

# Alieology: an Ask-Me-Anything Goofy Hang Ologies Podcast December 27, 2023

Oh hey, it's your sister-in-law who is staying in your guest bedroom recording a podcast because it's the day after Christmas. *[deep breath]* Hi, it's Alie Ward. This is a weird one of *Ologies*, it's not a typical one of *Ologies*, this is an AMA that I'm handing off to you on a platter of leftovers. It's not really a platter of leftovers but you're like, "Oh, it's like when you make a sandwich with the leftovers." It's the holidays and here's a little fun one, a little out of the ordinary.

Y'all on Patreon submitted a bunch of questions asking me anything so we're going to run through as many as we can. If you're like, how do I do that? How do I become a patron? It's a dollar a month, one big dollar a month, you can join at [Patreon.com/Ologies](https://Patreon.com/Ologies) and submit questions before we record. Also, thank you to everyone who leaves reviews; I don't have one in front of me, I usually read one. But we're doing this to see if we can do no edits and so, there's going to be stumbles, there's going to be weird stuff in here but I'm enlisting the help of my former editor and current husband, Jarrett Sleeper to ask me questions. We were going to have Mercedes Maitland do it but she's off for the holiday so we're pulling someone back into the fray who no longer edits *Ologies* because it's more fun to just be married than to have to work together on deadlines all the time. Anyway, I'm already letting this get away from me.

We're going to answer some of your questions. Some of them are weird. Some of them are like, how to do a podcast, and others like, why do you wear that sweater all the time? So, let's go. Here we go.

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**Jarrett:** Welcome to the AMA of Alie Ward. In many senses, one could consider this Alieology.

**Alie:** Oh boy. We're lying in the guest bedroom of Jarrett Sleeper, Samantha Sleeper, and Chris Barrie and we're laying in bed, lying in bed, the dog is between us, we're going to run through your questions. We have 39 pages of questions you submitted; we're going to get to every single one of them. I think this episode is going to probably be... 6... maybe 10, 12 hours?

**Jarrett:** Yeah, I'm going to do every single one, ideally.

**Alie:** Perfect, perfect. We've got lozenges, I'm hooked up to an IV for hydration, I'm wearing astronaut diapers, let's go.

**Jarrett:** Oh heyyyy. That's me because I'm the interviewer this time.

**Alie:** Okay, cool.

**Jarrett:** All right. This first question comes from Daniel\_Schmaniel: When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

**Alie:** I wish I had an audio clip, maybe I can put one in there, but I wanted to be Porky Pig or a star in the sky. My mom recorded me asking what I wanted to be, and I distinctly remember wanting to be Porky Pig, I didn't understand that that was not an option for a human being. I suppose I could still cosplay as that, no one's telling me I can't.

**Jarrett:** I mean, in some sense, you know, you get to go, "That's all folks," which is kind of a Porky quality.

**Alie:** I'm pissed I didn't have that as my sign-off all these years. A star in the sky, little did I know as a tiny tot that we all started off as stardust, didn't we? You can see the Cosmology episode for more on that. *[higher pitched, goofy voice]* It's linked in the bio.

**Jarrett:** All right. Josh Frye asked: When you were a kid, let's say 10 to 12 ish, what did you imagine that adult life that is 1) closest to your life today and 2) furthest from your life today?

**Alie:** Wow, that's a complicated question. I... imagined that when I was around the age of 24, I pictured myself and I was wearing a lavender business suit with shoulder pads and an updo and I was holding a child on my hip and there was another child and I thought as a 24-year-old I would probably have two children and wear lavender business suits.

**Jarrett:** Wow.

**Alie:** I nailed that one. *[Jarrett laughs]* I hit my 24<sup>th</sup> birthday and I was like, "Get the suit out of the bag," and then I just... I don't know where those kids went. I liked 'em when I had 'em. No, I didn't have any kids or a lavender suit at 24, or an updo so that was wrong.

One thing about being an adult, it's pretty tight. You can eat pie for breakfast if you have stable blood sugar and you can still have a job that's fun. I remember I liked to look through the Classified ads as a kid, which were still on newspaper, and be like, "Oh, I could do this job or this job." But then I found out that all the best jobs aren't in the Classified ads in the back of a newspaper.

**Jarrett:** Mm.

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

**Jarrett:** Yeah, I think so.

**Alie:** Because those were all, like, trade jobs that I didn't know how to do at the time but also...

**Jarrett:** In a lot of ways, those do sound like the best jobs now.

**Alie:** They do, yeah.

**Jarrett:** My little brother just finished working on a Christmas tree farm. That sounds pretty great.

**Alie:** I know. I know. But at the time I couldn't just slide into those, I needed way more skills.

**Jarrett:** Okay, what's the closest to your life today though?

**Alie:** I have a dog.

**Jarrett:** Mm-hm. You thought you were going to have a dog?

**Alie:** She's great. Yeah. She's great. When I thought about having a dog I was like, "What if it's just a frozen yogurt machine of poop and it hates me?"

**Jarrett:** Well, it kind of is one of those things.

**Alie:** She does hate us sometimes.

**Jarrett:** Mm-hm.

**Alie:** Yeah. She's pretty well-trained in the bowel department though.

**Jarrett:** *[giggles]* Les Johnson asks: When did you first expand your audience beyond your elementary classroom? You must have 'always' wanted to share knowledge.

**Alie:** I like how you're giving some spice to these. *[laughs]*

**Jarrett:** I'm just trying to read them without stumbling too hard. And I should have put glasses on because I'm squinting a lot at the screen.

**Alie:** *[still laughing]* I'm sorry. Increase the font size, like, zoomy zoom.

**Jarrett:** No, I like the challenge.

**Alie:** I forgot the question.

**Jarrett:** Well, there wasn't really a question, well there was a question in the first half and then commentary afterwards. When did you first expand your audience beyond your elementary classroom? You must have 'always' wanted to share knowledge.

**Alie:** My best friend growing up was named Erin Campbell and she lived across the street from me, and we met when we were 4. She was six months older than me, so I thought she knew absolutely everything in the world. She was also in a first-grade and kindergarten-grade mixed classroom, so I was like, "She knows everything, first graders do. She's the smartest person in the world." I think once I told her something about acorns she didn't know and I was like, "Wowww! Wow." This is exciting to share things with people who I thought knew everything. Funny side note about Erin Campbell, her name now, Erin Talbert, she's admin of the *Ologies* Podcast Facebook group. We thank her at the end of every episode. Erin, I love ya.

**Jarrett:** Do you like... Is it the feeling that you get that you told someone the thing they didn't know? Or is it the feeling that you believe you're witnessing someone else have as they learn something new?

**Alie:** I think I like learning stuff so much, it's nice to reciprocate. I had this uncle, Bob, who at the family reunions would take us out on a canoe and be like, "That's an osprey nest, that's a turtle." And I was like, "Wow if I hadn't hopped in this canoe with Uncle Bob, I wouldn't know anything, I wouldn't know jack shit about the ecology of this lake." So, I think Uncle Bob was also one of those. He was in the Forestry Service and a bit of a naturalist, not a naturalist like a nude, but like... I think that's a slightly different word. I think it was just like, oh I suddenly appreciate things around me that I didn't before. I think I like giving people context for things that might make them appreciate their surroundings more because I like that.

**Jarrett:** I remember going on a hike with someone who was into foraging and realizing just how that context, you can eat that, you can use this as a medicine... Hiking as a kid they were like, "At the bark of the aspen tree is something that turned into Aspirin," I was like, "Oh!" It really does change, it's no longer a pretty thing you're looking at, it's a world that you're involved in that's involved with you.

**Alie:** We have an Ethnobotany episode coming up. I think it's a willow tree, but I don't know.

**Jarrett:** I think you're right.

**Alie:** But Aspirin and aspen, that'd be tight. Marketing needs to get on that.

**Jarrett:** It is something like that. There is something from the bark of an aspen tree.

**Alie:** You're going to have to wait for the Ethnobotany.

**Jarrett:** I'm going to have to make an aside for this when I edit it.

**Alie:** Are we doing asides?

**Jarrett:** Probably not.

**Alie:** Okay, good.

**Jarrett:** This is a do-your-own-asides episode. *[laughs]*

**Alie:** *[laughing]* That means google it yourself.

**Jarrett:** *[laughs]* Yeah, extensively google about yourself.

This is not a highlighted one but I'm going to ask because I think this kind of stuff is interesting, I think is fun, potentially. Ric Peralta asked: So, after discovering you grew up in Sacramento and are almost the same age as me, I have to know, which school did you go to?

**Alie:** Oh, William Brooks Elementary, which, better not be any question on any things to get into my passwords of stuff.

**Jarrett:** Gosh, I hope not.

**Alie:** It was in El Dorado Hills which was outside of Sacramento and at the time it was mostly cow pastures, and I don't think the high school was accredited, I think it was not seen in the eyes of our lord, the US States of America that... *[laughs]* ... That reminds me of that...

**Jarrett:** "I personally believe..."

**Alie:** Yeah! *[laughs]*

**Jarrett:** That's so funny you thought that exact same thing! "Some people don't have maps." *[laughs]*

**Alie:** "Such as for example..." If I had to do an aside here, I think it was like, Miss Teen North Carolina gave an answer about geography.

**Jarrett:** "I personally believe..."

**Alie:** Yeah, that's legendary in map communities.

**Jarrett:** "That soome people out there..." *[laughs]*

**Alie:** *[laughs]* But yeah, was not accredited and now that town has turned very chi-chi and there's a Mercedes dealership. But yeah, at the time it was cow pastures, and we would romp around. My sister and I would get a stick and we'd go out and look for cow patties. One of us would poke the cow patty with a stick and the other would try to decide how old it was and write it down on a clipboard. Fieldwork, from a young age.

**Jarrett:** Kind of on the heels of that, Mish the Fish asked: What was your favorite part of being a UCSB gaucho? Mine was the free massage chair at CAPS. I don't know what any of that means.

**Alie:** I went to US... U...

**Jarrett:** UCSB.

**Alie:** UCSB, for my first year of college so I was a gaucho, was the mascot. I'm not exactly sure what a gaucho does, I think they wear...

**Jarrett:** Isn't that a cowboy?

**Alie:** I think they wear some kind of pants with flare of some kind. But my favorite part about going to UCSB, I'm sorry dear listener, was transferring *[Jarrett laughs]* because it was so fucking expensive that I went for one year and then I bounced to go to the community college because I could get all of those credits for like \$12 a unit. And so, I'm so sorry. If you are on the fence about college or whatever, JVs, community college, your best friend. I went to two different ones, one during the summers. And yeah, I got a bunch of credits, and guess what? No one in my life has ever asked me, "Hey, did you go to a Junior College for some of this?" Nope, nope. Never happens. It was a lot less expensive, and I don't have student loans now, paid them off years ago.

**Jarrett:** On that note, Colby Evans asks: How did you do in school? You're incredibly bright and quick-witted and I love your use of language.

**Alie:** Oh, stop.

**Jarrett:** Well, I think that too but that is what Colby Evans and other people who liked it said.

**Alie:** That's nice.

**Jarrett:** Interested to hear if some of that developed later in life.

**Alie:** If I did okay in school?

**Jarrett:** Yeah, during school. You know, your brightness, your quick wit, your use of language that we love.

**Alie:** I did always love language. My family is a bit of punsters.

**Jarrett:** That's true.

**Alie:** I did pretty well in school because I was always pretty interested in things. I still remember field trips to tide pools and drawing pictures of animals and stuff. In terms of English and writing, a lot of people in my family are writers so if you write a text on the family thread and you have a typo it's very shameful because there are a lot of editors in my family as well. Not that they shame you but it's personally, you feel ashamed.

**Jarrett:** Right, right, right. I get it. High standards.

**Alie:** Yeah.

**Jarrett:** But what about grades and stuff? How were you in school, school?

**Alie:** I did pretty well. I did all right. I gave the valedictory speech at my high school, but I did not have the highest GPA.

**Jarrett:** What?

**Alie:** I think they were like, "Does anyone want to do a speech?" And I was like, "I've got some things to get off my chest!" So, I talked about sexism. *[both laugh]* It's true! Okay, moving on, should we move on from my youth?

**Jarrett:** No!

**Alie:** I don't know, this can't be...

**Jarrett:** We've got way more. We've got memories, we've got goth days. This is an AMA episode!

**Alie:** I think you should just- But they're so, babe, I think just scroll up and find a random one.

**Jarrett:** Come on! Come on, it's Alieology, it's fun, I'm having fun.

**Alie:** Do people care?

**Jarrett:** I care. I want to start a podcast where I interview my wife.

**Alie:** Yikes.

**Jarrett:** I didn't know you did the valedictory speech.

**Alie:** Yeah, I did.

**Jarrett:** That's really interesting to me.

**Alie:** It was all about institutional sexism.

**Jarrett:** I want to know this, I want to know about this too. Stephanie Trout Berman: Did you ever get sent to the principal's office?

**Alie:** No. In fact, I only cut class one time and I asked my mom, "Can you just write me a fucking note for this, I want to go to the museum and maybe the mall in San Francisco and eat some clam chowder

out of a bread bowl." And she was like, "How are you doing on your homework?" And I'm like, "I'm pretty much caught up." And she's like, "All right." But I didn't cut class a lot because I was just like, "Augh, I'm going to have to catch up later." So, I just went. But then at the same time, I was like 16 and wearing fishnet shirts and going to goth clubs.

**Jarrett:** Oh, we're going to get to the goth days.

**Alie:** So, I was like a good...

**Jarrett:** There's a whole section of questions called, "The Goth Days."

**Alie:** Oh boy. I was a good kid mostly because I felt like if I tried to cut corners, it would just be like shooting myself in the dick. You know what I mean? I was like, I'm here to learn, I'm just going to get through it. My sister, my older sister, had a rebellious streak and I sometimes saw how that would turn around and bite her in her own ass, so I was like, well, I'm just going to take classes I like. So, I think I felt like the rebellion was...

**Jarrett:** But you weren't like, 100% straight-As kid.

**Alie:** No, I got Bs here and there.

**Jarrett:** Okay. Here and there.

**Alie:** Yeah. But I was... I also had... I guess I had friends whose parents were harder on them for grades, so I'd just ask them, "Hey, how does this theorem work?" And because their parents were so hard on them for grades, they'd usually be able to explain it to me.

**Jarrett:** Smarter not harder.

**Alie:** Yeah.

**Jarrett:** Okay. What's your funniest childhood memory? Asks Charline.

**Alie:** Once my family and I were watching *Pee-wee's Big Adventure* and there's a scene where Paul Reubens, rest in peace, hops on top of the bar and dances to the song "Tequila," and my family was concerned with how hard I was laughing. For some reason, it was the funniest thing I'd ever seen in my life, and it was like, "Oh, Alie thinks it's funny," and then it got to be like, "Is she okay?"

**Jarrett:** Yeah?

**Alie:** Like... I lost my mind.

**Jarrett:** I've seen that. [*Alie laughs*] I've seen you lose your mind over things that make no sense to me, but I love it.

**Alie:** Do you remember the time when I threw socks at you?

**Jarrett:** Yeah, you just couldn't get enough. [*Alie laughs*] We were folding laundry, you threw a sock at me, hit me in the face, you were losing your mind.

**Alie:** [*still laughing*] It was so funny because it didn't hurt you...

**Jarrett:** And then you were like, "Do it to me, do it to me." I threw a sock and was like, "I don't know if I want to." It hit you in the face, laughing so hard.

**Alie:** This was like, two months ago.

**Jarrett:** I know.

**Alie:** It's like if you're folding socks and they're in a ball and you throw them at someone, it's like if you were to throw an orange at someone or a softball, that would be really damaging. But if it's just

socks and it bops 'em in the face and they're okay with it, you're not surprising them, it was so... I remember you saying, "You're like the toddler who can't understand ripping paper."

**Jarrett:** Yeah, or like, jingling my keys and you're losing your mind. It was so cute.

**Alie:** I was laughing so hard.

**Jarrett:** It was so cute.

**Alie:** Because it should have been dangerous, but it wasn't.

**Jarrett:** I totally, I *totally* get it.

**Alie:** Ah, simple things.

**Jarrett:** All right, let's try...

**Alie:** I hope people are enjoying this episode. *[laughs]* I don't know.

**Jarrett:** I hope so too. Hey, this is a nice holiday chat.

**Alie:** Yeah, it's just a chat.

**Jarrett:** We're taking it down a notch...

**Alie:** We turned off the lights. We're just hanging. *[laughs]*

**Jarrett:** I think this is an interesting one too. I'm sure we'll get off your childhood soon but just whatever, I'm finding this interesting. Kevin Parichan asks: What's one birthday present you wanted as a kid, but your parents refused to get you?

**Alie:** *[sighs]* Emancipation.

**Jarrett:** *[both burst out laughing]* You never asked for that!

**Alie:** *[through laughter]* No, I didn't, I didn't. A lawyer? A family lawyer? Um... Oh, I know. This is so sad.

**Jarrett:** Is it?

**Alie:** Yeah.

**Jarrett:** I want to know.

**Alie:** Okay. So, I got my hand stuck in an escalator when I was like 4, right?

**Jarrett:** Yeah.

**Alie:** I was trying to figure out what happens to the rubber black band on the top of an escalator, where it goes.

**Jarrett:** That's curiosity.

**Alie:** And I found out it takes you to hell and back because my hand got stuck in there. This was before they had emergency stop buttons and so there were a handful of us kids on planet Earth who became accidentally ingested by an escalator, I was one of them. So, we sued, I know you've heard this story, because the department store didn't know how to turn it off. I had to go to a burn center every day for months, I had third-degree friction burns on my hands, I could see my tendons when I pulled them out of the mess. *[Jarrett winces]* And yeah, had to undergo a lot of burn therapy for it, I almost had to be held back a grade and I had to learn how to write again with my hand. So, we sued, and they settled, and we got... \$1,200.

**Jarrett:** Incredible.

**Alie:** Which covered part of the emergency room bill. *[laughs]* My family is not that litigious.

**Jarrett:** Unfortunate.

**Alie:** We're just like, "That's fine, that's okay. That'll work."

**Jarrett:** I mean, it's better to be that way. If everyone was that way, the world would probably be a better place.

**Alie:** Yeah.

**Jarrett:** But you coulda got paid.

**Alie:** I guess we just wanted to recoup our costs on the vet bill, for me. They told me that I'd probably grow out of the scars by the time I was 8 so I was like, okay, tight. I'm 4 now, I can handle that. Three and a half years. And on my 8<sup>th</sup> birthday, I woke up to look at my hand and I was like, goddammit, my hand is still scarred and I'm almost 22 now... And yeah, so 8 years old, that was my most disappointing birthday present.

**Jarrett:** That's not fair though, they couldn't give you not scars.

**Alie:** They could have not given me lies, earlier. *[Jarrett laughs]* There was nothing I really wanted. For a while, my birthday presents that I would mandate had to be under \$5 because I didn't want anyone spending money on me. All I wanted was a pair of Halloween socks and/or a photo from a photo booth of my loved ones.

**Jarrett:** You still don't really, vocally at least, crave stuff.

**Alie:** Yeah. I'm not a big stuff person. We moved a lot as kids so the more things you have the more you have to put in boxes and unpack later. So, I dunno.

**Jarrett:** Yeah. GhoulNextDoor asks: Any favorite memories from your time as a goth teen?

**Alie:** *[deep inhale]* I was a goth teen and into my 20s and I'm still goth at heart. I feel like I'm most comfortable when I'm wearing all black unless it's a mustard sweater. But my favorite memories, I had a boyfriend named Braun *[phonetic]* who had a faux hawk kind of a mohawk, he had a mohawk. And we'd drive around in his Caprice classic, which is a very giant car and had bad shocks, and there would be a lot of us crammed into it. I liked the smell of other people smoking cloves. I didn't like smoking them, it's too harsh but I like them from a distance even though no one should do that because I think they give you instant bleeding lungs. But I think driving around in the Caprice classic, listening to, like, Fugazi and stuff.

**Jarrett:** Somebody actually asked right after that, Yngvi: Which band was your favorite when you were goth?

**Alie:** *[grumbles]* Mmm... I mean, The Cure is just a very good staple.

**Jarrett:** Sure.

**Alie:** I remember I would listen to Throbbing Gristle to annoy my first college roommate.

**Jarrett:** That's a great name.

**Alie:** I dunno, Bauhaus, probably Bauhaus. Skinny Puppy. Sisters of Mercy, I mean.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, great stuff.

Got some Gremmie questions here. Colleen Sellwood asks: Does Gremmie see Jarrett as the spare human or as a second parent?

**Alie:** I think she loves you more.

**Jarrett:** You do?



**Alie:** I think so. Because there are times when you get up before me and you take her out. I think she's like... I think I'm kind of like the... Not a stepmom.

**Jarrett:** No.

**Alie:** Yeah.

**Jarrett:** She looks to us for different things.

**Alie:** That's true. She loves us both.

**Jarrett:** She's snugglier with you.

**Alie:** Should we ask science questions? Is anyone tuning in just being like...

**Jarrett:** It's an AMA!

**Alie:** I know. I just...

**Jarrett:** It's an ask YOU anything. Once in a while, it's fun to, you know... [*Alie grumbles gibberish*] Try to imagine something you like listening to and maybe you'd like to hear the host sometimes because you don't really, you know...

**Alie:** That's nice. That's true, okay.

**Jarrett:** You're always asking other people questions.

**Alie:** Can you imagine if we weren't recording? Okay, we're recording. That's nice.

**Jarrett:** We are right. If not, this is our warmup. [*Alie laughs*] Oh actually, this is... Cat Baklarz brought up: Updates on the stray dog situation?

**Alie:** Oh, ah! I'm glad someone asked.

**Jarrett:** I admire you for that whole thing, I think we should talk about this.

**Alie:** I don't know if I talked about this on the podcast, but I posted about this on Instagram about how I was... I've been trying to take yoga classes, I don't know if anyone's heard of them but it's a lot of stretching and breathing and I've been trying to take it for stress relief and I was on my way to a weekly yoga class and a stray dog came barreling down the sidewalk, some kind of maybe a German shepherd mix, in the middle of a crowded street, running into an intersection. And I was like, "Somebody get that dog." And so, I got the dog, it was friendly.

Anyway, I was trying to find its owner, not chipped, not fixed. Anyway, we had it at the house for a night or two. It was such a sweet beast, just like having a werewolf in the garage. Looked everywhere, and went to a bunch of different rescues, everyone was like, "We're full up here, we cannot take this dog." One woman, remember at the LA Animal Services was like, told us...

**Jarrett:** That was a heavy day.

**Alie:** Yeah, she was like, "If you can't handle the weight of owning the dog, don't pick it up off the street. People come in here with kittens they've pulled out of a bush, and I say, 'Go put them back in the bush,'" I was like...

**Jarrett:** They're overwhelmed. They're so overwhelmed.

**Alie:** I was like, "If I can't handle it? You work at the Animal Services, sounds like you guys can't handle it."

**Jarrett:** They can't handle it, that's the point, I think. Really, people have got to take care of their dogs and not let them breed and be turning dogs out on the street like this. It's terrible.

**Alie:** Get 'em fixed, spay and neuter, Bob Barker always said.

**Jarrett:** Bob Barker was right about that. And adopt don't shop for god's sake.

**Alie:** Adopt, don't shop. Anyway, TLDR, we found its owner. We *had* to turn it over to the pound because there's a stray hold; you can't just give it to a rescue unless it's been in a pound for a couple of days. Anyway, luckily, the owners came forward and I don't know, hopefully, they got it fixed.

**Jarrett:** It was tough. I was crying about that dog.

**Alie:** Yeah, you called him Charlie.

**Jarrett:** Shouldn't have done that.

**Alie:** I know. First step to falling in love.

**Jarrett:** Because he looked like the dog from *All Dogs Go to Heaven*.

**Alie:** Yeah, Jarrett cried, Jarrett sat on a bench when we had to turn him over and cried... We didn't turn Jarrett over; we turned the dog over but... [*Jarrett laughs*]

**Jarrett:** Maybe you should have.

**Alie:** I was like, I get it but unfortunately through paperwork, a rescue can't even take him.

**Jarrett:** It's fine. It all worked out for the best, or whatever it could have been.

**Alie:** We found some people who would have been happy to have adopted him if an owner didn't come forward but legally, we had to let an owner come forward and luckily, they did.

**Jarrett:** A beautiful creature. Okay. This is kind of related to the question before like, are people even interested in this? Somebody, Felicia Stelsel asked: Do fans frequently recognize you in public and how do you feel about fans coming to say hi?

**Alie:** I don't think it happens frequently. It happens enough to where it's really sweet.

**Jarrett:** It just happened on the airplane!

**Alie:** That's true, that was cute.

**Jarrett:** Actually, that was funny because she didn't recognize you until like, the end of the flight, we were talking about something.

**Alie:** Yeah. We were masked up because, hello, COVID season, holiday travel.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, and I had a little bit of a sniffle, I was COVID-negative.

**Alie:** COVID negative but still.

**Jarrett:** I still don't want to freak people out.

**Alie:** Yeah.

**Jarrett:** I don't know what precipitated it but somehow, they were like, what do you do? And you said, "I make a podcast about da-da-da..." And they go, "*You're Allison Ward?*"

**Alie:** It was really sweet.

**Jarrett:** Cute!

**Alie:** It was so sweet! We took pictures with her family. So yeah. It does happen. It happens every couple of weeks maybe. You know?

**Jarrett:** Yeah. So, how do you feel about it? What do you think about it?

**Alie:** I think it's really sweet. I feel like it's like... If you happen to look over and see someone wearing the same shirt as you, you'd be like, "We're wearing the same shirt!" Immediately, you're like, "Hey, look at us, we have something in common." They must like whoever I interview, I like whoever I interview so I think it's very sweet. Sometimes I get a little bashful about it because either I feel like I'm a mess or compliments sometimes are difficult to take. But I always like to take a picture with someone if they've said hello, I always like to offer because sometimes if you run into someone that you're like, "Oh my gosh! My girlfriend loves you," you're like, "Let's take a picture for her, let's make a video for her." Because then, if I ran into, let's say, Bob Barker, or a Bob Barker fan ran into him and was like, "My mom loves you." If he were like, "You want to take a picture for your mom?" I'd be like, "That's tight." You know?

**Jarrett:** Yeah, that happened at the vet's office a couple of weeks ago.

**Alie:** Yeah!

**Jarrett:** I guess it kind of happens.

**Alie:** It's sweet!

**Jarrett:** It's so sweet. I think it's nice when I witness it and stuff, and the once in a blue moon it has happened to me because it's like you work in your house or in an office, so far away with the internet, it's not a live show all the time and it's really nice to see it in the real world. It's so easy to get caught up in, you just record these things, you work in your office, you put it online, all kind of alone but isn't it nice when it comes into the real world and it goes, "Hi! Oh my gosh!"

**Alie:** Yeah, it's easy to forget that people actually listen.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, real people.

**Alie:** I think I just make it and go, hah! That's nice. And then I forget that other people listen to it. By the way, if anyone has ever seen the YouTube series "My Music," you may recognize Jarrett Sleeper as...

**Jarrett:** Don't say that, that's a weird one. That's so long ago.

**Alie:** [laughs] I know. But that's what I feel like people had a history of that... Amanda Chantal Bacon videos.

**Jarrett:** So many things. So many little viral things.

All right, I'm going to move on to a question, Ashlee Dent. So, this was inspired by actually a bit from *100 Humans* when you were getting people to talk about how they wipe their bums.

**Alie:** Oh no.

**Jarrett:** Wipe their bums, to use the— The person said: My question is, how do you dry off after a shower? Do you bring the towel in the shower or step out soaking wet? Do you dab yourself or scrub yourself? Do you follow the same pattern each time or is it always chaos? From the odd and intrigued, I thank you. I think this is a great question.

**Alie:** This is stemming from a Netflix show I did called *100 Humans* where, as "researchers in lab coats" we did ask people their toilet behaviors and they volunteered a lot of information I did not expect them to. In terms of a shower, Jarrett, I think you know this. What I do is I get a big, like, a salad bowl and I fill it with volcanic ash and then roll around in it, it's the chinchilla method, is what they call it. It just keeps you from drying out. Do I smell?

**Jarrett:** Yeah, it sloughs off all the dead skin. It's great.

**Alie:** It's essentially powdered pumice stones and I shake it out in my hair, it's like a dry shampoo but just volcanic ash. So yeah, look it up, it's the chinchilla method.

**Jarrett:** You don't want to reveal the secrets? Is it too intimate to talk about how you dry yourself?

**Alie:** ... I don't think... I don't think it's of interest.

**Jarrett:** I think you're crazy, you don't think it's of interest. These are the secret, private things everybody does. You don't think about that? And the things that you do alone?

**Alie:** Okay, I'll tell you one thing.

**Jarrett:** I'll tell you one thing. I stay in the shower to drip, I try, because my grandpa yelled at me one time, that was like, "Start drying off in the shower, you're getting water all over," when I went to stay with my grandparents. I was like, that's a good point.

**Alie:** That's correct. Also, the thing that makes you cold after you step out of the shower is all that water evaporating, so if you stay within the humid confines, I feel like less water evaporates a little bit less quickly and you don't get cold as quickly.

**Jarrett:** This is why this is interesting to me, because everything, there's a technique.

**Alie:** There's a technique!

**Jarrett:** There's a technique to everything.

**Alie:** If you were to ask me, if you were to say, "Here's \$10. Will you put a shirt on without drying your back?" I'd say, "You take that \$10, you get the fuck out of here." Do you know what I mean?

**Jarrett:** Yes.

**Alie:** Because putting on clothes while your skin is still wet is...

**Jarrett:** Real bad.

**Alie:** ... disgusting. It's fine for other people, I can't do it.

**Jarrett:** No way. There's a hierarchy as well. I can do it more with my pants than I can with a shirt, for sure.

**Alie:** And I've got to put socks on like an hour after my shower to make sure that there's nothing going on between those tootsies.

**Jarrett:** Absolutely.

**Alie:** No moisture.

**Jarrett:** Hey, actually I've never asked you this either. RJ Doidge said: What first made you decide on red hair? It's stunning, but curious on the origin story!

**Alie:** Oh shucks. Do you not know this?

**Jarrett:** I don't think I do.

**Alie:** Uhh, maybe like 15, 20 years ago or something I had black hair, blue-black hair. For the longest time, I dyed my hair black, it's naturally dark brown. I went to get it stripped of color and they stripped it and it turned orange, and they're like "Don't worry we'll get it back to brown." And I was like, I kinda like this! And they were like, "We could just stay at this stage," and I was like, let's just keep the orange for a while. I had big blotches in the back, but I didn't care, I did not sue them for \$1,200, perhaps I should have but I was like, it's fine. And then when I would go in subsequently, to go to salons I would show them a picture of like a baby orangutang, orangutan, because they have

the best color hair. But I just do it pretty much in a box by myself. I've gotten it dyed professionally like, three times.

**Jarrett:** That was really just an accident like, "Oh, red seems like the right one."

**Alie:** I kind of was like, this is a good move for me now. Black hair was feeling a little too harsh, I'd done it for too long. But brown hair felt too tied to my youth. So, red hair is also helpful because when you're looking to point someone out, you're like, "It's the redhead over there." But when people give me the look of "Hey, redhead," I feel like an imposter because I am an imposter.

**Jarrett:** Well, you know how I stand on that. I think self-selecting redheads and perhaps the redheadiest of all.

**Alie:** That's very nice of you. Well, we didn't have to endure any childhood trauma, so I feel a little bit of a...

**Jarrett:** I know. Faux redheads might get upset about that, but I feel like they'll understand what I mean.

**Alie:** I guess being an elective ginger is one of those like... It's like guys that wear flashy suits kind of. Am I peacocking?

**Jarrett:** I don't think so. I think you just found something that feels true to you.

**Alie:** It feels true to me.

**Jarrett:** Do you want to give Saira Manns any dyed red hair maintenance tips? Do you have any of those?

**Alie:** No, but I was going to say that I neglected to say what color I use which is I think a Clairol 6RR with a 20 developer, for anyone that needs the tech specs on that.

**Jarrett:** All right. Couple people... *[laughs]* Jenn 'Squirrel' Alvarez, Anna Thompson both were asking about your yellow sweater.

**Alie:** Oh, that thing- I love it.

**Jarrett:** Do you only have one? Do you have multiples?

**Alie:** No, the yellow sweater, for anyone that doesn't know this, I accidentally am pictured in this yellow sweater all the time, I think because I wear it *all* the time. It's just the right amount of stretchy, it's thick but it's not suffocating, it's a nice mustard color, it's got a stain I've got to get rid of somehow, but I wear it often and I almost packed it on this trip to see your family. I just wear it too often and there is simply one. I have looked on Poshmark, which is a resale site where you can buy used clothes, and I have found duplicates in case something happens; if I'm trapped in a fire, if someone throws, accidentally, a beaker of hydrochloric acid on me... I'm ready.

**Jarrett:** Wonderful.

**Alie:** I'm ready. What about some podcasty sciencey ones?

**Jarrett:** Within one of those questions someone said, real quick: Is it weird (Yes, Jenn) – but I don't think so Jenn – that you remind me of a very delicate, beautiful mantis?

**Jarrett:** I think that's very interesting because I get that.

**Alie:** You know what I feel a mantis has is a nice jawline.

**Jarrett:** You do have a great jawline.

**Alie:** So, I'll take that as a compliment. I also have bonkers thorny forearms, I have so many claws on my forearms, that's why I wear so many long sleeves.

**Jarrett:** And you constantly try to murder me.

**Alie:** Yeah, I try to eat your face.

**Jarrett:** Alli Cat: What hobby, or hobbies, are you finding yourself engaged in when you're not working on the podcast?

**Alie:** Cross stitch bitch. [Jarrett laughs] I'm doing cross stitch these days and I'm [deep grunts] loving it, I'm loving it.

**Jarrett:** I guess on the heels of that is, Naomi asked: Any current hyperfixations (ex: podcasts, shows, subjects)? It kind of is one for you a little bit.

**Alie:** Cross stitch bitch. Same, cross stitch. Sometimes I'll just be doing something else thinking, I can't wait to make some Xs on some fabric. [laughs softly] I'm not good at it. I've only completed one very small one but that doesn't mean I'm not working for lots of hours on my second one. Anyway, yeah.

**Jarrett:** All right a *lot* of people want to know the answer to this question. Shanel Wilson: My 8-year-old daughter has been a fan since *Brainchild* and is now an avid *Smologies* listener, would like to know what your favorite cryptid is?

**Alie:** [gasps] My favorite cryptid? Oh... I mean, I'm going to have to say the Frogman which I mentioned in an episode, gosh I can't remember what episode, but it was somewhat recent. There's this thing called the Frogman, people around town started seeing this frogman walking around, terrifying, large, it turned out to be a tailless iguana that had gotten out and was wilding and I think maybe police shot it which is not the way you want any story to turn out. But I think that that might be, I think it was called Frogman. If I'm incorrect, do your own aside about it and I'm really sorry.

**Jarrett:** Okay.

**Alie:** That wasn't the greatest answer.

**Jarrett:** That's fine. I've never heard of Frogman.

**Alie:** I just love the idea that there's this iguana with no tail just trying to get out there looking for a snack, looking for one worm to hold him over.

**Jarrett:** But none of the other ones capture your imagination? No Bigfoot, no Wendigo?

**Alie:** I just like that one because it's... There was an explanation and I think I identify with and am emotionally bonded to that iguana because that iguana caused such a stir, without knowing. Number one, that iguana was on its own journey. That iguana had some kind of Joseph Campbell, *Stranger in a Strange Land*, I don't know where he was going, I don't know if he was eating watermelon rinds out of compost bins, I don't know what he was up to, I think it was a he. I like that he caused a stir, I don't like his tragic demise. But I love a cryptid with an explanation, I guess? And I love a frogman. How can you not? I also would say a close second... I love when they... I love a siren maybe, like a sea siren that calls to you from the water.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, I think that's a good one.

**Alie:** Because we both know that underneath the sea, there's all kinds of shit we don't know about.

**Jarrett:** Oh yeah.

**Alie:** So, the idea that one of them is a sea...

**Jarrett:** Lost treasure for one, lots of lost treasure.

**Alie:** So much treasure. Microbes. According to Discovery, the megalodon which is an extinct shark. They did a whole documentary that hoodwinked people into thinking the megalodon shark was still alive and they interviewed all these shark scientists who spoke about it on camera thinking it was going to be a real documentary.

**Jarrett:** Yeah. We have no idea what's down there.

**Alie:** I know. But not a megalodon, I'm pretty sure that's well extinct.

**Jarrett:** Spencer James Parks: Holidays. Which are great and which need to go?

**Alie:** Oh my gosh. Well, I have a show that we've been wanting to launch [*Jarrett laughs*] about holidays called *Holidays Observed*. We might... It's been such a busy year.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, maybe one year. Maybe one day.

**Alie:** Which holidays need to go?

**Jarrett:** Yeah, which do you think are great, which need to go? Let's even make it simple, just pick two great ones, and one, maybe two, that could go.

**Alie:** [*softly*] Oh man.

**Jarrett:** Actually need to go is tough but I'm not going to answer for you.

**Alie:** I'm going to say I like Valentine's Day, not from a romantic sense but I think Valentine's Day is a really good time to send everyone you love in your life a card saying, "Hey, I really appreciate you, you're wonderful." Send it to your aunt, if they mean a lot to you, send one to your friends, because I think a lot of times you get holiday cards in the mail and it's... God bless you all, but it's just a picture of you and your kids, no note. And you're like, thanks for this picture of you and your kids. I like what they look like, I'm glad to have it. But I think in the hustle and bustle culture of the holidays, people feel really pressured to send something out. Wait a minute, wait until it's the dreary Februarys and people say, "Am I even going to get a valentine this year?" Shkabamsk! They open their mailbox, real two-dimensional, three-dimensional card that says, "Hey, remember that time you bailed me out of prison? You're a real one." You know?

**Jarrett:** I like that. What would you say has got to go?

**Alie:** Got to go? ... [*grumbles*] I mean... Columbus Day.

**Jarrett:** Good answer. Good answer, good answer. Obviously yes, good answer.

**Alie:** Yeah, and I'm an Italian y'all and both my sister and my mom have been in a Columbus Day parade. I just think, I'm happy to see it turn over to Indigenous Peoples Day and I am also like, one day? International Women's Day can absolutely take a hike.

**Jarrett:** Oh yeah?

**Alie:** *One* day? Really? ... One day. Half of the Earth. [*Jarrett laughs*] Women responsible for shoving human...

**Jarrett:** I think it's nice that they recognize... You know?

**Alie:** No, it is nice. All those Instagram posts that are like, "Hey..."

**Jarrett:** Hey, good job. Good job kid.

**Alie:** It does feel really good.

**Jarrett:** Does it feel good to you?

**Alie:** They're like, "Sorry for the sexism but hey, you're all right."

**Jarrett:** "Hey, women. We see you." *[laughs]*

**Alie:** *[laughs]* And if you don't do some labor tagging every single woman in your life that you really like, you're not a good woman. And also, hey, I like the ones from men that are like, "Hey, I've got daughters so obviously every woman out there is someone's daughter."

**Jarrett:** I used to say I had a lot of ideas about girls, women, whatever you want to call them. Now I've got this child here, this fuzzy, stinky little female, *[Alie giggles]* 10 years old, I get it. I get it now.

**Alie:** It's our dog.

**Jarrett:** They're people too.

**Alie:** Turns out, once you've got one, you realize they're human beings.

**Jarrett:** That's so crazy.

**Alie:** And I think International Women's Day has a lot to do with that.

**Jarrett:** Just really quick, I actually would not— Those are really good, you pegged really good picks. Most holidays I would not get rid of, but I have controversials I would get rid of. New Year's: don't need it. *[huge gasp from Alie]* Don't care. Don't care.

**Alie:** *[squeals]* What?!

**Jarrett:** Always a letdown. And St. Patrick's Day.

**Alie:** St. Patrick's Day is really...

**Jarrett:** I know that's controversial because it's such a fun notion but...

**Alie:** St. Patrick's Day is really just a day for imbibing.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, we can get hammered anytime.

**Alie:** You can pretend to be Irish. Look at me with my red hair, doing it every day. I'm sorry Ireland. But yeah. The New Year's thing is surprising because—

**Jarrett:** I like Irish, I just don't think you need St. Patrick's Day. You know why? I just associate it with really cheap, fold-up you know, graphics that they put in bars that Guinness sends out. It just feels like it's lost whatever it might have been cool.

**Alie:** When I think of St. Patrick's Day, my immediate vision is of a very, very thin plastic green hat.

**Jarrett:** Yeah.

**Alie:** You know what I mean? That's going to be in the gutter two hours later.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, I'm not even going to get— Just getting hung over. Augh. Just... Anyway. All right.

This is a first-time question-asker, Penny Loader: What is your favorite flower and why? And also, is Victorian flower language on the list? Please, thanks, peace and love. I don't know what that means.

**Alie:** I guess it is now because I didn't know that Victorian flower language existed before this moment in time.

**Jarrett:** Me neither.



**Alie:** Oh, to have an aside here! I hope that this makes people appreciate when I do put in asides because then here, I'd be like... [*hushed voice*] "Side note. Okay, so I looked into this..." But I didn't, you guys, I didn't do it!

**Jarrett:** It's fine. It's chill vibes at the holidays.

**Jarrett:** You know what else? We're in that middle zone between the big holidays and New Year's where you're just like...

**Alie:** We're in the liminal space between other people's champagne headaches.

**Jarrett:** A nowhere zone. We're all just... Yup, all right, continue. Favorite flower?

**Alie:** I think a tuberose or a tiger lily because they smell great.

**Jarrett:** Beautiful. That was Penny Loader, I don't know if I said their name, so I just need to make sure I say it.

**Alie:** I feel like people must have like, how do you make a podcast questions. Useful information. Not to say that these aren't fun and wonderful. I feel like as a person who dispenses information... I feel like I need to provide more useful information.

**Jarrett:** This is useful information. The point of it is to learn things about you.

**Alie:** I know. Okay. Functional information.

**Jarrett:** Maybe I have this tone of like, what are you talking about? Maybe it's because I'm *literally* in love with you so you're interesting.

**Alie:** Well, you married me. I know but that's the thing, I think a lot of people tune into *Ologies* just for turtle facts.

**Jarrett:** Yeah. But I think they do it for turtle facts through the lens of Alie Ward.

**Alie:** Well, thank you.

**Jarrett:** You know? They can go to Google otherwise, you know? [*both laugh*] Nobody go to Google. [*Alie still laughing*] Claire Netto asks: What are your favorite or most memorable interactions with insects been over the years?

**Alie:** Oh, definitely my favorite insect— Now we're talking about good facts! Okay, so my favorite insect is the *Cotonis mutabilis*, I think is the species and genus, it's a figeater beetle, it's native to Los Angeles. It looks like a green Japanese beetle but it's not; it's got these two golden stripes and a beautiful emerald metallic tone to it. It's big. It's bigger than your thumb and it buzzes around very clumsily, [*buzzes*] makes these really loud noises, people are *terrified* of it because they think it's a gigantic bee. It's just a big bumbling beetle that eats figs and fruit and it'll find an old orange and be like, "My day has been made!" And the grubs are like, the size of your pinky and they crawl on their back backwards, like they're doing the worm but backwards and they have little fuzzy bellies like a puppy, and I love them. Once we were in the garden of the Natural History Museum, we were getting our engagement photos done...

**Jarrett:** Ohhh my god.

**Alie:** Figeater beetles mean a lot to me... Figs come out in July, it's a very important month to me, July. I have a lot of nostalgia, we met in July, we got married in July. July, just in general, is very lovely. So, we were getting our engagement photos done and this big figeater beetle [*Alie buzzes*] buzzed and just landed right on my finger and when I see a figeater beetle it is... It's very exciting. My friends

Suzanne and Nina, they gave me two figeater beetles that had died whilst doing the nasty and they are frozen in my freezer. One day perhaps we'll taxidermy them.

**Jarrett:** That moment you're talking about in the garden, not only do I remember it very clearly, there's a beautiful photograph of it thanks to Robyn Von Swank.

**Alie:** There is! Robyn Von Swank was our photographer.

**Jarrett:** It's one of the best photos I've ever seen of you.

**Alie:** [*sighs*] I was so happy.

**Jarrett:** Your face is the most childlike [*little gasp and sigh*] wonder. It's so essentially you. That's a good one.

**Alie:** And my company is named after a structure in the gardens of the NHM and I have to do an offshoot company for just podcasting because I do other stuff and I think I'm going to call it Figeater Media because I eat figs, those beetles eat figs. In fact, one of my next embroidery projects... It's of a figeater beetle! [*excited giggle*]

**Jarrett:** Perfect. It's perfect.

**Alie:** It's exciting.

**Jarrett:** Also, Mirabelle.

**Alie:** Oh well, Mirabelle is my other favorite. That's a praying mantis that Jarrett gave me as a gift and Mirabelle lived, I think like six months. She could have lived longer but I fed her too many maggots. She loved eating fly eggs and then I gave her a fly egg and then I gave her a worm and then I think she over-ate and died. But Mirabelle, I had an open casket funeral for her, if you'd like to see pictures you can look on Instagram at #RIPPrayingMantis. We had an open casket, it was a very goth funeral; we listened to Bauhaus, everyone came in black.

**Jarrett:** Beautiful.

**Alie:** I was not 12, I was into my thirties. And that was a beautiful gift, Jarrett.

**Jarrett:** You're so welcome. What memories. What memories.

**Alie:** Good mems.

**Aside:** We're going to take a quick break, but first, we're going to donate to a charity of the ologist's choosing and I guess that's me. So, I am having it go to Dogs Without Borders which is the rescue organization that we got our dog Gremmie from. If you're like, what does Gremmie look like? You can check out on Instagram, @Insta\_Gremmie, she's a tiny little werewolf floof, we love her so much. Dogs Without Borders is where we adopted her from and right now, since there are so many animals in shelters, animal rescue organizations need all the help they can get. A lot of people got animals during the quarantine in 2020 and now they have decided that they don't want to be animal owners. I get it, things happen in people's lives. Anyway, Dogs Without Borders, we will link them in the show notes and that donation was made possible by sponsors of the show.

[Ad Break]

Okay. Back to editor/husband/wonderful dude Jarrett Sleeper asking me questions from patrons. Here we go. More answers.

**Jarrett:** Cierra asks: Do you have a new favorite spot at the LA Natural History Museum?

**Alie:** Oh! Well, the willow hut that they had, they did take it down recently and they gave me a branch from it. They knew that I loved it and were like, "Alie, we have to take the willow hut down for structural reasons," and I was like, "Can you save me a branch?" and that branch is on a wall in my office. My new favorite spot that's there, I was just there recently and I'm going to tell you it's the crab stacks, maybe. I saw some absolutely bonkers crabs down in the cavernous storage areas in the basement and that episode of crab facts is coming out soon but they... It's stunning. I saw some very, very large arthropods down there. So, we'll say that that's my new favorite spot. But anywhere in the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is lovely. Go in the rotunda, stand under the rotunda. They have so many bonkers artifacts. I think Walt Disney's desk is there, so many beautiful things.

**Jarrett:** Got a lot of questions about books from people.

**Alie:** Who reads? Gross.

**Jarrett:** Laura Kinney... Actually, let's do that one. A lot of people were asking about... Okay, I'll just name some names. Laura Kinney, Lindsay Mayer, JD Murray, Jordan Irons, Cat Baklarz, Jennifer Downey, they all asked a lot of questions about favorite books. I'm going to boil 'em down. Laura Kinney asked: What is a book that you've read over and over or a book with a special place in your heart? Do you have a book you've read over and over?

**Alie:** *My Side of the Mountain* is one of my faves. It's something I read when I was a kid and my friend, Dr. Teagan Wall – who I've mentioned many times on the podcast, she was also in the WGA episode, the strike episode that I put out in May – she got me a signed copy. This is a book about a kid who, in the '60s, it's fiction, just tells his parents, "Hey, I'm going to go live in the woods, I'm going to fuck off to the woods," and they're like, "All right, have a good time!" no one called CPS, no one sends out a search party, he just goes and lives in the woods and then does a bunch of algae experiments. I loved this book as a kid. I don't know what would happen these days if you let your child do that but the idea of living in a hollowed-out tree where you've made your own adobe fireplace... Amazing. He raises a falcon. Anyway, Teagan got a signed copy, the author is now deceased, so that is very difficult, and then she made a book jacket cover where she put blurbs on the back from our friends about me for my birthday and it was... I cried when she gave it to me. That book is one that I always look back upon with fondness.

But the book that I've read the most is an insect guide that I got when I was 12 and the number of times I've opened that book, I can't even, in the thousands and thousands. I would just sit and read about like, mayflies and be like, "Oh what does this do?" Yeah, if that's helpful.

**Jarrett:** Do you know which one it was? Do you remember? Maybe you should post it or something.

**Alie:** It may have been an Audubon Guide, which... Audubon, maybe not the greatest guy in the world I think it was that and it was an insect guide. Yeah, it's a little black paperback, very goth also. Just reading about spiders!

**Jarrett:** That's so funny. One person, Cat Baklarz said: What's the gothest science book/media you've consumed? And someone also asked, Jennifer Downey and Emma is Rosey: Best book you have read this year?

**Alie:** [*deep inhale*] I read *Little Fires Everywhere* and enjoyed that, Celeste Ng is a great writer, really enjoyed that. And then read her follow-up, oh my gosh, I'm blanking on it, *Everything I Never Told You*, so I've really been enjoying her work a lot this year. Also, Hank Green's book, *An Absolutely Remarkable Thing*, and the follow-up book, read both of those recently and I keep thinking about them in terms of whether or not there are aliens and timelines. Both great books.

**Jarrett:** There are a bunch of questions about movies and TV stuff. I'm going to skip to this, Autumn Liston: What movie traumatized you as a child?

**Alie:** Oh, we watched *The Shining* a lot as a child.

**Jarrett:** What?!

**Alie:** We watched everything. I think Cable was new and you could just turn on whatever, and my parents would be, I don't know, outside a lot, both my parents worked. And we watched wholly inappropriate things. I mean, no offense to my parents, they just weren't very helicoptery. And I remember *The Shining* and there's a distinct part where you see a deceased naked woman and that one really got me. *[Jarrett laughs]* What can I say? I was afraid to shower without someone walking me to the bathroom, for months. I was like, "Can you just peel back the curtain and tell me that there's not a deceased elderly woman in the bathtub?" My sisters had to be like... "There's one in there!" a lot.

**Jarrett:** That scared me, and I didn't like it. *[both laugh]*

Okay, okay, okay. Nolan Childerhose: What's your go-to type of music if you're looking for an energy boost?

**Alie:** Straight death metal.

**Jarrett:** You do not listen to that.

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

**Jarrett:** Oh my gosh, I would be so surprised if I didn't know you were listening to death metal.

**Alie:** Although my brother is in a band called Exodus.

**Jarrett:** Yes, of course, of course.

**Alie:** He's a thrash metal guitarist named Lee Altus, he's my brother-in-law. We'll be seeing him tomorrow.

**Jarrett:** Not in concert, in person.

**Alie:** True, true, true. IRL, we'll get a video with him. My favorite music to listen to... Sometimes I like listening to instrumental music from soundtracks because instead of thinking that I'm a beleaguered podcast researcher and host, I think, "I'm just a charming woman on a journey." Maybe I'm in a foreign café and I'm having a biscotti and mm, this soundtrack makes me think I'm just on a writing journey here with my laptop, and I feel instantly more adventurous. So, sometimes I'll do that. Philippe Sarde, I think is a composer that I'll listen to sometimes. He did the soundtrack for a movie called *Lord of the Flies* that I really like the soundtrack, a million years ago.

**Jarrett:** Beautiful.

**Alie:** So, sometimes I'll do that. Lo-fi beats, yes. I really like Allison Ponthier, who is a singer-songwriter from Texas who lives in New York, a redhead but I think she's a natural redhead. She's lovely, Allison Ponthier, look her up. She sang on the track "I Lied" by Lord Huron and she has an angelic voice.

**Jarrett:** She's amazing. I wasn't laughing at Allison Ponthier, I was laughing at a question that I read. *[laughs]* Walk Fearlessly wrote: What song is stuck in your head right now?

**Alie:** Oh no. *[Jarrett laughs]* I mean, we could get loud about it.

**Jarrett:** *[starts singing "Let's Get Loud by Jennifer Lopez"]* "Let's get loud, let's get loooud, uh uh..."

**Alie:** Jarrett and I, at least four times a day [*Jarrett laughs*] we'll be like... "Hey, what do you wanna... Later on, do you wanna get loud?"

**Jarrett:** [*starts singing again*] "Let's get loud, let's get loooud..."

**Alie:** Is that a Pitbull song?

**Jarrett:** No, it's Jennifer Lopez.

**Alie:** Is it?

**Jarrett:** Yes.

**Alie:** I didn't even know.

**Jarrett:** I had to google it because I couldn't remember but yeah.

**Alie:** It comes up so often.

**Jarrett:** So often.

**Alie:** And the singing is bad when it happens.

**Jarrett:** Excuse you.

**Alie:** It's bad.

**Jarrett:** Excuse you.

**Alie:** I go all... I go out in a way that I'm not willing to go out here because it's too intimate but let's get loud. [*laughs, then sings*] "Let's get loud."

**Jarrett:** Beautiful. Kate Gatton: What would your baseball/et cetera (wrestling perhaps) walkout song be?

**Alie:** Like, I'm leaving walking out? Or I'm coming out to it?

**Jarrett:** Yeah, you're coming out to it.

**Alie:** Oh. I think it would be that one where they go, "I'mmm coming out..."

**Jarrett:** No. Really? That's so obvious.

**Alie:** Well, that's what I'm saying because it would at least be explanatory. [*laughs*] People would know what's going on. They'd be like, "Oh, she must be coming out."

**Jarrett:** "Wait. What's happening right now? Oh, wait, oh."

**Alie:** "Oh, she's emerging."

**Jarrett:** But the one you were singing was [*starts singing "Get the Party Started" by P!nk*] "I'm coming out so we better get this party started."

**Alie:** Yeah, I just mean that from an explanatory, like, this is what I happen to be doing at the moment.

**Jarrett:** Not [*starts singing "I'm Coming Out" by Diana Ross*] "I'm coming out..." Not that one?

**Alie:** Either one of those would work just for letting people know what I'm up to. Or "Here I am baby, come and take me. Here I am, baby." I think that's a UB40 song. I don't know the answer to this question.

**Jarrett:** A UB40 song?

**Alie:** I don't know who sings it.

**Jarrett:** Didn't UB40 sing "Red Red Wine"?

**Alie:** I don't know. Jennifer Lopez sang all of them. I really don't know. I don't have a good answer for this and I'm sorry. Maybe it would be a really, really...

**Jarrett:** These were crazy answers. A UB40 song? Tremendous.

**Alie:** These are bad. Do you remember when I was like...

**Jarrett:** Goth Alie says, "A UB40 song is what I'll walk out to."

**Alie:** *[laughs]* I'm trying to think of the worst things that just explain what I'm doing. But do you remember when I wanted to walk down the aisle to that Phil Collins song?

**Jarrett:** Which one?

**Alie:** Ba-dum da-dum, da-dum, da-dum dum-dum.

**Jarrett:** "Do you feel it coming in the air tonight?" The song about killing his wife?

**Alie:** Well, I didn't know it was about killing his wife. I was like "Wouldn't that be great if the beat drops and then we walk out?" And you were like, "You know that's a song about someone killing the spouse?" And I didn't know that. So obviously, we went with that, and it was amazing.

**Jarrett:** We did, it was really good. Everyone was like, this will probably not be a weird...

**Alie:** Not be a weird, terrible marriage? No, we did not walk down the aisle to that.

**Jarrett:** No, we walked out to Shade.

**Alie:** That's true.

**Jarrett:** I love Shade.

**Alie:** Love her.

**Jarrett:** *[laughs]* Okay. Holly Giogrio-Dundon: What's the weirdest food combination you secretly (or not so secretly) enjoy?

**Alie:** Canned sardines. I mean, not sardines. Canned smoked oysters.

**Jarrett:** Canned smoked oysters...

**Alie:** If you've ever been on a Patreon livestream, I think I've eaten canned smoked oysters. They look exactly like an animal turd, and they taste like cigarette smoke, and they're covered in linseed oil or something or turpentine and I love them. I'll eat them with cream cheese sometimes. Sometimes I'll wrap them in a piece of seaweed, and I'll pretend like it's sushi, like apocalypse sushi, I found some old seaweed and also some tinned fish and *[croaky voice]* do you remember the days when we could take fish out of the oceans because the oceans weren't bubbling?

**Jarrett:** She enjoys umami.

**Alie:** I love some umami.

**Jarrett:** Eugh, you're so crazy.

**Alie:** It's delish.

**Jarrett:** I love it.

**Alie:** All right. We've got to tell people how to podcast. I know people are tuning in for the...

**Jarrett:** How to what?

**Alie:** I'm sure people had like, "How do you make a science podcast" questions.

**Jarrett:** I don't know. We're just having some fun!

**Alie:** I know. We're at an hour here!

**Jarrett:** Are you serious?

**Alie:** Yes! We've got 11 hours to go.

**Jarrett:** Okay, okay, okay. We do have 11 hours to go. Then maybe we should- Hold on. We'll just... I'll scroll down. I'm having too much fun with all these basic questions.

**Alie:** Do you know the feeling when someone brings out a birthday cake and you're like, "Oh, this is so nice," and then halfway into the song you're like, "Too much looking at me, too much looking at me."

**Jarrett:** Yeah, yeah, I understand. I understand.

**Alie:** I, I...

**Jarrett:** You're right, you're right. An hour in.

**Alie:** It's not that I don't like people asking me these questions, I think they're amazing. I just think a lot of "Aw shucks y'all shouldn't have."

**Jarrett:** That's very cute and sweet.

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

**Jarrett:** Sure. Okay.

**Alie:** I feel like the fact that I haven't asked you questions...

**Jarrett:** That's not what it's about.

**Alie:** I know but anyway.

**Jarrett:** Courtney Peterson asks: What is your favorite national park and why?! With an interrobang, which I appreciate.

**Alie:** I'm glad they asked this. It's Glacier.

**Jarrett:** Is it really?

**Alie:** I would say it's Glacier because I went there as a child and I saw a mountain goat in real life. We did a mountain goats episode in case anyone needs it. And also... Yeah. So, nostalgia. I like that it's so close to the land of Canada also. So, I would say that. I don't think I've ever been to Yellowstone... That was supposed to shock you.

**Jarrett:** I was thinking if we... I was like, I don't think I've been to Yellowstone.

**Alie:** Yeah, we gotta go to Yellowstone.

**Jarrett:** I've watched *Yellowstone*. Can't resist it.

**Alie:** Yeah, which doesn't take place in Yellowstone.

**Jarrett:** Right.

**Alie:** That always gets me. As someone whose family is from Montana, I'm like, come on. But yeah, I'd say I have roots to Montana, so I'd say Glacier. Also, I don't know where we stand on Pendleton, I think maybe...

**Jarrett:** The blankets?

**Alie:** Yeah. I don't know if they're good guys or bad guys, but they do make a Glacier blanket that's one of my favorites. We had one growing up and it was motheaten and stuff, but we had it forever. So...

**Jarrett:** I'm trying to get better about all-or-nothing thinking.

**Alie:** Yeah, okay.

**Jarrett:** So, much more dialectic for me, these days.

**Alie:** Sure, but still.

**Jarrett:** Who knows? I don't know.

**Alie:** I feel like maybe they may have stolen patterns from Indigenous tribes. But absolutely, this deserves an aside, and Pendleton, if I am mischaracterizing your relationship with Indigenous tribes...

**Jarrett:** I think they're really nice blankets, I think that's undeniable.

**Alie:** I know. But I think... I need to look it up is all I'm saying.

**Jarrett:** I'm trying to give you another side to it. *[laughs softly]*

**Alie:** Right, right. I just want to make sure to give credit where credit is due. Again, Pendleton, if I've got it wrong, I will correct it in a future episode, for one free blanket.

**Jarrett:** There we go. Derrick Allen asked: What would be your "perfect day"?

**Alie:** My perfect day?

**Jarrett:** Maybe this is too big. Is it too long a question?

**Alie:** I'll make it quick. Is it a regular day?

**Jarrett:** Uhh, whatever. Whatever you think it is. What is a perfect day to you?

**Alie:** I'm waking up early, it's dawn, I'm in a cabin, it smells like pine outside. You're there, Gremmie is there, a lot of people I love are in other cabins in the surrounding area but there's one meeting hall in the middle – this is a lot like family reunions when I was a child. You walk around, maybe you have some coffee with some delicious, very bad for you coffee creamer in it, and then you walk around maybe solo in the morning and just get cold air in your lungs, and then later that day, you're making food with all your loved ones that are in cabins, you're going on a canoe ride. Essentially, I'm just describing my family reunion. But also, there are a lot of fuzzy blankets, there are a lot of dogs available, there's maybe a movie on a blown-up screen projector at night... I've got a burlap sack full of jewels that I sell to a trader for gold coins.

**Jarrett:** Wow.

**Alie:** I use those gold coins to purchase a ship. I take the ship and I sail it to one of the poles...

**Jarrett:** Sheesh.

**Alie:** ... and I never speak to anyone else again.

**Jarrett:** That's... Wow... Okay.

**Alie:** I just felt like it was too ordinary. I tried to spice it up.

**Jarrett:** It's a perfect day, I loved it. Mercedes Maitland...

**Alie:** I love her.

**Jarrett:** Me too.



**Alie:** She's the lead editor of this podcast. She was supposed to be conducting this, but we couldn't get her in your sister and my sister-in-law's bed. What I'm saying is we didn't do this in time, I was getting ready, I was trying to get ahead on episodes.

**Jarrett:** Absolutely. If you were to make your own personal crest and motto, what image and which three Latin words would you choose?

**Alie:** [*softly*] Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy.

**Jarrett:** Latin words.

**Alie:** I want to just make clear that I wouldn't actually sell a burlap sack of jewels... Or buy a ship, I really don't like boats.

**Jarrett:** You actually really don't like boats, which is really funny. You talk all the time about how much you don't want to have a boat.

**Alie:** I never want to own a boat. Too much maintenance, I couldn't do it. I would use it maybe one day a year, it's just not my thing.

**Jarrett:** You were having fun with it, you were having fun with the question. Sue ya.

**Alie:** I'm stalling to figure out the Latin.

**Jarrett:** Let's do a little bit at a time. What image do you think would be on your personal crest and motto?

**Alie:** Figeater beetle.

**Jarrett:** Oh yeah, okay.

**Alie:** And it would be... *Ficus... phago ego.*

**Jarrett:** What do those words mean?

**Alie:** I think I mixed in some Greek. It means "I eat figs."

**Jarrett:** That would be it?

**Alie:** I'm put on the spot here.

**Jarrett:** That's not much of a motto. What does that mean to you? I eat figs.

**Alie:** Because it would be the figeater beetle.

**Jarrett:** I understand. But what's that motto... What does that personal crest and motto mean for your life?

**Alie:** It would mean, I partake in the juices of life, and I contain wasps.

**Jarrett:** Okay, I like that, I'll take that for you.

**Alie:** I really just couldn't think of enough Latin. I did take four years of Latin and I think that *phago* might be Greek.

**Jarrett:** Well, Faygo is a soda that Juggalos like to drink.

**Alie:** No, it's with a P-H.

**Jarrett:** Okay.

**Alie:** If I knew more Latin, I think that the crest would have a Juggalo on it though, for sure.

**Jarrett:** Dave Brewer: A friend in college said, "You'll regret the things you didn't do more than the things you did." He wasn't right about a lot of things but in my experience, he was right about that. What's something you regret not doing?

**Alie:** I had the opportunity to go in a fighter jet and I had too much diarrhea. *[laughs]* I was too scared. I thought we were going to pull like, 12 g and I thought I would throw up and I thought it would be very bad. I was able to pull 5.6 g, gravitational forces, in a centrifuge in training for it.

**Jarrett:** Very impressive.

**Alie:** But you know, with a flight suit that expanded and filled up it was inflated to help keep your blood in the lower half of your body, so you didn't have g-LOC which is g-induced loss of consciousness. I had the opportunity to go in a fighter jet and I was too scared and...

**Jarrett:** That's a good answer.

**Alie:** I should have. But my cousin Joe Salvamini, fighter jet pilot.

**Jarrett:** Oh yeah, one of the Red Devils if I'm not mistaken.

**Alie:** How odd is that, that I just have a cousin that flies, from what I understand, very expensive that fuel.

**Jarrett:** Hey, they're going to use it anyway.

**Alie:** You know what though? My carbon footprint, a little smaller because I chickened out.

**Jarrett:** Yeah. That's true, I guess.

**Alie:** So, good on me.

**Jarrett:** I guess. All right...

**Alie:** Someone's got to know...

**Jarrett:** Matthew Walcher- Wait, someone's got to know what?

**Alie:** Someone is going to want to know how to make a podcast. *[laughs]* I keep thinking someone is going to be like, "What recording equipment do you use?"

**Jarrett:** Zoom H4n, couple SM58s. There you go. You're off to the races.

**Alie:** That's very true.

**Jarrett:** Question answered.

**Alie:** Yeah. But make sure that you get your cards for this particular Zoom recorder not to be...

**Jarrett:** Yeah, they've got to be 32 GB or less.

**Alie:** Yeah, 32 GB or less. Rechargeable batteries are a good idea.

**Jarrett:** Get a lot of them. Change them every time.

**Alie:** Yeah. and I edit my stuff on Pro Logic, which I think is \$199.

**Jarrett:** Logic Pro.

**Alie:** Logic Pro thank you. But you can use GarageBand or Audacity.

**Jarrett:** I use the Adobe suite myself, I use mostly Audition.

**Alie:** Or you can hire Mercedes Maitland of Maitland Audio or someone from Mindjam Media, both of those companies do podcasts.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, listen to Season 3.

**Alie:** Of *Avatar*.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, *Braving the Elements*, Season 3. We're doing the *Avatar* podcast for Nickelodeon.

**Alie:** Jarrett is the post production supervisor on a new Nickelodeon season coming out.

**Jarrett:** That's right. What a thrill, what a thrill. Starts very soon. Matthew Walcher asked: What do you think is your most justified paranoia? How do you justify it? *[laughs]*

**Alie:** *[gasps]* Ohhh... Suddenly no one listening to *Ologies* anymore.

**Jarrett:** Oh, that's a *justified* paranoia? Well, that's not justified paranoia, that's just paranoia.

**Alie:** Well, you never know. I'm so lucky, this is the best job in the world, I'm so lucky. People suddenly not liking it. And actually, Apple did an update recently on their podcast software and...

**Jarrett:** Oh, we're not going to get into this. This is true anxiety you're having.

**Alie:** A bunch of podcasts, their downloads have dramatically dropped because of this Apple update and if you don't listen to the last five episodes or check it once in two weeks, then it stops downloading the episodes and I think sending you notifications. So anyway, it's terrifying, it's all happening. I've had so much bile in my throat over it, in anxiety, because it's like... Suddenly, because of nothing that you did wrong, you suddenly are swimming against this terrible current. So, if you listen on Apple, go listen on Spotify or go listen on... I think Google Podcasts is phasing out. There's Overcast, there's Pocket Casts, there's Podbay, just whatever.

**Jarrett:** Who knows? Or just listen a lot.

**Alie:** Just check it. Because podcasters, your favorite podcasters are freaking out a little bit about it. Okay, that's all. That's all I'll say. Also, if you feel like you're hearing more ads in podcasts it's because a lot of people don't have a lot of the downloads that they had a few months ago so then they have to double up their ad breaks because their downloads suddenly went down and they promised a certain number of ad impressions. So, that's what's going on. Now you know the tea from the podcast world.

**Jarrett:** Sheesh.

**Alie:** Aren't you glad? I could sit here and talk about podcast business forever. I had to learn so much from knowing nothing. So... there you go.

**Jarrett:** Kyla C: What is a dream scientific experiment or historical investigation you want to pursue (or have someone else pursue)?

**Alie:** I want to figure out what dark matter is.

**Jarrett:** Yes! That's a good one.

**Alie:** I need to know what dark matter is. Is it ghosts? Listen to the dark matter episode or the recent Quasithanatology about what a dark matter expert says about, "Is dark matter ghosts?" I like the idea that dark matter is all ghosts, I realize that it's not. I like the idea that it's invisible glitter filled with ghosts, and it allows you to send, like... some sort of ESP-type of text messages to people.

**Jarrett:** Yes. I'm going to start just rapiding these to you because I feel like we...

**Alie:** And then we've got to wrap it up.

**Jarrett:** I guess. Kai Kishimoto: If you could go on a wildlife safari to any period of Earth's history, what would you like to see?

**Alie:** ... The future.

**Jarrett:** Really?

**Alie:** Yeah. I want to see where we're at in 2,000 years.

**Jarrett:** 2,000 years.

**Alie:** I want to see if there are any buildings left. Just today I was thinking about at what point will the Earth recover everything, and buildings will only be pieces of metal that are buried in dirt and some shreds of plastic. You know?

**Jarrett:** Totally. Bonnie Detwiller: If you could permanently bring back to life any extinct animal, which lucky animal or species would you pick?

**Alie:** Gremmie after she dies.

**Jarrett:** Good answer.

**Alie:** I think... Tasmanian tiger, real bummer. But that's a charismatic kind of megafauna. Oh, you know what? Giant ground sloth. Augh!

**Jarrett:** Oh, cool one.

**Alie:** They had them in California!

**Jarrett:** I know. You can go see the big statues of them at the La Brea Tar Pit.

**Alie:** Giant ground sloth, hundo p.

**Jarrett:** Kasiah Sword: If you were a mythical creature, what would you be?

**Alie:** I am... [*stuttered chuckle*] I'd be a siren. Just kidding, I don't like boats. A mythical creature?

**Jarrett:** Yeah.

**Alie:** I would love to be something that had herbivore legs but an omnivore top. I would love to have antelope legs, like a centaur. You know what I mean? I want to run and gallop but I also want to have thumbs.

**Jarrett:** Centaur is it then. You'd be a great centaur.

**Alie:** Do you know how satisfying your poops would be? But could you eat enough fiber to get those kind of horse poops? Would you have to eat as much, like, Timothy hay to sustain your ungulate... I think they're ungulates.

**Jarrett:** These are very good questions.

**Alie:** You know, how many stomachs does a centaur have? Do they have one, normal, one alimentary canal, gastric everything like a human? Gastric emptying?

**Jarrett:** I think mythical creatures are... This is how I think they work; I think that they have magical qualities about them that allow them to do things that defy standard physics. Like a dragon or a hippogriff would just fall out of the sky, they're not made to actually do that but because they're magical mythical creatures they just go [*swishing, zooming sounds*] and zoom around no problem.

**Alie:** I bet if you poked a centaur in the belly, dark matter would just come streaming out, glittery ghosts. I just wonder how big their intestines are.

**Jarrett:** Marina: If you could magically be turned into a corvid, what species would you choose to be?

**Alie:** Oh, ravens. I'm very, very good friends with some ravens. They don't know that, but I do. I go and put out a pan of things they'd like to eat and then I do this... [*caw-caws a couple of times*] into the sky and then a couple of minutes later they start circling. Sometimes I give them peanuts, sometimes I give them some leftover biscuits, sometimes I give them scraps of chicken. I found out

they don't like bananas, they're like, "What in the what is this?" I thought maybe they'd think they were slugs or something, they don't like them. So, we're pals. We're friends. So yes, them. Because I would want to know, I'd want to be one of them and I'd want to go back to the nest and I want to be like, "What do you guys really like to eat?" That way I'd figure it out and get turned back into myself and I'd buy that stuff at Costco, whatever they said.

**Jarrett:** Julia Schock: Would you rather be a bear-sized chipmunk or a chipmunk-sized bear?

**Alie:** Chipmunk-sized bear all the way.

**Jarrett:** Really??

**Alie:** Hundred percent! Do you know how much food you'd have to get...

**Jarrett:** Good call, you're right.

**Alie:** ... to sustain your metabolism as a bear-sized chipmunk? *All* day long you'd be working. You'd be so burned out you'd be like, "I hid all these nuts and in order to hide the nuts I have to go like three miles in between nuts." You know?

**Jarrett:** You're right. You're so right.

**Alie:** But if you were a chipmunk-sized bear, you'd need one worm, it would last you a week.

**Jarrett:** A worm? Forget that! You could eat anything, you're an omnivore, you're a bear. And you'd have so much fun. One doughnut and you'd be like, "Bom-bom-wom-bom."

**Alie:** You'd be good to go for a long time. Also, your cave could be like, a shoe. It could be a Croc you found discarded in a park.

**Jarrett:** And you'd be so cute, everyone would love you.

**Alie:** You'd be so cute. And when you bit people, they'd be like, "It gave me a little nibble."

**Jarrett:** I was thinking that. if you were a bear-sized chipmunk, they would ET ya, you know? They'd come to take you away.

**Alie:** You'd get put in a bunker.

**Jarrett:** Or they'd shoot you with something.

**Alie:** For sure.

**Jarrett:** It would just be terrible. People would be like, "Wow, I've never seen a chipmunk that big. We'd better put it in a box."

**Alie:** They'd study you for days.

**Jarrett:** Awful.

**Alie:** Can you imagine though, if every single nut that you ate was like eating a pine nut for you? Tiny.

**Jarrett:** Yes.

**Alie:** Frustrating.

**Jarrett:** Simón Gómez: What makes a person smart, in your opinion?

**Alie:** Curiosity and being willing to learn things because no baby comes into the world being like, "Let me tell you about quantum physics and engineering and everything about this plant." Everyone had to learn. So, as long as you're interested enough to learn and retain the information, you can do so many things and you can know so many things.

**Jarrett:** Sarah Nyland: Hi Alie!

**Alie:** Hi!

**Jarrett:** [*mumbles*] My question is. Well, they said first of all: You're so cool...

**Alie:** Stop. [*repeats as Jarrett keeps reading*]

**Jarrett:** ... and I can't say how much I respect and love *Ologies*. I agree, we all agree. My question is: do you have an \*opinion\* on what consciousness is or how it evolved? I'm a layperson (neuroscience hopeful) interested in it, and I think that every animate being in the universe can have a sense of what it is, since after all our identities are made out of it! And I thought if I could one day get your opinion on this, I'd positively swoon.

**Alie:** I'm only laughing because one and a half minutes ago I was like, "Do you think they have horse-sized poops?" And now I'm supposed to explain consciousness. [*both laugh*]

**Jarrett:** That's why we come to this show. It's your opinion, your opinion.

**Alie:** I think that consciousness is a type of energy or matter that we don't understand yet and I think that we're going to be horrified to realize how many creatures have much more complicated types of consciousness. We talked about this in the Benthopelagic Nematology episode about deep sea worms about just how complicated a *C. elegans* nematode worm is and I think that we'll become more and more horrified as we see how many other creatures that we've exploited have types of consciousness similar to us, even if they don't have "a cognitive ability on par with humans," as we center ourselves so much. But I think we will figure out that it's some sort of energy or some sort of matter that goes somewhere to explain why we're like, alive one minute and dead the next. I don't know what that is. I don't know if it evaporates. I don't know if it becomes photons. I don't know if Grandpa becomes a butterfly that you think of every time you see it. I don't know.

But I do think that... Like, we just figured out soap. Indoor plumbing didn't exist in most US households until like, the 1930s, it was still common to not have indoor plumbing into the last century. Antibiotics, new. Vehicles, new. All of these things are new. Computers, new. So much science that we still are relying on was done without computers or the internet. So, the idea that we have it all figured out, especially consciousness and neurobiology and neuroscience, baby brains.

We don't even completely know, like we talked about in Quasithanatology, what neurotransmitters are working where and when. So, there are a lot of medications that are really helping people with different mental challenges, myself included – mental illnesses and depression, anxiety – that we don't know exactly how they work, we just know they just sometimes do work a little better than placebos. I don't know... I don't know. But I think the idea that we know everything is the saddest and most hilarious notion because we very much don't. And dark matter is ghosts. [*laughs*] No. Gremmie, we've got to take Gremmie's soul and we've got to put it in something else so that she lives forever, even though she doesn't like us very much, she needs to be around forever... I think she likes us.

**Jarrett:** I think she is around forever, personally. That's just because it's a failing of our limited capacity to perceive that we think time only goes in one direction. I think every moment is kind of infinite.

**Alie:** Oh! I've got to know about multiverses. That's another thing.

**Jarrett:** Alyssa Berg: Any new ADHD tricks and tips you've found that work for you since your last Life Advice and ADHD episodes?

**Alie:** Jarrett Sleeper, ADHD, I'll tell you one thing.

**Jarrett:** Hmm.

**Alie:** Stimulants don't work for me.

**Jarrett:** They do not work for you. Stimulants don't mix well with other things you've got going on. That's fine.

**Alie:** My anxiety is like, "Get out of here with that." Jarrett Sleeper any ADHD hacks that you wanna...?

**Jarrett:** Even if I'm not doing 'em?

**Alie:** Sure!

**Jarrett:** Because I've had a little bit of a rough go for a bit here. But I know without a doubt, intense physical activity, regularly, super-duper important to regulating my ADHD at all.

**Alie:** When you're talking intense physical activity, want to give some exams?

**Jarrett:** I think you need to do something that has you breaking a hard sweat and huffing and puffing, like hard. I don't think it has to be long, I think Tabatas are great.

**Alie:** That could be opening a pickle jar, for me.

**Jarrett:** No. I mean, yes. But I mean, you've got to get your heart rate up high, like over, I don't know, 150, I don't want to put a number on it, it's different for everybody, depending on where you're at. I'm sure you could go online and find some people who would give you a number, it would probably be around, over 140 BPM or something like that. But you've got to do something that is difficult, that makes you have some major metabolic response. Something that makes you go, "I worked out. I worked! Holy smokes." I think resistance training is really important too.

You know what? I'll tell you like, there was this dog show a long time ago and they always said, every dog, before you approach anything about its behavioral stuff, I saw this and I was like, "Hey, that works for me!" It was like, you've got to run them, you've got to make sure they're eating food and water normal and stuff, and then sometimes they need to have a job. I was like, yeah, that works for me. You've got to get tired to get your brain to settle at all, you've got to feed it the right... That's the only thing I know works for sure, is doing a lot of exercise or something like that.

**Alie:** For you.

**Jarrett:** No, I think for- I think this is pretty... I'm just saying, I think anyone with ADHD should give it a shot.

**Alie:** If they can. Mileage may vary but... Because we can't dispense medical advice here.

**Jarrett:** It's not medical advice.

**Alie:** It's a little bit medical advice.

**Jarrett:** It's lifestyle advice.

**Alie:** Right. It's not intended to cure or treat.

**Jarrett:** [*burst of laughter*] No. There's no curing or treating, I'm slipping every day.

**Alie:** Just a disclaimer. We've got to wrap this up.

**Jarrett:** You asked.

**Alie:** We're at an hour twenty-two.

**Jarrett:** We're at 22 hours?

**Alie:** Yeah, we're at almost 26 hours.

**Jarrett:** All right, I don't know what to do. We can cut stuff out of this too.

**Alie:** Nahhh! We're just going to post it. This is the most chill episode ever of *Ologies*, the fewest...

**Jarrett:** I dunno, I just got really anxious.

**Alie:** No, no, no, no, no. I just meant again, happy birthday to me.

**Jarrett:** I mean, I could do tons of HD- I'm not going to, I'm just going to stop. Umm... Mmm! ... What else? ... I'm just trying to look through because there's so much.

**Alie:** Pick one at random or scroll to the end.

**Jarrett:** Lindsay Howells: Hi Alie, I so appreciate the way you cultivate such an inclusive online community with your curiosity and willingness to authentically show up and learn in public. I feel like you could do a whole episode on this, or teach a class, but I would love to know more about how you build an inclusive community and what the challenges have been in creating it. You seem to do it so gracefully, but I'm sure there have been struggles or backlash or nasty comments at times. How do you cope with those things and maintain your unapologetic yet compassionate attitude toward those who give you shit?

**Alie:** Oh, that's really nice! I think that it's very much Golden Rule stuff. I don't like for people to feel excluded from anything, I don't like for people to feel othered because I've felt that in so many ways in my life. And the idea that anyone would feel unwelcome somewhere makes me want to cry. So, I like to make sure people feel seen and included and that also people are able to look at other people in a way that's much more dimensional because I feel like a lot of times, people forget that there are whole human beings behind a person's eyes.

So, I think I try to do that with *Ologies*, is have different ologists on with different perspectives and different histories and stuff. Hopefully, what comes out of the show is not only that scientists are real people but everyone has an interesting backstory and everyone has context to what they love and what they hate and everyone has these experiences and this knowledge that you would never know unless you tapped it with some sort of curiosity and empathy. So, that's really important to me.

The biggest backlash I think I've ever gotten is most of my one-star reviews are people who are like, "Love the show, great show, love everything about it. As to pronouns... I'm out!" And so, the asking of pronouns has been something that weeds out listeners who don't really like that inclusion. But that started... I've had a lot of trans guests on and also, someone who... their partner is nonbinary, they're like, "If you ask pronouns, it helps normalize that for all of us." And I was like, "That's a good point". So, I think then I started doing that.

But also, I did a Gynecology episode and I thought I was being inclusive, by calling it Women's Health and I talked a lot about trans women in it, but I completely failed to include trans men who have operating parts that a gynecologist can work on. And so, I got some feedback on that like, hours after it posted and I was like, "I didn't consider that, I didn't approach that in the most inclusive way." And I just take that as a helpful tip from people because I don't think anyone wants to admonish me or make me feel bad. I think people are just like, "Hey, just so you know, this was an oversight." And so, I corrected it as soon as I could and I learned a lot in the process and I learned a lot about - this was years ago, I think it came out in 2018 - about nonbinary identities.

Anyway, so I think that I trust y'all that if you are giving me feedback on something it's something that you want me to know for the betterment of myself and the show and for other listeners



because I have the opportunity to pass it on to other people. So, sometimes I've got to learn publicly that way I can teach other people why that context matters. But yeah, pronouns are a sticking point for some people, they don't like hearing about that. And I say, fine, that's fine. You can listen to things elsewhere but that's how we do things in my house, here. But I also get some backlash just calling me, you know, like ugly and stupid and stuff.

**Jarrett:** Yeah, that's weird. Do you?

**Alie:** Sometimes, yeah. But that's usually from accounts that are like...

**Jarrett:** It's like a nothing.

**Alie:** It's like Patriot49964, you know, on Twitter or something. You know? Where I'm like, "Nnhh, okay."

**Jarrett:** Mm-hm, right. That stuff is like, such a no- It's so childish and strange that you're like, "What?" It's kind of like a nothing.

**Alie:** Yeah.

**Jarrett:** Paulina Tarr, this is kind of on this: You seem like a person who knows themselves so well! [*Alie chuckles nervously*] You have a special voice and sense of self. How did you find that? (Asking as an early 20s person trying to find that for myself!)

**Alie:** That's sweet.

**Jarrett:** It is sweet.

**Alie:** I think I know myself too well sometimes because I'm too introspective and I'm always trying to tinker under the hood to be like, "How does this thing run?" But then again, I wouldn't say I'm wholly self-aware. But I think that at one point, I realized that you can be a little bit weirder than you think is okay because we tend to put on this *façade*, like a harder shell than we need to, to polish ourselves. I think that that results in a lot of homogeny. So, I think that you can be a little weirder than you think is okay and you're much safer than you think you are and also that's what makes people interesting. So, I always try to just, default to the truth in whatever I'm saying or thinking or writing, what's the most true statement? Because usually that's what is the most gratifying to put out and also, it tends to be more relatable. So, I think that if you feel weird then you should be weird. Don't hurt anyone else but if you feel weird, you should be weird.

**Jarrett:** A hundred, hundred percent.

**Alie:** I have a Post-it note on my desk that says, "Be weirder than you think is okay." And when I'm writing I try to remember - if I'm writing an aside, or if I'm researching something or dah-dah-dah-dah-dah. I think, "Am I playing it safe here? Or can this get a little grosser, weirder, or more kurfessional?" You know what I mean?

**Jarrett:** Sure, yeah. All right. We're going to do a few show-making...

**Alie:** Oh my gosh.

**Jarrett:** We're almost done!

**Alie:** Okay.

**Jarrett:** We're getting near the end. But I want to hit some of the ones that a lot of people wanted.

**Alie:** Okay, okay.

**Jarrett:** A lot of people asked something along these lines, but this is Hezy Anholt: How many hours/week-ish [*Alie starts laughing nervously*] do you put into *Ologies*? Is it your main gig? Would you make it your primary full-time thing or [*Alie laughing and croaking*] do you have a primal need to always be involved in multiple projects simultaneously (everything everywhere all at one) hi yes, I have ADHD too probably.

**Alie:** I love this person. It is my full-time gig now. But I do have a lot of projects usually in the works, like other TV shows or I was consulting on a lot of shows. This past year, I've really said no to a lot more things because *Ologies* is my main full-time job and it's more reliable and more... gratifying work than a lot of the work I do. I love a lot of my jobs, but this is the most true to me, and ahhh eughhh... In terms of hours, it takes all of them, I think. Right now, it's the day after Christmas and we're in your sister's guest bedroom recording this. but that's because I took a lot of time this week to just chill and eat like Panettone and stuff.

**Jarrett:** As. One. Should.

**Alie:** As one... should. But I would say... The number of hours I put in used to be like 80 hours a week and I think I've shaved it down to like... fiftyyyy? Sixty maybe? But it's yeah, a lot of it is I just go down research rabbit holes because I think they're really fascinating too. And then we also have Susan Hale, managing director who does so much on this show; she does all of our financials, she does a ton of social media, she manages a whole thing. We have Noel who does all the scheduling, who... I don't know how I would get places without her reminding me. And Mercedes, who does all the editing. I started this without any of that so I'm so lucky because I couldn't do this job without them at this point.

**Jarrett:** All right. I promise we're wrapping up with a handful.

**Alie:** I'm sorry I have the sniffles also.

**Jarrett:** Kaffeine asked, a bunch of people wanted to know: How do you discern who would make a good ologist to interview before you commit to interviewing them? How often do you have to throw out interviews? Asking as someone who has very bad trust issues haha. [*chuckles*]

**Alie:** I like listening, I love... Okay, first. The work comes first. I look at their work and I think, this is cool that they study this, they've maybe written some papers or do their own sci-comm on it. Typically, passion is a big leader in terms of whether or not I want to pick them to be on the show, if they're passionate about something. I'll maybe watch YouTube videos that they've done and think, "Oh great, they seem excited." I love reaching out to them and being like, "Hi, you probably don't know me, but I would love to talk about your life for a while," and hearing back from them. I will also see what other things they've posted to see if they've said anything wildly offensive or racist, misogynistic, which happens every once in a while, and I say, no I don't really want this person on the show. They can have whatever platform they want, just perhaps not mine at that moment because I am very protective of my listeners in terms of what I expose them to.

I have shit-canned two episodes. One of them... was about an animal but we ended up really talking much more about the harvesting of this animal in factory farming and I felt a little weird about it so that's kind of on the back- It's in a folder called "Back Burner." And then another was- Oh gosh, I don't know if I should say this. [*laughs softly*]

People got really mad at me about the Witchology episode because I talked to someone who was a practicing witch and some people were saying, "Why couldn't you get someone who was a scholar in this?" Number one it's like, this person has a ton of lived experience, they've written several books about it, they have their own spiritual beliefs, and I was interested to hear what those were. But I did interview someone about a topic adjacent to this who was very scholarly and ended up

saying some things that were... [*inhales, speaks quickly and high-pitched*] misogynistic and racist during the interview I found and I'm not going to name any names. I felt like they had a very good platform to denounce some forms of racism and they didn't. So, I said, I think I'm going to put this one in the 'Nope' bucket. So, what I got when a couple people were upset about the Witchology episode not being academic enough and I was like, "Oh, you have no idea what I have spared you."

So, that is why I went the direction I did with it, I wanted to talk to someone who had a wide breadth of experience and knowledge from a lot of different angles, both European and Indigenous and happened, they were nonbinary, which was helpful because talking about gender roles. Anyway, so if you disliked the Witchology episode, if you've listened to this much of the AMA episode and you disliked it, just know there was a reason I selected that guest. I thought they were perfect for it. Continue.

**Jarrett:** Okay, we're going to do like, two more.

**Alie:** Okay. Oh my gosh.

**Jarrett:** There are so many, we could do so many.

**Alie:** I know, I know, I know, I know.

**Jarrett:** This is a ticky-tack one, you have to decide if you want to give this secret away. Erin asked: I've always wondered how you find the audio snippets from movies- [*Alie laughs*] Do you usually have a specific phrase/scene in mind, do you have to google them, or is there a database somewhere?

**Alie:** There is a secret database, I'm not willing to give up our source for that, I'm sorry.

**Jarrett:** [*laughs*] Wow! Oh my gosh!

**Alie:** I'm just not going to do it. I prefer to keep that a secret.

**Jarrett:** Wow... Wow...

**Alie:** Usually, when I'm listening to the episode, I will put a note there of what I would want someone to say in response and then I'll go look for that in a clip or part of a conversation will remind me of something pop cultural that I'll want to put in there. But sometimes, a lot of the times too, the clips are there to kind of break up moments or as a transition from one thought to the next if I have to do an edit, or as just something to kind of... a proxy for what the audience might be thinking or what might be some subtext of what we're talking about. So, I'll usually think of something I would want to hear there and then I'll search for a quote that will match that. But I'm not willing to give up my secrets. You're going to have to tickle them out of me.

**Jarrett:** Oh my goodness. [*Alie laughs*] All right, all right, all right. I can't believe you're keeping that one because that's really, wow.

**Alie:** I know. That's for a future AMA.

**Jarrett:** There's a lot more for future AMAs for sure. Okay, there's one final one. I want to find it because they phrased it so well... Thank you for interviewing with me.

**Alie:** Thank you for doing this Jar.

**Jarrett:** It's been so great.

**Alie:** I'm going to be earnest right now if anyone has listened this long. This is a very vulnerable thing for me to do because it feels... I'm trying not to feel too self-indulgent about it by being like, "Yes, let's talk about me, me, me, me, me." And also, I'm conscious of the fact that I say, "Um," and such, I typically like to cut those out if I'm being sloppy in my diction.

**Jarrett:** I wouldn't describe you as sloppy at all, to be honest. All right.

**Alie:** Thank you, thank you.

**Jarrett:** Boreal Becca says: Is this an Alieology episode?

**Alie:** Well, well, well...

**Jarrett:** We must know. What's the best and worst parts of your job? [*Alie laughs then swoons*] And a lot of people wanted this. Just so you know, Will, Dave DeBaeremaeker, BeckytheSassySeagrassScientist, you know Becky, KaitSometimes, Mo Fo, et cetera. What do you got?

**Alie:** Best. Worst and best. Worst part of the job is trying to social media because a lot of... Just, the thing where you're writing something in an Instagram post and then you press one button, and you go back, and you lose your whole caption. So, I try to write them in another program or notes app. I'm always thinking I need to social media more but I'm also like, I have to work on the next episode so I can't spend the whole day social media-ing this and then be late on the next episode. So, that's very difficult. If someone is a social media expert and wants to throw their hat in a ring, LA-based, do holler. You'll find our contacts at AlieWard.com.

**Jarrett:** That would be fantastic.

**Alie:** Must be TikTok literate and willing to tell me what to post, sometimes.

**Jarrett:** Maybe even come over and say, "Alie, I'm going to film this for TikToks, okay?" And then just does it and then you put it on there.

**Alie:** And then you say, "Alie, we're going to spend six hours learning a dance so we can put a ten-second clip up."

**Jarrett:** That would be great as well.

**Alie:** Right. So, do holler.

**Jarrett:** Worst is social media.

**Alie:** That's the hardest part because I always feel like I could be doing more but I also... As soon as I hop on social media, also before I know it, you know, I'm dick-deep in something I don't want to be looking at.

**Jarrett:** I hear you.

**Alie:** You know? I'm on someone's cousin's in-law's yogurt-making page and I'm like, [*mutters softly*] "What am I... I got shit to do." So, social media is difficult for me.

Best part about my job... I love finding the ologists and I love when they write me back. There's a certain kind of message you get, like if you were to, say, text your crush and you were to see a notification from them, when you have an email in your inbox that you've been waiting for, there's a certain dopamine spike that happens when I get an email back from an ologist I've reached out to that is... It's like a jackpot. It's like, loose slots, coins coming out of the sky and it's a great feeling and I say, "Woo-hoo-hoo-hoo! I may have a new friend!" And as I've gotten busier, Noel will, as a scheduling producer will reach out as first contact because I got very busy and then I got very, very sick and I had to have, over the summer, y'all know that, and I had to shirk some of my responsibilities onto my very capable team. So now, in the last month or so I've been reaching out to people more again myself because the last six months or so, I was not feeling so great.

We also did a ton of episodes that we have banked from before I got pneumonia et cetera and those are still coming out. Someone the other day, Connor They/Them on Patreon asked me: What

happened to those episodes you recorded in early summer? I'm still putting them out and I like to intersperse them with maybe an animal one here, here's a medical one, here's one about something sociological. I like to mix them up so I'm spreading them out.

**Jarrett:** Great.

**Alie:** Thank you for that question. My second favorite thing about the job, hanging out in a bed, talking about myself.

**Jarrett:** Clearly not because this was unbelievably painful for you.

**Alie:** *[laughs]* I'm sorry. I thought it would be much easier but...

**Jarrett:** This was great.

**Alie:** I appreciate this.

**Jarrett:** I love you so much.

**Alie:** I love you!

**Jarrett:** I love you so much.

**Alie:** Thanks for listening to just a podcast host and a dog, and a hoosband asking questions. Mercedes Maitland, we are sorry that you did not give these questions out.

**Jarrett:** You're going to do it more regularly. Just do it more regularly.

**Alie:** We'll see. Perhaps a Patreon-only perk because I would like to get back to doing some livestreams, I haven't done them in a little bit, and I like doing them once a month. So, we'll do more weird stuff on [Patreon.com/Ologies](https://Patreon.com/Ologies).

**Jarrett:** I just keep hearing the theme song in my head because I know we're going to put it in here somewhere. *[starts humming]*

**Alie:** Thank you for doing this in your sister's guest house.

**Jarrett:** Oh, it's so nice.

**Alie:** It's lovely. Any advice, Jarrett, for people who want to start a podcast?

**Jarrett:** Just do it, man.

**Alie:** Just do it.

**Jarrett:** No, I mean, kind of. But also, you have better advice. Make it a show. That would be my advice. If you're going to start a podcast, make sure it's a *show*. You know what I mean?

**Alie:** Think about the structure and the format, think about why people listen. People listen to a podcast or whatever, they watch a video to get something from it, put it in their pocket, and say my life is a little bit different and perhaps a little bit better now. So, think about why you consume the media you consume and what you're getting from it, what you're taking away from it. So, think about when you're starting a podcast or when you're doing something like that, what are people coming to me for? And what do I have to offer? What do you want to disseminate? One thing I hope that *Ologies* does is not just facts about things but also a kind of inspiring, like some curiosity and some wonder and things like that. And also, this notion that people are much more human and complex and imperfect and perfect in that way. So, what are people coming to your thing for? So, think about that... Yeah, don't leave your audience out.

**Jarrett:** Also, on a very baseline level, because yes, your show does all those things. But on a baseline level, your show has a simple promise that is fulfilled every week.

**Alie:** Which is...?

**Jarrett:** I'm going to speak to an ologist from some ology.

**Alie:** That's true. That's the hook.

**Jarrett:** I'm just saying, that is very important, that makes it a show as opposed to, "My roommate and I are *really* funny. We're always just having these funny conversations. I think we should record our funny conversations, and everyone would get so into that."

**Alie:** Which, this is the most that of any episode I've ever done. *[laughs]*

**Jarrett:** Yeah, but you earned it, you earned it. You've done a lot of the other kind.

**Alie:** Okay. And it's the holidays.

**Jarrett:** We're not even trying to be funny. If we were *trying* to be funny, we're so... We are so funny.

**Alie:** I'm going to hit myself in the head with a microphone.

**Jarrett:** Let's wrap this thing up.

**Alie:** I'm just saying... Yeah, think of segments, think of what your show has to offer, and think of a little hook. If someone had to describe it in one sentence, how would they describe it? You know, if people say, "Oh, you make a podcast?" They say, "Yeah." They say, "What is it about?" Say, "It's called *Ologies*, you talk to a different ologist every week. you know, like geology, thermophysiology," and then I name a couple ologies and they go "Oh!"

**Jarrett:** "Oh, I get it! Wow, that sounds interesting. I'll tune in." All right, love you so much. Have a great holiday.

**Alie:** *[laughs]* Do we have a secret that we want to tell at the end of this?

**Jarrett:** Do you have a secret you want to tell at the end of this?

**Alie:** The secret that I want to tell at the end of this is that *[deep breath]* I'm wearing, I'm recording this in pajamas and it's currently close to midnight, Eastern Time and I've been wearing these pajamas all day and I haven't changed out of them... all day.

**Jarrett:** That's not even that crazy a secret. I feel like a lot of other people listening are going to be like, "Hey, that's me."

**Alie:** I'm just saying because I'm sweaty right now.

**Jarrett:** They're going to say, "Podcast hosts, they're just like us."

**Alie:** That's true, they are. They sweat in their pajamas for days at a time at their in-law's house.

**Jarrett:** And they play guess-my-fart with family members. *[laughs]*

**Alie:** *[laughs]* Oh nooo... Oh no.

**Jarrett:** I'm just lingering because this is real life. It's like trying to get off the phone with you.

**Alie:** I know, I know. I'm trying to think of a better... One other secret is I don't have COVID, but I do have a little bit of a runny nose and so during the recording of this, I have been shoving a paper towel periodically up my nose. Berbye.

**Jarrett:** Berbye.

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