

Wonderful! 81: Bug Man vs. Magic Guy

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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: Damn! [singing] I wish this was your podcast!

Rachel: Ooh.

Griffin: That's my first thing, and I wanted to bring it. It's the song, and I believe it's called 'Damn.' I think that the title of that—

Rachel: In parentheses, '(I Wish I Were Your Lover)'?

Griffin: I don't even think it gets the parenthetical. I just think the name of that song is 'Damn,' and it's from, y'know... [laughs] You don't need me to tell you who did that song.

Rachel: I don't, because... the... person... uhh...

Griffin: Just stall. Just...

Rachel: Band that sang that song is one that most people our age are familiar with.

Griffin: It's a... it's, uh... Sophie B. Hawkins.

Rachel: Ohhh.

Griffin: Who did... this is Wonderful! This is a show where we tell—it's a Sophie B. Hawkins fancast where we talk about the song, 'Damn, I Wish I Was Your Lover', which is how the song starts. I'm looking at the lyrics, and—oh, no, it's not. That's the first chorus.

Anyway, on this show, we talk about, uh, all the great hits of Sophie B. Hawkins, as well as whatever else sort of floats across our field of vision.

Rachel: Uh, there was the, um, uh, OG, 'I Wish I Were Your Banker.'

Griffin: Yeah. And, 'Shoot, I Wish I Was Your Buddy.'

Rachel: Um, 'Shucks, I Wish That I Worked At a Deli Counter.'

Griffin: There was, 'Fuck, I Wish I Was Your Mortician,' which was... that one...

Rachel: Wow.

Griffin: That one only got some college radio play.

Rachel: See, I was trying to clean it up.

Griffin: I know, but that one—she was going through a dark time.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Do you have any small wonders?

Rachel: I do.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Rachel: First, duh, Lizzo's album is out.

Griffin: I still haven't listened to it!

Rachel: Um, this is not one of those albums where like, the singles are the best songs.

Griffin: Oh, you're kidding me?

Rachel: I am not kidding you.

Griffin: 'Juice' is not even the star of that album?

Rachel: I—so, oh my gosh. So, there's 'Like a Girl,' which I really like. Kind of a lady anthem in the style of Beyoncé. Uh, and then I like, um, oh, oh... it's something...

Griffin: Is it 'Damn, I Wish I Was Your Lover,' the cover that she did for that one?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I bet she would crush that song, actually.

Rachel: 'Exactly How I Feel' is the name of the song.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Rachel: Uh, and it's very good.

Griffin: I'm going to listen to it this week.

Rachel: Please do.

Griffin: I will need some power to get me through Friday. Oh, were you just gonna go ahead and start doing your first thing?

Rachel: No, I had one more thing I wanted to mention.

Griffin: Oh, what was it?

Rachel: Uh, there is a new special on Netflix called Call to Courage, which features Brené Brown.

Griffin: Oh.

Rachel: Who I am a big fan of.

Griffin: Who is that?

Rachel: Brené Brown has written several books, uh, and she talks a lot about how you can't have courage without vulnerability. And so, she sounds a little bit like a self-help guru, but I will tell you what – she has a bachelor's, master's, and PhD in social work, and she comes from a very, like, research-based place. And I find her stuff really compelling.

Griffin: It's not just that she has big teeth and can speak confidently into a microphone.

Rachel: No. No.

Griffin: Which is really all it takes for a lot of folks.

Rachel: She's done a lot of research on vulnerability and shame, and she talks a lot about how vulnerability is necessary to have courage in your life, and I just find it very useful, and I would recommend it.

Griffin: Or superpowers. If you had those, you probably would...

Rachel: Yeah. Well, yeah.

Griffin: I saw Avengers: Endgame, and I can't talk about it, 'cause this is still gonna go up before embargo.

Rachel: Oooh.

Griffin: But I liked it a lot. I don't even know if I can say that.

Rachel: Look at this fancy guy.

Griffin: But I enjoyed it very much. Yeah, I went to an early screener. It was fun. That's, I guess, one of my small wonders. It was a good flick. Good way to wrap it all up. And also, uh, touch screens. They're pretty cool that they're where they are now, right?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: When I was a kid, I remember I had like an early palm pilot thing that I like, got...

Rachel: Oh gosh, I remember the palm pilots.

Griffin: And I was like, in love with it, because if memory serves, it was kind of open source, and so like, I figured out how to download like, these games that people made on them, and it was like a really quality version of Drug Wars and stuff like that.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And you had to like, press it really hard with this little stylus.

Rachel: How old were you when you got a palm pilot?

Griffin: Oh, I was in high school.

Rachel: Did you have a lot of meetings that you were uh, responsible for?

Griffin: I forget the circumstances as to why I got a palm pilot. I'm pretty sure it didn't start out mine. I don't know if that means I stole or inherited it.

Rachel: [laughs] Okay.

Griffin: But now they do everything. I saw a thing—this isn't a touch screen, this is my third small wonder. I saw this thing where people were shooting pool on a pool table, but there was like an AR overlay on it. There was like a projector overhead, so that there was a little circle around the cue ball. And wherever your stick went in over that circle, it would project a line straight forward that would bounce off of the borders of the table, so it would show you literally exactly where your ball is gonna go.

Rachel: Whoaaaa. That's some like, Minority Report stuff.

Griffin: Yeah. So I guess all my things together is just technology.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Who goes first this week?

Rachel: I have no idea.

Griffin: Ah, shoot. It's me.

Rachel: Oh, well, congratulations.

Griffin: My first—thank you for the prize. My first thing is... [in a strange accent] Creeks. Let me do my... I gotta get the good accent stank on this one. [in an even stranger accent] Creeks.

Rachel: Did you grow up actually saying 'crick'?

Griffin: I think it's interchangeable. No. That's too much for me.

Rachel: Did you know people that say 'crick'?

Griffin: Oh, absolutely. I think I—I get very—my hackles get up whenever anybody brings up certain like, Appalachian stereotypes, and I would say that saying the word 'crick' is borderline on them, but uh, just like all

Appalachian stereotypes, I don't think I necessarily fall prey into most of them. But I definitely know someone who falls prey into at least one of them.

Rachel: Yeah. And I want you know that I do not associate any stereotypes with you in particular. I just... I get curious about the words people use in their regions.

Griffin: 'Crick' felt too much like an affectation to me, but there were people who lived in Huntington who could pull 'crick' off. I'm talking about creeks.

Rachel: Yes. See, that I'm familiar with.

Griffin: Yes. Creeks. These little rivers are everywhere, and I am just... I'm all for them. We now live in a house with a creek pretty close to it, and—

Rachel: It's incredible. This is like a childhood dream of mine, to be this close to a creek.

Griffin: We're pretty close to a creek. When it's dry, like, nothing happens back there. It's more of a ravine. But then, as soon as it starts raining...

Rachel: Oh, it's wonderful.

Griffin: It starts gushing. And so, I was actually preparing this segment with the windows of our living room open, just listening to this just natural, white noise machine.

Rachel: Did you... one, write a poem about it that you're going to read right now?

Griffin: Um... I can just read my notes in the style of a poem?

Rachel: And two, is it onomatopoeitic?

Griffin: Creek? The word creek?

Rachel: No, the words in your poem. Did you use the sound of the creek to inspire the language you used in your poem? Did you do a lot of gurgle gurgle, slush slush slush... gurglepaglodiba?

Griffin: No. But I did write the following.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "I'm in our living room right now, with the window open, as I prep this. And it's just like this chill-ass white noise machine." And then, hold on, wait. [makes bubbling creek sounds]

Rachel: Thank you for that. Uh, Griffin, is this your first poem that you've ever written?

Griffin: Uh, it's my seventh one. Yeah, so I did the other ones in school.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Uh, I just like... when I was younger, I will say this. I didn't say the word 'crick,' but I did have a lot of creek-based activities that I could rely on, which is—

Rachel: Yeah. A lot of good creeks where you grew up.

Griffin: There were a lot of good creeks. There was one that sort of ran through my local park that we just kind of lived down the street from, and usually, like, y'know, we'd be playing in the park, or I'd be riding my bike. I would often ride my bike around the like, little track around the park. And when it got too hot, you just take off your socks, take off your shoes, and do a little wade in the water.

Rachel: Oh, yeah, wading in a creek...

Griffin: It feels very—I'm surprised that you're as for this as you are.

Rachel: Eh, I was kind of an outdoorsy kid. It might be hard to believe, but it's true.

Griffin: It is very hard to believe. I have—let me know if you've done this. You ever go crawdad huntin'?

Rachel: No. I...

Griffin: Now, see, that's where I—I never ate any of the crawdads that I caught, as far as I can remember, but I did go crawdad huntin'.

Rachel: How did you catch them?

Griffin: You flip a rock over really quick, and you try and grab them really fast.

Rachel: Oh, like a bear.

Griffin: Like a bear would do. Yeah, sure. I thought you meant like how you would grab a bear. You flip the rock off its cave, and you try and just grab 'em real fast.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, now – boat races? Yes. Boat races. Creeks were made for little leaf boat races. There was a bridge that went over the creek at Ritter Park, and we would just like, toss some leaves off and just see which one went under the bridge faster. Very good sport. Sport of kings.

Rachel: Oh my gosh, you grew up in like a Mark Twain story.

Griffin: I did. There was also a big tree that fell down, and it forted the 'crick.' Kids would use it as a bridge. So much so that it almost became like, codified, like, this is now a bridge. Uh, but I think someone got hurt. Uh, not full blown Terabithia'd, as far as I know, but like, it wasn't good. So then they cut it out. Which was a shame.

So, uh, there's just like this nice little water feature, and it's not like a big deal like a river. It's not like... it's like an unpretentious body of water, which I appreciate. It doesn't have to be anything that it's not. It's like the above ground pool of rivers.

Rachel: Interesting.

Griffin: Thank you. I guess an above ground pool is already its own kind of body of water, but um...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: So I was Googling, like, what makes a creek a creek? And technically, all creeks are streams, but not all streams are creeks.

Rachel: Wow. I... that's interesting.

Griffin: Yes, I know. There's a whole taxonomy of it. It goes as such—

Rachel: Okay, good. Good.

Griffin: The smallest kind of stream is a brook, right? A babbling brook.

Rachel: Mmm, so you don't have trickle? You don't have trickle in there?

Griffin: There's not a trickle, no. I don't think you would ever call it a trickle.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Brooks are usually very shallow, and they are usually fed by like, a spring. Uh, rather than like, being a... having a tributary of their own.

Rachel: Oh! Okay.

Griffin: Here is the... so, creeks are like, a little bit beefier, and they can also vary based on rainfall. So, the weird thing is, it's all kind of just... Calvinball when it comes to creeks v. rivers. It's all kind of just... basically it just says like... and there is no hard and fast rule for it. But just like, when a creek gets deep and long enough, somebody looks at it and is like, "I actually think that's a river now."

But there's no... so like, who decided all this?

Rachel: So it goes, brook, stream, creek, river?

Griffin: No. A brook and a creek is a stream, and technically, I think a river is also a stream.

Rachel: ... Okay.

Griffin: But so like... it just drives me wild! I grew up next to Four Pole Creek is what it was called. But it was pretty frickin' deep. When it like, rained and flooded in Huntington, which it was known to do very, very badly and destroy the city from time to time—

Rachel: I feel like, if you could bring a watercraft, or y'know, conduct transportation on something, it's a river.

Griffin: Is that what your... but see—

Rachel: That's what my brain says.

Griffin: But this is what I'm saying. Four Pole Creek was very deep. And so, when it rained a lot, it would get extremely full, and you could easily—

Rachel: Yeah, but could you put a boat on it?

Griffin: Easily. Easily.

Rachel: Yeah?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: What kind of boat?

Griffin: [laughs] A...

Rachel: How big is a boat?

Griffin: How big *is* a boat?

Rachel: No, how big is this—[laughs]

Griffin: Well, according to the dictionary, a boat is ten feet.

Rachel: How big is the boat that you're putting on this, uh, body of water?

Griffin: Uh, I mean, it's gotta be bigger than a kayak, right? You want an engine on this thing?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I could probably get a sailboat on it.

Rachel: Huh.

Griffin: Yeah, it was a big creek. Right? So who decides that? Who decides that?

Rachel: I think it has to be a bigger boat that can get on there.

Griffin: Okay. So the—

Rachel: See, I grew up in St. Louis, which is right on the Mississippi River. Now, that is...

Griffin: Oh, that river's big.

Rachel: That's a big ol' river.

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, I grew up on the—

Rachel: Nobody would call that a creek.

Griffin: No, and nobody would call the Ohio River a creek.

Rachel: Exactly.

Griffin: They would call it a... sludge. Line. Of acid.

Rachel: [laughs] Your dad really does. He has like, legitimate burns on his body from swimming in the Ohio River.

Griffin: Yeah. My dad is, uh... y'know, he's a very clumsy man, and so, I often see just like, new wounds appear on him. And then, I guess I had forgotten. I saw him while he was changing for a TAZ live show, and I was like, "Holy shit," 'cause he had just these patches of body hair that were missing. I was like, "What is that?" He was like, "Oh, that's from when I swam the Ohio River and I got acid burns on my body." Yikes.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: So anyway, uh, creeks are good. Creeks are great. They are the people's rivers, uh, and...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I just think more rivers should be creeks. And that's where I'm gonna leave it. What's your first thing?

Rachel: My first thing... Magic Eye.

Griffin: This is gonna be tough for me.

Rachel: I mean, it's gonna be tough for all of us.

Griffin: [laughs] I have never once, in my life, gotten a Magic Eye painting to work.

Rachel: Really?

Griffin: Never once in my life have I gotten one to work. And it wasn't until I was in like, college, that it dawned on me that it is probably because of my blind spot.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I could never, ever... people would see it and be like, "Oh, that's clearly a boat." And I'd be like... "What the fuck are you talking about?!" And I tried everything. Like, people were like, "Here's a life hack."

Rachel: It is very difficult for me. So like, the protip on Magic Eyes is that you're supposed to use what is called divergent viewing.

Griffin: What is this? That's where you go to to movie and you see the flick about the woman who defies... uh, the redhead woman from... oh my God, I couldn't remember a single actor's name. I just could—I can't think of a single actor's name!

Rachel: In the movie Divergent?

Griffin: That exists!

Rachel: [laughs] Ever? It's not—

Griffin: Keanu Reeves! Okay, holy shit.

Rachel: Wait, Keanu Reeves is in Divergent?

Griffin: No, I just—he's just a celebrity that I was able to think of. Oh my god.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Julianne Moore, maybe. Or Kate Winslet is in one of those. Magic Eyes is good, though. Divergent viewing, though.

Rachel: Divergent viewing. So instead of focusing your eyes, which is everybody's inclination to do, you look past it. So you kind of have something in front of you, and you act as if you are looking through it and past it.

Griffin: But then you can kind of like... eyes are so weird.

Rachel: Right?

Griffin: Because if you—they really do work like a camera lens, where you can adjust focus like, kind of like... you can control it. And so like, that's what you're supposed to do is like, dial it in and out until you see the boat. And I could never see the boat.

Rachel: I know. And it's hard for me. Honestly, like—

Griffin: You don't have to pity me. You don't have to pity me.

Rachel: You have to practice a lot. It's not like one of those things you get good at right away.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Here's the thing about Magic Eye. It was super huge in the '90s; so much so that there were three books released, and they spent, together, a total of 73 weeks on the New York Times best seller list. [laughs]

Griffin: Oh my god.

Rachel: I remember this as a kid. Like, I remember it being a thing. And it's so quaint now when I think about it, that the world was going crazy for these books and posters. Doesn't that seem like a simpler time?

Griffin: I like to think that Mr. Magic Eye, who invented it, Steve Magiceye... Magicee...

Rachel: Do you want to play this game? 'Cause I have the info right here.

Griffin: Well, I think he had this invention locked down pat in like, 1950. And he was like, "No. They're not ready for it yet. I'm gonna wait until it's the most lucrative, the most profitable." And then in the early '90s, everybody got dial up internet, and he was like, "Oh fuck. If I don't get this out now... once everybody's on the internet, nobody's gonna give a shit about Magic Eye. They will download their own Magic Eye and be bored with it in a week."

Rachel: Yeah. So Magic Eye, uh, actually has a history, and that history is autostereograms, which are images that appear 3D through 2D patterns. And this started as a random dot stereogram, invented by a neuroscientist in 1959. And he did that to test people's ability to see depth in 2D form. So he took dots, and he kind of moved them subtly, and people would project which dots they thought were further away based on the placement.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: So it was kind of like an optical illusion that he was kind of showing, uh, that people have the ability to see depth without...

Griffin: Actually having the depth.

Rachel: Needing depth.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. And so, this was in 1959. And then, in 1979, Christopher Tyler created the first black and white wallpaper autostereograms with a computer.

Griffin: Wait, there's a wallpaper?

Rachel: Yeah. Y'know how Magic Eyes are like wallpaper? They repeat the same—

Griffin: Right, right, right. Okay. I thought you meant literal like, putting it up on the walls.

Rachel: No. [laughs]

Griffin: Can I just say, though, having a Magic Eye wallpaper in your room would be pretty cool.

Rachel: Oh, gosh. That would make you so ill though.

Griffin: It would make you very sick.

Rachel: Y'know... oh, that's a way to update the yellow wallpaper. Are you familiar with that short story?

Griffin: No.

Rachel: Uh, it's, I believe, by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and it's a short story about a woman who was kind of locked away in a room, due to "hysterical reasons." And then, she kind of has this whole hallucination where she's like, in the wallpaper, and it represents her madness.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Rachel: Uh, and...

Griffin: But now it would be like—

Rachel: If you had the Magic Eye, that'd be for reals for real.

Griffin: She's like, "I still don't see any fucking boat!!"

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, so, it was in the early '90s, 1991, when a creator, Tom Baccei, worked with Tenyo, a Japanese company that sells magic supplies.

Griffin: Huh.

Rachel: So this started in Japan. The book was called 'Miru Miru Mega Yokunaru Magic Eye', which roughly translated is, "Your Eyesight Gets Better & Better in a Very Short Rate of Time: Magic Eye." [laughs] Uh, and the book became a best seller over there, and then it came to North America in 1993.

Griffin: It's nice not having to take responsibility as a nation for this one. Magic Eye is neat, but it almost cert—I don't know. I just assumed anything that burns as bright and fast as that is...

Rachel: No, that's a good point.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: That's a good point. I was talking to my coworker today about Ugg Boots, and how it was a trend that I could tell was kind of not gonna last. Magic Eye, very similar.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: So as you mentioned, Magic Eyes have been used by vision therapists to treat certain issues. Like if people are physically unable to see a Magic Eye, they could potentially go to their eye doctor, and they could have issues as like, binocular vision, or uh, accommodative disorders. So like, people that have "wall eyes" or crossed eyes or whatever also aren't able to see, uh, Magic Eyes.

Griffin: Huh. I think... I'm not missing out on very much.

Rachel: Not really, no. Especially by today's standards, now that VR exists, Magic Eye kind of seems unnecessary.

Griffin: Yeah. But see, VR works for me. VR works—which, I guess, is just like... it's just two screens that are kind of folded in.

Rachel: Well, they did say that Magic Eye kind of operates on the same assumption that like, uh, 3D glasses operate on.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: That your eyes can kind of do different things at the same time. That you can unfocus your eyes and have them work kind of independently, is kind of the same thing as like, y'know...

Griffin: That—I mean, that's the basis of pretty much all VR headsets and like, a lot of VR technology, all the way down to the Google cardboard thing, is essentially... when you put on like, the Oculus Rift, the headset is producing two images. So like, uh, it's twice as hard to make games for it, because it has to literally run two sort of visual fields at the same time. And then it is when those two visual fields combine at an exact, very, very precise that you have to sort of dial in, like, distance from each other, is where you get the 3D effect.

Rachel: Yeah. Also, uh, viewfinders.

Griffin: Oh, yeah.

Rachel: Those little plastic viewfinders. Kind of the same thing.

Griffin: Do you think that if Magic Eye came out today... and every time we say it, it does sound like we're saying magic guy. And that's really cool, too.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You know who I love? Magic guy. Criss Angel? I don't know. He's the one that does the tricks. Uh, if Magic Eye came out today, do you think it would be like, the dress? The Buzzfeed dress, the black and blue or the...

Rachel: Ohh.

Griffin: 'Cause there—y'know, I'd pull it up on my phone and be like, "Some dipshit says there's a boat in these squiggles." And then you'd be like, "There is a boat in those squiggles." And then... y'know, Twitter.

Rachel: [laughs] That's kind of how all of these problems end, isn't it?

Griffin: Yeah, sort of.

Rachel: Um, I... I don't know that there's room for Magic Eye anymore. Unless they can somehow get it on your Apple Watch.

Griffin: Hmm. But I'd need two Apple Watches.

Rachel: No, I don't think that's how that works.

Griffin: Hold 'em up to my eyes like I'm a bug man.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Did I look cool right then when I was pretending to be a bug man?

Rachel: You really did. Griffin literally held both of his wrists up to his eyes, as if I couldn't imagine what that would look like if he didn't demonstrate it.

Griffin: Like a bug man!

Rachel: Like a bug man.

Griffin: Bzzt! It's me, the bug man, here to fight you, Magic Guy! Can we steal us away?

Rachel: Please.

[music plays]

Griffin: Got some sponsoroonies. You want to hear me talk about them at length?

Rachel: Uh, only if I can talk about the first one.

Griffin: Yeah, why don't you go ahead and take the first one? 'Cause you've had more of your cloth modded than myself.

Rachel: Okay, so you watch the Poetry Corner... the YouTube video that I created for Poetry Corner?

Griffin: Watched it? [laughs] I freakin' absorbed it through my skin.

Rachel: Okay. That's... another word for taking something in. Uh, what I will tell you...

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: That little goldenrod sweater I was wearing?

Griffin: Oh, that old number?

Rachel: From Mod Cloth.

Griffin: Hey.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Well done.

Rachel: At Mod Cloth, there's no such thing as an ordinary outfit. Crafted by a team of in-house designers, their signature styles include hand drawn prints, standout silhouettes, and an inclusive size range that celebrates all women. Uh, you can find any number of things on there. I got that little sweater. There's all sorts of dresses, socks, shoes... uh, pants. Just a lot of really cool, unique prints and fashions for, uh, your wardrobe.

Griffin: I also heard they have rompers.

Rachel: They do have rompers. And jumpsuits.

Griffin: This is exciting news.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. Do you know the difference between a romper and a jumpsuit?

Griffin: Romper is... a jumpsuit is long sleeved, romper is shorts? I don't know.

Rachel: Long pant. Yeah. Yeah.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Rachel: Good work.

Griffin: Hey, cool.

Rachel: Good work, fashionista.

Griffin: Gosh, I'm smarter about clothes than I think.

Rachel: [laughs] To get 15% off your purchase of \$100 or more, go to ModCloth.com, and enter code 'Wonderful' at check out. This offer is valid for one time use only, and expires on July 6th, 2019.

Griffin: Hey, can I tell you about Care Of?

Rachel: Please.

Griffin: I'm gonna talk about a Osmosis Jones again. I feel like it's tough to not. So, if you didn't hear the last time I talked about Care Of, they are a company that is gonna deliver you a subscription monthly vitamin box, and it's gonna give you a boost of uh, power. Health power, that you need this spring season.

If you need energy? They got you. Better sleep? Got you. Maintain stress? They got you. Something else that you need to feel your healthiest? They've got you. So these pills... now, let's get into the analogy.

In Osmosis Jones, there is the character, Osmosis Jones. He's a blue sort of amoeba, uh, white blood cell sort of guy, fighting crime. He's trying—

Rachel: Can I tell you – every time you talk about Osmosis Jones?

Griffin: Yeah?

Rachel: I think of Earthworm Jim.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: But I know it's not the same.

Griffin: Yeah. Don't think of that.

Rachel: Okay. Good. I won't.

Griffin: This movie's about a blue cool guy who... but he can't beat the disease that's in Bill Murray alone. And so then, he takes a pill, and the pill turns into David Hyde Pierce. And I can't say legally that the pill is gonna turn into David Hyde Pierce inside you, these vitamins, but—

Rachel: Are you sure this is a real movie? [laughs]

Griffin: It's a great movie. So they're gonna give you an online quiz that is gonna ask you about certain things in your life. Just takes five minutes. And then, from that, they're gonna come up with a little regimen for you, and it's gonna have daily vitamin and supplement packs customized to your recommendations. They have vegan and vegetarian supplement options available, if that's something that is important to you.

And also, you can get 50% off your first Care Of order. Just go to TakeCareOf.com. Don't put any spaces in there. That's not how hyperlinks work. And then you're gonna enter 'Wonderful50', and that code is gonna get you all the David Hyde Pierces that you need.

Can you read me this first jumbotron?

Rachel: Uh, this first message is for Michael. It is from Sarah. "Michael, happy fourth wedding anniversary! I am so happy I got to spend another year gaming, parenting, and exploring life with you. Serenity and I are so lucky to have you in our lives. Here is to another forever and a year together. Also, thank you for being a good, good husband and putting up with my McElroy obsession. Love you lots, Sarah."

Griffin: Hell yeah. Couple gamers. I wish we were a couple gamers.

Rachel: Really?

Griffin: The gamers that game together... game together.

Rachel: That is true.

Griffin: And I have always told you that.

Rachel: No, if we were gaming together, we'd be gaming together.

Griffin: But you know what the problem is?

Rachel: What?

Griffin: We just like the different stuff, and I'm always wanting to play Osmosis Jones for Super Nintendo, and you always want to play your Earthworm Jim for Sega Genesis.

Rachel: Oh my gosh, that is so true. Do you want to hear the next message?

Griffin: Capulets and Montagues. Just can't seem to... can I read the next message?

Rachel: Oh, sure!

Griffin: This one's for Eric, and it's from Bridgette. Or Bridgeet. I'm gonna go with Bridgeet, 'cause that's what it actually is. "These are my vows. Hopefully, I am playing this for one hundred of our family and friends right now. Thank you for loving me and our sweet Alfredo and watching Drag Race with us. I've loved you for six years, and I'll love you forever. I've hidden some Girl Scout Cookies somewhere in the apartment. If you can find them, you can have them. I guess I'm your wife now."

Those are pretty good vows. Really, you sort of gets across exactly what you need to know in this exact moment.

Rachel: And I like the little mystery of the Girl Scout Cookies.

Griffin: And that's what I was talking about. These Girl Scout Cookies, they have a shelf life, so... get hunting.

[beeping sound]

Adam: The Greatest Generation is a Star Trek podcast that de-stigmatizes the very idea of having a Star Trek Podcast.

Ben: [laughs] We're Ben and Adam, the host of the Greatest Generation, and the technology we've developed is that nobody knows what you're playing in your ear buds.

Adam: You know, with legalization, it's easier than ever to find out what's in your buds. But we suggest that you legally find the Greatest Generation wherever you download your podcasts.

Ben: We'll send it to you in a discreet, unmarked package, and nobody has to know but us.

Adam: That's the Greatest Generation, the Star Trek podcast that you didn't know you needed, yet makes you feel like you belong.

Griffin: Can I talk about my second thing?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: It is, of course... a bidet.

Rachel: Oh, here it is...

Griffin: Oh, bidet!

Rachel: Here it is. Here we go.

Griffin: Here we go. We're gonna get a little bit, uhh... anatomical in this one.

Rachel: This... first of all, we should say, uh, that this is a lovely birthday gift from the very thoughtful Travis McElroy.

Griffin: Oh, he's very much thinkin' about sort of our needs.

Rachel: And when Griffin says 'our'...

Griffin: You used it, and you came out of that bathroom hovering four inches off the ground, so I do not want to hear you say like, it's *my* thing. It's *our* thing. We can both get down on this.

Rachel: I also want to say... so, it is a toilet attachment.

Griffin: Yeah. It's a toilet seat with a little robot inside it.

Rachel: That Griffin installed himself.

Griffin: I did a good job.

Rachel: And he did a very good job.

Griffin: I cut my hand in four places.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. And there was a small flood.

Griffin: And there was a little... it wasn't a *flood*. It was a little leaky leak.

Rachel: Was it a creek or a stream?

Griffin: It was a brook.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: So yes, we have a bidet now. It's rad. It has all these different functions. You can adjust the water pressure of the spray, the heat of the spray, the heat of the toilet seat. There's a massage function. An oscillation.

Rachel: The position of the spray.

Griffin: You can change the position of the spray. Frickin' of course. Nobody's buttoholes is same. Everybody's... which is another way of saying everybody's buttoholes is different.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, there's all kinds of bidets, right? We have the built in toilet seat one, which is the sort of more modern take. But there's also the standalone sort of toilet-esque appliance that usually lives right next to the toilet. I have seen these. Never used one, because it weirds me out. And then there are like, shower heads that you can use, uh, in some places.

Honestly, like, bidet use, uh, differs wildly between like, different countries. And different sort of uh, like, religious practices. There are certain religions that take hygiene, like, very, very seriously. And so, bidets, you will find like, more of them in regions where that religion is more common.

Uh, also among like, different age ranges. Bidets are becoming slightly more common among the elderly for various health reasons. Um, but I had never used one until I went to Japan, and it really opened my eyes, because they are very, very common there. Pretty much...

Rachel: Griffin, you're not supposed to use it on your eyes.

Griffin: Uh, are you sure? Oh no. Their bidet game is... I'm sure we've talked about this, but like, their bidet game was so on point, because... let's see, we had a home away there in Kyoto where it had like, ground effects that shone into the bowl, and also, sound effects that it would like, make running water, so you could like...

Rachel: I think you would walk in in the lid would open automatically.

Griffin: The lid would open on its own. It had a motion sensor, and then there was like, a perfume spray. It was so rad.

Rachel: The host was really excited to show it to us. Like, she knew that that was gonna be a big feature.

Griffin: Yes. And it... was. Uh, I just—and it feels very good on your duff, or whatever undertown parts that you're using to rinse up. And I didn't think

I would appreciate it. First couple of times I used it, I was like, "Hee hee hee!" And I turned it off really quick.

And then I was like, hey. I'm clean. I'm refreshed. It gets kind of uh, humid in Japan where I was walking around a lot. And so I would just get a little spritz, a little clean, and then I was ready to go. And having that available in my own home to fight off the fuckin' Texas summer heat... I am ready to beat the shit out of June, July, and August.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's gonna be so good. I am armed and ready.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: And bidets are good. Bidet a French loan word. The etymology, I thought, was hysterically funny. It's the French word... do you know what it means? Do you know what bidet means in French?

Rachel: We did not learn that in high school French.

Griffin: Uh, it's pony. So, in old French, 'bider' meant 'to trot.' So the etymology comes from the notion that one "rides or straddles" one of the standalone bidets, much like a pony is ridden.

Rachel: Oh my gosh.

Griffin: That is very, very good for me. So like, nobody quite knows—like, a lot of rad things that we use these days, nobody knows exactly who invented the bidet. But it is thought to have come from like, French furniture makers, from some time in the 1800s. What was the thing I recently talked about that I feel like we attributed to French furniture makers?

Oh, I've never done bidets before, right? Oh, sectionals. I think I was talking about sectionals. Yes.

Rachel: Oh, okay.

Griffin: Leading the charge. Uh, there was a written reference to a bidet in uh, Italy in 1726. Uh, there is also historical evidence of bidets being used like, among royal circles around that time period. And also, at that time, it was traditionally kept in the bedroom. Gross. Gross gross gross gross. Yuck yuck yuck.

Rachel: Y'know what I'm thinking about? Is the kind of comedy of errors that would come from the bidet in the bathroom, and then the bidet that you ride on out in the world. Right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: If it comes from the word pony, how do you differentiate when you're talking to your friends in France? Y'know?

Griffin: Yeah. Well, I think it's probably rare for a person to say... a person of a certain age to say the words, "I'm gonna go ride my pony," unless they are genuine.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I think genuine is the only one that can say that out loud. If you're ten, and you say, "I'm going to go ride my pony," I'm going to assume you're talking about the small horse.

Rachel: That's fair.

Griffin: And not the appliance. Okay, so there was a book that was published in 2001 called The Encyclopedia of Birth Control. Apparently, during this time period where like, bidets were starting to get going in Europe, it was used for contraceptive purposes.

Rachel: Ohh. See, yeah, they used to... they use to just think you could just...

Griffin: Just sort of goosh it out.

Rachel: You could just scoop it out, and you'd be fine.

Griffin: Just sort of goosh it out of there. Yeah, that's nothing. Uh, so plumbing got better. The bidet moved into the bathroom where it belongs. Uh, obviously, John Harvey Kellogg had to get a hand on the ball. And he was like, "Oh, let's talk about anal douching. Let's talk all about anal douching. You gotta be clean everywhere."

Rachel: Oh yeah. They've talked about this fellow on Sawbones before.

Griffin: Probably many, many times. So he came up with his own sort of bidet style contraption, surprising nobody. I feel like when that hit the news... "Kellogg invents new bidet-style nozzle contraption." I think everybody was like... "I thought he'd already done that... but I guess maybe I just had assumed."

Um, later in the 20th century, they became sort of more common household items. But it wasn't until the 1990s that the sort of built-in nozzle on the toilet seat sort of modern bidet that we own, and we know it, uh, came from... Japan, of course. That's where... they got their... they entered the playing field in the early 1990s with the built-in bidet.

There were companies like Clean Scents, Galaxy, Infinity, Novita, and GoBidet, and they just changed the fucking game for all of us. For the rest of us. Which I—

Rachel: And this is a lot easier on your plumbing than those like, flushable wipes and stuff that they sell now.

Griffin: So that's the thing. I was thinking that actually, a bidet was a sort of luxury item that was actually pretty bad for your global footprint.

Rachel: Yeah, 'cause it seems like it would use more water.

Griffin: But actually, it was found that like, you actually use way, way less toilet paper. And so, it evens out, and also, almost kind of like, makes up for

the fact that you are using slightly more water. Not a ton of water. You're not even using as much as you do when you flush when you use a bidet, unless you really wanna get clean all up in there, Kellogg.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, but yeah.

Rachel: And what's great too is, you can get rid of your shower, because why would you shower anymore if you have a bidet?

Griffin: You have a bidet. Yes. Exactly.

Rachel: Exactly.

Griffin: I love the bidet. I've used it every day since I've gotten it. If you are grossed out by this segment because you've never used a bidet, I really... I really don't think it has to be a thing.

Rachel: Griffin, are you inviting everybody to use our bathroom right now?

Griffin: No. Although, you are very—we had to put it in our guest bathroom, just 'cause it's the only place it would fit. And Rachel was very nervous about, like—

Rachel: 'Cause it's the first thing we're gonna talk about with every single guest that comes into our house now is that bidet.

Griffin: And we had a little Easter get together, and sure enough, everybody wanted to talk about the bidet, which was flattering for me, because they all wanted to talk about how well installed it was.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And then all of them were like, "Oh, I'm so nervous to use the bidet!" But then everybody came out like... "It was actually very good."

Rachel: Like, I'm glad I rode that pony.

Griffin: I'm glad I rode that particular pony. Bidets. They're amazing. What's your second thing?

Rachel: My second thing is a trip to the poetry corner!

Griffin: Hell yeah! [sings] Hey baby, I hear the poetry...

Rachel: Oh no. [laughing] Oh no, Griffin.

Griffin: Just do it.

Rachel: You had it last week!

Griffin: No, just do the—I know, but I used it all up, didn't I?

Rachel: There was like, scrambled verse I think was one of the...

Griffin: Just... go ahead.

Rachel: I'm so sorry. Uh, the poet I am featuring this time is Mary Oliver. She uh...

Griffin: Do you like the faces I make at you when you say the names of poets at me, and I pretend like...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Can you describe the one I just made?

Rachel: I always look at you to see if there's recognition.

Griffin: Oh.

Rachel: And you always do this kind of face like I am explaining to you how batteries work.

Griffin: Yeah. If you bring Robert Frost, or E.E. Cummings; although, that one's not gonna play on radio, I feel like.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And those are the only two. Emily Dickinson. She got some good ones up.

Rachel: You say this to me... but we have brought so many poets, and it troubles me that you can't name any of them.

Griffin: William Carlos Williams...

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: William Henry Harrison...

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah.

Griffin: William... Smith. We talked about his poetry in our bonus episode.

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah. Uh, Mary Oliver was born in 1935 in Cleveland, and she actually just passed away in January, 2019. She was 83 when she passed. It was a long life. Uh, she was born in Cleveland, moved to Massachusetts when she was older, and published 15 collections of poetry.

Griffin: Damn that's a lot of poetry.

Rachel: I know!

Griffin: I've only published four.

Rachel: [laughs] What are the names of those collections?

Griffin: Well, the first book was called... Just Some of my New Shit, and it was cool. It was cool. Like, the cover art was very cool. It looked like graffiti.

Rachel: You're like the Eminem of poetry, in that you just introduce yourself.

Griffin: Well, I dialed it back in, and the second one was Some Thoughts, and then the third book was... More Deep Thoughts. And I worked with Jack Hanvey on that one.

Rachel: [laughs] You know I have a soft spot.

Griffin: Yeah. And the fourth one was untitled. It was just kind of uh... it was just kind of blue.

Rachel: And so people called it your blue album?

Griffin: No. That's a Weezer thing.

Rachel: Oh, okay.

Griffin: Weezer stole it from me. I published these books in 1981.

Rachel: I get you and Weezer confused all the time.

Griffin: It's the glasses.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. [laughs] It's the white guy with glasses.

Griffin: Yeah. I look like a lot of white men with glasses.

Rachel: Did you know there's a Facebook group called uh, Griffin McElroy is Every White Guy with Glasses?

Griffin: Is there really?

Rachel: [laughing] Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. Is it—

Rachel: Every White Guy with Glasses is Griffin McElroy.

Griffin: Is it just screenshots of tweets that people send to me comparing me to...

Rachel: [laughing] I don't know. It's a private group, so I wasn't able to see what was in it.

Griffin: That's probably a blessing. Go with god, Griffin McElroy is Every White Guy with Glasses Facebook group.

Rachel: Uh, so, Mary Oliver is similar to the romantic poets in the kind of the... era of Wordsworth and Keats, who were poets—

Griffin: I know them!

Rachel: Poets who wrote about nature and kind of the majesty of nature.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Uh, but then she also has this kind of solitude loneliness, similar to Thoreau or Whitman of kind of like, "We are small in this environment." But also very like, American in its kind of like, spirit.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Uh, she, um... said in an interview with NPR, "Poetry mustn't be fancy. I have the feeling that a lot of poets writing now, they sort of tap dance through it. I always feel that whatever isn't necessary should not be in the poem."

Griffin: Yeah. That's...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Well, I probably could'a told you that.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, she won a Pulitzer Prize and a national book award, and there's this great, um, obituary kind of... not obituary, but y'know, tribute to her, the month she passed in the New Yorker. And they talk about, though her poems spoke to this kind of loneliness in the world, they were not poems about isolation, but about pushing beyond "emotional quarantine, even when you feel fear." So that was kind of a beautiful way to put it.

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: Uh, so I wanted to bring a poem that kind of represents that energy, and it's called 'When Death Comes.' It's very positive.

Griffin: Okay...

Rachel: It's a very positive, affirmative poem.

Griffin: Cool.

Rachel: When Death Comes.

Griffin: Uh-huh...

Rachel: "When death comes
like the hungry bear in autumn;
when death comes and takes all the bright coins from his purse

to buy me, and snaps the purse shut;
when death comes
like the measles-pox

when death comes
like an iceberg between the shoulder blades,

I want to step through the door full of curiosity, wondering:
what is it going to be like, that cottage of darkness?

And therefore I look upon everything
as a brotherhood and a sisterhood,
and I look upon time as no more than an idea,
and I consider eternity as another possibility,

and I think of each life as a flower, as common
as a field daisy, and as singular,

and each name a comfortable music in the mouth,
tending, as all music does, toward silence,

and each body a lion of courage, and something
precious to the earth.

When it's over, I want to say all my life
I was a bride married to amazement.
I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms.

When it's over, I don't want to wonder
if I have made of my life something particular, and real.

I don't want to find myself sighing and frightened,
or full of argument.

I don't want to end up simply having visited this world."

Griffin: That's amazing.

Rachel: Isn't that incredible?

Griffin: That's incredibly good. That's the best poem I've ever heard in my entire life.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I don't think I'm joking when I say that.

Rachel: It's beautiful. It's beautiful, and it's like I told you. It starts in this very dark place that a lot of poets go, and then ends saying, y'know, you have a lot of agency in this life.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And you're one of, y'know, millions of people. But there is a tremendous opportunity to be an individual in that.

Griffin: That was a very good poem. Thank you for bringing that poem.

Rachel: You're welcome.

Griffin: It was delicious.

Rachel: Good.

Griffin: A sumptuous poem. [tasty eating sounds] A honey-kissed...

Rachel: [laughs] Uh oh, Griffin is writing his eighth poem.

Griffin: A honey-kissed collection of words and... dripping... juicy...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Punctuate... do you want to know what our friends are talking about at home?

Rachel: Yes, please.

Griffin: Kat says, "Something I find wonderful? Planetariums. It's relaxing. The stars/planets projected across the dome are beautiful. Tickets are generally affordable, and usually, you'll learn something new."

Rachel: We should bring Henry to a planetarium.

Griffin: He would love it. He loves rocket ship.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: He do love that. Very much.

Rachel: He do. [laughs]

Griffin: They should call them space museums though, 'cause I get planetariums confused with plant... teriums. That's not really anything.

Rachel: Oh, I know.

Griffin: Is a planterium anything? I don't think they call them planteriums.

Rachel: I don't think so. I don't think so.

Griffin: Well, scrambled egg all over my face. Lauren says, "My wonderful thing is when my favorite fruit comes back into season. I live for winter oranges, I'm counting down until summer tomatoes, and I have just eaten my first perfect spring strawberry."

Rachel: Whoa!

Griffin: Oh man, I gotta make a strawberry pie, though!

Rachel: I think here it's more of a summertime treat.

Griffin: Is it?

Rachel: Yeah, I don't think the strawberries are going here yet.

Griffin: Huh, okay. Well, I'll make sure to get on it. Uh, there was—I've talked about Jim Spaghetti's strawberry pie, right?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: You have with me. I don't know if you have on the show.

Griffin: It's a very, very—they have like, one week where the strawberries they grow are like, peak, and during that one week, they sell strawberry pie, and everybody like, lines up around the block for it. It's the best.

So, here's one from Becca who says, "My wonderful thing is the last perfect bite of a meal. I'm talking specifically about when you notice that the best is on your plate. For example, the nacho with the best cheese topping chip ratio, and you specifically save it so it's your last bite. Chef kiss."

Rachel: Oh, I do this all the time. I'm very deliberate when I eat a meal of like, portioning out my food across the plate.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: So that I am able to consistently get the best bite all the way to the end.

Griffin: I like when I've eaten most of the stuff on the plate, and there's nothing but just sort of scrapples and leavens, and then I get a honk a bread, and I can just scoop it all up.

Rachel: Ohh, mm-hmm.

Griffin: Ohh, forget about it.

Rachel: It's tempting to finish that bread before you finish your meal, but you gotta hold onto a little bit.

Griffin: You gotta save one just juice spoon.

Rachel: [laughs] Is it weird that my mouth watered when you said 'juice spoon'?

Griffin: Yyyeah.

Rachel: Okay. [laughing]

Griffin: Hey, thanks to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our mouthwatering theme song, Money Won't Pay.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You can find a link to that in the episode description. Um, and thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go to MaximumFun.org, check out all the great shows there. I wanna give a shout out to Mission to Zyxx. It is a very ambitious and very, very, very well-produced and well-made space opera comedy improv show that is very fun.

Rachel: Yeah! Max Fun has been lucky to bring on a lot of really great shows recently.

Griffin: Dr. Game Show too is a hell of a lot of fun. Yeah.

Rachel: And then Amy Mann and Ted Leo for the Art of the Process?

Griffin: I know. I still can't believe that our network has a show with them on it. They're so talented. Okay, so yeah, that's all at MaximumFun.org. We have stuff at McElroy.family, including tickets to the live shows for My Brother, My Brother, and Me and The Adventure Zone that are still on sale in

certain places. I think northeastern regions, y'all slept on it and they're sold out, but they're in other places, too.

McElroy.family is the link, and we have merch, too. Working on some new merch that we're very excited about.

Rachel: Yeah. Is there an update on that?

Griffin: None that we can share on this show right now, but hopefully, soon, we will have news. We usually drop them in monthly batches, so maybe like June? We'll probably have something out.

Rachel: Okay. That sounds good.

Griffin: Yeah. Hey, what else do we need to say to our friends?

Rachel: Yeah, thank you for listening, and uh, if you haven't already joined our little Facebook community, it's a great place for people to share their Wonderful things each week.

Griffin: It's the best Facebook community.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Because you just get these little popups on your feed like, "Hey, y'know what's good?"

Rachel: People specifically go there to share great things.

Griffin: Yeah. Y'know what's good? The theme song to Crossfire. And that's just like, on your Facebook feed, and you're like, "Hey, y'know what? That *is* good." So yeah. That's the only good website.

Rachel: That's where I found out that Missy Elliott's new album is coming out soon.

Griffin: It's a news source, too!

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: You can't beat it. So that's gonna be it. I'm gonna go... downstairs...

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: And I don't want to—not gonna give away what I'm gonna do.

Rachel: Watch Survivor?

Griffin: Mmm, it's gonna come after. Let's just say, gonna get that spray.

Rachel: Gonna ride that pony. [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] I'm gonna jump on it. Was that whole bit too gross?

Rachel: I don't think so.

Griffin: I said 'anal douching' a lot.

Rachel: You did say that a lot, but you didn't describe it in detail, which I appreciated.

Griffin: I could.

Rachel: Please don't.

Griffin: Bye!

[theme music plays]

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[music plays]

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Ted: And I'm Ted Leo.

Amy: And we have a podcast called the Art of Process.

Ted: We've been lucky enough over the past year to talk to some of our friends and acquaintances from across the creative spectrum to find out how they actually work.

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Speaker 1: If I kick your ass, I'll make you famous.

Speaker 2: The fight to get LGBTQ representation in the show.

Speaker 3: We weirdly don't know as many musicians as you would expect.

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