

[cute sapphic intro music]

[00:00:00] **Laurel:** Hi everybody, welcome back to Sapphic Murder [but with a Curly from the Three Stooges accent so it sounds like "moyduh"] Club! We're your hosts, I'm Laurel Hechanova.

[00:00:11] **Audrey:** And I'm Audrey Nieh. Luckily, for this season's theme of...

Warbly robotic singing: LESBIAN CHAOS

Audrey: We have all been blessed with Rose Glass's latest film, *Love Lies Bleeding*. Did she know what our theme was going to be? Probably. Either way, we humbly accept this chaotic movie.

[00:00:38] **Laurel:** So this was directed by Rose Glass, and it was also co-written by her and I believe one of her friends from film school, Weronika Tofiliska. Rose Glass, who you may remember, this is her second feature film. Her first was *Saint Maud* which you should see if you have not. It is starring Kristen Stewart, Katy O'Brian, Ed Harris, and Anna Baryshnikov, um, who is Mikhail Baryshnikov's daughter. I did not know!

Audrey: Obviously

Laurel: Uh, right. It's like, how many Baryshnikovs could there be? Actually, there are probably lots. But, anyway, Jena Malone and Dave Franco.

[00:01:14] **Audrey:** Also, cinematography by Ben Fordesman, who was also the cinematographer for *Saint Maud*. And original score by Clint Mansell, which I think is worth noting because he is probably best known for all the, Darren Aronofsky films that he scored, like, *Pi*, *Requiem*

for a Dream – everything that has like, an intense, stressful build up, *Black Swan*.

[00:01:39] **Laurel:** *Black Swan*.

[00:01:41] **Audrey:** Yeah, *The Fountain*, *Moon*, so yeah, very much primed for this film.

[00:01:46] **Laurel:** I feel like, yeah, there are a bunch of echo, not echoes, but like parallels in *Black Swan* and this.

[00:01:51] **Audrey:** For sure.

[00:01:52] **Laurel:** Yeah, the transformation.

So my favorite summary of this movie is from Rose Glass who said, "Ultimately it is just a film about a woman trying and failing to quit smoking."

[00:02:02] **Audrey:** You've already said too much.

[00:02:04] **Laurel:** I know. Yep. And that's it. That's – from here on out it's just spoilers, spoilers, spoilers. So that's all you get if you haven't seen it. If you have seen it. Come with us on the rest of this journey.

[00:02:17] **Audrey:** Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. I think we need a, I think there needs to be like a bigger warning. I think, okay, I really, my wish, and I know that I can't have this, it's impossible, I can't have it because of the internet. I really wish that people would be able to go into this film without seeing or hearing like anything about it first, like no trailers, especially the trailers I'm seeing which are like so spoiler heavy, which I guess is maybe the nature of trailers, but uh, yeah, so if you have not seen this movie, please, I beg of you.

[00:02:49] **Laurel:** Just don't watch any more trailers.

[00:02:51] **Audrey:** Well, and also don't, don't move forward.

[00:02:53] **Laurel:** Yeah, and I'll – yeah.

[00:02:54] **Audrey:** It's like, I want you to listen, but I want you more to not be spoiled and like go into this just as innocent as possible.

[00:03:04] **Laurel:** We're actually gonna, we're gonna give you 24 hours. We're just gonna sit here quietly for the next...

[00:03:08] **Audrey:** Clock starts now. We're not going to talk until... Actually, we're going... There's a password. In order to proceed with this episode, you must unlock it with...I'm trying to think of, like what would be...

[00:03:20] **Laurel:** I know.

[00:03:20] **Audrey:** ...a secret thing in the movie?

[00:03:22] **Laurel:** What does Ed Harris eat when he gets mad?

[00:03:26] **Audrey:** No, you already spoiled it!

[00:03:27] **Laurel:** What? Oh, dang it! Okay.

[00:03:29] **Audrey:** What kind of car does Dave Franco's character drive?

[00:03:33] **Laurel:** Nice, okay.

[00:03:34] **Audrey:** Okay, in order to proceed you must – this is an interactive podcast, you must answer that question. Okay, but seriously, go watch it. It's out, I think. I mean, maybe it's not out in everywhere. In everywhere!

[00:03:47] **Laurel:** In every...! Aww. "It's not out in everywhere!" Um, yeah, I do feel bad. Like, I want to insist that people see this, but I don't think it's, yeah, I don't think it's gonna be everywhere just yet.

[00:04:01] **Audrey:** It's okay, you can come back later. After streaming. Yeah, please. Wait till it comes out on streaming if you, if it's not coming out.

[00:04:10] **Laurel:** Maybe in the meantime, go back to our episode about *Bound* and...no, is that too much? Ugh, never mind! Cut!

[00:04:17] **Audrey:** In the meantime, go back to our episode about something that is not a thing you have to watch.

[00:04:22] **Laurel:** Just...

[00:04:24] **Audrey:** Start from the beginning.

[00:04:25] **Laurel:** ...listen to all, yeah, do all the episodes where we talk about *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* and then come back. Because hopefully you'll be able to stream *Love Lies Bleeding* by that time.

[00:04:35] **Audrey:** Okay, great advice.

[00:04:40] **Laurel:** Your mouth said great advice, but your face does not say great advice.

[00:04:42] **Audrey:** Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, well. My

mouth said great advice, my butt meant great advice, and my face is half asleep, so. Okay, I don't know what's going on, but my butt has taken over.

[00:04:57] **Laurel:** This is the longest spoiler warning we've ever given.

[00:05:00] **Audrey:** I'm really trying to get people to leave, apparently. Oh my god.

[00:05:04] **Laurel:** Oh no.

[00:05:05] **Audrey:** Please love us. Okay.

[00:05:06] **Laurel:** Are we bad at this? We're bad at this. Okay.

[00:05:09] **Audrey:** All right, I think, I think we're good.

[00:05:13] **Laurel:** I think we're safe.

[00:05:15] **Audrey:** I think we've scared everyone

[00:05:16] **Laurel:** [sings] *I think we're alone now.*

[00:05:20] **Audrey:** I think we've scared everyone off who isn't our friend.

[00:05:22] **Laurel:** I know. We could just individually name people.

[00:05:26] **Audrey:** Like, I know, seriously, the people listening to this, you know who you are. Okay, and you probably saw the movie with us. Alright, okay, let's get into it.

[cute interstitial music]

[00:05:41] **Laurel:** Okay. What did you know about the film going into it?

[00:05:44] **Audrey:** What did I know? I don't know what I knew. Wait. Oh, no, you know what I knew? I know what I knew.

[00:05:49] **Laurel:** Oh my god. Is this a riddle? Sounds like it.

[00:05:52] **Audrey:** This is part of the the puzzle to move forward. You must unlock my, my riddle. Um, okay. I was preparing my lineup of films I was gonna see at Sundance this year in January and at the point in which I saw this film listed on the Sundance website. I had no idea. I didn't know anything about it I just saw like Kristen Stewart, it fell under the like LGBTQ plus track and I saw that photo you keep seeing everywhere, the promo one of the two of them, and it was like KStew, and I thought I, I thought I read like wrestling for some reason? And then that was, I was like, I need to stop, like I need to avert my eyes, like that was too much, and I was immediately that kind of like moved up to the the top.

[00:06:33] **Laurel:** Did you see that Rose Glass was attached to it, or you didn't even – you stopped at KStew and wrestling?

[00:06:37] **Audrey:** You know, I think I might have, because I remember, um, connecting the dots between that and *Saint Maud* somehow, but needless to say, when I was at Sundance, it was definitely like, this is the movie that, like, I kind of don't care about anything else, like, I need to figure out how to get into this, and because I had a P&I, like, Press & Industry pass, it didn't necessarily guarantee me entry into the premiere.

[00:06:59] **Laurel:** Mm hmm.

[00:06:59] **Audrey:** And so I basically, like, after the film that I saw right before, I just like booked it over and just waited in line for, I think, like three hours to make sure that I would get in, which was totally worth it.

Like, I think I ended up in the front row of the theater, which is, is, is pretty far back because there's like a stage. And so it was, it was like, it all worked out. It was perfect.

[00:07:18] **Laurel:** And you were front row for the Q&A then!

[00:07:20] **Audrey:** Yes, I was, I was front row for the Q&A. I was just like, I was trying to take video, but it was like, so stupid, cause I was like, heh, heh, heh, like, you know like chuckling?

It was not good, anyway, um, yeah, so that's, I didn't know a lot, but I knew enough, and, you know, um, I didn't want to like, get myself too hyped up about it. But then I think afterwards I was like, I need to tell everyone to see this movie. But I think that meant like, I didn't tell anyone to see the movie because I didn't. You know, like the same thing with Aftersun, how you were like, wait, did Audrey tell me to see this? And I was like, I really need Laurel to see this, but I don't want to even...

[00:07:53] **Laurel:** So you're just like wishing inside your head...

[00:07:55] **Audrey:** Psychically, yeah. It sounds...I was like *wOhmWoOoHmwoOhm...*

[00:07:55] **Laurel:** ...really hard.

[00:07:56] **Audrey:** Yeah, I think it worked.

[00:07:58] **Laurel:** I think it did because now I don't know how I ended up in the theater.

[00:08:02] **Audrey:** I hit you over the head. I mean, I kind of did hit you over the head.

[00:08:05] **Laurel:** Well, you arranged, you got me into the theater where I saw it for the first time. We saw it again last night, uh, P.S.

[00:08:15] **Audrey:** Oh, nice. Yes.

[00:08:17] **Laurel:** I don't think I knew, yeah, I think I saw, of course I saw like the Rolling Stone photo shoot for Kristen Stewart. And I had seen a trailer, but luckily my memory is bad and so I didn't remember most of it.

[00:08:30] **Audrey:** Oh, good.

[00:08:30] **Laurel:** And I think maybe the one of the good things about the trailer is that they cut it so fast, you know, that you're just getting these like flashes of like insanity and you're like, how would you retain any of it anyway?

It's like trying to remember a bizarre phone number.

[00:08:45] **Audrey:** A bizarre phone number!

[00:08:46] **Laurel:** Because it's just like a random sequence of things.

[00:08:48] **Audrey:** Yeah, no, that's, that's actually really good to know because it's like, it's hard to detach myself

from having seen it and then seeing the trailer be like, that's, that's whole movie!

[00:08:55] **Laurel:** Yeah, that's everything! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, totally. And I was, I was worried. I was, I was like, oh, I might hate this. And so I went in with like – because you had done a great job of not being like, *oh my god, this film is so good*. So I didn't have...I had low expectations going in. I think I feel kind of self-conscious about any queer movie that's getting any sort of, like, mainstream attention.

Um, I think we've talked about that phenomenon before, but it's like where you're part of the in-group, you're like, sort of, it feels weird to be, have your, like, in-group exposed to the world.

[00:09:30] **Audrey:** Oh yeah.

[00:09:31] **Laurel:** So that's a long way of saying I didn't have any real impressions going in, or just like, very vague ones.

[00:09:38] **Audrey:** That's the best way to do it.

[00:09:39] **Laurel:** We need to figure out how to get that to be the case for only good movies, though.

[00:09:44] **Audrey:** Oh my god. Well, it's kind of like the *Portrait* phenomenon almost. Like I, I similarly went in with such low expectations I think. I don't know. Something about it was like very 90s, like art house theater when I saw the trailer. I mean, we've talked about this a million times and I almost had like low expectations...

[00:10:02] **Laurel:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[00:10:03] **Audrey:** ...for it, you know, which probably helps. But yeah, I don't know how to do that. I don't know how to like, not have expectations, because I had this problem with *All of Us Strangers*, which we don't have to get into right now, but like, I unfortunately went in with, partly because of Paul Mescal, I blame him. I think I would have maybe appreciated it a little bit more if I just went in totally with like, nothing. But for some reason I was just like, really anticipating the movie. So don't do that, Audrey. Stop!

[00:10:28] **Laurel:** Yeah, yeah. Never want anything is the moral of the story.

[00:10:33] **Audrey:** Oh, yeah. I don't usually! What's wrong with me?

[00:10:37] **Laurel:** We've learned! We've learned not to desire anything, so, yeah.

[00:10:41] **Audrey:** Oh, that's so sad! It's true though. But I think with a gay film like that, I was like, I can desire because like, oh my god, this is not, not to get into like a film analysis about this, but like, you know, there are just more out there. There's more opportunities, like gay male protagonists, I think. And so I was just like, this is gonna be amazing.

But anyway.

[00:11:00] **Laurel:** But yeah, we...we won't get into it...

[00:11:00] **Audrey:** There needs to be a potion. I need to drink like a potion or something, you know, to enter it totally...

[00:11:05] **Laurel:** Yeah.

[00:11:06] **Audrey:** I'm sure there's a drug for that. Okay, speaking of drugs...

[00:11:09] **Laurel:** Oh nice. That was great!

[00:11:11] **Audrey:** How do we want to do this?

[00:11:13] **Laurel:** Immediate impressions?

[00:11:14] **Audrey:** This kind of gets into like, I think the topics that we're going to talk about, but I felt like I was on this rollercoaster ride from the beginning. It was like a little shaky, not because I was like, I don't know if I'm going to like this, but I was like, what is going on? And then there was sort of like a turning point. It may have been when the first – huge spoiler alert! – injection of like steroids happened, where I'm like, oh, I see where this is going.

You just know totally kind of like what's going on, like it's not gonna be...

[00:11:41] **Laurel:** Alli and I were actually talking about it last night, and we both agreed that for us, the first tonal marker was the close up shot of the sweaty, hairy nipple, like, in the opening montage of people working out. Cause it's like, oh, okay, this is like, this is gonna be, not what we usually watch.

[00:12:03] **Audrey:** Because of the nipple?

[00:12:04] **Laurel:** But, well, because of like all three, really, like, the sweat, well, yeah, the, the close up, the hair actually was the thing that was like, oh, okay, this is...hmm.

[00:12:14] **Audrey:** The great trifecta of tone setting: hair, sweat, and nipple. It's true, yeah, you're right. I bet you can go to any film and be like, if you see hair, sweat, and nipple all in the same shot, you know what's gonna happen. Yeah, I think that makes sense.

I think for me, like, the steroid like when she's like, *Oh, yeah, of course, like, this is like what we're gonna do.* I think it set some kind of tone for the characters. So I felt like it was a little shaky. And then all of a sudden, I was just going up, up, up, up, up in this like roller coaster, like one of those freefall things. And I was just like, along for the ride. Like, I was like, screaming and like, laughing. At Sundance, the audience was like, pretty receptive and like, all the queers showed up for it.

And so it was so exhilarating and like, so fun and satisfying in like, every dimension imaginable. And then the payoff is, it was, uh, as good, if not better, than, you know, I could have hoped for, and so that was like, kind of, immediate impressions was like, holy fucking shit, this is, maybe this is kind of like, immediate and after, I felt so, it was like, so validating and vindicating, I guess?

Like, it just felt like this huge release, because we're kind of getting into it a little bit now, but like, having seen like, every single lesbian film that came before it, practically, you know, it just felt like, this is it, like, this is what we, this – finally! This is the...

[00:13:36] **Laurel:** We did it! We did it, everybody!

[00:13:39] **Audrey:** Rose Glass and team, um, thank you! So yeah, it was just like, so cathartic, I think, at the end.

I was just so fucking happy, I couldn't believe it. I just

wanted to like, celebrate, you know? Anyway, that was my intense, uh, reaction, how about you?

[00:13:53] **Laurel:** Yeah, very, same. Yeah, I think from the hairy, sweaty nipple on, exact same. It's just like a roller coaster that's like, peaking, but not peaking, it's continuing to go up, and then, yeah, it like, climaxes at Jackie becoming this like, giant, sparkly hulk, you know, that like, takes down Lou Sr. Yeah, it was really exhilarating.

And I didn't, I wasn't even, like, I wasn't thinking about anything but the movie in the moment, which is, it sounds weird to say, but it's like, I wasn't, I was just in it, like, I was just along for the ride the entire time.

[00:14:28] **Audrey:** Sure. It was super immersive.

[00:14:30] **Laurel:** Yeah, yeah, and it's because, I mean, part of it is because I never expected anything that happened, you know? Like, it always surprised me. Like, even when, um, Kristen Stewart or, uh, Lou presented the, the steroids as almost like a, like a box of chocolates, you know? Like, the way that she's, like, so happy to, like, give it to her is, like, oh, this is, you know, it's just this fun thing that you'll probably, like. And I was like, *oh, no*. You know? Like Jackie's this like all natural bodybuilder, how's she going to take this?

And Jackie's like, *Oh, okay!* You know? And it's like, oh, that's what this is. That's what these characters are. That's the kind of movie this is. I was just along for the ride, because I didn't ever know what to expect. All the way to the end, you know, it's like, I did not see her turning into a 50 foot...

[00:15:20] **Audrey:** What?

[00:15:21] **Laurel:** ...you know, like, Hulk.

So that was, yeah, that was amazing. And it's interesting because, like, um, we should do an episode on, like, the magical realism endings of this and, like, versus *All of Us Strangers*, because, like, yeah, I don't know. I don't want to get into it now, but it's like this really this really did it for me, and I don't know that I would have like if you had told me that this is how it's gonna end, I would have been like, *mmm...let's do something else*, you know? Like I don't think that's gonna work, but it really did.

[00:15:52] **Audrey:** One thing that I want to clarify a little bit is like I was talking about how it was so cathartic because of all the kind of knowing everything that came before it. I actually don't think I realized that at first, right? Like, I just felt so, it just felt so, like you, like, I was just so immersed. I was totally in the world.

Like, the world building was incredible. Like, I felt totally pulled in. I did not, I had no idea what was gonna happen. Um, I was honestly worried someone was gonna, like, one of the two main characters was gonna get murderlated. Having seen *Saint Maud*, I was like, I don't know what's gonna...

[00:16:20] **Laurel:** Right.

[00:16:20] **Audrey:** ...happen next.

And then afterwards, when I was kind of like, just so happy and like, elated and relieved and I don't know what else, like, all the feelings, it took me a while to realize like, part of the reason why was just because of like, all this baggage I think I had around the genre, I guess? Not really

genre, but like, you know.

[00:16:41] **Laurel:** The entire time I felt like... Something crazy would happen like something just absolutely bonkers would happen or like a really like hot steamy sex scene would happen and I'd be like in my seat like, *Oh, can we do this? We can do this now?* Like, you know, with our films? And it's like, oh, this is so great. Yeah.

[00:17:00] **Audrey:** That just reminded me, one thing that I did, I think I knew going into it was, I don't know how this, where this came from, but KStew had said, "The sex scenes are gonna shock you." I think, I don't remember the context. Do you remember this? It was like early, early, early, like last, I think like last year.

[00:17:17] **Laurel:** Yeah.

[00:17:18] **Audrey:** And I think like the, you and me, and like the, the CUNT-y chat group we're in, with like Heather Petrocelli and Baby and Amie. Um, I don't remember who shared it. Maybe it was me, but like, uh, we were talking about that and, I think we were all like, eh, like, are we really gonna be shocked? I mean, I don't think I was shocked, but I was, like, very much delighted.

[00:17:35] **Laurel:** When I finally saw it, I was like, oh man, these sex scenes are going to be crazy. And it's like, they were great, but they weren't like, what the fuck? You know?

[00:17:44] **Audrey:** Yeah, yeah. But then I don't know, like, what would, what would shock me at this point, like.

[00:17:49] **Laurel:** Right. Yeah. Maybe she meant, she meant that for a different audience. All right.

[00:17:55] **Audrey:** All right.

[00:17:56] **Laurel:** So now we're going to do our top three...things? Is this? I see that...I see now that you said "topics / likes".

[00:18:05] **Audrey:** Oh, that, that was from a previous, I think I pulled that from a...

[00:18:08] **Laurel:** Oh, okay.

[00:18:09] **Audrey:** ...previous episode, but...

[00:18:10] **Laurel:** Um, because I only did things that I loved.

[00:18:12] **Audrey:** Mine are not top three. I think it's just like a random collection of three things, because I think it's one of those, yeah, this is kind of, this is the chaos. Um, so we'll, we'll go into three things we loved.

[00:18:24] **Laurel:** Are they prioritized in any way? Can you, like...?

[00:18:27] **Audrey:** No, not really. They're, it's a mess. It's uh, no, no. I think because I, there's so many things about this film, that I really loved and could be sort of like lumped into larger categories. I sort of tried to categorize them, I guess. So it's very messy, I will warn you, and also I think the reason we're doing like three things each is to really constrain ourselves so that this doesn't become like a 50 episode episode.

[00:18:53] **Laurel:** And some of our things might be the same thing.

[00:18:55] **Audrey:** Yeah, we don't actually — I don't know

what Laurel's gonna say, for all I know it could be like, Ed Harris's wig is number one. That would actually be on my list, but that's not on this list.

[00:19:04] **Laurel:** It's, it's on my ultimate list.

[00:19:05] **Audrey:** Yeah, that's what I'm saying. Like, my ultimate list is very long.

[00:19:08] **Laurel:** Speaking of which, did you see, do you know what Kristen Stewart's dad in real life looks like?

[00:19:13] **Audrey:** Does he look like that? Oh god. No, I don't think I do. Wait, do I?

[00:19:18] **Laurel:** Google John Stewart, Kristen Stewart dad.

[00:19:20] **Audrey:** Oh wait, I did remember her talking about her father for some reason. Oh, yeah. That's amazing. Yeah, I think I've seen, that's so funny. I think this movie is actually just a documentary. Yeah, wow, that's...I think Ed Harris was the one who made...

[00:19:39] **Laurel:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[00:19:40] **Audrey:** ...the suggestion of making his wig like that. So I wonder if he had, like, met, he, like, knew her father. It's like, I'm gonna fuck with you.

[00:19:47] **Laurel:** I've also learned that it's called a skullet.

[00:19:50] **Audrey:** Mm hmm. Oh.

[00:19:51] **Laurel:** Yeah.

[00:19:52] **Audrey:** Congratulations. Welcome to Americana.

[00:19:55] **Laurel:** Yeah, this whole movie did feel like a non-American's take on America, you know, it's like, oh yeah...guns! Working out! Like, murder! Crime!

[00:20:05] **Audrey:** I mean, it's weirdly also accurate, I guess. I don't know.

[00:20:10] **Laurel:** It's not wrong.

[00:20:11] **Audrey:** Because America is really, like, America is a caricature of America. It's like, America is America on steroids, right? So, the depiction felt like very kind of exaggerated, but also real at the same time, you know? Having lived through the 80s as a bodybuilder, I can speak to this. Alright, who's kicking it off?

[00:20:31] **Laurel:** Okay. I've decided that you are going first because you saw it first.

[00:20:34] **Audrey:** I feel like you're always making me go first for some reason.

Okay, my first thing is a collection of things, and the category that I'm lumping it under is what I really loved is how this film is kind of set within kind of a familiar neo-noir pulpy aesthetic setting, but at the same time essentially like defies all the tropes and cliches that you would expect not just for that genre but also for queer lesbian film especially I would say that that was like very unconcise but my...okay under this umbrella is, here are some examples.

They meet and they fuck almost immediately for as we know for a lesbian film like it's usually in the, in it takes

Laurel: It's like halfway in.

Audrey: ...an hour to get to sex or to anything. I was talking to Heather – my Heather – about it, and she said she looked at her watch and it, she said it was about 15 minutes.

[00:21:32] **Laurel:** That has to be a record. Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

[00:21:35] **Audrey:** Yeah, it's I mean, I think I can think of one other film that maybe is faster. I love the depiction of sex, I thought it was like, hot, rough, aggressive, desperate, smutty, real, you know, it just felt like sweaty, I don't know, it's just, I don't know if I've ever seen a film, a lesbian film that like, that's not a porn. That goes...

[00:21:56] **Laurel:** Mm hmm.

[00:21:57] **Audrey:** ...that goes into like, fisting and like, you know, there's no like, fisting cam or anything like that, but you don't see that often.

Just like, randomly listing off things that fall into this category. There's really no femme fatale, which I think you would typically expect for this, this type of films in this genre. I also feel like the equality piece, both of the characters feel like their own real unique person, and not like a cliché or like a stereotype of what you would expect in those roles typically, there's no like, I mean, I love, don't get me wrong, like I love like *Bound*, but unlike *Bound*, you know, you might expect like a butch/femme characterization, but it's like you have someone like Jackie, her body, that like, build, you just don't see that typically in films, right?

That's usually reserved for like men. And then to combine

that with femininity, the fact that it just like breaks down and challenges like your concept of what femininity is, I just feel like it was like that and that alone, it's like, can we write a thesis on that? Um, so both actors are queer in real life, which yeah, that almost never happens, I feel like.

And then, In the film, like, no one kind of does like what the quote unquote right thing and what you would expect. They just continue to push through in this way that defies like your expectations and like embraces what it is, like embraces the violence, doesn't like apologize for it, and even all the way to the end, it's not like they like drive off into the sunset and even like *Thelma & Louise* style, right?

Like the violence perpetuates or just it continues, and I feel like everything ultimately about the film, even though you can see like her references, like Rose Glass just seems like she's like the biggest film nerd, nothing feels like derivative. It feels like inspired but like fresh and original, and I will stop there.

[00:23:39] **Laurel:** Alright, so, that's funny, because a lot of the...

[00:23:42] **Audrey:** Did I cover like your top three all within my one?

Laurel: Yeah, I'm done!

Audrey: Oh no, I'm sorry!

[00:23:48] **Laurel:** Well, okay, so my, my number three is, you touched on my number two, and I'm just going to like leave that there as a teaser,

[00:23:56] **Audrey:** I touched on it or I stretched it out?

[00:23:59] **Laurel:** Oh god! Um...okay, my number three is the comedy aspect of it, because that was so surprising. I definitely didn't go in expecting it to be as funny as it was.

Kristen Stewart is insanely funny in this? Like, okay, so the one, the one time when Lou Sr is on the phone with her...

[00:24:23] **Audrey:** Oh my god. That was so good.

[00:24:25] **Laurel:** ...and he's like, "Are you threatening me?"

[00:24:27] **Audrey:** That was, I...

[00:24:28] **Laurel:** And it's not just the. "Yep." You know? It's also the pause before the yep. Oh my god. It's so like...and you can see her like thinking and then she does this little like nod like *mm hmm*. "Yep."

[00:24:40] **Audrey:** That was *fucking* perfect. You could feel the sort of...it's there's so much tension there and then like when she's the way she says it It's like that's like just simple.

[00:24:50] **Laurel:** She's such a kid, you know? Like you can see so much history...

[00:24:53] **Audrey:** It was so funny, and like the whole audience like you could feel like the laughter kind of like vomit out of them because it was just like so good after that tension. Ugh! UGH!

[00:25:02] **Laurel:** Yeah, so like Kristen Stewart across the

board all of her like her her comedy bits, but then also, you know, just like Ed Harris's hair, um, the cat licking the blood off of the floor – like when Daisy is wrapped in the rug behind the couch.

Audrey: Poor Daisy.

Laurel: The whole, the whole like smoking subplot is hilarious and the way that it comes back up, like when JJ is in the trunk and she's about to close the lid and...

[00:25:25] **Audrey:** Oh my god.

[00:25:26] **Laurel:** ...she can see his cigarettes sticking out of his pocket. And she's like, "...Nope." And then she like closes it. Ugh, oh man.

[00:25:33] **Audrey:** The card that um, Daisy gives her that she draws that like little flower that's like smoking?

[00:25:37] **Laurel:** Daisy also, just like, oh my god. And like Daisy's comedy, I feel is leveraged really well towards the end when she becomes kind of sinister, you know?

Audrey: YES.

Laurel: Like for a split second and she like threatens her?

[00:25:51] **Audrey:** Yeah, her character development was like kind of incredible. Yeah.

[00:25:54] **Laurel:** Holy crap. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Audrey: I did not see that coming.

Laurel: So. Alright, so that was my number three. Comedy.

[00:25:59] **Audrey:** That's really good. Um, I love that. I feel like this is very well rounded, our list, hopefully.

Laurel: Ok, good.

Audrey: Um, okay, my next one's gonna be much shorter, which is, because I already touched on this, like, when we were talking about first impressions, but it's really the, the commitment to that buildup.

You know, because it's just like she, she goes hard and she just keeps going harder and harder and harder. The tone, the pace, everything, like the violence keeps building up. The steroids, you know, like her body is physically, she's literally growing until she just gets giant, you know, and I didn't catch it the first time somehow, I, my eyes deceived me, but like the scene where she's like, she actually smashes, you know, the guys, I'm not gonna say his name, his face. And she's like, there's an angle where she is much bigger.

[00:26:43] **Laurel:** Yeah! I didn't catch that either, but Alli, Alli did, and then we, she pointed it out, like, this time, and I was like, what the fuck? She's, like, almost as tall as, like, she's hitting the ceiling!

[00:26:51] **Audrey:** She's hitting the ceiling, yeah. I think it's cuz the angle like the camera's kind of like a little bit above so it's hard to tell like what's going on.

[00:26:56] **Laurel:** And she's, like, glowering at him, so, like, emotionally, she's already towering over him, and I think that's what I was latched on to.

[00:27:01] **Audrey:** Yeah. And all the signs are there. Right.

[00:27:02] **Laurel:** Mm hmm.

[00:27:03] **Audrey:** I think I read some article about like, or some interview where Rose Glass was like, they were trying to kind of imply or metaphorically show the like muscle building, but it just didn't seem like it was working.

And so they were like, you could hear it and see the physical growing of it. It's just like insanely dramatic crescendo. You just fucking buckle up, just let go, you know, like let go while like Rose Glass stretches you out.

[00:27:28] **Laurel:** Ohhh my goddd! Are you? That's gonna be like every five minutes is a stretching reference.

[00:27:34] **Audrey:** I mean.

[00:27:37] **Laurel:** Pfft. Great. Okay, my number two is, you've talked about this, um, kind of in your first one, but gender. Like, both leads are, Or both characters are such an interesting mix of traits that are usually seen as either masculine or feminine, like strength, softness, beauty, ambition, violence, uh, like caretaking – the way that like, Lou cares for her sister, and then also like aggressiveness. And then like you were saying earlier, like, seeing a female bodybuilder portrayed as this, like, yeah, that body type, but then also just this, like, beautiful, very feminine person, and whose femininity is, like, never questioned, except, like, like, Daisy kind of makes some snide remarks about it, but she even gets, like, hit on by some dude, which I usually don't, like, care about, but, like, I don't think I've ever seen a muscular woman depicted as sexually desirable in a heterosexual context.

Like, I can't, I can't think of anything. But then also the way that like, the way that their characters take on certain things, like, Jackie is super strong, but Lou kind of does the, like, quote unquote heavy lifting of the two of them, like when things go to shit. And then like, Lou is more cautious, but Jackie is like, super ambitious and like, focused on getting things done in so many ways and then like by the end like Jackie is literally tossing Lou around like in the credits, you know, it's so cute.

[00:29:04] **Audrey:** I love that so much. It's so so precious. Yeah.

[00:29:08] **Laurel:** Yeah, Rose Glass said this really cool thing about how Jackie is kind of the 80s and Lou is the 90s. Like Jackie is the 80s and that she's like ambitious, focused on like bigger, better, more or whatever and then like Lou is this like jaded person. She's cynical. She's like known and seen too much. And so the movie is depicted in like 1989, which is like the midpoint between the two.

She also said this thing about how our bodies are this interesting midpoint between our inner selves and like the outer world. And, you know, What we do to our bodies reflects how we, like, how we see ourselves in that context of the world. Like, what makes us feel safe, you know, and then also safe from what, like, Jackie is, like, sculpting her body because it makes her feel powerful. Whereas Lou can't even stop smoking, right? Like doing something that is literally bad for her. But Lou will take the yolks out of Jackie's eggs. You know, it's like how they care for each other's bodies is interesting.

So yeah, I don't know. Um, gender and bodies is my number two.

[00:30:14] **Audrey:** Yeah, I feel like there's also a control

thing too, right? With, Jackie...

[00:30:17] **Laurel:** Mm hmm.

[00:30:18] **Audrey:** ...you get the sense that, that she's lost control. She doesn't feel like she's in control. And so being able to kind of control what she looks like, everything around that, you know, I think is, is kind of an interesting metaphor.

And then also going back to what you said about gender embodiment and like, what you expect typically in this kind of film, and maybe I was talking about this earlier too, but like, I think it's interesting when Jackie first enters the scene, or enters the gym, and Lou catches—sees her for the first time. She's essentially like the ingénue, right? Like, as she's entering that moment, and like, Lou is like, looking at her. It's really interesting, like, sort of how she plays with those roles. Rose Glass. Okay, my last one, which is not a umbrella one, is a very specific one, is just simply, um, Or, not simply, Katy O'Brian.

Um.

[00:31:06] **Laurel:** Awww. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[00:31:09] **Audrey:** I've, this sounds creepy, but I've, I've been watching her, oh my god, I'm gonna just stop.

[00:31:12] **Laurel:** Oh my god.

[00:31:12] **Audrey:** Okay, no, I've seen her in like, *Ant Man*, I've seen her in *Mandalorian*, from what I've seen, like, she's often cast as these, you know, very superhero-y type characters.

She has a martial arts background, so that makes sense. Um,

I think she got into film through martial arts, and she also was a bodybuilder, which obviously, perfect casting there, but um, this is actually in her wiki, which I thought was funny. She actually stopped bodybuilding because she didn't want, she didn't want to basically like take steroids, which I think everyone else was doing, and so just like the irony of that is like pretty amazing.

[00:31:46] **Laurel:** Oh man! Yeah.

[00:31:47] **Audrey:** She's so charismatic, and I felt like there was so much chemistry between her and KStew, and like, um, just so well cast, and I, I cannot wait to see what she does next. But also, going back to like, the body stuff we've been talking about, just seeing her on screen, you know, to me, this was like, a huge breakthrough, and I commend Rose Glass for, you know, fucking doing the thing, you know? But yeah, that's it. It's just Katy O'Brian.

[00:32:17] **Laurel:** And they didn't find her, like, I don't know if you came across this, but they didn't find her until like three weeks before they started shooting. Can you imagine, like, getting that close, not knowing who it's gonna be, and then finding Katy O'Brian? It's like, oh god, like a gift from heaven, kind of.

[00:32:32] **Audrey:** Yeah, yeah, it was like, there was a really good reason why they ended up having to wait that long, really, like, there was no one better. And also, like, she was probably already, like, physically primed for that role, right? In like three weeks, how would you have gotten someone to get to that state, to be plausible in that role?

[00:32:47] **Laurel:** Right, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, but then also, like, so, I read that she had been really nervous about even taking the role because it's like, she's

playing opposite, like, Ed Harris and Kristen Stewart, and she's, she was like, how can, am I gonna be able to handle this as a lead? And then she was like, if I don't take it, how else am I going to grow?

But then also, I think she posted this on Instagram recently. She has Crohn's disease and her, yeah, she like needed to have surgery like at the same time...

[00:33:14] **Audrey:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[00:33:15] **Laurel:** ...as they were shooting. And so she was doing these like crazy workout days and these like really tough shoots. And I don't know, she's just incredible.

And also because they hadn't found her until super close to the shoot, they were basically rehearsing like right before they shot each scene so there was like no rehearsal time between like, with her and Kristen Stewart and it's like...*what?*

[00:33:37] **Audrey:** And it's crazy, like I just, to hold your own to both of those, like, the entire cast really.

[00:33:43] **Laurel:** Yeah, yeah.

[00:33:43] **Audrey:** I think it was so well cast, like, everyone fucking brought it and like, was so committed. Yeah, I'm like, totally blown away by everyone, but yeah, especially Katy O'Brian.

[00:33:53] **Laurel:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, and I I'm not gonna be able to say this because they're not actually in my number one, but like, shout out to Jena Malone and Dave Franco. Like, oh my god, they were so good!

[00:34:04] **Audrey:** You're not gonna say this? What do you

mean? You just said it!

[00:34:07] **Laurel:** I know, but that's all I can say about it because we gotta go!

[00:34:09] **Audrey:** Okay, okay. Yeah, yeah.

[00:34:10] **Laurel:** All right, so my number one is the love story. This is easily my favorite meet cute of all time.

Audrey: Aww. Yeah, yeah, for sure.

[00:34:10] **Laurel:** Like, she walks into the gym, uh, Jackie wins over Lou by punching a guy and then getting punched in return. And then they're like, their attraction is sealed with a steroid injection in the butt so yeah you get you take it.

[00:34:33] **Audrey:** I can relate.

[00:34:35] **Laurel:** And it's so interesting seeing how like they what they do to each other like they I hadn't this hadn't hit me until like after and i was like thinking about the movie but they really do just bring out the *absolute worst* in each other! Like they're...like Jackie ends up murdering people! She murders two people! You know? And...

[00:34:54] **Audrey:** That you know of.

[00:34:55] **Laurel:** That I know of! And then like, Lou is, you know, covering up her crimes. And then, you know, I don't know. It's just like, uh, it's, it's nuts. But it's also like, weirdly endearing that they're, but then even like, as things kept getting more and more out of hand, for some reason, never, you said that, you know, you're like, *Oh, no, one of these two is gonna get murdered.*

And I was like, I never really felt – I never felt that. Like I was, it never felt like it was like spiraling out of control. I never felt like, oh man, *this is gonna be a tragedy and they're gonna die, we're gonna bury these gays or one of them*. And it didn't, it just kept like escalating and getting out of control, but I don't know, I don't know how to explain it. Like it, it didn't feel like *one of these people is going to die* to me. I don't know why. Like, maybe I just had too much, like, optimistic hope for them.

[00:35:44] **Audrey:** Yeah, I think for me, I'm just like, burdened by all the, the bury-your-gays, but like, I did not know they were going, it was going to end up being a love story. Like, I think, I felt like it was going that direction, and then I was hopeful because they had so much chemistry, but then I think at the point in which Jackie actually punched, like, Lou in the face? Do you remember what I'm talking about? Like she...

[00:36:03] **Laurel:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[00:36:04] **Audrey:** Like she's super roided out and she punches her. That's when I was like, *oh interesting*.

[00:36:07] **Laurel:** Oh, wait, wait. The *first* time she punched her in the face. Yeah, okay.

[00:36:10] **Audrey:** Yeah, and she, she, she ran, she, she ran to Vegas! You know, I think it wasn't until she like, maybe threw up Lou while she was performing. Like literally vomited Lou. Then I was like, oh, oh, how cute!

[00:36:22] **Laurel:** Oh, that's what did it for you? Amazing. Yeah, I liked how, like, you could tell from the very beginning that, like, Jackie had changed something in Lou. Like instantly, like the way that she falls in love,

specifically the way that Lou falls in love with Jackie is so cute. Like you can see it like in her eyes and on her face and the way that she like closes the gym immediately as soon as like these two dudes start talking to Jackie.

But then also, like, throughout the movie, you can, you get a sense for how much Jackie's presence in Lou's life has changed her, like, Lou has been this sort of, like, futureless shell of a human being up until that point, like, she's never left the town, she hates that JJ beats up her sister, but she's never actually really done anything about it, she's never gone against her dad, like, She actually, like, still works at his gym.

[00:37:16] **Audrey:** I mean, she did stop murdering for him,

[00:37:18] **Laurel:** She did stop murdering, yes.

[00:37:20] **Audrey:** and everything she tries, every time she tries to do something to stop JJ, he takes it out on her by beating...

[00:37:27] **Laurel:** ...beating up her sister. Yeah, but she, so she's like, she's kind of in this, like, in this...

[00:37:32] **Audrey:** She's trapped.

[00:37:32] **Laurel:** ...in this very like trapped situation. Yeah. Like she, but she also like, she doesn't really like tell Daisy, like, no fuck off. Like, I'm not interested. She can't stop smoking. Like there these things.

[00:37:43] **Audrey:** Right, right.

[00:37:44] **Laurel:** And then Jackie comes in who has like hitchhiked her way across state, you know, to get to this thing. She's like, she doesn't have a home, but she's like

training and she's like, you know, a bodybuilder. And so they're like very different people and they bring out different things in each other. And it's. So chaotic, but it's so, so, so sweet.

[00:38:02] **Audrey:** She literally solves Lou's problem by murder.

[00:38:06] **Laurel:** Right. Through murder. Yeah. And then, okay. So the last thing I'll say is that like, you know, the two last things is the sex is great, we've talked about it, but then also they drive out to the desert, into the sunrise, in a truck with a cat. Like I couldn't, there's nothing more that I could, could ask for.

[00:38:21] **Audrey:** ...and a semi alive person in the back of the truck. But yeah, the cat. It's really actually really sweet the way that they end the film. But it's not like clean, right? Like it's not just like, oh, here we go into the sunset. It's like, it's kind of beautiful. Like the lighting is beautiful, the, the cat, the whole scene. And then you see the like, you know, Daisy in the back kind of like rattling around a little bit. And I don't know, it's kind of perfect.

[00:38:45] **Laurel:** It's, it's, it is perfect. It's, yeah.

[00:38:48] **Audrey:** We have to wrap up and so I won't get into this so we can save it for another episode, but after I saw this at Sundance, uh, I was staying with a bunch of guys, male, uh, film reviewers in this condo and I had to explain what things like U-hauling were. So anyway, just end on that.

[00:39:09] **Laurel:** Great. Alright. Thanks a lot for joining us today, everybody. What did you think of? *Love Lies Bleeding*. Tell us about it on Instagram

@sapphicCultureClub. Or you can email us about it at SapphicCultureClub@gmail.com.

[00:39:25] **Audrey:** But don't tell us, unless you loved it.

[00:39:26] **Laurel:** Oh, yeah, actually.

[00:39:29] **Audrey:** No, no, we're super open minded.

[00:39:31] **Laurel:** Absolutely not. No, I don't want to hear it.

[00:39:36] **Audrey:** Lastly, you'll find links to things...did we...are we linking things? No. Lastly, if we mention things, you'll find links to them, uh, as well as the episode transcript, definitely the episode transcript, in the episode description, wherever you're listening to this podcast. Thanks for joining us, uh, now we're going to go off and get stretched out. Byeee!

Laurel: Oh my god!!

Warbly robot sing-song: LESBIAN CHAOS

[cute outro sting]