



This is Jeopardy: The Story of America's Favorite Quiz Show

Episode Fourteen: Jeopardy! Love Stories, On and Off Stage 10

A Production of Sony Music Entertainment, and Sony Pictures TV

Maryanne Lewell: So let's talk about the bus ride from the hotel to the studio, because that's the first time that I met my husband.

MUSIC: Whimsical spacey music begins

Alan Lin: So how did we first meet?

Cliff Galiher: I was able to, uh, set aside a day to come in to watch the second day of the Tournament of Champions that was taping.

Danielle Stillman: We first met at our audition. I was there early.

Lincoln Hamilton: And I was there very late.

Buzzy Cohen: When most people think about being on *Jeopardy!*, they might think of the glory of gracing the Alex Trebek stage, of completing a lifelong goal, of showcasing their knowledge to a national audience, and of course, bringing home lots of money while they're at it.

But for a few people, the show brought something...or should I say *someone*...unexpected into their lives.

That was certainly the case for one of my all-time favorite *Jeopardy!* champions, Eddie Timanus.

Eddie Timanus: I was a member of a, you know, kind of a game show fan discussion group where, you know, we just talked about game show minutiae, that kind of thing.

Buzzy Cohen: After Eddie's five-game streak in 1999, he met someone named Kelli on that very discussion board.

Eddie Timanus: *She was a teacher, uh, living in Rochester, Minnesota at the time. And she'd kind of signed on to the group, you know, kind of looking for ideas.*

Buzzy Cohen: Kelli was also a big game show fan and she figured that using *Jeopardy!*-like material in the classroom would keep her students engaged. She posted to the forum asking for help.

Eddie Timanus: *I sent something to the group, you know, just kind of, Hey, here's the word of the day, it's "whammy." How fun is that?*

Kelli Timanus: *There was a post that fit with what we were teaching. It was how the word "whammy" grew and got into American English. And later I told Eddie, Thank you for posting that. I used that in my class today. And it was really kind of cool.*

Eddie Timanus: *I was still single at the time, so like, Ooh, an email from a girl, girl, girl.*

Buzzy Cohen: The two struck up a correspondence, and later that year, when Kelli planned a trip to Virginia to visit a friend, Eddie suggested a dinner date to meet up in person.

Eddie Timanus: *We ate at RT Seafood Kitchen, which was not far from my home there in Arlington near the Courthouse Metro. That restaurant doesn't exist anymore, sadly. But I had pecan crusted halibut. [Laughs.]*

Buzzy Cohen: Kelli had the Shrimp Diane.

THEME MUSIC

Kelli Timanus: *We just started talking and it was like we'd known each other for a very long time and we just sat and talked and talked.*

Eddie Timanus: *We went out for a little walk, uh, around my neighborhood. It was summertime, so it was a nice evening.*

Kelli Timanus: *It was a very special night.*

Eddie Timanus: I walked home and said, *I think my life has just changed.* [Laughs.] It was kind of like walking on air.

Buzzy Cohen: I'm your host, Buzzy Cohen. And from Sony Music Entertainment and Sony Pictures TV, This Is Jeopardy! The Story of America's Favorite Quiz Show.

This week, we take a look at the surprising ways that America's favorite quiz show can bring people together. It's love stories, on and off stage 10.

ACT I

Buzzy Cohen: When I took you along with me to quiz night at O'Brien's, you saw just how much two *Jeopardy!* players can have in common just by being a part of the *Jeopardy!* universe. People who love knowing, well, *everything*, seem to love spending time together.

But once I started diving into the show's history with our producers, we noticed pretty quickly that for some, *Jeopardy!* was more than just a way to make friends, it was a love connection.

Here's Danielle Stillman, who played in season 32.

Danielle Stillman: Um, I had staked out a really great seat in the back where nobody was sitting next to me, and then some guy burst through the doors.

Buzzy Cohen: She's talking about Lincoln Hamilton, who also played in Season 32.

Lincoln Hamilton: I took the only seat available next to me, which happened to be next to this cute redhead.

That audition led to being on the show, but more importantly than that, the — the one person that is my soulmate, who I'm gonna spend the rest of my life with.

Buzzy Cohen: Danielle and Lincoln got married in October of 2022.

Danielle Stillman: It's pretty crazy that sometimes we just sit and look at each other and it's like, I shouldn't even know who you are.

Lincoln Hamilton: [Laughs.]

Danielle Stillman: And we have a mortgage together.

Lincoln Hamilton: Yeah.

Buzzy Cohen: For other contestants, that spark didn't come until later...sometimes weeks or even months after tape day.

Like Catherine Hofstetter.

In 2012, Catherine was a high school teacher in Plano, Texas. She competed in the Teachers Tournament that year.

Catherine Hofstetter: After the last day of taping, quite a few of us became friends on social media, uh, between the time that we taped and the time that our episodes aired.

Buzzy Cohen: Afterward, Catherine kept in touch with Justin...who was a sixth grade social studies teacher from Kansas City.

Justin Hofstetter: I think there was a period where we just talked every day for a good two, three months...

Buzzy Cohen: Justin and Catherine got married in January of 2015.

Catherine Hofstetter: It's been kind of a wild ride. I forget sometimes that we have this backstory. Uh, it's great when you meet new people because you always have something interesting you know, to be like, *Oh, guess what? I met my husband on Jeopardy!* And, it opens up lots of fun conversations, that's for sure.

Justin Hofstetter: Everything that's good about my life right now is because of the fact that I got invited to that Teachers' Tournament.

Catherine Hofstetter: I do not recommend it as a — as an approach to dating, but it certainly worked out for us.

Buzzy Cohen: *Jeopardy!* is *not* a dating app, nor is it a dating show, and for many contestants, romance might be the last thing on their minds when they're getting ready to compete.

MUSIC: Energetic drum beat

Alan Lin: It was a pretty interesting transitional time for me because I was moving for my graduate program. And in fact, when I had taped the Tournament of Champions, all of my stuff was still in boxes.

Buzzy Cohen: That's Alan Lin, who I faced off against in the 2017 Tournament of Champions — considered by many to be the greatest Tournament of Champions with the greatest champion. That's me.

But I digress. Little did Alan know during our games, Cliff Galiher, a *Jeopardy!* champion in his own right, had been in the audience, and Alan's playing and prowess definitely impressed Cliff.

Cliff Galiher: I came in and watched the semi-finals and the finals, and I watched one Mr. Alan Lin win his semi-final game and then play in the finals.

ARCHIVAL:

Alex Trebek: This monster of Little Minds. Alan.

Alan Lin: What is a Hobgoblin?

Alex Trebek: You are right.

Alan Lin: Monster Mash, 1000.

Alex Trebek: The artwork here depicts behemoth and this aquatic monster also mentioned in the Bible. Alan.

Alan Lin: What is Leviathan?

Alex Trebek: That's right.

Buzzy Cohen: I took home the title of champion that day, but Alan, he won in maybe *a bigger* way.

Alan Lin: After our taping, uh, the local *Jeopardy!* community invited all of us out to have a celebratory dinner. We went down the street to a nice Italian restaurant and, uh, that's where I met Cliff for the first time.

Cliff Galiher: We started talking about the games and our own *Jeopardy!* experiences, but quickly it really branched out to our other interests, um, to board games.

Alan Lin: That's right. And, uh, I had just purchased a new house and so that became a place where, uh, a lot of us would kind of gather to play board games.

Cliff Galiher: Yeah, we started playing every, you know, once or twice a month. And at one point, you got Gloomhaven, the long-term campaign game that took, yeah, took...

Alan Lin: [Laughs.]...took more than a year to finish.

Cliff Galiher: Yeah. But that's how we started to all grow closer. And how you and I started to grow closer. We became friends first and then...

Alan Lin: That's right.

Cliff Galiher: We just became more than friends over the course of many trips out to the Inland Empire.

Alan Lin: Cliff had also invited me out to, uh, the O'Brien's pub quiz, uh, out in Santa Monica, which is the pub quiz full of *Jeopardy!* Regulars. And, yeah, it was just a wonderful, uh, kind of falling into a friendship and then into more than that.

Buzzy Cohen: Cue Tupac's California Love.

MUSIC: Whimsical beat

Buzzy Cohen: But in the history of America's favorite quiz show, only *one* set of *Jeopardy!* sweethearts has taken their love — and their love of *Jeopardy!* — back to Stage 10.

Dan Melia: I'm Dan Melia. I'm a retired Berkeley professor.

Dara Hellman: My name's Dara Hellman and my connection to *Jeopardy!* is Dan.
[Laughs.]

Buzzy Cohen: Dan and Dara had been dating since before Dan went on *Jeopardy!* in the mid-'90s. They always knew they wanted a non-traditional wedding.

Dan Melia: We were talking about getting married and we're kind of torn between a drive-through Elvis Chapel in Reno and the National Cathedral.

Buzzy Cohen: On a whim, Dara suggested they get married on the *Jeopardy!* set.

Dan Melia: I think you thought it was a joke.

Dara Hellman: Sorta, a little bit. [Laughs].

Dan Melia: And, uh, I said, *Yeah, why not?* And, uh, so I asked the producers about that. Uh, I sent them an email and I think it was Maggie Speak then got right back to me and said, *I can't even talk to you about this until the tournament airs.*

Buzzy Cohen: By the way, Dan was actually competing in the Tournament of Champions at the time he started planning for the wedding. Talk about multi-tasking!

Dan Melia: The minute the tournament aired, I got a note from, I think, Harry Friedman, saying, *Yeah, when do you want to do it?*

Dara Hellman: You know, neither of us had ever experienced a wedding on a television set before or anything like that so we just kind of said, *Let's just go with it.*

Buzzy Cohen: On their wedding day, Dan and Dara stood in front of the contestant lecterns, while Bob Harris, Dan's former *Jeopardy!* rival, turned friend, turned *wedding officiant*, stood in front of Alex's lectern to preside over the ceremony.

Friends and family fanned out around the stage.

And a bunch of *Jeopardy!* staffers were there too — because this all went down after a tape day.

Dan Melia: They had a reception. The catering came in. Um, uh, we had champagne.

Dara Hellman: Everyone stayed. The makeup people, the hair people. Alex Trebek was our witness. I think to this day, the Alameda County, uh, Registrar thinks that we made it up and just wrote in anybody's name on — on our wedding certificate because you know, it says, "Alex Trebek."

Dan Melia: [Laughs.] Yeah, he was great.

Dara Hellman: He was, yeah.

Buzzy Cohen: They made us a *Jeopardy!* board, um, of, you know, wedding-themed questions and, *Do you, and do you* was one of the *Jeopardy!* questions and so, you know, we both said, *What is I do?*

[Laughs.] So again, I'm still not sure if we're actually married because of that, but, um, you know, we signed the certificate, so I'm pretty sure it, it, it worked.

Dan Melia: The entire crew was there, the sound guys, the camera guys. And even the, the directors and the people who set up the board and stuff who have to actually be there when this is going on. And I don't know, I hope they got a piece of cake later.

Dara Hellman: At least.

Buzzy Cohen: Dan and Dara first got together in October 1994. They've been together almost 29 years...18 of those as a married couple.

MUSIC: Exciting beat with momentum

Buzzy Cohen: After the break...a little competition, and a little chemistry.

ACT II

MUSIC: Positive, curious beat

Stacy Cloyd: If we had done it Watson style, where we got to play against each other five times in a row, I think it would've been three to two, and I don't know who would've been the three and who would've been the two.

Buzzy Cohen: Stacy Braverman and Rese Cloyd met in 2010 at a *Jeopardy!* contestant audition in Washington D.C., where Rese was living at the time.

Here's Rese.

Rese Cloyd: At the audition, one of the questions that the coordinators asked us to sort of loosen up the group, keep us from all being totally nervous nerds, which we all were, was who had come the furthest. And one of the women in the room raised her hand and said that she had come from Ann Arbor, Michigan, which is where she had just finished law school.

Buzzy Cohen: Stacy was slim, wearing glasses, her brown hair in a pixie cut. And when she then announced to the group that she was moving to D.C., Rese's ears perked up.

Rese Cloyd: As an alum of the University of Michigan, I was intrigued to meet someone else who was also a Michigan grad. And then the fact that she was going to be moving to D.C. in a few months was also interesting.

Buzzy Cohen: Rese was involved in the University of Michigan alumni chapter in D.C. So she said to Stacy...

Rese Cloyd: Hey, when you move to D.C., get in touch with me. Maybe we can do some of the Alumni Club events together. And you ghosted! What happened?

Stacy Cloyd: [Laughs.] Well, I studied for and took the bar exam. I packed up my whole life in Michigan and moved to DC. I started a new job. I got a cat. Um, I was dating somebody else and just kind of living my life, figuring myself out.

Buzzy Cohen: So this wasn't exactly what you'd call a meet cute. But several months later, Rese and Stacy would have the opportunity to meet again...this time, as competitors on the *Jeopardy!* stage.

At that time, Rese went by her first name, Emily.

ARCHIVAL:

Johnny Gilbert: This is Jeopardy! Introducing today's contestants, a climate scientist originally from Troy, Michigan...Emily Cloyd. A public interest lawyer from Washington DC...Stacy Braverman. And our returning champion, a high school chemistry teacher...

Buzzy Cohen: At the start of the game, Rese was in her element.

MUSIC: Suspenseful music

Rese Cloyd: I remember getting up there and feeling really confident. And then realized that I was getting totally out buzzed by the person at the podium next to me, who happened to be Stacy. She was really great.

ARCHIVAL:

Alex Trebek: Joy of Cooking calls it classic Mexican avocado relish. Stacy.

Stacy Cloyd: What is guacamole?

Alex Trebek: Yes.

Stacy Cloyd: Buzz In for 200 please.

Alex Trebek: Using electric clippers to trim your hair down to the scalp results in one of these. Stacy.

Stacy Cloyd: *What is a buzz cut?*

Alex Trebek: *That's it.*

Stacy Cloyd: *Buzz for four.*

Buzzy Cohen: As they headed into their first commercial break, the returning champion, Manny Maldonado III, was in the lead. But by the end of the *Jeopardy!* round, Stacy was edging him out.

During Double *Jeopardy!*, Stacy was on a roll, but the game took a brief pause when the producer had to stop tape to swap out one of the clues.

This happens occasionally, and it's the reason that *Jeopardy!* writers create an extra clue for every category... just in case.

Stacy Cloyd: **It was during that point, while they'd stopped it and I had a moment to catch my breath and look around that I realized that there was a locked game. That no matter how the last couple of questions went, unless I wagered very badly, I was going to win. And that was very exciting.**

Buzzy Cohen: Rese, standing to Stacy's left, also realized what was about to happen.

Rese Cloyd: **I turned over to her and I saw this, just, really what I would say is sort of a secret smile. She wasn't looking at anyone else. She was just taking it all in that she had gotten on the show and it was a runaway game and she knew she was gonna win...and...it was just a moment of pure joy that I was witnessing from her.**

Buzzy Cohen: Stacy didn't get Final Jeopardy! Actually, no one did, but she still took home \$14,984 and with a clever and modest wager, she became a *Jeopardy!* champion.

ARCHIVAL:

Alex Trebek: *Let's go to Stacy now. Stacy Braverman had \$15,000 and did she come up with — no, Admiral Farragut instead. You had to think about the wars abroad and Admiral Nelson. Nelson. It's going to cost you how much? \$16. Oh, you sly fox. \$14,984 as you become the new Jeopardy! champion. Well done, young lady...*

Stacy Cloyd: **A lot of adrenaline was going through my body. I felt really happy and excited and then I realized, *Oh my gosh, I'm gonna have to do this again in like five minutes.***

Buzzy Cohen: The win was a dream come true for Stacy...and although Rese finished in third place, playing on that stage still felt like a huge accomplishment.

Rese Cloyd: I can't really say I have any regrets. I think it was a really fun experience. And as Stacy has told me several times, had things gone the other way and I had bested her in the game, she may not have been as gracious a loser as I was. Because I'm the one who came up to her and suggested that we go forward with a joint viewing party.

Buzzy Cohen: Here's Stacy.

Stacy Cloyd: We went to a bar and invited everybody. I didn't tell my family how it had gone, but I know that you told yours.

Rese Cloyd: Yes. I told my parents, because my parents are able to keep a secret.

Stacy Cloyd: Everyone who was in the D.C. area came to the viewing party. My parents, my little brother, a bunch of our friends.

Rese Cloyd: There might have been a little friendly rivalry going on with who people were cheering for.

Buzzy Cohen: But not between Stacy and Rese.

Rese Cloyd: After the viewing party, we became Facebook friends. And one day I put out, *Hey, I'm gonna go strawberry picking.* You commented and said, *Hey, that sounds like fun. I'd like to go.* And we drove out to the farm and picked a lot of strawberries.

Stacy Cloyd: I had a really good time. I just remember thinking, I am enjoying hanging out with this girl.

MUSIC: Whimsical spacey music

Rese Cloyd: I am not very good at asking people out and so I was just trying to telegraph to you, like, *Hey, I like you.*

Stacy Cloyd: I think that you had asked if I wanted to go to Opera in the Outfield, which is a simulcast of an opera performance from the Kennedy Center on the big screen at the local baseball stadium. And I said, *I would like to go and maybe I'd be*

interested in going as more than friends, if that was of interest to you. It was something like that.

Rese Cloyd: *When I got that email from you, I was so excited and I wrote back pretty much as soon as I saw the email to say, Yes, absolutely. I would like to go out with you on a date and not just as friends.*

Buzzy Cohen: After many more non-friend dates, and 11 years of marriage, Rese and Stacy look back on their *Jeopardy!* origin story as a fun nod to the life they're building together. Creative, curious, and full of surprises.

We'll be right back. Stay with us.

ACT III:

Buzzy Cohen: While there have been many *Jeopardy!* romances over the years, there's another kind of quiz show love that shines bright on stage 10 — and that's the love that viewers feel for certain contestants.

Like Cindy Stowell.

ARCHIVAL:

Johnny Gilbert: *Here are today's contestants. A science content developer from Austin, Texas...Cindy Stowell.*

MUSIC: Whimsical music

Buzzy Cohen: It was 2016 when Cindy made her first appearance on *Jeopardy!*

But the story of how she got there wasn't an easy one.

Jason Hess: *Hi, my name's Jason Hess and I was Cindy Stowell's partner through her run on Jeopardy!*

Buzzy Cohen: Jason and Cindy first met in their sophomore year of college at Virginia Tech.

Jason Hess: *We ended up kind of randomly in a co-ed dorm. We were 19 years old. We immediately clicked and we were kind of simpatico from day one and, and just had, had the greatest time together.*

Buzzy Cohen: They were both studying chemical engineering.

Jason Hess: *She was a little shy, but was pretty adorable. She was, uh, very witty and funny, and I don't know — I was immediately hooked.*

Buzzy Cohen: Jason and Cindy dated throughout college, and after graduating, they decided to move to Austin.

Jason Hess: *In our adult life, you know, *Jeopardy!* was a kind of a routine and a ritual. It was something that we watched together every night. You know, I think for, for her and, you know, honestly, for me and lots of people I know, it was something that seemed like it would be something that would be fun to do someday.*

Buzzy Cohen: *Jeopardy!* was always in the back of their minds — but in the interim, they were very happy to explore the local trivia scene.

Jason Hess: *One night we said, *Hey, let's go check it out.* And we went in and did, did very well on our first night and, and it became a — certainly once or twice a week, almost every week, maybe as many as five or six times on the — a week at our, at our craziest.*

Buzzy Cohen: Jason remembers it as a great and stable period of time in their lives, but in March 2015, their world changed dramatically.

Jason Hess: *Cindy had been, had been dealing with some weird discomfort and, and...so...they did a scan and found — found a mass. They did a biopsy of what they found and, you know, came back with...it was already stage three colon cancer and it had already spread to lymph nodes.*

Buzzy Cohen: The next year and a half meant a succession of surgeries and treatments. And Jason was by her side through it all.

Jason Hess: *You know, you get a piece of bad news and, and we would, you know, cry together. And then the next day she was, you know, setting up the next round of appointments and trying to figure out what was next. She wanted to live and, you know, was going to keep trying until...until she couldn't...until she couldn't anymore.*

MUSIC: *Reflective slow music*

Buzzy Cohen: In all the chaos and emotional turmoil of the year that followed her diagnosis, Cindy got an unexpected call.

It was the *Jeopardy!* contestant department, letting her know that she'd been selected for an in-person audition.

Jason Hess: You know, the — the online test was just something we, we, yeah...*Oh, look, the, another year has gone by. Sure. Let's, let's take it again.*

Buzzy Cohen: But they hadn't put much stock in it — and with Cindy's cancer diagnosis, they nearly forgot about it.

Jason Hess: I think our mindset at the time was, you know, we need something fun. [Laughs.] You know, this is the, you know, if anything else, I think it was, a break from kind of the ongoing dread of the whole situation.

Buzzy Cohen: But I think at the same time, um, you know, she felt like she had a responsibility to — to check in with the production team because...she had the distinct sense that there was a chance that...you know, she would not make it to the end of her contestant window.

For most *Jeopardy!* hopefuls, once you try out for the show and get into the contestant pool, you can usually expect to get a call back within an 18-month period.

Former contestant producer Maggie Speak remembers when Cindy first reached out.

Maggie Speak: We got a letter from a young woman who was invited to an in-person audition — explained to us that she had cancer. And was given only a few months to live. And if it wasn't possible for her to make it onto the show in that period of time that she'd like to give her audition to somebody else.

Buzzy Cohen: Even though Cindy was ready to give up her spot, Maggie told Cindy to keep it.

So Cindy made it to the audition and she played incredibly well. Soon after, she received an invitation to compete on the *Jeopardy!* stage.

MUSIC: Fast paced suspenseful beat

Jason Hess: There was sort of a moment of consideration of, do we want to do it? Is this something that, that you can handle? But she really did not hesitate really, for long.

This was kind of a piece of good news to, to hang onto and, and kind of this light shining through the clouds where it was, you know, I think she was like, *Absolutely, I want to do this.*

Buzzy Cohen: So she did it.

ARCHIVAL:

Alex Trebek: *Cindy Stowell is from Austin, Texas, and this young lady enjoys viewing really bad movies. Give me some examples.*

Cindy Stowell: *Oh, well, um, in college, a friend of mine started a club where we rented out a lecture hall and a projector in, in a classroom, and we watched such delights as the Transformers cartoon movie...was pretty bad. You Got Served...also really bad. I mean, there are movies though that you can talk through during and kind of share the misery with others, so...[Laughs.]*

Alex Trebek: *Oh good. That's a great way to socialize, isn't it? All right.*

Buzzy Cohen: On Cindy's first tape day, she was bantering with Alex and clearing categories, but she was also dealing with challenges far beyond those that came with a typical contestant experience.

Jason Hess: **She was in the early phases of what turned out to be a blood infection, and she had had several surgeries, not to mention the cancer itself, she was in a fair amount of pain, kind of as just a constant low-level thing.**

Buzzy Cohen: Cindy was on medication, but she would get spikes of fever in the middle of a game.

Jason Hess: **There was a game on that first tape day, maybe game three or something where she spiked a, a pretty high fever and was, you know, when they went up to makeup between the brakes, she was clammy and she was starting to perspire.**

Buzzy Cohen: **But she'd get right back out there.**

ARCHIVAL:

Cindy Stowell: *No Stanley Cameo for \$1200.*

Alex Trebek: *Answer there...a Daily Double. [Audience clapping.]*

Cindy Stowell: I'm gonna chicken out at \$4,000.

Alex Trebek: That's all right. Here is your clue. The Russkies invaded the U.S. in this Swayze flick, and despite the cries for "Wolverines," neither Logan nor Stan showed.

Cindy Stowell: What is Red Dawn?

Alex Trebek: That's the movie! Way to go. [Audience clapping.]

Jason Hess: At the time, you know, I could tell she was dealing with stuff, but then she was still fighting through it and playing really well, and so it was, I — I think it, I — I didn't really process until afterwards. Looking back, kind of the enormity of what she had done. It's such a tough game and a game of reflexes and everything else, and it's really just kind of crazy to think of how well she did kind of under — under those conditions.

ARCHIVAL:

Alex Trebek: We are dealing with city names and here is your clue, players. Cuba's second most populous city and a South American capital share this name that refers to St. James. You have 30 seconds. Good luck.

[Final Jeopardy! Music.]

We come to you in the middle. Garrett, you had \$2,800. An up and down kind of game for you, and you wrote down Asunción, which is incorrect, and that will cost you therefore a thousand dollars only. Now let's go to our returning champion, Tim Aten. He's won seven times in a row. Over \$107,000. He also came up with Asunción. And what did he risk? A modest risk, as usual, \$3,600. Only leaving him with \$7,800.

So it's up to Cindy Stowell and she came up with Santiago, the Spanish name for St. James. Did you risk a little or a lot? A lot. [Audience clapping.] Way to go. \$20,801 for the new Jeopardy! champion Cindy Stowell. You'll see her again tomorrow at this lectern. Join us then, folks. So long.

Buzzy Cohen: By the end of her first tape day, Cindy had won four consecutive games of *Jeopardy!* After that, she went home for a full week before the next tape day.

Jason Hess: The week in between, after we got back and the next taping, she was in the hospital for most of that week for what turned out to be sepsis, you know, blood

poisoning. And got out of the hospital, I believe that weekend and then that Monday we were flying back to L.A. to go be on *Jeopardy!* again. It was just...I...it felt like this surreal kind of, uh, experience.

Buzzy Cohen: Cindy came back for a second tape day and won two more games. She was a six-day champ. She lost in her seventh game...and went home to Austin.

Jason Hess: I think the *Jeopardy!* staff were aware that things were going downhill. And so they found a — a loophole in the process. FedExed a DVD with her first three episodes to us in the hospital. And so we were able to play her episodes, you know, on a laptop.

BEAT

Jason Hess: The hospital and the treatment center we were working with, they basically said, *It's time to start thinking about hospice care.* We decided to do in-home, in-home hospice. They had kind of wheeled in a hospital bed in place of our, in place of our sofa for the last couple of days.

Buzzy Cohen: On December 5th, 2016, Cindy Stowell passed away from stage four colon cancer.

Jason Hess: She passed in the middle of the night, you know, three or four in the morning. The finality of it, you know, really kind of hit and, you know, obviously was, you know, obviously very, very sad.

Buzzy Cohen: But it also dawned on Jason that Cindy's last few months had been pretty extraordinary.

MUSIC: Whimsical spacey beat

Jason Hess: Everything about that experience, you know, kind of had a...had a touch of magic that I think, you know, in the larger picture, it really gave her, you know, a legacy. I think she, you know, would have, you wanted, wanted people to remember her as a kind, caring person that, was able to kind of do the best under really trying circumstances and her medical journey did not, did not work out for her, but she never gave up and she did the best with the, the hand that she was dealt.

THEME MUSIC

Next time, on This Is Jeopardy! The Story of America's Favorite Quiz Show...

Johnny Gilbert: There are, I guess, a couple of times when I started to introduce him on the show, I wasn't sure he was gonna come out on stage. I really didn't know.

This Is Jeopardy! The Story of America's Favorite Quiz Show is a production of Sony Music Entertainment and Sony Pictures TV.

It's hosted by me, Buzzy Cohen.

This episode was produced by Mia Warren and Sylvie Lubow.

The series producers are Julia Doyle, Rob Dozier, Sylvie Lubow, and Mia Warren.

Associate producer is Serena Chow.

Our series editor is Sarah Kramer. Executive producers are Lizzie Jacobs, Tom Koenig, Sarah Kramer, Michael Davies, and Suzanne Preté.

Production management help from Susonya Davenport and Tameeka Ballance-Kolasny.

Our theme music was composed by Hannis Brown. Cedric Wilson is our engineer.

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