

Still Buffering 364: Harley Quinn

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[theme music plays]

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

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Teylor Smirl.

Rileigh: I almost forgot our line there, guys.

Sydnee: Well, you partied too hard.

Rileigh: Was that right? That's right, right? That was right.

Sydnee: I wasn't really listening. [laughs]

Taylor: It sounded...

Rileigh: Thank you.

Taylor: ... fine.

Rileigh: [laughs] Did the cadence sound correct?

Taylor: That sounded—there were words.

Sydnee: [simultaneously] The cadence—

Taylor: It was informative.

Sydnee: The cadence was right, and so I zoned out. I don't—I... you know.

Rileigh: I just—I knew something had to come out with that many syllables that followed that same rhythm, so that—I—I think it's right. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: We all said our names. That's the important part.

Rileigh: That's really what matters.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Rileigh: The tagline's there in the—it's in the podcast [crosstalk].

Sydnee: We got our names right.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, do, uh... do you all wish when we were little that we would've gone to camp? Like, sleep away camp?

Taylor: Well... Syd, I mean, I did.

Sydnee: What camp did you go to?

Taylor: Sydnee... I went to that...

Sydnee: Ohhh. I forgot you went to that!

Taylor: I went to Republican Youth Camp.

Rileigh: Nooo!

Sydnee: I forgot you went to Republican Youth Camp.

Taylor: Yeah!

Rileigh: Nooo, I didn't know that!

Taylor: How did you not know that?

Sydnee: I forget that sometimes, Tey.

Rileigh: [simultaneously] I knew Dad went.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: I can't believe you did—like, I mean, not that you ch—I know you didn't choose to.

Taylor: No.

Sydnee: I just can't believe that happened, you know?

Taylor: Yes, against my desires I went to Republican Youth Camp, I think twice.

Rileigh: I didn't know that. And it was an overnight Republican Youth Camp?

Taylor: Oh, it was like—you were there for, like, a week a two?

Sydnee: Like a week or something.

Rileigh: Oh my god.

Sydnee: Yeah, I forgot you did that. You did do that.

Taylor: Camp Lincoln.

Sydnee: Can I just clarify, too? This wasn't some attempt on our parents' part to, like, make you a Republican or indoctrinate you. It's weird that you had to—'cause Mom was never Republican.

Taylor: No.

Sydnee: It's weird that they chose for you to—you know?

Taylor: Yeah. I don't... it was... it wasn't—I didn't really—I—I learned everything I needed to know about politics about Republican Youth Camp, which is just... the summation was "Nope! No thank you. Nope." [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: It's so wei—you know, and there was never an attempt to get me to go. Like, I don't ever remember—or if there was—

Rileigh: That's what I was gonna ask is how did just one of you end up going?

Taylor: [whispering] I don't know.

Sydnee: I mean, the connection—I mean, Grandma Jodie was connected to the camp, because she was a Republican in the legislature probably at the time. That probably tracks, that it would've been the same time she was serving, you would've been going to this camp. And so I know that she went and, like, I don't know, whatever—do you lecture? What do you do there?

Taylor: Well, I think she was one of—like, she was like a... I don't know. 'Cause I think Dad went to. Like, I think it was a thing from when they were younger. Like, she was one of the founders or something. Like...

Sydnee: Dad definitely went when he was younger.

Taylor: She, like, would—I don't know if she was a counselor or she would just speak there. I don't know. There was family history, so...

Rileigh: What do you do at Republican overnight Youth Camp?

Sydnee: Yeah, what did you all do there? Do you remember? Do you have any memories of, like—what are the activities? 'Cause I can't imagine, like, arts and crafts are part of it.

Taylor: I blocked a lot of it out. But, like, a lot of it was we would form two political parties and run against each other, and you would...

Sydnee: Like the right and the far right? Like—[laughs]

Taylor: Yeah. I forget.

Sydnee: Old school GOP or, like, Tea Party and Trumpers, or... [laughs]

Taylor: I think we were the Federalists and the Nationalists, maybe?

Sydnee: [laughs loudly] Oh no!

Raleigh: Oh my god.

Taylor: Uh, it was... I don't know. I just...

Sydnee: Oh no, the nationalists?! No!

Taylor: Yeah. Yeah.

Raleigh: Oh my god.

Taylor: I remember—I don't know. Like—

Sydnee: The America First Party?!

Taylor: It was... it was bad. I remember they would make us stand outside and compete for who got to eat dinner first would be whoever was the loudest, so we would just stand outside in lines and scream. And sometimes...

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: ... it would be in the rain. And you just—I was like, I don't even want to eat. I just want to get inside out of the rain, so I'm gonna scream. And I think that's a lesson in Republicanism. Um... [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: They were trying to, like—it sounds like—okay, I don't know. But it sounds like the kind of stuff that you do if you're one of those awful people who, like, get dogs and try to train 'em to fight. 'Cause that's all horrible, right? Like, I'm not—I've never done this. But I bet—it's like you do things

like that to make them mean and angry so that they'll fight. That sounds like that kind of behavior. Like, let's do this to these kids to make them mean and angry.

Taylor: I remember they made us—they woke us all up once, like, scared us all awake at, like, two o' clock in the morning to have an emergency session about the right to carry water guns on the camp property.

Raleigh: [spluttering laughter]

Taylor: And we all had to get up in the middle of the night—

Raleigh: No!

Taylor: —and go to the whatever meeting house and discuss water gun control. Water guns were allowed to be carried. I don't know. I was just—I wanted to sleep.

Sydnee: Do you think that's still going on? That camp?

Taylor: Probably.

Raleigh: It's gotta be. It's gotta be.

Taylor: I just—I r—

Raleigh: Camp Lincoln?

Taylor: A bunch of—I feel kind of bad that, like, a lot of—because my friends at the time—I think this was high school, middle school age? I forget. God, I blocked all of this out. Uh, but a couple of my friends went with me and they kept going back. Like, I think maybe I only went once, and after that I was like, "No thank you. Never again." And they kept going. So I—the indoctrination did not stick with me, but some of my buddies did. [wheeze-laugh]

Sydnee: Well, and I can see, um... I can't—I can't tell if it's still going on or not. You all are better at the internet than me. You guys can probably figure this out.

Raleigh: Was it in West Virginia?

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Oh.

Sydnee: It was somewhere in West Virginia. Uh, we have a lot of camps here. I mean, which makes sense. It's a rural state. There's a lot of outdoors. A lot of trees here. A lot of trees. A lot of trees in this state. Come down to West Virginia if you want to see some trees. We got lots of 'em.

I can see the, like, "I'm young and I like the camp—like, the whole camp atmosphere doing fun stuff together, and I don't really buy into this whole—your whole thing, but camp is fun."

Like, I understand. Like, I think that's a normal kid reaction. Like, "I don't really like all this stuff, but... " we never went to church camp, but I went with friends who were going to their church's church camp once. It was like a church retreat, so it was like a camp weekend kind of thing. And I went with them. It was weird on many levels 'cause I, you know, growing up Catholic we didn't do a lot of that stuff.

But I know that, like, they weren't there for the religious stuff for the most part. Like, they were there because it was fun to go stay at a camp and hang out with their friends and, like, see if they could kiss somebody while they were—you know what I mean? Like, it was very... it was not about the overarching theme for most of the kids there.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Um... Camp Lincoln does still exist, by the way.

Taylor: Oh, wow.

Raleigh: Um, we missed it this year, guys.

Sydnee: Oh...

Raleigh: It was June 25th through June 30th, so.

Sydnee: Where is it?

Raleigh: Just missed it.

Sydnee: What county is it in?

Raleigh: Um... that's a great question. Their website does not give you much. But if you want to know the official description, "Camp Lincoln is designed to educate young West Virginians in the workings of our two party system and build leadership skills for the future."

Sydnee: That's all it says?

Raleigh: That's all it says.

Sydnee: That's like a trick.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I remember in, like, some class we would have to take, where they—the teacher drew, like, a—maybe it was a bell curve on the board. And he was talking about, like, the two American political parties, and where we fell, and you had to go and stand on, like, where about on the board you felt you were. And everybody got up and of course stood on the right. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: My god.

Taylor: And I was the only person on—I was, like, all the way on the left, on the other side of the board. I was like, "I don't agree with any of this. I

don't think this is accurate. [laughs] Like, I'm way over here. Oh, look, I'm by the door. Oh no! I'm out the door! Oh! I'm never coming back! I'm running! I'm running, actually!" [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: I remember one time—this was—this is a very long time—I was in kindergarten, I think. That would've been the... um, Bush Dukakis I think election? That's a long time ago. And if you're young you have no idea what I'm talking about. I'm not talking about Dubya. I'm talking about the first Bush. And they asked us in kindergarten who I wanted to vote for, and obviously I didn't know anything about either candidate, but I liked the color red better than the color blue. And I remember coming home and telling Mom and Dad that I voted for the red person, because I like red. And Mom being like, "Well, me and your Papa voted for the blue person."

And then just being, like, devastated. Like, "[tearfully] I got it wrong! I voted for the wrong person! I just liked red!"

Rileigh: We did that same thing, except it was in 2008, and it was Obama and, uh... McCain? Was that 2008? Yeah. Yeah, Romney was 2012. Yeah, and I, like—but I liked blue better, so I picked the blue guy. And I went home, and I remember telling Mom and Dad like, "Everyone picked the red guy and I picked the blue guy, and I don't really know what that means, but... "

Taylor: The sad thing is is that there are a lot of people that are allowed to cast a vote and they probably vote that same way.

[all laugh]

Rileigh: I was seven. [laughs]

Taylor: Yep!

Sydnee: A huge part of—I mean, having run for office and failed, I will tell you that a lot of the advice I was given in the campaign arena is like, if they just recognize your name from having seen it on a sign, their chances of voting for you go up dramatically. If they just look and go, "I think I saw that name on a sign," they might vote for you for that reason.

Taylor: Wow.

Raleigh: I got to admit, I have done that. In some of, like, the smaller, you know, like, elections, like local ones that, like, you don't really ever hear anything about?

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: And you don't know who anyone is, and you can't even, like, look up information about them because it doesn't even exist online? You're just like, "Well. Park board. I saw that person's name on a sign, I guess, so okay."

Sydnee: I guess they tried harder than the other one. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah. I don't know. Name recognize, it means something, I guess.

Sydnee: No. Well, I was asking 'cause I spoke at the National Youth Science Camp.

Taylor: Oh, that's cool.

Sydnee: The other night.

Taylor: Man, I wi—

Sydnee: It was a very cool camp.

Taylor: I would've liked to have done that instead of what I did. That sounds better.

Raleigh: Yeah, the only ones I ever had the option of doing were the Catholic ones. I didn't do those, so science would've been better.

Sydnee: I didn't know—I mean, this was around when we were kids. I just don't think we ever knew about it. But they pick, like—you can have up to three delegates from every state in the country, and then they have I think nine other countries are represented by delegates as well, and they all come to this place in the—I mean, we are talking some of the most rural part of an already very rural state in West Virginia. It's in Pocahontas County, which is a gorgeous part of the state, but there's not—I mean, it... if you are used to a more urban landscape, it will look very unfamiliar to you. There's lots and lots of trees.

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: And plants.

Raleigh: Sydnee and those trees.

Taylor: Are you describing, like... you're just describing, like, forest right now, Syd? I think people know what that is.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Well, it's just—I mean, you will drive for miles and see nothing.

Taylor: "There are many trees, and lots of plants. Very... "

Raleigh: "There are no roads."

Taylor: "No b—b—big buildings. None. None of those."

Sydnee: It's near the, um... the radio telescope observatory, Green Bank. Which, like, is a—that's, like, an electronic quiet zone, so that they can pick up the radio signals from outer space. So, like, when you get into that part

of the county, like, you can't have cell phones, and they drive diesel cars, and... it's a really cool—anyway, there's a camp out there.

Rileigh: Wait. Why diesel? What is that—what—

Sydnee: It has to do with, like, the way that regular engines, non-diesel cars, like, they can have—there can be interference with the data that is picked up, or something? I don't know.

Rileigh: My non-diesel car is interfering with the—the space telescopes?

Sydnee: Yeah, somehow. I don't know. I—listen.

Rileigh: I don't not—I don't not believe you. I just—

Sydnee: I liked the gushy sciences, the ones that have to do with, like, gushy things, like people.

Rileigh: Why do you have to describe it like that?

Sydnee: And animals, and...

Taylor: [quietly] Gushy.

Rileigh: Why does it have to be gushy?

Sydnee: ... germs. I like the gushy sciences. The stuff—the physics sciences, I was never—those were always the ones that I'm like, I will work my butt off to get through this class and then never think about this stuff again.

Taylor: I bet—

Sydnee: Anyway.

Taylor: I bet that place you were is a good place to encounter an alien. I bet they have a lot of those. Do they have a lot of those encounters up there?

Sydnee: I—yeah. Aliens, cryptids.

Taylor: Oh, nice, nice.

Sydnee: You know. Um, and I mean, it was a gorgeous—like, the camp is a gorgeous little clearing across a one-lane bridge, and... I mean, it's very picturesque. It's what you would imagine. The camp's been around since, like, the 60's. It's been around a long time. And I have to imagine, like—or maybe the 70's. I have to imagine it was built in the wake of, like, Homer Hickam rocket boys, like, West Virginia sort of staking our claim as we can be science too. Like, there's more to us—

Taylor: [through laughter] We can be science too.

Raleigh: We can be science.

Sydnee: We have people here who do things other than coal mining and, like, we can be part of other things, and... anyway. There's a National Youth Science Camp there. It was very cool. The, uh... I want to say kids, but they're all, like, high school seniors, so some of them are technically adults, probably. But... either way. The young people who attend the camp are all what you would think. Brilliant, and ask great questions, and thoughtful, and will go on to do amazing things.

Taylor: That sounds awesome.

Sydnee: And I got to spend an evening talking with them. One of them asked me why America has such an anti-science problem.

Taylor: [laughs] That's a big question.

Raleigh: That's a good question.

Sydnee: I said—I know. I said, "I—you know what? I don't think I—I think the answer to that is so huge... I don't think I can—" you know? "I think it's bigger than I alone—I have thoughts. I have some reasons that I could give you that are concrete for some people, for some groups, but not as a

whole." So, I don't know. Maybe these kids'll fix it, though. So anyway, that's all I wanted to say about camp.

Taylor: Well. If only I'd gone to science camp instead of [laughs quietly] Republican Youth Camp.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, maybe it radicalized you, Tey.

Taylor: Yeah, I would say that's probably true. I would say—I didn't really have firm political beliefs at that age, and that definitely solidified them as like, "Oh, I want nothing to do with this." [laughs]

Sydnee: Please remind me, though, to ask Mom and Dad the question, why did you never even suggest it for me?

Taylor: Well, I think—I mean, I remember at least... part of the reason was that I really wanted to go to camp. I liked the idea of camp, and so they were like, "Well, here's this. Our family used to do this. You could do this."

Like, I think that was kind of it.

Sydnee: Maybe they thought you would—I mean, you were always very hardworking. [pause] [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Does that... what's that supposed to mean?

Sydnee: That's something that Republicans value. Like, work hard.

Taylor: No. No.

Sydnee: And so maybe they though, like... this'll be a good fit for Taylor. These are other people who value hard work.

Taylor: Yeah... I don't know about that.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: I don't know about all that. [wheeze-laughs]

Sydnee: I was trying to think why they would think you would ever be into that, and that's the only thing I could think of! Is like, "Well, I mean, Teylor was always very hardworking."

Taylor: I just like the idea of, like, being out in the woods and, like, you know, telling ghost stories around a campfire. And I didn't know I was gonna get that with a side of... [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Indoctrination.

Taylor: Indoctrination and... and food deprivation, and sleep deprivation. [laughs quietly] It really wasn't that bad. I don't know.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Didn't stick.

Sydnee: If that's the way we're raising the West Virginia GOP, a lot of things are starting to make sense.

Taylor: Well... I'm sure it was different when Grandma Jodie was involved.

Sydnee: Uh, so that... Teylor, let's just talk about what we're gonna talk about. I have no lead-in. I have no...

Taylor: Um... no, I don't either. Uh... uh, Harley Quinn. I guess non-specific Harley Quinn was my choice for this week. 'Cause—

Sydnee: Just Harley Quinn, the character.

Taylor: Yeah. Well, there's so much media with her. And it's—I mean, I feel like when you look at the character and how she's progressed, it's really cool. Like, um, of course Harley Quinn, a character from the Batman universe—or DC as a whole, DC Comics—but she didn't start out in the comics. She actually started out in *Batman: The Animated Series*, which I

think is one of the first interesting things. Like, she just was sort of a side character for one episode, and, uh, people responded really well to her, so she made a few more appearances, and then eventually transitioned into the comics.

Sydnee: Um, I will tell you that when you chose this topic, I just—I was sitting there with the girls the next day, and I was like, "Girls, I need to watch something with Harley Quinn in it. Do you all want to watch something with me?"

And they were both like, "Yeah, yeah, of course!"

They were excited. And the first thing that came up—'cause I just sort of, like, put in "Harley Quinn..." [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Sure.

Sydnee: ... and looked around. And what came up is from—I guess is that what that current animated series is called, Harley Quinn?

Taylor: Yes, it's just Harley Quinn.

Sydnee: Is that the title of the series?

Taylor: Yep.

Sydnee: Okay. That's why that came up. And it was... I know I had watched some of those episodes, or I had attempted to with the girls before, and like, the violence kind of freaked 'em out.

Taylor: Yeah, the... the—

Sydnee: They—

Taylor: That is not for kids, the new Harley Quinn. [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, so I didn't know that. But I remembered, like, some—I was looking at it. I was like, uh, we watched a little bit of this before, and like,

pretty quickly someone got shot, and there was blood, and the girls were like "Ahh!" Like, you know? I don't know. We don't watch a lot of stuff like that.

So they were kind of freaked out and I was like, "Uh, we can't watch that."

But then there was a Valentine's Special.

Taylor: No, no.

Sydnee: And I was like, "Oh, and it'll be about Harley Quinn and Poison Ivy, and that's nice." And, like, this—it's a Valentine's Special! So I watched that... with Charlie and Cooper in the room. And then very quickly realized that I was gonna have to, like, get them out of the room, or fast-forward, or watch more later. I did not know what I was in for.

Now, I enjoyed it immensely. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Yeah, that's a pretty—

Sydnee: But I had to stop and continue later, when the children were not in the room.

Taylor: That's for the best. There's a lot of thing you don't want to try to explain in that episode.

Sydnee: No. No. I don't—I mean, I don't want to spoil it if anybody hasn't seen it but, um...

Raleigh: Is there, like, kissing?

Sydnee: Is there kissing? [laughs]

Taylor: Yes. There is kissing. That is...

Raleigh: Well, I—that's, like—kissing, like wink-wink? Like...

Taylor: A lot of—

Raleigh: Mooching?

Taylor: A lot of the plot revolves specifically around... kissing. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Okay. Okay.

Sydnee: And, like... an actu—

Raleigh: That's what I assumed.

Sydnee: Like—[sighs] every... through a series of other things, everyone accidentally—everybody in the town gets exposed to pheromones from Poison Ivy. And so everybody is immediately aroused.

[pause]

Raleigh: [quietly] Oh...

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: I did not watch this one. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Well...

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: That sounds like that was fun for you to watch with your children.

Taylor: Yeah, I would—I would—if I were—if you'd asked, I would've said maybe some of the—some of the Batman: Animated Series episodes are okay. That's some... digestible Harley Quinn. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: We've seen that before. Yeah. They just get really—especially Cooper gets really excited. She does her makeup like Harley Quinn a lot.

And it's weird, 'cause she hasn't seen a ton of stuff with Harley Quinn in it. But she already very strongly identifies with that character.

Taylor: Well, she's in—what is that? I've actually never watched, but the kids—what's the...

Raleigh: DC Superhero Girls.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: She's one of those.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: That's true. There's, um—there's DC Superhero Girls, and then there's the... what's the high school one called? Um... I for—

Raleigh: I didn't know there was a high school one.

Sydnee: They're all named something like—all these shows are named some iteration of, like, Superhero Kids, or DC Superhero something. You know what I mean? Like, they all have similar names, so they run together. There's one, though—'cause there's one where these little kids, and she's still friends with them. I like it because in both series, they have, like, Batgirl and Wonder Woman and, like, all of the ones that you expect are the superheroes who hang out together. And then there are ones who will later, you assume, become super villains, who also hang out with them, and they're still friends. But they're kind of like the... like the mischievous ones is how they're painted. Like, they're kind of chaotic. They get in trouble at school sometimes. They'll, like, break curfew. You know? I mean, like...
[laughs quietly]

But they're not bad. They're not trying to harm anyone. They're not, obviously, trying to do super villain stuff. They're just, like—they don't follow rules already. And the superhero girls follow all the rules. And it's the same in the high school one. And in the high school one, they start to engage in a little bit of, like, trouble making that is beyond normal rule break—it's really

interesting how they do it. 'Cause it's like, they're still not the bad guys, but they're starting to do stuff where you're like, "Hmm. Uh-oh." [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Well, but that's—I mean, I don't know what other villains are in there, but like, Harley Quinn is not—especially in current, most recent canon, and a lot of recent portrayals, is not really a super villain. Like, she's an antihero now.

Sydnee: Well, I guess she just—she just hang—she was always hanging with one, I guess is—you know.

Taylor: Yeah. Well, she started out as a villain's sidekick, and then found her independence. I mean, that's what I like. When you pull back and look at the whole canon, it's like, you know, the growth that the characters had through multiple forms of media is really fascinating. 'Cause... just, you know. Started out as, like, the Joker—like, Joker's love interest/sidekick. And then I guess... 'cause that relationship was always portrayed is sort of abusive. And then it became so popular to write, you know, her finding some sort of, like, freedom from the Joker, and then sort of rehabbing her relationship with, you know, herself and, like, not pursuing a life of crime anymore. And now she's I guess more commonly canonically romantically involved with Poison Ivy. So it's a big—you rarely—I don't think you see that that often in media.

Usually, you know, like, Batman is—there are lots of different iterations of Batman. But Batman has basically always been the same thing. The Joker's basically always been the same thing. You know, he's a bad guy. Batman's a good guy. You know. Catwoman has always been kind of an antihero. Harley Quinn has gone through a whole change throughout, you know, written lore, which is cool.

Sydnee: Well, it's interesting, 'cause I guess if you were going to, like, liberate her from the Joker, you could've gone two ways with that, right? Like, on one hand, does liberation from her look like she is the super villain? You know? Like, she's the big bad that can take down Batman finally. Is that how we empower her? Or do we empower her by detaching her from the Joker's whole goal? 'Cause she didn't share that goal, you know?

Taylor: Yeah. Well, and—

Raleigh: It's also—

Sydnee: I think that's the more interesting path to go, you know?

Raleigh: I was just gonna say, it's interesting that—to me, she's one of the only characters I can think of that, like, has become so independently popular. Like, has her own, like, every—like, personality. Like, you say Harley Quinn, everyone knows—like, has an idea in idea in their head and know what you're thinking about. But started as an extension of, like, another character, if that makes sense. Like, I like that progression. It feels very, like, liberating in sense for a female character to start as an extension of a male character in a way. I know that's kind of, like, minimizing how she started. But in the sense that, like, you know, she was connected to the Joker. But she's become such her own thing in culture.

Sydnee: Is that backstory that she was the therapist who provided therapy for the Joker in Arkham, and then obviously was sort of, like, taken in by him and fell in love with him, and then... does she fall in a vat of something too, or is... [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Uh, I mean, in some canons, yes. Uh, like in the live action, she—and I guess actually in the Harley Quinn, the new series, they include that too, that she jumps in a vat of chemicals to prove her commitment to the Joker. Uh, that's not always true. Sometimes.

Sydnee: Didn't that happen too in the one, um, the Suicide Squad one?

Taylor: Yeah. Well, yeah. Like, all the live action ones have the same rough canon.

Sydnee: Okay.

Taylor: Um, yeah.

Sydnee: What does the vat of goo do to her?

Taylor: Uh, I mean...

Sydnee: 'Cause she's already, like...

Taylor: Her sup—like, her quote-unquote "superpowers" are sort of question mark, because she's a gymnast. Like, that's—she was always, like, very athletic.

Sydnee: Oh, she's a gymnast. I didn't know she was—see? I knew she was a psychiatrist. I didn't know she was a gymnast.

Taylor: No, she was always a gymnast, so she was very athletic. Uh, and I mean, at some point she gets, like, poison tolerance, but that's from Poison Ivy. Poison Ivy gives that to her. But, like, she's not...

Sydnee: Is she super strong, 'cause she carries the big mallet?

Taylor: That's—it's like... she doesn't really have, like... superpowers. Like, she's really, really smart, which is something that—that's something that kind of changed. Like, some of her, like, original backstory, as far as her being, like, a... 'cause what is it? Which one goes to medical school? Psychiatrist?

Sydnee: Psychiatrist goes to medical school.

Taylor: Okay. So her going to med school, like, it was—the reasoning how she got through it was that she, like, slept with her professors, which sucks.

Sydnee: Oh...

Taylor: And they at some point kind of retconned that. It's like, no, no, no. Harley's really smart. She's just insane. So she's really, really smart. She's really, really strong. But not superhuman—like, she's not a metahuman. She's not a superhuman. She's just strong because she's been a dedicated gymnast her whole life.

Sydnee: So it's weird, then, to—I don't know. I always wondered what the goo supposedly did to her.

Taylor: I... I mean, I...

Sydnee: I mean, it... what did it do to the Joker? Did it just make him look like that?

Taylor: Yeah, yeah. The—that's the description, as far it just bleached his skin and turned his lips bright red and turned—

Sydnee: [simultaneously] Turned his hair green.

Taylor: Yeah. So I don't know. Like, in the Suicide Squad one I guess it... does, like, the swirls, like the pink and blue swirls where her hair ends up pink and blue. Which, like, is that what it did? I don't know.

Rileigh: [laughs] It dyed her hair?

Taylor: I don't think they—

Sydnee: It dyed her hair?

Taylor: Yeah, like, two different colors.

Sydnee: [laughs] So it was just hair dye! All along the big vats of goo that people fall in in comic books, they're just hair dye.

Taylor: I don't know. I mean, I guess it—the idea with the Joker and Harley is that maybe it makes them a little crazy? Maybe that's part of it too. But it's not—neither of them have superpowers, so to speak, from the goo.

Sydnee: That's interesting. Well, I mean, it's a—the whole—I always thought it was a cool story, the idea that she, as a psychiatrist—obviously, like, for her to be taken in by the Joker, you could interpret that two ways. Either the Joker's just that good, you know, he's just that, like, persuasive that someone who had no inclination to do anything harmful or bad or whatever could be completely swept up in him and change her entire personality because of him. Or you interpret it as that was sort of always in her.

Taylor: Hmm.

Sydnee: And her falling in love with him allowed her to let go of some of her other self to embrace this new self, and then she completely becomes something that serves him, and then finally breaks free from him and finds what the middle path is. Like, who her true self is, which was maybe not the buttoned-up psychiatrist, but also isn't as the sidekick to a super villain, but is something in between that isn't necessarily good or bad.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: But is... you know. Is human, is both, is all.

Taylor: Well, and I think that's really what I always liked about Harley Quinn. Is that there's this sort of—you know, it's something that you hear a lot in relationship to superhero comics, especially in a universe like I think a lot of Batman's rogue's gallery. Bad things happen to them. They don't just wake up one day like "I'm gonna be a super villain."

Like, something happens to them and they become a bad guy. And something happened to Batman and he became a good guy. So that's it. It's like, trauma happens. How you respond to it defines whether you're a hero or a villain. Which I kind of hate that thought. 'Cause people apply that to real life then, and it's like, no. That's not how trauma works at all.

Harley is a little bit closer in as far as, like, yeah, she loses herself, you know, completely, to this... you know, to the Joker. And then kind of finds her way back to herself. And she still messes up sometimes. She's still, you know, got hang-ups and issues, but she's still trying to do good. I feel like that's a little bit more relatable. [laughs] You know?

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And it is funny, 'cause that—if you look at, like, the shows that Charlie and Cooper watch that portray them as little kids and then as

teenagers, that really is the way—I mean, she's portrayed that way from the beginning. Where it's kind of like... "Oh, I know I shouldn't do this, but it seems like so much fun, and I can't help myself. I'm just gonna go do this thing."

And, like, nobody gets hurt, but she causes messes or, you know, breaks something. And everybody's like, "Harley!"

And she's like, "I'm sorry! I just couldn't help myself!" [laughs quietly]

And, like, that's her. That's how she is. You know, she's like their chaotic friend who's always getting into trouble, but is so much fun to hang out with and everybody loves.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Well, it's a lot more realistic and enjoyable to watch when you don't have, like, quote-unquote "bad guy, good guy." Like, most people are both. And I think Harley Quinn is one of the only... I shouldn't say only. Is one of the best examples of, like, a superhero universe character that is not one or the other. Like, I feel like in the superhero world, you are not both, you know? You're either the good guy or the bad guy. And she is definitely not either, really.

Sydney: They have her hanging out with—and they give them all the similar vibe. Like, she hangs out with Poison Ivy and Cheetah, and somebody who can freeze stuff. She's, like, blue. I don't know who she is. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Somebody who can freeze stuff.

Taylor: Mrs. Freeze.

Sydney: Well, I don't know what her—is that... her? I don't know. There's somebody blue who can freeze stuff.

Raleigh: Elsa. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: [laughs] Yeah, she hangs out with Elsa. I forget. I don't know.

Raleigh: Elsa's kind of like Harley Quinn, in a way. You know?

Sydnee: There's more—there's—yeah.

Raleigh: Got the—got the—the—the complexity of—of—of bad and good, and—and female chara—I don't know.

Sydnee: She is—she is—I mean, that—I mean, we shouldn't talk about Frozen. But, I mean, I will say that, like, she is the villain and the hero.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I mean, and then Anna is too. But, like, she is the one causing the problem in the beginning of Frozen.

Raleigh: The antihero, if you will.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: It's her. She's the problem. It's her.

Sydnee: Which is unique, you know.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah. But I mean, I don't know. I always like that about—because I thought that was so weird when—especially when they brought it into DC Superhero Girls, the little ones. 'Cause you've got, like, this little girl gang of Batgirl, Wonder Woman, Supergirl. And, like, they give them all pretty cool personalities too. Like, they're not all... I don't know. They're not exactly what you would think. They're not all fighting for truth, justice, and the American way from the beginning. You know what I mean? Like, they're more human... or not. Some of 'em aren't human. The Green Lantern hangs out with them. The one who's a girl.

Taylor: Well...

Sydnee: And then they just start having, like... I forget. Batgirl I think becomes best friends with Harley Quinn, and the two of them just are, like, inseparable, and they're best friends. And the other Superhero Girls are like, "Just be careful. Harley can be kind of a bad influence."

And she's like, "Oh, I know. But she's my best friend."

You know? It's like a cute little... like, "Uh-oh, hanging out with the bad girls." But not really bad. Just like bad in a kid way.

Taylor: Well, and Harley—I mean, in the comics and in a lot of the animated properties, interacts with the Bat family in this way where, like, she—like, some of my favorite comics and episodes of, like, the cartoons are when Harley is teamed up with Batman. Like—[laughs] like, it's a good dynamic.

And she does, she helps them out a lot. Like, there's a... there's a whole canon where she gets, like, her own little, like—it's in her colors but she has, like, a bat jacket. [laughs] Like...

Sydnee: You know what's interesting? Do you—I was trying to think of an example of, like, male superhero characters or super villains who are portrayed like this.

Taylor: Well, she's—

Sydnee: With that sort of flexibility.

Taylor: She's most often—I think that the most common comparison is probably Deadpool, as far as... he's supposed to be sort of quote-unquote "insane," and he's a mercenary, so he can be on the bad side, but usually he's good.

Sydnee: That's interesting.

Raleigh: I can see that.

Sydnee: Yeah. I was just thinking, like, it is a u—I think that you could see it as somebody saying "Well, you know, a woman would be more fickle, or not entrenched in her values," or whatever. But on the flip side, maybe it's just like... she has the complexity to be more than one thing, whereas, like, it's true, the Joker and Batman are single minded exactly what they are, all the time. And that's that. I don't know. It's an interesting take on, like, good and evil.

Taylor: Well, I think it's—I mean... [laughs quietly] I've said before, like, I feel like, you know, in the Batman universe specifically, all of the villains sort of represent, like, societal problems. And that's also related to, like, whatever trauma happened to them to make them the way they are. You know, you've got—you've got exposure to deadly chemicals in environmental, you know, trauma. You've got mental illness unchecked. You've got poverty unchecked.

All of these things, which as an aside is, you know, Bruce Wayne as, like, a billionaire could fix all of these with money. He does not need to put on the Batsuit and beat people up. He could just fix these things with money and not have a rogue's gallery anymore.

But, um, all of the victims are usually people that are trying to do the right thing, normal humans just trying to be on the up-and-up. And Harley Quinn is sort of the answer in the sort of insanity of Gotham, Harley Quinn is kind of what you have to be as a person to, you know, have power and have sway... after whatever Gotham has done to you has been done to you. Like, you know. You can't just be a law-abiding citizen and expect to have a good life. You kind of have to have some... some roughness to you. Some, I don't know, some crazy. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Well, and you know what's interesting, too? I wonder if what—and you know way more about all the Batman villains than I do. Like, Harley Quinn also—yes she—I mean, she entered into this relationship with the Joker that was definitely abusive, and so there's, like, a source of trauma. And then I guess fell into a bucket of goo that did something.

Raleigh: Dyed her hair.

Sydnee: But prior to that she at least had enough privilege and power to go to medical school, and succeed, and get a career. You know? I mean, like, I wonder if that sets her apart from some of the other villains who, like, I don't think the Joker is portrayed as having had any privilege prior to him becoming the Joker.

Taylor: Well, I mean...

Sydnee: Wasn't he a criminal? Wasn't he, like...

Taylor: Well—

Sydnee: He was poor and so he was trying to help a gang of criminals, and...

Taylor: I mean, the whole thing with the Joker is he has no set backstory.

Sydnee: Oh, okay.

Taylor: The comic that gives that canon, the one that I had you all read a while ago, *The Killing Joke*, the whole framing on it is, you know, sometimes he tells the story one way, sometimes he tells it another way. It's like, they mimic that in *The Dark Knight* where he, you know, says "Oh, how did I get these scars?"

And he tells a different story every time. So it's hard to say exactly how his story came about. But... I mean, like, all of—not all of them, but most of the rogue's gallery has some sort of, like, trauma, bad thing that happens to them that justifies them being a bad guy.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Hmm.

Sydnee: I don't know. I just wonder if her background in psychiatry has given her some tools to work through some of her issues.

Taylor: Well, that's one of my favorite elements, and different people write the character different ways. She's been portrayed so many different ways. And sometimes, you know, they do lean into that. Like, "Oh, she's just a dumb blonde who... slept her way through medical school?" Which is an odd... I think that would be really hard to do. [wheezes] But... [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. I mean... I don't know, like, what decade we're talking about. I certainly think... bad things used to happen more regularly, you know. And nowadays it's harder to get away with terrible stuff like that, like with victimizing medical students and stuff. Certainly I hope so. But, um, nah, it would be very hard to do that. By modern standards, I don't know how that's possible.

Taylor: Yeah. See, I prefer when she's written as like, no, she's really, really smart. She's just... she's just a little bit of a nut. But, like, they'll have moments in both the comics and in—they do it in the movies too, actually. Where she kind of... she's using her—her psychiatry background to be useful in the moment, to sort of quickly psychoanalyze a situation or a person and, you know, make a decision. And I always love that, when they click into that. Like, "By the way, she's a doctor." Like, yeah, yeah, yeah, she's running around in, like, a corset and, you know, hot pants and roller skates, but she's a doctor. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: What do you think—I think that's something that—before we run out of time, that is worth talking about. Because Harley Quinn—like, Batman always looks like Batman, more or less. I mean, I know, like—I don't know. His outfit gets shinier or duller or—

Taylor: Sometimes it gets nipples.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: [muffled laughter]

Sydnee: There are iterations where it's more blue, and then nowadays it tends to be more black. But, like, overall, Batman kind of looks like Batman. The Joker generally looks kind of like the Joker, you know. Harley Quinn, her

color scheme is fairly similar, but obviously she has been portrayed as everything from, like, an actual harlequin doll-looking thing to something that is very sexualized, hyper sexualized, like roller derby girl of her dreams.

Taylor: Well, I mean, her look—yeah, it's changed a lot. And for a long time I was a stickler to the original costume. I thought, no, like, everything after that was just trying to make her sexier. Um, but I do like—I mean, god, especially the New 52 that gave her the... it was a corset with knives along her rib cage, which just functionally seemed like a problem. Especially 'cause she's an acrobat. So, like, the harlequin jumper made sense. She, you know, stretchy, flat foot, like, that—you could flip around in that. A corset doesn't make sense.

Kind of whipping it around to the whole roller derby aesthetic I think is, you know, I get it. I mean, she was also—she was designed for the animated series, which functionally means you have to have a pretty simplified design. Like, you know, that's where it came from. So I think once she made the move into comics, a lot of people were like, "Eh, it doesn't really hold up in, like, a realistic portrayal. It doesn't have as much design elements as you can have in a comic."

So I get the departure. But I don't know. The original design is still golden.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I don't know. I think it's interesting, 'cause I don't—does she at least—I mean, I didn't see this in the stuff that I watched. And of course I've watched a lot of the little kid stuff, so of course I wouldn't. But, like, designing her that way makes you question, is that part of her—is that one of the tools in her toolbox, her sexuality? Does she use that as part of—and I have not seen that a lot, but I have not watched nearly as much Harley Quinn material as you have.

Taylor: I think, like—like her first introduction is a little bit more one-note. She's the sexy sidekick of the Joker. But that's one of the things that I really like about her character, especially in more modern interpretations. It's like,

you know, Catwoman is sexy, and Poison Ivy is sexy. They use sexuality very much in their whole shtick.

Harley does not. Like, she might be drawn in a quote-unquote "sexy" way, but that's... it's kind of like the same—almost like—like I feel like Tank Girl has a similar appeal. Where she's sort of punk rock. Aesthetically she might look attractive, but that's—she's not about it.

Sydnee: Well, that—I mean, that—I—that was always the sense I got, which is why I think it is unfortunate, the portrayals that have been very sexualized. Because, I mean, Catwoman uses a whip. Poison Ivy has all of these vines and tendrils and things. She carries a giant hammer in a lot of depictions. There is nothing... [laughs quietly] inherently sexy about walking around with a giant mallet that can smash you. Like, you know what I mean? It's very much just—it's a different kind of energy and power. And just because she's pretty doesn't mean she has to be sexy. You know what I mean?

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And I appreciate that, I guess.

Taylor: I think me—I mean, like, her fashion in the Birds of Prey movie—which did either of you see that?

Sydnee: Mm-mm.

Raleigh: Mm-mm.

Taylor: Oh, you should've. Um... 'cause that's the difference. I feel like the conversation with Harley Quinn is really best encapsulated with her portrayal in the original Suicide Squad movie to her portrayal in Birds of Prey. Because Suicide Squad, as many people have noted, is very much Harley Quinn from a male perspective. There's, like, whole scenes of her just, like, getting dressed to, like, a sexy—or, like, you know. It's supposed to be like, "Oh, look! She's changing her clothes! Everybody stops and stares at her."

It's like, that's in a movie? That was needed?

Very much. And like, there's cut scenes where she's using her whole psychiatry thing to sort of diagnose people. They cut that out. Like, "No, we don't need to show her being smart. It's just her being sexy."

You know, her outfit is completely impractical. And then you cut to Birds of Prey where her outfits are so fun, but they're, like, fun for the girls. Like, it's bright colors, it's, you know, fashion. It's—like, it's what you would actually—I think if you actually love the character, it's like, that's what Harley Quinn would pick out for herself. It's kind of hideous, but in a magical way. [laughs] Like, her costuming in that movie you could believe that the character Harley Quinn picked out those clothes and put them on herself. And it's so much more of, like, a character free from the... I guess the male gaze? Which is why I love that movie so much. And why a lot of, like, bro-dudes hated it. It's like, "Oh no, this is Harley Quinn not for us. It's Harley Quinn for herself."

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. We didn't—I st—I mean, I can still watch that, even though I'm not assigned it. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: You should. Birds of Prey is—I don't care what anyone says. It's definitive Harley Quinn for me.

Raleigh: It came out a couple years ago, right?

Taylor: Yeah, yeah.

Raleigh: I saw it when it came out, but it's been a while.

Taylor: And the newer Suicide Squad is also really good, too. Like, the—her portrayal in that. It's all Margot Robbie. I hope they bring her back for more projects. I don't know what's going on with the live action DC universe right now, but... [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: I have no idea. No, I—yeah, I like the new—I liked her in the new Suicide Squad. I saw that. And I used to—I've told you, I used to read Birds of Prey comics.

Taylor: Oh yeah.

Sydnee: Constantly. Like, I had a—yeah. I kept up with every issue, like, as they came out. I was rea—I mean, that's been years. That was before, I don't know, residency and kids and... all my other things. But, um—but I always enjoyed those characters and those stories, and I like that... whatever. That part of the DC universe.

Taylor: Yeah. Well, and she was never—like, the—you know, the original Birds of Prey didn't include Harley Quinn, of course. It's the Birds of Prey movie with Harley Quinn, but it's a Harley Quinn movie. Um, but I do—and even in the new cartoon, which I do really enjoy, they have her have a friendship with Batgirl in the most recent season, which is really cute.

I don't know. It's wild to see the zeitgeist of a character, like, drive it in a direction. 'Cause it's not like one person was writing Harley Quinn for the last 20 years—she was, you know, created in the 90's—and decided to develop the character in this way. It's just, like, through different hands. People saw different things in her and, like, changed her from this kind of one-note sexy sidekick to the Joker to this completely different character, which is just so cool and liberating, I think, ultimately.

Sydnee: You should sometime watch some of those, the DC Superhero Girls and I think it's called DC Superhero High is what the other one is called. But, like, you would appreciate that, I think.

Raleigh: They're cute.

Sydnee: They are. They're funny, and... I don't know.

Taylor: Well, that's cool.

Sydnee: Wonder Woman never understands anything about, like... human, Earth culture. And so they're always trying to explain things like ice cream to Wonder Woman and stuff. I don't know. It's all very cute.

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: But anyway, I'm glad you had us talk about Harley Quinn, 'cause I know that she means a lot to you personally, Tey. Which I don't know—I mean, I guess we didn't really ask you. Usually we ask that question directly.

Taylor: Oh, why I like Harley Quinn so much?

Sydnee: Why is this—yeah. Why is she important to you, you know?

Taylor: I mean, it's funny how, like—'cause, I mean, my first tattoo was Harley Quinn diamonds when I was, like, 18, 19 years old. And that was back when she had just made her appearance in the comics, so there was still a lot of development that happened to her. And I don't know. Now it's like... everybody loves Harley Quinn. And back then it was almost like—god, especially being in comic book school with a Harley Quinn tattoo. It's like, "Ugh, she's not even a real comic book character. She started in the animated series. She doesn't count. Like, you just like her 'cause she's a girl." [laughs quietly]

It's like, no, because I always thought that she was... I don't know. She was somehow outside of the dichotomy. Kind of going back to the Republican camp thing. She was outside of the dichotomy of good and bad.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: She was figuring herself out and doing her own thing. And she had damage, but she didn't define herself by her damage. She wanted to be good, but she didn't, like, define herself as a good guy. She was just, you know, figuring it out along the way. And I relate to that.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Sure, she may have gone to Republican camp at one point, but...

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Republican camp, serving the Joker. I don't know, man.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: That's not fair to the Joker. He's—

Raleigh: One and the same.

Taylor: I guess canonically now he's, like, a Bernie Bro, so.

Sydnee: I was gonna—well, I don't know. Maybe now the new incel version. I don't know.

Taylor: Yeah, I mean, that's—I don't know if that's fair. That's like the people that have made that interpretation of the Joker are the same people that, you know, like Fight Club for the wrong reasons. That's a whole other conversation. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, we should do Fight Club sometime.

Taylor: I love Fight Club.

Raleigh: We should do Fight Club?

Taylor: Well, we—

Sydnee: Well—

Taylor: No, we can't.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: You can't say that on air.

Sydnee: Mm-mm. 'Cause that's the first rule.

Taylor: [through laughter] Yeah. First rule of Fight Club is don't talk about it on a podcast.

[all laugh]

Sydnee: Uh, well, thank you Teylor.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Teylor: Thank you.

Sydnee: And I will see the Birds of Prey movie.

Teylor: You should. You'd love it.

Sydnee: Raleigh, what's next?

Raleigh: Oh, I'm so glad you asked, Sydnee. Um—

Sydnee: We already know. [laughs]

Raleigh: Everyone knows what's next.

Teylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Everyone, I'm sure. Speak Now (Taylor's Version) just came out, by Taylor Swift, a couple days ago. So... it's an album that first came out in 2010, but her version just came out this year, so... yeah.

Sydnee: Alright. I believe Charlie has already been playing some of it around me, so.

Raleigh: Good. I'm proud of her. I've taught her well.

Sydnee: Yes. Alright, well, we will check that out for next week. And, um, Teylor, if people are unfamiliar—I don't know how you're unfamiliar with Harley Quinn—what's the first thing they should watch?

Teylor: Oh, gosh. I mean, I guess it depends on what level of violence you can take. You could always just go back and watch the Batman Animated Series episodes with her in it. Her first appearance is The Joker's Favor, if you want to just see the OG OG Harley Quinn.

Sydnee: There you go. Alright. Well, thank you for joining us. You should go to Maximumfun.org and check out all the great podcasts there that you would enjoy. You can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org, and you can tweet at us @stillbuff. And, um, thank you to The Nouvellas for our theme song, Baby You Change Your Mind.

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

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl.

Raleigh: I am still buffering...

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

[theme music plays]

Raleigh: See, it's really the cadence more than [unintelligible].

Taylor: [humming] Just do that. [unintelligible].

Raleigh: Words just—yeah. I don't know. Yeah.

Sydnee: It's like when I talk to the cats. As long as I'm talking nicely it doesn't really matter what I say, right?

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: They just understand, like...

Raleigh: Aww. Aww.

Sydnee: Aww. Aww.

Taylor: Jack understands every word I say.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Amelia's looking at me right now as I did that. "Are you talking to me?"

Taylor: [laughs] "That's for me, right?"

Sydnee: "Oh, that sounds like when you talk to me. Ooh. Ooh." Yep, she's looking at me.

[music plays]

Cameron: Hey, Max Fun listeners. This is Cameron Esposito. I'm a stand-up comic, actor, writer, best-selling author, and podcaster. I've got a great show called Query where I interview LGBTQ+ luminaries across, oh, a bunch of fields. People in entertainment, astronauts, musicians, rock stars. I am bringing the show to Maximum Fun. You can listen right now, and I am so happy to be on this network.

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[music and ad end]

[chord]

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