

Still Buffering: Sailor Moon R Movie

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[theme song, "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 Teylor Smirl.

Sydnee: Well, Tey, how's your FYP lookin' these days? [titters]

Taylor: [chuckles] Eh... it's a lot of... lot of doom predictions of what's to come. A little astrology in there with the end of whatever Pluto is doing, leaving us alone, right?

Sydnee: The 17th, right?

Taylor: Getting out of our faces for a while as cardinal signs.

Sydnee: Listen, I think I can say this—I think this is a safe space for me to say this because I have professed on this show my love for engaging with astrology. Whether or not I'm saying like I don't know that I'm like a true believer, but like I do like to engage with it. I do think it has insightful things for me to understand about myself at times. And if nothing else, it's kind of fun. So...

Taylor: It's fun!

Sydnee: Yeah. So, I'm never gonna throw shade at astrology. But I am gonna say this. I feel like I'd been hearing about this Pluto situation that was coming—like it was ending in October. And then I feel like something happened then. But then I was getting new ones, and I thought like it's over. And then I was getting these new ones that were like, actually, it's November. And it was feeling a little like, you know when a doomsday cult predicts the end of the world? And they're like, "Oh, we read it wrong. It was actually next year." [chuckles]

Taylor: No, but so that's—there was always a set date. It just retrograded. You know how planets, because of the different rotational—sometimes they go backwards through sectors of space? They're not actually physically going backwards, but as we perceive them.

Sydnee: Right.

Taylor: There was retrograde. So it like was moving out of Capricorn, and then it retrograded back into it, and then it moved back out. Now it's going for good. It won't be back in Capricorn in our lifetime. See, I feel like, because I was getting like the FYP poles of people being like, oh, you know, Pluto and Capricorn affects all the cardinal sides. All the cardinal signs are having a hard time. And I feel like it's only recently then I'm getting the ones that are like, okay, but especially you, Capricorn. Wow, you've had the crap beaten out of you since 1984. [chuckles] Like, that is like—

Sydnee: Before you were born.

Taylor: You waited until it was almost done to be like, actually, it was really bad for you, huh? Yeah, yeah, it was. I don't know if the stars are to blame, but it was bad.

Sydnee: I do feel like when they were like, "This is your final battle," it's like, well, yeah, you weren't kidding, huh?

Taylor: I think we lost. But yeah, so we're slightly, I don't want to say we're recovering, because it's important to be abreast of what's going on in the world. But there's, you know, sometimes I use my FYP for mindless like just a break from my brain. And when it's—because my brain's always screaming, "Everything's gonna go bad!" And then when my FYP is, "Everything's gonna go bad," it's like, okay, but just give me one like person dancing to cut that up.

Sydnee: And I mean, here's the thing, I do not—I do not believe in hopelessness as like, I'm not—okay. I'm not saying you can't experience it. Feel how you feel. I'm not gonna police anybody's emotions. But I personally don't see a lot of value in hopelessness, definitely for my own mental health.

And I believe for most of us. And so I think engaging with a lot of like hopelessness doesn't really help me. Engaging—

Taylor: No, it doesn't.

Sydnee: Yeah. I mean, engaging with anger, engaging with frustration, engaging with reality, I'm okay with all that. I will engage with content that is being honest about where we are, but I'm not really interested in engaging with like, let's all—with just like blind panic, I guess. You know? It doesn't—there's nothing I can do with that. I just absorb that energy, and then it's there, and then I've got nowhere to put it, and I need to have action to take.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: I've enjoyed—I do enjoy the energy of the TikTok trend, which is the mountain goat song.

Taylor: Oh, the, "You're coming down with me, hand in unlovable hand." No children.

Sydnee: Yes. That I enjoy. That's, it's from—

Taylor: You mean the new American anthem. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yes. And I like, I mean, I'm glad that a lot of white women are being honest and saying like, hey, fellow white women...

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: So, I do enjoy that. I enjoy that soup for our family has come back.

Taylor: [chuckles] I love that clip. Soup for my family.

Sydnee: Soup for my family. I have forgotten about soup for my family. It's soup. It's soup for my family. I forgot about soup for my family.

Taylor: I know.

Sydnee: So, soup for my family is back.

Taylor: I like the TikToks that are just somebody, like you don't even see a face, it's just somebody opening a cabinet and like pushing some cans aside. And then there's a can of like Progresso and they're just like thumbs up. [chuckles] If you transported somebody to this timeline and just like, "Watch this." Like, "What does that mean? Is this an ad for Progresso?"

Sydnee: You get it.

Taylor: It's a good soup.

Sydnee: You—

Taylor: It's good soup.

Sydnee: You get it.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: You get it. Soup for my family.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: No, I've enjoyed that. I was really bummed—no, I'm not gonna say that on a podcast. It was interesting to watch the... that one little fascist saying, "Your body, my choice."

Taylor: [chuckles]

Sydnee: Who then got doxxed.

Taylor: [chuckles]

Sydnee: And then for a while, TikTok—yeah, that's so...

Taylor: Ah, it's so unfortunate. I think they burned his house down. That's very bad. We shouldn't burn their houses down. [chuckles]

Sydnee: They didn't though, I don't think they did. So, I don't think that—I think TikTok let me think it happened.

Taylor: Oh, it didn't happen. Oh, that's very—it's good that didn't happen. That's good.

Sydnee: Yeah, no, I don't wish that. And—

Taylor: I think it's—yeah.

Sydnee: But the doxxing, that's so...

Taylor: Self-fortunate.

Sydnee: Yeah, that's a thing that I'm acknowledging happened.

Taylor: I just don't like... never mind.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: Well, I was gonna say, why would you say something so heinous, so loudly? With like not even like a modicum of like consideration to people can find you. But these people, I mean, I don't—to start with that being the questioning their logic and their reasoning skills, that's—we're off the— [chuckles]

Sydnee: Yeah. I mean, there aren't any.

Taylor: Yeah. We're—[chuckles] we left so solid ground a long time ago. So, I don't know. I just think that the real hero in that story is... and we should never shame people for things they can't control, but whatever. Childhood—like his mother's friend who knew him as a child, felt the need to leak to the world that he had a serious problem growing up with pooping his pants.

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: I'm just—there's nothing wrong with that. That's all right. It's totally okay, no one should feel bad for just constantly, all the time, every day at school, having to be picked up over and over again because you pooped your pants. It's not a big—don't feel bad about that, buddy.

Sydnee: But you know, that just—I think it reinforces though, why would you not empathize with those of us who would like to have control over our own bodies? Because clearly, at some point you did not have control over your own body, and that was hard for you.

Taylor: Right? Like, you—we want, you know, health care. You want to not have poop in your pants. There's common ground. [titters]

Sydnee: Yeah, I mean, and we don't have to talk about who maybe has worse in terms of consequences in this situation. It's us, but—

Taylor: Sure.

Sydnee: But we could meet on that common understanding—no. No... that's—we're past that. [chuckles]

Taylor: No, no...

Sydnee: We're past that. My TikTok was pretty witchy to start with. It's gotten witchier.

Taylor: Yeah, yeah. The witch is, I like all of the... both the... It's always just like some incredibly sweet-faced woman telling me about plants I could grow. But to be very, very careful, because they're dangerous. And I'm like, oh... Right. Right, right, right. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Which, I mean, man, that's a rough one for me. I have been asked, I mean, back to when they first overturned Roe, I've been asked by many people like well-meaning, "Should I grow these things in my own garden?" You know, for the help of others. And it's hard because like as long as there is a safe, legal way to do things, I think we should try to pursue

that. For your own safety, right? There is no controlled dosage of something you grew in your garden. That's hard. You know? It makes me nervous.

Teylor: Well, you—and especially as a doctor, I'm sure you can't endorse that. I do think the logic of it takes a while to grow a plant, maybe...

Sydnee: Which, I mean, here's the thing—

Teylor: Having a store of that stuff now is not like a bad idea.

Sydnee: Well, and I will say this. I do think if you are a science-minded person like myself, you may consider that perhaps there is a way to discover controlled dosages of things you can grow in your garden.

Teylor: Mm-hm.

Sydnee: Perhaps there is science that could be done. Perhaps those of us with—I have friends with centrifuges and autoclaves at home, you know? Perhaps we could—

Teylor: [titters] Yeah, sure.

Sydnee: [titters] I do—

Teylor: Who doesn't? [titters]

Sydnee: That's not a lie. I have an autoclave in the back of my car right now, because I had to move it from one office to another. So, I have my own autoclave! [chuckles]

Teylor: I wish you hadn't explained why, you should have just left that dangling. "I have an autoclave back seat right now! What?"

Sydnee: I—yeah. [chuckles] I found that there are a lot of people with like old medical equipment that they're willing to give you or sell you very cheap if you need it. And if you're somebody who has tried to like run a clinic with no money for many years, maybe you just, you know, learn how to do these things.

Teylor: Well... well, I mean, you know, all of the plants that obviously are for if reproductive freedom is further assaulted, as is. It's written in their—what are they calling their playbook? It's not Project 2025.

Sydnee: Oh, is there a new name?

Teylor: Now it's, I think it's America first now. We're just buddying right up against the Nazi rhetoric there.

Sydnee: They're not hiding it. They stopped hiding it a while ago, though.

Teylor: Well, I mean...

Sydnee: Well, I'm just saying for people who are like, "Well, I didn't know what I was voting for."

Teylor: [chuckles]

Sydnee: Yeah, you did.

Teylor: Yeah...

Sydnee: What were you saying, Tey?

Teylor: No, no, it was just like—well, there's all of that concern. I like the little old ladies that are just like, "Want to know how to grow poison? Would you like to know a bunch of poisons? Here are a bunch of poisons."
[chuckles] "You could grow them in your apartment. It's fine." [chuckles]

Sydnee: I noticed that because I saw somebody in one of those TikToks was growing foxglove. Foxglove is where we get digitalis, digoxin. Which, nowadays we synthesize a lot of things, right? We don't actually go out and like grow foxglove, pick it. Like, purify it, get the—right? Like, we can just make the same chemical in a lab synthetically. But that is where that came from, that is—and it will, if you don't—I mean, because it does impact your heart function, if you take the wrong dose, you can get very sick. And if you take enough, it could kill you. But I was—I saw that and I was like, well,

foxglove isn't traditionally—when we talk about like in the old days, like herbal abortifacients, medicines that would induce abortion and things like that. Yeah, fox—

Taylor: I kept seeing that word written, and I didn't know how to pronounce it. And I'm glad you said it. [titters]

Sydnee: There you go. Foxglove was not traditionally one listed, because it would hurt you.

Taylor: Mm-hm.

Sydnee: But that—and then it clicked what I was looking at. I was like, oh! This isn't... oh! [laughs] Oh, you're just recommending—oh!

Taylor: Yeah. We're getting prepared across the board, I guess.

Sydnee: Oh!

Taylor: It never hurts to be prepared. I mean, that's like, again, it was a little old lady. Pleasant old lady doing like Dollar Tree haul. And she was just grabbing like 30 boxes of Visine. It's like, you know... And I'm like, what if you got real dry eyes? And then I read the comments and I was like, oh! [chuckles] Okay, I didn't know that. Apparently you could... seriously endanger somebody—I'm talking like I'm on TikTok, we're not right now. You could kill somebody with that. [titters]

Sydnee: That's true. I—oh, man, that's probably seeped into our language, huh?

Taylor: Yeah, I was thinking about that as I was referring to the... aboard efficient?

Sydnee: Abortifacient.

Taylor: Abortifacient. But yeah, we could say that, that's fine.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Just got—TikTok somehow soothed this into double speak. [titters]

Sydney: It really did. I hadn't thought about that, like we—oh, that's not good.

Taylor: Yeah...

Sydney: I mean, it's—okay, it's a double-edged sword, right? Because like I think it's important, if something is really upsetting and it is also a—like if the word is upsetting because the thing is really upsetting, and it's serious and it's happening, and we need to deal with it. Sometimes softening it, to me, feels disrespectful. Like, no, this is hard to hear about because it's hard that it happens to people. And some—so but on the flip side, if you're someone that something terrible has happened to, perhaps that word is very hard for you to hear, you know? So like, that's a hard—I don't know.

Taylor: Well, the real reason that a lot of people choose to use that language is to cheat the algorithm. Because the algorithm will punish you. So if you're trying to say something important, you have to say it in this coded language. And I do think it's an interesting discussion to say like, but we are depowering the language in order to spread the idea. We're basically speaking in code to try to communicate an important idea. Which is a little—I don't... You know like growing up, everybody would say, "That's so Orwellian. That's so Orwellian." I'm like, not everything's Orwellian, guys. And I feel really dumb when something actually is and I'm like, okay, yeah, now it's Orwellian.

Sydney: Now it is Orwellian. I will say that I refuse to ever—the word seggs as a replacement for sex.

Taylor: Yeah, or shmex.

Sydney: You have ruined the whole thing. [chuckles] You've ruined it. Please, I can't. You've ruined it. [chuckles] Yeah, I think there are things that are happening that I guess you could accurately describe as Orwellian. I do think that there are comparisons you can draw to some of those things

right now. I think we need to be really careful of that. Again, because it's become such like a trope, it gets dismissed. You know what I mean?

Taylor: Well, I mean, that's like the trope of like, hey, everybody you don't like isn't Hitler. And I'm like, guys, but right now, I hate to tell you that the guy I don't like is... he's a fan, at least. He's a fan boy. [chuckles]

Sydnee: He admires him. Well, and that's like—I mean, that we've talked about for a long time in this country, that we're becoming Idiocracy. I mean, that goes back to George W. Bush. But if you look at the cabinet that's being assembled...

Taylor: Oh, yeah, no.

Sydnee: I mean... I mean... well... maybe?

Taylor: It's... well... Yeah, so I don't know, you know? I think whatever you feel the need to do to prepare yourself for whatever is to be wrought. I got—[chuckles]

Sydnee: Soup for my family, Tey. I just need soup for my family.

Taylor: I got a tick—I got a couple TikToks from other trans dudes that were just like, "Are we all working out now?" It was like a chain of people being like, I don't—now like is the time. "I've started lifting. I don't know what I'm gonna do with that, but I think it's important." And I'm like, you know what I started doing? Lifting weights! [chuckles] Like, I don't know what the—I should be strong. I should be putting this testosterone to use.

Sydnee: I will tell you that—

Taylor: Soup for my family! [chuckles]

Sydnee: I will tell you I Googled self-defense classes. Like...

Taylor: Yeah, yeah.

Sydnee: Because I was thinking like, well, I wonder how young those go.
[titters] Like...

Taylor: [titters] Like for you and your kids?

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah?

Sydnee: Can you see—man, if you take like Cooper's natural just like... I mean, she is immovable. Her tenacity is unmatched. And that says a lot coming from a Smirl. If you trained her—[titters]

Taylor: I was gonna say, like those movies about like how this like world-class assassin came to be, that's the origin story right there. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Because she already has that will. She has that like, "I will not be moved." [chuckles]

Taylor: Your daughter could kill a man, is what you're saying.

Sydnee: I'm saying maybe already. And then if you taught her skills—

[group chuckle]

Taylor: Well, you know, maybe you all don't need to have self-defense skills. Maybe just one of you has to be really good at it.

Sydnee: That's true.

Taylor: You can garden. Cooper can... you know, protect. [titters]

Sydnee: There we go. I don't know, Charlie I think is still destined for the stage. So I'm not sure how—

Taylor: [chuckles] Charlie will fight with the power of love.

Sydnee: Yes. Hey, that is a great segue.

Taylor: Yeah. Yeah, I—look, it was a rough week, and we needed something to talk about. Because I don't think focusing on what's going on on our FYPs is entirely good. So I tried to just dig up, what is something that is positive and hopeful? That's... it is partially distracting, but also I think kind of has good morals to it. Like a good, hopeful feeling to it. And you just go back to basics, you go to Sailor Moon.

Sydnee: I... Tey, when I first started watching, we watched Sailor Moon, our—

Taylor: Yeah, the movie.

Sydnee: The movie. Yeah. And I started watching it and I was like, I don't—have I seen this? And then it occurred to me, like I think... there was a moment that like, okay, now I've definitely seen this. But I don't know why it was like, it had to be unlocked from my memory. I think it was when you see like the little baby Fiore floating through space. I think that was the moment that I was like, oh, I've seen this.

Taylor: Well, if you did see it, because these—there are three Sailor Moon movies. But all three of them I bought when I was—hm... when did I first come to New York? I was in high school and I came on a trip with some of our family members. And I was maybe like 16 years old? And I bought the three movies fan subbed from just some weird store and in the Lower East Side. And so that's probably the ones that you remember watching from a very long time ago.

Sydnee: Yeah. No, I definitely... I know we watched the original Sailor Moon series at first dubbed—

Taylor: Yes.

Sydnee: Because I remember watching it on Cartoon Network. But then every—like most of the Sailor Moon that I engaged with after that, like other than what was on TV, was all subbed. So it is still—I still am a little like taken aback when I hear them speaking English. [titters]

Taylor: Well, they did, because they redubbed—we watched the original, the deep dub. The infamous deep—which I will always love.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: But they redubbed the whole thing with more accurate translations. I think that's the important part. You know, you could argue what voice actors you like better or worse, but it is much more accurate and I think did this movie justice, even like updating it. Because that was part of the other reason I brought it to the table is like, it's a little gay, and it's not afraid of that. Like right off the bat. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Okay, I wanted to talk about that, because it is a little gay. And I don't, I mean, I don't know if you've read more about it. I didn't really—I watched it. I didn't really read like, you know, any sort of—[titters] Like what is this supposed to mean, or anything kind of pieces about it. But I thought that as I was watching it, like it was pretty gay for—especially something that came out back in 1990... four, six, something?

Taylor: I think it was four.

Sydnee: Something to that... something of that nature.

Taylor: Yeah, the '90s.

Sydnee: But before we were allowed to make gay things.

Taylor: Way before we had like Steven Universe. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Yes. [titters] Back then, you—'93.

Taylor: Oh, wow, yeah.

Sydnee: So something that's that overtly gay was pretty rare back in '93. Unless the whole point was that it was gay. Like it could only be gay if the entire point of it is that it was gay, and then also probably tragic.

Taylor: Well, but I mean, I think that like Sailor Moon was always comfortably a little gay, like—

Sydnee: Well, yeah.

Taylor: You know how we talked about like how in Schitt's Creek, it's not written in a world that is post homophobia. It's written in a world as if homophobia just never really was a thing.

Sydnee: Yeah?

Taylor: And I feel like Sailor Moon is kind of, it maybe was more subtle in like season one. But I think that was always kind of like, you know, like lots of jokes that were just played off as jokes. Like that never—I mean like one of the girls finding another woman attractive was never like, "Oh, no, what was that mean?" It was just like, "Oh, yeah. That happens sometimes."

Sydnee: That is—yeah, I agree that it is kind of played off that way. I want to talk specifically about the play, because I do think though that there are elements of this that are specifically kind of gay.

Taylor: Oh, yeah.

[group chuckle]

Sydnee: Oh, yeah. But before I do that, we gotta check the group message.

Taylor: All right.

[break]

Sydnee: Taylor, the holidays are upon us.

Taylor: They are. Do you have your—

Sydnee: I mean, basically.

Taylor: Do you have your tree up yet?

Sydnee: Well, okay, no, I don't have my tree up yet. I usually don't—so, I will decorate for Christmas probably in the coming week. But I won't do the tree until the day after Thanksgiving.

Taylor: Oh, okay. All right.

Sydnee: But what I will do, and what I have been doing already, is trying to figure out what I'm going to buy all the different people in my life that I love. It can be really difficult to know. You know, I feel like there are so many algorithms online that lead us all to the same presents, that sometimes we're worried we're just buying people the same sorts of things over and over again.

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[break]

Sydnee: So, Tey, like did you feel—tell me, I—well, first of all, we should probably talk about the plot of this Sailor R movie. Sailor Moon R movie.

Teylor: Yes. The plot is this movie takes place after, I mean, it's after the sailor—after they... They get their memories back, then there's the Chibiusa arc, and then this takes place then. So... an old friend of Mamoru, who he met when he was a child, they were friends in the hospital together. He comes back to—he's an alien who comes back to bring him a flower, because Mamoru was the first person to ever give him a flower. But the flower he brings back his weird alien friend is an evil flower lady who wants to suck all the energy off Earth. So naturally, all the sailor scouts have to get involved and save the day. Is that succinct? [chuckles]

Sydnee: Of course. I would also like to—what is—does the evil flower lady have a name? I don't remember.

Taylor: The Xennian Flower.

Sydnee: Xennian.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: I would like to submit that for future... what are they, the cakes?

Taylor: Oh, is the Xennian Flower on your Hear Me Out Cake?

Sydnee: Hear me out, that's why I couldn't think of my cake, yeah. I would put the Xennian Flower on a Hear Me Out Cake. I'm just saying, I—

Taylor: She's pretty hot.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: It's a hot flower.

Sydnee: It is a hot flower. It's like an anthropomorphic flower—half flower, half woman, half spider. That's three halves. So that's too many halves, but you get—

Taylor: One third.

Sydnee: One third.

Taylor: Yeah. Yeah...

Sydnee: But yeah.

Taylor: Some—

Sydnee: Hear me out.

Taylor: Sometimes a weird snake, kind of serpent things...

Sydnee: Yeah. I don't enjoy her laugh.

Taylor: Mm-hm.

Sydnee: There's a moment where there's multiple of her sort of wavering like in the air behind Fiore.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: And the laugh is too much. But anyway.

Taylor: It's pretty creepy.

Sydnee: Did you—okay. The one thing as I was watching it that I doubt I thought about the first time around was, are we—like the way he interacts with Tuxedo Mask as soon as he shows up, it feels very like romantic. Like the lighting, the scene, the way it's like colored. And the music and the—like and he takes his hands. And the whole thing does not feel platonic.

Taylor: Well, no, and I mean, his immediate response is, sorry, he's taken. [laughs]

Sydnee: Right.

Taylor: Like, gee, clearly, that's meant to read that way.

Sydnee: But do you feel like that there is something that is a little like unfortunate that he's like, "I'm back, we can be together." And then Tuxedo Mask's girlfriend is like, "He's with me now." And then he's like, he immediately becomes the villain. Fiore immediately is like shoved to the ground, bad guy.

Taylor: Oh, do you think it's villainizing...

Sydnee: Well...

Taylor: Evil alien twink. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Well—[chuckles] Well, I just had that thought like, ah, I mean, if you're supposed to see it as like his ex-gay lover?

Teylor: Well, they were kids when they knew each other. But I do think—I mean, I think there's a lot. That's the thing, is like in the universe of Sailor Moon, a lot of relationships are kind of played that way though. There's like an assumed intimacy that it's not—you know, you could have just as easily—because so much of that is in the world of Sailor Moon, I can't read it that way. Like it would be no different than if the old friend of Mamoru was a girl showing up. That scene would have played out exactly the same.

Sydnee: But you don't think—well, okay. I just, it felt like a very romantic undertone.

Teylor: Oh, no, I think it's definitely meant to have a romantic undertone. I just don't think like whereas—I don't think it's a media trope of the evil gay.

Sydnee: Okay, that—

Teylor: Because I feel like they kind of... and I mean, they definitely like with the conversation, when the girls are sitting around the table talking about how it did—I mean, they're talking about it. Like that would be—

Sydnee: Yeah.

Teylor: If it was one of those subconscious things, I don't think it would be addressed. Because that the sailor essentially will sit there and say, "Well, there's nothing wrong with that. I know some people at my school that are like that." You know.

[group chuckle]

Sydnee: That's so—see? That is a perfect example of progressive in the '90s.

Teylor: Yeah, that's true.

Sydnee: There's nothing wrong with it. I have a friend who is that.

Taylor: Well it's funny though because, you know, I forgot, I was recently re-watching some old Buffy. And when Willow comes out—which is I feel like by the time Willow came out, that was definitely further ahead. That was years later.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: But Buffy is kind of weirded out by it. And everybody kind of is. You know, there's sort of like that desire to hide Dawn from the truth that, oh no, lesbians. She can't hear that lesbians exist. She can watch Buffy make out with her boyfriends all the time, but she can't know about the lesbians. Like that struck me as like, oh, wow, that's kind of backwards. That's kind of—that's kind of ridiculous.

Sydnee: It really is, especially considering that Buffy's two, you know, major boy—well, we're not going to talk about Riley. Buffy's two major boyfriends are soulless demons.

Taylor: Yeah. yeah, you'd You think that would register as a bit more controversial than a gay lady. A nice lady.

Sydnee: And I should amend that, largely soulless demons. Like they occasionally have souls. Occasionally, yeah, they are soulful. And then sometimes they're soulless. And it just depends on what season we're in. [titters]

Taylor: They're also way too old for it, so, you know, major age gap problems.

Sydnee: Well, that's—okay, listen, there's a long problem in fantasy where we take these creatures that are hundreds of years old and we pair them with 19 year old girls. [titters]

Taylor: Does any—I want to get back to Sailor Moon. But does any property properly lampshade that? Like, have a beat where the 200-year-old vampire is being, you know, is—the flirting with the 19-year-old. And then he's like, "Oh, no, but this not—not actually, though. No, you're a child to me. You're

a baby. You're an infant. You're a fetus to me. Absolutely not. No, thank you."

Sydnee: I don't think—I mean, none that I am familiar with. I don't... In the Acotar books, it is acknowledged. I mean, because the Fae are all like hundreds of years old, right? And then our main character is like 21 or something. So it's like acknowledged, but not in any way where it's like, "And this is not great." [chuckles]

Taylor: I don't even need it as like a moral lesson, because, honestly, I don't care. I just think it's funny. But I feel like it would be a good moment just because, I don't know. Like, I can't speak to somebody that's 25.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: Like a 25 year old will try to speak to me and I'm just like, "Eh, no. No..." [titters]

Sydnee: I know. I know. I know what you mean. There is definitely, there is something that—okay, that is the most unrealistic part of it, right? Okay, it's a 300 year old vampire? Sure, maybe, yeah, whatever. I don't know. Maybe there are, whatever, that doesn't bother me. But the idea that somebody who's 300 years old would look at somebody who is 19 human years old and be like, "We talk the same language." No. [chuckles]

Taylor: Yeah. Well, that's—and I guess maybe it's, you know, in this case, it's always a hot, old vampire with like a 19-year-old woman. Which is just an exaggeration of a very real Leonardo DiCaprio conundrum. [chuckles]
Like—

Sydnee: Sure, yeah.

[group chuckle]

Taylor: "I get older, they stay the same age." Okay, you're 300, it's so far past creepy.

Sydnee: No, I know. [titters] Well, and I mean—but I mean, maybe at that point you're just bored with everything. So just like, "I don't know what skibidi means, but my 19-year-old girlfriend says it all the time." [chuckles]

Taylor: Maybe, maybe, I don't know.

Sydnee: [laughs] Ugh.

Taylor: But I don't—anyway. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Sailor Moon.

Taylor: Yeah, I don't think—I get what you're getting at. And I think that there is like, because Sailor Moon always had this weird like—I was thinking about how it plays against the classic hero narrative. And it always existed outside of it. Like it's not trying to kind of reinforce the same ideas. I think there's a bigger lesson that any young queer person watching this movie in particular would feel was speaking to them in a positive way. Because it's about somebody who, I mean, he feels alone and ostracized.

And this is the one connection he had. And then, you know, the point is kind of the reason that Mamoru had that rose to give to Fiore is because Usagi was in the hospital as a little girl. Her mom had just given birth. And so she gave that rose first to Mamoru. And then he passed it—so it's like she is the source of love. And you see that from all of her friends, who were sort of lonely outcasts, who found love through her. So you know, it's a bit of like a... like the outcast is always sort of a parallel to the queer person, right?

Sydnee: I think that's true. I do think what's weird about it is, I definitely felt like it was—it had like a queer narrative sort of to it. And yes, they were all alone, they were—they needed somebody to love them. Usagi is the one who loves them first. I mean, now they have each other, but like initially. And then in the moment where—I mean, and we're spoiling the movie. In the moment where Sailor Moon briefly dies, she, that scene—and I mean, granted, the entire scene before it too, but especially in that moment, is such a Jesus scene. It's so—

Taylor: [chuckles]

Sydnee: Like she almost gets crucified.

Taylor: She gets crucified a lot in the show. Like multiple times, there's crucifixion imagery.

Sydnee: There's lots of crucifixion imagery. And she very much like, she's almost crucified. She gives herself for all of Earth and dies. And then all of her friends are gathered around her saying, "You said you'd always be with us. You saved us all, but you said you'd always be with us." And they're all sobbing around her lifeless body. And it's just such a—I was thinking like, this is a Jesus scene. This is wild that I've been thinking like, is this a parallel for queer narratives, or is this a parallel for Jesus Christ? Or both? [titters]

Taylor: It's not, though, because—and I—this scene, and it never stuck out to me before, and then I noticed that this time and I was like, oh, wow. Because, you know, classic... kind of the same with like the world savior, but also classic hero trope. The impossible choice. Save the world or save your friends. Save the world or save your lover. She's given the impossible choice. "Here are your friends, drop your weapon or I'll kill them." She's like, "Yeah, no problem."

Sydnee: She does—

Taylor: Screw the world. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: And the reason she sacrifices herself to stop the asteroid from, you know, killing her and—her friends are on it. Like, it's kind of wild that in the morals of Sailor Moon are not, I will—because the hero always classically finds a way to save both. He saves his friends and he saves the world. Sailor Moon said, without a doubt, given the choice, "I'm gonna save my friends."

Sydnee: I'm gonna save my friends. That is interesting. Which, I mean, I don't know, there's always this—I always think it's weird in Sailor Moon where when she is Usagi, she is almost like annoyingly immature for many

scenes. You know what I mean? Like, very like not—like unconcerned with the world around her. [titters]

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like when the flower petals start falling, and she's just sort of like twirling.

Taylor: Spinning [chuckles]

Sydnee: Like, "Ah! Ah!"

Taylor: I love that scene. [chuckles]

Sydnee: But then she becomes something very serious and, I don't know, infinite. Whenever she gets—not so much when she's Sailor Moon, it's when she becomes the Moon Princess.

Taylor: Yeah, but I don't know, I don't think it's a change—like, do you think it's a change of character?

Sydnee: I think she feels like a different person. Not so much—again, not when she's Sailor Moon. I think Usagi and Sailor Moon are the same. Like, one is more powerful, but they're generally like it's the same personality. I feel like when you see her turn into that—when she gets the magical white, flowing dress.

Taylor: Sure.

Sydnee: I feel like she's becoming her future self for a moment.

Taylor: Well, yeah, I agree with that. I just like that—I feel like even like whether she's Sailor Moon, whether she's Usagi, whether she's Serenity, Neo Queen Serenity—

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Taylor: There is always—like she is always Usagi at core. Like there is always that kind of soft, goofy silliness, that like slight lack of competence. Like, I feel like that's what makes her—like she's never—you never see her progress to like a hardened state. She never becomes a more adept version of herself. [titters]

Sydnee: No, she doesn't. That's true.

Taylor: And that's her power. Her power is always that she stays soft. You know?

Sydnee: She's hard.

Taylor: She is. And she wouldn't risk her friend's life. She'd risk hers, but she won't risk her friend's life. She shows forgiveness to the man that tried to steal her man. [chuckles]

Sydnee: I will say, there's some really, even in a cartoon from that era with—I feel like it's kind of, like there are some background scenes that are sort of like that soft kind of—I mean, you know art, so you know what I'm talking about. Almost like watercolor-looking.

Taylor: Oh, yeah.

Sydnee: But then there's a lot of like animation that just feels like a lot of like bold, bright colors. You know what I mean? Like, it doesn't look like something where you could create something scary or disturbing. Man, they're so good at it, though. When he stands up and he's got all those arms wrapped around him?

Taylor: Oh, yeah.

Sydnee: That's such an upsetting image.

Taylor: Oh, or the scene when she's being crucified and all the hands come out of the ground?

Sydnee: Yes. Yeah.

Taylor: That scene terrified me when I was younger. [titters]

Sydnee: They really hit home some of that imagery. I mean, I really find it upsetting. Tey, do you feel like at this point in your life, like other—when we're talking about the major, like the core Senshi, who do you identify with? Because I know you've often said like you were waiting for them to bring in the gay Sailor Scouts. Sailor Uranus, Sailor Neptune.

Taylor: I mean, I love Uranus and Neptune. I don't know... I mean...

Sydnee: I've always—

Taylor: Sailor Moon has always been my favorite.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Like I don't think that will ever change. I feel like I was—I like the gay ones. I wanted them to bring in the gay ones, because that was when, you know, when I was younger, I was like, well, this has to be my choice because it's the gay ones.

Sydnee: Mm-hm.

Taylor: I still love them, but I don't know, Sailor Moon is always going to be my—like there were moments when it just—just watching Usagi in this movie, I don't—I haven't re watched Sailor Moon in a long time. And I'm just like, I just love her. I don't think I'm like her, but I love her. [titters] I love how she loves her friends, and I love how she's written. And I love that she doesn't ever—I don't know, she'll always be my favorite. Probably the one that's closest to me as a person, though, is probably like one of the sad outers.

Sydnee: [titters]

Taylor: I don't know.

Sydnee: Not Uranus?

Taylor: No, Uranus is way too cool. Like Uranus is definitely cooler than me. I don't think I can—I don't think I can pull that off.

Sydnee: I don't think that's true.

Taylor: I don't know, I would say Pluto, who's just stuck at a time gate. Or Saturn, who like everyone still can't really decide if they should kill her or not. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Saturn shows up and everybody's afraid. And I never watched far enough into the series to understand why. I just knew everyone was afraid. [titters]

Taylor: Yeah, it was like, well, she's gonna in the world. It's like, well, she's just a kid. It's like, well, yeah. I mean, there's a whole plot point that's just, "We gotta kill this kid," right? Yeah, everyone knows we gotta kill this kid. [chuckles] It's like, that's—maybe—that's wild.

Sydnee: I will always most closely identify with Mars.

Taylor: Oh, I know.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: [titters] Absolutely.

Sydnee: If I had to have a power, I'd want it to be fire. [titters]

Taylor: Now, this is... Mars was always, I feel like... like as the—as you're ranking like the Inner Senshi, I feel like Mars is—probably because I feel like she goes hardest for Usagi. Even as much as they butt heads, you know?

Sydnee: Mm-hm.

Taylor: Like I always found their friendship particularly endearing.

Sydnee: Yeah, no, I did too. Because like when she needed to show up for her, she was—like she did. She never—you know? When it was time for her

to stand up for her friend, she did, and she recognized that. She just wasn't like all mushy all the time about it.

Taylor: And she's always the one that like, in a lot of those, there's always—[chuckles] So many seasons end with every Senshi dying horribly and Usagi having to witness it. Like that's kind of like, I forget how soon this is after that. Like Usagi's still—they're all still kind of traumatized from everything that just happened in this movie. You kind of get that. Like...

Sydnee: No, it's true. When do they say—when do they eat cheesecake?

Taylor: Eat cheesecake?

Sydnee: When is the part where they talk about eating cheesecake?

Taylor: Oh...

Sydnee: That's not in this movie. Where is that in the series? And that was in the dub. Remember, they talk about eating cheesecake?

Taylor: Isn't that—hm, is that before they all die? With...

Sydnee: Beryl? Is it that far back?

Taylor: Maybe? I know what you're talking about. Wow, that's back there.

Sydnee: Just saving the world and eating a cheesecake.

Taylor: And cheesecake, yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah. I forget when that happened.

Taylor: There were—there's always—I mean, I feel like every season ends with that, kind of. And it doesn't matter how many times they do it, it's always emotionally devastating.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: But Mars is always the last one to go down.

Sydnee: Mm-hm.

Taylor: You know, you'd think it would go in order, but it always—the show always makes the distinction of like, the one that stands the longest and hurts Usagi the most to see fall is Mars.

Sydnee: Yeah. It was fun to watch it again. I've missed—it's been a really long time. And I had started to get Charlie into it a few years back, but I think she was just a little too little to—and I think I also was trying to show her a sub when she had just learned how to read.

Taylor: [chuckles]

Sydnee: So...

Taylor: Yeah...

Sydnee: I need to dive back in with her with it a—I mean, a sub now. Because, I mean, obviously she could read it now. Or a dub that both of them could watch. Because Cooper can read, but I don't know if she could read fast enough to keep up with the sub.

Taylor: Well, this dub that's been—they've redubbed the almost—I think the whole thing is redubbed now. And it's all the same cast, and it's much more accurate. And, you know, no cousins anymore. [chuckles]

Sydnee: No cousins.

Taylor: No gay cousins. But I don't know, I just—for however dark the world feels, I think that, you know, Sailor Moon, the center idea of it—and this movie kind of expresses it all in one stroke. That like love is the most powerful force. And you fight for the things you love. And sometimes fighting isn't beating the crap out of your enemy. Sometimes fighting is trying to understand your enemy. Or, you know, trying to, I don't know... like—[titters] Have compassion or empathy.

Sydnee: I think it's good to remember that, because I think we're, especially right now, about to enter a time where a lot of us are angry all the time.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: And I don't—I think it's important not to lose your ability to love and feel empathy. And I don't mean with everyone. This is not me saying, "So like, try to understand why they did this." I'm not saying that. But there will still be times for compassion and empathy. And it's important not to harden yourself to that completely.

Taylor: Because then you can't access the silver imperium crystal.

Sydnee: That's the most important reason.

Taylor: Inside your soul. [chuckles]

Sydnee: Inside your soul... [chuckles] Just remember that.

Taylor: When Artemis is on the—like the DOS computer. [titters] Why does this—wait, who taught this cat to use this computer? How does this cat have a computer? How'd it get it?

Sydnee: I don't know, I think I could teach Olive how to use a computer.

Taylor: He just walked into a computer store and was like, "Excuse me, I'm a moon cat. Please give me—" [chuckles]

Sydnee: "Can I have a computer, please?"

Taylor: "A desktop unit." How'd he get that computer?

Sydnee: I mean, let's be honest. Like, I don't know, do you have the money for it? Sure.

Taylor: I guess so. I just...

Sydnee: There's that one cat that can play a keyboard, so...

Taylor: That's true.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: I think tracking and scanning the organic matter on an asteroid is a little harder than a keyboard. But, you know...

Sydnee: I don't know, have you ever tried to play piano? It's pretty hard.
[chuckles]

Taylor: Right. [titters] I've tried neither, so what do I know?

Sydnee: Well, thank you, Tey. It was fun to watch Sailor Moon again.

Taylor: Well, thank you for joining me. [titters]

Sydnee: I'm gonna make you watch something for next week.

Taylor: All right. Is it gonna be something else centered on love and uplifting, and kindness and friendship?

Sydnee: Honestly, yeah. I mean, in a very different way.

Taylor: Sure.

Sydnee: There is a TV show called Doctor Odyssey.

Taylor: Hm, all right?

Sydnee: It's a new show. It's on ABC, but it's also on Hulu, so... because I guess they're the same? I don't know, I've lost track of all the monopolies. But it's on Hulu. It's got Pacey on it. But the important thing is that it's—

Taylor: He will always be Pacey to you.

Sydnee: Yes, he will.

Taylor: Okay.

Sydnee: It is, I mean, it's just a doctor on a cruise ship. It's the wildest—I just need you to—I just need you to—all you have to do is watch the first episode. You don't have to watch more if you don't want to. If you love it, you can. But as long as you'll just watch the first one, just to get to get the vibe. Only because it's got ongoing plot, and so if you jumped in—like the Halloween episode was great. But if you jumped in on the Halloween episode, I don't think you would... like you wouldn't know what's going on with the characters.

Taylor: Well, all right, I'll check it out.

Sydnee: It's audacious, this TV.

Taylor: Audacious!

Sydnee: Audacious.

Taylor: Audacious television.

Sydnee: It's, well, you know Ryan Murphy helped make it?

Taylor: Oh, well, yeah.

Sydnee: So there you go. It's got that Ryan Murphy.

Taylor: He does do audacious television.

Sydnee: Yeah, yeah, it has that.

Taylor: Is this what we got instead of a new season of American Horror Story I guess?

Sydnee: Maybe. Maybe that's why. I don't know.

Taylor: We got that Grotesquerie show, but I—not the same vibe. Well, all right. Well, I'm excited. I'll watch it.

Sydnee: All right. Well, thank you, Tey. Thank you, listeners. You should go to maximumfun.org if you want to find some other great podcasts that you would enjoy. You can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org. And thank you to the Nouvellas for our theme song, Baby You Change Your Mind.

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'm still buffering.

Taylor: And I am too.

[theme song, "Baby You Change Your Mind" by Nouvellas plays]

Sydnee: It did make me want to go back and listen to the Sailor Moon soundtrack that we used to—or songs, or whatever it was.

Taylor: I was gonna say, because this has Moon Revenge, the Japanese song, in it, which is amazing and epic. But I can't... there was a dub version of this. And I feel like they put—I don't know, some of those—some of those English songs were pretty epic too.

Sydnee: Yeah, they were. I know. Let's go turn on Rainy Day Man. [titters]

Taylor: Yeah. [chuckles] I was thinking Power of Love.

Sydnee: Ah, yeah.

Taylor: She's got the power. It's good.

[break]

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