

Wonderful! 146: The Noid's Brother

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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hello, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hi, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: Oh, I'm sorry, is that sound bothering you?

Rachel: [pause] You really dedicated your life to being a beard man now?

Griffin: I don't know that I would say that. But it does—it is a sort of feature on my body that I'm not used to having.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: And I will be like, "Why's it smell so much like coffee right now?" And then I realize, it's the... it's the mustache, isn't it? That it's got a little bit of like, coffee leave—I don't know how people with like, actual, thick, lustrous beards, like, put up with it, right? Like, I mentioned syrup last week, where like, I don't want to eat a pancake and get syrup in my mustache, and then it's just like, a little sort of like...

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: It's like a smell memory card. Like a smell flash drive that I'm just constantly accessing. I don't know about that. So I think I might just go with a chinstrap beard.

Rachel: Oh. Great.

Griffin: Yeahhh! You're gonna love it!

Rachel: Love it...

Griffin: I guarantee it. Ohh, yeah. I'm gonna look like a very safe football player.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Of hair. This is Wonderful. It's a show where we talk about things that we like, things that we're into, and uh... do you have any of the small wonders that I've been hearing so much about lately?

Rachel: Yeah, y'know what? I do, actually.

Griffin: `Kay.

Rachel: I was thinking about it, and I will say, uh... adding a recipe to the rotation.

Griffin: Oh!

Rachel: I've got a few things that I can comfortably cook without much effort. I just—I know them by now. They're my go-tos.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And I think I'm gonna add that stroganoff.

Griffin: Uh, yes, you should. It's very, very good. You're very good at making it, and it tastes good, and it sat—sass—sassifies all my senses.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, yeah. So I, y'know... adding a new go-to to the uh, to the list of meals you can make, I'll say.

Griffin: Sure. I would also say like, uh, similarly in this quarantine environment, finding like, a good take-out place that you can also add to the rotation is also very nice. I've got a salmon... I have a salmon hookup now that I'm very excited about.

Uh, I want to do Teenage Bounty Hunters on Netflix.

Rachel: Ohh!

Griffin: Rachel and I are very into this show. It's uh, by uh, Kathleen Jordan... whose name sounds familiar. I don't know what else she's done. But it's a—it's a show about literally what it says on the tin. It's got big Veronica Mars energy.

Rachel: Yes. Yes, it really does. That's kind of—y'know, a lot of people are comparing it to Buffy, which I get. Y'know, there is kind of this element of, y'know, kind of badass ladies, like, kickin' butt. But um, I'd say Veronica Mars is probably a more apt comparison.

Griffin: Yeah, I think Veronica Mars had more of a comedy bent than, uh, Buffy had, and I think that this definitely follows... follows that. We've been having a lot of fun with it. We're like, halfway through the first season. There's only ten episodes on Netflix now, but we uh... I keep thinkin' about it when we're not watching it, which I think is the Hallmark of a good show.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Uh, I think you go first this week?

Rachel: I do.

Griffin: Okay, what do you got?

Rachel: Uh, so my first thing... I'm gonna call it, uh... misheard song lyrics.

Griffin: Okay, yeah. I don't think you—I don't think you're thinking, necessarily, too far outside the bun. I feel like misheard song lyrics is an established concept.

Rachel: Yeah. I find it kind of delightful. This is something... when I was younger, this was maybe more common, because y'know, people didn't have access to the lyrics right away if you heard a song on the radio.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: Um... the example my parents always talk about is that, uh, Zippity Doo Dah song. I used to think it was "Mr. Beanbag on your shoulder."

Griffin: Mister... mister...

Rachel: Instead of the—the bluebird. The bluebird on your shoulder.

Griffin: Okay. I guess that's not so bad. That's not one of the worst ones. I actually—you're sending me on a trip right now, because we had... I should do a whole segment on like, bathroom literature. Our household... we had several Uncle John's Bathroom Readers.

Rachel: Yeah, but is that really wonderful?

Griffin: Uh, no. I mean, these were pee-soaked tomes of bad jokes.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: But one of them, one of these kind of books was a book just full of misheard song lyrics, with like, little illustrations to go with each one.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: It was very much in that Uncle John's Bathroom Reader, Dave Barry sort of... or, Deep Thoughts milieu. Uh, yeah. I remember 'Lucy in disguise with diamonds,' and 'excuse me while I kiss this guy.' Another big one.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: I'm not saying the subject you have brought is equivalent to an Uncle John's Bathroom Reader segment, but if I was saying that—

Rachel: [laughs] I'm okay with that.

Griffin: Okay, then it is that. That's basically what this whole fuckin' show is, if we're being honest.

Rachel: In a way, yeah. In a way.

Griffin: It's Uncle John's Bathroom Podcast.

Rachel: And isn't that comforting?

Griffin: No! [laughing] It is demoralizing, but...

Rachel: Uh, so, I wanted to find like, some of these common ones. And a lot of them feel a little too pat. Y'know? Like, a lot of times, it's like, nobody actually thought this when they heard this song.

Griffin: Oh, well, fuck, now you're gonna say one, and I'll be like, "That's not it?"

Rachel: No. I thought I would do that too. Not the case.

Griffin: Okay. What do we got?

Rachel: 'Cause most of the time, they're just nonsensical.

Griffin: M'kay.

Rachel: Um, or they'll take the title of the song and mishear it, and that's when I'm like...

Griffin: That's—there's no way.

Rachel: Yeah. Um, so I did find a study... [laughs] Uh, a little suspect done by Earex, which is a eardrop company... [laughing]

Griffin: Okay...

Rachel: Just trying to make the headlines. Uh, this was a study done in the UK of 2,000 adults to kind of identify the most commonly misheard lyrics. Uh, and kind of why people would mishear lyrics, which I think they were trying to associate with earwax.

Griffin: Sure. A little suspect.

Rachel: Um, the study revealed that it took an average of six times for a person to listen to the song to get the lyrics. Which I feel like is...

Griffin: The entirety of the—the entirety of the lyrics?

Rachel: It says, six times to listen to the song before they felt confident they knew the lyrics.

Griffin: Interesting. Okay. I could probably do a chorus after six times.

Rachel: Which, anybody that's sung karaoke, and this happens to me all the time. I didn't realize, in the world of karaoke, that people had established go-to numbers.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I just thought they would get up and do songs they thought would be fun to sing.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And so I used to just be like, “Oh okay, is that how you do it?” And then I'd get up and be like, “I don't know this song at all.”

Griffin: There was a sort of infamous Black Street scenario—a sort of fiasco that played out.

Rachel: Yeah, Black Street! Also, I did a Ke\$ha song that I realized I didn't...

Griffin: Just didn't really know it.

Rachel: Didn't know.

Griffin: You did great up there, though. With what you had.

Rachel: Oh, thank you. I only do—I only do private room karaoke for that reason.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, so here's some of them. Um... Abba's Dancing Queen. Instead of “feel the beat of the tambourine,” we have “tangerine.”

Griffin: Mh...

Rachel: Right? Uh...

Griffin: Eh...

Rachel: TLC's Waterfalls... now, I think I thought this one at one point. “Don't go Jason waterfalls” instead of “chasing”?

Griffin: No, baby.

Rachel: [laughs] No?

Griffin: No. "Hey, Jason Waterfalls! Get back over—that's my boy, Jason Waterfalls!"

Rachel: We call him Jason Waterfalls, because—

Griffin: Don't go!

Rachel: You don't want to know the story, but we call him Jason Waterfalls.

Griffin: And those are the rivers and lakes that Jason Waterfalls is used to.

Rachel: Now, here's a phenomenon that I think you'll enjoy. A lot of insertion of the word 'sausage.'

Griffin: Okay?

Rachel: So, "we built this city on sausage rolls"...

Griffin: Nope.

Rachel: Um, and then, Bohemian Rhapsody, "saving his life from this warm sausage tea."

Griffin: No. No.

Rachel: Again, not sure why. Friends in Low Places. "I'm not big on sausage gravy." [laughing]

Griffin: Now, this one, I will give them, because that song seems like one that would not be... they're not gonna mention sausages in Bohemian fucking Rhapsody, buuut... Friends in Low Places?

Rachel: But maybe Garth? Yeah.

Griffin: If Garth said something about sausage gravy in a song, it would not—I would not turn my head.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. I can see that. Um, some of them, it like... it just seemed like—okay, so John Travolta and Olivia Newton John in Grease sing Summer Nights, and... the assumption, I guess, that some people thought that, instead of the guys saying “tell me more, tell me more,” they were saying “Tommy Moore”? [laughs] Which I think is funny, this idea that you're bringing in this character... mid-musical... just—

Griffin: [laughs] Not even mid-musical, babe. Mid-song! Without context!

Rachel: Like, when are we gonna meet this Tommy Moore?!

Griffin: Here's all the greasers, and we're singin' our song that's hugely problematic, and... wait a minute! Who's that comin' in from the wings?!

Rachel: Tommy Moore!

Griffin: It's me! Tommy Moore, Tommy Moore!

Rachel: [laughs] Um, and then, a lot of um, um... I understand just like—so, for example, we've talked about this before. Like, Nirvana's Smells Like Teen Spirit.

Griffin: That one, I'll—yeah.

Rachel: A lot of unintelligible in that song. But instead of “here we are now, entertain us,” people would think, “here we are now, in containers.” Which I feel like is fair.

Griffin: Whoa, yeah. I would give that. I don't know that I, uh... you mentioned six times – I've heard this song, obviously, a great deal of times. I don't think I could give you a fraction of a verse.

Rachel: And that's the thing I think that happens as an adult. You just—when you get to a section that you can't figure out, you're just like, “Welp, I'm just never gonna know that one.”

Griffin: Well, a lot of—and also, a lot of bands in that genre, back in that era, were kind of mumbly boys. Like, you wanna talk about Spoon Man? The song, Spoon Man? Here's what I know of Spoon Man.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: [sings, kind of] "Spoon Man! [gibberish]" That's all I get.

Rachel: I always thought it was "come together with our... "

Griffin: My hand?

Rachel: Hands? There's hands in there.

Griffin: But there's also—y'know what else is in there? I can say, with absolute certainty, is the word "spoon man." [sings] "Spoon maaan!"

Rachel: Uh, this is like, for Griffin, this is like, "I ate too much... "

Griffin: [in a weird voice] I ate too much!

Rachel: ... is a lyric that he has to say when it comes up organically. So if, for example...

Griffin: Pass me that spoon, man.

Rachel: Yeah. Mm-hmm. [laughs]

Griffin: It doesn't happen often. It almost never happens now.

Rachel: Uh, I want to finish, I think—so, there's a few, like I mentioned, where it seems like you should know what the lyric is based on the title of the song. So, Ruby Tuesday by the Rolling Stones... "Goodbye, groovy toothpaste."

Griffin: Stop it.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: That one's not—

Rachel: Nobody's ever done that!

Griffin: Nobody's ever thought that. Sorry, earwax scientists.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, this is kind of delightful. And I want to encourage, for those of you that have not joined the Wonderful Facebook group...

Griffin: Oh, I imagine this is gonna pop off.

Rachel: Sometimes, I think to myself, "This would be a good topic for that group." You'll find it, if you haven't joined, under The Rosebuddies Cast, which was our prior iteration.

Griffin: I mean, you can probably search Wonderful Podcast, and...

Rachel: I don't know if you'll find it.

Griffin: Oh, bummer. Okay. Yeah, it's a good group. Primo content. Uh, I wanna do my first thing. I'm very excited about it. It's just a good-ass YouTube video. I feel like I've done like, one of these before, and it's such a, I feel like, a good recommendation. 'Cause it's like, anybody can watch it, and I feel like anybody will enjoy it.

Uh, I went down a particular rabbit hole that I will detail to get there. The name of this video is Carillon. That's C-A-R-I-L-L-O-N. I'm going to be saying that word a lot, so that's what it is. And then, in parentheses, "(A Tower Filled with One Hundred Tons of Bells)," by a YouTuber named Rob Scallon, who is a... like, music producer, instrumentalist, who mostly does videos where he will focus in on a specific sort of exotic instrument.

And I went down this rabbit hole, because during one of my recent bouts of insomnia... it was about, I would say—I would clock it at about 1:30 AM, and

I was just on YouTube, going down a hole. And I was like, "I wanna hear some hurdy-gurdy music." Y'know what a hurdy-gurdy is? Perfect. I'm glad you don't, 'cause I'm definitely gonna do a hurdy-gurdy segment at some point.

Rachel: Okay. I have heard that phrase.

Griffin: It's like an old instrument with a—and instead of—it's like a violin, but instead of playing with a bow, you play it with a wheel. It's wild.

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: It's so fucking cool. But anyway, he did an episode on the hurdy-gurdy, which I watched, and then I watched an episode he did on the koto, which is a traditional Japanese, I think, like, nine or 13 string instrument that's pretty wild. And then I found Carillon (A Tower with One Hundred Tons of Bells in It), and just... oof, loved it. Loved it. So good.

Uh, a carillon is what it says—what I just said, in the title of the video. It is essentially a playable bell tower, uh, that has, typically, there was a number. Over 23 cast-iron bells that can be played at a keyboard-like apparatus. And that keyboard-like apparatus is not a keyboard. It is basically a bunch of levers that are, y'know, mechanically wired to, y'know, little strikers that ring the bells when you press them, and you have to press some of them with tremendous force.

So you're not playing them with your fingers – in fact, you're playing them with loosely closed fists. Which looks kind of painful. I know I only showed you like, a fraction of the video, just before we started recording, but I can't imagine banging on those wooden levers attached to like, striking devices against bells, feels really great after an extended period of time.

Rachel: Yeah, I just—I never really thought about how that sound was made.

Griffin: Yes!

Rachel: I always kind of assumed it was like, a digital alarm clock. Where it would just play a thing, and nobody would be responsible for it.

Griffin: So, most carillons do have some sort of automated playing, uh, thing. But they are all, y'know, ultimately wired to... at the end of the process, a bell is being rung. So at the end of the process, like, it is a mechanical sound. So even if it is like, an electrical process, it is an electrical process that pulls down a wire to strike a bell.

So it's never like, y'know, there's a loudspeaker just playing bell noises. These huge ass—and the biggest bell in this, uh, in this video, which focuses on the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel at University of Chicago.

Rachel: Yeah! I like—when you mentioned that, I was like, “I don't know if I remember...” And then as soon as I heard it, I was like, “Oh yeah!”

Griffin: “Oh shit, yeah.” Uh, it has 72 bells in what is called the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon. It is the second biggest carillon in the world, which is kind of remarkable. And in this video, Rob Scallon, like, treats it just like, y'know, the hurdy-gurdy, or the koto, where it's like, “Oh, here's an instrument that I don't know anything about.” And gets a like, in-depth tour of the carillon from the carillonneur, which is the name of a person who plays a carillon.

Uh, and you get to go inside and see these bells. The biggest bell in this tower is almost 17 *tons*. And it plays, like... and you hear that, and it's like, that's a wild, wild size for something to be. And then they get into like... the musical properties of this 17 ton object. Like, “Oh yeah, well, it's a D sharp, two octaves below middle C.”

Rachel: That's insane.

Griffin: Which is wild to think of like... a thing the size of a bell that size, as having like, an inherent musical property. Another thing that—here's what's great about this video, right? You mentioned, you walk by, and you hear bell tower music, and you just hear it, and you don't think about... you don't think anything about it.

Rachel: Somebody's like, up there hittin' it.

Griffin: This video is uh, a half hour long, and in it, it is just this cascade of realizations and questions that you now have about this otherwise mundane thing that you have experienced all your life. Like, for instance, did you know that the sound that a clock tower plays, uh, whenever the hour rolls by, the song that it plays, has a name? It's Westminster Quarters. Never knew that.

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: Never knew that song had a name. And it also has four parts, because traditionally, they would play it every quarter hour to tell you, uh, y'know, to provide a sort of sound-based queue for what time it was.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: And the like, notes that they would play, or rather, the segments of the song that they would play, would be different depending on where they were in the quarter.

Rachel: My brain is just like, blowin' up right now. Because I'm thinking about the functional purpose of that, right? Like, before everybody had like, a wristwatch for example.

Griffin: Absolutely. Right. But then, like, that's just the first question, right? Like, how do you strike a 17 ton bell to produce noise? Where do you strike it? How do you automate that process? Uh, how do you, in the case of a carillon, where it's attached to an apparatus where you can play the bells like a musical instrument... how do you compose for that? Right?

There's a few different considerations that I hadn't even thought about, where first of all, bells of any size have natural overtones. When you ring a bell, it's not just playing one sort of resonant note. It is playing, also, like, several overtones or undertones around that note, which can make it kind of like, tricky to write a piece that has like, typical melodic elements on top of it.

Not only that, but on a piano, if you want to hold a note, you press the key and you hold it down, right? You can't do that with a carillon, because if you do that, the striker is held up against the side of the bell, and it doesn't ring. And on a similar note, some of the bigger bells, the 17 ton bell, if you press it to get this low D sharp, it's going to be producing that sound for 40 seconds.

Rachel: Wow, gosh. [laughs]

Griffin: So if you're playing a song, and you want to incorporate a low note like that, you have to be set for it to be in the song, for people to be hearing it, for the better part of an entire minute.

Rachel: Yeah, wow.

Griffin: So how do you write a song around that entire concept, right? It's so fascinating. It's so fascinating. And I was wrapped—I stayed up past two AM, just like, watching this video like, "Tell me more about carillons!" The thing that I like, could not stop thinking about was this carillonneur. How do you... learn to play... such a public instrument? Every performance of a carillon is a public—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: The carillon at University of Chicago, you can hear it up to a mile and a half away. Everyone within easily a one-mile radius is hearing you learn... to play this extremely loud bell instrument.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And it's hysterical, because at one point, uh, Rob Scallon, they let him sit down at the keyboard. And he's just kind of getting a feel for how hard you have to press the lever, right? So he's like, trying to press the lowest note, which requires the most force to strike it. And he like, slams it a few times, and the cameraman just goes, "Well, now everyone in a one-mile radius thinks it's three o'clock."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: 'Cause you just struck the bell three times. And Rob was like, "Oh god, I didn't even think about that!" Everything you do while playing this instrument, everyone hears, so while shooting this video, I couldn't stop thinking about like... everybody's hearing this dude bomb! On this—

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: They must be looking at this church and being like, "What's going on up there?!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: So I wanted to know like, how do you learn how to play the carillon? And there's actually several schools, like, across the globe where you can learn to do it. Uh, I say several... not a lot. But even in the US, there are a number of music programs that offer like, carillon studies, including UC Berkley in Santa Barbara, University of Michigan, which has two of the 23 grand carillons in the world... I don't know why they have two of them. Do they go like, amp versus amp? I don't know. I can't imagine it.

And uh, University of Florida, University of Denver, and Missouri State all offer carillon programs, which is wild.

Rachel: That's fascinating!

Griffin: But there's a ton of carillons like, at colleges, y'know, anywhere. They just don't necessarily offer specific courses of study. There are two schools with a student-led carillonneur program that uh, y'know, the responsibility for taking care of the clock tower, and playing music...

Rachel: I love that. That's what I've been thinking a lot about, is maintenance and upkeep, and like, who are these people that come in and know how to tune it?

Griffin: It's all—well, they don't. You can't tune it. I mean, the way that you tune a 17 ton bell is by shaving metal away from the inside of it. So it's all preventative, right? You have to rotate the striker so that it's not hitting the bell, like, in the exact same point, and shaving away metal at that point, because there's two antinodes on a bell where it produces like, the ideal sound. So ideally, you want to be striking as close to that as possible, but then, you don't want to wear it down at that point.

Rachel: Yeah, and the repair? I don't know. It's just crazy to think about.

Griffin: Uh, two of these student-led programs where they just like, do the carillon all on their own, are in Yale and University of Texas, I guess? I don't know. I don't know that I've ever really heard the carillon down there very well.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I also didn't know the word 'carillon' until I watched this video. There's so much to learn, and you learn it all watching this video, and it's such a wild idea. Like, it's a wild idea for an instrument. Like, how do you learn it? How do you maintain it? How do you build it? How does any of it work? And it's all contained within this 30 minute video that is just fucking fantastic. If YouTube videos could get Oscars or Emmys, I feel like this one is deserving of it, and everyone should go watch it.

Rachel: That's really cool!

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, hey, can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yeah!

[ad break stinger plays on a carillon]

[ad break 21:27 – 22:38]

Griffin: We have a couple of grumbletrams here, and I would love to read the first one here, if you would allow me. The first one—you didn't say yes, but you winked at me. Very suggestively. It was a very damp wink.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, it's for Sam. It's from Mouse, who says, "Sam! I just wanted you to know that I love you more each and every day, and I wouldn't want to be on this journey with anyone else. You're my best friend, and I'll never tire of the countless nicknames you give to me or our wonderful dog child, Gemma. I'm so proud of you, and am lucky to be your partner. I can't wait to see where life takes us."

What uhh... what kind of nickname game you think they're bringing to the table?

Rachel: I was gonna ask you if you have any nicknames that you're particularly fond of. I know that you always wanted Mac to be part of your life.

Griffin: Like, for people to call me Mac?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That would've been weird, 'cause my dad is Mac. But I did have a coach who was also my homeroom teacher in high school, who called me Mac, and I did—I did like it.

Rachel: I mean, I have a really good nickname.

Griffin: For you?

Rachel: Yeah. Our friend Evan started calling me Rage! It makes me sound like—

Griffin: Rage is so good.

Rachel: Like such a badass. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, it does. It fits so well, too. Uh, you wanna do the other one?

Rachel: Yes. This message is for Jane "George Coolstanza," and it is from Julia "Small Crimes." Man, speaking of nicknames, huh?

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: "Way to be the raddest human around! You do so much for the Portland poetry community, on top of being the most amazing friend a nerd like me could ever ask for. I'm glad Tanta has Logan's Dragonborn shoulders to ride around on."

Griffin: God, hearing you tackle that sentence was so good.

Rachel: [laughs] "I relish your wit and salsa your face. I can't wait 'til this stupid pandemic is over so I can give you the biggest hug."

Griffin: It's like you didn't know which words in that DnD sentence were like, nouns, and which ones were adjectives.

Rachel: I like—I reached out to you for help, and you just grabbed both your hands back and said, "Nope!"

Griffin: Well, sometimes you gotta let the bird fly outta the nest on its own. And sometimes, the bird... falls. To ground. And goes splat.

Rachel: I like that this poetry personality has the nickname "George Coolstanza."

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: I think that's A+ work.

Griffin: Very fitting.

[Maximum Fun advertisement plays]

Griffin: Can I get that second thing?

Rachel: Yes!

Griffin: What do you got?

Rachel: My second thing is... healthy food that makes you happy.

Griffin: Oh!

Rachel: Y'know when you eat a healthy food, and you're like, "Yeah! I did it!"

Griffin: Yeah, I did it. Well, I mean... yeah. But that more speaks to the scarcity with which I... incorporate healthy foods into my... well, that's not entirely fair. I feel like I'm a decent eater.

Rachel: No, it's not! Well, y'know, I was talking about that stroganoff. One of those foods is mushrooms.

Griffin: Mushrooms!

Rachel: Mushrooms has the vitamin D, and you know I'm always talkin' about vitamin D on here, and how it helps you with the serotonin.

Griffin: That's true. Yeah, I guess that's true. I feel like when I eat a carrot, I'm like... I feel like I've done, like—like I've got some sort of... some sort of power up going on inside me.

Rachel: Uh-huh. Yeah, I mean, some of that is just like, knowing it's healthy and feeling good about it, but some of it is like, the actual like, vitamins and properties of the food. It is like—actually makes you feel good!

Griffin: Are you talk—I mean, are you about to get on some like, acai shit? Are you about to get on some super foods...

Rachel: No, that's what I wanted to say. I, as somebody who has taken medication for mental health, I am not advocating that this is a replacement for that.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: But there are some foods out there that really do. They got the—they got the good stuff in there, and it has a good impact on your body.

Griffin: Yogurt!

Rachel: Yes, yogurt.

Griffin: That's my—oh, that's my guy! Rachel sometimes will get kefir from the store. Little kefir Sutherland. I'll eat that. Drink that. Ooh! Got me feelin' right.

Rachel: Griffin is a busy man, and he doesn't want to sit down with a spoon.

Griffin: Noo.

Rachel: Dig around in a little cup of yogurt.

Griffin: This is even—this is a step above Go-Gurt. Like, Go-Gurt, you still have to do the manual... mechanical operation of squeezing the little popsicle pack up into your mouth. Kefir, you can just... *woosh! Kwoosh!*

Rachel: Griffin wants to knock it back like he is an athlete and Gatorade. Just like, sweatin' that yogurt out his pores.

Griffin: If I ever win some sort of big award, I want you to come and upend a big bucket of kefir right on my head.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, so reading about the probiotics, um... y'know, it aids in digestion, it boosts the immune system...

Griffin: Yup.

Rachel: And it also, supposedly, has a calming effect on the body.

Griffin: Oh, for sure, baby.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. I guess calming in that you're like, "Alright, now I'm taken care of."

Griffin: I am going to poop today.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, another one of those foods? Salmon.

Griffin: Salmon! That explains it! Why I'm at peak fucking physical condition right now!

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, it's got that—that omega-3.

Griffin: Ugh.

Rachel: Which helps keep your hair and skin shiny. Which, y'know, helps give you the appearance of happiness. You're all shiny. Ready to go.

Griffin: Yeah. Sure.

Rachel: Uh, fish oil supplements can also do that.

Griffin: Yeah. I took those for a while. They disagreed with me. I like the real—the real deal holy feel.

Rachel: Yeah! And I mean, there's all other sorts of, y'know, vitamin C is another one. Helps you, um... I'm not saying vitamin C like, cures the cold, by the way.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: But I mean, it's a good vitamin to have in you. You get it in broccoli, oranges, kale, strawberries...

Griffin: It's a cool—I think there is something to—when I, uh... if we're getting food from a, y'know, pick up from a restaurant or something... and I elect not to get the... shrimp tacos... which is not the worst thing that I could get, and instead, get the salad... there is a—cookie points is a fun joke that we like to do in our family.

Rachel: Yeah, uh-huh.

Griffin: But there is something about cookie points that is sort of cerebrally... rewarding.

Rachel: Uh-huh! Yeah, I think whenever we do take out, I like to think, "What is something I'm not gonna make at home?" And or, "What is something that's gonna have a lot more vegetables than I have in my fridge right now?"

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Salad's a good, uh... good itch scratched.

Griffin: Salads is just vegetables, for the most part.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. [laughs] Um... dark chocolate is actually helpful.

Griffin: Okay! Here we go! You're just trying to slide that one in!

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, health benefits, including easing emotional stress, according to a 2009 American Chemical Society trial. And I will say that, man, you take a little bite of that dark chocolate, and I'm like, "Alright. I'm gonna be okay." [laughs]

Griffin: Interesting. It says here, "Sour Patch Kids"? That can't be right. Well, I guess it's Sour Patch Kids!

Rachel: Uh, another vitamin found in a lot of foods – magnesium.

Griffin: I don't know much about this guy.

Rachel: Uh, it's found in dark, leafy greens, nuts, seeds, pumpkin seeds, avocados, whole grains, yogurt... and swiss chard.

Griffin: Kind of sounds—

Rachel: Helps uh, helps balance serotonin.

Griffin: Kind of sounds like we wanted to do a segment on yogurt, but we didn't wanna be like—

Rachel: Yeah, I just... got around it. [laughs]

Griffin: Fully Jamie Lee Curtis about it, so we're trying to sneak it in.

Rachel: Uh, I will also say, uh, folic acid is another one. Helps, uh, aid deficiencies that lead to a drop in serotonin. You find that in spinach, bok choy, turnip greens...

Griffin: God, I wish there was just one vegetable or fruit that I could eat that I knew had just kind of all of it.

Rachel: Just had everything?

Griffin: I guess that's like the idea of like, an ambrosia sort of substance. Which, y'know, don't exist. But if there was just one... if it was just spinach, like, I don't *love* spinach. I don't hate it. But I would eat it a lot if I knew like, eat the spinach, and you're fucking set for everything.

Rachel: I know, right? I mean, you'd think that's gotta be it, right? 'Cause everybody's puttin' that in a smoothie. Everybody's just like, put like, three cups of spinach in a smoothie. I don't really know why.

Griffin: Yeah. But then it's like, spirulina? And it's like, I don't know what that is. But does it have it all? I'll eat spirulina. I did have a smoothie once with spirulina in it, and I—then, maybe, anecdotally, I had the worst diarrhea of my entire life, so maybe... ?

Rachel: Griffin's pretty sure he should never eat spirulina again.

Griffin: I'm about 90% positive it was the spirulina sort of situation.

Rachel: I wanted to bring up... the reason I got on this path is, I've been really wanting some quinoa lately. Quinoa is kind of a mystery to me. I used to make it. I haven't in a very long time. Y'know, it's a grain. You boil it in the water. Um, and... I was reading about it, and there's—it's got a lot of protein.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And there's a flavonoid in it that has antidepressant effects. I don't know what—

Griffin: Hey!

Rachel: I don't know what flavonoid is. I didn't look it up. I don't wanna know.

Griffin: Flavonoid is a wild word, huh?

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: It sounds like, uh... a 1990s Sega Genesis game about like, that's like, licensed by... y'know, Cheerios or something like that. Like—well, I mean, I guess I'm thinking of The Noid. I am thinking of The Noid. And the flavonoid is like... y'know, The Noid battled freshness. So the flavonoid, I

imagine, would be like, instead of, y'know, ruining the freshness of the pizza, the flavonoid would go after the flavor somehow.

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah, this sounds also like it could've been like, Doritos answer to The Noid.

Griffin: Yeah, yeah.

Rachel: Like, the flavonoid gets in there with the cool ranch. Y'know.

Griffin: Or it could just be—The Noid was Domino's, yes? I believe? And so, it could just be that Domino's was like, "People love The Noid. What if he had a brother? Who went after flavor instead of freshness?" And then they did it for like, one or two commercials, and people were like, "That's too many Noids."

Rachel: [laughs] Um, I... I've been thinking about this more lately, just because we have been doing so much takeout, and I'm trying to like, diversify our takeout options.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: We found some healthy... some healthy ones that have things like salmon.

Griffin: Ugh.

Rachel: And it's exciting!

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: It's like, I'm never gonna buy salmon. I'm not gonna buy it.

Griffin: We bought salmon a couple times.

Rachel: Yeah, but...

Griffin: Y'know, we'll sous vide it up. It's alright.

Rachel: If I'm in the store, and I'm looking, I'm just like, "Ahh, I don't know what to do with that."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And y'know... it's good for you.

Griffin: Yeah. Gives you strong bones.

Rachel: It makes you feel good.

Griffin: Feel good. Strong hair. I could make a—I could make a ship-worthy rope out of my hair right now.

Rachel: Yes! You and me both.

Griffin: I could rig a sail of some kind. Uh, can I tell you about my second thing?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: I anticipate it will be quite quick. My second thing is capture the flag. Capture the flag. Capture the flag, the game that you play in real life, but also like, the concept of capture the flag as represented in other games, digital and otherwise. I just really like capture the flag.

I can count the number of times I played it in my youth on maybe one hand.

Rachel: Yeah, right? Like, I feel like this is something that presented itself to me, not until high school.

Griffin: Oh!

Rachel: And it disappeared immediately after.

Griffin: Wow, interesting! See, yeah, most of mine was earlier than that. I feel like, uh, once you got to high school, nobody... getting a game of capture the flag together is equivalent to like, as an adult now, trying to get like, a poker night together, back in the before times. Where it's just like, it's a huge amount of effort.

Like, with my group of friends, I feel like I *could* get everybody excited about capture the flag, but getting everybody excited at the same time, with enough time for us to play, in a place where we could play capture the flag... when we could just as easily just like, y'know, attach a retractable dog leash to somebody's back belt loop and have them run until we snap it back at the last second? Like, that's much easier to do.

Rachel: That was a thing for you?

Griffin: Ohh yeah!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Ohh, yeah. You talk to—you talk to Michael, you talk to Evan about some of that. Ooh, we ripped a lot of belt buckle loops. And people would be like, "What the fuck happened to your back belt buckle loop?"

Rachel: This coincided with the time of Jackass, didn't it?

Griffin: I mean, I guess it was a pretty low-stakes Jackass. Although, one time, I did do it. It ripped Michael's belt loop right off, and the metal tip of it came back, hit me right in the forehead. That—

Rachel: Oh, jeeze.

Griffin: That close to one of my precious little eyeballs. Uh, but capture the flag, man. It rules. It is a fairly modular game, where y'know, I say capture the flag, and I imagine there are multiple versions of it that people think about. Typically, uh, you're talking about two bases, two teams, each with a

flag. You want to grab the opposing team's flag from their base, get it back to your own to win, or score a point.

Typically, there is some version of tag also involved, where if you're in enemy territory and you get tagged, something happens. Either you're out, or you are—typically, we would play freeze, where you're frozen until a teammate could come—

Rachel: You have to go back to your side, too.

Griffin: Or that, yeah. Or you freeze until a teammate can come and rescue you.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Uh, and... I mean, that is about it. Sometimes you have to—sometimes you can hide the flag. I always thought that that was bullshit, 'cause people would always cheat. Like, "Oh, I hid it in my mom's locked car!" Like, fuck you. There's no way.

Rachel: [laughs] I feel like it was easy to be a player in a game of capture the flag, and just have no idea that the game was over.

Griffin: That is also a problem.

Rachel: If you played over like, a wide enough terrain, you'd be like, on one side, and somebody would come up to you and be like, "Oh yeah, no, they got our flag. It's over."

Griffin: But—

Rachel: Oh. I missed it.

Griffin: There's not a ton of like, variation to the rules beyond that, right? Uh, it's kind of tough to track like, the origins of any sort of folk game like this. There was, uh, a 1908 Boy Scout training manual published called uh, simply Scouting for Boys that detailed the rules of a game that it called 'flag

raiding,' which kind of resembles capture the flag, but with a decidedly sort of war games feel that maybe makes sense for the era.

Uh, what I like about capture the flag is that it mixes like, a lot of disciplines, and a lot of like, game ideas that I... y'know, am a fan of. It's like... I am not a particularly great runner, which sort of put me at a disadvantage in a lot of different games. But in capture the flag, if you're not a great runner, you can still be strategic in a way that maybe your peers aren't, 'cause you have to distribute like, who's defending, who's attacking...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: There's also a stealth element, which was always my favorite, like, genre of game to play when I was a kid. Like, again, I'm not a fast runner, or thrower, or anything like that, but I can hide with the best of them. And so, y'know, you get a sneaky approach up on that flag and grab it and run, then... you can kind of hold your own in a game where, otherwise, you maybe couldn't.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And not only that – you would be thrust into the spotlight. Ooh! There's nothing more exhilarating and terrifying than like, having the flag and running with it. And you're solely responsible at that point for the victory or loss of your team.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's very, very cool.

Rachel: There's glory!

Griffin: There's glory there, which was not a thing that I was ever really used to. Um, playing it like, in a sleep over, when it's like, dark? Probably the biggest game I ever played was at a church lock-in at our church, which was a fairly large church. It was like a three-story, uh, building, and playing it took the better part of the lock-in. Like, most of the little hours.

Rachel: You were playing it in the building?

Griffin: In the building, right.

Rachel: Oh, interesting.

Griffin: So one team was on one side of the first floor. The other team was on the other side of the third floor. So, the second floor was a sort of like—

Rachel: Oh, I like that! I always pictured it as an outdoor game.

Griffin: Uh, yeah. I mean, you can play it outdoors, but you can also play it indoors. And it was... pretty fun, and there were a ton of kids there, so it was like a all-hands-on-deck team-based game that lasted forever. I think my team lost, but it was still like, a lot of fun. And then we looked outside, and like, the sun was coming up, and we were like, "Oh no! I'm going to be so tired tomorrow!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I, of course, played it more commonly in video games. I think Halo is probably my biggest touchstone for this, especially when we would have LAN parties for Halo 1 and 2. And by the time 3 came out, I think most people were playing online. But like, playing capture the flag in that environment is also very fun.

For similar reasons, like, I play a lot of first person shooters. But I'm not like, amazing at them. I'm not like, uh... y'know, my aim is not as good as it is for somebody who like, plays... grew up playing like, Counterstrike, and like, really intense military shooters.

But... y'know, I can grab a flag and run with it, and work on my like, timing and sort of situational awareness. And it adds a sort of technique to any kind of game, whether it's a... y'know, an MMO like World of Warcraft has like, a capture the flag mode. Where even if you're not great at the core principles

of the game, there is a entirely sort of mental and, uh, y'know, cerebral element that the game otherwise doesn't challenge you on.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And I find that so fascinating! I find that really, really cool. Like, it fits into a lot of different game ideas, and it just sort of adds a, if you will, a third heat onto what the game already asks you to do.

Rachel: Yeah, I like that point, because I remember in high school, we would have a lot of half days where people would go meet up at a park, and a lot of times, folks got into playing like, ultimate Frisbee. Which I was like, kind of okay about. Y'know, there's not a whole lot of running with that. But you have to be really good at throwing and catching a Frisbee, and...

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: I was only okay at that. But capture the flag I liked, right? There's room for everybody in that game.

Griffin: If you're not a fast runner, you just hang out by your flag, and you play defense. Which like, y'know, very few people are willing to do, but I would always be like, "Yeah, I'll just post up here and make sure we don't lose." Seems like an important, y'know... it's not the most glorious position, but y'know, it essential. And I expect some form of recognition for it. Now. 20 years later. But I never got it.

Anyway. That's capture the flag. It's a good game.

Rachel: I like it.

Griffin: I would play it as an adult now.

Rachel: Yeah, for sure!

Griffin: I mean, not *now*.

Rachel: Yeah, not in this moment.

Griffin: Unless we incorporated some sort of like, six-foot-away Nerf gun... but even that seems like a risky...

Rachel: This must be why people have children.

Griffin: Yeah. So they can organize CTF with them?

Rachel: To play capture the flag again.

Griffin: I mean, we have played more hide and seek with our progeny than, uh, I have ever played in my lifetime.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Learned that I may be not as good at it as I think I am.

Rachel: You're better than Henry. [laughs]

Griffin: Well... Henry likes to hide behind the same mirror every time, and then once he hears you enter the room, jump out.

Rachel: He likes to start hiding. He likes to start hiding. He's like, "I'm going to hide," and you can see exactly where he has in mind. "You go count."

Griffin: Hey, can I tell you what our friends at home are talking about?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Emily says, "Time lapsed videos of plants growing – mushrooms, flowers, anything – are amazing! Nature is wild." I do love that. I love watching—mushrooms especially.

Rachel: It's real nice.

Griffin: This is a mushroom heavy episode. But mushrooms grow in the wildest ways. Mushrooms grow wild, man. Different mushrooms, like a morel, like, will grow, like... or more-ell? I think that's how you're supposed to say it. I've always struggled with that.

Rachel: I have no idea.

Griffin: It like, grows in like, this weird web. Mushrooms are crazy, man. They have gills that open up sometimes? What are you doing, mushrooms?

Rachel: Yeah. It's that fungus thing, man.

Griffin: Uh, and then, uh... Areathna? I hope I'm saying that right. It's a cool name. Uh, "Something I find wonderful is camping. Being surrounded by trees and breathing the crisp air while making coffee early in the morning is a feeling I'll never get over." I wish... we were better about liking camping.

Rachel: Right? Well, the problem is that Texas gives you about one month a year where it's good to go.

Griffin: It's good to camp. Yeah.

Rachel: And we don't have any gear at all.

Griffin: Don't have any gear. It feels weird to have gear for one month out of the year.

Rachel: We have built our lives around not having any camping gear.

Griffin: But if we're not... what better time is there to get into camping than now?

Rachel: I know! A lot of people that live in a better climate are really taking advantage of this.

Griffin: Damn it.

Rachel: And I get it!

Griffin: Maybe when it gets cooler, we should talk about it. We'll have a talk with our... spiritual advisors.

Rachel: We gotta invest in those good quality air mattresses.

Griffin: Oh, you know it. I might—

Rachel: No sleeping on the ground.

Griffin: I kind of want to, uh... if you'll forgive the use of the term – glamp.

Rachel: Oh, for sure.

Griffin: And...

Rachel: It's the only way we could do it.

Griffin: Only way we could do it is if there was some sort of...

Rachel: And all those flaps with the netting. You let the breeze through.

Griffin: Ooh! God, gotta have them flaps! Gotta have that fine mesh!

Rachel: This is—I think you've talked about this before, of going into like, an outdoor equipment store...

Griffin: Oh yeah! [laughs] I have! No, let's scratch that itch, man.

Rachel: Yeah. Like, the idea of having a good tent seems nice.

Griffin: Yeah. 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. Thank you also to Maximum Fun for having us on the network, and to everybody who donated in the recent MaxFunDrive. We really appreciate ya. Y'all came out in a big way for us, and uh, it means a whole hell of a lot. So thank you.

Rachel: Thank you!

Griffin: Anything else before we wrap up? I thought you were just about to just get up...

Rachel: [laughs] Just walk out.

Griffin: When I said that, Rachel rotated her chair like, a full 90 degrees away from me, and I thought you were literally just gonna be like... and just dip. That would be—that would be pretty badass. That would be a pretty Rage thing to do.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: Do you wanna do it, and we'll just like, see how it feels?

Rachel: No. It feels rude.

Griffin: No, but I'm saying like, you should do it. So it's not—

Rachel: I should just walk out?

Griffin: Yeah, just try it right now and we'll see how it feels.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Oh my god, she's actually doing it.

[sound of a door closing]

Griffin: You could—so, here’s the truth, is that Rachel couldn’t even pretend to be rude so much that she did just open and shut the door, doing a sort of, um, radio drama, sort of Michael Winslow routine.

Rachel: [laughs]

[sound of footsteps]

Griffin: Oh!

Rachel: Walkin’ away.

Griffin: Yeah. It’s weird. Your footsteps sound so far away, but your voice was just so crystal clear!

Rachel: [laughs] It’s these Lavalier mics we wear, y’know.

Griffin: Oh, that’s what it is.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. I’m downstairs right now.

Griffin: You’re so good.

Rachel: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

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