

Still Buffering 209: "Josie and the Pussycats" (2001)

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[theme music plays]

Raleigh: Hello, and welcome to *Still Buffering*, a cross-generational guide to the culture that made us. I am Raleigh Smirl.

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Teylor Smirl.

Raleigh: Man, that intro doesn't come out if I think about it. Just gotta let it fall out. I thought about it too hard and it almost didn't.

Sydnee: Well, our—our brains are all very stressed right now.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: It's okay. Uh, how are—how are you both doing? Quick check in.

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: That's—yeah, that's about right. [laughs]

Sydnee: How is social isolation treating you?

Taylor: Uhh...

Raleigh: Um...

Sydnee: Boy, I wish somebody had said that to me when I was a teenager.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: "Hey, teen Syd, how's social isolation treating you?" I would've said, "Not well, but future me promises it will make me stronger." [laughs]

Taylor: I, uh—I would've guessed that I had a lot of practice at this as a kid. I would've thought I'd be a little better at it. Um, my—my cat is lookin' extra greasy, because I pet him so much.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: I'm home so much, [through laughter] and I pet him so much, and I realized it yesterday. Like, "Oh no! You're the shiniest boy right now."
[laughs]

Raleigh: Get him some dry shampoo. [laughs]

Taylor: It's just all of my disgusting human oil is—is, uh, building up on my cat.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: [through laughter] That's where I'm at.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: I, uh—I, like—having kids, I have this, um, representation, I think, of what, like, my id—like, what is happening inside me right now that because I am socialized as an adult I'm not allowed to express outwardly.

Raleigh: In the form of your two-year-old.

Sydnee: Yes, and so while I'm, like, going about the day and I'm trying to, like—I—I get dressed and shower, and I do some work, and I take care of the kids, and I try to cook meals and, like, keep the kitchen clean and do some laundry and, like, do all the human things that I have been socialized to do.

Uh, my two-year-old, meanwhile, comes running at me, uh, throws an empty tube of chapstick at me, and yells, "I ate your chapstiick!"

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: And then runs back out of the room.

Raleigh: Did she?

Sydnee: She did indeed eat my chapstick.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Ooh.

Sydnee: Uh—

Raleigh: We all wanted to do it at some point.

Taylor: Yeah...

Raleigh: We can't judge her too much.

Sydnee: So—which I feel like is what's happening inside all of us right now. [through laughter] On some level there's just some—there's a voice inside going, [yells wildly] "I ate your chapstick! What am I doing?!"

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [yells wildly] "What is happening right now?!"

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: I, uh—the other night, I, uh—I had been taking melatonin gummies while I was at school to kind of help me get back—or while I was at school, on a regular sleeping schedule.

And, um, I had been taking them once I got home, because I was like, "Well, I still gotta wake up for classes and do homework. I should probably try to maintain some semblance of a good sleep schedule."

And then I ran out, and we didn't go to store or go get any groceries because we're staying home as much as possible.

So it's been a solid four days where I haven't had any, and I think my brain became dependent on it, so now I'm just up until five o'clock in the morning every night, and it's like I'm in this weird sleep-wake dream state where I'm just kind of floating through my room, [through laughter] and I don't exactly know everything that I'm doing, but somehow I wake up the next day and I just go to class and I do homework. It's finals week, so that's...

Sydnee: Hmm.

Raleigh: ... fun.

Sydnee: You need to get your sleep. But that is also, I think, an advantage of youth.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I remember a time when I could go on no sleep. Those days are gone. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah. I just realized the other night, I was like, "Wow, I watched all of *Too Hot to Handle* in less than a day. And then I watched all of *Euphoria* in also less than a day. This is sad."

Sydnee: That show...

Raleigh: "There's a lot going on." [laughs]

Sydnee: That show, *Too Hot to Handle*... that show is a lot.

Raleigh: It's...

Sydnee: Tey, are you familiar with this show?

Taylor: I—you know, I've seen what it's about. Um, and I've seen all the people tweeting about it. I can't go down—I can't follow y'all down this road. I went—I went down the *Circle* road with you, but, uh—oh God, that looks—it just looks terrible.

Raleigh: And how did you feel about *The Circle*?

Taylor: I liked *The Circle*. But you know, I do not wanna watch a bunch of hot people be frustrated about not being able to bone.

Raleigh: [trying to muffle laughter]

Taylor: Like, that sounds like a—the show that I would hate the most.

Raleigh: Oh...

Sydnee: All I think about when I watch the show...

Raleigh: It's so good.

Sydnee: ... um, is "How are they doing right now?"

Raleigh: It's been a year since then.

Sydnee: Well, I know. But, like, at this moment—

Raleigh: Oh, in isolation?

Sydnee: —wherever they are in the world, they're probably socially isolated as well.

Raleigh: They're probably better prepared for this than any of us.

Sydnee: They're probably socially distant. Well, but I don't know how it ends! What if they still love to bone that much? [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: And their—[holding back laughter] and now they're trapped in their—they're socially distanced into their homes. I mean, the—the—the new guy I just—on the episode I saw last night, a new guy was brought in who said he has sex every single day, so what's *he* doing? Maybe he's happily married, or settled down.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: Have I just been playing this game my whole adult life and I didn't realize it?

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: At least a little while now. Oh boy.

Raleigh: See, there's this big misconception about *Too Hot to Handle*. Welcome—

Sydnee: Uh-huh?

Raleigh: —to my TED Talk.

Sydnee: Uh-huh?

Taylor: [quietly] Oh no.

Raleigh: It's that it's just a challenge to see if they can go without smooching and such. But really, it's to make them have better, deeper connections with humans and relationships.

Sydnee: [doubtfully] Uh-huh.

Taylor: Yeah, alright.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: I think it's about not boning but, you know. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. I—I would say that maybe that's what the producers want you to think.

Raleigh: It's both. [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, I will say that there was a moment where one of the contestants said, "I've never actually—" Like, basically she said "I've never had a date."

I mean, more or less, that was the—it was like, "Any time I go out with somebody it's just, like, a prelude to sex. And so, I've never actually had a date where, like, you have to sit and, like, talk."

Raleigh: Communicate.

Sydnee: "And, like, find out other things." Like, it's usually just, like, tantalizing each other. And I thought, "Well, that's probably—" I mean, like, it's fun to talk to people sometimes, so that's probably a good thing that you're learning this. [laughs] That's a fun thing that you're learning. [pause] That's growth.

Raleigh: Yeah. It was an interesting show to watch with our parents. [snorts]

Taylor: Oh, God!

Sydnee: I don't know how you're doing that.

Taylor: Why would you do that?

Raleigh: I wi—I wish I hadn't. [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah!

Raleigh: But I wanted to start watching it, and they also wanted to start watching it. And there was this awkward moment where we were like, "Well... am I really gonna go back to my room and start watching it on my own computer, and y'all are gonna watch it in here?"

And then they turned it on and I was like, "Well, if it's on, I guess I'll just sit and watch the first episode." And then it was just all of it was on, and I... [pauses] It was a mistake.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. I would be very uncomfortable watching that show with Mom and Dad.

Raleigh: It was a mistake.

Sydnee: Uh, well, can I—

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs quietly] I don't know how to—I don't know how to feel about the fact that you've made this decision.

Raleigh: [sighs] I've lived with it, and it's over, and I just—it's in the past now. Everything that happens in isolation is just kind of pushed to the—the back of my head. Like, that wasn't real life. That wasn't real time.

Taylor: I think everybody has that one piece of media that they watch with their parents and realize pretty early on, "Oh, shouldn't watch this with my parents."

Mine was—mine was *Disturbing Behavior*. Or not *Disturbing Behavior*. What was the... oh God. The Sarah Michelle Gellar and Ryan Phillippe and, uh—

Sydnee: Oh, uh...

Taylor: —oh. Oh, they—

Sydnee: Yeah, they—

Taylor: —they were all sexy and in Catholic school.

Sydnee: And there was, like, the brother sister...

Taylor: Oh gosh.

Sydnee: ... like, vibes.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: This is always my favorite thing to do on this show, because I imagine there are several people somewhere listening right now that are screaming the name of it.

Sydnee: *Cruel Intentions!*

Taylor: *Cruel Intentions!* Yes.

Raleigh: [through laughter] Yeah, okay.

Taylor: Not *Disturbing Behavior*.

Raleigh: I was gonna say, they're screaming the name of it at their car radio or their phone. [laughs]

Taylor: Yep, yeah. *Cruel Intentions*, I watched with Mom and Dad, and that was a... that was a... that was a treat.

[pauses]

Sydnee: Uh... that was not a good move.

Taylor: No.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: No. I can't remember. it's been too long. Or maybe I just didn't watch sex movies with my parents.

Raleigh: [laughs] To be fair, mine wasn't a movie.

Sydnee: [laughs] Yours was a whole series!

Raleigh: It was a series.

Sydnee: You watched a whole sex series with your parents!

Raleigh: And the point of it was *not* to smooch.

Taylor: Yeah...

Raleigh: And touch. So... you know.

Taylor: I just wanted to watch somethin' with Buffy in it.

Raleigh: There's that. [snorts]

Taylor: I usually could trust Buffy. Buffy did me bad! [laughs]

Sydnee: It's a good movie, though.

Taylor: Yeah. It's a good movie.

Sydnee: It's a good movie. You know what else is a good movie?

Raleigh: I was gonna say, that's not what we're talking about. [laughs]

Taylor: There you go, come on. That was a lob. [laughs]

Sydnee: You know what is a good movie that you—that is family friendly? You can watch it with your parents, with your kids, with... your neighbors. Not now, but in the future maybe.

Raleigh: Um... *Trolls*.

Sydnee: Well, yeah. I mean...

Taylor: Yeah. Well, I think... there are lots of answers to that question.
[laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. That was not—

Raleigh: Well, you asked! [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: *Trolls: World Tour* is actually very good. But—[laughs quietly]

Raleigh: You just said that 'cause your husband's in it.

Sydnee: It's—no! It's actually very good, and it has a message!

Raleigh: [through laughter] Are you gonna cry right now, talking about *Trolls World Tour*?

Sydnee: No, I'm not gonna cry. It's—I'm just saying, like, it has a—like, there's a—you don't—I'm not gonna spoil it. You don't see it coming. It has, uh, a message. It's beautiful. Anyway.

Raleigh: We're not talking about *Trolls*! [laughing]

Sydnee: We're talking about *Josie and the Pussycats*.

Raleigh: Aw, man.

Sydnee: Uh, so you had both seen this film before.

Raleigh: Yes. You forced me to watch it about five years ago.

Sydnee: You say "forced" like it's not amazing.

Taylor: Seriously.

Rileigh: No, here's the thing. It was a good movie. But to get me to watch it, you *did* just... turn it on. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yes.

Rileigh: Just say—"Now just—just watch it. Just sit. Just watch it."

Sydnee: It's—it's hard to sell people on it because it was so poorly reviewed. [laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah!

Sydnee: I didn't—when I pulled it up—'cause I watched it again, and actually Charlie and Cooper watched it with me and—I mean, Cooper was—they were playing with toys too, so Cooper wasn't really engaged. But Charlie liked it.

Rileigh: I can see that.

Sydnee: Yeah, and they both danced around to the music in it, 'cause the music's awesome. But, uh, it—when you pull it up, the Rotten Tomatoes score on it is, like, 54, 53%?

Rileigh: Aw man.

Sydnee: Something like that? I mean, it's bad.

Taylor: Yeah.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, and it—it bombed when it came out, so it's hard to—it's hard to convince people who aren't already, like, indoctrinated... [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: In the teachings of *Josie and the Pussycats*, that it is a good film. Because if they look it up they're like—I mean, critics gave it, like, a—at the time, like, a 47 out of 100 on average. Um—

Raleigh: That's failing. [laughs]

Sydnee: It lost money, it lost a lot of money. Um, it bombed. And I think—I was talking to Justin about why this might be true, because as I will openly admit, I think it's a fantastic movie. I think it's funny, and it's cool to look at, and the music's great.

Raleigh: It has First Lady Rosario Dawson in it.

Sydnee: And everybody is just acting their butt off.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um... [laughs] It's great! It's a great movie. But, uh, if—if you watch the trailer... that might be—I think that—

Raleigh: I can see it now. [laughs]

Sydnee: —I think it informs why it might have done so poorly in the beginning.

Raleigh: Yeah. We watched the trailer together, and it is... a setup for a not-great film.

Sydnee: The trailer gives you absolutely no clue what this movie is actually about.

Taylor: Really?

Sydnee: No. It does not in any way hint at, like, what the underlying plot is. The trailer is very much like, "Three small town girls have a band, and they're gonna make it big. But are they gonna fight? Maybe, I don't know! And can they be rock stars?"

Raleigh: And it has that narration behind it. Like, the... [trailer voiceover voice] "In a world... "

Sydnee: Yeah!

Raleigh: [through laughter] Like, that's exactly what it is!

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Like, there is no hint at what is actually happening in the movie.

Raleigh: Mm-mm.

Sydnee: Um, and I think that that makes the—if it was just the story of three small town girls who formed a band and then became rock stars, that is not as compelling of a narrative. [laughs]

Raleigh: Really, if you think about it, we're *Josie and the Pussycats* in that sense.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Uhhh... well...

Raleigh: Except in—in—in the 21st century, and with a podcast.

Sydnee: Are we?

Taylor: Uhh... I mean...

Raleigh: If you think about it.

Sydnee: Are we?

Raleigh: I'm just saying.

Taylor: Are we—are we sneaking subliminal messages into our podcast to get people to buy things?

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: You'll never know!

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Listen to *Still Buffering*.

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs] I actually—I don't know if they're subliminal. [through laughter] Like, we have a whole ad break in our show!

Taylor: Yeah, no. We—we just tell you.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah. That's the joke. You think you know what you're being sold, and really this everything is just MeUndies all the time underneath of this.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: If you put our whole podcast, like, through, like, a scrambler, and then turn the pitch way up and then play it backwards... [through laughter]

Sydnee: [through laughter] If—if you play it backwards, it's just somebody goin' "MeUndies, MeUndies, MeUndies, Me—"

Raleigh: [laughs loudly]

Taylor: That's true.

Sydnee: No, that's not true. They don't even advertise on this show.

Raleigh: They don't even advertise on this show. [laughs]

Taylor: And it's the one that I want! Yes.

Raleigh: That's why we put subliminal messaging in. It's not for people to buy MeUndies. It's for MeUndies to hear it. [laughs]

Taylor: Exactly.

Raleigh: And want us. [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, the—so, the movie came out in April of 2001. I was looking at exactly what year. Um, and we are gonna spoil it, if you haven't seen it yet. We're gonna talk about that plot that—

Taylor: You had time to see it, alright?

Raleigh: Yeah. When did this movie come out, by the way?

Sydnee: 2001.

Raleigh: 2001. Okay.

Sydnee: Yes. I had *just* said that right before you asked that question.

Taylor: Yes.

Raleigh: You did?

Sydnee: Yeah. [laughs]

Raleigh: I'm sorry. I was one. Well, just scratch where I said I—asked what year it was.

Sydnee: It's fine. It's fine. Yeah, I'm—we'll definitely edit that out. Uh, so—

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: I will. [laughs]

Sydnee: —the—[laughs] so the—the movie came out, and like I said, it bombed, I think it was because the, um—the critics hated it. Now, it's funny. If you look back, what audience reviews gave it? A B.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Okay.

Taylor: I think that's fair.

Raleigh: Pretty good. That's fair.

Sydnee: Which, I mean, I would probably give it an A because I love it. But, like, I get, like—I could stand back for a minute and say, like, "Okay, a B is fair." Like, okay. I can see where there are... I don't know. I can see where maybe it's a niche thing. Like, it is a taste. It is a ta—it is *my* taste, but it is a taste.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: It is one of those films that's like—it's like *Rocky Horror*. Like, one of those that you watch so many times and you're like, "This is great!" But then if you try to introduce it to someone who it's just, like, not their thing or has never seen it before, they're like, "Well... is it?"

Sydnee: It's like when I try to show people the *Mickey Mouse Clubhouse* episode that's sort of a spoof of *Rocky Horror*, "Mickey's Monster Musical." And I say, like, "Isn't this amazing?" And people are like... [holding back laughter] "Is this an episode of *Mickey Mouse Clubhouse*?"

Raleigh: [through laughter] I was gonna say, it's not exactly what I was thinking, 'cause that's just still just an episode of *Mickey Mouse Clubhouse*!

Sydnee: But I just think it's so clever. [laughs]

Taylor: How—how often have you done that to people, Syd? Like, just adult friends over at the house, like, "Well... "

Raleigh: At least once to me. [laughs] Without Charlie or Cooper in the room.

Taylor: Wow. Alright.

Sydnee: I—yes, many times. I just think it's so clever, and people are like, "But we're still watching an episode of *Mickey Mouse Clubhouse*."

Raleigh: Yep.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: But it is true, *Josie and the Pussycats* is very niche.

Sydnee: So the—the plot, for those of you unfamiliar and okay with spoiling it, uh... the plot that's underneath it that is not hinted at by the trailer is that, yes, it's *Josie and the Pussycats*, who are a band, three—three women who form a band in Riverdale. It is set in the *Archie* universe. Uh, none of the other *Archie* characters are in the film. Um, but—

Raleigh: Sadly.

Sydnee: Yeah. [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. Well, they really want to focus on the story on, you know, Josie and Valerie and Melody. And, uh, they... do want to make it big, I guess, as rock stars.

But what they don't know is that, um, Mega Records, the label they end up signing with, are part of a giant conspiracy in the record industry where they don't really care about the band or the music. They'll use any—any band or

music, make them super popular overnight by, like, merchandising the heck out of them, and sending subliminal messages out in their music to make you first love the band, so you'll keep listening to the music, and then buy things.

So, like, brands pay Mega Records to insert subliminal messages in their songs, you know, to say, like, "Orange is the new pink."

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Or "Buy... uh... Adidas." Or... "I want a Big Mac."

Raleigh: Yep.

Sydnee: I'm trying to think of actual examples from the movie.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: So anyway, so that—so that is the—that is the secret plot, and also, they're working with the United States government to put secret messages in the music—

Raleigh: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: —that will, like, inspire you to, like, join the military and things like that, is the deeper plot. And, like—and they've also—like, this is an international conspiracy, 'cause they're—they're basically bringing in buyers from other countries to see, like, do you wanna use this technology? You know, you can pay us and we can use it to do whatever you want in your... home countries as well.

Raleigh: Maybe there's a reason they didn't put this plot in the trailer, because now that you're speaking it—

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: —in words, [through laughter] I'm like, "What—why did I watch this movie twice now?" Why—[laughs] Why are we talking about this movie?

Sydnee: It is a wild plot if you—

Raleigh: [through laughter] It is a wild plot!

Sydnee: They do—they do take it—well, but I think that's why it's so funny! 'Cause—

Raleigh: Because at first when you said, like, you know, advertising, subliminal messaging, okay. Wait, national government? Hold on. An international conspiracy?! [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, it is! I mean, like, it grows from what you would expect, which is, like, all of—not just the record industry but, like, all these big... conglomerates, all these big corporations are trying to influence you to buy their things, because it's cool. And then, they're doing it through a way which we have now decided is not okay, which is subliminal advertising.

But then they take it to an extreme, which is, "We can use it to control the youth of America... with whatever subliminal messages we want."

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And that could be utilized by the government however they see fit, and we could sell it to other countries to do the same for their citizens. And it's specifically aimed at teenagers, because they say they can basically convince teenagers to do anything.

Raleigh: Fair.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, I—I just think it's—it's funny because of the hyperbole.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And it's sold by Parker Posey, who is, like, the manager at, uh, Mega Records who, like, is behind the whole plot, basically. And she's so funny.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I think that's why it works. She's so funny and good, and everything she's doing is, like—it's so specific. There is no—there is not a—a line or a hand movement that isn't that character.

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: I just think that's funny.

Raleigh: I do think that is one of the better characters in the film.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: More entertaining. Developed, if you will.

Sydnee: I think both her and Alan Cumming are great in that—in that movie.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Yeah, I—I saw somebody tweet a picture of them together from *Josie and the Pussycats* and saying, "Could you imagine if we had had a live action Pokémon movie and this was our Jessie and James?"

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: I was like, "Oh, I see it!"

Raleigh: I see it. [laughs]

Sydnee: They're just—they're so good. They play off each other. I—I always have to wonder, like, how much of the stuff in this movie, like, various people kind of adlibbed here and there.

Raleigh: Came up with, yeah.

Sydnee: Um, you have to imagine that's true about Dujour.

Taylor: I was gonna say, Seth Green.

Sydnee: The other—[laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: —the other part of this.

Raleigh: No, they're my favorite, never mind.

Sydnee: The other part of this movie is that, of course, bands are not on board with the idea that their music is being used to, you know, brainwash the youth of America. And so if they find out about, they have to be disposed of, and a new band is brought in to replace them.

Uh, and so the band that immediately comes before—

Raleigh: [quietly, through laughter] Dujour.

Sydnee: —Josie and the Pussycats is Dujour, which is, like, a—a boy band, your stereotypical, you know, boy band. And, uh, they figure it out, and so they are—their—their plane crashes... intentionally. And I just think there are so many clever—like, when he come in to tell the pilot, like, "We gotta crash the plane because they're onto us," he says, "Take the Chevy to the levy."

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: I just think there's—there's so many—there's just—it's a very clever film.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm. [laughs]

Sydnee: Anyway, so they—but surprise! Dujour didn't—didn't perish.

Raleigh: [gasps] Dun dun duuun!

Taylor: No, they—the actually the plane safely, they just landed at—what was it, a Metallica concert?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Yeah, in the parking lot of a Metallica concert, and they—[laughs quietly] They got beaten up.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Um... [laughs]

Raleigh: Aw, man.

Sydnee: It's such a funny mo—it's so wacky, too! And there's—there's some weird stuff. Like, there's this—I think it's totally bizarre that they have, like, somebody who's pretending to be Carson Daly, and then they also have Carson Daly in the film. And Carson Daly's kind of, like, making fun of himself in the movie. Um, did that make sense to you, by the way, Raleigh?

Raleigh: No.

Sydnee: *Total Request Live?*

Raleigh: No. This was one of the things I brought up to you the other day when we were talking about this movie was, um, I always have a minute whenever TRL is mentioned in, like, a '90s, early 2000s TV show or movie where I'm like, "Hold on. Let me pause for a minute and just do a quick Google. Because I have heard this before, but I have not experienced it."

No, I didn't really—there's a lot of that that I don't get as much. I get the—the concept? But I don't get, like, the—the bits and the jokes as much, 'cause I never watched it.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: It was a... now it does seem very strange to think that we all watched the same thing every afternoon. Like, so little live television I feel like is consumed by a certain generation. It's all just streaming whenever you want, you know?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Like, that's—everybody watched—and it was the same videos every day, for the most part. It's not like they really changed. [laughs]

Sydnee: No. I mean, they would change slowly, but yeah, for, like, weeks at a time you'd—you'd just have a different order of the same videos that people were requesting, and then something new would come out and that might be thrown in the mix, but yeah. Um... yeah, that is really weird to think about. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Well, and I—correct me if I'm wrong, but I think one of the other jokes about that whole scene was at the time, Carson Daly was dating Tara Reid?

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: So the fact that he's trying to kill her was... a funny joke. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. I mean, that's—I think that's wild too, that they're like, "Josie is gonna be easier to manipulate. These other two Pussycats are getting in the way." [holding back laughter] "So, we're gonna have Carson Daly murder them."

Raleigh: Yep. [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, I—that's a wild—I don't know. But again, I—I think that's what makes the film great, is that it's unexpected and weird.

Raleigh: Um—

Sydnee: Hold on. We have a lot more to talk about.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: We haven't even—we haven't even started on the fashion!

Taylor: Oh, right.

Raleigh: I know.

Sydnee: But before we do that...

Raleigh: Let's check the group message.

--

Sydnee: What have we got this week on the group message?

Raleigh: We have a sponsor I want to tell you all about this week.

Sydnee: Alright.

Raleigh: And it is—it's an app. It's a website. It's gonna let you continue supporting restaurants in your community safely, because there are thousands of restaurants open for delivery on DoorDash that need your patronage now more than ever. So DoorDash is gonna let you support your favorite restaurants in this time when we all need a little bit extra help. We all need a little bit extra food delivery.

Sydnee: Yeah, I am so tired of cooking. DoorDash has really been a savior lately, because I feel like I was stuck in this cycle. I never leave and I just cook and do dishes and cook and do dishes, and you need a break, and our local restaurants need our support.

Raleigh: Yeah. DoorDash is the app that's gonna bring you food that you're craving, right now, right to your door. And all you have to do is open up the

DoorDash app, choose what you want to eat, and your food will be left safely outside your door with the new contactless delivery drop off setting.

Which I think is the nicest thing I have experienced using DoorDash, because I didn't realize that this was, like—there are some other apps where that's an option you can select or, like, if you call for delivery straight for a restaurant you have to ask for that, but DoorDash is just—they're gonna do that anyways. They're just gonna leave it outside your door for you. Everyone stays, you know, socially distanced and healthy and...

Sydnee: Our—our DoorDash drivers are always friendly, and I don't know if this is a West Virginia thing but they—they leave the food on the door, but then I've had many who will then, uh, call from their safe distance away from the, like, road outside our house and then, like, wave as we go to get the food.

And I'll be like, "Thank you!" And they're like, "No problem!" From far away. I—I really appreciate that, though. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs] We're safely—safely distanced, but—

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: They're still—they're still nice.

Sydnee: But we still have manners.

Raleigh: We still have manners.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: Um, so even your local restaurants are gonna be on there, which I think has been the best—the best for us here, as we have so many small businesses, so many local restaurants. Almost all of them are on DoorDash, so I can just pick my favorite local eatery and they'll leave my food at my door for me so I can keep supporting our local small businesses, even during this time.

So Tey, if our listeners want to check out DoorDash, what should they do?

Taylor: Right now, our listeners can get \$5 off their first order of \$15 or more, and zero delivery fees for the first month, when you download the DoorDash app and enter code "buffering." That's \$5 off your first order and zero delivery fees for a month when you download the DoorDash app in the app store and enter code "buffering." Don't forget! That's code "buffering" for five bucks off your first order with DoorDash.

--

Sydnee: So, we haven't even gotten into the fashion of *Josie and the Pussycats*, and I think that's part of what made the movie, like, back when I first saw it, what I loved about it was I thought it was all so glamorous.
[laughs]

Raleigh: Right.

Taylor: Oh, yes.

Raleigh: How do you feel about it now?

Sydnee: Uh, now I—

Raleigh: Is it still glamorous?

Sydnee: You know, there's a—

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: —because—I think that everybody feels this way about, like, the era that they, like... they were a teenager in, that they came to, like, start choosing their own look.

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: You're always gonna kind of feel a special affection for that.

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: And so, like, the handkerchief tops and the plastic pants and the body glitter, I'm always gonna feel a little bit of like, "Aw. I wish I could wear that again." [laughs quietly] I don't—especially the handkerchief tops. Is that just me?

Taylor: No.

Sydnee: That every time I see 'em I think, "They're just beautiful."

Raleigh: They're—I was actually watching this, and there were two things I saw now watching it and I was like, "That looks like something I've seen in a store recently." The, uh—the handkerchief tops now are slowly, I think, making a comeback.

Sydnee: Really?

Taylor: Oh no.

Raleigh: Yes. Um, except—

Sydnee: I had so many of those. [laughs]

Raleigh: —slightly modified? Um, I've seen a lot of, uh, online shopping I should say. It looks like a bandana top almost, but it's just, like, wrapped around the top, and then it just looks like you've basically tied a bandana around... under your arms, and then it droops down, um, unto a little point, so it's a little crop top. That's very popular.

Sydnee: Same idea.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Same idea. Yeah, I had—I had similar.

Raleigh: Little different than the ones in the movie, but very similar. Um, those are making a comeback. Not that makeup, though. [laughs]

Taylor: Well...

Raleigh: It's just—I feel like—

Sydnee: Frosted, glittery, shimmery,,,

Raleigh: Yeah, yeah, yeah. There was a certain point when we were doing the show and I was watching, you know, older shows and movies, and I was like, "That makeup... I've—I've never seen anything like that."

Like the frosted blue eye shadow and the brown lips? I've never seen anything like this before! [through laughter] And now that we keep watching these movies I'm like, "Everyone did that! That wasn't just a movie, that was—everyone did that!"

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: And it's always just that look. Something super frosted and light and shimmery, that's usually not blended at all. It's just kind of like a big swipe of frosted blue across your eyes.

Sydnee: Uh-huh.

Raleigh: And then something dark and berry-like on your lips that have been very darkly lined.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Yes.

Raleigh: And that's about it. [laughs] And very thin eyebrows, the eyebrows, yes.

Sydnee: The eyebrows in that film are quite thin.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Yes. That—that—that is one thing that, like, I am glad, as someone who has big, bushy eyebrows by, like, by default, unless I tame them, I'm glad to see that the eyebrows—uh, that fad is over.

Um, I don't know—Teylor, did you ever go in fully for the skinny eyebrow thing? I don't remember you doing that. I know I didn't.

Teylor: No, no. I never really did. I mean, I never really got into... I was never really into fashion that much in that time period, so I don't know. Like, a lot of these things are the things that I knew were there, but I—I would never have worn them. I would never have taken part.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, I, uh—I definitely wore—I mean, not, like, a shiny, leopard print... pantsuit with no shirt. Like, that's not... well, it sounds pretty cool now. [laughs]

Teylor: I was gonna say, I'd wear—I'd wear that now, absolutely.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, and I never wore shoes like they wear, the giant plastic platform.

Teylor: Yeah, with, like, the see-through bottom? Those are so un—unfortunate.

Raleigh: I kinda do want those though, just to, like—have you seen the ones you can just put stuff in the bottom?

Teylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Like, in the clear platform?

Teylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Really?

Raleigh: That sounds fun.

Taylor: Yeah, just have a little—little terrarium in there. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah!

Taylor: Maybe a fish.

Raleigh: Uh-huh!

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: I would do that.

Sydnee: Uh, no. I—I just mean more like the... the cute, drapy, shimmery tops.

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: Those were—those were cool.

Taylor: I did—

Raleigh: Um—

Taylor: —oh. I did really remember uh, loving Josie's hair in this movie.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: That really iconic scene where they go to the beauty salon and everybody's getting makeovers, and they bring in the one punk girl to do Josie's hair, and it's just adding a little fwoop on the side.

Sydnee: Uh-huh.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Like, "Nah, she's too punk rock! We can't handle it! Don't worry, we got somebody." [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] They bring her—she does. She gives her that swoop and everybody cr—everybody claps, and that's it.

Raleigh: "Amazing!"

Sydnee: I—you know, I—and the other thing that makes this such, like, a perfect movie for the time is that... I was thinking about this as I was watching it. They get—they have this giant makeover montage where, like, they're getting done up—'cause they're just, like, small town girls, right? Like, that's the whole thing. Like, they're grungy small town girls. And, like, while they're getting the makeovers, they're not taking it seriously. They're, like, throwing food at each other and—

Raleigh: How quirky. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. And, like, all that. [laughs] Exactly! Like, it's so silly. Like, "We're just like, whatever. We don't care about makeup and—"

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: —and at the end, they don't look that much different. [laughs]

Raleigh: They don't!

Taylor: Yep.

Raleigh: They were already pretty good at, like, wearing fashionable, stylish clothes and doing their makeup and hair and stuff before.

Sydnee: It's the—well, it's the classic movie trope of, like, you're already conventionally attractive.

Raleigh: They were already attractive people, yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, but we're prete—we're all going to pretend like you weren't until later, when you took off your glasses or whatever, and now we realized you were. [laughs] But I love—it's such a, like—it's like a '90s, early 2000s—it's such, like, a trope. Like, this person was always attractive! You can't fool me!

Raleigh: Um, I do think there's that—the magic, though, that if you're watching that as, like, a—a young person, maybe like a young teen girl, and you're like, "Wow. That transformation. They look so beautiful. I want some fancy Hollywood company to make me over and put me in fancy clothes."

Sydnee: But you—you gotta go full *She's Out of Control* if you're gonna do that.

Raleigh: Okay.

Sydnee: You've gotta have—you've gotta have the initial presentation where, like, you've got the glasses and the braces—

Raleigh: Like *The Princess Diaries*.

Sydnee: —and you're dressed kind of, like, frumpy, because you don't want people to look at you, and all that kind of stuff. And then you've gotta have, like, Tony Danza leaves town...

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] And while he's out of town—

Raleigh: In every movie.

Sydnee: —while you're dad's out of town, your new stepmom helps you get, like, a makeover, and I think lets you get your braces off early? I'm not sure. That's always been unclear. And you get, like, contacts, and you get a whole new outfit and, like, a perm, and, like, you've gotta go full out if you're gonna do... that. [laughs]

Raleigh: There's always that moment.

Sydnee: I think I'm remembering that correctly. I—man, that's been a long time.

Raleigh: There's always that moment in those films where they never wear glasses again and they throw them away. And I'm just like, "Are you gonna... did you—"

Sydnee: "Can you see?"

Raleigh: "—did you get Lasik? [snorts] Did you get surgery, or are you just—"

Sydnee: Contacts.

Raleigh: "—only gonna wear contacts and then take them out and never see until you put contacts in again? Because glasses are too *not* stylish."

Taylor: Well, I mean, that—this movie did star the queen of being beautiful after taking off her glasses, because, uh, the lead actress was also the lead actress in *She's All That*, right?

Sydnee: That's true. Rachel Leigh Cook.

Raleigh: I have not seen *She's All That*.

Sydnee: So, it's—I think it's very well cast. We talked about Alan Cumming and Parker Posey, but I think, like, if you—like, the Pussycats are all very well cast. Um, I mean, I think this was one of Rosario Dawson's, like, first big roles.

Raleigh: Really?

Sydnee: And she's, I mean—I don't think, like... I'm the first person ever to say Rosario Dawson is incredibly talented, obviously. Um—

Raleigh: No one has ever said that before!

Sydnee: [laughs] I know. Groundbreaking stuff on this podcast. Uh, so obviously, she's great. Obviously she's—and a good Valerie. As somebody who read a lot of the comic, a very good Valerie.

Like, they even have in the, like, montage scene early on where it shows all the stuff that they do, like, to make ends meet, to pay the bills and all that, Valerie's got a lot of, like, um, community service, volunteering kind of stuff. And Valerie always was, like, the one to, like, be an activist and speak out and that kind of stuff. I felt like it was very good and reflective of her.

Um... Melody's thing is that she's... not very intelligent.

Taylor: Yeah...

Raleigh: Right.

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: That's the thing. I feel like there's always one, right? In, like these—

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: —no, in these stereotypical movies—

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: —about, like, a group of—a group of young women. There's always one that's like oh, her thing is that she's not smart. Like in *Mean Girls*. Like, there's the Karen. "Aw, she's—she's not the smartest."

Sydnee: And that was Melody's thing. I mean, she was supposed to be the most beautiful, like, always. Like, in the comic, it was like she walked down the street and people, like, passed out when they looked at her.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um, I do think that they hit it though with, like, she's also very loving and friendly and kind to everyone. Loves animals. And when she talks, there are always music notes around her... words, in the comic book, because her voice is so... melodious.

Raleigh: I like that.

Sydnee: I get—I think Tara Reid, like, really turned in the performance of her career.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Is what I'm saying.

Taylor: She is kind of a perfect Melody. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: She really is! I think it was—it suited her perfectly. She was excellent in that role. Uh, only rivaled by her performance in *Sharknado*.

Raleigh: That's what I thought! That's what I was gonna say!

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: I—the first time I remember experiencing Tara Reid was in *Sharknado*, and I remember you all talking about Tara Reid and I was like, "I—I don't know who that is." And then now that you're talking about her in this film, it's the same person.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Wow.

Sydnee: She was huge, and then she was gone, and now she's back!

Rileigh: And now she's back, in *Sharknado*! Man, I forgot *Sharknado* happened. That was like a weird fever dream.

Sydnee: And Rachel Leigh Cook is very, uh, kind of low key. Her performance is a little more understated. But I actually think that's fair for Josie, 'cause, like, Josie was kind of your typical, like, girl next door. And, like, not too, uh... outrageous or extreme in any specific direction is how Josie was framed.

Like, she's—she plays guitar and she's friendly and she's nice, and she likes Alan M. and Alan M. likes her back, but it's not too racy, and—you know? I mean, like, it... that was Josie, so I think that's the character.

Rileigh: That's fair.

Taylor: And also fixed cars. That is a—there is a—a lot of people, a lot of teens know how to fix cars in the *Archie* universe.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: [through laughter] It's very...

Sydnee: [laughs]

Rileigh: It's a person—big personality trait there. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] I wanna know—

Rileigh: Cars.

Sydnee: —this—this dates so far back in the Archie universe that—the idea that, like, we're gonna take a girl next door who's, like—like, nice and pretty and relatable and easy to talk to and not intimidating, 'cause—right? Like, that's Betty, that's Josie. Like, that's... that was the girl in the comic book, back in the 50's or whatever.

At some point, we want to give her an edge, so we'll make her be able to fix cars.

Raleigh: Yep! [laughs]

Sydnee: What fantasy was that?!

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: 'Cause you know that's what it is! I mean, like, these were—these had to have been the creation of, like—some guy was like "You know what would be hot?" [laughs quietly] "I'm gonna make her be able to fix a car. She's fixing Archie's jalopy again."

Raleigh: Yep. One male writer did it, and the rest of 'em were like, [miming taking notes] "Hm, yeah, hm, okay, hm, mm-hmm."

Sydnee: "Yeah, this—this is good."

Raleigh: "We'll keep with that, mm-hmm."

Sydnee: The—the movie is full of, uh, gratuitous product placement, which got it a lot of criticism when it came out. Um, but it's—like, that's the joke, is that they're—they're talking about selling things—using media to sell things to the youth of America, and then the film is just covered in overt brand placement. Like, it is not secret.

Taylor: And I believe, uh—I believe I read, uh, that it actually—it wasn't, like, paid brand placement.

Sydnee: Nope!

Taylor: That was the joke. They just—they just had all that stuff in there, but they didn't get money for it.

Sydnee: Nope. No brand paid to be part of the film. They just voluntarily, like, put Target all over the private plane and put—uh, made the entire bathroom McDonald's themed, and... they just did it.

Raleigh: Interesting.

Sydnee: Yeah. Well, it was—

Raleigh: 'Cause it's part of the—it's part of the... joke.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: Part of the thing.

Sydnee: It's part of the joke. Uh, that we are also selling you—I mean, he even says it at one point, because they changed the name of the band from The Pussycats to *Josie and the Pussycats*. And he's trying to sell them on it, like, why it's better. And he's like, "Are you more likely to read a comic book or buy a CD or watch a movie—"

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: "—starring... " I mean, it's—it's very overt. And I like that. I like the self—I like how self-aware it is. At one point—so, their manager is Alexander Cabot III, and his sister, Alexandria, is... [laughs quietly] Uh, with him in the movie, and he's just—she's just there. And at one point they call attention to that. And he says, "Why are you even here?" And she says, "'Cause I was in the comic book."

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: That's good. [laughs] I forgot about that line. That's a good one.

Sydnee: And it is true. And she also always had skunk hair. Like... I don't know if those were supposed to be—it doesn't look like roots. It looks like her hair just grows with a white stripe down the middle.

Raleigh: Yeah. Um... I feel like this movie was made for people like—like you, Sydnee. Your—your—

Sydnee: [laughs loudly]

Raleigh: —your—you grew up with the *Archie*—

Sydnee: [through laughter] What do you mean, people like me?

Raleigh: —you grew up with the *Archie* comic books, so you'd read about *Josie and the Pussycats*.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: And then there were all those little jokes in it, that if you just went to go watch this movie with a friend and you had never heard—you had never read an *Archie* comic book or anything before, you wouldn't get, but you got—you got all those. All those bits.

It's like when you reboot something, and you can watch it without watching the original, but there are always going to be little Easter eggs in there that you're only get if you've seen it before.

Taylor: Right.

Raleigh: That's like—

Sydnee: Yeah, that's true.

Raleigh: I read *Archies*, but I will admit, I never read very many of, like, the little separate issues of *Josie and the Pussycats*. Like, the—the stories in the *Archies* that were about just Josie or, like, the ones that had Josie in them. I usually just read, like, the Bettys and Veronicas. So wouldn't have gotten those as much. I don't—I don't see those bits as much.

Sydnee: I think that's fair. I think—I think they definitely... uh, did enough, like... I don't—I mean, it's weird to say "fan service," because it's like... the giant fans of *Archie* comic books.

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: You know, the thundering herds of us that are fans of *Archies* and demanding more *Archie* content.

Um, I think it's—it's, like, a se—like, there are a lot of us who are just, like, low key, secret fans. Like, it's not a big part of what I talk about. But yes, I have read an inordinate number of *Archie* comics.

Raleigh: All of them, some would say.

Sydnee: Maybe. [through laughter] And—

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: —and I do care very much about these characters, in the sense that, like, I grew up with them.

Raleigh: Well, I mean, isn't that kind of where *Riverdale* came from? It's like, enough people have experienced *Archie* at some point in their lives that we can put these character and this universe into a TV show.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: And people will get the characters. But then we're gonna just *wildly* twist it all and make it so it is just only related through names to the comic book series. But it's still those characters, and it's still Betty and Veronica and—

Sydnee: Like, hair color. [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Yeah. Yeah, Betty's still blond, Veronica still has, like, black hair, don't worry. Archie's a redhead.

Taylor: Jughead has a—has a hat. [laughs]

Rileigh: Jughead has a hat. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs loudly]

Rileigh: Um, this was my other—this was my other question. *Josie and the Pussycats* are in Riverdale.

Sydnee: Yes.

Rileigh: Do you think the events of this film happened before or after? Because... they're still just doing, like, local concerts in Riverdale, and the time period of *Riverdale*... I don't think is necessarily modern day. I've only watched, like, the first season, but I don't think they ever specifically say when *Riverdale*...

Sydnee: Before or after the events of the show *Riverdale*?

Rileigh: Yes.

Taylor: Uh...

Rileigh: What if this is, like, their—

Sydnee: I think you have to accept that *Riverdale* is canon. [snorts]

Rileigh: [through laughter] And *Josie and the Pussycats* the film is canon.

Sydnee: Perhaps I'd be more willing to accept *Josie and the Pussycats* as canon than *Riverdale*!

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: I don't know. I feel like those are two very different dimensional, uh, *Josie and the Pussycats*. 'Cause the *Josie and the Pussycats* in *Riverdale*... they do exist in *Riverdale*. They're a very—very different—I mean, different take on the band. Definitely a little less silly. [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah. And, uh... who is it? One of—Josie dates Archie in *Riverdale*, I believe. Does that even happen in the comic book?

Sydnee: I don't remember Josie dating Archie.

Rileigh: Or maybe it was Valerie.

Sydnee: Valerie and Archie date in the comics for a while.

Rileigh: Maybe it was Valerie. Again, I've only seen the first season of *Riverdale*, but one of them dated Archie.

Sydnee: Yeah, it is canon that Valerie and Archie date for a while.

Rileigh: Well, then I think...

Sydnee: [laughs]

Rileigh: [through laughter] Maybe you have to accept *Riverdale* as canon, Syd.

Sydnee: I don't—I don't think—no, 'cause Josie's always romantically linked with Alan M., who—Alexandra—Alexander Cabot is chasing. Do you know sometimes Alexandra has magical powers? Occasionally?

Rileigh: [through laughter] No! [laughs]

Taylor: Wait, what?!

Sydnee: Some—

Rileigh: What?!

Sydnee: Sometimes she does, like, Sabrina-esque spells and such.

Taylor: So if that—

Sydnee: Every once in a while. [laughs]

Taylor: I mean, maybe—because the thing about—I mean, obviously there's magic in the Sabrina-verse that we have. Uh—

Sydnee: [laughs] Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Taylor: And there's already been connections where the Sabrina-verse does—I mean, they coexist with the *Riverdale* on TV, that they are in the same canon. So I don't know. So this is maybe the weird third part of the extended universe?

Raleigh: Well, and now isn't *Katy Keene* all up in there?

Taylor: Oh yeah, yeah, there's *Katy Keene*.

Sydnee: Yeah, *Katy Keene*'s comin'.

Raleigh: So—

Taylor: For such, like, a low—

Sydnee: Lil—lil *Jinx* is next.

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Taylor: Such, like, a lowkey comic book that, like, everybody kind of read, and some people were like Sydnee and obsessed over it, but most people were like, "That's fine."

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: [through laughter] How is so much media made around it?

Raleigh: I know!

Sydnee: It's a rich universe.

Taylor: [through laughter] It is, like—

Raleigh: Because growing up—especially made for my generation, because growing up in school, it definitely was like I read Sydnee's old hand-me-down Archies, and I didn't know a single other person that had ever consumed or heard of or read an Archie in any way.

Sydnee: Archie attempted to adapt through the years. And, like, if you read the comics, sometimes it's very clumsily done. Like, for instance, I remember for a while, you could tell where people were supposed to be wearing roller skates, and it had just, like... I don't know how that works on an art level, Tey, but I could tell that the roller skates had just been changed into roller blades.

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: But, like, the rest of the clothes and stuff were all the same, as in the old school. I don't—I don't know how you do that. But, like, you—it was obvious to even me. Like, I don't know anything about art but I can tell, like, you just changed these skates to roller blades. [laughs]

Taylor: I like that that was a detail they wanted to change to bring it into the modern era.

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Taylor: Like, "Oh, we don't—we don't wanna scare the kids away with these roller skates. We gotta got those roller blades! [laughs] Like, leave—leave, like, the—the weird, like, Twiggy, like, jumper. The, you know, the 60's style sunglasses. Leave all that. But those roller skates have to go."

Sydnee: Yes. They really do. And, like, Archie drives that jalopy around long after, like... [laughs] We are in the 90's—

Raleigh: Eternally.

Sydnee: —and he is driving a jalopy.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: I really wondered if *Riverdale* was just gonna give him an actual jalopy. But he does have, like, a... a weird old car in that.

Raleigh: It is an old car, mm-hmm.

Sydney: Well, there you go. I—I would, uh—I don't know... I—the one thing I would say about *Josie and the Pussycats*, the movie, in terms of timeline is that they appear to be living in a house together, and not in—like, working jobs and not going to school. So my—

Raleigh: So what we're saying is *Riverdale* took place before *Josie and the Pussycats*?! [laughing]

Sydney: Yes. My guess is that they are in college now.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydney: Or, like, I—if not, I—I shouldn't assume. Perhaps they're not in college. Although I always would've assumed Valerie... she's—she was very education focused. But anyway, I—[laughs] I—like, they are—they are out of high school.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Well, but I—I thought after high school—

Raleigh: [through laughter] I love this universe.

Taylor: Josie moves to *Katy Keene* land I think canonically, in the—in the *Riverdale*-verse, so I don't know. I don't know if this holds up.

Sydney: Maybe this was like the summer in between, when they made it big as rock stars.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, the music, if—if nothing else, the last thing I'll say. The music from this film is so good.

Taylor: Oh yeah.

Sydnee: Adam Schlesinger was involved in all the music, and the song "Can't You Just Pretend to be Nice?" is so good. I mean, the whole—the whole—it's so good. Um, the singer is from, uh, Letters to Cleo. Did they—were they the band?

Taylor: I don't think there was the whole band.

Sydnee: Did they play—

Taylor: I think it was just the singer. But I actually think that a lot of, uh—a lot of musicians at the time did backing vocals and stuff. Like, I swear, I think Biff Naked was involved in this.

Sydnee: Oh yeah? I don't—I—see, I don't know. I—I didn't read... I didn't read that far into it. Um, Kay Hanley, is she the one who sang?

Taylor: Yes, Kay Hanley sang.

Sydnee: Okay. Uh—but, uh, yeah. The music is great. I would highly recommend if nothing else, like, listen to the soundtrack. It's so good. Um, I have the record.

Raleigh: You do?

Sydnee: I do.

Raleigh: Oh man.

Sydnee: And it looks like—like it's just—like, it looks like it's by the band, *Josie and the Pussycats*.

Raleigh: Oh yeah.

Sydnee: Like, it is not the soundtrack.

Raleigh: Right, that's good.

Sydnee: It looks like their record. Like, it's all leopard and pink and it's cool and... yeah. I mean, it's—it's great music. It's a great movie. It's a lot of fun.

Raleigh: Have you tried playing it backwards?

Sydnee: To see if there are—

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: —yeah, what subliminal messages are they? Um, and we still haven't even spoiled everything. There's still more to Parker Posey's character.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Uh, so if you haven't seen it, you should see it.

Raleigh: You should. A good quarantined watch.

Sydnee: I think so.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: It's a ton of fun, and it—it deserves way better than its scores would, uh... would lead you to believe.

Raleigh: Not much better than its trailer would lead you to believe, though.

Sydnee: No. Don't—watch the movie first, and then watch the trailer. And see if, like, it reflects it at all.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Such a—such a bad representation of what a great movie it is.

Taylor: Where was this? Is it on Netflix right now? Is that where I—I think that's where I watched it. Netflix or Hulu has it.

Raleigh: I... paid for it. [laughs] 'Cause I'm lazy.

Sydnee: I—we already owned it.

Raleigh: Of course.

Taylor: Oh, oh. Alright. Yeah.

Raleigh: It's somewhere on the internet. Probably on a streaming service.

Sydnee: Uh, Tey. What are we doin' next?

Taylor: Uh, alright. Well, on—on the—[laughs] on the topic of really good, uh, really good albums, um, maybe—maybe, uh, a little bit, uh, better—maybe even a little better than *Josie and the Pussycats*.

Raleigh: Whoa!

Taylor: I know. I want to talk about, uh, Fiona Apple. Uh, she has a new album out that's getting great reviews. It's a—it's a great album, but I want to go back in time and talk about mainly her album *When the Pawn...* and, uh, also a little bit of *Tidal*. Kind of the albums that came out in the late '90s that were very influential in my life. Um, but also just Fiona Apple on the whole. She's just—she's cool. She has tons of great music, so...

Sydnee: And her new album's getting, like, crazy—or, really great reviews.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Rave reviews.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: So.

Taylor: It got, like, a—a perfect 10, I guess? Is a thing?

Raleigh: Wow.

Sydnee: From Pitchfork, yeah.

Raleigh: Alright.

Sydnee: I—I have listened to about half of it.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Yes. *Fetch the Bolt Cutters* is the new album.

Sydnee: So, yeah.

Raleigh: Well, I'm excited.

Sydnee: Yeah. Very, very good.

Taylor: I think—I think you'll like this, Raleigh. Based on some of the stuff you've had us listen, I think—I think you'll like some, uh—some of Fiona Apple's stuff.

Raleigh: I'm—I'm ready.

Sydnee: Alright.

Raleigh: I've never listened, so this should be fun.

Sydnee: Well, join us next week for Fiona Apple talk.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Uh, and thank you all for listening, everybody. I hope you're all staying safe and staying socially distanced and staying, um... staying well.

Uh, and as happy and as okay as you can be in these tough times. Thank you for sticking with us and listening to our show. We appreciate it.

You can tweet at us @stillbuff. You can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org. The email does work again, so if you have any things that you're like, "Hey, I bet you all liked this thing. Do any of you want to talk about it?" Let us know! Or if you just—I don't know, wanna email us. Go for it! [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: That's fine too. Whatever. Uh, and thank you to the Maximum Fun Network for hosting our show. You should go to Maximumfun.org for a lot of wonderful podcasts you would enjoy.

And thank you to The Nouvellas for our theme song, "Baby You Change Your Mind."

Raleigh: This has been your cross-generational guide to the culture that made us. I am Raleigh Smirl.

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl.

Raleigh: [holding back laughter] I am still buffering...

[theme music begins in the background]

Sydnee and Taylor: [out of sync] And I... am... too.

Raleigh: Man, how many times is Sydnee gonna forget to say her name?

Sydnee: I was up too late playing Animal Crossing.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Oh, that'll do it.

Raleigh: I get it.

Sydnee: I—I had to go get a new inhabitant, another island.

Raleigh: [snorts]

Taylor: Ooh, who'd you get?

Sydnee: A lion who lifts weights. Bud?

Raleigh: That's good.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

[static]

Speaker One: Welcome back to Fireside Chat on KMAX. With me in studio to take your calls is the dopest duo on the West Coast, Oliver Wang and Morgan Rhodes. Go ahead, caller!

Speaker Two: Hey, uh, I'm looking for a music podcast that's insightful and thoughtful, but, like, also helps me discover artists and albums that I've never heard of.

Morgan: Yeah man, sounds like you need to listen to *Heat Rocks*. Every week, myself, and I'm Morgan Rhodes, and my co-host here, Oliver Wang, talk to influential guests about a canonical album that has changed their lives.

Oliver: Guests like Moby, Open Mic Eagle, talking about albums by Prince, Joni Mitchell, and so much more.

Speaker Two: Yo, what's that show called again?

Morgan: *Heat Rocks*: Deep dives into hot records.

Oliver: Every Thursday on Maximum Fun.

[static]

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