

Still Buffering: Airheads (1994)

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[theme song, "Baby You Change Your Mind" by Nouvellas plays]

Raleigh: Hello, and welcome to Still Buffering, a cross-generational guide to the culture that made us. I'm Raleigh Smirl.

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl.

Sydnee: I get to go to prom tomorrow.

Taylor: That's nice.

Raleigh: That's fun. What prom are you going to? I thought you were done with that.

Sydnee: Not a high school one [laughs].

Raleigh: Oh, okay.

Sydnee: That would be weird.

Raleigh: A little.

Sydnee: And inappropriate. Fairness West Virginia, which is a lobbying organization in West Virginia for the LGBTQ+ community, is having a prom tomorrow night as a fundraiser.

Raleigh: Hm.

Sydnee: So, Justin and I are going to prom again.

Raleigh: Do you have a fancy outfit picked out?

Sydnee: I do. I have a fancy kind of tux suit thing.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm?

Sydnee: Tux-ish style suit. And I bought fancy boots.

Raleigh: Fancy boots?

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Teylor, my boots are called The Brooklyn.

Teylor: Oh.

Sydnee: [laughs] I don't know why. But...

Teylor: I don't know what a Brooklyn Boot would— I just thought that was a Doc Marten.

Sydnee: Yeah, I thought about Doc Martens. I almost did get Doc Martens, but then I saw these little booties. They're black but they have this sort of vaguely Western kind of stitching on the sides. They felt very hipstery to me.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Which normally is not necessarily my style, but I thought it went well with the sort of pattern shirt and suit thing I was doing.

Raleigh: Yeah. I'm not sophisticating my look every day. I started out in law school trying to dress all... like a law student. And now, here I am four weeks in and leggings and sweat pants is all I can do because law school is hard. So, I'm just going the opposite of fancy suit and boots and... sweat pants. [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, I mean...

Teylor: That's fine.

Raleigh: [laughs] It's all I got.

Sydnee: That's what I wear most days. I mean, I have meetings this afternoon and I am in scrubs. Which I have not actually had to care for patients this day. But what I've found is that if you just wear scrubs around and people know that you're a physician, they don't question, they assume you have. And so, I can get away with it. Like, I just wore scrubs today and nobody knows I just came from home. I was podcasting in scrubs. [laughs]

Raleigh: I was just having this exact conversation with some of my other friends in law school. Where it's like, we don't get the equivalent of like going to work, somewhat comfortable work clothes, this recognizable that this what I do and that's why it's acceptable to wear at all times, like scrubs. There's no that... I mean, unless we just wear like a judge's robe [laughs] all the time.

Sydnee: They do look, I mean, comfortable.

Raleigh: Judge's robes?

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Sure. But I mean, you don't get to start wearing those when you're in law school [laughs]. That'd be pretty weird.

Sydnee: I'm just saying... It's like visualization, you know?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm, manifesting.

Sydnee: Manifesting. Wear the judge's robe. Become the judge. I don't know, I would say that wearing scrubs in public is only sort of acceptable. I get away with it a little more because like, during COVID, they mandated at the hospital that everybody wear scrubs. And then they started asking us to not wear the hospital scrubs. Like, to wear our own scrubs.

Raleigh: That's weird.

Sydnee: I'm not really sure why but that was part of it. And so, I didn't own my own scrubs, I just used the hospital scrubs. Which are like— because

they buy them in mass quantities or like the sort of... I mean, they look like hospital scrubs. You know what I mean?

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: They don't fit well. Actually, they are not cut for someone shaped with hips and certainly with boobs. They are not cut for that at all. So, they're always like really strangely tight in the waist and then very baggy in the shoulders for me.

Anyway... So, I bought my own scrubs and they... Like, I can get away with those. They look like pants. They look like joggers. It looks like I'm in joggers with a strange number of pockets.

Raleigh: That sounds pretty useful.

Sydnee: So, I don't know. That helps a lot. Teylor, I'm excited to talk about the movie that you picked for this week. Because finding it, it was a little quest I had to go on. [laughs]

Teylor: Yeah! I was not ready for how hard this movie was going to be to find. I apologize for that.

Sydnee: I mean, I found it. It's fine.

Teylor: Same. Like, I just had to watch it at a weird speed on YouTube, illegally. I am sorry for that, except for there is no other way to stream it. It is not on any service. So, oops.

Sydnee: It was no problem. It was fun. It was like, it was fun doing the digging and then when Justin came in and found me watching I think the same one you found, he went, "What are you watching?" [laughs]

Teylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: And then it was fun because he assumed like, "Well, Sydnee just couldn't find it." And I was like, "Trust me. You can't find this. Trust me." [laughs]

Taylor: I felt like— I got up early today— I've seen this movie many times but I got up early today to rewatch it before we record. And I was like, "Ah, I'll just hop on Prime or whatever." Then it was like, "Oh no. Oh no." So, I'm just glad I found it. I felt like I had a prewarning of this though, because just earlier this week, I tried to watch the movie *The Others*. You know, the Nicole Kidman ghost story movie?

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: And I haven't seen it in forever and I've been rewatching all of my favorite horror movies in spooky season. And it was one that I could not find. And I'm like, how can you just not find it? What a weird occurrence that you just can't find a movie streaming somewhere. I did not know I would encounter that twice in one week. [laughs]

Sydnee: Rileigh, did you encounter similar difficulties?

Rileigh: Yeah. I was reading until 1:30. So, I was like, well, you know what? I'm already up reading. Might as well just turn on this movie as I'm you know, winding down my night. I'll just bring up my Apple TV. Google told me it was on HBO Max. So, I pulled up HBO Max.

Sydnee: It told me that lie too.

Rileigh: I was on there. Then the next Google told me it was on Prime. Wasn't there. And then it said Hulu. It wasn't there. So, then I went to iTunes 'cause I was on my Apple TV and just figured like, well, you can buy any movie. Even if you have to pay for it, you can do that now. You can buy any movie. No.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Rileigh: So, then I went on YouTube and looked up *Airheads*. And it was a tiny screen down in the corner with like a blue, stary background.

Taylor: We all watched the same one, I think. [laughs]

Sydnee: We did.

Raleigh: That just said, "Sorry for the size," at the top. "Thanks for watching."

Sydnee: Uh-huh.

Taylor: Yup.

Raleigh: And that's what I watched.

Sydnee: [laughs] We did.

Raleigh: And then I moved it to my computer so I could at least like zoom in the screen and make it so the tiny screen was bigger. But yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: We all watched the same one.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: We did.

Taylor: We put in the effort to try to do it responsibly and legally or pay for it. And that just isn't an option, so...

Raleigh: I was prepared to pay for it. I was like, you know, it's not streaming so I'll just rent it on iTunes. Can't even do that.

Sydnee: I feel like— I mean, I am happy to, if this is like... You know, if this is fair. I will purchase the DVD offline.

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Assuming I can find it. Just to make it all shake out fair in the universe. You know, I will always do what I can to support Brendan Fraser

and Steve Buscemi. I will do that, but... I mean, I didn't even look. Can you buy it on DVD?

Taylor: I mean, I think the DVDs are still out there. 'Cause I also realize I don't have a DVD player.

Raleigh: I don't have a way to watch DVDs. [laughs]

Taylor: I think I have a disk drive in a drawer somewhere that I bought specifically so I could at some point watch movies on my laptop. And I don't know where that is. This is a bigger conversation that I think has been prominent lately about this concern of like, wait, all this streaming media and digital media...

We are entering an era where we have permanently lost things that were made in fully digital form. And that's kind of scary. Like, there's no archival evidence that certain things exist if they've only been premiered on streaming services and then deleted. It's just kind of weird and scary, and I think sad.

Sydnee: That is weird. You know, I was just looking, I think you can get Airheads on DVD in multiple places. It looks like eBay was the first thing that came up, so... [laughs]

Taylor: Go ahead and order your DVD of Airheads because it's lost to time elsewhere. [laughs]

Raleigh: I have a theory about why it was so hard to find. That I've been working on last night as I was trying to go to sleep after watching it. I looked up the Wikipedia 'cause I always like to look up the people in it and when it came out and the general reviews and everything. And I saw that it lost like six million dollars. [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah, it was a failure.

Sydnee: Oh, I didn't know that.

Raleigh: And I didn't know that. And I wouldn't have guessed that.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: And my immediate assumption then was like, well, maybe it just like, no one thought to put it on their streaming service because it just kind of wasn't up there with other Brendan Fraser or Steve Buscemi movies that were more popular. And it just didn't reach that level of like, "Everyone from the '90s is gonna need to watch this." You know?

Sydnee: I don't know if it— because like, it had some of the same— I had this thought, is it because it has some of the same problematic elements that a lot of movies from that era do? But they are the same ones as a lot of movies from that era. I don't think it stands out for that.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I think some of the things they do and say are like, "Ooh... No, don't use that word. Don't say that." But I don't think it's any worse than any of the other movies we've talked about on the show that are from that same time period.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Where you're like, "Well... There's some sexism here and a little bit of racism here and a little..." And some words that we know better than to use now. But like that is that time period. All the TV shows and movies that we talk about did that.

Taylor: And I was thinking about... 'cause this was '94. So, this was two years after Wayne's World. But similar... I kind of feel like they're in the same universe in my head. I don't know [laughs] like just cause it's—

Sydnee: They are.

Taylor: Like parody metal guys. I don't know. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yes, they are. They are parody metal guys. And there's a little bit— I mean I— Well, okay. Tey, do you wanna summarize the plot before we...?

Taylor: Yes. All right, so Airheads is about the band, The Lone Rangers, plural [laughs]. Who are struggling musicians who decide to break into a radio station and force them to play their demo so that they can get a record contract.

But everything gets out of hand because they have fake toy guns that they use to hold everybody ransom. And it just becomes this big media thing. People show up in the parking lot and there's a crowd gathering. And they end up getting to play their music live.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: And uh... I mean, I feel like that's kind of it. That's the plot.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm, and then they go to jail.

Taylor: And then they go to jail. I think that the bigger sort of message is about like... I don't know. Artists making real art versus being a commodity. Because there's all these like shmoozie record execs trying to like pay the money or make them sign contracts. And they don't care about their music and what they have to say. It's interesting. I think it actually kind of goes hard in that specific way. [laughs]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm, it does. I mean, that sort of railing against the music industry, that would become the norm.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: This would've been early for that. And certainly, was like very... You know, it's kind of a grunge ethos that they're— I mean, they're metal guys. But if you look at the big bands as we were going from the '80s to the '90s, a lot of them were... they were with the record companies, you know? They weren't like railing against that system.

But then you look at going into the grunge era, then that very much was selling out and all that kind of stuff, that concept. And that's what they're talking about, before everybody recognized that there was so much toxicity

in the music industry and so many artists that were being taken advantage of. And before it became like— I feel like that when you say that now, it's like, "Yeah. Yeah, we know." You know?

Taylor: Yeah. I think we've all just sort of surrendered to the industry at this point. [laughs]

Sydnee: In so many fields, not just music. But in so many ways. [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah. [laughs] But, it's a very— I do think it's a very self-aware movie. 'Cause even some of the things you were speaking on, like I think that the... Like, they make jokes about the fact that it's three middle class white dudes. "Oh, look at all their problems." [laughs] I was surprised on the rewatch how self-aware it was for the time it was made.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: I do think it's, you know— It is the struggle of the artist to be a true artist and be taken seriously. But it's also like, "Yeah, but all right, calm down. [laughs] You don't have real problems."

Sydnee: I think that's true. And with some of the things like when they... When hostages start escaping, when they realize that the guns are squirt guns. Squirt guns with hot sauce in them.

Taylor: Yes.

Sydnee: You see that one of the hostages, who is a black man, is immediately arrested by the police. Which I think they are intentionally doing to address that. Like, I think that's supposed to be intentional commentary.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Which would have been very progressive to even talk about in 1994.

Taylor: Yeah. The other person that escapes is David Arquette as a surfer punk DJ. And he's like crowd surfing while the black man's being arrested. I was surprised by that sequence, for the time. I was like, "That's very accurate commentary, but jeez."

Sydnee: And I think they pull back just a little from actually driving it home. From making the point. But it's there. I mean, they're very clearly making— It's intentional. They're making a comment on that. That this is what would happen in this situation. That is not shocking. It is wrong.

They don't go all the way with calling it out. But like it's right there. I was kind of impressed in that moment thinking like, "Oh, well, that was... that was ahead of its time." Just to even acknowledge that reality.

Taylor: Well and I mean even like— I don't know, not to be [laughs] controversial on main. But like, the way that they kind of present the cops. There're cops that are like surveying the perimeter of this and I mean they kind of... they're ridiculous characters that are you know...

There's a main guy that seems reasonable, but everybody else is sort of absurd. It is not a forgiving representation of the police. Which is also fair. [laughs]

Sydnee: And also very of its time. It is similar, again, to like Wayne's World, when you talk about the way that when Wayne and Garth interact with a police officer, it's a very similar vibe.

Taylor: It's outdated in a lot of the language and some of the sort of offhand sexism, absolutely. But I don't think it's like... I don't think it's lost to time because it's bad.

Sydnee: No, I don't either. That is what was confusing to me. I don't think— I was sitting there trying to think, why is this so hard to find? It's not a bad film, it's very much... I mean, I know it didn't do well. But it feels to me like a lot of the movies of the time. I'm not gonna say it should win an Oscar.

Taylor: No. [laughs]

Sydnee: It's fun, it's funny, there are some really good performances. It's very much of its time. I don't think there's anything bad about it. It's not any more offensive or problematic than any other movie from that time is sometimes. So, why is it so hard to find?

Taylor: I think with the Brendan Fraser renaissance that I feel like we're about to experience, maybe it'll come back on a streaming service.

Sydnee: You think so?

Taylor: I think so. It's also got maybe not my favorite Steve Buscemi performance, but one of them.

Sydnee: It's a good Steve Buscemi.

Taylor: Metal head Steve Buscemi is real. Like real... [laughs] I was gonna say real transition goals. [laughs] Like, that's a little dude that looks like he rocks. That's what I'd like to be perceived as. [laughs]

Sydnee: He's a very cool dude. I don't think I remember that the line where he talks about how it's okay that they're gonna go to— He's talking about it's okay that they'll go to jail or whatever. And he's like, "Remember when Ozzy peed on the Alamo and he was banned from there for 10 years. And then he came back and rocked the place?"

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: I have said that and I have heard people say that. And I don't I realized that's what it was from.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: It's funny. Like, oh, okay. I mean, I know I'd seen the movie but I don't think I had ever connected that, oh, I quote that movie. I think, you know, the only other thing is, I was a little surprised. Because I love Brendan Fraser, and when I think about Brendan Fraser, I think about like, The Mummy. My Brendan Fraser from The Mummy.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: And I think about George of the Jungle. [laughs] And his interactions with his girlfriend were a little hard at first. 'Cause that's rough for the time.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Well, I mean, it is a parody. It's a caricature, you know. He's supposed to be sort of the meathead bozo kind of character. And I mean, he's very apologetic towards her. But actually, I like the interaction between... like, the relationship there. Because she's kind of just as unhinged as he is. [laughs]

Sydnee: That's true.

Taylor: That is why they are a couple. Like, she throws the chair through the window and breaks the soundboard. And then they're like, "We love each other." And then they're good. It's like, you know what? This is toxic, but it's toxic both ways. So, it's fine.

Sydnee: [laughs] It's funny. I think that shows a shift in tone in the time too, though. Because like that really was— There were so many relationships like that on TV and movies back then. They were like, it works because they're both such a mess and it is a toxic relationship.

But because they're toxic in that way, similar, it's okay. And nowadays, we would look and go, "Hmm, that's unhealthy. That's very toxic." But back then it was like something you could aspire to. Maybe you could be in such a fun, dysfunctional relationship as these two people. [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah. But I also think, isn't that closer to truth? Like, I know nobody wants to be in a dysfunctional two-way relationship. But who are we kidding? That's a lot of relationships. [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, I don't know. Yeah, I mean, I guess... Nothing is perfect, that is true. Nobody is ever always the best that they could be at being a partner. That is absolutely the truth.

Taylor: Well, I don't think it's about like finding— You being your best self and finding somebody else who's their best self. And you go forward as your best self. Like, "This is my damage and I do my best with it. What's your damage? All right, I can work with that." [laughs]

I prefer relationships that are represented like that. So, I agree. At the beginning, I was like, "Ah, she's doing all the work and he's just some lazy bozo." I was like, "Nah, they're good for each other," by the end. [laughs]

Sydnee: It works okay.

Taylor: And I don't think anyone else could've played that role and still been lovable, but Brendan Fraser.

Sydnee: Rileigh, I have all this love for Brendan Fraser because of these movies we've talked about. When did you... I mean, do you love Brendan Fraser? I guess is what I'm asking. [laughs]

Rileigh: Um... I don't know if I've seen any other big Brendan Fraser movies, ever?

Sydnee: Really? The Mummy?

Rileigh: Mm-mm.

Sydnee: I don't know what to say.

Rileigh: Are there any other big deal ones? 'Cause I can't remember any that I've seen. You keep saying The Mummy and others.

Sydnee: Encino Man?

Taylor: I was about to throw out Monkeybone. I was like, what? No, no one's seen that. I'm the only one that loves that movie. [laughs]

Sydnee: He was in Encino Man, right?

Taylor: Yes.

Raleigh: I also haven't seen that.

Sydnee: And George of the Jungle?

Raleigh: Mm-mm.

Sydnee: I mean, obviously he was in this new movie that's come out, The Whale. But I haven't seen that.

Raleigh: Yes. I did know that from Twitter.

Taylor: Isn't he in Doom Patrol? Mainly a voice. But...

Raleigh: I haven't seen that.

Sydnee: I mean, there were lots of Mummy movies.

Raleigh: I don't think I saw any of them.

Taylor: I think of Brendan Fraser as the ultimate archetype of like when we use the phrase himbo. That is the character he embodies.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: He's lovable, well-meaning, maybe doesn't always get everything right... Like, that is the blueprint for that type of character, is Brendan Fraser.

Sydnee: It really is. And I'm looking back through movies that he's been in. There is no way you'd remember... I mean, like, I'm not surprised. I don't remember...

Rileigh: I mean, obviously I know who he is and like I could picture him in my mind's eye when you were talking about him. Like, last week saying we were gonna watch this movie, I knew who you were talking about. But not because I've ever seen him in anything. I think just from cultural context.

Sydnee: I'm looking at the covers of some of these movies that he was in, back in the '90s. And I'm just thinking like this is so my jam from the '90s. Not my jam now, but in the '90s it would've been. And how have I not seen this.

I don't know, I'm just looking at these movies and I'm like, that looks like a movie I would've loved. Well, I don't know anything about it, I just look at the cover and think like... Look at all those nice-looking guys with tousled hair and sweaters on the front. I would love that movie. What is it? [laughs]

Rileigh: I will say, I did notice two things about people in the movie that were not Brendan Fraser. One is that Adam Sandler has always looked like Adam Sandler.

Taylor: Yeah!

Rileigh: Like, always. Like, that could be Adam Sandler in an Adam Sandler movie I watched in like 2013. In *Airheads*, that could be the same person.

Sydnee: It is, yeah.

Rileigh: I don't know if that means he's always looked young or if he's always looked older than he is. And just now he's actually the age?

Taylor: He's always looked Adam Sandler age. [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah, maybe he's just Adam Sandler. But one of my favorite, favorite guys from *Criminal Minds*, which is like my all-time favorite show, is the DJ.

Taylor: Oh?

Rileigh: The shark? Is that what they call him? Whatever his real name is.

Sydnee: Yeah, I know who you're talking about.

Raleigh: The chill one? That's Joe Man... tagna?

Sydnee: Mantegna.

Raleigh: Mantegna, yes. That's his name. He's like one of the main dudes in Criminal Minds. And obviously, Criminal Minds, when he was on it, started like a decade ago. So, he is much older.

So, it took me a minute. Especially with the low-quality YouTube video. I had to pause and be like, wait a minute. And then look it up on my phone and I'm like, "Oh my God, it's him. I can't believe it."

Sydnee: He is very good in that movie.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: It is weird, there is a moment where— Okay, so they have fake guns and then somebody crawls through the duct work with a real gun.

Taylor: Kramer.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Kramer. Kramer does [laughs]. Raleigh, Kramer is from a show called Seinfeld.

Taylor: Do you know Seinfeld?

Raleigh: Okay, now, Sydnee. I know Seinfeld.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: I don't know?

Raleigh: I haven't seen a lot of it. It's not like I've seen all of it.

Taylor: You don't know The Mummy!

Raleigh: I feel like there's a cultural difference between Seinfeld and The Mummy. Seinfeld, there is a 90% chance— If you turn on TV back home after 11 o'clock, there's a 90% chance Seinfeld's gonna be on one of the main cable channels.

Taylor: And there's a 75% chance The Mummy is gonna be on. [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: The Mummy is on a lot.

Raleigh: You know where I saw Brendan Fraser? In the ride at what Universal...

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: Was in Universal or Disney that used to be The Mummy ride?

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: Oh no.

Raleigh: That he was in for like a split second. That's where I've seen him. [laughs]

Sydnee: But you knew Kramer when you saw him?

Raleigh: Well, it wasn't like I saw him and I was like, "Kramer!"

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: It was like, "Oh, yeah. That guy. That's who that is. That guy."

Sydnee: Because of, I mean, the unfortunate downfall of Michael Richards [laughs], the actor who plays Kramer... Whenever I see Kramer in anything I'm like, "Oh, no. It's Kramer." [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: He went on a racist rant once, Raleigh.

Taylor: Oh! Oh...

Raleigh: I didn't know that.

Sydnee: Yes. Neither of you knew? Let me tell you that, yeah. One time, Kramer... and I mean, maybe multiple times. But I know at least one time that he did and it was bad.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: So, not a fan of Kramer. But yeah, I saw him and I was like, "Uh-oh, Kramer's up in here."

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: And of course, he's got a gun. [laughs]

Taylor: At least he's like a crappy character. At least there's that.

Sydnee: Yeah, he's a bad guy.

Taylor: He's the worst guy.

Sydnee: He brings a real gun to the situation.

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: And that is a weird moment. Like, when that gun goes off, it's legitimately disturbing, I feel like.

Taylor: Well, I feel like this is a movie that is... it took place before America had maybe— And I mean a lot of America hasn't. But I would say at least some of us that are aware, have had a reckoning with gun violence. Where guns are used as a prop in this movie and it's a part of the story telling.

And watching it now, it's like, "What? How could you... Oh, right... You just throw guns around and it's fine and it's funny. And you can still like these guys even though they brought prop guns and did this storyline."

Raleigh: Well, that's what I was gonna say. Even not the real gun, just the bringing of the fake guns. I had a moment where I was like, "You can't do that... That's not okay."

Taylor: Also, I know from like... I don't know, from cosplay. Like, you have not been able to buy anything that looks even close to a replica of a gun for... it's been decades. This is a weird relic where the idea of a toy gun is not good. I mean, fair. But also, it is kind of weird in that respect. Like, it's a big storytelling element of this movie, it makes me deeply uncomfortable.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: It's true. That's something, Raleigh, I don't know if you would've seen in your lifetime, but like toy guns... First of all, there used to be a lot more toy guns.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Which I don't think there are as many... We do not— That's one of the— I don't have a ton of rules as a parent. We do not have toy guns. I'm not even a fan of like squirt guns or...

Raleigh: You have nerf guns. Justin's a fan of the nerf guns.

Sydnee: Okay, listen. I do not have nerf guns. I throw them away when I get the opportunity.

Raleigh: Here's what I'll say about nerf guns though...

Sydnee: Do you know how many nerf guns and squirt guns I've thrown away?

Raleigh: A lot?

Sydnee: Because they are brought into my house and it makes me mad. And everyone knows that they're not supposed to bring them into the house and I get rid of 'em.

Raleigh: I will say the nerf guns that they make now, though, are so ridiculous with like the giant barrels and white and orange whatever flames on the side. It's like, okay, this is removed from reality.

Sydnee: I tried to be okay with squirt guns for a while. 'Cause you know, you're swimming in the pool or whatever. You're having a squirt gun fight. And you know, I had a super soaker as a kid. [laughs] Those were fun. But it's hard. If they're completely removed from the idea of a gun, it's easier. But I just don't know, it's a tough thing.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And back then, toy guns looked like guns. Remember for a while, they just put that little orange cap on the end as if like, "There, we fixed it. It's obviously a toy. We made the tip orange."

Taylor: And it was removable. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yes. The idea of getting that, a toy gun that looked like that... I mean, it's scary. 'Cause now we know that's really dangerous to walk around with.

Taylor: Well, I mean, they even say like... Steve Buscemi works at a toy store and he comments, "These things are discontinued." Or you know, they're illegal now.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Travis: So, there is that kind of awareness. It's a weird harbinger of what's to come, that statement, kind of offhand. Like, "Oh, yeah. You can't even sell these anymore." Like, oh. Yeah...

Raleigh: It's one of those moments in movies in like the '90s where people would be going to airports and they could just like run through and there was no security or anything.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: And it's like, oh, this was pre giant historical moment, where this thing became different. And I think that's true with fake guns in this movie in '94. And also, I'm thinking of that scene in friends where Ross runs through the airport. Just like, no ticket needed, nothing. And then they have another episode from like five years later and then there's you know...

You have to have a ticket, there's security and all that stuff. But it's always interesting for me to see those because obviously all the large, big historical moments were either before my time or right at the beginning of my life, where I don't remember a time where they didn't happen.

Sydnee: That was kind of a sad thing to say, I'm sorry.

Raleigh: Oh, no. I mean, it's not sad.

Sydnee: I know you didn't mean it sad, I know you didn't mean it that way. It was just a very—

Raleigh: No, I really don't mean that at all. It's interesting to me because like even Love Actually, which is one of my favorite movies to watch in the Christmas time, you've got a little boy running through an airport. And the first time I saw it when I was like 12, I was just sitting there thinking like, "How? That's not right. That's not real."

And just because people of my generation have a completely different outlook on the world and what's okay and what's not, and what's typical and what's not. I mean, that's why I like watching things that you all bring,

because... I don't know, it offers a different perspective where it's like, this is what the world was like when I wasn't around.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: It's hard because like—

Taylor: I feel like this is the exemplification of like, that's why we can't have nice things. Is what we're discussing here. [laughs]

Raleigh: I don't mean any of this in a sad way. It's really just genuinely like—

Taylor: It is fair, though.

Raleigh: Obviously, I think things are probably safer and maybe better in a lot of ways now. In a lot of regards, I'm not talking about specifically guns. But in a lot of ways, there are a lot more things that are put in place to keep people safer and to hold people more accountable for things than there were in the '90s.

Sydnee: Sure, we have car seats now.

Raleigh: Sure, yeah. And like seatbelts.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: In some ways, yes. In some ways I feel like... I don't know. I mean, I'm just gonna not beat around the bush. With guns it's like, we can keep making toy guns illegal and things that look like guns uncomfortable. And we can't say the word gun. But we won't do anything about the actual guns. Let's be real here. That's the thing. [laughs]

Sydnee: No, you're right. I mean, that's true. That's a fair statement. Is that we do, we worry about all these things around it. And we have, I think... I don't know. I don't know if movies are more careful about that. I would think. But I think it's like the audience doesn't have the appetite for it like they used to.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: That would be my suspicion. In this movie, the premise that this young rock band would take hostage a radio station just to get their song on the radio... In the '90s, it sounds kind of metal. Kind of like, "Yeah. Forget the system. Make 'em listen to you. Make your voice heard." Like, it sounds cool.

You say it now and it's like, "Oh my gosh, those poor people. There are people who work there. They're just trying to do their frikken job, man. Why would you do that to them?" But I understand it's just a shift. You couldn't do that now because that would be my first thought. Why would you do that to people? [laughs] That poor DJ.

Taylor: Well, because we're aware of gun violence. It's wild because no, we wouldn't have a movie where toy guns are used as a plot element for characters we're supposed to like. But we will absolutely still have movies where guns are cool and people wield real guns and they're a cool, shiny thing. 'Cause it's just... I don't know. That's where we're at. [laughs]

Raleigh: You know what it reminded me of after watching it, was the Woodstock '99 documentary.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: And the whole vibe they give of the people that were there at that time. And the destruction and like... They were trying to be all anti-capitalism and you know, "We're individuals and we don't feed into the machine," and everything. But then in the end, they ended up making a really hard situation for a lot of underpaid workers that had to clean up after them and lost money and stuff.

It kind of reminds me of that where it's like that same kind of '90s vibe. Where we are anti-establishment and capitalism. But haven't quite figured out the best way to maybe do that, and also in an ethical way. [laughs] "So, we're just gonna burn it all down." [laughs]

Taylor: Well, there's the awareness of things like with the sexism and the racism. And there's kind of a nod to it. But they never turn the full corner. Even the fact that these dudes held a bunch of people at gun point and were released in... six months, three months?

Raleigh: Three months.

Sydnee: I noticed that, three months.

Taylor: That was a bit of a bitter pill at the end. Like, well... Yeah, it's a bunch of white dudes. Yeah, that's reads. [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, it does. And I mean, they sort of comment on that. They say like, "Well, if you're a rockstar, you can kill somebody and you won't go to jail."

Taylor: Yeah!

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Like, they say that and then they become really famous so they spend three months in jail for doing something that was really scary and dangerous and could've resulted in death. Which, maybe it is all commentary. But I think you're right. They fall just short of... you know?

Taylor: Well, I think that's the struggle of parody. It's like, where do you—"If we make this real, if we make this, everybody has to really pay." Then it's not a comedy anymore and people don't watch it. "But how do we get the points across but we still feed them to you in a way that you'll swallow them?" And I think that's a hard—

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: I don't know. Maybe that's why it's not readily available. [laughs] 'Cause it doesn't do one or the other successfully. It's not lighthearted enough to just be like, "This is a goofy movie." And it's not hard hitting enough to be like, "Oh, this is really saying something."

Raleigh: Yeah. And I had that thought going in. I thought this is gonna be like Wayne's World kind of level of goofy, silly. Probably have some moments that make me go like, "Hmm," because it's from 30 years ago. But it was not as lighthearted and funny. But I don't think it's because of the jokes being bad or anything. I think it was just watching it for the first time and the context of it being 2022.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: A lot of things that maybe were funny to audiences in '94, just don't hold up the same for people now. And I think a lot of movies, you can get away with some of that. Like, I don't know, Bill & Ted and Wayne's World maybe don't hold up perfectly. But they have a lot of other really funny, good stuff going on that people still like them. I don't know.

Taylor: It's sort of a primordial soup of a lot of today's problems in this movie.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: I mean, I still enjoy it. I think that the cast is amazing.

Raleigh: Oh, yeah.

Taylor: Especially the main three.

Sydney: That saves it. I mean, really. If you didn't have the right actors—I'm not saying it has to be these three. But if you didn't have the right actors in some of those lead roles, I think the movie would be sort of lost to obscurity. Because of some of these other things we're talking about. I think that they're so good and engaging. And at times, really funny.

I mean, there are moments of this movie that are very, very, truly funny. And no matter what other things... you know, might be problematic. But if you didn't have such engaging, charismatic actors in a lot of these roles, I don't know if it would... I don't know if the problems would outweigh how good it is.

Rileigh: I just can't get over like, it's really hard these days to put a movie on YouTube in its entirety.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Rileigh: And not have YouTube be like, "No, we'll put it on here. But you have to pay \$5 to watch it." That one had 700,000 views on that video. It was not just some obscure, only been up for a couple months video. It's been up for a while and has a good amount of views. And YouTube still is just like, "Meh." [laughs] I don't understand. I've never seen this happen.

Sydnee: That's fascinating.

Rileigh: There has never been anything we've discussed on this show, no matter how obscure or how old it is or anything, that I've not been able to at least rent somewhere or pay money somewhere. This is the first time it has ever happened.

Taylor: Did I bring the most controversial piece of media to Still Buffering in this new era? I'm so sorry.

Rileigh: I don't even think it's the most controversial thing that we've ever talked about.

Sydnee: I wouldn't have thought, no. We have talked about stuff that is way more problematic.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: We have talked about things on our show that I have trouble saying like... Even if there are parts of it, or actors or whatever, that I really like, that I have trouble saying anything other than, "This is bad. This is deeply flawed in ways that are harmful now." I don't feel like that about this movie. I think there are certainly things that you wouldn't put in a film now.

Taylor: Yeah.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And in a perfect version on this, I would remove. They used some slurs and things that I would never advise be in a film. But I don't, I mean, it is not nearly as bad as some of the other stuff we've talked about. [laughs]

Taylor: Well, you know, and I think something that I like about what we do on the show, is that I don't think we bring things to the center to just crucify them. Like, if it's a bad thing, it doesn't need our press. There's too much of that in the media, right? Like, "Look at this bad thing that you should feel badly about and it does bad things."

We don't need to give a platform to media that should be left behind, that should be thrown away to YouTube. It can stay there. So, I wanna question my thoughts on this. Like, what did I bring this for? But I also feel like I always try to reduce whatever I offer up to what is it trying to say? If I feel like it's trying to say something that's worthwhile, it's okay to talk about the gnarly bits and the things that don't land in the modern age.

And I think what it's trying to say is still really relevant. It's almost like sad because it's like, we lost that battle. Like, now, all media goes through a filter. We started off talking about media that gets lost to the digital— being premiered on digital platforms. Like, that's literally amazing shows getting thrown away because they didn't perform well enough.

Where the conversation about art or content is gone. Art is worthless, content is everything. And that's where we're at in this day and age, for better or worse. Well, for worse. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. I mean, I think it almost... not only is it still relevant, the stuff they talk about— And maybe that's why it wasn't as popular at the time. Some of the things that they are referencing and like almost commenting on, but just sort of putting up there for you to see. Without actually saying something necessarily about it, just kind of making it obvious.

I think are easier to recognize now. I think it's easier to look back through history and see those elements and go, "Oh, that's messed up." They're highlighting that it's messed up. They're highlighting that it's messed up that

the police rush in and embrace the white hostage and arrest the black hostage.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: That's messed up. And they're saying that. But at the time, you would have to have literally said it. [laughs] You would have to literally have had a character stand up and go, "Hey! That's messed up!"

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: In order for people to understand it. It's easier for us to recognize those things now. Which makes it, I think, kind of cool to go back and talk about and see. And again, there are some really funny parts to the movie.

Taylor: Well, like the... whatever the second— The LAPD unit that shows up. They're the ones that sneak the gun into the building, that present the real danger into the situation. Like, that is... Yeah. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. No one was in danger until that gun showed up.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Well, that's not true. Fake guns are... I mean, there was danger. There was definitely danger because they thought it was a real gun. But like yes, the actual life-threatening weapon was brought by the police.

Raleigh: I will say, in my four week long legal education, there's not much difference really in the ramifications if you have a fake gun and a real one, if you're threatening people with it. So... [laughs]

Sydnee: No, you just do three months.

Raleigh: Oh?

Taylor: Three months and you get a concert in the jail.

Sydnee: And your girlfriend can come. [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah, I don't know. There's a lot. I will own up to that there's a lot going on. This is not an easy— It's weird 'cause it is an easy watch. It's a dumb— The thing is, the movie is dumb. It's a funny, goofy movie with a bunch of funny actors.

Raleigh: But in the same way that so many are.

Taylor: Yeah. But then you look at the elements and it's like, is it reenforcing bad things? I don't know. It's questioning them but it's not going far enough to like put a pin on it. So...

Raleigh: True.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Which, I don't know what you can expect from a comedy.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Sure.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Now, I'm glad you brought it up 'cause it was fun going on the quest to watch it.

Taylor: [laughs] I'm so sorry. Start pirating your illegal downloads. Buy your DVDs now because media's just... it's gonna get worse from here.

Sydnee: Yeah. I mean, Airheads is out there on DVD. You can buy it.

Taylor: Oh, God. Is this where we're going with like the NFT crap? Like, "Now, the only way you can own a piece of media is by buying this token," or whatever.

Sydnee: I hope not.

Taylor: It's all part of it. [laughs]

Raleigh: Have you ever just had such a Gen-Z moment of just sitting in front— It was like 2:00 in the morning at this point. Just sitting in front of my Apple TV, just slack jawed. Like... I can't find a piece of media. How can I not find a piece of media?

Sydnee: I mean, I am from the generation that this movie is from. And I had a moment of like, "What? It's nowhere?"

Raleigh: Gotta love YouTube.

Sydnee: Taylor, thank you. I appreciate it.

Raleigh: Yeah. I did enjoy watching it.

Taylor: I'm sorry. [laughs] I don't know if I should apologize. I just wanted to see Steve Buscemi in a sleeveless shirt, I'm sorry.

Sydnee: No, I enjoyed it. I enjoy the movie. I think it's been a fun conversation.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And I enjoy a challenge. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah, we found it.

Sydnee: Raleigh, what's next?

Raleigh: So... [laughs] Speaking of horrible things on TV, I wanna talk about Dated and Related, on Netflix. Which is not about dating people you're related to.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: Gotta clarify.

Sydnee: Teylor's face. [laughs]

Teylor: Okay? [laughs]

Rleigh: It is a Netflix dating show by the same people that have made Love Is Blind and Too Hot to Handle. All those more modern Netflix dating shows. Where young sibling pairs go to a villa to date people. And you have to be a good wingman to your siblings.

There's twin sisters, there's twin brothers, there's a brother and sister. There are all these young, attractive people. But they also have to try to date people while their sibling is there. And you're judged by how good of a wingman or person you are to your sibling.

It's absolutely ridiculous, it's on Netflix. You don't need to watch the whole season, you get the idea of it after like one episode. I will say though, I got sucked into a mind-numbing hole of watching the entire season. So... It might happen, I can't guarantee it won't. But just an episode of it, you'll see what's going on.

Sydnee: All right. Well, we will watch that next time. In the meantime, I encourage you all to go buy Airheads on DVD. Quick!

Teylor: Or don't, it's fine.

Sydnee: Or don't if you don't want to.

Teylor: Support Brendan Fraser in his new efforts, I guess. [laughs]

Rleigh: There you go.

Sydnee: Thank you, siblings. Thank you, listeners. Thank you to Maximum Fun, the wonderful network that we are a part of. You should go to maximumfun.org, check out all the great shows there.

You can tweet at us, @Stillbuff. You can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org. 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'm Rileigh Smirl.

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl.

Rileigh: I'm still buffering.

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

[theme song plays]

Sydnee: Yeah, I'm gonna keep say that Alamo line now that I know what I'm quoting.

Rileigh: I've never heard you say that.

Sydnee: I've said that before. I don't know why I just didn't know what I was quoting. [laughs] But it's cool.

[Let's Learn Everything theme music starts playing]

Caroline Roper: What happens when you give a bug recreational drugs?

Tom Lum: What was the first recorded sound?

Ella Hubber: How do we figure out how old the Earth is?

Tom: Let's find out together, on our show Let's Learn Everything. Where we learn anything and everything interesting.

Caroline: My name's Caroline and I studied biodiversity and conservation.

Tom: My name's Tom and I studied computer science and cognitive [mumbles].

Caroline: Hm, did you?

Tom: [laughs]

Caroline: [laughs]

Ella: And my name's Ella, and I studied stem cells and regenerative medicine.

Tom: On our show, we do as much research as we would for a class, but we don't get in trouble for making each other laugh.

Caroline: And we get to say fu—[censor beep] [laughs]

Ella: [laughs]

Tom: Maybe not in the trailer? [laughs]

Ella: Subscribe to Let's Learn Everything, every other Thursday on Maximum Fun.

[Let's Learn Everything theme music concludes]

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