

Still Buffering 412: It's What's Inside

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[theme music, "Baby You Change Your Mind" by Nouvellas 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 Taylor Smirl.

Sydnee: I'm gonna try to make it through this recording without the cat walking on everything. [chuckles] I have too many cats, Taylor.

Taylor: Too many cats, that's not a thing. You got a big house, not enough cats. One cat for every room.

Sydnee: Uhh... I don't— I can't— I am also like completely coated in orange fur right now.

Taylor: Well, that's— You've been blessed.

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: You've been blessed by a sweet orange kitty.

Sydnee: Well, she's very sweet, but she's sitting on the ground trying to eat carpet fuzz right now. Amy, stop it. Stop it.

Taylor: Well that's— you know, they can.

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: Don't question the cat, just enjoy the cat.

Sydnee: Okay, okay, I will try. So, Tey, Halloween is this week. I think it's the time—

Taylor: It's the Halloweek!

Sydnee: By the time people listen to this, the official Halloween will— like Halloween night will have passed.

Taylor: Yes.

Sydnee: But I feel like the parties go on for weeks before, and then we'll be attending a party the weekend after, so.

Taylor: Yeah. I— I really like when— I like when Halloween is close to like... Like next year it'll be good, 'cause then I think you'll get two full Halloweekends out of it.

Sydnee: Yeeeeeah.

Taylor: Because inevitably people are gonna have parties the weekend before Halloween, but when it's a little bit closer to the other weekend then it feels like it's okay. When you're like havin' a Halloween party, like deep into like, you know.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Three, four days into November, it feels a little like, "Ah, I gotta move on, I gotta let this go." But still. Still.

Sydnee: I think we'll still be there Saturday, I feel like.

Taylor: Yeah. That's—

Sydnee: It'll still be spooky.

Taylor: Right.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: I support— I support the two weekend Halloween celebration.

Sydnee: I do too. I, honestly, anything to extend. Like we start putting up Halloween decorations in September, so.

Taylor: Mm.

Sydnee: You know. And then I enjoy, like because of social media, I get to see like a whole month of various costumes.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: From like adults going to parties, and then also like my adult friends who have children posting all of their kids' cute costumes. 'Cause they're always like 30 different Halloween events, and I imagine that there are children who don't feel like they need a different costume for every event. Those are not the children—

Taylor: Not your children. [chuckles]

Sydnee: No. That— These are not my children, my children— And I will say, like they wear costumes just on a regular basis.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Just for like as clothes, so. [chuckles] So that's just who they are. But so you get to see like this myriad of all these kid costumes in all these different Halloween-themed environments, that we have concocted for the entire month of October.

Taylor: It's great.

Sydnee: And I enjoy that. Yes. I like Halloween parades for kids, I like schools that do that, where they just make the kids walk in a circle around the school so that all the parents can look at them and go, "Ohhh." [chuckles]

Taylor: I remember doing that.

Sydnee: Yeah. Did you ever think about that? Like that's not fun for the kids, it's fun for the parents.

Taylor: I thought it was fun, but I guess it depends on your priority as a child. I— As somebody that actively cosplays.

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: Like walking in a parade and getting to show off your costume is— that was...

Sydnee: Okay.

Taylor: Oh, oh yeah, I was— I wish we did that at comic book conventions, like why don't we do a parade?

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: Everybody that's in a costume form a conga line, and just walk through the convention.

Sydnee: So that others can appreciate it.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah, no that— I—

Taylor: They do that on the stage if you sign up for it, but like what if we just all did it on our own?

Sydnee: I think you should start that, Tey.

Taylor: Promenade.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: I still— I don't know why this is like, "This is the costume," but I have this embedded memory of this like genie costume that I wore when I was a kid that I loved.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: It was like deep purple and it was covered in like sparkly bits.

Sydnee: I remember this costume.

Taylor: And it had like puffy sleeves.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah, like puffy pants and puffy sleeves, it wasn't like—

Sydnee: Uh-huh.

Taylor: It was like not Jasmine, it was Jasmine adjacent in like its design, but it was just the— this beautiful purple and gold and glittery, and I loved it. and I just remember walking the parade in that costume, and just feeling like, "Yes. Yes, I know."

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: "I know how good I look in this." [chuckles]

Sydnee: I miss those days of like your costume being able to just be like a thing, like, "I'm dre— What am I dressed as? A genie." Like I don't know, like I was a hippie a lot.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Which is like that's— I know it's cliché, and it was easy, but I miss that. I feel like as an adult, and maybe it just depends on like who your circle of friends are, I feel like there's a lot of pressure to have a costume that is relevant, like culturally relevant, or funny. Or... is a cool character that everybody will appreciate. You know what I mean? I feel like a lot of pressure to like make the costume be like, "Ha, nice." Like [chuckles] "Cool."

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: You know?

Taylor: Yeah, I— Especially I feel like in, I don't know. I feel like Bushwick Halloween costumes are their own things, 'cause I've definitely been at parties where I'm like, "And what are you supposed to be?"

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: And I just get the look of like the most disgust, and it's like, "Um, obviously," and they strike a pose like, "I'm a Banksy from like 2000 blah blah blah."

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: I'm like, "Oh yeah! I see that now, yeah." [chuckles]

Sydnee: See.

Taylor: "I'm a lost collection of Sandy Sherman photographs, clearly."

Sydnee: I—

Taylor: "Oh." [chuckles]

Sydnee: [chuckles] I think that it depends on your— This is— Man. That is such like a... re— like a— it reveals something about your personality. Do you want a costume that will have people coming up to you and asking what you are? Or do you want a costume that everyone will instantly know what you are? Does that matter to you at all? Because it is hard for me, if I'm wearing a costume that I am the least bit worried that people won't know what it is, I get so uncomfortable. Like I do not wanna have to explain my Halloween costume. For me personally, I'm not saying that this is true universally, for me personally, I feel like I messed up if I'm having to explain it.

Taylor: Well, but see the— I think there's one thing of like— 'Cause I mean, as a cosplayer, a lot of my costumes— 'Cause everyone's like, "Oh, Halloween must be so easy for you. Tons of costumes like great." But a lot of them are obscure characters from, you know, random comic books and anime that I can't go to a party in New York and a lot of people are gonna know what I am.

Sydnee: Sure.

Taylor: It's cool when people do. But then there's the costume, like that— the sort of pretentious costume, it's like, "I am making a costume that will allow me to separate people into hierarchies [chuckles] of intelligence."

Sydnee: See...

Taylor: "So if you understand my costume—"

Sydnee: That's no fun.

Taylor: "— then you get points for that." No, I don't—

Sydnee: No.

Taylor: I don't like that either.

Sydnee: No, I— So when we were trying to decide our costumes this year, I had gotten this dress for an event, which I don't wear dresses that much anymore and I don't go to events very much, so it was kind of like— It was a big deal, I picked out this dress, and I really loved it. And when I put it on, some of my friends were like, "You know—" 'Cause I've been reading the *ACOTAR* books, they were like, "That is a Night Court dress."

Taylor: Mmm.

Sydnee: "That is definitely like... You could be High Lady of the Night Court." And I was like, "Oh, for Halloween." [chuckles] "Justin and I could go as sexy fairies from *ACOTAR*." Then I started thinking like, "Man, I do not wanna have to explain what I am." [laughs]

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: To any— There will be like three people at that party who are gonna be like, "[gasps] I love it!" and everyone else is like, "You're what?"

Taylor: I don't know. I mean but do— I have not read the books. These fairies have pointy ears, correct?

Sydnee: Yes, pointy ears.

Taylor: They have wings?

Sydnee: Some. Like Just—

Taylor: Like would you have wings?

Sydnee: Ah, well.

Taylor: If you wear wings. [chuckles]

Sydnee: It depends on what form I've shifted into, I could.

Taylor: Okay, alright, well because I mean I—

Sydnee: I could. Justin would have to. Justin would have— Like Justin's would necessitate wings.

Taylor: Sure.

Sydnee: Mine would— Well actually no, he can make his wings disappear. So we could both just say we're not— like we are not showing— Our wings are not visible at this time.

Taylor: Well I was gonna say more like—

Sydnee: 'Cause we have magic. [chuckles]

Taylor: — if you have pointy ears and wings on, even if nobody understands what specific fairy you are.

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: You are going to read as fairy or elves or some magical creature, like that's a costume, you could wear that and just be like, "Yeah." Maybe you don't know the exact reference, like you don't have to tell— correct people, "Well actually." [chuckles]

Sydnee: I think— I think the other problem though, as much as I would enjoy, personally, wearing those costumes. The other problem is that because the books are known for being fantasy, but also... like erotic. I worry that wearing the costumes, especially as a couple, it's like is this just for you all, or— [chuckles] Is this—

Taylor: Is this the elevated version of like the— the plug and the light socket costume, is that what you're worried about?

Sydnee: Mm. [laughs]

Taylor: [chuckles]

Sydnee: Well is— Like that but because there's so much, and because everybody talks about the aspects of the book that are like smutty, is it also gonna look like we just were like, "Hey, this is something we're into privately and we've decided to wear it in public for everyone?"

Taylor: Syd, I—

Sydnee: You know what I mean?

Taylor: I don't— Because I know what you actually went with and I'm like you still have the same problem there.

Sydnee: Really?

Taylor: Like every couple's costume can be like, "Yeah, you know what? Maybe they're gonna go home and leave the costumes on. Maybe."

Sydnee: Ahhh, I guess the— Okay, so for our actual— This is interesting since you do know, our actual costumes are Deadpool and Wolverine.
[chuckles]

Taylor: Yeah. Yeah, and anyone— I mean you've seen the movie, right?

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: That car scene, come on.

Sydnee: Oh, I guess. I guess yeah.

Taylor: I would even—

Sydnee: I don't know, I think—

Taylor: I mean despite the fact that I— I'm understanding that your books are very horny, I would say wearing [chuckles] Deadpool and Wolverine is maybe even hornier.

Sydnee: Really?

Taylor: Doesn't have to be, but you know. If you're worried about perception.

Sydnee: I don't know that— You know, and I'm always quick to call out, like I will ship anybody. [chuckles] But I did not... I didn't pick up a lot of sexual tension between them.

Taylor: Well, I— Okay. I— We— I guess—

Sydnee: Maybe that's just me though.

Taylor: We watched different movies, I don't know.

Sydnee: I mean I can understand why other— Like I can understand why people would ship them.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: And I can understand why people would— why that would be like a [chuckles] maybe like there's some fan fiction out there.

Taylor: Oh, there's a lot.

Sydnee: I can totally understand that. But I—

Taylor: Well it's also— I mean it's not— it's in the comics in as much as Deadpool is, of course, pansexual.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: And you know, he has a lot of man crushes in the comics. Wolverine is one of them.

Sydnee: Ohhhh, see, I didn't know that.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: These are not things— I had not seen... the... was— How many *Deadpool* movies were there?

Taylor: This is the third? Yeah.

Sydnee: Okay. Then there was one in the middle. I saw the first one, I never saw the second one before I saw *Deadpool & Wolverine*.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: I felt very— I— Yeah.

Taylor: I like the second one, the second one's good.

Sydnee: I don't know how I didn't see it, but I didn't see it.

Taylor: Mm.

Sydnee: Yeah. Yeah. But I saw this one, and anyway, Justin is Deadpool and I'm Wolverine.

Taylor: That's gonna be real cute.

Sydnee: Yeah, I'm excited about it. I'm not excited about wearing a costume that is like, head to toe.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: So peeing.

Taylor: Well.

Sydnee: Peeing will be quite the... the adventure.

Taylor: [sighs] Yeah, as somebody that owns a Spidey suit, I can say it's, you know, you just give yourself some time. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Are you dressing up for Halloween? Do you have any events to dress up for?

Taylor: Uh, I— I am invite— I have a party on Halloween night, and I've got, I don't know, it's in my— there's always things I can do in my neighborhood. I'm trying not to go out a bunch, but... I don't know what to wear, because I just had Comic-Con, and I made a Astarion *Baldur's Gate* cosplay, and I made a Rio cosplay from *Agatha*, and then I also have

a cosplay of Angel Dust cosplay from the show *Hazbin Hotel* that I didn't finish in time for the con—

Sydnee: Mmm...

Taylor: — but I did finally finish. None of these— I think— I guess *Agatha* would be the most culturally relevant for like... the vibe of the party that I'm going to.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: So I might wear Rio, but.

Sydnee: I'm— I— See I think that would be a great choice, just because I think *Agatha's* so big right now. I... Like I had a moment as I was watching it, at some point in the last few weeks, where I was very sad that I already had this like costume chosen, we've already bought it, like I already know what I'm wearing, because I would really love to dress as Agatha. Really love to dress as Agatha.

Taylor: Mm.

Sydnee: Also I just want that coat that she wears, you know?

Taylor: Oh yeah, the coat is gorgeous.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Well I was gonna say 'cause if you wanna dress as Rio, there is canonical relation— he— Justin could still be Deadpool and you could be Rio, for reasons.

Sydnee: Oh.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Okay, interesting.

Taylor: Mm-hmm. So yeah.

Sydnee: No.

Taylor: Spoiled the most recent episode for anybody, but.

Sydnee: No, I will stick— Justin made me claws. He 3D printed me claws, so I will— They're great, and they're well done. I don't know what— It is interesting, and you as a cosplayer can probably give me some tips. If you're at a party and you've got Wolverine claws in your hands.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: 'Cause they're just the ones you hold, right.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like they're not gonna be attached to my hands. Where do I put them? Like I'm gonna wanna hold food and beverage. [chuckles]

Taylor: Yeah. Well I mean, if I were like—

Sydnee: [chuckles] Do I—

Taylor: If I were like—

Sydnee: Do I need like a special purse or satchel? [chuckles]

Taylor: I'm sure you could devise one, but your party is at your house, if I'm not mistaken, correct?

Sydnee: Well that's true.

Taylor: Yeah, I would say if you're at a party at a bar, I would probably try to have a way to secure them to me, 'cause people will steal stuff.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: But if you're at a party at your house, you just keep 'em close to you, so if somebody wants to snap a picture, you put 'em on.

Sydnee: That's true, that's true. I will just do that. 'Cause yeah, I thought about that, I was like, "What am I gonna do?" Once I've shown

everybody the costume, I'm just gonna be like, "Okay, I'm good with these." [chuckles]

Taylor: No, I mean if you like— I don't know, probably if I was at a convention, I would— 'Cause I know the way those like— they just hold under your fingers, right?

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: I would probably just connected the little like fishing line around my rest and to it, so like it can just dangle when I'm not holding it.

Sydnee: Ohhh.

Taylor: And then I can— I could flip it up and hold it.

Sydnee: That's a good idea.

Taylor: Well, then they'd be there ready for yah, so you wouldn't have to worry about 'em.

Sydnee: Yeah, and I guess there's no worry, like I think people will still know who I am even if I don't have my claws.

Taylor: Yeah, yeah, you're gonna be wearing a bright yellow suit with blue accents.

Sydnee: [laughs] Yeah. No it's the whole thing, yeah it's definitely the whole thing. Well good. Well, I... I'm still excited, I— 'Cause maybe that's always the thing, like if you decide your Halloween costume really early, you gotta be prepared that there might be other cultural touchstones.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: I've seen a lot of people dressed up as like the bridesmaids from the "Domingo" sketch on *SNL*.

Taylor: Oh yeah.

Sydnee: I've seen that quite a bit.

Taylor: You love that sketch.

Sydnee: Yeah. Yeah. And I am—

Taylor: I'm glad to see— Oh, go ahead.

Sydnee: Oh, go ahead.

Taylor: I'm glad to see the return of the *Silent Hill* nurses.

Sydnee: Yeah?

Taylor: That was a— It's a staple at every convention, but I've seen people dress up as the— as it for Halloween, and that's fun. Terrifying, but fun.

Sydnee: I've seen a lot of... Olympics references.

Taylor: [chuckles] Yeah.

Sydnee: The break dancer, the Australian break dancer.

Taylor: Yeah, yeah, and the pole vaulter.

Sydnee: The pole vaulter.

Taylor: Oof.

Sydnee: Those are well done.

Taylor: [chuckles]

Sydnee: I have seen some that— they have— that have achieved the appropriate outcome. [chuckles]

Taylor: Yeah, that's definitely for an adult party, but that's good.

Sydnee: Yeah, yeah. I appreciate those costumes. I don't know that I've seen— You know, I would've expected to see a ton of Agatha ones, and I'm sure they're out there, but I feel like I'm not seeing them on my TikTok yet.

Taylor: I felt the same way at Comic-Con, I really thought that I would see a lot, and I saw— I only— When I was Rio, I saw like one Agatha, and uh... I don't know. She screamed at me very abrasively while I was going up the escalator, which I guess would be in character, but there's [chuckles] also a point where it's like, "I get character, yes, but you're also just a stranger screaming at me abrasively."

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: "So I'm not gonna respond to that." [chuckles]

Sydnee: Yeah. No, that's a little intense. It could just be like a "Hey!"

Taylor: Yeah, "Oh look, twinsies."

Sydnee: Yeah. Of course, I will say, and this isn't— you're probably not as plugged into the kid costume world as I am.

Taylor: Unfortunately not.

Sydnee: I— My prediction is you're gonna see a lot of Disney's *Descendants: Rise of Red* characters this year.

Taylor: Okay.

Sydnee: Cooper will be going as Chloe Charming, or course daughter of Cinderella, obviously, everybody knows that.

Taylor: Obviously. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Right.

Taylor: Ehh, so the implication is Prince Charming's— his last name is Charming.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: Oh. Sure, alright.

Sydnee: The— In the— In this new movie, in the new *Descendants* movie, which is about the daughter of the Queen of Hearts and the daughter of Cinderella teaming up to go back in time and make the Queen of Hearts not evil. Yes.

Taylor: That seems like a dangerous game to play when that's your mother.

Sydnee: Well, it's the first— They allude to the fact that there's gonna be more. So they— Like I don't know what they're setting it up for, 'cause at the end of it it's like a very brief happy ending, like we fixed it, but then they're like, "But what else has changed?" And so then we're gonna have to wait for the next movie to come out. It's— But it's got Brandi as Cinderella.

Taylor: Oh, I love that.

Sydnee: Like yeah, and then the— I don't know the actor's name who played the prince in that version of Cinderella too that Brandi was in.

Taylor: Oh, they brought 'em both back, that's so cool.

Sydnee: Yes, they're the parents of Chloe Charming, who is really, I mean I will say like, who— She's Cinderella's daughter, but she also is like really great with swords, and like a great fighter and all this. Like they've made her a very cool character.

Taylor: Nice.

Sydnee: Yeah. Also, the Queen of Hearts daughter is really good at all that too. I don't know, all of the Descendants are really good at fighting. [chuckles]

Taylor: I mean, you know. Seems important in the royalty Disney universe, there's a lot of... lot of upheaval constantly.

Sydnee: Yeah, yeah.

Taylor: Monsters and villains, you should learn how to wield some sort of weapon.

Sydnee: [chuckles] I love the idea— They kinda put out the idea that the reason the Queen of Hearts is the way she is is because she was made fun of in high school.

Taylor: [sighs] That explains a lot.

Sydnee: Yeah. That's sort of the conceit is like there was a specific incident where she was embarrassed in high school by...

Taylor: [chuckles]

Sydnee: The sister of Ursula.

Taylor: Okay.

Sydnee: Not Ursula Ursula's little sister.

Taylor: Embarrassed the Queen of Hearts.

Sydnee: Yes. And it made her evil. Like she was really sweet before that, like super nice, friendly to everybody, super sweet, and then after that she became evil.

Taylor: I mean, it's— I guess you could fix that with time travel. I feel like maybe she just needs a therapist, that feels like— that's what-

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: That's how we prevent mastermind villains nowadays. [chuckles]

Sydnee: But it's so much better to go back in time.

Taylor: I don't know. I don't know, 'cause you mess with your parents' history, and you know, you might erase your existence. Has *Back to the Future* taught you nothing? [chuckles]

Sydnee: Not the *Descendants*. [chuckles] I don't know, it is very— Those *Descendants* movies are so big, with the young people, they love 'em.

Taylor: [mutters] Interesting.

Sydnee: And I predict we will see a lot of Chloe Charmings and Reds this... this Halloween.

Taylor: Alright. Well we'll have to— I mean, I don't— there's not trick or treating in my [chuckles] in my neck of the woods. I mean I'm sure there, is but you know. No-one's walking up my like my third story walk up and walking on my door. I wish they did, I would love that.

Sydnee: Yeah. No but I hope everybody is safe this Halloween.

Taylor: Yes.

Sydnee: And [chuckles] has a happy but very safe Halloween.

Taylor: Be safe, have a good time.

Sydnee: And if anybody shows up at your party with a device that can switch you into other people's bodies, don't do it.

Taylor: Yeah, classic Halloween no no.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Which is a lot. Yeah.

Sydnee: That's the movie we're talking about. I went ahead and got into it.

Taylor: Did you figure out the name finally? [chuckles]

Sydnee: Honestly no. Is it *It's What's Inside*?

Taylor: *It's What's Inside*.

Sydnee: Okay. I keep wanting to say like *What's on the Inside*, or I don't know.

Taylor: In— What's the movie, the Pixar movie, where the emotions have emotions.

Sydnee: *Inside Out*?

Taylor: Is that what it is? Okay, different movie. I didn't watch that one in preparation, and I watched the right one.

Sydnee: No. Okay. It— I think— Thi— So this is a psychological like thriller.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Of sorts, that just came out, and I have to say, like the central conceit, if you just accept that someone made a machine. [chuckles] Where everybody can sit in a circle, put electrodes on their heads, and then they're switched into each other's bodies, just accept that that is possible and exists and has been created.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Then I think that the rest of the movie is pretty— it's a pretty good movie.

Taylor: It is. And you know I'd looked at it before, before you told me you wanted to watch it, and I was like, "I don't know, does that sound good?" But I was— It was thoroughly entertaining.

Sydnee: The— I think— So like— And we're gonna spoil the movie, obviously.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: So if you haven't seen it. But... the idea of switching into each other's bodies, obviously you can see where there would be issues. Like first of all they set up the idea that there was one member of the group, the guy who actually shows up with the machine, who had been kind of like... basically screwed over by them.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And had— He had ended up getting kicked out of school. Right?

Taylor: Yeah, they got him expelled.

Sydnee: Yeah, because he brought his sister to a party who was under drinking age, and she ended up getting drunk and... there are a fight because... the guy that she was with was making out with another girl. And anyway. He ends up getting expelled from school for bringing his sister to a party and letting her drink, even though he was not the one who did all that.

Taylor: Yeah. And it was two of his friends that are at this party are the two that kinda sold him out and pinned it all on him.

Sydnee: So you've got this guy who shows up, who now has like I guess made like ostensibly made a ton of money in Silicon Valley doing tech stuff, right?

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: And he— You— Like that's— I think the initial tension is "Why would this guy wanna come hang out here?" You know, after that. And now he's brought this high-tech piece of [chuckles] gadgetry that is still being tested, that can switch them all into each other's bodies. And so you've kind of got that underlying tension, and then the sort of everybody has their own stuff going on. Like their own... they wish they were with someone else kind of yearning.

Taylor: It's definitely got the setup, like the dynamic of the friends group is like frenemies more than friends all around. Like everybody kind of feels like they all have very fake personas, more or less, you know.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Like... there's a lot. There's a lot beneath the surface, which oh, hey. It's the point of the movie. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Right. And so then once they start switching bodies, the problem is some of them are really enjoying being... the— One, being in someone else's body, and then the anonymity of... You know, they don't necessarily know who's in each other's body.

Taylor: Mm.

Sydnee: And then you can use that to make out with people too.
[chuckles]

Taylor: That seems to be the main thing that they do with it, is just— One girl does post an Instagram, so she can feel what it's like to get a bunch of likes all at once.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: That was...

Sydnee: That is a— That's kind of a sad.

Taylor: Yeah. One of the bodies is an Instagram influencer, so it's...

Sydnee: And you realize pretty quickly like so they're play— The game that they're playing is you switch into each other's bodies, and then you have to try to guess who's who.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: That's the game. But then what becomes clear is that like you could always lie, and nobody can prove [coughs lightly] that you're lying, except the person who set the machine. And the person who set the machine is the first one to lie.

Taylor: Right.

Sydnee: And so then you can lose track. And then so you've kinda got this air of like, "Oh man, what are we gonna do with this? Somebody's gonna steal someone's body, this is so scary, this is upsetting." And then the absolutely worst thing ca— that ha— could happen happens, which is two people who— Listen. I don't know why you would want to decide to go at it on a rickety balcony on the top of an— of a house.

Taylor: Yeah, I'm not really... I did not see that move coming at first, and then I'm like, "Ohhh, alright." 'Cause I was trying to figure out how is the movie gonna go off the rails, 'cause it has to happen at some point.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: It's obviously gonna happen, and then I saw that, I was like, "Oh god, this is the worst way it could happen."

Sydnee: So these two of— two of the people, while they're in someone else's body, are doing it on a balcony. The balcony is o— like they show that it's old and rickety. [chuckles] And then it collapses, they fall off the roof onto a... statue. It's like an art piece that's supposed to symbolize like a vagina.

Taylor: It's like a heart vagina that's pierced with arrows.

Sydnee: Yeah. And anyway, they fall on it and die.

Taylor: Perfect body catcher, is what it is. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Yes. Exactly. And so now you have— And you kinda have to like— you gotta keep track while you're watching this movie. So two people's bodies have now perished, but their souls, I don't know.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Their selves are inside other bodies that are still alive.

Taylor: And two— So the two selves that were in the other bodies are dead also.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: You've got people dead and two dead bodies, two dead souls. You've still got enough bodies to go around, but they're the wrong bodies now, permanently.

Sydnee: Right. And so you have two bodies walking around that the selves that go in them are gone, and so what seems natural is that you would put the selves whose bodies are now destroyed in those.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: That— Which is like the logical thing that I guess some of them want to happen, but then you've got other people who are like, "I don't—" They all have nefarious... I don't know, pur— like desires. They— For

whatever reason, everybody kinda wants to stay in different bodies.
[chuckles]

Taylor: Yeah. Well you've kind of got your main character, more or less, Shelby.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: Is in a relationship with, who, Cyrus his name?

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: And it's not a good relationship, it's not a healthy one. He's kinda got a weird long-standing crush on the— the hot Instagrammer, Vikki. And she, in this last switch, she's in Vikki's body. So she kind of gets to use that to tempt out like... "What if I stayed in this, and that's— Would you be happier like that?" It's a—

Sydnee: And he's kinda like, "Okay." [chuckles]

Taylor: Yeah. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah he's kinda the worst.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: They establish that throughout the movie.

Sydnee: Which like so you have all this— And then that— And then there's the mounting tension of the police are on their way.

Taylor: Yeah. Because somebody called in a different person's body and reported that the accidental death of two people was actually a murder. And... Which I—

Sydnee: Which would be a heck of a murder to pull off.

Taylor: That's the only thing like— And I mean obviously every movie has a suspension of disbelief. There's a magical machine that switching

personalities, so you know, suspend your disbelief. But I was just like, "Well I'm pretty sure if the police showed up, you could say 'No, that was this jerk over here trying to pin it on me'. But you know, clearly there's a broken balcony, there's no physical evidence." Like any— Everybody else in the party could've said, "No, that didn't happen that way."

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: But it's like a serious threat, like, "No, now you're gonna go to jail forever now."

Sydnee: I mean, and like he does. [chuckles]

Taylor: Yeah. Yeah. [chuckles]

Sydnee: And it's really— it really is like I think it's well done. At the end of the movie, like the climax, as the police are showing up, is this final body switching. Where supposedly people are supposed to go back where they belong.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: But they leave it open as to if that has happened.

Taylor: Well and then you get the coda that shows you where everybody ends up.

Sydnee: Well, but I don't even know, like when it comes to Shelby, I'm still not sure.

Taylor: Well but who else would she be was my only question.

[pause]

Sydnee: Well I guess that's true.

Taylor: Also, that final— the final lines in the movie where she tells him to go.

Sydnee: Oh yeah.

Taylor: He said that only to her, so it had to be her.

Sydnee: Okay, so that was her.

Taylor: But I think that was part of the— like the kind of the, you know, like her— him saying like, “Oh, you don’t seem like yourself,” she’s finally being honest with him. So that’s her being herself.

Sydnee: I gotcha.

Taylor: Is—

Sydnee: Her being herself.

Taylor: — finally, you know, not trying to appease him or make him happy, or bend to, you know, be what he wants to— She’s just being real, like... “Rot in here, rot in jail.” That final twist though, because yeah you have this set up where it’s the one... The guy that they got expelled comes back and he brings a suitcase, and you think he’s just a creepy dude.

Sydnee: Right.

Taylor: And then you find out really in like the— the very— like the third, third act, like it’s been his sister all along. Because after this party where she got drunk and there was this fight, she was put in like a psych ward, and you know.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: She has plotted her revenge for I guess eight years now, and so she body swapped with her brother, so she could come to this party and just... I don’t know what her plan was other than just to find a way to just screw everybody over.

Sydnee: Yeah, just to hurt them all.

Taylor: And she did.

Sydnee: Yeah. Yeah, it’s pretty incredible.

Taylor: She—

Sydney: I have to say, at the end.

Taylor: She ends up stealing Vikki's body, and Vikki ends up in Reuben's body. And... what's the— Dennis? Is that the—

Sydney: Yeah.

Taylor: He ends up in the brother's body. The only person that really ends up in the right place— the only people that end up in the right place are our initial couple, Cyrus and Shelby.

Sydney: And Shelby. And Cyrus is in jail.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydney: Yeah, it's a— I would say like I didn't have high expectations, I thought it was kinda goofy, I thought the premise was kinda goofy, like they switch bodies. And at first I thought "Is this just gonna be about like I have the opportunity to hook up with other people, and like will they or won't— Like is that sort of the tension?" I didn't have a lot of... I don't know, I didn't think it was gonna go in the direction it did, and the deaths were— I mean it was so well done.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydney: It was like you felt in that moment like, "Ohhh. That's what this is gonna be." It was really clever, I mean it really is like it's a smart movie. It's entertaining, I didn't— I don't know, I figured out that it was the sister before the end, but.

Taylor: Did you?

Sydney: Yes.

Taylor: As soon as they— I mean as soon as they showed her in the car, I was like, "Oh." Like I— But I had not... You know usually when you've got that character, it's like, you know, the gun in the first act that you know is gonna show back up.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: It's a little bit more pronounced. I didn't see that, I didn't see her entering the narrative coming. Which I should've, 'cause once I saw the actress I'm like, "Of course she's not gonna be a bit part in this movie, she's one of— She's not Kiernan Shipka, but she's one of the ones that looks like her."

Sydnee: Yes. [chuckles]

Taylor: There's the three that look the same. [chuckles] Right? And they're all— they all have pretty successful, I don't know which one it was.

Sydnee: Well and it's interesting because they do a good job of the story we hear about her is told by the men who like... screwed her over, basically.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Right? That is the narrator for this story about her, and at first I just accepted it and didn't think about it any further.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And I think that that was really smart, because of course that's the way they saw her. They painted her as the hysterical woman, you know.

Taylor: Right.

Sydnee: Who like, "I don't know, like she went— she freaked out 'cause she had a crush on me or whatever." And I just sort of, like as the viewer, kind of accepted that narrative and moved on with the movie. And like that was just that jerk's interpretation of events, like that was not what happened.

Taylor: Right.

Sydnee: But I did not do any deeper thinking at that moment, I was just— I just accepted the jerk's interpretation.

Taylor: Well and it was— there was an odd sort of satisfaction to that because you know they're not— Outside of I'd say outside of Shelby, they're not very likeable people.

Sydnee: No.

Taylor: Like they're all kind of self-absorbed, you know, like just obvious like the kind of people that you would never wanna [chuckles] be stuck at a dinner party with.

Sydnee: Oh yeah.

Taylor: So having that kind of third act, you know, anti-heroine come in and, you know, ruin all of their lives was a little satisfying.

Sydnee: Well and I will say, even Shelby who is supposed to be— [sighs] I don't know, I don't know that this movie has a final girl per say.

Taylor: She's the kind of the archetype at least.

Sydnee: Yes. Even Shelby like... the... I mean you feel bad for her because her boyfriend's obviously not that into her, and that's sad.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: But then this sort of desperation for like internet approval is not like— I mean that's not a super attractive quality, right?

Taylor: No.

Sydnee: Like they're not painting her like totally— You know, like usually our— I feel like our hero in these movies would be the kind of girl who is not concerned with Instagram likes, right?

Taylor: Right.

Sydnee: Like she would say that, like, "Ugh, you're all so childish," and then she'd read... I don't know, Prust or something. You know what I mean? Like. [chuckles]

Taylor: Sure.

Sydnee: That's usually the girl in that role in a movie, and even that like— this character is not that, she's still like trying to post something. Oh man, that when she posts an Instagram with the caption, and then she doesn't get likes right away and she deletes it, that whole moment.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I don't feel that way because I'm too old, but I have to imagine that for an entire generation of people they saw that and were like, "Relatable."

Taylor: Yeah. Well, but I mean, I think that, you know, I— You could've just— You could've made this movie with just the central plotline and it would've been a really interesting movie. I like the... the amount of work they did building on this sort of concept of self. Because we do have that where it's like herself— her physical self is not gaining approval in the way that she wants it, you know. And she— And then she— Like after that, she flips over and she looks at the Vikki, the popular Instagram girl.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: And like it's clear that's something that she covets, like you know.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: Like, and like... I don't know, even like I was asking "Why the weird art house?" Because this house they're in, it's an old rickety house, but it's been filled with all of like the— the one guy's deceased mother's weird artwork.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: That is all around like, I don't know, body parts. Like vaginas and wombs.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: And it's like, "Okay, there's this rebirth thing going on, and you've literally—" It's aesthetically pleasing throughout the movie to have them walking into all these weird, dreamlike settings that are in this house.

Sydnee: It is.

Taylor: But it also kind of adds this layer of like symbolism to it, so I think that that was a lot like... You know, the movie was trying to do something a little bit deeper than just "Oh, what if everybody switched bodies?"

Sydnee: No, I think you're right. And I do think there's— I think the symbolism is part of it. They talk about rebirth, 'cause the one character is, I don't know what her spirituality is, but she's portrayed as someone who's very spiritual.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: And she is seeing this as "This was meant to happen. I was supposed to be reborn. This is fine." Like how— That's how she's coping and, you know, understanding the situation. But I also think it calls to like— It reminds me of some of those older kind of Gothic horror, like big creepy mansion like kind of settings.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And then especially if you look to like masquerades, and like I don't know, it reminded me a little bit of some sort of Poe short story, or something.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: You know what I mean? Like everybody in the masks.

Taylor: *Mask of the Red Death.*

Sydnee: Yeah, like I mean it's the same idea, they're not in a mask, but it's the same concept of like if you can put on a mask and be someone else, what are you capable of, who will you— who are you underneath?

Taylor: Right.

Sydnee: If you could just cover yourself up, or be anonymous. I feel like that— they're calling on that kind of theme which is really old in horror books and movies.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And isn't— has nothing to do with technology. But that's kind of what they're talking about.

Taylor: Absolutely. Well and the way that you see like each of them being brutally honest about either the body that they're in, or each other while they're in opposite bodies.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Because, you know, it's clear none of these people have very good opinions of each other, and they can only really expel— express that when they're separated from their own self.

Sydnee: I really enjoyed the moment when... the one character says, "I'm allergic to peanuts."

Taylor: Oh yeah.

Sydnee: And I had— I knew as soon as she said that, I was like—

Taylor: "That's gonna come back."

Sydnee: — "Oh, that's gonna come back. Oh, that's a great way to—" I mean we— And then you're thinking like you could kill somebody's body that— like that's wild. [chuckles]

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: I do feel like you'd feel an EpiPen in your boot, but that's...

Sydnee: Yeah, you would think.

Taylor: But I, who knows. She was dying of a peanut allergy, she probably wasn't thinking about her boots.

Sydnee: No. [chuckles] I... I don't know, I just really like— It was— It's on Netflix, we just kinda put it on, like, "I don't know, this might be interesting." Sometimes late at night I can't watch really scary stuff 'cause then I have nightmares, and it didn't look like it was gonna be super scary. Which it isn't, it's like thrilling and exciting, but it's not scary.

Taylor: Yeah. No, it—

Sydnee: But I didn't have high expectations, and it exceeded them.

Taylor: Absolutely. No, it's really it's fun, it's well-written, I think the char— I like bad horror and good horror, I just don't like boring horror thrillers.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Like that's the only thing that takes me out, and usually that comes from just really flat characters. And every one of these characters is really well acted and really well written. Like even if they're kind of horrible people, I feel like you can do the room full of horrible people really badly. Like I don't care what happens, 'cause I'm not rooting for any of these people, who cares.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: And this is— it's well done. You care enough about each of them that you wanna know what happens, but it doesn't feel tragic, it just feels like a fun rollercoaster ride.

Sydnee: And I think— I really love people still trying to "How do we continue to make things that are scary and thrilling and dangerous in an era when technology is so omnipresent?"

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I mean that's why you see so many of these things that like throwback to the '80s, like eliminate cellphones so we don't have to deal with that in the plot.

Taylor: Right.

Sydnee: I love when people embrace the idea of technology moving us forward, and the more connected we are, and the more we can constantly know about each other. And then also making it scary, I love to see that.

Taylor: Well even use the technology as important plot points, because you have two in this. You've got— I love the scene where the girl that's in the Instagrammer's body has recorded just a heinous video that she's threatening to push, that will—

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: — you know, ruin her, get her cancelled. And then you also have the other character that transfers all the funds. The—

Sydnee: Oh yeah.

Taylor: The one girl gets her revenge by basically stealing all the money from the guy that screwed her over's account. Like so you have technology used. You know it reminded me a lot, I feel like a good double feature with this would be... Did it come out last year? *Bodies Bodies Bodies*?

Sydnee: Oh yeah.

Taylor: Two years ago, and—

Sydnee: That was good.

Taylor: — very similar vibes though, right? Like kind of a bunch of entitled—

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: — awful young people in a house, and really their only enemies are each other.

Sydnee: I think that— Yes, that would be a good double feature.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: That was a good one too.

Taylor: Similar vibes.

Sydnee: Yeah. Well I'm glad you enjoyed it, 'cause I really— I thought it was a very clever, well done— I hope they don't try to make a sequel. I feel like the—

Taylor: [chuckles]

Sydnee: I feel like it's that kind of movie that would be more well-received than maybe they predicted, and now they're gonna try to make more of them, and it's— I think it's just a perfect little... exactly what it is, and you don't need to make more. [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah, the way it ended obviously leaves it open that you could.

Sydnee: Sure.

Taylor: But I agree, it was just good on its own. Although I don't know, the concept was interesting enough that maybe wait. Don't do it next year, maybe wait a couple years to bring it back, but.

Sydnee: Yeah, and you'd have to come up with new, I don't know... It'd have to be a new vignette for it.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like how else could a machine like that mess with people? Well thank you for watching it, 'cause I really enjoyed it.

Taylor: Yeah, thank you for having me watch it, I'm glad I did.

Sydnee: I will—

Taylor: I might've overlooked it.

Sydnee: I will say, this is not something that— for next week, but as long as we're still in the spooky month, this is just a movie that we watched last night that I would recommend. If you like horror movies, we watched *Azrael* on Shudder.

Taylor: Oh, you know I haven't watched that yet. I swa— I saw it go up.

Sydnee: I would recommend it.

Taylor: Yeah?

Sydnee: Very well done.

Taylor: I'll check it out.

Sydnee: Also very much up your alley, Tey.

Taylor: Yeah?

Sydnee: Like just like embracing... I mean it gets a little gory, it gets a little gruesome, so warning on that.

Taylor: I love gory and gruesome.

Sydnee: But embracing the gory. I don't know, it escalates to a point where you're just kinda like, "Oh my god!" and it's good.

Taylor: I mean I just saw *The Substance* for a second time last night, so I'm all about the gore.

Sydnee: [sighs] It's— I can't— Did you go to the theatre?

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Oh man, see.

Taylor: Do you not have it in theatres yet?

Sydnee: I need things to be streaming. No.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: I— Well we just— I need things that I can watch when I'm at home after my kids have gone to bed.

Taylor: I think it'll be out streaming soon. But it is ho. [chuckles]

Sydnee: I wanna see it.

Taylor: I— Like my friend was like, "Wait, this is your second time seeing it? 'Cause I— Once is all I will ever need to see that movie. I will never need to see that movie again." [chuckles] Like, "Well, you know." [chuckles]

Sydnee: Now, next week... we will be— Man, Tey, the next time we record will be the day before Election Day.

Taylor: Oh, jeez. Alright.

Sydnee: So I feel like I should say due diligence before we finish this episode that if you have early voting where you are, you can vote. [chuckles]

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Go vote. [chuckles]

Taylor: Please do that.

Sydnee: Please vote. We have early voting here in West Virginia, I'm probably gonna be voting in the next half an hour. So vote, and then if you don't, vote on Election Day, do that and just vote. Please vote. Please vote.

Taylor: I will be voting on Election Day. I've never had an issue with it. My polling station has never been that crowded, so.

Sydnee: Justin will be out of town, and so we're going together this week to make sure that it's done.

Taylor: Good. Lock it in.

Sydnee: Yes. We're locking it in. Getting those votes in.

Taylor: Good.

Sydnee: Here in West Virginia, where our votes always— [chuckles] Are so helpful.

Taylor: I mean same in New York, but you know.

Sydnee: In the opposite direction. But I'm gonna do it anyway, so. Please vote. Alright, well I just thought— I feel like you're supposed to say that, right?

Taylor: Yes.

Sydnee: I should say that.

Taylor: Check now that you're registered, and then vote.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Well thank you, listeners. Thank you to Maximum Fun. You should go to maximumfun.org and listen to all the great shows there that you'd 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 music fades in]

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.

[outro theme music plays]

Sydnee: For a moment, I didn't know if it was you or me, and then I was like, "Hey, oh, damn." [chuckles]

Taylor: I had the same moment, I don't know.

Sydnee & Taylor: [chuckles]

Taylor: One of us.

Sydnee: And then Amy was crawling on my recording equipment. Man, I hope it didn't mess it up.

Taylor: Well.

Sydnee: Okay. If I cut out—

Taylor: I can still hear you. That's alright.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: We were almost there.

Sydnee: There we go. It's not my fault, it's the orange cat. [chuckles]

[acoustic guitar music plays]

John: Hello sleepyheads. *Sleeping With Celebrities* is your podcast pillow pal. We talk to remarkable people about unremarkable topics, all to help you slow down your brain and drift off to sleep. For instance, the remarkable actor Alan Tudyk.

Alan: You hand somebody a yardstick after they've shopped at your general store, the store's name is constantly in your heart because yardsticks become part of the family.

John: *Sleeping With Celebrities*, hosted by me, John Moe, on maximumfun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts. Night night.

[acoustic guitar music fades out]

[ukulele chord]

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