

Wonderful! 125: A Thighful of Chico

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Jesse: Hi. It's Jesse, the founder of Max Fun. We promised you a MaxFunDrive this week, but things haven't exactly gone how we expected. So, given the pandemic, we're gonna postpone this year's drive. Events are still fluid, so we're hesitant to give you specifics about new dates. Right now, we have late April penciled into our calendars. We'll keep you posted about that.

As it stands, a lot of our Drive machinery was already cranked up, so for one thing, you might hear a reference or two to the Drive in our shows, which might've been recorded before we made this decision. And here is some good news – there's a bunch of great bonus content available for all of our Max Fun members.

If you're a member, and you missed the email with instructions on how to listen, check your spam folder, or log in at MaximumFun.org/Manage. Also at MaximumFun.org/Manage, you can change your membership if your circumstances have changed. We know this is a tough time for a lot of people, and we understand. You can also go to MaximumFun.org/Join at any time if you'd like to become a member.

During the next couple weeks, what would have been the Drive, we're going to do our best to be extra available to you. We've got some streaming events planned, some social media stuff. We know a lot of folks are isolated right now, and we want to help provide comfort in the best ways that we know how. You can follow us on social media, and we'll let you know what's up.

During this tough time, I have been feeling really grateful for my community of colleagues here at Max Fun, and for you, the folks who make our work possible, goofy as that work may sometimes be. Stay safe out there. We're thinking of you.

[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hello, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: Rachel has just criticized the way I'm sitting, but I can't help it. I'm balled up like a little tiger, ready to freaking strike. Do you know why that is, Rachel? And listener.

Rachel: Because it's... the MaxFunDrive.

Griffin: It is MaxFunDrive time, and it's happening now, and you're in it!

Rachel: Wait, let me do my air horn noise.

Griffin: Yeah, oh, god!

Rachel: Woo woo woo wooooo!

Griffin: It's getting worse!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's getting worse over time! Or better. Depends on if you care about authenticity, or just like, raw fun factor. And for me, it's really fun. This is the MaxFunDrive. It's the first week. You're in it. We're here. We're live. And we're just living the dream, and we hope that you are, too. How you doing? Let's check in.

Rachel: [laughs] I mean, I'm doing real good.

Griffin: I like your straight hair. You've straightened your hair.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Uh, you look like a very business profesh. Got a chunky necklace on, and that's very stylish. Very in right now. And y'know what else is in right now? Supporting the Maximum Fun network.

Rachel: Oh, interesting segue. [laughs]

Griffin: Thanks. This year, for our bonus episode, Rachel played Animal Crossing: New Leaf on the 3DS for... what, like, a month and a half now, and talked about her experience, which is really fun, 'cause you don't often dabble in the gaming space.

Rachel: I am not a video game person.

Griffin: Yeah, so that's a really fun one. And we have tons of other stuff, and every other show on the network does, too. You get that when you become a member at the five dollars a month level.

Rachel: Small wonder. I am going to say... uh, for my small wonder, uhh, Cheez-Its.

Griffin: Cheez-Its!

Rachel: Those little square cheesy crackers.

Griffin: Ooh, Cheez-Its! You seen them Cheez-It Crisps?

Rachel: Y'know, I think—didn't we see an advertisement for that?

Griffin: You saw an advertisement for Cheez-It—

Rachel: And we thought, "That is a brilliant combination."

Griffin: What is that? What—it's like a Cheez-It that they made a Pringle into? What?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That doesn't seem to make a whole lot of sense, that sentence.

Rachel: What about you?

Griffin: Uh, y'know... I think I've talked about it before, but I just love taking apart machinery. I love taking apart electronics. I fucking love it. I just did it with the Switch I have to put it together, give it a little Animal Crossing glow up. You can check out my Insta story to see the process.

Rachel: Well, probably not anymore. I don't think those things last.

Griffin: No, I pinned it. I pinned it. You can go watch it at any time.

Rachel: Ohh! Any time! [laughs]

Griffin: I just really, uh... the process of taking something apart and putting it back together again, uh, is so, like, soul satisfying to me. I am so into it. And now, kind of like, after doing this enough, I have kind of a bucket of like, electronics and plating and stuff—

Rachel: Oh god.

Griffin: —that that I can use for like, whatever the hell I want to.

Rachel: Just chokables. Just things to choke on.

Griffin: No, it's locked away in the bottom drawer of this cabinet, so not very locked away at all.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Hey, what is your first thing? And by the way, that's the biggest fucking bottle of Topo Chico I think I've ever seen in my life.

Rachel: I got it when we hosted people a while back, and we never drank it. And when I looked into the fridge today, there was no more sparkling beverage, except for this giant, uh...

Griffin: It's the—it's the—

Rachel: 50 ounce?

Griffin: 50 ounce? Yeah, it's the size of my thigh. It's like you're drinking a thighful of Chico.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Hey, what's your first thing?

Rachel: My first thing is the evolution of the veggie burger.

Griffin: Hey, it's come a long way, baby.

Rachel: Yeah, dude!

Griffin: You had one of them pos—Impossible Boigahs?

Rachel: Y'know what, I haven't.

Griffin: I have not either, and that feels weird, 'cause I love a food, like, gimmick. Not that it's like, gimmicky, but it's new.

Rachel: I think it's 'cause we don't do fast food a lot.

Griffin: Ever, yeah. We used to, man. We used to just crush that.

Rachel: When we go to a restaurant, we don't usually have an instinct to order a burger at a restaurant.

Griffin: Unless it's a burger restaurant. And then like, yeah, if we do like a burger fast food, it's usually Shake Shack. And like, I think they do one, but sorryyy, I'm gonna get that SmokeStack, like, every tiime.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I'm sooo baaad.

Rachel: I—I like to order it if, y'know, I'm feeling like I need to get some more vegetables in my diet.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: It also tends to make me feel less sick after, which...

Griffin: Oh, than a big beefy boy. Yeah.

Rachel: Yeah. So I... there's maybe only one year in my life that I was a vegetarian. Um, but I still enjoy a vegetarian product; particularly, the veggie burger, 'cause it's come a long way.

Griffin: Yeah. Are you saying—the yardstick you're using to measure the distance that the veggie burger has traveled... is that yardstick sort of labeled, proximity to meat, like, texture and flavor and realism?

Rachel: I mean, all of the above.

Griffin: Okay, I see.

Rachel: Right? Like, I'm gonna tell you about how it started, and you're gonna realize, I think, just how far it's come.

Griffin: I'm gonna guess it started with just like, somebody took a big Portobello and was like, "This is a burger now. Handle it."

Rachel: It's even worse than that.

Griffin: Oh boy, okay.

Rachel: Uh, so this is 1982. Gregory Sams had a natural food restaurant in London, and then he decided to go into wholesale natural food. His original idea was to sell it in dried food packets to be rehydrated.

Griffin: Hey, that sucks. [laughs]

Rachel: So it was like a little bag of wheat gluten, sesame, soy, and oats, with some herbs in it, and you would form it into a patty and cook after rehydrating it.

Griffin: Rehydrate—you just run that shit under the kitchen sink?

Rachel: Just add a little water in there and make it a Play-Doh, and turn it into a burger.

Griffin: Do that for me, dude! Don't sell—don't—

Rachel: [laughs] That's what he did shortly after. I think to save on cost in packaging, he went that direction.

Griffin: I can understand that like, people buy big tubes of ground beef and turn those into burgers. Like, I get it. But like, you can't—

Rachel: Yeah. I know.

Griffin: You can't give me a big bag of carrots and be like, "Now make that into a fucking burger." Like, where do you draw the line?

Rachel: At the time, it was cheaper than, y'know, like, getting a meat. So that was like, a pro, I guess.

Griffin: Fair. Okay, yeah.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, by 1985, which is just three years after Sams did this, Garden Burger was founded.

Griffin: I know them.

Rachel: This is what I love, though. So, they were founded in 1985. They released their first vegetable-based burger in 1992.

Griffin: Seven years of RND?!

Rachel: So they—yeah. [laughs] Yeah, right?

Griffin: What?!

Rachel: [laughing] I just picture them in a room with like, a bunch of carrots and bell peppers, and chopping them up and being like, “Aw, this won't hold together...”

Griffin: “Not this...”

Rachel: “Start over.” [laughs]

Griffin: “What about this?”

“That’s just a whole eggplant.”

“I know...”

Rachel: “You just wrapped some tape around some mushrooms. That’s not a burger.”

Griffin: “You wrote ‘hamburger’ on a whole head of iceberg lettuce. You know that isn't right.”

Rachel: [laughing] Um, veggie burgers now are made with a lot of different things.

Griffin: Oh yeah.

Rachel: Um, I've had like a black bean burger, which is pretty popular. Um, there's also like, a lot of nuts, grains, seeds, and, y'know, mushrooms. You'll see a lot, lately, different vegetable proteins.

Griffin: Yeah, that's sort of the basis of the... here—I am very, uh... I've never lived as a, uh, anything other than an omnivore sort of lifestyle. So I don't follow, like, the Impossible Burger or what it is. I know that it is a vegetarian thing, but as—from reading just sort of cursory news, as this thing was in development, I think it's made of just like... celery stem cells, or something like that?

Rachel: I can tell you what it's made of.

Griffin: Oh, please. Okay.

Rachel: Okay, so in 2011 – that's when the Impossible Burger hit the scene. It is soy protein, coconut oil, sunflower oil, natural flavors are the primary ingredients.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: So the coconut oil is where you get the fat that like, holds it together and like, sizzles and everything.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Um, the Impossible Burger has 19 grams of protein.

Griffin: [whispers] Damn.

Rachel: They not only make burgers – they make sausage. So in May 2019, Little Caesar's began testing the Impossible Supreme Pizza in Florida, New Mexico, and Washington state with plant-based sausage.

Griffin: [laughs] There is something vaguely Orwellian about the Impossible Supreme Pizza, made with faux-sausage.

Rachel: I'm like—on one hand, it's like, really cool, and good on Little Caesar's, y'know, 'cause they're such an affordable option, y'know? Like, to make that available.

Griffin: I've had a veggie burger before, so I imagine the Impossible Burger is like, dope as hell. That's like, all I ever hear about it. I remain skeptical... of the sausage simulacra. Because – and there's a restaurant here in Austin that people love, and I'm not gonna name names. Not gonna name names. But it's a vegan restaurant people love here in Austin.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: And it was right next to where Rachel, uh, your apartment was when I first moved here, so we'd go there all the time for brunch.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Scoop on in there, and be like, "Let me get that vegan breakfast sausage," and it was like, a puck of sort of oats that was like... it did not even come close to—I'm trying not to Ron Swanson out over here, but like...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I don't know about that one. That one's closer to me, to my heart.

Rachel: Um, well, if you think about sausage, a lot of it is seasoning. Like, a lot of it is that like, y'know, spicy pepper. Y'know, that like... that sausage flavor.

Griffin: The sausage experience.

Rachel: Texture of sausage isn't anything I think anyone's particularly excited about.

Griffin: Eh... speak for yourself.

Rachel: Okay. [laughs] I wanted to tell you... beyond the Impossible Burger, 2019, the Awesome Burger. [laughs]

Griffin: What is this?

Rachel: Get ready. Okay, so, the Impossible Burger, as I mentioned, had 19 grams of protein. The Awesome Burger... 26.

Griffin: Okay!

Rachel: So more protein than a beef burger. The Awesome Burger, pea protein.

Griffin: Mmm, that's how they—

Rachel: Also coconut oil, wheat gluten, and then, fruits and vegetables.

Griffin: So this one not only, y'know, tastes good... it get you jacked, is what you're saying.

Rachel: I mean, a little bit. The thing is, anytime you put coconut oil in something, you're gonna get a fair amount of fat. So it's not exactly like, a health food. But it, I mean, is more nutritious in some ways.

Griffin: Yeah, it makes you crazy strong. So that's like, all that matters to me, 'cause you know I'm... all about that sort of lifestyle, of getting very powerful.

Rachel: Can you give me some examples in the way...

Griffin: Of how much prot' I'm like, cramming in a single day?

Rachel: Yeah. Tell me some of the foods you eat that are high protein.

Griffin: Uh, peanuts. White co—white fish. A lot of cod.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. How do you eat your peanuts, exactly?

Griffin: Ohh. In a—

Rachel: Like a little handful, or...

Griffin: No, I do it in big bowl. I do it in big bowl.

Rachel: Big bowl.

Griffin: Yeah, so I just have—I'll have a bowl of peanuts. Like a salad bowl. Like a mixing bowl of peanuts, just at my desk.

Rachel: Uh-huh. [laughing] Uh-huh.

Griffin: And then, when that's gone, what I like to do is go downstairs, cram some white fish, slam some halibut, and then I will refill the bowl, and I'll bring that right back upstairs. So yeah, I'm a... my blood peanut content, at this point, I'm blowin' like a 1.2 or something like that. It's rough.

Rachel: Oh, you just reminded me of Mr. Peanut. RIP.

Griffin: It's fine. Remember? He came back to life. 'Cause the fucking—

Rachel: I think I missed that. I was living in a world where I thought he was still gone.

Griffin: No, he came back as a baby.

Rachel: Oh, like Groot? Like a Groot situation?

Griffin: Like a Groot situation.

Rachel: M'kay.

Griffin: Stand in your fucking truth! Mr. Peanut is dead! And you had it! That's all you had to do was walk the fuck away! You had it, and then you were like, "Look, it's like baby Yoda. Remember him?" I'm like—fuckin' cowards.

Rachel: [laughs] The reason I bring that up is just that, I think a lot of people just say, "Well, I'm not a vegetarian. Why would I eat food designed for vegetarians?" But I think it doesn't hurt to uh, to switch it up a little bit. And I will say, there was research that, y'know, it's like, under five percent of the population is vegetarian.

Griffin: Mm.

Rachel: But the majority of the population is trying to be more health conscious, and this is a way to do it.

Griffin: Yeah. I want to eat one of these now. I'll do it.

Rachel: Yeah, me too!

Griffin: I'll do it. I'll do it. Let's do it tonight. Let's just throw our hat over the fence. Let's stop putting this off. Let's go get in the Jeep, right now. We don't have a Jeep.

Rachel: Burger King has a veggie burger.

Griffin: Burger King has a veggie burger! Let's—

Rachel: I don't know where a Burger King is, but we can figure that out.

Griffin: There's gotta be a Burger King some—I'm trying to remember the last time I saw a Burger King. We'll figure it out together.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Hey, do you wanna know what my first thing is?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Me too. Oh, yeah, dunk. Oh man. I got two that like... when I started to write my notes on this, like, for both of them, I was like, "We have to have talked about this." Like, it was full Mandela effect, like, I know we've talked about this.

I'm also talking about a fruit. And... or, a food.

Rachel: Okay. [laughs] I was gonna say, that wasn't a fruit.

Griffin: I'm talkin' about a fruit. An Impossible Burger's a fruit, if you think about it. It's got seeds. We'll come back to it.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: I'm talkin' about grapes.

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: If you sat me down in front of two buttons, and one of the buttons was labeled 'grapes disappear,' and the other one is labeled 'all other fruits disappear,' and I had to press one of them, ooh boy. That decision would take me a long time.

Rachel: I don't think I knew that you like grapes this much.

Griffin: I love grapes. I don't, uh... I don't know. I don't—we don't keep a lot of them around the house. But whenever we get those little cocktails that have like, the different fruits in them, and it's mostly for—you know I'm in there, just constantly sneakin' them grapes.

Rachel: See, I... it has to be a firm grape for me.

Griffin: Oh, interesting.

Rachel: If it is the least bit squishy, I am not interested. Take it away.

Griffin: I do not... care so much about that.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: I think the term 'nature's candy' is kind of like, played out. But I think grapes are so good, that candy should be called mankind's grapes.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And that's just where I stand on the matter. I think I would press the 'destroy all other fruits' button. Because here's the thing – grapes? Versatile. Right? Just on the surface level, you got your purple grapes and you got your green grapes, right? Your dark grapes, and you got your white grapes. There's tons of different like, grape—

Rachel: Lots of grapes.

Griffin: There's lots of different grape types, though, beyond that, right? You got your very sweet concords. You got your—

Rachel: What about that cotton candy grape? You remember that one?

Griffin: The cotton candy grape, I do remember that one. Uh, and it's funny you bring that up, because... what the fuck? That one came around, and I didn't hear about it until a couple years after it came around. How did I miss that they made that? How did I miss they made—

Rachel: It seems like somebody should've contacted you directly.

Griffin: It seems like somebody should've called me up. The company that made that is called The Grapery. They made cotton candy grapes, where they just basically, uh, did some cross breeding different dank strains of grapes until they made one that tastes like cotton candy. Which, I don't

know how you necessarily dial that in. But concord grapes are a component in that.

Concord grapes rarely, like, sold individually. They are usually made into other things. Um, so like... oh, The Grapery also makes a kind of grape I had never even seen before.

Rachel: It's really called The Grapery?

Griffin: It's called The Grapery.

Rachel: I love that.

Griffin: They are like, the leaders in boutique grapes.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: They make a grape that used to be—they used to call Witch Fingers, and then I think they decided, "Hey, that's gross, and people don't want to eat that." Now they're called Moon Drop Grapes, and they're shaped like a gherkin. Like, they're long. They're almost rectangular.

Rachel: Weird!

Griffin: And I need to have these grapes. Uh, there's a Japanese type of grape, uh... I can't remember the name of it, but that can grow the size of a plum. There's all kinds of different grapes!

Rachel: Ooh!

Griffin: So if there's no more other fruit, you're fine. 'Cause there's lots of different grapes, right? I've never eaten a gross grape in my life.

Rachel: Oh, see, I disagree.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: It's those squishy ones! You know what I'm talkin' about.

Griffin: Yeah, I guess so. Uh, one thing to keep in mind about grapes is, they are one of only a small handful of foods that are naturally fun-sized. And I think that that is important.

Rachel: [laughs] Mmm...

Griffin: Now, you can say—were you gonna say, like—

Rachel: I'm gonna argue.

Griffin: You're gonna say like, strawberry? Strawberry's like a two bite... like, that's not... especially fun-sized.

Rachel: Strawberry. Blueberry.

Griffin: Blueberry's a—[smacks lips] Blueberry's like an M&M. I wouldn't say an M&M can be even fun-sized, right? It's small and intangible. Grape is just perfect little bite every single time, and you don't have to go through and say, "How many grapes am I gonna get?" Or go through and like, pick an individual grape off the grape tree or whatever. They come on these beautiful little clusters! You just grab a cluster and go. It's like Go-Gurt. It's nature's candy. It's Go-Gurt. It's fun-sized. They've like, figured it out.

Rachel: You get so close to writing a poem on so many episodes, Griffin, and I just want—one of these days, I want you to cross over.

Griffin: But that's the thing about grapes, right? You think about them, and you have a point. When they get super old, you can't eat—

Rachel: Yeah, squishy. I need a little firmness.

Griffin: Wrong! If you let them go even further, they turn into raisins. And raisins are awesome. You get—I don't eat them, again, anymore. But when

you're a kid, and you get the little red box of Sun-Maid in your lunch box? And crack that open? It's like a little, just, dried fruit vacation!

Rachel: That's why you hear, all throughout the cafeteria, kids screamin', "I've got raisins!!"

Griffin: You reach a certain age when you're too fuckin' cool for raisins, right? And then like, your mom starts packing you some Star Crunches. Some Oatmeal Crème Pies. You're like, "I've moved—I've put away my childish things. I don't need raisins." But there was a time where I needed raisins. But I'm just saying, if grapes get too old, they turn into raisins. And that is incredible.

Rachel: That is incredible.

Griffin: We also gotta talk about when you just squeeze these things, the fluid they secrete, grape juice... don't mind if I do. That's like, the best juice that there is. You can also—you mix it with blueberry juice, cranberry juice, to make a little grape juice cocktail. There is no time when I don't want to be drinking that. The problem is, if you let grape juice get too old, you can't drink it.

Oh wait!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That's what wine is!

Rachel: You really should've been on the debate team in high school.

Griffin: That's what wine is, and wine is dope, and it makes other food taste better?!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: From grapes?!

Rachel: Yeah. That's true.

Griffin: Apple's not doin' that. Orange isn't doing that. Lime isn't doing that. This is the king—this is only the purview of grapes. But you have to be really careful with grapes, because if they get too smashed up, then you can't eat `em anymore.

[pause]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Wait a minute!! That's jelly! There's nothing you can do to grapes to ruin them!

Rachel: Mmm.

Griffin: There is nothing you can do to a grape where it's not still like, "Ha ha! I'm still good to consume in some way!" Think about it! What are you gonna do?

Rachel: You can't put arms and legs on them and sunglasses... oh wait!

Griffin: Oh wait!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You totally can, once they turn into raisins! You can be like—you could even be like, y'know what? I'm gonna get ahead of this. I'm gonna crush `em all up when they're still seeds, so you can't—that's grape seed oil!! You can't do anything to ruin them!

Rachel: It's not like they have a board game or anything. Oh wait... Grape Escape!

Griffin: Grape Escape is a thing!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I'm just blown away by the versatility, the survivability, of a grape.

Rachel: Yeah, that's true. That's true.

Griffin: And I think that the saying, 'when life gives you lemon, you should make lemonade,' I also think that's bullshit now, and it should just be like, 'make your life a grape, and then it doesn't matter what life gives you.'

Rachel: Oh, make your life a grape.

Griffin: It doesn't matter what life gives you. You're gonna be good. You're gonna make jelly out of it. You're gonna make grape seed oil out of it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's the best—have I convinced you that this is the best fruit yet?

Rachel: Yeah, no, I'm onboard. 100%.

Griffin: It's the fruit I always wanna be snackin' on.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But then, even if I hated the flavor of it, you gotta respect the grape. Because it can be whatever it wants to be. And there's nothing you can do about it.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Hey babe?

Rachel: Mm-hmm?

Griffin: Can I hear your second thing? Wait a minute, this one's not gonna have a Tim Allen break in it. Let me just drop the Home Improvement stinger in right now for no reason.

[Home Improvement stinger]

Griffin: What's your second thing?

Rachel: My second thing. I think maybe, to others, it is a nuisance. But when you experience it yourself, it is enjoyable.

Griffin: Are you gonna be like, "Wasps."

Rachel: No! Yawning! [laughs]

Griffin: You enjoy—you enjoy—

Rachel: Don't you love a good yawn?

Griffin: I've never thought about it as being good or bad. I just thought about it as like—

Rachel: It's not as good as a sneeze. I'll give you that. A sneeze is pretty great.

Griffin: Okay. First of all... [yawns] This is like—this is a weird sort of psychic vampirism.

Rachel: [laughs] I'm gonna talk about that a little bit.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah. It's—

Rachel: Griffin looked very interested in yawning, just in that moment.

Griffin: It was weird. My body was like, "Mm, yawn sounds pretty good right about now."

Rachel: See?

Griffin: And then like, my body tried to do it, but then it was like, "Nah, you're good. It's noon. You're not that tired yet."

Rachel: [laughs] I yawn a lot, uh, when I'm nervous. Um, or—oh! There it is!

Griffin: [yawns] There it is. Oh my god.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I apol—can we—I apologize. If you are not a yawner, you're going to during this segment, and I apologize in advance.

Rachel: Yeah. Sometimes I'll be like, waiting at the doctor's office, and I will just uncontrollably be yawning. Or like, just nervous about a job interview or whatever. Uh, and so, I was kind of fascinated with it, and like, why I do it all the time. And so, here's—here's—there's been a lot of studies on it.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: The most scientifically backed theory is brain temperature regulation. If your brain temperature gets too outside the norm, inhaling air can help cool it down.

Griffin: Okay...

Rachel: So if you're real hot or real cold, powerful stretching of the jaw increases blood fl—

Griffin: [distantly] This is unbelievable!

Rachel: [laughs] You have to stop, Griffin!

Griffin: *You* have to stop!

Rachel: Powerful stretching of the jaw increases blood flow in the neck, face, and head. The deep intake of breath during a yawn forces downward flow of spinal fluid and blood from the brain.

Griffin: Damn, all that just from opening my mouth real big?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Damn.

Rachel: So, there was a study, uh, where researchers went to Tucson in the winter and in the summer. The researchers asked 80 pedestrians to look at pictures of people yawning, which is traditionally a trigger for a lot of people. In cooler weather, 45% of people yawned when they looked at the pictures. But in hotter weather, only 24% of people yawned.

Griffin: That's... wild.

Rachel: So like, taking in the air to kind of regulate your temperature.

Griffin: Yeah. I don't think about it like that. I just think it as a sleepy boy thing. How come it's a sleepy boy thing?

Rachel: Uh, okay. So, another reason you may yawn is because the body wants to wake itself up. The motion helps stretch the lungs and tissues.

Griffin: [yawns] That's three!

Rachel: [laughing] This is insane, by the way.

Griffin: Yeah babe. It is.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, babe. It kind of is. Fuckin' Professor X over there, in my fuckin' dome, mixing stuff around.

Rachel: Okay, okay. In order to wake yourself up, yawning may stretch the lungs and tissues, and allow the body to flex its muscles and joints. It also may force blood towards your face and brain to increase alertness.

Griffin: Okay, now it makes sense.

Rachel: This is gonna make you feel good about all the yawning you're doing right now. There was a study at Baylor that shows that the greater empathy a person has, the more likely they are to yawn. They did a study where they looked at 135 college students, and how they reacted to different facial movements. The results showed that the less empathy a person had, the less likely they would yawn after seeing someone else yawn.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: So I guess that's not exactly what you're doing right now.

Griffin: Kind of is.

Rachel: But yeah, the idea that you're mirroring somebody in an empathetic way.

Griffin: Can I tell you a little bedtime hack for me, for getting Henry down? And I realized this, like, if you read a book that's like a bedtime designed book, where a character, like, yawns...

Rachel: Ohh!

Griffin: Every time—it started out unintentionally. Like, I would read, like, the character says, "yaaawn," and it would make me yawn, 'cause it's later at night. And then Henry would see me do it, and then Henry would yawn.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And then he was really easy to go take down, and then I just started doing it on purpose.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Like, I just started like, really trying to get a good yawn out, 'cause it worked. Like, I started to get very superstitious about it. Like, if I can't make this boy yawn, he is not sleeping tonight.

Rachel: This is true, actually. On the nights where I put Henry down, 'cause either Griffin's not present or we're kind of switching, I will ask Griffin, like, "What are your tips and tricks? What is the new practice that you're doing?"

Griffin: Yeah, it's really hard not to sort of create a ritual out of it.

Rachel: So, here's some other tips and tricks kind of to stop yawning.

Griffin: I would need these right now.

Rachel: Okay. This, I think, is a reason that I yawn when I'm nervous. Uh, if you feel yourself yawning excessively, try deep breathing through your nose. Your body may need more oxygen.

Griffin: [breathing heavily through nose]

Rachel: A 2007 study also found that nasal breathing decreased contagious yawning completely in the research.

Griffin: Yeah, but I don't wanna do that into the microphone.

Rachel: I know. But I think that's why I yawn when I'm nervous, because my breathing is real shallow.

Griffin: Okay. That last one, by the way? I did a fourth one just while Rachel—I didn't stop the show and make a big production out of it, but it felt—I'll give you this, babe. It felt so fuckin' good. It felt really, really good.

Rachel: [laughing] Right? Sometimes if you really let go. Like, don't worry about how your face looks. Don't try to stifle it.

Griffin: Yeah, I just let it rip.

Rachel: Just go for it. It feels good. Uh, other ways: get moving, breaking up a routine can also help stimulate your brain. Uh, excessive yawning may be from too much caffeine. So if you consume too much caffeine, that may happen.

Griffin: Yep.

Rachel: Um, also cool yourself down. You can take a walk outside, or drink a cool beverage, and that may help, too.

Griffin: Cool.

Rachel: I'm sorry that this segment ruined you!

Griffin: [laughs] I did another one.

Rachel: I'm actually really curious now from our listeners, uh...

Griffin: What's your high score? Alright, let's get up on the leader—

Rachel: Yeah, what's the high score? [laughing]

Griffin: Take it to the leaderboard, Mo! I did fuckin' five!

Rachel: [laughing] I didn't do any, but I think I'm so focused and stimulated right now. You're clearly not.

Griffin: I'm clearly not. I mean, it could also be because I drink a, y'know, a gas tank full of coffee every day before noon, and that is probably not awesome. I need to get that energy back up, so I'm gonna tell you about my second thing, and boy, it's gonna get me there.

Again, I could've sworn on a stack of Bibles I had talked about this before. I'm talkin' about a band. A band that is, uh, so good, I feel nothing but guilt for not bringing them yet. I am talking about... Vulfpeck. We have not talked about Vulfpeck on this show.

Rachel: I know! I... I feel like we have, but I...

Griffin: According to Wonderful.fyi, we have not.

Rachel: Okay. Maybe it was a small wonder? Is that possible?

Griffin: I clicked on the small wonders button, and there was nothing. So I think we're good.

Rachel: You brought this to the McElroy family in a big, big way not long ago.

Griffin: I did. It is a big thing in our family. If you listen to like, the pre-show playlist for any of our shows, there are a lot of Vulfpeck songs on it. Uh, I think one of the reasons why, actually, we think we have talked about it on this show before is because, uh, one of the songs was like, kind of on the short list when we decided to switch formats to be the theme song.

Rachel: Oh, yes!

Griffin: I remember we like, talked about it. And if you've never heard Vulfpeck before, I'm gonna just start this segment out by playing that exact song. It is off of their 2016 album, The Beautiful Game, and the song is called Animal Spirits.

[‘Animal Spirits’ by Vulfpeck plays]

Griffin: I listened to Vulfpeck sort of like, off and on, like, whenever they post a new YouTube video, I'll jump in and dive back in and just remember how much I dig them. And today, like, writing my notes for this, I just like, went through all their shit, and it's just so good!

Rachel: It's very, very good. It's such great like, hype, fun time music.

Griffin: And it's so like, uh, it covers such a like, broad range of genres and stuff like that, but all sort of executed at this like, perfectionist level. So, uh, Vulfpeck is formed, the members of the band kind of formed like Avengers.

They are all from the—they all went to the music school at University of Michigan, and they all played the rhythm section for this school performance. And one of the founders of the band, a guy named Jack Stratton, was inspired by these 1960s session musician groups that would play on funk albums, like The Funk Brothers and The Wrecking Crew.

And so, after this performance, he was inspired to have this kind of live rhythm section experience like they had had. So he put together Vulfpeck, and the whole sort of concept is, it's four core members of the party who are all, uh, most of them sort of multi-disciplinarians that are just tight... tight as hell, like, musicians that play fuckin' really, really tight rhythm sections of music, and that's the whole thing. And they will blend in other performers on top of that to like, tackle other genres, but they are mostly, uh... they are mostly funk artists.

But as soon as you get into Vulfpeck, as soon as I found them, uh, probably 2018, uh... and this was true for anyone at any time. Like, there is just an infinite reservoir of good shit that they have made, whether it be albums or videos. Um, they have—one of my favorite genres that they frequently tackle is this like, super blissed out, like, R&B soul stuff. And usually, that is with a collaborator who is a—he's a vocalist named Antwaun Stanley, who is probably my favorite living soul singer on the planet.

And that's kind of just the ethos, right? They're really good, and they work with people who are also just like, really good at their craft. And like, there's something about that collaboration that is really kind of playful and fun.

Like, all of their videos are very funny and enjoyable. But like, this song that I'm about to play next is called Wait for the Moment. It's just like, man, like, just an instant sort of soul classic. So, this is Wait for the Moment.

[‘Wait for the Moment’ by Vulfpeck plays]

Griffin: So my favorite thing about Vulfpeck is... uh, and this was true for that song that we just listened to, uh, that they are very online. They are very on the internet. And a lot of the songs that you hear on the albums, they record in studio, one take, altogether, and record it, and then they put a video out of that, and that's the music video for it, too.

Rachel: Oh, okay!

Griffin: And so, Wait for the Moment, you can go and watch them play it. Just watch them perform it, like you are at a live performance. Uh, and... that's enjoyable, right? If you enjoy the songs, it's enjoyable, because you get to watch it get made, and that's like, super cool.

They are also sort of aesthetically just kind of very funny. But the reason why, like, I cannot stop watching their videos is because there is a sort of genre of online videos that I'm really into, which is just like, people being really good at the stuff that they're doing. And that is true for... anything that they have—anything that they have done.

Rachel: Yeah, I never really thought about that, but you're right.

Griffin: Uh, their bassist is a guy named Joe Dart, who has gone on to become sort of a household name in the bass industry. He has his own bass guitars now that are sold in stores. Uh, there are just videos of him like, on stage, just ripping a fuckin' like, three minute long bass guitar solo, which is difficult to like, uh, difficult to get into.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, and there are... I mean, there's just an infinite number. There's a song called Cory Wong, which is basically just like—and Cory Wong is a

contributor and collaborator with the band – that is just like, I don't know, five minutes of solos. And so, the music video for that is like, half them in the studio, half them at a live show, just like, fucking destroying.

But the video I come back to, and my favorite video of theirs, I sent to you today. I don't know if you had time to watch it.

Rachel: Yeah, I did. Well, I didn't watch the whole thing.

Griffin: It is, uh, the video for a song called Tee Time. And this is off their album from, I think, 2018, called—or, 2017, called Mr. Finish Line. Uh, the song has three performers on it. Theo Katzman plays the cymbal, the hi-hat, I think. Jack Stratton plays the kick and snare. So I love that they have split up the drumming duties between two people.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And the only other, like, thing happening—there's some clapping in the background, but the only other thing is Woody Goss, another member of the band, is just tearing a Yamaha electric piano the fuck up.

Rachel: I thought it was sped up. I thought the video was sped up, it was so incredible.

Griffin: I thought it was sped up. When I first listened to it, I thought it was like, multiple people playing a keyboard. I thought it was not live, like, no way. For two minutes and 43 seconds, he just fucking shreds it. And this video, they filmed it outside. All the takes are filmed outside.

They're on this lush, green lawn. And Joe Dart, Cory Wong, and Joey Dosik are just like, chilling next to the electric piano. They all have cans of LaCroix that they are drinking on this like, nice day. And over the entire video, there is this timer counting down from two minutes and 43 seconds to the end of the song. The aesthetic is like, unbelievable on this video.

Rachel: [laughs] Well, it's called Tee Time, right? So it has kind of a golf quality.

Griffin: It has a bit of a golffy quality to it. The song is unstoppable, and I'm gonna play a clip of it now, and as you listen to it, just remember that everything that's not drums is one guy at an electric piano just playing the shit out of it. Uh, and it is just so fun to watch. So this is Tee Time.

[‘Tee Time’ by Vulfpeck plays]

Griffin: I just really, uh... I love this band. I love, uh... I love like, viral YouTube videos of like, “Hey, this guy goes to the airport and plays, like, super hard—plays MeGaLoVania at the airport for two hours. Watch him do it.” Like, this is that sort of idea of people being really, really good at playing music. Which, y'know, I say that, and it sounds like, “Hey, isn't that every band ever?” But there is a certain level of like, funk expertise on display here that is sort of the whole thing of the band.

Rachel: Well, yeah. The music is front and center. Y'know, a lot of times when you see a performance, like, we're really—we're focusing on like, the narrative story of the song. And this is like, this is music first.

Griffin: Yeah, and there's not like a lead, right? There's not like a lead of the band, except on like, vocal tracks with Antwaun Stanley, which are universally fucking amazing.

It's just about making really tight funk music, and I just love it. I love it to death. Love 'em to pieces. Go watch the Tee Time video, please. It's the one—I've watched that video a hundred times. I cannot stop. Uh, yeah.

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. I'm not going to thank Max Fun.

Rachel: No, we've done that. But hey...

Griffin: We have done that a lot. [laughs]

Rachel: If you're interested in listening to other McElroy shows, checkin' out McElroy videos, you can go to McElroy.family.

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, and I think that's it. I think that's it.

Rachel: I think that's it.

Griffin: Well...

Rachel: Is there a way you could take grape...

Griffin: Mmm...

Rachel: ... and put it in a fun song for us to go out on? No?

Griffin: Hmm. [pause] No.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

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