

Still Buffering 221: Glee (2009-2015)

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[theme music plays]

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

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl.

Sydnee: Welcome to another week of the MaxFunDrive.

Rileigh: Yes!

Sydnee: This is fun.

Taylor: Our nice, mellow MaxFunDrive.

Sydnee: Our mellow MaxFunDrive. It's fun, it's week three, we've never—this is uncharted territory.

Rileigh: For everybody!

Sydnee: Yeah.

Rileigh: Usually it's only two!

Sydnee: What happens in week three?

[pauses]

Taylor: This, I guess.

Rileigh: No one knows!

Taylor: Right? We're experiencing it.

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. [holding back laughter] So I guess we'll find out.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I wonder if it's sort of like—you know on *Brooklyn 99* when, uh, what's-her-face success—like, drinks more drinks, and each drink Amy gets—

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: —and becomes a different person?

Raleigh: Like Two Drink Amy, Three Drink Amy, yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah. Is, like, really into sex, and then another one's really sad, and another one's, like, really goofy, and... yeah.

Raleigh: That's like One Week MaxFunDrive, Two Weeks MaxFunDrive—

Sydnee: So what's Week Three MaxFunDrive like?

Raleigh: What's Three?

[pauses]

Raleigh: Is it—

Taylor: Uhh—

Sydnee: We'll see.

Raleigh: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: From my perspective, it's sweaty, but that's just because this part of my apartment isn't touched by the air conditioning. [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: That's right. You heard it here first, folks – it's the sweaty week of MaxFunDrive.

Taylor: [through laughter] Yes. There you go. All of my weeks are sweaty now.

Raleigh: *I* know what's special about week three of MaxFunDrive.

Sydnee: What's that?

Raleigh: This is the week that, um, our bonus episode will be available.

Sydnee: That's right!

Taylor: Oh, that's right, yes.

Sydnee: There's so much bonus content, and ours is going to join all the other bonus content with welcome—it will hug them... all.

Raleigh: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: You listen to it. If you become a member, you can listen to all this... great content. Um... we are a listener supported network, and because of all of our members that we are so grateful for, that help support us, we are able to continue to make the shows we make and, uh, hopefully make them better, make our sound quality better, do more of them... [laughs quietly] Do better of them.

And, uh, by going to Maximumfun.org/join to sign up and get some cool gifts, uh, you can help us make our shows, and help the whole network make all the shows that we make. Uh, there are lots of levels. Five dollars a month, \$10 a month, whatever you can do. But we'll tell you more about the gifts

later, but for now, just remember – Maximumfun.org/join is, uh, the website to know. So...

Raleigh: Welcome.

Sydnee: Welcome. Uh, Raleigh, I really appreciated your topic this week.

Raleigh: Thank you.

[pauses]

Sydnee: You look surprised.

Raleigh: I just—I am! [laughs]

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh—[laughs quietly] Well, it was a great opportunity to bond with Charlie. Um, I did want to mention, we had to build a fort in which to bond.

Raleigh: Ah.

Sydnee: That was the agreement.

Raleigh: Forts are fun.

Sydnee: She would only watch the show with me that I had chosen that was not—she said, "Is it a cartoon?"

"No."

"Hmm. Is it about little kids?"

And I was like, "It's about teens?"

Raleigh: She loves saying she's gonna be a teen soon. Even though she's not, she loves saying that she is.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. And I said, "It's about teens." And she said, "Mmm... I don't know... "

Raleigh: "Hmm... "

Sydnee: And I said, "Well, make a deal with me. You'll watch the show with me if I..." And she said, "Build a fort." Instantly. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I'd—wait a second. So you're sayin' that I watched this show for no rewards whatsoever, and I could've had a fort? Is that what you're telling me right now? 'Cause...

Sydnee: You—yep. You could've had a fort.

Taylor: I feel a little cheated. I did not push the issue.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: I didn't know that there was bargaining to be done for this, or I certainly would've done it. [laughs]

Sydnee: Can I tell you—if you—I wish I could share—the fort—all my pictures of our fort have Charlie in them, so I won't share them on social media. I wish I could. It was a phenomenal fort that I built—

Raleigh: It was a very good fort.

Sydnee: —out of couch cushions and pillows and all the blankets we had, everything. I—and then, I let Charlie decorate the inside of it. She had, like, little string—a little string of fairy lights she put up inside it.

Um, she put some of her favorite books. She, like—that's how she lined the walls. Instead of wallpaper she just put books around the edges that she liked the covers.

Raleigh: That's very good.

Sydnee: Um, she brought in some of her, like, little knick knacks from her dresser, and then a painting of Justin.

Raleigh: Yes.

Taylor: [laughs] Wha—a—well, okay.

Sydnee: A painting of Justin that, um, one of his fans had sent him. It's—we've had it for a while, that Charlie keeps in her room. She put it up in the back of the fort, like, right under the fairy lights, so it kind of looked like a shrine to Justin. [laughs]

Raleigh: Oh, good. [laughs]

Sydnee: And this is—this is what she sat in the entire time we watched *Glee*.

Raleigh: Wow.

Sydnee: Yeah. In her fort. It was a great—I just have to say, it was the best fort I've ever made.

Taylor: That sounds like a really good fort.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: The fairy lights really make it.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Just, like, its own little home.

Sydnee: And the books were really—it was very funny. It was like, "Here's a Muppet book, and here are—" there were a couple comic books in there, she had to include those. And then she wanted one comic book open. It was

a DC Superhero Girls comic, and she wanted it open to a certain page and then displayed.

Taylor: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: I feel like this is—she's gotten this very honestly from the two of you.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Yeah, I was gonna say, your all's house is kind of decorated with books, because you just have bookshelves everywhere, with lots of books in 'em! So she's learned from you.

Sydnee: It's important to have an extensive reference library. You never know—

Raleigh: No, I get it!

Sydnee: —what you don't know!

Raleigh: I've never gotten rid of a single book. I have way too many. I get it.

Sydnee: I have to look through them sometimes just to see, like, what do I not know about? Hmm. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Have you, uh, heard of something called the internet? It's all there.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs] My—

Sydnee: Now—

Raleigh: This is—this is my favorite trick. It doesn't happen as much with Sydnee, because she lives with Justin who is, like, one of the most internet savvy people of all time.

Sydnee: That's true, that's true.

Raleigh: But that's my favorite thing that happens with our parents sometimes, is they'll be like, "I don't—I don't know how to do this thing." Or, like, "How am I supposed to know how to use this or do this? I have no idea! We don't have the instruction booklet still, and I have no—I've never done this before!"

And I'm like, "Look, guys, just... your phone. Just look up how to blank, and it's right there."

Sydnee: Every—every time it's about going somewhere, about, like, directions somewhere...

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah...

Sydnee: Whenever I hear the phrase, "We're going to map it out," I'm like, "Oh no... no... " 'Cause I envision, like, are—would they actually use... maps? [laughs]

Raleigh: It reminds me of the days of MapQuest—

Sydnee: Paper?

Raleigh: —when they would type in the thing and print out the sheets with the step-by-step directions on them, and Mom would have to sit up front and yell them out to Dad.

Sydnee: Oh ho ho, I think they are one step away from road atlas days.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I think—I think at any moment, our parents would revert to whipping out physical paper maps—

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: —and drawing routes.

Taylor: I actually—I remember using those, Syd, on your senior trip, when we went down to the beach, and there were just, like, three giant map books in the backseat that we pulled from to figure out how to get from West Virginia to Florida.

Sydnee: We did, we did, and we would highlight the routes to go. And gosh, those were wild days. You know in those days, Raleigh... [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Uh-huh?

Sydnee: You would—if you needed to stop somewhere, like, to stay halfway, like if you weren't gonna drive all the way and you wanted to stay at a hotel, you would just kinda get to a point where, like, "Well, I guess I've driven enough."

And you'd look for an exit with a hotel, and then you'd just walk in and say, like, [holding back laughter] "Do you have any rooms?"

Raleigh: No.

Taylor: Yeah, yeah!

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: No. No.

Taylor: Nothin' booked ahead of time. I remember using, uh—

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: I remember using MapQuest, printed-off MapQuest directions to get to Otakon.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: My junior or senior year of high school. Uh, and we thought we were bein' real cute, marking them off as we went so we would know what we'd already done. We did not think that we have to come *back* from Otakon...

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: Oh no!

Taylor: So, first off, you gotta use the same directions in reverse, but that doesn't really work. And also, oh, we Sharpied out all of the directions [through laughter] on our way here! So...

Sydnee: It is—it is astounding—

Taylor: Let's see where we go! [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: It is astounding how often using the directions in reverse did not work. [laughs]

Taylor: No! That's not how directions work at all! [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs] It's almost like some roads only go one direction!

Taylor: Exactly.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: And—yeah, and the, uh—what is the—gosh, what's the big turnpike that goes around, like, from Baltimore to DC? The—

Raleigh: Oh, I know what you mean.

Taylor: Yeah, there's that big—it goes in two directions as well. And if you get goin' on the wrong direction, you will end up in DC. And uh, and not Maryland. Uh, that's—yeah, I don't know how we survived. [through laughter] I don't know how we got back...

Raleigh: I will just say—

Taylor: How we got there...

Raleigh: —my sense of direction is horrible, and I am so glad that I drive in the era of readily available, accurate GPS.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: That is fair.

Raleigh: I wouldn't get anywhere if I didn't. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. There was a time where I remember people used to know all the interstates that would, like, go places. Like, they could just say, like, "Well, you take this one, and then you take this one."

I remember it was a challenge on an old *Big Brother* or something.

Raleigh: Oh my gosh.

Sydnee: Like, name all the interstates to get from one place to another. And can you imagine doing that now?

Raleigh: Dad still tries to do that with me sometimes when I'm asking him how to get somewhere. He's like, "Well, you just take the—take 64 to here,

and then you hop on whatever, and then you get on this, and then you go a little bit, and then you get off at this exit and you're there."

And I just look at him like... "I don't know why you think I can do this."
[laughs]

Sydnee: It's a very Dad thing. That's a very dadly—dadly skill. [laughs]

Taylor: That's like when people tell you, "Oh, you just head west." And I'm like, "What—that—"

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: "What—that means—"

Raleigh: I don't have a compass!

Taylor: "—nothing!" [laughs] Like, what is—am I basing this off the—the sunlight? Is there a crow that will direct me? What does that mean, west?! I don't know west!

Sydnee: I—I never understood that either. Like, I don't know—I don't want—I don't want compass directions. And also, I live in West Virginia, so we don't know distances.

Raleigh: No.

Sydnee: Everything is in time. How far away is that? About an hour. How far away is that? Oh, at least two. How far away is that? Oh, that's just a long way.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: That's just—which means, like, over three hours.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Yeah. It's a ways away.

Sydnee: [laughs] That—if you—[laughs] Honestly, in West Virginia, further than 10 minutes is a ways away.

Raleigh: That's a ways away! [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah. Like, I—I, uh—Manhattan is set up on a grid. It is west, east, north, south. If I'm in Manhattan, those directions mean something to me. But outside of that, it is just as... just as useless as a riddle. [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] Whenever you say that, you just gotta look for the nearest tree, see which side the moss is growing on...

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] "I've found north!"

Taylor: Look for a suspicious cat that will lead you on your way! [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, so what did we miss on *Glee*?

Raleigh: [humming]

Sydnee: I was trying to do the thing.

Raleigh: Yeah, yeah. Um, a lot! There's a lot that happens in *Glee*. [laughs]

Sydnee: We watched *Glee*. Uh, Charlie—I will say, uh, once she got into it, she really liked it, and actually I had, uh, left the room for a second to chase Cooper, and she turned on the next episode on her own while I was gone 'cause she wanted to see what happened next, so...

Raleigh: Now—

Sydnee: Although she did at one point say, "Mommy, what's sex?" And I was like—

Taylor: Oh!

Sydnee: "Ah, crap."

Raleigh: Nooo!

Sydnee: "Aw, man!"

Raleigh: What'd you say?

Sydnee: We'll talk about it when the episode's over.

Raleigh: Okay.

Sydnee: And then she forgot.

Raleigh: And she forgot, yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: How many years do you think that'll work for you?

Sydnee: I will have a frank, honest—I think you both know this about me.

Raleigh: Yes. I believe that 100%.

Sydnee: I will have an honest and open discussion when she really wants to know the answers to these questions. I don't think we're quite there. But once we're ready, when she looks at me and is ready I will—you know I will. I'll get out graphs and charts—

Raleigh: Oh yeah.

Sydnee: —and pictures, and use the right name for everything. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: Um... so, *Glee*. [laughs quietly] Uh, *Glee* started in May of 2009 and ended in 2015, so it was on for several years. Um, it was my favorite show, like, of all time. It was my greatest obsession for years. It was all I wanted to watch, all I wanted to talk about.

I wanted to be in show choir. I was convinced that was what high school would be like, and that was what show choir would be like in high school. Little did I know that my high school didn't have, like, a competitive show choir when I got to it. [laughs]

Sydnee: Do they not—

Raleigh: Nope.

Sydnee: Was Illusions still not a thing?

Raleigh: Nope.

Sydnee: Really?

Raleigh: You can take the *class* show choir, but it's not like *Glee*. They don't just stand up and sing songs to each other.

Sydnee: No...

Raleigh: And they don't even compete. I didn't even get to go to New York and sing about loving New York at the National Show Choir competition. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: We sort of did that, though. I mean, we didn't go to New York but, like, we went to Universal Studios and performed.

Raleigh: See?

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: You basically lived *Glee*. [laughs]

Sydnee: I did live *Glee*—I mean, that's a—*Glee*—there are parts of *Glee* that feel very real and familiar to me.

Raleigh: Um, I wanna play a quick little game real quick. I want—I want you all to guess the Rotten Tomatoes score of *Glee*, for the entire show as a whole, knowing that you all watched pretty much all the first season. Sydnee, you've watched it all in past years.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Um, and knowing that the viewership by the last season ended up being less than a third of what the viewership was for the first two seasons.

Taylor: Ooh.

Raleigh: I just want everyone to guess what they think that Rotten Tomatoes score is. [laughs]

Taylor: So that—I mean, I just want to make the assumption. That means that what I saw as just the first season is considered the *good* part?

Raleigh: Yeah. There are six seasons, and seasons one through three are usually, like—that's good *Glee*. Once you get past that it's like, "No, that's bad *Glee*."

Taylor: Uhh...

Sydnee: It's like a lot of shows where they try to transition characters into the college years, things start to go...

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: ... awry.

Taylor: We're doin' our best over here on Still Buff. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: [through laughter] We do—we did—aw, man. [laughs]

Sydnee: Aw. Oof!

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Oops.

Raleigh: Oops.

Taylor: Uh, I'm gonna guess a 25.

Raleigh: Ooh.

Sydnee: That's really low. I would've guessed 60.

Raleigh: 60? It's a 71!

Taylor: Whoa!

Sydnee: Hey!

Raleigh: I know, right? I would not have guessed that!

Sydnee: It's because those—in those first three years, people really loved it.

Raleigh: People loved *Glee*!

Sydnee: People loved the music, too. Like, the—the mash ups and stuff were, like... everybody was listening to those.

Rileigh: So, I was reading about how it came to fruition, um, and it was—Ian Brennan was one of the original writers of the show, and he originally wrote it as a movie, and tried to find people to work with on it, and eventually, um, Ryan Murphy got involved.

And he said, "Well, this should be a TV show. This lends itself to being a long-running series." Um, if you go somewhere like Fox where their top show at the time was American Idol, I guess, people love musical shows there. Just make this into a musical and combine it with, like, the top songs of every week, and musical theater songs for those kind of people—

Sydnee: [bursts into laughter]

Rileigh: —and you've got a great show!

Sydnee: For those kind of people!

Rileigh: For those kind of people, which you know isn't the majority of people watching, you know, like, Fox. Um, and apparently within 15 hours of Fox receiving the pilot, they picked up the show.

Sydnee: And also, I bet it's easier to write the show when you know that you can take up big chunks of it with musical numbers. [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah. I—[holding back laughter] I saw a video once that was like, *Glee*—

Sydnee: Less plot density per episode! [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah. That *Glee* without the musical numbers is, like, 15 minutes of dialog. [laughs] For an hour long show. [laughs]

Sydnee: Um, you just put in some musical numbers, some slushies in the face, and...

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeahhh.

Sydnee: ... you just got a few lines to write.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Lot of wasted slushies, there.

Raleigh: Yeah. Which is just a wild way of—jocks bullying nerds is supposed to be the thing? You throw a slushie in their face? Like, what is—you paid for the slushie and you don't even get to drink it! You're just throwing it in someone's face!

Sydnee: It's hard for me to, like... that—I think now, obviously, the way that people are treated like that—like, the idea that, like, that would be okay is a very cynical view of high school. That, um, it would not—it would be such a thing. Can you imagine if that hap—that would be such a big deal.

Raleigh: Oh yeah.

Sydnee: Um, now. But then, when I look back to when I was in high school, I don't remember people, like, tormenting people like that, openly in the hallways in a way that, like...

Raleigh: Well, I don't either!

Sydnee: ... administrators would see and teachers would see and turn a blind eye. I mean, I'm not saying, like, people weren't tormented in high school. Many people were. But, like, I don't know. That—

Raleigh: It was never like it was in the movies and TV shows where you saw, like, people being thrown up against lockers and asked for their lunch money or whatever.

Sydnee: And teachers looking away so they didn't get involved.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: I did have—once, I was collecting money for, like, a—it was, like, a... a charity walk for some sort of—I don't know. It was one of those walk for life things, and I had my little can that was for money, and one of the—it was in health class, and one of the older kids that was cool... he walked in and he put his gum—

Raleigh: [gasps]

Sydnee: Ugh!

Taylor: —in the slot and said, "There you go."

Raleigh: Ew!

Taylor: And my first thought was, "Oh no!" And then my second thought was, "This is like one of those moments in the movie!" [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: "I'm in it!" [laughs]

Taylor: That was the one, though. That was the one. Outside of that, it was all just, you know, behind your back kind of stuff. But that was a very—very cinematic moment of bullying in my youth.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: It has a lot of *Glee*—and I don't know if I would've thought about this when I was watching it when I was younger, but it has a lot of cynicism about, like, the public school system, and about the way that adults feel about teenagers and treat teenagers and, like, um... I don't know.

A lot of that doesn't really—it's hard for me now as a grownup. I'm like, "Ehh... I don't wanna—" Like, I don't believe that is true most of the time. I don't believe that default. It makes me sad to think about. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: I don't—it's harder for me. Where as a kid, I probably didn't pick up on as much of that.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Well, I wasn't a kid when I watched it, but I was younger.

Raleigh: Well, yeah. It started, like, what, 11 years ago? Oh my—

Sydnee: I was less mature than I am now.

Raleigh: Gosh. Um, yeah. But for those of you who don't know, *Glee* is about a show—a show choir at a high school in Ohio. Um, and you've got your cheerleaders, your mean cheerleading coach, your football players, and then the Glee club, the show choir, that eventually gets jocks and the cheerleaders and the cool people to join, and rise to show choir fame.

Sydnee: The—and the thing that, uh, the do early on to, like, raise the Glee club out of total, um... the social sub-basement I think is where they say they are...

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: ... uh, is they do a performance at an assembly for the whole school, uh, of Salt-N-Pepa's "Push It."

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly] And because it's so sexy, everybody's like, "We love the Glee club!"

Raleigh: [simultaneously] "We love Glee club!" [laughs]

Sydnee: Which—

Taylor: Is that—

Sydnee: —it was funny—[laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: What do you want to say, Tey? 'Cause I have—these are my thoughts on this. [laughs]

Taylor: I just thought that that moment was a—very much a suspension of disbelief, because as I was watching it I'm like, "Oh, surely the—this is gonna be—they get laughed off the stage, and then it's like a big fail."

And then when the whole audience stood up and cheered, uh, in celebration, I thought, "Ah, okay. Well... [through laughter] That's not accurate!"

Rileigh: Now, Teylor—[holding back laughter] would you be surprised to know that this is not the only time in the series that the Glee club starts a sex riot in the auditorium with their sexy Glee club performance?

Taylor: I—I didn't know that would be a r—uh, r—something they would return to that's a theme!

Rileigh: Yep! [laughs]

Sydnee: It was simultaneously—

Taylor: [pained] Oh no...

Sydnee: —that's the thing. It's simultaneously—because it is set up kind of opposite this plot line about the celibacy club. And the thing about the celibacy club is that it's like this idea of, like, all the popular kids are in the celibacy club, but many of them are having sex, and are not in fact celibate. Um, they're just in it because it's what they think their parents want and what looks good. It's like being in the coolest club. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: [holding back laughter] Yeah, the celibacy club.

Taylor: Sure!

Sydnee: And so—so I think they're trying to play this other side of it which is like, here are these, like, outcast kids who are having this, like, honest and open discussion about the fact that, like, we should talk about sex because teens are having it, and if we are open about it then we can be sex positive.

And, like, they're trying to do that, but it ends up is, like, [through laughter] the *Glee* club does this weird sex show in front of whole school. And it's funny, because I thought, "Well, I was in show choir. And, like... [pauses] That's not that far off. Like—" [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: The nerdy kids were up to all kinds of freaky stuff that nobody knew about.

Raleigh: Yeah, I believe that.

Sydnee: And so, like—you know? It's not—that isn't that off base, but nobody—like, nobody did it in front of the school, because then everybody would've made fun of you! I don't know. It's this weird moment of simultaneously, like, "Oh, I recognize that." And, "Oh, but that was not the reaction." [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah, that's—that was the part—I just—I don't think that they're—I don't know. Like, you just perform that really sexy solo onstage in the school musical and the popular kids are like, "Actually, you know what? I've never really looked at you the way I should." [laughs] Like, that doesn't happen!

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs] The best is I think the next season, when they do a Britney Spears assembly and they sing "Toxic," and it is, again, a sexy number, but this time, Mr. Schue sings "Toxic" and dances with them. [holding back laughter] In front of the whole school.

Taylor: Hmm...

Sydnee: I—okay. We need to talk about—

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: —this is a great segue into, um, the—so, the director of the show choir, William Schuester, Mr. Schue, as he is known by his students, uh, is a frequent performer.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: And I want to—I want to dissect that, and some of the particular performances that he seems, um, apt to do. But before we do that... [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Let's check the group message. [laughs quietly]

--

Sydnee: First of all, I have big news for you all this week on the group message.

Raleigh: What's that?

Sydnee: I did a art.

Raleigh: Whaaat?

Taylor: You did an art?

Sydnee: I did an art. All on my own, Tey.

Taylor: That's... good! I'm—

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: That's right. [laughs quietly] I am not, uh, an artistically inclined person. When it comes to, like, any sort of, I believe you would call it 'rendering,' Teylor? [laughs quietly]

Teylor: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Making things look like they look.

Teylor: Ah, yes, yes.

Sydnee: Can't do that at all. Uh, so I don't feel like I have ever really been able to use that medium to—like, visual art to express myself in any way, because I'm not—I'm not very adept at it.

Uh, and then we got Wild Gears. What are Wild Gears? Well, they—it's basically like the Spirographs. The idea that you used to use when you were younger, except they're—they're so much better. They're more precise, they're laser cut gears, they're beautiful, they've got all different kinds of, like, sizes and shapes and, um—I mean, they're really—they're really easy to use once you get the hang of it, and you can create designs and things that are way beyond what you could do with what you're remembering the Spirographs you used as a kid.

So I was able to try these out with Charlie. Uh, she had a blast with 'em, and I was actually able to, like, make something that was cool, and looked good, and was nice, and I could share with other people. They were really easy to use, really easy to learn. And it really is—I know this sounds... like a small thing, but I always assumed art was something I could not do. It was like, "This is not for me. I can't do art. I don't know how. I'm bad at it."

And I could create something that was, you know, abstract and different and cool, and it was a fun experience. It was fun to use. I could share it with my kid, and I felt really good about it!

Raleigh: Yeah!

Sydnee: You know? So, uh, you can make all kinds of designs. They're really high quality. Uh, like I said, it's like the Spirograph you remember

using, but Wild Gears has taken it to that next level. And right now, we all need something that's kind of relaxing and fun and freeing to express ourselves while we're at home.

Raleigh: For sure.

Sydnee: So Tey, if our listeners want to check out Wild Gears, what should they do?

Taylor: Well, you can discover Wild Gears and get a 20% discount at wildgears.com/stillbuff. So get that 20% discount, wildgears.com/stillbuff.

Sydnee: That's right. Wildgears.com/stillbuff. Check 'em out!

Raleigh: Yeah. Um, I have a great announcement.

Sydnee: Okay.

Raleigh: So, we already talked about how it's MaxFunDrive. It's week three. Remember that's, uh, Maximumfun.org/join if you want to sign up to become a Maximum Fun member of our family.

Um, but this week we have something very special. So, we have our gifts, which we've talked about a little bit. You know, five dollars a month, we have all that great bonus content from every past MaxFunDrive, every single show. This year we're playing more D&D with our Mom. We did last year as well. Lots of great episodes of all your shows you listen to.

At \$10 a month, you get to pick your favorite enamel pin, and you get that as your member gift. But, for all of our members at the \$10 a month level or higher, now you can purchase additional pins from the Max Fun store! So if there were, like, three you couldn't choose between and you just picked one, but you still want those other two, now you can get 'em! It's great!

Sydnee: There are so many good ones. There's—it's hard to choose, even for me, which one I like the best. So, uh, now you have the opportunity to get more than one!

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um, and like Raleigh said, there are lots of levels to contribute at. There's a five dollar a month, \$10 a month, whatever you feel comfortable. There are higher dollar amounts as well, and gifts associated with every one of those levels. Um, but a lot of people like the pins. They look great on jackets, and vests, and backpacks, and—

Raleigh: Which is why ours is my favorite, because it's very meta. Ours is a little jean jacket that has a *Still Buffering* patch across the back, and a bunch of other little cute patches, so if you wear it on your jean jacket it's like, "Whoa! Jean jacket on your jean jacket!"

Sydnee: And it's important to know, all the proceeds from the additional pins that you buy go to charity.

Raleigh: That's great!

Sydnee: So not only are you—you know, if you're at the \$10 a month level, you're supporting the network, and if you buy extra pins, you're supporting a great cause. Uh, so, you know, you're doin' great stuff.

Raleigh: Go check that out.

Sydnee: And thank you, thank you. If you are a member, uh, if you—if you aren't, but you share our show, tell a friend, share a link, tweet about it, whatever, that really helps us out. Um, thank you for all that you do in helping us make this possible. Um, and if you wanna do—if you wanna join, if you wanna upgrade, Maximumfun.org/join.

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Raleigh: Okay. I need to talk more about Mr. William Schuester. [laughs]

Sydnee: I had forgotten how often he was involved in the performances.

Raleigh: In the music, yeah. Um, I like to forget about it sometimes. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I mean, it's fine in the context of the show, inasmuch as I think all of these actors are kind of similarly aged, right?

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Like, he's played by a young dude, the actors are all a little bit older than what they're portraying. But yeah, then you think about this in, like, high school experience. Like, "Oh, that would be super weird, and kinda creepy."

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Well, it always—and, like, in—in choir classes, like, your teacher did sing periodically.

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: But it was usually, like, to help you with the part. Like, to show you. It wasn't like...

Raleigh: In a performance?

Sydnee: Well, and it was never like, "Okay, kids. Here's the number you're about to do. But before I have you all do it, I'm going to hit the beat box... [laughs quietly] And perform it for you all, alone, in the room, here I go."

That would have been *wild*. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah. [sighs] He just... like, I respect Matthew Morrison as a performer. He was a Broadway guy. He's very talented.

Sydnee: Obviously, he's very talented.

Raleigh: Um, and he has a great voice. But just some of the song choices, when you think about this very white high school teacher... for the first season, he sings a lot of songs by black artists, and he raps a lot.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: Uh—well, and that's—I mean, partially because, you know, I think one of the criticisms of *Glee* is there—there aren't a lot of black performers in the cast to—

Raleigh: There aren't.

Taylor: —to do those performances, unfortunately.

Sydnee: No, and that—it kinda gets into, like... watching *Glee* now in today's world, it gets into... what I think is both the thing it did well and the thing that it did poorly, um, at the exact same time.

Which is, I think that there were a lot of shows that didn't really know how to address any issues that mattered, didn't know how to talk about things, so they just didn't talk about 'em. Um, because, I mean, the staffs of the shows that were making the shows were not diverse in any way, so they didn't—they would just stay away from those issues.

Or you have shows, like Raleigh, you had said *How I Met Your Mother* was on in this time frame too, which was a show that I very much enjoyed some elements of, but oof, did not age well in others.

Raleigh: And was a very not diverse cast and crew and all that kind of stuff, yeah.

Sydnee: And I think *Glee* tried to handle some of these issues. I think sometimes it's very clunky. Uh, and in some ways, it was just like it didn't even see... how bad it looks to have a *Glee* club that is not very racially diverse in many ways, and they would tackle a song by a black artist and have their white leads perform it.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um... or the white *teacher* perform it.

Raleigh: Which is just bad on another level.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um, 'cause it's like I won't even let one of my students do it. I'm gonna do it—and he—and, like, at that point on the show they have black members of the Glee club, so they don't have to use white people. So, I mean, it's all—there are some of those issues where it's like, "Ooh. Why—" I mean, now—you hopefully wouldn't see that now, in 2020.

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: Hopefully.

Raleigh: Um, it also—it makes you think about, like... it's a show that—I mean, it started in 2009. It tried, I think, to be a more diverse cast and show with plots that were probably a little bit more... inclusive, I guess, than a lot of other shows at the time?

I mean, it had openly gay main cast members, it had not-white main cast members... but it also, you know, had bullies that said really offensive things to these people in minority groups, and the bullies also weren't ever, like, made out to be the horrible bad people that get punished for being horrible bad people to all these diverse groups of people. They were just, like, other characters.

So yes, it was shown to be bullying, all these offensive things that were said in the show, but, like, is it okay to continue saying all those offensive things, even if it's bullying, if nothing ever comes of it?

Sydnee: Well, and if you try to redeem the characters who do it, too.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I mean, I think—I think that's the hard thing is, like, the character Sue Sylvester, who's in charge of the cheerleading squad, um, Jane Lynch, says some... at least in the first season, and probably continuing—

Raleigh: Continuously.

Sydnee: I just—I—I don't remember it as well—some really horrific things. Um, and if you're playing that character for the villain, and they just—and I don't know, I mean, I guess from a story arc, you hope that they either have some giant change of heart and, like, try to make amends for all the damage they've done or, from a storytelling perspective, they get their comeuppance.

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: But I—I never feel like either happens. Like, we redeem and try to, like, "Well, they might be bad in these ways, but here are these other ways we're gonna humanize them that makes this thing okay."

And it's like, "Well, no." 'Cause homophobia's never okay, and transphobia's never okay, and, you know, racism is never okay. And so you can't... you can't balance out that bad stuff in the character with some good stuff later.

Raleigh: Right.

Taylor: Well, and I think it's—you know, as we were talking beforehand, Syd, you made the good point that it is set in high school, and so some of these sort of... I think you used the word "clunky," like, trying to introduce a character whose identity is kind of, you know, something that is either mocked in the show or used as a joke, but then people have to come around to that.

Like, in high school, that is like, when we're young we have a lot of people, you know, across the nation and around the world, they grow up with wrong ideas about people. They grow up with limited, closed-minded ideas, and you have to be exposed to other people, and you, you know, have to kind of open yourself up to those people. And so, that's something that teens go through.

So, to show, like, a teen learning how to be more accepting and open-minded I think is—it's valid. It is—when it's in an adult, it's kind of... well, now we're just, you know... like, that's—it's hard to root for an adult to, like, have a turnaround and, like, a, you know—grow as a character, because they should already be there. The kids, it's a little bit easier to stomach.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: Especially when it's an adult who is making these attacks on kids.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Most of the time.

Sydnee: Yeah, that—and I think a lot of that is kind of played for laughs. I mean, frankly. I don't think it was about sending a message.

I do think that when you talk about the relationships between the teen characters, you do see more of what you're saying, Tey, which is that the characters start out with very limited perspectives, some of them, and then grow in their acceptance and understanding and become better humans.

I do think you see that evolution happening, and I think, at times, it's handled well and is very powerful and meaningful. And representation, you know, at that time period, was still rare. And so, like, when you see the relationship that develops between, like, Kurt and Blaine, or Britney and Santana, like, those are lovely to see in a show aimed at teens.

Uh, but I don't—I don't know. It's such a mixed bag.

Taylor: Well—

Raleigh: I mean, like—

Taylor: —go ahead.

Raleigh: —it's just—there's a story line—I think probably past the first season, but there's a football player who is horrible to Kurt, who is a gay character, um, who bullies him horribly, physically, you know, verbally, and then at some point you realize that this character is horrible to Kurt because he is also gay, but he is closeted, and he is scared of coming out of the

closet, um, because he is scared of being not accepted by his family or by his friends.

Um, and then later on throughout the series, you see him come out, you see him start accepting who he is, start dating men. Which is, like, a good story line, I think, to see, because then you see that, like, reconciliation between him and Kurt where he's like, "I was angry because I was jealous that you were who you were, and I couldn't be, and that's not okay. But, you know, I'm sorry, and I'm trying to be better now."

Which is—I think, if you're going to have that sort of story line where you have this horrible, homophobic character, and you bring it back around that way I think is at least a way of showing, like, that's something that really happens, and that's good to show because you're seeing that bad things happen, and there's a way to get something good out of it.

Taylor: I—I agree, uh, but I do think that there's a certain—I mean, this is just true about all media, and maybe that's why we're all trying to be—like, we're talking about a show that's ten years old, so different time.

But we all, I think, owe it to audiences to be more responsible, because ultimately, I think life does tend to imitate art, and that narrative of, "Oh, the closet case bullies other queer people, and then they come out and all is forgiven," or, like, you know that's—that—that explains it all, like, also puts a pass on behavior that is people that are repressing their identities abusing other people.

Raleigh: Of course, yeah.

Sydnee: Sure.

Taylor: And it's like, that's—at some point, that can't be an excuse. It's—and so that kinda reinforces that, that it's okay, they were gay the whole time. It's like, "Yeah, but they still abused other people!" [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: And that's where I think—I think it's hard, 'cause, like, in some ways, um... you know, I like—Charlie's a little young for *Glee*. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh—

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: I mean, she likes the—she likes the songs with—the singing and dancing. Like, that was really—if I could've just shown her a mash up of the mash ups, she would've been very happy. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: Um, but, you know, I—I like exposing her to things with diversity, with diverse characters, with—you know, that show the entire gender spectrum and, you know, sexual orientation, and racial diversity. I like that. Um, and certainly *Glee* hits some of those notes, you know?

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Um, early on, from the jump. [laughs]

Taylor: I see what you did there.

Sydnee: I know. [laughs]

Taylor: Hits notes. Ah ha ha.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Notes.

Raleigh: 'Cause it's a music show.

Taylor: Song thing.

Sydnee: But then it—but—I didn't mean to, but I did. But then it's like—in one of the episodes early on, they have—I won't get into—the plot gets so convoluted sometimes. For reasons—

Raleigh: [snorts] Sometimes? Always.

Sydnee: —for reasons that surpass understanding, Sue Sylvester is co-captain—er, co-coach of the Glee club, and they split the Glee club into two factions. And she takes all of the students who are minority students.

And her point is, "You don't do service to these students in your club. You put them in the background and never allow them to shine, and I am gonna do something different."

Now, she has other nefarious intentions, and all this other stuff, and there's problems, but what she says in that moment is so true about the series up to that point. And is a criticism that you could level at the Glee club, and then on a meta level, at *Glee*.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: And it's an opportunity at that moment—I was watching it I thought, "Oh, she's the good guy in this narrative, because what she's saying is true, and it—maybe this gives them the chance to course correct." But I don't really feel like the show takes it.

Raleigh: They don't.

Sydnee: I feel like there's so many ideas about, like, "Ooh, I wanna talk about this!" And then it's like, "Oh, I'm bored with that. Let's talk about this now! Okay, let's talk about this!"

And we never get a chance to really have that conversation, and then fix that problem for the show. Because, like, okay, can we then finally have

Mercedes have the big solo, since she's every bit the singer that, you know, Rachel Berry is?

Raleigh: Rachel is, mm-hmm. Which, I mean, comes up again two seasons later when some of the Glee club members, like Mercedes and Santana, get tired of not ever having moments to shine, so they start their own Glee club, and they have another all-female Glee club where they're the two head singers. And in *my* opinion, they're better than New Directions!

But of course they lose to the New Directions and have to go back and join... that Glee club, and then continue being backup for Rachel.

Sydnee: How many more sad ballads do we have to see Rachel and Finn perform to each other, really?

Raleigh: [sighs] I just...

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Like, at first you're like, "Aw, okay. Like, the—the nerdy musical theater girl and the football player, they're never gonna end up together. But oh, they're singing a love song, and now they're in love."

But then it's like, it's been four seasons, why are they still singing emotional ballads together? We get it! [laughs]

Sydnee: And there is some stuff that doesn't—as a parent, um, and as an adult, like, there are some plot lines that—the whole... Will—William Schuester's wife is pretending to be pregnant. Like, initially, she has what they keep referring to as a hysterical pregnancy. Um, which is not usually a term we use. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I was gonna say, that term itself is pretty—pretty bad. [laughs]

Raleigh: It sounds wrong, yeah.

Sydnee: Right. Uh, but she—she thinks she is pregnant, and she goes and finds out she's not actually pregnant, and then at that point, she knows

she's not. This is not a, you know, a psychiatric condition. She knows she's not pregnant. She's just pretending to be. And that whole plot line is rough. I mean...

Raleigh: Yeah!

Sydnee: It's—it's all—that, I have a problem with. And as an adult I'm watching thinking, "Oh, I hate this whole story line. I don't like anything that's happening here." Um, then she hands out pseudoephedrine to all the children in one episode.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Yeah, that—ah—that was like when they brought on, uh—oh, gosh. Um, uh—Kristen Chenoweth? Is that—yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Uh, her episode where she's brought on as, like, a past member of the Glee club from, like—

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: —Schue—uh, Schue's era, and she's—it's just played off for jokes that she's sleeping with students and giving them alcohol.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: And... it's—it's like—I guess my problem with it, because I went in thinking this was gonna be, like, lighthearted, silly show.

It actually has very dark humor. It gets—it's very uncomfortable at some points. Uh, when you're kind of lampooning all of these things equally, like it's all just kind of played for laughs, you're putting on level, like, making fun of Will because of, I don't know, his hair or something, with, you know—oh,

like, this—it's funny to, like, sleep with children, and make fun of black people.

Like, you're putting—yeah, you're making fun of everybody equally, but some of these insults are a lot more dangerous than others.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I think that's where the—I think that's where everything gets muddy. I think that's why you can't just, like, celebrate the moments where it does something that's very progressive for the time. Not for now, but for the time.

Because there are so many moments like that where it is just accepted from the moment we meet the character Puck that he's... a teenager, who is sleeping with adult women.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And... that is just, like, "Ha ha." And, I mean, we talked about on *Dawson's Creek*.

Taylor: Right.

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: Like, that whole plot line is played out with Pacey and his teacher. And it's like, "He's a child! She's an adult! This is wrong!" You know? This is—this is all wrong! It's not funny, it's not romantic, it's not lovable or sweet or silly. It's not cool. It's... statutory rape.

And, like, yes, I know what you—and, I mean, *Glee* falls into that sometimes where you're just like, "Uhh... I'm—I'm not—I don't wanna laugh at or with or around this subject. Don't—you know, handle this better! Handle this better!" [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Yeah. Well, that's the—it's the fallacy of, like, the, "I'm an equal opportunity insulter!" It's like, "Yeah, but some insults have a lot more cultural harm."

Sydnee: Ahh, the *South Park* gambit. [laughs]

Taylor: Exactly.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Like, "Oh, we make fun of everybody! It's fine!" And, like, nope. Still not fine. [laughs] There are some people are a lot more, you know, impenetrable to insults that it's—that insult doesn't endanger their ability to live a life, so they are different.

Raleigh: Yeah. I think that's exactly what it is. You can't have a villain like Sue Sylvester, who is supposed to be this comedic villain... which if you want that to be her character, then make it so the insults she makes are about, like, Will using butter as his hair product.

Or, like, at one point, they make a joke about her throwing sticks at them, and they say, "No, literally she threw sticks at us." And it's just her standing there in the hallway throwing twigs at one of them.

Like, make that your comedic villain! Don't make it that she's supposed to be this funny character, but also she says horribly offensive things to all minorities at all times. Like, that's exactly what it is, now that you say that.

Um, I do think it's worth mentioning before we wrap up, um, recently—the character of Santana was played by Naya Rivera, and she passed away just a few weeks ago, which was so sad.

Sydnee: It was very sad to hear about.

Raleigh: Um, but she played a character who had an arc about her sexuality, in later seasons, and later came out as a lesbian, and was openly gay, ended up marrying Britney.

Um, but she had a really important character arc for me to see growing up, because I was a teenager just starting out in middle school, high school, when all that was on TV. And watching her, like, not be able to accept herself, even when the people around her were saying, "We know this is who you are and that's okay, we love you anyways."

But her problem was with her not being able to be okay with herself. It wasn't that she was worried about everyone else. She didn't want to say it out loud, because she thought that would change everything for her if she did. And eventually she did, and she was very happy, and you saw her character become this overall just happier person, because she was finally living her life as who she is.

And that was really important for me to see on TV. I do think that is one of the plot lines that *Glee* did pretty right, was giving characters like that airtime and story time, and that was very important, I think. For not just me, a lot of people.

Taylor: Yeah. And I thought that the—Finn is the character from the original cast. His coming out to his dad I thought was really a—

Raleigh: Kurt?

Sydnee: Kurt.

Taylor: Kurt, oh, sorry. Uh, oh. Finn's the quarterback. Uh, Kurt's coming out to his dad I thought was really—like, it was a—it was a very touching moment to see just, like, the acceptance. So, I agree with you. Like, there are narratives there that I think that were really cool, and definitely different for the time.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And it is—you know, when you said that it just reminded me. There was one interaction, uh—Kurt early on in the series has a crush on Finn, but he's approaching Finn to ask him about something else entirely. And when he walks up to him, he says, "Can I ask you something?"

And Finn says, "Oh, I'm sorry, I don't wanna go to homecoming with you. Um, I really—I'm very flattered, and I know how important dances are to gay teens... [laughs quietly]"

Raleigh: [quietly] Oh, man.

Sydnee: "—but—[laughs quietly] but I don't—I'm not gay," or something like that. But the way he says it is actually—it's very much like... "I'm not offended, I'm not grossed out, I'm not—" like, it was very—there was this moment where it was like, the show could be more like this.

Like, this is just a guy saying "Thank you, but no, I don't—I would rather not. You know, I'm straight." Like, I don't know. There are moments in the show where you see, like, "Okay. That was, like, a—there's almost a healthy interaction that oc—almost." And then it's—then it's undercut.

Taylor: Well, and I mean—but maybe—you know, it's worth noting that Ryan Murphy is obviously one of the producers of this show, right?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Taylor: And Ryan Murphy's gay. Like, the fact that all these plot lines we're talking about are gay plot lines, and that they're handled with a certain amount of, like—they're showing things that it's good to show on TV, the kind of—the dialogs, the acceptance, the narratives.

That's because you've got a gay person in the writer's room. So maybe it's just—it kind of hearkens to the importance of having not just what we're seeing on screen, but the people that are making these things have that experience to be able to write narratives that are properly informed.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: I think you're exactly—and I think that is the—that is one of the takeaways from *Glee* that we haven't quite mentioned. But just as a general point, shows about gay characters do better when you have gay people playing the characters, and you have gay people writing and informing the

characters. Shows about trans characters do better when you have trans actors playing the characters and trans people in the writing room.

Same thing with—we have a character in *Glee* who uses a wheelchair, who is not—nothing against this actor, who is wonderful and talented but, you know, if you have a character in a wheelchair, you should have it played by an actor in a wheelchair, just like they do later in the series have an actor with Down's syndrome playing a character with Down's syndrome.

You know, there are—you can do that, and that makes your show more, uh—it makes it better. It makes it more rich,, more diverse, more accessible to all audiences. It creates better art when you include everybody in the process, behind the scenes and onstage. You know, both. And that is something that, again, it's hit or miss. It's a mixed bag with *Glee*. Sometimes they got it, and then many times they didn't.

Raleigh: I think if you made *Glee* today, it would be a very different show in a lot of ways, but I do think some parts of it would still probably be very similar. Still gonna have, like, the outcast Glee club that sings songs that sometimes it's just ridiculous and unbelievable.

Sydnee: Well, that is—that is the thing I alluded to in the beginning, and I will echo. There are moments of *Glee* that felt very true to life to me. In show choir, we... were weird, a lot of us.

Raleigh: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Um... [laughs quietly] We, uh, were overly dramatic a lot of times. There was always, um, sexual drama going on, relationship drama going on. There was a mixture of kids from a lot of different, like, backgrounds, that—we were a diverse group. And we weren't exactly considered the coolest. [laughs]

Raleigh: Sure.

Sydnee: But we did... we did perform songs for our own enjoyment in the choir room. Not uncommonly.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um, that did happen, I will say—

Raleigh: I believe it.

Sydnee: —where we would just, like, in between classes or before the teacher would show up, turn on a song and start performing it and casting shows and doing our own thing. So, like, there are parts of it that are very... they're show choir.

Raleigh: Well.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: Thank you all for watching *Glee* with me. [laughs quietly] It's a—I know Sydnee, you've watched it before. Teylor, I'm sorry that this was a forced first viewing, but—

Teylor: No, you know, I—I—there were things I really enjoyed about it, and also, clearly, it had an important impact in you, you know, figuring yourself out, Raleigh. So for that, if nothing else, I'm thankful for it.

Raleigh: Well, I appreciate you all. Sydnee, what is next?

Sydnee: Uh, I want to—I want us to do a show—I want us to cover a show that is new, that is very new, and I think addresses some of the same kinds of ideas as *Glee*. Some of them, not all of them. Uh, but in a—in a more up-to-date, more progressive, better way.

Raleigh: Okay.

Sydnee: *The Babysitter's Club*.

Teylor: That is not what I was expecting, but okay! [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] I mean, there's—I would say markedly less sex. [laughs]

Raleigh: I... would think so!

Sydnee: [laughs] As in none. Uh, but many other issues that come up that we've talked about with *Glee* that I think that—they're handled so well. It's aimed at a younger audience, I would say, but still, I don't think—I, of course, was a huge fan of the books back in the day, and I've read—I don't know if I've read every one, but pretty darn close.

Uh, but you don't have to read the books to appreciate the series. If you do, you'll see a lot of the similarities. It's kind of fun to watch. But, um—but it's a new show. It's on...

Raleigh: Netflix.

Sydnee: Netflix. And I watched the whole thing with Charlie. That was much—I feel much prouder about exposing her to that. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah, that makes sense. [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, but I think you all would enjoy it, and I think our listeners would enjoy it.

Raleigh: Well, I am looking forward to it.

Taylor: As am I.

Sydnee: Um, you don't have to read the books, by the way.

Raleigh: Well, good.

Sydnee: I will—I'll provide some context. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Alright.

Taylor: I'll read a Wikipedia article.

Raleigh: Yeah! I can do that.

Sydnee: Yeah, hey!

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: There was also a movie, right? That came out in our time—our timeline? [laughs] Our time?

Raleigh: Your timeline? [laughs]

Sydnee: In our timeline?!

Taylor: We're in the wrong timeline now. Uh, it had Alex Mack in it, right? The girl that turned into the goo?

Sydnee: Yes, uh-huh!

Taylor: Okay.

Sydnee: That's right, yeah. So you get—if you would like to watch the film, you can.

Raleigh: Ooh.

Taylor: There's that.

Sydnee: Um, one more time before we go, I want to thank all of our listeners, uh, for listening at all, and then thank you for those of you especially who are members, who, you know, provide support to our show, to our network, to continue doing the things we do, by being a monthly donating member of Maximum Fun. This is the MaxFunDrive time, so if you are thinking about joining and you're in a position to do so, this is the right time to do it, because you get a—you get a gift!

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Um, and again, there are all kinds of levels. Whatever you are capable of doing, we appreciate it. The five dollar level, you get all of the bonus content. Over 200 hours. So much listening enjoyment.

Um, at the \$10 level, you get to pick which pin you like, one of our awesome enamel pins, uh, designed by Megan Lynn Kott. And right now, you can also, um, if you're at the \$10 monthly level or more, you can buy whatever other pins you would like, and the proceeds from that go to benefit a charitable organization. And, um, we really appreciate it if you can do that. If you can share our show or tell somebody about it, we appreciate that too.

Uh, you can tweet at us @stillbuff. You can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org, and don't forget that website. Maximumfun.org/join. If you can, become a member now!

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.

[theme music plays]

Sydnee: Now quick, we'll do a mash up of "The Thong Song" and "I Could've Danced All Night." Go.

Raleigh: Aw, man, I can't believe they—

Sydnee: [humming]

Rileigh: [laughs] You're doin' it by yourself!

Taylor: Wait, was that real?

Sydnee: You guys aren't helping me!

Taylor: Was that from the show? Is that from the show?!

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: I can believe it, but also, wow!

Rileigh: Yeah. [laughs]

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[music plays]

Brea: Hey! I'm Brea Grant, an e-reader who loves spoilers and chocolate.

Mallory: And I'm Mallory O'Meara, a print book collector who will murder you if you spoil a book for me.

Brea: And we're the hosts of *Reading Glasses*, a podcast designed to help you read better.

Mallory: Over the past few years, we've figured out why people read.

Brea: Self-improvement.

Mallory: Escapism.

Brea: To distract ourselves from the world burning down.

Mallory: And why they don't.

Brea: Not enough time.

Mallory: Not knowing what to read.

Brea: And being overwhelmed by the number on their TBR list.

Mallory: And we're here to help you with that. We will help you conquer your TBR pile, while probably adding a bunch of books to it.

Brea: *Reading Glasses.*

Mallory: Every week...

Brea: On MaximumFun.org.

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