

Wonderful! 117: This is Bras

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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Oh, hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: Ain't we stinkers, though? Oooh!

Rachel: Oooh!

Griffin: Ain't we stinkers?

Rachel: What's the name of this character?

Griffin: Stinker Rick.

Rachel: Well, see, that doesn't really sound like a stinker name.

Griffin: Oooh! Uh, Rick can be a stinker.

Rachel: Y'know what? Y'know what your name should be?

Griffin: What?

Rachel: Dubley.

Griffin: Dubley?

Rachel: Dubley.

Griffin: Why?

Rachel: I don't know. Sounds like a stinker.

Griffin: Dubley?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: D-U-B-L-E-Y sounds like a stinker?

Rachel: Yeah, sounds like a real stinker.

Griffin: Guess fuckin' take that, all the Dumbley—Dubleys out—not Dudley?

Rachel: [laughing] No.

Griffin: Dubley.

Rachel: Dubley. [laughing]

Griffin: That's not a name, babe.

Rachel: Well, I didn't want anyone to feel offended.

Griffin: And this is exactly what's wrong with this frickin' PC culture.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: George Carlin was so right. He's like, [imitating George Carlin] "Oh, these days, all the teenagers are makin' up—"

Rachel: Here are the seven names you can't say on podcasts.

Griffin: [imitating George Carlin] "You can't say Kevin. You can't say Rebecca."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: How good is my George Carlin, by the way?

Rachel: Oh, incredible.

Griffin: It's a fucking slam dunk.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: It is... he would be proud, if he—is he alive?

Rachel: No.

Griffin: No one is quite sure.

Rachel: No. Pretty sure, no.

Griffin: No one knows for sure. Anyways, do you have any small—this is Wonderful, it's a podcast where we talk about good stuff. Do you have any small wonders? And this is a segment where we talk about things that are just... pretty good.

Rachel: I wanted to say, the... just the surprising, heartwarming nature of the show, The Circle, on Netflix.

Griffin: I was also going to bring The Circle as my small wonder. I felt weird about endorsing this show when we started watching it.

Rachel: I know. I know.

Griffin: Because it seemed extremely, uhh, trashy?

Rachel: Yeah, very suspect from episode one.

Griffin: Uh, but it is—it's a very wholesome show that, uh, smacks of Solitary, a show that I vociferously sort of like to talk about.

Rachel: Yeah, right?

Griffin: Uh, a reality show in which people are locked away in little pods and forced to compete in challenges, but they never actually meet each other. That's what the circle is, except it's social media!

Rachel: Episode one...

Griffin: Oogh.

Rachel: Not great.

Griffin: Not great.

Rachel: Episode two... ehh...

Griffin: Ehh.

Rachel: Episode three... wait a minute...

Griffin: Okay, okay. Hey, what's goin' on here?

Rachel: Episode four... aww!

Griffin: It's—it's just a show that—it ends up being surprisingly super wholesome, and that's my shit. I love it when a show can make that turn. Uh, yeah.

Rachel: You sit down, you could watch this with your mom, you could watch it with your grandma, I think.

Griffin: I don't know. There's a lot of lewd language and a lot of blue concepts in it.

Rachel: Well, yeah, I guess so.

Griffin: There's a lot of, uhh... pubic bones, just sort of out there.

Rachel: Well... [laughs]

Griffin: That's what the circle is. That's what they call the pubic bone region, 'cause it kind of forms a circle, if you think about it.

Rachel: Uh... huh.

Griffin: Do you have a first big wonder that you want to start us off with?

Rachel: I do, yes.

Griffin: Okay, what do you got?

Rachel: Uh, it is a music artist.

Griffin: Oh yes.

Rachel: And her name... is Yola.

Griffin: Yola...!

Rachel: Yeah. I'm sure people do that to her.

Griffin: Ah shit, you're probably right.

Rachel: [laughs] I actually just discovered her today. Every once in a while, I – and I know you do this too – I will check the Tiny Desk Concerts.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Just to see who's hip with the kids.

Griffin: I don't know that that's a necessarily great cross-section of the little twee NPR, like, concert studio is like, really a great representation of who the kids are.

Rachel: Well, when I say kids, I mean people under 40 but over 30.

Griffin: ... Okay.

Rachel: Y'know?

Griffin: So those aren't kids at all, and you know that. Some of those are boomers, I think, technically.

Rachel: Um... no.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: [laughing] You almost got me there.

Griffin: Ahh, maybe.

Rachel: Slid that one past me. I don't think so, sir. Uh, Yola had her first full album come out, just in February 2019, so just almost exactly a year ago. Uh, it was called Walk Through Fire, and she put that out on Dan Auerbach's label.

Griffin: Why does that name sound familiar?

Rachel: He's from the Black Keys.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: He's also like a producer of a bunch of different artists.

Griffin: Okay, yes.

Rachel: Um... I had to look him up, too, 'cause I was like, "That name does sound familiar." Yola's from Bristol, England, and she's got a real, like, country music inspiration kind of behind her stuff. Like, if you listen to some of her music, you'll instantly make that like, Dolly Parton comparison.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And she cites that, like, as one of her primary influences. Her mother happened to have like, a full collection of like, records from like, old, like, country superstars. And so, it just really got her interested in the music, but she didn't really get started out that way. Uh, she was a backing singer for a lot of different bands, including Massive Attack, and The Chemical Brothers, and Iggy Azalea.

And so, she kind of, like a lot of artists, just got her start kind of standing behind other artists, kind of singing the same thing as multiple other people, until she really kind of got the confidence to go out on her own. Her first EP came out in 2016, and then it wasn't until 2019, as I mentioned, that she released that album, uh, Walk Through Fire. And I wanted to play the song, It Ain't Easier.

[‘It Ain't Easier’ by Yola plays]

Rachel: It's—there's something interesting about her sound, which feels... y'know, very, like, Americana. But then, also, like, modernized a little bit?

Griffin: It's wild. You could've sent this to me, and like, said it was from any time period, and I really would've believed you.

Rachel: I know.

Griffin: 'Cause it really—it does have that, like, uh, that Dolly Parton-like sort of country western narrative songstress sort of thing happening.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: But through like, a soulful lens that just completely obscures, like, the actual area that it hails from.

Rachel: Yeah! So there's a review in Rolling Stone of her album, and they say, um... it is a "meticulously crafted love letter to 20th century American pop that fuses a half-dozen or so genres, including early '70s country soul, singer-songwriter, pop music, smooth R&B, '60s countryopolitan..." Which I didn't realize was a thing?

Griffin: Whoa. Countryopolitan?

Rachel: Countryopolitan. Like country... metropolitan, I guess?

Griffin: We gotta listen to Cocaine and Rhinestones to understand what any of this is about.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, and so, she was nominated for a whole bunch of Grammys. For this upcoming Grammy award, she was nominated for best new artist, best Americana album, best American roots performance, and best American roots song.

Griffin: Hell yeah.

Rachel: Uh, so she—I mean, she's definitely kind of made her way here in... I guess she'd be 37? Be 37 this year. Uh, so yeah, so if you are interested in her music, and then, also want to check out the Tiny Desk Performance, that was January 17th.

Uh, she is incredible. It's very exciting to like, see somebody who's kind of not afraid to be exactly who they are, and kind of live their interests. Um, she talked about, uh, how doing backing vocals became something that she just got coaxed into doing all the time. Uh, and so, she said now, she's at the point where she shows up places, and people just kind of assume that she's doing backing vocals. And so, she's still trying to kind of figure out kind of what it means to be a solo artist. But I feel like it's exciting to think about where she might go next.

Griffin: Yeah, for sure.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I'm glad you turned me onto her.

Rachel: Yeah, it's cool stuff!

Griffin: I listened to a bunch of other stuff today. Yeah. Uh, can I talk about my first thing?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: My first thing, you should not Google. Don't Google my first thing. My first thing is a game...

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: A folk game that you play with another person that I have always called... Slap wrestling.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I have only known it to be called slap wrestling. And I promise, it's not nearly—if you don't know what I'm talking about...

Rachel: I don't think I do.

Griffin: It's not nearly as violent as it sounds. It is impossible to like, Google it, though, because I don't actually think this game has a proper name. Uh, but there were lots of like, different results, whenever I like, searched sort of the rules of it. That came up of lots of different names, including 'standoff,' I found, and simply 'push hands' is another name for it.

If you Google 'slap wrestling,' the first million results are just videos of huge Russian dudes slapping the shit out of each other.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, is this the game that we played in New Orleans?

Griffin: Probably. It sounds like the kind of game that I would want to play while we're in New Orleans and are hanging out with our friends in the street and have nothing else to do and have had a few drinks.

Rachel: Is this where you stand, like, hand to hand with somebody?

Griffin: So, the rules of slap wrestling... which is what I will call it, for lack of an official name...

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: ... is that you stand about a foot or two away from each other, sort of facing one another, hands up, palms facing each other. The rules are, if you move your feet, you're out, and you have to try and hit the other person's hands. If you hit 'em anywhere else, you are out, because that's aggressive. Now you're fighting. Now it's a hand fight.

Rachel: [laughs] Okay.

Griffin: And we don't like hand fights around here. We like slap wrestling. Uh, you gotta hit hands with the other person to try and make 'em lose their balance and fall down. Or, when they, y'know, push their hands towards you, trying to knock you down, you sort of move your hands back so that their momentum carries 'em straight forward, and they fall into you.

Rachel: You have pictures of us playing this game in New Orleans. Like, I feel like you got a nice camera, and so, you took a bunch of pictures of us playing this.

Griffin: Of us playing slap wrestling. Yes, we did. Now I remember doing this. The reason I had a hard time remembering is that I've played this game so many times in my life.

Rachel: I had never seen it until we played it that time.

Griffin: This is not bullshit. This is like... I, uh... I was—to sort of chart my interest in it, I learned about it when I was pretty young. Like, in middle school or so, when I was in a play with like, the Marshall University kids. Sometimes the college would like, cast kids for kid roles in their college theater productions. And so, hanging out with those older kids, I learned about slap wrestling, and tried to partake.

I was very weak, but my center of gravity was so low that I made quite a name for myself on the slap wrestling.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And it just seems like the... if it sounds like violent and aggressive, then I'm not describing it correctly, because it's not.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: If you suffer any—

Rachel: A lot of people have played it where you do like, hands over other hands, and you like, do it that way.

Griffin: Well, that's—yeah, that's another different game that will show up when you look up slap wrestling.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That's like, uh, red hands.

Rachel: When it's like, waist level, and you're like, kind of trying to like, slap the top.

Griffin: Slap each other's hands. That's not what it is. It's all about making the other person lose their balance.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That's it. Um, and... so like, it is the perfect game to play when you have other people there, and you don't have any like, props. You don't have any, y'know, balls or Frisbees or like, any other sort of like, game stuff to play with. Like, this is a game you don't need anything to play except another person, and like, an area that you can, y'know, safely fall down in.

'Cause I've also been in intense matches where, first person to move their feet is out, and so, both people will just start falling backwards. And instead of moving their feet, they just fuckin' dead ass plank drop straight back.

Rachel: [laughs] Can you really play it with somebody of a particularly different height?

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: 'Cause I feel like I've only really ever played it with people that are close to my height.

Griffin: Uh, yeah, no. I mean, you can—the balance of it, no pun intended, is like, the balance, right? And so, I really was, y'know, a skinny 13-year-old kid playing against college students. And they would try and hit my hands, and like, I would just move them, and they would fall over.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, yeah. There is a great equalizer in slap wrestling, and I—because it is like, the perfect game to play when you have like, down time with nothing else to do and nothing really to like, play with, backstage at shows with the rest of my like, contemporary theater friends, like, growing up, we would play it constantly. We would constantly slap wrestle.

I remember me and Justin turned our coworkers at Joystick onto it, and then at like, shows, like...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I remember very fondly, like, waiting for trains at one E3, and just like, every time we were at a train station, we'd just slap wrestle real quick and knock out a couple rounds.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: Uh, it is so fun, and uh... it's also kind of a great icebreaker game.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Like, playing it with those Joystick guys, I remember like, feeling more close to them, because you kind of—

Rachel: Oh, that's true.

Griffin: Well, one, you're getting like, in the person's personal space in a very, like, sort of harmless, uh, gamey way. But also, you're not just getting in their personal space – you're getting in their fuckin' head.

Rachel: Yeah. No, that's much better than like, "Okay, uh, say your name and an animal that you would be if you were an animal."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I don't like those games.

Griffin: No. I don't have the kind of free time where I just am just sort of chilling with nothing to do, and there's other people around. I feel like, honestly, since... and I'm a sound like Banksy. But since cellphones, maybe. Now I don't have as much of a reason to slap wrestle when there's nothing else to do.

Rachel: [laughs] It's true.

Griffin: Uh, but it's still, like... if it is... I will still play this, like, if everybody's just standing around with nothing to do. If we're waiting in line for a concert or something like that, like... slap wrestling, man. It's fun as—it's fun as hell.

Rachel: Yeah. I'm glad you reminded me of this, 'cause I'd forgotten about it, 'cause as I mentioned, that was my only time playing it was that one time years ago.

Griffin: Let's remember. Next time we're together, nothin' going on...

Rachel: Okay. Next time we're together.

Griffin: Next time the two of us aren't torn apart by our brutal schedules.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, hey. Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yeah!

[ad break music plays]

Griffin: The internet is a labyrinth, and it's guarded by monsters, viruses, um... swordfish operations. Swordfish hackers. What else is in there?

Rachel: Just, uh, clouds... of... y'know... terrorism.

Griffin: Nasty—whoa!

Rachel: [laughs] I don't know. I'm sorry.

Griffin: Alright. I mean, cyber terrorism. Thanks, Rachel.

Rachel: Yeah. Bullying. Cyber bullying.

Griffin: It's important to... uh, mild—cyber bullying, very important. Mild step down from cyber terrorism, I would argue.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Anyway, we've gotten extremely intense very quickly, which I don't think our advertiser will appreciate, but I do want to tell you about Dashlane. Because Dashlane is a service that helps make everything you do on the internet way easier. It will fill out your forms faster, it'll remember all your passwords, it keeps all your online data accessible and safe—

Rachel: Hey, you.

Griffin: —with one app. What?

Rachel: Do you have your... password on a Post-It note under your mouse pad? Stop doing that.

Griffin: Uh, I've just written mine right on the monitor in Sharpie.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, it remembers and auto fills your login and payment information so you don't get slowed down filling in your info across all devices. And it lets you safely send passwords and secure notes, share streaming passwords with your family, send coworkers access codes, let visitors know your Wi-Fi password, et cetera.

So, start dashing through the internet and help support the show by visiting www.Dashlane.com/Wonderful to start your 30-day free trial of Dashlane. No credit card required. If you like it, use the code 'Wonderful' at checkout to save 25% on your premium subscription.

Rachel: Can I tell you about our next sponsor?

Griffin: Oh yes.

Rachel: It's not the first love. It's not the second love.

Griffin: You do this every time.

Rachel: It's Third Love! No, *you* do this every time, Griffin McElroy. This is my first time doing it.

Griffin: Oh. How did it feel?

Rachel: Pretty good!

Griffin: Was it your second time doing it?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Was it your third time doing it?

Rachel: Y'know, if it were my third time, it would be the best time. Because what I'm talking about is Third Love.

Griffin: This is bras.

Rachel: [laughs] Thank you. I always forget to say what it is.

Griffin: It's my favorite NBC family dramas.

Rachel: [laughing] This is Bras.

Griffin: Mandy Moore going through her closet, and she's like, "Hey, guys. Hey guys? This is bras." And her family is like, "I know. It's been four seasons."

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: "I'm old. Now I'm young. But there's still bras." Is that what it is?

Rachel: [laughing] Yes, exactly. Except it's socks.

Griffin: Awwww, shit.

Rachel: Bras... not for your feet.

Griffin: Nope.

Rachel: Turns out. [laughing]

Griffin: That's the—that's the twist at the end of the pilot.

Rachel: Um, I was actually on the Third Love site the other day.

Griffin: Oh, what's up?

Rachel: Because here's the thing. Y'know how sometimes, you get in a little rut with a particular, um, retail site?

Griffin: Oh yes. Oh, all the time. Ugh. BestBuy.com. I'll just—what am I doing here?

Rachel: [laughs] For a long time, I got the t-shirt bra, 'cause it's like... it's like a real great bra, and I love it. But I started lookin'. They got other ones too, turns out.

Griffin: Oh boy.

Rachel: A lot of other ones. Um, and not only that – they got a lot of different sizes. They have half sizes. Uh, and not only that – every customer has 60 days to wear it, wash it, and put it to the test. And if you don't love it, you can return it, and Third Love will donate it to a woman in need. They make it incredibly easy to find the right bra and the right size, and if not, they give it to somebody who needs it.

Griffin: That is—you're giving me a voice right now that is so tender.

Rachel: [laughs] Stop fighting me on this, Griffin!

Griffin: I'm not. I promise.

Rachel: Third Love knows there's a perfect bra for everyone, so right now, they are offering our listeners 15% off your first order. Go to ThirdLove.com/Wonderful now to find your perfect fitting bra, and get 15% off your first purchase. That's ThirdLove.com/Wonderful for 15% off today.

Griffin: Got a jumbotron here. This one's for Otter Pop, and it's from Panda Pants.

Rachel: Oh, this one's gonna be cute.

Griffin: Who says, "As I write this, you're cozied up next to me on the couch watching YouTube, and there's no place I'd rather be. Marrying you last year fucking ruled. Our honeymoon in Japan this year will, too."

Rachel: [laughs] You got so excited.

Griffin: I know! "Thank goodness for the chance to yell about how much I love you through the most Wonderful – TM TM TM – podcast. Prepare yourself... I'm'a grab that butt later."

Rachel: Oh my gosh.

Griffin: That is...

Rachel: They're living a parallel life from us. You realize that, right?

Griffin: It is weirdly parallel to us in a way that kind of freaks my bean a little bit.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: How much—how fiercely are you gonna grab that butt, that you do need forewarning about it?

Rachel: Yeah. Prepare yourself.

Griffin: What does that mean?

Rachel: Maybe—maybe, uh, Panda Pants startles easily, because of the panda pants.

Griffin: Ahh, yes.

Rachel: And so, Otter Pop is just trying to do Panda Pants, y'know, a solid.

Griffin: This is fun fan fiction of our fans.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's literal fan fiction.

Rachel: Can I read you the next one?

Griffin: Yup.

Rachel: This message is for Casey. It is from Julie. "Casey, I just wanted to drop a line to let you know some things that I think are wonderful! Every dog, Scott Pilgrim vs. The World, eating Buncha Crunch at the movies, playing Overwatch, listening to this podcast, and you. Absolutely not in that order. Thanks for being the best husband I have. I think I'll keep you. Love, Julie."

Griffin: That is... that order seems pretty good to me... and that might just be because I don't know Casey.

Rachel: What is—what is Buncha Crunch? That's like a toffee thing, right?

Griffin: No. Buncha Crunch is essentially a Crunch bar. Like a chocolate bar with like, rice crunch in it. But it's like, little, y'know, nuggets of 'em. Little crunch nuggets.

Rachel: Oh, that sounds good.

Griffin: That should be the name of it. I think I would do, um... okay, I'll do Casey, and then, uh... oh, god. Scott Pilgrim. Every dog. Overwatch. Then, Buncha Crunch, and then our podcast.

Rachel: Wow.

Griffin: It feels wrong to put our podcast first, 'cause...

Rachel: Well yeah, but not last.

Griffin: Okay. We're definitely above Buncha Crunch.

Rachel: Thank you.

[beeping]

Speaker 1: Nearly two decades ago, Commander Data sacrificed his life.

Ben: The Greatest Discovery is also about Star Trek: Picard!

Adam: Jesse Thorn won't let us stay on the network unless we do all the Star Trek series, and so, here we are. Doing a show about maybe our favorite Star Trek character of all time.

Ben: If you're excited to watch the new Star Trek: Picard series, and you'd like some veteran Star Trek podcasters to watch it along with, we're your guys. Sorry you're stuck with us.

Speaker 2: The hell are you doing out here, Picard? Saving the galaxy?

Adam: So subscribe to The Greatest Discovery. You can find it anywhere you find podcasts.

Ben: Or at MaximumFun.org.

Speaker 3: Long live Picard!

Griffin: I got so excited to hear your second thing, I fully punched my laptop. Take that, Jony Ive.

Rachel: Who?

Griffin: Jony Ive. He designed Apple products for a long time.

Rachel: Wow. Is this a thing people know?

Griffin: Yeah, he's sort of a part of the sort of cult of personality.

Rachel: Oh, do you mean Steve Jobs?

Griffin: No... I didn't—no, babe, I didn't mess his name up that bad.

Rachel: OKay. [laughs]

Griffin: He's also not with us anymore. Jony Ive is actually not with Apple anymore. But he designed it, and he would always be like, [in an British accent] "This time, I made the fucking edges rounder."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [in an British accent] "This time, it's got five fucking cameras, doesn't it?"

Rachel: "Now it's big. Now it's small again. Now it's big again."

Griffin: [in an British accent] "This time, you can get it big or little. I'm Jony Ive. I'm the smartest man ever." [laughing]

Rachel: [laughs] Does he have an accent, or is this just—

Griffin: [in an British accent] "This one's got no apps. Oops. Oops! It's got apps again! That was clearly not right. No screen on this one. You just kind of yell at it."

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: [in an British accent] "This one's an orb. You can eat it."

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: [in an British accent] "If you want. If you get bored with it. Did you see how round it is? I've done it again."

Rachel: Is he Ringo?

Griffin: [in an British accent] "I might be."

Rachel: [laughs] Can I tell you my second thing?

Griffin: Yes, please.

Rachel: Okay. This has kind of been a long time coming, and I just decided I'm gonna do it.

Griffin: You're leaving me! [tearful]

Rachel: No. [laughs]

Griffin: [tearful] I knew it. It's like Marriage Story 2 up in here!

Rachel: Well, we haven't watched that yet, so I don't know if we should say that.

Griffin: No. It just seems like Closer, but... with half as many people, huh? Just every clip I see, that—

Rachel: So even closer, then, really, I think.

Griffin: The closest.

Rachel: 'Cause less people.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: Every clip I see is just Adam Driver, and his face is so red! And Scarlett Johansen is so upset with him!

Rachel: And it is very close to their face.

Griffin: I don't want to see that.

Rachel: [laughs] Maybe they'll do another one that's happy, and we can watch that one.

Griffin: That's fun! A prequel. Okay. What is your second thing?

Rachel: Uh, this is something I've been thinking about for a long time. It is not ending my marriage to Griffin. It is group therapy.

Griffin: Oh, yeah!

Rachel: I'm bringin' it. I have been in group therapy over a year, uh, and it is maybe the most challenging thing I've ever done. Uh, and I've thought about bringing it for a while, but I wanted to feel like I really had a handle on it, which I don't.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But I feel like I've been doing it long enough now that I could talk about it. Uh, this is something that, um, I don't think a lot of people really know about. And I feel like the only time I ever saw anything depicted about it was in like... on television for like, y'know, AA meetings, for example.

Griffin: There was that Matthew Perry show called Go On. Do you remember that?

Rachel: Ohh. Yes. Yes.

Griffin: I'm amazed that I just pulled the fucking title of it.

Rachel: Wow, I do.

Griffin: But it's like a... it was a Community style show, just about group therapy instead of community college.

Rachel: And there is something very Community about the concept. So, just to give you kind of a quick synopsis... so, group therapy is typically like six to 12 people. Um, and uh, it is selected for people that want to focus on relationships. Because what it allows you to do is just have conversations in the room with people, and really pay attention to your feelings, and trying to identify kind of what it is about what's being discussed, or the people in the room that are kind of bringing those feelings out in you. Uh, and in kind of a safe space.

I had been seeing a therapist, and I was talking about how I kind of... felt like I had a pretty good handle on kind of my mental health, but that I still found myself being very kind of analytical and inward in my relationships with other people. It was very hard for me to kind of be open emotionally, and be vulnerable, with even some of my closest friends. And my therapist, who happened to lead a group said, uh, kind of the best way to build that strength is with other people.

Um, and so, she talked me into it for like, six months. I'd like—I'd go see her, and she'd be like, "What do you thiiink?" And I'd be like, "Oh, what if—y'know, what if like, y'know, like, I can't relate to them?" Y'know, just a lot of concerns, really, about the personalities in the room. Because the way that it's been for me is that I am only comfortable being kind of open and honest with people that I've known for a very long time.

Griffin: Right. It's like a... it's like a catch 22 in a way, where like, having those conversations would improve your opening up to people, but it requires you to open up to people.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Yeah, um... and I think kind of the reason—part of the reason the dynamic works for so many people is because, you get this kind of shared sense of purpose, and it also kind of builds this community. Uh, and you're talking with people that may not have kind of a lot of the same common ground. Um, but if you do find moments of kind of commonality, it kind of helps you reduce that feeling of isolation, and make you kind of more confident. Y'know, that you can find shared experience with people, even if they're like, not... y'know, from your background or have your experience.

Griffin: Do you feel like, uh... I know the answer to this, but to like, demonstrate... uh, like, how long do you think it took for you to like, feel comfortable enough to like, actually participate in like, a material way in that environment?

Rachel: I think kind of the same as it does, like, in a relationship with a new person generally. Like, it was like, four to six months of me going once a week, and just being like, "Okay, I need to get a handle on everybody in this room." [laughs]

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Like, I needed to feel like I kind of understood the dynamic, and what everybody was bringing. And this is just kind of generally how I approach relationships. And so, you end up learning a lot, basically, about yourself. Um, because not only are you like, told to kind of examine your feelings in the moment, but you're in this room of people sharing very personal things, and kind of the way you react to that is just kind of a microcosm of how you react to that in your day to day life.

Griffin: Yeah, of course.

Rachel: Um, and so, there's been kind of a lot of research on it. Obviously, it's not something for everybody. If you're, y'know, intensely shy, or have real severe social anxiety, it's probably not appropriate for you. But there's been research to say that, um, seeing other people's progress in a group can help individuals realize that they can also make progress.

Griffin: Hm.

Rachel: The group, um, allows you to kind of observe, as I mentioned earlier, what the reaction people will bring out in you. And so, you'll notice moments of where like, your anxiety is spiking, or you'll notice how your body language will change. And you have people in the room to kind of respond to that. Uh, and studies have shown that the—kind of the peer interactions that happen in group can be very therapeutic.

And so, more than just, y'know, doing like, individual therapy, you can identify a lot with one another in the room, and that can kind of translate to your real life. So not only that, but you can develop communication skills and socialization skills, and learn how to accept criticism. And it also helps you kind of develop some self-awareness by listening to other people.

I think a lot of people will enter group, either—y'know, 'cause they have a particular relationship that they're kind of struggling with, or that has kind of made them feel more insecure, and they'll kind of spend a lot of time in the room exploring that. And they can have people kind of react and say, "Y'know, what you're saying to me right now, I'm not—that's not the impression I'm getting at all." Y'know? Like, people—

Griffin: Oh, yeah.

Rachel: People that will be in your corner pretty quickly, and they have no real, like, stake, necessarily, in how things turn out for you. Y'know? Like, it's not like a family member or a friend, who you trust, but you also feel like, "Oh, well, you're really invested in me." It's like, "Oh, this person I see once a week believes this about me."

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: "This must be a really strong part of who I am that they could pick up on that already." Um, and I think, also, that it's a safe environment to kind of experiment with trying to say different things out loud to people and communicate better.

That said, I mean, it is kind of terrible. It's very sweaty. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I usually will come back from it very sweaty.

Griffin: I feel like I can tell, when you like, get home from work, 'cause you do it in the middle of your work day. Like, "Oh, shit."

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: "It must've been wild up in that chamber."

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs] 'Cause people will bring—I mean, the people have varying levels of mental health issues, and y'know, when you're in the room, it's not like you're matched necessarily with people who have like, your exact level of, y'know, like, anxiety, or your exact level of depression.

Griffin: Right, sure.

Rachel: Y'know, and so, you're talking to people who will bring a lot of stuff that can be upsetting, or can remind you of other things that you'd forgotten about, and it's... I mean, it's intense, and you're literally, at least in my experience, sitting in a circle, all staring at each other. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. I feel like it's gotta be—right? That's gotta be universal, right? They don't have anybody like, sit in a straight line...

Rachel: [laughing] Sit in a row.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Um, and then, the therapist just kind of acts as facilitator. It's not guided in the way – at least, my experience hasn't been guided in the way that I thought. Like, there's no like, topic for the day.

Griffin: Oh, it's emotion jazz, baby.

Rachel: The first couple times I was there, I feel like people just sat silently for a while, just kind of waiting to see...

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] Waiting to see who was gonna share something.

Griffin: Since you have told me about like, your experience, uh, it has sounded so appealing to me from a like, uh... I go to individual therapy, and like, most of the days that I go to it, like, I catch myself at the end of it like, "Wow, these things have all been true for me lately or always, and I've never really thought of them, 'cause I didn't fuckin' say them out loud to another person, and my brain isn't that introspective, where it's not—"

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So the idea of like, having a room full of people who I might have more in common with, or can give me some extra context for the things that I'm like, thinking and addressing and acknowledging for the first time and saying out loud, like, sounds so invaluable... and also, like my fucking absolute nightmare.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: Vat of venomous asps, biting and biting and biting until I am dead forever.

Rachel: [laughing] Yeah, it... I have found, my opinion about it got better when I thought of it as kind of like, a testing ground. Right? Because people in the room will remind you of somebody in your life. Whether it's like a family member, a friend, or an ex, and you'll say like, "Oh, they're saying things that person would say. I'm gonna ask them a question and see how they would respond to this." 'Cause it kind of helps you think about, "Oh, this person might be similar, and I have an opportunity now to ask them a very personal question..."

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: "... that I couldn't necessarily do with the person, y'know, that they remind me of." So it's—

Griffin: And that, I feel like, is valuable to—like, that—the fact that I feel the way I feel, like, that I have that fear, is probably something that I could get some help with, uh, from a big group of strangers.

Rachel: Yeah. It can—it can be very challenging, because you do become kind of laser-focused. Like, in some ways, it makes you more self-conscious, because you have a bunch of people sitting, listening to you, and saying, "Oh, y'know what? That sounds a lot like what you said about this last week." And you're like, "Oh my gosh, it does. Oh, do I always say that? Do I always sound like that?"

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: Um, but I—y'know, I think I'm invested in it. My therapist initially said, "I make everybody try it for at least three months." And at the time, that seemed like forever, 'cause it was once a week for over an hour for three months, and I thought, "There's no way. But I will do it, because that is the rule." [laughs] And I follow the rules.

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: Uh... and now it's been over a year!

Griffin: Yeah, and you've been doing great.

Rachel: And I feel invested in it, and Griffin has told me it's done good things.

Griffin: It has! Yeah.

Rachel: So I feel good about that.

Griffin: It's been really—I can tell, like, it's been great for you. And I'm super proud of you, too. Like, it is, like... I genuinely do not know if I could do it, because it is—and we share some of the same sort of social anxieties, to lesser degrees, about like, being able to open up to people, or being able to, y'know, talk to people at all. Like...

Rachel: On like a personal level, y'know? Like a real, like, personal appeal.

Griffin: And to—for you to jump in and just like, fuckin' do it is... is so badass.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Well, that's the end of the show. Thanks for listening, everybody.

Griffin: [laughs] What's your second thing? Is it Cheetos?

Griffin: Thanks for listening, everybody. That's it. Thanks to Bo En and Augustus.

Rachel: [laughing] I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I always do this to you.

Griffin: ... it's sky cookies.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: It's Delta sky cookies.

Rachel: Hey, those are very good cookies.

Griffin: Don't you fucking patronize me on our love podcast!

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: How dare you. I'm talking about Biscoff cookies. Sky—

Rachel: You can dip 'em in coffee, and they're—

Griffin: Don't! I—I can't!

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: I know what this is!

Rachel: No, hey, we're both brave. [laughing]

Griffin: [bursts into laughter]

Rachel: Tell me about your relationship with these cookies.

Griffin: You say that a lot about small sky cookies. Sky cookies. Okay. Let's stiff upper lip. Let's be serious about this. Sky cookies are important to me. I'm talking about Biscoff cookies. I fly a lot, and whenever I fly Delta, which is probably... I don't know, top two. Top three airlines for me.

Rachel: You gotta sign up for that rewards thing.

Griffin: I do! I'm up on it. I'm up on it now.

Rachel: Oh, good good good good.

Griffin: I've been a good boy lately. I got down on the apps, I've been... yeah. I don't have credit cards or any of that shit. I guess I should. But the way that they gamify, like, frequent flyer miles, like, scares the shit out of me.

Rachel: I know. [laughs]

Griffin: 'Cause I could get, like, way too into that. But I like Delta, because like, they're probably, y'know...

Rachel: And they got those cookies.

Griffin: They're probably ethically horrific in some way that I don't know about, but uh, they got movies most of the time, and that's pretty fresh.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Their bathrooms are microscopic most of the time. It's hard to even, like... I don't want to be blue here, but like, get toilet paper down there.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Because like, the thing is so—the stall is so narrow that you can't like, open up your legs enough to get... anyway. Their cookies are off the fuckin' chains. I'm talkin' about free Biscoff cookies that they give off. They give out at Delta flights. Every Delta flight. Uh, they offer you free snacks. Pretzels, Cheez-Its, or cookies. And if you choose anything but the cookies, you're wrong. You've chosen incorrectly.

Rachel: And hey, a lot of the times, they'll give you... they'll give you more than one.

Griffin: Give me those Cheez-Its and those cookies.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I'm a silver member, maybe. I'm on my way to becoming a silver member. "That's nothing, sir."

Uh, traveling in the morning, I do fly a lot. Just flew last weekend. Gettin' a shitty cup of coffee with some cream and sugar in it, and a packet of Biscoff cookies that you can just sort of... I don't dunk it, 'cause that's too messy for me in the airplane. I need to be pretty, like, y'know, spotless the whole time. But I will take a bite, and I'll take a slug of that coffee, and just sort of let it... [chewing sound effect] in the mouth.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Damn, that's good. That's so satisfying. It's how I start off my day, and I just love it. If you've never had one, Biscoff cookies are just these super crunchy shortbread cookies that are flavored with like, caramel, and then spiced with uh, a bunch of different spices. There's like, cinnamon and ginger and nutmeg. Kind of a gingerbread sort of situation...

Rachel: Yes. Yes.

Griffin: ... happening there. Um, and you can buy them in some stores. I think, in America, they are strictly imports.

Rachel: You know you can get that spread, right?

Griffin: Cookie butter.

Rachel: Yes sir.

Griffin: Here's the thing. I love Biscoff cookies. They come from Belgium. In Belgium, they're called speculoos. Uh, and they were originally in like the 1700s, given out on Sinterklaas, which is Saint Nicholas day, which I guess is a different day from Christmas day. It's December 6th. And now, I eat them on airplanes to get very strong.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, Delta started serving them on their airplanes in 1986.

Rachel: Oh man.

Griffin: Which means I've never lived in a world without sky cookies, and that's a blessing. And other airlines... I thought this might've been true, but I couldn't like, remember explicitly. Other airlines do also offer Biscoff cookies sometimes.

Rachel: Oh.

Griffin: American Airlines. Alaska Airlines do. I forget who else. But if it's your birthday, sometimes Delta will turn them into a little crown for you, and put a little crown of Biscoff cookies on your head.

Rachel: [laughs] Here is my question. Undoubtedly, we could purchase these and have them in our home.

Griffin: When they sell them in stores, though, they are much smaller. They're much, much, much smaller.

Rachel: Oh, okay. Would you want to have them at home, and would that potentially make the sky cookie less special? This is my question.

Griffin: This is one of those foods that I could see myself... This is true of the weirdest shit, and you can probably attest to this. Uh, I probably talked about this during the bars episode, where I was like, I just like having—I like having some sort of fruit and nut bar.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Some sort of grain bar in the house at all times. Right?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Because if I'm a little peckish, but it's not really a good time, and I don't really want to have a huge, like, wild snack, I'll grab a bar. I kind of feel like I would get this way about Biscoff, where I don't want to just go to the store and buy a box of Biscoff cookies that I could then have, like, at night, y'know, after dinner here and there. I would want a fuckin', like... wild bulk barrel of Biscoff cookies, so that I would know that like, for breakfast, when I have my morning coffee...

Rachel: Uh-huh?

Griffin: I'm just good. I'm covered in the Biscoff department.

Rachel: Okay. So you'd want like a gallon sized...

Griffin: I either want no Biscoff cookies, or I want 30,000 Biscoff cookies in my house.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: Uh, Delta serves them, uh, because they're fucking good. But also, because they are vegan and nut free, so like...

Rachel: Oh, that's nice!

Griffin: It kind of works for most folks.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Uh, I just—I really like `em. I don't like... I don't love, like, a super sweet, super rich treat, especially when I'm flying. I really do try to stay like, sort of more conscious about my, like, body and the things I'm putting

in it on a day where I'm flying. 'Cause flying, already, kind of beats the shit out of me. And I just think that they're just... kind of mellow and rich and satisfying, and with that morning coffee, it's so good.

But cookie butter is just Biscoff cookie crumbs, all ground up, mixed with fat, flour, and sugar. So it's kind of like Nutella, but it's actually ground up cookies, and that's pretty wild. I don't love that. Don't love that. Love Biscoff. Don't love when we gelatinize it.

Rachel: I think... I like the concept of it, but all I can think is, wouldn't you just put it on other cookies? Like, I don't think I'd want it on anything but other cookies.

Griffin: [sighs] When I Googled it, it was like, "You put this on bread to make a sandwich like you do with Nutella." And I wanted to be like, "Yo, Google? People aren't doing that that much with Nutella." Like—please don't send me links to like, "Here's a Nutella and peanut butter sandwich that I like to make." That's fine. Like, I know that some people do that. But I do not think that is Nutella's sort of like, main use now.

Rachel: No, it's like a dessert treat, y'know?

Griffin: I like Biscoff cookies in their sort of snappy, crunchy, y'know, shortbread form. That's my jam.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: I do love them very much. I love them. Thank you, Delta.

I have submissions from our friends at home. Joel says, "The recent mention of McGruff the crime dog and other animal PSA mascots made me think of the Lee County lit..." Jesus, this is so rough to say. I cannot believe that this is what they called it.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "The Lee County Litter Lizard."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "Cutouts of the lizard are set up at various local parks throughout my small hometown, reminding kids to throw their trash in nearby bins. I

loved him as a kid, and I still do now. He's a cute 'lil guy. He's against littering, and he always seems just as happy to see me as I do seeing him."

Rachel: Lee County Litter Lizard. Hoo, that is hard!

Griffin: Litter lizard.

Rachel: Litter lizard.

Griffin: Litter lizard, litter lizard, litter lizzid, litter lizard, littler... [dissolving into gibberish] That's like a—

Rachel: A vocal? Yeah.

Griffin: That we would definitely sing before opening night of Oklahoma. Uh, Joel sent a picture of this wonderful lizard. It's very big and imposing.

Rachel: Can I see it?

Griffin: Got a yellow baseball cap on.

Rachel: Oh, whoa.

Griffin: And a big smile.

Rachel: I think he looks kind of like a gator.

Griffin: Oh, he does kind of look like a gator. That is powerful. Yeah. And he is wearing a t-shirt. It's a white t-shirt that somebody has written in Sharpie, "Lee Litter Lizard" on it. That's so fun. Okay, thank you. That's a very good—I want to hear about everybody's local...

Rachel: Yes, me too!

Griffin: PSA mascots. I want to make a podcast about local PSA mascots, 'cause I find it so fascinating. Uh, VJ says, "My small wonder is the smell of old Navy... ships." I read that sentence, and I was like, "The smell of Old Navy? Like, they're—ships? You mean the literal... the literal old in the Navy."

Uh, "I've worked on two separate battleship museums; one in Hawaii, and the other in California, since I was 16. And now, as a 29 year old, the smell of the old oil and ship stuff makes me feel at home. The smell even grew on my girlfriend over time, but initially, when I would get home after work, she would always say that I smelled like ship."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: What's a old ship smell like?

Rachel: What is this life?

Griffin: Old oil... okay. I can kind of put together kind of what that smells like. And ship stuff.

Rachel: I have always been very, like... very, very deeply landlocked. Uh, so, I don't think I've even been on any kind of... ship, except for a cruise ship.

Griffin: Which probably has its own smells.

Rachel: Probably doesn't smell like old Navy ship.

Griffin: Want to know what old Na—see, I'm adding this to my bucket list of smells. And this is a special list.

Rachel: [laughs] Bucket list smells?

Griffin: I've got one bucket that I've been going around the country, and...

Rachel: Puttin' smells in?

Griffin: Puttin' smells right in that.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: One day, I'm just gonad dunk my face in there. [inhales deeply] Huff it all up.

Thank you 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 hey, to to MaximumFun.org while we're at it. While we're thankin' people.

Rachel: Yeah, thank you Maximum Fun for hosting our show, and hosting a lot of shows like The Jackie and Laurie show.

Griffin: And Mission to Zyxx.

Rachel: Yes! And... Round Springfield.

Griffin: Aaall great programs. You can find more at MaximumFun.org. If you like the stuff we make, it's all at McElroy.family. Uh, you want to check out our merch, or uh, other podcasts or live shows comin' up... we're working on some more dates for that. Um...

Rachel: I think there's still tickets for Cincinnati, right?

Griffin: Yes, I believe so. Those are comin' up in late February. But we'll be announcing a couple more short tours, uh, for the spring, comin' up here soon. Uh, Rachel and I are gonna be doing Wonderful on that aforementioned cruise ship. Uh, JoCo Cruise 2020. There have been no cabins available for that for like a year, so I don't know why I'm telling you.

Rachel: But look forward to a live episode at sea!

Griffin: Ah, yes. Yarr. We'll do lots of fun... ooh, what's great about the sea? That's—what's—we always do like, local Wonderful, and I feel like... ocean... there's so much.

Rachel: There's a lot of stuff in the ocean.

Griffin: It's really big. Coral.

Rachel: [laughs] Every time you say that, I think of your Walking Dead impression.

Griffin: Coral! Get to the car, Coral!

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: I can't say anything but his name. Coral. Bye, everybody.

[theme music plays]

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[music plays]

Janet: Hey, I'm Janet Varney. And like many of you, some more recent than others, I used to be a teenager. In fact, just about all of my friends were too, including wonderful women like Alison Brie.

Alison: I'm dead center on the balance beam. And this is like, a big gym. All the— kids' parents are there, watching. I have to stop, like when you have to pee so bad and you can't even move, and then I just go.

Janet: Oh, nooo! [laughs]

Alison: I just pee right in the middle of the high balance beam.

Janet: So join me every week on the JV Club podcast, where I speak with complicated, funny, messy humans as we reminisce about our adolescences and how they led us to becoming who we are. Find it every Thursday on Maximum Fun.