

## Still Buffering 215: "Dawson's Creek" (1998-2003)

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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:** Was that tagline right?

**Sydnee:** Yep.

**Raleigh:** Okay. [snorts]

**Sydnee:** I think!

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Sorry, it's been a while since we've actually done it, and it just kinda came out before I could think about it, and I was just hoping it was right. And no one said anything, so I assumed it was.

**Sydnee:** I was, uh—I wasn't paying strict attention, 'cause I was thinking about how I should've peed before we started.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** But, um, maybe that's the energy that I need for this.

**Raleigh:** Holding your pee energy?

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** That energy?

**Sydnee:** [laughs] Don't you think that's—

**Taylor:** Is that—is that good?

**Sydnee:** I mean, maybe not—not—no, it's not great for your body. But, like, for your energy.

**Raleigh:** Where you're just kind of, like, clenching. Like, "[quietly] Oh, okay."

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** "Yeah. Yeah."

**Sydnee:** It doesn't have to be that bad. [laughs] I was just k—I was—I was pondering that.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** We're gonna see. Maybe this show will be better.

**Raleigh:** We'll see, yeah.

**Taylor:** Sydnee's conducting a scientific experiment. She has a—she has a hypothesis. We're gonna see what, uh—what happens.

**Sydnee:** Is the show better if I don't pee first?

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] When you have to pee.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, when I have to pee. I don't know!

**Taylor:** That's a slippery slope, if you—if you do feel like it's better, uh, better material, because then it becomes something that you feel like you have to do every episode, you know?

**Raleigh:** Hmm.

**Sydnee:** Hmm.

**Taylor:** Those ritual things that people get into for performances?

**Sydnee:** Yeah...

**Raleigh:** [holding back laughter] Having to pee is Sydnee's. [laughs]

**Taylor:** That would be bad.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] No. I, uh—I just—I—see, it was a great—I had a great morning, because, uh, Justin had the girls long enough for me to, like, have a shower *and* drink two cups of coffee, which is rare.

**Taylor:** Ohh.

**Raleigh:** Wow.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Now you're gonna pay for that.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, I'm—I'm paying for it. [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** Yeah. I don't know, Syd. I think you—you—you of all people, you got the little... the little—you know. Your kidneys don't—don't do as much for you as—as they—as they should. You got the lazy kidneys. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** That's true. I got a lazy kidney.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** That's absolutely accurate. You know, I—

**Taylor:** [through laughter] Ol' Lazy Kid' Syd.

**Sydnee:** There are—I could, like... I haven't had labs done in so long. I could probably figure out if it really is a lazy—I had an infection, uh, [laughs] in my kidney. I had pyelonephritis, a kidney infection, when I was very young. And Mom told me for years that one of my kidneys doesn't work. I don't know if that's true!

**Raleigh:** Mom told *me* for years that one of your kidneys didn't work.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] I don't—

**Taylor:** Wait. Do one of your kidneys *not* not work? 'Cause I just thought that was... is that—[laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Well, I don't—so, here's the thing.

**Taylor:** I thought that was canon. Is that not canon?

**Raleigh:** I did too! [laughs]

**Sydnee:** The basic, like... [laughs quietly] the basic, like, CCPs I've had done, which is just a basic blood test, which would, like, look at kidney function, among other things—like, I—as far as I know, they've always been normal. And so I don't... [pauses]

**Raleigh:** [laughs] Wha—ha—

**Sydnee:** I don't know! I don't know. But I've never had any formal, like, "How well is your kidney functioning—" I've never had any, like, scans or ultrasounds or anything to, like, look at my kidneys, to, like, see if there's any damage to them—I don't know.

**Raleigh:** I swear, growing up, that was what Mom always told me to get me to not hold my pee, was that you had one of your kidneys that didn't work anymore—

**Sydnee:** She—[laughs] She *still* says—

**Raleigh:** —because of that. So I shouldn't hold my pee!

**Sydnee:** —she *still* says that.

**Taylor:** You—you held your pee, and it backed up into your kidney, and that kidney drowned.

**Raleigh:** Yes!

**Taylor:** It drowned in the pee, and then it—now it doesn't—[laughs] doesn't work!

**Raleigh:** And you know what?

**Sydney:** That is not what happened.

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] Is that science?

**Raleigh:** [holding back laughter] Tey—Taylor and I never went to medical school, so we don't know if that's right or not!

**Taylor:** Yeah, sure! That could happen!

**Sydney:** That is not what that—

**Taylor:** Drown your own kidneys!

**Sydney:** I did—I did have ureteral reflux, which did cause urine to back up through the ureter into the kidney—

**Raleigh:** [snorts]

**Sydney:** —and it did lead to an infection, and I did have a very severe pyelonephritis kidney infection, and I was hospitalized when I was younger. Uh, and I—I got better. [laughs quietly] Obviously.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydney:** I survived.

**Raleigh:** Right.

**Sydney:** Uh, but I don't know if it was severe enough to actually, like, damage... my kidney. If it did, it didn't damage enough of it to, like, my—I—I... everything works fine. You know what I mean? So, like—because you don't need two 100% functional kidneys.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. I thought for a long time you had one taken out also, I thought you only had one. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** No, no, it's still in—they're both there. The question is, is one working at full capacity or not? And I don't actually know if it is. But—but there's enough that I—everything works fine, so it's not really worth it to, like, dig further into this quandary. [laughs]

**Taylor:** I feel like it—considering your profession, Syd, that's something that you could, like, get checked pretty easily?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Like, that—I—I feel like you of all people should know things about your medical health?

**Raleigh:** And you've had two children. Don't they do, like, full body, like... what's goin' on all up in here all the time, whenever you're havin' babies?

**Sydnee:** No. You wanna start talking about the care for pregnant people in this country?

**Taylor:** Yeah...

**Raleigh:** I guess that's probably true. [laughs]

**Taylor:** I—I'm not—I'm not a doctor. I got my vitals taken for the first time in probably a decade when I got my antibody test the other day. And the doctor was taking down all the numbers, and I'm like, "Is that—is that good? What about that one? Is—is that good? It's just been a long time [through laughter] since I've seen these things! Can you tell me what these mean?"

**Sydnee:** Well, that's what I'm saying! Like, the labs that I have had done for other reasons have been fine.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** But I—I would not say that I've had every test done necessary to tell you if, like—is there some scar—some scar damaged area of a kidney that isn't functional? I don't know. I have not had all of the testing necessary to tell me that answer definitively. But I have enough testing to say that, like, everything—I mean, I work fine. Like, I have no reason to think—I can take the normal—like,

the standard dosing of medications. I don't have to watch any aspect of my diet. Like, that kind of stuff for my kidneys.

**Rileigh:** [laughs quietly] Welcome to this crossover episode of *Sawbones* and *Still Buffering*—

**Sydnee:** I know. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** —where we talk about, uh, medical diagnoses that shaped Sydnee's childhood. [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Taylor has an excellent resting heart rate. Let's talk about that.

**Rileigh:** Wow!

**Taylor:** Oh yeah, apparently. I—I do!

**Rileigh:** Just like Jimmy Buffett.

**Taylor:** I—I mean...

**Sydnee:** [through laughter] You and Jimmy Buffett, that's right.

**Rileigh:** [through laughter] Yeah.

**Taylor:** It could—I guess it could mean bad things, except for that I run all the time, so it's probably a good thing.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** That's what I—that's what I learned.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** 'Cause the doctor was like, "Well, with that low, that could be bradycardia. But, do you run?"

I was like, "You coulda said the—the—like, the not scary thing first!" [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Like, "Are you an athlete?"

And I'm like, "Yes, I run every day."

She's like, "Oh, that's probably why."

**Sydnee:** If it makes you feel better, bradycardia just means slow heart rate.

**Taylor:** Yeah. Oh, okay, alright.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, yeah.

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** So yeah—so then both—so it is—okay. See, I was like—

**Sydnee:** It is both.

**Taylor:** —looked up that word and it was lots of scary things attached to it, and I was like, "Oh, well, I don't want that!" But...

**Sydnee:** Yeah, it just describes slow heart rate. It doesn't necessarily give you an ideology. Like, why is it slow? It just says it's slow.

**Taylor:** I have a hard—I guess I—man, that—that must really speak to my running game, because the idea that I'm chill—like, anywhere in the chill spectrum as Jimmy Buffett is impossible.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** [through laughter] Like, my heart is—must be in amazing condition to overcome how—how anxious I am all the time.

**Sydnee:** There you go.



**Rileigh:** Yeah, see, that's my problem. Mine's always super high, and I don't run every day. So doctors are always like, "Are you... are you okay? What's g—"

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** I'm like, "I—I have anxiety. It's fine, I'm fine." [laughs]

**Taylor:** "Just thinkin' about things. All the time." [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah. "Also, the thought of you taking my heart rate makes me anxious that it's going to be bad, so then I just get anxious [through laughter] about you taking my heart rate!"

**Sydnee:** It's a real—it's a real phenomenon. We usually—we usually see it with blood pressure. We call it white coat hypertension. But white coat tachycardia, that's a fast heart rate, tachycardia, could be a—could be—definitely we can see that.

**Rileigh:** Well.

**Sydnee:** Although I don't even wear I white coat, so I don't know why I do that to patients.

**Taylor:** Could you sneak up on 'em?

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Just wrap it on their arm from behind. "Ha ha!"

**Sydnee:** [through laughter] I do—I sneak up and yell "Boo!" and then take their blood pressure. I don't know what the problem is with my technique.

**Taylor:** It's so—so high!

**Rileigh:** Well, this has been everyone's, uh, medical check in of the week, I suppose.

**Taylor:** There we go. Sydnee maybe—maybe has, uh, two good kidneys. Maybe! And I probably have a good heart rate. Probably. Good talk. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** This was good. Uh—

**Raleigh:** Yeah, great job.

**Sydnee:** Don't hold it, kids! If you gotta pee—if you have to go potty, stop and go right away.

**Taylor:** Except for if you're a podcaster, which apparently the... the rules—

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** 'Cause then you have to finish your podcast. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Then—then—then go potty right away. Um, you know what'll chill us all out?

**Raleigh:** What's that?

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly] A smooth boat ride—

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** —down the Creek. [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** Oh boy.

**Raleigh:** Whose creek?

**Sydnee:** Whose creek? *Dawson's Creek*, of course!

**Raleigh:** Oh!

**Sydnee:** I'm so excited to talk about *Dawson's Creek*. Uh, you know, it's weird. I—I have a love for *Dawson's Creek* that does not stem really from my teenage years.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** I came to *Dawson's Creek* almost before—like, at the end of the show.

**Raleigh:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** Uh, I started watching it I think around the last season. Like, I started back from the beginning, because one of our cousins had taped every episode on VHS, and so I had a giant plastic tub—

**Raleigh:** [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** —of VHS tapes of all of *Dawson's Creek*, and I had a tiny TV. [laughs]  
And I—

**Raleigh:** How very early 2000's.

**Sydnee:** I know. And I would pop my—my VHS tape into—it was one of those TVs that had the VHS player in it, and so I would pop my VHS tape into my tiny TV and watch my episodes of *Dawson's Creek*, one by one by one. [pauses] There you go. [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** Wow.

**Sydnee:** Uh, but I loved it. I don't know why.

**Raleigh:** I was gonna ask why.

**Taylor:** Yeah, you—can you make some guesses? What was the appeal to you?

**Sydnee:** You know, I think it—whenever I start to try to understand, like—explain or understand myself why I like *Dawson's Creek*—

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** —it's the same problem I have when I try to explain why I like *Archie* comics. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Like, it's like Justin said. He read an *Archie* once and went, "I mean, it's not funny." [laughs]

And I'm like, "No... "

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** It's very often not. Um...

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** It's not—[laughs] it's pleasant? [laughs]

**Raleigh:** It's—it's the same why I feel about *Archies*, uh, except I understand that they're not funny, and also sometimes not even, like, super pleasant. They just kind of exist. And I just have so many that you've left behind, and I'm like, I—I guess I gotta like these now, [through laughter] because we have so many of 'em!

**Sydnee:** It's something—it's like, um—things like *Archie* and like *Dawson's Creek*—and I mean this, by the way, with all of the affection in the world. I do not mean this in a negative way, although I realize it's gonna sound that way. I—I think sometimes they fill the same space as, like... buttered noodles.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Like, you know when you were a kid and you just wanted a big plate of noodles with butter and salt?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah...

**Sydnee:** And it's like... it's not particularly anything.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But you're *gonna* eat it.

**Rileigh:** And now when you see kids with 'em now you're like, "Well, I want more than that. But also, like, man, buttered noodles are good!"

**Sydnee:** Buttered noodles are g—I mean, they're just—they are exactly what they are. There—there's no—there's nothing, like, extraordinary in any direction, but you just wanna keep eatin' 'em?

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** It—it's very low-stakes engagement.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** It's like playing *Animal Crossing*.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** It's like, this is just—there's no consequences to my actions. This is just a very pleasant experience.

**Taylor:** I—you know—but if that was the layer over top of *Animal Crossing*, where your neighbors just cheat on each other all the time and, like—

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** —have—have wistful feelings for one another—[laughs]

**Rileigh:** Your way of getting back and forth between your friends' houses is just a quick little rowboat—rowboat trip.

**Sydnee:** Rowboat ride.

**Rileigh:** Rowboat ride.

**Sydnee:** To the wrong side of the creek.

**Rileigh:** Dun dun dun.

**Taylor:** I think if you live along, like, a... fancy—I think, like, a creek—it's not a creek! It's like a nice, like, lake or something that they live along. I don't know. But—

**Sydney:** Uh—

**Raleigh:** I mean, we live close to the Ohio River. Is that...

**Taylor:** That's a river.

**Sydney:** That's a—

**Raleigh:** It's not the same.

**Sydney:** —that's a river. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** We have creeks. But they're not like that—I mean, that's bigger than a creek, definitely. What they're on in the show is definitely bigger than a creek. [laughs]

**Sydney:** Yes.

**Taylor:** I think if you have waterfront property, in most cases there's not a wrong side of it. How about that? [laughs]

**Sydney:** Well, that—

**Raleigh:** That's true. [laughs]

**Sydney:** —I mean, that's the—that's the big problem, right? So, Joey—okay. If you're not familiar with *Dawson's Creek*—[laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** Oh, good. Here we go.

**Sydney:** Uh—

**Taylor:** [crosstalk]

**Sydney:** —it's a teen—it's a teen drama. Drama as a loosely used word, here. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** It's a teen show. About, uh, Dawson, the titular character Dawson Leery, who is—he's... what—I don't even—I'm trying to explain Dawson—

**Raleigh:** Dawson's—

**Sydnee:** He loves film.

**Raleigh:** I was gonna say, a film guy.

**Sydnee:** He's obsessed with Steven—

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] He sees himself—

**Sydnee:** Huh?

**Taylor:** Yeah, I was saying, he sees himself as the next Steven Spielberg.

**Sydnee:** Exactly. Exactly. Obsessed with Steven Spielberg. Uh, kind of views his whole life in terms of movies and film, and the supporting characters in his life—which I think is very much how he tends to view things—

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** Which they do, like, challenge, as the show goes on, but—are his best friend Pacey Witter who's, like, the... the guy who messes up. He's, like, quirky and funny, and—

**Raleigh:** Also the—the man of Sydnee's dreams, apparently. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs] Yes.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Justin has a shirt that is identical to one of the shirts Pacey wears on the show.

**Raleigh:** Really?

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** The first time Justin wore it I was like, "[gasps loudly] [whispers] It's a Pacey shirt!"

**Taylor:** "I—I chose right!"

**Sydnee:** [laughs] "I ch—"

**Raleigh:** "I did it!"

**Sydnee:** "—I chose Pacey!" Uh, and then there is the girl. Joey. Joey Potter, who lives on the wrong side of the Creek. Uh, and her and Dawson have been best friends since they were teeny children, and then of course they become teenagers and lovey feelings develop.

**Raleigh:** [scoffs] Hormones. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Hormones. And then the other—the—to complete the core foursome...

**Raleigh:** Because you always have to have two men and two women, I think. It's just like *Archies*. You just have to have two guys, two girls.

**Taylor:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** To complete them, uh, you introduce Jen.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Jen Lindley. Who, uh, comes from *New York*.

**Raleigh:** Ooh!

**Taylor:** Ooh.



**Sydnee:** The big city. [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** And, uh, shows up in the first episode, kind of like your blonde bombshell, to disrupt this quaint little... love... relationship thing that—

**Raleigh:** That is blossoming between Joey and Dawson.

**Sydnee:** Yes. Uh, because immediately it's like—it's—man, I love those—do they still do that in movies where you have the scene where, like—

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** —the most beautiful character steps out of a car and, like, time stops—

**Raleigh:** Yeah, slow motion, yeah.

**Sydnee:** —and they walk slowly. And her floral—oh, her dress! Her floral Laura Ashley dress is blowing in the wind. [laughs]

**Taylor:** I was gonna say, 'cause that—that scene cracked me up, because I get the presentation is, "Oh no, here comes the sexy one!" But she's wearing, like, a—like, a very... like, cute cardigan. Like, yeah, floral set.

**Raleigh:** I was gonna say, she has on, like, a tiny yellow cardigan, too! [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah, and she's kinda got, like, kind of like a heavy gait to her walk. Like, it's not like a "Ooh, ooh!" It's like—no, it's just—just—here's a chick. [through laughter] Okay?

**Sydnee:** Jen—Jen really develops into that chara—'cause Jen—you know, it's funny you mention her walk. I—Jen has that throughout the whole series. There is some—

**Taylor:** And I love her walk! Don't get me wrong. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** No, I like it, too. I appreciated it, because it really undercut this idea, um—and they do that—they do that throughout the series where, like—Jen is introduced as, like, uh, the hot sexy girl from New York who's gonna steal Joey's man. But pretty quickly you realize, like... no. Jen—Jen is just Jen, and has very little interest in any of that, in any of this weird... drama that's going on. [laughs]

**Taylor:** It's like—even, like, the premise on why she moves there. If I'm not wrong, it's because her—her grandfather is dying, and her grandmother will be otherwise alone, so... is that—that's pretty much the reason, right?

**Sydnee:** That is why, uh, her grandmother wants her to come help her, yes. But also, Jen was getting into... trouble.

**Raleigh:** [gasps]

**Taylor:** Oh, okay.

**Sydnee:** Sort of a—it's sort of a *Fresh Prince of Bel Air* kinda thing.

**Taylor:** Okay, sure. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Like, Jen—

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** —Jen was—Jen is, uh—is having a lot of, um, sexual relationships. She is dabbling in drugs and alcohol. She is partying. She is part of, like, the New York party scene. And—

**Raleigh:** Yeah, you know that, Taylor. The New York trouble... party scene.

**Taylor:** So, you come to New York City to—to get troubled or be troubled. And then, you know, at some point we do our time and we all leave for a quiet—

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Cape town. Cape t—a cape town.

**Raleigh:** [holding back laughter] Cape town?

**Sydnee:** Capeside.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** So, she gets sent to Capeside because her parents think she's heading down a dangerous path, and her grandmother needs help and so it's like, this is a good time—and also, Gran is introduced in the beginning as an incredibly kind of uptight, conservative, uh, deeply religious character who is supposed to, like... straighten out Jen.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like—you know, take her to church and get her right with the Lord. That is very much the impression you get at first. Um—

**Taylor:** Which I did—I really enjoyed one of the first confrontations between Gram and Jen is when Jen announces that Jen is an atheist. And—

**Sydnee:** [snorts]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** —Gram just needs to accept that, you know? And it's like, "Oh! Dun dun dun. Atheist!"

I was just like, "Oh, right. This is the 90's. That was still... that was still controversial, I guess, for a lot of... you know." I don't know. I guess in a lot of ways it still is now, but it seems very dated. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** It does, it does. And it's funny, if you keep watching, Jen—as I was rewatching it it occurred to me, Jen at least twice dates guys, and the whole, like, conflict is that they are, uh, very religious—

**Raleigh:** [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** —and—[laughs quietly] she is... an atheist, as she—she has to, like—they have her character say that many times throughout the series.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. I mean, even from, like, the very first episode.

**Sydnee:** Yes. Uh, and, like, the—you know, the thing is, they make Jen declare her atheism constantly throughout the series. But other than Grams, nobody's goin' to church!

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** None of the characters ever go to church!

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** That I can think of. Heck, I can—marriages happen on this show, none of them in churches! [laughs]

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** There's a creek right there to get married next to!

**Rileigh:** Yeah, why would you get married in a church when you can marry on the creek?

**Taylor:** It seems like for all these big, beautiful houses these people have, they are rarely inside. They don't—

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** —they don't do a lot of inside time in this Cape... Ville

**Rileigh:** [laughs] Lots of outside time.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** It's—and it—you know, I think—and I think we should say straight off the bat, like, it is a show that is quite lacking in diversity.

**Rileigh:** Oh yeah.

**Taylor:** Oh yeah.

**Sydnee:** For sure. Which—

**Taylor:** It's *very* white.

**Sydnee:** —yes. It is a very white show, and it—it, uh—at that time, a lot of shows you could level that criticism at easily. Um, not representative of most places in—in America.

**Raleigh:** I mean, yeah. We talked about Friends. Friends was the same way.

**Sydnee:** Exactly.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Which—which is even more, like, striking, 'cause it's set—

**Raleigh:** In New York.

**Sydnee:** In New York.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Um, but yeah. It's not a diverse show. And they do, like—they play with this idea that Joey Potter lives on the wrong side of the creek. And they give her, like, this kind of, like, more—like, harder backstory? To, like, Dawson, who's got this, like, perfect little life.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And then you've got Joey, who lives with her older sister Bessie, who I think as the series starts is pregnant.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Uh, her husband Bodie is away. I forget why he's not there. He's there and not—he works out of town or something, and so he's not always there.

**Raleigh:** He's there from the first episode.

**Taylor:** Yeah, he's there.

**Sydnee:** Oh.

**Taylor:** 'Cause he—they—he gives them macaroni to try.

**Sydnee:** Oh, that's right. Well, as the series goes on, Bodie, like, is in and out. He's, like, there and not a lot.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Um... but, uh... [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Their Dad—their Mom died when they were little, and their Dad is in jail for... something drug-related.

**Raleigh:** I swear, the first episode—I just watched it yesterday, and I think the phrase she uses is, like, "conspiracy to traffic marijuana—"

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** —I wanna say is what she says, because I remember hearing it and pausing and going, "Hold on. Wait a minute." [laughs]

**Taylor:** He was—

**Raleigh:** "What?" [laughs]

**Taylor:** —he was just, like, sittin' next to a cop he didn't know was a cop on a bench. He was like, "Man, I'd like to sell some marijuana one day!"

And the cop was like, "Ha ha, caughtcha!"

**Sydnee and Raleigh:** Gotcha!

**Taylor:** "You're goin' to jail.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Uh, so—so—so Joey—

**Taylor:** [crosstalk] white people.

**Sydnee:** —Joey and Bessie have to—[laughs quietly] they have to, like, raise themselves. Well, Bessie's grown up. But, like—so, they've gotta—they've gotta have their own... life here. And it's also—I think it's also supposed to be that since Bodie is black, that is part of, like, the—the backstory for Joey and Bessie, and why they are considered outsiders with the rest of the Capeside...

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** ... society or whatever.

**Rileigh:** 'Cause right from the get-go, Gran thinks that's... not okay.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Um, but—but they still have a very nice, lovely, creekside home.

**Rileigh:** Yeah!

**Sydnee:** That later in the series, by the way, they convert into a bed and breakfast.

**Rileigh:** I would stay there.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. So, I mean, it's gotta be substantial and roomy. They convert it into a B&B!

**Rileigh:** Yeah! Unless it's just one bedroom for one guest at a time. [laughs]

**Taylor:** I mean, I—

**Sydnee:** It's never—it's—they have that Full House thing going on where you can never really tell how many rooms or where everyone is in it.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like... [laughs]

**Taylor:** I mean, I guess if everybody—

**Raleigh:** We just know these rooms exist somewhere.

**Taylor:** —if everybody lives in mansions around you, then having, like, a good-sized home it's like, "Oh no, [through laughter] you're from the wrong side of the creek!"

**Raleigh:** I just can't get over "Wrong side of the creek."

**Sydnee:** I know.

**Raleigh:** I just...

[pauses]

**Sydnee:** Well, it's—

**Raleigh:** I—I love it. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. [laughs quietly] Uh, so... okay. I'm trying to—I'm trying to—I still don't think I've explained why... okay. I really liked—first of all, one of number one criticisms that people always leveled at the show is the way the teenagers talk to each other.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Because they're, like, hypervocal.

**Raleigh:** I would agree with that.

**Sydnee:** Um, their vocabularies... are not reflective of what we assumed the typical teen vocabulary was. Their references are wild. Not just like—I mean, with Dawson it's a lot of film reference, which you can buy because his character is supposed to have this deep love of film.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.



**Sydnee:** Um, but all of them are constantly referencing, like, philosophy and, like, religious texts and historical ideas and—and poems, and things that you don't expect a group of 15-year-olds who are, like, hanging out—

**Rileigh:** Right.

**Sydnee:** —next to the creek... [laughs quietly]

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** ... to, like, be able to just randomly throw into conversations. And so I think even though that is why a lot of the critics were like, "What is this? Who is this for?"

**Rileigh:** Sydnee!

**Sydnee:** I was like, "Oh, I—yeah!"

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** "I would've loved to have friends like that!" [laughs]

**Taylor:** "I could make philosophical references, and—and have long introspective conversations! I would like to go there!" [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Well—

**Rileigh:** "I would fit right in in this creek!"

**Sydnee:** "I would love this—" I would—[laughs] I would just watch *Dawson's Creek* and have conversations with them. Like, just pause it and be like, "Well, let me—let me stop you right there, Dawson. Here are my thoughts on Nietzsche." So... [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Aww. I can see you doing that, too. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah...

**Sydnee:** No, I didn't—[quietly] I didn't do that. I didn't really do that...

**Raleigh:** Maybe just sometimes, right? [laughs]

**Sydnee:** But I don't—

**Taylor:** We all know, now. You can't deny it. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I don't think I'm alone, though. In—in that—what that was talking about is, teenagers aren't what we assume they are. They have other things going on. And that kind of conceit, I think, however it manifests, can be a very powerful thing in a show when you're younger. To say, like, "Hey, you see me." You know?

You see that, like, not all of us are into the same things, and some of us are—*all* of us are thinking about life and, like, serious things and worried about things and have real life problems. And it—and any show that spoke to that I think was very nice. As opposed to, like, the previous idea about teenagers which is, "I don't know. They're all thinking about skateboards and pizza." [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** Sure.

**Taylor:** Wait, is that—

**Raleigh:** I mean, that one's more accurate, but—[laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah. [holding back laughter] I was—I was only thinking about skateboards or pizza. I don't know.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Did I do it wrong?

**Sydnee:** No, that's fine. But some of us—

**Raleigh:** I'm in the last few months of teen brain. I'm just letting you know, that's—that's all I think about.

**Sydnee:** Some of us weren't just thinking about skateboards and pizza is all I'm saying.

**Raleigh:** So you needed a more sophisticated show, like *Dawson's Creek*.

**Taylor:** I unders—'cause that's the thing. It's, like—there's the dissonance of, like, I—I do not remember any of us talking like that, but I do think we felt those things, and we just couldn't quite verbalize them, and we definitely didn't have the nerve to say them. So there's a bit of that fantasy element of, like, teens that are eloquently saying all of the things that you felt, but didn't have the guts to say out loud.

**Sydnee:** Yes. I do think—I think they handled some things, um—some—I mean, obviously it is of its time, and there are problems. I am the first—I think we can all tell from watching it now. Like, there are lots of problems with it, aside from the utter lack of diversity. Um, right off the bat, Pacey is sleeping with his teacher.

**Raleigh:** [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** That... yeah, that story line was really disturbing to me!

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Yes. And when you say "Right off the bat," you mean from the first episode.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Raleigh:** Of the whole series.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** And he—

**Sydnee:** Uh, and he is 15.

**Raleigh:** Yeah, they're sophomores in high school.

**Taylor:** Yeah, and she is 35.

**Sydnee:** Yes. So—so right from the beginning, there are problems. Again, another thing that, like... thank *God* has evolved over time, is the idea that, like, no, it's not okay if it's a male student and a female teacher.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** That doesn't make it okay. Like... this is still—

**Raleigh:** Because I was gonna say, *Pretty Little Liars* did start out—it was a teen drama series I watched in, like, middle school and high school that did start out with one of the teen girls in a relationship with her male teacher.

**Sydnee:** Really.

**Raleigh:** Yes. I was going to make this correlation, because I just thought that was fascinating. It's like, oh, this was a story line from the beginning of this series that started airing in 1998, [holding back laughter] and this was also a plot line from a series that started airing in, like, 2013, I think.

**Taylor:** Yeah. See—

**Sydnee:** And—

**Taylor:** —I—I had to remind myself what era this was made in. 'cause I'm like, "Surely this is gonna advance to, like, a court case story line, right?" And then this woman who took advantage of this very, very young boy is going to serve time for this, right? [through laughter] That is gonna be the way this takes it? Oh no, they're just gonna, like—"

**Raleigh:** No...

**Taylor:** "—just—oh... " Like, "Oh, it's tragic that it cannot be, and—and—" Okay. Well... [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Like they're star crossed lovers.

**Taylor:** [through laughter] Yeah! It's like, "Nooooo!"

**Sydnee:** Yeah. I—well, and I think that again, in that time period, like—Raleigh, this probably wouldn't shock you to hear, there was that argument. Like, "Well, but if it's a male student, he probably was into it, so it's fine."

**Raleigh:** Right.

**Sydnee:** As if, like, that excuses, like—well, no. I mean, it's statutory rape. So... that obviously is a probably with the show. Uh, and then... the other thing I think is interesting that I feel like, as the series evolved and culture moved forward, they tried to deal with, is early on in the show, Pacey—Pacey's older brother Doug is a police officer, and the two of them are constantly butting heads because Pacey is kind of the screw up.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** And... his brother thinks he needs to, like, fall in line. And Pacey is always—the way that he torments his older brother is by largely calling him, like, closeted, and insinuating that he's gay. And early on, that really, like—every time you hear that it's kinda like, "Ugh... " like—

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** —it's just so gross and bad, because it feels like it's an insult. "I'm calling you this as a way to be mean."

**Raleigh:** And it was also beyond that way that's just, like, people used to use that word as an insult. It was all the way to, like, "This is true about you, and I'm making fun of you because this is also your personality, and also using it against you as an insult."

**Sydnee:** Well, and, like, going through—like, it shows him, like, at his apartment, like, going through his records and being like, "Judy Garland? Come on, Doug. Really?"

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like, it's very clear. I mean, like, really, it's very clear. Like, he's—and the way the series tries to *I think* make up for that later is by actually making Doug gay.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** Like, yes, this is a gay character, and he has been—he has not come out to anyone, and Pacey may have known it because it was his brother and he knew his brother and, like, had known it, but he didn't know it because Doug ever told him or anything like that. Um, and I feel like that that was their way of, like—that was their mea culpa? And that's not... that's not enough, in my book. You know?

**Rileigh:** Yeah. Because when you say "To the end," you mean, like, the very last episode.

**Sydnee:** The last episode is when you find out.

**Rileigh:** Not, like, the last few seasons or last few episodes, like he gets this arc of, like, you know, discovering his identity and not being ashamed of it and, you know—but no. It's the very last episode.

**Sydnee:** Yes. The very last episode.

**Taylor:** I—[laughs quietly] I'm realizing that *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* did the exact same thing with the character that they were always making fun of, uh, for being gay, and yet apparently they handled it [through laughter] with more eloquence than *Dawson's Creek*, 'cause you actually get a development arc for—for that character. Okay. Well, alright.

**Sydnee:** Well, they try. I mean, they just—the problem is, it's not a bad arc if they didn't try to cram it into the last episode.

**Taylor:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Um, because what Doug is dealing with is, he's older than the other characters. He feels like—I mean, even—so, okay. Jack, who's the other—that's the other character I wanted to talk about. Jack McPhee, uh—Jack and Andie McPhee joined the show... season two?

**Rileigh:** Yeah, two. Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I think. Um, a brother and sister move to town. Andie immediately becomes, like, a love interest with Pacey and, like, that's part of his arc because Andie is super smart and driven and motivated and, like, helps Pacey do better in school and care about things.

And then you also get into actually a really interesting mental health story line with Andie, because Andie has bipolar disorder, and goes off of her medications at some point. And you see that she has, like, a manic episode, and it's all—that's all, I think, a good plot line.

Jack's plot line is when he first joins the show it's like a, uh... it's a romantic rival for Joey's attention, because Dawson and Joey are having this, like, moment where Joey loves Dawson, Dawson loves Jen, Dawson realizes he loves Joey, but then... in a whole plot line where Dawson ends up getting Joey's Dad put back in jail—[muffled laughter]

**Raleigh:** Every—[laughs]

**Sydnee:** [through laughter] Because—because Joey's Dad burns down their restaurant for the insurance money! [laughs]

**Raleigh:** I just can't with these teen shows!

**Sydnee:** I know!

**Raleigh:** That every single episode is like, "if you didn't think it could get any wilder, hold on!"

**Sydnee:** So...

**Raleigh:** [quietly] Oh my gosh...

**Sydnee:** Jack joins the show at this moment where, like, Joey—like, Dawson is finally realizing, like, the depth of his love for Joey. And Joey's like, "I can't with you right now."

**Raleigh:** "You just got my Dad put back in jail!" [crosstalk]—

**Sydnee:** Yeah, "I'm so mad at you!" And so, like, she starts to fall for Jack, and they date for a while.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** And then there's this—I think—I think they do it—I think it's p— especially for the time period, kind of well handled—where Jack stands up in class to read a poem. There's this, like, really awful, mean teacher who forces Jack to stand up in class and read this poem in which he speaks about kind of a nameless male... figure, in a way that indicates he's attracted to them.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And the entire school goes wild.

**Taylor:** I—

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like, "Oh my God, Jack McPhee is gay, and he's dating Joey, but he's secretly gay, and he read this poem, can you believe it?"

**Taylor:** I did find that—that element was a little funny to me. Just, like, the thought that, like, "Oh no, if you look inside yourself... you might find gay!" [through laughter] Like—like he just was like—

**Raleigh:** I mean, yeah. [laughs]

**Taylor:** —"I have to—" when he was like, "Oh, I have to write this poem, and I don't know." And Dawson's like "Just, you know, talk about your truth." And he's like, "Okay." And he's like, "It just came out! I don't know where it came from! Oh no! The gay leaked out!"

It's like, I feel like...

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** I don't know. Everybody's queer experience—obviously everybody's different. But you kinda, like, know? Like, for a long time you're like, "Maybe... yeah, probably." It's not just like you just have a—I don't know. Maybe some



people have an aha moment, but [through laughter] I really like that idea of, like—

**Rileigh:** Maybe it's like—yeah!

**Taylor:** [through laughter] "Oh no! It manifested!"

**Rileigh:** [laughs] You get possessed by the—the secret gay inside, and then you just start writing a poem and you're not even moving your hand! It's like, "Whaaa, whoaaa!"

**Taylor:** Is that—

**Sydney:** Now—

**Taylor:** —that's gonna make more young men afraid of expressing their feelings, 'cause what if they express their feelings and their feelings are gay?!

**Rileigh:** Nooo!

**Taylor:** Nooo!

**Sydney:** Now, he—he kind of—I will say, as the series goes on and Jack continues to, like... deal with this, like, find how he's gonna, like, be out and be okay with that and, like, figure things out for himself, because it really does portray as, like, a journey for him to figure it all out.

Uh, he talks a lot about the—a lot of the conflict comes from his father. So, Jack and Andie's thing is that their mother also has, we think, bipolar disorder. It's not really clear, but some sort of diagnosis for which she's been hospitalized, and has a lot of difficulty, like, helping with day-to-day life stuff. And so largely Jack and Andie care for her.

Um, their father works in the city and is never around.

**Rileigh:** Okay.

**Sydney:** So—and they're all very wealthy. That's their thing.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. Everybody is. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** They had an older brother, Tim, who was, like, the star of the family, who died in some sort of accident previously.

**Raleigh:** Of course.

**Sydnee:** And the—and that kind of destroyed the whole family. And Jack has always felt like he—his Dad didn't love him as much, and so he has to be the son now... that his brother—no, this is why! And he talks about this.

Like—and he knew his Dad would not be cool with him being gay, and so he, like, didn't want to acknowledge that part of him for so long because it—he knew that it would be the final thing that would mean he'd let his Dad down.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Which I think is a very, like... realistic to some experiences, understandable, like, self-realization arc in terms of sexuality.

**Sydnee:** And even Andie voices, like—she's not thrilled with the idea.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah, that—

**Sydnee:** Because—

**Taylor:** —it's—of the core cast, the only person that's really like, "Okay, whatever!" is Pacey. [laughs] Like, stands up for him?

**Raleigh:** [through laughter] Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I also think that's part of—well, and I mean I think that's part of, like, the show trying to make up for the early, like, Pacey quietly gay-bashing, like, his brother. I think that's part of his—supposed to be his redemption, is, like, the only one who stands up for Jack, the only one who is just by his side is Pacey.

Now, Joey comes around, but obviously there's this moment of, like... "Oh, we're dating, but you—ohhh!" [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** So it's not immediate. [laughs] Um, although she does come around pretty quickly. But, like, Pacey's the one who is from the jump, like, "So? Who cares? Okay."

**Raleigh:** Which I think makes it somewhat—I mean, you could read into that more and be like, "Okay, so he's always been accepting and loved his brother, maybe and he's just, like—you know, trying to—"

**Sydnee:** Sure.

**Raleigh:** I don't know, mess with him, but in an awful way? I don't know. But it makes you think that maybe in some way inside Pacey has always, you know, accepted his brother, maybe.

**Sydnee:** Uh, this led to eventually the first onscreen prime time male—gay male kiss.

**Raleigh:** Wow!

**Sydnee:** This show, *Dawson's Creek*.

**Taylor:** Oh, is that—what episode is that in? Is that one of the ones you gave us?

**Sydnee:** No... I don't think so—yeah! No, it was! In True Love.

**Taylor:** Okay, yeah, alright. Oh, alright.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, yeah.

**Raleigh:** Wow.

**Sydnee:** When—when Jack kisses—

**Raleigh:** First one ever?

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Raleigh:** Wow!

**Sydnee:** Yeah, Jack kisses Ethan? I think is his name. They don't end up together, but... it was a huge—it was a huge deal for the character, it was a huge deal for TV.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Which again, are all these things that are, like, you know, uh, achievements for some kinds of diversity in this show, in the context of the fact that the show ran from 1998 to 2003, but looking back now you can see all the... still issues that exist.

**Sydnee:** Sure, sure. But it was—it was definitely a big deal, especially for a teen show, um, to show that was a big deal.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Uh, yeah. That was—so, that was in one of my—that was in one of my favorite episodes. I love the episode where Jack comes out. I think that those two episodes together, it's a two part—I actually—again, I think for the time they handle it... pretty well. I mean, not perfectly by any stretch, but they handle it pretty well.

Um, the episode True Love where Pacey and Joey sail away together on a boat for a summer—

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** —you know, like you do sometime when you're 16?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** I was just—

**Raleigh:** I did that when I was 16. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah. 'Cause, you know, she comes—she makes a decision all at once and then, like, meets him at the dock right before he's leaving and is like, "I'm going with you!" And that's great. In my mind I just was thinking, "But your clothes... clothing. You need clothes."

But then they—at least they have a line of writing in there where she's like, "Well, what about clothes?" And he's like, "Who knows? We'll get 'em somewhere." So

at least they resolve that, 'cause that's the kind of stuff that I can't stop thinking about when I watch [holding back laughter] shows.

**Rileigh:** Me too!

**Sydnee:** She also abandons Bessie at the B&B.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Oh.

**Sydnee:** Like, they've spent the whole season establishing this B&B, like, uh, Pacey helps them build it and get it all set up and all this, and then she's like, "Good luck!"

**Rileigh:** "Bye"!

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly]

**Rileigh:** "Boat life."

**Sydnee:** "Good luck! I'm goin' off on a boat. I'm a teenager, and me and this other teenager are gonna sail away on a boat for the entire summer."

**Rileigh:** Which is why Sydnee was in love with Pacey, right?

**Sydnee:** He built—I mean, he restored this whole boat, and then they sailed away together.

**Rileigh:** You just wanted a boat summer with Pacey. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** He buys her a wall! [loudly] He buys her a wall! [laughs]

**Rileigh:** A wall?!

**Taylor:** Yeah, to paint on?

**Sydnee:** For her to—uh-huh. For her to express herself on. He believes so much in her art that he buys her a wall down—well, he rents her a wall downtown, so that she can paint on a wall and express herself to the whole city.

**Rileigh:** The thing about *Dawson's Creek*—[laughs]—

**Sydnee:** It's so romantic!

**Rileigh:** From the very first episode, which—when I watched the first episode I was very intently watching, like, "Okay, I need to get all these, like, beginning plot points and, like, characters and their—their personalities so I can, like, understand the show better."

But it—it—you know, in every pilot of an episode they throw in those plot points that they don't fully explain so that you wanna keep watching.

*Dawson's Creek* is like every two minutes they're like, "Alright. What else can we—what else can we fit in here?"

And it does that every episode, is the thing. Not just the—[holding back laughter] not just the pilot episode. So there's just so much going on with everyone all the time!

**Sydnee:** Ju—Justin likes to focus on Dawson's parents a lot. Um, which they do have a lovely arc in the series, I will say.

**Rileigh:** [wheezes]

**Sydnee:** But... I mean, it starts out with, you know, Gail is cheating on Mitch, and then they get divorced—

**Rileigh:** [holding back laughter] They get divorced for a little bit.

**Taylor:** A little bit.

**Sydnee:** And then they get back together, and then they have a baby, and then Mitch dies in a tragic... ice cream accident. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Wait, what?!

**Sydnee:** [holding back laughter] He—he's driving his car and he's eating ice cream, and the scoop of ice cream falls off the cone, and he reaches down into

the floor of the passenger seat to scoop—to pick the ice cream off the floor, and he drives headfirst into a truck. And it's very sad.

**Rileigh:** Sorry, but you know that's something our Dad would do. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Oh no!

**Sydnee:** It's very sad! Ju—any time we're eating ice cream in the car now Justin says, "Don't pull a Mitch Leery."

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Um... it's very sad. It's very tragic. Uh, because they had this lovely little story. But in the background of the early seasons, Mitch is designing his restaurant.

**Rileigh:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** [through laughter] And it's appears to be a scuba-themed rest—[laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yes.

**Taylor:** Yeah!

**Sydnee:** In—in which people are actually wearing, like, old-fashioned, like—

**Rileigh:** The big helmets.

**Sydnee:** —big scuba helmets? [through laughter] Justin is obsessed with this! Like, "What is this restaurant that Mitch Leery is designing?!"

**Taylor:** It never comes to fruition, though, right?

**Sydnee:** Leery's Fresh Fish.

**Taylor:** Oh! It—

**Sydnee:** By the end of the show, it is—it is a restaurant.

**Rileigh:** Wow.

**Taylor:** Is it scuba-themed appropriately?

**Sydnee:** It's... fish. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Well, that's different.

**Raleigh:** Fish are—fish are nature's... scuba divers.

**Taylor:** Syd—

**Sydnee:** I love—

**Taylor:** —you went to med school. You know there's a difference between scuba divers and fish.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, well, it's—I mean, it's a fish place, but that's about it. Um... they—they also—I do love at the end—they signify in the time hop that they're all adults now because they drink. That's how you know they're all grownups. They're all drinking.

And some of them drink beer. Most of them drink wine. And I—I just, at some point, look at the wine that all the characters are drinking. It is a color that—and Taylor, you know alcohol better than me, and maybe there is a wine that is this color, but I don't think any wine is this strange... pinkish, reddish—I've never seen—so clear. I've never seen a r—it's not a rosé. I don't know what it is. But it's like—it's wine in the loosest sense.

**Raleigh:** So it's just water they put some food coloring in.

**Taylor:** It sounds like Boone's Farm.

**Raleigh:** Very clearly.

**Sydnee:** It—it does. It looks like they're all just, like, sitting around, like, adult, drinking [laughs] casual sip of Boone's Farm from this wine glass! It's so wild! Like, they all are! And I'm like, "Why don't they have... just—it's fi—like, they're grownups! That one's drinking a beer! Can't they just have an actual wine?!"



**Taylor:** I feel like that—I don't know. I notice that a lot in movies where wine doesn't film right, or else they're just using something and thinking, "It's fine." You know, like, "It'll show up right," and they just don't bother to—to fix it? To, like, use something that works? 'Cause—I don't really know. Like, maybe wine on camera looks thinner or looks different. How—how light passes through it. But I do wish—

**Sydnee:** Yeah, that's true.

**Taylor:** —people paid attention to those details more. Because also, one of those things that once it's on the screen I'm like, "Well, that's where my attention is. People might be talking, buildings might be exploding. I'm lookin' at the weird colored wine, or the dirty martini that's clear," or whatever. Like, I can't—I can't look away. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** There are, um—there are other reasons to watch this show the rest of the way through. Uh, Joey has a really hot professor for a while, and—

**Raleigh:** [gasps]

**Sydnee:** —there's—when she makes it to college, there's tension there.

**Raleigh:** [simultaneously] Scandal.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Uh, her roommate in college, Audrey, Busy Philipps, is hilarious and fantastic, and, like, is the on—she becomes the voice of the audience after a while. Like, basically saying, "What is the deal with you people?! Like, why are you all brooding and sad and, like, what do you have to worry about?!"

Like, it's very nice to have her on the show. She's very funny. Um, and different from any of the other characters. And, uh, I also will say, like, Jen is never given—I mean, Michelle Williams is a fantastic actor.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And, uh, her character I don't think is ever given enough through the show. She's really—I always felt like at the end, which I guess this ruins—this is a spoiler, but—

**Raleigh:** Spoiler!

**Sydnee:** —uh, Jen dies in the end.

**Raleigh:** [gasps]

**Sydnee:** And I always thought that was kind of unfair. Because it's really, like—it's a sacrifice I feel like of the plot in—in service to the big story line, which is "Who will Joey choose? Dawson or Pacey?" Which is unfortunate.

**Taylor:** Yeah, like, I—I was reading about that. [stammers] I guess the director said that they—that the one thing that the group hadn't encountered was, like, a loss of one of their own, and so that was really important. Just, you know, to kind of I guess check the boxes on—on their education into—into adulthood.

And so that's—that was the driving force to, like, get Joey to make up her mind, but—which it just—it's like, I mean, I guess if you're—if you're fridging a female character in service of another female character's development it's... better? I don't like it. I still don't like it. [laughs] Never gonna like it!

**Raleigh:** Yeah, but it's... [sighs] it's still like that classic trope that still happens in TV shows and movies that a female's story line ends when she chooses a male that she will be with romantically.

And we—we have talked about *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* before. Like, that's a show that was one of the first that ever was like, "Actually, that's not an end for a female. You can have a life, and romance can be a part of it, but your life doesn't end when you choose a male to settle down with."

**Sydnee:** And the—and the other characters don't—I mean... to some extent, Jack gets that happy ending. [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Um, because... well, I guess—I don't know. Is that a spoiler?

**Raleigh:** Yeah. A little bit.

**Sydnee:** Uh, Jack and Doug end up together, and it's—I don't know. I think it's one of the cutest scenes in the finale.

**Raleigh:** But in some ways it also, like, "We had two gay characters... "

**Sydnee:** "So we put them together."

**Raleigh:** "So we put them together." [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** No, it very much it. No, it very much is. And, uh—but, like... Jen does not—I do not think she gets a fair ending, 'cause she—she has had a child, and she has a very young baby, and then she's dying. And it's very—it's all very, like... "We've done all we needed to do with your character."

I don't—it's—I think it is—I think—that is the one thing where I was—when I was younger I was such, like, a Joey fan that I didn't connect with Jen. As an adult rewatching it, like, Jen had a lot figured out that the other characters didn't from the get-go, and I feel bad for the arc that character got.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** It's sad.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Uh, and then... well, I don't want—I guess—we're not—we're not getting too deep into the spoilers but, uh, the—I guess Dawson—Dawson gets his—his chosen end, which—he's not with anybody, right?

[pauses]

**Taylor:** Oh!

**Raleigh:** [gasps]

**Taylor:** Don't answer me.

**Raleigh:** [screams] No!

**Taylor:** Right, right, okay. Alright.

**Rileigh:** I got genuinely into *Dawson's Creek*, everyone. I started watching and I didn't stop watching until I had to go to sleep.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Rileigh:** Um, and—

**Taylor:** Never mind.

**Rileigh:** —it's okay, it's okay.

**Taylor:** Never mind.

**Rileigh:** You know, I was hoping Joey ended up with Pacey anyways.

**Sydnee:** Dawson—

**Rileigh:** And I kinda knew that was gonna happen. I didn't think they'd put Joey with Dawson. I figured Dawson's happy ending was, like, he did his movie, right?

**Sydnee:** He has a meeting with Spielberg the next morning.

**Rileigh:** Okay. That's his—

**Sydnee:** That's the—yeah.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Um—

**Rileigh:** That's his happy ending.

**Sydnee:** That's his happy ending.

**Rileigh:** Sure.

**Sydnee:** Well, but again, it's kind of what we're talking about. 'Cause he's a male character, so he gets—

**Rileigh:** He gets a career.

**Sydnee:** —yeah, he gets a career as a happy ending.

**Taylor:** I mean, that—that's—yeah, I kind of—I hate that that cliché happens, but also, I just couldn't... I don't know. You—Syd, you think—you said he gets better right now he deals with—he has some development, but man, I really... from the jump I was like, "Ugh. It's called *Dawson's Creek*, and I just hate Dawson." [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** [laughs] "Why can't this be someone else's creek?"

**Sydnee:** I know.

**Taylor:** Like, this is the quintessential guy that's never been told no or questioned. He gets to talk until his sentences are done, and then have some moments of silence where everyone's supposed to consider how intelligent they are [through laughter] before anyone starts talking.

**Sydnee:** He—he gets, um... he gets beaten down a little bit. After—after his Dad dies, and then, like, his—his foray in film school is not going as well as he thought it would. Like, things... things get harder for him. And his character gets to develop when things get harder. Um, and it introduces some other cool characters because of that. But, um... yeah. It—it—he definitely—it's not—he's not as cringy as things go on.

**Raleigh:** That's good.

**Sydnee:** Uh... but, um, yeah. So that's...

**Raleigh:** That's *Dawson's Creek*.

**Sydnee:** That's *Dawson's Creek*.

**Raleigh:** Overall, I—I genuinely did start watching it, and I was like, "I—I kinda want to keep watching it!" Because yes, it's one of those cringy over dramatic teen shows, but it's kinda mindless sometimes, which is nice.

**Sydnee:** Grams gets better.

**Raleigh:** Oh, that's good.

**Sydnee:** Not only does Grams, uh, turn around and that later she—'cause Gram starts to date later, after her husband passes away. Later on, she dates. And one of her suitors is Black, so.

**Raleigh:** Wow!

**Sydnee:** That changes.

**Raleigh:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** And then—which again I think is the show being like—

**Raleigh:** "Oops! We made—"

**Sydnee:** "Sorry."

**Raleigh:** "—Grams racist in the first season."

**Sydnee:** Yes. And then—

**Raleigh:** "Like, very racist." [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Yeah. And then, uh, when Jack comes out Grams is, like, fine with it.

**Raleigh:** Wow!

**Sydnee:** Super supportive. Um—

**Raleigh:** They made up for how awful they made her character by just making her, like, the most accepting? [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** They make her—they make her, like—she's still very religious, but she's very accepting and loving, and actually when Jack—Jack and Jen become, like, besties as the series goes on, and when Jack and Jen go away to college together, they bring Grams with them.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah, that's what you—you bring your—you bring your Gram-gram to college.

**Raleigh:** [through laughter] I brang—yeah!

**Sydnee:** It's—it's kinda—

**Raleigh:** Yep!

**Sydnee:** —she's like—she becomes, like—

**Raleigh:** That's very cute.

**Sydnee:** —the adult that—'cause a lot of the other adults just, like, disappear.

**Raleigh:** Right.

**Sydnee:** And she gets to stay.

**Raleigh:** That always happens in teen dramas. It's like, "Where the adults?"

**Taylor:** No parents.

**Raleigh:** Ever. No parents.

**Sydnee:** Well, that was actually—I was reading. That was actually why Mitch Leery's character ended up getting killed off, is 'cause the actor—who, by the way used to be The Flash—

**Raleigh:** Oh. Didn't know that.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. When—when he—when he found out, like, "They're going away to college and, like, we're just here," he was like, "I don't have time for this."  
[laughs]

**Raleigh:** "I don't wanna do this."

**Sydnee:** "Just kill me off or something. I don't—I'm—I'm kinda done with this whole thing."

**Raleigh:** Oh, man. That makes sense.

**Sydnee:** "So please get rid of me know."

**Raleigh:** Yeah

**Taylor:** [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Um, which I thought was kinda funny.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** I—I think it's interesting that you kind of witness in the show itself a bit of a—a cultural, like, awakening, or an attempt at actually being more sensitive and more aware of itself. 'Cause it started in the 90's and it was like, "Oh, this is fine, right? Every other scene is, like, homophobic or racist, and it's very white." And then it's like, "Ohh, okay. We're—people don't like this. We have to change things." But then they did, you know. They didn't just double down, like... some shows. Friends.

**Sydnee:** No, no, they definitely tried to change with it.

**Raleigh:** [simultaneously] Friends.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, like Friends. Yeah. No, they definitely tried to change with it and improve and fix things, and they got some stuff very wrong. They got some things, I think, pretty well.

**Raleigh:** Good.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Um, but, uh—but at the end of the day I still think it's, like—it's fluffy, and... enjoyable sometimes.

**Raleigh:** It is just one of those things you can turn on in the back, and some things—like, man, that's just unrealistic and wild, but also, like, aww, I kinda want to keep watching.

**Taylor:** Hey, everybody gets to have some butter noodles every now and then.  
[laughs]



**Rileigh:** Yeah!

**Sydnee:** There we go.

**Rileigh:** There you go.

**Sydnee:** If you need some buttered noodles...

**Rileigh:** They're all on Hulu.

**Sydnee:** Teylor, what's up next?

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Teylor:** Uh, so, up next, I want to go with a movie. I want to talk about *Edward Scissorhands*. Uh—

**Sydnee:** Oh, that's good.

**Teylor:** —of course directed by Tim Burton, came out in 1990. Um, sort of quintessential, young, spooky people viewing in my generation. [laughs quietly] I identified as a young spooky person, so there's that. [laughs quietly]

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Alright!

**Rileigh:** I'm very excited.

**Sydnee:** I—I think—I think Charlie can handle it. I'll watch it with Charlie. Not Cooper.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. It's been a while since I've watched it. I was too young. I got freaked out the first time.

**Teylor:** Yeah...

**Rileigh:** I'll be better now.

**Sydnee:** Well, we will do that for next week. Thank you both for indulging me.

**Raleigh:** Of course.

**Sydnee:** I'll never make you watch *Dawson's Creek* again.

**Taylor:** No! I mean, [stammers]

**Raleigh:** I'll just *choose* to watch *Dawson's Creek* now.

**Taylor:** I think I would watch more of it. Like, just on the—on in the background while I'm drawing. I like to find things that I can kind of focus on, but don't have to focus on too much, and that's—that's good. So—Raleigh, apparently you're gonna watch it all now. This is your thing.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. I—it might happen the next week we come to record and I have watched all of it. You never know.

**Sydnee:** Stick in there for Busy Philipps.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Um... well, thank you all. Thank you, again, uh, to *FANTI*—

**Raleigh:** Yes, thank you, *FANTI*.

**Sydnee:** —for allowing us to drop their—drop their episode last week. Um, we really appreciated them giving us the opportunity to do that and to share that with our audience as well. Um, thank you, listeners. I hope everybody out there is, um, staying safe, staying healthy, um, taking care of yourself and others. Um, Maximumfun.org has a lot of wonderful shows that you would enjoy, in the downtime you have right now, when you need a break.

Um, you can tweet at us @stillbuff. You can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org. 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 Teylor Smirl.

**Raleigh:** I am still buffering...

**Sydnee and Taylor:** And I... am... too.

[music plays in the background]

**Raleigh:** [humming *Dawson's Creek* theme]

**Taylor:** Yep.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [humming]

**Taylor:** But the one on Hulu doesn't have that song!

**Sydnee:** I know, I don't—

**Raleigh:** It's different.

**Sydnee:** —they—they didn't have the—I don't think they had the rights. The only time they play it is the series finale.

**Raleigh:** Mmm.

**Taylor:** Ohh.

**Sydnee:** So you just gotta watch the whole thing.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm, yeah.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Jarrett:** Hey, I'm Jarrett Hill, cohost of the brand new Maximum Fun podcast, *FANTI*.

**Tre'vell:** And I'm Tre'vell Anderson. I'm the other, more fabulous cohost, and the reason you really should be tunin' in!

**Jarrett:** I feel the nausea rising.

**Tre'vell:** To be fanti is to be a big fan of something, but also have some challenging or *anti* feelings towards it.

**Jarrett:** Kinda like Kanye.

**Tre'vell:** We're all fans of Kanye, he's a musical genius. But, like, you know...

**Jarrett:** He thinks slavery is a choice.

**Tre'vell:** Or like *The Real Housewives of Atlanta*. Like, I love the drama, but do I wanna see Black women fightin' each other on screen?

**Speaker 1:** [singing] Hell to the naw, to the naw, naw, naw! [laughs quietly]

**Jarrett:** We're tackling all of those complex and complicated conversations about the people, places, and things that we love!

**Tre'vell:** Even though they may not love us back.

**Jarrett:** *FANTI!* Maximum Fun. Podcast.

**Tre'vell:** Ew!

[music plays]

\*\*\*\*\*

[chord]

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