

Babette ([00:00](#)):

Hey, Ally.

Ally ([00:02](#)):

Hey, Babette.

Babette ([00:02](#)):

How are you doing? How was your weekend?

Ally ([00:09](#)):

Oh.

Babette ([00:11](#)):

Oh God.

Ally ([00:12](#)):

Well, picture this. Okay, I went to a steakhouse for a friend's birthday. That was his choice, not mine. And I'm in the bathroom at his steakhouse, which I guess honestly, the vibes were there to feel hate crimed. But no, I went in, there was only a men's and a women's bathroom. So I went into the women's, obviously 'cause the men's is disgusting, and I'm in the stall and all the women in the bathroom have this all-hands meeting.

([00:48](#)):

It just took one woman to be like, am I in the men's room? And then everybody joined in and was like, yeah, wait, are we in the men's room? Do you think this is the men's room? All talking about because they saw me go in there and I came out, and I would just say already this story sucks, but it's not that crazy. But for me, the craziest part was coming out and most of the women were like butch lesbians.

Babette ([01:14](#)):

No.

Ally ([01:14](#)):

Yes. There was one cis woman who I think really kicked off the party, but yeah, all of these crew cut North Hollywood, butch lesbians getting off work at the Paramount lot are joining in this chorus of could this be the men's room? Oh my gosh. And I just came out and was like, I'm trans, I'm non-binary, don't worry, I was born a woman and left. I wanted to light my birth certificate on fire and throw it behind me at them.

Babette ([01:43](#)):

That's crazy.

Ally ([01:45](#)):

I know.

Babette ([01:47](#)):

It really be your own people. So Ally, it feels like we should probably talk about why we decided to make this podcast.

Ally ([01:59](#)):

Yeah, let's go back to the beginning. A few years ago as I was really digging into my own transition journey, I wanted to interview other trans people and queer people, gender variant folks to learn from their experiences as I reflected on my own. So I decided to take a road trip and talk to people around the country.

Speaker 3 ([02:22](#)):

I think a successful coming out is, did you say everything you wanted to say?

Speaker 4 ([02:26](#)):

So I never came out to my dad. I never had the conversation, hey dad, I'm a faggot.

Speaker 5 ([02:30](#)):

I felt aware of my sexuality at a younger age.

Speaker 6 ([02:34](#)):

And he was like, well, it's just a phase.

Speaker 7 ([02:36](#)):

There were several instances where I did end up meeting people in the church who were also closeted as well.

Speaker 8 ([02:42](#)):

So much things within the relationship that I grew up with such heteronormative views on love.

Speaker 6 ([02:47](#)):

It was harder to say lesbian than it was to say gay. So when I came out, I would say I'm gay.

Speaker 9 ([02:52](#)):

Got surgery three weeks ago. It was a decision I fought myself with for years.

Speaker 16 ([02:57](#)):

I'm happy with my presentation, and it took me a very long time to realize that.

Speaker 10 ([03:03](#)):

Can people read me as non-binary? What do I need to do to prompt people to ask me for my pronouns?

Speaker 11 ([03:10](#)):

I started to feel really confident about exploring gender queerness as much as I was my gender sexuality.

Ally ([03:20](#)):

So that podcast has evolved into something a little bit different, and you'll be hearing from all those amazing folks that I spoke to on my trip in later episodes. But through that project I met you, Babette, through a mutual radio friend and we decided to work together.

Babette ([03:35](#)):

Yes. And as we worked on this podcast we were listening back to all of this amazing tape from your road trip, we realized that one of the folks we interviewed was also a podcast producer. Here's a really sweet clip of Ally and our now producer, Ire.

Ally ([03:50](#)):

So you started T, what is that like? You said you're doing low dose.

Ira ([03:54](#)):

Low dose, yes.

Ally ([03:55](#)):

Tell me everything.

Ira ([03:56](#)):

The gel version. I don't have to mess with needles.

Ally ([03:59](#)):

Incredible.

Ira ([03:59](#)):

It's great. Yeah, so I've been on it for two months and I'm on the second to lowest dose and it's been fucking awesome so far. Yeah, I was nervous about starting it. I was like, what if this isn't the right thing? And then as soon as I started, I was like, yeah, this is it. Great.

Ally ([04:14](#)):

And can you feel, I mean, what does it feel like?

Ira ([04:17](#)):

I can't tell you really.

Ally ([04:18](#)):

That's an impossible question, but like-

Babette ([04:22](#)):

Damn.

Ally ([04:23](#)):

Oh my God.

Babette ([04:23](#)):

Y'all sounded hell of different. Can we break the fourth wall for a second?

Ally ([04:29](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

Babette ([04:30](#)):

You guys sound like babies.

Ally ([04:30](#)):

I know, dude.

Babette ([04:34](#)):

You're just like little excited little trans babies. I just want to scoop you up and pin you on my carabiner.

Ally ([04:43](#)):

We sound...

Babette ([04:44](#)):

I think it's the T, but I think it's also, it was a long time ago. It's a long time ago.

Ally ([04:48](#)):

Yeah, but that sounds like 14 years ago.

Babette ([04:51](#)):

It really does.

Ally ([04:52](#)):

If you told me that we were on the high school newspaper together and that was us talking to each other, I would believe you.

Babette ([04:59](#)):

Oh my God.

Ira ([05:01](#)):

I can see my cheeks going red listening to that.

Ally ([05:03](#)):

Yeah, seriously. That is one of the purest things I've ever heard, Ireland. Okay. So as you can hear, Ire and I were clearly so excited to talk about trans-ness, specifically our trans masculinity. And that sparked a new idea entirely, we wanted to make a podcast where we interview people and cover more specifically gender-related topics.

Babette ([05:28](#)):

So this podcast has been a long time coming, literally three years in the making, and it's finally ready to transition from the files. I'm going to stop. Let's do that again. And it's finally ready to transition from files on Dropbox to your podcast feed and we are so excited to share it with you.

Ally ([05:50](#)):

Without further ado, enjoy the first episode.

Speaker 13 ([05:58](#)):

Am I even queer?

Speaker 12 ([06:00](#)):

...'cause I think I want to take testosterone.

Speaker 15 ([06:01](#)):

I mean, I'm wearing men's underwear right now.

Speaker 17 ([06:03](#)):

Is that a boy? Is that a girl?

River ([06:04](#)):

Man, woman, cisgender, transgender. We're born into language.

Speaker 19 ([06:08](#)):

Butch, femme, T-girl.

Speaker 20 ([06:09](#)):

Decolonized.

Speaker 21 ([06:10](#)):

Queer, trans, BIPOC.

Speaker 14 ([06:10](#)):

Neurodivergent.

River ([06:11](#)):

Cisgender, hetero, patriarchal, capitalist, girl boss.

Speaker 24 ([06:16](#)):

Queer, femme, lipstick every day.

Ally ([06:17](#)):

Tea for Two fag-boy relationship.

Speaker 26 ([06:20](#)):

Butch.

Speaker 27 ([06:21](#)):

Boyish and spritely.

Speaker 25 ([06:22](#)):

The softer more [inaudible 00:06:25].

Speaker 29 ([06:24](#)):

Oh, but you're so feminine. You're so feminine.

Speaker 30 ([06:26](#)):

Attraction to a hot T boy.

River ([06:28](#)):

I used sexuality to try to understand my gender.

Babette ([06:32](#)):

What does it look like for non-binary people to transition?

Speaker 33 ([06:36](#)):

I was a boy. If I was looking down at the memory, I was a boy.

Speaker 34 ([06:39](#)):

It's really difficult to look at gender identity head on.

Speaker 35 ([06:44](#)):

Wade, I think I'm trans.

Babette ([06:51](#)):

Welcome to the podcast. I'm Babette Thomas. I'm an artist, radio producer and researcher, and I'm currently trying to get my degree in dumb bitch studies at Yale University.

Ally ([07:01](#)):

And I'm Ally Beardsley. I am a comedian and I'm currently taking carpentry classes and testosterone. Babette, what is new in your world?

Babette ([07:15](#)):

Listen, so as you know, I've been using they, them pronouns for a few years now and I've been in this place of trying to figure out what's next. And recently I've just started testosterone, which has been a whole thing, a whole spiral if you will.

Ally ([07:36](#)):

Okay. What's it like?

Babette ([07:37](#)):

Well, okay, so I started with the needles. I started with the intramuscular injections, as they call it on the streets.

Ally ([07:47](#)):

Oh, the two-inch needle?

Babette ([07:50](#)):

The two-inch needle that you have to fucking puncture into your leg. And it's like, do I have to have a medical degree to be fucking doing this casually? But anyways, I have a really bad feared needles. I have a really bad feared needles ever since I was a kid. Once a doctor had to stop seeing me because I kicked him in the groin when he was trying to give me a shot when I was like six years old.

Ally ([08:13](#)):

That's so weird. Honestly, that's weird of him. He's like, oh, you kicked me, I can't see this child anymore. What's up with him?

Babette ([08:22](#)):

Well, I think I kicked him the balls really hard. I think I kicked him really hard.

Ally ([08:26](#)):

I'm going to call that an occupational hazard and he's still being a little baby.

Babette ([08:31](#)):

Exactly. No, but it's so funny that that was my experience and I really thought I could do injections where you have to, I definitely could do injections if someone else was doing it, but I cannot inject myself. It was so hard.

Ally ([08:43](#)):

I will say sub-Q is so different and I definitely couldn't do the bigger-

Babette ([08:47](#)):

What's sub-Q?

Ally ([08:47](#)):

It's this way smaller needle and you put it in at an angle so you just gather up skin on your stomach. And as you're pinching, it becomes numb and then you put this really tiny needle in and you insert it and it goes right under the skin in pools.

Babette ([09:02](#)):

I feel like that was not presented to me as an option.

Ally ([09:05](#)):

I know, I know.

Babette ([09:05](#)):

I was only offered the two-inch needle that you have to jam it to your leg. But anyway, I digress. So I started with those injections, it really wasn't working for me. I had a 30-minute panic attack every time I was doing it. So recently I've been doing T gel, which has been really great. I mean, it's all low dose, it's very chill. And so that's when feeling really good, but I'm also in this very weird place of being like, oh my God, is my hot dyke era over now that I'm starting T, is it done? But then I realized it's just beginning and it's just going to look different for me. And so I feel like-

Ally ([09:47](#)):

Oh my God.

Babette ([09:49](#)):

...I've been in a spiral, but I'm coming out of it a little bit is how I would describe where I'm at right now.

Ally ([09:54](#)):

Really? I love that. I do feel like there are some things you think you're going to have to give up, like labels that you actually really identify with and you're like, well, this is over for me. And then you're like, no bitch, none of this is linear. We're all just figuring it out. I feel like I talk about this so much with friends, but people are always like, oh my God, I'm spiraling right now. But spiral can go up and down. I'm obsessed with that idea. You can have an upward spiral, that's gorgeous. And my therapist was talking to me about this and it's like you keep repeating patterns and that's the spiral, but you're one rung up and you have a little bit of perspective. And that's honestly how I feel about gender. I am repeating the same things and it does feel very repetitive or like nothing has fucking changed and then I'm like, wait, no, actually, I have a little bit more perspective on this.

Babette ([10:50](#)):

Okay. I totally feel that because I feel like so much of my gender identity is about feeling like I'm coming to the same place again and again and again almost since I was a kid. So it's like, okay, tomboy becomes cis lesbian becomes non-binary dyke. And it's just like, okay, these are all iterations of the same thing, but you're just collecting more knowledge about yourself and I think more certainty in yourself as you go along.

Ally ([11:18](#)):

Yes.

Babette ([11:19](#)):

I mean, this is a tiny bit of a tangent, but there's this artist collective that I'm very interested in, they're called Black Quantum Futurism, and their whole thing is proving that Afro-indigenous notions of time are actually more true to quantum principles of physics. And they just have a residency at CERN in Switzerland, which is this huge scientific research center. And so I'm very into the idea, I'm very interested in time as a spiral, which I think is the same thing as what you're saying, where it's like you're coming back into these things, but just with different lessons and different rungs of a tree. So I think, yeah, I'm like, maybe this is a podcast about non-linear time.

Ally ([11:56](#)):

Oh my God.

Babette ([11:59](#)):

'Cause I'm obsessed with that. I'm very into that.

Ally ([12:00](#)):

Me too.

Babette ([12:00](#)):

Yeah. I love that though, I love the spiral. I love that metaphor.

Ally ([12:04](#)):

Yeah. I do think in a lot of ways gender expression is a full balancing act. You're holding all these truths about yourself and you're really trying to make them work, make them work with the world around you. What makes you feel good. I was thinking about all of that and I was Googling what's responsible for balance, the inner ear. Have you ever looked up a photo of the inner ear? There's a God damn spiral. It's literally a spiral. The cochlea.

Babette ([12:38](#)):

This just becomes a conspiracy podcast. We're like, spirals are everywhere.

Ally ([12:40](#)):

And if you reverse the numbers two, three, one, one then you will get the Latin word for spiral. So yeah, there's our conspiracy tangent on spirals being the ultimate symbol of queer gender expression.

Babette ([12:55](#)):

Yeah, seriously. Gender spiral, is that the name of the show?

Ally ([12:58](#)):

Oh my God, yes.

Babette ([13:01](#)):

Did we just figure it out?

([13:06](#)):

So Ally, you and I are both coming from perspectives of folks who were assigned female at birth, right? And so for this first episode, it felt like it only made sense to talk to our trans masculine friends about their conceptions of gender and how they came to identify in the ways that they do.

Jacke ([13:31](#)):

I feel like masculinity for me has an inherent softness and tenderness to it. It feels very youthful. I feel like ever since I've come out, I've tapped more into a childlike part of myself that feels very tender and something to protect. It just feels so boyish. There's a very charming nature about someone who's trans masculine and how they even speak about being trans masculine, it's such a tender experience to transition into that. And yeah, I think the softness, it reminds me of a child, very playful, very bright and vibrant and lively.

Babette ([14:18](#)):

That's Jacke. He uses he and xe pronouns. He's a dear friend of the show, but this conversation with him was actually the first time that Ally and I met xem. Xe're such an incredible storyteller and xe took us through this amazing journey from black girlhood to mental health and feeling like quote-unquote too much emotionally as a trans mass person. It makes so much sense that he's such an amazing and incredible storyteller because he's an artist, writer, actor, and musician. We thought our conversation with xem would actually be the perfect interview to kick off the show, so let's get into it.

([14:53](#)):

Thinking about how other people view your masculinity, what are some of the ways that you like to express your masculinity that feel good to you?

Jacke ([15:01](#)):

I feel like on a surface level, my baseball cap is an extension of my head at this point. And when I was coming out in college, it was something that made me feel really valid in who I was. It was a very small thing that I could just throw on and take away, what I felt, the feminization of doing my hair every day. It just felt so feminine and dysphoric to be sitting there, before I cut my hair off, that I had to spend so much time doing it every day. So when I could just throw on a cap, it was just so liberating to feel like a skater boy or something like that and play that role. I studied theater, so I love playing roles, but I love inhabiting a different character, a different person, and then that character just became who I was. It's not a character anymore, but I feel like other ways I express masculinity is through, I guess, the way I love, I feel. The relationships I have in my life, that side of me feels masculine.

Ally ([16:04](#)):

You said something that I thought was really interesting and you said about being an actor and you were like, I was playing a character and it's not a character anymore, and I'm obsessed with that thought. And I feel like even if you're not an actor, what were some ways that you were able to try something new on in order to find out what was really you? Was there any fantasy that you participated in or what was that like for you?

Jacke ([16:33](#)):

When I was transitioning in college, I wanted to fulfill this fantasy of boy next door kind of thing. I wanted so bad to be that guy. I wanted to fill that role, that fantasy. It was a brief one because that one I felt was more surface level in regards to discovering my gender identity and it shifted from wanting to be boy next door to just wanting to be a more just laid back version of myself. I don't know, I've had this qualm about being told I can be difficult emotionally. I feel like a lot of people when I was younger, I was super sensitive, I would cry a lot and things like that. And I was very just emotionally expressive and I think a lot of people took that to mean that I was weak and overly dramatic. And a lot of people think that little girls are overly dramatic and they're emotional and-

Babette ([17:25](#)):

Little black girls though, specifically where it's criminalized.

Jacke ([17:30](#)):

Right, exactly. And it's made more aggressive than it actually is. And anger is something that I couldn't express or figure out how to express for the longest period of time, many years. My blackness has always come first in my life and fussing that lately with my masculinity has been interesting because I personally am trying to hold on to this softness, this tender part of myself, but there's a pressure in the back of my head of, well, what does it mean to be a black guy walking down the street? It's like that's the role I'm assuming now. People engage with me differently now in good ways that are cool and also ways that make me feel like I need to be tougher than I actually am or need to be harder or need to be more edgy or more assertive or aggressive in the way I engage with others.

([18:22](#)):

And I never do that behavior, but it is always lingering in my brain. What is the ideal thing and am I even striving toward it? Probably not. I'm still trying to navigate anger because there's such a pressure to stifle it when you're a little black girl growing up. It was so frustrating to me because I wanted to just be youthful and have fun sometimes, and it draws me back to what I was saying earlier about trans masculinity being so charming and boyish and how it feels. I'm finally accessing a child likeness that I wasn't allowed to really when I was growing up. I had to grow up fast, I had to figure things out about my mental health early. I was young and I really didn't understand it when it was told to me. I just had to assume a more mature role and that's just a pressure that's put on little black girls anyway.

Babette ([19:16](#)):

Totally.

Jacke ([19:18](#)):

They have to be little women before they're ready. So that definitely feels like something I'm currently fighting against with my expression as I'm like, I'm allowed to be an adult. I'm 25, I'm an adult, but I'm also, there's still a kid in there and there always will be. I am very proud to show the kid off sometimes. I just want to be goofy and have fun, I just want to be a little mischievous little guy. I don't know.

Babette ([19:48](#)):

I'm just a little guy.

Jacke ([19:55](#)):

Yeah, a little guy. And I so desperately want it to be that simple.

Babette ([20:04](#)):

That interview was so powerful to me for so many reasons. I think what Jacke said about black girls never really having the chance to really be youthful, to really be girls, it really resonated for me. I think for me growing up as a black girl in the early 2000s, it led to this weird unsettling in my gender. I never really got to be a girl, so what am I now? I've always been in this state of non-binary-ness and what does that mean for me and other people who also grew up as black girls?

Ally ([20:39](#)):

Okay, so this idea of I didn't get to be a girl, that was taken from me. What does that feel like for you now? Are there girlish quote-unquote things that you're really attracted to that you love?

Babette ([20:56](#)):

Yeah. I think the thing that I say is that I think I grew up as a girl who's a boy who's a girl, which doesn't make sense. That's too many, that just doesn't make sense.

Ally ([21:07](#)):

No, it actually does and it was deep. Yeah.

Babette ([21:11](#)):

Yeah. It's just this idea where it's like, I never really got to be a girl. There's an un-gendering that happens in black girlhood and black womanhood, so it's like, okay, I was a boy, but I also had this mom that was dressing me in church clothes to go to school every day. So I was definitely a girl and I think now when I present more femme, it's just like, this is my bread and butter. It's because femme dressing and dressing in that way I think is just such a big deal in my family and it's not something I want to completely reject.

Ally ([21:44](#)):

Totally.

Babette ([21:45](#)):

I think being stylish and being femme is very important. I guess there's parts of girlhood that I don't want to throw away.

Ally ([21:51](#)):

Yeah. I could totally see the feeling of being like, don't take this femme part away from me. That is genuine and I'm entitled to that, yeah. So I feel like a theme has emerged for us, Babette, where we're really looking at the inner child and reflecting, I don't know, just on the baggage that us as trans folks have absorbed from such a binary upbringing.

([22:26](#)):

I feel like we're bros. We're T bros.

River ([22:30](#)):

That's right. T bros. Pre-T bros.

Ally ([22:34](#)):

Exactly, exactly. The bond just gets a little bit stronger.

River ([22:38](#)):

That's right.

Ally ([22:38](#)):

But yeah, I feel like when you transition around the same time as someone, it's always like, oh, what's that person up to? Okay, chill.

River ([22:48](#)):

It's like you're in the same high school class or something.

Ally ([22:50](#)):

Yeah, exactly.

([22:53](#)):

So this is my friend, River Butcher. He's a standup comedian, an actor, and a writer who identifies as a non-binary trans guy. I was really excited to talk to River because I feel like there are, because of Instagram, just periphery people that really embolden you. I don't know if you've ever had this, but you're just like, whoa. They really took that step? Okay.

Babette ([23:16](#)):

Totally.

Ally ([23:16](#)):

You don't really know why you find it so interesting, but you're like, oh, I'm just so interested.

Babette ([23:21](#)):

Oh, 'cause it's what you want to be. It's what you want. We know why.

Ally ([23:25](#)):

Oh, totally. Yeah. It's just fun, solidarity, and it just makes you feel like you can do something else. Possibility model, I would call it.

Babette ([23:36](#)):

Totally.

Ally ([23:38](#)):

What does masculinity look like in your body? What do you like about that? What do you resist?

River ([23:47](#)):

It's interesting because masculinity was a thing that presented itself in my body and my existence really early on from the beginning. I was born in 1982, so in 1986 I was four and I was just doing the things that I naturally wanted to do which are things that we would typically code masculine like being outside, running around, playing sports. But at the same time, it's also just the way that I moved in the world and the space that I took up. It's all coded masculine. I think in most cases it was people accepting it for the best part, which is great. Thank God. I'm not shitting on that, but nobody was like, this is awesome about you. I mean, people were positive about me in general, but it was never like, it's okay. I love that about you that you play sports, it's really cool. It was always this thing that was like, well, we'll see what happens.

Ally ([24:49](#)):

Yes. Oh my God.

River ([24:50](#)):

We'll wait it out and we'll see, it'll probably change. And it was not a direct message, but it was definitely a message I was getting. It wasn't a direct message from the people that accepted me, but I did get a direct message from the people who did not. There was a lot of don't do that, don't act like that, girls don't act like that. And so then I'd be like, well, okay. I mean, you're the one telling me I'm a girl, I don't even really know what that is 'cause I'm four years old and you're telling me that's what I am. But then the things I do are in conflict with the thing you called me, so maybe I'm not the thing you're calling me. Maybe I'm this thing you call a boy, maybe that's more, and then they're like, no, no, no, absolutely not. Well, you're not that because we have paperwork that says you're not.

([25:30](#)):

Every moment as a child, every moment that I reached towards something coded female or feminine, music, colors, clothing, television show, toys, activity, literally anything that could be coded in the pink aisle, I got some feedback from somebody that was, oh, thank God. Oh, finally. And I was like, no, absolutely not.

Ally ([25:59](#)):

Yes.

River ([26:00](#)):

And so I just rejected it wholeheartedly. I was like, keep it away. Keep it away as far as possible. The edge of that then became internalized misogyny, the borderline of that is that. And so then once I was able to scrape that away and accept my masculinity and present that to the world and have it be accepted in a loving and positive way, now I can actually have these feminine things around me and listen to music that I've always loved, but actually allow it in. I have listened to Jagged Little Pill more than I ever have in my entire life and I loved it, it's a great fucking record. It's brilliant. It's incredible.

Ally ([26:42](#)):

Yes. Alanis shout out.

River ([26:44](#)):

But as a four-year-old child, people assume you don't know what you're talking about. In my where I am now, I'm just like, oh, kids already know. And it's not even that, my personal opinion is I was just born the way that I am. I wasn't like being trans is a language that we've made up to describe something that exists as it is. I wasn't born one way and I needed to change to something else. I was born a way, society told me that wasn't okay and then in adulthood, I had to find something to get me back to where I started, which is my personal experience of being trans, and it is not universal. Everybody gets to have their own experience, but I just think that kids are, yes, you're born trans because we're born into a world that has that language of man, woman, cisgender, transgender. We're born into language. I was created to be me, period.

([27:43](#)):

So anyway, so this is all long-winded way of saying it has taken a long time for me to accept my own masculinity because it has been such a problem for so long moving through the world. It's hard sometimes because, at least for me and I would assume this for you too, you come from a culture and a genre of people who are pretty anti-man. Anti-man, not anti-masculinity, but once you pick the man part, it can be a little dicey.

Ally ([28:18](#)):

Yeah, definitely.

River ([28:20](#)):

I think that as a trans mask person, that is also something that kept me from accepting my masculinity.

Ally ([28:27](#)):

Feminism really helps, I think, when you're a young queer person and you figured out the sexuality part, but not the gender part and you're like, oh, you've been telling me I'm a woman, but I can be a different kind of woman.

River ([28:41](#)):

But it always has to be woman, which is interesting because that is actually a patriarchal experience of feminism, that it has to be one way or it's wrong. And of course these things infect each other, it's not intersectional feminism for sure, it's very cisgender, hetero, patriarchal capitalist feminism of girl boss or whatever-

Ally ([29:00](#)):
Perfectionism.

River ([29:01](#)):
Exactly, right. Yeah.

Ally ([29:02](#)):
Girl boss.

River ([29:03](#)):
It's interesting you mentioned I got the sexuality thing figured out, now I got to understand the gender. I would say just to anybody that's listening that thinks they feel that way but there's something that's not right. I used sexuality to try to understand my gender, which worked for a while, but it doesn't work because it actually, to me at least, I don't believe in hierarchy, but there's experience, like experiential things where I realized, oh, there was a time where I sort of retrofitted.

([29:34](#)):
I dated men in my life. I haven't recently, but I would. But I've opened my mind to my heart a lot more because I retrofitted these relationships and I've been able to look back and go like, oh, the discomfort I was feeling wasn't because I was monosexual. It was because I was attracted to this person as a man. I was attracted to him and as best we could, I think that was present. It was definitely a queer relationship 'cause I was in it. But it's given me so much relief and understanding to look back at it that way and realize, oh, when these physical things weren't working, sometimes it's just 'cause it's not working, but the internal, oh, but this isn't the way that I want to relate to you physically or emotionally or whatever. And so that's interesting too to realize, oh, I got to double back on this other thing and look back at this and understand it in a different way now that I'm accepting of all these things in myself.

Ally ([30:46](#)):
That is 100% how I feel as well. I think I would seek out relationships with women because that made me feel like a man in this very, and still using a straight framework and to interact with men, I had to become a woman 'cause of course. And now that I'm finally transcended that in my mind, I can feel attracted to multiple people if they're seeing me for who I am. That is, I would say, maybe 100% of the people we've talked to so far for this podcast are very Tea for Two fagboy relationship-forward.

River ([31:23](#)):
Yeah. I mean, it's interesting. It's funny 'cause my relationship, and I cherish it so I'm not going to get into it too much 'cause it's for me and for us, but she is also non-binary, she's a she, they. It's just interesting because it's a lot less femme and mass, it's I guess Tea for Two in a way 'cause I'm not interested in rigid concrete boxes. I fill out enough paperwork in my life that I don't need to have it in my home life. I tell the government specifics is way too much to need to do it in my own life, but that I guess is what's so cool about it is that it's not about playing roles, these assigned roles. Obviously, if you want to play roles for fun, do that, but these outside-in things that you have to maintain this weird balance. Like the scales have to always be in balance or something, it's very strange, but I think it's super cool-

Ally ([32:18](#)):

So much work. It just feels effortless to let all of that fall away and be like, what is here naturally? And the answer is something way more nuanced and way more queer actually.

River ([32:29](#)):

That's right. And I feel like it's happening, but I want this for straight people, heterosexual people.

Ally ([32:36](#)):

Yes, totally.

River ([32:37](#)):

This genders heterosexual people and I feel as though it is happening. It's happening because you have the Tom Holland and Zendaya photos where you're just like, look, there it is. This is it. It's there. That to me is a queered straight relationship for sure. I don't know. And it has nothing to do with what they do to each other in the bedroom, I don't care about that, but you see those two people and that is a queered relationship. I don't know if this has been your experience, but all of this to me, having an open mind of what somebody's bringing and a willingness to view people as queer as opposed to straight until proven otherwise is way more divine feminine. It's way more open-minded, it's way more open to me than you've got to prove your gayness or whatever. You've got to prove that you've been through the shit or whatever because-

Ally ([33:31](#)):

Much softer, much more caring.

River ([33:34](#)):

Yeah, more feminist. 'Cause if we actually have more numbers on our side, isn't that a good thing if we're actually seeing each other?

Ally ([33:41](#)):

I'm really interested in this idea of a patriarchal experience of feminism. It's true that a lot of trans masc folks come up in feminist or lesbian spaces and they get either spoken or just unspoken pushback for quote-unquote becoming a man when the whole idea of feminism is this freedom from gender roles or equity for everyone regardless of gender.

Babette ([34:17](#)):

Listen, the lesbian to T-guy pipeline is very real. It is alive and well. The lesbian to T-guy express.

Ally ([34:28](#)):

Yes. Wait, Babette, when did your perception of gender change or what did it look like? How did that manifest for you?

Babette ([34:36](#)):

If I go back and think to my childhood, it's constantly shifting, constantly moving, my gender and my masculinity never necessarily just being one thing. I think a good example of this is when I was in second grade, I only hung out with girls, I was really obsessed with fairies, I was so into those Egyptology, Wizard-ology, all those books, that was my Bible. I loved that shit so hard to the point where I actually told my mom, I'm not your kid, I belong to the fairies in the woods. Me and this girl we were like, we are fairies. Just really embodying that, really feeling very feminine, my mom would always dress me in these dresses.

(35:18):

But then third through fifth grade, there was just such a shift where I refused to wear dresses anymore. I only wore, what the fuck is that T-shirt that's like come to the dark side, I have cookies. Like that little Kremlin, those T-shirts. I had those T-shirts and I would only wear that and baggy jeans and play touch football with only boys. And so I feel like there is this constant shifting, whether it's every day or maybe every year, and of course then when you go into middle school, I feel like there are these pressures to be a lot more feminine 'cause there are boys and everyone's going through puberty. So I would say for me, masculinity and gender, in general, has just never felt like a very stagnant thing. I feel like it's always changing for me.

Ally (36:06):

Our first episode is done.

Babette (36:11):

Yes.

Ally (36:12):

We all of a sudden turn hard into yes boots queen.

Babette (36:18):

Yes, exactly.

Ally (36:18):

Burn the house down.

Babette (36:26):

Burn the house down, slay. I love this title that we landed on too, Gender Spiral. I can't wait to keep gender-spiraling with you. It's so fun.

Ally (36:35):

Yeah. And it's a good thing.

Babette (36:36):

Right, exactly.

Ally (36:38):

I'm so excited to talk to more people about their experiences with gender all across the gender identity spectrum.

Babette ([36:44](#)):

Totally. And everyone's experience is truly so unique and different and that's the beauty of it all and I'm so excited to capture that beauty on this show.

Ally ([37:01](#)):

Welcome to the Credits. Gender Spiral is an original podcast from Audiation. This episode was mixed by Matt Noble. Music is composed by Chanell Crichlow. Art is by Joey Han and graphics by Honey Hodges. The executive producers are Ireland Meacham, myself, Ally Beardsley, and co-host Babette Thomas, as well as Sandy Smallens.

Babette ([37:21](#)):

Huge thank you to our very first guests, Jacke Colquitt and River Butcher. Links to find them online are in our show notes.

Ally ([37:29](#)):

And thank you so much to everyone whose voice we heard from my long road trip in 2020. You will be hearing more from each of those people.

Babette ([37:39](#)):

And if you like the show, please head over to patreon.com/genderspiralpodcast to support us and get access to all of the fun stuff like our Discord server, bonus content, and complimentary merch. You might even find Ally's personal OnlyFans?

Ally ([37:56](#)):

Listen. That's completely a joke, you will just get a photo of my dog's paws. You can also check us out at genderspiralpod.com where you'll find a link to leave us a voicemail and ask us questions. Tell us who you want to hear from and what you want to hear about on the show. And follow us on Instagram, it's @genderspiral. Subscribe wherever you get your podcast and stay tuned. We're releasing a brand new episode every single week this summer.

Babette ([38:24](#)):

Tune in next week and come-

Ally ([38:26](#)):

Come spiral.

Babette ([38:29](#)):

Oh, oh, oh. Okay. Let's try that again. Let's try that again. Okay. Okay. Tune in next week and-

Ally ([38:36](#)):

Come spiral with us.

Babette ([38:41](#)):

Okay, one more time. Okay. Tune in next week and-

Ally ([38:46](#)):

Come spiral with us.

Babette ([38:47](#)):

...come spiral. I'm going to throw you into a ditch. Can you please?