

Wonderful! 137: The Scent of Jazzman Bruno

Published June 18th, 2020

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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Wait, my beard was scratching against the pop filter. I'm so sorry. My beard was scratching against the pop filter.

Rachel: Can we get—can we get somebody else in here? I've, uh... I've decided to replace you.

Griffin: Oh no! Because of my scratchy beard, and how it's always rubbing against the pop filter, and making unseemly scratchy noises?

Rachel: Exactly that reason.

Griffin: Listen. I was trying to show off... my incredible beard.

Rachel: [laughs] Your incredible beard. Hi! Hi. Hi. This is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: And this is a show where... ugh, dang it! It's doing it again, this big, lustrous freaking beard! I'm so sorry, everybody. This is embarrassing. It never happens. Tell everyone about the beard. It's pretty remarkable, isn't it? I don't know why I've chosen to highlight it.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, the beard is not something I had really noticed until immediately after you said that there was a beard. So, that's about where we're at, I think.

Griffin: Wow. [pause] Wow. Maybe we should bring someone else in.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [fake holding back tears] Maybe bring in Henry. And he could take my spot. 'Cause you would never disrespect him in front of our—

Rachel: He doesn't have a beard.

Griffin: That is true.

Rachel: I mean, that's one pro.

Griffin: Yeah, he would make a lot of other, I would say, unprofessional noises, though. That you would have to contend with. And then you'd be—

Rachel: He's entering his poop period.

Griffin: He's really exploring his poop phase right now. Um...

Rachel: In that it is the funniest word he knows, and so, he inserts it as if it is a joke by itself.

Griffin: Yeah, and he likes to just sort of like—I'll say like, "I love you, son." And he will look back up at me and say, "I love you poop." And then, that's pretty good.

Rachel: I mean, that's pretty good.

Griffin: Like, I know that's not the medium in which you find comedy most of the time, but it's—

Rachel: Somehow, he got the impression that being funny is a very valued quality in this house.

Griffin: Don't get it. I don't understand.

Rachel: I don't know how it happened.

Griffin: Uh, this is Wonderful, a show where we talk about things that we are into. Things that are good. Things we're excited about. You got any, uh, those small wonders?

Rachel: Why don't you go first? [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, yeah. My first, uh... my small wonder is a bit of a heavy one, but we just watched Thirteenth, which is on Netflix right now, which is uh... a documentary all about systemic racism, specifically in—with regards to, uh, the for-profit prison system in the country. It is, uh, an extremely challenging film to watch.

I think, right now, it's a very necessary one, and it is uh...

Rachel: It's done really beautifully, in that it kind of helps you stay rooted in the time period as you're watching it. And so, you really see the progression and how it happens, and what the factors are in it happening.

Griffin: Yeah, and it's—even if you are like, the type of person that is like, fully cognizant of the fact that systemic racism exists, it is a sort of like, staggering look at how it has, um... metastasized. And like, changed form, sort of maliciously, to survive. And it is, uh... yeah, it's very difficult to watch, but I think that, um, if you are trying to, y'know, stay educated while, y'know, seeing all of these remarkable protests against police violence, and violence against black communities, like, it is a... it is a really, uh... it's a really remarkable film.

So, yeah. I would encourage you to watch that if you are looking for more educational resources. And I realize, now, I have set you up to fail, if you bring something like—

Rachel: Yeah, right? [laughs]

Griffin: Like, Nathan's hot dogs!

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, I was actually gonna reference... and this is not, uh... a paid advertisement. There is, I imagine, one of these in most areas.

Griffin: Oh boy.

Rachel: We have kind of like a CSA box system. Um, ours is called Farmhouse Delivery.

Griffin: Oh, yeah!

Rachel: I think CSA is the right way to refer to it. A lot of people get like, a local produce box delivered to their house. This is kind of similar to that, except it's... it's all sorts of local Texas goods, so...

Griffin: True.

Rachel: So I can get like, a salsa. I can get like, a frozen pizza. It's all like, local companies that have decided to distribute their goods this way. And so, every week, we get one, and it is the best.

Griffin: It is really good, uh, especially since, y'know, going to the grocery store is not an appealing idea right now. And so, getting like... y'know, stuff that people made, and stuff that people are like, really—like, products they are enthusiastic about and passionate about is like, very, very cool.

Rachel: Yeah, and it's helped us kind of try things that we wouldn't have otherwise tried. It's kind of like when you go to a grocery store, and they have only like, two options for a particular food. And so, you end up kind of dipping into stuff that you wouldn't normally eat.

Griffin: There are carrots in this box that would... fuckin'—

Rachel: Oh, these carrots.

Griffin: Curl your toes, these carrots would.

Rachel: Ohh, these carrots.

Griffin: Because of the flavor of them. Not because they grew in a particularly, like, phallic shape or anything like that. [laughing]

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: That's probably not where—that's probably—there are probably, I would say, six percent of our audience that went there with it. But I wanted to gently nudge them back towards the light of the Lord.

Um, I go first this week.

Rachel: Great!

Griffin: I'm gonna—y'know what? I'm gonna change the order of mine, because one of the things that I want to talk about is inspired by a product that we received in this remarkable little farmhouse box. Uh, it is the humble oatmeal cream pie. This is the sandwich with oatmeal cookies on either side of it, and cream right the hell there in the middle.

Rachel: This is dangerous, isn't it?

Griffin: Why?

Rachel: Just 'cause it's so, like... it's so bad. Y'know?

Griffin: [laughs] What?

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: What's...

Rachel: Well, just like, it's not necessarily a healthy or nutritious food.

Griffin: It's got oatmeal in it! Are you kidding me?

Rachel: [laughs] Oh, there you go.

Griffin: It's got oatmeal in it! There are way worse things that you can eat.

Rachel: I'm just saying, at one point, you specifically suggested that maybe I stop buying these, because they...

Griffin: Oh, they're so bad.

Rachel: We were compulsively eating them. [laughs]

Griffin: That is true. It is—yeah, they are sort of undeniable. They are extremely powerful.

Uh, I wanted to talk a little bit about my relationship with the Little Debbie brand.

Rachel: Oh, please! Please.

Griffin: Uh, when I was a youngster, y'know, I was the third child. And we were of sort of an age range that we were like, all in school, and we had two parents working full time jobs. And so, like, uh... I want to say around like, fourth or fifth grade, I started to pack my own lunch in the mornings, because that's—y'know, that's a lot of boys to prep in the morning time.

So my lunch... this was a critical mistake for my parents, giving me this level of freedom. Um, I'm not proud of my lunch that I had for a great deal of my youth. But it contained the following – it would have a Ziploc bag of chips; usually not a very big bag. Like a small... a small bag of chips, usually Snyder's chips. I don't know if that's a brand that exists outside of West Virginia, but uh, just regular old potato chips.

I would have a can of Sam's Club off brand soda. So like, Dr. Lightning. You're shaking your head already.

Rachel: Oh, I'm just dismayed. Continue.

Griffin: Uh, sometimes I would have a sandwich in there. Sometimes, I would put a sandwich in there. The sandwich was either peanut butter and honey or pepperoni and mustard. [laughs]

Rachel: Ohh, Griffin!

Griffin: Yeah, this was the heat I had. And then, it would also have a Little Debbie in there.

Rachel: Is pepperoni and mustard a thing that people have eaten?

Griffin: I mean, if you think about like a—there's a lot of Italian sandwiches that are...

Rachel: Okay...

Griffin: Y'know, those types of meats.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: With a—with a mustard or something on top. Usually, there's, y'know, *other stuff*.

Rachel: Yeah, yeah. [laughing]

Griffin: Not just pepperoni and mustard. God, I loved pepperoni growing up. I would make little pepperoni rolls in the microwave myself, which is basically just, I would put pepperoni and bread and sort of fuckin' wad it up. [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, now... what did I fuck with? Right? What kind of Little Debbies did I bring to the table? You're probably thinking Oatmeal Creme Pies, right? Since that's the subject of the—

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: No. I did not like an Oatmeal Creme Pie growing up. I did not respect the Oatmeal Creme Pie. And in fact, they ranked pretty low on the tier list for me.

Rachel: Wow!

Griffin: It is only since I have grown older, and my palate is more refined, that I really appreciate an Oatmeal Creme Pie.

Rachel: [laughing] It was too complex a taste for you as a child.

Griffin: It wasn't complex. It wasn't complex enough, is the honest truth. It wasn't, if I'm being frank, chocolaty enough. And then, while I was putting the notes together for the segment, I went off on a huge tangent here, and I did provide a definitive ranking of... Little Debbie snack archetypes. From the perspective of like, elementary school Griffin, 'cause this list has changed now.

But obviously, in the top slot, you have the brownie family. The Cosmic Brownie, the Zebra Brownies...

Rachel: Ohh, see, I was gonna say the Nutty Buddy.

Griffin: Uh, the Nutty Buddy...

Rachel: Is that not Little Debbie?

Griffin: Nutty Buddy ranks in at number eight for me.

Rachel: Whoa, Griff!

Griffin: Yeah, the Nutty Buddy, like, peanut butter crunch bars sort of...

Rachel: I disagree!

Griffin: Okay, well let me keep going. Number two, we have the cake family. Zebra Cakes, Fancy Cakes, et cetera. I loved a Fancy Cake. Uh, then you have the cupcakes, like the chocolate, just like, one with the swirl on the top, or Cosmic Cupcakes. Not as good as Cosmic Brownies.

Uh, number four, Fudge Rounds. Ooh, Fudge Rounds, though! Can you at least get on the Fudge Round train with me? It's like a chocolate Oatmeal Creme Pie, so it was like, in my mind, better.

Rachel: I don't know that I've ever had one. Continue.

Griffin: Oh my god. Uh, number five, Star Crunch.

Rachel: Yeah. Never.

Griffin: Star—what?!

Rachel: Um... this may not shock you to hear that my family did not purchase these items.

Griffin: Oh, yeah. Well, they thought you were allergic to chocolate...

Rachel: That is true.

Griffin: ... based on nothing, for pretty much your entire—

Rachel: Well, based on a doctor actually suggesting that that was the case.

Griffin: Right. Uh, number six, Honey Buns. Oof. I'd still go crazy for a Honey Bun. Number seven – I don't know why this ranks so low. It should be much higher. But Pecan Spinwheels.

Rachel: Ohh.

Griffin: I would unroll those things—

Rachel: I have had those.

Griffin: I would eat that like a fucking pecan Fruit by the Foot.

Rachel: Yes, yes, yes.

Griffin: Those were good as hell. Eight, of course, Nutty Buddy. Uh, peanut butter crunch bars. Uh, number nine, Caramel Cookie Bars. Hey, nice try, Little Debbie. This is just a flat Twix. This is just a broad Twix.

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: So... and then, number ten, Oatmeal Creme Pies would... just barely made the list.

Rachel: Wow!

Griffin: But now, like, I would flip that whole thing, I think, on its ear.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: I think a Cosmic Brownie would put me into, like, a coma at this point.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, I don't think I would enjoy that experience.

Rachel: Did you—I want you to think back to this time period where you were making your own lunch. Did you notice some kind of, uh, lethargy that showed up in your afternoon times? Maybe after lunch?

Griffin: Um, I mean, it was so—I mean, you drink a, um... what was it called? Like a Mountain Lightning, and you eat a Cosmic Brownie, and eat a

peanut butter and honey sandwich. That's gonna provide you enough energy to get you from... y'know, uh, 11:30 where you eat the lunch, 'til about 3:15 PM.

Rachel: I can't. I can't imagine.

Griffin: And then I would get home and just sort of like... just sort of fade out.

Rachel: Do you know, were your brothers doing the same... the same thing? Did you ever happen to look over?

Griffin: I don't know what my brothers were eating. I do not know. Uh, anyway, then Jamie Oliver came to West Virginia and fixed... [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] And fixed it.

Griffin: Fixed us all. Thank you, Jamie.

Uh, so, the Oatmeal Creme Pie was the original Little Debbie snack. In 1935, O.D. McKee, who was the founder of the company, uh, had this bad recipe for hard-ass oatmeal cookies that nobody liked. And so, he started to figure out like, "Hey, can I make these bad boys softer?" And then he did. And then, I guess he was like, struck by lightning, or visited by an angel or something, 'cause then he had the idea to put cream in between these beautiful, soft bastards.

And the Oatmeal Creme Pie was born. And they would sell them for a nickel a piece, and the rest was history. A nickel a piece! Can you imagine?

Rachel: Oh, those were the days.

Griffin: Those were the days, when you could just get a five cent Oatmeal Creme Pie. Um, and yeah. I mean, there... I mean... they are not the healthiest food. They do give you, I wrote down, four percent of your daily iron.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And one percent of your daily potassium. So... um, and then, I guess the reason that this is obviously coming up is because we have gotten them in this farmhouse box, and they're incredible. But I also have just like, recently come to the realization that you can just make these. They're literally just two oatmeal cookies with some buttercream between them.

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah.

Griffin: You can just make them!

Rachel: We could do that.

Griffin: We could do that!

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: And I think that that's an exciting idea. Um... yeah. I have on the notes here that we get them in this incredible box, and um, they're really good. And I love Oatmeal Creme Pies, and they are like, the dessert that I'm most enthusiastic about right now. And I would—I would ask you to respect that.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: What's your first thing?

Rachel: Okay, my first thing is... is kind of a surprise to me.

Griffin: Oh boy!

Rachel: Uh, I think... I like celebrity fragrances.

Griffin: Y—d—the concept, or the scent?

Rachel: Well...

Griffin: Oh no.

Rachel: I have a tester here for you.

Griffin: Oh no! Wait, are you gonna—why do you have a celebrity fragrance?

Rachel: Uh, I was doing a little research on celebrity fragrances, and I became very intrigued.

Griffin: Okay, tr—you know that my brother, Travis, is like, obsessed with the concept of celebrity fragrances, right?

Rachel: I didn't know that! Has he talked about this?

Griffin: He is like an acolyte of...

Rachel: Is this one of his games?

Griffin: No, this is not one of his games. He has many games. I'm sure it will show up eventually. So you want me to smell this and tell you—

Rachel: I just want you to smell it!

Griffin: And then you want me to tell you what celebrity it is?

Rachel: Oh, I mean, you can do that. I just want you to smell it and see that it is, in fact, not a bad smell.

Griffin: How should I—

Rachel: Just stick your nose. Don't spritz it.

Griffin: Oh!

Rachel: That's kind of nice, right?

Griffin: [sighs]

Rachel: What do you think?

Griffin: I'm getting a...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I'm getting a Kelly Clarkson?

Rachel: No, not at all.

Griffin: No, no...

Rachel: No, not at all.

Griffin: Is this a... [sniffing]

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: Is this Taraji P. Henson?

Rachel: [laughing] No.

Griffin: No? Who is that?

Rachel: Sarah Jessica Parker!

Griffin: Ohh, that was gonna be my next guess! Why do you have SJP's smell, babe?

Rachel: Well, okay, so here's the thing. So I was researching. I, I guess like Travis, found it very intriguing, and I was reading about it, and I decided I would just invest in a celebrity fragrance, just to see what all the fuss was about. Uh, and I—I read the notes. Y'know how they give you the notes?

Uh, I tend to like a patchouli smell. And I know...

Griffin: Ohh!

Rachel: I know what that says about me.

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] Uh... and so, I saw that was listed as one of the notes, and then, I... I purchased it, and here we are.

Griffin: I'm excited to learn more. I have to ask – are you mostly just fascinated with the concept of a person being forced to identify... their smell?

Rachel: A little bit. Just the process is kind of fascinating to me.

Griffin: Can I ask you – and I know you've just identified patchouli notes. And maybe we should save this for the end of your segment. But what the Rachel scent is? The scent of a Rachel?

Rachel: Ohh, gosh. I mean, I would have to know... I like something that is more citrusy. I also looked at a Jennifer Aniston fragrance. She does a lot of beachy options.

Griffin: See, I was—weirdly, you are not like a beach bum. But from you, I am getting a sort of... outdoor scent, like, when you come inside from, uh... not like sweat or stink or musk or anything like that, but just like the scent of outdoors.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: With like, a little bit of—I'm getting like, a grapefruit?

Rachel: Exactly.

Griffin: Off of you?

Rachel: Yeah. I like a citrus. I have a body wash right now that is grapefruit.

Griffin: Oh! That's cheating, because I have—I used it in a pinch. It's nice. It's good stuff.

Rachel: [laughs] It's nice. Uh, so, I um... I did a little research. There is a company called Coty that does a lot of this. C-O-T-Y. Because they kind of give you a process as a celebrity to easily create a fragrance. Uh, celebrities that have used Coty include David Beckham, Halle Berry, Beyoncé, Faith Hill, Lady Gaga, J-Lo, Madonna, Tim McGraw, Kylie Minogue, Rihanna, Gwen Stefani.

Griffin: Okay. All of those people? Like, I was waiting—

Rachel: Have used this one company.

Griffin: I was waiting for the outlier there where I'd be like, "They have a scent?" But all of those people, I was like—

Rachel: Tim McGraw? That one surprised me a little.

Griffin: Yeah, bud. Yeah, bud. Tim McGraw for sure has a scent.

Rachel: [laughing] Um, fragrances actually started—I was looking... there is a whole Wikipedia page that lists out celebrity fragrances. It is not comprehensive. Um, but it gives you kind of a good idea of when it all started, which was in the '80s with Cher and Michael Jackson.

Griffin: Okay. They were the first two to have their own scents?

Rachel: Um, I mean, I can't say that confidently, but...

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: That was what my research indicated.

Griffin: I could see Cher being at the Vanguard of that.

Rachel: Yeah. And then, in the '90s, Michael Jordan. Do you remember this?

Griffin: Yes, of course I do.

Rachel: Michael Jordan cologne?

Griffin: Of course I do. Every—every—yes. Everybody, I feel like, knew about that.

Rachel: Also, White Diamonds by Elizabeth Taylor.

Griffin: Yep. But that was just because of the fucking commercials that were just nonstop.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh-huh. It came out in 1991. It has grossed close to two billion dollars.

Griffin: I feel like I can see that commercial in my mind, and when I do think about that commercial in my mind, it's like, kind of... and I apologize to everybody, but like... it's like, overwhelmingly erotic. Like, the commercial was like, laying it on thick.

Rachel: Well, it's very gauzy. Uh, in that there is a lot of, like, drapery that she walks through.

Griffin: There's a lot of—it's sort of boudoir-y, if memory serves.

Rachel: Yes, exactly.

Griffin: And then, I don't know if I'm sort of, um... y'know, emphasizing that because of the era that it came out in, and my age, and sort of my relationship with puberty.

Rachel: Oh yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: Necessarily.

Rachel: Yeah, this was as close as you could get to something that was boudoir-y at the time, I imagine.

Griffin: Yes. Yes.

Rachel: Uh, so here's the thing that I also am kind of fascinated by, is it is not unusual for a celebrity to make multiple fragrances.

Griffin: Hmm.

Rachel: Apparently – and I saw this on multiple sites – Jennifer Lopez has 25 fragrances.

Griffin: Holy shit!

Rachel: Paris Hilton, 26. Britney Spears, 27.

Griffin: Wow!!

Rachel: I know! Isn't that incredible?

Griffin: That's so many—I—okay. At a certain point, though, it stops being like... okay. If I catch a whiff of you wearing the Sarah Jessica Parker scent, I'm going to think, like... that's what Sarah Jessica Parker thinks she smells like, or would like people to think that she smells like.

When you put out 27 fragrances, like, what are you saying? Are you saying like, this is Britney on, uh... y'know, a warm day on the boardwalk. This is Britney in the ski lodge. Y'know what I mean? Are these different shades of Britney, or is Britney just saying, "Hey, here's a good stink that I think you would like."

Rachel: Well, so, and I was reading a little bit about how this process works. I couldn't find like, a great, reliable source. But what I did find was a suggestion that, uh... the perfume company like Coty might approach the celebrity, or the celebrity approaches them, and they develop a brief. A creative team will sit down and create a brief, which is just kind of instructions to the perfumer on the types of things to like... hit on.

Griffin: What a strange little world.

Rachel: So uh, it can be a sentence, it can be several pages... it could also just be a picture or a video of like, this is who we're designing this for. Now, put some ideas together. And then, the celebrity just has to show up, smell a few things, and say, "I like that one."

Griffin: Pretty cool gig. Good work if you can get it.

Rachel: [laughs] And then, potentially make a billion dollars. Which is incredible.

Griffin: I think I would go in like, full blown Villanelle. Like... I want to smell like power.

Rachel: [laughs] Can I tell you something? So, I was looking through this website that listed all the different celebrity fragrances. John Hodgman has one called Whale!

Griffin: [bursts into laughter]

Rachel: Isn't that incredible?

Griffin: It's so good!

Rachel: I couldn't find any details on it, really.

Griffin: I have to imagine there was a sort of nautical focus, there.

Rachel: Apparently it came out in 2013. It's funny, because there's a list of all the celebrities and their occupations. So it's like, y'know, singer, footballer, actor...

Griffin: What's it clock Hodgman as?

Rachel: Humorist.

Griffin: Yeah. That's fair.

Rachel: He's gotta be the only—I didn't look for sure, but he's gotta be the only humorist on the list. [laughing]

Griffin: [laughing and clapping] Oh, shit. The Gene Shepherd stink. You're gonna love this one.

Rachel: [laughing] Um, there have also been some fragrances that were not as successful. Apparently, in 2015, Pitbull released a fragrance called Miami that was not particularly popular.

Griffin: I have to imagine Pitbull has gotten back up on the horse since then, though. Right?

Rachel: Um, y'know, I haven't look—let me look and see if there's a multiple for him.

Griffin: There's gotta be. Um, while you're searching that—

Rachel: No, I'm not seeing one.

Griffin: Hm, okay. Well, maybe that's a project that I could approach. I been—y'know I've been looking for a reason to collaborate with Pitbull for a while.

Rachel: A reason to—yeah. Mm-hmm.

Griffin: In a non-insulting answer, what do you think my smell would be? And there is a correct answer.

Rachel: Ooh. Uh...

Griffin: Non-insulting.

Rachel: Non-insulting. I'm trying to think... I feel like you like a... like a woodsy? Like a woodsy smell?

Griffin: Uh, I do. I do. Yeah. Uh, I enjoy natural scents, is one way of putting it. Sure.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: But that's—

Rachel: Did you have something in mind?

Griffin: It would just be Old Spice Pure Sport.

Rachel: [laughs] Oh. You have dipped into the fragrance! We've talked about this on the show.

Griffin: This is true. I'm not going to give them free advertisement, but I was, uh—I got a Facebook ad for like, a solid wax cologne that I wear. Like, I wear like, every day now.

Rachel: Yeah, I like it!

Griffin: Yeah, I like it too. It's nice to smell good. I finally get it.

Rachel: I had been kind of, uh... being lax on my fragrance since I've been at home.

Griffin: Mm.

Rachel: But then I decided—

Griffin: I've been meaning to say something...

Rachel: [laughs] Maybe I should get back into it.

Griffin: I wouldn't say you've been lax on your fragrance. It's just that you don't choose the fragrance you get. Your body just kind of chooses it for you.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Like, everybody has a fragrance at all times. Do you know what I mean?

Rachel: No, that's true. That's true. Um... so, I mean, I would just encourage everyone to check these out. Bruce Willis has a fragrance that is just called Bruce Willis.

Griffin: [laughs] He didn't call it Bruno?

Rachel: Nope.

Griffin: What a missed opportunity. I want to smell like Jazzman Bruno.

Rachel: Oh, for those that are wondering, the Sarah Jessica Parker is Lovely. But she also has other ones.

Griffin: No doubt—yeah. No doubt.

Rachel: Called like Stash and Covet.

Griffin: Oh, those are good names.

Rachel: Uh, Nicki Minaj, of course, has several. Rob Lowe has one. Um... it's just—it's exciting. It's exciting to look at, to learn about. I would recommend it.

Griffin: Let's play a game.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: We'll go back and forth. First one to stall loses. And I want you to come up with a one word name for different celebrity colognes.

Rachel: Oh, okay! Let's do it.

Griffin: Secrets.

Rachel: Wait, so I have to say the celebrity?

Griffin: No, just a name. A one word, incredible cologne name.

Rachel: Ohh! Oh, okay. Blade.

Griffin: Blade?!

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Whose cologne is Blade? Wesley Snipes, I guess.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] I'm Wesley Snipes. This is my Blade cologne. It's my licensed merchandise from the Blade franchise.

Um, Scandal. Scandal...icious. Scandal, based on the TV show, Scandal.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh... does it have to be one word?

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Oh. Okay, wow. You're pretty certain about this. Um, I'm gonna say... Spa.

Griffin: Spa is good.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Spar! It's like Spa, but this one's like a—

Rachel: Oh, I like that!

Griffin: This one's like a, ooh!

Rachel: I liked that. Ooh.

Griffin: Spar is good!

Rachel: Ooh, I like that. That makes me want to do Conflict.

Griffin: Conflict is... we're getting a little bit out of... Violence!

Rachel: [laughs] Murder!

Griffin: How to get away with murder. Based on the TV show. Hey, can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

[ad break stinger plays]

[advertisements]

Rachel: Okay, we have jumbotrons.

Griffin: Alright!

Rachel: This first one is for Beck. It is from Gina. "Thank you for introducing me to everything McElroy, for always listening to my ramblings about grad school stress and gay anxiety, and for being my best friend and wonderful thing every week. I love you, and I hope future you is living your best life. Hopefully, on island time."

Griffin: Probably... unless it's a private island... I mean, there are people living on islands now.

Rachel: Yeah! Yes, yes!

Griffin: Safely. Responsibly. And that's good.

Rachel: And people that live in proximity to islands so that they could, perhaps, take a boat.

Griffin: You could live on island time, also... in your own home.

Rachel: That's true. Get one of those signs from Home Goods. [laughs]

Griffin: From... wow, that sentence. Get one—get a sign that says—

Rachel: Get a sign that says like, "Island time!" And put it on your wall. And then, there you are.

Griffin: And you get that—and you get that from Home Goods?

Rachel: Yeah. That's a store, right?

Griffin: Um...

Rachel: I think so.

Griffin: And you just—you're saying you just sort of be near this sign? And it...

Rachel: Uh-huh. It—

Griffin: And it's like an order? It's like a command that you have to follow?

Rachel: [laughing] Y'know, have you ever been in like, a vacation rental, and they have a lot of...

Griffin: Have I been inside a vacation rental with an iconic sign on it? I don't know. Have I, Pipis Room? Yes.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Here's a Yahoo. Or a—Jesus Christ, babe. This week. I tell ya, bud. Woof. Really gettin' away from me. But here's a jumbotron that is, uh, for Kayla, from Felipe, who says, "To my dearest Kayla Bayla, happy anniversary! This first year of marriage has been incredible. You make me happier than I ever thought I could be, and I can't wait to continue binging shows, playing with our dog Shelber Belber, and making wok popcorn with my favorite person in the whole world. I love you so much."

Babe, this next part Felipe said? I don't want you to get like... I know you get jealous. I know you get angry when you get jealous. *Felipe* said this.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: "P.S. You got a nice butt." That was Felipe saying that!

Rachel: Now, would I be angry because the suggestion is that maybe you were saying this, or the fact that—

Griffin: I would not!

Rachel: —somebody else might also have a nice butt? [laughs]

Griffin: [bursts into laughter]

Rachel: And I would be upset by the competition?

Griffin: Yes. That is possible.

[Maximum Fun advertisement plays]

Griffin: Can I tell you about my second thing?

Rachel: Please do.

Griffin: My second thing is a show that uh, anyone can watch. On—well, I guess if you have access to Netflix. Uh, that show is, I Think You Should Leave with Tim Robinson. And I wanted to talk about this. It's a comedy sketch show. There's six episodes of it. And it's fuckin' great. And... like, uh—I think like, pound for pound, I would put it in like, the comedy pantheon of like, Nathan for You, of just like, must see comedy TV.

Rachel: It didn't occur to me that everybody wasn't watching this...

Griffin: Right!

Rachel: ... until we talked to some of our friends, and they were like, "What is this?"

Griffin: And none of them watched it. So—and this is why I wanted to talk about it, is like, there is a weird... phenomenon. And I don't think I'm telling tales out of school here, where like, when there is a, um... a prestige drama, like, everybody watches—like, when we were watching Breaking Bad? Fuckin' everybody was watching Breaking Bad.

When I was watching Game of Thrones, it was this cultural phenomenon where every single person on the planet watched Game of Thrones, right? And I don't think this necessarily qualifies for Game of Thrones, because I don't necessarily think that that was a great show. But these like, prestige dramas are, um... like, mandatory in a way that I feel like comedies are not.

Like, outside of like, the '90s NBC sitcom era, like, these days, I feel like when there is a show that is critically, widely regarded as like, perfectly funny like a Nathan for You, it doesn't have that like, penetration that a prestige drama does.

Rachel: There are a lot of people in comedy right now that talk about how it is difficult to promote a comedy these days, uh, just because people are not getting their comedy the way they used to. I feel like a lot of people do, y'know...

Griffin: Sure. Podcasts.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: And all kinds of other stuff. Well, yeah, and y'know, I guess, uh—I'm like, working this out as I am talking to you, so I'm probably gonna, uh, blivate a bit. But like, comedy is more subjective than drama, right? Like, there are the things that you find exciting or, um, emotionally impactful. Like, there is a, uh... fairly narrow street that you can go down to like, achieve those things.

So, you watch a Breaking Bad, and more people are gonna find it like, exciting and emotionally impactful, while comedy is like, pretty subjective. I feel like—because I feel like, when we watched Nathan for You, and we're like, "This is the fuckin' best, funniest show ever," and then tried to get Justin to watch it, and the like, anxiety of it made it an unwatchable show for him. I guess maybe that's part of it.

Anyway, I Think You Should Leave with Tim Robinson is, uh... it's incredible. It's like, probably my favorite sketch comedy thing, even though it only has six episodes. The hit rate on it is like, unbelievable. Um, I would posit that

like, SNL in its prime didn't have the like, hit rate that I Think You Should Leave...

Rachel: I think Key and Peele has a pretty good—

Griffin: Key and Peele is really—I would, for sure, put Key and Peele up there.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So, Tim Robinson is, uh, a comedian who has had like, a few roles on various comedy things throughout the years. He was a featured player for a season on SNL, and then got moved to a staff writing position. He was only the second, uh, SNL cast member to ever make that move from, uh, featured player to staff writer, which I thought was interesting.

Um, the other big thing that he has done that we have been watching lately, uh, which is on Comedy Central. It had one season back in 2017 I want to say, is a show called Detroiters, which he does with another comedian named Sam Richardson, that is so fucking good and funny and pure. And if you're looking for another recommendation, and you've already watched I Think You Should Leave, uh...

Rachel: Yeah, we just started watching it.

Griffin: Wow, it's good. It's, uh—the two of them are just sort of down on their luck ad execs, of like, a small local commercial ad company.

Rachel: Yeah. Tim Robinson's character like, inherited his father's company, and they're trying to like, keep it going.

Griffin: And they just like, make bad local—it is a show about bad local TV commercials, which apparently are also based on a lot of actual Detroit local ads, because they both grew up in the Detroit area.

Rachel: But a lot—yeah. That's the—that's what is so charming about it, is they both grew up in Detroit, and you can tell they both love Detroit.

Griffin: It's so good.

Rachel: And so, it's just kind of so charming, the way they like, pay homage to the city in the show.

Griffin: It's a weirdly loving show, too. Like, their relationship is like, very, uh, sweet. Uh, anyway, Sam Richardson also shows up in—I realized this as we started watching Detroiters. He shows up in like, three or four different I Think You Should Leave sketches.

Rachel: Yeah, I figured as much.

Griffin: Um, so, every episode of I Think You Should Leave has like four or five sketches in them. And again, like, almost all of them are like, poop my pants funny, like, very, very, very good. And there's like an element of, I would say, like, Tim and Eric-y sort of absurdism going on.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But it doesn't like, only rely on that, and it doesn't rely on sort of like, uh... out of control, like, editing, or anything sort of like, meta like that. It is just sort of like... it's just really funny sketches.

Rachel: I will say—I will say there is a little bit of poop humor in there, which can be challenging for some sometimes.

Griffin: But there is a consistency to the poop humor. And to everything. Like, I think that's what sets it apart from like, a Tim and Eric thing, where uh—and I love Tim and Eric. I'm not shitting on them. But like, uh, there is a consistency to the world that I Think You Should Leave puts together, as evidenced by the fact that, whenever they do reference... poop. I'm sorry, Rachel. They do refer to it as mud pies, just for some reason.

Um... it is just like, this bizarro other realm that this show takes place in. But that bizarro other realm has rules that are—that are sort of immutable. And I think that that is like... just really, really, very, very funny.

Uh, the show is also executive produced by the Lonely Island, which I did not realize.

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: But that makes a whole hell of a lot of sense.

Rachel: Yeah. It—it is not unusual to see a Saturday Night Live cast member appear in one of the sketches. So you can tell that he must've made an impact while there.

Griffin: Here's the thing – there is nothing funny about talking about a funny show. So like, I could reference the sketch that Andy Samberg is in where they're on like, a pilot episode of a game show where they don't know who the villain—the whammy, like, villain is supposed to be, or what he's supposed to do, so he just kind of comes out and harasses Andy Samberg.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: But like, I think there's actually a couple of sketches from this show that I can play audio clips from that will still get across.

Rachel: Oh, okay!

Griffin: What are so good. One that I'm incredibly fond of is a recreation of that one scene from Walk the Line, the Johnny Cash movie with Joaquin Phoenix, uh, where he is like, auditioning for a record deal in front of some record execs, and uh, plays some gospel music. 'Cause that's like, the music everybody was playing, and the record execs turn him down and say like, "Hey, we—nobody's buying gospel records anymore."

And just as the band's packing up, Johnny Cash improvises, y'know, this Folsom prison-blues-esque, uh, Johnny Cash tune. There is a sketch in I Think You Should Leave where uh, it's basically that, just literally shot for shot, except Tim Robinson is the fake Johnny Cash's bassist, uh, who also jumps in on the improvisation. I'm gonna play a clip from that now.

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Speaker 1: [sings] He cocked that crooked hammer back, and he brought that hammer down!

Speaker 2: [singing badly] Exactly! The bones are the skeletons' money! In our world, bones equal dollars! That's why they're comin' out tonight, to get their bones from you! The skeletons will pull your hair, up, but not out! All they want's another chance at life, they've never seen so much food as this!

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Griffin: It's a very memeable show. Which I didn't really appreciate until very recently. And this sketch, The Day Robert Palins Murdered Me, I feel like, I see a lot of discussion of 'the bones are their money.'

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It is, uh—it is very, very good. Again, like, I can't add anything on top of it that will make it more entertaining or anything. Uh, but the other one that is literally—I think it's the very first, like, sketch in the very first episode, or maybe the second sketch, uh, is a... it's a take on a local ad for a law firm, uh, of one of those old—and you don't see 'em as much anymore, but like, "Has this ever happened to you?"

Rachel: Oh, I feel like you definitely still see them. We just don't watch a lot of daytime TV.

Griffin: Well, I see a lot of like, accident lawyers just like, "Hey, I'm Thomas J. Henry, and I got 55 billion dollars from this one trucker. So, come get your money." But like, it's just shot like that, like an accidental injury firm, of just like, "Have you ever bought a house, and then you found out it had termites, and then, the exterminators show up, and they just take turns going in and out of your bathroom for two hours..." And it just spirals out of control.

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Speaker 1: And then they get really serious. They say, "It's turbo time!" And they both start running around the house as fast as they can and jumping over the couches! But when you try and jump in, they yell at you, and they say, "You're not part of the turbo team!! Don't run!! You don't run with us! We're the ones who run! Until you're part of this turbo team, walk slowly!"

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Rachel: [laughing] That's very good.

Griffin: There's—I just—I don't know. I feel like I wanted to bring this up, first of all, because I uh, I really enjoy it. I think it's a very, very funny show. But it also like, kind of made me realize when we were talking to our friends and none of them had watched it—

Rachel: Well, so much of—

Griffin: —that there is just this weird thing that happens where there's just not as much commonality there.

Rachel: So much of like, whether or not a Netflix show gets traction is like, based on that little square icon, right? Like, I feel like a lot of times, the— what you see in that little icon, and whatever little trailer pops up, is what makes you decide if you watch it or not.

Griffin: Maybe. But it—is it bigger than just what platform it's on, right? Like, maybe—I don't know. You could probably make an argument that like, Comedy Central has a pretty terrible app, and I don't know how many people have, uh... have, y'know, cable or whatever, and are watching Comedy Central. I assume there's quite a few people.

But like... *Chappelle's Show* is another one that like, everybody watched *Chappelle's Show* when *Chappelle's Show* was on.

Rachel: Well, here's the thing. If it was called The Tim Robinson Sketch Show...

Griffin: You think it would?

Rachel: People might see it and be like, "I like sketch comedy," and click on it.

Griffin: Maybe. Yeah. I don't know. Uh, I Think You Should Leave. Go watch it. It's so good. What, uh... what's your second thing?

Rachel: My second thing is a artist named Mereba.

Griffin: I had never heard of Mereba, until, uh, you sent me a YouTube link to the song you were gonna talk about.

Rachel: Yeah! I was watching... I was watching a video from Spillage Village, and she has collaborated with that band, and uh, she was kind of a standout in the video I was watching. So I started looking into her.

Um, her name... so I said Mereba [ma-ree-bah], because that's how it's commonly pronounced in the states. But her name actually—it's her last name. So her name is Marian Mereba [meh-reh-buh].

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: And she's just kind of accepted Mereba [ma-ree-bah], because that tends to be the pronunciation. Um, her father is Ethiopian, and um... so that part of her heritage is part of the reason that she has adopted that name. Because it's a word that's in that language.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: So, she is 29, and she has lived kind of all over the place. Born in Alabama, lived in Greensboro, North Carolina, Georgia, and then, did spend some time in Ethiopia. She started as kind of a folk artist.

Griffin: Mm!

Rachel: She was very inspired by artists like Joni Mitchell and Bob Dylan. Um, and it was only when she spent time in Ethiopia and came back and started rethinking, like, her heritage and her connection to black music, uh, that she really started working on her own beats, and started using Ableton to make her own music.

Griffin: Oh! I like Ableton.

Rachel: Which, yeah, I thought you'd be excited about.

Griffin: I am!

Rachel: Uh, so, her album that I was listening to is called The Jungle is the Only Way Out. She said in an interview, quote, "The Jungle is so many different things. I came up with the album title while walking to the train one day, on the way to my old day job. I felt like my life as I knew it was in the midst of falling apart. A lot of what I held onto for stability was changing around me. But I also felt strangely empowered by the chaos, almost like it was daring me to make it out alive and prosper. It just clicked. The only way out of this chapter of my life is through it. The jungle represents that chaos, confusion, and mystery."

She is a very poetic person.

Griffin: Oh, for sure.

Rachel: And the album has a lot of spoken word moments on it. Um, and you can listen to the album, which is kind of like a mixture of like, R&B and blues, and then, there is some folk and soul and hip hop. There's a lot of different influences. In interviews, she said that she was very inspired by like, Tracy Chapman, and Lauren Hill, and Stevie Nicks, and you'll hear kind of a lot of that in the album.

Um, but I wanted to play the song, Heat Wave.

[‘Heat Wave’ by Mereba plays]

Rachel: This song actually came out with the album in 2019, but is obviously very applicable...

Griffin: Extremely relevant right now!

Rachel: ... for these times. The song is about police brutality against black people in America. And if you're interested, you should watch the video, 'cause it is incredible, and addresses a lot of what, y'know, was going on at the time and continues to go on now.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: It's a song that features, uh, Black, and—the artist, Black. And um, has like, a really great kind of beat, and also kind of like a summer, like, jam quality, but is obviously about a very serious subject.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And I just can't stop listening to it.

Griffin: Yeah, there's—I uh... there's something sort of, I guess, kind of dissonant about the idea of like, uh, a powerful song about a incredibly important subject that is also, like, you can't get out of your head. 'Cause I've had that “long summer, long summer” hook, like, in my head forever.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: I feel like the same thing happened with the This is America, where uh—

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Uh, y'know, you hear it, and it's so fucking, like, impactful, and kind of like, staggering. But then like, the whole time, you have that just—the hook stuck in your head. I guess is like, the mark of an incredibly successful song.

Rachel: Yeah. So, she has—she has, uh, lived in Atlanta, and collaborated with a lot of people out of Atlanta. So, it's not unusual to find her on other tracks. But uh, this album just came out in 2019, is really exciting. She's just kind of at the beginning of her career, and this is another one of those artists where I am excited to see what happens next with her.

Griffin: Rachel's... hot—hot watch! What's the—there's not a good name.

Rachel: [laughs] I'm just trying to do the thing that we did with Lizzo, where we mentioned her, and then, totally unrelated to us mentioning her, she became a huge hit, and we got to say we were there on the ground floor.

Griffin: [laughs] Right. Even though we were—we actually probably were not at all.

Rachel: We were not at all, yeah. She had been around for a long time. [laughs]

Griffin: Hey, I got some submissions from our friends at home. You want to hear them?

Rachel: Yes, please!

Griffin: Here's one from Mary, who says, "My small wonder is that satisfying click when you snip something with sharp scissors. It could be a loose thread, fresh flowers, or even trimming hair. It always makes me happy to hear that little clip sound."

I think there's a reason why that is like, the original ASMR sort of track. I think, uh—like, the history of ASMR, I feel like, dates back to a very old recording of somebody like, doing a haircut in binaural sort of sound.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: I remember listening to something like that at like, COSI when I was like ten or something like that. It is very satisfying.

Uh, Rachel has like, been trimming my hair with like, clippers.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: In lieu, obviously, of me going to the parlor. Uh...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And uh, like, when I do my bangs or stuff, like, after you're done trimming it, like, it's very satisfying to make that cut.

Rachel: By the way, we should get some real haircut scissors, huh?

Griffin: Yeah, huh? We should stop using our like, kitchen shears.

Rachel: Stop using our kitchen scissors. [laughs]

Griffin: Yes. Uh, here's another one from Samiel. I apologize if I butchered that. "In a recent episode, Griffin talked about power washing videos, and in a similar fashion, I've really come to enjoy car detailing videos. Maybe it's something about knowing how nasty we can get in our cars, or maybe I've discovered something latent in me that just loves shiny shit. Either way, they're all like 30 minutes long, and each is special."

I also have been getting served quite a few car detailing videos!

Rachel: [laughs] Can I tell you something kind of embarrassing?

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: I have always wanted to get my car detailed.

Griffin: Same.

Rachel: But I am scared that it is too messy to even start that process.

Griffin: Like you're gonna bring it into the car detailing place, and they'll be like, "No way!"

Rachel: Well, it's just like, I have a big—right now, I have a big Mickey Mouse stuffed animal in my back seat. Like, what do they do with that stuff?

Griffin: What are they gonna do with that? Yeah.

Rachel: Like, part of me thinks like, should I clean it before they clean it?
[laughs]

Griffin: Uh, my admission is more embarrassing than that, which is like... I just am too lazy to get my—wh—I got, as a birthday present from our friend, uh, Justin Minsker—

Rachel: Oh yeah, did you ever use it?

Griffin: —a gift certificate to go get my car detailed for like, 40 bucks or something like that, and I just didn't go.

Rachel: Yeah, I don't know how you make an appointment.

Griffin: Just didn't do it.

Rachel: I don't know how long it takes. Uh, I don't know when a good time to go is. I don't know how you find—y'know, there's so much unknown. But I enjoy it, and I think it is a great service, and one day... [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I hope to partake.

Griffin: One day, it would be nice to do. But like, also, uh, I have driven approximately three times since March. So now...

Rachel: True. But wouldn't it be nice to get into a clean car? [laughs]

Griffin: In a month, when I go get in a car again? Yeah, maybe. Uh, hey, 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.

Uh, and thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go check out all the great shows on Maximum Fun like, uh, Stop Podcasting Yourself, and Tights and Fights, and a whole bunch more. MaximumFun.org.

I stepped on the Max Fun thing. You usually do that.

Rachel: Yeah, I know!

Griffin: Sorry.

Rachel: Now I'm trying to figure—no, I don't have to.

Griffin: No, please, you're better at it than I am.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, if you are looking for new podcast content these days, uh, I would recommend going to MaximumFun.org and looking at all the great shows, comedy and culture, that you can find on that wonderful network.

Griffin: See? That was so much better.

Rachel: Uh... [laughs] Um, and... there are no ads this week.

Griffin: That is true.

Rachel: Our intention is to continue to donate ad revenue when possible, to uh, valuable causes at this challenging time. Griffin, do you have a cause that you would recommend folks check out?

Griffin: Uh, yeah. I would recommend the Marsha P. Johnson Institute. We donated to, uh, that organization for MBMBaM this week, and uh, looking into it is so great. Marsha P. Johnson was a black, trans activist during the Stonewall Riots who was this incredibly important, incredibly incredible figure, and the Marsha P. Johnson Institute goes to support black trans folks all around the country. And uh, is an incredible cause for so many reasons.

So, uh, we'll put in a link to the Marsha P. Johnson Institute in the episode description, also, if you want to read about that.

Otherwise, yeah, stay safe. If you're still going out there protesting, uh, that's incredible. Thank you. Wear a mask. Be safe about it. And um... I don't know. I—I'm not your dad or anything! I mean, it's not like I'm your dad! But... be safe out there! And wash your hands! A lot of people have just stopped washing their hands. And don't get me started!

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: You should be doing it anyway! It's not like they're gonna put a—they're not gonna send out a memo one day like, "Hey guys, we whipped COVID. You can stop washing your—" Still do it!

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: 'Cause there could be – Rachel, I'm sorry – poopoo, peepee on there.

Rachel: This has been a very poop-heavy episode.

Griffin: I know. Ugh. That's June for ya, huh?

Rachel: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

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