

Wonderful! 163: Party Time!

Published 31st December 2020
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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hello, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hey, it's Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: Are you laughing about that funny joke I just told right before?

Griffin: Rachel told a real ripper right before we started. And we can't, unmm, we can't tell it here, because it was in—

Rachel: It was blue.

Griffin: Very poor taste.

Rachel: It was blue and it was crass.

Griffin: It was crass and it was so sexist.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I was— no, I'm laughing cause babe, this one's footloose and fancy free, free-wheelin'.

Rachel: There you go.

Griffin: The free-wheelin' bob beelin. We're gonna have fun in this episode.

Rachel: We're loosening our suspenders.

Griffin: Loosey goosey. Why are we so loosey goosey, you ask? Well, um, we don't have anything prepped. Listen, here's the situation.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: We um— every time I say that, I always think of the intro to that one episode of Parks and Recreation where Leslie Knope goes on to sing all of Parents Just Don't Understand when Ron comes in and says "Here's the situation," and she's like, "So, what do you need?" and he's like, "Someone's on fire in the park."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay, anyway, we just did a live show last night for Austin Bat Cave and, uh—

Rachel: Thank you to everybody that bought tickets.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: And checked it out. We had a really good time.

Griffin: Yeah, and you all helped raise a lot of money for that really cool organization. We will probably put up an audio episode of that show at, you know, at some point later down the line.

Rachel: I know a lot of folks weren't able to join us and kinda lost track of time, so that will be a way for you to hear part of it, too.

Griffin: Yeah. You'll also hear the debut of an exciting new segment that I've been piloting.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: But we— so, we did that and we, um, didn't have time to prepare— we're recording this the night after that and we don't have anything prepared.

Rachel: Yea, we do not have childcare this week and so we don't have a lot of time.

Griffin: Or ever? Did we ever? We had childcare for a minute there, right?

Rachel: We did.

Griffin: I didn't dream it?

Rachel: We did, but it was...

Griffin: I feel like I had a sweet, sweet dream at some point that there was somebody who lived in this city who came to help us with our child sometimes, but now I don't even—

Rachel: She'll be back. Hey, it's the holiday season.

Griffin: It's the holiday season, you're right.

Rachel: Everybody deserves a little time.

Griffin: Yeah, I'm not trying to Scrooge it over here, you know what I mean?

Rachel: But all of that to say we, we... came up with a concept for this show.

Griffin: Rachel came up with a concept. We were thinking about a theme that would require no preparation, something that is timely and delightful and just with, like, an endless amount of stuff to talk about. Do you wanna introduce today's topic?

Rachel: Yeah. So, we are recording this and we will release it the week of New Year's Eve, slash New Year's Day. And the past few years we have invited friends into our home and have a nice little party in our house.

Griffin: Little casual, but like, kinda classy get-together— I feel like there's an unspoken agreement that at a New Year's Eve party you're gonna get a little bit classy. And I feel like that's completely— but why? Like, why?

Rachel: No, we have some friends that showed up, people put on nice clothes and—

Griffin: Just set a precedent.

Rachel: We make some fun cocktails. It feels like we're real grown-ups doing grown-up things.

Griffin: I think that's why I feel like New Year's Eve is fancier because it has something to prove. It's like I've put away my childish Christ— Crimbo things.

Rachel: I'm gonna bring in this new year just lookin' so nice.

Griffin: Looking so grown-up.

Rachel: And I don't know, we really like hosting parties. I think Griffin and I as a couple— I don't know, I didn't attend quite as many parties in my previous life before I met Griffin.

Griffin: Yeah...

Rachel: He just, he's a good date, I guess, is what I'm saying. But anyway, all of that to say, that it got me thinking about parties and I thought we could do an episode where we talk about just kind of the wonderful parties that we have been to, and the wonderful things about parties on this year where we and a lot of other people may not have parties to attend.

Griffin: What was our last party? Probably— it was probably on the Jonathon Coulton cruise.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Earlier— earlier this year, before things really popped off.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Which is quite a—

Rachel: Or potentially New Year's last year. [laughs]

Griffin: Or potentially New Year's last year would have been, yes, the last proper party. Oh man. [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That'll be an interesting moment for people to listen back to, because you can hear the weight of this year sort of accumulate and land on me in like, one sort of moment. Which is cool.

Rachel: Super relatable.

Griffin: Super relatable. I love a party. I love a New Year's Eve party. So, we thought we would just sort of talk about parties. Our favorites.

Rachel: Do you wanna go chronological?

Griffin: Chrono— like, of every party I've ever been to?

Rachel: Well, no, but like... hit some highlights from the child years and the teen years. I'm curious about this, because I feel like there's a point when you really entered the theatre scene of Huntington West Virginia and I think your party experiences may diverge from mine a little.

Griffin: Wildly, yes, I would argue. Yes.

Rachel: [laughs] Any good birthday parties? Any time as a child you were like, "This is it. We did it."

Griffin: Birthday parties were largely a bring kids over to my house and there would be some Little Caesars and some cake.

Rachel: You didn't do, like, a laser tag or a Burger King?

Griffin: Well there was one, and we have video of it, it's in like one of the home videos that my Dad shot, of me and my buds wrecking a McDonalds when I was like, 4 years old.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: There's a great moment in that video where I'm wearing these big, baggy pants, and at the McDonalds parties they would set up kind of games for you using McDonalds things. So, they would use those old Styrofoam things that the McNuggets would come in, and you had to see how many of those you could stack up before it fell down.

Rachel: Oh, that's fun.

Griffin: The game I played at the tender age of four or five, you had to hold a straw up to your nose and try and drop it onto a cup on the floor.

Rachel: Oh, that is a lot of co-ordination for a small child.

Griffin: It is a lot of co-ordination, but also, my pants were so baggy that the straw fell and it landed right on a divot right on my dingaling.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And it was really funny. Everybody busted up, everybody was like, "Griffin caught it with his dingaling."

Rachel: Is that when it hit you? When you were like, “I wanna be an entertainer.”

Griffin: Yeah, that’s when that one hit me.

Rachel: “I wanna make people laugh.” [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. Um, best party though ever was at the, uh, I was... I wanna say seven, I wanna say seven or eight, and it was The Gym Factory. The Gym Factory was a sort of infamous place in Huntington lore where it was a, you know, like a gymnastics training facility, so they had the long runway of trampoline floor, they had the big pit full of Styrofoam geometric objects that you could, like, swing and jump into.

Rachel: It’s so smart that they made that, like, a public venue for kids to play. Because that is the one thing about my friends that took gymnastics that I was always jealous of.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Like, “that just looks fun.”

Griffin: I mean, you had to pay. It wasn’t like a free park or something like that.

Rachel: Well, yeah.

Griffin: Later on, in our teen years, it would become— it would host a really shady teen night in the back room in The Gym Factory—

Rachel: What was that back room used for usually?

Griffin: I do not— I do not know.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I think it was like a stage, so like maybe they would do... gymnastics things on a stage? That’s nothing.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, but anyway, this was before that, before the sort of nasty times. And I just had a birthday there that was pretty baller. I remember I got a star

named after me by my Nonnee. She did one of those, like, star registry things, and that like blew my mind. That was like the best gift I ever got.

Rachel: It is kind of the perfect age to do it, right?

Griffin: Oh, yeah.

Rachel: Cause any older than that and you're skeptical.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But like at that right age, you're like... part of that space out there is mine.

Griffin: Yeah. Age 9 is like, "Okay, but like, who's—"

Rachel: "Is that it?"

Griffin: "Who's gonna say that it's my name? Who did you register it with?" Because I could name a star Nonnee right now and I could say, "That's your star up there, Nonnee. That one up there in Cassiopeia." That's a tough word to say. I can't think of too many others from, like, my younger days.

Justin and Travis— I have a memory of a Justin and Travis party. Cause they share the same birthday, November 8th, and I remember a party they had where a bunch of their buds came over who I knew, like, also, and we all played poker using our Halloween candy as the stakes. And I remember thinking that was the most fun idea ever.

Rachel: That's clever.

Griffin: And I always wanted to do it again, and then also because it was their birthday, I did get one toy, as was the custom.

Rachel: [laughs] I think that's betting a lot on the fact that your child would still have a significant amount of Halloween candy a week after Halloween.

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, it was most— I'll be honest, it was the snickelfritz. There were a lot of, uh, atomic fireball, hard jawbreakers in there.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: God, those were miser— who was that for? Who wants— eating, like, a spicy cinnamon candy is already not great, but to be like, “But now it’s here in jawbreaker format, so it lasts forever.” That’s some, that’s some, like, really masochistic stuff, I feel like.

Rachel: I mean, I’m that way with all sugar candy. Like, Nerds, you know, Smarties, all that stuff didn’t do anything for me.

Griffin: Not a big— yeah. Any big parties from your childhood?

Rachel: I was trying to think about that. I feel like all of my birthday parties were also in my house.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I don’t— and I’m mostly remembering them from pictures, and so I’m just picturing my backyard and my basement in a lot of these parties.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: So, it’s hard for me to really pinpoint a birthday that—

Griffin: Did you ever have a pool party? You had a pool, you had an above-ground pool for a while at your house.

Rachel: I did, but my birthday’s in March, honey.

Griffin: Oh yeah.

Rachel: You know, Missouri...

Griffin: March in St Louis is not— yeah.

Rachel: We did not have the pool open.

Griffin: Yeah,

Rachel: I had a roller-skating party.

Griffin: Yes!

Rachel: In my back yard. And that was—

Griffin: In your back yard?

Rachel: Well, I had that, like, that patio space under the deck.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: So, it was just going around in circles on the patio.

Griffin: That's fun.

Rachel: And that was right when some people had rollerblades and some people didn't.

Griffin: That was the— that was the caste system that had been forced upon us.

Rachel: Mm hmm. Um... and I had a party that was... kind of beach themed and there was Twister, when I was in middle school

Griffin: Ooh... [chuckles]

Rachel: And I had boys there.

Griffin: Oh, you knew exactly what you were doing.

Rachel: Mm hmm.

Griffin: Mm hmm!

Rachel: [laughs] There's a picture of me wearing, like, a yellow Hawaiian shirt and blue corduroy pants.

Griffin: Jesus Christ.

Rachel: Very of the time period.

Griffin: Very, very attractive. It must have been a very fetching outfit.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, but yeah, no, I feel like my party life didn't really kick off until high school, and it was never at my house.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: Did you have a friend that had, like, the party house?

Griffin: Did I have a friend who had, like the party house. Yeah, um, our close friends the Minskys, growing up they— we sort of like, just kind of occupied, like squatters, their basement. There was like a summer where I helped our friend Justin Minsky like clean out that basement, and Justin and his brother Evan, and we like, bought a bunch of beanbag chairs and they set up like, a projector, like a film projector, that we could play games on and stuff. And there was a pool table down there.

And we would do New Year's Eve parties down there, like, every year for like, probably 4 years in a row, if not more. With like, everybody. With all the theater friends. Because that's the thing you missed out on. The theater friend circle, and I imagine this is a universal thing, is way more liberated than like, any other friend circle I ever had. Like, if I wanted to go a boy-girl sleepover party in like, middle school, with my theater friends, it was A-OK.

Rachel: I still cannot wrap my brain around that.

Griffin: Still can't ponder that.

Rachel: I can't. I can't. Because even if you had grown up with these people, things change. I don't know if you recall the beginning of Dawson's Creek.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: But Dawson and Joey grow up, and they develop urges.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And so, it just surprises me that y'all continued to sleep in close quarters.

Griffin: No, yeah, I mean it was pretty... pretty puritanical. I don't know what to tell you. I can't write a fanfiction of my high school years with you.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I would say the other big thing that you missed out on was cast parties. You wanna talk about parties, oh my God. You get that adrenaline pumping, you get that on the stage, that theater night, just like, opening night adrenaline going, then you have that closing night where you just finished your last show, "Oh my God, I'm gonna miss you guys. Let's scoot down to the Pizza Pub and play in the arcade and just like, kick it there for a few hours and come down."

Rachel: The closest example I have of that is when I was in marching band and after the football games we would go to, like, Steak and Shake.

Griffin: Ugh.

Rachel: You know, it wasn't free-spirited, you know?

Griffin: It wasn't. And you didn't play theater games. Which was a big thing you missed out on and a big staple of parties, I feel like.

Rachel: This is interesting that you bring this up, because the other day I jokingly referred to Zip Zap Zop with you and you had no familiarity with it, and it blew my mind because I thought that was *the* theater game.

Griffin: I have always thought of Freeze as being The theatre game, the one where you tag people in and out to like, step into scenes and—

Rachel: Gosh, you'd play that for fun.

Griffin: Oh god, yes. We had, uh, we never talk about this because it sounds bougie, when in reality— we had a basketball court in our back yard. Which, if you hear that and you think like, "Ooh, huh huh..." we had a back yard that was grass that we liked to play in, and at some point they paved it in and then there was a basketball hoop.

Rachel: Now, a court in my head has two hoops.

Griffin: No, it was just one hoop and some cement, and honestly, most of the time that court was covered right with dog dookie. It was covered with dog dookie and if you did wanna play basketball you would have to scoop it up. So, at that point, it's like, interface with excrement to get exercise? No, I think I'm okay, thank you. Um, but we would go back there and, I mean, a basketball court's a perfect place to do some theatre games. Perfect place.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I'm wondering if there's people reeling from the revelation that the McElroy household had a basketball, like, facility.

Rachel: You can't call it a facility or a court if you just have a hoop. Like, I feel like 30% of the country has a basketball hoop just in their back yard.

Griffin: Right, but like, what about me and my brothers would make you think that that was something that my parents would prioritize?

Rachel: There was a period of time when I was in middle school where I also wanted a basketball hoop in my back yard.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: And I think it was just cause it was something to do.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And also, you know, Jordan.

Griffin: Jordan, oh yeah.

Rachel: Right.

Griffin: Anyway, I've taken up a lot of time here, but that's because I've been to way more parties than you.

Rachel: [laughs] I really— my party experience, I feel like, really started my senior year of high school. Uh, and that was because I had a couple friends that reliably did not have parental supervision.

Griffin: Oh yeah, that's huge.

Rachel: And these friends also had alcohol, which at the time... [laughs]

Griffin: Those two usually do kind of go hand in hand.

Rachel: And it was also because my senior year, we still had connections to the people who were seniors when we were freshman in high school, and they had just turned like 21.

Griffin: Of course.

Rachel: And so, they were kind of, you know, they got us our cranberry Jack Daniels coolers.

Griffin: Och. [shudders]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, I mean, I can't cast aspersions. I was not a high school imbibor. Maybe like, homecoming, senior year, I feel like we had some Smirnoff Ices, but that was mostly my um...

Rachel: I felt this urge, like, things have to start getting exciting. We can't just watch movies at each other's houses anymore.

Griffin: I mean, we had Freeze, babe.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You know this. We had Freeze.

Rachel: [laughs] You had Freeze.

Griffin: Um... yeah, I, all of the parties that I went to, honestly, after I started doing theater, because we got started pretty early, were just theater parties. I like, didn't really go to a lot of school friend parties. But I was okay with that, because the theater parties were secretly, like, quite lit. And I had a very good time at them.

Rachel: I will say that I did not particularly enjoy my rebellious teen parties. I feel like New Year's was really fun senior year because that was the year 2000 and our friends had a party and there was this, like, excitement around whether or not the world was gonna end, you know.

Griffin: Oh wow.

Rachel: That felt rowdy and fun, but for the most part, I just, I was never one to drink very quickly or very much, and then I would just witness this display, you know the teen display of drunkenness?

Griffin: Oh, sure, sure. Yeah.

Rachel: Where it's like, "Oh, what am I doing? I have no control over myself," you know? And you're like—

Griffin: Yeah...

Rachel: Watching it and you're kinda like, "What's going on here really?"

Griffin: I mean, I— I— I participated in that as well.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I will admit. But for me, it was like, in college. It was not in high school.

Rachel: Yeah. I was also kind of terrified or any kind of losing control generally, so I was a little slow to that party, I will say.

Griffin: I was more scared that somebody would tell on me to Jesus.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That somebody would call up Jesus and be like, "Uh oh, somebody is straying from his walk... you better do something," and then like, my dog would get sick or something.

Rachel: Wow. Man.

Griffin: Growing up in the Southern Baptist tradition, that it was we learned, is that if we did drink alcohol or—

Rachel: Something bad would happen to your family?

Griffin: If we played, uh, you know, table games at the dog track, or cussed—

Rachel: There's a real mobster dynamic, like, "Hey, you wanna cuss? You wanna see what happens?"

Griffin: Huh, how 'bout that. Yeah, I guess so, huh?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: We hosted a New Year's Eve party at our house every year. This was not, obviously, debaucherous in any way. But we— it was always a thing at our house. Like, for whatever reason I never went to anybody else's house I think, for New Year's Eve. It was always at our place.

Rachel: Wow.

Griffin: And my mom would just crank out the appetizers. Oh my God! The appetizers. I'm talking about bacon-wrapped little weenies, I'm talking about, uh, oh God, chocolate-chip cheesecake dip, when you put little Graham crackers in it? Mm, [eating noises]. Like, little Velveeta ground beef queso, ohohoho, don't mind if I do.

Rachel: I wonder— do you think that's like a regional thing?

Griffin: I think it's absolutely a regional thing.

Rachel: Because I know— I've noticed when we've gone over to the Smirls, they have like, a kitchen island that is full of—

Griffin: Just apps, apps, apps.

Rachel: 30 different kinds of appetizers.

Griffin: It's a low country boil with 50 sides. You can treat yourself— you can have bagel bites with your low country boil. It's so choice.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Nothing is better than that. I would say that makes up, like, the majority of my, like, young party attendance. I remember quite distinctly the, like, small handful of school friend parties that I went to. I had my first, uh, little smoocheroo at a boy-girl party in middle school, in a way that made me really recoil with terror and shame when we watched Pen15.

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: Which I cannot recommend highly enough, because it was seemingly biographical of my experience.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, it was like—

Rachel: I will say too, yeah, my first kiss was in middle school at a YMCA teen night.

Griffin: Mm hmm.

Rachel: In the stairwell of like, a gymnasium.

Griffin: Who was— I'm gonna kick this dude's ass. Who was it?

Rachel: Well, I've told you about this person, remember?

Griffin: That's right, that's right.

Rachel: I re-encountered him in high school and was kinda joking, like, we had this shared history, and he had no memory of it whatsoever. [laughs]

Griffin: He— babe, I gotta tell you, he definitely remembered. He was trying to play you for a fool.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Ours was spin the bottle, and, uh, yeah. Classic. You can't beat it.

Rachel: Oh, I hate it.

Griffin: And uh, let's just say the bottle landed on me and the girl who spun it started to say, "No, no, no!" Um and only agreed to do it if we went behind a sheet on the other side of the room and I got a little lip service and then she went back to the other side and everybody was laughing at her.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [air horn sounds]

Rachel: God.

Griffin: Was it ideal? No.

Rachel: No. [laughs]

Griffin: Does it make me sad to think back about? Yes. I wish I'd saved myself for you.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: For our wedding. That's supposed to be your first kiss, is the wedding.

Rachel: I'm glad you didn't, honey, I'm just gonna say I' glad you got a little experience.

Griffin: You know we woulda had that uh...

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah, that video.

Griffin: I can't even remember that show.

Rachel: You're the one that showed it to me.

Griffin: Yeah. It's two people who have never kissed and then they kiss for the first time at their wedding. It's a, it's a rough watch. Um... hey, can I— do you— would it be okay with you if I stole you away?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Okay.

[ad break]

Griffin: Oh boy, we have grampabons here and we're gonna just start reading them because we have a lot. This one is for Sophie and Grace and it's from Darren, who says:

"Dear Sophie and Grace, happy first anniversary. Wow, it's only been a year? Time flies, right?" Not this year, I'd argue, Darren! "It's been my honor to be there with you on your journey from perfect strangers to life partners. I'm so proud of how far you've come together and I can't wait to see what the future brings. I love you both with all my heart."

Darren, what a sweet heart.

Rachel: Are you going to make a reference to Perfect Strangers?

Griffin: I wish I could. But the truth is I didn't watch that much Perfect Strangers. I just know the theme song because it's the greatest, [music] standing tall on the wings of my dreams...

Rachel: For all those that may have doubted that Griffin could hit that note... don't.

Griffin: Have you heard our show before? You know what I'm capable of.

Rachel: Incredible singer.

Griffin: Here's another one. It's for Danny and it's from Julia, who says,

"Hello darling," or sorry, "Hullo darling," with a U. "You're my wonderful thing today, tomorrow and always. When this airs, you'll be in the midst of your last year of university. Keep working on getting that iron ring. For now, let's take a day off, eat some ramen and play video games. I love you most."

Do you get a iron ring from graduating from— where... where?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Julia says university which makes me think that maybe this is across the pond?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Um... do they get iron rings over there when they finish school?

Rachel: I mean, you can get a class ring.

Griffin: Not a class ring. I'm not talking about some, you know, white gold Jostens.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I'm talking about an iron ring forged in Mt Doom.

Rachel: You could fashion one, I imagine. If you knew the right people. If you had, like, an iron hookup.

Griffin: I mean, if you find a big enough nut, you could just slide that on ya. Just a big enough nut or washer.

Rachel: Oh, you're talking about the hardware material.

Griffin: Yeah, sure. Okay.

Rachel: Okay. [laughs]

[Maximum Fun ad plays]

Griffin: I wanna hear about— let's take the limiters off.

Rachel: Shall we talk about the college years?

Griffin: ... I'm not sure I want to.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I didn't even, like, I didn't even tear it up. I have, like—

Rachel: Do you have any, like, good parties? Like, let's not, like...

Griffin: Oh yeah, sure.

Rachel: Let's not, you know, embarrass ourselves, maybe, as much as we refer to the particularly remarkable parties we have attended.

Griffin: I had a few, and I looked back on them somewhat fondly. I had a few sort of archetypical college parties that were, like, madcap, I would say, in a way. And I'm glad that I did them, but I wouldn't ever, ever, ever, ever wish them upon any other person, ever. I had the, like, um, doing something I shouldn't be doing when the parents who were supposed to be out of town that the kids said were gonna be out of town came in and started yelling at everybody sort of situation.

Rachel: Oh.

Griffin: And like, a literal sprinting out of the building and running all the way back home situation.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Like, I had one of those. But I don't know that I would call it the best party I've ever been to.

Rachel: I remember, I think it was like my junior year of college I started running in a crowd of people that were as, like, into the theme parties, you know?

Griffin: Oh, that's fun.

Rachel: You do a costume, you know, or there's like a theme to the music or the snacks or the pot luck or whatever?

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: I always really enjoyed those. I think at first, I was kind like, [sarcastic] "Oh, this sounds cool", and then I was like, "No, this actually is really cool."
[laughs]

Griffin: I feel like I reached a point after— all of those things I described were freshman year. I feel like freshman year was a rough year for, uh, yours truly. Going through a lot of, let's say, personal crises that I was sort of struggling to

deal with, and so I just was like, going to parties of people I didn't know, like with people I didn't know.

Rachel: Yeah. I will tell you, that is freshman year for most people.

Griffin: Yes, I know that, again, like, it's a stereotypical thing. Like, I'm not— I didn't reinvent the wheel. But then I pretty much stopped going to parties. And the ones I did go to, nobody was putting in as much effort as the parties you are describing. I don't know that I ever went to a themed party.

Rachel: I think that was the thing, so freshman year— and this is probably true with every college town. There is, like, a part of town where all the students live when they, you know, get older? And you would just walk around in like, in the desert of this neighborhood trying to find a party.

Griffin: Oh, I never did that!

Rachel: So, we used to do that, like freshman year, we didn't know anybody, we didn't know where parties were, and so we would just head over to that part of town and we would just walk.

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That's a bummer I feel like, a little bit?

Rachel: And then we would start walking up to a house because we could tell there was a party happening, and then we'd like, poke our head in and there were like, four people, and we were like, "Gyyuualright!"

Griffin: [laughs] No!

Rachel: [laughs] Like, back out.

Griffin: How did you not, like, accidentally break and enter into someone's home?

Rachel: [laughs] We— I mean, that's probably technically what we did. I mean, if you open a door, uh, and walk in...

Griffin: God opens a window.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, but then a lot of the parties that we did go to that were, like, actual parties, we would just end up sitting on the couch talking to each other.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: We did not have the skills or the ability to, like...

Griffin: Mingle?

Rachel: Yeah. Be like, party animals.

Griffin: I did in that debaucherous peri— that was the thing. I wish I could take that year where I was a complete fuckup and like, lost my scholarship and like, really kinda wrecked things, and like, take away the bad parts where I lost my scholarship and really wrecked things...

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah.

Griffin: But I could keep hold of the part of me that was bold enough to just be like, "Ah, fuck it." Like, "I'll go to this, whatever man, I'll go to this party."

Rachel: It's that nothing-to-lose energy, you know?

Griffin: That nothing-to-lose energy. The problem was that I quickly developed things to lose, and so I guess I just gotta get back out there babe, and I'm sorry.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] I gotta go. I gotta hit the open road.

Rachel: You would never.

Griffin: I would never, ever, ever, ever, ever. Makes me feel uncomfortable even joking about it.

Rachel: [laughs] I will say the college years is also when I discovered a love for the Halloween party.

Griffin: Halloween parties are— yeah, that's...

Rachel: That was like, that was really fun. Just because it, like, gave you a conversation starter. And it gave, like, a purpose to the evening.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: I feel like a lot of times I would go to parties and I would kinda be like, "How do I know when I've had enough party?"

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But I feel like with a Halloween party, it's like, "Oh, I've seen everybody's costume, I've had a few drinks, let's call it a night."

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: You know? But at other parties, you're like, "If I leave now, did I miss the party?"

Griffin: The answer is almost always yes.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: For people, I think, like you and I. But I feel like, uh, there stopped being parties at a certain point and then there were just kinda hangs.

Rachel: Yeah

Griffin: Like, we would go to our friends house every single night and just, like, hang and play beer pong or NBA Jam or whatever. And those were the best times I ever had—

Rachel: Let me tell you, I didn't play beer pong or flip cup until I moved to Austin Texas at the age of 26.

Griffin: Oh wow.

Rachel: I just totally missed that. Partly because of what you're saying, I like, stopped going to parties at a certain age.

Griffin: It is stigmatized, and rightly so, as a sort of, you know, fratty bro activity.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I wish I could reclaim that for every— for general purpose use. Because it's a f— guys? It's a fun game.

Rachel: I have seen you—

Griffin: Not even the drinking, the throwing a ping pong ball into a cup skillfully? I love that shit.

Rachel: This is— there is something about the skill that is required to do that that you have exactly.

Griffin: It's the only thing I've ever been good at.

Rachel: [laughs] I feel like Griffin will roll up to a drinking game table and everybody will be like, "Oh, this guy. Let's see what he's got." And then everybody will rally and—

Griffin: Buckets, buckets, buckets.

Rachel: There's cheering, there's lifting up on shoulders.

Griffin: Well, that's the secret, is that I don't really like beer. Especially very, very, cheap, watery beer, and so I had to get good as a sort of survival mechanism if I didn't want to drink the gross stuff.

Rachel: No, but you realize when you— oh... never mind.

Griffin: Were you so unfamiliar with the rules of the game that you thought that you—

Rachel: [laughs] Well, the game like, flip cup, you have to drink the beer no matter what.

Griffin: No, not beer pong. Beer pong, you— yeah.

Rachel: Beer pong, the other team does, yeah.

Griffin: Um, I just wish that there was a— I just wish that we could— like croquet. Like, a nice summer game of croquet. I guess actually if you saw somebody playing croquet this day and age, you would— there would be some level of stigma about that. You would make some assumptions about that person in the same way that if you saw somebody playing beer pong... what's a neutral sport? Cornhole? Nah, even that.

Rachel: What do you mean by neutral?

Griffin: Like, if you see somebody doing it out in the— throwing a frisbee. Why do I only like fratty bro stuff?

Rachel: [laughs] I mean, most games that you play kind of casually are kind of bro games.

Griffin: I guess so. I wish I could go back and tell myself throughout all of my, like, childhood through college, not to sweat how many parties I wasn't going to, because I now, with the hindsight that comes with my old age, I realize that only when you become an adult do parties actually get pretty good, I feel like.

Rachel: That's fair.

Griffin: From a logistical perspective and from a, you actually enjoy it instead of just being a disaster.

Rachel: Yeah. I will say though, when you get older you go to fewer parties where people are dancing...

Griffin: But you gotta make 'em count. You gotta make 'em count.

Rachel: Yeah. I specifically miss those parties where you go to and there'd be really good music and people would be dancing.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: You don't that as much when you're older.

Griffin: No, I guess not. I remember there was a weird period right after I'd moved away from Huntington where I came back in town and a lot of my friends were still, like, seniors in college, so I went to a couple college parties having, like, graduated. Which first of all made me hugely uncomfortable, but also I felt like this immunity from the need to, like, milk it and make a night of it in the way that you do when you're, like, in it?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And seeing everybody else, like, in that desperate stage of just like, "I gotta make this count" was like a weird— like a time travel, like, astral projection.

Rachel: You just reminded me of that, like, getting ready for a party.

Griffin: Pre-game, yes.

Rachel: I did not like that.

Griffin: No! It lasted so long.

Rachel: [laughs] It lasted so long!

Griffin: It lasted so long! There was a dance club that we would go to every Friday night in Huntington called Club Echo, it was the best, Friday nights they had the same DJ, dude named Jesse, who would go and he would play the same, like, set every night. And it was the best and it was so fun. But every time, I would like, hang out with a big group of friends who all wanted to go together. They'd like, get started at like, 7, and then they would keep going past the time when the party started.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It would be like 10 o'clock and I'd be like, "Can we please just go?" and they're like, "But we have this Keystone Light here, for free!"

Rachel: Oh my gosh, I still, that is still hard for me. Because I was somebody in high school who had a curfew of like, 10pm. But when you are in your 20s, parties don't start until 10pm.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And so, I would go over to a friend's dorm room and we would sit around and quote-unquote "get ready".

Griffin: No!

Rachel: For like, an hour and a half, which... it only ever took me like 15 minutes. Then you're just sitting there and you're starting to like, second guess whether or not you even wanna do this thing, and then you get there and then, like, it hasn't even really started yet.

Griffin: It's a weird purgatory. It's party-tory and it's not fun— it's not especially great. It just makes you more nervous and more sort of like, desperate for the night to come to be like, the best. "We're gonna remember this night for the rest of our lives!" Like, it's a Wednesday. We're not. It's a Wednesday!

Rachel: Well, that's what people don't like about New Year's, honestly, is that there's so much build-up.

Griffin: I guess. It's the only— it's the only holiday with a pre-ordained kissing segment, which is like, already a lot.

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: I'll grant you that. I mean, as an adult, I meant to say that like, people finally throw parties with some effort.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: And resources thrown behind them.

Rachel: Yes, that's true.

Griffin: If I wanna be— if I wanna cheat a little bit, I would say of the top five parties I've ever been to, probably four of them were weddings, which are just like, by definition, the dopest party that you'll ever throw.

Rachel: Oh, interesting... I never really considered those as parties.

Griffin: Sure. I have, uh, and maybe this is just a recency bias thing, but like I have a lot of memories and a lot of stories, like, with our close group of friends from that, like, whirlwind three-year period where all of us got married.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And just, like, had a bunch— had a really— I know weddings are also a really stressful time for some people and it's not everybody's cup of tea. I hated going to weddings when I was like, a kid. Because there's nothing for you there! But like, when you're there with your pals and you're dancing and eating good food and watching eternal love commitments... aw man, you really can't beat it.

Rachel: That's interesting you brought that up. I wasn't even including that in the category. I was like, thinking strictly house parties.

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, it's cheating, because it's also like, for most folks, the most expensive party you will throw, so of course it will be competitive, but...

Rachel: I loved when I— so in... gosh, it would have been 2011, 2012... 2011. I like, moved by myself and had little parties in my back yard. It was the best! We had a new year's party, it was actually, it was the first new year's you and I were dating.

Griffin: Oh yeah.

Rachel: I was still living in that house.

Griffin: I remember.

Rachel: Little fire pit? Got all dressed up.

Griffin: We did the grapes eating thing.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: And somebody threw something in the fire pit that it shouldn't have been there, and an ember came up and it burnt your leg, like, through your hose.

Rachel: Yeah, I was wearing stockings and we, like, couldn't get it out.

Griffin: That was a scary moment.

Rachel: I had a burn on my leg. [laughs]

Griffin: I remember that very clearly. You— I think you still, I think, have a scar on your leg from that.

Rachel: No, I don't anymore. [laughs]

Griffin: Anyway, um, yeah, I think weddings are probably the best— and of course, like, themed parties now, you do get a lot more effort put into it and a lot more co-ordination. The murder mystery party is of course right up our alley.

Rachel: Yeah. I figured you were gonna bring that up.

Griffin: Yeah, it's a good time.

Rachel: I think it's more up your alley than mine, honestly.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I... I get very focused on people's performance and whether or not they just seem suspicious because they're not really selling what they're doing.

Griffin: I think it just goes right back to the theater kid shit.

Rachel: [laughs] I know.

Griffin: I think it goes right back to the theatre kid shit. I didn't know how insular a, like, formative experience that was until I was an adult. That like, there were people who did theatre kid shit who were like, a certain way, and then there were other people who just didn't even tap into that world or energy, like, at all. And that was mystifying to me.

Rachel: Yeah. See, I grew up in a very kind of like, too cool for school environment, where you were hesitant to show real enthusiasm for things. And so, when I encountered theater people, I was like, "They are so excited about everything. So sincerely excited." And I didn't— like, it knocked me on my heels a little bit. I'm like, "Are we— are we enjoying this genuinely, is that what we're doing? Is that the vibe?"

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, sometimes you'd go to a clunker. Sometimes— I'm not gonna make it sound like all theater kid parties were great. I remember distinctly going to one theater kid party when I show up and I was like, in middle school, and I was like, "What's up everybody?" and they're like, "Not much, we're watching In & Out, starring Kevin Kline," and I was like, "We're kids. Are you... "

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "We're kids. You sure? Okay."

Rachel: That's what I was telling Griffin, the experience I had, the other day. I definitely hung out with theater people, but I hung out with, like, a certain kind of theater person who just really loved the music, uh, more than the theater game itself. And so, I would go to these slumber parties and all of a sudden everybody knew Rent.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And I was like, "How is everybody singing along with this song right now? What did I miss?" And I realized, like, I was in a theater group. I just wasn't experiencing the...

Griffin: Yeah. You missed the bus.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And the boat. And the train. Anyways, it's always a party when I get to be here with you in the studio. Sorry again for the strange energy of this— maybe this was an odd one to cap out 2020 with, but also maybe an incredibly

appropriate one to cap out 2020 with. Two extremely tired, tired parents talking about the parties that they used to go to, back—

Rachel: [laughs] Well, there will be parties again. One day.

Griffin: Maybe. What will be the— I guess it depends on, you know, vaccine roll-out protocols.

Rachel: Oh, gosh.

Griffin: Would love to get out there for a 4th of July party— if we could secure an Independence Day party, like, guarantee. Earth Day, Arbor Day, I don't remember when those are. Uh, Arbor Day's mid-April... I'm not feeling especially confident...

Rachel: Yeah, no, we can't really count on that one.

Griffin: No. No.

Rachel: 4th of July, I like that.

Griffin: 4th of July feels— it feels like we can start putting a lot of our weight behind 4th of July. Let me— [knocks on table]

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah, I don't even wanna say it.

Griffin: Um, yeah. We should stop being downers. 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 to Maximum Fin for having us on the network. There's a bunch of great shows on there that you should go check out pronto.

Rachel: For sure, for sure.

Griffin: For sure, for sure. And thank you— thanks to everyone who tuned in to our Austin Bat Cave live show and supported us there. And really, thank you all to you listening. I feel like we could get incredi— there's a version of this where we get incredibly sentimental about what this show and you all and recording it has meant to us during this fucking nightmare year.

Rachel: It really, it feels like a practice. Like, doing this show feels like we have undertaken a conscious effort to be grateful in our lives.

Griffin: Which is a thing you hear people talk about, but then also like, challenge yourself to do that publicly and with a weekly deadline.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Because that's different. [laughs] It becomes a sort of mechanical thing that you, like have to do.

Rachel: Can I give you a spoiler for what I was maybe going to talk about this week?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: French bread pizza. [laughs]

Griffin: Fuck yeah. Are you kidding me? Yes.

Rachel: [laughs] Like, when you do this show, you sit there and you think, "What is something that bring me joy?" and a lot of times it's difficult to get in that headspace, and you go back to being nine and you think, "You know what I really liked? Is when you—"

Griffin: Is French bread pizza, yeah.

Rachel: French bread pizza. [laughs]

Griffin: No, I have spent the day in a pretty deep funk, I would say, just because we are pretty...

Rachel: We're worn out.

Griffin: We're very tired. We're very, very worn out. And I'm not trying to join the chorus of tired pandemic parents, but fuck. But this— every time that we get in this room and we get in front of mics and we talk to each other like, that all goes away very quickly.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And I'm grateful for that. I love watching you rub your belly.

Rachel: [laughs] It's so big!

Griffin: Rachel is, if you're following the timeline of the show, 16 months pregnant and...

Rachel: [laughs] I am entering my third trimester, which, you know, there's only three, so...

Griffin: There's only three trimesters, so...

Rachel: We're getting to the end.

Griffin: We really need to start doing stuff.

Rachel: We really need to put somewhere to sleep for this guy.

Griffin: Somewhere to... yeah. Um, where is it? There's some, I feel like, Scandinavian country where they just like, send you home with a cardboard box and it turns out that that's great and the kids love the box?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] [gasps for breath] There's a Scandinavian country where they...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: They like, did this, did a study and they were like, "We just send you home with a box and a blanket and the kids... the kids love it." [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] I know that you can't go to my doctor's appointment...

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: But I wish you could. [laughs] Just for that question. Like, "Excuse me doctor, we're preparing for our second child and I've heard that there's a country where there's... a box?"

Griffin: And your doctor will be like, "Ah yes, I don't remember exactly, I do remember a Scandinavian... somewhere in that Scandinavian region." Oh, holy shit. Yeah.

Rachel: We'll have to look on IKEA and see if they sell the box. [laughs]

Griffin: They definitely, I bet they do. Somebody in the Facebook group, please prove that I'm not, like, completely off my nut.

Rachel: [laughs] Are you thinking of kittens?

Griffin: Oh— yeah. I did it. Because it was my little fur babies. Anyway, happy new year everybody. We'll see you in 2021 and um... yeah. We'll try harder this year. Nah, we tried pretty fucking hard this year. I think making it through it is cause for celebration enough. So, let's—

Rachel: Cheers.

Griffin: Let's just cheers to... New Year's.

[theme music plays]

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