

Still Buffering 194: "High Fidelity" (2000)

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[theme music plays]

Raleigh: Hello, and welcome to *Still Buffering*, [hesitantly] a cross-generational guide to the content that... [pauses] shaped... us. [holding back laughter] Made us.

Taylor: Wow!

Raleigh: Dang it! [through laughter] I for—

Taylor: Didn't think about that, did you?

Raleigh: [through laughter] I forgot I had to say it until we were doing the count in!

Taylor: Oh, no...

Sydnee: I think it was "culture that made us."

Raleigh: What did *I* say?

Sydnee: Content.

Raleigh: Dang it! I always say content.

Sydnee: You wanna try that again?

Raleigh: A cross—welcome to *Still Buffering*, a cross-generational guide to the content—culture! That made us.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Welcome to *Still Buffering*, [through laughter] a cross-generational guide to the culture that made us. I'm Raleigh Smirl!

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl!

Rileigh: I'm sorry! It still takes getting used to, okay?! [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Ah, well you got it on the third try, that's alright. You could edit out the other two, right? Although now I just said that, so—oh well!

Rileigh: It's fine.

Sydnee: That's okay. That's fine. I—I feel like, uh, actually that was about right for, uh, 2020. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: It seemed—it seemed so promising, and then we just tripped... on the door frame. [laughs quietly] Right as we entered the house of the new year, we fell across the door frame, and...

Rileigh: Really. I, like, was so ready. I was like, "Yeah!"

Sydnee: ... knocked out a couple teeth and broke our nose and—

Rileigh: Yeah...

Taylor: New year, new you! Ew... [laughs]

Rileigh: I was so—oh, man. So ready to talk about what we were gonna talk about today. I was like, "Yeah, this is good! We have—we have—we have content." And then as we were doing the count in I was like, "Oh, God. I have to say what the subtitle of the show, and I forget what we made it!" [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, well, you may not understand based on Rileigh's... [laughs quietly] uh, introduction, there. But in case you didn't listen to our last episode, just briefly, our show is sorta different. We're all still here. We're all still talking.

Rileigh: It's still called *Still Buffering*.

Sydnee: Yes, and we're all still, um, of different generations. [holding back laughter] That has not changed.

Raleigh: I did not time travel.

Sydnee: Mm-mm. No Tardis has arrived to fix that. But—

Raleigh: Sadly.

Sydnee: —we, uh—we now are gonna talk about stuff that—like movies, TV shows—

Raleigh: [laughs] We're talking about stuff!

Sydnee: —music, books, whatever, that shaped us when we were young and impressionable. And—and we will each bring something new each week. Um, but before we get into that, Raleigh, you had an experience which emphasized exactly why—

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: —this change was necessary.

Raleigh: I, uh—I went to the local Starbucks the other evening to get—

Sydnee: This is a coffee establishment.

[pauses]

Raleigh: [through laughter] Thank you, Sydnee. To get some—some work done.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: Um, and this group of teens—and I realize I am 19. I understand I am a teen. When I say "teens," I mean, like, middle school probably. Like 13 or 14 years old, like, fresh teens.

Sat down at the table next to me. And they started talking. And one of them called the others "babies." They were like, "Oh man, I am so old. I feel like I'm basically an adult. I'll be 15 in a month and you all are only 13?"

I was like, "Whoa... dude. You're not an adult. You're, like... f—I—you're—you're a baby!"

And then they kept cursing. And I was like, "Stop cursing. You're—you're so little. Don't curse. I didn't even know what—"

Taylor: Aw...

Raleigh: "—I didn't even know what bad words *were* when I was 13!"

Taylor: [skeptically] Okay, alright.

Sydnee: That's—that's not true.

Raleigh: I didn't wanna say 'em.

Sydnee: Yeah. You knew what they were, and we tried to get you to say 'em all the time!

Raleigh: You tried to get me to say them. But they, freely, were just—they were everywhere! And they kept, um... like... at first, I think they were pretending, but then they were really, like, snorting the cocoa powder and the cinnamon that was on the table at the Starbucks—

Sydnee: Oh, that's a bad idea.

Raleigh: —and taking videos of it to put on their Snapchat stories and, like, make TikToks of it. And they're like, "Oh my God, this is gonna go so viral! We're gonna put this on TikTok and it's gonna get so many likes! People are gonna love it!"

I was like, "I am so glad—" I said on Twitter I was glad Snapchat wasn't a thing when I was 13, and I realize it was, like, it did exist, but it was not something everyone had. I certainly did not have one. And TikTok certainly was not a thing. And no one was doing crazy things to make videos of it and put it online.

Sydnee: Well...

Raleigh: I mean—

Sydnee: People have been doing crazy things to make videos of it—

Raleigh: Yes.

Taylor: Yes.

Raleigh: Yes, but that was not a thing on—on those, you know, social media platforms like Snapchat and TikTok when I was 13.

Sydnee: I hope they stopped doing that. That's not really great for your nasal mucosa.

Raleigh: I know. I felt like—I felt like such an adult when I wanted to be like, "Hey, ca—can you guys just—I don't—you're being loud, but that's okay. Can you guys just... stop... doing that? That has to be bad for you. Please stop." [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Please don't hurt yourselves.

Raleigh: Please. [laughs quietly] Be—keep yelling, keep doing whatever you want but just... don't hurt yourselves.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: And then, um, they all walked out of the establishment after deciding whose parent was going to drive them home, and they had to call parents because they were all too young to drive.

Sydnee: Aww...

Raleigh: And that was a very nostalgic moment where I was like, "Aw, I remember when I had to call everyone's parents to see who could pick us up!"

And then they all walked outside, and as they were walking out they turned around and dabbled at the entire establishment, then left. [wheezes]

Taylor: I think this is all very charming. I mean, other than the—

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: —I mean, the—the cocoa powder up your nose. Which, like, hey, we've all done it once, right? Right? But, you know, uh, everything else about that is I think that's—like, kids, they're being kids! They're, you know, doin' their thing.

Raleigh: Well, that's the thing. I wasn't *annoyed* by any of it. None of it was, like, bothering me. But I had a moment where instead of seeing them being, like, "Oh ho, my fellow teens! I understand every interaction you're having!"

Immediately I was like, "Oh no, stop it! No!" And then I didn't get it, and I felt like I was such an outsider. I felt old. I wasn't, like, bothered—

Sydnee: That's what happens.

Raleigh: Yeah, I wasn't bothered by any of it. It was just very strange to see these teens and be like, "Oh no, I don't... I don't get it."

So that's—in short, that's why we—[holding back laughter] we don't do teens anymore. Teen stuff.

Sydnee: I'm glad that—I'm glad that dabbing is still a thing. Um—

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: I didn't know it was!

Sydnee: I'm glad to hear that it is, and that it is still as inscrutable to me as it was when I first learned of it—

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: —because I don't know why you would turn around and dab at Starbucks. I don't understand the context of that.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: I don't know—like, are you dabbing in salute? Are you dabbing in thanks? Are you dabbing in, like, a negative—like, "I got you, Starbucks! I snorted all your cinnamon!"

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: I don't know—[laughs quietly] I don't know what the dab means, and I'm glad I still don't understand!

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: It's a—it's a contextual thing, you know? It could be a greeting, as well as a goodbye. It can be an encouragement as well as a celebration of success. The dab has many applications. [holding back laughter] It's like aloha!

Sydnee: [laughs] It's just an inflection thing.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yes.

Rileigh: I will say, I've tried many times to try to teach your—your almost two-year-old how to dab.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Rileigh: She has not picked up on it yet.

Sydnee: No.

Rileigh: I'm hoping we'll get there one day. Charlie knows how.

Taylor: You're—you're almost 34-year-old still hasn't exactly gotten it right, so, you know—

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: —some people just don't have that. The dab skills.

Rileigh: It's true. I certainly don't. [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, I'm sorry to hear that.

Rileigh: No, it's okay. It was a very, uh, reassuring moment, because when we decided to stop talking about teen stuff I was like, "Man am I—are we doin' it too soon? Am I not old enough yet? Am I still a baby?"

And yes, I am still a baby. *But...* we made the right decision, [through laughter] because *I* don't understand th—those kids today.

Sydnee: Charlie started telling us about a game that she liked to play called "cheeky peekers."

Raleigh: Uhh...?

Sydnee: And, uh—

Taylor: Hmm.

Sydnee: —we kept trying to figure out, like, where did she learn about this game, and how do we not know about it, and are we so out of touch that our five-year-old knows about something that we don't know about?

And then we realized she made it up.

Raleigh: Oh, okay.

Taylor: Oh, that's great!

Sydnee: It just means—it just means you're playing cards with someone and you look at their cards.

Raleigh: [laughs loudly] Cheeky peekers! [laughs]

Sydnee: And then you're a cheeky peeker.

Raleigh: I love her so much! [laughs]

Taylor: That—that sounds—that's—that's very British. I—[laughs] that sounds—

Raleigh: It does.

Sydnee: She invented the game, cheeky peekers.

Taylor: I hope that she develops that further into an entire game.

Raleigh: Oh, she's so good.

Taylor: Like, that's—

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: I'm into that.

Raleigh: The goal of the game is to secretly be a cheeky peeker.

Taylor: Cheeky peekers!

Sydnee: [crosstalk] [through laughter] She said one of you is the cheeky and one of you is the peeker.

Raleigh: [laughs] Well...

Sydnee: And I said, "What do you do?" And she said, "Well, you look at the other person's cards."

Taylor: Wait, though—does the *cheeky* look at the other person's card, or the peeker? 'Cause I would assume the peeker, but then I don't know! That—that cheeky!

Raleigh: They're cheeky!

Sydnee: I think whichever one Charlie is—

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: —is the one that gets to cheat [through laughter] and look at the other cards!

Raleigh: That makes sense.

Sydnee: I don't even know what card game we're playing! I just know that she gets to sh—to cheat!

Raleigh: It's go fish.

Taylor: [laughs] Okay, so there are three roles. There's the cheeky, the peeker, and the Charlie, and [through laughter] there's only one way.

Sydnee: Who's—who's—whatever suits her.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, your assignment this week was to watch *High Fidelity*.

Raleigh: Yes.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: This was—

Raleigh: And I did.

Sydnee: —this was my idea.

Raleigh: I, um, wanted to be fresh up on my memories of it, so I started watching it last night, and then fell asleep about 30 minutes before the end, so I finished the last half an hour of the movie before I came to record today.

Sydnee: Well, good.

Raleigh: So I have consumed it.

Sydnee: It, of course, was a book originally by Nick Hornby, and then a movie that came out I believe in the year 2000. uh, starring John Cusack. And I have to admit—while this is no longer true, before everyone yells at me—this used to be one of my top five favorite movies.

Raleigh: Aha, top five.

Taylor: Hmm.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: That was good.

Sydnee: I also used to have top five favorite... everything. Probably because of this movie!

Raleigh: Yeah, I was gonna say.

Sydnee: Uh, but this used to be one of those for me, and I was not alone. I—I would say—Teylor, you can probably attest to this, that there were a lot of people from our collective generation that loved this film.

Teylor: Yes, absolutely. I remember—I never had the enthusiasm for it that you did, but I definitely remember liking it, or at least... *trying* to like it. [through laughter] Pretending to like it, 'cause it seemed like I was supposed to. Uh, but yeah. I definitely thought of it more fondly than on the rewatch. It was definitely a thing that, in general, was considered good culture.

Raleigh: Yeah. I, uh—I had not watched it. I had heard the name of the film before. I had no idea what it was about until watching it this time, and I... did not like it. [snorts]

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: I—I could see the...

Sydnee: I'm not shocked.

Raleigh: Yeah. I could see the—the cultural context having some influence over things that would never be in film or media today. I feel like you have to expect that from everything from, like, you know, any time in the past.

Um, but I just found the main character very, very awful. [laughs] And I didn't like watching him, or trying to root for him in any way, because, like... I didn't like him, and I didn't understand why... he had had so many relationships.

Sydnee: It's—it's hard—

Raleigh: That so many girls liked him.

Sydnee: —so, for those of you who haven't seen *High Fidelity*, we're gonna spoil it. Sorry.

Teylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: But it's also—

Raleigh: It's 20 years old.

Taylor: [simultaneously] Yeah, you've had 20 years.

Sydnee: —[simultaneously] it's been 20 years. Yeah, c'mon.

Raleigh: That's... older than me. [laughs]

Taylor: You've had more than a Raleigh amount of time to see this.

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: Um, but generally speaking in the film, John Cusack is our main character Rob, who, uh, has just been dumped and decides to revisit the top five worst breakups of his life.

Like—both in, like, flashback storytelling form, and then in literally finding these, uh, former—these exes, and—and finding out why he keeps getting rejected is kind of his premise. Um, and that is—that is sort of the story of the movie. He is also—it's—it's, I think, relevant that he owns a record store.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: He considers himself—and they say this in the film—like, an unappreciated genius when it comes to... liking music. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, it's a—he's very good at liking music.

Raleigh: He's very good at music. But not making it! Liking it.

Sydnee: Him and his two employees at the record store.

Taylor: I don't—

Raleigh: I don't know—Go ahead.

Taylor: Hold on. Is he—is he good liking it, or is he good at judging it? I think that's... you know?

Raleigh: Mm.

Sydnee: Yeah, that's...

Taylor: Like... he's a really good judger of things, I think.

Sydnee: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Raleigh: I didn't know going into this that Jack Black was up in this movie.

Taylor: Ah, yeah.

Sydnee: Really?

Raleigh: [laughs] Until I turned it on and I was, like, five minutes in! I was like, "Whoa, wait, wait, wait. Wait, wait, wait. *Jack Black?!!*"

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: [wheezes] "You look exactly the same!" [laughs]

Sydnee: He does! Uh, I enjoyed—

Raleigh: I enjoyed Jack Black's character.

Sydnee: Yeah, and you know, it's funny. I don't always enjoy Jack Black, but I did. [laughs]

Taylor: Well—

Sydnee: In this film.

Raleigh: I did enjoy his character.

Taylor: His character—I—I—like, I had a moment where I was like, "Oh, well at least Jack Black's character is worse than John Cusack's character." But in some ways, like, was more likable? Like... [through laughter] Like, John—Jack Black

being his most obnoxious version, like, was still more likable, still had more redeeming qualities, I think, than the main character of this movie.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: So I think—I think that's part of what this movie suffers from, in retrospect. Uh, because watching it again—I rewatched it.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Just 'cause I hadn't in a while, and, I mean, I knew—I already knew some of the things that would be problematic, and I—I watched it again, and Justin watched it with me, 'cause I think he was as big a fan of it as I was, back in the day.

Uh, and part of it is that the main character, I do not think is *supposed* to be as likable as John Cusack is—is likable, you know? As he is playing it.

Taylor: Oh, okay.

Sydnee: As it is—as it is performed and written and acted.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I think the problem is that we have a picture of a guy who is selfish.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I mean, he's—he's very navel gaze-y. He's—he's not really concerned with how anyone else is doing or feeling, or what they're thinking, or.. anything, at any time. And it's evident in his past relationships. It's evident in his current relationship. He has very little interest or even thought, like, why he *should* care... how Laura feels, or what she wants or needs.

Um, and so should be kind of a jerk!

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: But... he's given so many opportunities to be funny, and lovable, and witty, and clever, and... it's hard to just dislike him. And I—I think—I don't know if

it's a casting issue because John Cusack is like that, or—I don't know. But I—I think that his character needs to be a lot more unlikable than he is played.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: [quietly] Ah, yeah... I found him plenty unlikable, but maybe that's just me. I don't know! I'm not—

Raleigh: Yeah...

Taylor: —I'm not charmed by John Cusack, so I guess that's, you know—

Raleigh: Well—

Taylor: —it sounds like a you problem. [laughs quietly]

Sydney: I had a—I used to have a tote bag with John Cusack on it.

Taylor: I remember this, yes.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydney: Yeah... so... [laughs]

Raleigh: Um, I mean—I feel like for me, this is the first time ever seeing this movie and it's the year 2020. it wasn't that hard for me to be like, "Ugh, this... this jerk. Come on. This guy's the worst!"

I—I don't know if it was, like... it was just kind of everything about him. It was just kind of... it was the way that I feel like—which I think was interesting to think about—the quote, unquote "villain" guy of a modern, like, rom-com movie would be written.

Sydney: Wow!

Raleigh: Like, that's the kind of guy in a modern coming of age—and I was gonna say young adult, but he's, like, what, 36 in this movie? Is that what you all said?

Taylor: I—in the—

Sydnee: I think he's supposed to be in his early to mid-30's, yeah.

Taylor: Yeah.

Rileigh: Yeah. Which is older than, I would say, most movies of this type would play their main characters now.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Rileigh: Um... but his whole self-absorbed, like, arrogant, know-it-all, "Why don't girls like me? I'm great" kind of attitude? Like, that's how all the bad guys that the girls think they wanna date at first—

Sydnee: [laughs]

Rileigh: —and then end up finding their real good guy. That's how they're written in all, like, the—the modern movies.

Taylor: Yeah... I mean, like, if this movie was—was—if these same characters existed in the modern age, they'd be on the internet, like, you know, in—in incel communities, I feel like. [laughs]

Rileigh: Yes!

Taylor: Like, "[whiny voice] Why does nobody appreciate me? Like, I have records—"

Rileigh: Yeah!

Taylor: "—and can tell you obscure facts about things you're not interested in." Uh... which maybe—

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: —actually—'cause you know, to the—like, the—the main three, the three people that work at the record store, the main character, Jack Black's character, and then, uh, Dick is the other character?

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: The only—the only redeemable character in this movie except maybe Bruce—well, Bruce Springsteen's in it, so that's—[through laughter] there's that, but...

Sydnee: He's fine.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Bruce Springsteen's great. Uh, but, like—you know, there's a difference between, like, that character, Dick, who was, like, really passionate about vinyl, really passionate about it, and, like, clearly very into it, fascinated, versus the other two characters that seemed to *arm* themselves with their knowledge and use it against people in, like, horrible ways.

This is really a divide that I think is very real, and you will encounter it throughout life of, like—people that are passionate about things? Very cool. People that use their passions as weapons against other people? Bad people. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I—I think that's very true. I think it was—I think that's why it dates it so much to see your protagonist written this way.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm, yeah.

Sydnee: Because I—I looked at it as, like, an evolution—for me as a young—as a young woman watching it, this was an evolution of the male character that I was supposed to like.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And it was at least an evolution in a direction that I could appreciate because, well, he says things that are interesting... he's funny...

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: He seems... decently smart. And that's better than the previous, like, male... like, dreamboat heartthrob, main leading guy archetype who is, like, silent and handsome, and that's it. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And maybe punches sometimes. [laughs] You know? I mean, like—

Rileigh: Well, I mean—

Sydnee: —there was at least, like—okay, well I—I like the direction where, like, I would—I would be into a guy who talks back.

Rileigh: [snorts quietly]

Sydnee: And—[laughs] I mean, that was—

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: But no, was it a healthy direction? No! Because as much as that is not the kind of role model I would want young men to aspire to be—because he is. He's totally self-centered and totally arrogant and complete—uses his knowledge to exclude others, which is—none of this is nice or kind. But, uh, he also shaped the kind of woman I thought *I* should become.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Because those messages told me, like, if I'm gonna get a guy like that to be into me, I gotta be a lot cooler. I need to be a lot more into what *he's* into. I need to figure out what guys think is cool and like that. And then I'll be cool.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Which—

Sydnee: Which is, like, the downfall of a whole generation of women. I mean, my—myself included. [laughs]

Taylor: But it's strange, because, like, in—within this movie, the idea that liking all the right stuff gets you the guy is—is kind of... doesn't work, because you got Marie De Salle which, by the way, if you're looking for the character, you should be, like, enamored with in this movie, she's right there. Uh, but she has all the cool interests, knows all about the cool music facts. They hook up that one night and then as soon as he turns away from her he's back to thinking about Laura.

So she was the quote, unquote "cool girl" who liked all the stuff that he liked. He talked about how great it was to share all this stuff, and then immediately it's like, "That's done." Like, so—you know. If it's—if it's not what you're like, if it's what you like, then why didn't that work? Uh...

Sydnee: And he's also incredibly manipulative with her. I hadn't really thought about it—

Taylor: Oh, yeah!

Sydnee: —until I rewatched the scene, but he describes how he got to sleep with her, and he talks about, like... "I—I talked about things in vague ways that were warm and caring, but also, like, hinted at a deep ocean of melancholy—"

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I mean, it's *so* contrived, and—

Raleigh: I hated it. The whole time I was like "[dry heaves] God, ugh..."

Sydnee: Well, and it had never—like, I don't think I'd ever thought about it until I rewatched it this week, and I was like, "Oh... that's... eugh."

Raleigh: Yeah, he—

Sydnee: "This sounds rough!" [laughs quietly] "This is rough!"

Taylor: The—the only thing that made me okay with that was she seemed to kind of be like, "Yeah, I just really wanted to sleep with somebody, so whatever, dude. [through laughter] Bye." Which is fine. Like, he's—

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: —at least she maybe didn't buy it.

Sydnee: I think that they give her that. I actually think they give her that pretty well, that she does not buy it. The look sh—when he says, "I'll call you," the look she gives him... it's like, "That's not what this was about."

Taylor: Yeah. "Please don't." [laughs]

Sydnee: "Let's not—yeah."

Raleigh: "You don't have to. Please."

Sydnee: "Please don't, actually. That's—let's not play games. This was—I liked you, you liked me, we had a nice night together, now please... [holding back laughter] go about your way."

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: "Leave me—leave me be." [laughs] And—and, I mean, I like that they give her that empowerment. And it's not, like, in a desperate, sad way. It's, uh—

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: "I got what I was looking for."

Raleigh: Yeah. "Thank you, bye."

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: "Thank you, next." [laughs]

Sydnee: "Thank you, bye." [laughs]

Taylor: Well, speaking of sad, what about some of the other women that he revisits? Like, those interactions.

Sydnee: Yes. Let's—before we—I wanna go through those, because I think that those are the, uh—just like the main character never thinks about [holding back laughter] any of the women he's interacted with... I think that the movie skates past them.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: And I want to discuss them further. But before we do that...

Raleigh: Let's check the group message.

Sydnee: Uh, hey. You guys had a long day... at work?

Taylor: [quietly] Yeah.

Sydnee: Or a tough—a tough day at school?

Raleigh: You mean here?

Taylor: [quietly] Most days.

Raleigh: At work? This is my work.

Sydnee: Yeah, I know.

Raleigh: It's been a long day at work.

Taylor: Okay. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: But, like, school... Raleigh, you're not playing along—[laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah, I've had a really tough day at school.

Sydnee: Are you feeling like "[loudly] I don't have the energy to go out and interact with the world!"

Raleigh: Always.

Taylor: Every day.

Sydnee: "I'm not gonna cook."

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: "But I—I am hungry."

Raleigh: Yes!

Sydnee: Well then DoorDash is here for you.

Raleigh: [gasps] [holding back laughter] Tell me more!

Sydnee: Uh, DoorDash can connect you to all your favorite restaurants in the city. Uh, it's super easy. You just open up the app, pick what restaurant you want, pick the food you wanna eat—uh, you don't have to talk with anybody on the phone. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: That's my favorite part!

Sydnee: You don't have to drive anywhere. You can go ahead, put on your sweatpants, uh, order the food you want, and it will be delivered to you wherever you are. Uh, not only is your favorite pizza joint already on DoorDash, but there are over 340,000 restaurants in 3,300 cities, so you might find a new favorite one too. And we have it here in Huntington!

Raleigh: Yeah. Which is... wild. [laughs]

Sydnee: I know! It's amazing and wonderful. Uh, it solves all your problems, because how many times have you been like, "Oh, man. I waited too long. It's too late to cook. I've really gotta watch *High Fidelity* again so I can talk about it on a podcast."

Raleigh: Yep.

Sydnee: "Um, but I just want somebody to bring me, uh, some... some food from the only Indian restaurant in Huntington, but it's also very good."

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs] So Teylor, if our listeners wanna check out DoorDash, what should they do?

Teylor: Well, you can get \$5 off your first order of \$15 or more when you download the DoorDash app and enter promo code "buffering." So that's five bucks off your first order, just download the DoorDash app from the app store and enter promo code "buffering." Don't forget, that's promo code "buffering." five bucks off your first order of \$15 or more.

Sydnee: So, uh, Teylor, you mentioned we should talk about the other, uh, female characters in the movie, and I think we should. Because...

Rileigh: Yes.

Sydnee: That is, I think, the primary problem that sort of gets addressed vaguely, is that Rob never thinks about other people.

Teylor: Right.

Sydnee: Like, at all.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um... and, uh, he goes through these five relationships largely—not really—he says to find out why he got rejected, but not really.

Rileigh: Yes.

Sydnee: It's not really about that.

Rileigh: No, because really he kind of maintains, like, defending himself the entire time.

Sydnee: Yes. He wants to hear what they have to say so that he can refute it.

Rileigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Yeah. So he goes—his first relationship when he was a child, Allison Ashworth—they kissed on the playground for three days after school, and then she kissed Kevin Banister, and then he finds out she married Kevin Banister.

Rileigh: Yeah. [pauses] Which—can we point out that young John Cusack is played by Drake Bell of *Drake and Josh* fame—

Teylor: I noticed that!

Rileigh: —in this film? [laughs]

Taylor: Yep.

Raleigh: I paused the movie and I was like, "Hold on a minute... *I* know that face!"

Sydnee: Uh—and, uh, and that's fine. That's fine. He chalks it up to fate. Okay.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: I—I did like—

Raleigh: Sure.

Taylor: —he tries to argue with the mother, I'm guessing, and, uh, about if he was in fact the first boyfriend. I liked that at least the mother got to hang up on him, and there was one moment of, like, "Thank you. Everyone should do this."
[laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] "Okay, Bob. I have to go now."

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs] "Bye!"

Sydnee: Uh, but then, uh—then we move on to what I would say is the worst—like, in terms of stuff that hasn't aged well—that wasn't good when it happened—

Raleigh: It's so bad...

Sydnee: —but at least happened a lot, then, and then now we—hopefully people know better. The—the—Penny. The character of Penny is—

Raleigh: The Penny.

Sydnee: Everything about it's hard, because we note that, like, he revisits this relationship that he had in high school. Uh, this girl that he liked because she was—as far as we can tell, he liked her because she was pretty and she listened to the right... recording artists. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Uh, but he—he revisits her, and they have a date, and she has a cool job, and he thinks everything she says is cool, and she's still pretty, and she's great. But his only interest is to find out why, in fact, she wouldn't sleep with him in high school, but she did sleep with another guy.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Which is just—it's all gross.

Raleigh: It's all the worst.

Sydnee: It's all the worst. And there are—there's a whole scene—it should be noted that, uh, has—it's like the idea of consent didn't exist?

Raleigh: Uh-huh.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Back then?

Raleigh: He calls—

Sydnee: Which is not true.

Raleigh: —women's breasts, like, the property of men?

Taylor: Yeah...

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Right? And, like, they—they decided to annex them from—[stammers]

Taylor: The whole—

Raleigh: —all of it. I was just watching, my jaw down, like, "This can't be. What I'm watching can't be happening." [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Well, and then she—she describes to him this very painful situation that she went through. I—I mean, partially at his—because of his actions that led to...

I don't wanna go too much detail but, like—and it's like—afterwards he's like, "Oh, cool. Bye." [laughs] Like... clearly this girl was traumatized—

Sydnee: That's—

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: —for a large portion of her life!

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: But then—but all he—all he remembers from this conversation is, "Oh yeah, I broke up with *her*!"

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: "So it's fine now."

Raleigh: Yep.

Sydnee: "Moving on." Um, and her experience and her life is completely negated. And I think the thing is, like, that's very evident. Like, the—the beat there is—it's such a fast transition from her—I mean, this awful story that she tells, to his, like, "Oh, that's right! I wasn't rejected, I rejected her! This is great!"

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Like, it's such a fast turnaround that I think it's intentional. It's supposed to look awful. Like, it's filmed that way. It's not like, "Don't you realize how bad he looks?" No, he's supposed to look bad. But they just never—I feel like they—they graze against the idea that he's a bad guy, and then turn away from it instantly.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Well, it—

Sydnee: Like, they never fully embrace it.

Taylor: —it felt like it was almost played for laughs. Like, "Hah, this guy's such a jerk. Look at him, he's great." Like... it was—

Sydnee: It is!

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: —yeah, like, just the quick cutaway, and then he asked for the check, and it's just like—the scene is very comedically filmed. Which was just really gross to me.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And—and it's hard, because, like, if—if that's the way you're gonna play this guy, he's gotta get his comeuppance. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: He has to lose.

Raleigh: If you—if you want to write a bad guy as your main character, you have to have something bad happen to them.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: Like, there has to be some sort of, like, you know, karma in this—in this universe.

Taylor: Well—

Sydnee: And you can't—he—he has this scene that in the book I always felt like was a lot better, where he lists—he, uh—he has a mutual friend with his ex, Laura, played by his sister, Joan Cusack. Which, I will say, one redeeming thing about the movie—the interactions between them onscreen they are so good.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: That's true.

Sydnee: You—I mean, if you didn't know they were siblings, you would think they just had amazing chemistry. They're just really great when they fight onscreen. Anyway—but, uh, where she—so, she's the mutual friend. She's trying not to play sides, and then all of the sudden she's on Laura's side, and calling him an a-hole. And he—

Raleigh: [gasps]

Sydnee: —reveals that he did a series of bad things to Laura that are probably why she thinks he's an a-hole now, and that Laura has now told him.

And, uh, in the book it's played like—he lists these things, and then he says, "And I know these all sound bad," and then he gives you context for them. And they aren't—I'm not gonna say they're understandable, but at least you see where this—at least you see how these things happened.

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: Uh, and then he says, "But I challenge you to, like, write down the four worst things *you've* ever done... on a piece of paper, and see how you feel."

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And it's—and it's funny, 'cause in the book it's a lot more like... we've—we've all done bad things, you know, and if you just lay 'em out in a line, we can all look like terrible people, and it's a lot more understandable.

But then in the context of this character... it's—it does seem even the more unforgivable, because he says all this stuff that he did to his girlfriend, and then in the very next scene he's like, "So I'm gonna call up all my exes and find out why I got rejected."

And it's like, "Well... did you just hear what you just said?"

Raleigh: "You just *said* why you did. Like, you just said it yourself!"

Sydnee: "You did all this horri—terrible stuff!"

Rileigh: "You're bad!"

Sydnee: "Like, you cheated on her, you owe her money—"

Rileigh: "You did bad—yeah."

Sydnee: "—and said you wanted to... sleep with somebody else, and—"

Rileigh: "Yeah! [pauses] Just, like, rewind a few seconds and—[laughs quietly] you have your answer! You don't need to do the rest of this film!"

[pauses]

Sydnee: Uh...

Taylor: Yeah. I mean, it's like he's almost to, like, an important realization that reducing people to five-item lists is not a good way to communicate, judge, or interact with people. And then he's just like, "But moving on." [laughs] "Top five some other stuff!"

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah, because he does. He moves—he moves right on, and then, I mean, we got to, um... Sarah is the name of the relationship he had with the... she got dumped, he got dumped, so they kind of joined their sadness. And they got into, like, a sad rebound relationship, and then she dumped him for somebody else.

And I don't know what the message is there. It's just all very sad.

Rileigh: Yeah. They were both sad, so it was sad.

Sydnee: I guess he realized—I don't know. Are we supposed to think he's a nice guy because he says he could have slept with her because she was sad and lonely, but he didn't take advantage of that?

Taylor: Well—

Sydnee: Are we supposed, like, "Oh, okay—"

Raleigh: Is that his redeeming moment?! [laughs]

Sydnee: "—is this it?"

Taylor: No! Because he doesn't just say, "I could've, but the only reason she'd wanna sleep with me is she's sad."

He said, "No, it would be sleeping with a whole sad, single culture." Like—it's like, you know, "You're below me now." [through laughter] Like, it's because he was judging her!

Sydnee: I guess that's true, yeah. And then the—and then the—the final, um—the final girlfriend he revisits is Charlie.

Raleigh: [simultaneously] Charlie.

Sydnee: —Uh, I did not name my daughter for her, in case anyone was—

Raleigh: Are you sure?

Sydnee: Quite—quite certain.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] In case anyone out there is like, "Is that why?" No. No.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: No. Uh, but I—you know, it's funny, 'cause, like... I had a moment as I was watching this where I found myself in crisis trying to figure out how I feel about Charlie.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: 'Cause the idea is that he dated Charlie in college and she was... way out of his league.

Raleigh: She was cool and—and artsy, and smart, and—

Sydnee: And beautiful.

Raleigh: —had friends, yeah.

Sydnee: And funny, yeah. And just, like, all this great stuff. And so he goes to a dinner party with her now, and she's still all these things, except for now he says it's all crap. Everything she says is stupid. She's not very smart. She's not funny. She's not interesting. She doesn't listen to people.

And I found myself watching going... "Well, maybe that's all a lie. I can't trust you!"

Taylor: I—that's—I had the same feeling! 'Cause I remember watching the movie when I was younger and thinking that she was—like, believing that she's an awful character, and what a weird revelation.

And when I was watching it again it was like, I don't know, she's—she's clearly successful. She's surrounded by successful people. Like, this is somebody that is—that has won. Is, like, a—like—I think he's, like—yeah, I agree! I was like, "No, this is all garbage!" She's—I think she's amazing! And just—yeah!

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Was way, way, way, way, way too good for you, and continues to be. And you're just trying to justify it in this framework you're giving yourself, to justify all of your past breakups.

Raleigh: He was just bitter that... she left him for somebody better back when they broke up! That was it!

Sydnee: Which is basically what she says!

Raleigh: Yeah!

Sydnee: Like, "You—you were miserable, and sad, and, like, not fun. And— [laughs quietly] you didn't seem happy, and I found someone who was, and we were in college, so... you know. These aren't exactly sophisticated relationships. So I moved on!"

Rileigh: I don't know if that was supposed to be another moment of, like, feeling bad for—for John Cusack there. Like, "Aw, he felt insecure 'cause she was so great, and she broke up with him because he just, like, couldn't—couldn't feel that confidence in himself, and she should've, like, reassured him."

Like, I didn't know if it was supposed to be *that*. Like, "Aw, it's not his fault!" But... again! I liked her the whole time! I just thought he was just, like, bitter!

Sydnee: It's very 90's. I think it's supposed to be—like, Marco—you barely get an idea of who this person is, other than I think he's supposed to be very attractive.

Rileigh: Yeah. That's pretty much it. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. He was supposed to be cool and attractive, and he got dumped for the captain of the football team. I mean, I really think that's the equivalent you're looking for here, is... he's just the nerdy guy who's doin' his best, and he got dumped for the hot guy, and don't you feel bad for him? I really think that's that—that's that beat.

Um... but, like, you can't play that game with us, 'cause we know, now! [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah!

Taylor: Well—

Sydnee: We've seen you!

Taylor: And even in the flashback when they show, like, her being with Marco. It's, like, he's standing outside her apartment calling her names! [through laughter] Like, he's—saying horrible things to her!

Rileigh: That's what I was gonna say! He's, like—he's screaming and calling her names. But then saying, like, "Can't we just talk this out?!"

Taylor: No!

Rileigh: "You "b"!" It's like, "Wha—what?! *No!* [laughs] You—did you hear yourself?!"

Sydnee: And, I mean—I think it's supposed to be—again, I think that it's intentionally funny. Like, it's supposed to be played for laughs.

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: Like, "Can you believe what he just said?" Uh, but it's—it's just hard, because I never—again, as the movie progresses, like, he goes through this crisis. We find out, as a side note, that, uh, Laura is—is now dating someone else.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um...

Raleigh: Ian?

Sydnee: Ian. Played by Tim Robbins. And it is... by the way, his performance... man.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: He's so good.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: He's so—ugh! It's so good! [laughs]

Raleigh: Sydnee looves Tim Robbins!

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] I do! 'Cause he's so brilliant in that role! Everything he does is the, like, skeeziest. But, like, he's so good at it. It's so good.

Taylor: See, even that—like, I remember his character being just, like, so awful. And then on the rewatch I'm like, I don't know, this guy clearly—he's—he's got a—a aesthetic that I don't particularly like, and that's... fine.

But, like, I don't know, he seems to pay attention to her feelings? He seems concerned about, like, this honestly *abusive* ex-boyfriend that's stalking her, as it seems. Like... w—with the amount of calls and everything.

Like, I—if you take away all the, like, goofy, like, "Look at what a, like, lame-o he is" wrappings that they put him in, he just seems like a dude that's just trying to take care of someone to some degree. Like, it's not that heinous.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Yeah...

Rileigh: I don't know.

Taylor: No, I mean, they tried!

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: He's got the high ponytail. They have the karate picture. Like, I get it. it's—I get it. But I just couldn't—I couldn't really hate on him. They tried so hard to make him a caricature of someone you're not supposed to like, 'cause he's takin' the girl from your main hero. And it's like, I don't know... I feel like at least that person would've... not taken her for granted. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Well, I already so much dislike for John Cusack it was like, there's no one else in this movie I could like less, I think.

Sydnee: Well, and I'm never gonna hate on Tim Robbins.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] I just think he's excellent. I think he's very funny and his characters funny, and he's very funny.

Rileigh: [holding back laughter] Tell me more about Tim Robbins, please.

Sydnee: Oh, I'm done now.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: I just think he's very funny.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, but the—

Raleigh: He is.

Sydnee: —I do find it—I did find this turn—it was funny, 'cause Justin said "I don't think it's believable," and I actually said I thought it was more believable—one of the more believable parts—that the turn in the movie, what saves Rob from... his loneliness and rejection, uh, is that Laura's father passes away.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: And basically, in her grief and loss and sadness and shock, she... returns to Rob. Which I actually feel like, for better or for worse, is—is a pretty honest depiction of—

Raleigh: That's pretty fair.

Sydnee: —of what can happen. I mean, not to everybody, certainly, but, like, I think if you were in a very long term relationship that felt safe and you go through something that tragic, you may well revert back to that relationship, whether it was good for you or not. So I actually thought that was a pretty honest... you know. That could happen.

Raleigh: And I do think it's interesting that she even says, when they're in the car after they decide to get back together, she's like, "Well, there'll be... romance at some point, probably. Like, this is what you want, right? Like, we'll just—yeah, this is fine. There'll be—sure, some other time."

Sydnee: "I'm too tired not to be with you."

Taylor: Ugh...

Raleigh: "Too tired not to be with you." It's very, like... because I can imagine watching this and being young and being like, "Oh, yay, they're getting back together. And, like, oh, how romantic." But then, like, wait. Wait. What? Wait. There's no romance? I— isn't there supposed to— isn't this when there's supposed to be, like, the big, like, music buildup, and they kiss, and they hug, and then the credits roll.

But no! She's very, like—and he's okay with that! He's okay. He's like, "Okay. That's fine. As long as you're not with Ian and you're with me."

Like, what?

Sydnee: Well, and it—he really, like... [sighs] I don't think at that point he has changed at all.

Rileigh: No.

Sydnee: I don't think he's grown or changed. Um—

Rileigh: This was not a Scrooge moment for him where he visited all the ghosts and was like, "I'm a new man now!"

Sydnee: No.

Rileigh: He was kind of the same.

Sydnee: He—he—all—he used all those experiences to reinforce what he already believed and felt, and make him feel better about those beliefs. And you—the only hint you get that things have changed or he's grown is at the very end, because he... it—it's kind of insinuated that he's thinking about maybe steppin' out with this new girl, who's interviewing him for a magazine and who clearly is into him, and he starts making a mixtape for her. Which is, like... red flag.

Rileigh: That moment, I was like, "Aw, man." [laughs]

Sydnee: And, uh—I mean 'cause, you know, in the 90's makin' a mixtape... oof.

Rileigh: Oh, man. That was everything.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: That's big time.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: You don't—you don't just do that.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And, uh—and even Laura knows the implications.

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: And she's just like, "I'm just not gonna say anything." Um, but then he realizes that he doesn't wanna do that, [holding back laughter] and so he proposes to Laura. Sort of.

Raleigh: It's... [sighs]

Taylor: Well, he—he—I think he parrots her words, too. He says something along the lines of being too tired to... do otherwise as well. So this is—is this the resolution, that we just watched two people just wear each other out emotionally [through laughter] to the point that they're just gonna be together? Ugh, jeez, guys! [laughs]

Raleigh: Like, I guess that was supposed to be his realization of his wrongdoing, was that maybe—was it that he couldn't commit to her and, like, he wasn't ever fully invested in her, but now he's going to be.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: And that was—

Sydnee: [simultaneously] I think that is what you're supposed to—

Raleigh: —that was his big realization. Like, that's always been his problem all along, but also it definitely was *not* his problem all along and he has *many* other problems as to why he is not a good partner, but *that's* the one he picks? He's like, "Well, I guess to fix that, I'll propose."

Sydnee: Yeah, I—

Raleigh: It's the most, like...

Sydnee: It's hard, because he—what he says is so, um... it's so immature. He says that the—it never—the fantasy never delivers.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And it's like, at his age, the idea that he's, one, clinging to some... like, two-dimensional fiction girl that he really wants, and two, realizes that that's not how humans work, um, it's really scary!

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Like, it speaks to a deep set immaturity and, like, lack of... of understanding and empathy and growth...

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: [through laughter] That is truly disturbing.

Raleigh: His lines are written like he's, like, supposed to be 18 or 20 years old!

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: But he's 36!

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: It's disturbing.

Sydnee: And, I mean, the only—the only hint you get that he's really changed I think is at the very end, when he's making a mixtape for Laura, and he says that he's putting stuff on it that will make *her* happy. Stuff that *she* would like.

And that—that is—

Raleigh: [sarcastically] Wowww.

Sydnee: —that's supposed to be—well, it's supposed to be meaningful, because the entire movie he's spent telling other people what *he* likes.

Raleigh: His top five.

Sydnee: His top five. And now he's trying to think about what someone else might like. So he is, for the first time in his life, *attempting* empathy.

Rileigh: To think about other people!

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: [sarcastically] Like, wow! Great job! What a—what a hero's journey!

Rileigh: Yeah!

Taylor: Ugh.

Rileigh: Again, this, like—this is a moment that I could see in the middle point, in the climax of a movie. Like, "Oh, he's learning!" And then by the end it's like, "Oh, yay! He's actually a decent person now!"

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] You talk about him like he's AI. Like, "Ah, it's learning!" [laughs]

Rileigh: "It's learning!"

Taylor: It's learning something, whoa!

Rileigh: But... it's like when you're, like... I don't know, litter box training your cat! It's like, "Oh, look! They went for the first time! They're learning!" But that's, like, the ending of this movie!

Sydnee: Yes.

Rileigh: The first time they go in the litter box. Like, "Welp, that's it!" It's the most apathetic ending to a—to a love—quote, unquote "love story..." ever.

Sydnee: It was a very—it's just a very 90's love story, though.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: And the fu—yeah.

Sydnee: The... [pauses] I was just gonna say the idea that, like, you—you end up together because... you both—not because you both want to be with each other, but because you can't not be with each other... that's very 90's.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: I just... because the thing is, the weird thing about it is that I still—I was entertained by this movie.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: What I'm realizing is that is if you took out the two characters that I think we're supposed to care about, Rob and Laura, if you took them out of this story I don't—all those other characters, I'd watch a movie about them.

I would watch some sort of, like, cute, like, you know, romance between Anna and Dick? I love that. That side story. That's great. I would watch the musical career progression of Jack Black, along with the punk kids. Like, Marie De Salle?

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Even—even Tim Robbins' character, yes. Like, all the characters that revolve around these people have [through laughter] so much more interest to me? Then there's just, like—but no, focus on the mayonnaise on the center of this story. Like...

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: They are the least interesting, yeah.

Raleigh: That's very true.

Sydnee: Um, well, I will say that maybe it will be better in the—in the remake that Hulu is doing that comes out on—

Raleigh: Valentine's Day.

Taylor: Ohh.

Sydnee: —on Valentine's Day. Uh, it's still called *High Fidelity*. But it's, like, a ten episode series or something, and it stars Zoe Kravitz.

Rileigh: Yeah. So it's supposed to be all gender swapped, I guess, and more modern, but still very similar premise and everything.

Sydnee: And it's set in your neighborhood, Tey.

Taylor: Yeah, they've been filmin' all around, a bunch of places that I know.

Rileigh: That's wild.

Sydnee: They've moved it from Chicago to Brooklyn.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um... from London to Chicago to Brooklyn—

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: —so we'll see how it has—has changed. Um—

Rileigh: I'm sure that will be of note to our show in the future.

Sydnee: Yes. It will be interesting to see. I would not recommend, if you ever go back and find that there is a musical...

Taylor: [laughs]

Rileigh: There *was* a musical!

Sydnee: Uh-huh. That ran for, like, ten days.

Rileigh: Ten days.

Sydnee: Uh, I would not recommend that, based on my listening to it, my brief listening to the music.

Rileigh: I really wanna go listen to it now.

Sydnee: I—I would not. I would not highly rec—but I—I will say, like, man. I read that book—you should see my copy of that book. It is so weathered. It is so

well worn, 'cause I read it so many times. I saw the movie so many times. I listened to that soundtrack over and over and over and over. I *do* recommend the soundtrack. Um, I thought it was very good.

Uh, and I—it's hard, 'cause I'm never gonna say I hate this movie, and I still laughed at points watching it, and I still enjoyed parts of it. Um... it's hard to let go of something that was, like—it was so firmly lodged in, like, my teen years as something that was formative for me, something that helped me, like—I would say late—late teens, early twenties, helped me try to form who I thought I wanted to be, and then I had to, like, go back and say, "Okay, well, that was wrong."

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: "I don't wanna be—[laughs quietly] I don't *wanna* be with somebody who just likes me because I said I like the same bands they like. Uh, I want... you know, I want a lot more, and I deserve a lot more," and we all do. We all deserve better than that in a relationship. But it—I had to undo a lot of damage.

Raleigh: I do think the initial, like, viewing and appreciation for something like that when you're younger, though, is just as important as you're later going back and reviewing your—your thoughts on it. Like, you still—it meant different—it meant something different to you when you're a teenager than it does when you're an adult.

Taylor: Right.

Raleigh: Everything does. You just—you see things different. Also, it was the 90's, or 2000, and now it's been 20 years. [holding back laughter] Things are very different culturally, and everything. So... we always have that same—I didn't *hate* it. I just... in comparison to—to rom-com movies that are supposed to be of similar vibe of modern day... it was very different.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: Difficult to watch.

Sydnee: Perhaps out of touch.

Rileigh: A little bit out of touch, yes. Considering it came out when I was being born. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs quietly] Yeah, that's fair. That a little hard for you to—yeah.

Rileigh: Yeah. But I am looking forward to watching, uh, the Hulu series.

Sydnee: Uh, and Teylor, do you wanna tell us what we're gonna talk about next week?

Teylor: Yes! So, uh, also in line with things that were really impactful on us in our youth that maybe, you know, deserve somewhat of a critical eye, but also—I mean, this—this a little less so. I still think this is a pretty important work.

Uh, I'm gonna bring to the table, uh, *The Killing Joke*, the Batman comic that is focused on the Joker, written by Alan Moore. Uh, fantastically illustrated by Brian Bolland. Um, one of the books that is mentioned so often in the discourse of the modern movies, the modern interpretations of the Joker.

Uh, there's a lot that happens in it. Some—some good, some bad, so I don't know. I would love for my sisters to give it a read, and then anyone that wants to, you know, listen next week as well. It's a short book, it's easy to find. Uh, but yeah. We're gonna—you know, while *The Joker's* winning all the awards this awards season, uh, let's go back to one of the—the core origin stories.

Sydnee: Let's do it.

Rileigh: Yeah!

Sydnee: Have you ever read it, Rileigh?

Rileigh: I have not.

Sydnee: I have once, but it's a long time ago, so.

Rileigh: I will say I'm very excited. The only comic books I ever read growing up were *Archie's*.

Sydnee: [snorts]

Rileigh: That were your old ones, so.

Sydnee: Alright!

Rileigh: This will be—this'll be exciting.

Sydnee: This'll be a departure.

Taylor: Absolutely.

Sydnee: [laughs] Alright, well, we'll check that out for next week, and in the meantime, thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on your network. Uh, check out Maximumfun.org for a lot of other shows you would enjoy. Uh, you can tweet at us @stillbuff, and you can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org.

And also, if you have ideas, like, of... stuff that you think we should talk about, let us know. You can tweet at us or email us or whatever. Like, any kind of movie or music or book or comic book or cartoon or—I mean, *anything*.

Rileigh: Anything.

Sydnee: Literally anything. Uh, and, uh, I think—oh, and thank you to The Nouvellas for our theme song, "Baby You Change Your Mind."

Rileigh: [speaking carefully] Uh, this has been a cross-generational guide to the culture that made us. I am Rileigh Smirl.

[pauses]

Sydnee: I am Sydnee McElroy. [snorts]

Taylor: [through laughter] And I'm Taylor Smirl!

Rileigh: I am still buffering...

Sydnee and Taylor: [very out of sync] And we... are... too. [laughs]

Rileigh: Man, I was on it that time! It wasn't me! [laughs]

Taylor: You were lookin' at me like, "Go, Teylor!" And I'm like, "What? What's goin' on?!"

Raleigh: You're next!

Sydnee: Totally spaced out!

Raleigh: [laughs] We'll get there eventually.

Sydnee: Why don't we do it in age order?

Raleigh: It's week two. We'll get there eventually.

Taylor: [unintelligible] I don't know.

Sydnee: I don't know.

Taylor: Great.

[theme music plays]

Speaker One: *Dead Pilots Society* brings you exclusive readings of comedy pilots that were never made, featuring actors like Patton Oswald.

Patton Oswald: So, the vampire from the future sleeps in the dude's studio during the day, and they hunt monsters at night. It's *Blade* meets *The Odd Couple*!

[audience laughs]

Speaker One: Adam Scott and Jane Levi.

Jane Levi: Come on, Cory! She's too serious, too business-y. She doesn't know the hokey-pokey.

Adam Scott: She'll... learn what it's all about.

[audience laughs]

Speaker One: Busy Phillips and Dave Koechner.

Dave Koechner: Maybe this is family.

Busy Phillips: My uncle Tell who showed his wiener to Cinderella at Disneyland is family. Do you want him stayin' with us?

Dave Koechner: He did stay with us, for three months!

Busy Phillips: [loudly] And he was a delight!

[audience laughs]

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