

Wonderful! 166: Pockets of Flesh

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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hello, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: Big changes afoot. It's a day of metamorphosis, wouldn't you say?

Rachel: Uh-huh. Yeah. No, are you talking about the new top I'm wearing?

Griffin: I'm talking about the... well, we have new friends in the studio! And I always like to give new friends in the studio a shout-out. Everybody, give it up for... rug! Ahh, yeahhh! Ruuug! That's right. We have rug in the studio today. How's it going, rug?

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: [laughing] Oh, rug, you're crazy. It's a circular rug with a sick geometric pattern, and I think it really ties the whole room together. Let's also give it up for... six new floating shelves! Yeahhh, six new floating sheelves!

Rachel: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Haven't really taken a lot of time to put things on those floating shelves. They're more aspirational.

Rachel: Griffin has had to do a fair amount of video work recently.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: And it has brought to light that his office needed a little oomph.

Griffin: Yeah, I think during a, uh, like, D&D streaming thing... or like, some sort of RPG streaming thing that we did during the—god, maybe even the last MaxFunDrive, Austin Walker from Friends at the Table said that my office looked like a hotel business center.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And it really cut me deep. Um, yeah. Really—it's looking huge in here, and that's the thing that everybody was thinking about when I was talking about the metamorphosis today, was that. There's nothing else happening in the country that's bigger than rug.

Rachel: [laughs] I know, everybody's tuned in to CNN right now for the live stream of rug.

Griffin: Live. It's live rug stream. Don't miss it. Who's gonna step out onto the rug? Probably just me and Rachel.

Rachel: Probably just Griffin. [laughs]

Griffin: Um, hey, do you have any small wonders?

Rachel: Mm, can you go first?

Griffin: I mean, it's inauguration day. We are recording this in the morning time. I think things are already maybe happening a little bit. Um, and that's very exciting. Y'know, turning over a new page. Stoked about that. But I—that's—I don't know. I don't know. Can you go first? [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] Uhh... y'know, I'm gonna say, a fashionable glove.

Griffin: Mm.

Rachel: Part of what I have enjoyed at the inauguration is the winter wear.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Most specifically, the type of glove that the folks are putting on their hands. 'Cause a lot of people don't think about that.

Griffin: Oh, sure. No.

Rachel: And there was—there's a great clip of Bernie Sanders coming in, wearing these mittens.

Griffin: Oh, I gotta see that!

Rachel: They're just darling.

Griffin: So he's not feeling the Bern. Or, I guess he is feeling... he's not feeling the chill. The icy chill. That's really nothing.

Um, I'm gonna say... god, I don't know, man. I've been playing—I know I talk about chess a lot on this show, and I've been playing a lot. But there's a thing that I really like doing called pinning, where you aim a piece at the king, but there's a piece in between them that your opponent has, and then—so they can't move it. And so it's like, oh, I bet you'd like to use that rook, but you can't move it.

Rachel: Ohh.

Griffin: I own—that rook is mine now, and I'm gonna stomp on it however I want. So satisfying every time.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um... sorry that it wasn't more interesting than that. Do you wanna tell me about your first thing, though?

Rachel: Yes. Uh, my first thing is blinking. [laughs]

Griffin: You're really...

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: We were talking yesterday about how you were struggling to come up with a concept—like, topics for this week. And you were like, “Y'know, it could get to the point where I would just talk about something really, really sort of basic, like blinking.” I feel like you said—even said—

Rachel: I don't think I said blinking.

Griffin: Okay. Well, here we are. Moisten... let's moisten those eyes together.

Rachel: There is nothing... basic about blinking.

Griffin: You're telling me, every time you blink, you go like, “Ahh! That's the stuff!”

Rachel: It's so critical! And it makes a huge difference. I read a lot about blinking.

Griffin: Alright.

Rachel: And a lot of the kind of the eye strain issues and the problems that we all have with technology are due to not blinking enough.

Griffin: Yeah, I'm always saying that. Not drinking enough water. Not getting enough sleep. Sleep is like one big blink, if you think about it.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: It's like a blink but with dreams in it. Hm?

Rachel: Uh-huh. Not your most poetic assertion, but I'll go with it.

Griffin: I think it's actually maybe my most poetic assertion.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, the average person blinks 15 to 20 times per minute, or about 1,200 times per hour.

Griffin: I bet I could do more.

Rachel: Yeah, probably. [laughs]

Griffin: Is that a fucking challenge?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh. Ow! Why does it hurt if you do it this fast? Ow!

Rachel: I—uh, later in this segment, I will introduce a blinking exercise.

Griffin: Oh, fun! Okay.

Rachel: Um, so you can take on that challenge.

Griffin: Okay. Are you any good at staring contests? Where you don't blink? I'm dog shit at them. I cannot do it. I have the most sensitive...

Rachel: It's been such a long time.

Griffin: ... tender, baby eyes that need to be just so intricately maintained.

Rachel: I mean, they're national treasures.

Griffin: They are, yeah.

Rachel: Not a lot of people realize how beautiful Griffin's eyes are.

Griffin: No. They're two deep pools.

Rachel: [laughs] I think it's 'cause you hide them behind glasses, which you'd think would emphasize them.

Griffin: Nope.

Rachel: But in fact, people can't really—they're just—they're so magical.

Griffin: Yep. Rachel's the only one that gets to see me without glasses.

Rachel: And the glass really obstructs them.

Griffin: That's true.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: But enough about me.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, some animals such as turtles and hamsters blink their eyes independently of each other.

Griffin: That's a cool look. I bet every—so every hamster is like, "Are you trying to get with me? Oh, no. You're... you're um... you're just moistening your eyes one at a time. My mistake. I got very excited."

Rachel: Uh, there are a lot of muscles up in there. I don't think I realized how many muscles. I'm not gonna say the names of the muscles, because I don't think anybody really *needs* to know them. But...

Griffin: There's your occi--occipital... flange. You have an occipital flange on each one. Right? That's one of them. The occipi—the occ—

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: The oxynobiol flange?

Rachel: Uh, okay. So there is a muscle that opens the eye, there's a muscle that is in the upper eyelid, and there is a muscle that functions as a squinting and winking muscle.

Griffin: Why not just have one muscle do all that stuff?

Rachel: There's a muscle that pulls the lower lid down when you're looking down. When you're widening your eyes, there's a muscle in there.

Griffin: Oh, I don't like this.

Rachel: I know. A lot of muscles in there. Uh, blinking is also a way to kind of determine whether or not there are particular, uh, illnesses or disorders of the nervous system. Because the blinking can be a criteria for medical conditions.

Griffin: Sure. Yeah. That makes sense to me.

Rachel: Uh, infants do not blink at the same rate of adults. So y'know how I mentioned 15 to 20 times per minute for an adult?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Uh, infants only blink an average of one to two times in a minute.

Griffin: Can babies do anything right?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: We're about to have another one, and like, I feel like I know a lot about the shortcomings of babies now. So I'm just gonna be looking at this kid's eyes, like, "Blink. What are you doing?"

Rachel: The article—now, I didn't read a lot of studies on this, obviously. But the article I read, they're kind of uncertain as to why that's the case.

Griffin: Huh.

Rachel: There's a suggestion that there is just kind of less surface area, and so, there's less lubrication needed.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Also, infants get more sleep, and so, there's less fatigue.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Maybe that's why.

Griffin: Yeah. Lazy, too. Aren't they?

Rachel: [laughs] So, when eyes dry out or become fatigued, that's often because, uh, you are not blinking as much. So if you are reading or focusing on an object for an extended period, your rate of blinking decreases to about three to four times per minute.

Griffin: Interesting.

Rachel: Yeah. So, that's why like... I feel like now, especially, if I try and read at the end of the day, it's much harder than it used to be, 'cause I'm like, looking at a screen all day, and then I go to try and read, and my eyes dry out real fast.

Griffin: Yeah. Well, for me, I noticed this last night. I was reading a book on my Kindle after you'd gone to bed, right? And so, it's like, illuminated backlight. And depending on like, the angle that I'm laying down while I'm reading, sometimes my left eye, which has that blind spot, will just drift. Like, wildly drift, like, to the side, and I have to like, blink to like, re-center. Yeah.

Rachel: Get it back in. Yeah. Yeah, that is the big suggestion, is that if you make a conscious effort to blink every 10 to 15 seconds, it'll keep your vision sharper while you're working.

Griffin: Who makes a conscious effort to blink every 10 to 15 sec—how long could you maintain that?! It would be the only thing you did all day!

Rachel: You need to put a little alarm on your phone.

Griffin: That goes off every 10 to 15 seconds?!

Rachel: [laughing] Uh-huh.

Griffin: Yeah, that's gonna make you very popular in the Zoom meetings.

Rachel: Uh, okay. So here is a blinking exercise.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: Uh, set aside five one-minute sessions, spread throughout the day, every day for two weeks to blink. During each minute, look each of the five forward directions – up, down, left, right, center – and blink ten times in each direction. You should make sure your eyes are closing fully, but do not squeeze your lids tight.

Griffin: How do I look right now? Cool?

Rachel: Really cool. [laughs]

Griffin: Do I look really cool right now? This is hard, babe.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: How do you blink looking up? Ow! Ow! Fuck! Ow! God! Why does this hurt my eyes to do that?!

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: Hey folks at home? I feel like we should put a disclaimer in – don't do this, 'cause you may hurt your eyeballs.

Rachel: I was wondering a lot, because I can only wink one eye.

Griffin: That's true.

Rachel: And it made me wonder about the muscles on the right side of my face that I can't like...

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Y'know, I can't wink.

Griffin: Watching you try to wink with that side of your face is among my favorite things in the world.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: Sometimes you just like, don't close either eye. So you do what you just did, which is kind of like, move your head diagonally a little bit.

Rachel: [laughing] Like, you know.

Griffin: And sometimes I have to—like, that's the sign that I have to know in order to know that it's on. Y'know?

Rachel: I can wink my left eye.

Griffin: Yeah. That's true.

Rachel: At least, I think I can. Now I'm embarrassed to try.

Griffin: Let's see it. You def—you—can I say something? You make a meal of it.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Every single part of your face—even your right eye is like, contributing somehow.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: Um, can I tell you about my first thing?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: My first thing is... trading card games. Or collectable card games.

Rachel: Whoa!

Griffin: Which is like this—it's something that I have had so much exposure to, and it's something that I would be willing to bet you have had virtually zero exposure to. You never got—you never have played a Magic the Gathering or anything along those lines, I'm assuming.

Rachel: No, no. Y'know what? I feel like a real cool kid on this podcast sometimes. [laughs]

Griffin: Hey, there's nothing not cool about not playing... Magic the Gathering. That sentence got away from me a little bit. But um... and it's been a minute since I've been in the scene.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I think, um, especially now, in these pandemic times, like, virtual online trading card games, whether they are sort of a virtual extension of a Magic the Gathering, or Hearthstone is the big one. That's the one I used to play a whole, whole lot.

Rachel: Now, I noticed you're not saying Pokémon, and I'm wondering why.

Griffin: Pokémon is coming. Pokémon is coming later. We will talk about Pokémon.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: But like, I played a lot of trading card games growing up, to varying degrees of like, seriousness. Pokémon's probably the most serious I got, in that I competed in Pokémon tournaments with my beautiful deck. It was a psychic fighting type deck, which is...

Rachel: And you sold off some of those cards to like, get to college, right?

Griffin: Oh, god. Not to get through college. No, I sold a binder of all of my cards. And these were like, first generation original run Pokémon cards that are now worth... a disgusting amount of money. I had a Charizard. I had a hologram Charizard from a first series that would be worth... so much money. Uh, but I sold all of them to build a PC when I was in college.

Rachel: That is an important thing. Don't discount that.

Griffin: No, I mean—[sighs] Yeah, I got like 400 bucks out of it. So like, y'know, that was a decent return on investment.

Rachel: Adjusted for inflation, that's a million dollars now.

Griffin: Adjusted for the value of those cards now, it would be worth much, much, much, much, much, much, much, much, much more than that.

Um, so, traditional collectable card games involve you putting a deck together that you then sort of battle other people's decks with. You can get premade sort of starter decks, which is usually how people get their start, which you kind of supplement with booster packs.

Uh, which, y'know, you see videos of people opening a pack that has, y'know, seven or eight cards in it, and they get excited. Maybe they get a good one. Maybe they get one that has a hologram on it, and that's especially exciting. Very, very shiny cards.

I think I collected Pokémon cards long before I ever learned how to actually play the game, because I just liked opening up the deck and seeing pictures of Pokémon, and sometimes they were shiny. And it would be like, five dollars every time that I wanted to get that thrill. Any time I wanted to, uh... it was essentially—I mean, you're essentially talking about, y'know, a fresh pack of smokes, at that point. You just need a little bit of a rush.

Uh, Magic the Gathering is sort of the quintessential trading card game. It was the first one, and it is still very, very much going strong. It was created by a guy named Richard Garfield, who has gone on to make like, a few other things, none of which have sort of been the smash hit success that Magic the Gathering has.

It came out in 1993, and was just instantly huge. Like, instantly incredibly, incredibly successful. You could not find Magic cards in the store in 1993. And like, the game has gone on to evolve and incorporate all of these other things, and uh, shed other things.

An element in Magic, and in a lot of trading card games, like, back in the day, was essentially gambling, where you would have to draw a random card from your deck, and that would be the ante for that game. So that if you lost that game, you would get the opponent's ante. So there was an actual sort of like...

Rachel: Yeah. See, that's what I was wondering about with trading card games. Is it like other games where you end up stealing other people's cards, and they're yours now?

Griffin: Um, I mean, that was sort of a—that was very quickly sort of phased out. That was an element in Pokémon, too, and I definitely got some cool cards that way, and I definitely lost some cool cards that way. And uh, because there are sort of—as Magic went worldwide, and different countries

have different extremely strict gambling laws, that sort of element has gone by the wayside.

But Magic introduced like, these concepts, like you have mana cards that you have to spend to cast these spell cards, or summon creature cards, and then you battle your opponent's creatures, or try to punch through them to actually damage the opponent. And if you lower their health all the way, you win.

That is like... pretty standardized now. Like, that's how Hearthstone works. That's how like, all of these other games work. So this game that came out in 1993 really did set the—set the stage for every other trading card game that came after it. And man, did I play a lot of them. I played Magic for a bit. I played Pokémon for a long time, won second place in the Mid-Ohio Con tournament.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Won a couple of Toys-R-Us tournaments, which was very exciting.

Rachel: Can I ask? This is a real practical question, but how do you carry around those cards?

Griffin: Uh, I mean, there's a whole, uh... industry.

Rachel: I mean, like, 'cause you're getting ready to play.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: So it's not like you want them in a binder. You want them like, ready in hand.

Griffin: No. So, I had a little plastic box, basically. Like, a little plastic box that was the size of a deck that you, y'know, take care of.

Rachel: Yeah, okay.

Griffin: I was never into... a lot of people put their cards into sleeves. I never did that. Like, each card individually—

Rachel: Oh, to protect each one? Wow.

Griffin: Every single one, yeah. Yeah, that was never—that was never my scene. Even when I was like, deep in Pokémon. But I mean, there was a... I played an X-Men trading card game. I played Harry Potter trading card game for a while. I think there was a Power Rangers trading card game that I played for a little bit.

Rachel: Really? Huh.

Griffin: And a lot of them are very, like, derivative of one another. Pokémon was cool, because you weren't trying to damage, like, your opponent. You were just trying to knock out a certain number of enemy Pokémon, and you could like, switch them out at will. Uh, Pokémon still has a very vibrant and active trading card game scene as well.

I think Dragons Lair, back before pandemic times, had like, Pokémon tournaments like, all the time.

Rachel: You think you could still do it?

Griffin: No. No way. No way.

Rachel: I mean, obviously, you don't have the cards. But like, do you have the skill?

Griffin: No, I don't think so. There is a certain amount of investment that you have to do. I mean, financial investment, certainly. Um, but... I played a lot of Hearthstone when that first came out, and I played it for many years, actually, and... there is a huge financial investment that goes into that, because you are spending real money on virtual cards to build your deck.

Rachel: Yeah, I remember seeing you play that.

Griffin: Um, and so, in order to be good, you not only had to have like, a solid deck, you had to essentially know what every card in the game was, so you could anticipate what your opponent might have in their deck.

Rachel: Ohhh.

Griffin: It's a huge amount of sort of time investment and money investment that like, I do not think I am capable of anymore. But I just have always really, really liked it. Twofold, right? I like the idea of you having your deck. My psychic fighting type deck, which was called Brains 'n' Brawn, uh... I like, carried that through a couple years, like, constantly iterating on it, where I'd like, play somebody, and I'd notice some shortcoming in the deck that I would then try to switch out cards here and there.

And so, the thing I had was very... this was like, before internet, where you would like, go on and find out what the best deck is, and then just try to replicate that. This was like, this is my—this is my sword. There are many like it, but this one is mine. Like, that was so cool to me, as a kid.

But also, like, I was obsessed with opening booster packs, and seeing what you got.

Rachel: Yeah. I mean, there's still a whole YouTube industry around...

Griffin: Sure. There was a kiosk at the mall where they would sell you a booster pack, and you would open it, and if you got like, a hologram Charizard or Blastoise was kind of valuable too, they would buy it right back from you on the spot if you wanted to. Like a Charizard, you could get like a hundred bucks, like, right back. Which then, you could just reinvest into more booster cards.

Um, yeah. There's another thing these days called deck building games, where you get like, a big pack—I think Netrunner is a big one that I've been kind of curious about for a while, but you get just a big box with all the cards in it. And then you sort of draft cards to make a deck when you play it, but you don't have to go out and buy a bunch of, y'know, maybe I'll get this very rare card or not.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah. I like card games in general. Um, and I've been kind of itching... there have been like, a lot more digital card games coming out lately, and I've been kind of itching to get back into one of those, but I do not think I will ever, ever be able to break that—mostly because I don't know who the fuck I would play those against. Unless you also wanted to get deep into Magic the Gathering with me these days.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, no. It would be Pokémon if I got back into one. It probably would be that. But that even seems like a further... which one would you rather play?

Rachel: I don't know enough about either to really make that call.

Griffin: That's the correct answer. Can I steal you away?

Rachel: [laughs] Yes.

[ad break stinger plays]

[ad break]

Griffin: Oh, we have bumblebims! Did you know? We have them, and I'd love to read one. Because this first one was uh—it's for Tanny and Sean, and it's from Emery Zeitz, who says, "You introduced me to the McElroys, and I introduced you to Monster Factory. From there, our friendship has only grown more meaningful. Sean, you are one of the funniest and most thoughtful people. You both are such amazing friends. I'm so thankful and proud to know you two. Here's to more MOTW games and Franksgivings. I love you, both." That is, of course, an acronym for Monster of the Week, I believe.

Rachel: Ohh!

Griffin: The game that we played for TAZ: Amnesty. I'm just assuming. I can't imagine what else it could stand for. Um, but yeah. I kind of miss that. I kind of miss that system. I kind of wish I was still playing Monster of the Week. Not in a recorded format, but just for funsos.

Rachel: Well, I mean, there's still time.

Griffin: There is still time. I'm a young man.

Rachel: Can I read the next message?

Griffin: Please!

Rachel: This is for Patrick. It is from Melissa. "Hey, Patrick! I'm so proud to call you a best friend. Even though we're far apart, we always have fun and deep conversations about anything and everything. I cherish our terrible puns. Someday, we will meet in person and have an excellent best friend hug. I hope you get to chillax every day and throw on a cool record. I love you, bro!"

Griffin: Um, my glasses are filthy right now, and I was kind of like, going cross-eyed trying to read the small text on my phone here. And so, I did think—I did think it said "I cherish our terrible puma."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And I was like, there's a story there. I wanna know.

Rachel: I like there's just enough personal detail here that, potentially, there is a Patrick and Melissa listening that's like, "Is this... is this for me?"

Griffin: "Is this us? I do have a terrible puma."

Rachel: "I do like chillaxing... "

Griffin: "I do say stuff like that a lot... "

[Maximum Fun advertisement plays]

Griffin: What is your second thing?

Rachel: My second thing... pockets.

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: Alright. Alright. Alright. Alright.

Griffin: [laughing] But what is blinking except putting your eyeball in a pocket of flesh?

Rachel: [laughing] Sometimes, I think of like, an everyday thing...

Griffin: Yes?

Rachel: And I'll look into it to see if there's anything there. And a lot of times, there's not.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Pockets, much like blinking... a lot of stuff there.

Griffin: Yeah. Yeah. No, for sure, for sure. Definitely. I mean, yeah.

Rachel: Here's—here's the difference between the two of us.

Griffin: Uh-huh.

Rachel: I didn't play a lot of games. Y'know?

Griffin: Right, right.

Rachel: My time prior to meeting you...

Griffin: Lot of pockets.

Rachel: Lot of pockets. [laughs]

Griffin: [laughing] You have no excuse, honey. There's nothing—there is no excuse, I feel like. I'm curious to hear about the history of pockets, right? I'm just saying... you—I have never heard you talk about pock—I guess maybe in the context of like...

Rachel: Why do you think I like overalls so much?

Griffin: That's true. It's just pockets all the way down.

Rachel: Why do you think, when I wear a dress, I'm always excited that there's pockets in it?

Griffin: I feel like you are describing every person who wears dresses.

Rachel: I know. But here's the thing, alright? So, pockets weren't really a thing for women for a very long time.

Griffin: Sure, yeah.

Rachel: So, that was what was really interesting about this research, is that yeah, every person I know that wears dresses is like, "There are pockets in it!" And universally, this is like, acclaimed. [laughs]

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And I was always just like, why is this so exciting? And I realized it's 'cause like, based on the silhouette, based on the history, like, whatever's popular at the time, like, it is not common to find a functional pocket in an item of clothing for a woman.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And so, this used to be a thing for everybody. In the medieval era, both men and women tied little bags to their waist, which is why when you go to those renaissance faires, everybody's got the little bags tied to their waist, y'know?

Griffin: I always just assumed there's some sort of unguent in there. Some sort of magical dust.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, I mean, probably just like... weapons. I'm guessing. Right?

Griffin: A little bag tied to your waist that is filled with weapons?

Rachel: Just little tiny weapons?

Griffin: Like a small sword?

Rachel: Little throwing stars?

Griffin: Like a cocktail sword? Why do you need—why would they need—wait, hold on.

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: You think people at the ren faire are walking around with pouches filled with shuriken?

Rachel: No, no. I'm saying the olden days.

Griffin: You're saying, in olden days...

Rachel: Yeah! People needed little...

Griffin: Little shuriken to throw around?

Rachel: Little hidden weapons.

Griffin: Specifically, throwing stars, though?

Rachel: Well, I don't—I don't have a wealth of knowledge on weaponry, so that is what I—

Griffin: About medieval throwing weapons.

Rachel: [laughs] That's what I could think of.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Just a little tiny mace. [laughing]

Griffin: Alright.

Rachel: Isn't that cute to think about, though?

Griffin: Like a little mace, and a bad guy coming for a knight, and the knight's like, "Bink!" But then he's been killed by the bad guy's regular sized weapon?

Rachel: Uh, part of the reason that we moved to pockets is that like... for thieves, y'know, you really wanted to like, hide your valuables. You didn't want like, here's this bag that you can rip off my waist. So pockets became more of a thing, too.

Griffin: I mean, is the logic there like, I want to put my valuables closer to my butt and privates? Because I'll feel it more that—like, I will definitely know that you have touched my butt?

Rachel: Well, and you just don't know what somebody has, y'know? Like, with a big bag, you can be like, "Well, I bet there's a lot of good stuff in there. I bet there's a lot of tiny weapons." [laughs]

Griffin: Right. Well, that was the whole term, 'cut purse' was essentially like that, right? Because you could cut that bag right open, and they would never be the wiser about it. You can't cut somebody's butt open. I mean, I guess you can.

Rachel: [laughing] I don't really want to get into that.

Griffin: Yeah, I don't want to either.

Rachel: Uh, in the late 17th century is when you start seeing pockets in, uh, clothing, permanently sewn into coats and waistcoats and trousers. Women at this time is, y'know, like, big, wide skirts. And so, you were getting... sometimes like, pockets just like, in various parts of the skirt, but not in like, a functional like, I can slide my hand in kind of way.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: But in like a storage, hidden within layers kind of way.

Griffin: Okay. I guess I don't really understand what the function of that would be, if you have to like, lift your dress up and like, dig around in there for a bit to pull out your chapstick.

Rachel: Yeah, I mean, I think the idea is that it was not like, a public pocket. Y'know, it was like a...

Griffin: Oh, it was a secret pocket.

Rachel: It was like a, "I've gotta go to the powder room and dig in my skirt for 20 minutes to find what I need."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: There was also something called the reticule, which was a highly decorated purse.

Griffin: Whoa.

Rachel: Also, something called chatelaines, which was like, waist chains.

Griffin: Whoa! Wallet chains?!

Rachel: These are like the... [laughs] These are like the beginning of purses in like, the 1820s.

Griffin: But wait! They actually have wallet chains is what you're talking about, or...

Rachel: Well, it was a waist chain.

Griffin: That attached to your valuables?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That's a fucking wallet chain! You can't tell me that's not a fuckin' medieval wallet chain! I mean, not medieval.

Rachel: I mean, what is a purse? I mean, basically it was a purse. But it went around your waist.

Griffin: So it was a fanny pack?!

Rachel: Like a fanny pack, yeah.

Griffin: It's a fanny—it's a wallet chain fanny pack?!

Rachel: Yeah. [laughing]

Griffin: Why do we not still have those?! Why do we not still—I would wear that every time I left the house. Are you kidding me?

Rachel: Not especially adjustable though, if you think about it.

Griffin: I don't want it to be adjustable. 'Cause I don't want thieves to adjust it off my body.

Rachel: Mm, 'kay. I mean, I'm sure there's a market out there for it, if you want to go on Shark Tank.

Griffin: Fuck yeah. I would love to go on Shark Tank.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I would love to meet Mark Cuban. Give him a piece of my mind.

Rachel: [laughing] That would be great for you to go on Shark Tank and just have Justin and Sydnee like, stumble upon you, and we'd never tell them that it happened. They're just watching, and suddenly, you're on there with your...

Griffin: That would be great.

Rachel: Your chained fanny pack.

Griffin: I think they only like that weird Canadian Shark Tank, though. I don't think they watch—

Rachel: Oh, Dragons' Den?

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Uh, so, what really made the difference for pockets, uh, for women, was uh... 1890s, there was an organization called The Rational Dress Society.

Griffin: Fuck yes!

Rachel: That called for women to dress for health, ditching corsets, and wearing loose trousers, and adopting clothing that allowed for movement like bicycling.

Griffin: Awesome! That's such a—what's the name of the organization again?

Rachel: Rational Dress Society.

Griffin: That's awesome!

Rachel: Uh, and then, this is right... y'know, this is right around when women are like, going into the work force. And so, all of a sudden, they're like, able to wear pants and do all these things, because they're desperately needed to have these like, very important jobs.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And in 1910, a "suffragette suit" with no less than six pockets became all the rage.

Griffin: Awesome!

Rachel: So this was like, a really—a big time—there's a whole book about this called *The Pocket: A Hidden History of Women's Lives, 1616–1900*, just talking about this evolution of pockets for women.

Griffin: That is very fascinating.

Rachel: Um, but y'know, as fashion changes, y'know, there are setbacks. I mean, I was reading an article... so, a lot of what I pulled is from a Vox article in 2016. But uh, there's just a lot of articles talking about how like, essentially, the front pockets for women are never functional. Like, they're always just like, decorative. And a lot of that is for like, as I mentioned earlier, this silhouette. Y'know, there's a lot of movements where like, oh, we have pockets now. Nope, now we don't! Now it's not fashionable anymore.

Um, just to kind of, y'know, slim the front and the hips. A lot of times, they're removed. In 1954, Christian Dior famously said, "Men have pockets to keep things in. Women, for decoration." [laughs]

Griffin: [scoffs] Alright.

Rachel: Um, but yeah. In 1933, y'know, Womenswear Daily is still saying, "Should women wear trousers?" This has been a conversation for a very long time, and continues to be. And y'know, speaking of silhouette, it made me think of the cargo short.

Griffin: Oh, sure.

Rachel: How it is like, y'know, reviled now because I think, a lot of times, it was a more baggy appearance. Uh... [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. No, we're definitely—we're cresting the wave right now, where we're gonna soon just hate pockets again.

Rachel: I know.

Griffin: Yeah. For everyone.

Rachel: I know, but I love the pocket.

Griffin: I guess it's sort of—I'm more of a minimalist than you. Like, I don't need my wallet. Most of the time. Y'know?

Rachel: Uh-huh. But you—oh, you have a smaller phone now. You don't have that giant phone anymore.

Griffin: I have a tiny little phone. I could hold this thing in my mouth and just walk around. My mouth is a pocket for my teeth, if you think about it, and tongue.

Rachel: What is happening to you today?

Griffin: What is happening to *you* today, I would argue, Madame?

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: Can I do my second thing?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: [laughs] My second thing is... I promise it's unironic. I don't know that I will be able to sell that. I don't bring ironic things to this show. I feel like that would be contrary to the spirit of the Wonderful! brand, for us to bring things that we don't actually enjoy. So when I say that I love the song, What a Fool Believes, by the Doobie Brothers... I need people to understand that that is... that maybe that started out as an ironic enjoyment.

I mean, here is my history with The Doobie Brothers, and really, all sort of music from the yacht rock era, which is that my dad fuckin' loved it.

Rachel: This is what I'm wondering. I'm wondering how many more years I get with you before you become Clint McElroy.

Griffin: I'm there, babe. I'm so sorry.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, at least for me, uh, the kind of media I consume... it's—I've been there. But my dad would like, play this music, and I'd be like, "This suuucks!" when I was younger. And then, Yacht Rock, the...

Rachel: The web series?

Griffin: The web series came out, and then, it was kind of like, fun to make fun of it. And then, I did enjoy it, like, ironically. Like I would put it on the juke box whenever we went to bars or whatever. And I think there's just

been a very pleasant backslide into unironically enjoying the works of The Doobie Brothers. Specifically, What a Fool Believes.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: And I think this song absolutely slaps, and if you laughed when I brought it up, or dismissed it out of hand, I want you to just sort of cruise on the vibes right now as I play a little bit of the song, What a Fool Believes, by The Doobie Brothers.

[‘What a Fool Believes’ by The Doobie Brothers plays]

Griffin: Did you listen to it when I told you I was gonna bring it? You know the song, right?

Rachel: I do know the song. I didn’t seek it out, no, because I feel like I’m familiar with it.

Griffin: Okay. I mean, the thing for me about this song... there’s a lot, and I’m gonna come back to this. But that synth sound that they have in it is the most pleasant—that like, almost like, calliope fuckin’ circus whistle ass synth sound that’s like... [imitates synth] That was a really good impression of it.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It’s throughout the whole song. It’s like, my favorite little instrument in all of recorded music. It’s throughout the whole song, and it’s so pleasant, and they use every, like, inch of it. It’s constantly like, in the background, just sort of like, accentuating the melody. And then, at one point, it’s just like, very, very little tiny little stabs of chords as they get into the prechorus that you can just barely hear in the background. But if you know to listen for that delightful... that delightful little synth, it’s always right there.

Uh, I’m a sucker for... I think the song... when did this song come out? Like, ’79 I think? Uh, yeah. It came out on The Doobie Brothers’ ’79 album, Minute by Minute. Uh, I like, love old synths like that. It’s why I love Mort

Garson as much as I do. And to hear one that is this prevalent in a song, that went number one on the charts, is like... is so fucking delightful to me.

Um, I also just like—the structure of the song is so bizarre. I had never really read the lyrics to What a Fool Believes.

Rachel: Yeah, I had not.

Griffin: I'm just gonna read it. I'm gonna read some of like, the beginning lyrics of What a Fool Believes. Because when you hear it not in the context of the song, you're like, "Wait a minute, that's lyrics to a song?" I'm just gonna start. Okay.

"He came from somewhere back in her long ago
The sentimental fool don't see trying hard to recreate
What had yet to be created once in her life

She musters a smile for his nostalgic tale
Never coming near what he wanted to say

Only to realize
It never really was
She had a place in his life
He never made her think twice"—the only kind of rhyming couplet in the song, there—

"As he rises to her apology
Anybody else would surely know
He's watching her go
But what a fool believes he sees
No wise man has the power to reason away
What seems to be
Is always better than nothing
And nothing at all keeps sending him."

Like... what are you doing?!

Rachel: It feels, like, Shakespearian. [laughing]

Griffin: It's so wild! Like, this is—it was written by Michael McDonald and Kenny Loggins. Uh, and it just goes! It just goes and goes and goes and goes and goes like that.

Rachel: Yeah. You can't really attach to a particular image or narrative in that.

Griffin: Right! It's just like, one long train of thought.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So from like, a songwriting perspective, that's wild.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: That's like, I think you kind of have to give them a little bit more credit than you usually would when you hear, "Here's a song by The Doobie Brothers." Uh, yeah. It's just absolutely, uh... it's absolutely wild.

It won—Minute by Minute won Record of the Year in 1980 Grammys, and What a Fool Believes won Song of the Year at the 1980 Grammys.

Rachel: Wow!

Griffin: I think it's well-earned, man. I think it's, uh... I think it's just a pleasant song that I like to vibe to for sure. But I also think like, by a lot of different ways that you could judge a, y'know, a song... lyrically, melodically...

Rachel: Yeah, you haven't mentioned the harmonies.

Griffin: Compositionally... I mean, yeah, the harmonies are absolutely gorgeous. Uh, yeah. It's a good fucking song! It's my favorite Doobie Brothers song, and that's saying something.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: 'Cause they got some slappers. They got some slappers in there. China Grove? Forget about it! Takin' it to the Streets? Stop it!

Rachel: Oh, that is a good one.

Griffin: Not as good as What a Fool Believes. Uh, okay, so let's talk about what our friends at home are into.

Finn says, "I am a sewist, and something I find oh so wonderful is that, sometimes, I get to work with really soft fabric like sherpa, which means spending the whole dang day half-wrapped in the fluffiest material you ever did touch. I also find it wonderful that 'sewist' is the term for people who sew. It's just very fun to say." I didn't know that.

Rachel: I didn't know that either!

Griffin: Fun fact from Finn. Thanks, Finn.

Uh, Derek says, "Rarely does a garnish punch as far above its weight class as the maraschino cherry. It completes an ice cream sundae, becomes a boozy, sweet treat in an old fashioned, and they're even good enough to eat right from the jar." I love a maraschino cherry! Oh my god, yes.

Rachel: Huh.

Griffin: I think that's my favorite part of old fashioned. Which, I enjoy an old fashioned every now and then, is when you do get to like, the little fruit snack at the bottom.

Rachel: Huh. I don't think I knew that.

Griffin: You don't like that? You don't like it?

Rachel: Ehh, so sweet. Sooo sweet.

Griffin: Yes. That's a feature, not a bug.

Rachel: I do like them in a milkshake, 'cause like, I know what I'm getting into, right? They have a sweet on sweet, and I'm ready for it.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But when they're like, in an alcoholic beverage, I'm like, "Whoa, what? What's this doing here?"

Griffin: You don't like a little chunky—that's not true. You like a bloody mary. It's not the texture that's upsetting you, though. It's the sweetness.

Rachel: It's the sweet. Yeah.

Griffin: Huh. Interesting. Interesting. I think it's maybe, uh...

Rachel: It's like a little Gusher in there, y'know?

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, I worked at TCBY where we just had an infinite supply of maraschino cherries, so I'd just be in the back room just... [making 'chomp' sounds] Running them down. If my blood sugar was getting low, I would eat some maraschino cherries, and I'd be like, "What? It's vitamins."

Rachel: I wish I had some footage. Some security camera footage of you at that TCBY. I mean, I know that you found a spot where you could be undetected.

Griffin: Yeah, where I could just play my Nintendo DS and eat maraschino cherries by myself in the corner behind the coats? Yep. Yep yep yep.

Uh, hey, thanks to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our theme song, Money Won't Pay. You can find a link to that in the episode description. And thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go to MaximumFun.org and check out all the great shows that are on MaximumFun.org!

Rachel: Yeah, you should check out Reading Glasses.

Griffin: Oh, yeah.

Rachel: I feel like, y'know, Poetry Corner for me is just like a little segment that I do every once in a while. But if you want to hear more about books...

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Rachel: Every episode.

Griffin: Yeah, we had a—I want to recommend FANTI. We had an episode on our feed here last year, and uh, that show is fuckin' great. It's funny.

Rachel: Yeah. Getting lots of recognition for how good that show is.

Griffin: Yeah, absolutely. Uh, catch the wave. Catch the FANTI wave. Um... yeah, I think that's probably gonna do it. I mean, I can't think of other announcements.

Oh! Uh, the podcast book comes out next week. Everybody Has a Podcast (Except You). It's a book that me and my brothers wrote that uh, Rachel got... what would you call it? Like a guest verse on.

Rachel: Yeah, there is a chapter focused on research and just the experience of researching for a podcast, and me and Sydnee and Teresa all wrote a little segment in there. It's—I would recommend—okay, if you're like, "Oh, I'm not gonna do a podcast, so I don't need it." It's like, not—it's not a super technical book. It's very accessible.

Griffin: It—yeah.

Rachel: I would think, if you enjoy McElroy podcasts, and you want to know what the special sauce is... that's the book for you.

Griffin: Sure. We wrote it from a sort of hobbyist... for a hobbyist reader, not for somebody who's like, y'know, gonna start working for WNYC or whatever. And so, yeah. We worked hard on it, and I'm proud of it, and it comes out next week, and you can find out more, like how to preorder it or whatever, at McElroy.family. It would be super cool if you preordered it.

There is something of a, mmm, freezing effect that our current sort of life situation has on book sales. So, anything you can do to help us rectify that would be pretty cool. Um, but that's it. Yeah, thanks. Thank you. Hey, thank you.

Rachel: Thank you.

Griffin: Thank you. Thanks. Uh, thanks a million! Spank you.

Rachel: Nope.

Griffin: Very much.

Rachel: Nope.

Griffin: Spank you very much.

Rachel: No. No thank you.

Griffin: Spanks for the memories! Do you like this guy?

Rachel: No. Not at all.

Griffin: You don't? What do you not like about him?

Rachel: Ooh, there's a lot. There's a lot.

Griffin: Okay. Just say it. He's a big boy. He can take it.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Say what you need to say about Spanker, and then, let's move on.

Rachel: Uh, he's not remotely funny or charming or attractive to me.

Griffin: [gasps]

Rachel: You said he could take it.

Griffin: [gasps] He could. I can't. [sobs]

Rachel: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

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