

## Hot & Bothered (Liz)

Very few things were drilled into me as a child as well as: you have to marry a Jew.

I took the stereotypical journey on this family rule. First, I accepted it as gospel. I wasn't even sure that I knew any non-Jews and I had no idea why on earth I would ever marry one.

Then, of course, I began to question the merits of this 11th commandment. Around the time I was bat-mitzvahed, I asked my grandfather why it was so important that I marry a Jew.

He said, "Because one day, you will be in a fight with your husband. And he will call you a dirty Jew. And you will never be able to forget that."

There were other arguments for only Jew-on-Jew marriage bandied about by all of the adults in my life. "No one will understand you as well as a fellow-Jew." "It will just be easier for you- and we want an easy life for you." "Hitler killed 6 million of us, so we need to make more Jewish babies."

Questions around race, ethnicity, religion and assimilation are at the center of our laws, histories and culture. But they are also the center of our Romantic lives. Who you spend your life with is the greatest political act of your life; it will greatly determine your socio-economic status, your religious life, where you live, your health. And also, on the nights that you're having dinner just the two of you, or are holding each other in grief or celebrating in joy; who the hell cares *what* they are?

And my life partner is *super* not a Jew.

I'm Vanessa Zoltan and this is Hot & Bothered.

**Our writer this week is Liz Aeschlimann. She graduated from Harvard Divinity School just a little bit after I did and now works at a Hillel at a prestigious college. She picked the trope, “Virgin Widow.”**

Liz: I picked it because I was so excited to hear that that was a trope. I had read a story for a class that was written in Hebrew in, like, 1919, and it featured a virgin widow, and I was really excited to see what would happen if I tried to update that and play with gender and queer it and just have fun with it.

**Widow tropes are usually used in regency Romance novels and the fact that the character is a widow means, among other things, that the book can be sexier. The character knows what sex is and their next husband won't assume virginity.**

**But in the “virgin widow” trope, the virginity matters double than in traditional Romance novels. It's not just this woman is a virgin. It's that she was married, and is *still* a virgin. She's extra-virgin. Like olive oil. This is not a trope that is obviously relatable to our time. So I asked Liz to tell me why it appealed to her.**

Liz: I think the opportunity it provides is for a sexual awakening and that seems like it can happen in a feminist way or a not feminist way, and when someone has been married and is still a virgin, it just makes that sexual awakening even more fraught and complicated I think in an interesting way.

**And sexual awakenings, of course, happen now- even in fraught and complicated ways. I asked Liz to tell me everything about her story.**

Liz: So my story is based off of this story called *The Tale of The Scribe* by Shai Agnon, who was a very well known Hebrew writer. He won the Nobel prize, and *The Tale of The Scribe* has this, it's written as kind of a simple fable of life in Eastern Europe, but underneath all of that there are all of these currents that sort of call that whole world and some of the extremes into question.

So Agnon's story is about this scribe who writes Torah scrolls who is so obsessed with purity that you sort of realize as the story unfolds that he and his wife never have sex, and they pray and pray and pray for a child, but they never have sex, and so of course they don't get pregnant. And the wife, Miriam, dies a tragic death, basically I think out of heartbreak for not having a child, and Raphael becomes more and more extreme in his obsession with purity and becomes totally immersed in writing this Torah scroll.

So, I can't follow that story completely, but what I'm planning to do is to take the character of the women in this marriage and have her be the one who becomes the widow. I'll have the scribe die. And my plan is for her to become, to sort of take over his scribe duties and start writing Torahs for herself and kind of take up this holy practice and have kind of an awakening of power and voice. And simultaneously she is going to meet a woman at the ritual bath, at the mikvah and they are going to fall in love, but I'm not sure exactly what will happen from there.

Vanessa: Oh my God I'm so excited about this book. When does this take place? When does your book take place?

Liz: I think I will have it take place in the same time period. Late 1800's early 1900's. Eastern Europe.

Vanessa: So one of the requirements for it to be a proper romance novel is for it to have a happily ever after, how are you going to have a lesbian love story in you know, 1890's Poland shtetl life end happily?

Liz: That's a good question, I've thought a little bit about that. I've had to ask myself, is it possible to have a happily ever after where maybe people never know that you are in a romantic relationship with someone, where you have to stay closeted. But I don't think there's any other way to do this. So I have to sort of hope that there is. I was thinking about, I mean I'm so excited to work with all of these themes around purity and ritual and gender and I was thinking of that in this, kind of traditional world, which still exists in some spaces, where there is so much division between womensphere's and mensphere's, even though it tends to support this patriarchal society, it actually creates

this womensphere that is beautiful and full of opportunity for lesbian love to happen not through a traditional structure of marriage or something but in this kind of separate protected space, and so maybe the happily ever after will be in that kind of ambiguity.

**I find that so touching. A happily ever after within ambiguity. As a child we went to temple every week. We did shabbat dinner every week. And I went to Hebrew School at the temple three days a week. And we were devout atheists.**

**All four of my grandparents were Holocaust survivors. They all spent time in Auschwitz and two of them survived death marches. They were all raised Orthodox and they all lost god in different ways and in different places. But they all left the concentration camps atheists.**

**My father once said to me, when I asked if he was sure there wasn't a god, "Well, if there is a god, he hates us. So I'd rather not believe in one."**

**My family was both inside and outside of our faith. Judaism dictated how we celebrated birthdays (from sundown to sundown), how we grieved, and that we fed the dog before we fed ourselves. But more than Jewish, we were products of the Holocaust. We lived life with Holocaust based edicts: Never stand in line. Question all orders. Never buy German products. We judged other Jewish families who had Krupps coffee makers or BMW's. In fact, my mother offended a friend by judging her Mercedes so mercilessly, that the friendship ended.**

**One year only my mom and I wanted to go to temple for Yom Kippur. So the two of us got in the car and started driving to services. I started crying as we were driving there. And to this day, I have no idea why. But, all of a sudden, I very much, did not want to go to temple. So we turned around and picked up In N' Out burgers and brought them home to the rest of the family.**

**What my family is going for is similar to what Liz is writing about. A Happily Ever After within ambiguity- a loving relationship with our beloved Judaism, without that pesky god who ignores the suffering of the world. My parents want me to**

**marry a Jew, a sign of that love- but that ambiguity makes it so hard. What other Jew is going to feel the same way I did about our faith? The way that I feel about it is so specific- guitars in synagogue? No! But hamburgers instead of fasting? Sure!**

**When Liz and I got back on the phone, I asked for her to read me some of her story.**

Liz: The house was dark and cold, tomorrow she would line the walls with newspaper and give the wind one more layer to pierce before it forced its way in. She lit a lamp but could not bring herself to cook. Avram could work all day at his little desk, never stopping to eat, but now that she had no need to stop him steaming the window with chicken broth and demanding he come to the table, she understood with a deep weariness how one could forget to eat. Desi woke in the dark, it was she realized, the hour when Avram would rise to study, and with a rush of possession she threw off the covers and swooped to his shelf.

She felt her spine curve into Avram's slight stoop, and the sureness of his step as she crossed to his table. She slammed the sacred book on the table and opened to the middle. Yes, she was Avram keening piously over his fine. Tugging at his beard, so pious in his humility, so smug in his renunciation. She read the words, deciphering without comprehending, she finished the page and put the Mishna aside, it was dawn, time for prayers. She opened the velvet bag that contained Avram's tefillin, wrapping the straps that held boxes containing the most sacred words around her arms, and placing them on her head as she had seen her husband and her father do a thousand times.

She threw his prayer shawl over her head and rocked back and forth on her heels, mocking, furious, and still somehow Avram herself, alive in her body. The light had resolved into morning. Usually she would cajole him to eat now, warming two slices of bread on the stove and smothering them in butter and jam, but she had no wife to interfere. She felt like a column of fire. She threw off the prayer shawl and unwound the straps of tefillin, noting with satisfaction the red marks the leather had cut into her skin. She laughed, what had stopped her from doing this very thing years ago?

It was so easy to break a taboo, to violate a norm, to shock the rabbis. She had put a cloth over her head, ha! She had wrapped some leather around her arm. So! Didn't she kiss the box with the same holy words every time she walked through her door? Who was to say she couldn't wear them like jewels and a crown. Like a necklace nestled against her breast. She strode back to the table, and uncovered the piece of stretched hide on which Avram had scribed the words of the most holy book, bringing forth generations of Torah. One scroll springing with his hand from the womb of the next.

The fire settled into the hearth of her belly, she stared in awe at the letters on the page, the last he had written, and sank into his chair. B'shalom yosei halom. B'yad lecheihav V'yavo ods notov. Once Joseph dreamed a dream, which he told to his brothers, and they hated him even more. The words were perfect, beautiful strokes of the pen, holy yet from a human hand. She breathed, the letters breathed. She spoke the words aloud, creating them again in her mouth. The holy one spoke and the world was created, she thought.

**That is the other thing about widow stories: the tension is built into the story because, well, widow. A past relationship, in all of its complexity, looms large over the story. Miriam, Liz's main character, is wrapping herself up in her ex-husband... while she's also judging him. There is grief at the center of these stories.**

**But also-- there's freedom. Because, as Liz says, it becomes clear how easy it is to break certain rules when someone dies. Sometimes, when people die, there is nothing but grief. But sometimes, there is also some release. In order to be in relationship with one another, we have to bend a little; we have to make compromises, pretend to find things interesting that we do not find interesting. Grief then bends us further-- makes us not want to get out of bed, for missing the person. But eventually, as the grief lifts, sometimes we can take up space in a totally new way. It becomes clear to us how easy it is to break the taboos that that relationship made real.**

**I am a Holocaust widow. The thing I grieve is the tragedy at the heart of my family's story. I carry it with me daily; in how I respond to the news of the Boko Haram, or what is happening at the US-Mexico border; in how I look at a line to get into a concert. I am bent in the shape of the Holocaust and I can never shake it. Not even by marrying a fellow-Jew and having a thousand Jewish babies would I un-bend myself.**

**When I met my partner, Peter-- I kept it quiet from my family for a little while. But one day, I finally called my mom. "I met someone," I told her. "And I really, really like him." "Great." She said. "Jewish?" It was her first question. "No." "OK..." she answered. "He's German," I told her.**

Liz: That feels like what I'm interested in writing. And I have been trying to get underneath the other character more, Atarah, the love interest, and I'm not sure exactly where this will go but I have been sort of thinking of her as more secular and wanting to write different kinds of stories, or collect different kinds of stories. That maybe challenge the tradition in a different way, or leave it, but that she's still in relationship with this scribe old tradition through the romance, and what is created in that collaboration or conversation.

**There would be so much new for these two characters: At least for Miriam. A sexual relationship at all... a romantic relationship with a woman. A life of study. A life in which she can pray like a man. Falling in love. And all while grieving her husband- who wasn't a monster, and whom she seemed to genuinely love.**

**Peter and I didn't talk about my being the grandchild of Holocaust survivors and his being German for our first several dates. But when we did, something immediately became very clear to me.**

**He understood my relationship to the Holocaust better than any American-Jew I had ever known. He was raised and formed in Germany, and so the shocking twist of my life that made our relationship sound impossible to childhood me, actually made it seamless on the inside. No American-Jew I knew ever had as**

**similar of sense of what it was like to be raised in the shadow of the war, as well as Peter did.**

Liz: I had another idea that I haven't actually tried writing but I want Atarah to also be a writer, to be a different kind of writer. I think I had some of that already but I was wondering if maybe instead she's like, the cousin of the virgin widow's dead husband and she comes, like as a sort of modern, enlightened woman to learn about the country folk. And these backwards, religious people and it's more of like an ethnography project or something like that. And so she ends up staying with the virgin widow and like, observing her and they learn from each other and maybe there's a big fight, um, when her sort of, arrogance gets exposed and like, "What are you writing down about me." And that turns into passion somehow. \*laughs\* Um, and they, yeah, but they, they learn from each other. That's, I think that's where I'm trying to get to- them learning from each other and both of their art and like, imagination being stretched.

**I think that's the thing about being with a non-Jew, who was actually everything I was raised to not be with. My imagination is stretched by him. I love him, not in spite of his Germanness, but in part, because of it.**

**But also, in all my grief, Sometimes, I worry that I am missing what "Jewish couples" have.**

**So I called one half of my favorite Jewish couple:**

Vanessa: Can you please introduce yourself? Say your name and how you know me.

David: Yes, my name is David, I am your older brother, I've known you since you were two years old.

Vanessa: Oh my god you're so lucky.

David: I know. I know, I had to wait two years and two months and 20 days until you showed up.

Vanessa: That was some fast math you just did, or it's creepy that you have that memorized.



David: Do you wanna know how many seconds that adds up to?

Vanessa: No, I'm good, I'm all set. Thanks. You're also the husband to our guest writer, Suzanne.

David: That was an amazing podcast episode. I mean you and I talked about it, but it was kinda like, you don't get a much more targeted podcast episode ever. My sister, my wife, talking about my son. I mean.

Vanessa: And Mom was in that episode too, right?

David: Yeah, yeah, sounds about right.

Vanessa: Well I actually want to talk to you about the women in your life. So you married a nice Jewish girl.

David: Yes.

Vanessa: And I am with a nice, not Jewish man.

David: Correct.

Vanessa: Do you think I'm missing out.

David: No. No, I don't. While we were growing up it was instilled into us that, you know, we should marry somebody Jewish for a whole host of reasons, but I think we determined on our own that while Jewish culture is important to us, the religion or the belief in god is not. You know, I think we're both atheists, and so I think we can lead meaningful and spiritual lives without Judaism and if you have a partner who is Jewish or who is not I think, you know, you can still have a spiritual life.

Vanessa: But it's so nice that you and Suzanne like, do Seder and do Shabbat.

David: Yeah, but I mean there's no reason you can't do that.

Vanessa: I mean I do that.

David: Exactly.

Vanessa: Peter's really nice about it.

David: Exactly. So, I think it's the person who you choose, it's not the fact that they are Jewish or raised Jewish, I think it's bigger than that, right, I think the person who you decide to partner and spend your life with, if you share with them that Yom Kippur service is important to you and you want them to be a part of that, then you know, you have the right person when they say yes. You know, I'll be there and do that.

Vanessa: Do you feel like, cause one of the things that I talk about in this episode is that we were more raised as grandchildren of Holocaust survivors than we were raised Jewish. Does that resonate with you?

David: Yeah, I think so. I don't know if Mom and Dad would say they're atheists, but I think they are. And I think it was less about the religion and more about keeping the tradition alive and knowing what our family went through to survive. I always felt kind of, I guess, an importance to honor that, you know, with my life cause I think we were given so many opportunities and so I just wanted to try to make the most of it and, you know, lead a rewarding life that our grandparents afforded us.

Vanessa: Suzanne, in her wedding vows to you, I'll never forget it, said that as a grandchild of Holocaust survivors you're a miracle and that you're her miracle. Were you surprised when I told you that Peter was German?

David: Uh, yes. \*laughs\* Absolutely. But then I met Peter, I don't know, a few months later, I don't remember how long...

Vanessa: Yeah you guys met really early, like two months into my dating him.

David: Correct, and we even played Cards Against Humanity together.

Vanessa: Yeah, and we, wait, finish that story. \*laughs\*

David: Well, I don't remember exactly how it was, but he had some Hitler or WWII Holocaust card and he, very wisely chose not to play it.

Vanessa: He literally didn't play the Holocaust card. \*laughs\*

David: Yes, I'm sure he soon found, you know, shortly thereafter that us Zoltans play the Holocaust card quite often.

Vanessa: Yeah, he was like, he put it down and was like, "I didn't know what to do with this." \*laughs\* At the end..

David: Yeah.

Vanessa: Oh, what a trooper.

David: But to answer your question, he's a lovely man. So yes, I was surprised but, and I suspected that, knowing you, you would have chosen someone or date someone who is worthy of you and is a good person, so I wasn't too surprised to learn that I liked him.

Vanessa: Do you want to hear one of my dirtiest secrets? It's brother appropriate.

David: Oh, sure, sure.

Vanessa: So I love my German, non-Jewish partner, but like, one of our cousins has a non-Jewish partner and I'm like, "really?" it offends me when our family brings in a non-Jew.

David: That's interesting.

Vanessa: Like I completely drink the Kool-Aid and only spit it out a little. Like just enough to stain my own shirt.

\*laughs\*

Vanessa: Do you not judge other people, other Jews when they marry non-Jews?

David: No. Not at this point. There was a time in my life, sure, absolutely, but you know, nowadays it's just not as important to me. I don't know, maybe it's cause I, you know, married a Jewish woman,

Vanessa: Mhm.

David: Even though Suzanne's much more knowledgeable about Jewish customs and all the religious holidays and everything, you know, it's not completely foreign to me. So it does bring, you know, a closeness or just an inherent understanding. So, in that respect it's wonderful, but you know, that's not necessary for everyone. So.

**It was really interesting to hear David say that being Jewish wasn't a huge part of his relationship with Suzanne. I think of it as such a big part of their relationship; they go to Chanukah parties and Bar Mitzvahs. They hosted my grandfather's Shiva. But I am on the outside, looking in. If he says it isn't a big part of their relationship, I believe him.**

**I asked Liz why she thinks religion is such a big part of our conversation around relationships-- and she said exactly how I feel about it.**

Liz: Well I think the idea that spirituality and religion are this individual thing is very influenced by Christian Protestantism, and Judaism and other religious traditions are extremely communal and even when you're doing things individually it's in the context of being part of a community and other people doing them too. Um, I guess I think about religion as a form and a way to kind of channel these human impulses and needs that we have for connection and mourning and celebration and hope and fear, all these very basic human needs and so much of the time, I mean all of the time those are not things that only we experience. There are things that are human that everyone experiences in different ways. And so often it's more powerful to hold and channel and articulate those things with other people and in relationship and so to be able to be afraid with someone or hope with someone or mourn in a group and to have a way to do that, to have words to say or a thing to do, or a song to sing is really important.

**Being the same religion as your partner doesn't necessarily help your relationship but it does mean that you, together, can be part of communities together. And I think that that is what I grieve in my relationship; nothing from the inside of it. But I, in part, don't go to temple because I'd rather stay in and hang out with Peter. But if we both went to temple... it'd be different. I'm not blaming him. I could, of course, still go. He's so supportive. But in Judaism, there's a huge familial and community aspect to religion. And even though he's supportive, as we host Seder and Shabbat dinners, he's not in the community with me.**

**This podcast started because I started writing a Romance novel and found it to be deeply healing and rewarding. The romance novel that I wrote is about a woman choosing between two men: one's a Jew, and one's a non-Jew. And she chooses the Jew. But here's the thing-- the point of writing a Romance novel isn't to say, "that's what I really want." It's to explore different possibilities and to meditate on your own life and the choices that you've made. Writing about a Jewish woman choosing between a Jew and a non-Jew, and her choosing the Jew- well, it made me really happy for my character. But it didn't make me want to be with Peter any less.**

Liz: I think getting to take this story by Shai Agnog that I found really strange and fascinating and charming and try to write a positive story with a happy ending has been surprisingly and, I guess when I think about happy ending it, it, my image is all the loose

ends tied up and a certain kind of everything's great and everything's always going to be great kind of happiness. And that feels unrealistic and not like a thing that I want to spend my time writing. But to try to find a different version of happy that has a few of those bittersweet notes maybe that make it feel more real... and complex. But still feels, like, satisfyingly happy. Because that's also part of real life. Yeah, just finding the balance.

**I don't think about Peter's and my differences very often. We have the same relationships to food and to money, as to how to raise kids and how to engage politically. We have the same feelings towards our families. There is such familiarity about him to me. I love Peter. And so, as I tell him all the time, I'm going to keep him.**

**And now, for our very last assignment from Julia Quinn on how to write Happily Ever Afters.**

Vanessa: Hi Julia!

Julia: Hey, last episode!

Vanessa: I know.

Julia: Well, for me.

Vanessa: Yes, for you. I have more work after you. Sad that it's over but happy because we're gonna be talking, finally, about our happily ever after.

Julia: Yay! That's what makes it a Romance.

Vanessa: Yes, so now I would imagine that this is just a time where you get to see the payoff for all the hard work you put into watching two people fall in love, watching them get into a fight, having them get back together... like now you get to just like, see what it is that you've been fighting for this whole time.

Julia: One thing that's very common in a happily ever after / epilogue is mushy, wedded bliss with babies here or on the way. But that's assuming, you know, that you have characters who want to have babies, not everybody does, so that's not everybody's happily ever after. I mean, the thing about Romance is there really two possible ending

points. There's, you're wrapping up your story and then there's also the epilogue, which is a very common thing in Romance novels.

Vanessa: And I love them, so everybody write them for me.

Julia: Okay, well, since Vanessa is the queen here and you are gonna be writing epilogues I guess, we can talk about that a little bit. So, technically, your story needs to feel complete without the epilogue. So, if it weren't there then you'd still feel, you'd be like okay, I feel good, I got my Happily Ever After, they're gonna love each other forever, they're not gonna get divorced in six months, and usually for me that is pretty soon after everybody, you know, reveals their love, their trust, their vulnerability, all that stuff. And probably they're kind of like, snuggling in some way, and you know, I love you, I love you, love love, you know. It's a little bit mushy and sweet and kind of fun and I usually try and work some humor in there.

And then there would be an epilogue. And so that can take place however long after. I've written some where it's, you know, the next day. I've written some where it's six months later, and with that one you're just giving a reveal into where they are in the future. And it's kind of fun because now you're writing about people who are established. Who trust each other, who love each other, who are no longer in the phase or courtship. And, you know, probably not the glimpse into the future when, you know, you're arguing about the carpool and stuff, or whatever the regency equivalence of that is...

Vanessa: The carriage bill last month was exorbitant!

Julia: Yes, why did you buy so many hats?

Vanessa: Although I feel like even those moments, if it's then like, oh you, can be cute, right? As long as there's an oh you wink.

Julia: Yes, exactly. I mean you don't want full on arguing I guess in your epilogue. You don't want to put something into the epilogue that will like, sow seeds of doubt and undermine everything you've done up to then. But, you know, think about it. Do you want an epilogue, do you need an epilogue? The epilogue really is the cherry on top. So you've already, you've got your ice cream sundae and you've got your hot fudge and your whipped cream and you don't need the cherry on top, but it kinda makes it better. Yeah.

Vanessa: An epilogue is only supposed to be about joy. So they're fun to write cause you just get to imagine different forms of happiness and prove Tolstoy wrong, that actually happiness can also be different.

Julia: All happy families are not alike.

Vanessa: Exactly. And I think epilogues are a wonderful exploration into all the different ways that people can be happy.

Julia: I like that.

Vanessa: So Julia Quinn, our meet cute is that I wrote to you even though I didn't think there was a chance in hell that you were writing back to me because you were my favorite Romance author, and you wrote back and went on this, like, two year journey with us. You had no idea what you were signing up for and have been gracious and generous and brilliant along the way so thank you for doing this with us and thank you for teaching everybody how to write a Romance novel.

Julia: Aw, thank you, you guys have been so wonderful in return. You've made me think about what I do which can help me become better. You know, no matter how many books you've written you can always get better. I mean sometimes I do things and I have no idea why or how and now I'm starting to think about it. So it's awesome. It's been wonderful.

**Given my family's history, I was slightly nervous about telling them when I started dating Peter... but, as you know by now, my mom is pretty great. Her name, by the way, which I've somehow have never told you in our months of doing this podcast together, is Nicki.**

Vanessa: Hi Mom!

Nicki: Hi honey! How are you?

Vanessa: I'm good, how are you?

Nicki: I'm well, thank you.

Vanessa: So, I'm wondering if you could tell everybody the story about your friend Sharon, what happened.

Nicki: Sure. I had a friend named Sharon, and she was buying a new car, and we'd talked about the cars and at that time in my life we bought nothing that was German. And I discussed it with her, and she came and told me that they bought a Mercedes. And I was very upset and I don't remember what I said but I know I was not nice about it because she was Jewish and I felt she should stand up for us and respect that. I then realized that I was unfair. It was never my business, and I did call her to apologize. But it was never the same after that. But whatever.

Vanessa: And can you tell me what you felt the first time that I told you about Peter and that he was born and raised in Germany?

Nicki: Um, we were very happy for you, that you found somebody that you liked. And I trusted you and trusted that you would not be with somebody who treated your Jewishness, our Jewishness negatively. But rather somebody who embraced it and respected it. When I see Peter I don't think, "Gee, he's not Jewish" or "Gee, he's German," I look at him as the man who makes my daughter happy, who loves her, and she in turn loves him, and that's more important than anything else.

Vanessa: I mean that's pretty remarkable, right? To go from having said, "there will be no German products in this house" to your daughter living in a German house. Is that hard for you?

Nicki: Honestly, sometimes when I'm in the "German House" and I see cartoons in the house that are in German and I see the social circle of German friends, I do have to take a deep breath sometimes, and think "Oh my" because I had grown up with such a bias about that. Sometimes I have to remind myself that it's Peter, it's not his history that we love and cherish.

Vanessa: Are you sad that I'm not with a Jew?



Nicki: I will tell you I don't believe, I haven't personally experiences that American Jews really relate to the Holocaust as much as other country Jews in countries that really felt it an experienced it. Even though our experiences were different in the wars, I don't know what the terminology is but he wants to resist it and make it right. I wouldn't tell you I would like, I would say, Vanessa go look and find a German man, no, I would never have done that. But the fact that you did, and it's Peter... I'm absolutely fine with it. On the contrary, he's a very good match for you.

Vanessa: Okay, love you Mama.

Nicki: Love you, love to all of you guys.

Vanessa: Bye.

Nicki: Okay, bye honey.

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Special Thanks this week to my mom. Thanks mom.