

Still Buffering 227: "Mean Girls" (2004)

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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: Uh, I know we were about to talk about fall, but I just found my water bottle under the table and I was very excited—

Raleigh: [snorts]

Sydnee: —so I wanted to share that before we started. I had lost my giant Hydro Flask that I carry around all day to keep hydrated. It's right here under the table.

Raleigh: It was just under the table, down the stairs in your house the whole time.

Taylor: Is this stayin' in? Is this a bit? Is this—you—you felt that—

Sydnee: No!

Taylor: —everyone needed to know this?!

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] I was just—I was getting situated as we were counting in, and I looked and went, "[gasps] My water bottle!" [laughs] I've been so dehydrated!

Taylor: You—you can drink water out of other things. There's a cup right now in front of you that you've been drinking other things out of.

Sydnee: Well, that's coffee, so...

Rileigh: What *kind* of coffee is it Sydnee?

Sydnee: It's pumpkin coffee.

Rileigh: Pumpkin coffee!

Taylor: Ahh, it's—

Sydnee: I have pumpkin coffee—

Rileigh: [singing] It's the most wonderful time...

Sydnee: —I had pumpkin creamer in the other coffee I had earlier. This is my third coffee.

Rileigh: Wow!

Sydnee: I am ready for this day! [laughs quietly]

Taylor: You are—you are set! I don't think—have I had—have I consumed pumpkin good—goods yet? I don't think so!

Sydnee: Why? [snorts]

Taylor: I don't know!

Sydnee: [laughs]

Rileigh: Why, Taylor?!

Sydnee: Wh—why?! [laughs]

Taylor: Well, I don't like—I don't really—I always make my coffee at home, so I don't go to places that offer the pumpkin coffee. I usually make, like, a pumpkin syrup for coffee, cocktails and stuff at home. I just haven't gotten around to it yet. I don't know!

Sydnee: I found a, uh—

Taylor: I had some nut coffee. Is that a thing? That's fall, right? Nuts?

Sydnee: They're all the—

Rileigh: Sure? Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Yeah? I mean, I love—I love nuts. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Nuts are great!

Rileigh: [unintelligible]

Sydnee: I mean, unless you have a—unless you have a nut allergy, in which case please do not consume those nuts.

Taylor: No.

Sydnee: I am sorry.

Rileigh: Is it true that if you give babies peanut butter, now they're just invincible to peanut allergies for always?

Sydnee: Not ne—like, not 100%. It's not like that. But there is some evidence that we should introduce, like, common food allergens earlier in our lives, as a way of avoiding food allergies. Which is a big shift. We used to say, like, put off introducing these foods until they're older, and now we're saying, no, maybe you should try to introduce them earlier. I—you know, it's funny. With peanut butter, I gave peanut butter to both of our kids at the doctor's office during appointments.

Rileigh: Oh, just in case?

Sydnee: Just in case. Uh, 'Cause I felt safer. So I, like, brought a little thing of peanut butter and then, like, gave it to 'em. And so now, like, some of my friends

do the same, 'cause we all take care—in our office. We're all family docs. We take care of each other's kids. We bring our kids to the office for appointments for their first peanut butter. [laughs] I mean, not *for* that. You know what I mean. They're there for their well child—they'll eat some peanut butter while they're there. [laughs]

Taylor: That's a—that's quite an extra challenge to surprise your doctor with. Like, "Oh yeah, [crosstalk]—"

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: "—oh, by the way, just gave 'em peanut butter, first time. Who knows what's gonna happen?"

Raleigh: "We're gonna see how that pans out."

Sydnee: "Good luck, everybody?"

Taylor: Just bring a little bee. Sneak it in. Like, "Oh, just let my kid get stung by a bee. Just thought it was the right place to figure this out." [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: "I also brought, um, some shrimp? We're just gonna—"

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: Just rubbed 'em on his face, just now while your back was turned. So let's see what happens."

Raleigh: "Just kinda peel one for myself, and then touch his cheeks with my shrimp fingers."

Sydnee: [laughs] "Give my baby a shrimp!" [laughs]

Taylor: If it's gotta happen, it's gotta happen here, right?

Sydnee: You know, Cooper loves shrimp, though.

Taylor: Aww.

Raleigh: No way she's allergic to 'em.

Sydnee: No. No. I was very, uh, lucky in that regard. But my kids don't have any—there's nothing wrong with food allergies, but you do have to be a little more cautious, you know.

Rileigh: How about—are your—are your kids allergic to the joys of fall? Or do they also love them?

Sydnee: Uh, Charlie is thrilled, because Charlie's favorite season is winter, and so we are—

Rileigh: Oh, we're just one step closer.

Sydnee: Yes. We're one step closer to winter. Charlie wants it to be co—I don't understand this kid.

Rileigh: Can I—why is her favorite season winter?

Sydnee: She loves it when it's cold, and she loves snow.

Rileigh: Okay. I guess that's fair.

Sydnee: It's not a holiday thing. It's cold and snow. It's very clearly weather.

Rileigh: I know that girl loves to swim, though! And be outside!

Sydnee: She's thrilled for winter coming.

Rileigh: Interesting.

Taylor: I really—I really wanna, like, speak on behalf of the people that love fall, how often you get called, like, basic and it's like, "[dudebro voice] Ugh, you like fall." Like, it's cool to make fun of people for enjoying a season that really, if we were gonna rank 'em, I think the season that has the most to offer, and is thus the logical choice, is fall.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: It's a good season. I mean—

Taylor: It's got—you've still got decent weather for the most part. It's not crazy cold yet. You've got really good, like, snacks and drinks. Like, there are some good holidays in there. Like, you got Halloween, you got Thanksgiving, so you get to be spooky and you get to eat a bunch of food. I think it's the superior season!

Sydnee: It's—I mean, it's way up there. I will always like summer, just because I like it when it is as warm and humid as possible.

Raleigh: Gross.

Sydnee: Those are my favorite weather conditions, is hot and hum—[laughs]

Taylor: You like—okay, you likes to be sweaty. Okay.

Sydnee: I do! I like heat.

Taylor: Sweat, and just musty all the time. Alright!

Raleigh: Why do you—[laughs quietly]

Sydnee: I love heat and humidity. It is my favorite weather condition, and so summer will always win for me, but...

Taylor: Just swampy, swampy butts. Alright!

Raleigh: Ugh.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: I prefer that feeling when you walk outside and you've got the sun, but it's not a hot sun. It's still just a little bit cool. You've got, like, the crisp air that kind of makes your cheeks a little red, but you've still got the sun, so you're not cold. Just enough for, like, a light denim jacket and some leggings.

Sydnee: No. I like when you can not distinguish between the temperature of your skin and the air around it, and you can feel the moisture trying to condense there on you. I love that.

Taylor: What is this?

Raleigh: Why do you like to be just wet?!

Sydnee: [laughs loudly]

Raleigh: Just—just—sw—sweaty and wet!

Taylor: "My favorite season is moist." [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: Why do you want that?! That's my least favorite state of being, when you go outside and it's so hot you start sweating, and then it's like, now these clothes smell bad, and now, like, I got sweat stains under my arms, and my—my butt sweat, and my boob sweat—I got all the sweat everywhere!

Sydnee: I should really move to a more tropical climate.

Raleigh: [through laughter] You really should!

Sydnee: It would really agree with me more.

Taylor: Yeah, you just need to—I don't know. Like, a bog or something.
[crosstalk]

Raleigh: [through laughter] A swamp!

Sydnee: [through laughter] I should move to a swamp or a bog!

Raleigh: Sydnee is Shrek. [laughs]

Taylor: A tropical bog of some kind. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: So you'd just constantly be clammy and moist and—and just—okay. Wow. I've never heard anybody profess love for any of those feelings you're describing.

Sydnee: It agrees with my hair and my complexion. Everything tends to do better when I'm in that kind of environment.

Taylor: What?!

Rileigh: I know people love summer, but people love summer for the things you do in summer. Like, "Oh, I love swimming. I love going to the beach." Um, you know, like, having time off from school or going on vacation.

Sydnee: [simultaneously] I mean, those are good, too.

Rileigh: I have not once heard someone say, "I like summer most because it's when I'm sweatiest!" [laughs]

Taylor: Don't you just love when you lay in bed at night and you're just—just laying in your own sweat? Like, your sheets are just damp, because there's just no way to stay cool? I love that feeling. Just—

Sydnee: People are always allowed to say, like, "It's not bad, 'cause it's a dry heat." Why can't you say, "It's not bad 'cause it's a wet heat"? [laughs]

Rileigh: 'Cause that's the bad kind of heat!

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: You know when you breathe in and it's just like soup? It's just so nice.

Sydnee: Yeah! Well, I like soup, too.

Taylor: [laughs loudly]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: Oh, God.

Rileigh: That's why Sydnee likes summer. The air turns to soup! [laughs]

Sydnee: That is the only downfall with summer, is that it is not, uh, the best weather for eating soup, and soup is my favorite food. So, I will say fall has the edge on summer in that respect.

Raleigh: Fall is soup season.

Sydnee: Yeah, it's much better weather for soup eating. Unless it's a cold soup.

Taylor: I was gonna say, you're really discounting gazpacho, here.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: That's for summer.

Taylor: That is, yeah.

Raleigh: You know, I just—I prefer the more temperate seasons. Fall and spring are my top two. Fall edging out spring just for the holidays but, you know, it's just like you got—they're the seasons where you don't have to bundle up, 'cause you're not gonna, like, you know, go outside and be frozen, but also you don't have to, like, wear as little clothes as possible in order to not, you know, sweat everywhere. But apparently that's a preferable sensation for some.

Sydnee: For some, you know.

Taylor: Some.

Raleigh: We do live in a place where you get all four of 'em, though.

Sydnee: That's true.

Raleigh: The seasons, I mean. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Yeah. Uh, well, as we are moving into fall... it is not—usually this is, like, back to school season.

Taylor: Well...

Sydnee: I'm attempting to transition here.

Raleigh: I mean, I already went back to school. Kind of. Online.

Sydnee: It's a weird—it's a weird fall. That is one thing. Like, I do usually enjoy this time of year and this transition a lot but, um, knowing that we're about to be inside a lot more is not exactly... thrilling, this year.

Raleigh: The one good thing I've found, though, is online school, it doesn't matter what the temperature is outside. You can wear whatever you want to your classes, 'cause it's the temperature of your inside home, and my home is always cold. So even though it's, like, 85 degrees outside, I'm not walking to class. I can put on sweaters if I want.

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: It's whatever I want it to be. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Ah, football is happening.

Raleigh: Uh-huh.

Sydnee: Unfortunately.

Taylor: Good for football I g—yeah, I don't...

Raleigh: You know, my school is paying for lots of rapid response tests for football players, multiple times a week. And I...

Taylor: That's... great?

Sydnee: people were tailgating all over town this past weekend, so that was...

Taylor: Ohh...

Sydnee: Unfortunate.

Raleigh: But, um, there are still entertaining things you can watch at your home, in the safety of your home, away from the football people.

Sydnee: There we go. What would one of those things be, Raleigh?

Raleigh: Um, how about the 2004 film, *Mean Girls*?

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: If you're missing out on the school experience, don't expose yourself at a football game. Both to a virus or in general. Uh, just watch a movie [crosstalk].

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. [through laughter] Don't—don't—

Raleigh: Oh no!

Sydnee: Uh, so we rewatched *Mean Girls*.

Raleigh: Yes. This was my pick. I know it was more of a... it definitely came out before I was a teen, and before I could understand anything in it. I don't think I watched it until it had been out for a good bit. Um, but this was, for some reason, the one movie—maybe this movie and *Clueless*. I—because of you all, I think I really got exposed to a lot of, like, late 90's teen films, as my coming of age films. Um, this movie I watched at every sleepover. I could've quoted every single line. I—I was obsessed with it, for whatever reasons.

Sydnee: I think it's—like, you can buy it as a package deal with *Clueless*, too.

Raleigh: You can.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: That's how I ended up getting it. I could've rented it, and I was like, "You know what? What if... I'll just buy it. I'm gonna watch it again at some point." [laughs]

Sydnee: You know, I bought it, and I should've bought the package deal with *Clueless*. Now that you say that, why didn't I buy Cl—I'm gonna—

Raleigh: Exactly!

Sydnee: —at some point, I'm gonna buy *Clueless*, so I—aw, man. [sighs]

Raleigh: Gotta get that package deal. I got 'em both!

Sydnee: I missed out on that deal.

Raleigh: But, uh, yeah. It's the story of the three mean girls, I suppose, at a high school, and the new girl that comes and gets roped into their clique. If you haven't seen *Mean Girls*, although I feel like it's one of those cultural moments that most people have experienced, right?

Sydnee: I think a lot of people—yeah. I mean, I'm sure it did fairly well.

Raleigh: Yeah. Um—

Sydnee: It's one of those that there are—there are a lot of things in it that are relatable. Um, some aspects of it that I would argue are sort of timeless, in the, like, teenage, high school experience. And then many, many other aspects that are firmly set in 2004.

Raleigh: In 2004.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Firmly planted in that time, culturally and, you know, in terms of the—the language that is used, and the kind of tropes and stereotypes that are used. Um, firmly set in 2004, and would not exist now, 16 years later.

Raleigh: Yeah. That *Mean Girls* definitely could've been—could not have been made in 2020.

Sydnee: Nor should be, I should say.

Raleigh: No, it should not be. Um, yeah. And then it was followed by [holding back laughter] its much less successful, uh, sister film, *Mean Girls 2*, in 2011.

Sydnee: I do not know about this.

Raleigh: It is... you're not gonna agree with me on this. It's like the *Grease 2*. It's—

Sydnee: Ohh, so it's so much better!

Raleigh: No. [laughs] It's so—

Sydnee: It's far superior to the original, but yet unappreciated in its time.

Raleigh: [through laughter] It's so bad! They, like—it was made in 2011, so it wasn't even, like, close to the original movie. Um—

Sydnee: Was it all new characters, or—

Raleigh: —and it was all new characters.

Sydnee: Okay.

Raleigh: But intended to just be the same... characters.

Sydnee: Was it like a remake sequel? Like, one of—

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: —where it's like they're saying it's a sequel, but really they're just—

Raleigh: It's just a remake. Like, they got three new teen girls that were your plastics. It was at the same high school, and then a new new girl. They used, like, some—some Disney Channel stars, because it was that era of, like, *Camp Rock* and *High School Musical* and all those movies. Um, but it was horrible. So, do not recommend.

Sydnee: Did they improve on it in terms of, like, the stuff... that was obviously problematic?

Raleigh: Yes. I think that is the one positive takeaway from the sequel. Um, and we're not gonna talk too much about the sequel, 'cause I didn't want you all to watch it, 'cause it is just very bad. Um, but the one thing they did right was there is much less... insensitivity, and just obvious problematic content.

Sydnee: Right.

Raleigh: Um, which I think it seems to be—we've talked a lot about various older pieces of media on this show, 'cause that's, like, you know, half of this whole

show. And it seems like that's just a pretty common thread in anything you watch from before a certain time, just probably within the past, like, decade, right? There's gonna be something in there. You're like, "Come—come on."

Sydnee: It's—yeah, well, and it's interesting because, like, now that we—I mean... [sighs] I wanna say now that we understand the root of this problem, but we've always understood it, we just weren't talking about it. But the root of this problem is you can look at a movie like that now and say, "Well, I bet homogeny behind the camera is the reasons that this is the product that we see in front of the camera." You know? You see these homogenized points of view on every level. The people writing it, the people casting it, the people—

Raleigh: In it.

Sydnee: —you know, directing it, the people in it, the—all of it becomes a very specific, singular worldview that does not represent anybody outside of that narrow slice of humanity. And in particular I think this is a lot of, like, white feminism.

Raleigh: Yes.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Is a lot of what this movie is.

Raleigh: Yeah. I just think that's important to know before we talk about it, because yes, I loved this movie the first time I saw it, and when I watched it obsessively when I was probably, like, 12 years old.

Um, but I don't want anyone to think I am saying that it is a perfect movie, or it is, like, great for representation, or it doesn't have problematic moments, because it definitely does. It is a flawed movie, and has flawed characters, and development, and all sorts of stuff.

Um, it's the kind of thing—it's one of those that—I have not experienced this very much, because a lot of the media I've watched has just been more recent media. Um, one of the first things I've rewatched since I was very young where I've been like, "Oh. This is a lot worse than I remembered." 'Cause, like, you have this idealized version of something you loved when you were younger in your head, and then you rewatch it when you're older, like, "Oh no!"

Sydnee: I think those of us—Tey, you would probably agree. Those of us who grew up in the 90's have a lot of those moments. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Yeah. Yeah, there are a lot of movies that I kind of remember as, like, "Oh, it was dumb, but it was okay." And I was like, "Oh, this is not watchable." [laughs] "This movie should not exist anymore. We should not talk about it anymore." [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Well, and it's hard, because it—there are things like—we've talked about *Dawson's Creek* on this show, which has some things that I still love. But at the same time, I've had to recognize a lot of other things that need to go in the garbage. [laughs]

Raleigh: I mean, yeah. We talked about *Friends*, and that's one of, like, the most problematic, for so many reasons.

Sydnee: *Friends*. We talked about *High Fidelity*, which has tons of problems. I mean, you know, I think it's important to be able to look back and—recognizing why those problems are there, and what they are, is important for us to do. It's a reckoning that we need to do, so that we don't continue to make the same mistakes moving forward.

Taylor: But I think it's—it's—you know, a movie like *Mean Girls* falls a little bit more under the microscope than a lot of these other movies, because at its time, it was pointedly trying to advance a conversation about feminism, about how women treat women, and how women are looked at in general.

So it was seen as, like, "Oh, this is—this is good. This is advancement." I think that's why it feels a little, like, harsher on the rewatch, because you realize, just, how it had a—you know, it was helping—it was pointing out problems for one very specific type of woman in the world, and ignoring the existence of everybody else around that.

Sydnee: It also—you know, the whole—the whole idea is that, um, all these women in the movie, all these girls, really—I mean, they're—they're supposed to be children.

Raleigh: They're supposed to be in high school.

Sydnee: Yeah. All these—all these girls in the movie are spending so much time harming each other, hurting each other, you know? Taking swings at each other instead of supporting each other, and I think that that is—that is an important thing to talk about.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I think that that is a very valid conversation to have. But the problem is that the movie continues to take swings at everybody in it. Um, and it's played for laughs. And some of the things are not... funny. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: And so it's hard to do that, to talk about how important it is for women to support each other, which is true, and then have parts of the movie that are very clearly not supportive of women as a whole, or all women, or everybody but this specific kind of woman.

Raleigh: Sure. I mean, even to the point where, like, you think it's about... I don't know. At least when I was watching it when I was younger, you think it's about, oh, female empowerment. Girls should be nice to each other. You shouldn't try to take down other girls to make yourself feel better. And, like, yes, those are important things to learn, especially, I think, all of us, coming from, like, a more... I guess isolated, more rural high school experience, maybe, that maybe felt similar to *Mean Girls* in a lot of ways.

Sydnee: Sure.

Raleigh: Um, that's important. But also, like, then you look at, well, guys also in this movie are guilty of a lot of... I don't know. Shaming of women's sexuality, of making fun of them, of mocking them, of using them. But they get kind of a pass. Like, they don't have to be a part of that whole assembly they have about, like, "We should all be nice to each other, and we should stop bullying each other."

It's very, like, "No, this is a girl problem. This is for the girls. Guys, you know, obviously you don't—you don't have to do—you don't have to deal with this."

Sydnee: Well, I think that—I think you're hitting on something that, again, was of a time, that we still are struggling to move past. It's the same logic that tells a woman when she's going out, "Now, listen. Do you have your pepper spray, or

your whistle? Do you—what are you wearing? Have you thought about how you're going where you're going? Don't—don't take a drink from anybody."

And I'm not saying any of that is bad advice, but what we're focusing on is, "Listen. The men can't be changed."

Taylor: Right.

Sydnee: "There's no hope. They're just gonna be bad, and they're going to hurt you, and they're going to be dangerous. But we're not gonna focus on any of that. We're gonna focus on you, because we actually could change the girls, maybe. So let's just tell the girls what to do. But boys will be boys, so there's no hope there."

It's still that same mindset.

Taylor: Which is pretty broken, because I think that competitiveness that sort of undermines female friendships, or friendships among women, is coming from the fact that there are limited seats at the table for women. You know?

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: It's like, you can have—one girl gets a spot. It's assumed that the rest of the table is men. And so that's why I think that, you know, women compete with each other. They don't know how to be nice with each other. I'm not saying that's across the board true, but I think that's something that the movie is trying to address, is how, you know, we have to take each other down, and somebody has to be on top of the pile, and that's... only because we're made to compete against each other.

Sydnee: Right. Without any consideration that, hey, maybe we should pull the boys in for an assembly and talk about, like, "Why do you think it's okay to treat girls this way?" [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Who—you know. Let's get into that. What are you dealing with that this is the result, and let's start untangling that, and try to fix that part of the problem.

Rileigh: Right.

Sydnee: Um, I wanna—we haven't really talked much about the movie, the plot, the elements of it itself. But before we do that...

Rileigh: Let's check the group message.

Sydnee: Uh, so one thing I will say, as the weather gets a little colder, I really enjoy staying inside and, like, cooking dinner in the evenings. I always find, like, getting into that routine with the school year starting, even virtual school.

Um, I like those evenings, especially when, like, Justin and I can cook together, and sometimes we can get the kids involved. And, uh, I will tell you that HelloFresh has made that a lot easier for us. I can't always come up with, like, good ideas for recipes.

I'm not a bad cook, I just don't always know what to do, what to make. Um, and then we're trying to limit going to the store all the time, and so sometimes I won't have the exact ingredients I need if I do come up with a recipe. And HelloFresh solves all those problems, uh, by delivering right to your doorstep, pre-portioned ingredients, um, a recipe that you can follow with easy instructions, and pictures, and everything you need just to make a delicious meal for your whole family.

Um, whatever your style of eating is, whether you need a kid-friendly recipe like I might need, or a vegetarian recipe, they've got all different kinds that you can try. Um, it's really easy to do, it's really quick, and you can feel really good about creating a meal that's maybe something new that you haven't tried before. Um, all the ingredients are right there, so you don't have waste left over. I know that's always a huge problem. Like, you go buy a huge bundle of herbs of some kind, and then end up throwing away half of it 'cause you didn't need it.

Rileigh: Right.

Sydnee: Um, HelloFresh saves you from all that. Uh, and it is, for all these reasons, the number one meal kit service in America. So, if our listeners would like to try out HelloFresh, Teylor, what should they do?

Taylor: Uh, you can go to hellofresh.com/80stillbuffering and use code "80stillbuffering" to get a total of \$80 off your first month, including free shipping on your first box. Additional restrictions apply. Please visit hellofresh.com for more details. That's hellofresh.com/80stillbuffering for a total of 80 bucks off your first month.

Sydnee: So, we haven't really gotten as much into the plot, um, of the movie. We're talking kind of all around the movie.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Do you want to...

Raleigh: Yeah! Um, so Cady is the main—the main character of the film, and she has just moved from Africa, 'cause her parents are...

Sydnee: Zool—zoologists?

Raleigh: Zoologists, yeah. Um, so they've moved to America, and she goes to, like, a real high school for the first time, and is immediately, like, recruited as a friend from the—the plastics is what they call the three popular girls in school. Um, Regina, Gretchen, and Karen.

And then she also becomes friends with Janice and Damien, who are kind of like—they say they're the outcasts, you know. They don't really fit into any of the cliques. Um, and they're like, "Hey, you should spy on the plastics and mess with them, and pretend to be one of them, and tell us what they're like, and tell us what they do."

And then of course Cady does become a real plastic, and... hijinks ensue.

Sydnee: [laughs] Hijinks ensue.

Raleigh: Yes. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Um, I will say that it draws on the long, time-honored tradition of teen movies having absent or incredibly clueless parents.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Who seem... [laughs quietly] unwilling to engage in any way with what is happening with their children.

Raleigh: Yeah. Yeah, you've got Cady's parents that are just very, like—very clueless as to what's going on, 'cause the first few days Cady's at school, she has, like, no friends, and they show her eating lunch alone in the bathroom, and comes home, and her parents don't really, like, ask or say anything about it. They're just kinda, "Okay, sorry, bye."

Sydnee: Which is weird. You'd think—she's been homeschooled her whole life. It seems like the kind of thing she might tell her parents.

Raleigh: Yeah. Or that her parents would be concerned about. Like, you know, you've never been in school with other teens before. Maybe we should... talk about this, work on this.

Sydnee: It makes me wonder if her parents actually went to a high school. When they were like, "We want you to have the high school experience." Like, do you, though?

Raleigh: Do you?

Sydnee: Do you? [laughs]

Taylor: Are you aware what that entails?

Sydnee: Did you go to one? [laughs] Uh, and I think they're trying to, like—early on, they're trying to draw on this idea that she was used to kind of living in the wild, around a lot of nonhuman animals. And so now she's among human animals, and they're trying to, like, kind of... draw similarities between the two. Of, like, the jungle. But that kind of falls apart pretty quickly.

Raleigh: Yeah. I do really like, actually—there's a more recent musical adaptation of *Mean Girls* that I have seen and listened to many times. It just came out within the past few years.

Um, and they do. They continue to make that connection throughout the whole kind of musical, of all the teens as animals, and that's how she learns to, like, adapt and, um, become one of them. Assimilate, I guess, because she just associates them with animals she knew [laughs quietly] in the wild in Africa. Um... but yeah. It is kind of a—a weird... transition, I guess. They try to make in the beginning of the movie. Like, "Oh, look. All the teens are just animals." But that does not...

Sydnee: No.

Raleigh: That does not stick.

Sydnee: We move past that pretty quickly.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Um, there's a lot of—a lot of the drama surrounds this, I think, what you finally hear about later in the film. This central, uh, conflict between Regina George, the popular girl, and Janice Ian, who is Cady's friend, but is really kind of using Cady to infiltrate and destroy Regina George and her friends.

Because of this history of the two of them having been really close in middle school, and then Regina got a boyfriend, and kind of ditched Janice for her boyfriend a lot, and that upset Janice, and so Regina spread a rumor around that the reason Janice was upset is because she was in love with her, because Janice was secretly a lesbian, and so she wouldn't invite her to her pool party, because... homophobia.

There would be girls in bathing suits and whatnot. Which is all really horrible, and just kind of... I feel like that was a moment that could've been addressed a lot. Like, I kept wanting to see, now, watching it at this point, more of a resolution of that. Because all the things that are happening in that story are, like, real things we could talk about, real problems.

And some of them just, like, normal things, which is as you're growing up, a lot of us will become interested in, like, relationships, and sex, and intimacy. Like, but it happens at different rates. And so it is very normal to have a friend who all of a sudden wants to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, and you're not really feeling that, and you feel left behind. And then of course the stuff that is not normal, which is treating somebody like an outcast by spreading rumors about them, and then

hating them because of the rumor. Because even if she was a lesbian, what's the big deal? But, you know, all that.

Taylor: Well, and that's something that I—I really—I forgot how that kind of played out, or was treated in the movie. And I—I... it was a little hard to see just how it's con—it's played as, like, an unspeakable, horrible thing to say about somebody, really throughout the movie.

Uh, because actually—in my high school life, I had the very same thing happen to me. Not by a friend. Uh, it was somebody in a photography class that I took, actually, who started the rumor, whatever, that they didn't feel comfortable being in the darkroom with me, because I was a—I was a lesbian, and they were afraid that I was gonna hit on 'em.

Um, and that was—I mean, I—you know, that was not something—I didn't—I didn't hatch a master plan to get back at this girl. I just stopped going to the photography lab on my lunch breaks. [laughs] And dropped it as a hobby. So—'cause it was, like, something that I didn't know—I knew I was questioning my sexuality at the time, but that was something that I thought was between me and me.

And having somebody else pick up on that was really scary, and I felt like a gross monster. It felt unspeakable to me. So, to see a movie treat it as, like, an unspeakable bad thing, as, like, a joke, I would like—oh, I wish you could've had a point where it's like, "Yo, that's not that bad, though!" [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah. My hope in rewatching it—and I don't necessarily think this was the intention of the movie because, like we've said, this movie was not necessarily doing a lot to be inclusive and diverse.

Um, my hope with it is that Janice was so insistent that she wasn't a lesbian because she saw what it did to her having friends before, when people thought that about her, so she didn't, like, want people to think this about her, because then she would lose friends again. That is my hope.

Because, again, like, yeah, people are homophobic. And I have—I mean, that idea that, "Oh, you're a lesbian, or you're bi, so you can't be around us. Like, if we're changing, or we're at a pool party and we're in bathing suits." Like, that's not... a—like, a—a wild thing to have someone say, or to experience when you're in high school. Like, I have been there before. It's like, "Oh, you like girls? You

can't—we can't change in front of you then. 'Cause, like, you know, that's... that's weird."

Um, so I mean that, I think, is—yeah. It's a conversation they could've had about how bad of a thing that was to experience, and how to, like, more... uh, kindly discuss it, and realize, like, that doesn't mean being a lesbian is a bad thing. But it means that making someone feel bad for whatever their sexuality might be is a bad thing.

Taylor: Well, and—

Sydnee: Well—oh, go ahead.

Taylor: I was just saying, the fact that the movie makes a very big point of then putting Janice with a—a boy. Like, "Don't worry! She's making out with a boy at the end of the movie. Super okay!"

Raleigh: "She's super straight."

Taylor: "She's totally—yeah." It's like, I didn't need her to be a lesbian. That didn't matter to me. But the idea that they, like, never really dealt with the fact that that—yeah. It just kind of, like, uh—it's not that the—that this happens in high school is true. That's just an accurate observation. But the containing around the movie is kind of like, "And it is a bad thing. Like, look, she's straight. It's better that way." [laughs]

Raleigh: And they do kind of just throw it in there at the very end that she ends up with a guy. There's no, like, romantic story line between them throughout the film that, like, ends up being resolved in the end with them together. It's literally just, like, the very last scene of the movie. Oh, look, she's now... making out with this male character we've never seen her interact with up until this point. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Yeah. I think he, like, vaguely hits on her at one point, and that's about it. Yeah.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: No, I think if—it's really true and honest to have that conversation and say, like, um, the kids, the teenagers involved, would not have a more sophisticated way of talking about this, especially in 2004.

Raleigh: Sure, yeah.

Sydnee: I think that's fine. But then if you're making the movie where you're dealing with something like that, the movie has to say something about it. You gotta find a way for the movie to handle it. Um, because otherwise you just let it fall like that.

Like, "Don't worry. She's not a lesbian. Everything's okay." [laughs quietly] And that's the message that comes across, and surely that's not the message anybody wanted to send. But that is what we get as we walk away. Is, like, could we not have dealt with the fact that this was something that could be so destructive, a rumor like that could be so harmful? And how does that play with the idea that, like, Damien is out and gay...

Raleigh: And no one really... has a problem with that.

Sydnee: And nobody cares about that. Or, at least we don't see that being—you know.

Taylor: That plays into the same problem the movie has as a whole with, like, the—the boy characters, right? Like, it's fine for him to be gay. But for a woman to be a lesbian, that's a whole other story. Like, it's—you know, it's that weird double standard.

Raleigh: And, you know, it almost—the movie almost does that. It almost says that's okay, even if you were a lesbian. That's not a bad thing to be. Yes, this was a traumatic moment that involved your understanding of your sexuality, but this is not a bad thing to be, even if you are or are not—it almost does, when they're all in the gym and they're all apologizing to each other or whatever. Like, all the girls are in there together and saying, like, "This is what I've done wrong to other women, and I'm sorry."

Janice gets up there and has a moment where she's like, "Yeah, you know what? You're right, Regina. I do have a big fat crush on you," or whatever that she says. And, like, everyone cheers for her, and then she falls backwards, and all the girls catch her off the stage or whatever.

It almost does that where it's like, "You know what? So what? Even if I did, yeah, sure. You think everyone's obsessed with you. And look, all these other females that are here like me anyways, and they're all still my friends, and they're all still supporting me, and they—" like, the whole metaphorical, symbolic catching when they fall off the stage in the trust fall or whatever. But then it—it—it doesn't follow through. Then it's like—you almost went there, but no. She had to end up with a guy, and then we never spoke about it again.

Sydnee: Yeah. Which again—I mean, it's hard because, like, a lot of these things, even the fact that the movie sort of resolves things by things just... resolving.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I mean, it's just, time passed. Things faded. People moved on. These are true things. I mean, that happens in high school. Like, it's weird to look back. I found my old middle school yearbooks.

Raleigh: Oh, gosh.

Sydnee: I know. [laughs quietly] And it was weird. I was looking at the things people wrote in my middle school yearbook, and I found a place where a guy wrote something in my yearbook making fun of me. I was—I don't wanna get in the weeds with the joke.

But, like, part of what he wrote in my yearbook was a thing that people used to make fun of me that year, and was really very traumatizing to me at the time, when they did that, because it was part of a lot of bullying that was happening. But then he wrote it in my yearbook and then was like, "Haha, have a great summer!"

So, like, I gave my yearbook to this guy to write in it, I guess. I mean, I don't remember. But, like, by the end of the year I must've said, "Hi, person who... tortured me earlier in the year. Please sign my yearbook." [laughs] And then he made a joke about torturing me! And then said, "Have a great summer!"

And I said, "Thanks!" And probably wrote in his yearbook!

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And, I mean, I'm looking at it thinking, "How did this happen? How—what was this series of events? I don't remember, but something must've happened!"

But that is how, like, those years are like sometimes. Is, like, people do really terrible things to each other, and then they just sort of move past it? And so, like, there are truths in the movie that I think are interesting, and then there are things like that, which are just not...

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: They're just swept under the rug and moved on. Like, "Well, don't talk about that. That'll get too..." But I think that's it. I think what you're seeing is that people didn't have the language to talk about these things, 'cause you didn't have enough different perspectives making the movie. You know?

You need to have people who weren't straight, who know what that felt like in high school, to talk about that. You needed to have people who weren't white to talk about some of the—some of the issues with race in the movie, that are just... I mean, aside from the fact that almost everyone's white.

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: You know? I mean, you needed to have people who were in the room making the movie to talk about these things, to handle them better. And if you don't, then you don't know what to say.

Taylor: Yeah. Well, that's what—you could believe that maybe somebody in the writer's room had been a straight woman that was made fun of for being a lesbian in high school, and that could've maybe been there. It's like, "Oh, I was assertive and spoke my mind, so people thought I was gay."

And it's like, "And what?" [laughs] Like...

Sydnee: Well, and it's the same thing for, like, the idea of making fun of girls in high school because they were or weren't having sex. Both of those are mentioned in the movie. Somebody is made fun of 'cause they're a virgin, and then other girls are made fun of because they are known to not be virgins. And all of that is... you know, obviously something people have gone through, and clearly

people were familiar with, because they talked about it. But I still feel like there were plenty of times in the movie where people were slut shamed.

Raleigh: Oh yeah.

Sydnee: You know? And the movie was doing it. Like, making fun of Halloween costumes that girls wear that are revealing. As, like, "[mockingly] Oh, didn't realize we're all just supposed to... you know, wear lingerie."

Raleigh: And then also did the opposite and made fun of Cady for not understanding that you weren't supposed to dress in an actual scary costume I guess. Because that's what—I guess she thought Halloween was like, "Oh, you dress scary," so she dressed as this, like, zombie bride.

Sydnee: Instead of the more nuanced thing which is yeah, as we get older and we begin to understand and experience what our own sexuality is, you know, whatever form that might take, there are a lot of us who say, "Ooh, I'm gonna use Halloween as an excuse to dress sexy, because I can now. Because I can on Halloween, and I can't other times of the year, and I feel this part of me that I want to express, so now it's—it's safe to do so."

Which is normal, if someone chooses to do that. It's also normal to say, "I wanna dress as a zombie bride." [laughs] That's fine, too!

Taylor: Well, and kind of, like, by the same token, one of the things that I noticed that I was like, "Ooh, that's uncomfortable," is that the—towards the end when they're competing and the mathletes thing there's, like, the other team, and there's an observation right at the beginning like, "Don't worry. None of 'em are cute."

And then they, like, do, like, a funny... quote fingers, "funny" beat, where they look at all the men on the other team, and oh, look, they're—they're all ugly. And then there's, like, a dressing down of the one female on the other team, when Cady's going head to head with her. She's kind of making fun of her in her mind.

And she's realizing, like, "Oh, that doesn't mean that it's any less likely that she'll beat me." So it's still, like... I mean, it's still making a joke in the movie about, like, "Haha, the other team isn't attractive." So, who is this movie—like, you're a movie kind of made, like, for the nerds, but then you're also mocking all of the nerds for not being attractive? It's a weird kind of hypocrisy.

Sydnee: It—it is. And it also, I would say, all these other things that it doesn't handle with enough care, the whole question of weight throughout the whole movie. It's so played for laughs. The fact that Cady gives Regina George these protein bars, these weight gain bars, and tricks her—

Raleigh: And, like, the labels are written in some other language.

Sydnee: In Swedish.

Raleigh: Yeah, Swedish.

Sydnee: So she can't read 'em, so she thinks they're to help her lose weight, but really she's tricking her into gaining weight. That whole thing is played for laughs all around. Like, it's supposed to be funny that she's doing it, it's supposed to be funny when she's wearing sweatpants later. All of that is supposed to be played for laughs.

Um, and then they have, like, these references to female characters in the cafeteria as either the girls who are eating or the girls who aren't eating. And again, this is all supposed to just be, like, "Haha." Like, little toss off jokes, even. Just, like, "Look at this—these are funny things that happen in high school." And it's like, "Oh, you—you mean disordered eating?" [laughs quietly] No! That's not just—that's not a funny thing that happens in high school. And it really is just kind of tossed in there like that.

Taylor: Well, that—I mean, really, everything that they do to Regina, from, you know, the mildest thing of giving her something to put on her face that's not meant to go on your face to, like, turning her friends—

Sydnee: [laughs quietly] That makes her face smell like a foot. [laughs]

Taylor: Like, alright. But still, it's—it's pretty... like, cutting her shirt so that her boobs would show. Like, she runs with it, but it's actually pretty gross. Like—like, everything they do to her is—it's pretty terrible. I mean, she's a bad person, but the proper response is to not assault her in various ways.

Raleigh: But, I mean, it's what she does to Cady that finally, you know, crosses the line for Cady and is like, "Alright, you know what? Yeah, I'll come for her."

But when you think about, what does she really do? Oh, she gets back together with a guy that she dated before Cady was even at the school that Cady, like, knows from math class and has a crush on. But Regina starts dating him again, so Cady is, like, "Yeah, you know what? She deserves all these horrible things."

Like, if you're gonna make it about her being a bad person, so you have to, like, do these—not that most of them were even funny, but you have to do these things to get revenge or whatever, make the thing that she does more of, like, an actually bad thing. Like, what she did to Janice was a very bad thing, and that makes her, like, a—a bad person. But just... if it's over a boy? That's it?

Taylor: Yeah. Like, that—that crush that Cady has is justification for all of her actions, including—including—which I thought this was hypocritical. So, Cady kisses her boyfriend while they're studying together, and then tells him that, uh, Regina is cheating on him.

But he is now effectively—he's made out with—yeah, he's cheated on her, and then he breaks up with her. So it's kind of like, I don't—like, yeah, I mean, don't get me wrong, that's a bad thing to do. But it's bad all around. You're all bad people! I just, like, rewatching the movie—like, and Janice, you're bad because you manipulated Cady, who was not socialized in any way, to do all this just to have a friend. And then you did all these bad things to other bad people. Everybody sucks. [laughs]

Raleigh: And, I mean—

Sydnee: I just wanna hang out with Amy Poehler. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah. Honestly.

Taylor: Yeah...

Sydnee: At least it's—at least it's transparent. I get your thing. [laughs] You're a cool mom. [laughs]

Taylor: [simultaneously] You have a dog. I love dogs.

Raleigh: Or Karen.

Taylor: Yeah, Karen! I'd be down with Amy Poehler and Karen. [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah, they're fine.

Sydnee: Who—who knew that this would be the revenge of the Karen? [laughs]

Rileigh: Oh, man.

Sydnee: Karen comes out on top in this one.

Rileigh: Um, but you know, having been out of high school for a few years now, I think that's the one thing that I can say. Like, well, I mean, that's... I guess that's probably a little bit true. Is, like, yeah, we all kind of... [laughs quietly] were horrible people at some point to each other.

Like, when I think about the friends I had, like, when I was in high school at least, or the people I hung out with, there were definitely moments where we were all, like... just—I mean, high school, teenagers, we were kids. And we, like, said mean things about each other, or did not nice things to each other, or didn't invite each other to things, or whatever. Hurt each other's feelings, had fights, stupid things that happen when you're in high school.

And then all ended up, you know, we're still friends. It's fine. Like, that is the one thing I can be like, you know? Yeah, all the people in this movie are kind of horrible to each other, and it's all very messy, and it doesn't all really make sense.

But you know what? I guess that was kind of how my high school experience was, too. We were all kind of—everyone I knew was kind of a bad person, but also, like, I don't know, being around them just also kind of by extension probably made you a bad person at some point. And also, like, it was all very messy, and who was friends, and who was dating, and—I don't know. But... I guess that's probably realistic. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I guess—I guess that's why I didn't have friends, 'cause I didn't want enemies, and they were the same people.

Rileigh: [laughs] Yeah!

Taylor: Like I just—you know, if people made fun of me, I just stopped being around them. I just disappeared. Like, I did not—I just didn't engage at all, 'cause

there was no way to be a part of the system without—yeah, like, having to be involved in that stuff. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Those were the rules of engagement. That's very true. And it's—I think that at the end of the day, that's why, like, there are pieces of the movie that ring very true about that experience, because they are supposed to be children. And children do mean things, and hurt each other sometimes, and that doesn't necessarily mean that they're bad people. It means that, like, they're children. They need to learn. They need to grow. They need to mature. They need... you know, people in their life to help them become better.

Um, but at the same time, if you're gonna make a movie like that for teens, 'cause the movie very much appeals to the people it's talking about, uh, you can't reinforce all those negative messages. And there's—there's so much of the movie that does that, that it's hard to look back at it now and be like, "I want my kids to watch this, and learn from it." Well, no, I don't. [laughs] There are parts that make me laugh, and then there are many parts that make me cringe and go, "Ooh, no. Don't—oh! Why did you say that word again? Stop saying that word! Like, no! What is—" but, I mean, that's... I guess that's the early 2000's. That's...

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah. Like, that's the thing. It's like, I—at the end of the day, you're still giving a primer in this sort of messed up way that we're socialized that we think we have to be socialized in order to fit into society. Like, this is still, like, every high school movie that reiterates the same stereotypes and the same ideas.

Sydnee: Yes. Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Hopefully when Charlie and Cooper are old enough, there'll be better high school movies for them to watch.

Taylor: I mean, apparently *Mean Girls 2*—you know, it's less problematic, so... [laughs]

Raleigh: Well... yeah. You know?

Taylor: Is the real reason you didn't want us to watch that because you knew Sydnee would love it more? Is that it?

Sydnee: Heyy.

Raleigh: That's also possible.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Heyy.

Raleigh: It's just—it's not just me, either. If you look up just, like, the reviews and ratings, like the Rotten Tomatoes score on *Mean Girls 1* versus *Mean Girls 2*, oh man.

Sydnee: Yeah, but they would say the same about *Grease 1* and *Grease 2*.

Taylor: That's true.

Raleigh: Yeah, Sydnee! That's—that—that's true. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Or *Rocky Horror Picture Show* and *Shock Treatment*.

Raleigh: Also—also fair! [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: [laughs] Uh, well, if—we've talked about it before, but if the *Babysitter's Club* show is any, um—is any signal as to what's to come for teen movies and shows and stuff aimed at the next generation—

Raleigh: It's a good direction.

Sydnee: —I think we're in—yeah. We're moving in a much healthier direction, where we can laugh and joke about the foibles of youth without...

Raleigh: Being problematic.

Sydnee: ... insulting everyone. [laughs quietly] So.

Raleigh: Um, well, thank you for rewatching this movie with me, both of you.

Taylor: Yeah!

Rileigh: I'm glad we all got to experience that shared feeling of, "Oh, I didn't remember it being this bad!" [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: [laughs] I'm glad you get to know what it feels like.

Rileigh: Yeah!

Taylor: Yeah!

Sydnee: Because—[laughs]

Rileigh: It really is one of the first times where I've felt that way. 'Cause yeah, there are things I've watched that are from the 90's or 2000's that I'm watching for the first time, where I'm like, "Oh, this is problematic." But this is one of the first times where it's something I watched a long time ago, and now am rewatching. Like, "Oh no!"

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Well, get used to that feeling. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] Welcome.

Rileigh: Good, good.

Sydnee: Uh, well, thank you Rileigh. I would—

Rileigh: Of course. Yeah, what's next?

Sydnee: I, uh, was inspired. I, um, follow Patti Murin on Twitter, and she was talking about how much she'd like to see a specific musical created, and her star in it, and it got me thinking about a movie that I once loved called *Troop Beverly Hills*. Uh, and man, I would pay to see Patti Murin as Phyllis Nefler in that musical. If that is ever created, I'm there. But, uh, in the meantime, I think we should watch the movie. I used to be obsessed with this movie. I haven't seen it in a while.

Rileigh: I haven't either. It's been a long time.

Sydnee: I am worried about what I'm gonna find! [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: It's gonna be a lot of the same next week! [laughs]

Sydney: [laughs]

Taylor: I think so. I think I was—'cause how—you were—you couldn't've been a teenager when you were into this movie, Syd.

Sydney: No.

Taylor: You must've been, like, maybe, what? 12? 10?

Sydney: Something like that. Like, preteen, preteen days.

Taylor: 'Cause I remember watching it, but maybe, like, 7 or 8. [laughs quietly]

Sydney: But I did watch it repeatedly, 'cause I was obsessed with it. I was obsessed with—if I remember specifically, like, the fashion of it... uh, I was obsessed with. [laughs]

Raleigh: Sorry, I—I—

Taylor: Ooh.

Sydney: I am so excited to revisit and see if it lives up to all of my, like—I mean, really, like, I wanted to dress like these characters. I was so obsessed with this movie when I was young.

Raleigh: I just looked it up to see when it came out. It came out in 1989. [holding back laughter] Um, but it has a 25% on Rotten Tomatoes.

Taylor: Oh boy.

Raleigh: Oh, good!

Sydney: [chanting] Beverly Hills, what a thrill! Beverly Hills, what a—[normally] I'm so excited for y'all to watch it! [laughs]

Taylor: [crosstalk] This is terrible, yeah.

Raleigh: This is just a whole series of ruining things we loved.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: I guess—so, for my week to follow, I'll have to think of something else that I have very, very shady memories of that might be awful.

Sydnee: Okay.

Raleigh: Oh, good.

Sydnee: Oh, so excited for us to watch it and revisit. [laughs]

Raleigh: Man.

Sydnee: Oh, please don't let it be bad.

Raleigh: [sighs]

Sydnee: Alright. Well, thank you both. Thank you, listeners. I hope you are all staying home and staying safe. I just wanted to say that if anybody out there has a moment—I've seen some people say this on Twitter, and I know I've felt this, where you start to think, "Is everyone else having fun, and I'm the only one who's still trying to stay inside? Is everyone else going to parties and football games and concerts—or whatever is happening. I don't know what's happening. Um, and it's just me?" It's not just you. At least the three of us are with you. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um, it's not just you. I had a moment where I thought, "Did I create this whole thing in my head the other day?" I didn't. You didn't. We didn't. Please, stay strong. Um, there are always podcasts. You can listen to those in the safety of your own home. And you can go to Maximumfun.org for lots of podcasts you would enjoy. Did you like that?

Raleigh: Wow, that transition.

Sydnee: I know. So smooth. I'm getting better. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: It's only taken years. Um, you can tweet at us at s—[laughs quietly] @stillbuff, and you can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org, if you have thoughts or suggestions or questions or comments about, uh, anything. 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.

[theme music plays in the background]

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl. Also, hi, Ned!

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: Aww. Hi, Ned. Uh, I am still buffering...

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

[pause]

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Cringe corner.

Sydnee: I know.

Raleigh: Yep!

Sydnee: We continue.

[theme music plays]

[music plays]

Justin: Hi, everybody! My name is Justin McElroy.

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Justin: We're both doctors, and—

Sydnee: Nope! Just me.

Justin: Okay, well, Sydnee's a doctor, and I'm a medical enthusiast—

Sydnee: Okay.

Justin: —and we create *Sawbones*: a marital tour of misguided medicine.

Sydnee: Every week, I dig through the annals of medical history to bring you the wildest, grossest, sometimes dumbest tales of ways we've tried to treat people throughout history.

Justin: And lately, we do a lot of modern fake medicine... because everything's a disaster. But it's slightly less of a disaster, every Friday, right here on Maximumfun.org as we bring you *Sawbones*: a marital tour of misguided medicine. And remember:

Sydnee: Don't drill a hole in your head.

[music plays]

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