

Women at Warp Episode 176: We Doin' Sci-Fi Stuff Today? (Lower Decks S2)

[Women at Warp theme]

Kennedy: Greetings and welcome to Women at Warp: A Roddenberry *Star Trek* Podcast. Join us on our continuing mission to explore intersectional diversity in infinite combinations. My name is Kennedy and thanks for tuning in. With me today are Sue.

Sue: Hello.

Kennedy: And Andi.

Andi: Hello.

Kennedy: Before we get into our main topic, we have a little bit of housekeeping to do first. Our show is made possible by our patrons on Patreon. If you'd like to become a patron, you can do so for as little as \$1 per month and get awesome rewards from thanks on social media up to silly watch-along commentaries, visit patreon.com/womenatwarp.

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Now, that the work is done, let me roll up my sleeves because we're reviewing *Lower Decks* Season 2. [makes fanfare sounds]

Sue: [laughs] Every time I hear theme song, I love it more. Can I just say?

Kennedy: It just keeps getting better.

Sue: It's so good.

Kennedy: [laughs] So first, the premiere episode, *Strange Energies*, where Mariner and what's his name? Ransom, geez, already I forgot his name. All I can think of is the rainbow swirls because that whole scene was just-- It's the first thing I remember and it's the only thing that's hitting me right now. But I'm curious before I get into my bag, how do you all feel about it?

Andi: The thing I like about this episode and the thing I like about *Lower Decks* in general is that it is so cool to see a *Star Trek* show lean into being *Star Trek*. The self-referential humor, I am so about it. It wouldn't work on a normal show because this is a comedy show and it's almost less, want to say, formal, if that's the word for it. They can make fun of themselves in a way that other shows it wouldn't work nearly as well. But they do it so well. And they do it so well because you can tell how much they love *Star Trek* and how much fun they're having with *Star Trek* and just the smallest things they will bring back. And this is a good example of that. That's like, "Here's a trope of *Star Trek*. Let's have it happen on *Lower Decks* and then make fun of it." It's freaking awesome. I love it.

Sue: And it's not just references to *Star Trek* we've seen on TV or in film before, it's references to lore around *Star Trek*. Like when Mariner says, "I know we're not supposed to have interpersonal conflicts, but I really hate that Andorian."

Kennedy: Perfect.

[laughter]

Sue: I mean, that's the Gene idea that we talk about all the time.

Kennedy: Yeah. And the other cool thing about it is I don't know any other franchise, longstanding or otherwise, that can refer to itself so many different ways. Like, nobody even the Whovians can't refer to themselves within themselves the way that *Trek* can. There's other episodes that jump out in mind that drive that home. Of course, *Strange Energies* being one of them because it makes a reference to Gary Mitchell. So, there's *TOS* right there. And then, with the next episode, *Kayshon, His Eyes Wide*, aside from- there's a Tamarian in Starfleet now. But there's also that collectorship where everything you could have possibly-- all of the true, true nerdy things, like all the collector nerds lost their minds with this episode because of everything that it made reference to in the background.

I was watching it earlier today to remind myself and I was like, "Oh, snap, there's this. Oh, snap. There's that. Oh, snap. There's this." And it's just a really cool example of what this franchise can do. And it's just such a love letter.

Andi: Yeah. *Kayshon* is a good example of this because it also shows the flexibility that animation gives you that live action doesn't because we get to see more aliens on the show than we have ever seen before. And a huge part of that is because it's just as easy to draw an alien as it is any other human crew member whereas in other shows, it's a production.

So, the fact that we get to see one-off alien species that we don't usually get to see very often on live-action *Star Trek* nearly as much, this show is probably the most species diverse that we've ever had, and it's because it's animated. And kind of going back to our first point where it's just this clearly is a show that the writers love, the thing I like about the collectorship idea is, if you ask nerds, like, what would they want to do with a collector ship, it would 100% be like, "Let's run around and fight the collection." It's wish fulfillment. But like not creepy and weird. It's just fun. It just taps into the fun aspects of *Trek* fandom in a way I don't think we've ever seen before and I really enjoy.

Sue: But it's not just relying on the jokes. This show is not just jokes and references. This, I think, might be one of my favorite episodes of the season because with Jed in the mix in this story, we're finally getting somebody who has a similar style as Mariner who's butting heads with her. And then, she's learning the lesson of, "People have different strengths and I need to pay attention to that. And my way isn't always the right way." So, you're getting the character development and you're getting the story, And in *Strange Energies*, they're also setting up in that episode her abandonment issues.

Kennedy: Oh, yeah, for sure.

Sue: Which is a theme through the whole season.

Kennedy: Yeah, I'm thinking there's something there. I'm thinking, coming up, Carol Freeman must have devoted her life to *Trek* and never saw her daughter. Carol Freeman went to join the *Trek*, geez. [laughs]

Sue: She devoted her life to *Star Trek*. She's a big fan.

Kennedy: Right. She devoted her life to Starfleet. Beg pardon. And in an effort to stay close to her mother, to maintain a connection with her mother, she joins Starfleet too but is the antithesis because resents it, I think, low key. And she resents her mother's devotion to it as well. So, those abandonment issues definitely are there in *Strange Energies* and, like you said, through the rest of the season, for sure. Overcompensation is here in *Kayshon, His Eyes Open*. So, it's been hard to see Mariner's growth because it's almost like that mirror

that I mentioned from first season, I'm like, "Oh, my God, Mariner's me." It's like, "Oh, snap. No, this is you guys just at me next time, okay? Don't make a whole series about my life. Cripes."

One quick note about *Kayshon, His Eyes Open* before we move on. The fact that he had to learn Federation standard, I think, is a big deal. And it's a cool way to shine light on folks who Federation standard AKA English, isn't their first language and there's going to be some language barriers and the fact that it still occurs in this time frame, I think, is super cool.

Andi: The thing that's cool about him as a character is not only are we getting the cool stuff, but we're also getting this was the criticism of that episode is that as a language that would be very difficult and would cause a lot of confusion. And so, they're like, "Hey, here he is. [laughs] And look--" It causes a lot of confusion. And I just find that very charming. And regarding Mariner, one thing that I like about *Lower Decks* in general is that it's very standalone in many ways, but the character development is arced.

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Kennedy: Oh, for sure.

Andi: So, you see the character themes pretty much in every episode. In the beginning here, we start to see Mariner's go to move being hostility, which is her arc over the season. We have her difficulty with working with other people. And with Boimler, we have him addressing his perfectionism and how that kind of holds him back sometimes. And these are themes that are repeated throughout the episodes we're going to talk about. I always find that cool. Like, the stories are standalone sometimes, but the themes aren't. That's good writing, in my opinion.

Sue: Also, shout out to the Trekkie crafters and fabric artists, because their work on Kayshon puppets practically immediately.

Kennedy: That day, within the hour it dropped, there were Kayshon puppets. I want one so bad. I want to be a Kayshon puppet. Like, that's a cosplay idea. [laughter] Just this enormous puppet. [laughs] Oh, God, that would be fantastic. Moving on, we've got *We'll always have Tom Paris*.

Andi: A favorite.

Sue: You know what? This episode is them addressing all of the criticism they received for season 1.

Kennedy: Yep. They did that a lot over the course of the season, for sure.

Sue: And the best thing about it is that they weren't saying, "You're wrong." They're saying, "You know what? You're right. So, let's fix it." At least that's the way I read it. Putting Mariner and Tendi together, splitting up the crew in a different way, making Mariner canonically queer. All of this happens in this episode.

Kennedy: I specifically appreciate all of those things that you said, Sue, and the fact that Mariner was in greenface for a little bit there, I was a little uncomfortable. I was like, "What? Wait a minute. [laughs] This is how we drive home that this is bad? This is how we do this? Because I'm uncomfortable." I guess that's an indicator of how damaging blackface was or any type of appropriation of a person's visage without-- just like any type of impersonation in that way made me uncomfortable.

But it was also like the way she handled it, I think, like you said, is how people who would make those kinds of arguments for something like that, all of those responses are things that she said. So, I think they just do a really good job of taking heavy topics as well and hitting the nail on the head in a way so they could push through the story.

One of those heavy topics being Tom's clear PTSD. Your man is not okay because Boimler didn't look like a Kazon. When he did all the things he had to do to get his plate, "I've got to get my plate." Boimler is so sweet. I want to hug him. After all was said and done, Tom reacted like he was still at the far reaches of the Delta Quadrant. Your man was scarred. And talking about that in a way that is comedic made me a little uncomfortable too. I was like, "He's not okay." Maybe I'm sensitive. Maybe I read a little too much into things when it comes to that. Maybe I have a safe-- a special place in my heart for the Voyager crew that could be as well. I wonder how you all thought about that.

Andi: I guess I didn't take it so much as it being a comment on Tom having PTSD as more-- For me, I took it as more of a funny callback. I thought it was funny, but I also can see how you would read it that way and why that would be discomfoting.

Kennedy: Yeah. Because to your point, Andi, they could have done that. How many different species did they encounter in the Delta Quadrant. They could have plucked from anybody, but it was the fact-- because the Borg are probably more traumatic than that Kazon excursion was or maybe, I don't know, anybody else seeing Harry get all eaten up by the undine. Any one of those things is traumatic.

Andi: I think for me, it just seemed like they were going with one of the more iconic Voyager specific alien races.

Sue: Yeah.

Kennedy: Fair. I'm with it. To our point that we're trying to establish about this being like a not just a *Star Trek* comedy, it being a *Star Trek* show. I'm looking at it from a lens. It's like, "Haha, this stuff has more comedy than usual, obvi." But this is still a legit crew. They're still in space. They're still upholding the Prime Directive somewhat.

Sue: Because of the nature of *Star Trek* and its ideas-driven storytelling, when you're making a comedy show within that universe, I think one of the difficult things to navigate is that you're always going to run into situations where the audience might think, "Should they be making jokes about that?"

Kennedy: Mm-hmm.

Andi: And we're definitely going to get into that with some of the later episodes too because I think this is a really fine line to walk. And most of the time, I think *Lower Decks* does a really good job of walking that line, and then occasionally they dip their toe past the line, which is kind of an inevitable outcome if you're going to try and do comedy about serious things.

Kennedy: Yeah, I could agree to that. The big thing about this episode is seeing more of Dr. T'Ana for me and more of Tendi. Mistress of the Winter Constellations? Bitch, what? What? I have so many questions. What did you do? Where do you come from? Who are your people? Like, what is happening? Dom Tendi for the win? What is going on? That part really impacted me. It was cool seeing Orions, but it was definitely cool seeing a little bit more of Caitian culture too.

Sue: Mm-hmm. Why is her tail so short? That's what I want to know.

Kennedy: I think she'd been in a fight. She's scrappy.

Sue: I mean, that's-- I buy it.

[laughter]

Kennedy: Scrappy. At first, I thought she might have been one of those breeds that has bob tails or shorter tails, like a Manx, maybe. Just judging by her ears, I think homegirl be fighting people.

Sue: That's fair.

Kennedy: Moving on to my favorite episode, I think of the season, Mugato, Gumato.

Andi: Okay, so I have to say that the Mugato scene [laughs] where they're banging is the funniest thing I've ever seen in my life.

[laughter]

Sue: This show is so horny.

Andi: [laughs] I fell off my couch. And this is not hyperbolic. I literally laughed so hard, I fell off my couch. My stomach, I had to pause the episode at some point because I couldn't stop laughing. And then I was missing things because it was just one of those kinds of things that I will think back on it and laugh. [laughs]

Kennedy: Oh. Everything about *Mugato*, *Gumato*. I remember telling Sue that it read like [unintelligible 00:16:08] adventure. It read like somebody who has been a fan like us, like a big old nerd about it and has dug in every possible crate they could to bring this episode. Because, here we go again, splitting up the Fab Four, or Fave Four as I call them, putting Boimler and Raffi together, and those two just being pure little nerds, bless their nerdy little hearts out-Fereng-ing Ferengis. Like, what? Starfleet's finest. Starfleet's finest.

Sue: That's my way to win a battle, with profit and loss sheets. [laughs]

Kennedy: Just. Oh, man. So good.

Andi: [sighs] Can I just say too that regarding the humor, I find it very interesting that I have been more than once-- and I'm sure Sue has too and Kennedy, been more than once told that I am a humorless feminist. [Sue laughs] And yet, to me, this was so freaking funny. But it's one of the episodes that I feel got the most backlash for, "This is too far. This is not *Star Trek*." Which, to be fair, I think is valid. Like, humor is super subjective. I can see how somebody would sit down and be like, "That was too much. I didn't find it funny." And I think that's valid. But I just think it's really funny that we get treated like humorless, prudish feminists and then I'm crying laughing at this episode.

Kennedy: I get told to lighten up all the time.

Andi: Yes. And something we're going to talk about again later, I'm sure.

Kennedy: Right. And the reason why I thought the Mugato fornication scene was so great was because it was very sex positive. Boimler and Rutherford could have reacted with disgust. I'm pretty sure they were too busy being scared for their lives. But when everyone was spent, [laughter] they just kept it pushing. They weren't like, "Ew, it's disgusting." They

were just like, it's a thing. It happens." Like, it's apparently very natural and kept it pushing. The fact that they included a watcher was-- I just thought was really nice to include folks in the kink community who just prefer to watch.

[laughter]

Sue: For more on that topic. [laughter] Before we move on to the next episode, I just want to say that my favorite part of *Mugato*, *Gumato* was that Shaxs pronounced it differently every single time. [laughs]

Kennedy: Oh, it's the best part. Because wasn't it DeForest Kelley who couldn't get it right and was saying it different every time? Just chef's kiss, man. Like, what else could you possibly need?

Andi: Also, not quite as hard as the *Mugato*'s, but I also almost cried laughing at Mariner just beating the crap out of Boimler and Rutherford in *Anbo-jyutsu*, I thought I was going to lose it.

Kennedy: Oh, my god. Oh, my God. They were like, "We've been practicing." When homegirl went off, I said, "She's a problem." [laughs] Mariner has seen time somewhere, Mariner's done hard time on someone's penal colony. I don't know. I definitely believe the Klingon black ops story now. I believe that. That wasn't something she told some bartender to spread at a bar. No, no, that happened.

Sue: I'm curious about everybody's backstory now.

Kennedy: Oh, yeah, for sure. Next is *Embarrassment of Dooplars*.

Andi: Kirk and Spock forever. [Kennedy laughs] That's all I have to say about that.

Kennedy: No, it's all good. What a fun episode.

Sue: Can we talk about Kirk and Spock at the bar? I'm all for Spirk. 100%. But it's just a plus. There's no heart. And the fandom in seeing this screenshot was like, "Kirk and Spock is canon."

Andi: Yeah, I wouldn't go that far.

Sue: Yeah. I'm on board for it, don't get me wrong. But you've also Mariner plus Boimler, and they are definitely not a couple. So, I guess it leaves it open for interpretation.

Andi: Yes, which is kind of the hallmark of Kirk and Spock, in my opinion. Like, you can interpret them as platonic friends. You absolutely can. And I think it's beyond a valid interpretation. And then, you can also interpret it as more and both are fine.

Sue: Yeah. I don't think I personally will go as far as calling it canon-

Andi: Oh, no. No, no, no.

Sue: -based on the names carved in a bar.

Andi: The subtext is still subtext. It is not yet text.

Sue: If you want to though, I'm for it. [laughs]

Kennedy: That's what's up. Geez, what was I going to say about *Embarrassment*?

Sue: This episode's about classism. Is that what you were going to say?

Kennedy: Probably, [Sue laughs] yeah. The whole series, as we're finding, is about the divide, the hierarchy within the Federation and Starfleet.

Andi: And how arbitrary and pointless it is.

Kennedy: Yeah. Especially when you consider the things that these people do every day. I can't imagine being considered on a lower rung of anything in Starfleet. Like, we're in space. Everything I do is high risk. What do you mean I'm on a lower tier? If you don't let me in this party-- [laughs]

Sue: Yeah. I think this is the first time it comes up this season. But when Freeman says, "I'll be the only California class captain in attendance," so all captains aren't equal either?

Kennedy: Yeah. It's just really--

Sue: But that's-- Mm, mm-mm.

Kennedy: Especially considering the optics. it's like, "Okay, great." You're going to give this woman a piece of her flower, but not the whole bouquet, even though she's clearly doing the work to own it. But we'll get into that too because [unintelligible [00:22:12]. you were talking about Kirk plus Spock and Mariner plus Boimler being sweet and pure and stuff in the bar. My favorite part of that bar was Tendi handing Rutherford a model of Deep Space Nine after struggling with his memory the entire episode. And I think they're incorporating some cognitive disability hints with Rutherford. And I'm liking it. I like the inclusion element of it.

But the fact that she gave him a Deep Space Nine and he got excited because it had both a Jadzia and an Ezri [Sue laughs] because they won't give us *Deep Space Nine* references. Like, they're not going to give it to us because everybody wants it. We got the piece of a glimpse in season 1. The fact that everybody's still wearing those uniforms is like a nod.

Sue: In this very same episode, they mentioned Quarks. She talks about having served on Deep Space Nine. Mariner does.

Kennedy: Right. But we won't see anybody from *Deep Space Nine*.

Sue: We saw *Deep Space Nine* itself in season 1.

Andi: Let's hope. Let's hope we see more *DS9*.

Kennedy: I said what I said. I want-- [crosstalk]

[laughter]

Andi: It's not enough, Sue. That is what we want to get across here.

Sue: Never enough.

Andi: We want more *Deep Space Nine*.

Kennedy: I want Bashir to show up on the Cerritos to give T'Ana some tips on how to do things and her be thoroughly irked by how pleasant he is.

Andi: No, what I want is Bashir and Mariner running around doing bi/pan things and just being chaos everywhere.

Kennedy: That can happen too. That could be the holodeck part of that episode. [laughs] I'm with it. Moving on to *The Spy Humongous*, which I think is really a cool point in nailing home the subplots here in this season. One being the Pakleds and the fact that they are super aggressive and apparently really hard to kill. And Carol Freeman's ambition, like we've already seen in previous episodes this season alone with *Embarrassment of Dooplars* immediately. But homegirl's trying to be out. She's trying to get noticed. She's trying to get-- I don't know what-- She isn't clear about what her goal is, but it sounds like she's ready to leave the crew behind because she's so ambitious and making these diplomatic meetings and first contact and negotiations and stuff.

And in her ambition is underestimating the Pakleds, clear underestimation. When that dude got yeeted into space [Sue laughs] and survived, I was like, "Wait a minute." Like, it's one thing for them to be a little dull. It's another thing for them to use technology from other cultures instead of developing their own. But surviving the vacuum of space? No, that would instantly put me at red alarm.

Andi: And I think the thing about Freeman's arc in this show is that it's often contrasted, and it is in this episode, with Boimler and his ambition and also his insecurity. He wants to be Freeman and Freeman wants to be more than she is. So, I think kind of the two of them together, we can take from their stories is that like, there is always farther to go, but when you're always looking towards where you want to be, you're noticing where you are.

Kennedy: Right. For sure. I was definitely proud of Boimler this episode. The red shirts were clearly like-- Ugh, what--? Like, is there a term for people like that who don't do work? [laughs]

Sue: Failing upwards? [laughs]

Andi: Managers?

Kennedy: Okay, great. Yeah, yeah. There is probably several words. Okay, great. It was cool seeing Kzinti in Starfleet. It was just really neat. I love the fact that we're seeing all these *TAS* aliens unironically.

Sue: There were a lot in the last episode too.

Kennedy: Oh, the grub guys, the server guys.

Sue: Oh, and-- I'm going to get it wrong. One of the avian guys.

Kennedy: Oh, yeah.

Sue: There are two different races that are the avian guys and I don't recall which one is which. Sorry, Erin Harvey. [laughs]

Kennedy: It's all good. I think the fact that we're even referencing *TAS* is impressive.

Andi: Because it's canon.

Sue: It is canon.

Andi: Sorry about it.

Kennedy: It is.

Sue: I got to say though, I still am uncomfortable with the Pakleds being like the season villain because I'm sort of uncomfortable with the Pakleds in general. There are very few big people, fat people on *Star Trek*. And this entire race, their whole thing is that they are fat and they are unintelligent. And it irks me a little bit that those things are linked. And even though they say at the end of season 1, the Pakleds aren't a joke anymore, they're still kind of a joke in a comedy show. Just give me more fat people in Starfleet and I would be less-

Kennedy: Vigilant.

Sue: Vigilant, skeptical, cautious. I'm not even sure what the right word is. But I just side eye them every time they're on screen.

Kennedy: I definitely felt that as well, and I find myself trying to justify them, I feel like. Maybe our translators aren't picking up what their dialogue skills are actually like. Maybe their form of conversation is-- what we can perceive is all the translator can get through. Maybe this is all a ploy. And for them, life is just simpler. I don't know. I don't know. I keep finding ways to justify them being that way, Sue, and they keep falling short. So, I definitely can see where you're coming from on that.

Andi: Hey, no show can be perfect. There's always going to be ways to improve.

Sue: Absolutely.

Andi: And I think overall, we like *Lower Decks*, but this is one thing that I also am not super comfortable with. And I think that it varies from joke to joke too, because sometimes there are jokes where it's clear that the joke is Starfleet and how they are treating the Pakleds and then there are other times where the joke is, "Look how silly the Pakleds are." So, even within that, discomfort is nuanced.

Kennedy: It makes me root for them, to be honest. Next episode, the problematic one, Where Pleasant Fountains Lie. [Sue laughs]

Andi: Yeah. Okay. So, I remember when we-- I think it might have even been the same group when we talked about *Lower Deck* Season 1, and there was THE one episode that made Sue and I uncomfortable was the one episode that we thought was really ableist. I don't remember the name of that episode. The one where there it's like--

Sue: The one with the farm.

Andi: Yeah. And we're like, "Ooh, this really just did not work for us." That's this episode for this season for me, because I found some of it really interesting. I really found the whole fantasy medieval court kind of thing in space very, very cool.

Kennedy: Oh, that's lit. However.

Andi: Yeah. I liked getting background for Billups who we don't know a whole lot about, but the whole thing was super creepy. And I just really don't understand why they thought I would find it funny to watch a mom try and basically coercively sexually assault her son. It was so gross.

Kennedy: She was pimping him. She was straight up pimping him on behalf of the kingdom. She was nonconsensually pimping him. Let's be clear.

Andi: Yeah, there's lots of consent problems here. But my problem is less with that. It's more with how it's framed by the reactions of other people. They should not be reacting like, "Oh, look, she did it again." No, man, no. This is super messed up, like, criminal.

Kennedy: Yeah. Not okay.

Andi: And nobody, even within the episode, seemed to feel like there should be consequences for this or understood the gravity. And part of the reason is, at the end of the day, again, this is supposed to be a lighthearted comedy show, and you can't unpack that comedically. And so, that makes the whole episode built on rotten foundations, because this is not something that is funny. So then, how are we supposed to laugh at it?

And I have to think that if Billups was a woman, we'd be talking about it much differently, and the episode would be very different. And I don't think that it would exist. Because part of the jokes is he's a man. And then, the other thing is that, like, they've coded him-- at the very least, coded him to be asexual. And so, the joke is like, "He's a man who doesn't like sex. Let's force him to have sex." No, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Kennedy: Full stop. Full stop. You're right. If this was Andarithia Billups, we would have a completely different conversation around it. And I wonder if they thought that was the gag. Like, "Hey, this is a really problematic thing that could happen. Why don't we spin it so it can be funny?" And it's just like, that's not what happened. That was a whole entire miss. And it's a shame, because Billups being a prince, low key, is a great idea. It's a great concept. Like, Ren Faire in space, great nod to folks who go in Starfleet uniform to Ren Faires. Like, there was great bones there but--

Andi: Yeah, if they had him being tricked into doing something that would make him become king, they could keep all of that and just make it not be sex and this whole episode would have been great. Like, literally change that story beat from, like, he has to say this phrase, and so she's always trying to trick him into saying those words. I don't know. Like, literally, you could make up anything.

Kennedy: It could be his mustache. Oh, my God. He shaved his mustache and now he's king.

Andi: Shave off his mustache.

Kennedy: Yeah.

Andi: Ritually shave off his mustache, and then he's king. Exactly. Like, that immediately is a million times funnier. Has no consent issues at all. And this whole episode suddenly works again.

Sue: It has no sexual consent issues.

Andi: Yeah, that's true.

Sue: It still has consent issues.

Andi: Yeah. I'm just saying, you could rewrite that episode very easily with pretty much anything else and make it less problematic.

Sue: Hot take. I don't think you should.

Andi: Okay.

Sue: As an ace person, I obviously don't speak for all ace people. I found this story incredibly relatable.

Andi: Wow.

Kennedy: What? Oh, my God. Tell me more about that. I was ready for Super Sue. I was ready for Super Sue. [laughs]

Sue: So, from my perspective, I, for the most part, identify as aro-ace, so aromantic, asexual. But also, within asexuality, there tend to be categories of being sex favorable, meaning that you are happy to have sex, you enjoy having sex, sex indifferent, and sex repulsed. So, those are the three mains, obviously, spectrum, all of this stuff. But from my perspective, like, sex is not a thing I think about all the time. Sex is not a thing that I am seeking pretty much ever. But I am moving through the world. I'm surrounded by it. I'm surrounded by media telling me I should, that it's important, my family telling me that it's important. My mother has never tried to coerce me into having sex but she has, against my will, tried to set me up with multiple people.

And for me, that's the same thing. Like, you're trying to force me into a relationship that I don't want. I am not interested in having a relationship. But that in itself is coercion. But a lot of these things Billups is dealing with is navigating the world for me as an ace person, of people with this expectation of coupling with the sort of being the butt of a joke when you're not interested in this topic of conversation. But what I really loved about this episode is that Billups' crewmates aren't making fun of him.

Andi: Oh, that's true.

Sue: They're like, "Oh, you're a virgin? Okay, cool."

Andi: Yeah. I really liked how supportive Rutherford was through the whole episode for Billups.

Sue: Right. And when it's announced to the entire ship that he's a virgin, nobody is laughing at him.

Andi: That is pretty cool.

Sue: Right? And you also talked about if this were Andarithia Billups. It was. It was Deanna Troi. Because his mother is clearly supposed to be a Lwaxana Troi type. But in the early seasons of *TNG*, this is exactly what Lwaxana did to Deanna with her whole arranged marriage business. Was it *Haven*?

Andi: Yeah. That's really cool. I love that perspective on it. I guess the thing that would probably have helped me not be so uncomfortable would be if they hadn't had that scene where he is clearly freaking out and two people sitting there staring, that to me really creeped me out. So, I really appreciate that perspective of this is relatable. But I'm wondering if there's a way to walk that line where you still could get that story without being so creepy? I don't know.

Sue: Yeah. I don't want to make it seem like I'm saying the coercion is okay. Definitely not.

Andi: I don't think we thought that.

Sue: Tricking somebody into having sex is not okay. But I think you're right. The scene that bothered me the most is when he's in the towel in the bathroom.

Andi: Yes.

Sue: He's not just celibate because he prefers to be in Starfleet. And I just also want to say celibate is different from asexual. Like, celibate is a choice not to have sex, whereas asexual is a lack of sexual attraction. So much terminology. [chuckles] But he didn't make the choice of, like, I would rather do this, but sex is still a temptation. He's clearly, from that scene, either just not interested in these people or not interested in sex entirely.

Kennedy: Right. And for me, it was the scene leading up to it where he goes to Freeman and officially resigns. And those two guards, I guess, whatever, grip him up and he says, "Is it going to hurt?" I was like, "Oh, my God, no." I was like, "They can't-- How? What?" I was like, "I hope someone protects Billups." And thank God for Rutherford, because-- Ooh, I will say that it did kind of warm my heart to see how many people that I knew were so ready to go to war for Billups and protect him. So, I think, as cringey as that episode was, it was kind of a litmus test to show us that the kids are okay. Like, no one was like, "You should have banged."

Sue: Yeah. I heard some of the comments about this episode before I had a chance to watch it. And then when I watched it, I was like, "Yeah, this part is not great. But they're also telling us that it's not great?" Like, the episode is not saying, this is okay. What's everybody mad about? [laughs]

Andi: Yeah. And I think that's where I didn't feel the same, I guess, because-- I don't think anybody was like, "Wow, what a great mom. She really cares--" It wasn't like that. But I don't feel like the reaction from the crew or the episode encompass how supremely not okay all of that was. I thought the reaction to what happened was very mild and barely there.

Kennedy: The only argument I could launch against that, Andi, is that Freeman and the crew are fully aware of the shenanigans. So, knowing what Billups is about, what Billups is not about, and if this is something that happens a lot, I imagine the crew would be desensitized to seeing this woman as more of annoyance than anything else.

Sue: We've also seen over and over again in *Star Trek* where a crew member's culture comes into play and everybody else just kind of backs off.

Kennedy: Yeah. Because you're supposed to. In this case, it's like [makes squirming sounds]. But you're right. Definitely Deanna Troi vibes, Sue.

Sue: But while we're talking about ace stuff, I just want to say, you know who else has some real ace energy is D'vana Tendi. The trick, or rather the stunt she pulls in *Strange Energies*, I think it's the first episode where she freaks out that she might lose her friend to a relationship? That is some ace energy. [Andi laughs]

Kennedy: See, I thought she was in love with him and Raffi was giving me ace.

Sue: Well, in season 1, he tells Badgley that he like-likes her, and she doesn't seem to be interested in dating whatsoever, but anyway.

Kennedy: Interesting.

Sue: I mean, they both could be. But that particular instance of, “You can't date. I don't want to date you, but you can't date this person because I don't want to lose you from my friend life,” I can't tell you how many times I have been through that.

[laughter]

Kennedy: Aww. Another thing I could have lived without is AGIMUS. Without Jeffrey Combs' face, it was just alarming. [Andi laughs] We are accustomed to him playing villainous roles and seeing his face, so it establishes a level of familiarity that makes him a little less threatening than his characters actually are. We all know Weyoun was a problem, but because it's Jeffrey Combs, we're all kind of like, “Oh, look at this scamp. Got to keep your eye on him.” Same thing with [unintelligible 00:41:12] was a racist jerk. But it's Jeffrey Combs, so everything's cool.

And I feel like without seeing his face, without having a human being to portray a character behind, I guess, that voice or that cadence or I don't know what it is. No, ma'am. No, ma'am. I would have set that thing on fire so fast. I don't give a good John Brown about a regulation. They would have had to court martial me on that one.

Sue: But you also pointed out in your recap that you were really bothered by Boimler and Mariner fighting.

Kennedy: Yes.

Sue: And I was thinking about it, usually when that's the setup in another episode, you get that frame of one character winking at another, but that doesn't happen.

Kennedy: No. He could have pulled her aside and been like, “Hey, listen, I figured something out.” And that would have been it. Because that's definitely their dynamic as well. Like, that's on brand for them, doing scrappy undercover things. They've been around each other long-- He's been around her long enough to know that she would be with the shit if that was the case. But punching her in the face and then stunning her was like, “No, unacceptable. Send it back. I don't want it.” That's when this episode really bothered me. And then, seeing Tendi being traumatized by the thought of losing Rutherford.

The fact that this woman, this queen, what's her name, Paolana? The fact that she staged not only her death, but other people's too? Like, who are you? What? What? fight me, fight me. Because now you're doing too much. You've been doing too much. But that's not cool. Tendi's clearly traumatized. All these things happened this episode that were, like, heavy things and I don't understand why people were into it. I get it that Combs is a fan favorite and everything, but this one was not the one for me.

Andi: Yeah. As I said, I enjoyed huge swaths of this episode, but I have to say that it was easily the weakest episode for me as well. Just the whole Billups storyline really made me uncomfortable. Although the next time I watch it, I definitely will watch it through a new frame because your thoughts on it were really interesting, Sue. But overall, just not my favorite one. You know what was my favorite one,

[laughter]

Kennedy: Was it *I, Excretus*?

Andi: Yes. This episode rocked. Boimler was so good in this episode. I can't believe it's real. He is a hero upon hero. When he comes out with the Borg babies strapped on and he's like, “I taught the Borg queen empathy,” oh, it was so good. It was so, so, so, so good. Actually,

the whole episode was freaking good. We were talking about how fun the references are. This was like what would happen if our crew was in old episodes of *Star Trek*? [Sue laughs] How would that be? And it was freaking brilliant.

And I have to say, I told you we'd come back to this. I'm here again. It really bothers me that this episode was so freaking good. And all of these people on Twitter decided to take a screenshot of someone who wasn't even actually Boimler-- Like, literally was not Boimler, being naked and being like, "This is just. Ah, I can't believe that this is *Star Trek*." And, like, just clutching of the plurals. And this episode was so good, and it makes me so frustrated.

Kennedy: Like, I literally know what John de Lancie ass looks like.

Andi: Yes.

Kennedy: You all are mad that there's a black stripe over a fictional-fictional Boimler?

Andi: Yeah, it's not Boimler. They're like, "This is this character. And he's so--" And I'm like, "It's not him, which you would know if you watched the episode and knew the context. This is like a really ramped up, over-the-top extra version of *The Naked Time* that was designed to be so horrifying that Mariner would fail her simulation.

Sue: But it's also not the first time we've had nudity on this show or in this season.

Andi: No. Like, watching that backlash was so frustrating.

Sue: The real them, if you can call them real, were all in a group shower together in the second episode.

Kennedy: Yeah. And more. And everybody else. Everybody else on that shift. We saw everybody's bits. So, why is this the problem? I will want to say in that scene though, in the background, Billups is chilling naked, but with his pad.

Sue: Yes, yes. [Andi laughs]

Kennedy: I was like, "This is pure. He's probably looking up filthy engine designs." Look at you. Look at you looking at engine designs or schematics that need to be updated. You filthy, filthy engineer. Shoutout to the one true pairing of *Lower Decks*, that is Shaxs and T'Ana. [laughter] If I wasn't crushing on Shaxs before-- spoiler alert, I was. Definitely crushing now because he tall and thick like I like him.

Sue: Can we talk though about the mirror universe simulation?

Andi: We have more bondage gear.

Kennedy: Yes.

Sue: But they also directly say, "Nothing makes me hornier than torture."

Kennedy: Yes. Yes.

Andi: I was watching this episode and I was like, "I cannot believe that we literally did a kink episode like a week ago." [laughs]

Sue: It really was.

Andi: Now, they're releasing this episode? Really? One of the reasons why I think it was so telling is, it's insight into how the writers see *Star Trek*. You know what I mean? So, I feel like it would have been really useful in our discussion, but c'est la vie.

Sue: I do love though that they think it's all like a fake exercise to get them to work together. And it's really just Shari.

Kennedy: Shari yn Yem. They kept messing up her name too, [laughs] which I thought was a little disrespectful.

Sue: That was also kind of their purpose in messing it up.

Kennedy: Yeah, Shari yn Yem. I was like, "That's not her name." [laughs] But just the fact that to prove their point, they literally sought out perilous situations and coasted through everything like it was nothing was, to me, a bigger flex on the franchise than *Kayshon* and *His Eyes Open* was episode wise. Because here we've established halfway into the season, almost towards the end of it, that this crew is rough around the edges, but they get it done in the broad scheme of armada that is known for getting it done. And here we are, proving that even the knuckleheads can get it done in a way that is fun for them, that is effortless for them. Like, "I don't know about y'all, but I'm not flinging myself towards a blackhole like everything's cool."

Andi: And I'm bringing it back to Boimler because to me, he's the real highlight of this episode and this is, like, super character development for him.

Kennedy: Oh, yeah.

Andi: The thing he wants more than anything is to prove himself in this exercise. And he gives it up for his crew.

Kennedy: Yeah. And was killing it.

Andi: Yeah. Oh, my gosh, he was so good.

Kennedy: When that second take around, when he was nailing it, I said, "Okay, Boimler, let's go." I was cheering for him. Boimler was the biggest glow-up for me because he was so annoying to me in the first season. And then, in this one, listen, that study abroad really too good.

Sue: [laughs] The best.

Kennedy: Really did him well. Moving on to *Wej Duj*.

Andi: Another amazing episode. Really loved this episode. I really love how *Lower Decks* is like, "Oh, so we're a comedy show, but we're also going to deepen canon like you would not believe and explore things that the live action shows because gloss over well. Well, no, we're not only going to explore them. We're going to do standalone episodes that are shorter than live action episodes that do more for world building." What? Amazing.

Kennedy: Flex.

Andi: I have the biggest crush on T'Lyn. [Kennedy laughs] She can call me.

Sue: So, a friend of mine, after watching this episode, texted me and goes, "Are we getting a new character in season 3?"

Andi: Yes. I hope so. They better bring it to us. We want her.

Sue: I love her.

Andi: She's so good. She's the perfect-- Okay. This is why the Vulcans are my favorite. Because my favorite Vulcan characters all have that quality where they're super logical, but they are super sass masters at the same time. So, like, Tuvok, Spock, they're both really good at this, where at the very end, she walked out and said, "Live long and prosper," same way Spock does in the JJ movies. It's one of my favorite moments for Spock is just like, "Live long and prosper."

Kennedy: Like, cough and die. [laughs]

Sue: And you haven't even met T'Pol yet.

Andi: I know. I'm excited. I love the Vulcans. I love them because [sighs] the idea of them is so good because it's, like, on the one hand, they have so much emotion that they're trying to keep a handle on it through logic, but their emotion leaks through all of the time, and I just love them. I love them so much. And she was so awesome.

Kennedy: My favorite thing about T'Lyn is learning how dramatic Vulcans are.

Andi: They are so dramatic. Spock and his loot should have told us.

Kennedy: Yeah, just dramatic. She has lost her mind. What? [laughter] "This is the precise outburst I'm referring to." What outburst? Like, what? Like, no wonder Michael Burnham is like that. No wonder. No wonder. No wonder. I also want to give a shoutout to Ma'ah. I really appreciated him. I felt like he was a cool Boimler reflection of somebody who wanted ambition. Shoutout to him for sticking to his guns when his commanding officer was being a prick. Like, what is it with-- I thought, like, Klingon's whole thing was not jeopardizing the peace between their allies and stuff. Like, what is wrong with you, bro? Like, we can't keep doing this. So, I appreciated Ma'ah.

I appreciated seeing a targ. He is super, super cute. And I appreciated the fact that we saw some downtime with the bridge crew. And I like the fact that they phrased it in a way that it's like, "Hey, it's going to be 12 hours until we get somewhere. Let's do things. Here's some R and R." And it's like, oh, wow. I guess, yeah. If you're constantly in space, like you're in transit, you're not always exactly where you need to be. Some things do take some time to get to. So, just that idea was really intriguing for me.

Sue: Can we also talk about all of these Starfleet officers appropriating Hawaiian culture?

Kennedy: And how Boimler calls them out on it?

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Kennedy: Perfect.

Sue: Although I do appreciate that one of them is a big girl.

Kennedy: Yes. I was going to say, "Wait, [unintelligible [00:52:42] Is it going to be you?" I really love the fact that she was there. I wish we had a name for her. Her cute little accent. It's just [onomatopoeia] If Boimler hadn't called them out on it, I would have been upset. I'd

have been like, "Damn, [unintelligible 00:52:55], how dare you?" [laughs] So, yeah, *Wej Duj*. And then, shoutout to the Borg at the end.

Sue: Oh, my gosh. Genius.

Kennedy: Shoutout to the Borg. Shoutout to the Pakleds.

Andi: The Borg in general on *Lower Decks* has been really fun.

Kennedy: Yeah, yeah, for sure. I also like Shaxs reacting to the way-- just the fact that Bajor was mentioned. Fighting fascism is a full-time job.

Andi: I want that on a t-shirt so bad. So--

Sue: Noted?

Andi: Well, yeah, maybe, noted, because it is. That's why it's so exhausting.

Kennedy: Which brings us to *First First Contact*.

Andi: Oh, okay. So, when I was first time Trekking and I got to the *TNG* episode with Sonya Gomez, I was so in love with her and I was so bummed we never saw her again. The fact that they brought her back-- this is what I was talking about before when I was like, it's wish fulfillment but good. You know what I mean? Like, so many writers make such a big deal of. "Oh, you're just audience pandering." Sometimes, audience pandering is awesome.

Kennedy: Especially when you consider the reason why we never saw Sonya Gomez again.

Sue: Tell the children.

Kennedy: Oh, yeah. So, when I was doing research for an article for a post that I wrote, apparently there was initially just like a scheduling conflict. Like, they wanted to reshoot a scene after it had already been shot and it had been enough time that Lycia Naff had cut her hair to a cute little 80s pageboy shortcut kind of jam. And was treated like dog shit on set just because she had cut her hair, and they had to put tracks in essentially to keep continuity. If you go back and watch it, you can see her hair versus the hair, I suppose. But because it was like that, she was just like, "All right, well--" And that on top of the fact that her and LeVar Burton had such cool, almost like brother-sister camaraderie countered the initial intention of making her a love interest for him. So, they really just didn't know what to do with the character.

But you going to give my girl shit because she got her haircut? Please. It wasn't like she got her haircut mid shoot. We were done, we were wrapped. My contract is complete. What is the attitude for? So, the fact that they brought her back was especially triumphant. Shoutout to Sonya Gomez for feeling up Captain Picard.

Andi: Her spilling hot chocolate was one of the only times I've ever seen myself in *Star Trek* because these people are for the most part extremely competent, awesome people. And that's great. But I would be spilling hot chocolate on Picard. Like, that's what I would be doing if they put me in space. And I really like that they did such a nice gentle callback in that if you didn't know who she was, you don't need to know who she was. And then, they give her a little character moment where she's really understanding this somebody who trips and it's like, that can just be a character beat. It doesn't have to be a callback if you can get you writers who can do both is what I'm saying.

Sue: Well, and you know what it shows is that when you're in that situation, when you make that kind of mistake and you're just clumsy or you break something or whatever, you think, "This is it. I'm going to get fired. This is the end of my career. What's going to happen to me?" And the next time we see her, she's a captain. And she's giving that kindness to her crew. It's just A+.

Kennedy: Yeah.

Andi: The thing is she was such a good captain, like really impressive leadership. Like, that whole moment where she was like, "Okay, now we've got to go to work."

Kennedy: Those pips though and that ship though, shout out to the Archimedes, woo. She was sexy. [laughs] I was like, "Okay, Gomez, put your big [unintelligible 00:56:57] behind ship, let's go." The other thing that jumped out at me was Mariner's immaturity. Like, I'm getting annoyed now. Like, I get it's funny. Haha. Kiki, you're irreverent but, girl, get your life together.

Andi: There was a handful of times where I was like, it's a little unbelievable that you're being so aggressive right now when everybody is trying to get things done. But at the same time, I think they were playing that up because they wanted a more impactful resolution, which was her growing. I think they just pushed it a little too far. Because that scene on the bridge where she's talking to Freeman, I thought that one was okay. Like, Freeman being like, "Okay, can we talk about this later?" But also, "I'm sorry too, and I love you." Like, that to me is the perfect amount. Whereas when she's arguing with them, right before they're about to dive into Cetacean Ops, which we must get to, but anyway, that to me was like, "Really, what are you doing?" [laughs] That seemed a little over the top and out of character for me. Like a line or two. Yes. Like, a full-on argument right before they're all going to die? Maybe not the time.

Sue: But that's exactly what happened at the end of season 1.

Kennedy: The thing about that scene in particular that makes this so complex for me, the nuances, is one of the things that a number of people, a number of black women specifically will co-sign with is that in the black community, there's a lot of pressure to outperform everybody around you. And if you come from a family of outperformers in an outperforming organization, there's going to be a whole lot of pressure, there's going to be a whole lot of expectations in terms of what your role was at the moment of crisis. And her line with like, "You guys don't understand what my family's like," hit me particularly hard because it's like, ooh, heavy." So, for Tendi to then be like, "We are your family now. Get over it." is important because it establishes another layer to found family.

A lot of folks having parents from generations that don't understand the nuances of how we approach things now and aren't trying to hear anything about mental health or self-care or labor rights or any of that. Like, they're not trying to hear it. And to have that affirmation happen at a point of crisis was so impactful, I think, for me and for Mariner, it looks like, because it enabled her to remember who she is and who's around her. Or rather, I should say who else is around her.

Andi: Yeah. And I think that scene and the scene on the bridge are two of the reasons why I thought this episode was so good because it was such a good standalone problem and standalone episode. But they didn't let it get completely wrapped up in shenanigans. They still grounded it to our characters and their feelings and their development. And that scene where Tendi is like, "We're your family now," was gorgeous. I just think that literally they could have cut maybe one or two back and forths where Mariner's arguing with them and it wouldn't have felt so--

Kennedy: So forced.

Andi: Yes.

Kennedy: I feel like that time could have been-- I'll see this, I will see you leaving that in there or see you cutting that part right or just clipping it, but raise you leaving that part in there and cutting her running to Ransom in them to let them know what happened. We could have just had a quick little scene on the bridge, like, "Hey, by the way this is happening." And then, being like, "Whoa." And it escalating kind of in the same way. I feel like that took a little bit of time away from that moment there. But speaking of powerful moments, holy cats, Cetacean Ops. [Sue laughs] Holy cats.

Sue: Although I could have done without the super horny dolphins.

Kennedy: Can we--? Are we-- Like, what?

Sue: Beluga, whatever they were--

Kennedy: They were belugas.

Sue: Super horny.

Kennedy: Entirely unnecessarily called HR horny. Like, that's not even like, haha, Kiki. Like everyone nowadays is like, "Whoa, boundaries, too close." And "I get it. Rutherford swum-- swum? Swam in Cetacean Ops before with-- oh geez, what's her name? Barnes and somebody else." But it's just like, "Sir, I am on the clock. [laughter] "What are you talking about?" Don't talk to me like that. What's the matter with you?"

Sue: What concerns me though, I know I'm going back a little bit, but it feels like Mariner didn't get the kind of season resolution that the other three got-

Kennedy: No, not at all.

Sue: -in this episode. Because we've got Tendi being told that she's being put into the science officer training program.

Andi: Like Jadzia Dax.

Sue: Like Jadzia-- What are you talking about? Like Spock. [laughter]

Kennedy: What are you talking about? I don't know who the fuck it is.

[laughter]

Sue: And her struggles have been with her confidence and her supervisor is telling her, "You're nailing everything we give you."

Kennedy: It's a little unsettling.

Sue: And Rutherford is dealing with moving on and the fear of losing his memories again. And Boimler was struggling with command styles and jumping in and taking charge. And they all reach a point in this episode where they do something big that shows their progress. And we've seen Mariner have these fights before with her mother and we've seen her apologize before with her mother. So, where it just didn't feel to me-- maybe somebody saw

something I didn't or feels differently. But it didn't seem to me that she's taking the same steps forward as her friends are.

Kennedy: Yeah, it's almost like they're holding on to her character development to give the show somewhere to go.

Sue: And yes, she acknowledges that when she likes people, she pushes them away. But she's done that several times.

Andi: I agree. But also, speaking of that, 100% ship Mariner and Jennifer.

Sue: Me too. [laughs]

Kennedy: Oh, yeah, they're the new Bennifer.

Andi: First of all, I love that Jennifer was literally a throwaway line, "Move, Jennifer," which was one of the funniest moments for me in season 1. I love that. And then, now at the end of everything, she's sitting and having a drink with Jennifer. And I do think that's a pretty significant step forward for her.

Kennedy: Yeah.

Andi: And I enjoy seeing Mariner be Mariner, but maybe a little bit wiser and closer to a cute Andorian.

Kennedy: [laughs] I just want them to spell Jennifer the way I spell it. Like, there's no way that an Andorian is spelling Jennifer the way we spell it. I'm totally with the fact that there's an Andorian named Jennifer. But please don't spell it like human beings do. I've provided a spelling several times on the internet. You're welcome. Freeman was framed. All this time, she was underestimating the Pakleds. And look at this greasy stunt they pull. Holy cats. Obviously, someone's helping them. And the fact that it was so sneaky, brings me to the scene in the credits, the title credits, where they run up on the Borg. And first, it was just the Romulans and the Borg. Now, it's the Romulans, the Pakleds and the Borg.

So, I'm thinking this reeks of Duras. Just sneaky behind the back stuff. Obviously, it's not the Duras family themselves, but in terms of conspiring with one's enemy to get what one wants, I just-- Oh, oh. I would have rather there have been a big blowout guns, a blazing full fleet, or at least a half of the fleet fighting the Pakleds because they've amassed that much power and are secretly being controlled by a mastermind who is ridiculously intelligent. And all of Pakled intelligence is, like, siphoned into the queen kind of like the way bees keep the queen bee cool or bring her food and junk so she could just lay eggs. Like, the queen Pakled is just brilliant. That's what I was hoping for.

But then, framing her? Oh, I'm outraged. I am offended. Justice for Freeman. Free Freeman. Where are the signs? Where are we organizing? The embarrassment to come to my ship, you won't come to my job. You won't come to my house and arrest me in front of my family? Disrespectful.

Sue: It's quite the cliffhanger though.

Andi: I felt like they were evoking best of both worlds there, which I enjoyed, but also did not enjoy, how dare. I thought this was a really good season, and I really like this show.

Sue: I really want to know what the deal is with Rutherford's implant now.

Kennedy: Yeah. What did he forget?

Sue: Yeah, but especially the, "We'll make him think it's elective." You mean it's not?

Andi: The actual story-story, the plot of this episode was one of the best space shenanigans plots I think they've ever done on *Star Trek*. Like, not on *Lower Decks*, on *Star Trek*. It was so cool and creative, and everybody got to shine. I thought it was really, really well done.

Kennedy: Well, that's about all the time we have today. Sue, where can people find you on the internet?

Sue: You can find me on the bird app @Spaltor. That's S- P-A-L-T-O-R.

Kennedy: And, Andi, where can folks find you with the internet?

Andi: Easiest place is Twitter. I'm @firsttimetrek.

Kennedy: Cool. And I'm Kennedy. You can find me @thatmikeychick. That's that-M-I-K-E-Y-C-H-I-C-K. Don't act up in my comments because I'll blag you and drop you. Blag you and drop you? I'm tired. I will blag you and drop you. You heard it here first, folks.

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