

Still Buffering 249: Now and Then (1996)

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[theme music plays]

Rileigh: [holding back laughter] 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: We made it through the ice storm!

Rileigh: Yay...

Taylor: Good job.

Sydnee: No one sounds excited.

Taylor: I'm very excited that you're— that you all are okay. Uh...

Sydnee: [laughs quietly] Well, thanks, Teylor.

Rileigh: I mean, I'm excited that it's over, but I'm still... that was a long week. [laughs quietly] Doing online school during an ice storm where pretty much all of the area where my professors and all of my fellow classmates live was without power and internet was just... the worst. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: That was a long week. Uh... to have small children with nothing to do, and to just, like, try to exist... in a hotel room. That was no fun.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: I just— of course, up here in New York, we got hit by some storms. We didn't lose any power. Uh, and just having to hear all this happen from the outside, um, that seemed very stressful. I'm— our parents refused to seek any sort of warmth for, like, three days. [laughs]

Sydnee: I was so worried. They were just— they were determined to just freeze there, in their home. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Just stay by the— the, like, two feet radius of the fireplace. And I don't know. Drink wine? Which does not help. [laughs]

Rileigh: No. [laughs]

Sydnee: No. And we— we did— uh, so nobody thinks we're terrible children, like, we did get a hotel room for mom and dad. And they were like, "[sighs] Oh, I don't know... maybe we should just stay at home." [laughs quietly] I was like, "No!"

Rileigh: Eventually they came around, but it took— it took 'em a little bit. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Yes. Yeah, eventually they did seek refuge in a hotel room so that they didn't freeze. [laughs quietly] But... it did take a while.

Rileigh: Yeah. I did feel bad, because I was lucky enough to have my dorm space on campus, which I couldn't get to at first because I was trapped at mom and dad's house with no power, uh, and trees fallen down blocking me from— from escape.

Um, but once I got back, I couldn't offer my powered, warm dorm space to anyone because of the COVID restrictions. We can't have any visitors or anyone inside, so, you know, mom and dad were helping me get back to campus while I was like, "Okay, I'm gonna go inside in the warm and take a shower and use my WiFi and everything. You all just... stay out here. Can't come in." [laughs quietly]

Taylor: They couldn't have pulled, like, a *Never Been Kissed* situation and tried to pass themselves off as—

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: [through laughter] As cool college kids?

Rileigh: You know, I think there were several people that tried to do that for their friends or parents or family, at some point throughout this week. But they— they were not— they were not havin' it. It did not work.

Taylor: That's too bad.

Sydnee: It really, uh— it added an extra layer of difficulty to this whole thing. 'Cause, like, you know, the thing— whatever you think about West Virginia— and, like, part of it is probably right. Some of it's wrong, but part of it is probably fair. Uh, people really are, like, good about pulling together and, like, looking out for each other, their neighbors and their community.

And so, like, normally this kind of thing happens and you'd have a lot of people reaching out saying, "Who has power? You can come stay at my place. I got a bed. I got a couch. I got a mattress on the floor, whatever, we'll camp out."

You know, you always have that, that kind of "We look out for each other" thing. But then you've got, like, you know, a pandemic. So... [laughs quietly] you can't. And it just— this whole other layer of, like, what— what do you risk now, because you can't just sit in your home if you have no source of heat, especially with little kids. It made the— 2021 is starting out more difficult. [laughs quietly] Like, the level of difficulty has been upped, just to enter the year, than I feel like we knew 2020 was gonna be. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I don't like these, this, uh— this... competitiveness that's developing between each year to be [through laughter] progressively worse!

Rileigh: Yeah...

Taylor: 2021 like, "I gotta come up with something, man. 2020 used up all the good stuff. I gotta get creative. Hmm... cover... cover an entire country in ice. How's that sound? Sound good? Cool."

Sydnee: Yeah.

Rileigh: [laughs] I am— I am hopeful this is still, like, the remnants of the— whatever curse was on 2020, 'cause we're still in, like, the first two months, so I'm hoping this is just, like... like, maybe the peak of the bell curve or whatever, and we'll start coming down on the other side, and maybe things start getting better for most of 2021? I don't know. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Yeah. You know like how Chinese New Year is a little bit later?

Rileigh: Yeah!

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: Like, maybe this is— we're just a little off time of the natural flow. We just don't really know when it actually ends. Soon.

Sydnee: This is just to remind us that, like, the way that we see time, and the year, and months and all that, is all just a construct, and that, you know, the forces of the universe do not care for our— our measly human... denotations of time. Like, "Whatever. That doesn't matter to us. 2020, 2021. These numbers mean no— you made up the numbers. The numbers are fake. All of it's fake." [laughs quietly] "It's all an illusion."

Taylor: "2020 can last for eons if I choose. I am the universe." [laughs]

Rileigh: Do you think after this they redo the calendar? They change it all up? Because, like, we're about to go into March again, and last year March lasted for about six months, so I'm just wondering, like, how much more time are we gonna start adding between Marches? When is the year gonna start? [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I just wanna— just, yeah. I just want a whole new set of months. Like, this— this is Meh. Next month is I Dunno. After that is like, Ooh, We're Here Again. [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah. And that's it. It's just the three.

Sydnee: [laughs] I read about this once.

Taylor: [through laughter] That's it! That's the year!

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: There was a— this is, like, 46 BC.

[pause]

Taylor: What?

Rileigh: Okay?

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Wait...

Sydnee: Uh... 46 BCE was the longest year in human history. Because—

Rileigh: No, Sydnee, I think that was 2020. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Yeah. [laughs] Your facts are outdated.

Sydnee: I read about this once. It was really interesting! It was because they— it was before the, um... the Julian Roman calendar. And so in order to, like, reset so that the months would be the way they wanted it to be, they had to add extra months into the year.

But they didn't have names for 'em, because it was just a way of, like, resetting everything. So it was also called The Year of Confusion, 'cause no one ever knew when it was, or, like, what it was. [laughs quietly] Like, the sun went up and down, time passed, no one knew— there was no name for any of it.

Taylor: So, now.

Sydnee: I think that's fascinating.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah.

Rileigh: That feels very... that feels very relevant.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: But it reset the calendar. That's why we have the 12 months, like, that we have now. But anyway— but this was— this is how it all got reset is they just had one year where they were like, "Listen, this year's gonna kinda be a throwaway. Nobody's ever gonna know what day it is. But January 1."

Taylor: I would like a hard reset, if possible.

Rileigh: Yes.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: And could I, like, get, like, maybe a— a year or two back? Like, can I minus a few years from my age?

I saw somebody post that they went into the pandemic at 28 and now they're 30, and my heart went out to that person. Because, like, you know, going through that sort of a transition where you're like, "Alright. I'm almost 30. I gotta do things." Don't do anything for a year and a half. "Okay, alright. Alright. I'm 30 now. It's cool."

[all laugh]

Sydnee: So, speaking of the passage of time... [laughs quietly]

Taylor: [laughs] Ah, yes.

Rileigh: Yes. Uh-huh, good. A good transition.

Taylor: The good old passage of time.

Sydnee: Um, we watched *Now and Then* this week Uh, first of all, it's been a long time, I realize, since I've seen *Now and Then*, because I started it. And, like, I was getting it in under the wire to watch it, because of the power being out and all that for so long.

I didn't have an opportunity to watch it on my own, so I ended up having to watch it with my children. And I thought, "Well, it's a— you know, they'll like this." Like, there's a lot of, like, kid stuff. There's, like, water balloons filled with jello. Kids like that.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Yeah, kids like that.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly] This'll be fine. Uh, I had forgotten, um, how much, like, death... [laughs quietly] is a part of it?

[pause]

Taylor: Yeah!

Riley: Death, murder...

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydney: Uh-huh.

Riley: Descriptions of death. [laughs]

Sydney: Like, very vivid descriptions of, like... like, a character's mom dying.
[laughs quietly]

Riley: Mm-hmm.

Sydney: To— to the point where Cooper looked at me after that and went, "Her mommy died!"

And I was like, "Aw, crap. What have I done?" [laughs quietly]

Riley: [laughs]

Sydney: Why did I let them be in the room when I was watching this movie?
[laughs]

Taylor: Coop probably wanted to go back to that description a few times, though, right? Let's be real. [laughs quietly]

Sydney: Charlie and Cooper— well, first of all, Cooper loved the fact that people kissed in the movie. There was mooching.

Riley: Mm-hmm, yes.

Taylor: Oh, no!

Sydney: And Cooper was very much... yeah. Cooper is very into, like, people getting married and kissing right now.

Taylor: Okay.

Sydnee: Um... [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Mooching sells.

Sydnee: Moo— yeah, mooching. Um, but Charlie got really into the mystery of what happened to Dear Johnny.

Rleigh: Hmm.

Sydnee: And then, like, at the time I was thinking, "I don't remember. I remember that Crazy Pete—" which is the name— which is what they call the character, which I realize is, like... obviously not what you should call a human, and awful. But that is his name in the credits.

Uh, that you realize he is Dear Johnny's father. Like, I remembered that— that twist. But I didn't remember, like, what happened to that person who passed away. And then you find out later, like, "Oh, he was murdered." And then— and Charlie sort of missed it? Like, she was listening, but she didn't quite understand what happened.

And she was like, "So, what happened to Dear Johnny?"

And I was like, "Uh... nothing?" [laughs quietly] I didn't know how to say, like... you don't really understand the concept of "murdered," so... [laughs quietly] I don't know—

Rleigh: Oh yeah! I guess that would be a weird concept. [laughs quietly] To share with a six-year-old. Like, we just got into, like, what death is. But let's— let's add another layer to that.

Sydnee: Well, that was really, like— it occurred to me, all of this. Like, I had in my head this movie that I watched as a kid, was what was in my memory, that I found really, like, lovely and endearing when I was a kid.

And now I'm realizing, like, we just showed anything to kids, didn't we? [laughs quietly] Like, for a while there. [laughs quietly] There are parents of a certain age who have this moment frequently, where you're showing your children something

that you remember being so, like, appropriate for kids when you were younger. And then, like, ten minutes in you're like, "Oh crap!" [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydney: "Oh crap, *Peter Pan*! Oh no!" [laughs quietly]

Riley: [laughs] "No, *Peter Pan*!"

Taylor: *Peter Pan*'s a big no.

Sydney: "No, *Peter Pan*!" [laughs]

Taylor: For lots of reasons.

Sydney: "No, *Peter Pan*! I didn't know you were *this* bad!"

Riley: [laughs]

Taylor: There's definitely a lot of casual, like, just death. Like, a lot more like, it's totally okay to see somebody just get— just straight up murdered in a cartoon or [laughs] a kids' movie.

Sydney: Yes.

Riley: Yeah.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydney: Well... and I— it was funny. The first— so, I should say— so, the plot of *Now and Then*, if you haven't seen *Now and Then*... [laughs quietly] uh, *Now and Then* is a movie— it's like a co— I mean, it's sort of like *Stand By Me*. Which you've probably— most people have seen, I think.

Um, it's a coming of age type of movie for young women in the 1970's. And then, like, they have a wild summer that they'll never forget where they learn about life, and love, and friendship, and family, and... [laughs quietly] whatever.

And then they grow up and we see them as adults at the end of the film, living their— living out their lives and still having... not learned this, I guess? Um, that's really the whole thing. I don't think there's much more—

Rileigh: There's a now and there's a then.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah.

Rileigh: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: That's kind of the whole thing. And it is— I saw, like, a lot of the— so, it came out in 1995. It was panned by critics, apparently. Like, people did not like it. And basically just said, "Oh, so it's *Stand By Me*, except with girls, and also worse."

Taylor: Oh no!

Sydnee: That was kind of the...

Rileigh: Oh man.

Taylor: [laughs] The first— the first backlash to an all-female reboot! I didn't know it went back that far.

Rileigh: [laughs] It's like *Ghostbusters* before the *Ghostbusters*. [laughs]

Taylor: Oh no!

Sydnee: That was e— that was exactly— everybody was like, "[dudebro voice] Why'd you need to remake this great movie but put girls? In it? And then... it sucks now."

And that was pretty much it.

Rileigh: It was probably because they talk about, like, female puberty, right? Everyone was like, "Ugh, gross." [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Well... there is that aspect. I feel like any movie, um— I would say that, like, *The Virgin Suicides* probably had this same kind of reaction from, like, all of a sudden you have girls talking about... what society— not me. This is not me. But what society would deem, like, gross girl stuff.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And it's like, "Oh no, don't put *that* in a movie." [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: See, I guess— I guess this is showing my references, because when I— I hadn't watched it, I think, since, like, we watched it in childhood. And maybe it's just because I'm a big fan of *IT* the movies, but all I was thinking was, like, this feels like a very parallel story to *IT*. Especially with all the random, like, death and murder. I'm like— like, is this just— is this the same, like, world, but like, these kids are coming back just to have a reunion while these kids over here are, like, fighting the evil incarnate from out of space clown man.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: [through laughter] Like, it kind of felt very the same.

Sydnee: There is a scene where a child falls into a storm drain.

Rileigh: Yes.

Taylor: Yeah, right? Like, it felt like— I was like, "Oh no! And now the clown comes. Wait, no, you're watching— this is a— this is a— not a scary movie."

But I was waiting. I was ready for the clown. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: It's an intense scene nonetheless. Like, that was the scene— when that start— that— when that part happened— one of the characters gets into a storm drain intentionally to get a bracelet, and then is saved by— by the way, when the old man comes to save her, I had this moment where I was like, "They didn't use the same old man that they did in *Home Alone*, did they?" [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: But no, they don't. Um—[laughs quietly] But, like, at that moment I realized, like, "Oh, it's the same character, right?"

[pause]

Taylor: I mean, yeah.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Same idea.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like, nice old man who everybody thinks is creepy for absolutely no reason, and helps out our protagonist in the end.

Rileigh: Yeah. Man, I...

Taylor: That's a— go ahead.

Rileigh: Oh, I was just gonna say I love that image of Derry, Maine with one little downtown area goin' on, and there's a bunch of kids that come back to fight a clown. [laughs quietly] They had their own— you've got these girls that come back—[laughs] talking about their treehouse.

Sydnee: Yes, to hang out in their—

Taylor: Like, it's just an adjacent story line. Like, you know, that's— that wasn't— that wasn't a murder— uh, a robber that broke in and murdered Pete's family. That was the clown. They just don't know. They're just out of the loop. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] And then the thing, uh— so the storm drain scene really— at that moment I was looking at Charlie going, "It's fine, don't worry. No, don't worry. Everybody comes out fine. It is fine."

This is before I remembered the murder. But, um...

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] That really shocked Charlie. And then the other thing that I— it hit me. In the opening scene of the movie, you see, like, the four adults. Who, by the way, like, they got big names for this, you know?

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: You've got Demi Moore, you got Melanie Griffith, you've got... Rosie O'Donnell, um, Rita Wilson. I mean, yeah. I mean, big names.

Taylor: Yeah.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: But, like—

Taylor: Well and the kids too, yeah.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah, Christina Ricci, Thora Birch.

Sydnee: Devon Sawa, a young Devon Sawa.

Sydnee: A young Devon Sawa. Uh, Gaby Hoffmann.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um... and I don't remember the fourth actor's name. But anyway, um... so, in that opening scene you see the adults, and then you flash back to their summer as children, and then they're adults again in the end.

But both Demi Moore and Melanie Griffith's character are swinging, and because they have, like, big city sophisticated lives, that's kind of like the way they're both made. Like, one is clearly East Coast, one is clearly West Coast, but both big city sophisticated. [laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Um, and you know that because they're smoking, and that's what you do in a movie in the 90's if you're a big city sophisticated person is you smoke.

Rileigh: Of course.

Sydnee: And they're swinging on the swing set and smoking, and Charlie looks at me goes, "[scandalized] Are they smoking?!"

[all laugh]

Taylor: Well—

Sydnee: "Who does that?!"

Taylor: I mean, I even had a moment. Because, you know, the adult versions of themselves come back to town because one of them is pregnant. And there is a scene where Demi Moore's character is standing there next to the pregnant lady smoking her cigarette.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: I'm just like, "Yo, that's—[laughs] don't do that!"

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: 1995!

Taylor: [crosstalk] Yeah, that was a... the— the wardrobe and the characterization of Demi Moore's character in this, though. That was just—[kisses fingers] that was beautiful. [laughs] It was like this literary goth, like, Demi Moore in, like, braids and pantsuits. It was good.

Rileigh: It was a very good aesthetic.

Sydnee: Well, that's how you all dress in New York, right?

Taylor: Absolutely, yeah. You show up and they give you your, uh, all black, slightly businesslike attire with, like, a weird hat.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: And a carton of Marlboro Reds. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: And Melanie Griffith brings her— not just a limo, because she's famous, but a limo driver who has to sit in the limo the whole time she's there, I guess?

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Yeah, I don't... how long was she planning on staying? 'Cause it's implied that she was planning on staying through the pregnancy, through the birthing process, so that— that must be a well-paid limo driver. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Rileigh: Yeah!

Sydnee: Yeah. Um... Rosie O'Donnell, who Christina Ricci grows up to be, is a gynecologist who also— an OB-GYN who also... they allude to, like, her being great at sports, so... which I don't know if that's an *A League of your Own* reference, or... [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: [laughs] Is that also in the canon? I don't think that fits the timeline, Syd. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Is this the same universe? Was Rosie O'Donnell in *A League of their Own* as that same character, who is also now an OB-GYN who is delivering... Rita Wilson's baby?

Taylor: Did all movies in the 90's, like, take place in the same universe? Is that... I mean, I guess that would be the *IT* miniseries then, not the new movies, but...

Sydnee: I also feel like it's unfair that, like, you have Rosie O'Donnell in this role, and they mention at one point— because, like, Rita Wilson's supposed to be, like, the kind of prototypical, like, homemaker sort of stereotype.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And she says— she refers to her as having— Rosie O'Donnell's character as having an alternative lifestyle? And then they define her alternative lifestyle— I'm using air quotes for that, by the way— as that her and her boyfriend live together in sin. [laughs quietly] And it was like—

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah. Not the obvious. [laughs]

Sydnee: Right. Even in '95, could we not have lesbians?

Taylor: Well, especially because— I'm sorry, and maybe this is just, you know, when you— especially growing up in the 90's where you kind of have to reach for gay icons, and, like, queer moments in film, you make them up even when they're not there. But the whole relationship between Rosie O'Donnell's character and— what's her name? Rita... Wilson?

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, like, that whole relationship as adults— they're very close and, like, Rosie O'Donnell's the one that's there for the birth, not the dad. And there's, like, a very specific scene when the dad finally shows up and, like, Rosie O'Donnell has delivered their child and is just kind of standing there off to the side watching. Like, it was— it felt a little bit a gay longing, I'm gonna be honest. [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I feel like— I feel like that's there, to some extent. I feel like that— but it's like it's in there in the way that a lot of things were in the 90's. Where, like, someone was smart enough to be able to slip it in without other people who weren't as smart knowing it was there. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: [laughs] Just a secret— just a "Shh! Secret gay cookie. It's— it's here! Shh, don't tell anyone. Don't tell. You can have it!" [laughs]

Rileigh: It's like when you're watching cartoons, like children's cartoons as an adult, and every once in a while there's a moment and you're like, "Oh, that's— that's in there for the adults that are being made to watch this with their children."

It's like, "This is for the— this is for the queer people watching. You'll— you'll understand." [laughs quietly] "Not the straights, but you will."

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: A secret message that the straights won't hear. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: Just to let you know, like, we're here. Don't worry. We're here too. We see you.

Um... I wanna talk about why, like, this movie— why I liked it so much that I would make— that I would subject you all to it.

Taylor: [laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: When apparently, like, literally no one else did, is the impression the internet has given me. Um, but before we do that...

Rileigh: Let's check the group message.

Sydnee: Uh, I don't know if you two know this, but my husband loves cereal.

Taylor: Aware.

Rileigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Yeah. Like, he does a whole podcast about it.

Taylor: Yeah.

Rileigh: That's why someone told us we had a bad cereal podcast. [laughs]

Sydnee: Right. We're about to improve the quality of our cereal podcast today. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Yes.

Taylor: Alright.

Sydnee: Um, 'cause, you know, cereal's great. I love cereal. Uh, I think that was always, like, a special treat of a breakfast when you got to have cereal when you were kid. Um, but we— as we grow up we realize, like, there's a lot of sugar in there, and that's not, like, the only thing you wanna have for breakfast is sugar. Um, and so you want to eat cereal that tastes good, but that you can feel a little better about nutritionally, and Magic Spoon has solved that problem for us.

Um, we've been getting Magic Spoon for a while, because Justin does love cereal so much, and he was looking for something that was just a little— a little better in terms of the sugar content.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Uh, 'cause some sugar is okay. Too much sugar is not good. And, uh, Magic Spoon really tastes great and, like, will fulfill that cereal craving that you have without giving you all that sugar.

It's keto-friendly, it's gluten-free, it's grain-free, it's soy-free. Um, it's got more protein, and, like I said, zero sugar, so it's— you know, you can feel better about eating it as a meal. Um, and you can get a variety pack with cocoa, fruity, frosted, peanut butter— I really like the peanut butter. I thought that one was particularly yummy.

And, uh, like I said, you can feel good about eating a bowl of that for breakfast and know that you got a much— a much more well-rounded breakfast than, uh— than your usual bowl of cereal.

So, Tey, if our listeners want to check out Magic Spoon, what should they do?

Taylor: They should go to magicspoon.com/buffering to grab a variety pack and try it today. And be sure to use our promo code, "buffering," at checkout, to save five dollars off your order. And Magic Spoon is so confident in their product, it's backed with a 100% happiness guarantee. So if you don't like it for any reason, they'll refund your money, no questions asked. That's magicspoon.com/buffering, and use the code "buffering." Uh, thank you Magic Spoon for sponsoring this episode.

Rileigh: So, as a young— a young college student that, um, lives in my own dorm, I find myself walking around campus a lot, sometimes at night. You know, walking back into my dorm, or walking to the library— a lot more when I could actually go places, you know, pre-pandemic, but still now. You know, sometimes I gotta go out and get things. Um, so I have long looked for something to keep with me on myself that makes me feel a little bit safer while I'm doing so.

And that is why I have started using Birdie. Um, it makes it so I can, you know, keep running errands, talking walks, you know, doing whatever I need to do on my own, and still feel safe.

Um, Birdie is a personal safety alarm that is easy to carry and simple to use. When activated it emits a loud siren and a flashing light to help deter an attack, which is very true. I, you know, wanted to try it, just, you know, when I first got it. See, like, "Well, what will it actually do if I need to use it?"

And it does. It is a very loud siren, and a very bright flashing light. Um, but it's nice, because you don't need to press anything, you know, you don't need to get anything out and, um, get anything set up. You hook it on your key chain, and when you pull off the body of your little alarm from the pin, then it goes off, so you can keep it right on your keys. Um, it is no danger to you, so you can feel confident using it.

As someone who is very, um, not always coordinated, it was very easy for me to use. And also, it comes in fun colors, so you'll actually want to carry it. I know mine is a fun little pink color that goes with my keys, and goes with my wallet, so it goes with my whole look I got goin' on, but also keeps me safe. So, buy your Birdie today for a safer tomorrow.

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

Taylor: Well, She's Birdie is offering our listeners 15% off your first purchase when you go to shesbirdie.com/buffering. That's shesbirdie, spelled S-H-E-S-B-I-R-D-I-E, shesbirdie.com/buffering for 15% off.

Sydnee: So... [sighs] okay. I tried to, as I watched it, understand what exactly about this movie spoke to me so much. I think part of it was kind of what we've already alluded to. The idea that, like, this movie was not... um, necessarily made for boys. [laughs quietly]

Um, because I felt like so much of the stuff I was supposed to like when I was younger was not really for me, but it was deemed cool, and so I was supposed to like it. And this felt like distinctly... aimed at me. Um, which, you know, as we've talked about before, is also stuff that gets widely panned when it's aimed at teenage girls.

Uh, I do think that, like, the main writer character, like, back in my angsty youth, I would've connected to that. Like, "I know what that's like. Nobody understands you. You have this secret internal world." [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: "You can only share with your diary." [laughs] I think a lot of that, like, angst spoke to me. Um, and I kind of assumed, like, "I'm gonna be like that when I grow up, just like Demi Moore. I'm gonna be dark, and messed up, and— I won't smoke, 'cause smoking's bad. But otherwise—" [laughs quietly]

Taylor: [laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: I have to assume that's what it was.

Taylor: I was thinking that. I was like, "Man, young Sydnee definitely thought she was going to be Demi Moore, and she turned out to be Rosie O'Donnell." [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Rileigh: That's what I was gonna say. I was gonna say, "Did you realize this is the character you actually ended up as?" [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh... you know, in retrospect, I should've. The moment where Rosie O'Donnell's character with— it's Christina Ricci, I should say— where Christina Ricci is getting dressed and, like, she's putting on just a big flannel and going out. I was like, "Ohh. [laughs] That's me."

[all laugh]

Sydnee: Um... yeah. And then getting in fights because the boys say she can't play sports.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: "Ohh."

Rileigh: "I get it." [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I love that— you know, there's kind of a center thing in this with the young girls is that they do, like, regular seances, and they try to talk to the dead.

I— when you're talking about stuff that girls love, it's like girl stuff, I love that in the pantheon of stuff that movies and pop culture codify as girl stuff, it's like, "Oh, makeup, fashion, the occult!" [through laughter] Like—

Rileigh: [through laughter] Yeah!

Sydnee: Uh-huh.

Taylor: [through laughter] That is always in the wheelhouse! And I'm like, "Yes." 'Cause it's true! Every young, like— every young girl goes through the, like, "I think I'm gonna be a witch now" stage. Uh, that's just part of your, uh—[laughs] your maturing.

Sydnee: It— it really is. Like, it is something that— I mean, I don't know. You know, I am just speaking anecdotally to my own personal experience. Obviously you can't generalize everything. But there really is, I have noticed, when Justin and I talk about, like, "You know when you were younger, and you played with Ouija boards?" Or, "You know when you were younger [laughs quietly] and you

tried to cast spells?" "You know when you were younger and you had seances, or played "Light as a Feather, Stiff as a Board," or tried to get Bloody Mary to show up in the mirror, or—" [laughs quietly] and he's like, "No?" [laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: "No? No, I don't know any of this that you're talking about. We did not do this."

Taylor: Is it just, like, a natural reaction to, like, you know, you get to—you get to be, like, a— like, a preteen, teenager, you want agency and power in your life. And, like, I guess if you're raised as a man it's like, "Oh, this is all available to me."

And if you're raised as a woman you're like, "Oh. Well, I guess I gotta turn to magic."

[all laugh]

Sydnee: I mean, it makes—

Rileigh: I just— I—

Sydnee: —it makes sense.

Rileigh: Yeah. I just really appreciated— mom showed me this movie a very long time ago for the first time. I was probably older than Charlie, but probably not by much. Um, and I hadn't seen it again until just this week, and I did really appreciate how into figuring out what happened to Dear Johnny they got. Um, like, because it felt very— it felt very close to me to see other young women getting really into a true crime story and trying to figure it out.

Taylor: [laughs]

Rileigh: It very much felt like the kind of thing— like, they probably have a conspiracy board somewhere, um, you know, with all, like, the red string tacking things together. I also, like Charlie, got very into that, that story line.

Sydnee: Yes. That's all Charlie wanted to do was solve the mystery, what happened to Dear Johnny?

Um— I, uh— I have to admit, I completely forgot about Brendan Fraser's, um... like... Vietnam vet character that shows up in there.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Um... [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Oh. Looking amazing, by the way. I forget how attractive that man is. [laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Uh, he really is, right? I mean...

Taylor: He's beautiful. Beautiful man. Great actor, but, just...

Sydnee: Just in everything. Um, *George of the Jungle*? Man. [laughs quietly] So good.

Taylor: That is an odd— that's an odd little moment in the film. Like, I like it. I like that they're slipping in the narrative that is going on in the timeline. But, like, it's also very much like, "Oh, by the way, Vietnam."

[all laugh]

Sydnee: Well, I mean, if you set a movie in 1970 I don't think you can't talk— you know?

Taylor: [through laughter] You have to—

Rileigh: Yeah, you have to put it in there to, like, just fully round out the setting, right?

Sydnee: [laughs] I mean, if you're— if you're not gonna have helicopters in the entire thing... [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Right.

Sydnee: Um... but yeah, that. And then also— I mean, talking about other people who show up in this movie, then Hank Azaria shows up?

Taylor: Oh, that's right!

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: He's the— he's the new boyfriend to the mom that's having a divorce, which is very scandalous.

Rileigh: [holding back laughter] That is a very scandalous moment in this movie.

Taylor: Well, and also we're missing our queen. Janeane Garofalo is in this movie.

Sydnee: Yes! Janeane Garofalo!

Taylor: As the best role! Like, if— like, as this, like, waitress/mystic [laughs] that the girls interact with?

Sydnee: [laughs] I love that. Yes. Yeah, exactly. Um, which, you know— what they're playing on, like... and I don't know— it's funny, 'cause I don't know if it entirely comes across until you watch it a lot, but what they're kind of playing on is that when you're a kid, you meet people, and because, like, the way you see the world as a child is just how everything relates to you, just because— I mean, that's how we're— that's how we're made.

We are inherently kind of self-obsessed when we're young, and then we learn to be more empathetic and open as we get older. But because of that, people in your life become these sort of caricatures of who they were. Um, like these archetypes that meant something to you. They were signposts in your development.

But they're really just reflections of you in some way, or something that you built. And that's— it's surreal in that sense. Like, that's who these people that they run into are. They're these sort of depictions of the scary guy in the neighborhood who turned out to be kind once you got to know him better. And the creepy waitress who knew about—[laughs quietly] about the occult, um, that scared us, and the cool— the cool older guy who told us that parents just don't understand, in the denim jacket that one time. [laughs] Like, that's who these people are.

They're not real humans in that sense, but that's how we— like, if you look back, I'm sure you have people like that from your youth who, like, hold those sort of places in your brain, and then now as an adult you go, "I bet that they were actually just a person." [laughs] "I bet that was a person."

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: No, that is very true.

[pause]

Sydnee: But I don't know. Watching it now, that sort of nuance comes across. But, like, I think the first time I watched it I was just thinking, like... I don't know. "Boy, this movie really gets me." [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Well, it's funny, 'cause I remember watch— when I watched as a kid thinking that it was a very— like, a high— I don't know, that there were higher stakes in the film. And now watching it as an adult I'm like, "Not a lot happens in this movie." [laughs]

Sydnee: It really doesn't.

Taylor: But I think that's— but that's kind of the point, you know? The stuff that is, like, major life events when you're 13, 14 years old, the stuff that defines your year or would define your summer can seem very trivial to an adult, but it both is incredibly important to you, and then in the grand scheme of things, you know, low stakes. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Was it a book?

[pause]

Rileigh: Ye—

Sydnee: I'm gonna... go ahead, Rileigh.

Rileigh: Yes?

Sydnee: Make your point, and I'm gonna look and see if this was based on a book.

Rileigh: No, I was just gonna say I remember having the same impression of this movie, that I probably watched it when I was, like, eight or nine. And thinking, like, "This is a really intense movie. There's a lot going on. There's a lot at stake for these— these gals."

But, yeah. Rewatching I was like, "Oh. Not... they got that treehouse, but that's about it."

Taylor: Exactly. [laughs] That's the summation of the summer.

Rileigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Taylor: "We learned about murder and we got a treehouse."

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: It's funny. I don't— yeah, it wasn't— it was not based on a book. Um, but it feels like it should've been. Because, like, books always have those diversions where it's like you're trying to get something done, especially if you're reading a book about a young adult. Then, like, because they don't have agency, stuff gets in the way. So, like, we have to paint the garage today so we can't solve this murder mystery. But then after we finish painting the garage [holding back laughter] we— we can get back to the murder mystery.

That's a very, like...

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Young Adult book device, you know? To, like, add stuff in there.

Rileigh: I will say, the woman who wrote the movie adapted the *Pretty Little Liars* novels for TV.

Sydnee: Hmm.

Taylor: Oh!

Rileigh: And wrote a lot of the *Pretty Little Liars* TV series. Um, which I didn't realize until I looked up information about this movie for this episode, which makes sense looking back because it has those— those beginning hints of, like, "These kids really don't have that much stuff going on, but oh, no, there's a murder. Okay."

[all laugh]

Sydnee: Um... you know what's interesting? It was filmed in Savannah, Georgia.

Taylor: Oh!

Rileigh: Oh!

Sydnee: Yeah. Even though they say Shelby, Indiana.

Rileigh: Very different settings, right?

Taylor: Yeah. A lot of things are filmed in Savannah, though. [laughs]

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

Sydnee: I also really wondered if, um, calling the place where they all lived the Gaslight Addition... [laughs quietly] I kept wondering, like, is this intentional? Is this, like... is this a message? [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Are they being gaslit somehow? [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Are all their— is it because, like, everybody's parents were gaslighting them back then, and because this was the era of, you know, where we stopped trusting authority, and don't trust anybody over 30, and... I don't know. I thought it was interesting.

Taylor: Interesting.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Did we even use that term in '95, though?

Taylor: I was gonna say, I think that that's— I don't think that was a common... [laughs quietly] reference point.

Riley: That's what I was wondering. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: But, you know, I did just think about another connection, uh, to *IT*. I'm pushin' this. Uh, both are framed narratively by a character who grew up to be a writer.

Riley: That's true!

Sydney: That's very true.

Taylor: So I—[crosstalk]

Sydney: Now, where is—

[pause]

Sydney: Where does *IT* take place?

Taylor: [simultaneously] That's in Maine.

Sydney: Oh, okay.

Taylor: It takes place in Maine, so they are... they're different locations, technically. But... [laughs] I think if you're gonna pan this movie for being very similar to another film, I'm just sayin'. [laughs]

Sydney: This movie is about— this is a companion piece to *IT*. Um, what was happening to the kids who didn't know about... *IT*?

Riley: [laughs]

Taylor: Or get it by a clown.

Sydney: [laughs] These were the kids that the clown was not interested in. That's, um... [laughs quietly] there was overlap in those Red Rover scenes. If you

look closely, there are kids who definitely get, whatever, eaten by the clown. But... [laughs] but they're not named, so.

Taylor: That clown was not into girl stuff, either! That protected them. And— and! And the clown knew that they knew about the occult! There was one girl in the Losers' Club in *IT*. And you know what? She had nothing but dude friends, so she wasn't properly educated in the ways of magic. You get enough young girls together and they can protect themselves from evil clown magic.

Sydney: It was Janeane Garofalo.

Taylor: [through laughter] It was!

Riley: [laughs]

Sydney: She protected them. She— she was the—

Taylor: Singlehandedly.

Sydney: —the sorceress that was protecting them the whole time, and if she had not existed, they would've been part of the *IT* thing.

Taylor: Tim Curry would've just devoured them.

Riley: They would've been part of the *IT* thing.

Taylor: [laughs]

Riley: Oh, I forgot that was Tim Curry.

Taylor: [through laughter] Yes!

Riley: Oh, man.

Taylor: They would've seen the deadlights.

[pause]

Sydney: Um... well, anyway. [laughs]

Taylor: [through laughter] Sorry.

Sydney: It's, uh— the movie is infinitely more interesting when you give it this, um— this backstory, I think.

Taylor: There you go, yeah.

Sydney: Yeah. Uh, you know, it's one of those things. So many things we— we re-experience on this show, and I, like, remember why I love it so much. I will say that Now and Then, um— I mean, I still like it because of the nostalgia, because it meant so much to me when I was younger, and there still are things that I see that I connected to because of, like, events very specific to our childhood that I saw in that movie and connected to when I was a kid. Um, but all that being said... [sighs] it's a tough one to hold up in today's world. It's just— it's— one, it's so white. It's just... I mean—

Riley: It is very white.

Sydney: —it's an unforgivably white movie.

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Sydney: [laughs quietly]

Riley: Yeah.

Taylor: Yes.

Sydney: Um... and, uh, yeah. It's just— and the— it's a very homogenized kind of view of what it's like to be a teenage girl. Um, it's just a very kind of one note thing, and that doesn't mean that, like, nobody can ever watch it or enjoy it. But, uh, I don't think it's something I'm going to be reshowing, 'cause my kids obviously lost interest at some point and wandered out of the room. It is not something I think I will be reshowing them as teenagers and being like, "Watch this. It's so important."

I don't know that it... there are many things on this show that I do that I, like, hold on to and I'm like, "I'm gonna make sure and share this with my kids."

I don't know I think this one might just be too much of the past.

Taylor: I do think there's one aspect of this movie that's worth salvaging, and that's not actually the movie, but the soundtrack.

Sydnee: Yes.

Rileigh: Yes.

Taylor: I remember having this and playing it in the car a lot when we were younger, the CD. It was a great— it's a great soundtrack.

Sydnee: It absolutely is. I used to listen to that all the time.

Taylor: Just a lot of classic 70's hits.

Sydnee: And if you want to make, like, a graphic novel where you merge this and *IT* into something else...

Rileigh: Hmm!

Taylor: [laughs] That is the— the strangest crossover, like, fanfic idea... but it's— the internet exists, so it's probably out there already. I don't know.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: *Now and IT.*

Taylor: [laughs loudly]

[all laugh]

Sydnee: *Now and IT!*

Taylor: There it is! There it is.

Rileigh: *Now and IT.*

[all laugh]

Sydnee: Oh, that's perfect.

Taylor: [singing] *Now and IT*, don't have to look back.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Oh my gosh. *Now and IT*. Okay, well... hey, look. If there's something that you wanna see in the world and nobody else has made it, you know what that means, Teylor.

Taylor: Yeah. [laughs quietly] Just— just, like, the horrible murders and terror happening in the background, but then in the forefront you just have this lovely coming of age story about four young women. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Trying to buy a treehouse.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: They just wanna buy a treehouse.

Taylor: I just love the idea of here's this kid falls into the storm drain, and the—the evil clown comes and is like, "Oh, wait. It's a girl... no."

Sydnee: [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: "I don't want anything to do with that."

Rileigh: Mm-mm.

[all laugh]

Sydnee: We'll— we'll the nice—

Taylor: "It's a girl doing girly stuff. Not about it. Also, they're clearly guarded by the occult." [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Yes. We'll let the nice old man come save this one. [laughs quietly]

Um, alright, Teylor. Well, thank you both. Let me say thank you before I ask you what's next. Thank you both for indulging me. Um...

Rileigh: Of course.

Sydnee: Yes. And I will be apologizing for Charlie and Cooper for scarring them.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Teylor: Well... [laughs quietly] I mean, if they had to learn about, like, death and murder somehow, I guess, you know, from Christina Ricci isn't the worst way to do it.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Yeah. She did Wednesday Addams pretty well. That's, like, another way of doing that, right?

Sydnee: That is true. Charlie got very excited when she figured out that was Wednesday.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: 'Cause they love *The Addams Family*. They both do. And they love *Beetlejuice*. So it's not like... it's not like this is... anyway. [laughs]

Teylor: Yeah.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Teylor: Uh...

Sydnee: Uh... go ahead. What's next?

Teylor: So— so next up, uh, I'm gonna bring some music to the table. Um, this isn't really nostalgia because they never really went away, but I wanna talk about Green Day. Probably the first, like, I don't know, I'm using quotey fingers, "punk band" that I ever loved. Uh, very much a gateway punk band for a lot of kids in the 90's.

Sydnee: Perfect! Alright.

Rileigh: Alright. And, you know, I saw their stage musicals. [laughs]

Taylor: [laughs] The whole other generation knows them as, "Oh, right, the musical people." [laughs]

Sydnee: "I saw their stage mu—" if you had told me... oh my gosh. Listening to Green Day in, like, my friend Eddie's basement that someday there would be a stage musical. [laughs]

Taylor: I was gonna say, that's— that's who introduced me to the— *Dookie*, yes. Uh, that's not where I saw them progressing, but, uh... [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Uh-uh.

Taylor: Well.

Sydnee: [sighs] I hope everybody had a friend Eddie's basement that they listened to Green Day in. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: I think everybody did. [laughs] Another quintessential thing, like, thing of growing up.

Sydnee: [laughs] Alright. Well, thank you both. We'll listen to Green Day for next week. And, um, thank you for listening, and enduring *Now and Then* if you are one of the I guess majority who does not enjoy it. Thank you anyway. [laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Um, and you can tweet at us @stillbuff. You can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org, and you should go to Maximumfun.org. There are lots of wonderful shows that you would enjoy. Just go there, and you can find them and listen to them.

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

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.

[theme music plays in the background]

Rileigh: I am still buffering...

Sydnee and Taylor: [out of sync] And I... am...

Taylor: ... too.

Sydnee: ... too. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Aw, man, guys!

Sydnee: That was really bad. [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: It was very bad.

Sydnee: Have you written *Now and IT* yet? Or...

Taylor: Right now, in my head. I'm multitasking.

Sydnee: I'll do the parody theme song for you.

Taylor: Get to work on that. I know that'll take you, like, five minutes.

Rileigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

[theme music plays and ends]

[music plays]

Speaker One: Hey, kid. Your dad tell you about the time he broke Stephen Hausdorff's nose at the Kid's Choice awards?

[audience laughs]

Speaker Two: In *Dead Pilots Society*, scripts that were developed by studios and networks but were never produced are given the table reads they deserve.

Speaker Three: When I was a kid, I had to spend my Christmas break filming a PSA about Angel Dust! So yeah, bein' a kid sucks sometimes.

[audience laughs]

Speaker Two: Presented by Andrew Reich and Ben Blacker. *Dead Pilots Society*, twice a month on Maximumfun.org.

Speaker Four: You know, that show you like. That hobo with the scarf who lives in a magic dumpster?

[audience laughs]

Speaker Five: *Doctor Who*?

Speaker Four: Yeah!

[audience laughs and applauds]

[chord]

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