

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

I was sad, so I got a lot of groceries today and that made me feel better. I like to get crab legs from Costco and just sit and eat them. And they're like \$10 for three giant claws.

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

Oh my God. Are we talking like a melted butter kind of situation?

Babette ([00:15](#)):

Yes.

Ally ([00:15](#)):

I've never lived on the East Coast.

Babette ([00:17](#)):

Yes. Well, it was so funny, 'cause my roommate was like, "Grad students are literally struggling, bringing Tupperware to events and you're eating crab legs and La Croix." And I'm just like, "Listen, the crab legs are only \$10 at Costco." And they're so delightful, and so that felt like a really nice way to nourish myself today. I was sad and then I had the crab legs and then I was no longer sad, so that was really good.

Ally ([00:40](#)):

I love that. Crab leg medicine.

Babette ([00:42](#)):

Yes. No...

Ally ([00:43](#)):

Medicinal crab legs.

Babette ([00:49](#)):

My friend was making fun of me 'cause at the smallest inconvenience, I just desperately want to see food boil. Like anything goes wrong, and I'm just like, I just want crab legs and potatoes right now.

Ally ([00:58](#)):

This finger hovering over this glowing red button of-

Babette ([01:06](#)):

Exactly.

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

... food boil.

Babette ([01:08](#)):

Yes.

Ally ([01:09](#)):

I had a cooking day, 'cause I've been so busy. I went to Maine for this performance school, which was really beautiful. Then I came back and I'm doing full-time school, full-time work, so I have 12 hour shoot days where I wake up at 5:30 in the morning to go to school first.

Babette ([01:27](#)):

Oh my God.

Ally ([01:27](#)):

Yeah, I'm not doing okay. So I also had-

Babette ([01:30](#)):

Yeah, let's talk about it.

Ally ([01:32](#)):

... a cooking day. But I do think for me also, I think groceries and cooking food for myself is a really gorgeous reset. I made a stew and then I made an apple and blue cheese walnut salad.

Babette ([01:48](#)):

What kind of stew?

Ally ([01:50](#)):

It's Kitchari. It's like Indian moong dal and rice. Lot of turmeric. Gorgeous. Absolutely gorgeous stew.

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

Oh, I make something... Is it almost like a dal kind of?

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

Yes.

Babette ([02:03](#)):

Or is it a little different? Okay. I make something similar with red lentils and it's so good.

Ally ([02:06](#)):

Ooh. Yum.

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

Wow. Okay. I feel like we're learning things about each other, which is like we're both doing poorly. Which is so weird, 'cause we just hop on this podcast, it's like, how are you doing? We're both doing poorly and the way we remedy that is through food. I immediately was like, I need to go get crab legs

from Costco because I'm doing poorly right now. So I just love treating myself like a little baby. I think that's what feels important. It's like I need to be fed. I need to be burped. I need to do these things to myself, and I need to validate myself in the way that my parents never would. These are the things that I have to do for myself-

Ally ([02:42](#)):

This is the re-parenting.

Babette ([02:42](#)):

... when I'm feeling sad. Exactly.

Ally ([02:46](#)):

Oh my God. Totally.

Babette ([02:47](#)):

I mean, yeah, I don't know. It's getting colder here on the East Coast too, so it also felt like there's a real shift emotionally in the air too.

Ally ([02:47](#)):

Totally.

Babette ([02:55](#)):

It just feels like shit is going on and maybe it's for the best, but it's like, oh, I got to take care of myself. I got to-

Ally ([03:02](#)):

It's like head down and work mode.

Babette ([03:06](#)):

Yes.

Ally ([03:06](#)):

The fall is, it catches me by surprise every damn time, but I am just like, oh, everything's happening at once. So I feel like it'll be nice. I think we have a few more episodes left of this first season and then we're going to chill. Okay?

Babette ([03:22](#)):

Yeah. I'm going to hibernate.

Ally ([03:29](#)):

I say it to myself in the mirror, "We're going to relax. Okay?"

Babette ([03:29](#)):

Exactly. Exactly. Yeah. This is what we get for trying to fucking better ourselves through education. Why am I doing this? Why am I doing this? But here we are.

Speaker 4 ([03:41](#)):

Am I even queer?

Speaker 5 ([03:42](#)):

Because I think I want to take testosterone.

Speaker 7 ([03:44](#)):

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

Speaker 8 ([03:45](#)):

Is that a boy? Is that a girl?

Speaker 5 ([03:47](#)):

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

Speaker 4 ([03:51](#)):

Butch femme, T-girl.

Speaker 9 ([03:52](#)):

Decolonized.

Speaker 4 ([03:53](#)):

Queer, trans, BIPOC.

Speaker 5 ([03:54](#)):

Neuro divergence. Cisgender, hetero, patriarchal, capitalist girl boss.

Speaker 4 ([03:58](#)):

Queer femme. Lipstick every day.

Speaker 5 ([04:00](#)):

T for T, like [inaudible 00:04:02] relationship.

Speaker 7 ([04:03](#)):

Butch.

Speaker 10 ([04:03](#)):

Boyish and spritely.

Speaker 4 ([04:05](#)):

The softer, more fay. Oh, but you're so feminine. You're so feminine.

Speaker 5 ([04:09](#)):

Attraction to a hot T-boy. I used sexuality to try to understand my gender.

Speaker 4 ([04:14](#)):

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

Speaker 11 ([04:18](#)):

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

Speaker 4 ([04:21](#)):

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

Speaker 9 ([04:26](#)):

Wait, I think I'm trying to...

Ally ([04:38](#)):

Oh my god, Chris, how are you?

Chris ([04:39](#)):

I'm so good. I can't believe we're finally on a date after all these years.

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

I know. Thank you so much for meeting me at Buca di Beppo.

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

I'm so excited. I hope that's not offensive.

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

I think it will be in five years, but right now you're okay.

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

I can't really think about the future. I can't extrapolate.

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

So let's get down to business. Okay.

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

Yeah, I dare you.

Ally ([05:11](#)):

We usually ask people to introduce themselves like, how do you identify? What are you thinking through right now? In whatever way feels right to you.

Chris ([05:23](#)):

Okay. Wow. As something that you do five times a day suddenly feels so important when somebody asks you to do it on recording. Okay. My name is Chris Renfro. My pronouns are they/them and I identify as gay and queer.

Ally ([05:43](#)):

Ooh.

Chris ([05:44](#)):

Trans non-binary.

Ally ([05:45](#)):

Well, we are kind of in a funny situation with this project because we were like, oh, we want to explore gender, which means that we're going to be using words like masc and femme, but ultimately we don't believe in that binary. But I still think it's interesting to talk to people about what does the masc, femme, gender binary make you think of first, and what's your relationship to that?

Chris ([06:09](#)):

What does it make me think of first? I guess I really associate it with just how people choose to present themselves. It really does feel, and this is nothing new, just like a performance of some sort, and it's like how comfortable or how authentic does performing in a certain way feel to you? I don't know. I feel like fairly new to thinking about it to such a deep degree really. I pushed down and suppressed a lot of my feelings until we hit the pandem-y and then I was forced to sit in my bed and be like, ah, okay, so those thoughts about being trapped in your own body, we should confront those now that no one's looking, I guess.

Ally ([06:53](#)):

Totally.

Chris ([06:54](#)):

So during the pandemic, I went to my friend's fight in Kenzie and was like, "Hey, I think that I'm a trans woman. Can you help me out?" And they're like, "Yeah, absolutely." And started using she/her for me, which felt a certain way, and then I booked [inaudible 00:07:11]. Ooh, beep that out, beep that out if the strike is still happening. I booked something and I moved to New Orleans. And down there I started using, well, I started using they/them before that, but that's where I really started using it really freaking hard.

Ally ([07:28](#)):

Yes. And meeting new people, which is so helpful.

Chris ([07:31](#)):

And honestly it felt like gay summer camp. I was surrounded by so many queer people and they were all new to me, and so it feels easier to express or try something new in that environment. And I met my best friend down there, Fin Argus, also non-binary, and we sort of got to explore a lot of new things together. I know, a couple years since then, now I've landed on they/them for now. It doesn't feel a hundred percent right, but it feels the closest right now. What I'm still struggling with is that presentation of it all. I sometimes feel the need to present one way or another, which is sort of antithetical to the whole non-binary of it all, which is so confounding to me. But I guess 30 years of thinking one way is going to really tether you to an idea, isn't it?

Ally ([08:25](#)):

No, totally. What kind of moments for you make you feel like you want to present one way or the other? What are a couple of those vignettes in your life?

Chris ([08:35](#)):

That's a great question, 'cause that's what I'm trying to figure out right now. I've noticed over the last couple of years as I've been more comfortable being more "femme" or more "masc" or whatever, leaning into those in whatever situation's day to day. It's only been since the strike and another pandemic of sorts that I'm like, wait, let me think about that harder. Why am I wanting to present more femme on some days or more masc on other days? Is it a reaction to something or is it me being scared of something or feeling more comfortable about something? And the answer right now, I don't know, but I'm trying to be more cognizant of it. So I don't know. I don't really know.

Ally ([09:14](#)):

Wow. Yeah, I was really particularly curious about gay boy spaces and how that feels to be in, because we talked to someone last week named Jess, Jes Tom, about the gender soup of Fire Island and how everyone's she, and there's just things in gay spaces where everything feels very rubbery and stretchy and it's like you can be she, you can be he, but ultimately it is kind of a very similar look or kind of like... I don't know. There's something like very masc about it and I'm curious about finding your particular gender femininity in that space.

Chris ([09:59](#)):

Yeah, I have a lot of thoughts on that and what I'm going to say right now is not meant to be disparaging or to knock down particular people's lived experience by any means. It's going to be a broad generalization from my point of view only, which could or could not be true.

Ally ([10:19](#)):

You can't see this, but Chris's lawyer is right behind them with a hand on their shoulder.

Chris ([10:23](#)):

They have a knife to my throat.

Ally ([10:23](#)):

Yeah.

Chris ([10:28](#)):

Like, "We're done letting you do interviews alone. The Fire Island queers are going to get you."

Ally ([10:37](#)):

No, sorry, sorry, sorry. Okay.

Chris ([10:39](#)):

Yeah, you better be sorry, actually. Just by the way. In case you're curious. Speaking about traditional gay boy spaces, not that I've been to Fire Island, but I guess the closest would be West Hollywood, right? That's our tether. That's sort of an island. You can't get there from the metro. But you're right, there is a lot of she/her-ing just about anybody, and there is a lot of, not performative femininity, but people go out and they're like, well, it's my opportunity to wear my cutest skirt, or it's my opportunity to wear heels with this tight ass tank top and look butch and look feminine. It is really cool that we have those spaces for it, but sometimes I feel that it is more dress up. The subtext is sometimes, wouldn't it be silly if I did this? I'm going to do it. Less so than-

Ally ([11:33](#)):

Definitely.

Chris ([11:34](#)):

... feeling like the genuine need to express this. It is more like, well, I'm not going to do drag, but I'll do this.

Ally ([11:41](#)):

Yeah, costume.

Chris ([11:43](#)):

It's costume. And that's certainly not for everyone, and it does allow some people who are maybe less comfortable exploring their gender identity authentically. It does give the room to come in and do that in a space where everyone is in costume. There is still a lot of prejudice and a lot of ignorance in those spaces too.

Ally ([12:05](#)):

Yeah, definitely. Yeah, it's hard because it's, so many girls that I know their first time wearing a dress was at a pride where their friends were like, "Wouldn't it be crazy if we did your makeup?" You know what I mean? And I'm kind of like, oh, yeah, that's a special space. But then there are really transphobic people laughing in a skirt. Yeah, that's difficult.

Chris ([12:29](#)):

Yeah. I mean, I just came across a video on TikTok of one of the many gay interviewers on the street, and you can censor this word if you feel the need to, but a guy looking straight to camera and being like, "I know people don't like this word, but I love calling people tranny, 'cause it's what you are. And I'm a gay man, and I can say it." And I'm like-

Ally ([12:50](#)):

Oh my God.

Chris ([12:51](#)):

And just like posted it too. It was like you really doubled down.

Ally ([12:54](#)):

Wild.

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

It's also truly-

Ally ([12:56](#)):

Wild. What are you talking about? There are straight people who are trans. What are you talking about?

Chris ([13:09](#)):

Exactly. I think it boils down to ignorance and there's almost too much heat on trans issues right now in a way that we're getting so much misinformation. If there were less heat in the media, I think it would be easier for queer people to educate other queer people, but when most of the information you're getting is from the right or from conservative media or talking points, it's easy to get misinformed.

Ally ([13:34](#)):

There's a lot of fan fiction going on.

Chris ([13:39](#)):

Oh my God.

Ally ([13:39](#)):

You hear it.

Chris ([13:40](#)):

Yeah, fan fiction.

Ally ([13:40](#)):

You're like, "What?" You had to crack your knuckles and write this, it's so outlandish, like-

Chris ([13:45](#)):

Wow. The water's making the frogs gay.

Ally ([13:51](#)):

And the frogs are kissing the girls. Okay, so just being someone who's known you, how would you describe your gender presentation outside of western colonial binary words? Do you feel like you find yourself outside of that and that's some of the work that you've been doing, or are you just trying to figure it out day to day?

Chris ([14:15](#)):

I'm trying to figure it out day to day. I find myself maybe more in a space of gender fluidity and then trying to discover how I can live. How do we put those things into words and how do I... I don't know. So look, I just came from this backpacking trip through Vietnam and Thailand. And while I was in Thailand, I saw so many trans people just living their life. Almost every establishment, there was always a trans person working the front or taking our order. They were everywhere. They were happy. Everyone was really chill with them. And I already knew this going in, but there're like... I'm going to get it wrong. I'm going to say 10 genders in Thailand, but there are certainly, more than we recognize here beyond cis-male, cis-female, non-binary, trans-male, trans... There are more.

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

Totally.

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

And so it was just like built into the culture. And I'm like, that's cool, because I don't really feel like I fall into one of the discreet categories right now. And sorry to keep not having an answer. I just don't know. I just don't know.

Ally ([15:23](#)):

Well, I love something that you said earlier where you were like, and I'm pretty new to this, and that's a really common through line for everyone that we've interviewed is everyone feels very new to this. Which I'm kind of like, oh my gosh, that's reminding me of people being like, "I came out so late. I came out at 19." Everyone's late or everyone's new is so relative to them, and you're like, "No, what are you talking about? You're just being hard on yourself."

Chris ([15:54](#)):

That's a great point. I didn't, and let me brag for a second, didn't have a hard time coming out as gay. I actually never really had to, was just real chill with my family. My dad's twin brother is gay, and so I was like, this is normal, hoopty doopty. And so I have had those thoughts of like, oh, I wonder if this is what it would be like if I grew up with a tougher family, or grew up in a more conservative environment when I was coming out at 16.

Ally ([16:24](#)):

Totally.

Chris ([16:25](#)):

Trying to deal with these feelings, trying to deal with a lot more shame, trying to have these conversations with my parents and them not understanding.

Ally ([16:32](#)):

Totally. There's no framework in existence for that conversation, and you're just like, oh my gosh, how am I going to explain and then explain what I'm feeling? And, yeah.

Chris ([16:44](#)):

Yeah. My parents, I think, assumed it meant asexual, because they were like, "So you're not going to get married." Like, I'm not, but that's not the reason.

Ally ([16:55](#)):

But that has nothing to do with gender. Wow. Well, okay. Another part of this that I really wanted to ask you about is your clothes.

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

I love my clothes.

Ally ([17:08](#)):

Yeah. I love my clothes.

Chris ([17:08](#)):

I love them.

Ally ([17:12](#)):

Okay. Yeah. Tell me about your style. Or do you have influences on that, or what do you follow when you're picking out what you're going to wear?

Chris ([17:20](#)):

Thank you for asking about my favorite thing that's still in the closet. So my style, it changes a lot, but I, in the last couple years, think that it's a mix of, one piece of clothing that I wear is going to be traditionally formal, like I'm wearing pants for a suit that I would wear at a wedding probably. And then the other half of the outfit will be something incredibly casual or street punk-y. And so I have this torn up... What do you call this shirt?

Ally ([17:52](#)):

Plaid shirt?

Chris ([17:54](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, plaid shirt. And so it's like a mix of that. And so I have my skirts in there that I'll mix up with. Well, I have some more professional skirts that I'll mix up with a ratted tee, or a casual skirt that I'll mix

up with a nice blazer or something. But I think that everything is well-fitted, I like everything feeling pretty tight. I feel pretty comfortable in my physical body for the first time in maybe my whole life, so I like showing it off.

Ally ([18:24](#)):

Amazing. I love that kind of a high and low balance that you got going there.

Chris ([18:29](#)):

I get a lot of influence, honestly, from my best friend Fin. They are very canonically, Gen Z, which I think their entire motto is, how can we not be millennial? And so I've never felt more hate in my life than someone who is just six years younger than me. But I do get a lot of influence from them, 'cause it gets me out of my little bubble being what we were told, which was this, a crew neck and maybe an infinity scarf. I don't think millennials ever really had cool fashion, so I'm trying to mix it a little bit. So their mom describes their fashion as dumpster fairy chic, and I think it's incredibly accurate. Whatever you're thinking is right.

Ally ([19:26](#)):

Wow. I love that. I absolutely love that. Wait, that's so funny to be hanging out with someone... Yeah, do you feel like a kind of freeness that this kind of whatever next generation just was kind of raised in? Do you feel that difference?

Chris ([19:45](#)):

Oh yeah, for sure. There is sort of just a built-in punk mentality, and it might be just due to age range. Maybe we were also sort of punks at that age. Maybe it's just a factor of being in your end of teens, early twenties.

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

Yeah, totally.

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

But there is a sort of, okay, I don't give a fuck. And if you want to be a part of my crew, that's fine. And if you don't, I guess I'll see you at Thanksgiving.

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

Yeah. Oh, yeah. Totally.

Chris ([20:17](#)):

Yeah, which is really nice. I think it is really freeing, 'cause I think at least me, I always think about, well, what are they going to think or what are they going to think? And even if I do ultimately, I do ultimately usually land on, I don't give a fuck. It doesn't seem to come as easy to me.

Ally ([20:33](#)):

Yes, definitely. There are a lot of times in public I feel, like whenever I think of riding in an Uber or these kind of interactions where you are talking to someone, but it's just easier to go with whatever's being assumed of you and not have to describe pronouns. You're just kind of like, it's not worth it. But I do feel like I have younger friends that are like, it's important for me to model these conversations about gender and how they're moments where I'm like, wow, you're choosing battles way more often than me, and I deeply respect that, but I just don't have the energy right now.

Chris ([21:10](#)):

I fully fucking feel you, dude. I truly just walk around being misgendered all the time, and at this point I'm like, I don't care, I know what it is. And then right behind me is Fin being like, "That's not them." I'm like, "Thank you. I love you, and I appreciate you." Just wouldn't be what I would do. And that's totally cool.

Ally ([21:34](#)):

Oh my God. Yeah. So beautiful. I feel like, yeah, we're kind of pushed towards our end of comfortability right now with gender presentation, so it's fun to watch people with so much more energy.

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

When did you start using they/them pronouns? 'Cause I think... The whole time I've known you, for sure.

Ally ([21:49](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Probably like 2017, 2018 or something.

Chris ([21:54](#)):

Okay. Around the time we met.

Ally ([21:55](#)):

Yeah. I remember I just was at College Humor, and then it was a little bit easier to start. Kind of what you were talking about with getting that job where you're like, oh, I'm meeting all these new people so I can just decide to make a new change, and it's easier than people that I've known for years and trying to make the shift, and...

Chris ([22:17](#)):

Yeah, you get to build your own confidence with a new group of people.

Ally ([22:17](#)):

Totally. Totally.

Chris ([22:22](#)):

And then you crusade your other friends.

Ally ([22:23](#)):

Yeah. You're like, "These fucking..." No. Okay, so I was wondering if we could talk about acting, but without any specifics, but just about non-binary in Hollywood as-

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

Oh, cool. Yeah.

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

... an overarching thing.

Chris ([22:41](#)):

Yeah. We'll treat it like a short form game. Try not to name the streaming service.

Ally ([22:47](#)):

That's so great. I have this buzzer.

Chris ([22:52](#)):

The scab button.

Ally ([22:53](#)):

Yeah. Do you go out for roles that are your gender, or do you feel like you're going out for all different kinds of roles? Or how do you feel about casting in general?

Chris ([23:05](#)):

I do get to go out for all different kinds of roles. Ooh, I'm already so tempted to name names. So I was filming a show in New Orleans where I was playing a cisgender character, and towards the end of that I auditioned and booked another show that was specifically non-binary, and that was really cool. And I later learned that the pool was indeed, they were really actually looking for non-binary people, because I heard of AFAB friends and AMAB friends that all went out for it. I was like, cool. Which is a distinct difference from other things that my reps have sent me out for, which we've got on calls about. My reps are fantastic, fabulous, wonderful about it, and they give me the tea about the conversations they have with some casting directors, and I love it. I fucking love them for it, because my agent called me about some project once, and they're like, "We're really pushing you hard for something that you would be perfect for, this non-binary character, but they're looking for, and I quote, a non-binary girl." And they're like, "We had to call you to tell you that."

Ally ([24:13](#)):

Oh, so they're every straight man in Los Angeles. I'm just looking for a non-binary girl.

Chris ([24:24](#)):

A cute non-binary girl is [inaudible 00:24:26]-

Ally ([24:26](#)):

Come non-binary chick. Wow, okay. That's beautiful.

Chris ([24:32](#)):

Yeah. So no, there's a lot of... No. Yeah, it was gorgeous. Wonderful. So there is still a ton of that where people are just kind of using the word because they've heard the buzzword before and they're like, "We should do that. What's the harm as long as we get our NBG?" Yeah. But I do see change from pre-pandemic to post pandemic in terms of breakdowns being open gender for things, even if it's not specifically non-binary just being like this or that. I see it especially more in theater, ton of theater auditions where just, open gender. You may be asked to present male on stage for this or that, or maybe asked to portray female on stage on this, but casting is this. And so that's cool. You can see the change happening quicker in theater.

Ally ([25:22](#)):

Oh, that's fucking awesome. Theater is always so much more cerebral or intellectual than TV. I went out for a role and the sole line was, "I'm trans."

Chris ([25:36](#)):

Wait, how is that the only line? Are you walking past someone in the bathroom being like, "I'm trans."

Ally ([25:44](#)):

I'm trans. It said, whispered. No, I'm kidding.

Chris ([25:47](#)):

Wow. SVU is doing the work. The first trans character to not be murdered.

Ally ([25:54](#)):

Yeah, I was going to say from the corpse it says, "I'm trans."

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

Whispering. The cold dead body leans up and whispers.

Ally ([26:03](#)):

Yeah.

Chris ([26:05](#)):

"I'm trans." Commercial.

Ally ([26:07](#)):

Commercial break. So that's cool. So it sounds like you feel... Well, I'll ask you. Do you feel comfortable playing roles outside of your gender identity?

Chris ([26:18](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. I'm not personally troubled by it. It's all a little act to me. It's all just silly fun to me, even in a drama, I'm like, ha, ha, ha, 40 homogeneously white men have to watch me cry on camera for

roughly 32 takes. I don't really care if they're calling me he, this is really fucking silly what we're doing. Personally to me, to me, it's silly.

Ally ([26:55](#)):

You did not just call out the makeup of the room. Oh my God. Yeah. That's so funny.

Chris ([27:08](#)):

It's fine to me.

Ally ([27:09](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, definitely. It is just really crazy to have a diversity push in front of the camera and you're like, "You know, we still have to interact with the sound guy."

Chris ([27:20](#)):

Yeah.

Ally ([27:21](#)):

It's like, wow, you have this really sick show and you still have so many people in the room that are being so weird. How about we have a diversity push for that? For the gaffer.

Chris ([27:33](#)):

It's so funny, I got into a show where the HR person, or I don't know what their explicit title was, but we'll call them HR. The HR person called me before I flew down to Atlanta and was like, "Hey, girly. So you are in fact the only trans or non-binary person that we've ever had on the program. And don't worry, we've given everyone a sensitivity training ahead of time, so everyone knows how to address you and shouldn't be mean at all. So don't you worry. We figured it out, girlarina."

Ally ([28:11](#)):

No.

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

"X-O-X-O chica."

Ally ([28:24](#)):

You know they hung up the phone and they just were so happy. They were like, "Job well done."

Chris ([28:31](#)):

They ordered a statue off of Amazon and engraved it with their own name.

Ally ([28:36](#)):

It just says, ally of the year. So that made you feel so comfortable and just kind of ready.

Chris ([28:46](#)):

I felt so good and not weird at all. I felt so normal. I was like, everyone is cool.

Ally ([29:01](#)):

Wow. Oh my God. Doing the absolute most HR people worldwide. That's beautiful. That is so crazy. Okay, I had a kind of similar interaction. I was doing a show where my wardrobe was a dress, and I really had a moment. This was literally March 2020, this was as lockdown was happening, I was also in Atlanta. And I was like, okay, I saw the wardrobe. I was like, this kind of sucks, but whatever, I'm playing a role, whatever. And it felt like this man sprinted in, but I know he didn't, but he appears to me out of breath and he's like, "I just want you to know, we hired you because we know you're non-binary." I was like, "Oh, cool." And he was like, "Are you comfortable in this dress?" I was just like, okay, gay angel out of nowhere. I was like, "Actually, kind of not." He's like, "Good, we're going to get you a suit." And changed all my wardrobe.

Chris ([30:01](#)):

Damn.

Ally ([30:02](#)):

And renamed all the characters into these masc leaning non-binary names. Yeah. I was just kind of like, wait, literally, who are you? I don't even think he was-

Chris ([30:12](#)):

Not even associated with the production.

Ally ([30:15](#)):

He's like, "I'm the FedEx delivery person."

Chris ([30:19](#)):

But I sensed some butch energy over here and I knew that you were in trouble.

Ally ([30:27](#)):

I was just like, damn, wow. People are really going above and beyond in certain... But I will say, I really appreciated it in the moment. Sometimes it's corny, but sometimes you're like, oh my God, actually, there are ways that I kind of abandon myself when it comes to work, and I'm kind of like, oh, this feels really bad, but just get through it. It's kind of strike adjacent where you're just like, oh, we really deserve all these things, and we kind of downplay ourselves, and when we get together there's this collective energy of like, oh, yeah, this isn't right. Something should change.

Chris ([31:03](#)):

Yeah. I mean, as actors in general, we're just taught not to really advocate for ourselves and just always be thankful that we have the job. Don't speak up or else they're not going to invite you back. And there is safety in numbers, and that's why the striking can happen and we feel good about it, and we're not scared because it's like, well, they can't not hire all of us. Right? They can't not hire all of us.

Ally ([31:26](#)):

Can you quickly Google that?

Chris ([31:30](#)):

Ira, can you please open a tab?

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

Ira, please?

Ira ([31:32](#)):

I'm on it.

Chris ([31:39](#)):

Yeah, but I mean, I get it. I do it all the time too. How do you feel about that sort of stuff? I mean, same question back to you. I sometimes feel like, am I going back to a prior conversation about Gen Z being so vocal about it and trying to push the conversation? I feel like the second voice in the back of my head is, maybe you should speak up. Maybe this helps the next person that comes into the room.

Ally ([32:01](#)):

Totally. Yeah. I do think it does do that. I think my energy, my bandwidth changes a lot, so I feel like it's kind of nice to be like, sometimes I really advocate for myself and I have an educational moment with someone, if I feel genuinely I have the bandwidth for that. And sometimes I don't and I'm just kind of like, you said she and it's fine. But yeah, for roles, I think I would go out for anything. I feel like starting T was really scary for me because I was like, oh my God, what if everything changes and then I don't fit into any box? I've talked to friends who are singers and have the same thing, and it's like, oh no, you always find the new baseline for yourself. And so I do feel like I'm kind of coming into that and feeling confident. And I'm throwing out these I'm trans self tapes night and day.

Chris ([33:01](#)):

Okay, so it's clear now that no one's asking for these self tapes.

Ally ([33:04](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Actually [inaudible 00:33:05]-

Chris ([33:05](#)):

You're just sending short ten-second clips.

Ally ([33:07](#)):

I say, "Hi, I am Ally. I'm 5'9" ish." Show my hands and I go, "I'm trans." And then I say, "Send."

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

Oh, you say, "Send." So none of them have made it to the offices.

Ally ([33:20](#)):

Wait, what do you mean?

Chris ([33:24](#)):

And send. Thanks, Siri.

Ally ([33:29](#)):

Thank you, Siri. Okay. Is there anywhere that people can find you online should you wish to be found?

Chris ([33:35](#)):

Yes. You can find me on Instagram @themeatskeleton, M-E-A-T skeleton. You can find my feet pictures on the internet.

Ally ([33:49](#)):

Wow.

Chris ([33:50](#)):

Oh, yeah. I'll go ahead and add more photos on there. I wish my rating were higher. And I have a new podcast coming out with my best friend, Fin Argus. It's called One of Us, and it will be out where you find podcasts soon. Probably not when you're listening to this, 'cause we're filming our first episode in truly eight minutes.

Ally ([34:12](#)):

Wait, what's One of Us about?

Chris ([34:14](#)):

One of Us. I'll give you our line. It's two platonic lovers scour the universe, recruiting people for their best friend army.

Ally ([34:24](#)):

Incredible. We love. That sounds so fun.

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

It's a part cultish, a part just an excuse to get to talk to our friends about stuff.

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

Yeah, totally. Oh, that's great. A perfect cult.

Chris ([34:39](#)):

Now where can people find you?

Ally ([34:41](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Chris ([34:41](#)):

Let me practice.

Ally ([34:44](#)):

I really love the co-host energy that we found here. You can find me @themeetskeleton, M-E-E-T.

Chris ([34:54](#)):

I dare you, you freak.

Ally ([35:00](#)):

Okay, great. I'm imagining that you have to go, but is there anything that we didn't cover that you were really hoping to talk about when it comes to gender?

Chris ([35:08](#)):

No, I think we covered absolutely everything.

Ally ([35:12](#)):

And that's the right answer.

Chris ([35:13](#)):

Yeah. Print it, put it in a book and sell it to UCLA medical.

Ally ([35:23](#)):

Oh, gorgeous. Okay, Ira.

Chris ([35:28](#)):

Yeah. Ira, did you find an answer?

Ally ([35:29](#)):

Yeah. Did you find... Are we all fired?

Chris ([35:31](#)):

They can't fire [inaudible 00:35:32].

Ira ([35:32](#)):

Yeah, not really.

Ally ([35:33](#)):

Yeah.

Babette ([35:47](#)):

So I feel like it was so sweet how Chris kind of elaborated this friendship with their Gen Z friend who kind of pushes them in various ways, but also is someone who they can think about gender alongside, and I feel like those kind of people in your life are so important. And I'm wondering, Ally, do you kind of have someone in your life like that, that you guys are maybe on a similar vibe, similar journey type of thing?

Ally ([36:16](#)):

I was really thinking about that. I've met people where I felt almost like, I don't know how to put this, but mutually stuck. Which is a really beautiful feeling where you're like, ah, something's not totally working. Then you meet this person, they're like, "Yeah, for me, it's not really working for me either." And then you kind of figure it out together, and I feel like that was my end of femme presenting lesbian, beginning of masc presenting non-binary. I made friends and it was like, "Oh my gosh. Yeah. Why do we wear our hair so long?" And I'm literally like-

Babette ([36:55](#)):

So that was kind of your friends maybe served as a type of, not catalyst, but kind of sounding board to think about these types of things?

Ally ([37:04](#)):

I think so. No, I think when Chris was talking about their friend, I was like, oh my gosh, that's such a accelerator kind of feeling. To meet someone who's so fully in their... Yeah, just so comfortable in their skin, and you're just kind of meet them and join that level. They kind of raise your baseline a little bit of what you expect from the world, if that makes sense?

Babette ([37:33](#)):

Totally.

Ally ([37:33](#)):

And I thought that was really cool.

Babette ([37:35](#)):

Yeah. Well, I think what you're describing is kind of a "role model," but not in the conventional sense, but kind of ideal like your role models can and maybe should be your peers, not these people that are like... I don't know. I feel like people totally love to look up to people who are millionaires or something. It's like that is never going to be you, honey. But you can look alongside people next to you as your peers and people you can learn from, and it just feels really crazy to say, and I think this is part of why I wanted to do this podcast, but I guess I don't have anybody in my life where I'm just like, ah, yes, that is it. That is what I want for myself exactly.

Ally ([38:15](#)):

Yes.

Babette ([38:17](#)):

But that feels so weird, 'cause there's so many trans people in the world. What do you mean there's no one? But I guess I just maybe haven't met someone where I'm like... Because I obviously know some more maybe binary trans people, trans masc folks, and I'm like, that's not exactly what I'm doing. And so I feel like I don't exactly have someone where I'm like, yes, you're pushing me, and that feels good. I think I often look for that in romantic relationships, which is interesting. I usually go for those type of people in romantic relationships. But yeah, I don't know. It's such an interesting idea how Chris described, like their friend refuses to let them settle, kind of like this Gen Z punk-y vibe. And as I was listening to the interview, it made me think about, I think the age gap between Chris and their friend is also maybe the age gap between me and you, which is fun.

Ally ([39:08](#)):

Yeah, definitely. Millennial and Gen Z. Do you absolutely hate me?

Babette ([39:14](#)):

No.

Ally ([39:17](#)):

What Chris was saying about that, I have never felt that kind of vitriol. I was like, oh my God.

Babette ([39:26](#)):

It's not your fault.

Ally ([39:26](#)):

Yeah.

Babette ([39:26](#)):

It's not your fault.

Ally ([39:29](#)):

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for saying that, Babette.

Babette ([39:31](#)):

Do you think I'm really Gen Z? I feel like some people have been like, "Oh, you're very Gen Z. I can very much tell." And then other people are like, "I don't think you're that Gen Z." What do you think?

Ally ([39:40](#)):

Well, you're a conservative Republican, and so it's kind of hard to tell.

Babette ([39:40](#)):

Exactly.

Ally ([39:50](#)):

Yeah, I know. Yeah. It doesn't feel like we have the same maybe push and pull that they do in their relationship, although maybe, yeah. I'm trying to think.

Babette ([40:00](#)):

'Cause we're both deeply repressed.

Ally ([40:06](#)):

Yeah, I know. I definitely ID with the walking down the street and people are misgendering you and you're like, that's not energy that I'm going to put into correcting this person in this micro interaction.

Babette ([40:20](#)):

That's how I feel too. Yeah, most of the time.

Ally ([40:22](#)):

But deep respect for people who are like, no, actually at all times, we're going to get this right, it's not that hard, kind of energy.

Babette ([40:31](#)):

Well, that was the energy of Liv like a few episodes back. And also, and that interview almost moved me to tears because I was like, "I didn't even think of this. I'm not even doing this." And that's the energy behind a strike is to be like, these things are fine, but we're being like... Or not fine, but it's like the lobsters are being slowly boiled alive, and there's one to notice, "Hey, we're being boiled alive right now. This is crazy." And I think-

Ally ([40:57](#)):

Totally.

Babette ([40:58](#)):

Yeah. I think part of this is also maybe gendered in the way that I was raised, but I think I'm just not one to cause a fuss. Or if I'm going to cause a fuss, it's going to be maybe through this podcast of create something out of this. No, seriously. Or I think I use radio and in my work as like, it's like I'm mad about gentrification in Oakland, I guess, and I've tried to talk about friends who are new residents to Oakland. It just doesn't feel like it's landing and it's like, okay, you know what? I'm going to make a whole radio installation or something about this. That's kind where my energy is channeled, but yeah.

Ally ([41:37](#)):

Totally where it can feel like explorative. And I do agree that it feels kind of like AFAB to grin and bear it and kind of just be like, is it worth it? Is it worth this interaction in this cortisol level spike?

Babette ([41:51](#)):

Exactly.

Ally ([41:51](#)):

And some people, they're like, yeah, it really is. And you're like, whoa.

Babette ([41:55](#)):

Well, I guess I feel that way maybe with people who are close to me where I'm like, that's where I'm going to put the energy to maybe even have conflict, but with someone on the street who I literally don't give a fuck about, I don't care about you, or make you a better person at all.

Ally ([42:10](#)):

Totally. I think we need both. You need the occasional person that's teaching everywhere they go, and then, yeah, I feel like when I have energy, I'm like, okay, cool, I'm really going to break it down for this person. But usually, absolutely not.

Ira ([42:29](#)):

Okay. I feel like that feels good as a-

Babette ([42:31](#)):

Does it feel good? I'm worried that me and Ally are just complicit.

([42:51](#)):

Gender Spiral is an original podcast from Audiation. This episode was mixed by Matt Noble, and music is composed by Chanell Crichlow, with art by Joey Han and graphics by Honey Hodges. This show is executive produced by Ireland Meacham, myself: Babette Thomas, my co-host: Ally Beardsley and Sandy Smallens, with additional story editing from me.

Ally ([43:13](#)):

Thanks so much to our guest, Chris Renfro. You'll find a link to their Instagram and their website in the show notes. If you like the show, please head over to patreon.com/genderspiralpodcast to support us for \$2 a month, or subscribe to a higher tier for bonus content, special monthly postcards, and even free tote bags.

Babette ([43:33](#)):

You can also check us out at genderspiralpod.com where you'll find a link to leave us a voicemail, to 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](#).

Ally ([43:49](#)):

Tune in next week to Gender Spiral.

Babette ([43:51](#)):

Where you never have to spiral alone.

Speaker 12 ([43:51](#)):

Audiation.