

## **Still Buffering 401: The Rise and Fall of a Midwest Princess – Chappell Roan**

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[theme music, “Baby You Change Your Mind” by Nouvellas plays]

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

**Sydnee:** I’m Sydnee McElroy.

**Taylor:** And I’m Taylor Smirl.

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** I’m pushing really hard, guys.

**Taylor:** I was gonna say, you’re struggling!

**Sydnee:** I should’ve— You should’ve taken some of my meds first.

**Rileigh:** I took ibuprofen.

**Sydnee:** That’s not enough.

**Rileigh:** Let’s roll.

**Taylor:** How many packs of cigarettes did you smoke last night?  
[chuckles]

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** Apparently too many.

**Taylor:** It sounds like a lot?

**Sydnee:** I thought you kids just vaped these days.

**Taylor:** Vaped too hard.

**Rileigh:** Not the hardcore ones.

**Sydnee:** The hardcore ones still smoke?

**Rileigh:** Yep.

**Sydnee:** You vape and then you use those little... snuff pouches full of caffeine or whatever, nicotine or—

**Rileigh:** Zyns.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Those are full of nicotine. Not caffeine.

**Sydnee:** Well, whatever. [chuckles] Some sort of stimulant.

**Rileigh:** I would like to clarify I do not smoke or vape or Zyn.

**Sydnee:** Or Zyn.

**Rileigh:** I am sick. [chuckles]

**Taylor:** Thou shall not Zyn.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** I don't Zyn. Or sin.

**Taylor:** [chuckles]

**Sydnee:** I cannot believe that snuff is cool.

**Taylor:** I mean it's—

**Rileigh:** Apparently if you put it in little pouches.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But there have always been tho— now, the fact that it's just nicotine is new. Like, they used to be little pouches of like tobacco. But still. I didn't think I'd see a day that snuff would be cool. [chuckles]

**Taylor:** Never count out the tobacco industry for finding new ways to poison children. [chuckles]

**Sydnee:** Right?

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** The moment that they stopped fighting vapes and said, "No, actually never mind, we're fine with vapes," everybody should've been like, "Oh, wait, what? Uh-oh. Uh-oh!"

**Taylor:** Yeah, you'd think.

**Sydnee:** No. Did you all watch *Eurovision*?

**Raleigh:** I did not.

**Taylor:** No.

**Sydnee:** [sighs] Why don't you all watch *Eurovision*?

**Taylor:** Honestly, you watch weird funky— it's funky TV. You watch— it's like, "Did you watch *Eurovision*? Did you watch *Doctor Who*?" I'm gonna always answer no to those questions.

**Sydnee:** Okay, *Doctor Who* is great and classic.

**Raleigh:** I did watch *Doctor Who*.

**Sydnee:** Yes. It's so good, right?

**Raleigh:** It's very good.

**Sydnee:** It's very good.

**Taylor:** I watched the clips where Jinkx Monsoon was there.

**Rileigh:** Jinkx Monsoon was the main villain in the most recent episode.

**Sydnee:** Oh, I haven't watched that one yet. I watched "Space Babies," but I didn't watch that one.

**Taylor:** See, I just— I don't know. This is the funky TV that I know you're really into that I just don't. I do know there's drama with *Eurovision* because I get clips on it on my For You Page, but that's about it.

**Sydnee:** Here's the thing that— okay. First of all, *Eurovision* brought us ABBA. So I think we should always remember that, that *Eurovision* gave us ABBA. So thank you, *Eurovision*, for ABBA.

**Taylor:** Oh, okay.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Well, I mean, that's— they did "Waterloo" at *Eurovision* and won, and everybody was like, "Who are these? We love these people. This is great." Thank you.

*Eurovision* is always wild. It's a European song contest, if you don't watch *Eurovision*. Each country puts up their own offering and they have like numerous rounds.

We just watched the finals. I don't watch the semifinals and like how the country— The countries each have their own internal competitions to choose like who's gonna represent them as well. I don't know anything about all that part.

I just know the final where like... Oh, gosh. How many are in the final? Like 17 countries or something make it to the final round? And put up— it's a song that is supposed to kind of represent... either their country or something about their country or something that is inherently their culture.

Like it's a song for their whole country. I think that's fascinating. They have to choose "This is the song that we feel like best represents our whole country in this song competition."

**Rileigh:** So "Waterloo" was—

**Sydnee:** Yup.

**Rileigh:** — the entire country's song?

**Sydnee:** Okay, so that— exactly what you just said, that's the— that is the puzzle. And because I'm an American, I'll never solve it. The criteria that they're using— I don't know if it's—

Sometimes it's a song that's like, "Oh, that's just a good song."  
Sometimes the performer is like super talented. Like, "Oh my gosh, that's one of the best voices I've ever heard." Celine Dion competed once.

**Taylor:** Oh.

**Sydnee:** Not for Canada. [pause] Uh... Switzerland, I think?

**Rileigh:** Is she from there?

**Sydnee:** I don't believe so. Don't understand— You can draft people, I think.

**Taylor:** They just brought in a— Well, if you're gonna bring in a ringer, you bring in Celine Dion.

**Sydnee:** You bring in Celine Dion.

**Rileigh:** Huh.

**Sydnee:** So like sometimes it's like a fantastic singer. Sometimes the song is great. And then other times it's spectacle. Other times it's like, "Can you believe we're doing this?" And I don't understand—

We were watching it. We had a big group of friends over all watching it together and they were like, "Who do you think— like, who usually wins? Who are the best ones? Who's favored?" And I'm like, "I never know. The ones that I like best never win. I have zero ability to predict—"

Like, if you asked me at the end like, "Was that a good *Eurovision* performance?" I have no idea. I know the ones I like. I know the ones I think are funny. But if you asked me to rank like how well they did, I guarantee you it would be nowhere close to what the finals are.

Because part of it is an aesthetic that I don't think as an American I understand. Part of it is there's a popular vote. From people. Like people get to call in and vote. Part of it is there's also like a judge vote that's country specific.

And there are politics at play. Like obviously there are broad politics that I understand as a citizen of the world. But then there are like nuanced European politics that I don't understand or know are happening where countries are hated that I didn't know were hated. [pause] Do you know what I mean?

**Taylor:** Like, what—

**Riley:** Oh no.

**Taylor:** What's a surprise example of a hated country?

**Sydney:** Okay. Like I thought Estonia did pretty well. Like I thought their song was pretty good. And nobody liked Estonia. Like they got such little support that I started to wonder what did Estonia do?

Finland's was hilarious. Finland's had a performer named Windows 95 Man, who came out in a Windows 95 t-shirt and no pants. Like nothing on the bottom?

**Taylor:** That's what he did. You just said, "I don't know what they did," but you're describing a man with no pants, so I'm already not voting for that.

**Sydney:** He came out of a denim egg.

[pause]

**Taylor:** Uh...

**Sydney:** And there were other performers just dressed in these giant denim outfits. And then at the very end a pair of jean shorts are lowered on the stage dramatically to him so that he can put them on, so that he can have jean shorts on. And the song was called "No Rules."

[pause]

**Taylor:** [quietly] That actually sounds pretty rad.

**Raleigh:** That does sound pretty cool.

**Sydnee:** You should watch the video. You should watch the video.

**Taylor:** Now that I've seen the whole vision, I...

**Sydnee:** Yeah. You should watch the video. It's pretty funny. But they— But nobody else liked it, I guess. And so then I'm like, I don't... what— Did Finland do something that I didn't know about? I mean, sometimes it's obvious. Sometimes, like—

I mean, you know. Like... Ukraine has done very well. Their performances have been very good, but also I think that politically they are liked and supported, right? And so like you see Ukraine perform very well, and part of that is talent. Part of that is like, people are on the side of Ukraine.

**Raleigh:** Sure.

**Sydnee:** Russia was banned from the competition. We understand some of these politics. [chuckles]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But then there are other things that I don't always— I'm like, "I don't know what happened there." [chuckles] That's the mystery of *Eurovision*.

**Raleigh:** I think I can tell my brain isn't working at full speed today because I just tried to look up "What did Estonia do?"

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** And of course it tried to tell me like the entire history of Estonia. It's like, "Well, no. I don't need to know about that right now. Just what did they do to make everyone hate them?"

**Sydnee:** There's always stuff like that. And like— And then there's the performers' names. There was obviously Windows 95 Man. The performer

who won from Switzerland, their name is Nemo. The performer from Ireland is named Bambie Thug.

**Taylor:** Yeah, I saw a lot of their videos on my For You Page. A lot of Bambie Thug.

**Sydney:** They were great. Yeah, I loved Bambie Thug's whole thing. The performance was great. The song was great.

**Taylor:** I couldn't believe, 'cause I just kept seeing random clips, that it was all the same song.

**Sydney:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Because it's— it felt like very different genres. And then finally I was like, "I gotta see this whole thing," so I did seek that out, and it was really lovely.

**Sydney:** You should also watch Baby Lasagna from Croatia.

**Taylor:** Sure, yeah, of course.

**Riley:** Sorry? Sorry?

**Sydney:** Yeah, Baby Lasagna.

**Riley:** Okay.

**Sydney:** Yeah. It was great.

**Taylor:** Baby Lasa— from Croatia.

**Sydney:** It was fantastic. Croatia's performance with Baby Lasagna was fantastic. [chuckles]

**Riley:** Why is their name Baby Lasagna?

**Sydney:** I don't know! I don't— and I generally— Like, occasionally I'll just have to know like okay. Everybody seems to love this or hate this or whatever. And I have to like google and find out more.



But a lot of the times I just resist that urge and just accept that *Eurovision* is a mystery that I'm not— as an American, I'm not supposed to understand. And I'm also not supposed to weigh in on in terms of quality, right? Like, I don't... Why does my American opinion matter? It doesn't.

**Taylor:** Is it just all of Europe trying to out-weird each other? [chuckles]

**Sydnee:** Well, yes. But... When I was trying to read why did people not like Finland, I think part of it is they went too far. I think that they want it to be weird and a bit of a spectacle, but if it's too weird then I think they get offended.

Like, "Oh, come on. We're weird but we're not ridiculous." But I don't know what that line is, obviously. So I do think you can get too weird for *Eurovision*.

**Taylor:** Mm.

**Riley:** Can I ask, where do the judges come from? Because I feel like there would be a problem with bias if you have judges coming from countries that are competing.

**Sydnee:** Well, you're not allowed to—

**Taylor:** They're from Estonia.

**Riley:** Right.

**Sydnee:** You're not allowed to vote for your country, so all the judges... Like all the countries who compete get to throw votes out there.

**Riley:** Oh, okay.

**Sydnee:** But you just can't vote for your own country.

**Riley:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** So you get the judge— And it's like you give 12 points to the country you like best, and then it goes down from there.

**Riley:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** But there's more than 12 countries, but you only have 12—that's the max. And so every country gets to vote, but you can't vote for yourselves. And then there's the popular vote. And...

**Rileigh:** How do we know the country voting isn't strategic to say like, "Hmm, I think this country might do better than us—"

**Sydnee:** It is.

**Rileigh:** "— so even though they were good we're gonna give 'em one vote."

**Sydnee:** It 100% is.

**Rileigh:** Oh.

**Sydnee:** It 100%— At times you just see countries voting for each other who are allies, who are just close and like support each other.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. I was gonna say, it sounds like *The Circle*.

**Sydnee:** And like the o— So like Americans, they let us compete one year I think in like the semifinals, and then they hated us and we never made it any further. Because—

**Rileigh:** That does make sense. We're not in the Euro.

**Sydnee:** Well, but I think we just really wanted to be there, and so they let us. But I think that because there is a popular vote element to this, there would be no point. Why would we ever comp— like, everybody hates us. Which is— I mean, is not— you know. I mean, it's... well-earned.

**Rileigh:** Fair. Fair.

**Sydnee:** Like but that's also why... [chuckles] UK— the UK never does well. [laughs] Because they... they hate us. But they... A lot of Europeans hate the UK almost as much as us. Not as much. But almost as much.

**Taylor:** I don't know. I would say more in a lot of cases, yeah.

**Sydnee:** Maybe more. 'Cause of Brexit. But they got zero popular vote.

**Rileigh:** Wow.

**Sydnee:** Zero. It was wild.

**Taylor:** Yeah, I can believe that.

**Sydnee:** And their song wasn't— it wasn't bad. I thought it was actually pretty good. It was an interesting performance and decent song, but zero votes.

**Taylor:** Well, I feel like the dif— I mean, we've— we're over here just being big ol' dummies that they can point and laugh at. And, you know, that's America's whole vibe. Just a bunch of dummies over here.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** But the UK has like actively been... They've been over there doing their damage in the EU. Far more recently than we have. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Well, and I do wonder if it's the perception of Americans— And I have no idea, this is just me theorizing. Is that it's not that we're intending harm, we're just stupid. And so we cause harm. But that the UK is smarter, so their harm is intentional. I don't know.

**Taylor:** [laughs] Uh...

**Sydnee:** Like, we're just a big ol' country of idiots stompin' around, accidentally knocking stuff over or something.

**Taylor:** We are—

**Sydnee:** Which isn't true, by the way. [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** No. Our country is the personification of weaponized incompetence. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yes. I mean, there is—

**Taylor:** Emphasis on the “weaponized” part.

**Sydnee:** I mean, it’s just— we’re too big for it to be one thing. But like there is malicious intent sometimes. Some of it is incompetence. And then there’s a lot of apathy.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And then there’s a lot of people who are comfortable enough that they don’t pay attention. I don’t know. It’s a mixed bag over here.

**Taylor:** We could also never be goofy enough, clearly, for *Eurovision*. I don’t think we do silly goofy very well.

**Sydnee:** We take ourselves too seriously, generally.

**Rileigh:** I think—

**Taylor:** We can do irony. Look at our music, we’re very good at irony.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Rileigh:** I think if they let someone from like Appalachia, you know, like the Wild and Wonderful Whites or something to represent America.

**Taylor:** Yeah, the Dancing Outlaw. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah. I think that would be the best way to represent us, really.

**Sydnee:** Oh man.

**Taylor:** [sighs] Yeah.

**Rileigh:** It’s just silly enough. It doesn’t take itself too seriously, but it is taken seriously.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. And we’re— We’re kind of gonna go District 12 for our representation is what you’re saying.

**Taylor:** Mm.

**Riley:** Yeah. Yeah, like Lucy Gray Baird.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Riley:** Yeah. That's what I'm saying.

**Sydnee:** I just— I worry that we would send, like... I don't know what we would do. I can't even fathom. Like my worry is that it would end up being a country performance, and I don't hate all country music, this isn't me hating on country, but I mean like the bad—

**Riley:** I will hate on country.

**Sydnee:** Huh?

**Riley:** I will hate on country openly. I will do that.

**Sydnee:** There's old— Listen. When you say, "I hate all country music," what about Dolly Parton is the next question, right?

**Taylor:** What about Johnny Cash?

**Sydnee:** Right? So like there's old school country that would be cool.

**Riley:** Okay. okay.

**Sydnee:** What I'm talking about is the new country that isn't really music. That is just like a collection of nouns about America set to the same sort of twangy tune.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And its only purpose is to unite the worst people in the country against everyone else, right?

**Riley:** Morgan Wallen.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I mean new country. I don't mean old country. I mean the new crappy stuff.

**Riley:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah, no. Country's been co-opted. It used to be the music of the, you know, the unionizers and the rebels and the—

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** You know, the everyman. Like actually, and they sang about overthrowing the government and— [laughs] you know?

**Sydnee:** Right.

**Riley:** You know, Taylor Swift was up in there.

**Taylor:** Well, I don't know if she...

**Sydnee:** That's true. [chuckles]

**Taylor:** Uh... yeah.

**Riley:** She started out a little bit country.

**Sydnee:** She did.

**Taylor:** Old country would be very sad about what new country is.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** But old country could also kick the poop out of new country. So I would like to see that happen.

**Sydnee:** Which is an argument for like Appalachia representing us.

**Riley:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

**Sydnee:** But the other thing that you could say is like... rap and hip-hop is a very American music art form, you know what I mean? And so you could—

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** That would be another great way to represent our country in something that is true to us and like... you know... our culture.

**Rileigh:** We could send Taylor Swift.

**Taylor:** Well...

**Rileigh:** That would do good, right?

**Taylor:** Hmm...

**Sydnee:** I don't know. Maybe? Would she?

**Rileigh:** She's going on a whole European tour.

**Taylor:** She doesn't seem very good at being silly goofy.

**Rileigh:** Oh, she's very good at being silly goofy.

**Taylor:** I don't... I think she— maybe accidentally being silly goofy. When she's— Like that album you had us listen to last, when I would just have it on in the other room and walk into the room, it was kind of funny.

'Cause every time she'd be saying something spooky, like [chuckles] your weird friend that's way too convinced they're a witch, and she'd just be like, "Oh, I live in a creepy house," I'm like, "Okay, Taylor." Then I come back. She's like, "All of your curses belong to my soul," like, "Alright, Taylor. Sure, sure, sure." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs] I actually— I will say that when we were watching it we were talking about who could— Because there is a bit of camp. There is a bit of spectacle.

It is that... There's a European thing that is a little bit like... uh... flashy, disco-y... you know. You know what I'm saying? Like, not afraid of color and sparkle.

**Taylor:** Oh, I see where you're going. I see where you're going with this.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. I think there is an artist that would represent us well. That we're talking about this week.

**Taylor:** Oh. I thought you were gonna say Jojo Siwa.

**Raleigh:** Oh.

**Sydnee:** Oh! [laughs] Well.

**Taylor:** Come on. [chuckles]

**Raleigh:** I thought you were gonna say Usher's Super Bowl performance.

**Sydnee:** Oh, well no, there you go. There you go. Jojo Siwa invented gay pop, so she'd be perfect for this.

**Taylor:** I mean...

**Raleigh:** She would.

**Taylor:** She's very... sparkly, glitter, flashy... Don't know.

**Raleigh:** I just gotta say, if no one has seen the impression they did of her on SNL, I implore you to watch it.

**Sydnee:** No. [chuckles]

**Raleigh:** 'Cause... oh man, it's good. It was on Weekend Update.

**Sydnee:** Hey! Whoa-whoa there, siblings. We almost forgot to check the group message. This week on the group message we have a special message for you from Storyworth.

From all of the fathers, father-figures, the dads, the dad-like, the daddiest in your— Daddiest, you know, the most dadly in your life. It can be hard



to know what should you get 'em for Father's Day? What's the perfect gift?

And Storyworth has you covered, because we all know that the dadly types like to tell stories. They like to tell us about their lives. But sometimes if they're dadly like our dad is dadly, they want to tell you the same stories over and over and over again.

Like for instance, our dad was in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade when he was eight years old. He rode on a float with Soupy Sales and Ronald McDonald. Maybe there's some other stories we'd like to hear. Well, Storyworth has your back.

Each week they will email your loved one a thought-provoking question, and you get to help pick it. So not just that one time at Thanksgiving. Maybe you can hear a story about the bravest thing you've ever done, or a time where you felt super cool, or maybe your most embarrassing moment.

Something that maybe somebody wouldn't think to tell you, no matter how well you know them or how long you've known them, and you'd love to know that about that person. So your loved one will answer the question. They can include pictures if they want to.

And then after a year, Storyworth will compile your loved one's stories and photos into a beautiful keepsake hardcover book that you'll be able to share and revisit for generations to come.

You can even keep a copy of the book for yourself if you want to, which is a wonderful thing to do. I know it's the kind of thing I would love to do to show my children, to tell them stories about my dad, you know?

That, you know, he doesn't have to tell 'em, they can read them for themselves, which is really neat! Or anyone in your life. Doesn't have to be a dad. Any dadly figure, or anyone else. And Storyworth has more than 25,000 five-star reviews on Trustpilot with millions of stories preserved since they were founded, over a decade ago.

So, if you want to check out Storyworth for Father's Day, or for anybody and any reason in your life, give all the fathers in your life a unique heartfelt gift you'll all cherish for years, Storyworth.

Right now, save \$10 on your first purchase when you go to [storyworth.com/stillbuffering](https://storyworth.com/stillbuffering). That's [storyworth.com/stillbuffering](https://storyworth.com/stillbuffering) to save \$10 on your first purchase.

**Rileigh:** Anyways, we're not talking about the inventor of gay pop this week. [wheezes] Jojo Siwa. We're talking about—

**Taylor:** Just one of the disciples.

**Rileigh:** One of Jojo— [wheezes]

**Sydnee:** One of Jojo's disciples.

**Rileigh:** One of Jojo Siwa's disciples, Chappell Roan. It's not often I get to bring something to the table that we all already enjoy.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** I feel like usually if that happens it's one of you two bringing it because it's something, you know, that you all probably introduced me to at some point. But now I get to contribute Chappell Roan, who we all already like very much.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm. Who would do well at *Eurovision*, I think.

**Rileigh:** Yeah, you're probably right.

**Taylor:** I could see that. She definitely has some good costumes.

**Rileigh:** Oh yeah.

**Sydnee:** The costuming. And there's also, like... There are a lot of acts that are— I don't— Well, I mean, the winner, Nemo, is nonbinary. Barbie Thug is nonbinary.

There were quite a few acts that lean very strongly into like LGBTQ themes and culture. And like... I mean, I would assume some of the performers are also part of the community, just based on like the imagery they invoke and...

**Taylor:** [wheezes]

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

**Taylor:** That's a very delicate way of saying "That person looks very gay."

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** There's lots of, like— There were like dudes in like chaps and thongs. I don't know what you want me to think. I mean, like—

**Taylor:** Ehhh. It's Europe. I don't know.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, well... [laughs] I'm just saying, I think this would fit in very well.

**Taylor:** [chuckles]

**Raleigh:** I think you're right. I also think that her commitment to the bit and to campiness and to everything having a theme.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Raleigh:** That sounds like it would work very well.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Raleigh:** All of her shows have a theme.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Raleigh:** That you're supposed to dress according to, depending on what show you're at.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Having a theme, that's very gay. Mm-hmm.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. You can't just have a concert. It's gotta be a themed concert.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Which I do appreciate, because as someone who always frets so much and so deeply over what to wear to a concert or a music festival that usually I end up just putting on like jeans 'cause it's too much of a decision, I do appreciate someone telling me the theme. Like, "Here's what you wear. Here's what you dress as."

**Sydnee:** Can I make a humble suggestion? Find an article of clothing you like, and buy it in every color.

[pause]

**Rileigh:** Now, Sydnee, I know you did that with your overalls.

**Sydnee:** I did. [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** But, you know, concerts are like special occasions.

**Taylor:** Yeah. You wear your—

**Sydnee:** I have—

**Taylor:** You wear your dress-up clothes when you go to a concert.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I have dress-up overalls.

**Taylor:** No you don't. You don't, though.

**Rileigh:** [wheezes]

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** 'Cause those don't exist, so.

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I do. I do.

**Taylor:** No, no, no. No, you—

**Sydnee:** No.

**Taylor:** No, you don't. You don't. You definitely don't.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** There's no arguing that you do not possess those.

**Raleigh:** No.

**Sydnee:** They're the— They're different— They're the colors that are dress-up colors.

**Taylor:** Well, now, no. That's— there are no— What are dress-up— Actually, no.

**Raleigh:** Sorry, I was gonna say. Can I—

**Taylor:** What are— [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Can I know what are dress-up colors?

**Sydnee:** Black.

**Raleigh:** No.

**Taylor:** Mm, no. No.

**Sydnee:** That's classy.

**Raleigh:** Does that mean if I wear my leggings and my sweatpants that are black that... that's acceptable? That's dressy?

**Sydnee:** They're classier than blue.

[pause]

**Raleigh:** I don't know if I agree with that.

**Taylor:** No.

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Taylor:** No, that— I mean, yes, there is a timeless appeal to, say, a little black dress, but I don't think you can sub in a little pair of black overalls. [wheezes]

**Sydnee:** There— I saw somebody talking about on TikTok like the 90's, and they were talking about your— you would dress up in your black jeans. That's when you were trying to dress up is you would wear your black, your formal black jeans.

And I realized that whatever that moment in culture was, I adopted that. Because I have black jeans that I wear when I'm dressing up. [chuckles] And I think like, "Black denim is classy. Black denim is what you wear when it's time to dress up for the evening or for an event."

I tried to wear them to do a presentation and I was like, "I don't think I should wear jeans... for this. I feel like I have to wear dress pants." But anyway.

**Taylor:** Well, I mean, I— I would say you can dress up a pair of black jeans a lot easier than a pair of blue denim jeans. But the construction in a pair of overalls I think is what denies it its, um...

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Taylor:** Its functionality as a dress-up piece.

**Sydnee:** Is it the top pocket?

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Who knows what you're keeping in there?

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Raleigh:** Could be an egg roll. [chuckles]

**Taylor:** Yeah, hey—

**Sydnee:** Sometimes I keep a snack in there.

**Taylor:** If you got— If you could have the possibility of snacks like four inches from your face then you're not dressed up. I think we can all agree on that.

**Sydnee:** I put fun pins in that top pocket of all of 'em. They all have a different fun pin.

**Taylor:** Well.

**Sydnee:** Like, not writing pen. Like, P-I-N, you know? Like, I attach a little cute...

**Taylor:** Oh, you got some flair?

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Just one on each one.

**Raleigh:** I think that takes it down a step from the dressing up factor.

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Raleigh:** Although you probably would fit in pretty well at a Chappell Roan concert.

**Taylor:** Yeah, I bet there's a lot of overalls there, if you know what I mean.

**Raleigh:** [giggles]

**Taylor:** If you know what I mean!

**All:** [chuckle]

**Raleigh:** Um... Chappell Roan.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Raleigh:** Is a singer. She's your favorite artist's favorite artist. She is your dream girl's dream girl.

**Sydnee:** And you can't tell her what— You can't tell the audience what she's serving.

**Taylor:** No.

**Raleigh:** No.

**Sydnee:** We can't say that word on our show.

**Taylor:** No.

**Raleigh:** Can't say that on our podcast, but she is serving what you are. Um... if you know what I mean. She's 26. I just had to look that up because I actually was very curious how old she was. She's only two years older than me, which is crazy.

**Taylor:** That age feels correct, though. Because...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** If she was any younger I'd be like, how can you be that smart and be that young... and like just aware of yourself? Like, to have a full image of yourself. But if she was any older I don't think she could be as of-the-moment as she is. Like, that is—

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** That feels like the right age. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** What are you trying to say about people that are younger than 26?

**Taylor:** No, I mean, it's hard to know yourself to that— to be like that fully formed of an artist, you know?

**Raleigh:** Uh-huh.



**Taylor:** Not that there's an intelligence lack. It's just like, she clearly knows exactly who she is, and that's terrifying. [laughs] When you're that young.

**Raleigh:** That's true.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** I would also like to point out, her first name, her given name is Kayleigh.

**Sydnee:** Oh.

**Raleigh:** Spelled with an E-I-G-H. And it feels—

**Taylor:** Ohhh.

**Sydnee:** Ohhh.

**Raleigh:** And it feels very...

**Sydnee:** You feel connected.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Okay.

**Raleigh:** Close to me.

**Sydnee:** Sure. That makes sense.

**Taylor:** I see why she goes by Chappell.

**Raleigh:** No part of her real name is Chappell Roan. Her name is Kayleigh Rose... Amstutz.

**Sydnee:** Hm.

**Taylor:** Does she explain—

**Raleigh:** It's her given name.

**Taylor:** — where her stage name comes from?

**Sydnee:** Yeah, I wonder why she—

**Raleigh:** That's a good question.

**Sydnee:** I get Chappell is more like, I don't know, mysterious like than Kayleigh. You know, Kayleigh is more like, that's a name. That's like a normal name.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Oh.

**Sydnee:** But I wonder why she didn't go with Chappell Rose.

**Raleigh:** So, her stage name—

**Sydnee:** That feels natural.

**Raleigh:** — nods to her late grandfather. Chappell was his last name. And Roan for his favorite song, the cowboy tune, "The Strawberry Roan."

**Sydnee:** Oh, okay.

**Taylor:** Oh, I love that.

**Raleigh:** Said she wanted to honor her Missouri roots.

**Taylor:** That's very cool.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I found her because of TikTok. TikTok kept showing me clips of her performances and her songs.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. TikTok is a big fan of Chappell Roan's.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** She's got a lot of good TikTok-able soundbytes.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Rileigh:** And the outfits, of course, go very popular, go very hard.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** And the choreography.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Rileigh:** Gen Z loves a good choreography moment, 'cause it's like a TikTok dance.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** There for you.

**Sydnee:** I— You also get to spell something.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** So you learn, you know.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** There's an educational element to it.

**Rileigh:** And as Taylor Swift said, "Hey, kids. Spelling is fun."

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** And Chappell Roan took that seriously.

**Taylor:** You know, I'm glad I— The first time I heard the song where you spell, which is "Hot to Go," I couldn't understand why she was singing about hot dogs. 'Cause my brain kept thinking—

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** “Hot— hot doggo. Hot— no.”

**Sydnee & Rileigh:** [chuckle]

**Taylor:** [laughs] There’s not a D in there.

**Sydnee:** [sings to the tune of “Hot To Go”] “H-O-T-G-D-O-G-O.”

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs] Now that’s all I hear when I know it’s not. I know it’s “Hot to Go.”

**Sydnee:** [sings] “I would like a hot doggo.”

**Taylor:** [sings] “A hot doggo.”

**All:** [laugh]

**Rileigh:** I did, uh—

**Sydnee:** I’ve written the parody. The parody’s coming.

**Taylor:** Oh no! [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** [chuckles] I did teach Charlie and Cooper the “Hot to Go” choreography, which is where— you kind of do a “YMCA” moment, except you spell “Hot to Go”—

**Sydnee:** Right.

**Rileigh:** — with your arms. And after I showed them Charlie said, “Well, that’s not right.” [wheezes] And I said, “Sorry?” she said, “That’s not how you spell what she’s saying.” I was like, “H-O-T-T— No, I’m pretty sure that’s how you spell ‘Hot to Go’.”

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** And she was like, "No. She's talking about... hot toes." I was like—

**Sydnee:** Hot toes?!

**Rileigh:** I was like, "No, Charlie. No, she's not. She's not talking about hot toes."

**Taylor:** Hot toes?

**Rileigh:** She was like, "Are you sure?"  
"Yeah, I'm pretty sure. Pretty sure, Charlie."

**Sydnee:** What does Charlie think is... I don't even want to know.

**Rileigh:** That's what she thought she was saying.

**Taylor:** Did she say it like it was like a racy thing? Like, "She's singing about hot toes...?"

**Rileigh:** Yeah! She was like, "Hot toes, baby sis. She's singing about hot toes." I was like, "Charlie... I'm pretty sure I'm right here." [chuckles]

**Sydnee:** I'm gonna have to dig into that. [laughs]

**Taylor:** [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** But the thing with Charlie Gail McElroy is once she's sure of something, she's sure she's right about it.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** So it took some real convincing.

**Taylor:** Where did she get that?

**Rileigh:** Hmm. Where would she get that from?

**Sydnee:** Okay, well, I'd be careful there, Rileigh, before we throw too many stones. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Hmm, where would she get that from?

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Rileigh:** I had to show her many videos of Chappell Roan herself doing the choreography to show like, "See? That's what she's spelling. It's 'Hot to Go'. It's not hot toes."

**Taylor:** That's a relief, really nice.

**Sydnee:** I did enjoy after you taught them that you said, "See? It's sort of like the gay 'YMCA'."

**Rileigh:** Well, I meant—

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Sure, yeah. Well...

**Rileigh:** I meant the lesbian YMCA. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I know. No, it was just funny. 'Cause it's like... "YMCA" was pretty frickin' gay.

**Taylor:** "YMCA" was the gay "YMCA." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yeah. This is the lesbian "YMCA."

**Taylor:** Yeah, there you go.

**Rileigh:** It's the lesbian "YMCA."

**Sydnee:** "YMCA" is now the gay "Hot to Go."

**Taylor:** [quietly] Yes.

**Rileigh:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** There we go.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** We all get a spelling song. [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** Sure. Except for the straights.

**Sydnee:** The straights... don't know how to spell.

**Rileigh:** No. [wheezes]

**Sydnee & Teylor:** [laugh]

**Rileigh:** Yep.

**Teylor:** Is that true?

**Rileigh:** Correct.

**Sydnee:** No, no. I—

**Rileigh:** Correct.

**Sydnee:** I am assuming... B-A-N-A-N-A-S.

**Teylor:** Is that for the straights?

**Rileigh:** Is that for the straights?

**Sydnee:** Well, I'm— This is based off— I think Gwen Stefani's straight.

**Rileigh:** But who's it for?

**Teylor:** No, Gwen Stefani is straight, but that doesn't mean that song is for the straights.

**Sydnee:** Ohh, okay. So this isn't just about... Okay.

**Rileigh:** This is the audience also.

**Taylor:** Yeah, 'cause—

**Sydnee:** I don't know. Who is—

**Taylor:** — I think that song is so goofy that the gays have claimed it. 'Cause if something is bad or weird or campy or strange enough, the gays will take it.

**Sydnee:** That's true.

**Rileigh:** Like that could be a lip sync for your life song on Ru Paul.

**Taylor:** It might have been. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** It might have been at some point.

**Sydnee:** Okay. Well, I—

**Taylor:** Yeah, I don't think— Gwen Stefani is very much not gay, and— But that doesn't mean her music is safe from the gays. Nobody's music is safe from the gays.

**Rileigh:** No.

**Sydnee & Taylor:** [chuckle]

**Sydnee:** Uh... Except for maybe Jojo Siwa's, ironically.

**Taylor:** [laughs loudly]

**Sydnee & Rileigh:** [laugh]

**Taylor:** That is! That is some sort of like, I don't know, Greek tragic curse upon her. Like, "Ah, yes, my child. You are gay, but your music... it shall only be for the straights."

**Sydnee:** [chuckles] I've seen those TikToks about like things that are made by gay people for the straight people, and by gay people for the



gay people, and by straight people for the gay people and the— Have you seen—? Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Riley:** Yeah.

**Sydney:** Yeah. Okay.

**Riley:** I saw— I heard a TikTok audio of Jojo Siwa just last night of her saying like, “I’m the first artist to ever do a transition like this, and to ever—”

**Sydney:** Yeah.

**Riley:** “— have a transformation like this in the public eye. I’m the first one, and it’s scary to be the first one.” [chuckles] I just want to— I want to talk to whoever on her team is like, “Yeah, you can say that, Jojo.”

**Sydney:** This is what’s rough. Like, people— artists don’t, for the most part, nowadays, especially somebody like Jojo Siwa who has had like adults directing her career her whole life, this stuff isn’t decided solo, typically.

They’re not unilaterally deciding on like the way they’re going to promote something or package something or whatever. They’ve got a whole team of people advising them, typically. That’s what’s baffling about Jojo Siwa.

**Riley:** Unless it was a conscious decision to have her market it in a very controversial like, “What the F are you talking about, Jojo?” kind of way. Because then everyone will be talking about it and listening to it.

**Taylor:** I mean, I do kind of feel like the forces behind her are so corporate that this is some sort of like Taylor Swift *Inception* speed run. Because that’s what kind of happened organically with Taylor Swift, right?

She was very talented, people were very hard on her, and then there’s a lot of people that kind of came around to her side. Not just because she’s very talented but also because “Hey, the world was really unfair to you.”

**Sydney:** Mm.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Like, "There was a lot of cruelty thrown your way." Like, "Jojo Siwa, we're gonna change your image. It's gonna be really cringe and people are gonna make fun of you, and then a lot of people are gonna feel bad about it, and then you're gonna have success."

We're gonna— we're gonna— Cringe is very popular, that gets things reposted, so that'll get you out there, and this is gonna ultimately make the algorithm work in your favor." Like, I think it's a mastermind thing going on.

**Sydnee:** That would make sense. 'Cause it is weird that she reinvented her look to look like KISS, but has not said, "I wanted to look like KISS," when she very clearly looks like KISS. [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** And also she didn't reinvent her look by saying like, "I'm gonna... write some new music or like design a new look that feels more me." She just like bought songs from other people that other people had written.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Rileigh:** And was like, "This is me now."

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** Which I know lots of artists buy songs from other artists. I know that's like a very common thing. But usually they're not claiming they wrote them after they buy them.

**Sydnee:** True. I do feel bad for her.

**Taylor:** Well see, it's working.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. I mean, it's true.

**Rileigh:** Well she's—

**Sydnee:** I'm not gonna listen to her music 'cause I don't enjoy it, but I do feel bad for her.

**Rileigh:** — making a ton of money.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** She's making so much money.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** So there's that.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Chappell Roan has—

**Sydnee:** Is opening for Olivia Rodrigo, right?

**Rileigh:** She was.

**Sydnee:** Oh. That's old.

**Rileigh:** She was for the first part of the tour.

**Sydnee:** Okay.

**Rileigh:** Which I'm very sad about because I'm seeing Olivia Rodrigo in July, and Chappell Roan is no longer opening for her.

**Sydnee:** Mm.

**Rileigh:** Which is very sad. But yeah, she was opening for Olivia Rodrigo. I actually— I... I might be wrong on this, and I'm sure someone will tell me if I'm wrong.

I knew who Chappell Roan was a while ago, 'cause I had a friend who introduced me to her about this time last year. And she was popular, but nowhere near as popular as she is now, and I really feel like it was TikTok that exploded her popularity.

I really feel like it was TikTok sounds of like short snippets of her songs, of her shows, of her costumes, that by the time she was opening for

Olivia Rodrigo there were a lot of people going to see the show that were like, "I'm here also for Chappell Roan."

**Sydnee:** I mean, for me, I definitely heard of her from TikTok.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Like, that was definitely... Which, I don't know, like was it just the— she benefited from the fact that the algorithm goes like, "You seem gay. Here."

**Taylor:** It does do that.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. It does do that a lot.

**Sydnee:** The algorithm is very good at picking up on queer culture.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** And pushing the right things to you.

**Taylor:** Well... I'm curious what you got fed, Syd. Because I know my interest in Chappell Roan started when I was getting *Nana* videos set to "Good Luck, Babe." *Nana* is a... a lesbian-but-not-really anime that came out in the '90s.

**Rileigh:** Mm.

**Taylor:** About two girls that live together and are roommates and are best friends and love each other, but of course one ends up married to a man and the other one, I don't know.

**Sydnee:** Hmm.

**Taylor:** Anyway.

**Rileigh:** History will say they were roommates.

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Taylor:** Yes. Like there's lots of very innocuous statements in the manga and the anime. Like, "Oh, if you were a man I would love you forever," and "You're the person I love the most in the world, more than any man." But then it's like, "Nah, it's definitely not gay." Uh, super gay.

**Sydnee:** Oh.

**Taylor:** I kept getting a lot of edits to that song to that, because I like anime. And so that's how it came across my For You Page.

**Sydnee:** It started with the uh... Tiny Desk that she did.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Ah.

**Raleigh:** I love that Tiny Desk.

**Sydnee:** That is what like I first got surfaced.

**Raleigh:** Mm.

**Sydnee:** And I was like— I thought... I mean, when I first looked I was like, "Oh, it's like a drag performance."

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** 'Cause she's dressed, like her makeup and everything is like drag.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And I didn't know who she was. And I was like, "This is really good," and because I watched it, then I started getting clips of her from I'm assuming Olivia Rodrigo's tour.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Like her on stage performing different places.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And then I was like, "Maybe I should look this person up, because this seems really good."

**Rileigh:** Yeah. I, uh... I also— I know that TikTok likes a sound that can be used in like a trend.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** Where you can use to sound to like make... I don't wanna say memes about it. But you know what I mean? Like change the caption or like change the video and like then it blows up because everyone wants to make one and like find them relatable or whatever. The song "Casual" off of this album was a trend like that.

**Sydnee:** Oh, was it?

**Rileigh:** Where it was changing out like, "This happened. Is it casual now?"

**Sydnee:** I— The ones that I kept getting initially were "Red Wine Supernova."

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** A ton of that. And then, uh—

**Rileigh:** It was very popular.

**Sydnee:** Because of the— Because I kept getting the, the... uh... the "California King. No, really it's a twin bed with roommates."

**Rileigh:** "Maybe it's a twin bed."

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** "With roommates. [simultaneously] Don't worry, we're cool."

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] "Don't worry, we're cool."

**Rileigh:** [chuckles] Yeah.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] "I heard you like magic. I got a wand and a rabbit."

**Taylor:** "I got a wand and a rabbit." That's a great line. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Great line. And you know, there was a lot of discourse about that song specifically online 'cause a lot of— Well, a lot of Karens—

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** — were like, "Why are— Why is my teenager listening to this? This is so inappropriate." And so many people, mostly queer women on TikTok, were like, "Hey... Men have been singing about much worse stuff for a very long time about women."

**Sydnee:** They have.

**Rileigh:** "And you have a problem with it because it's a woman singing about being with other women."

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** They have, and I wondered about that. I saw some like... controversy about people getting upset at the Olivia Rodrigo concerts.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. 'Cause there are a lot of young girls there seeing Olivia Rodrigo.

**Sydnee:** Which like have... has anyone been listening to Olivia Rodrigo's songs? Like are you listening to her lyrics?

**Rileigh:** Well yeah, and also seeing her performances.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** That are very like, you know, suggestive.

**Sydnee:** Well, and I mean, she's got plenty of lyrics that are very suggestive. And I mean—

**Rileigh:** [chuckles] That sometimes I hear your kids singing along to and I'm like, "Whoa!" [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Yes. I know. I know. So like I don't—

**Rileigh:** "Charlie, Cooper no! You don't know what you're saying!" [laughs]

**Sydnee:** No. I mean, like— So I don't think it's any less suggestive. I think my take on Olivia Rodrigo's songs, and maybe this is heteronormative culture, I think they're usually about men.

**Rileigh:** Well, yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I— Yeah. I mean, I don't wanna— I never want to assume. But, like...

**Rileigh:** Several of them are— have like male pronouns and stuff in them.

**Sydnee:** Yes. They have—

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** So like they seem to be about men. And so I— my assumption is your problem, parents, isn't that they're suggestive songs, your problem is they're suggestive songs about women.

**Taylor & Rileigh:** [simultaneously] Yeah.

**Rileigh:** That's 100% what it is.

**Sydnee:** Now I, uh— Charlie and Cooper love "Femininomenon." They sing that and "Hot to Go" a lot. [chuckles]



**Rileigh:** They're just so... They're such good earworms, but not in the way where it's like you're annoyed that it's stuck in your head. Like, "Ugh, I heard that song once and I can't get it out of my head." That way.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** It's like I just want to keep listening to it. There's something about it that just like scratches the right part of my brain that I just want to start it over as soon as it finishes.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Yeah. It's really— I mean it's— a lot of— You know, part of it is that it's confrontationally queer. I think that's really powerful.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** I think it's not— It's not the like, "Ooo," like you know, "Maybe this could be about a guy, but maybe it could be about a girl." It's like the terminology she's using it's like, "No, this is definitely a... a, you know, two lady situation going on here that is being described to you."

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Rileigh:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** Yes. This is about a girl.

**Taylor:** Which seems powerful. Which seems very refreshing. It's not framed as like something devious or something you need to hide. But all this just in general is very powerful music.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Like I think that's what's so shocking is just, it's... feminine, but it's just so powerful.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** It is. And it's feminine and powerful in a way that I would say— [sighs] I mean, nothing is completely new. Everything is sort of building on the shoulders of what came before it, right? So I don't want to say like it's brand new.

But I do think it's representing the next sort of evolution in feminine power. Which has been like I would think— I would say has been a struggle in recent years to figure out what direction to go with that. Like we kind of all got sidetracked with this girlboss era.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** You know? Where feminine power was this very, um... white woman thing. You know what I mean? That was just this one thing, and it had to do with like suits, I think? Pantsuits or something. But, like... [chuckles] And then maybe starting an MLM.

But like there was this one like direction you could go. And I— I see us moving in maybe a positive direction where we can say, like... feminine power can look feminine. But it doesn't have to. Like you don't have to wear lipstick and heels to have feminine power, but you can.

And it can also be confrontational and strong. But that doesn't have to be in a way that is masculine for it to count, you know? I mean, that's a— it's a hard needle to thread, I feel like.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. I also appreciate I think— We joke about Jojo Siwa being gay pop. I think the difference in why people seem to genuinely appreciate Chappell Roan more as an artist and like what's she's saying is because she doesn't say, "I created gay pop. I'm the first queer woman to ever sing about being a queer woman."

**Taylor:** [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** But I think she acknowledges that like we're finally at a point in society where maybe you can more openly and confidently and almost like in a risqué way—

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** — sing about being a woman with other women, and it be popular music.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Like you don't have to be a woman who's singing about being with other women, but you have to do it in a way that's like subtle and sneaky for it to be on the radio. Like now you can sing about it openly and powerfully and it's okay, and it's popular.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Well, yeah. I mean, so much of like the media depiction of specifically lesbians, it's either for male consumption.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** And then it can be feminine, but it's got to be tailored to the male gaze.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Right.

**Taylor:** Or you have to divest yourself of femininity, and that's a very— a different kind of like, "This is what a lesbian is." And this is— It's almost like a defense mechanisms.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** It's like, "I don't want to be objectified by male gaze, so this is the way that I can perform myself as a woman."

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** And it feels— I think that's what— it's like... This is for the girls and the gays.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Like that is who she is for. That is who—

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** It is for the female gaze. And it's so... That's a double entendre.  
[laughs]

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** It's for the female gaze, the female gays.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** But it's rare we get something like that pushed forward. And I think that's what feels so new about it is that that element of it feels confrontational. It's like— it's— "You can look, boys, but this isn't for you."

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** And that's a rare thing.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I agree. I think it's cool to see, like the... like I said, when I first saw her I thought it was a drag performance at first.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** Which she does— I mean, I guess it is in a way, at times, a drag performance.

**Rileigh:** It kind of is, yeah.

**Taylor:** Kind of is, yeah.

**Sydnee:** And I think it's cool to see that. That really combines— Drag is like this performance of femininity that is also... it kind of celebrates, even though that's not necessarily what it's intending. Like, it does, right? It kind of celebrates feminine stuff, in a way.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And it's cool to see like drag culture and then a cis woman coming together to say like, "Let's do this. We're on the same team."

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Like, "Let's celebrate femininity in a positive, good way together." There's been conflict there before, and I think it's cool to see, you know.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Those sorts of groups uniting and like, "Hey, let's do this all together."

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** "It can be cool to be a feminine person. Being feminine can be cool in its own way."

**Rileigh:** It reminds me a lot of Renee Rapp, except like sparkly.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm. Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Like they feel very similar to me in what they're trying to do for younger women. Although, you know, I'm just now thinking about this, the fact that Chappell Roan's 26 and Renee Rapp is my age, she's 23.

It's that slight difference, I think, between Gen Z, like very Gen Z culture, and slightly older than Gen Z but right on the brink of Gen Z culture. Where it's like, trying really, really hard to not be... status quo, like Gen Z, you know what I mean?

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Rileigh:** Trying really, really hard to be like Renee Rapp like saying controversial things like, "I hate old people and I am ageist." Or like, being slightly older and being Chappell Roan and being like, "Hey, it actually doesn't really matter. I don't really care that much."

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** "Let's... Let's party." [chuckles]

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I also think it's tough, and maybe this is the evolution— maybe this is the track that Renee Rapp's on. If... It is hard if you have grown up, um— and I'm much older than both of them.

Like, I have cast off a lot of femininity in part 'cause it didn't connect with me, but also because I want to be seen as strong and powerful in the circles in which I walk, and because of where I live and what I do, that often means... being as masculine as possible. That's what— That's how power is demonstrated, right? In ways that are masculine.

And it's interesting. It has made me think about like did I throw off all of that? Do I really hate all that is feminine? Not hate, but you know what I mean, for me. Do I really feel disconnected from all that is feminine because I do, because I felt like I had to?

I mean like watching her perform and listening to her music has made me question that myself and think like, you know, maybe I could take a little bit of that back.

Maybe I could wear makeup a little more, because sometimes I do. Maybe I could take five extra minutes with my hair, and that doesn't devalue me in my power. I know these sound like dumb things, but I really— I think that—

**Rileigh:** No, yeah. I mean in a very minuscule way it's like how I used to say like, "Oh, I hate pink. Pink is my least favorite color."

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Not because I really did, but because it was the girly color and I didn't want to be seen as girly, and now I'm an adult woman who's like, "Actually, everything in my apartment is going to be pink, because I have accepted that I don't hate it. I just thought I had to."

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** Well, I think, you know, it's funny, 'cause as you were saying that Syd, I think of how many times you have sort of I think implied your worth in like statements of like, "I didn't even wash my face today."

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Or like, "I just pulled my hair into a ponytail."

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** It's like you're trying to establish like, "Take me seriously."

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** "I work very hard. Look at how little I take care of myself." And... I— That is always something that I think women have to do to be taken seriously—

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** — is divest themselves from sort of... anything that feels too froofy. I mean, men have to do it too, right? Like anything that's too close to personal care, if you're a woman, you don't get taken seriously.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** If you're a man, it's gay.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** But I think that there's, you know, something really important about being in touch with both sides of yourselves. The practical side and the side that can be a little bit softer.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Teylor:** And we separate these things culturally into masculine and feminine, but it's— you need both. [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Right.

**Teylor:** You should feel like you can have both.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Teylor:** And any selection within that you want.

**Sydnee:** No, it's true. And it really— Like, watching her performances and listening to her music has made me kind of think about that. Like... did I really get rid of all that stuff— Not physically, but just like, what I think about and value.

Did I really get rid of it all because it's not me, or did I get rid of it because I was trying to prove that I was strong, and serious, and worth listening to to the people around me?

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** And I thought... Our culture thinks masculinity equals strong, serious, worth listening to.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** And so I'm just trying to perform that.

**Teylor:** Right. But also devoid of emotion.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Teylor:** Gruff. You know, doesn't care about [chuckles] smelling nice or being pretty.



**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** And I think most people want to smell nice and look pretty. I would say that that's the general population.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Taylor:** But I think that kind of goes back to the drag comparison. Because drag... Yes, in a lot of ways it's about performing femininity. But it's not just femininity. It can be masculinity.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** I mean, drag kings have existed—

**Sydnee:** Sure.

**Taylor:** — as long as drag queens have existed. It's about performance of self.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** It's allowing yourself to be the you-est you inside of your head in the most refined, fascinating way. And I think we all have the desire to do that. And I think that's what really shocked me about her is like, she's 26 and she's doing that.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** She is the most her her. [chuckles]

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** And I think that's what's so... the way you can't look away. It's terrifying to see somebody that's that aware of who they are, and strutting their stuff to that degree.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Like there's nothing performative about it, as much of a performance as it is.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** It's exciting to see what she's gonna do next.

**Rileigh:** I am very excited.

**Sydnee:** The album is great. I've listened to it repeatedly.

**Rileigh:** Me too. And "Good Luck, Babe."

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Because that technically is not on the album. It came out after.

**Sydnee:** Oh, that's right.

**Taylor:** That's a single, right?

**Rileigh:** And I do love that. Yeah, yeah. Well, thank you all for listening to Chappell Roan. I know we all already had.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** But thank you for listening more.

**Sydnee:** No, it was great.

**Rileigh:** And talking about it with me.

**Sydnee:** And she officially is my pick for America's entry in *Eurovision*.

**Rileigh:** I'd support that.

**Taylor:** Rileigh, what's your favorite song so far?

**Rileigh:** [sighs] I know it's one of the most popular ones, but "Red Wine Supernova" I just can't stop listening to. I just love that song.

**Taylor:** It's a good song.

**Rileigh:** What about you all?

**Sydnee:** I really like, "Casual."

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. Tey?

**Taylor:** My favorite thing about "Casual"— my favorite song is— I mean, right now it's probably "Good Luck, Babe."

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Because I think that's... [wheezes]

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** If you've been—

**Rileigh:** It's so good.

**Taylor:** If you've been out queer for a long period of time and have had the relationship with like, "You're not gay—" or, "You're not straight but you don't know that yet, and I just gotta walk away."

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Like, I like that there's an anthem for those of us that have been there.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But I like that “Casual,” from a lesbian perspective it’s like, no, this is a casual lesbian relationship. You do get that close.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** I can answer your question; yeah, it is. [laughs] It’s casual.

**Rileigh:** Yes, it is. [laughs] Yeah.

**Sydnee:** [chuckles] It’s a good song, though.

**Rileigh:** Well, thank you all, and Syd, what’s next?

**Sydnee:** Um...

**Rileigh:** [chuckles]

**Sydnee:** So you may have seen the previews for *Twisters* that is coming out, so I thought we could go back and watch *Twister*, ‘cause that was an important movie to me as a young woman. [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** *Twister*, singular.

**Sydnee:** *Twister*, singular.

**Taylor:** Mm.

**Sydnee:** Um... Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Alright.

**Sydnee:** Please watch *Twister*. [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** I’ve never actually seen it, so.

**Taylor:** Wow.

**Sydnee:** It’s so good. I’m excited for you to watch it.

**Rileigh:** So we'll talk about it.

**Sydnee:** M-hmm. Well, thank you, Rileigh. It was fun to talk— I mean, I know we had already listened to Chappell Roan, but it was fun to talk about it and listen to it again.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Thank you, listeners. You can go to [MaximumFun.org](https://MaximumFun.org) and check out a lot of great shows you would enjoy. You can email us at [stillbuffering@maximumfun.org](mailto:stillbuffering@maximumfun.org). And thank you to The Nouvellas for our theme song, Baby You Change Your Mind.

[theme music fades in]

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

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

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

**Rileigh:** I am still buffering...

**Sydnee & Taylor:** [simultaneously] And I... am... too.

[outro theme music plays]

**Sydnee:** I did not plug Apple Music once.

**Rileigh:** Great job.

**Taylor:** Well now you definitely did. Actually. Once.

**Rileigh:** Oh.

**Sydnee:** [chuckles]

**Rileigh:** Well, you failed.

**Sydnee:** Mainly TikTok this episode.

[phone rings]

**Rileigh:** Oh, Justin's ruining our podcast!

**Sydnee:** Oh, Justin!

**Taylor:** Justin!

**Sydnee:** Justin!

[announcement bell rings]

**Janet:** Hello, teachers and faculty. This is Janet Varney. I'm here to remind you that listening to my podcast, *The JV Club with Janet Varney*, is part of the curriculum for the school year.

Learning about the teenage years of such guests as Alison Brie, Vicki Peterson, John Hodgman, and so many more is a valuable and enriching experience, one you have no choice but to embrace, because yes, listening is mandatory.

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[announcement bell rings]

[ukulele chord]

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