

Still Buffering 372: "Snow Angel" - Renee Rapp

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[theme music plays]

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

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl.

Sydnee: Uh, we made our first trip to Spirit Halloween yesterday.

Raleigh: Ohh, that's exciting.

Sydnee: I know.

Taylor: I'm jealous.

Sydnee: First trip of the season.

Raleigh: I didn't know it was already open.

Sydnee: Oh yeah. The abandoned Toys R' Us has once again been turned into a Spirit Halloween.

Raleigh: I was gonna ask what abandoned department store it got put into.

Sydnee: It's actually—so technically it was originally a Toys R' Us, and then it was an abandoned Toys R' Us, and then it became a trampoline park briefly?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And it still has the—it looks like a Toys R' Us. Like if you rolled up on the building you'd like, "Hm, that reminds me of Toys R' Us."

But it still has the sign out front for the trampoline park.

Raleigh: I see.

Taylor: What is a trampoline park?

Sydnee: Hm. It's, um...

Raleigh: My nightmare.

Sydnee: [laughs] It's a building full of a bunch of trampolines and sprained ankles.

Taylor: [sighs heavily] Well.

[pause]

Sydnee: But any—

Raleigh: If you asked—if you asked me, "Raleigh, how can we create a space where you only feel anxiety and you feel nothing but fear, but to anyone else walking in they would think it would be an enjoyable, pleasant time?" It would be a trampoline park.

Sydnee: I don't like trampolines. I—

Raleigh: I hate them so much.

Sydnee: Charlie and Cooper—one of them—both—I don't know. They had been there a couple times, 'cause people had had birthday parties there, and I just... it's not my thing. But it's an abandoned trampoline park now.

Taylor: It's, like, every place that a Batman villain could possibly set up shop. That's where the Spirit Halloweens instead. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: It's an abandoned trampoline park... [laughs quietly]

Taylor: It might sound like that's a made up thing that some—Trapolino is the evil guy. He lives there. He's a bad guy that's gonna... take away all the—make Gotham bouncy with his bouncy rays.

Sydnee: Everybody bounces at you.

Taylor: Yeah. They're pretty scary.

Sydnee: Yeah. Uh, and I will say, it is spooky in there. The floors are very wet for some reason. There were lots of signs. [laughs] That said, like, "The floor is wet here. Watch out." [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: I don't like that!

Taylor: Is that spooky? "[spooky voice] The floors, they're weeeet!" [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] Uh, it freaked the kids out, 'cause they did have a lot of—like, the section in the middle with the giant, like, animatronic spooky things was, I felt like, bigger than usual. And it wants you to walk through the middle of it, but they were both like, "Yeah, no way." [laughs quietly] So we kind of skirted the outside.

[cat meowing in background]

Um, but they have a lot of clown-themed horror this year. Like, more than usual. I don't know why. Are clowns back? Specifically, why are Killer Klowns From Outer Space so big all the sudden?

Taylor: I don't know. Is that movie having some sort of revival? I mean... it's a great movie. It's terrifying. But...

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I don't know. But it—I don't remember that being a property that they have a lot of. Like, they always have a lot of, like, Beetlejuice, Trick or Treat, Haunted Mansion, um... Hocus Pocus is big. You know, like you can kind of predict the properties that they have lots of. Both costuming stuff but also, like, uh, house decorative stuff from.

But I had not seen Killer Klowns From Outer Space until this year, and they have tons of merchandise plus, like, giant, like, eight foot stand-up animatronic clowns that once—if you step in front of them there's, like, a sensor, and they'll, like, jump at you.

Raleigh: I hate that. I hate that so much.

Taylor: Apparently they also have, uh... full human-size cotton candy cocoons that you can hang from your ceiling? Just...

Sydnee: See, I would get one of those if they had had—I did not see that at this Spirit Halloween. But they also had several shelves that said, like, "More... spooky coming soon," or something."

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] It was not—

Taylor: "More spooky coming soon!"

Sydnee: [laughs] It wasn't done. Like, it is a partially finished Spirit Halloween. They're still building it out right now. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: It's September 5th. Why did they feel like they had to rush to get that Spirit Halloween open?

Taylor: Uh, excuse me, alright, you know. You know all, like—

Raleigh: Listen. I [crosstalk]

Taylor: Some people, they wanna—"Oh, it's—it's Christmas, basically, in November." Okay, some of us, it's spooky all—all—all year, really, but definitely—once August is done, it's spooky time.

Raleigh: I'm having a hard time getting into the fall spirit with the intense, intense heat happening right now in DC. It is, like, 100 degrees every day this week, and it's just making me unreasonably angry. [laughs]

Taylor: That's pretty spooky.

Sydnee: [simultaneously] That's unusual for you. That's—see—

Raleigh: I know. I know. Usually I'm, like, one of the first ones. But I just—it's something about the fact that every time I leave my house there's no moment of, like, a pleasant chill, even early in the morning. It's just like I'm walking into a sauna.

I had a five minute walk to CVS last night and I left with my hair wet, and by the time I got back it was completely dry. Because it was like I was walking in a giant hairdryer. It was awful.

Sydnee: That's convenient.

Raleigh: It's awful! So when I come back into my apartment drenched in sweat, I have a hard time being like, "Mmm, cozy. Let's light a candle and get under a blanket." [laughs] "And make it hotter by making some cookies or some soup."

Taylor: You don't have to do all that.

Sydnee: [simultaneously] But you love pumpkin.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah. You love all your pumpkin stuff.

Taylor: I watch—

Raleigh: I don't have any decor with me.

Taylor: I watched Practical Magic last night, and then The Craft. Getting going on my list!

Raleigh: [crosstalk]

Sydnee: You know, those are two properties they really need to have at Spirit Halloween.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: I don't think Practical Magic would really fit the vibe, but I feel like they could have some Craft merchandise.

Sydnee: Yeah. I don't—

Raleigh: Definitely.

Sydnee: I don't think I saw any of that. And I will say, like, it's not rushing the season, based on the crowds there. Like, there were quite a few people in Spirit Halloween when we were there.

When you check out, they give you the option of donating to, like, a children's hospital. They always have, like, an organization you can donate to as you check out. And if you do you get to write your name on a pumpkin and put it on the wall. And the only reason I tell you this is there were a lot of pumpkins already on that wall.

[all laugh]

Sydnee: Like, it's early in the season, and there were quite a few, which means they've had a lot of traffic in that store.

Raleigh: Do you think pumpkins carry over?

Sydnee: Hmm, no. These—I bet these are all new pumpkins.

Raleigh: For the new season?

Sydnee: I think these are new—new this-season pumpkins.

Raleigh: Hmm.

Sydnee: But the, uh... the girls picked out some costumes. They usually end up with two different at least costumes because they have different Halloween events. The trick or treat, and then the school thing. Um... Cooper picked Sam from Trick or Treat.

Taylor: Nice.

Raleigh: Oh, I love that.

Sydnee: Or Lil Punkit, as he's known in our house.

Raleigh: Lil Punkit, yes.

Sydnee: Yeah. And Charlie picked Cher from Clueless.

Taylor: Oh.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: That's appropriate.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. So...

Raleigh: I'm always amazed by what they pick, because I feel like—and maybe this is just the thing with all kids, but it's certainly the thing with your kids. I feel like you think you know what they like. Like, you know the properties they enjoy. You know the characters they like. And you walk into a Spirit Halloween and you see those characters there. And you think, "Well, certainly you're going to want to be this. You love this thing."

And then they just pull something out of left field. Like, "Where did you—what—what is that? Where did that come from?" [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, it was weird, 'cause Cooper went to Spirit Halloween dressed as Wednesday.

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: I know, I could've sworn she would go with a Wednesday.

Sydnee: She—she wore her Wednesday dress and put on, like—and her black boots, and her black lipstick and, like, did extra black around her eyes to make her eyes look, like, sunken.

Raleigh: Oh my gosh. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Like, not just black eye shadow but, like, under her eyes. And I found—they have of course a lot of various Wednesday costumes. She was wearing the classic Wednesday Addams dress. But they have all of the ones from the new show, plus they have a purse that is a headless doll.

Raleigh: Oh.

Sydnee: They have a bunch of—

Raleigh: Like she used to carry?

Sydnee: Like the headless doll that Wednesday carries. They turned it into a cross body bag. Which she did get that, I will say. She was like, "Uh, I do need this to go with my outfit right now."

Raleigh: [laughs] "I need this as a daily accessory."

Taylor: Yeah. Like, Wednesday's just her general vibe. She needed a costume.

Sydnee: Um, there are—by the way, if you haven't checked it out, there are a lot of new cross body bags at [holding back laughter] Spirit Halloween.

Raleigh: Are cross body bags back in?

Sydnee: They have so many purses! Like, if you—they're—but they're all over the place, so it's like you have to—it became like a fun game. Like, I would search each section to see, like, what kind of themed purse do they have. And they're all—like, they have one that—Taylor, it's just a giant knife.

Taylor: Oh! That's nice.

Sydnee: It's like a giant, bloody knife that's a cross body bag. Anyway, I'm just saying.

Raleigh: I love a cross body.

Sydnee: I know, I do too! I found so many that I liked.

Raleigh: It's like at the end of every Disney ride when they have those backpacks in all the gift shops.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Yeah, they have—

Raleigh: Now it's cross bodies.

Sydnee: They had one of those little backpacks with, um, Lil Punkit on it.

Raleigh: Oh.

Taylor: Did you get that?

Sydnee: No... no, we didn't get that. We did get—Justin's real deep into the Haunted Mansion merchandise for decorating the house. So... I didn't get a costume.

Raleigh: [crosstalk]

Sydnee: I'm still—I've gotta come up with s—I don't know. I'm still debating.

Raleigh: I gotta know, um, is Cooper gonna wear that Lil Punkit to school? Is that, like, gonna be the vibe at kindergarten?

Taylor: She's gonna wear that when she murders somebody, let's be real. That's her Jason origin moment.

Raleigh: Yeah, that's gonna end up in a true crime documentary. [laughs]

Taylor: [crosstalk]

Sydnee: Uh, okay. So, I said that. I said "Now, this is for trick or treating, not for school, right?" 'Cause, like, usually we're okay with that. Like, 'cause they wear costumes all the time, so it's not—they don't get single use out of any costume they own. They wear them lots of times throughout not just Halloween season, all the time.

Raleigh: Throughout the year. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yes, throughout the year. So I don't feel really bad about buying two costumes 'cause I know they're gonna wear 'em a lot.

Uh, I asked, like, "This is trick or treat costume, right? This is not school."

And she's like, "No, no, no. This is school."

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: So I have, uh... I mean, not quite two months to work on that, but I got some time. [laughs quietly] To work on that. I'm hoping to convince her to wear that for trick or treating and, like, something else for school, 'cause I do think it will scare her classmates, and I do think I will get a call from the teacher.

Um, I will say, though, they have, like, trick or treat in the gym is what they do at their school. And the last two years Mom and I—and Justin has come, but Mom has done most of the work—have set up, like, tables in the gym. Like, we have manned our own table to hand out candy in the gym. And so I see what all the kids wear. And there were a lot of Squid Games kids at this elementary school last year. So I feel like if some of these elementary school kids are watching Squid Games... we're not too far off with Trick or Treat, right?

Taylor: No.

Raleigh: But if you walked by someone in the gym of your elementary school wearing a little Squid Games suit, would that have the same impact as walking by Cooper wearing [through laughter] the Lil Punkit costume?

Sydnee: Okay, there were at least two Pennywises last year.

Raleigh: Okay, okay.

Sydnee: So I—and, I mean, I don't know. I—I am still gonna—

Raleigh: [simultaneously] It's just something about the full head.

Sydnee: I'm still gonna try to convince her. I'm—yes. The head is the—yes.

Raleigh: Something about the full head is like, you don't know what's under there. Like, you think it's Cooper then, you know, you realize oh, this is— now this is just Lil Punkit. Cooper is gone.

Taylor: But, I mean, like, I wouldn't be—even, like, if the real Sam—I wouldn't be, like, afraid. 'Cause I follow the rules of Halloween, so I'd be like, "Yeah, we're cool."

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: "I like Halloween. You like Halloween. I don't know. My sister over here who's complaining about the fall season... she might have to watch her back around you, Sam, lil buddy. But not me. We go way back."

Raleigh: No—[sighs]

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: I'm not complaining! [laughs] I'm just—

Taylor: [laughs] You—yes you are!

Raleigh: I'm just hot! It's just hot!

Sydnee: "[high pitched voice] It's just hot!"

Raleigh: I just want it to be cool! I want to be—

Sydnee: "[high pitched voice] I'm just hot."

Raleigh: I wanted to be able to—I want to be able to wear pants! I wanna wear flannel! I wanna wear long sleeves! I'm tired of summer clothes. I hate summer clothes. I love fall clothes. If I wear 'em now I'll have a heatstroke.

Sydnee: This is what's great about Spirit Halloween. I found a button up short sleeve shirt at Spirit Halloween that's like one of those that ties, you know, in the front?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And it has all the things from Trick or Treat all over it. It has Lil Punkit and the lil lollipop—

Raleigh: Oh, that's nice.

Sydnee: —and it says Trick or Treat. And it's real lightweight. Like, it's almost see through it's so lightweight. But it's, like, Halloween, but also summer. [snorts]

Taylor: Best of both worlds.

Sydnee: So, you know, if you do your clothes shopping at [through laughter] Spirit Halloween...

Raleigh: As I do. Although they do have a cardigan at Spirit Halloween that is a Barbie cardigan.

Sydnee: The Barbie cardigan! I almost bought it.

Raleigh: That. Like, I would wear that. I would wear that on a regular basis.

Sydnee: I don't really wear pink, and so I looked and it and I was like, "This is so cute!" And then I was like, "I don't—this is a whole—this would—I'd be reinventing myself to wear this pink cardigan."

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Like, this isn't... I can't go down—I did buy the Riverdale Letterman jacket that they sold.

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Uh-huh.

Sydnee: As a costume. But I wear it legit, because it's so cute. Um... I don't think I could do this. This is not—this is a reinvention of me I'm not ready for.

Raleigh: Man, endorsing Riverdale now means something totally different than it did after, like, the first season when you bought that jacket.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: The twists and turns that show has taken.

Taylor: There've been, what, aliens, and magic powers, and time travel?

Raleigh: It's finally over and they're all dead now, I think. [laughs]

Sydnee: They are all dead now. It ended with Betty on her deathbed, I believe.

Taylor: What?!

Raleigh: And then she goes into the Pop's Chok'lit Shop in the sky. And reunites with everyone who died before her. Uh, and sits at the table with Jughead and Veronica and Archie and...

Taylor: I mean, was it like a—

Raleigh: ... has a shake.

Taylor: —a flash forward to, like, her being old on her deathb—okay.

Raleigh: Yes.

Taylor: It's not like they all die—[laughs] The way you said it, it sounds like they all got wiped out!

Raleigh: No.

Sydnee: No.

Raleigh: There's a—I saw—Netflix posted the final scene of the show on social media, which feels like a weird move to, like, put—I don't know. Um, but yeah. I guess it's her grandchildren are riding in the car and they're, like, talking to grandma Betty in the backseat like, "Okay, grandma Betty. Time to get out!"

And grandma Betty is... gone. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah. It's like her dying. And then, like—'cause the headlines around it—which I guess were spoiling Riverdale for everyone—the headlines—

Raleigh: [laughs quietly] I haven't even watched it.

Sydnee: I've never—yeah. I've never—I watched the first episode and went, "Nope!"

Um, the headlines were all like, "Final episode reveals that basically they were all in a polycule."

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And that was the headline. And it's like, there was time travel... and—

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs quietly] Like, right? Like, and aliens and, like, spells, and magic. And then the thing that they were like, "But this'll really blow your mind. The four of them were in a polycule." [laughs quietly] It's like, that

was not—that was not by far the most shocking thing about this show.
[laughs]

Raleigh: They couldn't handle the life with Archie story line of doing, like, what if life was with Betty and what if life was with Veronica?

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: They just had to do 'em both at the same time. And throw Jughead in there.

Taylor: Oh, I don't...

Sydnee: That's fine.

Raleigh: [laughs] Anyways.

Taylor: It's on par with everything else there.

Sydnee: [crosstalk] The time travel was the stranger part.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: I—I haven't watched it. I follow someone on TikTok who's like, "Here's what you missed on Riverdale this week, and I'm not making any of it up, I swear." And it sounds absolutely ridiculous, but it's all—it's all what I missed on Riverdale.

Taylor: I—I used to get TikToks like that, and it's like, there's no way this is true. This person's gotta be making this up. But... no.

Sydnee: No.

Raleigh: Apparently they're all real.

Sydnee: I read synopses for a while 'cause I was... but then I just couldn't. Um, we gotta talk about—

Raleigh: Anyways.

Sydnee: —your topic.

Raleigh: Yes. Um, this week we are talking about Renee Rapp, who just put out her first album, called Snow Angel. Just came out I think last month sometime. Um... yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah. Um, she is from Mean Girls, you said?

Raleigh: Yeah. So she, um—I don't know if you all know what the Jimmy Awards are. But it's like the national, like, high school theater awards that have, like, you know, their finals in New York, and they do performances and stuff. And, like, all these high school theater companies from around the country, there are people who win, like, regional awards, and then they go and do the Jimmies in, like, New York.

Sydnee: I had no idea that existed.

Taylor: Wow.

Raleigh: Yeah. Um, I don't think there are any—like, I don't think any of the high schools, you know, that we would've known people at, or we would've gone to participate in any of those. But, um, it's a big, big deal in the theater kid community, especially on TikTok. Um, because there are several Broadway stars that have gone and been in the Jimmies and then gone on to get offers from that. And she won her year, which I believe was the same year I graduated high school in 2018. It may have been 2019.

But she won whenever she was a senior in high school, and then immediately was offered to graduate and come back and be Regina in Mean Girls on Broadway.

Sydnee: Hmm.

Raleigh: So she did that. I think she was, like, 19. Um... and took over that role.

Sydnee: [simultaneously] Can you imagine—

Raleigh: I know.

Sydnee: —how intense the atmosphere is... at that—at that competition?

Raleigh: Oh yeah.

Sydnee: Can you imagine a bunch of—

Raleigh: You all should check out some clips sometimes, because they spend, like, a week, like, rehearsing together. And then they come up with a bunch of musical medleys, and they perform them all. Playing, like, the characters that they were nominated for. Like, they won their awards for.

Sydnee: Uh-huh.

Raleigh: It's like they're combining songs from all these musicals with these random groups of characters. And it's all these high school theater kids, like, trying to get their, like, ten second line out there and be, like, the one that you remember. It's so good.

Sydnee: Oh my gosh.

Taylor: That's terrifying.

Sydnee: I cannot even imagine. Yeah, no, that sounds sc—and I mean, like, this is not a knock on high school theater kids. Like, I was one. Um...

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: But, like, just the intensity with which—when we would, like, cast a show among us as a friend group, and then just perform it at, I don't know, Gino's Pub or wherever we were hanging out. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: At Applebee's. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: At Applebee's. [laughs quietly] At Oliver's, the restaurant that used to exist Huntington many, many years ago.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Anyway, I just can't imagine. I cannot imagine the intensity of that, and the anger over who gets what, and... the tears and the betrayals and the romances and the... breakups. Wow.

Raleigh: Yeah. Yeah. I, um, I could be mistaken, but I think they usually pick a male and a female winner every year, and she was the female winner, and I'm pretty sure the guy who won was Andrew Barth Feldman that year who went on to then be Evan Hansen in Dear Evan Hansen. Um... so.

Sydnee: So winning this thing is, like, a big stepping... like, stone for success.

Raleigh: I don't know if it is—yeah, I don't know if it is for everybody, but I know there are several. Like, the woman who originated Eurydice in Hadestown, she was there. Um, there are more.

Sydnee: Interesting.

Raleigh: But yeah, apparently it's, like, a big deal. They do it in New York so all the Jimmy kids then go on their social media and say like, "I'm performing on Broadway!" [laughs quietly] 'Cause they do their one night performance, like, on a Broadway stage. Um...

Sydnee: Aww.

Taylor: Well, that counts.

Sydnee: That's kinda cute, though.

Raleigh: Yeah. I mean, if that would've been a thing at our high school or anywhere nearby, I would've, like... lost my mind at the chance to do that.

Sydnee: That's like, um... this summer when we did SpongeBob, we got Lin to do the voice of—he agreed to be Garry the snail and do our meows.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um, so Lin is the meows that were in the show. And all of these younger people at our show [laughs quietly] are now listing that they were in a production of SpongeBob with Lin Manuel Miranda! [laughs]

Taylor: Hey, they were!

Raleigh: It's technically true.

Taylor: It's not a lie.

Sydnee: I know. [laughs] I was like, man, that is such—that is such big theater kid energy. Like...

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: "I'm gonna list this. This is fine."

Taylor: It counts.

Sydnee: "I have no pro—this is totally—I am totally earnest in that I will list this and tell people this, and I... I think it's fine." [laughs]

Raleigh: Can you imagine them going into, like, an actual audition and they ask about that. Like, "What was Lin Manuel Miranda in a local production of SpongeBob the Musical in Huntington, West Virginia?"

And they have to explain, like, "Well, let me tell you." [laughs]

Sydnee: He was Garry the snail.

Raleigh: [through laughter] He was Garry the snail.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: Oh, man.

Sydnee: Anyway.

Raleigh: Anyway, yeah.

Sydnee: I really enjoyed this album. I was kind of surprised how much I did. 'Cause I felt like it—like the first song tricked me a little. Like as it started in it just kind of sounded—I don't know. Like... more like... sort of this generic kind of pop music that it didn't—it was like, oh, this is nice. But then, like, this guitar riff comes in all of a sudden. And I don't know. It, like, threw me for a loop. I enjoyed it a lot more than I thought I would.

Raleigh: Well, good.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: Um... yeah. She, um... she had an EP before this that only had a couple songs on it, but it kind of does the same thing. There's a couple songs on there that kind of fit almost that more... chart-topping pop vibe. Um, but then a couple that really surprise you. Um, I think especially on this one, the song, the titular song Snow Angel, um, that one is... it's also one of those where you're not expecting what it goes into in the bridge and it gets very big and almost, like, showtune-y. And that's, I feel like, one of the moments where you can tell, like, oh, this is a... this is a theater kid. This is like a... this is a Broadway singer.

'Cause so much of isn't just, you know, her beats or her lyrics. It's like her voice, which is just amazing.

Sydnee: Yeah. Her voice is amazing. And she—but she definitely has, like, um, a harder edge to some of it than I expected.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Um, it's not all just, like, ballady, like, "Listen to me belt." You know?

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um... I thought, uh—I really liked I Hate Boston.

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: I don't hate Boston, but I did like the song I Hate Boston.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: That is an incredibly catchy—I'm surprised that isn't, like, a single. 'Cause it's very—it's very catchy. It has that earwormy quality.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: If I remember correctly, Talk Too Much and Pretty Girls are singles.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Hmm.

Taylor: And Poison, Poison's gotten some play, hasn't it? I feel like I've heard that before here.

Raleigh: Yeah. That, uh—the refrain, which I can't repeat on this family friendly podcast, um, has blown up on TikTok. Where she says, "Of course I'm a feminist, but I'm having a hard time supporting all women, like, when it's you," or whatever.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: And "It's I hate that—" er, "I hate that B-word." Um, yeah. That has blown up on TikTok. Which I find very funny.

Sydnee: I think, you know, now that you say that, I feel like I've heard that on TikTok.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: I wish I knew the story behind that song. I've tried to find it. Um, 'cause it sounds like she's talking specifically about somebody else in the industry, but it's not... it's not discernible.

Raleigh: I actually just last night scrolling through TikTok stumbled across an interview of her talking about how she wrote the song Snow Angel. Um, and it was—because she had kind of hinted at—that was a single that was also released before the album. Um, that it was about, like, something kind of, like, traumatic she had been through, but hadn't said what.

But last night I saw an interview where she said essentially she was out with a bunch of friends that were kind of, like, industry friends that partied a lot and encouraged her to, you know, drink and party and go out and stay out late and all that.

Um, and she woke up at, like, 5 AM in a hotel stall bathroom and, like, had blood on her hands, and was alone, and had no idea how she had ended up there. And the last thing she remembered was, like, being with her friends at, like, 10 PM. And she had come with these people, and they had just, like, let her... go off alone, I guess? And someone had put something in her drink, and then she was just, like, blacked out, you know, seven hours, and woke up in a hotel bathroom by herself.

Um, and that's what inspired that song, because it was a lot of, like, these people that she thought were friends, but really it was just, you know, things that she had gotten hooked on, and things that she had, you know—like, part of the lifestyle she'd become addicted to that she realized she no longer should.

Sydnee: Oh, gosh.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: I didn't know that.

Taylor: I was curious, 'cause when you told us the album title I'm like, is this... snow angel? Or is this snow in terms of its relationship to drugs? Uh, and then after hearing that song, like, well, there's something about addiction here, which is sad for someone so young. I mean, it's sad for anybody, but she's so young.

Raleigh: Yeah. Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah. You know, I hadn't put that together until you just said that. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Oh.

Sydnee: I didn't really think about that, but that's true.

Raleigh: Yeah. Um... but yeah, I love that song. It's another one where she—she's bisexual, and she's out, and she's written several songs about her relationships with men and women. But she says that she doesn't like putting pronouns in there too often, because she wants kind of people to be able to listen and, you know, apply it to whomever they would like, and apply it to their situation. And she doesn't always think that's important, but

she did in Snow Angel, in the bridge where she says "I still look for him in her."

She said that's, like, specifically because, um, she wanted to point out the duality of, like, women in relationship—women who are bisexual in relationships with men and women. Um, and she said she feels like it's important to note that in her songs when she can, because there were no songs she listened to growing up that would've represented her in that way.

Sydnee: That's interesting.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: [unintelligible] I was watching some of her music videos and that, uh, Pretty Girls obviously is about...

Raleigh: Mm-hmm. Pretty girls.

Taylor: Yeah. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Mm-hmm, yeah. [laughs]

Taylor: Specifically, like, the girls that will, you know, will make out with other girls. And then it's like, oh, it's just a—teehee, it's just a silly thing that, you know, happened.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I also really liked Gemini Moon.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Hmm.

Sydnee: I felt, um... uncomfortably seen sometimes in that song. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Really?

Taylor: Do you have a Gemini moon? [laughs]

Sydnee: I'm not a—I don't think I do. I had that thought, like, "I don't think I do."

Taylor: This would explain a lot.

Sydnee: Hey! [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Hey!

Taylor: I'm just—you relate to it!

Sydnee: I—I just—I did. I felt like... oh, man. That's me. Sometimes. Um... and I—I mean, I liked the recognition. Like, yeah, I probably should stop making excuses for it and... [laughs] it's also like a dumb thing to be like, "It's like, well, it's not my fault. It's just my Gemini moon." [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Which she acknowledges. Like, yeah, no, I just should be better to you. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: "I just shouldn't be that way, should I?" No, uh-uh. Um... but no, I enjoyed it. 'Cause I was like, "Oh... I need to—" I had to go read the lyrics 'cause I was like, "What did she say about being bored all of a sudden?" [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Is that—do you—do you relate to that?

Sydnee: Not—I mean, not in my current—not with Justin. Like, I don't relate to that in my relationship now. But, like, do I relate to feeling that way in general, in situations in life, and in past relationships, and being guilty of, like, being all-in one second and then thinking like, "Ugh... this is boring. Never mind."

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like, instantly. Yes. I'm working on it. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs quietly] Do you have a Gemini moon?

Sydnee: I don't know. I don't know what my moon is.

Taylor: Yeah, it—

Sydnee: I just assumed I was a lot of Aries.

Taylor: I don't think that's—I think you can't have that in your current relationship. You got kids. You can't get bored of your kids. Like, "I'm sorry, kids. This was fun for a little while, first couple years. But you know, this whole, like... like, you-me thing, I think we have to take a break." [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [laughs] "I need space."

Sydnee: I am never bored of my children. Never. I am sometimes ready to, like, beat my head against the wall. [laughs quietly] 'Cause I'm trying, like, desperately, like, "Please just brush your teeth. Please stop. I don't know—why are you just staring in the mirror? Now you're singing. Now your just, like, banging your toothbrush—please just brush your teeth. We have to go to school!"

Taylor: That's just—

Sydnee: I'm never bored.

Taylor: I was gonna say, that's just karmic revenge for getting bored of people in relationships, Syd. Now you got permanent relationships with two people that you'll never be bored.

Sydnee: No, I'm never bored. I'm never bored with Justin, either. But I also—but, like, I recognize that I—he knows I'm the kind of person who does get bored and, like, hates to be bored, and will seek out, like, "Well, I gotta do something else, 'cause I don't wanna be bored." And then that makes me feel bad. 'Cause I'm like, "Is he aware of that, and he feels like he has to constantly entertain me? So I don't get bored?"

Taylor: Well, that's, I think... I think that's probably—I think that's ideal, right?

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Like, just make sure your partner's aware that they better never let you get bored, and that's okay? [laughs]

Taylor: No. If you're the kind of person that constantly wants to be entertaining people and doing bits and making jokes—

Sydnee: Ahh.

Taylor: —and you're with somebody who constantly needs to have bits and have jokes and have new stimuli, I think that works out pretty good.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: That's true, that's true, okay. That's fair. Like... and I think Justin does not like predictability. He doesn't, um—he hates being in a rut. And I think I am a good fit, because I don't know what I'm going to be like from one day to the next. [laughs] So.

Raleigh: And you created two children who are never the same from one day to the next.

Sydnee: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. They are also unpredictable, especially the little one.

Raleigh: That little one.

Sydnee: The little one. You never know. Every morning I'm like, "How'd you sleep?" And I never know what's she's gonna say. It could be anything. I ask Charlie every morning, "How did you sleep?" And she says the same thing. "[quietly] Amazing!"

Raleigh: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: "[quietly] Amazing!"

Raleigh: They're pink sister and purple sister. [laughs]

Sydnee: I'll say "Cooper, how did you sleep?" And she'll say, "Shut up!" "Okay... " [laughs] "Okay... "

Raleigh: Uh, does she still sleep with Bob?

Sydnee: Um, she has a pile next to her now.

Raleigh: Oh, okay.

Sydnee: She doesn't hold any one stuffy, but Bob is next to her. Jack, Sally, uh... she has a new—or she was a Wednesday doll, and a new Lydia doll. And... that little, um, whatchamacallit from Avatar.

Raleigh: I don't know.

Sydnee: The blue people.

Taylor: Na'vi?

Sydnee: Yes. She has a baby Na'vi. [laughs]

Raleigh: That explains a lot about her dreams probably, right? That combo of stuffies being right by her face as she sleeps.

Taylor: Sleeping in a herd of weird creatures.

Sydnee: I don't... I don't know. But they just—but she doesn't touch any of them. She just wants them piled next to her.

Raleigh: Just watching her. [laughs] They're protecting her.

Taylor: I had all my lions for that.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah. That's true.

Taylor: I had outside lions and inside lions.

Sydnee: Charlie has two stuffed log pillows, one under each arm, that she sleeps with clutched to her.

[all laugh quietly]

Taylor: Sure.

Sydnee: And her sleep mask, and her special lighting, and her humidifier, and her white noise.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: [sighs] Oh... oh, Barbie.

Raleigh: Oh, Barbie.

Sydnee: That's my Barbie.

Raleigh: Um, I wanted to talk about the song 23, because one, I enjoy it because it came out right before my 23rd birthday, so I found it very apt. But I also think as someone who enjoys both Taylor Swift and Renee Rapp, obviously you have the Taylor Swift song 22, which is fun and upbeat about being 22 and kind of partying, being out with friends, and being young.

Um, and 23 feels very much like the same way I felt once I realized I'm now 23, which is, like, somehow being 23 feels significantly older than saying you're 22. Um, and, like, you are getting closer to a point where you're expected to be, like, somewhat of an adult and somewhat have your stuff together.

Um, but you still feel a lot of the same, like, angst and emotion of being like a teenager almost. I feel like it's a really good follow-up. Obviously it was not intentionally, like, a sequel to 22. Um, but I feel like if you listen to the two back to back, 23 is very much like... the change in feeling from being in your early 20's to then being closer to being in your mid-20's.

Sydnee: Have you noticed a shift in the way you're feeling?

Raleigh: It's not really like—like, how—I mean, obviously, like, it's just a day, you know? It's not, like, a big difference. But there is something that makes you feel internally different about saying you're 23 than 22 for me personally. Like, I feel... I don't know. Less of, like, "I'm just 22." Like, I'm 23. I'm closer to being 25 than I am to being 20. I am 5—no, 4 years removed from being a teenager. I'm coming up on, you know, ten years since I, uh—or five years since I graduated college and high school and all that. So...

Sydnee: Well, and I mean, to be fair, I got married when I was your age.

Taylor: Wow.

Raleigh: Oh, yeah.

Taylor: That's weird to think about.

Sydnee: Yeah. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Is that why Cooper—

Sydnee: It's weird for me to think about.

Raleigh: Is that why Cooper asked me why I'm not married? [laughs]

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: 'Cause she's like, "My mom was married by your age. What's up with that?"

Sydnee: Yes. Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Um, that makes sense. But yeah, I don't know. Obviously you don't physically or, like, mentally feel that different from the day before your birthday to the day of your birthday when you go from 22 to 23. But... it, uh... I don't know. Like, when she says "How old do you have to be to live so young and careless? My wish is that I cared less at 23." Like, almost that feeling of youth... slipping—slipping away. Um, in the sands of time. But also, like, you know. Feeling—having anxiety and feeling older, even before you get to 23. Like the feeling of maybe you weren't young and careless, even when you were young and careless, if that makes sense.

Sydnee: Well, and I will say that, like, to an extent, that feeling never completely goes away, or at least so far. I don't know, I'm at 40. At this

point. Where, like... before I turned 40 I had this—it was actually worse leading up to it, because I had this panic of like, what I was still young enough to do in my 30's. And I was about to not be in my 30's anymore. And, like, did I really live the way I should've? [laughs] You know? Did I embrace all the things I still was allowed to when I was in my 30's that, like, for some reason in my mind... no longer apply when you're 40 years old, and now you're old. Now you're not... young anymore and, I don't know. I mean, I think that's a normal kind of panic to have as you age.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Did I do all the stuff I was supposed to do at the last stage I was? Is it too late for that?

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I don't know.

Raleigh: I also—it's nice because she and I are the same age, almost exactly. Um, obviously, that's why she wrote the song 23. Um, but... I think there's—I've noticed a lot of people I talk to that are the same as me or around the same age because of the pandemic kind of stopping time, but time also continued to pass for a long time, it feels kind of wild that I'm 23, because before the pandemic I was 19. Like, I was still a teenager. And now it feels like life is maybe returning to some semblance of normal. I'm like, "Oh, well, now I'm 23. I was a teenager, and now I'm 23." Where it's like, time went by even faster. But it also didn't pass—like, time didn't progress at the same speed in which it was happening.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah, it felt like everybody got some sort of strange witch's spell. [laughs] And just lost three years of your life. You're three years older. I didn't do anything, but I'm older now. Alright. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Yeah, I was a sophomore in college! And now I'm in my second year of law school. Like, how'd that happen? I graduated college! I'm an adult! I'm 23! I was a teenager?

Sydnee: No, I know what you mean. I feel like those years for Cooper have been weird.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Because I think about, how is this kid in kindergarten? She was just a baby. And it's 'cause, like, the pandemic kind of stole some of those in between years.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Yeah. Um, but yeah. That's why I like that song so much. I'm, you know. Also it came out, like, two weeks before my birthday, so it was very apt.

Sydnee: Um, is that your favorite song from the album?

Raleigh: I think my favorite song is probably... Snow Angel. Or I really like Tummy Hurts. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Hmm.

Raleigh: I like Tummy Hurts a lot. Um, I don't know. I like all of them for different reasons. It's very much one of those albums that it just depends on what mood you're in, what you're feeling like listening to and feeling.

Sydnee: Yeah. No, I like that it has a range. I like that it has different songs with different vibes. I always enjoy that. It takes you on different emotional journeys.

Raleigh: Yeah. I feel like you can always tell when a theater kid has written a song.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Or an album, I guess.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: And she wrote all these songs, right?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: That's impressive.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: You can't help but emote.

Raleigh: Gotta tell a story. That's why I like 'em. Do you all have a favorite?

Sydnee: I really like I Hate Boston.

Taylor: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: I just—again, I'm kind of surprised it wasn't more of a breakout hit, 'cause it for me it was just so—like, after I listened to the album it was the first song that was stuck in my head and I wanted to go back and listen to again.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Um... I like the first song, Talk Too Much.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: That one was catchy. And it kind of reminded—it had that Olivia Rodrigo vibe, too.

Raleigh: I can see that.

Taylor: A little bit.

Raleigh: Yeah, yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah. I felt a little bit of that too.

Raleigh: Yeah. Well, thank you all for listening.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: It was, uh, you know, obviously not important to me growing up 'cause it just came out. But she is one of those people that I was like, "Oh my god, she won the Jimmys, and now she's on Broadway," and now everyone knows about her because she's a pop star now, and on TV.

Sydnee: I enjoyed it, and Charlie and Cooper did too, so.

Raleigh: Well, good. [crosstalk]

Taylor: I knew her from that show—what is it? Sex Lives of College Girls?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Which is unfortunately not—I don't think it's gonna come back.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: But she's not gonna be on it. That's too bad, 'cause she was probably my favorite part.

Raleigh: [simultaneously] She was my favorite character.

Taylor: Yeah, she was great.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm, yeah. But, uh, yeah. Now everyone knows her. She started out at the Jimmys.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Um, Taylor, what's next?

Taylor: Well, this is—this is definitely not something that is timely from my childhood. But, uh, you know, it's a much, much older movie, but it's one of my favorites. Maybe my favorite? I feel like that's a hard statement to make. But I make someone watch it with me [through laughter] every—every Christmas Day. I don't know why that's a tradition that I started.

But I want to talk about Casablanca. Of course it came out in 1942.

Raleigh: Oh my gosh.

Sydnee: A long time ago.

Raleigh: Well, alright.

Sydnee: Alright. Well, we will watch Casablanca for next time. And in the meantime, you should check out Snow Angle by Renee Rapp. I imagine it is places other than Apple Music.

Raleigh: It is also on Spotify. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: There you go. Uh... [laughs quietly] thank you, listeners. Thank you to Maximum Fun. You should go to Maximumfun.org and check out a lot of great shows there that you would enjoy.

Um, and you can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org. And thank you to The Nouvellas for our theme song, Baby You Change Your Mind.

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

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]

Sydnee: We're both headed to Spirit Halloween to do some purse shopping [unintelligible].

Raleigh: Yes.

Taylor: [unintelligible]

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: That's just when I get my home decor every year.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah.

[music plays]

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