

## Still Buffering 223: The Brave Little Toaster (1987)

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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!

**Sydnee:** Well, we're recording this episode on the most important birthday that happens in the month of August. [muffled laughter]

**Raleigh:** You can't even finish it without laughing!

**Taylor:** Wowww.

**Raleigh:** Wow!

**Sydnee:** This is the most of all the August birthdays. This is the one [holding back laughter] that *really* counts. [laughs] That *really* matters.

**Raleigh:** In case you're wondering, no, Sydnee's not talking about me, her younger sister, whose birthday is in August!

**Sydnee:** Oh, what?

**Raleigh:** It's Charlie's birthday.

**Sydnee:** It is Charlie's birthday.

**Raleigh:** And I would just like to point out, I love Charlie and I got her a great birthday present.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** I did!

**Sydnee:** I hear a "but" coming!

**Raleigh:** *But...*

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Raleigh:** ... the milestone I am reaching for this August birthday, I would argue... is a much more important one than six. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Is it 16?

**Raleigh:** No, it's 20!

**Sydnee:** Not 21.

**Taylor:** Yeah...

**Raleigh:** No, but this is the end of my teenage years!

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** I know, but there is some sort of, like, depreciating value on birthdays as you get older that, I mean—

**Raleigh:** [sighs] I know.

**Taylor:** —a significant birthday when you're, like, over 12 is kind of taken over by a significant birthday when you're under 12, I think always. Like, six? Every year counts when you're under—maybe ten. When you're under ten it's like every year is a big year. But 20 is important, too. I don't know. Might be a tie.

**Raleigh:** That's like—

**Taylor:** I'm gonna say it's a tie.

**Raleigh:** Mom and Dad kept saying, "We have to go see Charlie! She'll never be five again after today!"

And I said, "I'll n—I've spent the last, like, seven years being a teenager, and I will never be a teenager again! This is when I enter the next whole decade of my life! [pauses] No one cares about this?!"

**Sydnee:** Well, we just have to focus on Charlie's first.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Hers is first.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. I told Charlie my birthday was also in August and she said, "Oh."

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** And I said, "Why? What's wrong?" And she said, "I thought I was the only one with a birthday in August. [holding back laughter] That made me feel special and important."

**Sydnee:** Peep's birthday was two days ago!

**Rileigh:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs] We called him and wished him happy birthday!

**Taylor:** Well, uh, Peeps has the decency to yield to month to Charlie, Rileigh.

**Rileigh:** I refuse. No. I refuse. And next year, when I turn 21... that will not be overshadowed by Charlie's seventh birthday!

**Sydnee:** Let's not get carried away.

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] Seven's a pretty big year!

**Sydnee:** Let's—hey, listen. Let's just—

**Taylor:** I think that's when you can rent a car is seven!

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly] I can barely handle that she's six.

**Rileigh:** Um, I would like to share with everybody, though, that I did get, I think, the best birthday present of all time—

**Sydnee:** It is a good—it is a good present.

**Rileigh:** —and I am confident in saying that. I got Charlie a cameo video from Jojo Siwa—

**Taylor:** Oh no.

**Rileigh:** —and I can tell you all this because she doesn't listen to our podcast, obviously.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. She does not know yet.

**Rileigh:** So, I like to think I make up for taking half of Charlie's birthday month by getting her very good birthday presents. I feel okay about that. But as soon as her birthday's over I'm like, "Okay now. It's my turn."

**Sydnee:** She's gonna be very excited by that.

**Rileigh:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** She's very into Jojo Siwa. We have a whole themed—I mean, we're not really having a party.

**Rileigh:** It's just, like... us.

**Sydnee:** It's just us.

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** But—[laughs quietly] but I am putting up decorations, and—

**Rileigh:** Yeah, she has a cake.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, you guys are making a cake. So, like, we do have Jojo Siwa themed thing—I did find—it'll be us playing it. Heads up. But I did find a game that is themed around pin the tail on the donkey, but—

**Raleigh:** Is it pin the bow on the Jojo?

**Sydnee:** Pin the bow on the Jojo.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** And so I do have that I'm going to put up, and we can all together as a bunch of adults, and Charlie and Cooper, play pin the bow on the Jojo.

**Taylor:** That sounds—I mean... that sounds great to me, but I can't really be a judge of social interaction right now, so... [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** Yeah, you know, in the middle of everything going on, that's—that's fine. That's okay.

**Sydnee:** I—it's the best—we're gonna—there's—we've organized—again, I can talk about it 'cause Charlie won't hear this. We've organized a little birthday parade for this weekend where people will drive by—

**Raleigh:** Staying in their cars.

**Sydnee:** —staying in their cars. They'll have balloons, they'll wave and honk, and she can wave. [pauses] Oof! 2020! [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Oof, 2020.

**Sydnee:** Oof! This year!

**Raleigh:** Mom—Mom asked me. She was like, "What do you want—what do you wanna do for your birthday?" And I sat there thinking, like, it's a week after I'm already gonna be taking—I mean, classes virtually, but taking classes. It's on a Sunday. It's not even on, like, a night where I can take off or anything and relax. And I can't go anywhere or do anything! So, like, I don't know, Mom! I guess, like... [pauses] have dinner like we always do? [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Eat a whole cake!

**Raleigh:** Eat a whole cake, maybe? I don't know. Can I get an ice cream cake?  
[laughs]

**Taylor:** You're just experiencing what birthdays are like in your 30's, but it's your 20th birthday.

**Raleigh:** [laughs] I did—

**Taylor:** 'Cause I feel bad—[laughs quietly] I—so many people are being cheated out of birthdays this year. My birthday was in January, so I had the opportunity to have [through laughter] one of the last birthdays of 2020!

**Sydnee:** You did. You had a birthday.

**Taylor:** I know. Well, I had—two of my friends dragged me to a bar, and then we went back to my house and watched movies, so I feel bad that that was a relatively safe, unsocial birthday.

**Sydnee:** Think about poor Mom, here. She had a mile—I won't say what it was. She had a milestone birthday this year—

**Raleigh:** 30.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** Okay, yeah.

**Sydnee:** Uh, and she got sick on her birthday. Not with COVID, just was—

**Raleigh:** Just sick.

**Sydnee:** —yeah. Just sick enough that we couldn't—we had this whole big thing. We were gonna take her hiking. She wanted to go hiking.

**Raleigh:** That's not my thing.

**Sydnee:** I had a cabin—that's not my thing. But we had a whole thing. Teylor was gonna fly in. Uh, and then she got sick, and so we had to cancel the whole thing, and then—but here—it wasn't COVID, and now there's Co—anyway.

**Rileigh:** But then, like, three weeks later when Mom was better, that was when lockdown started. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Teylor:** Yeah...

**Rileigh:** So... you know. It's been a long one. I am thankful that maybe by the actual big birthday, by 21, I'm hopeful that I'll be able to celebrate in a more standard manner.

**Sydnee:** This is when I start chanting "Vaccine, vaccine, vaccine!"

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yes. I'm very—yes. I am excitedly following the progress of the vaccines. It's okay. Vaccines have saved us all for a long time now. They'll continue to save us all.

**Rileigh:** It's crazy how at first at the beginning of all this we all were like, "Oh my gosh, it's March. Maybe we can just—maybe we'll only have to do this for a few weeks, right? Maybe just, like, a month or two."

And now it's like—we're in August, so it's been five months, and we still have four more to go until the end of the year. And I'm like, you know what? Yeah, it's fine. I've already accepted the rest of this year is just pretty much a wash. I'm just gonna hold out til January 2021. [laughs]

**Teylor:** Same.

**Sydnee:** But anyway, it's Charlie's birthday. [laughs loudly]

**Rileigh:** Yeah! Happy birthday, Charlie!

**Teylor:** I think everybody just has one big... big birthday party next year, after we're all vaccinated, to make up for all the birthdays that weren't quite great.

Just everybody have a big ol' national party day. [laughs quietly] What day is inauguration? Maybe we can time it. [laughs quietly]

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I agree. Every celebration's gonna be the biggest next year. All the birthdays, all the holidays, Pride, everything. They're all gonna be the biggest they've ever been.

**Taylor:** I'm gonna be gay *all year* to make up for not having Pride this year.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Previously...

**Rileigh:** I was only gay in June before.

**Taylor:** Just save it all up for June! That's how it works, right? [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Uhh... yeah. So...

**Rileigh:** [quietly] Oh, man.

**Sydnee:** It's okay. It's okay.

**Rileigh:** [quietly] 2020.

**Sydnee:** She gets it. I let her have an ice pop this morning.

**Rileigh:** That's nice.

**Taylor:** Happy birthday! [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** We had donuts for breakfast. She's gotten toys.

**Rileigh:** She's only six.



**Sydnee:** She's having a Zoom princess party this evening where someone dressed up as a princess will, like, entertain her and talk to her.

**Taylor:** Oh, that's—that's good.

**Sydnee:** I believe it's Rapunzel.

**Taylor:** I like that.

**Raleigh:** That's nice. That's my favorite as well.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** That'll be a treat for us all.

**Sydnee:** You can—hey, do you wanna come?

**Raleigh:** I mean, I might just wanna say hi to Rapunzel but I mean, like... It's not my birthday.

**Taylor:** If it was Belle, she'd be there. But Rapunz—you know.

**Raleigh:** That's true.

**Sydnee:** It was almost Belle.

**Raleigh:** Charlie likes Rapunzel more. I understand it.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, I had to have a conversation where I was trying to suss out, who would she rather spend time with, without telling her what we were doing. And initially it was Belle, and then she switched to Rapunzel. And then she looked at me and went, "Why are you asking me this."

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Raleigh, what I think you do—

**Sydnee:** [through laughter] I was like—

**Rileigh:** "[makes "I don't know" sounds], 20 questions?"

**Taylor:** Rileigh, I know you have a Belle costume. I think you just show up on the Zoom call in it, and you challenge her for princess supremacy.

**Sydnee:** Oh, like those YouTube videos where they have the princess rap battles.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. I don't wanna witness any of this. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** No, I also don't—

**Sydnee:** I actually—I'm running from the room just thinking about it.

**Taylor:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [through laughter] This is so cringy.

**Rileigh:** Justin—if you're running from the room, Justin is, like, melting into a puddle on the floor. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs] Uh... that's not—I don't have a transition. What're we talkin' about, Tey?

**Taylor:** If only we were all wiener dogs, our problems would be solved.

**Sydnee:** Heyyy! There you go.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Man, that, uh—you know what? That line was buried so deep in my psyche, Tey, when we were watching *The Brave Little Toaster* in preparation for this episode about *The Brave Little Toaster*, I heard it and went, "[gasps loudly]" I don't even know that I remembered that—I mean, I guess if you had asked me, "What's that from?" I could've come up with it, but it was so, like, part of our youth... you know what I mean?

**Taylor:** It crossed a lot of lines with me, 'cause I kinda had the same feeling. I couldn't remember who said it between Batty from *Fern Gully*—'cause we quoted a lot of Batty from *Fern Gully* when we were young.

**Sydney:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** And then that was the line from *Brave Little Toaster*. But they kinda crossed in my head and they were just all the same. Like, I don't have anything to say, so I'm gonna quote something from a late 1980's, early 1990's... cartoon. [laughs quietly]

**Sydney:** [through laughter] We did quote a lot of Batty from *Fern Gully*! That is so—

**Taylor:** "Tails? Humans don't have tails!"

**Sydney:** [simultaneously] "Tails? Humans don't have tails!" [laughs]

**Taylor:** "They have big, big bottoms that they wear with bad shorts, and they walk around going, 'Hi, Helen!'" [laughs]

**Sydney:** "'Hi, Helen!'" [laughs] [pauses] Have you not seen *Fern Gully*?

**Raleigh:** No.

**Taylor:** That'll be on my list someday. [laughs]

**Sydney:** Okay. We'll do Fern—please. We have to do *Fern Gully* at some point.

**Taylor:** Ohh. We didn't—who wasn't in love with Krista? Uh—

**Sydney:** Oh, man. [sighs] Anyway. So... uh, I like—

**Taylor:** [quietly] We'll talk about *Brave Little Toaster*. [laughs]

**Sydney:** —yeah, I was about to talk more about Fern—I'm—you can't just bring up *Fern Gully*! [laughs]

**Taylor:** Let's save *Fern Gully*, okay? It's a very good movie with a very important message, and a brilliant performance by Robin Williams.

**Sydnee:** I'm gonna show it to Charlie.

**Raleigh:** I... had never seen this film.

**Sydnee:** Okay.

**Raleigh:** Until... yesterday.

**Taylor:** Woww.

**Raleigh:** Um, but that line, [holding back laughter] I had heard our father say so much for I don't know why, just many times throughout my life that—when it—I had the same reaction when it was spoken. I was like, "[gasps] This is it! This is where it was from!"

**Sydnee:** Now—now, Taylor, do you wanna give us a quick plot summary for anyone uninitiated with, uh—what was it? 1980...

**Taylor:** 7.

**Sydnee:** 7? Okay. Film—

**Taylor:** Yes, 1987. Uh, so, *The Brave Little Toaster*—

**Sydnee:** *The Brave Little Toaster*.

**Taylor:** —which is actually based on a novella by Thomas Disch from 1980. Uh, but came out—the movie came out in 1987. It is the story of a bunch of appliances who, like, live in a cottage—uh, it's like a family vacation home—realizing that their master, who's the young boy of the family—they call him master—uh, is not gonna come back, so they wanna go find him so they can, you know, have a purpose again.

So it's like a—a toaster, a blanket, a vacuum cleaner, a lamp, and a radio that all head off to journey from this cottage in the woods to the city to find their owner, so they can be of use again.

**Rileigh:** Was this, like, a pre—when you described it I kept thinking, was this a precursor to, like, *Toy Story*? 'Cause that's very *Toy Story*. It's like, "Oh, they have a young owner, and they're toys, and they come to life." So instead of appliances, they were like, "Maybe—can we make appliances [holding back laughter] something that kids like more?" And they made 'em toys.

**Sydnee:** You know, I—I was—did you—I know that you have read about this a little bit, Tey. Did you find any references to that? 'Cause I was thinking that as I was watching it. Like, "Wow, there's a lot of—" because we just watched *Toy Story 4* the other day for the first time, and so that was on my brain.

But then, like, the lamp in the Pixar...

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** I kept looking at the lamp in the movie and thinking, like...

**Rileigh:** Huh.

**Sydnee:** Was this—was there inspiration here? Was this just, like, a—

**Rileigh:** Is it just a coincidence?

**Sydnee:** I don't know.

**Taylor:** So, I read an AMA with the director of *Brave Little Toaster*, Jerry Reese. And, um, he—he didn't answer the question directly. It was kind of farther down in the conversation and he didn't get to it. But, uh—where somebody asked if that was inspiration. It was pointed out that there people that worked on *The Brave Little Toaster* that did work for Pixar eventually, so there's that connection. But, I mean, someone also brought up, like, *The Velveteen Rabbit*.

Like, this idea of an inanimate object that's loved by a child that, you know, tries to be reunited with the child isn't—it's a sort of consistent idea. But I do think that—you can't, like—especially with the things that the appliances come up against, 'cause there's so much in *Toy Story* that's like—they face off against, like, you know, things that symbolize death and becoming obsolete and useless. I

can't imagine that it isn't, in some way, a loving homage to *The Brave Little Toaster*.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I—a quick Google search tells me that there are lots of, uh—well, at least there's a lot on Reddit about this. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** There—there's a lot out there drawing those connections, and I think that some similar—I think this may—*The Brave Little Toaster* was the first Pixar film that wasn't. Could've been, almost was, wasn't. I see some suggestions. I just—I'm browsing, I'm perusing briefly. But I bet there is some connection there.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** It feels very Pixar.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm. Um, I will say, it was a lot—I don't wanna say "dark."

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** But it was a lot more like, "Oh, dang! Okay!" Than I expected it to be. 'Cause from what I knew about *The Brave Little Toaster* I was like, "Oh, they're—it's an alive toaster, and he goes on an adventure."

And sure, that's in there, but also, like, there was... death. [snorts]

**Taylor:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** Almost death. Multiple times!

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** I was not expecting that.

**Sydnee:** No, it's—well, it's—and, I mean, I think that drawing the connection to films like *Toy Story* where, like, it's for kids—I mean, animated appliances. It's adorable, the music's cute, and the—

**Raleigh:** It is adorable.

**Sydnee:** —you know, I mean, like, so much of it is funny and cute and adorable. Um, but the themes that the kids aren't gonna pick up on are a lot heavier. I mean, I think that...

**Taylor:** Well, and I think—

**Sydnee:** I mean, it's sad! Like, the premise is sad.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** The stuff has been abandoned. That's—it's—it's sad!

**Taylor:** Well, and that—you know, I was reading about its release, and there was a lot of back and forth with Disney as to if it was gonna go straight to video, straight to, like, the channel, or it was gonna get a theatrical release. Uh, it was released at Sundance, and even though it didn't win there were a lot of people that privately came up to Jerry Reese and said, "Look. This was the best film, we just—it would—cartoons don't win this, at Sundance."

And then it showed at a lot of, like, college campuses and stuff. So it—even when it was made, there was an awareness of, this is—it's for kids, but there are things that are kind of—not necessarily meant for adults, but can certainly be better understood by adults in this movie, so I think that, you know, even in making the movie, there was kind of a magic moment I think in the late 80's and early 90's where animation wasn't committed to necessarily whose its audience was. It was just existing, and I think *The Brave Little Toaster's* an encapsulation of that, 'cause—yeah. It's very heavy. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Is that—is that why you can't—when I first went to look for it, I went to Disney+ assuming that it would be there, and I almost accidentally watched *The Brave Little Toaster Goes To Mars*.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** 'Cause I just saw *Brave Little Toaster* and clicked right away, and Justin was like, "No, no, no, no, no!" [laughs] And I was like, "Oh."

So they have that, and they have something called *Brave Little Toaster To The Rescue*, and I'll be honest, I've never seen either of these... I guess sequels? Or... I don't know where they fit into the narrative, but I've never seen those films—

**Rileigh:** [holding back laughter] You don't know the timeline.

**Sydnee:** [holding back laughter] Yeah, I don't know—I don't know—are they canon? But I—*Brave Little Toaster* was harder to find.

**Taylor:** Yeah. Well, the timeline is, for anyone interested, is that actually the, like... in how the movies were made, *The Brave Little Toaster Goes To Mars* came before *The Brave Little Toaster Saves The Day*. But, uh, sequentially in the movie timeline, the third movie happens between the first and the second. So the last thing—

**Rileigh:** [snorts]

**Taylor:** —*The Brave Little Toaster* does is go to Mars. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** So this I like a *Fast and the Furious* kind of thing.

**Taylor:** [through laughter] Yes!

**Sydnee:** Where there's—Tokyo Drift actually happens later, even though it's third in the order?

**Rileigh:** Uh-huh.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** It happens after—

**Rileigh:** It's like a whole *Zelda* timeline you've got going on.

**Sydnee:** —six, I think. Anyway—[laughs]



**Taylor:** Yeah. And, uh—and that's the—the—*The Brave Little Toaster Goes To Mars* is actually written by the original author of the novella, uh, so that—I mean, it's still, I think, a lot—it's a lot—I've seen that one. It's a lot more of a lighthearted film. He was, like, a famous scifi writer before he—he did *The Brave Little Toaster* for kids, but he was actually a well known scifi writer.

Fun fact about the original author of *The Brave Little Toaster*. Phillip K. Dick wrote a letter to Congress trying to show that he was a communist and part of the Soviet Union [through laughter] and part of the Red Scare!

**Sydnee:** Why?!

**Taylor:** [through laughter] 'Cause Phillip K. Dick was paranoid!

**Sydnee:** Oh my God.

**Raleigh:** Wow!

**Sydnee:** Not because of *The Brave Little Toaster*.

**Taylor:** No, no. This was before *The Brave Little Toaster*—

**Raleigh:** All because of *The Brave Little Toaster*. [laughs]

**Taylor:** And there was no basis to this. There was no founding in this. And, uh, he was a big fan of Phillip K. Dick before that, and then he found out and he was like, "Well—well, heck! That's not very nice." So he based it—

**Sydnee:** Ahh.

**Taylor:** —in one of his last novels, he had a character that was based on Phillip K. Dick—or maybe it just was Phillip K. Dick. But it was very—not, like... it was—you know, it was a jab. Uh, so that's just—

**Sydnee:** Although, I will say, these appliances? They're all working together for the—for, like, a common goal—

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** —and they each have their role to play, and they—you know. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Do you think it's like *Animal Farm*? [laughs]

**Taylor:** [through laughter] Is it—

**Sydnee:** The men are pigs, the pigs are men. I don't know! [laughs]

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** I don't think—no, I don't think so. The themes from the book slightly differ from the themes of the movie, but there's—for—as soon as I heard that there was a cool scifi writer that wrote the original I was like, "Oh, well it's definitely been butchered, right?"

But it's actually pretty close. Like, the ending is changed, but it's a—if anything, the movie is darker and scarier [through laughter] than what the original novella is!

**Sydnee:** Really?

**Rileigh:** Wow.

**Taylor:** Yeah. Uh, they add in a lot of the confrontations with mortality that happen in *The Brave Little Toaster*. Uh—

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** —and, I mean, that's—I think that's what—'cause I remember as a kid I just was fascinated by this movie. Just—and there were things that I didn't understand, but that made me sad, like the flower scene. Um...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Early on in the movie when they first set out on their journey, uh, they're in the woods and there's, like, a cute singalong, but the toaster comes across a yellow flower, and the yellow flower sees itself reflected in the toaster and, you know, wants to hug the toaster—kind of falls in love with the toaster. And the toaster is like, "No, I—I can't be with you!" And leaves. And then it looks

back at the flower, and the flower is wilting and dying, it's a really sad moment. And then it kinda goes back to the happy song.

**Sydnee:** It's funny, because I had—I was watching the film with Charlie and Cooper, and I had chased Cooper out of the room right as that scene was taking place.

**Taylor:** [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** And when I came back, it had just ended. And I asked Charlie, "What did I miss?" 'Cause it's been a while since I've seen it. And to hear Charlie try to describe—

**Raleigh:** Aww!

**Sydnee:** —[wheezes] it was heartbreaking!

**Raleigh:** What'd she say?

**Sydnee:** She said, "Well, there was a yellow flower, and because the toaster is like a mirror, the yellow flower saw another yellow flower, and... then liked it?"

And I said, "Oh, did it, like, fall in love?"

And she said, "Well, I don't know if it wanted to marry the toaster."

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs] "But it loved the toaster, except the toaster's not a flower, so the toaster had to leave."

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [through laughter] And I was like—

**Raleigh:** I don't—okay.

**Sydnee:** "So then was the flower sad?"

And she was like, "Oh yeah. The flower, like, fell over."

And I was like, "Oh, okay."

**Raleigh:** "Ohh." [laughs]

**Taylor:** I—I—

**Sydnee:** "I kinda remember what I think you're describing!" [laughs]

**Taylor:** Anybody out there that's concerned, like, "Kids won't get complex concepts, like a woman can love a woman." And this kid's like, "This flower fell in love with the reflection of a flower in a toaster!" And—[laughs] it's like, they're fine. They get it.

**Raleigh:** They get it.

**Sydnee:** I liked, "Did they fall in love?"

And she's like, "Well, I don't know if they wanted to get *married*." [laughs] "Like, don't rush things, Mom! I don't—they wanted to hug!" [laughs]

**Taylor:** One of the fascinating things about that scene, which I always—like, I wanted to understand what that meant. And even when I rewatched it as an adult, I'm like, there's something—there were little bits that I didn't quite pick up on. Like, there's that scene, and then you see, like, everybody's really cruel to Blankie that first night. Like, there's—the first night that they all camp out, Blankie just wants to cuddle up with somebody and no one lets him cuddle up with them. And, uh, then that scene happens. And then right after that, the toaster rescues Blankie from the mice, and then later that night, Blankie makes a little tent out of himself so everybody will cuddle up under Blankie, and the toaster makes a point of thanking Blankie and, like, being really nice to Blankie.

But what the director pointed out in the AMA was that Blankie and the flower are the same color purposefully, because *Brave Little Toaster* learns a lesson in that he couldn't save the flower, but he can save Blankie, so that's why he saves him from the mice, and then he learns to appreciate Blankie. And it's a lesson about kind of saving what you can save? Which is... that's a big concept for kids, but also really beautiful? [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** Yeah!

**Sydnee:** Well, and to build on that, after that I think it's—is it Lamp or Radio? One of 'em asks the toaster, "Why are you being so nice to Blankie now?" Is it Lamp?

**Taylor:** Lamp, Lamp does.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Like, "What's up with you? Like, you—you know, why are you being so nice when we've all been kind of rough on Blankie?"

And the toaster's just like, "Well, I just realized that it feels good to be nice to the blank—" I mean, basically that's it. Like, "I realized that I shouldn't be mean, and I started being nice, and it feels good to be nice."

And that's—what I—[laughs] Rileigh's about to cry!

**Rileigh:** I am about to cry!

**Taylor:** [through laughter] It's a really sweet moment!

**Sydnee:** I will say, as a parent, like, that's a really great way to—like, for kids, because kids have so much difficulty when they're really little seeing the world from other people's point of view. I mean, that's just the way their brains are wired. It takes a while to have the ability to, like, put yourself in someone else's shoes. So, "Why should you be nice to someone? Well, because it will make them happy," is a harder concept than "It feels good to be nice." You know? The person is happy, and that makes you feel good. That's a really... that's a strong way of selling it to kids. Like, here's a good reason to be nice! You feel good. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah. It's like—

**Sydnee:** When you're nice.

**Rileigh:** —you got—tell that to Cooper. It's like, when you're mean to—to Aunt Rileigh, to Baby Sis—

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** —don't worry about the fact that it makes Baby Sis sad. Just think about how good you might feel if you're nice! [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs] When—when you pick up your toys and beat Baby Sis with them—

**Raleigh:** When you beat me with a shovel—[laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Hey, we—we—hold on. Before we talk more about the movie, 'cause I have some more, uh—we haven't really gotten into why it means so much to you, Tey, and we need to get into that.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But before we do that...

**Raleigh:** Let's check the group message.

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**Sydnee:** Oh, there was—sorry, there was a bug on my glasses!

**Raleigh:** Eww!

**Sydnee:** Okay. [laughs] I don't wanna talk about my glasses, though. I wanna talk about my pants.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Raleigh:** Are there bugs there, too?

**Sydnee:** No, there are no bugs on my pants.

**Taylor:** That's good.

**Sydnee:** My pants are bug-free. And my pants are also comfortable, and stylish, and wrinkle-free, and ready to go from a busy day at work to playing with the kids in the evening, to out to dinner, if I... ever get to do that again. Um, because they're Betabrand. And I'm told y'all about Betabrand pants before. I had discovered these on the recommendation of fellow doctor moms who were like, "Oh, you gotta check out these pants! They're so great."

Um, because we're you're round in the hospital all day and you're sometimes, like, you know, bending down to check out feet, or whatever you're doin' at work. I mean—you know, I know it doesn't seem like it, but doctor work can get pretty physical. [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Uh, Betabrand pants are really comfortable. They look nice, because they're dress pants. Uh, but they feel like yoga pants. So you have the comfort of yoga pants all day, but you're wearing dress pants to work.

Um, so I would highly recommend Betabrand's dress pant yoga pants. They're professional, they're stylish, they're comfortable. Um, they're totally functional, and they're made of wrinkle-resistant, stretch-knit fabric, perfect for long days. Whatever your work is, outside the home or inside the home if you—you know, if you're working from home right now, it's still important on those Zoom calls to look professional, or just to feel like you're in that work head space. It helps to, like, get dressed for work every morning. Routines are important. So, Tey, if our listeners want to check out Betabrand dress pant yoga pants, where should they go?

**Taylor:** Well, right now our listeners can get 25% off their first order when you go to [betabrand.com/buffering](https://betabrand.com/buffering). That's 25% off your first order for a limited time at [betabrand.com/buffering](https://betabrand.com/buffering). Find out why people are ditching typical work pants for Betabrand's dress pant yoga pants. Go to [betabrand.com/buffering](https://betabrand.com/buffering) for 25% off.

**Raleigh:** I want to talk to you all about what's in my ears.

**Taylor:** Wax!

**Sydnee:** [simultaneously] Wax?

**Raleigh:** No!

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** I wanna talk to you all about the earbuds in my ears.

**Sydnee:** Ohh, okay.

**Rileigh:** So, I've been doing school from home now, um, for many months, and will be doing so for the next many months. So it's very important for me to have a good pair of earbuds, because I wanna be able to listen to my class and my classmates and my professors, and not necessarily what's going on in the house around me. I need to focus. Um, and that's why I use Raycon earbuds. Whether you're working from home or working on your fitness, 'cause I use these when I'm working out, too, you want what you're listening to to be what *you're* listening to, not what maybe your mom and dad are listening to, like on the evening news! Or maybe not what your guinea pig is saying at that moment, because you need to focus.

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly]

**Rileigh:** [holding back laughter] Bu—but before you drop hundreds of dollars on a pair of wireless earbuds, check out Raycon, because they start at, like, half the price of all those other wireless earbuds. And, um, they sound just as amazing.

**Sydnee:** And they're comfortable, and they don't fall out!

**Rileigh:** Yes. They don't fall out. They're so comfortable. And their newest model, the Everyday E25 earbuds offer six hours of playtime, seamless Bluetooth pairing, more bass, and a more compact design that gives you a nice, noise-isolating fit, which is perfect for all of your earbud needs.

The company was founded—uh, cofounded by Ray J, and celebrities like Snoop Dogg and, uh, Mike Tyson. Did you know that?

**Sydnee:** I didn't know that.

**Rileigh:** Neither did I! But now we all know. And they are all obsessed with Raycons as well. And I am too. So, Teylor, if our listeners want to check out Raycon earbuds, what should they do?

**Teylor:** Well, now's the time to get the latest and greatest from Raycon. Get 15% off your order at [buyraycon.com/buffering](https://buyraycon.com/buffering). That's [buyraycon.com/buffering](https://buyraycon.com/buffering) for 15% off Raycon wireless earbuds. [Buyraycon.com/buffering](https://buyraycon.com/buffering).

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**Sydnee:** Now, Tey, I had a question as I was watching it. Um, do you feel like—and maybe, again, I was just in this mindset because Justin has been watching all of the Miyazaki movies with Charlie, um, for... another podcast he listens to. They go through all of various directors works, and—anyway, so he's watching them for his own enjoyment, and to follow along.

And I've been watching some of them with him, and I've been thinking a lot about the way that, um, your connections to, like, Japanese animation, and I was thinking about in *The Brave Little Toaster* the idea of all of the objects in someone's house having, like, a soul, and a personality, and feelings, and, like, the way that we treat things mattering. Things that are inanimate. The idea that, like, it matters, the way you treat that toaster that you don't use anymore. It matters, the way you treat your desk lamp.

Um, and that all seemed to tie together to me. I don't know if any of that was meant to be there, or if I was just reading that in there, but...

**Taylor:** Um... I mean, I don't—like, that concept, it's—it's funny, because that's a—it makes me think of Mari Kondo. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah!

**Sydnee:** Well, it does, it does, yeah.

**Taylor:** Uh, but the thing about Mari Kondo, her—you know, the—the... uh, respect and appreciation of inanimate objects, uh, that comes from—I mean, that's not exclusively, but that's, like, from her understanding of Shinto beliefs. That, you know, like—yeah. Like, objects have spirits, and power, and that they deserve to be treated well. And I love that concept, and I do think, like... I don't know, like, it's a chicken or egg situation, 'cause *The Brave Little Toaster* was such an important movie to me when I was young and hadn't been exposed to any of that that I do feel like maybe in my teen and adult life that's what drew me to things that had that concept in it. Um, because I do like—you know, I think that that's... I think that's actually a good way to go through the world, is to be respectful and appreciative of anything that you come to—that comes to be of service to you or comes to aid you in your life, even if it's your toaster. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** I found it—I found it very moving, because—as the movie started I started thinking, like, "Why were all these objects just abandoned here, anyway? That seems kind of mean."

And then I thought, "Why do I think you can be mean to a toaster?" [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** "Where—where did this come from?" That I—that, like, part of my brain goes, "Well, don't be so mean to your... [through laughter] vacuum cleaner!"

**Raleigh:** I think my viewing experience was probably slightly different in terms of what it did to my—[laughs quietly] my, uh, mental state concerning all of my inanimate objects.

**Sydnee:** Ah.

**Raleigh:** But the main character leaves them because he's going to college, right?

**Taylor:** Well—

**Raleigh:** So—

**Sydnee:** Well, they've moved out of the country and to the city, right?

**Taylor:** Uh, I think the—it's—the setup in the novella's a little bit clearer. Uh, it's like a—a summer home for these people, and they're not—so they only come visit it once a year, but it's been a couple years since the family's come visited, because they're older, and now the son's going off to college, yes.

**Raleigh:** Okay. See, that's what got me. When he comes back at the end and he's, like, gonna bring 'em all with him, even though he's going off to be an adult at college. I was like, "Man." And I was looking around my room, like, thinking about all the things that I had left there since I'd moved out and been at college, and I was like, "Are they all—are they sad?"

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** "All of—[laughs quietly] all of these various things I have in my room, and—and... appliances? Do I need to take them with me?!"

**Sydnee:** And that—I tell you, if we talk about adult themes, you start to get into—that is one of the hardest things I've found as I've grown up and moved places, and our family has grown, and, like, the things we need have changed, you know? When you first move out, it is very common to take a bunch of stuff that your parents don't need anymore. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** You know?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Or whatever. Like, he goes to the summer house to get some things to take with him, because he's moving out now, and these things are not needed by his parents, so he can take them. And, like, our first—I know for Justin and I, our first apartment together was completely furnished with things that were old. Things that were given to us, things from our collective youths. And then as you get older, you start to, like—"What can I let go of?" Because, you know, this table's totally broken. But I love it! But it's totally broken. Or, you know, whatever. This is falling apart, or this isn't big enough anymore, or whatever it is. That's such a hard transition as you get older, because you—you do look at these things that are just things, but at the same time... my alarm clock I've had since sixth grade.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** That same alarm clock.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] And it's—boy, it barely works, but I keep trying to fix it, 'cause I don't—it's gonna be hard to have to let go of that.

**Taylor:** That's funny. I still have my Sailor Moon alarm clock. I no longer use it as an alarm clock, but it just lives in my house now, as a... object. Uh, well, and I—

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** —I also wonder if, like—'cause that works even from, like, the... the one to one kind of like objects as, like, things that maybe can be treasured and hold

sentimental value. But even in sort of a metaphorical way of, like, things that make you who you are and serve you in your youth, and I think, you know, with the parallel of, like, him going off to college—and even as the objects move through this transitional period—it's almost like a coming of age story, as they learn how to care for each other, and they each kind of have their moment of valor where they protect each other, that the objects are sort of coming into themselves, weirdly enough?

But that idea of, like, what do you leave behind, and what do you take with you? And that not everything that—you know, that obsolescence doesn't have to exist for all aspects of our previous selves. I mean, that just because this boy lives in a house full of new, cool gadgets that—you know, they have that whole song about basically being cutting edge and being better, and that's why all these things from this boy's past are useless. But ultimately, those are the things that he treasures and chooses to take with him, which I think is kind of a beautiful metaphor about getting older and truly, you know, honoring your—your past, that has made you who you are.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Um, I also think it's a great example of movies that are for kids, but there are lots of not only themes that adults can connect with, but, like, there's dialog in there with little, like, side jokes and things that I—like, I was watching to see, like, "Okay, Charlie did not pick up on that at all." Not, like—not, like... dirty or something. I just mean, like, that joke sailed right over her head, and I'm chuckling. 'Cause I'm like, "Ha ha, that was kinda funny."

Like at one point the radio says, "I'm as certain as I am honest." And...

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Somebody else is like, "Oh, we're doomed, then." And, uh, it was just a funny little quip. I mean, like, there's a lot of that little—I don't know. I feel like some of that is—it speaks to an older time in television and movies when everybody was witty and talked really fast. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Especially with the radio's humor, which I love. I love that, like, transcontinental accent and that whole vibe, yeah.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I like—it reminds me—in that moment, it reminded me a little of, like, some of the witty back and forth on *MASH* that I always enjoy. It's—but it's a bygone era. It's not—you know, we don't see that a lot on television anymore.

**Taylor:** I also thought—as far as something I think adults would get and maybe kids wouldn't, like, the scene with the vacuum cleaner where they come across the waterfall? And the vacuum cleaner starts—he has a panic attack is what happens. [laughs quietly] And so if you know—and this is something I learned from the AMA, too. It's like, so what happens is the toaster then walks him back and forth in a vacuum cleaner motion, you know? Something he's used to to calm him down, and he gets very insecure and defensive about it. But it's like, what an odd detail to include in a children's movie. But then it's also a way of discussing, like, anxiety and panic with children in a way they can understand. Like, "Do you remember what happened to the vacuum cleaner when he got scared?"

Like, that's what that presented to you! Like, a tool for teaching that, which is, like, not something that you would think—I mean, it should be something that kids are exposed to, but not something you'd think a movie would care to do. And especially a movie in the late 80's.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Um, I thought it was similar with, uh—I always—in the very beginning, or towards the very beginning of the movie when the air conditioner gets really angry, and that scene had always stuck with me as, like, for whatever reason, very intense and... like, I don't wanna say upsetting, 'cause it wasn't, like, disturbing to me. But, like, "Oh, do you remember how scary that anger was?"

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** That—gosh, that anger—like, it really—I mean, he ends up blowing a fuse or whatever and breaking himself. Um, but that concept of, like, getting so angry that you lose control and harm yourself or someone else or scare people. Like, I remember that message being stuck in my brain even as a kid as, like,

"Oh, he's really gotta learn how to control that anger, 'cause he really hurt himself and scared everybody with that anger."

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But that stuck with me, even as an adult.

**Taylor:** Well, and even—like, why he was mad was that the child was too small to reach him. Like, he didn't have connection like the other objects did. So that moment at the end when—I think the kid's name is Rob? When he comes back to the cottage as an adult and fixes the air conditioner, [through laughter] and the air conditioner cries a little Freon. And it's like, "Oh, finally he can reach me."

It's like, Oh! Man! [laughs]

[pauses]

**Raleigh:** I was thinking about—

**Sydnee:** [laughs] Raleigh was about to cry.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [through laughter] I'm trying to think about other things, 'cause I'm about to cry about all the moments in this movie. It's been a very emotional week for me. I don't know why. It's just everything I've watched has made me cry, and *The Brave Little Toaster* is right up there at the top of the list.

**Taylor:** I think it makes—yeah.

**Sydnee:** It's Charlie turning six.

**Taylor:** [laughs loudly]

**Sydnee:** It's just such a huge milestone birthday, six, and... you know. It's just—

**Taylor:** [continues laughing]

**Sydnee:** —really, I think the whole month probably will be about—

**Taylor:** Yeah, we'll probably gonna be sad and thoughtful about that.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah, there has been no sort of, like, mental existential crisis for me thinking about, like, "Oh God, I'm 20 years old, what is—this is my whole year of my life has just been nothing! What do I do? I don't know what I'm doing with my life!"

It's all because Charlie's turning six.

**Sydnee:** It is! I mean, it's hard. She keeps saying, "What will kindergarten be like?"

And I keep saying, "I don't know!" [laughs] "It'll be here!"

**Raleigh:** No one knows what kindergarten'll be like this year. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** "I don't—look around! It looks like this house!"

**Raleigh:** Um... I was thinking about, while I was watching this movie, what would *The Brave Little Toaster* and the cast of appliances look like in the year 2020?

**Sydnee:** Hmm.

**Raleigh:** Because I think it would be, like... like, a roomba? [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** Ohh!

**Raleigh:** And, like, a—like, um, a... a smart fridge, or, like, Alexa. Or, you know, one of those things.

**Sydnee:** Uh-huh?

**Raleigh:** Like a smart appliance, and maybe—

**Sydnee:** Ohh, there would definitely be an Alexa in there.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** And a slightly outdated iPhone.

**Rileigh:** And then definitely, like—yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Like an old iPhone or iPad or something.

**Sydney:** What do you have instead of a lamp? [pauses] Lamps are still kinda lamps. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Lamps are still lamps, I guess. [laughs]

**Sydney:** It would just be, uh, a more efficient bulb. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Now, they do—it would be an LED lamp is what it would be. [laughs]  
They—

**Sydney:** A better bulb.

**Rileigh:** —they have a very fancy toaster now. I don't know if you all have seen, but it has a little, like, touchscreen on the side of it, and you pick what kind of thing you're putting in, whether it's, like, a bagel, a piece of bread, an English muffin, whatever. And then you select, like, how toasted you want it to look based on the pictures, and then you just tap all those things and put it in. Do you think it'd be, like, a high tech toaster this time?

**Taylor:** Maybe.

**Sydney:** That wouldn't be as cute.

**Taylor:** It could have a little face on it maybe, and, like, [crosstalk]—

**Rileigh:** I mean, it still looks like a toaster.

**Sydney:** Instead of an electric blanket, they'd have a weighted blanket.

**Taylor:** [laughs]



**Rileigh:** It'd be a weighted blanket. [laughs]

**Taylor:** That'd be cute. Although it is kinda—it's sad to think about this in our current times, because planned obsolescence of appliances is so built in. Like, you know, there's something wrong with you if you still have an old iPhone or whatever. It's like, not—there's not actually anything wrong with you. But, you know, it's like—we get things to—who doesn't have a drawer full of old, abandoned iPhones or—

**Rileigh:** Oh, yeah.

**Taylor:** —you know?

**Sydnee:** No, that's very true. I—you know, this got me thinking. You said a roomba, and we have, like... named and made part of the family our roomba.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Rufus.

**Taylor:** Rufus the Roomba.

**Rileigh:** Well, then you had Jeremy before Rufus.

**Sydnee:** Jeremy got moved downstairs. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Oh, so now you have Jeremy *and* Rufus.

**Taylor:** Oh, okay!

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Jeremy—Jeremy is our downstairs roomba, and Rufus is our upstairs roomba.

**Rileigh:** Uh-huh. That—

**Sydnee:** Rufus is... smarter, I guess? Is what I have been—

**Taylor:** [gasps]

**Sydnee:** Well, I don't mean this in a mean way! Like—

**Raleigh:** Like technologically? Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like, technologically, he's a smarter roomba. I don't think either—are they—I don't even know if they're roomba brand roombas.

**Raleigh:** No idea.

**Sydnee:** But, I mean, everybody knows what a roomba is. I don't know. Justin got the Rufus one because he's better at knowing the map? Like, Rufus knows a map of our house or something?

**Raleigh:** That's kinda scary.

**Sydnee:** Whereas Jeremy didn't know a map of our house.

**Raleigh:** He would just kinda run into walls.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Jeremy would run into things. But Jeremy's still cool. He—he—

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** —Jeremy lives in the basement now. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** This does bring up an interesting point, which is, is it important that in *The Brave Little Toaster* they didn't name any of the appliances? They are just what they are. They are Toaster, and Lamp, and Blankie.

**Taylor:** Well... I mean, there's an interesting sort of meditation of purpose in this movie. Like, the reason they want to find the master is because they're validated by serving the master. Like, that's their whole purpose for being, and that's why their names are just what they are, what their purpose is, what they do.

Um, and of course they end up back with him. So, you know, there's no deeper resolution that's needed. But it is interesting that along the way they learn how to serve each other and protect each other, just purely for that. Like, I—I don't know. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** They could've—they could've named each other Friend.

**Sydnee:** [snorts]

**Taylor:** Aww. [laughs] That's—[laughs]

**Raleigh:** It would've gotten very confusing. They all would've been named Friend—

**Sydnee:** What is wrong with you?! [laughs]

**Taylor:** That's the—that's the real message.

**Sydnee:** "[mockingly] Named each other Friend!" [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Hey!

**Taylor:** It's not that they found their way back to the master, it's the friends they made along the way. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah! 'Cause, like, they're talking about the—being defined by your purpose, and now they've learned to be f—friends, not just appliances!

**Sydnee:** Maybe when they go to Mars they get names.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Is that why that's the last step of the little toaster's journey is because he just went to Mars and then that's—that's where he is?

**Taylor:** No, they go to Mars to fight off, like, invading, uh, Martian appliances, [through laughter] or something like that. It's a—I don't know. It jumps the shark.

**Raleigh:** Now I gotta watch that one!

**Taylor:** It leaves the planet.

**Sydnee:** Oh, noo.

**Taylor:** I don't think we can—I mean, uh, especially on the topic of obsolescence, we can't talk about this movie without talking about the final song in the movie, uh, "Worthless."

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Uh, holy crap! I saw a list ranking the scariest, most, like, intense Disney songs, and this beat out "Hellfire" from *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.  
[laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Because it should!

**Sydney:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** I thought about watching that song—like, if I would've been Charlie's age watching it, and I was like, "[gasps] I never would've—I never would've stopped thinking about this!" [laughs]

**Sydney:** She—she didn't make it to the very end of the film. Um, got distracted. But, um... yeah. That would've been a lot for her.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** I mean, it's—it's just, like—that's noth—there's no other point to it other than, "We all had lives, and now we've been deemed worthless because we no longer can serve our purpose, so we're—we're being... destroyed at the junkyard." Like, that's—[laughs]

**Raleigh:** That's so sad!

**Taylor:** [through laughter] It's so sad!

**Raleigh:** [sniffing]

**Sydney:** This movie really took me on a journey.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I don't know that I was ready. I don't know that 2020 was the time—

**Raleigh:** I wasn't.

**Sydnee:** —to revisit—

**Raleigh:** Yeah!

**Sydnee:** —*Brave Little Toaster*. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Well, and, I mean, even, like, that—like, the creepy—like, the "B-Movie" song when they're in the appliance place, and they're all talking about being ripped apart and used for their pieces. Like, I don't know. Like... there's something deeper there about, like, are we just what we can do? And, like, is that the only use we have? And then, I mean, that's not for kids, but as an adult, and maybe also being locked inside and reading too much into things, I'm like, "I'm not just an appliance, man! I'm not just my pieces!" [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Well, it really speaks to, though, like... the kind of media you expose your kids to when they're little, and I don't mean this in a preachy way at all. I mean this in a positive way. Like, those—some of those themes do settle in. Um, especially with repeated watchings, which I know we watched *Brave Little Toaster* multiple times.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Uh, so, I mean, those messages—if they're good ones, like, even if your kid doesn't get it, like, you can—it'll get in there. [laughs] it'll worm its way inside and stick with you, and you'll find yourself someday, like, 37 years old, looking at your alarm clock going, "Well, I can't get rid of you, you've been with me so long. I guess once you finally break, I'll just keep you on my nightstand flashing 12 for the rest of time!"

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** But, I mean, that's really what happens in the end, right? Because even though the boy has—understands that there are better versions of all of these

objects, it's not their purpose, it's not their use that makes him love them. It's something else, and that's what makes him want to keep them. So that they've been outdated, they've been outmoded, but it's—so they have achieved something greater than their purpose that they were designed for.

**Sydnee:** Which is also another important lesson for kids. 'Cause again, when you're young, everything—all humans are seen in relation to you and your needs and wants. I'm talking about very little kids.

**Raleigh:** Sure.

**Sydnee:** And then, part of maturing is seeing people as people who have value intrinsically, not just as they relate to you. [holding back laughter] You hope everybody reaches that stage of—

**Taylor:** [laughs] Well...

**Sydnee:** —cognitive development, and emotional development.

**Taylor:** 2020, man. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** I know. Just... show your kids *Daniel Tiger*. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Well, this was a very emotional addition for me to our week, but I enjoyed it.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** I'm—I appreciate you both for rewatching, or watching for the first time, *The Brave Little Toaster*, uh, with me. It's very—

**Raleigh:** [unintelligible]

**Taylor:** —very important part of my upbringing. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** It was fun, it was fun. And I am going to, when—maybe I'll wait til birthday number seven before I have Charlie sit back down with it.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah. There's a lot to unpack there.

**Sydnee:** What's next?

**Raleigh:** Well... I would like—we talked about Taylor Swift before. [laughs quietly] We talked about Taylor Swift's documentary. But Taylor Swift surprised us all last time, right after I announced the last thing I gave us, which was *G/lee*. This is much better, because this is Taylor Swift's surprise album, all written and recorded in quarantine, *Folklore*.

**Sydnee:** Alright.

**Raleigh:** I want to talk about it.

**Sydnee:** I haven't listened to any of it. I don't know how that's happened, that I have not—

**Raleigh:** It's very good, and very different. It's got some good messages and lyrics.

**Sydnee:** I have somehow not been exposed to any of it.

**Raleigh:** Well, now you're gonna be exposed to all of it.

**Sydnee:** I will listen. I'll let Charlie—I'll let Charlie listen to this.

**Raleigh:** She'll like it.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Alright! Well, we have our assignment. We will listen to that for next week. Thank you both. Um, so we can now—everyone at home can celebrate Charlie's birthday, the most important August birthday, alongside—[laughs quietly] us.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Resume the birthday of August celebration.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] I'm gonna be on this until it's your birthday.

**Raleigh:** I know.

**Sydnee:** Okay.

**Taylor:** We'll celebrate your birthday too. It's a big deal.

**Sydnee:** Of course.

**Raleigh:** But you know, by the time we're doing an episode of this, like, and I'm 20, it'll be September. It won't even be my birth month anymore. [laughs quietly] That's 2020.

**Sydnee:** Well, we can play pin the bow on the Jojo for your birthday too, if you want.

**Raleigh:** Thanks. I really appreciate that.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] Uh, thank you, everybody listening at home. Uh, you can tweet at us @stillbuff. You can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org if you have thoughts or suggestions or questions or things you want us to talk about.

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

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

**Sydnee:** I'm Sydnee McElroy.

**Taylor:** And I'm Taylor Smirl!

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

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

[theme music plays]

**Sydnee:** Do you wanna give us one more wiener dog line, or...



**Taylor:** [laughs quietly] Just that one wiener dog line.

**Sydnee:** Okay. Well, I just meant...

**Raleigh:** That's it.

**Sydnee:** Okay.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** "Hi, Helen!"

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

\*\*\*\*\*

[music plays]

**Speaker One:** Welcome!

**Group:** Thank you.

Thanks.

No problem.

Thank you.

**Speaker One:** These are real podcast listeners, not actors. What do you look for in a podcast?

**Speaker Two:** Reliability is big for me.

**Speaker Three:** Power.

**Speaker Four:** I'd say comfort.

**Speaker One:** What do you think of this?

[loud clanging]

**Group:** [groans]

**Speaker One:** That's Jordan, Jesse, Go!

**Speaker Two:** Jordan, Jesse, Go?

**Speaker Four:** They came out of the floor?

[thud]

**Speaker Four:** And down from the ceiling?

**Speaker Two:** That can't be safe.

**Speaker Four:** I'm upset.

**Speaker Three:** Can we go now?

**Speaker One:** Soon.

Jordan, Jesse, Go! A real podcast.

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