

Wonderful! 94: 109.9 The Whammer

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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy!

Griffin: Hey, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: I have Smooth stuck in my head again, so it must be the end of July, huh? We must be pullin' into August if I've got Carlos Santana and the other guy's Smooth stuck in my head, huh?

Rachel: You know what's interesting is that somebody that I'm friends with on Facebook just posted some pictures from a Carlos Santana concert they went to.

Griffin: And you have to wonder.. obviously Carlos Santana has a long and storied career before his, uh, fabled partnership with Robert Thomas [pronounced with a soft "th"].

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Uhh, just lotsa—lotsa shreddin'. Lotsa shreddin'. I don't actually know that much about his career. There was a Guitar Hero song. It was fine. Uh, but does Rob show up at the live shows?

Rachel: Probably not!

Griffin: Probably not!

Rachel: He's got stuff to do!

Griffin: He's got other stuff to do!

Rachel: Is there a particular lyric of Smooth that makes you think of the summertime?

Griffin: And you know what's funny? I mean, [briefly singing Carlos Santana's "Smooth" very...not greatly] "Well, it's a hot one!"

Rachel: Oh, there you go. Yeah. That's fair.

Griffin: You watched that music video. It's a lot of people sweating in the sun.

Rachel: Yeah, okay!

Griffin: Uh, yeah, no, it's the official summer jam. You know what's funny, though? I have it stuck in my head, but I don't know... a lot of the lyrics.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: It's—the part that's like, [singing quickly] "Just like ocean, under the moon—" Oh, no. I do know it. Shit.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I know every word.

Rachel: You know, this reminds me. You know how you said "It's a hot one," in the voice?

Griffin: [singing again...] "It's a hot one."

Rachel: This is like, after we have dinner, and you're very full.

Griffin: Mmm.

Rachel: And you do the Dave Matthews—

Griffin: [Dave Matthews impression] I ate too much!

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Yeah. I do that sometimes.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, it was fun. I tell you, the best thing about having an infant is the number of times that you're allowed to bust out [Dave Matthews impression] "Pretty baby!" [gasps for breath]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I didn't mean to make a sort of like, post-coital... release sigh at the end of that?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: But it is what—it's what happened, so I needed to—I had a post-coital... release. Do you have any small wonders?

Rachel: [pauses] You know, I always mean to think of these.

Griffin: But you don't, is the thing.

Rachel: And then I don't actually do it, is the problem.

Griffin: Can I swing in here? I'll do mine real quick and give you time.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Uh, the reason I probably have Smooth stuck in my head is because we just finished watching the new Veronica Mars stuff, which was created by a different Rob Thomas. Uh, really good!

Rachel: Yeah, that's a good one.

Griffin: It's really good! It's way better than—like, it's way better than it has any right to be.

Rachel: We thought it was gonna be like, fan service of like, "Oh, and remember this guy? He's back!"

Griffin: But they do do that, but they do it in a way that is, like—

Rachel: Feels necessary.

Griffin: It feels necessary and earned, and there is a pretty dramatic tonal shift of this season, compared to obviously when she was in high school, and the movie, which I don't remember anything about.

Uh, but they like, make that tone work. And so, even though it is like, way more adult, way more mature, it still feels like old Veronica Mars?

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: It is—like, even if you don't care about Veronica Mars or whatever, like, it is beyond my comprehension how they have managed to pull off a, you know, reboot or whatever. I think if you make something like, 15 years after it goes off the air, I think it counts as a reboot no matter what, but yeah, I was blown away by how good it was.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. Yeah. I, uh—

Griffin: Blown away? Because there's bombs.

Rachel: Oh, that's good. I was gonna say that I was telling Griffin, since it takes place during spring break, I was getting real OC vibes.

Griffin: It did give me some OC vibes. Ooh, you know you said that and it activated that center in my brain where I started running the math on how long it's been since I've watched all the OC, and if I can—if it's okay for me to...

I'll tell you what's—I'll tell you what it is. We don't have a beach trip this summer. You and I are not going to the beach this summer, and so—

Rachel: That's true.

Griffin: —maybe we need to head to [singing indistinctly] California... California?

Rachel: Ooh. You're close. Keep—keep trying.

Griffin: [singing indistinctly] Califor—California! From the Wizard?

Rachel: Ooh.

Griffin: [snorts] I changed.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: Did you—I gave you so much time there.

Rachel: You gave me so much time... and during that time I came up with a small wonder.

Griffin: Oh yeah?

Rachel: Which is the little video that somebody in the Wonderful! Facebook group posted of how those I Spy books are photographed.

Griffin: So cool.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: I never thought about it. You meet the, like, photo artist who invented them, and like, I had so many of those, and like, it's real pictures.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: It's real pictures! Every one of those is a real picture!

Rachel: Yeah, like, it's composed. It's not like, a bunch of images layered on top of each other.

Griffin: It's a big—it's one big photograph!

Rachel: Yeah, he really, like—he lays it all out.

Griffin: My man lives at like, a lil FEO Schwarz. He's got all kinds of stuff.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Did I say FEO Schwarz?

Rachel: You said it real fast, so I just—I gave you the credit for A on that.

Griffin: Uh, thank you. Who goes first this week? I believe it is you.

Rachel: I think it's my turn.

Griffin: Then grip and rip it, baby!

Rachel: I'd like to take you to The Poetry Corner.

Griffin: [gasps] You said that so gently. Look at your sound wave on that. It's barely visible.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You're trying to give—now I have to boost your audio, but I think you're trying to give me ASMR vibes. All right.

Rachel: Do you want me to retake it?

Griffin: No, it's fine. I'll—

Rachel: [loudly] It's The Poetry Corner!

Griffin: Now—see, now look at your sound waves.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: You know that's not ideal either.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: All right!

Rachel: I'm just playin' a lil game over here.

Griffin: Yeah. [laughs] Fuck whoever has to edit this, right?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, okay, we're in it. Do you need the song?

Rachel: I would like it, yeah.

Griffin: [imitates machine gun fire?] [imitates explosion?] [exaggerated gruff radio DJ voice] It's The Poetry Corner on 109.9 The Whammer.

Rachel: [laughs] Um...

Griffin: Does it go up to 109.9?

Rachel: I didn't think it went past 107.

Griffin: Huh, okay. Well... this is 109.9. It's Pirate Radio. It's The Whammer. We—

Rachel: Do they—now, in this radio station you've created, do they do things besides poetry?

Griffin: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!

Rachel: And how do they transition, let's say? So like, what comes after The Poetry Corner in the, uh, the schedule?

Griffin: Well, it goes from like, musical to less musical and less musical and less musical until we land on poetry, right? So we start with like, the most pure, like, all music all the time, which is Christian ska. And then we take a step down from there, and we get to zydeco. That's a lot of music! Look at some sheet music for zydeco, folks. Then, you know, classical, uh, hip hop, and then dubstep, and then scat—

Rachel: Mm-hmm?

Griffin: —and then poetry scat—

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: —and then scat poetry.

Rachel: That's a nice transition you created.

Griffin: Then we go back up to dubstep.

Rachel: Oh, okay.

Griffin: But a capella.

Rachel: Ooh!

Griffin: Then poetry.

Rachel: I love that.

Griffin: And it's commercial free, folks.

Rachel: Is it the same DJ?

Griffin: It is. He's, uh—yeah. He doesn't need to sleep—

Rachel: 'Cause the tone he brings to Poetry Corner is a lil more high octane.

Griffin: Well, that was a promo. You know that they cut those together in like, Nashville, or like, you know, iHeartRadio headquarters, and then they send them out.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: You think that every radio station hires somebody who like, can go [imitates machine gun fire] [imitates explosion] [exaggerated gruff DJ voice] 109.9. [higher pitched voice] The Whammer!

Rachel: Can I... can I take things to where I like to be?

Griffin: Yeah, please.

Rachel: In The Corner?

Griffin: Yeah, please.

Rachel: And out of The Whammer?

Griffin: Yeah, please.

Rachel: Uh, so the poem I am bringing is by the poet Simone Muench!

Griffin: That is a fun name!

Rachel: So in a way, it's my own Munch Squad.

Griffin: [high pitched voice] Hey!

Rachel: [laughs] It's spelled M-U-E-N-C-H.

Griffin: Still.

Rachel: It was fun, though, right?

Griffin: Guess what? The people listening? They can't know how it's spelled!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: They just hear it!

Rachel: So I could've started this with like... I wanna munch...

Griffin: I wanna munch poetry.

Rachel: And then you'd say, "Simone!"

Griffin: Oh, yeah, yeah!

Rachel: Mm-hmm. Uh, Simone Muench was born in Louisiana. She got her Bachelor's and Master's in Colorado, and then a PhD at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and she currently directs the writing program at Lewis University in Illinois.

Griffin: Still alive?

Rachel: Yep!

Griffin: Fuck yeah.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's so much better when they're still alive.

Rachel: She has written six books of poetry and has worked collaboratively on three books. So, this is what's kind of exciting about Simone.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: She has been kind of exploring working collaboratively with other poets on a book.

Griffin: By submitting pieces to the book, or actually working together on poems?

Rachel: No, literally—yes, literally a poem that is collaboratively written.

Griffin: Interesting! I never think about that as being a thing that people do.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. So for example, there is a poet, Dean Rader, that she worked with. And she would work on a line, and then send it back and forth.

Griffin: Huh!

Rachel: And they would put whole sonnets together, just like that.

Griffin: That's really neat!

Rachel: Mm-hmm!

Griffin: It's like Mad Libs, but artistic.

Rachel: I like it too, 'cause it's a good motivating device, right? Like, it takes a little of the anxiety off, 'cause you're just doing one line at a time.

Griffin: Well, and also, like, you are being held accountable by this other person who sends you, uh, one single line of po—but then wait, hold on. That could get really imbalanced, because then I could write, like, "I wanna eat a tasty asparagus," and send it to you, and then you're like, "Well, shit. What am I supposed—" you know, somebody's always doin' the setup and the other person has to figure out how it rhymes with it.

Rachel: I appreciate our elders because they take care of us.

Griffin: [under his breath] Care of us...

Rachel: Like asparagus?

Griffin: Yeah... but then do you really wanna—after what I've just done to you, do you really wanna send that back to me—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —to pitch another—

Rachel: You know poetry doesn't always rhyme, right?

Griffin: Uh, it does, or else it's just talking.

Rachel: Okay. Uh... so, the other kind of inventive approach she took started with a book that she released in 2014 called *Wolf Centos*, and this is not something I'm familiar with, but a cento, which is also called a collage poem, is made up of lines by other poets.

So what would they do is they would take a line of poetry that they really liked by another poet, and they would use that as the first line of their new poem, and they would kind of build from there.

Griffin: Is that allowed?

Rachel: Yeah, of course!

Griffin: Not of course! There's IP or whatever, like, it's my—that's not—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —he can't just—you know what I mean?

Rachel: Well, like, a true cento is apparently just all lines from other poems.

Griffin: So you didn't write a lick of it.

Rachel: No.

Griffin: This is your—your mashup.

Rachel: But you composed it. It's much in the way that a painter does not necessarily make the paint himself.

Griffin: Oh, okay. That is a wild—

Rachel: Mm-hmm?

Griffin: —this would be like if somebody took, like, little pieces of all the water lilies and then put it together in one turbo lily painting—

Rachel: [laughing] Yeah!

Griffin: And was like, "This is mine now."

Rachel: I mean, that is collage, right? Is taking bits—

Griffin: But collage isn't necessarily taking other people's stuff? I don't know. I think it's cool, right? Like, I think it's a cool idea, but maybe... you know. I'm a content, uh, creator, and so I'm always thinking about—

Rachel: Mm-hmm?

Griffin: I'm saying this poem would get so many YouTube strikes.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I'm saying that Simone's channel would be demonetized quicker than, you know—split—to—lickety-split! [pauses] See, that's why I can't do poetry.

Rachel: Art is usually some degree of theft. You know that, right?

Griffin: Okay. Well, then this podcast is now called Old Town Road—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —and you can find it on anywhere that other Old Town Road is available, and it's going to be indistinguishable. This is Old Town Road: a podcast about things we like.

Rachel: Do you wanna go ahead and get us started on that one?

Griffin: Yeah. I'm going to take my horse to old town road, and walk it all day long. My name—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —is Lil Nas. This is my horse. And together we'll sing this song. Old town. Old town. Old town road.

Rachel: Mm-hmm?

Griffin: The street cleaners come on Tuesdays.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Old town. Old town. [laughing] Old town road. And... shit, help me, babe. What rhymes with Tuesdays?

[pauses] See? And this what I do. I would take all that and I would mail it to you, and I'd say, "[loudly] You f—you fuckin' finish it! I don't know!"

Rachel: Oh...

Griffin: But you needed to know when the street sweepers came.

Rachel: No, yeah, because that's what moves the story along, because later you have to move your horse, because the street sweeper is coming on that side of the street, so you have to move your horse to the other side of the street.

Griffin: And you can yell "The street sweeper's coming!" But that dumb horse will stand right in front of the whirling blades—

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Of the street sweeper. [laughs]

Rachel: [laughing] The blades? Uh, I became familiar with Simone Muench while I was living in Chicago, and it was the book *Lampblack and Ash* that I first got my hands on that got me really excited about her!

Griffin: That's kind of a little poem right there.

Rachel: I know! So she is currently a professor, as I mentioned. She also teaches film studies courses, has a real interest in film.

Griffin: Multi-disciplinarian.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. Particularly horror movies. You can find a lot of commentary from her on horror movies. She has, like, a series of poems that are just based in horror movies themes. It's actually—it's pretty interesting.

Griffin: Ooh.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Freddy's coming. Uh-oh. Sharp blades. Sweet dreams! None of that rhymed, but like, imagine it rhymed and was a poem.

Rachel: Are you—is the whole point of this that you wanna impress me as a poet, and so that one day I bring Griffin McElroy to Poetry Corner—

Griffin: Yeah...

Rachel: —as my favorite new poet?

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, somebody could probably take things I've said—

Rachel: [strained] Mm-hmm?

Griffin: —over the thousand hours of recorded...

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: ... uh, my voice audio that exists out there, and turn it into a pretty bangin' poem.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: And then it's mine, 'cause it's my voice.

Rachel: [laughs quietly] So the poem I wanna read you is from a book called The Air Lost In Breathing. There is a review, actually, of that book from Stephen Malkmus, from Pavement.

Griffin: Oh, wow!

Rachel: Yeah! It says "Muench has composed her book with the killer poet sense of timing, drama, and tenor. The Air Lost In Breathing is written in an unpretentious yet biting style. Terrible escapes and violent interruptions, it's all here for the taking."

Griffin: Have we done Pavement? On this show?

Rachel: I'm pretty sure?

Griffin: I don't think we have!

Rachel: No?

Griffin: I don't think we have.

Rachel: Huh!

Griffin: We could.

Rachel: We could!

Griffin: We like Pavement.

Rachel: We do!

Griffin: What's the poem?

Rachel: The poem... and just, um, mild content warning. There are some suggestions of abuse, but not described in detail.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: The poem is called On Hearing My Father Pulled a Shotgun on My Grandparents During Thanksgiving Dinner. This is from *The Air Lost in Breathing*, which came out in 2000.

All my relatives seated: Louellyn and her new husband,
Aunt Nan and Laura May, Uncle Buddy passing
mashed potatoes, toasting God, good food, and the lack
of family deaths this year. Everyone flying, driving home
for that day when families convene and I laugh,
imagining my father strolling in,
uninvited, shotgun on hip, his red hair
tangled and cow-licked, beer-gut
protruding from the hem of his t-shirt, shooting
the turkey and everyone splattered
not with blood, but celery,
oyster stuffing, droplets of grease.

I have always held my father up
in one hand, everyone else in the other
as if on a set of scales
and my grandparents, my mother and I
sink while my father floats there
weightless and grinning. I refused to see
my father's grief: a wife who divorced him, a daughter
who hates him, his liver dissolved, his angular
cheeks now pockets of flesh, veined
and sallow. I only saw
how the nights he didn't come home
were a relief to us all. But for once, alone,
a thousand miles from the South and not
part of the argument, I think about my father
as a boy, rising at 4:30 to milk cows
before school, an ache in his stomach
from too little sleep and on days when he was too sick
to get out of bed, his father, my grandfather,
would jerk him up, belt in hand, and he

would trudge to the dairy with the crack
of a belt echoing in his ears.

A young boy with hair
shooting out in bright-red spirals, his body
wiry, pale as cream, perched
on a stool, waiting for the sun as his body
shook with anger, the sting of leather, the chill
of a southern dawn and the only heat
came from the cow's moist noisy breath
as he squeezed her udders for milk, formed
clouds with his mouth in the dissipating dark.

Griffin: Jesus!

Rachel: Isn't that cinematic? Can't you see her as a film studies—

Griffin: [shakily] Yeah, for sure!

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Uh, yeah. That's, uh... that was a very affecting story, there.

Rachel: I, um... it was interesting, 'cause you know whenever I like a poet and I
look for a poem to bring, I want it to be something that's like, emblematic of their
work, but, you know, kind of like a nice, succinct, generally uplifting poem?
[laughs]

Griffin: Sometimes.

Rachel: Sometimes, though, you can not shake a poem, and I looked at maybe
20 of Simone Muench's poems and then just kept coming back to this one, 'cause
it was so powerful.

Griffin: Yeah, no kidding.

Rachel: And it stuck with me just all day long, and so I had to bring it, because
it kind of shows the power of her voice and of her storytelling and the kind of
precision with which she like, puts an image together.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Um, and kind of the fearlessness of it, too.

Griffin: Yeah, no kidding.

Rachel: You know, like this is like, obviously like, a lot of challenging things are being referenced in that poem, but it feels so brave that it is really powerful to read, and I really enjoyed it.

Griffin: You do know that I can't follow that up with like, "[dejected voice] My first thing's... clown farts," or like—you know?

Rachel: [laughs] That is the danger of The Poetry Corner, I don't know what to tell you.

Griffin: Yeah. 'Cause poems are good.

Rachel: Poems are good stuff!

Griffin: Poems are good, man! I don't know!

Rachel: Lot of intensity there.

Griffin: Uh... so...

Rachel: But, you know. Go ahead with your, you know, tootsie roll pops or whatever.

Griffin: [quietly] Jesus.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, mine is a—a seminal work of literature for me.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Highly respected in the annals of history, um... and is beloved...

Rachel: By Toni Morrison?

Griffin: By... yes. Toni loves it, crazy about this one. I wanna talk about a book by an author named Gary Paulsen—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —and the book is called Hatchet.

Rachel: [laughs] I'm so glad you brought this. I loved Hatchet.

Griffin: I was on a kick where I was like, thinking about—I don't know how I got on this. I think I watched a little bit of like, Wrinkle In Time on a plane and it got me thinking about like, all of the books that were so formative to me.

Rachel: Yeah, yes.

Griffin: Like, uh, like Wrinkle In Time, and Bridge to Terabithia, and The Giver. Holy shit, The Giver, and Brave New World, and like, all these books I read when I was a kid. And I keep—I just can't stop thinking about Hatchet, because man—that was the first book I remember reading that I was like, in love with. It was like, the first book I remember reading where I read it again. Like, after I finished it, like, pretty soon after it, just because I had such a good time being in that world.

If you're not familiar with Gary Paulsen, he is, um, a like, wildly prolific outdoorsman author who wrote this book, Hatchet, about this 13 year old kid named Brian who survives a plane crash in the like, northern Canadian wilds, and then has to survive out there. And he ended up turning that into like, a whole five book series, and—

Rachel: Oh, did you read the other books? I'm not—

Griffin: No.

Rachel: —familiar with the other ones.

Griffin: Yeah, I'll do a little plot synopsis, 'cause they get pretty wild.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: But like, a few years after Hatchet came out, they made a film adaptation of it called A Cry in the Wild. It was a big hit. Despite that success, and like, all of the things that he has written, like over a hundred books I think, not all necessarily big chunkers, but he still lives in like, relative obscurity, and like, not... you know, he's not flexin', necessarily. He just like, chills in New Mexico.

He got really into Iditarod racing for a long time, and then was like, raising Iditarod race dogs.

Rachel: Oh my gosh.

Griffin: Until he had to retire from that in 1990 because he had some sort of heart condition, but then in 2004 I guess he licked it, because he got right back into Iditarod racing.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: He's like... I don't know much about the man. I didn't like, do a bunch of research on interviews and stuff like that, but he just sounds like a super outdoorsy dude, which you definitely get from Hatchet and all these books—

Rachel: Well, and then he made all those cartoon strips. You know, with the... The Far Side?

Griffin: That's pretty good!

Rachel: [laughs] Can I confess to you that when you first said Gary Paulsen there was like—

Griffin: You thought that I was gonna do—

Rachel: —there was about 5 seconds where I thought, "Wait, is he gonna—oh, Paulsen. Never mind." [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, so, Hatchet. If you haven't read it, it was published in 1987. It won a Newberry award, and like, surface-level it's a pretty straightforward book. This boy crashes, was flying to—his parents are divorced, he's flying to see his dad up in northern Canada. Pilot has a heart attack, plane crashes into a lake, he survives, pilot dies, and all he has to survive in this like, huge, huge, huge plot of uninhabited land is a hatchet that his mom gave him as a present, and he uses it

to survive. And, you know, he eventually gets in the sunken plane again and gets the radio transmitter and is saved, bada bing, bada boom, that's it.

Uh, there is a lot more to it than just like, the survival story. Like, a surprising amount of exploring the isolation that a young person goes through when facing some sort of family challenge like a divorce like this. Which is like... I don't know. I think it's easy to sell the children's lit sort of genre short in this regard, but I feel like it's got a lot of other stuff going on for it.

And all that is relatable. Like, not necessarily the torn family thing, for me, but like, angst. 13 year old angst. There's loads of that in this book.

Rachel: Well, yeah, and to... I don't know. When you think about movies like *Castaway*, for example, that are very based on this kind of like survival premise, there's something different about the idea that being a kid... I mean, for obvious reasons, but also like, you can't even—like, you're not preparing that scenario. You know, I feel like the older you get the more you're kind of always trying to—

Griffin: Preparing for the plane crash? [laughs] Yeah.

Rachel: Always trying to think kind of a step ahead of how you would react or how you would respond, but when you're younger, that's no part of your experience. And so, to be in that situation is kind of... I don't know. It's fascinating.

Griffin: And it—Paulsen like, wrote about surviving like, um, hard situations like this. Like, hard physical situations, but he also wrote about like, you know, surviving psychological trauma and, you know, shit from your youth. You know, there is an element, I guess, of some sort of autobiography in there, but I don't think he's necessarily ever been especially forward about that.

Anyway, all that stuff's great. It's not why I like the book.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, I like the book because it's a badass adventure about a normal kid who has this godlike instrument in the form of this hatchet, and he crashes, and he's like, hurt, "Oh no, what do I got? A hatchet. Well, shit! It's just a hatchet! What am I supposed to do?"

You can do anything with it!

Rachel: I know.

Griffin: You can do anything! He gets it—he like, uses it to get all kinds of dope stuff. It's like Minecraft the book. Like, he starts out and he punches a tree and he gets a, you know, he makes a spear and a bow out of it and he starts hunting, and pretty soon builds like, an awesome shelter that when you're a 13 year old kid, like, you wanna have that shelter and live in it and eat, you know, the turtles that you caught that day, and you wanna fight off the fuckin' big porcupine who's a major dick, and you wanna somehow survive a tornado that comes through—like, this book gets wi—this book throws some shit at young boy Brian.

Uh, and he's just this normal kid that, when pushed into this like, horrible circumstance, not only survives but thrives, and he starts with nothing and turns it into this sustainable life out in the forest, and as a kid who doesn't have any outdoor expertise, like, that was so enticing for me. That was so, so gripping for me. Uh, and I would actually be curious to see how hatchet sales were affected by the release of this book?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Because to this—to this day, if I see a nice hatchet at like, REI or something, I'm like, "Oof..."

Rachel: You think there were parents going out and being like, "Oh yeah, sure, I'll get you a hatchet!"

Griffin: I think if Henry reads hatchet when he's 13 and is like, "This book is incredible and my birthday's coming up." I'll be like, "Say no more—"

Rachel: You're gonna wanna get him a hatchet?

Griffin: I'll get him a hatchet! Not a super sharp hatchet. Now, it's gotta—

Rachel: Oh, like a dull—[laughs]

Griffin: No, it's gotta be sharp, because if he gets in a plane crash in the Canadian wilds he's gonna need the hatchet!

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: But see, Brian didn't have the benefit of reading Hatchet! He was the hatchet!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: He went before us as the hatchet! I almost the hatchet man, but that's a different—

Rachel: Nope.

Griffin: —that's an entirely different thing.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Uh, so the rest of the series... there are four more books in the series.

Rachel: Wait. Can I ask you, is it Brian every time?

Griffin: Uh... no, it's mostly—oh, it is Brian every time. Sorry, sorry. I thought you were asking if the word "Brian" is in the title every time.

Rachel: No, no. I'm wondering like, how much stuff happens to this poor guy throughout his life?

Griffin: It's Brian, and most of it is still like, pretty close against 13. Like, he doesn't grow—I don't think there's a book where he's like, 52 and, you know, quits his office job or whatever. Actually, one of those books is kinda like that. Lemme—

Rachel: Okay, okay.

Griffin: The second book is called The River. This is the second book in the series, and in the second book, the government comes to Brian and says, "We want you to teach us how you survived so that we can teach the military your secrets, 13 year old boy."

Rachel: [laughing] Okay.

Griffin: And so he goes out into the wilds with this like, military liaison, and they go out there together and he's like, "No, we can't bring any other supplies. It's gotta be authentic." And the liaison's like, "Okay, whatever you say!" And then like, he gets struck by lightning or something like that.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And it's like, "Uh-oh, here—back at it again!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Gotta get this dude down the ri—uh, the next book, the third book in the series... try and follow along here, 'cause the timeline's gonna get a little convoluted.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: At this point... it's a big book. Hatchet's a big book, and it's big enough to, even pre-internet blow up era, get a lot of detractors saying like, "Ah, you know. What are the odds that this kid would actually do it? He finds the radio transmitter at the end, that's deus ex machina."

So fuckin' Gary Paulsen's like, "Okay." He writes a book called Brian's Winter that destroys the second book in the series entirely. And in this one he just doesn't find the radio transmitter, so he has to survive a winter in the wild.

Rachel: Ooh.

Griffin: It is literally a consecutive sequel, and things get very, very rough for Brian. It's like this weird, like, parologue, like, story, that apparently Gary Lo—Par—P—now you got me doin' it.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That Gary Paulsen wrote to shut up his detractors. Next one's called Brian's Return, and in this one he is actually having struggles fitting in to urban life, and he talks to a therapist who's like, "Yeah, you should just move back to the woods." [holding back laughter] So he moves back to the woods.

Rachel: [laughs] 'Cause it's worked out so great for him.

Griffin: It's worked out so good so far, and in the final book it's called Brian's Hunt. He just hunts and fights a big fuckin' bear.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It like, kills this like, trapper family that he met in one of the earlier books and he like, was upset about that. So he was like, "I'm gonna find—"

Rachel: So it's a like a fugitive-style—

Griffin: It's literally fuckin', uh—what is the—what is the movie with Bill Murray where—The Life Aquatic, where he's like, "I'm gonna find—hi, it's me, Brian. You may know me from Hatchet. This bear killed my friends, so I'm going to find it and I'm going to tear it in half."

"Aren't you like, nature man?"

"Yes. Yes, but I—just this one. Let me kill this one big bear."

Anyway, Hatchet kicks ass.

Rachel: I just—I wonder about the decisions that Brian is making where he keeps ending up in these life or death situations.

Griffin: I know! I know!

Rachel: I gotta tell you—I mean, I don't know that I've ever been in a situation where I had to—

Griffin: Kill a bear?

Rachel: K—kill a bear, yeah.

Griffin: Well, there but for the grace of God go Brian.

Rachel: Yeah. Thanks, Brian. [laughs quietly]

Griffin: Thanks, Brian! Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

[Home Improvement theme plays at high speed until the Tim Allen grunt, which plays extremely slowly and with reverb]

Griffin: Hey, our first sponsor is frickin' MeUndies!

Rachel: Oh, I love those guys.

Griffin: I love the underwear that they make. It's really, really soft and comfortable. Not soft in a bad way. It's not like fleece. That would be weird, wouldn't it? Fleece underpants?

Rachel: Probably be pretty hot.

Griffin: It would pretty hot down there in your zone. These are not—these are that micromodal fabric. It wicks that shit away and it feels so comfortable and so good. They got—

Rachel: Have you ever worn a pair of cotton underwear and thought, "I wish this was twice as soft." And then you're like, "Wait. You know what'd be better than twice as soft? Three times as soft."

Griffin: You what's cooler than three times as soft? A billion times as soft.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You're not ready for that.

Rachel: You're not ready. You've gotta start here.

Griffin: Human skin has not evolved to the—if you were touched—

Rachel: [laughs] It would slide right off you.

Griffin: It would slide right through you.

Rachel: Hmm.

Griffin: Like, it would tr—it would sort of phase through a different plane. You would enter the mouth of madness.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: But anyway, they got lots of fun prints. They have new prints also that drop every Tuesday. They got lounge pants and onesies. I love my lounge pants and onesies. Big, big fan of those. Makes my duff look pretty cool.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, also if you wanna get something for your doggies that match them, you can match your doggies with these new Buddy Bands! They have the same prints and colors as MeUndies have! That's pretty freaking cute.

Rachel: That's very cute.

Griffin: So, for any first time purchasers: when you purchase any MeUndies product you'll get 15% off and free shipping. Get your 15% off your first pair, free shipping, and a 100% satisfaction guarantee by going to meundies.com/wonderful. That's meundies.com/wonderful.

[claps]

Griffin: That was an edit point. That wasn't me clapping like some sort of Roman Emperor [laughing] for you to read the first-- [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Oh, Lord.

Rachel: This is how Griffin and I communicate in all situations.

Griffin: [laughs]

[claps]

Griffin: [imperious voice] The diaper cream!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [imperious voice] The boy requires the diaper cream!

Rachel: [laughs] [sighs] I have a message for Brad. It is from Jacqueline!

Griffin: Well, don't keep me waitin'!

Rachel: "Brad, happy birthday/anniversary/whatever holiday this airs around. Living with you and our little loaf cat is wonderful. Here's to many more days filled with adventures, breweries, popcorn, and nap time. The world is a better place with you in it, and I love you with all my heart. You're the best."

Griffin: Is there a word more challenging to stick the landing on when sandwiched by other words than breweries?

Rachel: Breweries.

Griffin: Brewries. I feel like when Merriam-Webster was like, "All right, uh, breweries. How many syllables is that?" And everybody in the room just like... "Seven?"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "I think it's two."

"Shit!"

Rachel: Mm-hmm?

Griffin: Funny word though, huh? Thanks for the message, Brad and Jacqueline. Here's another one for Xander and it's from Tiana who says, "Hey, Xander! I doubt I'm going to win this Jumbotron—" uh-oh. I hope there's nothin' scandalicious in here.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "But if I do, thank you for introducing me to Wonderful! I love sharing my small wonders with you every day, and I love spending time with you! Thank you, my best friend and wonderful boyfriend. I miss you as always, and I know Haru does too. Time to change the litter box, so bye! Update: OMG, we won?"

This one tells a nice little story.

Rachel: Aw.

Griffin: Uh... I don't know if that ending is like, "Time to change the litter box. Anyway, I've gotta go." Or.. are they changing the litter box?

Rachel: Ohh. Oh, do you think it's like, an instruction?

Griffin: I think it's—I think it's—

Rachel: Like, "Hey, Xander. I hope you've been enjoying this message, but you better go change that litter box." [laughs]

Griffin: "Xander, what's that smell? I've gotta go, my car alarm!"

Rachel: [laughs]

[house music plays]

Dave: Hi, I'm Dave.

Graham: Hi, I'm Graham!

Dave: And we're two house DJs who have been trapped inside our drum machine.

Graham: We love it here, and we'd love if you stop by and visited us every week—

Together: On Stop Podcasting Yourself!

Dave: Here on Maximumfun.org.

Graham: We're just a couple of doofuses from Canada.

Dave: And listen to our show, or perish.

Graham: [laughs quietly]

Dave: Stop Podcasting Yourself.

Graham: On Maximumfun.org.

[house music plays]

Rachel: Hey, can I tell you about my next thing?

Griffin: Yeah, you just—yeah!

Rachel: It is... The Onion.

Griffin: The onion. The humble, layered fruit.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: The salty, humble, layered fruit: the onion.

Rachel: Uhh... n—I mean, nothing against onions. I love onions, but I was actually talking about the satirical digital media company and newspaper.

Griffin: Oh, yeah. They're pretty good, too.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. You familiar with the, uh, the work of The Onion?

Griffin: Of course I'm familiar with the work of The Onion.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, I think most people are. But I think it's worth discussing, because it's incredible, and just like, such a nice salve in this troublesome time.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: [laughs] So, this started in 1988.

Griffin: Holy shit!

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Really?

Rachel: It was a weekly print publication. Uh, started in Madison, Wisconsin. This was conceived by University of Wisconsin students Tim Keck and Christopher Johnson. The Onion was founded as a weekly print newspaper. And then, beginning in the fall of 2000 to early 2001, the company relocated from Madison Wisconsin to Manhattan to raise The Onion's profile.

Griffin: It's so funny thinking about it—and I know this is like, maybe insulting, but thinking about it like an actual... business? Like, I know it is, and that's not trying to short sell them, but it's—

Rachel: I know. So, this is around the time period where they, you know, turned into a full production company, and started making the books and the digital content. I'm not gonna talk about that as much, though, 'cause I actually haven't consumed a lot of it. I've always been kind of a devotee of the orig.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And I actually—I don't know. When you were in Chicago were they still doing the print version?

Griffin: Yes? I think so?

Rachel: They actually—I think they only officially ceased the print edition in 2013.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Um, but you could still get it in some major cities before that. So, in September 2011, The Onion moved back to Chicago, in the Midwest, and by June 2014 is when they launched ClickHole, which I know you're a big fan of.

Griffin: Which—aw, man. Also, former Wonderful! segment, ClickHole.

Rachel: [laughing] Mm-hmm?

Griffin: For their amazing Gatorade video.

Rachel: So I wanted to talk about some of the great headlines, which'll be a nice segue into the one that you wanna share.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Which may be on my list. There are a lot of different media outlets that have kind of identified their favorite headlines, so I kind of pulled from those.

So, from Salon.com, this is when they talk about the origin of the Onion article titled "No Way To Prevent This, Says Only Nation Where This Regularly Happens."

Griffin: As funny—like, The Onion's a very funny website, but now every time I see that pop up it is also like, a gutting, horrible mirror. A pitch black, terrible nightmare mirror.

Rachel: So, they've used this article several times in response to mass shootings. Every time it's used, it just becomes more and more powerful, I think.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: That's kind of an example of the way that they can kind of shine a light on a particularly ridiculous aspect of our culture.

Griffin: It's satire, right? Satire doesn't have to be gutbustingly funny if it's, you know, also just horribly observational.

Rachel: Uh, so this has also come in handy recently. In 2016 there was an article titled "Nation Throws Off Tyrannical Yoke of Moderate Respect For Women," [laughing] which I really enjoy. In the time period, uh, when Trump took office, there was a lot of good fodder there.

Griffin: Well, as there was for most satirical—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: —most satirists in general.

Rachel: Uh, Pitchfork 2017. This is one that I wasn't familiar with, but I absolutely love. "Sugar Ray Thrilled To Be Playing In Man's Head." [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: Here's an excerpt: [laughs] "Although many members of the band claim the performance was their best in years—"

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: —"the show was reportedly not without its share of mishaps."

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs quietly]

Griffin: Rachel just clutched her chest!

Rachel: [inhales] "Halfway through the third repetition of his opening number, McGrath began unexpectedly singing Rock Lobster."

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: [holding back laughter] "A song written and recorded by pop sensation the B-52s."

Griffin: [laughs distantly]

Rachel: [laughs] "Only to return to his original set list moments later." That whole article is so great. [laughs] 'Cause I think at the end, the person's like, "I don't even know why this song's stuck in my head. I don't even like Smash Mouth."

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: [laughing] Just so great. Okay, now this is maybe the most famous and most, like, prescient Onion article that came out in 2004, and it was titled "Fuck Everything, We're Doing Five Blades."

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: Which was a parody of the Schick Gillette razor wars, which actually predated Gillette's actual introduction of the 5 blade razor in 2006.

Griffin: What was it, the Quatro?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: That was Quatro. Now—I guess they do have razors with six blades now.
[laughs quietly]

Griffin: All right!

Rachel: Um... so here's a quote from that.

"What part of this don't you understand? If two blades is good and three blades is better, obviously five blades would make us the best fucking razor that ever existed. Comprende? We didn't claw our way to the top of the razor game by clinging to the two blade industry standard. We got here by taking chances. Stop. I just had a stroke of genius. Are you ready? Open your mouth, baby birds, 'cause mamma's about to drop you one sweet, fat nightcrawler. Here she comes. Put another aloe strip on that fucker, too! That's right. Five bae—five blades, two strips, and make the second one lather. You heard me. The second strip lathers. It's a whole new way to think about shaving. Don't question it."

Griffin: I've never heard you say the word "fucker" in the way that you just said it.

Rachel: [laughs loudly]

Griffin: It was like, deeply spiritual, deep south, like... oh boy. I'm intoxicated.

Rachel: Um, I... this platform plays such a valuable role in all of our lives—

Griffin: Oh, yeah.

Rachel: —and I think it is worth recognizing on our show about great things.

Griffin: You mentioned the book. So, this was my main exposure to The Onion, in I think 2004, early 2000—

Rachel: The Our Dumb Century?

Griffin: Our Dumb Century was released. We had this in the McElroy upstairs bathroom.

Rachel: Yes, that sounds right.

Griffin: And I read it, uh... many times—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —during my many sojourns to that room—

Rachel: Is this why all the McElroys spend so long in the bathroom? Were you just conditioning yourselves?

Griffin: Yeah, we had that. We had a lot of Uncle John's Bathroom Reader.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: There was a page in that book that I would just turn to, and it made me laugh every time.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Our Dumb Century is like, a collection of fictional Onion pages from newspapers throughout time. Like, imagining a scenario where The Onion has been the paper of record for a century.

"July 21, 1969. Headline: Holy Shit! Man Walks on Fucking Moon! Neil Armstrong's historic first words on moon. 'Holy living fuck! The moon.' Jesus fucking Christ. The distant, lonely, mysterious satellite that has fascinated mankind since the dawn of time. So distant—is distant and lonely no more. At 4:17 PM, EST yesterday, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin E. Aldrin Jr. touched down on the sea of Tranquility in the lunar module Eagle and radioed back to Earth the historic report: 'Jesus fucking Christ, Houston. We're on the fucking moon.'"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "'Holy living fuck, are you fucking believing this? Over.' Armstrong radioed back to NASA headquarters, nearly 250,000 miles away, 'I abso-fucking-

lutely am standing on the—' [laughs] '—the surface of the fucking moon. Holy mother of fuck,' the first man on the moon added."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "'Roger. No fucking doubt about it,' Mission controller Peter Levelle replied. 'A-fucking-firmative, over.'"

Yeah. I just thought it was the funniest thing ever.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's still very good.

Rachel: There's so much to mention.

Griffin: All the ones they do now of just like, "Area Man, blank blank blank," like, they're so quick hit, and it's the same joke structure every time, and it slays me. Yeah.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: The Onion. Uh, my second thing. I'm gonna go through it real fast, 'cause this has been—we've been really chewin' the—chewin' the fat, here. Chewin' the—chewin' the ch—cud. I'm gonna talk about the fact—oh, wait, this is last week's notes. I can't talk about Blown Away again.

Rachel: I mean, you could.

Griffin: I wanna talk about the fact that there is an app for virtually all of my human needs. This is maybe a bit more of an abstract idea. But like, tech industry, whatever. I don't wanna go off on the tech industry. End of the day, I think it's pretty sick that whenever there is a function that I need filled by technology or an app, odds are it exists!

Rachel: And you know what the time I really realized this?

Griffin: Hmm.

Rachel: Was when you got our lawn mowed through an app.

Griffin: We needed a lawn mower—we were going out of town and we wanted to get our lawn mowed. Got an app and was just like, "beedabop beep boop!"

Rachel: This was years ago, too. This isn't even like, a new thing. This has been around for literally years.

Griffin: This week, Nintendo's coming out with a new model of Switch, in September, and I wanna get it. Nintendo products are like, famously kinda hard to get the first like, salvo that come out. And so I was like, ah, I wanna preorder it. How do I find out when preorders go up?

Well, you can sign up for Amazon or Best Buy or whoever's like, mailing list and they'll tell you when the item is available. What if I'm not checkin' my email?"There's an app called like, The Tracker, that I downloaded, and I just typed in like, "Hey, send me a notification whenever this thing pops up in any store." And then it did today, and I got it! Because an app existed!

Rachel: Wow!

Griffin: The app exists! And like, I fretted about that. I fretted about like, am I gonna get this thing? And then there was an app for it. And obviously that's a really innocuous thing but like, Slack I think is a great app. Discord is great. It's like, I need to chat and I need to make communities and I need private chats and I need a place to upload files and get them distributed to people and X, Y, and Z. There's apps! Those apps exist!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I'm really, really forgetful. I'm an extremely forgetful person.

Rachel: It's true.

Griffin: I got Google Cals now, and I am more diligent about putting stuff into G Cal, and now my fuckin' phone is like, "Hey. Hey. You forgot about that haircut. [loudly] Go! Go! Go!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I would've missed the haircut without it. You know what I mean? Uh, I mean, there's just so many. I can't make it through movies without havin' to go pee.

Rachel: I have never looked this—I thought that this was not real for the longest time.

Griffin: Oh, RunPee?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: This has just transitioned to a segment about RunPee. RunPee is an app, and I actually think they changed it recently where it's like, a pay to play sort of situation where you have to buy credits to get this function for different movies, but you sit down in the theater, and you pick which movie you're about to watch in the app, and then—it even has a dark activation mode, and it'll say like, "Once the lion roars in the MGM logo, now you—turn the app on, and get it going," and it syncs up with the movie, and it tells you when there are like, down periods in the movie where you can go pee. And while you're peeing, you can read a synopsis of what's going on while you're peeing!

Rachel: How—how quick do they get this updated, and what is the process for updating it? I just—I have so many questions.

Griffin: I don't know. I don't know if they're getting early screeners, but there's an app for that! If I wanna know what the tempo is of the song I'm listening to, there's an app for that! Like, there's an app for all these things, and yes, we live in like, a dystopian cyberfuture, and that part's not great, and there's a lot of apps for stuff that people will like, never need, like, a lot, but the benefit of that like, horrible spaghetti at the wall is, you know, do you need an app to help soothe your anxiety or sleep better? There's tons of apps for that! You can have Matthew McConaughey read you a book, whatever!

Rachel: Can I tell you what literally changed my life is just having Google Maps on my phone.

Griffin: [claps]

Rachel: I was the person that used to print out directions on a piece of paper—

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: —and carry it with me to my destination, and I did that for far too long, and what would happen sometimes is you would turn the wrong way, and then—

Griffin: That's it!

Rachel: —[laughing] you just had no idea how to get back!

Griffin: Now I'm lost! I drove to Chicago when I was like—before I had an iPhone, and went to visit my buddy Evan, and survived in Chicago. Basically I like, parked my car way outside of the like, the city, like in the very far last stop of the trains, and then like, just forgot that I had a car. And then on my way back—I got lost in Cincinnati for like, two hours, and I was like, pulling into gas stations to call my dad, like, "I don't know where I am."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "I don't know where I am." I ended up having to go the wrong way down a highway because I finally saw my exit, and so I like, [imitates screeching tires] I drove the wrong way down a highway, a little bit—

Rachel: Oh, jeez...

Griffin: —to get home, 'cause I was so panicked. This is the thing, like—and I'm not gonna Andy Rooney out here, I promise, but like, this is a real thing that I think about, is this idea of these mostly fairly privileged, like, desires or curiosities that I have, can now be instantly catered to in any imaginable way, and like, that was wicked—when I was younger, when I was in high school, like, we had a dial up modem where if somebody called the house while I was playing EverQuest, it kicked me off the internet! And now it's like, I can figure out—my phone'll tell me when to go fuckin' pee during the Avengers movie!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Like, that is such a wild sea change, and it has not been that long—

Rachel: No.

Griffin: —since it wasn't a thing. And there's, like—I think when you become a parent there's like, lots of—you can make infinite observations about like, "Well, that's different," which is probably why like, it's a thing that every parent generation has ever done. This is the origins of the "I walked uphill two ways to school," like, maybe this is my version of it, but it is—I don't begrudge it, it's just like—because God knows I take advantage of it, too. It's just wild to me how quickly that has changed.

Uh, yeah. Shit's different.

Rachel: I used to have to tear the little accordion pieces of the edge of paper when I would print something out, 'cause you used to have to print something out!

Griffin: Yeah! One time I printed out like, a 150 page GameFAQs strategy guide for Pokemon Gold and Silver, and I got caught, 'cause it was the school library.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And they let me keep it, but uh got in, uh, trouble, and I wasn't allowed to work in the library anymore.

Rachel: [sighs] You did this when you were working in the library?

Griffin: Yeah, it was the perfect crime, huh?

Rachel: Oh, man...

Griffin: I was the inside—I was the inside man. You know why? 'Cause I could—I didn't have like, a reliable internet access at home that I could download the GameFAQs for. Anyway...

Rachel: I have a theory that every story of employment before the age of... let's say 20... or no, let's say 23.

Griffin: [distantly] Yeah.

Rachel: Is primarily a story of theft.

Griffin: Oh, yeah, baby. Oh my God.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I could tell you shit that would make your hair turn gray.

Rachel: See, now why is it okay for you to steal Krushems from the TCBY, but it's not okay for Simone Muench to take one line out of somebody else's poem?

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: That's just what I'm asking.

Griffin: You know what? You're right.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: You're not. It would be like if I put the Krunchems in the ice cream and I was like, "I made both the Krunchems and the ice cream. This is called Griffin's ice cream."

I wanna talk about what our friends at home are excited about. Katie says, "You know what's wonderful? When you're folding a paper in thirds to put it in an envelope and you eyeball it and you get it perfect on the first try."

Ooh!

Rachel: I love that, too.

Griffin: Kobe!

Rachel: When I worked at literary magazines and we used to have to send responses back through the mail, I really perfected folding a piece of paper.

Griffin: Alexandria says, "My wonderful thing is when you line up your car tires just right with the gap in between two speed bumps while driving, and either miss the bump completely or only go over it with two of your tires like a lil game, but in real life."

Rachel: I do this all the time!

Griffin: I do too. Not because I'm a speedy boy, necessarily, but because like, I don't trust the suspension in any car. Like, it can't be good for your car, right?

Rachel: I can't imagine it is, but it's also just kind of a fun challenge!

Griffin: Kind of a fun challenge, yeah. Lindsay says, "A thing I find wonderful is when someone opens a fresh pack of minty gum and the smell escapes the plastic casing for the first time. I was reminded of it during a long flight when the person next to me opened a fresh pack of minty gum and I could smell it from my seat. It was truly wonderful, and very refreshing after a long stint in the airport."

Rachel: God. Out of all the smells that you get on an airplane, that has to be the best. [laughs]

Griffin: Or possibly the only good one.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Have I ever told you the story about when... I think this was probably on tour, so we were all probably—the boys were all traveling together, and there was an older woman sitting in the seat in front of us who had a big thing of Country Crock.

Rachel: No. See, this is me, I was there—

Griffin: You were there.

Rachel: —and it was the person sitting next to me. You made me take the middle seat, because that's what you always do.

Griffin: That's right, okay.

Rachel: And the woman literally got out a tub, a plastic tub she was reusing specifically to put tuna salad in it. Like, the plane hadn't even left yet, and I just looked over at you, and I remember motioning—

Griffin: [laughs] [high-pitched] Of Country—oh, Country Crock!

Rachel: —like, "Can you believe this is happening?"

Griffin: Of Country Crock! Of Country Crock. Like—you know, fuck it, I'm from West Virginia, I know all about the using Country Crock as a Tupperware situation. But not... I would never bring that shame onto an airplane.

Rachel: On a plane!

Griffin: With the stinky fish inside.

Rachel: And also, like, how did she get that through security?

Griffin: How did she get—did she make it in the airport?

Rachel: This was not that long ago.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I mean, it was at least within the past five years.

Griffin: Yeah. I have IBS, and a very small bladder.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: You do not want me sitting—you do not wanna be on the hook every time I have to use the—the john.

Rachel: You do not wanna be on the plane, let's say, even!

Griffin: [laughing] Yeah. It's not a bad point.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Thank you to everybody listening today, and... you know what? Even if they're not listening, thanks to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our theme song, Money Won't Pay. You can find a link to that in the episode description. And a big thanks to Maximum Fun. They got all kinds of great shows, like Switchblade Sisters.

Rachel: Bullseye!

Griffin: And Stop Podcasting Yourself!

Rachel: Can I Pet Your Dog?

Griffin: No.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And a lot more at Maximum Fun. We have other stuff at mcelroy.family. Uh... [imitates machine gun fire] [imitates explosion] [hoarse voice] The sins are broacasp—are broadcasts ours. Now, for some reason, it's the National Anthem. Good night... [DJ voice] and good luck! [imitates machine gun fire] [sings the first few notes of the National Anthem]

[theme music plays]

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Nnekay: Hey, James!

James: Hey, Nnekay! What we doin', girl?

Nnekay: We are inviting the awesome listeners of Maximum Fun to join us at Minority Korner!

James: Ooh, fun!

Nnekay: But you know how we go on tangent city.

James: We're the joint mayors!

Nnekay: We're not gonna do that, okay?

James: Supes focused.

Nnekay: Okay, so Minority Korner is where you can all come and get your pop culture takes.

James: Plus social commentary, news, and TV, movie reactions, like Avengers Endgame.

Nnekay: No spoilers here!

James: Ooh, snap!

Nnekay: Sometimes we dig into the vault, and we review and recap those movies you missed.

James: Lookin' at you, Halle Berry's Kidnapped!

Nnekay: I love how she always gives 1000%.

James: Like Beyonce!

Nnekay: Did you see Homecoming on Netflix?

James: She was burning it down like the mother of dragons!

Nnekay: Have you seen the latest Game of Thrones?

James: So good. Only thing missing?

Together: More black people!

James: What'd you think about Mayor Pete?

Nnekay: Wait a minute, James!

James: We went on a tangent?

Nnekay: Yes.

James: Ah, well. Join us every Friday for more tangents.

Nnekay: On Maximum Fun!