

## Still Buffering 432: School of Rock

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[theme song plays]

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

**Taylor:** And I'm Teylor Smirl.

**Sydnee:** Uh, Tey, we're under a tornado warning here, today.

**Taylor:** Oh!

**Sydnee:** Not warning. Watch? What—

**Taylor:** That's not as bad...

**Sydnee:** Which is the one where...

**Taylor:** ... right?

**Sydnee:** ... the taco isn't assembled, yet?

**Taylor:** *What?*

**Sydnee:** Haven't you seen that meme? "How to tell the difference between a tornado warning, and a tornado watch"?

**Taylor:** And it involves tacos?

**Sydnee:** Yeah, they have all the ingredients for a taco laid out on a table, and they're like, "This would be a— I think that's a taco watch." Because all the ingredients are present, and so a taco may occur here. And then they have a taco next to it, and it's like, "We have actually visualized a taco. This is a taco warning." I think that's right.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** You understand what I'm saying?

**Taylor:** I understand what you're saying. That seems like a visual metaphor that would make it *more* complicated to understand, but... [laughs]

**Sydnee:** It's a "watch" first. So a watch means all the ingredients for a tornado - or a taco - are present. So, like, one *could* occur.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** And then a warning is, like, "Oh, no, we saw a taco."

**Taylor:** You don't have a taco; you've got taco ingredients.

**Sydnee:** I have taco ingredients.

**Taylor:** Alright.

**Sydnee:** Yes. It's funny, because I had read that Tornado Alley was shifting because of climate change...

**Taylor:** Oh, yeah. I remember you telling me about this.

**Sydnee:** Well, but then I— As soon as I said that, I feel like my phone was listening, because then I saw a post from our local weatherman who was clarifying, like... It's not that it's shifting, because it's still where it is; it's expanding. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Oh, okay.

**Sydnee:** So it's not moving, so much as getting bigger.

**Taylor:** Other places are not having *less* tornadoes.

**Sydnee:** We're—

**Taylor:** More places are having more tornadoes.

**Sydnee:** Yes. We are just having more. And it's mainly, like, Ohio has seen the greatest increase, but West Virginia's right next to it. So it's moving east— It's not moving. It's *expanding* east.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** It's expanding.

**Taylor:** Eventually, America's just gonna be one giant tornado. Like, the spot on Jupiter.

**Sydnee:** I guess? I guess. „Cause, like, it's a fairly unique weather phenomenon, the tornado, to this part of the world. Tornadoes occur other places, but they generally... primarily occur in Tornado Alley in the United States. And now, in the Expanded Tornado Alley. The Expanded pack. We paid for the expansion pack. [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Of tornadoes.

**Taylor:** Right. *That's* what my taxes went for.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

I don't know. It's weird, because like, I don't... we don't do a lot of tornado preparedness *drills* here, because we're not supposed to have them.

**Taylor:** Yeah... I feel like that's— that idea, as we face the repercussions of climate change and global warming, is really gonna become [laughs] a real butt-kicker. The idea that lots of cities were not— they were built for the weather that they have always had...

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** ... and once, suddenly, they have new weather... I mean, what happens now, you know?

Like, cities that are built, you know, Down South, around where you get hurricanes, they have all this stuff built in. Like, you know, all the houses on the waterfront are up on stilts, and stuff.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** And you've got all the stuff built in. Because, hey... we have hurricanes.

But then, like, I don't know... A few years back, when we had a big hurricane hit New York City... And now, every year, there's predictions that it might happen again. I'm like, "Wait. You know what city's not built for a hurricane?"

**Sydnee:** New York.

**Taylor:** "New York City, baby!" [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Well... [laughs] Or, I mean—

**Taylor:** Landlords have put this place together with duct tape for about 20 years now.

**Sydnee:** Well, you could take the West Virginia approach, which is: we've always had flooding. We continue to have flooding. Meh, we're not prepared for flooding. Not only are we not prepared for flooding...

**Taylor:** That's true.

**Sydnee:** Sometimes, in the wake of flooding, our governor says, "We don't need federal assistance; we're fine." And that's not true.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** But he says it, anyway.

**Taylor:** What's he trying to prove? What is that? Is he trying to walk it off? You can't walk off massive destruction...

**Sydnee:** Flooding.

**Taylor:** ... from natural disasters. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** No, you can't walk off flooding. [chuckles]

**Taylor:** No...

**Sydnee:** No, we did need help. We *do* need help. We're not getting any help. But that's...

**Taylor:** Yeah...

**Sydnee:** That's just status quo, here.

So yeah, I don't know. I was thinking about that, because I remember doing hurricane drills when we were little, and we lived Down South.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** And you would, like, hide in the hallway?

**Taylor:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And then... I don't think the kids do tornado drills. Or if they have, they haven't— They do active shooter drills. We won't... We won't spend a lot of time thinking about that today. But I don't know that they do tornado drills.

**Taylor:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** What do you do? I mean, I guess it's the same thing, right? Hide in the hallway? That's probably the same.

**Taylor:** [laughing softly]

**Sydnee:** You just go to the hallway? I mean, what— I don't know— [laughs] I don't know why it would matter. It's like, fast wind, go to the hallway.

**Taylor:** I don't know.

**Sydnee:** Get away from windows. Get to a door frame. Hide in the hallway.

**Taylor:** Just not gonna meditate on the fact that we are prepared— we have *accepted* that school shootings are a force of nature, and yet we're still in denial of the actual forces of nature that we should be preparing ourselves for, that we're creating. That's gonna— I'm not gonna— We're not gonna... Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I guess—

**Taylor:** Not gonna marinate on that. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I guess we should go to the basement. I read it— The last time there was a severe thunderstorm, at 3:00 AM, I laid there, listening to the wind blow, and read all of the [laughs] recommendations.

So I think we go to the lowest floor in our house, and stay away from windows.

**Taylor:** Mm-hmm. Yep.

**Sydnee:** That will be our plan.

**Taylor:** I don't know. I know that if my roof leaks, if there's like a light rain outside, I get a cute, little... Just a cute, little, natural— a waterfall element...

**Sydnee:** Hmm!

**Taylor:** ... in my apartment building. Really, it's a nice additional feature.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Like, most people would pay extra for that, really, Tey.

**Taylor:** Yeah! Absolutely. No, that's— you know, you even get a skylight.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Hole in the ceiling... It's a skylight.

**Sydnee:** Yeah!

**Taylor:** The hole— yeah, it's a skylight.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, skylight, indoor water feature.

**Taylor:** The water light— yeah. Very cool, very chicue.

**Sydnee:** That's very bougie.

**Taylor:** Yeah, if there was a hurricane, there would be no plan. It would just be like, "Well, alright." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Uh... Go— no, you're on the top. Oh... You're too high up there. You need to go low. You gotta get down.

**Taylor:** Yeah. I don't know, I don't... Like, do I go knock on my downstairs neighbors' doors, like, "Hey, so uh..."

**Sydnee:** "Can I hang with you „til this is over?"

**Taylor:** We're all under the same roof that is poorly made, so if the roof comes down, I think that affects all of us.

**Sydnee:** I think that's what you should do. Because I don't— [laughs] I had this moment where I thought, "Well, just get outside, so that you're not in a structure that can collapse." And it's like, "Well, no, don't go outside." [laughs] That's where the weather is.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Okay. No, don't do that, either. Man!

**Taylor:** I mean, technically, we do have a basement, but I think the whole thing would just go in on itself.

**Sydnee:** [sarcastically] At least we can trust that we have a federal government that's gonna take care of us all in... the wake of natural disasters.

**Taylor:** I mean, yeah... Um, paper towels.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Throw some paper towels at our head.

**Sydnee:** Did we cut any of those programs? Did DOGE take care of any of them?

**Taylor:** I'm sure they're all gone.

**Sydnee:** Are they all gone?

**Taylor:** They're all gone.

**Sydnee:** But we might rehire them next week. We do that now.

**Taylor:** See, what they *did* is they— all that money that they cut from all the people that protected us from tornadoes, they just hired more tornadoes.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Those tornadoes... they're pretty good guys. [laughs] They invest in cryptocurrency. They deserve a job.

**Sydnee:** I don't know— you know, the problem is, it's...



**Taylor:** [clapping] Hardworking America-born tornadoes!

**Sydnee:** Tornadoes. Right. Like, we don't import our tornadoes.

**Taylor:** No.

**Sydnee:** They didn't immigrate here.

**Taylor:** We got rid of all those immigrant job opportunities, and we hired *natural-born* tornadoes.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, they were born in Texas.

**Taylor:** Love that.

**Sydnee:** Um...

**Taylor:** They got li'l cowboy hats on.

**Sydnee:** Aren't these the— Don't they hang? Don't these people, like, hang with some of the people who think that liberals make the weather, too, though?

**Taylor:** That is true.

**Sydnee:** Don't some of them think that? That, like, we're making the... we're making the storms...

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** ... or something?

**Taylor:** Yeah. We have the liberal weather machine...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** ... that, uh...

So that's— I don't really know.

**Sydnee:** I think George Soros built it, is my understanding. He built the liberal weather machine. And then...

**Taylor:** What a fun reality that must be to— It's terrifying. It's a terrifying reality they live in, but it's got so many features.

**Sydnee:** After the protests on the 5th, there was a— „Cause there was a local. West Virginia participated - there were, like, 300 people here in Huntington, out protesting. It was a very successful protest.

But afterwards, one of the local groups who organized it made a fake Facebook event, like as a joke. This was supposed to be a joke. It was intentional.

**Taylor:** Oh, no.

**Sydnee:** Saying, like, the event was Pick Up Your Soros Check Post-Rally. You know? Like, as a joke, because people think that their protesters are paid. And obviously, they're not paid. I've been to many protests; I don't... I only kind of know who George Soros is. He's certainly never given me a check. So, that's not true.

But they made the post, and I just thought, "No! [laughs] No!"

**Taylor:** It's gonna be on Fox News tonight.

**Sydnee:** There is *no* nuance on the internet. Especially not on Facebook! Like, you wanna put that out on— Do you know what your grandma is falling for on Facebook, and you think you can put that out there, like, sarcastically, and everybody's just gonna be like, "Haha, that's a funny joke"?

You can't! You can't! People are going to take that seriously! I guarantee you that somebody— yes. I am shocked it wasn't on Fox News. I'm shocked it wasn't.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** At the very least, local news. How did SAZ not pick that up?  
[laughs]

**Taylor:** We gotta— I mean, I don't know. What's it like to just not understand jokes? Just not...

**Sydnee:** Well, I mean...

**Taylor:** You gotta stop making jokes, „cause they don't get „em. They don't...

**Sydnee:** We're gonna understand them, again, because Elon Musk is bringing comedy back. Right?

**Taylor:** I— I don't know.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** „Cause he's not very good at— every time somebody makes a joke on his behalf, he like, I don't know... it's the... [laughs] disappeared. Like...

**Sydnee:** Well, but that's what he promised us. He was gonna make comedy legal again. It's legal.

**Taylor:** Hasn't he gone on Fox News, crying because people are making fun of him, twice now?

**Sydnee:** Yes. Well...

**Taylor:** Definitely once, but I think it was twice.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Here... Here's your comedy. You asked for it. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm. Yeah. I don't know what happened to the "F your feelings" crowd. They've got lots of— [laughs] they just have big feelings now. And they need to express them. They've got big feelings!

**Taylor:** I don't— Yeah...

**Sydnee:** Well...

**Taylor:** [sighs]

**Sydnee:** Anyway, if there's some good news in America, that's that [laughs] Jack Black is back.

**Taylor:** Speaking of comedy...

**Sydnee:** Speaking of comedy... um...

**Taylor:** There you go.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. In the— We're not talking about the *Minecraft* movie, but Jack Black is... I mean, he's like one of the biggest stars, now. Justin and I were having this debate: who's the bigger star at this point, Jack Black or George Clooney?

**Taylor:** What an odd debate that you decided to...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** ... to have. What— Just— Okay...

**Sydnee:** I can't remember why— where... the twists and turns, the rollercoaster ride, arrived at that destination. I don't remember.

**Taylor:** How do you end up comparing those two? It's not like saying, "Who is the bigger star, Brad Pitt or Leonardo DiCaprio?" Like, those are two men that held similar places in society.

Jack Black, and George Clooney?

**Sydnee:** I don't know. I think— He was on *SNL*, and then we were talking about something. I don't know... But, like, the—

**Taylor:** I mean, the answer is definitely currently, Jack Black.

**Sydnee:** He is, now. I think he is. Like, he is a bigger celebrity.

I mean, George Clooney is an entity outside of himself, right? Sometimes you achieve that level of celebrity that you're an idea, as much as you're a human...

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** ... in the zeitgeist. Jack Black, though, has as well. And if you look at currently, like, he was in the *Minecraft* movie. He was in *The Mario Movie*. He was in the... *Jumanji*. He's like a big deal, now!

**Taylor:** That's true.

**Sydnee:** I mean, he has been, but I would say at the moment... I think George Clooney is in a Broadway production of *Good Night, and Good Luck* - which I'm sure is fantastic, and incredible, but I don't... I don't know that it's achieving the same [laughs] notoriety as Jack Black is at the moment.

**Taylor:** I feel like George Clooney is on that Jack Nicholson trajectory, where it feels like at some point, you become less cool if you're actively working. Like, your whole thing is to just be a cool, older guy...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** ... and hang out, and be cool. Wear sunglasses in unconventional places.

**Sydnee:** And, like, have an incredibly successful and impressive wife.

**Taylor:** That's— Yeah. That's a part of it.

**Sydnee:** That's a part of it.

**Taylor:** You're not supposed to work anymore. You just show up, and be cool.

**Sydnee:** And doesn't he pay for a satellite, or something?

**Taylor:** That sounds right. Yeah. I don't— I never once heard that in my life; I have no reason to believe it. But you know what? Yeah. Sure, probably. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I think that's what he uses all those dollars he makes off of, uh... What's that, like... that espresso machine? [laughs]

**Taylor:** He has an espresso machine?

**Sydnee:** He does all the ads for an espresso.

**Taylor:** Oh.

**Sydnee:** Have you ever wondered, like, "Why is George Clooney so into doing—" Like, why is he doing ads? He's George Clooney, he shouldn't have to do ads. But he does ads for an espresso; I think he uses all that money to buy a satellite that monitors a border? Some... I don't know. [laughs]

**Taylor:** *What?*

**Sydnee:** Look— Google it. [laughs]

**Taylor:** You learn this on Facebook— This sounds like Facebook information. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughing] I saw this next to an event to pick up my George Soros check. [laughs]

**Taylor:** I was gonna say, Syd, you might have... Here you are, calling out the... parody. You might have fallen prey to some of it. I don't know about all that.

**Sydnee:** Okay.

**Taylor:** Alright. Jack Black.

**Sydnee:** Jack Black. We're talking about Jack Black. Specifically, we thought we would talk about *School of Rock*. Because I feel like that was, like... I don't know, I was a fan of Tenacious D.

**Taylor:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** I saw— I went to one or two Tenacious D shows. Um...

**Taylor:** I remember going to one with you. The um... Wasn't it Tenacious D, Jimmy Eat World, and...

**Sydnee:** Weezer?

**Taylor:** ... Weezer. Yes.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Yeah. And so I knew Jack Black in that regard. I feel like... Was there any other movie where I would've— Like, *School of Rock* was really the one for me where I really loved Jack Black, right?

**Taylor:** Yeah, but you were such a fan of *High Fidelity*. And he is...

**Sydnee:** Well, that's true. That's true.

**Taylor:** I feel like that was a lot of people's introduction to Jack Black.

**Sydnee:** Yes, this is true. And I'm certain that that was an introduction I had to Jack Black prior to that, absolutely. But I think what's weird is, as you say that, I'm 100% aware that he is in that movie, and I have seen it many, many times, and yes, that tracks... but that movie, to me, is just like... It's just John Cusack, in my head.

**Taylor:** Well, sure. He's the dreamy one in that movie, yeah.

**Sydnee:** You know what I mean? And especially when I watched it, and I was like, [adoringly] "Oh! Oh, John Cusack..." Like— Because I was, you know, a teenage girl, and I fell in love with that character. I think he just eclipsed all other characters in the movie, for me.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** You know what I mean?

**Taylor:** No plot points, no understanding of what the core themes are. One of which is, "This guy's actually kind of terrible. Nope, just... just all about him."

**Sydnee:** It took me a long time to realize that. That was an adult revelation, when I realized, like, Rob is not... is not Mr. Right. Like... I mean, it really— the whole concept of "It's not what you're like; it's what you like," that... that was pervasive through many years of my youth.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** It took me a long time to outgrow that.

**Taylor:** I mean, there is a...

**Sydnee:** I mean, I'm...

**Taylor:** ... generation of people harmed by that belief. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yes. Don't you think?

**Taylor:** Yeah...

**Sydnee:** In like, top five lists of comparing, and just completely eliminating somebody as a potential— not just like romantic option, but any sort of friendship, partnership, hanging out with, based on their musical taste, or something.

**Taylor:** Right.



**Sydnee:** I mean, that used to be really, like... normal.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] Well, that was not great. I don't defend that. I don't look back, and go, like, [longingly] "Those were the days... Where if somebody was like, „You know, I really like the *Green Album*,’ you were like, „[shocked gasp] Get away from me!”

**Taylor:** It's true. I mean, I'd imagine we are out of touch with the youth of today. I feel like they probably have those same systems of judgment, because that's just called being young and kind of immature. And, you know, when your entire world is the band you're into, then it only makes sense to... only have a partner who is into that band.

**Sydnee:** I guess that's true. It forgets the fact that some day you grow up. And while you still *like* things - I mean, I still like music, and movies, and obviously, we talk about them on the show. I like all those things. They no longer define me.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. You have to move past that. I think the problem is that the movie sort of... [laughs] The movie offers the suggestion, "What if you never did?"

**Taylor:** Yeah. Or, like, you never *should*, even.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. "What if we just stay there, forever?"

Yeah. Anyway, so I kind of forget... Yes, Jack Black is in that movie.

**Taylor:** That's fair. That's fair.

**Sydnee:** But I really think, um... *School of Rock* was when I looked at Jack Black, and went, "Oh! Okay!"

**Taylor:** "What you got going on? What's this about?"

**Sydnee:** "Okay! Hey! ... Hey!"

**Taylor:** Yeah. You know, I was thinking, something that both movies have in common is that Jack Black— Which I think is cool. I mean, it really shouldn't even be something that we can remark on, but this is the world we live in: usually, a guy like him... like, not playing the goofy, comedic role— Like, he is kind of a... [laughs] kind of a loser, in both movies.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** But the loser that he's playing is the kind of... you know, the "rock god in his own mind," alt cool guy that everybody had a crush on.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** And, you know, that's... I like that— I think Jack Black is conventionally attractive, but that he's not kind of forced into that role in either of these films, of like, "But he's the goofy fat guy!" Like, that's not... you know.

**Sydnee:** No. He's incredibly confident.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Right? Like, in both movies. I mean, he has... like, complete belief in himself as a rock god, as a star. There's no moment of, like, "You know, I haven't been successful in my [laughs] musical career. Could it be me?" No. He is not considering that, whatsoever.

And that shouldn't be attractive, but it is...?

**Taylor:** Oh, yeah.

**Sydnee:** I mean— You know? Because especially in *School of Rock*, focusing on that, his unerring belief that he is a rock star has led him to, living in his brother's house... you know, not really having a way to pay the bills, or

contribute in any way to them paying their bills. And he's obviously getting on his brother's girlfriend's nerves. And, like... you know—

**Taylor:** Is he his brother? I thought it was just a friend.

**Sydnee:** I thought they were brothers.

**Taylor:** Well, anyway, yes.

**Sydnee:** You know what? I may have just assumed that they were brothers. In my head, they're brothers.

**Taylor:** I feel like that would make...

**Sydnee:** They're probably just friends.

**Taylor:** ... Sarah Silverman's character much meaner, [through laughter] if it was his brother! [laughs]

**Sydnee:** She— I feel kinda bad. I know we're talking about Jack Black in *School of Rock*, but can I just say... I feel a little bad for Sarah Silverman, in that movie. „Cause I feel like she is not given any depth, other than... like, a B. The word that rhymes with “witch.”

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I feel like that's, like, her whole direction. Is, “Just be as mean as you can, and say the meanest thing, and dismiss everything, and just be mean.”

**Taylor:** Well, and Jack Black is not kind... like, he's not *kind* to her. One of the first lines that he says, “Oh, I'll make this money, and then I'll throw *you*,” and he points to, you know, the guy, “and your dog,” and he points to Sarah Silverman, “a bone.” And I'm like, “Oh, he just called her a dog!”

Yeah, so he's living rent-free in their house. And he just insulted— yeah, I would want him out, too. Just as an adult that pays rent...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** ... and knows how hard it is to pay rent, [laughs] I would want that man out of my house.

**Sydnee:** Well, it is frustrating. He *isn't* contributing, and that's— you know, he's pursuing his dream, but he could, like, help. [laughs] I don't know. And he's not helping her around the house, either. He's not like, "I can't give you money, but can I help keep things clean, and neat, and run errands for you?" or is like, "Can I contribute in other ways?"

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** There are lots of ways to be a team member. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Well, and it's definitely— because at the end, when she's in that final fight with the— I don't know, brother-friend? Uh...

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm. [laughs] I may have just, in my head...

**Taylor:** I swear they're just friends.

**Sydnee:** ... just decided they were brothers. They're probably just friends; you're probably right.

**Taylor:** When she says, "You need to learn how to stand up for yourself." And then he leaves, right? He leaves, and goes to the show. And I think the insinuation is, "Okay, by that, he is standing up to *her*. And he's going to support his friend..."

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** ... and then they show them at the end, running the rock school together. So he's pursuing his dream again. So *she* was the problem all along, telling him to... be practical, and live a realistic life. Which, eh, you know, I... either way, it's fine, but... [laughs] it is a harsh edit.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. It *is* a harsh edit. I feel like... It's funny. That's one of those characters that— I mean, she's not a major character in the movie. Like, you're not really supposed to be focused on that; that's not what the movie's about.

But looking at it now, through today's lens, 2025, I don't think you'd see a character written like— I would hope. You wouldn't see a character written like that today. Like... you hope women are given a little more dimension than just, "Oh, you're gonna be the real nag of a girlfriend who is a total bummer."

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** You know?

**Taylor:** Well, I think it's also sort of an archetype of that time period. „Cause I think it's the same as the Benny edit, you know, all of the... looking back at *RENT*, and going, "I don't know. Benny was just... I mean, everybody needed to have a roof over their head."

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** And you *should* really...

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** You should pay your rent. [laughs] It's right there, in the name of the show. You should pay your rent. [laughs] Important to...

**Sydnee:** It's... I know. No, it's true. It's hard, because, like... Aw, man, now we're gonna talk about *RENT*. We shouldn't talk about *RENT*, but...

**Taylor:** No. No, just talking about *School of Rock*.

**Sydnee:** No. You— He is right that you do have to pay rent, but also the system of landlords of somebody making their living off of owning your house...

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** ... is corrupt, and wrong. And I do believe in a revolution [laughs] that would end that. However, that's not what people on *RENT* are trying to do, either. Like, they're not trying to stage a revolution, and change the system for everybody. They're just trying to hang out.

**Taylor:** Yeah, they just want to hang out for free...

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** ... and make their art that they don't really try hard on.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** It's similar to some of the complaints when we were talking about *Girls*, where it's like, "No, no. It's *cool* to pursue your passion..."

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** "... but to do so while taking advantage of kind people around you isn't punk rock, or revolutionary." It just makes you kind of a...

**Sydnee:** Right.

**Taylor:** ... a jerk.

**Sydnee:** Right. That's— yes. It's complex.

**Taylor:** There should be a world where artists can live for their art, but maybe having a job that just easily pays your bills, not the hardest... it's not the end-tier [laughs] talent.

**Sydnee:** Which, I think, is the issue with Dewey, is that he is living there, he's not paying rent, and he also somehow feels entitled to do that. Like, you get the sense that he feels like this is what he deserves.

**Taylor:** Well, you know, the visuals of the movie, like when you get to the end and he has... he is running the School of Rock. So he *has* created a day job for himself, you know. He doesn't become a rock god.

**Sydnee:** Right.

**Taylor:** They don't win battle of the bands. He doesn't get his dream come true.

So the story of, like, "You kinda need to come down from your high horse, and you need to do something that supports you that's not just the dream," that *is* the narrative. He just never recognizes it in the story. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** No. No. Because he's still a rock god, in his own mind.

**Taylor:** Which is— I guess it's fine. You know...

**Sydnee:** I mean, I do. I think that's fine. And „cause I think what we're also supposed to be embracing is that all these kids were getting, like, a really uptight... [laughs] education. Like, a one-sided view of life. And that through music— Although they already had a music class, I will say.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** So I guess specifically rock music.

**Taylor:** Rock and roll. Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. So it's really, like, that rock music is important for the development of young minds.

**Taylor:** It lets you express yourself.

**Sydnee:** I [crosstalk]. [laughs]

**Taylor:** It's funny, because it shows - especially with the last couple conversations that the kids have between each other, where they're all... like, the dialogue that's written for the children, as they just... they, like, say

more curse words, and insult each other more. And it's like, "Oh, see, now they're being *real*. Now, they're *real kids*." [laughs]

Like, now they're just like rude kids. But that's fine, I don't know. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I would say, you know, I could make a case that I know— I know what they do at the end is a rock show.

**Taylor:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** I know it's not a theatrical production. But I feel like— I *feel* like it's a great argument for theater, for getting kids involved in theater. Because that's essentially what he does, right, by creating all these different positions for the kids. Like, some of them are playing instruments, some of them are singing, some of them are doing costume, some of them are doing lighting shows, some of them are stage managing, some of them are... You know, they're all doing different aspects—

This is theater that these kids are involved in. Like, that's the corollary.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** He created a children's theater.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** And if that's what the movie's about, I'm on board!

**Taylor:** I mean, I would say that it's definitely... those are very much theater kids [through laughter] by the end of the...

**Sydnee:** Yes, they're theater kids! [laughs] Except they're not— Thank God they're not making out. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Wow.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] That's what happens when they get a little older. That's when we get to, like, eighth grade, ninth grade, and into high school. Then,



you don't even wanna... don't— listen. We don't need a movie about that. „Cause they're all making out.

**Taylor:** Yeah. But I do think the overlay of rock, specifically— And, you know, there were moments when I paused it. When he's got the whole diagram of rock history on the board. It's actually, like— I mean, I'm sure it's not hard to find a guy that works in movies that could write that on the board very thoroughly...

**Sydnee:** Sure.

**Taylor:** But there's a lot of guys [laughs] that— Just turn to any personal assistant, like, "Could you write a diagram of the history of rock and roll on this chalkboard?"

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** "Yes, I could." A lot of dudes that could do that.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Uh...

**Sydnee:** "Do you need to do any research?"

"No."

**Taylor:** "No, not at all."

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Taylor:** There is that, though, that's nice, running through the movie, the history of rock and roll. And you've seen it, specifically, more so than theaters. You know, you're not singing somebody else's words; you're singing your own. You know, the song...

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** ... that the guitarist kid writes is a really cool song. Like, it's a cool song about, you know... thinking outside the box, and thinking for yourself.

**Sydnee:** And it is interesting, because in that moment where Dewey says, "We need to play *your* song, it's better..."

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** ... like, he's being earnest. "Your song is better; we should play it." There's no ego in it.

But then it is interesting, like, so does he learn the lesson at the end that helping these kids become these best versions of themselves, and embrace all *aspects* of yourself, like the parts of you that do well in school, and follow the rules, and want to achieve. But then the parts of you that maybe wanna break the rules a little bit, and push back, and question authority. Like, embracing all of that, and then creating your own thing, and finding your voice.

Like, I guess the message could be, "And he learns that that's *so much more* important than being a rock-and-roll star." But I don't know that we... [laughs] I think you would have to— That's me, like, *putting* that on the story. I don't think that's on the movie. I think that's just me saying, like, "Yeah, I bet he learned that. Sure. That seems like a thing that somebody could learn."

**Taylor:** I mean, he kind of is. I think especially in that scene when they lose the battle of the bands, and Jack Black is upset for like, a minute... and the kids are like, "Who cares? We didn't come to win; we came to play." And like, you know, it's... "It's punk rock to lose! It's cool, that this is what we did."

And he's like, "You're right!" Like...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** He does *learn*. It's just maybe... I don't know. Maybe this is just a conversation more about media literacy. I think the movie shows that he

does change; he just never has a moment where he says, "Hey, you know what I learned today? [laughs] You know what I realized about life?"

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Which is good, actually. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** That probably would've ruined it. [laughs]

**Taylor:** I don't know. I feel like, nowadays, movie kind of feel the need to do that. Because, you know...

**Sydnee:** Yeah...

**Taylor:** ... it's... I don't know. But... I like that. He shows his change of behavior.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. There are definitely movies, now, that I feel like they need to hit you over the head with, "You see the... this is the message here, right? This is an allegory."

Can we talk for a minute— „cause we've talked about *RENT*, and I don't know if this was like, subconscious that we brought up *RENT*...

**Taylor:** Oh, right. Adam Pascal.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Can we... [laughs] Can we talk about whatever the shirt... the weird shirt-sleeve-jacket-thing he's wearing in the [laughs] final battle of the bands?

**Taylor:** Well, now, *he's* just wearing an unbuttoned shirt. His...

**Sydnee:** Oh, no, it's the other guy.

**Taylor:** It's the other guy.

**Sydnee:** The guitarist.

**Taylor:** Yeah, that's right. He is wearing just sleeves, no shirt.

**Sydnee:** What is that?

**Taylor:** It's great. It's great, is what it is.

**Sydnee:** It's great? [laughs]

**Taylor:** He's got...

**Sydnee:** [laughing]

**Taylor:** ... just sleeves, no shirt, and a stomach tattoo.

**Sydnee:** Is it?

**Taylor:** I don't know.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** You know, like, the whole... the bimbocore style that very much came back for a minute, there?

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** Um, whatever that is, that's it, but for dudes. And I love it. More dudes should...

**Sydnee:** I don't know...

**Taylor:** ... should do that, whatever that is.

**Sydnee:** I don't know— whose gaze is that for?

**Taylor:** Pst. Mine. Everybody's.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** If you got an open mind, it could be yours.

**Sydnee:** Not mine. That's not— [laughs] That is *not* for my gaze. I don't know what to do with that. I don't...

**Taylor:** [crosstalk]

**Sydnee:** I don't know how to feel.

**Taylor:** I thought it was great, „cause the whole— the way they dressed that band - what were they called, No Vacancy? Adam Pascal's band?

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** Um, in the battle of the bands. It was so... It was so for the gaze. Take that to mean whatever [through laughter] you mean.

**Sydnee:** It is. It is, it is. Well, and maybe that's why. Like, I'm looking, and thinking, "Oh, you are not interested in me, [laughs] sir."

**Taylor:** It's all the long hair, and the exposed stomachs, and like, yeah, alright. Like, don't get me wrong, wanted the kids to win, but I'm not mad that these guys did. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs] "No Vacancy."

Why— Let me ask a question. So I do think that's a little cringy. Why is what Jack Black does *not*? „Cause it's not. And consistently.

**Taylor:** What do you mean?

**Sydnee:** Well, I was thinking about— the kids are really into that song, the chicken song from the *Minecraft* movie.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** And we were talking about it, this morning: was that written, or does he just, like... come up with this stuff? „Cause it's very— you hear that, and you're like, “Oh, that's Jack Black.”

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** Right? Like, you don't hear that, and think, “I wonder what artist created this piece of music.” Like, no, that sounds like Jack Black. That's his thing.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** And there's something about it, like, that it's been the same for so long. And that it feels... it's not dated, but it's the same thing he's been doing for a long time.

**Taylor:** Well, I mean, he did the same thing with the *Mario* movie, with the peaches song.

**Sydnee:** Yes. It's the same thing. Why— I feel like it should be cringy, and it's not.

**Taylor:** I mean, that would be like asking if Weird Al is cringy.

**Sydnee:** ... Well, why isn't he?

**Taylor:** „Cause he's Weird Al!

**Sydnee:** He's not!

**Taylor:** I mean, I don't know. I think, like... Or, like, is Dolly Parton cringy? I think when someone— I've talked about this before, but it's that whole, you know, “Knowing who you are, and doing it on purpose.” Having that level of, like, just knowing what you do best, and just doing it really freaking well...

It operates outside of the realm of, like, this fear we have to say whether or not we like something. “Oh, no, is that gonna make me not cool, whatever?”

Like, you just see somebody doing their own thing, and even if it's not your particular thing, you have to go like, "Oh, that's cool. *That's* cool."

Jack Black is somebody that seems to know exactly who he is, and exactly what he can do, and he seems to be really into doing it. And even if it's not your thing, you can't look at that and be, like, not impressed.

**Sydnee:** It's weird, though, because I really think he transcends... that archetype, like, which he's done since he was young. So I think if you imagine the teenage boy who gets really obsessed with metal, and then is always talking about, like... metal, and the album covers being cool, and that kind of stuff. And that is a very... I don't know. I feel like that's a specific kind of nerd, you know? It wasn't ever... Even if the music was cool, that sort of obsession wasn't ever seen as cool. But he has made it cool, and has kept it cool.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And it shouldn't be. If you describe it, it sounds, like, *very* dorky. And it's not.

**Taylor:** I don't know. But it's cool when it's real, when it's authentic. And I mean, I guess that's sort of, like... I mean, we went through a lot of [laughs] YWCA shows. A lot of, you know, young bands.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** And there's something that I think—

**Sydnee:** [laughing] "A lot of YWCA shows."

**Taylor:** Yeah. Yeah. [laughs] Not even the YMCA. [laughs] It was a W.

**Sydnee:** [through laughter] No, dude, they couldn't play— they couldn't *fill* the YMCA! They had to play the YWCA; that's the smaller venue. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Well, there's this thing, and it's... You know when an artist - and I think it's especially egregious when it's a dude musician up on stage - who is

just singing, but they're also definitely thinking, like, "I bet I look so cool, right now." And it just takes you out of it so intensely, it's like, "Aw, come on..."

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Like, yeah, alright... You're living your little... moment, up here.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** But you are so hyper-aware of what you look like. It's that sort of weird reflection back. It's just not cool.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** And you can get every move down for playing the role of somebody like that, and you will still come across as uncool. But then some people are just born that. Like, you can't convince me that there's a moment of Jack Black's performances that is inauthentic. And I think we will always be wooed by authenticity.

And, I mean, that's— like, look at the people I just made. Dolly Parton is mainly country, western. Weird Al is polka? Jack Black does this, like...

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** ... metal god thing, right? Very different genres. They just figured out exactly who they are, and what they do well, and they do it well. And you know, you just gotta hope that whatever you are naturally is cool, I guess. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Do you think, though, that it's not what you are naturally is cool, it's that you just are it?

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like, that is the X factor. Like, that is the— when we think about, like, charisma, and how— I mean, there's some obvious things. Like, people



who are... you know, easy to talk to, and open... Do all the nonverbal cues that make people feel safe, and welcome. And you know, we can talk about— there's, obviously, a lot more that goes into it.

But then there's just a thing that some people have. And you see them on screen, or you meet them, or whatever - you see them onstage - and they just have the thing. And you know the thing. And you can't— It's that "thing."

I'm wondering if that's what we're really talking about.

**Taylor:** I mean, I think it's on wavering belief in what you're doing. Like...

**Sydnee:** Just for the sake of doing it?

**Taylor:** Yeah. Unwavering belief in who you are. You can't question it for a minute; the *minute* you question it, people see through it. Those little cracks form. And I think that's what...

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** I don't know. Maybe that's the X factor? Maybe it's just...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** ... incredibly well-developed delusion. [laughs]

Like Lady Gaga! Lady Gaga has it. I don't know what it is...

**Sydnee:** She does.

**Taylor:** ... but she's one of those people that, no matter how— whatever she's doing, you take it as like, "Yep. That is the right thing."

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** You *should* have that weird, giant bug monster come out on stage, or wear that neat dress, or... [laughs] chew on that plastic.

**Sydnee:** Or have a diamond in your mouth, while you're talking? [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah. That's what you should be doing. I don't know.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** You gotta...

[pause]

**Sydnee:** Yeah. No, I mean, it's interesting. Because I do think, like, that is—that is why— It is remarkable to me that a movie like *Shallow Hal* was ever made...

**Taylor:** Oh, yeah.

**Sydnee:** ... and [laughs] Jack Black was able to survive that. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah...

**Sydnee:** Right? Like, that movie shouldn't exist.

**Taylor:** Well, I mean, I think Jack Black is always gonna be at his best when he's doing something that is very Jack Black adjacent, you know? He's been in lots of...

**Sydnee:** Yes. And not that.

**Taylor:** Yeah. I mean, that's not his strong suit.

**Sydnee:** No. He's also a jerk in it, which is not how I think I perceive him, ever.

**Taylor:** Mm.

**Sydnee:** Like, maybe deluded at times, but not a *jerk*.

**Taylor:** Yeah. Yeah, I think the less we say about that will be the better.  
[laughs]

**Sydnee:** It's unfortunate that the movie exists. I mean, I'm not defending it. I'm saying I'm glad that Jack Black's still around after that terrible movie was made. [chuckles]

**Taylor:** Everybody in that movie, I think, has apologized for it. Well, and, I mean, look at that movie, but then look at the speech - well, not the speech - the conversation she has with the young singer in school of rock. Where he says, like, "What? I like to eat, is that a crime?" Like, "I'm cool..."

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Like, "I'm a rock god," or whatever. He says, "I'm cool, and chubby." It's not— just because I'm this doesn't mean I can't be this. It's like, "Yeah, it's just a fact about me. Who cares?"

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Like, it just doesn't matter. Which I think is the healthier perspective to take on your, you know, weight. It just is what it is - let's move on! We don't need to make [through laughter] an entire movie about it.

**Sydnee:** No. We don't [laughs] need to make a whole movie with Gwyneth Paltrow about it.

And I think— But I think all of this, too, is also why I have to be honest, like... I was a little disappointed with the whole, um, Tenacious D situation, with him kind of... turning his back on Kyle. You know?

**Taylor:** Oh, yeah! Who... So he had made some political statements, right? And then Jack Black just sort of...

**Sydnee:** Yeah... He made— It was not a smart joke to make, I would say. From both just a PR, like, political standpoint, like joking about people... being killed is never, like, a great... I don't know. You're gonna rub people

the wrong way. Even if they agree with you politically, there are gonna be people who are like, "Oh, well, don't..."

And it was after the assassination attempt.

**Taylor:** Ahh...

**Sydney:** He made a comment that...

**Taylor:** That's right. That's right.

**Sydney:** I'm certain a comment that many people made. Um... quietly, and publicly, and online, and offline. I'm certain many people said similar things. But it put Jack Black in a position to either stand by him or kind of walk away, and I was disappointed that he walked away. „Cause... you know... I don't know.

We have all said thoughtless things at time, without really considering the ramifications or, like, the... "Is that the best way to express this sentiment, or the time or the place?" You know, we've all done that.

**Taylor:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydney:** And I think that specifically, when it comes to Donald Trump, I don't know that any of us have, like... like, nuanced or... [laughs] or, like, quiet emotions. Right? Like, we all have strong feelings. And so... I don't know.

I was a little disappointed to see that, because I feel like especially with as big a star as Jack Black is, he could've helped him weather that, you know? It didn't *have* to be the end of his career.

**Taylor:** Has it been the end of his career?

**Sydney:** Well, I mean, I don't know what... I don't know what he's going to do without Jack Black.

**Taylor:** I think that's just— I don't know, I don't exist in that level of... Clearly. [laughs] This is that level of celebrity I can't possibly understand how their decisions are made. But I wonder if it's not, like, a concern for the Streisand Effect.

Like, well, now if Jack Black gets involved, does it become a bigger thing? Versus something that's just, like...

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** ... it's in a 24-hour news cycle, and then it's gone, and then they can just go back to being Tenacious D.

I would hope that would be the thought of it, „cause that's the truth. Like, sometimes, I'm sorry, but it's true: making a performative statement to make yourself look good for the people that will decide if you're a good person or not from a statement...

And I'm not saying that Kyle's statement was performative; I think he was just speaking from a place of anger, which is justified.

**Sydnee:** Sure.

**Taylor:** You know, sometimes, you have to— I would imagine that these people with these massive platforms have to do the math of, "Will I make it worse?"

**Sydnee:** It looks like they went... they canceled their world tour, and put their work on hold in July of last year, after he made the comment. And then that's... That's the last I know of.

**Taylor:** Well... I don't know.

**Sydnee:** I know. I thought that was unfortunate. And this isn't me saying, [grumpy tone] "So forget Jack Black!" I'm just saying, like, I was disappointed.

**Taylor:** I mean, he's also been in massive studio things. *The Mario Movie*, the *Minecraft* movie. I don't think you can work with those studios, if you're controversial.

**Sydnee:** Right. Well, and I mean, he isn't, right? He wasn't saying that. I don't know what... I would imagine his— I would *assume* his politics are similar, but he wasn't making comments like that. I don't know.

I don't know. Maybe they aren't. I tend to assume... [laughs] That's a terrible thing. I tend to assume anybody I like, like, "You probably... You probably also..."

**Taylor:** I think we're all guilty of that.

**Sydnee:** Right? Like, he wouldn't vote for Donald Trump, *right?*

**Taylor:** No, I don't...

**Sydnee:** *Right?* [laughs]

**Taylor:** Every now and then, I'll have a celebrity that I like, and I'll think, "I gotta look up what they're into." You know?

**Sydnee:** Yeah...

**Taylor:** Sometimes, you got those that are a little— I remember having that moment with Jimmy Buffett forever ago. Like, "You know what? Actually, wait a second." [laughs] And like, "Oh, good, good, good. Okay." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Okay. No, they definitely— they supported Obama. They did an anti-Donald Trump show... Okay.

There's just— There are certain lines you just, I don't know, if you're gonna cross „em, you gotta accept what's gonna come with them, and so...

**Taylor:** Yeah. I love that Billy Joe's out there, every night. It's like, the first time I saw Green Day do the "I'm not part of the MAGA agenda," you know, line in "American Idiot." I'm like, "Yeah, alright, punk rock!"

But now, it's like, they do it over and over again, and I keep getting videos like, "Look, they did it again!" I'm like... So he's like, "Yeah, see? Still saying it! Still speaking out!"

I'm like, "I love that for you, Billy Joe Armstrong. [laughs] You will always be punk." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** We all use the tools we have, I guess. [laughs]

**Taylor:** You know, and I love it. I love it. „Cause there's always gonna be delusional people on the right that somehow perceive of a world where the punk rock thing to do is be conservative. It's like, thank you... Thank you for doing the bare minimum, Billy Joe. But you are, and I love you for that.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Yeah, no, it's not punk rock to be conservative, at all.

**Taylor:** No, and it's not punk rock to not back your band mate.

**Sydnee:** Mm-mm.

**Taylor:** I'm not defending it; I'm just saying— I don't know... There's probably a lot of publicist math that people are doing on situations like that. People can't just...

**Sydnee:** Sure.

**Taylor:** ... respond authentically.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. No, I get that. Which is why I'm not out here saying, like, "I'm..."

[laughs] Cooper has a book. It's like a kid's book. Have you seen those they've made? They're not, like, *Golden Books*, but they're retellings of movies or TV shows. Like, we have a *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* one...

**Taylor:** [laughs] Oh, why not?

**Sydnee:** ... and we have a *Home Alone* one, and we have a *School of Rock* kid's book. It's like an illustrated, condensed book of *School of Rock*. And it's really cute, and it's well done, and Cooper is obsessed with it. „Cause the kids love the movie, and so we've seen the movie dozens of times, and now we've read this book dozens of times, and I'm not, like, gonna go burn the book in protest, but...

**Taylor:** Yeah, don't do that.

**Sydnee:** No. I would never. But I am disappointed, that's all.

**Taylor:** Well... I mean, how's... [laughs] I was gonna say— So much has spun off of it. Like, I don't know. You've seen the musical, right? The live show?

**Sydnee:** Yes. I have— Well, not... yes. Not actually in a theater. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Oh! Oh, you've seen—

**Sydnee:** Ooh. Ooh!

**Taylor:** [crosstalk].

**Sydnee:** Well... Listen. It is hard— We have to choose shows to do every summer, and sometimes it's hard. I've never had the opportunity to see a show. I feel like theater should be easier to access.

**Taylor:** No, I agree with that wholeheartedly.

**Sydnee:** You know?

**Taylor:** I don't understand why more shows are not professionally shot. I mean, I *do*, because that's how... Well, okay, that's a complicated issue. Because ticket sales are suffering...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.



**Taylor:** ... so much right now on Broadway that you have to at least have the exclusivity of "You've gotta come here and see it, 'cause that's the only way we can sell tickets." But it's also an unfortunate circumstance, because it limits accessibility, so...

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** You're putting the ability for theater to exist at all up against the ability for people to access theater at all. Well, what a [laughs] fun choice you have to make.

**Sydnee:** I know. It's complicated; I think that is a nuanced kind of topic. And I have seen it, and I would like us to do it, one summer. I think it would be a lot of fun to perform here.

**Taylor:** I feel really lucky to have gone to see *School of Rock* when it was Alex Brightman playing the main role.

**Sydnee:** Yeah!

**Taylor:** And I didn't know who he was, at that point. I mean, I'm sure he'd been in things. I'm just not up on my theater. And I was so— I was like, "This guy is so cool. How do you fill—" My thought going in is like, "Oh, I don't wanna watch a bad Jack Black impersonation. Like, Jack Black is the only person that can do Jack Black."

It's like, yeah. „Cause Alex Brightman didn't do Jack Black. Alex Brightman does Alex Brightman! [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** It's one of those people that just does his thing so well. And, uh...

**Sydnee:** He's really great. What I have seen was him, and he's fantastic.

**Taylor:** Oh, yeah. Yeah, he was just so... Then, when he was in *Beetlejuice*, I'm like, "Oh, okay. Now, [laughs] I like this guy. I'm gonna follow everything he does."

**Sydnee:** "This is his thing."

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. "This is *his* deal."

**Taylor:** Absolutely.

**Sydnee:** Well, Tey, I think it was a good suggestion to talk about *School of Rock*, „cause I enjoy talking about Jack Black, and... again, I've seen that movie so many times, because the girls just love it.

**Taylor:** [laughs] Do they have favorite characters of the kids?

**Sydnee:** They both, I think, feel like if they were in it, they would be... oh, what's her name? The manager.

**Taylor:** Miranda Cosgrove? That's the actress, right?

**Sydnee:** Yes. I was trying to think of her character's name, and I can't think of her character's name.

**Taylor:** She's so...

**Sydnee:** But yes.

**Taylor:** Yeah. She's so young in this. I almost didn't recognize her, because I was like, "That looks like that one actress, but if she was really young." And it's like, "Oh, no. This movie's just old." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** That's her. Yeah. They both feel like they would be her.

**Taylor:** That's cool.

**Sydnee:** Except they would also sing, they have clarified. [chuckles]

**Taylor:** My favorite kid was probably the drummer...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** ... that was on a queer punk rock trajectory. I like how quickly they did that, like... [laughs] He just goes from being like, some kid that likes to set things on fire, to having his hair spiked up...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** ... his sleeves rolled up. Like, aw, yeah... [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I like the keyboardist.

**Taylor:** Ah, he's great, yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, he's great. Alright, well, Tey, what are we talking about next week?

**Taylor:** Well, since we've got the new *Hunger Games* book out...

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** You mentioned that you had just [laughs] finally seen the newest *Hunger Games* movie, so...

**Sydnee:** [giggles] Yes.

**Taylor:** *Songbirds and Snakes*?

**Sydnee:** *A Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*. Yes, I finally watched it. I never read the book, so I held off a long time watching it, and I finally did. „Cause it was in the zeitg— „Cause of TikTok.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** „Cause TikTok kept showing me... [laughs] clips from the *Hunger Games* movies, and then talking about the new book, and so I just finally said, "Okay, I'll watch the movie."

**Taylor:** There you go.

**Sydnee:** So I think we should talk about it.

**Taylor:** Yeah. So we talked about the original movies. We won't be spoiling the new book, but we will be talking about [laughs] this movie.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

Alright, well, thank you, Tey. Thank you, listeners. If you've never seen *School of Rock*, you really should. It's a great... It's fun for kids, so it's a family watch. Your kids will love it, too.

You should check out MaximumFun.org, and check out all the great shows there that you would enjoy. You can email us at StillBuffering@MaximumFun.org. And thank you to the Nouvellas for our theme song, "Baby You Change Your Mind."

[theme song gradually starts playing, increasing in volume]

**Taylor:** This has been *Still Buffering*, a cross-generational guide to the culture that made us.

**Sydnee:** I'm Sydnee McElroy.

**Taylor:** And I'm Taylor Smirl.

**Sydnee:** I am still buffering...

**Taylor:** And I am, too.

[theme song plays]

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