[*Gender Reveal* theme music starts]

**Molly:** Welcome to Gender Reveal, a podcast where we hopefully get a little bit closer to understanding what the hell gender is. I'm your host and resident Gender Detective, Molly Woodstock.

[*Gender Reveal* theme song ends]

Hey friends. Hope you’re all hanging in there with whatever weird weather you’re having… or possibly not having. This week’s interview is going to be late. And I know that I could just make it late and not say anything and no one would care. But I also know that I really intentionally don’t talk a lot about my personal life on this podcast, and I thought maybe I would tell you all of the reasons why this podcast was late in an effort to let you get to know me a little bit more and let you know what’s going on in my life. Because I know that some people want that. However, if you don’t want that, that’s totally fine! Please just delete this episode. There will be an actual episode really soon! This is only for people who think it would be fun for me to just ramble for an indeterminate amount of time about all the things that have happened to me in the last week. I will say they are all related to being trans, which is why I am talking about them on a show about being trans. I also want to give a content warning for food restriction, mentions of disordered eating, mentions of the existence of transphobia, and mentions of the existence of hate crimes. If you are currently restricting your food, I would prefer that you did not listen to this episode. Oh, but also, I’m okay! So don’t spend this whole episode worrying about me.

So… I have a bunch of reasons why this podcast is late. I am going to approach them in order from least personal to most personal to psych myself up.

So the first reason is that I’ve been very busy. I hiked for a couple days with someone who I will talk about later, and then I went to the XOXO Festival. If you have not heard of this, XOXO is a conference that happens every year. It’s an experimental festival about the Internet and creative people and it’s really hard to describe. It’s better to just Google and look at the line-ups from past years and that might help you get a sense. But something that I love about XOXO is that despite being founded by two cis straight white men, it actually is, like, *truly* dedicated to inclusivity, and it’s really obvious that they actually *care* about trans people and disabled folx and folx of color, and they’re not just trying to do the bare minimum in order to seem woke and cool and inclusive – they’re actually, like, *really* caring about those people as people. So, as one manifestation of that, there is really incredible representation of trans/non-binary/queer people at this festival. There are lots of folx just wandering around. I got to hang out with Eden Rohatensky, who you might remember from their episode of Gender Reveal way back at the beginning of the show. They’re the one who coined the phrase, “Gender is not a spooky ghost,” which turned into, “Gender *is* a spooky ghost,” which turned into “Gender both is and is not a spooky ghost, it’s the darndest thing,” and which you can now celebrate by our merch that says “Gender is a spooky ghost.”

Anyway, former Gender Reveal guest Soleil Ho gave a presentation about what it’s like to become the representation that you fought for for so long and the responsibilities and stresses that come with that. I saw Emma Kinema give a presentation on labor unions. I saw Harry Brewis, who you might know as Hbomberguy, talk about the time that he raised 350,000 dollars for trans youth by playing Donkey Kong 64, which was really fun. Helen Zaltzman of The Allusionist podcast talked about gendered language, gender-neutral language, her search for an honorific that didn’t feel terrible to her, and taught us some lesser-used honorifics, like P-E-R (Per.) for person, I-N-D (Ind.) for individual, and M-R-E (Mre.) for mystery. Can we all be mystery now? Can that be our honorific? I am so excited about the mystery honorific! My gender is an ethereal cloud of mist! Anyway!

This has been great. XOXO is actually not quite done yet, but I’m going to go see Rhea Butcher and another trans person who does Left At London. It’s going to be very good, it has been very good. I’m so grateful for this opportunity and that means I haven’t been home making a podcast. By the way, shout out to Rose Evelethwho makes the Flash Forward podcast. She was also at XOXO and she kept sneaking away to work on her podcast and actually get her work done on time, unlike some of us. So! That was the easiest thing for me to talk about.

The second thing – and this is where the content warning comes in – is that I started Wellbutrin. Uh, I’m a person who resisted being on brain drugs of any kind for ten years and instead preferred to just white-knuckle my way through barely being alive, and then I went on brain drugs and my life got immeasurably better. So, strong recommend. I have been on SSRIs for, I think, a couple years now, and there are things that have really been great about it, such as, I am alive. And also there are small side effects that are worth it, if you’re in crisis, but I was like, “Hmm, I wonder if I could feel a little bit better without more of the side effects that I’m experiencing,” which for me were like, not really being able to feel feelings, like I was like – it was great to not feel feelings when I was dying of having feelings, but what if I could feel a feeling? So, I went to a doctor, a random doctor because it’s impossible to find a psychiatrist – anyway. And, uh, I ended up getting on Wellbutrin, which I was really excited about because I have a lot of friends who are on it and they had really good things to say about it. And unlike SSRIs, Wellbutrin is a stimulant, the same way that Adderall is a stimulant, the same way that cocaine is a stimulant. And so I’ve sort of lost the ability to eat or sleep! For the first week, everything I ate tasted like metal and then I just stopped having any sort of hunger feelings, which is why I put a content warning in here, because they explicitly say not to take Wellbutrin:one, if you have a history of seizures and two, if you have a history of eating disorders, and I do have a history of eating disorders, but I’m also in like really, really, *really*, *really* strong recovery. And it’s something that I’ve fought really hard for and feel really good about. And I would just say that if you are not in 300% recovery, don’t take Wellbutrin, because it’s really hard… to eat.

So! I have not been doing a good job of feeding myself. Also, my routines are all messed up because I wasn’t at work this week, so normally I have regimented times when I eat and I haven’t been doing that. And regimented times when I meal-prep, and I haven’t been doing that. Also, I don’t sleep anymore. I’ve been sleeping like 5 hours a night? And it used to be that I slept like 7 and a half hours a night and was super tired. Now I sleep 5 hours a night and I’m tired but like at weird times, because then the stimulants kick in again. [pause] I feel okay in the day to day, but I’m also aware that not eating and not sleeping for a couple weeks is not good for me, and that manifests in that when I sit down to work on the podcast, I *cannot* concentrate and I start falling asleep. So, my brain is being bad! And it’s making it very hard to make a podcast because I cannot take care of myself right now. And I’m going to figure out how to take care of myself, and I’m going to make more podcasts, but I just want you to know that that’s where I’m at. And also that I’m hoping these side effects go away. Feel free to chime in if you are on Wellbutrin about whether your side effects went away or not, because I would like to stay on this drug, and I also need to eat and sleep again one day. So that’s where I’m at with that!

The third thing – [sigh] oh boy. Hmm. [nervous laugh] The third thing is that I fell in love with someone? Uh, which is *such* a *wild* thing to say on a podcast, uh, one because I am a Scorpio Venus, which means I never tell anyone about my relationships *ever*. Last time I broke up with someone, I didn’t tell anyone for six months! Uhh, yeah! Also, they listen to the podcast and their friends listen to the podcast and my friends listen to the podcast. Whew! This is uncomfortable. Anyway, uh, I fell in love with someone, and a cool thing about falling in love with someone is you get *free* brain drugs, which we know, if you, uh, get really, really, really into someone, your brain does this amazing thing where it floods your brain with, like, dopamine or serotonin or both – I’m unclear, I should’ve Googled it before I started talking – and it just makes you feel really *good*. It’s like antidepressants but it’s free and there’s not weird side effects, other than you having the rest of your life fall apart! [giggle] Some people call this phase NRE or New Relationship Energy, I like to call it good, good brain drugs. And uh, when you’re on good, good brain drugs, people have a tendency to sort of pull back from their day-to-day lives and spend a lot of time where I would call Love Island, where you just hang out with said person, enjoy your brain drugs, and sort of don’t do anything else. So, uh, I’ve been doing that a lot! Which is also a reason why I, like, haven’t been sleeping! Whew! Whew. Uh, related note? Dating other trans people is rad as hell. [laugh] Uh, dating other non-binary people is rad as hell. Uh, strongly recommend trans4trans, strongly recommend they4they, uh, it’s -it’s good. That’s all that I’m saying about that!

So! [sigh] The fourth thing is that the time when I wasn’t going to XOXO or making out with someone or not eating or sleeping, uh, I’ve been doing a lot of, like, wild processing. One of the things I’m processing is, like, this new relationship with this person, which has been good, but like a lot to talk about. But also, I’ve been processing something with another person I was seeing, which I don’t want to talk about at all, but it was a thing that took a lot of time. And then also, I was processing realizing the fact, once I got really into this person, I was just realizing that I don’t really know for 100% where my parents are with that. I don’t know one, how they would act if I just, like, brought someone who wasn’t a cis guy around them that I was dating, because I haven’t really done that before, intentionally, like I’ve just sort of kept it away from them. And also, I know that both of my parents do not use they/them pronouns for me, they never have. Neither of them have done it one time. [pause] And they have Archie’s book, and they know my pronouns, and they know my friends’ pronouns, and they have not used them. For whatever reason. So, what would it look like to bring someone, theoretically in the future, who I really cared about, who uses they/them pronouns – because like I said, they4they, the best thing – and had to choose between *never* introducing someone I care about to my parents, in case they’re going to be, like, homophobic or, uh, use the wrong pronouns for them, versus, like, putting someone that I care about in, like, a potentially harmful situation. [sigh] And I realize that, like, I didn’t just find out about transphobia – I know about transphobia. A lot of people’s parents are not, like, sort of on the fence about this, they’re just like very strictly not okay with you being gay or not okay with you being trans! And, like, there are a lot of people whose parents are just a straight-up no on this, and my parents are not a straight-up no about this. And that’s cool for me. [sigh]

And also, I was hiking earlier this week with this person… Here’s the thing – there’s no, like, good gender-neutral term between ‘person I’m dating’ and ‘partner,’ uh, which is why I’m like, “I don’t know, the person I’m in gross gay love with.” I don’t know! That person? You know, the person. Um, we were hiking and there’s something about, like, going on a hiking trip and having to, like, *look around* every time you kiss to make sure no one can see you, and, like, making sure that you don’t get out of the car in rural areas so that you don’t get hate-crimed. Uh, there’s something about living like that for two days, like, trying to be super in love but also, like, hide who you are to everyone because it’s not safe to not hide who you are to everyone, as like two gay trans people… and then come home and be like, also, I don’t know if I can ever, like, talk to my family about this! Yeah. So that’s just been a lot, and that was something that I was processing a lot. [sigh]

So! The reason that this podcast is late is because I went hiking, tried to not get hate-crimed, didn’t get hate-crimed – was a success on that, went on Wellbutrin, don’t know how to eat or sleep still, had to process a thing, had to process another thing, had to process another thing, and I’ve just been, like, being really gay and trans on Love Island in a way that I feel like, honestly, I deserve!

[outro music begins]

So! You didn’t need to know all that, but now you do. This feels vulnerable as fuck. If you would like to chime in about your feelings about anything, unless they’re mean, you can find me on the Gender Reveal Slack, that’s bit.ly/GenderSlack. You can find me on Twitter and Instagram @mollywoodstock, you can find me on Twitter and Instagram @genderreveal. I’m very bad at responding to messages because I don’t eat or sleep and I’m on Love Island, but… I will see them! And I will respond one day! And will say, “So sorry for taking so long.”

Shout-out to everyone who knows me who is learning this information from this podcast. Alright, I appreciate all of you so much. Thank you so much for your support in real life, on the Internet, on the Patreon, by listening to the show. A new episode is coming really soon – it’s like halfway done, it’s just not done. It’s going to be so good. It’s with a queer, non-binary, biracial therapist! We’re also going to talk about eating disorders, so there we go.

This episode was produced and edited by me, Molly Woodstock. Our logo is by Michelle Leigh. Our theme song is by Breakmaster Cylinder. We will be back as soon as I get off this goddamn island with more feelings about gender.

[music ends]