

Wonderful! 93: The Ghost Ship McDonald

Published July 24, 2019

[Listen here on themcelroy.family](#)

[theme music plays]

Rachel: [inhales]

Griffin: That was the deepest breath I've ever—you know that's gonna be the first thing people hear—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —is you just ripping—like you're vaping... just God's own air. Wow, that was powerful.

Rachel: Takes a lot to get these pipes ready.

Griffin: All right, fill 'em up and let 'er rip!

Rachel: [pauses] Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: There was no breath that time! This is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: Now I don't know which way you're coming from! Do you—

Rachel: Do you want me to do it again, but with the breath?

Griffin: I just wanna make sure that you're oxygenated, okay? I don't wanna see you over there turning blue because you're too busy laughing at all the great jokes we're doing!

Rachel: I'm a little—I'm a little bit scarred from a comment, like, two years ago, where the listener indicated that I breathe too much.

Griffin: Oh! Well—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That person's probably a real dickfish.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Breathing's a pretty cool thing to do. It's sp—

Rachel: Yeah, it is a thing most people do, that's true.

Griffin: Yeah, it puts—I makes you're—I guess—I'm not really sure of the specifics, but, um, I guess you need it... It's like food for your lung-stomach.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: And that's—that's the best that I've gathered. Uh... I have lots of organs. I'll be gosh danged if I know what they do. Heart pumps blood, brain thinks thoughts, anything other than that I... like, pancreas? Liver? Kidneys?

Rachel: Did you know... the skin is your largest organ?

Griffin: [dudebro voice] Uhh... not really. [exaggerated laughter]

Rachel: Oh.

Griffin: [laughing continues] [inhales] Oh, boy.

Rachel: Do you have any small wonders?

Griffin: That joke! That joke was it. Uh, Comic Con was fun. I had a fun book tour. It's a very personal small wonder, but I went and—

Rachel: Very star-studded week for you.

Griffin: A weirdly star-studded week, uh, yeah. I saw weirdly a lot—like, more fame-o's than I've like, seen in—

Rachel: Did anybody say, "Oh, yeah! Griffin McElroy from the podcast Wonderful!"

Griffin: Uh... yes.

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: Uh, David Duchovny did.

Rachel: Oh yeah?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Big fan?

Griffin: Which was not—not David Duchovny.

Rachel: Oh. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, I'm sorry to break your heart.

Rachel: That's a bummer.

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, yeah, no, it was a very fun time that was also completely bizarre and like, profoundly out of my area of expertise, but, uh, gosh dang it, we got through it anyway.

Rachel: I saw those pictures of you. You looked real cute.

Griffin: Thanks, babe! Yeah, I did a red carpet photo shoot at an Entertainment Weekly event. It was pretty... pretty—pretty wild, man, but here, I'm back, and I'm just—

Rachel: Which you did have to purchase a blazer on the road. [laughs]

Griffin: I did. I bought a blazer at Macy's 'cause I didn't... you know, I didn't pack for EW.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: But what's your small wonder?

Rachel: My small wonder is ice cream sandwiches.

Griffin: And I'm glad you're doing this in a small wonder, not a big wonder, 'cause you know—

Rachel: 'Cause you're not a big fan.

Griffin: Don't like 'em.

Rachel: It's so strange to me. What don't you like about it?

Griffin: Biting ice cream. Don't like it.

Rachel: But they have the little outside that's all soft and easy to bite!

Griffin: Oh, but—oh my God, now I'm thinking about that stuff getting stuck to the roof of my mouth, but I also have this cold ice cream up against my teeth? [sighs] I have sensitive teeth. You know this. You maybe don't know this.

Rachel: I didn't know they were sensitive to temperature. I thought they were sensitive to everything else, but I didn't know temperature, too.

Griffin: Yeah, much like the rest of me.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, God doesn't give with both hands, you know?

Rachel: What did he give with the one hand? [laughs]

Griffin: My enormous organ, come on! Uh, it's been a hundred years. I don't know who goes first. I have a suspicion it's me. Here's a quick question, hot enough for ya? Geez. It's really hot in here.

Rachel: It is, yeah, but I thought you were used to it by now, 'cause you like, set the thermostat to do this. This very thing.

Griffin: Gets hot in these rhinos! Ace Ventura. Uh, it is my turn to go first this week.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: And Ace Ventura is my—no. Uh, my first thing is the supered hero that we call Spider-Man.

Rachel: Oh! That's nice.

Griffin: Spider-Man, pound for pound, Spider-Man's probably my favorite, uh, superhero. Uh, I like—

Rachel: Seems about right.

Griffin: I like him a lot. I just got back from Comic Con, obviously, and in the middle of that like, book tour trip, I saw Spider-Man Far From Home, so I'm kinda just like, keyed up to talk about the Spider-Man.

Rachel: Yeah, I didn't even ask you! Did you enjoy that film?

Griffin: I enjoyed the ever-loving crap out of it. It was really good. I liked it even better than Homecoming, which was like, fantastic.

Rachel: Oh! Well now I really wanna see it!

Griffin: Yeah, we should—I would definitely go see that one again in a heartbeat. Um, you should probably see Endgame first. Shoot. I think it's out next week.

Rachel: Ohh.

Griffin: Okay, but we'll—we'll talk off air about what movies we're gonna watch when. Um, I have never been like, huge into comics, which you might think is a lie because we just did one with Marvel, but like, it was always around me, because my dad wrote comics and collected comics.

Rachel: Did Justin or Travis pursue comics?

Griffin: Uh, not to the extent that dad did, certainly.

Rachel: It's so interesting to me, like, how that happens when a parent like, so exclusively loves something, how it's like, hit or miss whether or not it continues.

Griffin: Yeah, I mean—I think they know more about comics than I do, so like, I have to, you know, think that they do—they did, uh, dive into the comics scene

more than I did when I was a kid. And like, for me it was just video games and that was basically it.

Rachel: Yeah, that was basically—[laughs]

Griffin: Um, so like, my exposure to Spider-Man has been mostly through movies and games. I saw the first Toby McGuire Spider-Man movie on opening night after rehearsal for some play we were doing, and it was like, a midnight showing, and I was pretty young, and it was badass. I was like, "Oh! So this is the Spider-Man I've heard so much about!"

Uh, and I think it speaks to the fact that like... my only exposure is through movies and games, and there have been, like, a lot of good ones of both of them. Uh, and I think that's just because Spider-Man is a really good, interesting superhero. He's got like, the best blend of interesting powers, but also like, interesting real life stuff as compared to like, all the other superheroes.

Um, there's like, a vulnerability to him that I really like. I've always thought like, if people find out that, uh, Bruce Wayne is Batman, at the end of the day he's still like, a kajillionaire, so he'll probably be okay. If people find out Clark Kent is Superman, he's still this like, invincible super god that can go up and, you know, explode the moon.

Rachel: Good point.

Griffin: Uh, but Peter Parker's just like, a, you know, kinda nerdy, clumsy—like, kinda—not clumsy. He's extreme—[laughs] He's extremely coordinated because he has superpowers for that. Uh, but like, the comics, especially kind of the early ones, deal with, you know, growing pains and that, you know, high school drama, and also the fact that he's like, living in New York and completely broke.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And some of the things that go along with that. Like, it tackles all these subjects that make you think like, "Oh, Peter Parker's life is not super good, and he has a lot of really great people, a lot of really great characters who could and do get hurt when people find out the truth about him."

Uh, and I've always been sorta drawn to that. I feel like it gives them a lot— whoever is writing Spider-Man, whatever, has like, a lot to work with. Um, and I

also think that that kind of goes hand in hand with his powers, right? Like, he is agile and he's pretty strong and he can shoot webs, but other than that, like, you can—you can mess Spider-Man up in a fight. Like, Spider-Man can get hit and get like, torn up in a way that—

Rachel: Yeah... that suit's pretty thin.

Griffin: The suit's pretty thin, unless it's the awful like, nanite... fuckin' metal suit from Infinity War. No thanks, no thanks, no thanks. Put that back.

Rachel: And then the—the web. The web doesn't seem—I mean it seems strong enough to support a human man, but like, couldn't you just chainsaw right through that?

Griffin: I think you could probably chainsaw right through it, and that's why Spider-Man's mortal enemy, The Lumberjack—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —always, always manages to get him! And kill him. He's killed him like, 12 times.

Rachel: It made me think of a—wasn't there a wrestler that was like, Hacksaw?

Griffin: [WWE announcer voice] "Bonesaw is ready!" [normally] Yeah, Bonesaw.

Rachel: Bonesaw.

Griffin: Yeah, but he beat Bonesaw's ass, so that's it. I don't think he had bonesaws on him, so maybe in Spider-Man 4, uh, he'll... you know, or 3, he'll come back and, you know.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Have bonesaws. Uh, he is... he's also like, a nerd, but like, not in the cool Tony Stark way.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: He is like—he's an absolute brilliant genius, but he's also like, a nerd in the cultural sense of the term, and is like, very, very unsuccessful in social situations despite the fact that he is Spider-Man.

And like, I also like the fact that despite he has like, worked with The Avengers to save the world from these entities of cosmic horror, uh, he is still like, mainly the friendly neighborhood Spider-Man, who is just like, kinda trying to keep stuff from getting bad in Queens. And so there's like an intimacy there that like, I don't—I haven't really found in any other, uh—most other superheroes, I should say.

Um, I just think like—I don't know. For a superhero who has been around as long as Spider-Man has, like, it's kind of wild to me how much like, staying power that he has.

Like, I haven't seen a Superman movie or whatever or a Batman thing since the first two Christopher Nolan films where I was like, "Ooh, this is a good story that this superhero can generate!" But like, most Spider-Man movies, even the Andrew Garfield ones, which I did not love, were still like, I don't know, above the bar.

Uh, oh God, Into the Spideverse was like, my favorite movie of last year.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Uh, here's some spider facts: he first appeared in Amazing Fantasy #15 in 1962, created by Steve Ditko and Stan Lee. Uh, and what was really cool about the book—it came out during The Silver Age of comics which was like... it had a pretty set, uh, relationship between superheroes and teenagers, which is to say like, they were their—their wards. They were their sidekicks and flunkies and whatever, and Spider-Man was the first like, teenage main superhero.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Despite the fact that like, in every other sense of the term, like, he could've been a sidekick. He was a dweeb and, you know, he was kind of scrawny and then he got powers, but instead of, you know, pushing him into the sidekick role, you know, he was the leading attraction. Uh, and... I don't know, people just went—people just went wild for it.

Um, yeah. I just really like—I really—I enjoy Spider-Man. I enjoy his games. There was a good PlayStation Spider-Man game that came out last year. Swinging on webs is the coolest, like, way of transit any superhero has.

Rachel: No musical, though.

Griffin: The musical... let's talk about Turn Off the Dark. I had never seen it, uh, unfortunately. I—

Rachel: Well, wasn't it only available to the public for like, a very short time?

Griffin: It was on Broadway for 3 years.

Rachel: Oh, really?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Oh.

Griffin: It was on Broadway for 3 years. I read a plot synopsis, 'cause I didn't even know any—y'all, it is fucking wild! There was like, some figure out of like, Greek myth that coaches him through like, the training process of his powers, and—

Rachel: Wild.

Griffin: Uh, yeah. It's, uh—it's wild. And there's a scene where he fights The Sinister Six, apparently just like, over the audience. I read that and I was like, "Oh, that's why this thing was an engine that consumed ankles for fuel."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, yeah. Spider-Man.

Rachel: Spider-Man!

Griffin: Good superhero. What's your first thing?

Rachel: My first thing... supportive sandals.

Griffin: [pauses] [laughs quietly]

Rachel: You always take a drink when I say what my thing is—

Griffin: Well, it's because I just talked for a long time. Supportive sandals, though. I don't know what it means, but I assume it like, "Aw, Rachel. You had a hard day. Why don't you, uh—"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "You can have that extra Dove chocolate."

Rachel: "Rachel, did you lose weight? Because I'm feeling a little less pressure on me."

Griffin: "Rachel! Rachel? Let me give you a massage." That would be wi—why don't those exist?! Big boots you slap on that rub you while you walk on 'em!

Rachel: While you walk on them. I think that's where the challenge is.

Griffin: They'd have to be pretty big to get the servos and stuff inside.

Rachel: Yeah, and probably very hot.

Griffin: Mm—unless they had a cooling spritz spray inside of them, also.

Rachel: Ew, but then you're just damp down there.

Griffin: But then they also have a dryer... function.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh-huh?

Griffin: Yeah. But that's gonna—but there'll still be that mildew-y scent. Good news, it's got... odor spray. And you can customize it.

Rachel: A lot of sprays in—in—yeah.

Griffin: Well, then you need the secondary fan system to dry the—

Rachel: It almost seems like you'd need a pair of pants to go with the shoes, and then some of tech can go up through the pants.

Griffin: Well, yeah, I mean, the pants are mainly gonna be sort of like, storage for all the fluids that these shoes consume.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: 'Cause they are gas powered, also. Diesel, so that's good for the environment I think.

Rachel: [laughs] So why don't these exist? It seems like we've worked it out!

Griffin: It seems like we need 'em!

Rachel: Uh, well, I am actually—I'm referring to supportive sandals kind of in contrast to the typical shoe of the season, which is the flip-flop.

Griffin: Oh, I see.

Rachel: I'm not wearing them right now. I know that you just looked to see.

Griffin: I just che—I just clocked your shoesies. Yeah, you got—you got a fun, flirty lil strappy brown number. And I don't know what—anything about shoes. [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] No, I'm talking more about the sandal that is designed for summertime wear, um, but it has arch support and like, you know, curved foot beds and... you know, like a variety of things that are designed to be more supportive for the foot.

Griffin: I believe I ha—I believe you got me a pair of these.

Rachel: I did, I bought you some.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Because you almost exclusively wear sandals in the summertime, and it ends up being really harmful for your feet if they don't have support!

Griffin: Upgraded to boat shoes, didn't I?

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Thanks, cruise.

Rachel: [laughs] So, here's the problem with flip-flops. Let me just put this out there. So there's no support in there, and what happens is that you can get plantar fasciitis. Are you familiar with this?

Griffin: I've—I've heard of it and I don't know what it is. I think fasciitis means "of the skin?" Maybe?

Rachel: Maybe. Neither of us are medical professionals.

Griffin: Or "of the face? The skin of the face?"

Rachel: And then fascism is—

Griffin: Bad, obviously.

Rachel: —is when the skin is... you know, oppressive.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Uh, no. plantar fasciitis is related to the arch of your foot. So there's like, a tissue, like a band of tissue in the arch of your foot, and if you don't have appropriate support, you can start to get pain in that area, um, because you're just putting weight over and over again on like, the ball and the heel of your foot, and it's like, putting pressure on the tissue and then it can really hurt.

I don't know if you've ever experienced this, but sometimes if I wear like, flip-flops all day, by the end of the day, like, I have a lot of like, pain and cramping.

Griffin: Hmm. Well, I guess my little life hack there is to just sit at your desk.

Rachel: Mm. [laughs]

Griffin: For a long time.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, if you get too many bouts of plantar fasciitis, your body will start producing a new, like, bone?

Griffin: [incredulously] What?!

Rachel: In your foot, which can—

Griffin: Cool!

Rachel: —cause, like, a heel spur on the back or bottom of your heel.

Griffin: Or is it evolution finally trying to get a tail up in there?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Hmm?

Rachel: A foot tail?

Griffin: It d—I mean, the body is figuring it out. It's the, like—it's evolution, babe. In like, you know, 20 generations, maybe it'll work its way up.

Rachel: Oh, did you hear they rebooted FootTales?

Griffin: [snorts] [laughing] That was nothing!

Rachel: [laughs] [singing] Woo-oo!

Griffin: Yeah, you.

Rachel: I want you to sing the whole song, but make it Foot Tails, and I want you to do it right now, I think.

Griffin: [singing] Life is like a walking cane, here in Footburg."

Rachel: [laughs] That's good enough for me.

Griffin: Thank you.

Rachel: Uh-huh. Also, if you wear a lot of flip-flops you'll notice that you start to kind of curl your toes a little bit to kind of hold them on.

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Rachel: Um, which can cause your toes to bend up in a fixed position, and you get like, the hammertoe.

Griffin: It also gets it in the like, grundle, between your big toe and second toe. Your pointer—your pointer toe.

Rachel: Mm-hmm? [laughs]

Griffin: And it can just really rub you—rub you raw down there.

Rachel: Yeah yeah yeah. But like, a supportive sandal, like, addresses a lot of those issues. And I think—there's this whole, like, barefoot movement now—

Griffin: Oh, yeah.

Rachel: —of just like, human beings don't need shoes, and you can toughen your feet, you know, by just—and the best support for your foot is to not obstruct any—

Griffin: Cool.

Rachel: —with shoes. But here's the thing: like, that may be true that people didn't start out with shoes, but they were walking on like, soft surfaces, like dirt and sand and grass.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And now it's a lot of concrete!

Griffin: They hadn't invented like, nails and staples and Legos yet.

Rachel: Well, and also like, the dirt or the sand will kind of contour to support your heel, whereas pavement doesn't do that.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: So I—this is just more... I mean, it's appreciation for the supportive sandal. Uh, like a Teva, for example.

Griffin: Oh, yeah. I have always said Texas.

Rachel: I just don't think that's right.

Griffin: I don't think you think that's right.

Rachel: [laughs] You're saying it like it is a word that exists in Spanish, and I don't think that was ever the intention.

Griffin: Mm... agree to disagree.

Rachel: But, uh, yeah. I—it's more of a PSA, really. For—

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: —for those of you that are exclusively wearing the flip-flop in the summertime, may I introduce you to the concept of a supportive sandal.

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Rachel: A little more money, but... greater durability and support for your feet.

Griffin: Yeah. And, um, doesn't make you sound like a duck when you walk.

Rachel: True...

Griffin: My professors back at college would like, know when I was coming down the hallway, because they would just like, "f-clack, f-clack!"

Rachel: You got a loud flop.

Griffin: I had a loud, heavy flop, and it pretty much ended my professional assassin career.

Rachel: [laughs] Hey, can I steal you away?

Griffin: I wish you would.

[Home Improvement theme plays, gradually slowing and distorting]

Griffin: Got a couple sponsors here. I'm gonna talk about the first one, because the first one is ZipRecruiter. If you are hiring for a job, regardless of what that job is—ice cream taster, professional... jumper, tree eater, then it's hard to find people who are gonna apply for those jobs, because they're mostly fictional. Um, but if you wanna make it really simple, fast, and smart, you're gonna need to go to ZipRecruiter.

They've got powerful matching technology that scans through thousands of resumes to find people with the right experience and invite them to apply for your job. Hey, this guy eats trees. Go—get 'em! Go get 'em. Go have 'em.

Rachel: I like that.

Griffin: It's so effective that 4 out of 5 employers who post on ZipRecruiter get a quality candidate through the site within the first day, and right now our listeners can try [strained] ZipRecruiter—why did I get br—it left me breathless!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] It's such a great service it made me forget to breathe! ZipRecruiter, you can try it for free at this exclusive web address: ziprecruiter.com/wonderful. That's ziprecruiter.com/wonderful. ZipRecruiter: the smartest way to hire.

Rachel: Can I tell you about our next sponsor?

Griffin: Oh, yeah. Light her up.

Rachel: It's Rothy's!

Griffin: Rothy's...

Rachel: Did you know... and I—you won't know, because I didn't tell you until right now. My mom bought a pair of Rothy's!

Griffin: [gasps]

Rachel: She got like, a fun animal print!

Griffin: This such a special day in any daughter's life.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, and she said they're very comfortable. They also arrived very quickly. That's something that I imagine they don't promise, but has always been the case for me, is that I'll place the order and like, I'll get 'em the same week, which is incredible.

Uh, Rothy's are shoes made out of recycled plastic water bottles. Uh, Rothy's has diverted over 25 million water bottles from landfills, and they're fully machine washable. Every time you need a refresh, you can simply toss them in the washing machine.

Check out all the amazing styles available right now at rothys.com/wonderful. Go to Rothy's, R-O-T-H-Y... S.com/wonderful—

Griffin: [laughs quietly]

Rachel: —to get your new favorite flats. Comfort, style, and sustainability. These are the shoes you've been waiting for. Head to rothys.com/wonderful today.

Griffin: I thought you were doing a The Mask joke. When you were like "R-O-T-H- why? Because I gotta!" From The Mask? I thought you were doing a The Mask joke from J—uh, Jim Carrey's The Mask?

Rachel: You know that originated from The Mickey Mouse Club, right?

Griffin: Uhh... did he—did Mickey Mouse say P-A-R—

Rachel: I think it was like, "M-I-C-K-E-Y, why? Because we love you."

Griffin: No—I—I... right, but I was—I thought—I believed that it was more of a Mask joke. The Ma— The Mask.

Rachel: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Do you think I'm... especially influenced by Jim Carrey's work?

Griffin: Just The Mask.

Rachel: Yeah? [laughs] What—what gave you that impression, that I am a Mask devotee?

Griffin: Well, that you're wearing a big green mask right now!

Rachel: Oh...

Griffin: And right before we started recording you went "Smokin'!" and this is now the, like, 14th Jim Carrey reference of this one episode of Wonderful. Are you following the ARG at home?

Hey, this is a message for Liz. It's from Patrick, who says, "Here's hoping we've made it intact to month N of our minicrutch's life, where N could be anywhere from -2 to 4."

My head is fucking reeling right now. My head is—

Rachel: I didn't even try. I just—as soon as it seemed math-y, I just checked out. [laughs]

Griffin: Absolutely spinning out of control wildly. Uh, "Maybe more! You're wonderful, and I'm guessing the baby is wonderful too. You might not be the party's face in D&D, but you definitely are in our family. Love you through critical hits and failures alike. Let's get square pie tonight!"

I believe this is a message about a baby. About a bay-bee?

Rachel: Don't do it. Everyone knows. Don't do it.

Griffin: What, the—oh, you thought I was gonna do the 1-800 Collect?

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Was Jim Carrey in that commercial?

Rachel: [laughing] No.

Griffin: Then it shall pass us by!

Rachel: Hey, did you see this next personal message is also about D&D?

Griffin: Oh, no, I didn't!

Rachel: It's for Rob. It's from Kate.

"Happy anniversary, Rob! It's been 10 dang years, holy crap. You're a great husband, a wonderful father, and a fantastic human being. I look forward to so many more years with you, playing D&D, raising our three kids, and having a great time together as partners in life. I love you. Kate."

Griffin: Man... it's really hard to find a D&D group, so I applaud you for going above and beyond, just by—

Rachel: Especially—they've got three kids!

Griffin: Well, that's what I'm saying. You've made—you've made your D&D group. You have forged one—

Rachel: Ohh.

Griffin: —from—from nothing, and I think that that shows a lot of dedication to the game.

[Star Trek comm sound effect]

Ben: The Greatest Generation is a Star Trek podcast that destigmatizes the very idea of having a Star Trek podcast.

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

Ben: You know, with legalization, it's easier than ever to find out what's in your buds—

Adam: [laughs]

Ben: —but we suggest that you legally find The Greatest Generation wherever you download your podcasts.

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

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

[Star Trek comm sound effect]

Griffin: What's my second thing?

Rachel: I was just wondering that!

Griffin: [laughs] My second thing... came outta left field. It's a new—it's a new thing. I generally try to touch on older subjects. This is hot and fresh and really—the, uh—the active word here is "hot," because I want to talk about the Netflix television program Blown Away. This is... last week was wild.

Rachel: It's a little amazing to me that you started watching this without me. I'm just gonna say that.

Griffin: Well, I didn't think that you'd be into it. I thought it was gonna be a bad show, uh, and then me and Justin watched like, four episodes of it, and oops! It's incredible.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, last week was like, wild, because our book launched, the second graphic novel, uh, I went on tour, had this like, buck wild time at Comic Con. The biggest thing was when I discovered Blown Away on Netflix. It's a reality competition show about glass blowing, and it's just a wild, wild ride. Every episode, start to finish, is a fucking roll—a 22 minutes roller coaster. You will scream and cry and go on just an abso—the greatest journey of your life.

Start with this. Glass blowing? It looks really, really cool. To do it. You look like a—like, all they do is they like, get these blobs of molten glass on these big straws or whatever, and then they put them in the thing, and then they can spin 'em and work with like, tools. You look like a fuckin' warlock, of glass.

Rachel: Are the folks that compete in the show, like, full time professional glass blowers?

Griffin: They are—I would love it if they were just home glass blowers who had, like, other—

Rachel: So what I was wondering, like, is this a hobby?

Griffin: Yeah, it's like, "I've been blowing glass for two months!" [imitates glass shattering] "Aw, f—"

Rachel: "Aw!"

Griffin: "—beans!" Uh, I just like—they get the little blobs and the color, like, pellets, and they shove 'em in, uh, a furnace, through what's called a glory hole, which is hysterical.

Rachel: [laughing] Mm-hmm?

Griffin: And then they cut and shape it with all these specialized tools, and then they put it in an annealer to slowly cool it so it doesn't break. Like, I've learned more about glass blowing... I went from nothing to like, I think I have a pretty, like, firm understanding of how glass blowing works! Uh, which I didn't expect, so that's fantastic.

Um, there's also, like—it's enough to make me think, like, "I could probably blow some glass," which is a new—a new desire in my life. Like, I could probably make a pretty cool looking sphere, or a—or something.

Rachel: Classes do exist for that. I remember, because my friend Ariel took glass blowing classes briefly.

Griffin: I understand that, but please also understand that I would be very afraid to get some of the hot glass on me.

Rachel: Mmm.

Griffin: 'Cause what do you do?

Rachel: Do they wear big protective gloves?

Griffin: Uh, yeah. I mean, they do. And they have that weird like, newspaper pad that they can kind of like, roll it on.

Rachel: Mmm.

Griffin: I imagine that provides some—but still, the fear of me getting the hot glass on me would kind of suck a lot of the fun out of the process. Um, and it's just such like, a visually captivating process. It's like you're making glowing candy, and that's like, one reason why the show works so well.

Um, but also it's because these glass blowers featured on the show are... like, these brilliant glass wizards who have been glass blowing for so long, they have forgotten completely how to speak and interact like human beings.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, which is not to like, completely knock them, but like, the way they talk about glass. The way they talk about this red-hot sand makes it sound like they are talking about like, snakes or crocodiles or something. Like, the—a fun drinking game would be like, any time anybody says like, "Heh, well that's glass for ya!" Or like, "Well, yeah. Phew! Glass'll do that to you. Eh, ha, that's just—that's just glass! [gasps] I know that sound. That's glass."

Rachel: Uh-huh? [laughs]

Griffin: It's just every—every, like, 45 seconds somebody talks about some property of glass as if they are talking about the most precious diamonds, or the most dangerous gun. These people fucking love glass more than anything, and I have no metric for judging glass, which makes figuring out the winner kind of a shock every time, unlike—like, a cooking show I feel like I can see food and be like, "Mm! I bet that one's the best."

This one I'm like, "I don't know! That's a pretty good cup! That's a pretty good, uh, that's a pretty good light fixture, I guess! Whoa, a chandelier? That's probably gonna win," uh, and the biggest reason... and now I'm gonna show my hand... that it's so watchable—and this is horrible. But the glass breaks all the fucking time. The glass breaks constantly.

Not a joke, every episode, one or two people's glass just fuckin' shatters and they have to start over. Challenges go for like, 5 hours, and they'll be like, on hour 4 and just like, "[high pitched] Bink! Oops!" Gone.

Rachel: Ohh...

Griffin: And then it's like, "Well, okay. I have an hour. Let's try and redo it in one hour." Uh, and it's constant. It's like if you were watching Top Chef, or like—it's like if you were watching Great British Bake Off and every episode, two people dropped their, you know, 14 tier cake on the way up to the judges' table.

Rachel: I always, like—I always yearn for that when I watch those baking competitions, so I'm excited to know this exists elsewhere.

Griffin: And you don't want it to happen.

Rachel: Well, yeah, no.

Griffin: Like, you don't want these people—these wonderful sorcerers—

Rachel: You wanna watch it happen.

Griffin: —you wanna watch it happen, kinda.

Rachel: Yeah... mm-hmm.

Griffin: Is the problem, is that you do need it and want it 'cause you're filthy inside. Um, but it turns every episode into a fuckin' horror movie, because they will like, get you set up—like, whenever it like, zooms in on somebody and they're like, tapping their—their like—their hose to get the glass thing off of the end of it, you know if they leave it on that shot for too long, you're like, "That shit's about to fall to the ground."

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: And then sometimes it doesn't happen, and you're like, "[loudly] Well, now I don't know any—" It's like it was—it's like it was paced by a master horror director, because it sets you up to have these expectations and then, uh, swerves on 'em constantly. Uh, I just, like—I need this to become a genre.

Rachel: What's the name of the show again? I already forgot.

Griffin: Blown Away.

Rachel: Blown Away.

Griffin: And you know they are going to use that pun a great deal in this show.

Rachel: Yeah yeah yeah.

Griffin: I think at the end when they judge, they're like, "The artist who really blew us away was blank." And then they'll be like, "The artist who failed to blow us away—" [laughs] It's like, wow. This is a good show. I want—

Rachel: Who are the judges? Like, I feel like the expertise in this area would be very limited, and that it would—by like, the third season you would literally run out of people that could do it.

Griffin: So there's one, like, master glass worker who is like the artist-in-residence judge, and then there is... they will bring in a guest judge who—

Rachel: Like Paula Abdul?

Griffin: Like Paula Abdul—no, it'll be like, either a glassblower or like, they will have a—they did one for, um, wine—they wanted a goblet. Like, they wanted a wine glass and a decanter, and they had like, some wine expert come in and he could like, judge the physical properties of it.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: But then there's also the host of the show who's like, in the judging room with them, and this guy is a total idiot. He doesn't know anything about glass, so he'll point at something and he'll be like, "Hm, that one is, uh, nice and red!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Yes!

Rachel: Is he like a comedian type?

Griffin: Uh, he's like a host type.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: He is the audience surrogate. "I don't know what that is," he will say, probably.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, yeah. Blown Away. Watch it. Cr—just cram it. You're gonna just absolutely love it.

Rachel: Can I say my second thing?

Griffin: Yeah, please.

Rachel: I'm trying to think of how to describe this, and the best thing I can say is the story that is floating McDonald's.

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, I think you could even describe it... more than that.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, are you familiar with the concept of a—like a floating restaurant? Like a restaurant that is on a boat or barge?

Griffin: Yes? There was one in Huntington that did sink.

Rachel: Yeah, so that's the thing. [laughs] They almost always do.

Griffin: [laughing] Oh, do they? [laughs] Oh, man.

Rachel: So I—the reason I got connected to this was last week on Stop Podcasting Yourself they had a woman who was a writer, and apparently she did a big story on the floating McDonald's that was in Vancouver. And I was like, "How funny! St. Louis had a floating McDonald's. Was this like, a thing?" Only in those two cities. [laughs]

Griffin: Okay, I was about to say, I have never heard of this in my life.

Rachel: Um, and it kind of makes sense. So, St. Louis is right on the Mississippi River, which runs between Missouri and Illinois. Uh, the Mississippi floods a lot.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Uh, less so lately because of climate change, there, I said it. Um, and for a while in the 80s and 90s, they used that river a lot for like, floating casinos, for example, and floating restaurants was kind of the other thing. And they still apparently do like, riverboat cruises. Um, Mississippi is not a particularly pretty river. It is literally very muddy, uh, so I imagine that was a little difficult to sell.

Griffin: Unlike the proud Ohio river—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —with its crystal clear waters you can see the healthy catfish through.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: We'll eat you, healthy catfish! And they'll jump right up into your arms, ready to go.

Rachel: Uh, so the floating McDonald's in St. Louis opened in 1980, closed in 2000. uh, could seat 375 people and was open year round.

Griffin: Why—[laughs] why?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughing] Why? Why did they need a boat one? Why did they need a boat one, baby? Tell me!

Rachel: So, I was reading about it a little bit. I think initially the person that was responsible... I don't know if it was a franchisee or whoever it was, but the person was actually trying to get the McDonald's into the visitor center below the Gateway Arch.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Uh, and it was just impossibly expensive, and so they were like, "Oh, well what if we take this barge, we make it look like a riverboat because St. Louis has a big history of riverboats because of the Mississippi?" Uh—

Griffin: And then we crash 'er—crash it right into the fucking Gateway Arch. Now our McDonald's is in there!

Rachel: Uh, so they—so yeah. So it lasted 20 years. I went to this barge. I have very strong memories of it as a child.

Griffin: How was the food?

Rachel: I mean, it's... you know. McDonald's, so.

Griffin: Incredible?

Rachel: [laughs] So they designed it to look like a stern wheel paddle boat, so it had this kind of like, tourist-y quality to it.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: And it was right next to the arch, so you'd like, go up in the arch and then you'd go get McDonald's on the—on the barge.

Griffin: Yeah, that's what it is. You look out those weird observation windows from the top of the arch and you're like, "I'm gonna eat at that McDonald's boat!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "Cool! I can see—oh, look at the beautiful river!"

"Yeah, look at the beautiful McDonald's boat in it!"

Rachel: Uh, so it closed in 2000, I don't think for lack of business but because it needed extensive renovation, which it just like, didn't make sense to do that, financially.

Griffin: Yeah. You can't pull it into like, a McDonald's dry dock.

Rachel: Uh... [laughs] The—[laughs] I just pictured like, Grimace out on the side with like, a little washrag, just trying to do some of the work himself.

Griffin: I mean, that's—that's the—that's the question: which of the McDonald Land peoples was the captain? 'Cause you know it ain't Ronald. You know Ronald's not out there working on—

Rachel: Do you think he's the face? Like, he's—yeah.

Griffin: He's the face, but like, he's not putting in the work.

Rachel: Oh...

Griffin: Somebody—they needed a trusted hand on the rudder.

Rachel: Who—who was the lady duck creature?

Griffin: Uh, Birdie?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: She seemed to have leadership potential, I think.

Griffin: Yeah. I don't think... I don't think they would let Mayor McCheese be in charge of anything ever again.

Rachel: No, and I mean, obviously not the hamburgler.

Griffin: No, not the hamburgler! Are you kidding me?

Rachel: Is that all of 'em?

Griffin: [loudly] That's the—this is the hamburgler's perfect fucking crime, is—

Rachel: [laughs] Just to drive it away?

Griffin: All he's gotta do is jack this boat, and then like, the keys to the kingdom are his. He can not only steal as many burgers as he wants, he can make them. He has—he has obtained the means of production.

Rachel: Well, eventually he'll run out, though.

Griffin: Will he? Or can he just f... fish up some...

Rachel: Eugh.

Griffin: ... river beef.

Rachel: Ew... Do you wanna hear about the other one? The one in Vancouver?

Griffin: I—yeah, I do!

Rachel: So, the McBarge, officially named the Friendship 500, was a McDonald's restaurant built on a 187 foot barge for Expo 86 in Vancouver. So this was like the World's Fair in 1986.

Griffin: Right, yeah.

Rachel: Uh, it could serve up to 1400 people.

Griffin: Holy shit!

Rachel: Built at cost in today's dollars, it would've been 26 million.

Griffin: [loudly] Holy shit!

Rachel: The staff had little sailors' uniforms and the dining room had panoramic views of Vancouver.

Griffin: Well, that sounds nice.

Rachel: It was intended to be a McDonald's restaurant long after Expo 86, but apparently the barge was vacated and remained empty on the Expo grounds until 1991.

Griffin: What happened—

Rachel: So they just—it's kind of like a World's Fair—like the Olympics, where people do those big showcase pieces and then they just—

Griffin: Leave 'em there.

Rachel: —atrophy.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Uh, in '91 the new owner removed it because they were forced to. Um, it had been anchored derelict in the Burrard Inlet until 2015, when a individual named Howard Meakin moved it to Maple Ridge in the Northeastern section of Vancouver.

Griffin: Is it still a McDonald's?

Rachel: No.

Griffin: Or is it just a big boat now?

Rachel: No, at this point it is nothing. It is just a big, empty boat.

Griffin: Okay. There's gotta be some McDonald's brand signage on the boat still though, right?

Rachel: Well, so here's what happened. So, he was gonna spend 4.5 million to renovate the barge and turn it into a deep sea museum.

Griffin: That's a—okay.

Rachel: Uh, to be named Deep Ocean Discovery Center, but then he realized how expensive that was—

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: —4.5 million is a lot of money, and he thought, "Oh hey, Vancouver City Council. Give this a historic place status, and then I can get more funding from government grants."

Griffin: [laughs] [loudly] This McDonald's—this derelict McDonald's is a fuckin' institution!"

Rachel: [laughs] "From ye olden days of 1986."

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Um, he did not get enough petition signatures. Uh, and so then they planned a crowdfunding campaign, but had to cancel the event they were planning to hold in October due to bad weather. [laughs]

Griffin: Okay. So it sounds like God doesn't want this beautiful boat McDonald's.

Rachel: And apparently that was just kind of the end of it, at least as far as we know. I mean, it's been two years now. Nothing's happened.

Griffin: When they decommissioned the St. Louis one, do you think they just like, cut the rope anchoring it and just let it float down the river, and now it's somebody else's problem?

Rachel: Here's another interesting thing. So, nobody really knows exactly what happened to the McDonald's thing, or at least I couldn't find it online, but there was a Burger King floating restaurant.

Griffin: Ohh...

Rachel: In St. Louis, built in like, opposition to the McDonald's floating restaurant.

Griffin: Fuck yes!

Rachel: So, I could not find a lot of details on this Burger King barge, but in '93 during this huge flood, it got swept away and headed straight for Poplar Street Bridge, and rammed into it.

Griffin: Holy shit!

Rachel: So they were able to rescue it, but then it rolled over two months later and sank.

Griffin: Oh no!

Rachel: Apparently, when the river.. goes lower in periods of drought, you can see it. So in 2012, when the Mississippi hit all time lows, like, the [laughing] Burger King barge like, rose out of the ashes.

Griffin: You see the grim skeleton of—of Vid Kid.

Rachel: If you read about other floating restaurants across the country, like, almost every story is, "It broke loose during a flood and ran into some bridge." Every time.

Griffin: Mm-mm, mm-mm! Naval warfare. The ghost—

Rachel: Ohh.

Griffin: The ghost ship McDonald—

Rachel: [laughing] Uh-huh?

Griffin: [laughs] The ghost ship McDonald and its spectral crew came in, unmoored their rivals, and sent them to, uh, their own watery fate.

Rachel: Mm-hmm?

Griffin: God, that was good.

Rachel: Tell me about the floating restaurant in Huntington.

Griffin: I cannot remember what it was called. It was not a—we had two, actually. One of which was like, a restaurant and bar that I did not frequent very often, so I do not remember what it was. The other one was just kind of like, a—it was well outside of Huntington. My dad's gonna kill me that I don't remember, 'cause we actually went to this one quite a few times.

Um, and it just—it was just kind of a restaurant that you would walk down a pier to get to. It wasn't necessarily a full blown boat. Uh, and it sank, like, while I was still living in Huntington.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It like, it like, went under. I think the barge bar ended up being okay.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But, um... okay in the sense that it didn't float. It was not a very fun place to be, if memory serves.

Rachel: Yeah, it's hard to say. It's not like the food is particularly good on these floating restaurants, but the concept of it is very charming and very problematic and kind of delightful. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. There's one, uh—but there is one in Hong Kong, remember?

Rachel: Yeah, uh-huh?

Griffin: That like, we tried to get into and it's like, a really fancy, uh, roast duck restaurant, but like, it takes a bit 'cause you have to take a ferry out to it. It is just like, this huge, hyper-colorful boat. Uh, I would love to check that out.

Rachel: I think a lot of times people assume the novelty is enough and they don't work too hard on the food.

Griffin: Yeah. Apparently they do.

Rachel: Uh, and also it sounds like it's not a great investment, so why would you put a lot of money behind great cuisine if you're probably gonna use it in a few years anyway? [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. Like they always say, the two best days of your life are when you... buy your boat, and then when the ghost ship McDonald comes and sinks it, and you collect the insurance money, which you split with the ghost ship McDonald, because you had a whole racket. You had a whole racket going, didn't you? James?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Cracked the case. Hey, here's what our friends at home are talking about. Katie says, "My small wonder is vacuum cleaners that have a self-winding electrical cord. The fact that it saves time by just pressing a little lever with your foot and makes a satisfying 'zoop' sound as it winds up? Perfection. The one we

have at work always reminds me of a robot slurping up spaghetti, and it makes vacuuming the lobby bearable each night."

Rachel: This is like one of those ideas that if Shark Tank existed would've shown up on Shark Tank, and would've been incredible, because it's such a like, brilliant innovation.

Griffin: It is, but I'm pretty sure if they did that on Shark Tank, like, none of the sharks would do it, and then like, when the episode aired Hoover would just be like, "Yoink!"

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: "Don't mind if I do!"

Rachel: Henry loves this, by the way. It like, always makes him laugh.

Griffin: Scares the shit outta me.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I'm afraid it's gonna whip back and get me and plug into my leg and electrocute me, even though I know that's not how any of it works.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, Rebecca says, "I love when you take Friday off at work for whatever reason, maybe just to get an extra long weekend, and the Thursday before feels like your own secret Friday. TGIT?"

Rachel: Hmm.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Now why don't you to talk about this, Griffin.

Griffin: Why?

Rachel: Because I don't think this has affected you in a very long time.

Griffin: TGI—taking a Friday off work, and then having a s—secret TGIT? Yeah, I mean, when I look around at my chums at the office and know that these suckers are gonna be here, uh, you know, sch—scribblin' the ink and dippin' the—print—the pens, and filing these paper clips all day, and—

Rachel: Uh-huh? [laughs]

Griffin: —uh, Timmy—Chimothy didn't make the coffee again. And I look at them and I'm like, "Ugh. Thank God it's Thursday." 'Cause I—I hate them. I hate 'em so much.

Rachel: I should take you to work with me one time.

Griffin: Please do! I have—

Rachel: Like a Take Your Husband To Work Day.

Griffin: I'd forgotten—although you don't have any coworkers now either, so—
[laughs]

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs] That's true.

Griffin: Heads have rolled at Rachel's place of work.

Rachel: But I do have to go sit in an office space for 40 hours a week.

Griffin: Uh-huh. Alone.

Rachel: Which comes with its own challenges.

Griffin: Yeah, like, uh, the—uh, the—the sex tall—doll that you talk to, uh, while you're there, just to keep—keep the loneliness from setting in. Sort of a Lars and the Real Girl situation happening there, and I'm—

Rachel: Of all the comedic choices you could've made, you had to go with sex doll.

Griffin: Eh... yeah. [laughs]

Rachel: Mm-hmm?

Griffin: Unlike the—uh, unlike the potted plant that you've—that you kiss.

Rachel: There you go.

Griffin: When you get lonely.

Rachel: Mm-hmm?

Griffin: Do you at least call the plant Griffin?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, that's our friends at home. Thank you to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our theme song Money Won't Pay. Find a link to that in the episode description. Thank you for listening. Thanks to Maximum Fun?

Rachel: Uh, if you are not familiar with the other shows on the network, I would recommend you go to Maximumfun.org and look through the huge list of podcasts. Every day there are different podcasts that go up on that site, and it continues to be incredible.

Griffin: Yeah, and, um... yeah. We have shows on there. You can go to mcelroy.family if you wanna see all the stuff we do. Uh, gonna have new merch up in August. Uh... I think that's it. Gosh, I'm so tired. I think of a joke 'cause I'm so tired, babe.

Rachel: Mm. [laughs] Aw.

Griffin: [whiny voice] Baby, end it. End the episode, please. End the episode, please!

Rachel: I had an idea, and I shared it with Griffin, and I think it would be a great bonus episode where we just spend the whole episode just bouncing ideas off each other on what our sign off should be.

Griffin: How about, "None of your beeswax!"

Rachel: Doesn't really fit with the tone—

Griffin: "Don't have a cow, man!"

Rachel: "That's... a wonderful-a pizza pie!"

Griffin: [Urkel impression] "Did I do that? Did I do that?"

Rachel: [sighs]

[theme music begins in the background]

Griffin: [Urkel impression] "Did I do that? Did I do that?"

Rachel: "Did we do that."

Griffin: "Did we do it? Cheese, please! Did we do that?"

Rachel: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

Maximumfun.org.
Comedy and Culture.
Artist Owned.
Listener Supported.

[Sawbones theme music plays]

Justin: Hi everybody, my name is Justin McElroy.

Sydnee: And I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Justin: And together, we're the hosts of Sawbones, a marital tour of misguided medicine. What does that mean for you, the podcast consumer? Well, it means that you're gonna get a lot of stories about how we used to do weird stuff to people, in order to try to fix them.

Sydnee: Did you know that we used to think diseases were caused by bad smells? And that we used to eat mummies, for medicine!

Charlie: That's super funny! I kinda like it!

Justin: Well, thanks! And we hope you'll kind of like our show: Sawbones, a marital tour of misguided medicine. It's available every Friday, wherever fine podcasts are sold, or at its beautiful, picturesque home, at...

Charlie: Maximumfun.org!

[Sawbones theme music plays]