

## Still Buffering 225: "Veronica Mars" (2004)

Published August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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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 Teylor Smirl.

**Sydnee:** Rileigh, I'm enjoying this pumpkin drink you brought me.

**Rileigh:** I am very glad you're enjoying the pumpkin drink I brought you.

**Sydnee:** Teylor, did I tell you?

**Taylor:** No!

**Sydnee:** We have pumpkin drinks?

**Taylor:** Is it pumpkin drink season already?

**Rileigh:** Well, yeah. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly]

**Rileigh:** I think all the coffee companies decided time doesn't matter anymore.

**Taylor:** That's true.

**Rileigh:** I think the quote from Dunkin was, uh, "There's only one thing some people can count on to be certain every fall, and that's the arrival of pumpkin drinks—"

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** "—and we want to just bring that certainty into the world a little bit sooner." [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** That's...

**Sydnee:** Yeah, it is not—it is not the, uh, pumpkin drink that everyone talks about.

**Rileigh:** It's not a PSL.

**Sydnee:** No.

**Taylor:** Oh. Just, like, pumpkin in your coffee?

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Just a little bit of pumpkin flavor.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** But it is good. I—well, I had a pumpkin beer over the weekend, so—

**Rileigh:** Oooh.

**Sydnee:** —I guess...

**Rileigh:** It's pumpkin season.

**Sydnee:** It was—it was spicy? It had chilies in it with the pumpkin. [crosstalk]

**Taylor:** Oh, that sounds really nice.

**Rileigh:** So that is pumpkin spice.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm, yeah! Mm-hmm. Actual spice.

**Taylor:** I—look, I'm all for the extension of the Halloween season in both directions. Like, I just—it can run right up on summer, and it can run right til Christmas. I'm fine with that.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** [laughs] Like, I—I recently subscribed to Shudder, which is, like, a horror streaming service. And, uh, they're doing two months of horror movies. They're just starting Halloween in September. Like, sorry, September! You got nothin' else to offer, so we're makin' you spooky. And I am happy with that.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Well, I mean, Charlie asked me the other day, "Can we just make it Christmas time?" And I really—I sat there for a second thinking, "Well... "

**Raleigh:** "Why not?"

**Sydnee:** [laughs] "I mean... I guess we—I guess we could?"

**Raleigh:** I know people that have already put up their trees. Just, like, why does it matter anymore?

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** We're all gonna be here until Christmas, so we might as well start it early.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Just surrender to it.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** That's actually—you know, maybe that's a—that's a really positive way of looking at the meaningless quality time has adopted in all this. Like, "Well, if time has no meaning, then it can be Christmas every day!" [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm. I don't know if this is true for anyone else, but I have noticed that here, usually our Augusts are still, like, our hottest summer days. But

recently, we've been having some fall-ish weather. Not—not chilly yet, but just, like, a cool breeze, and not super hot days.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** It's very nice.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] No, it's been nice, it's been nice. I don't—it's all played havoc with my garden. My garden's a disaster now.

**Raleigh:** [snorts]

**Taylor:** Aww.

**Sydnee:** So... the cucumbers are growing round. What does *that* mean?

**Taylor:** Well, they're little chubby boys!

**Raleigh:** [simultaneously] Growing round?

**Sydnee:** Yeah, they're coming in like little round sort of...

**Raleigh:** Like a sphere?

**Sydnee:** ... teardrop-shaped sort of, like—

**Raleigh:** That's—that—

**Taylor:** That's—that's cute!

**Sydnee:** Well, I mean, they're—

**Raleigh:** That doesn't sound right.

**Sydnee:** —well, no. It makes—[through laughter] it makes me—it makes me think something's wrong! Well, I mean, like, I already read about why all my watermelons collapsed. I know what happened with my watermelons. There wasn't enough calcium.

**Raleigh:** Hmm.

**Sydnee:** Which, [holding back laughter] according to the internet, either comes from over or under watering, so thanks for that! [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Rookie mistake.

**Sydnee:** I either over or under watered them.

**Rileigh:** You just—the only thing you know you didn't do is water them the right amount. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** That's the one thing I know for sure, is they didn't get the right amount of water, so they didn't have enough calcium, so when the blossoms fell off, the ends of them collapsed.

**Taylor:** Aww.

**Sydnee:** I know! It was very sad. So I—I had to do away with the watermelons. But they're compost.

**Rileigh:** That's good.

**Sydnee:** It was a good addition to my compost.

**Taylor:** What—if you start growing pumpkins now—I don't know how fast things happen. Can you have pumpkins by pumpkin time?

**Sydnee:** No.

**Taylor:** No?

**Sydnee:** You know, we got—we got pumpkin seeds, um, and we were supposed to plant 'em, but our—the dirt around our house sucks. So I would have to, like... till an area [laughs quietly] and load in a bunch of dirt outside of my little garden box to grow pumpkins, too, and it just—it was overwhelming. But next—by next year, I promise. 'Cause they were—Charlie was very much into growing pumpkins. Next year, I promise we will grow pumpkins.

I—I've learnt—this was a practice year.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** It was a trial run.

**Sydnee:** If anyone would like to write us an email, though, and tell me why my cucumbers are growing in round... [laughs] I would really—they weren't initially! Like, they were normal, cucumber-shaped cucumbers.

**Raleigh:** Do you think they were like, really happy at first, really healthy, and then something happened and they were just like—

**Sydnee:** Yes!

**Raleigh:** —"We don't have the energy to keep going at this rate."

**Sydnee:** Well, the—the vines look kinda scraggly, and I don't—I'm watering them. Nothing changed with the dirt. I don't know what happened.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** I really don't know. I... I got rid of the watermelons. [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** You know, I love hearing about your garden, but, um, I feel like no one is talking about the—this week, and the momentous occasion that arrives at the end of this week.

**Sydnee:** Ohhh, okay.

**Taylor:** Ohh.

[pause]

**Raleigh:** Which is... my birthday.

**Sydnee:** Ohh, your birthday.

**Raleigh:** This is the last episode we'll record that I'm a teenager!

**Sydnee:** Hey, that's true!

**Taylor:** Oh, wow.

**Rleigh:** This is a big deal for this podcast! This podcast started because I was a teenager! [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Do you have any, like, last minute teen advice, or teen info or insight, or...

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Anything?

**Taylor:** You've gotta wrap it all up, right now. On the spot.

**Rleigh:** Oh, man! That's big pressure.

**Sydnee:** What have you learned as a teen? Do you want me to revisit this at the end?

**Rleigh:** Yeah. Maybe we'll circle back. Because it's only kind of a little bit of an existential crisis when you realize, like, "Oh, this has been... all of probably the most formative years of my life up until this point. Now they're over, and now I'm in my 20's! [laughs quietly] What?!"

**Sydnee:** [sarcastically] Not your 20's!

**Rleigh:** Not my 20's! I'm not a teenager anymore! I never will be again! At the end of this part of my life, I'm gonna be, like, a whole—like, a *real* adult!

**Taylor:** Well...

**Sydnee:** Ehh...

**Taylor:** Ehh... [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rleigh:** Like a whole—like a whole one!

**Sydnee:** [laughs] Eh... Eh...

**Taylor:** You know, as a counterargument, hi. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** [laughs] You—hey, the older you get—this is what I think, at 37, and maybe someday I'll change my mind. There are no real adults. We're all—

**Raleigh:** That's fair.

**Sydnee:** —we're all doing the best we can, and wondering when the adults will show up. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** I keep waiting to wake up one day, and I'll be an adult. Like, "Aha, I've made it! Now I have... like, sincere beliefs, and I know what I'm doing." Nope.

**Sydnee:** "I feel certain about things." [laughs] Uh—

**Raleigh:** But, uh, yeah. This is...

**Sydnee:** Well, think about it. Think about your teen advice. We'll revisit. We'll give you the length of this podcast to come up with a summary of your teenage years.

**Raleigh:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** That should be plenty of time. I saw a TV show. I don't wanna talk about *it*, but...

**Raleigh:** [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** ... um, maybe someday in the future, called *Teenage Bounty Hunters*.

**Taylor:** That's a—

**Raleigh:** [muffled laughter] Wait, sorry. I just—

**Taylor:** [laughs]



**Rileigh:** —wanna point out that this show is about, like, various medias.

**Sydnee:** Uh-huh, uh-huh.

**Rileigh:** And you started, like, around when we should probably start talking about the actual part of show, you said, "I saw a TV show. I *don't* wanna talk about it." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Well, okay! [crosstalk]

**Rileigh:** [crosstalk] I saw it.

**Taylor:** And then we just end the episode.

**Sydnee:** [through laughter] Wouldn't it be great if that's where the sentence ended? "I don't wanna talk about it."

[extended pause]

No, I do.

**Rileigh:** Do you wanna talk about it? [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I just wanted to mention that if anybody's looking for a new show, *Teenage Bounty Hunters* on Netflix was really good and, uh, I liked it. It's good, Tey. I—trust me, it's good. Um, but—

**Taylor:** I don't like this idea of teenage bounty hunters.

**Sydnee:** Oh, it's funny.

**Taylor:** It's not like a reality TV, right?

**Sydnee:** Ohhh, no, no, no!

**Rileigh:** [bursts into laughter]

**Sydnee:** No, no, no, no.

**Taylor:** I don't know! I don't—I don't trust America anymore. Maybe there's a show about, like, [through laughter] 15-year-olds rollin' up on criminals!

**Sydnee:** Two—no, twin sisters who go to, like, a really conservative Christian school accidentally become bounty hunters.

**Taylor:** Uh, as it happens. Okay.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And—and there—and there you go. It reminded me of some shows I had enjoyed in the past. It has a little bit of *Buffy*, and it has a little bit of *Veronica Mars* in it.

**Taylor:** Ahhh.

**Raleigh:** Ahhh, there we go.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, there we go.

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] There we go.

**Raleigh:** So you had a plan.

**Sydnee:** I had a plan. 'Cause it's—you know, we're gonna talk about *Veronica Mars*.

**Raleigh:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** Taylor, I'm excited, 'cause you had never seen *Veronica Mars* before this past week.

**Taylor:** Correct.

**Sydnee:** Did you like it?

**Taylor:** Uh, I did. It was not what I was expecting. And I don't—and I mean—when I say I've never seen it, I don't think I had—I knew that, like, it was a private investigation thing, but I was thinking, like, slightly older *Harriet the Spy*.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** I assumed it was going to be kind of like cute and, like—like, very WB, and it was very dark! Like, I mean, it goes there. It, uh—it has a lot of, uh, heavy stuff in it. So—

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** —uh, but I really—I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed the characters. I thought the writing was really smart. Um, I liked the noir sense that doesn't go too far that it takes it out of reality.

**Sydnee:** What's—here's what's weird. Since you are the newest to it—it was never—I mean, it has a very, like, strong cult following. But it was never, like—it never achieved mass popularity, which is why it got canceled eventually.

**Raleigh:** [sighs] See—

**Sydnee:** And you had to have—what was it? Like, a Kickstarter to make the movie?

**Raleigh:** Yeah, the make the movie. And then I think, like, another petition or whatever to get the fourth season.

**Sydnee:** So, like, it was—it was always, like, a—the fans demanded it, and the networks really weren't interested in it, kind of show. And I never quite understood why, because, like, *The OC* ran a long time, and I feel like it fits in with those sort of teen drama-y kind of shows.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Or like *Dawson's Creek*, you know.

**Raleigh:** This seems like... I mean, even the kind of thing that more people would've enjoyed watching than those people who enjoyed watching *The OC* and *Dawson's Creek* when they were on TV. 'Cause I feel like those shows were

somewhat limited and, like, if you had older people or, like, adults, whatever, watching them, they might think they're a little silly. But *Veronica Mars* to me was always, like—I feel like adults could get into this. Like, it's got some mystery. It's got some intrigue, but it's about teens, so teens can get into it. I have never gotten why more people haven't seen it and don't like it.

**Taylor:** I—I just wonder if it's—I mean, the time—the era that it came out in. 'Cause when did—this came out, what? Like, early 2000's?

**Sydney:** Yeah. I'll have to look up the exact year, but around then.

**Taylor:** I mean, 'cause I'll be honest. Like, and I guess—you know, we're talking about *Veronica Mars*. There's some pretty heavy plot points in there. Uh, there's some, you know, trigger warning for sexual assault, is a theme in the first season. And that's something that I could see, like, at the time it came out, the fact that that's a huge—she's investigating her own sexual assault throughout most of the first season. That's a pretty heavy, like, thing to have. I mean, I think it's great. It's a very powerful, like, element to the story. But for when it came out, I feel like that would've maybe turned a lot of people off as, like, "Oh, that's—I don't wanna watch that. That's not fun, like, teen drama! That's real life drama." It is—that is a thing that unfortunately teenagers deal with, but, you know.

**Sydney:** That's true, yeah. 2004 is when it came out.

**Taylor:** Okay. Alright.

**Sydney:** Yeah, I could see that. 'Cause I also wonder if part of it wasn't that—um, kind of like you said, you didn't know what to expect. Whereas, like, if you look at *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*...

**Raleigh:** It's in the title.

**Sydney:** You know what—[laughs] you know what you're walking into. Whereas I think—when I first, uh... oh, I forget who convinced me to try it out. But I had no idea what I was about to watch. I had really no idea. Um, I had—like, I had heard the name of the show, but I couldn't have even told you that it was about a private investigator. So I feel like it didn't, um—the concept of it did not get widely known for people to be like, "Huh, that might be something I'd be interested in."

**Rileigh:** Yeah. Yeah, I—I think it was one of those shows—I should add, this came out in 2004. I did not start watching it when I was [holding back laughter] four years old.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Um, it was one of those that I think when the movie came out, I was at your house, Sydnee, I think.

**Sydnee:** I believe this is right.

**Rileigh:** And you and Justin wanted to watch the movie, and you told me, like, "Oh, no. This is great. You'll love it. You'll love this."

And then I watched the movie with you all without ever having seen the first seasons.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** And then I liked it, and you convinced me to go watch the other seasons, and that is what I did.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Rileigh:** But I was probably only, I mean... whenever the movie came out, I was 12 or 13, something around there.

**Sydnee:** I mean, I know we were giving you the DVDs, so that dates it already.  
[laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah, it wasn't like I was watching it on, like, a streaming service or anything at that point.

**Sydnee:** No.

**Rileigh:** Um, but yeah. And then I was into it by the time the newest season came out, just what, a year ago? Two years ago? Um, so I watched that in real time. But...

**Sydnee:** Uh, one—one thing that I always liked about *Veronica Mars*—which, as we've—if you're not familiar with it, it is—she's a teen PI. Uh—

**Rileigh:** Her dad's a real PI.

**Sydnee:** Yes. And there's a whole backstory to, like, um, why she used to be kind of in with the in crowd at her high school, where there are, like—there's a group of very, like, rich, you know, kind of stereotypical, like, popular, sort of mean kind of kids. And then fell out with them, and is now sort of an outcast. And also, investigating the death of her best friend, the murder of her best friend. And this is, like, the setup of the whole thing.

Um, one of the things I really like about it is the relationship between Veronica and Keith Mars.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Her dad. I always—I loved that, throughout the whole show. It's a very, um... like, they're close because, as you learn, Veronica's mom is an alcoholic, and so she is, like, in and out of her life, and in and out of treatment, and then sometimes kind of vanishes, and so doesn't play a huge role in her life. And so it's mainly just her and her dad together, and they're very close in that sense, but then also, like... she's totally independent, and he gives her the—you know? Like, he trusts her to take care of herself, and that kind of thing and—I don't know. I just thought it was a really nice... father daughter relationship there.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Very empowering. You don't see a lot of that on TV.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** I was expecting at the early episodes that it was gonna be like, "Oh no, she's sneakin' around behind his back and solving cases that he didn't—he just wants her to stay out of it!"

And then the fact that he was like, "Oh, look into this for me. Like, book my trip. Like, investigate—investigate this person." Like, oh, that's cool! Like, yeah. That was really refreshing. I didn't expect that.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, he certainly doesn't want her to be in harm's way. But at the same time, he understands that to a degree, she is capable of looking out for herself and, you know, that kind of thing. And I don't know. It was just—it's a very admirable and progressive kind of look at a—when you see, I think, that relationship modeled a lot on televisions, especially in teen shows, it's all very like, "Protect my little princess!"

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And it is not that at all, and I thought that's very refreshing.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Especially for 2004, for when that came out, you know

**Sydnee:** Yeah

**Raleigh:** That that wasn't how it played out.

**Sydnee:** A million years ago. [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** Yeah. A million—

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** —that was 16—that was a—yeah, that was a million years ago.

**Sydnee:** It may as well be a million years ago. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Um, but also it's—Kristen Bell is *Veronica Mars*.

**Sydnee:** Oh!

**Raleigh:** Which just makes it that much better.

**Sydnee:** I guess I should set—you know—

**Rileigh:** We hadn't mentioned that. But, like, I just feel like that really sets it up for people who, like, you know, maybe haven't seen it but, like, *Good Place* fans.

**Sydnee:** *Frozen*.

**Rileigh:** *Frozen* fans. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** It's so weird, because forever, to me, Kristen Bell is *Veronica Mars*.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And it was cool to look and be like, "Oh, look! Ana's played by *Veronica Mars*!" [laughs]

**Rileigh:** [laughs] It's like, "No, wait."

**Sydnee:** "Oh, look! [laughs] *Veronica Mars* is in this new show, *The Good Place*!" Like, that is how Kristen Bell—that is—in my head space, that is who she is. Um, [laughs] forever.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** It was hard for me to adjust to see her as a teenager at first, 'cause she just—she hasn't aged. She still looks the same.

**Rileigh:** She looks exactly the same!

**Taylor:** Yeah, but I've always seen her as, like, an adult, so seeing her playing a teenager I'm like, "No, that's, like, a 30-year-old woman." Nope! Nope. It's just that she still looks like an 18-year-old woman. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** How old was she? Do you know when she did *Veronica Mars*? 'Cause she was supposed to start out as 16, or 17?

**Taylor:** Yeah, 'cause she—

**Sydnee:** Let me see. 'Cause the question is, how old is she? It started in 2004.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.



**Sydnee:** Um, and she's 40.

**Raleigh:** So—

**Sydnee:** She's three years older than me.

**Raleigh:** 20... 4?

**Sydnee:** So, I guess older than—[laughs]

**Raleigh:** Older than 16.

**Taylor:** Yeah, she was older than her character.

**Sydnee:** Older than the—

**Raleigh:** Yeah, older than she was supposed to be. But, still.

**Taylor:** That's what—this was—

**Sydnee:** I mean—

**Raleigh:** It was believable.

**Sydnee:** —but believable, yeah.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Um, I do think it's interesting, though, that I think when you look at the reboots of it, like—you had the original, what? Two seasons of the show? Three seasons?

**Sydnee:** Three, yeah.

**Raleigh:** Three. Um, that felt very, like, story-driven, you know? And then, unexpected end. You didn't think the show as going to end there. And then the movie, which was a decade later probably, and the movie feels like it is very for

fans of *Veronica Mars*. It doesn't feel like it's supposed to be, like, a plot continuation that, like, boosts the story in any way. It just feels like, "This is for you all. You made this happen. Here's all these Easter eggs, and characters, and..."

**Sydnee:** I—I feel like it was. I mean, aside from the fact that quite literally, like, the fans funded it through a Kickstarter. Um, I feel like a lot of us felt like we were left hanging. Like, what—what is happening? We need closure.

**Raleigh:** At the end of the three seasons, yeah.

**Sydnee:** We would love to know. We cared about these characters. Um, 'cause I was very—I was every bit as invested in the characters as I was the story. Which—I mean, that sounds like... obvious? But that's not always true! [laughs]

**Raleigh:** That's true.

**Sydnee:** Um, I always—I always use, like, *Lost* as a comparison. I was very invested in the story of *Lost*.

**Raleigh:** Not the characters.

**Sydnee:** They thought I was invested in the characters. [holding back laughter] But I was very invested in the story, and I was dissatisfied.

**Taylor:** Well—

**Sydnee:** Um, but I was invested in both in—so I wanted an end. Give me a nice little end, and that's what the movie did.

**Raleigh:** Right.

**Taylor:** It's interesting. I read an article that interviewed the creator talking about the movie, and how there was pressure—because it's a fan-funded movie, he felt like he had to do what the fans wanted. And, like, pay attention to the fandom and, like, the—the relationships that they liked, and wanted to see come to fruition and, you know, like—the characters they liked, and that that was a really hard way to write a story that you have in your own head, the direction you see where you're gonna go. And I won't get into it yet, but I—that—when he got

the fourth season it was a bit more like, "Now I'm *not* gonna do what the fans want me to do." [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Well, I definitely think that's true. Because as much as I enjoyed the movie in the sense that, like, "Thank you, I needed to see these stories play out, and I needed to know this ending occurred."

And, like, that felt very satisfying. It does feel different. Like, it definitely feels different than all of the—than both the first three seasons and the fourth season that eventually came. It definitely has, like, tonally—

**Raleigh:** It's a little bit lighter.

**Sydnee:** It is.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Everything feels a little bit like—almost like the first three seasons were, uh, her remembering those things. And, like, the way that you would remember them through the lens of, like, narrative and all that.

**Raleigh:** Sure.

**Sydnee:** And, like, was it really that gritty and dark? [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Or maybe it wasn't. Maybe it's just the way you remember things. Like, it felt very different to me. And then once you get to the fourth season it's like, "Oh yes."

**Raleigh:** "We're back!" [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** 'Cause it does have that—like we said. Like, it's noir. It has that dark, kind of hard-boiled, like, nobody is really good. Nobody is a quote, unquote, "good guy."

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Um, and—

**Rileigh:** There's also no promise that the ones you do like are going to... be okay. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** No. Or—or that they're always going to be good people. That was one thing that I felt like, um... may have influenced why the show wasn't as popular in the beginning, is... from the beginning—but it definitely grows more as the show goes on—I feel like Veronica is not your stereotypical, um, female protagonist.

**Taylor:** Mm-mm.

**Sydnee:** She's, of course, very lovely, and smart. And, like, those things are always there for the—you know. And she generally has good intentions.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But then there's other sides to her that are flaws, and are very much part of who she is. They're baked into her. And some of them harm her, or harm her progress in whatever she's trying to do.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And she doesn't necessarily confront them and try to overcome them. Um, and that's a very complex character for a teen hero, you know?

**Taylor:** And I kept—I kept waiting for sort of a formation of, like, a Scooby gang, if you will. Uh, in the first season.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** And, I mean, you know, she has Wallace. But even that relationship it's like, well, she—she uses him a lot. And, like, he understands that. But it's not like that kind of warm, you know, reliable, quippy friendship that you get from a lot of the other shows of the same era. There's that sense where she never really has a safe space in it, and that kind of—it's a constant environment of anxiety that, you know, really is counter to what—that sort of teen drama, but there's that safe core of buddies that you've always got at the center of it.

**Sydnee:** Exactly. Um, I wanna get more into that idea, but before I do that...

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

\*\*\*\*\*

**Sydnee:** Uh, first of all, I told you all about this once before. But I wanna talk again about Wild Gears. Uh, because I am no artist. I know, this is shocking.

**Rileigh:** [gasps]

**Sydnee:** You—[laughs quietly] you have both seen the stick figures I draw. And I know you're both thinking, "Well, obviously you're very talented in the visual arts, Syd."

**Rileigh:** [holding back laughter] Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** [quietly] I like your stick figures!

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly] They always have triangle dresses. Uh, but I usually cannot create art with my hands that looks like, well, anything. Um, and certainly nothing you *wanna* look at. But with Wild Gears, uh, they have reimaged the spirograph for the 21st century, and I can make designs and art that looks cool and beautiful and interesting, and will make people think, "Hey! She knows what she's doing."

Um, the gears are precise. They're beautiful. They're very satisfying to use. You can—they have all different sizes. I have a whole bunch of 'em. They all come in different sizes. They're thick. They're really high quality, so you're not gonna, you know, accidentally break 'em they're not flimsy. Um, they're really easy to control and get the hang of use while you're doing them. Uh, they're relaxing to use on your own, if you just, you know, wanna make something.

If you have some extra time right now and you feel the need to express yourself in a way that maybe you've never tried before in a different medium, this is a great opportunity to do so. And they were fun to, uh, play with my kids with. You know? They're still accessible for me to, like, sit down with my daughter and play around with it. It was like the spirographs we used to use as kids, except a higher

quality, better version of that. So, uh, Teylor, if our listeners want to check out Wild Gears, what should they do?

**Teylor:** Uh, Wild Gears is making art fun, relaxing, and easy, with high quality, laser cut gears. Discover Wild Gears and get your 20% off discount at [wildgears.com/stillbuff](http://wildgears.com/stillbuff).

**Rileigh:** Uh, I wanna talk about Curiosity Stream. [pause] We're supported—

**Sydnee:** [simultaneously] Okay! [laughs]

**Rileigh:** —this week in part by Curiosity Stream. Which, uh, is like Netflix for documentaries. Or, as they like to call it, smart TV for your Smart TV.

**Sydnee:** Ohh.

**Rileigh:** Ehh?

**Sydnee:** That's clever!

**Rileigh:** Get it? Get it?

**Sydnee:** I like that. I love documentaries.

**Rileigh:** Me too.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. They're one of my favorite things to watch.

**Rileigh:** The ones about—you know, you got food documentaries, you got history, you got true crime, you got travel. And Curiosity Stream has all of them. They have thousands of documentaries on their streaming service, um, and nonfiction TV shows on all of those topics, and many more. They also even have exclusive programs just on Curiosity Stream, featuring people like Steven Hawking and Nick Offerman.

**Sydnee:** Nick Offerman!

**Rileigh:** And I love Nick Offerman. I don't know about you all, but every time I watch him I just feel like I'm watching *Parks and Rec* again. I love hearing him talk about anything.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm. And he's Justin's woodworking hero, so, yeah.

**Raleigh:** Yeah! So, there you go. Um, and you can stream all of it from your TV, phone, tablet, or computer. So, wherever you can use Curiosity Stream, you have it all right there at your fingertips.

Taylor, if our listeners want to check out Curiosity Stream, what should they do?

**Taylor:** Uh, they should go the [curiositystream.com/buffering](https://curiositystream.com/buffering), or use code "buffering" to sign up, and just \$14.99 for the whole year. So, that's [curiositystream.com/buffering](https://curiositystream.com/buffering), or use code "buffering."

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**Sydnee:** So, I think we're getting into one of the things that differentiated the show, like I said. But also wondered if played into the fact that it was, you know, a little less accessible, is *Veronica Mars* as the character is, um, very distanced, and almost unable to connect to other people.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** I mean, you—except she has this close relationship with her father. Although even, at times, she hides things from her father.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Um, but you—you really get the idea that she is an island unto herself. She—nobody fully knows her, and she keeps it that way, and that's very important to her. And it enables her to be very good at her work. There are many times where, like, that quality allows her to investigate things in a way that the rest of us would feel very uncomfortable or have difficulty doing. And to pursue whoever—you know, whoever may be responsible, no matter how much she thinks she cares or is close to somebody. If she thinks that they did something, or she needs to use them as means to an end, she will do it. Um, which makes—again, makes her a very good investigator, but also makes her a little harder, if you are a teen or young adult—it's a little harder of a character to connect to, 'cause most of us aren't like that, you know?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah. I was really waiting for the, uh—uh, obviously spoilers. But, like, in season one, when she both thinks that Logan could've been the murderer of her friends and possibly the person that assaulted her—like, in both instances I was waiting for the drama of, "Oh, no! But I'm kinda dating him!"

And it was just like, "Okay, great. [holding back laughter] Gonna let the authorities know. Gonna, like, turn in the evidence."

**Sydnee:** She—yeah. She's always ready to cut somebody off. I mean, she is ready to turn on people in a second. And I think, you know, you could get into sort of, like, are we trying to say that this is born of her trauma? As a result of her trauma she has this? And now we're kind of saying her inability to connect with people is like a superpower she has, which... I think you could dig into that as, like, well, maybe that's not the best message.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** But one way or another, um, her flaws are on full display throughout the show. And I just think—I think that's impressive for a show like this, that is aimed at a younger audience. Because especially for female characters, I don't feel like there are a lot of opportunities to be that way. You're often pigeonholed into the good girl who ultimately, in a show like this, would probably be the damsel in distress at some point and, you know, like, cry and fall apart—or you're the bad girl, and that's all you are. And it's rare to see somebody who is both, and who doesn't—I mean, her arc doesn't go, "But then she learns, and she loves, and she changes and lives happily ever after."

That is not her arc.

**Raleigh:** I do like that there's no, "She falls in love and now is different, and has changed, and, you know, now she wants to accept more people into her life, and change her line of work, and do something less dangerous."

Like, no! Yeah, she has relationships, but that does not ever change who she is. And that's something I think I didn't like as much when I was watching it the first time, because I was, I mean, probably eight or nine years younger than I am now.



And I was like, "Aww, but I want 'em have, like, a cute, like, you know, like, fall in love and have a cute relationship or whatever."

But now rewatching it to talk about it now, I was like, "Yeah! That's right! You shouldn't—" you know. It's not good to depict these relationships for young girls where, like, you should fall in love with someone and then change who you are to make yourself more appealing or desirable.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Well, and I—

**Raleigh:** I appreciate it more.

**Taylor:** —I think it also is very—it's very beholden to that kind of noir idea. Where, like—even, like—I don't know. Like, the main love interest being Logan. It's sort of like a gender-swap femme fatale character. You know? Always kind of troubled and just as much bad as good. And it's not—you know, you don't ever expect in those, like, hard-boiled detective movies that the detective's every gonna settle down and have a family. Things are gonna keep going wrong in their relationship, because there's a central core to that character that is mistrust and sort of, you know, like, not being settled, that drives the character forward. Which, I like that it kind of hearkens back to that sort of media.

**Sydnee:** It definitely does, because every time you think she's gonna get some sort of, like, resolution and peace, they definitely—I feel like there's, like, a punishment for her again. Like, she has to pay again in some way, and there's more trauma that has to be suffered. Which, again, feels very noir to me.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like, life never just settles down and everything's fine. You have to—there is more darkness to come, always. And if you get too comfortable, that's when it's gonna hit you. And I feel like that definitely... apart from the movie.  
[laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Apart from the movie. [laughs quietly] Uh—

**Rileigh:** Gosh.

**Sydnee:** —[laughs] that's definitely in there. Especially as we move in to season four.

**Rileigh:** Man. Season four. [holding back laughter] I get—I get upset every time I think about it. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** And I think in part—in part you see, like, some of the things we're talking about is indicated by the fact that a lot of the other characters have moved forward with their lives. Um, have grown up—and even in ways that are, like, not particularly exciting, but are very—feel very true. Like, Wallace's adult self...

**Rileigh:** Feels right.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** It feels very right. Like, yeah, he wouldn't be into drama. He wanted, like, a normal, happy, healthy life. [laughs] He didn't want all the stuff that Veronica kept bringing into his sphere, and so he has a—a very kind of typical grown-up existence. Um, which makes a ton of sense for that character.

Logan has obviously matured and grown up. You know, he's, like, going to therapy, and trying to get ahold of his anger, and all of the, like, trauma, and his father, and his youth and everything that was—you know, all of his past. He's trying to move past that and grow up and be a healthy adult. Um, Veronica is not, in some ways. She is still—

**Rileigh:** Yeah, kind of stuck.

**Sydnee:** —yeah, she's still stuck. She's still very much that same person. 'Cause she had gotten her law degree, right?

**Rileigh:** Yeah, right?

[pause]

**Sydnee:** Didn't she actually finish?

[pause]

**Raleigh:** Actually, I don't remember. Maybe she didn't finish.

**Sydnee:** I don't remember. It was from the movie.

**Raleigh:** One—she either—she almost got it or she got it. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Either way.

**Taylor:** She's still a PI, though.

**Sydnee:** Like, she had—yes. Well, she had the opportunity to go and—

**Raleigh:** To be a lawyer.

**Sydnee:** —be a lawyer and do other things with her life, and she returned to Neptune and was a PI.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And is fine with that. Or at least as fine as Veronica is with anything. Um, but then, uh—but Veronica seems to thrive on, like, upheaval.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm. On chaos.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yeah, to some extent. Uh, I do—I do like the consistency of Dick Casablancas.

**Raleigh:** [holding back laughter] Oh my gosh! I was hoping we were gonna talk about this—

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] Ohhh, that name!

**Rileigh:** —Casa—Dick Casablancas at some point.

**Taylor:** Well, I just really had to take—I was like, "Wait. So you're telling there are two characters in this show, and their names are... Dick and Beaver. And we're just gonna, just—just—okay.

**Rileigh:** [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Yeah...

**Taylor:** Sure. Roll with it. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** They're just there.

**Rileigh:** They're there. Dick Casablancas... is always Dick Casablancas. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** It—it's funny, 'cause, um, I hated... [laughs quietly]

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** ... Dick Casablancas. And Justin always got such a kick out of Dick Casablancas.

**Rileigh:** Yeah, I did, too. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** And I always thought, like, how can you think he's funny? He's so terrible! And it wasn't til, like, I got older and rewatched it that I was able to, like, "Okay. Well, I can kind of appreciate [holding back laughter] Dick Casablancas from afar."

He was consistent, too! Like, his character never, uh—I mean, like, that seems like a—'cause the thing is, you want somebody like Dick Casablancas to get what comin' to 'em, right? Like, especially from a high school sense.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like, smug and rich and... just a jerk.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And you just—you just wanna see, like, "Oh, well. You're gonna peak, buddy. [laughs] Enjoy it now! The future is—belongs to us nerds."

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But the thing is, like, the truth is, they usually...

**Rileigh:** That doesn't happen. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** They do okay. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Yeah, they do fine.

**Sydnee:** It's not fair. It sucks. Um, and maybe they'll grow and change and be good people, or maybe they'll be Dick Casablancas. But... there are Dick Casablancas's in the world.

**Rileigh:** The other thing I want to talk about, which is a spoiler, I think, for a lot of the show, in case you haven't watched it or want to watch it, is Veronica's relationship with Logan.

**Sydnee:** Yes. Now, did you think—

**Rileigh:** Which is a big, recurring thing.

**Sydnee:** —did you think early on that, uh, Duncan was gonna be her...

**Rileigh:** Yeah, I did.

**Sydnee:** ... guy? Did you think they were setting up for a reunion between her and her, we find out, not-brother?

**Rileigh:** Yeah, that you think is her brother and you're like—

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Wow, that was a plot point. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** —"Whoa, what?" And then... [laughs quietly] not brother.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. [laughs] There's a weird moment where it's like, "What?! Where is this going?!"

**Raleigh:** "Sorry?!" [laughs]

**Taylor:** I don't—I mean, I just—I watched most of the first season and then kind of jumped around in the second and third so I could get to the fourth, but man, does anything go as hard as the first season? 'Cause it's like, "Maybe incest! Like, assault! Like, lots of death." Like, that's a—that's a lot [through laughter] in one season.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I mean, you—

**Raleigh:** It's all jam-packed in there.

**Sydnee:** —you see the secret pregnancy, right?

**Taylor:** Oh—oh, with Duncan? Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah, that was a wild way of getting rid of his character. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** That was a wild—I mean, it does! I would say it goes as hard. 'Cause, I mean, that was a wild, like...

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] [through laughter] I guess that's true.

**Sydnee:** That whole plot line, and the—they really fooled me with the end of that. Like, his disappearance and everything.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. Yeah, I had forgotten about all of it until I rewatched it. And then you just—all these crazy things that come back and you're like, "They really went there, with every single character!"

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Yeah, I—

**Rileigh:** But I did think Duncan had good, uh, development in his character. Like, I do think he was one of the characters that even though he kind of faded out of importance, I guess, throughout the show, that his character got a good arc, I think.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** And went from, like, this troubled, angry teen, to... a better person.

**Sydnee:** I think it—I think it takes a while for you to be able to start seeing him not through Veronica's eyes. 'Cause Veronica views so many people kind of as to, like, what are they to her? What is their relevance, you know?

**Rileigh:** Well, and then so many people, if you're looking at just how they're relevant to her, that aren't relevant to her.

**Sydnee:** Right.

**Rileigh:** So it's just like, whatever. They don't matter. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** And, like, I think Veronica gets very wrapped up in her own loss, with her best friend, but does not think as much about the loss for Duncan, you know? Especially since for a while he believes he killed her.

**Rileigh:** Accidentally killed his sister.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Which he did not.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Um, but then Veronica and Logan. I have to say, the first time around, I didn't see that coming.

**Taylor:** No.

**Raleigh:** Really?

**Sydnee:** When they first start making out when, uh—that's the episode with Jonathan Taylor Thomas there, right?

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly] I did not see that coming.

**Taylor:** Yeah, I—I, uh—I read an article before I started watching the show. I—you know, I—but it mentioned the relationship. And then I started watching it and I'm like, "The guy that's knocking out her headlights with a crowbar? That's—that's the one? That's her big relationship?"

**Raleigh:** Yep.

**Taylor:** "This butthead?" [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh:** You know—

**Sydnee:** It's a very, uh—I will say that that, to me, echoes of Buffy and Angel and Spike, there.

**Taylor:** Yeah, but at least they—I mean, they had, like, redeeming, charming qualities. This guy was just a big ol' butthead. I don't know.

**Sydnee:** Ehhh, I don't know about that.

**Raleigh:** Sydnee likes Logan. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah, I'm [crosstalk]—alright.

**Sydnee:** He has the ability to be charming.

**Taylor:** I liked older Logan better than young Logan. Like, Logan in season four I was like, "Okay." I mean, he's just kind of there, but he's working through his stuff. But the young one, like, I... yeah. Sorry! Agree to disagree.



**Rileigh:** Logan in season four... [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** Well... [laughs] for when he was there.

**Rileigh:** I just—I got—[laughs] this is the—

**Sydnee:** He's quite nice looking. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah. This is, I guess, the—talk about the end of season four, right? I feel like we have to.

**Sydnee:** They set—you know, they set you up towards the end of the original series for this, like, Logan has to be the true love because of the speech in the hotel room, with the... what is it? Years and... blood, and... oh, what does he—it's the name of the last episode.

**Taylor:** Oh, yeah.

**Rileigh:** About how much they have been through together, and he loves her, and all that stuff, and... you think they're—and also, they both—which we've talked about before—I don't think Veronica as much so as Logan—but they're both flawed. Like, it's not like you have this perfect character getting dragged down by a bad person, or vice versa. Like, they both have their stuff going on, and they kind of just find... comfort in each other's baggage, almost.

**Sydnee:** Years, continents, bloodshed. That's what it is. But, now, to some extent they bring out the worst in each other.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I will say, too. Like, they're not necessarily a good pair in that way.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm. But you just want 'em together. *I just wanted 'em together.* [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Well, I never thought Duncan could keep up with Veronica, and I thought maybe Logan could.

**Rileigh:** Duncan—yeah, and I think that's why when you have Meg come in as a character—like, that makes sense for Duncan.

**Sydnee:** Same thing with, uh—we didn't even talk about Piz.

**Rileigh:** Oh yeah.

**Taylor:** Oh, I... that... [laughs] that's a great name. I just read that in synopsis, 'cause that's, what? Season two? Season three.

**Sydnee:** Three.

**Rileigh:** Three.

**Sydnee:** Three, yeah. [pause] Yeah, he couldn't keep up with Veronica either.

**Rileigh:** No.

**Taylor:** I kinda—at the beginning I—

**Rileigh:** I felt bad for poor—

**Taylor:** Go ahead.

[pause]

**Rileigh:** I was gonna say, I just felt bad for poor Piz after a while. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Yeah, me too.

**Taylor:** At the beginning, I thought—I thought Weevil was a pretty good love interest for *Veronica Mars*. I thought that was someone who could actually keep up with her. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yeah, we haven't talked much about him. I liked Weevil a lot.

**Rileigh:** He was one of my, if not my favorite character.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah, that's what I—that's who I was shipping. That's—that was where my money was. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** That's a good—it's a good ship.

**Raleigh:** It is.

**Sydnee:** It's a good match. And, like, if you look at, like, where Weevil ends up—I mean, I like that, because he's still [holding back laughter] sort of involved in crime...

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But in, like, a very fatherly way? [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Fatherly crime.

**Sydnee:** It's a—you know?

**Taylor:** Crime dad!

**Sydnee:** But, I mean... well, it makes a lot of sense for him. Like, the idea that he was gonna completely get out of that world—he did not seem like that was his inclination. Just like Veronica was never gonna just, like, I don't know, become a lawyer, or join the FBI and just kind of—like, she was always gonna be walking that line between doing what's good and what's not good. And I feel like Weevil's there, too.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. I do think, though, that because Weevil is such a good character, that that's why he couldn't have been with Veronica, though. Was because I feel like he was one of the only people that, like, was ready and always there to call Veronica out, whenever she was doing something that wasn't great, or, like, vice versa, would be there to help her, but then recognize when he was being used. Kind of in the same way Wallace did, which I think Veronica just did that with a lot of people in her life.

**Sydnee:** She does, yeah.

**Rileigh:** But I think that Weevil was a good counterbalance as, like, a good partnering there. Like, in a platonic sense, because they kind of keep each other in check, I guess. But also Weevil's just a good character.

**Sydnee:** He is. He's a great character. Um, I, uh—I was devastated at the end of the series, though.

**Rileigh:** [sighs] We finally—we have Logan and Veronica together. It's—it seems happy.

**Sydnee:** It really is—it really is classic, like, we—the—our—our hard-boiled PI—

**Rileigh:** [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** —has, like, waded through all of the moral grey zone to find goodness, honesty, truth. To, like, reach out and connect to another human and be vulnerable and finally, like, leave all that darkness behind, is what the implication is. And she is gonna get married, and is ready to move forward. And then Logan gets blown up.

**Taylor:** By Patton Oswald! [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** [distant laughter]

**Rileigh:** God. Man, I—

**Taylor:** I think that my love for Patton Oswald outweighs any love I had for the character of Logan. I was just like, "Well, alright." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I knew it the whole last scene. I was watching that whole last scene leading up to it—well, not the very last, but you know what I mean. That scene. And I knew—I knew—I could tell. You can tell by the pacing what's coming. Like, you can just read it. Like, "He's gonna die. He's gonna die. Why is he gonna die?!"

And then you're figuring it out with her, why he's going to die. And it's just like, "[gasps loudly]"

**Rileigh:** See, I didn't—I guess I was just so into it emotionally at that point, where I wasn't really paying attention to all the—the things pointing to his eminent death. [holding back laughter] So when it happened I was like, "[gasps loudly] Whaaat?! What?!" [laughs quietly] And then I thought, "Well, maybe it just—maybe he didn't really die. Maybe he just got hurt, and maybe this is, like, out of sequence and out of time, and this is, like, something that didn't happen. This didn't really happen."

But no! Then there's a time jump, and Veronica's in therapy, and talking about Logan dying.

**Sydnee:** I, uh—I was in denial. I—

**Rileigh:** You tried to convince me for a while that it didn't really happen, and you thought they had tricked us, and that maybe he was still alive.

**Sydnee:** If you don't see a body... [laughs quietly] that's why they do that on TV! If they don't show you a body, they're leaving room.

**Rileigh:** That's true.

**Sydnee:** I was very—I was very determined to not believe that he was gone, but... I think—I think he's gone. [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** And it makes sense, because she can't be happy. She can't be settled. She can't leave the darkness. That's the whole point of her character. I don't love that for her, on a personal level, [through laughter] but, you know.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** That's how these—that's the noir aspect coming in again. Like, your hard-boiled PI can never rest.

**Sydnee:** Right. No, you're exactly right. That had to be—the only ways that this show could go—esp if they were, I assume, planning on another season at that point.

**Raleigh:** Yeah, that's certainly what it seemed like.

**Sydnee:** Was for her to lose again, and she had to lose big, because it had to be a big enough loss to undo all the growth. All the, like, hopefulness, all the trust, all the belief that things could be good. You have to undo it all, and so the loss had to be big. And Logan was the natural choice, I think, in that respect. I think the only other loss that could've echoed that would've been Keith. Um, which I wonder if the reason for that is just, like, "But Keith is so good, don't lose Keith!" [laughs]

**Raleigh:** That had to have been a debate, though, right? Like, which one do we... which one do we get rid of?

**Sydnee:** I can't—I can't lose Keith. And you free her, without her being in a relationship, you know? Because she was trying to squash the more, like, damaging aspects of her personality. Like, address those in her relationship with Logan. Her dad is not gonna demand that of her. And if she was in a marriage, that would've—I mean, she would've at least had to, like, go to therapy and work on those things.

**Raleigh:** And at least if they're setting it up for another season—I don't know if that's happening, ever.

**Sydnee:** Who knows, who knows.

**Raleigh:** Um, but at least you know that her dad being there for her—I feel like you can count on the stability of their relationship to get her through losing Logan, and to keep her doing what she does. But I feel like if it would've been the other way around, you would've ended up with a character that you wouldn't believe would still be with Logan, and, like, having this happy life and settled, if her dad would've been the one to go.

**Sydnee:** It would've been constant, like, them fighting and her going out to do things and try to, like, solve things, and demand retribution for this, and Logan trying to get her to stop. And I think that's a less interesting story.

**Rileigh:** I agree.

**Taylor:** If either of you could make the trade and have the story end with Keith kickin' it instead of Logan, would you?

[pause]

**Sydnee and Rileigh:** No.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Oh, no.

**Rileigh:** I can't.

**Sydnee:** I—I—I will—

**Rileigh:** As much as I love Logan, I love Keith more. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I will stan Keith Mars forever. [laughs] I can't—no.

**Rileigh:** He is my favorite TV dad, I think, of all TV dads.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] Yeah. I would not—I mean, I hate it on some level—and, I mean, this just speaks to the kind—I get it, from a narrative perspective, from the kind of show it is, from the story you're trying to tell. I understand all that. For me, I just wish all shows could be about, like, people being nice to each other and getting along, and...

**Rileigh:** Is that why you like *Terrace House* so much?

**Sydnee:** Yes. [laughs] I mean, why can't we all just, you know—why can't we start with when people end up together, and just go from there?

**Rileigh:** Sure.

**Taylor:** I don't know if that would have quite the same tone [through laughter] as the rest of *Veronica Mars*.

"Now they're just workin' through their marriage, and figuring things out along the way." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs] I just—I like—I like happy endings as beginnings, and then just happy. Um... so.

**Raleigh:** Throughout the whole thing.

**Sydnee:** Throughout the whole thing. No, but—and I—but I do think it is true to the—I mean, it is. That's the kind of story they're trying to tell. We're not as used to seeing it, I think, again, with a female protagonist, and especially with the way the show starts, as a young female protagonist. That is a very unique casting. But if you look at that, if you switch it to a male and you made him an adult, that story is over and over and over. We have lots of examples of that. So, it makes sense, you know?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But, thank you for watching it, Tey.

**Taylor:** Yeah, no, I wanna go back and watch the stuff in between. I skipped around to get the major plot points, but I'll definitely go back and finish it.

**Sydnee:** There are a lot of funny parts. I mean, it's clever. It's witty. It's well written.

**Raleigh:** I think it's one of the few teen shows that transition to college, and it was still—still good. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Yeah, it makes that jump well. And there are a lot of other characters that are funny and interesting that show up throughout. Like, repeat characters and stuff. So, it's well worth it.

**Taylor:** And this is just an aside, but it reminded me a little bit of *Jessica Jones*. Kind of had that very similar character, sort of.

**Sydnee:** Oh yeah?

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.



**Taylor:** Yeah. I don't know if either of you've watched that. Maybe I'll pick that someday.

**Sydnee:** Alright. Well, uh, thank you both. What's up next, Tey?

**Taylor:** Uh, so this is a little obscure but, uh, it's an important comic to me. It's a comic by the name of *Bug Boy* by one of the, like, originators of Japanese horror comics, Hideshi Hino. Uh, so it's a pretty short graphic novel. Um... it's kinda hard to find in print, but I think it's out there on the internets in scans. And, uh, yeah. So... kinda like Kafka, but cute, and also with, like, ten times more body horror. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Amazing.

**Sydnee:** Alright, I'm excited—well, I've already read it. But I'm excited to talk about it! [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah, we'll talk about it next week.

**Taylor:** Alright.

**Sydnee:** Yay! Alright.

**Taylor:** Thank you.

**Sydnee:** Uh, thank you both. Thank you, listeners. If you want to tweet at us, you can tweet at us @stillbuff. And if you want to email us, um, to tell me why my cucumbers are round... or anything else—

**Taylor:** Please explain that. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** —uh, stillbuffering@maximumfun.org. And Raleigh, before we go...

**Raleigh:** Yes?

**Sydnee:** You have to tell us—you have to cap off your teen years.

**Taylor:** Oh yeah!

**Rileigh:** Oh man. Um... I think that... my teen years were a lot cooler and a lot better, and a lot more, um... a lot less dumb choices than maybe I normally would've made, if it wouldn't have been for this show, and both of you.

**Sydnee and Teylor:** Awww!

**Rileigh:** So... that's my—that's my—that's my recap.

**Sydnee:** Well, that was very nice!

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Teylor:** Thank you!

**Rileigh:** I got to talk about all my teen years as I was doin' 'em. And I know we've been done with that part of the show for, like... many months now. But, you know, that's where it started. I got to talk about 'em all, and figure things out with your all's help, so.

**Sydnee:** Well, I'm glad to hear that. I never know if we're helpful or not, so...

**Teylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** I mean, most of the time, helpful. Of course, you know, there were... some moments.

**Sydnee:** Some not.

**Rileigh:** Sure.

**Teylor:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** But yeah.

**Sydnee:** Aww.

**Taylor:** It is kinda nice. You know, most—most people, they look back at their teen years and you've got photographs, maybe a journal that you half kept up. You've got a podcast! [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah, I have a whole audio journal of, like, every stupid thing I ever said or did.

**Taylor:** Ohh, is that good or bad? [laughs]

**Raleigh:** To go back and listen to. Five years worth. So, uh... there's always that. [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** Good for you?

**Sydney:** If you ever decide to have kids, you have such great stuff. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Such great stuff to share with them.

**Taylor:** Oooh.

**Raleigh:** Oh man.

**Taylor:** Or hide from them! [laughs quietly]

**Sydney:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Or hide, yeah. Or remove from the internet forever.

**Sydney:** Oh. Well, thank you.

**Raleigh:** Thank you all

**Sydney:** And happy early birthday.

**Taylor:** Yes.

**Raleigh:** Next time we all talk, I'll be 20!

**Taylor:** Woo hoo!

**Sydnee:** Yeah. I'll tell you on the day, but it feels official... to do it on the show—

**Rileigh:** Thank you for clarifying that you would tell me happy birthday on—on my birthday.

**Sydnee:** That's the one you get! No more! [laughs]

**Taylor:** Say it once a year.

**Rileigh:** Okay. Six days early, I guess that's fine. [laughs quietly]

**Sydnee:** Uh, alright. Well, thank you, Rileigh. And, uh, thank you to The Nouvellas for our theme song, "Baby You Change Your Mind."

[theme music begins in the background]

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

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

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

**Rileigh:** I am still buffering...

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

**Sydnee:** [singing quietly] Happy birthday to you...

**Rileigh:** Oh, it's not even my birthday!

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Oh, sorry.

**Rileigh:** Then you'll get the one happy birthday song out of the way, and then no one will sing to me on my actual birthday!

**Sydnee:** Well, I already sang the first line, so that one's done. [laughs]

**Rleigh:** Only get one repeat of it.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

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**Teresa:** *Shmanners*. Noun. Definition: rules of etiquette designed not to judge others, but rather to guide ourselves through everyday social situations.

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