

**MBMBaM 554.5: MBMBaM Presents: The New Appalachian Workshop
ft. the McElroy Brothers (but not Griffin)**

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Justin: Hi, everyone. Um, my name is Justin McElroy. I play Justin on *My Brother, My Brother and Me*.

Travis: Um, I'm Travis McElroy. I play the part of Travis on *My Brother, My Brother and Me*.

Justin: Uh, our youngest brother has uh, been blessed with another child, and as such is unavailable to record our comedy podcast, *My Brother, My Brother and Me*.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: But—

Travis: Poor planning on his part, I would say.

Justin: Poor planning. Very rude. Shortsighted.

Travis: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Justin: Good news, though. We have something kind of special for you. Um, back in... oh, what year was it, Trav?

Travis: I think it was 2018?

Justin: 2018. Travis and I filmed our [sighs] oh, gosh, what would you call it? Sort of an experimental, uh, show about woodworking...

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: ...for uh— well, the intent was for HDTV, didn't get a pickup.

Travis: Yeah, that's true. Well, yeah, our producer came to us, producer Stan, came to us and said, uh, "I love what you guys do with the podcast. Um, do you think you can bring that kind of energy to a TV show?"

And we said, "Well, we have, Stan, but it..."

Justin: Yeah. Failed.

Travis: It didn't pan out. And Stan said, "Well, maybe the problem is three is just too many."

Justin: Yeah. So he kind of convinced me and Travis to— to— to dial in.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Get rid of some of the chaff...

Travis: If you will.

Justin: ... gotta focus on the "we," and really make a show about the fine art of woodworking.

Travis: Right, right, right. Something that Justin and I are both very passionate about.

Justin: Yes. And something that Griffin maybe is less so.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: He kind of likes... electronics and stuff like that, so...

Travis: Well, Griffin lacks passion in basically anything.

Justin: In general.

Travis: I've never seen him happy.

Justin: Yeah. Uh, not once.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Maybe— hopefully this new baby will finally be—

Travis: Maybe. Maybe that will be the missing— yeah. [crosstalk]

Justin: So anyway, what we thought— what no one wanted it...

Travis: No.

Justin: ...even though we tried our best. Which doesn't seem fair?

Travis: Yeah, right?

Justin: I don't know if that's the way it's supposed to work.

Travis: And we really wanted it, too. Let me be clear: we tried our best and we wanted it.

Justin: That's true.

Travis: And still, they wouldn't give it to us.

Justin: Yeah. Which doesn't seem fair. But we didn't want it to go to waste, so what we've got for you is a really special treat. Um, it is the audio— just the audio.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Of course, we can't show you the video sort of half of this.

Travis: Yeah, both for copyright reasons, and we don't know how to do that through podcasting.

Justin: Through podcasting. Doesn't make sense.

Um, so we just wanted to share that with you. And um, we hope you enjoy it. You know, try not to be too sad about things what might have been...

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Uh, obviously, you know...

Travis: Just enjoy what is, you know what I mean?

Justin: Just enjoy what it is, what was. This— this one wasn't in the cards, but at least you get to enjoy uh, *The New Appalachian Workshop featuring The McElroy Brothers (but not Griffin)*. Uh, and without further ado, let's take it away!

[gentle instruments play]

Singer: Another day, another brother chopping some wood with one another. There's still some wood to cut. So it's time to give it all to Justin and Travis to cut up.

[instrumentals rise]

Singer: To cut up, yeah, to cut up and put back together again in *The New Appalachian Workshop featuring The McElroy Brothers (but not Griffin)*!

Travis: And so I say joiner; no, that's a planer! It's a— like, a completely different tool, right?

Justin: [laughs] I love it. Hi, everybody.

Travis: Oh, hi!

Justin: My name is Justin McElroy, and welcome to *The New Appalachian Workshop*. This is my brother, Travis McElroy.

Travis: Hi, folks! So glad you could join us.

Justin: Hey, uh, most of you probably know us from the wild world of podcasting, where we've had limited success in a variety of fields. Um, maybe you know us from our uh, best-selling graphic novels or our roleplaying games. But our real passion is the art of wood.

Travis: Oh, yes. It's something uh, that's spoken to me for quite some time, and my brother – a recent convert, but a strict devotee, I would say – and we're coming at this from a couple different standpoints, folks! You know, Justin is more like the furniture guy, more of like the practical, uh...

Justin: The sexy one?

Travis: Sure, the sexy one. I'm a bit more of the bad boy of woodworking, coming at this from a carving perspective as well as doing some scenic work in the theater.

Justin: [laughs] Now, Travis, back when you were treading the boards, you were also a licensed contractor, is that correct?

Travis: That is true. Yeah, I was a master carpenter, a technical director, and became a licensed contractor and had to learn how building codes worked, sort of.

Justin: Uh, before we get into the show proper, I did wanna show you something I've been working on. [thudding, clattering noise] [strained grunt]

Travis: Oh, yeah!

Justin: What do you think?

Travis: Oh, my God, Justin.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: That's incredible!

Justin: Yeah, thank you, Trav. I've been working on it for about six weeks now. I'm real proud of it; it is sort of the first step of a wooden toilet.

Travis: Yeah. No, I'm— I love it. Can I just say, the seat, so smooth. I was worried about that; that was concerning.

Justin: It's crucial. It's also shaped exactly to my specific butt type. When I sit on this, I can't actually feel it.

Travis: Oh, really!

Justin: [laughs] Because of that.

Travis: You've reached butt negative, is what we call that.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah, butt neutral.

Justin: Hugely disconcerting. Now, can you guess the wood— take a look at the grain.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Justin: I haven't stained it, so you're getting just the natural thing. Can you guess the wood I've used for this project?

Travis: Hm, let me smell it. [sniffs] Hm. Is that cherry?

Justin: You got it, it's cherry.

Travis: Ah!

Justin: It's a cherry toilet seat.

Travis: Great choice— that's a great— can I just say? A great choice. Now, are you gonna do the whole thing in cherry? The bowl, the reservoir, the pipes, the flanges, everything?

Justin: Yeah, I have to figure out a point at which the woodcraft stops.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Because you could seal things up all day long, but you are gonna get some expansion and contraction once water enters the picture.

Travis: Now, have you thought about using sawdust instead of water?

Justin: Now, that's interesting. Kind of a dry toilet.

Travis: A dry toilet, if you will.

Justin: That maybe isn't— that reminds me of an old woodworking joke.

Travis: Oh?

Justin: Have you heard this one?

Travis: Probably.

Justin: I know you're kind of the master of woodworking jokes...

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: ...so I know that you've uh...

Travis: You heard that when I said about planer, earlier, right?

Justin: Remi—no, remind me.

Travis: Where someone said, "Is that a planer?" And I said, or they said "Is that a joiner?"

And I said, "Joiner? No, that's a planer."

Justin: Oh, oh, oh. Yes, yes, yes.

Travis: Right, okay.

Justin: My joke I wanna tell you is, did you hear about the guy who mixed up sandpaper and toilet paper?

Travis: No.

Justin: His woodworking looked like [censored, whirring noise].

Travis: Oh, I love it! A little blue— a little blue for my taste.

Justin: A little blue. Uh, we are, uh, we made our living, and sort of got our notoriety in the past with an advice show. And so our producer, Stan Tebowski, thought it would be great if we um... do people normally mention producers from the—

Travis: Well, it's a fun thing— they did it on, like, *Regis and Kathie Lee*.

Justin: Yes, yes. Jarvis.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: I remember Jarvis on there.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: So this is a, uh, an advice segment, but it's focused on wood.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Wood— you know, our listeners from our old podcast that we used to do, *My Brother, My Brother and Me* sent in their woodworking questions that we wanna answer here on *The New Appalachian Workshop featuring The McElroy Brothers (but not Griffin)*.

Travis: And let's be clear, folks. In some of our previous incarnations, uh, we've been some, like, jokesters? Right, but there's nothing – joking about wood does not interest us at all. Like, carving, be it carpentry, be it, you know, working with heavy machinery can be very dangerous, folks, so this is gonna be straight down the middle...

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: ...of pretty serious stuff. So let's get to that first question.

Justin: Obvious disclaimer too, uh, safety does come first. You shouldn't trust anything we say.

Travis: No, absolutely not.

Justin: "Dear brothers, I have recently started a laser-engraving wood business."

Travis: Nice.

Justin: "I mostly just engrave on cheap plywood..."

Travis: Ooh.

Justin: "...and to make anything 3D, I use several different types of glue, all of which have awful repercussions. The wood glue that's the safest takes the longest to dry."

Travis: Ugh.

Justin: "It's messy."

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: "Been told that wiping it on my pants makes it look like um..."

Travis: Is this about to get blue?

Justin: "For TVs..." [sighs] We'll edit it. I'll edit it out.

Travis: Made jizzes. Just made jizzies.

Justin: Jizzies. [laughs] It looks like jizzies.

Travis: "I made jizzies." Okay.

Justin: "And the quick-drying glue, I swear, is just repackaged, twice-as-expensive super glue..."

Travis: Mm-hm.

Justin: "...and also can be difficult to use. In your expertise, what's the best solution to gluing wood? How can I stop it from being a mess on my jeans?" That's Sincerely Suspicious Stains in San Antonio.

Travis: Get yourself—

Justin: Trav, what's your glue?

Travis: Uh, well, my g— I like uh, Gorilla Wood Glue, frankly. Gorilla made here in Cincinnati, queen city. I enjoy it. But let me just say right off the bat, friend: get yourself an apron! Don't wipe your jizzies on your jeans.

Justin: Oh, yeah, a woodworking apron. That's great.

Travis: Get yourself an apron! Get yourself an apron. Or get jeans that are the same color as the jizzies. And then you can't see them.

Justin: I use— I use gym shorts, and old t-shirts that make me look like uh, I'm about to go to a soul cycle class.

Travis: Oh!

Justin: But what I'm really doing is doing wood.

Travis: That's a trick of the wood. Not a people will tell you that, but like, the wood will see you, and it will relax. Because it's like, "Oh, he's not going to be drilling into us today; he's going to soul cycle class. Oh, wait, what's that? He's drilling screws into us." But they're so relaxed, it doesn't split. Right? That's something that they don't tell you at woodworking school. You just gotta find that out out here on the streets.

Um, but yeah, I think it sounds like if you're wiping enough on your pants to look like jizzies, you might just be using too much glue that's getting all over your hands. That might be the issue there.

Justin: I have a big pile of rags that I'm using to wipe away excess.

Travis: Yeah?

Justin: But you know what, if you do have excess, sometimes the smartest thing to do is just let it dry a little bit, let it tack up, and then scrape it off there with a scraper.

Travis: I love that. I love that.

Justin: Now, I'm a Titebond II man.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Justin: I like Titebond II, uh, more than— I actually use Titebond II more than three. Now, the differences can be— to the amateur, can be a little bit tough to discern.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Titebond III is water-proof, while Titebond II is water-resistant, so that's [crosstalk] Titebond III.

Travis: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Justin: But also Titebond III – and this is a personal thing for just the way I like to work; Titebond III has a longer open time, about 10 minutes. And so you can set up Titebond II in about five minutes.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Justin: And I like to work fast.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: I'm not doing a bunch of complicated glue-ups. I like it to start tacking up, so I can move on with my life.

Travis: Now— now, now, Justin...

Justin: Yeah?

Travis: Sorry just to jump in here, but sometimes that drying time, that setup time, give you a chance to step back and you know, sip some mint tea, look at your handiwork, thinking about how, you know, how much you've done, how far you've come. How, you know, in the act of creation, it is like unto a god. Do you ever just step back and think about how only God can make a chair and you? Just the two of you.

Justin: Just me and God, making chairs. No, Travis, I've never taken time for reflection like that.

Travis: Oh, you have to. Oh, you have to. That's my favorite part—sometimes, I'll get a hunk of wood. I'll see what exists within it that I can bring out, and then that's what I'll carve out. And say I carve out a little piggy, right?

Justin: Mm-hm.

Travis: And I think, uh, I've created life! You know what I mean? That this is kind of my act of creation, and in that way, a bit of an act of defiance against God. You know what I mean? And then I'll sip my mint tea, which I have here in the mug I've carved.

Justin: Oh, beautiful.

Travis: [slurping sound] Mm! And just think about... my sheer power.

Justin: [wacky voice] My gosh, you talking about—

[normally] Oh, God. It's Woodso the Woodchuck.

Travis: No. Oh, my goodness.

Justin: God. Woodso—[sighs] I'm sorry, Trav. I talked to the producers about it, and I told them I didn't want to do—

“[wacky voice] What are you guys talking about?”

[normally] I told them I didn't want to do Woodso the Woodchuck, who wants to eat all of our projects.

Travis: It's for the kids, and it's toyetic! Hey, Woodso!

Justin: “Well, hey, Trav! What kind of thing are you guys working on today? Anything involving [extended, warbling] wood?”

Travis: Well, it's always involving wood, Woodso. It's a woodworking show. And as you can see here, Justin has created a beautiful cherry toilet seat designed to fit his butt...

Justin: [quiet chewing noise]

Travis: No, Woodso! Woodso, leave it!

Justin: “Hey, come on, I'm starving!”

Travis: Okay, but don't make me activate the electronic belt, Woodso.

Justin: “The scientists made me have a soul and a brain!”

Travis: I know, Woodso.

Justin: [chewing noise] “I'm starving!”

Travis: Hey! Woodso! Woodso, back in the crate!

Justin: “Alright, I'll take a break.”

[rustling, metal clinging sounds]

“What’s the crate made of?”

Travis: It’s made out of metal. We planned ahead, Woodso. You can’t be released into the wild. The genetic modifications, if that got spread throughout the woodchuck community, it would be the end of us.

Justin: Uh, Trav, with Woodso back in his metal crate, would you like another question?

Travis: Well, actually, Justin...

Justin: Huh!

Travis: I want to take you over here, join me over here.

Justin: Okay.

Travis: That’s right! It’s Woodworking Legends!

Justin: Oh!

Travis: It’s a Woodworking Legends corner. Now, Justin, I wanna show you— Stan, can we pull up that image? Yes. Okay, so folks at home, you are seeing now an image of the miracle steps of the Loretto Church. Look at those.

Justin: Miracle steps, wow! Look at those things!

Travis: Look at `em, folks! Oh, goodness. I’m so glad you’re all seeing this, because you wouldn’t believe it if I described it to you.

Justin: Oh, hachi— now, that’s— Trav, if I can say, that’s craftsmanship.

Travis: That's craftsmanship right there, Justin! It is a 720 spiral staircase...

Justin: Hoo!

Travis: ...with no center column, and no supports!

Justin: How on Earth... [pause] did they get that done?

Travis: Well, it's not only that, Justin. Supposedly, legend says, no nails were used. Just wooden pegs and glue.

Justin: Hachi— glue?

Travis: Yup!

Justin: When was it made?

Travis: Well, the— I don't know, 1800's. But here's the real thing, Justin. That's not the real miracle.

Justin: I'm already on Cloud 9 over here.

Travis: I know.

Justin: And I used this staircase to get up there.

Travis: Now, here's the part of the story that's uh— This is blue, so I figure Stan will— but it's kind of [censored, whirring noise] up.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: The person who designed this church, this chapel, didn't design stairs into it originally.

Justin: Uh-huh.

Travis: So you had the second-floor choir, you know, area, and it was unreachable when the church was done, according to legend.

Justin: Wow, that must've been embarrassing. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, it must've been a real problem! Uh, "Oh, there's your problem," kind of thing, you know, as they say.

And so uh, the nuns there, well, they prayed. Prayed uh, to the patron saint of woodworking. And uh, then a lot of— listen, a lot of carpenters. Let's just call them what they were: [censored, whirring noise] carpenters, came in and said, "Nothing can be done about it. That's just unusable space now."

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: "Maybe a ladder," they said.

Justin: A big dust collector up there.

Travis: Yeah. And the nun said, "A ladder? No. We're nuns. That would be embarrassing. Can you imagine what that would look like, nuns going up and down a ladder all day?"

So they prayed. And then an unnamed carpenter arrived, built these steps, left without payment or giving his name, and he was never seen again.

Justin: Now, that sounds noble, but I've been woodworking for long enough to know that what probably happened is he finished, and he was like, "I have no [censored, whirring noise] clue if this is gonna stand up or not."

Travis: Yeah. [laughs] He—

Justin: "I'm terrified. I'm actually gonna just go ahead and book."

Travis: And to be fair, the railing was added later by the nuns, so originally there was no...

Justin: [laughs] Woah!

Travis: ...no railing on this bad boy, and I guarantee that carpenter was like, "Man, I don't know. I don't know. This is just a weird dream I had, and there's no guarantee— I should go."

Justin: "I should go."

Travis: "While it's still dark and no one's here."

Justin: [laughs] What a b— now, where are these?

Travis: This is in Santa Fe, uh, at the Loretto Church, the miracle staircase.

Justin: Well, I gotta get over there. Uh, I gotta get over there and check it out. That'll be the first trip I take here in just a couple— whenever I'm traveling again.

Travis: Yeah. Worth it! Can you imagine walking up and down those babies?

Justin: Will they let you? Do they make you pay to do it, or...?

Travis: I think it— I think it actually is three dollars a person, if I remember correctly.

Justin: Okay, that's a—that's a steal.

Here's another question from our viewers. "I'm a would-be keen amateur woodworker, but I don't know where to get any wood to work. I don't want

a heap of lumber big enough to build a house with; just a handful. Do I just have to steal it? Help me, please.”

Travis: Why is that— why is that where you go to?

Justin: Wait, hold on. “Help me, please.” Longing for Lumber in Ladywood.

Travis: I like that. The two options are, to this person, order, like, a huge stack of house-amount lumber or steal it.

Justin: Yeah. I mean, when you start at any craft, any question seems answerable.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: “Where do you get— even *get* wood?”

Travis: Right.

Justin: It's comical now to us seasoned pros. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: But it is a fair question. Where do you get wood? Well, friend, let me tell you, wood's all around ya.

Travis: It's everywhere. It's every— look over there, you see that? That's your neighbor's fence. That's wood! You can use that!

Justin: Well, no, you shouldn't take people's things.

Travis: No, I'm not saying you *should*, I'm just saying you *could*.

Justin: I'll tell you one great source, if you wanna stop fucking around. You know, keep an eye out for pallets.

Travis: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Justin: Pallet wood is very on brand right now. Now, you gotta be careful to make sure that it's hasn't been, um, chemically treated to where it would be dangerous. You can look— there's like, charts you can look up that can tell you what the different stampings on the pallet wood are. And usually, they're gonna be put together uh, a lot of times with nails, so you wanna make sure you have like, wonder bar, crowbar, something that's gonna help you pry those apart.

But once you do, and you clean `em, and you fix `em all up, just give `em a little sandarookie. Uh, that could be some quality wood. That's gonna have a lot of character, and it's gonna be something that you could just mess around with, gratis.

Travis: Let me tell you my trick, Justin.

Justin: Okay.

Travis: Look for restores. Look for— we got one here in Cincinnati. Uh, it's where people bring uh— you know, if they'd done some demo to old buildings, they'll bring like, old doors there, and old pieces of woodwork and some trim, and stuff like that. Sometimes you can find some good-quality, already seasoned aged wood there.

And the deeper trick is, sometimes it's already made into something.

Justin: Okay.

Travis: And then you can just buy that and say you made it.

Justin: Um...

Travis: Now, you won't get the satisfaction out of it. Let me be clear.

Justin: I wouldn't do that. I actually don't agree with that.

Travis: But you will get compliments.

Justin: Yeah, I guess that's true. Um, I would be careful if you're driving around, and you're looking for— I mean, you could look around for furniture people are throwing out, to try to find some wood to mess up there, but be careful, 'cause like, a lot of the stuff that's been made in the past however many years, 10, 20 years, a lot of it's gonna be made out of, like, particle board, uh, and MDF, which is medium-density fiberboard.

And that's— I don't really think that that's worth reclaiming. You're not gonna be able to strip that and make it look nice; it's just gonna be junk, so I wouldn't mess around with it. And I'll use MDF in a project, but not—I mean, something [crosstalk]...

Travis: I'll tell you another secret, folks. This is from Travis, the theater professional. Uh, if you got an IKEA near you, uh, oftentimes they will have a section that is just like, "Hey, here's a bunch of loose parts that are either from returns or, like, incomplete boxes of damaged floor models," you could find some pretty good, like, butcher block tabletops in there sometimes? And then you just build a table under that. Use that butcher block for the top, now you got yourself a little cutting station to use in the kitchen or for kids to do crafts on top of...

Justin: Oh, my gosh.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: What a great— what a great tip.

Travis: Thank you.

Justin: Thank you.

Travis: You're welcome!

Justin: I appreciate it.

Travis: [laughs] That'll be five dollars, please!

Justin: [laughs] Hey, I got uh, I got some more woodworking jokes.

Travis: Oh, please, yeah!

Justin: You know, woodworking's really serious, but we like to have a little bit of fun from time to time.

Travis: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Justin: So I wanted to sort of take a second to tickle your funny bone.

Travis: Hey, Justin, you know— how are these jokes? Like drilling into a board without predrilling.

Justin: Uh— how— how— how?

Travis: They crack me up!

Justin: That's actually extremely good, Travis.

Travis: Thank you.

Justin: I wish you'd had the courage to wait to say that after I did the jokes...

Travis: Oh, right, right, right.

Justin: `Cause I feel like it would've hit a lot better...

Travis: Well, we'll edit that in post.

Justin: We'll get it in post. Hey... [restraining laughter] Hey.

Travis: Uh-huh?

Justin: Hey, Trav.

Travis: Yeah, Justin?

Justin: [laughs] Hey, Trav.

Travis: Yeah?

Justin: What's a woodworker's favorite band?

Travis: Ooh, uh... I give up!

Justin: Staind!

Travis: Ah, that's pretty good. That's pretty good.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: That's pretty good. That's a pretty good— oh, Stan's over there, losing it. He said Staind, not Stand.

Justin: [laughs] Hey, here's another one. What is Geppetto's favorite cereal?

Travis: Oh, boy. Uh, ooh. Oh, oh, oh, oh. Uh, I give up.

Justin: I know you think it's Pinnochios...

Travis: That's what I was gonna say, but yeah.

Justin: Listen, you gotta really— this one's a thinker.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: And not as much a joke.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: I know you think it's Pinnochios, but it's actually Cheerios. They're Whittleos. Though I guess both 'wood' work.

Travis: Okay. Okay. Now, Justin, is that from uh— is that from a viewer? Was that viewer-submitted, or was that something you found 'wood' work?

Justin: [sighs]

Travis: Okay. No, I get— I feel like there's eight punchlines in there?

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: 'Cause you also said Whittle—[laughs] Whittle—

Justin: They're Whittleo— Cheerios are Whittleos.

Travis: Yeah, no, I— okay. I get that. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So Pinnochios is one punchline. Whittleos is another one. Woodwork is the third punchline? You don't often see that in a joke, where they just say like, "Hey, choose your own favorite punchline here, uh, and laugh at all of 'em."

Justin: Um—

Travis: Oh, boy, Stan pissed himself.

Justin: [laughs] That's actually hugely embarrassing.

Travis: Stan pissed himself laughing. Is he on camera right now? He is?

Justin: He is? Can you get him off?

Travis: Can we get Stan off camera, please? Okay, thank you.

Justin: As a woodworker, I love the final stages of a project.

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Justin: All the little impurities and errors go away.

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Justin: It's a real varnishing act.

Travis: Ah, I love it! I forgot we were doing a joke, and I thought we were just talking about how good it is to finish a project, and so you really got me there at the end.

Justin: Yeah. It's pretty good. I tried to come back with a better joke that that, Trav...

Travis: Yeah. Yeah.

Justin: Uh, I think I nailed it.

Travis: Ah!

Justin: And nobody saw it.

Travis: Oh, I see. Nailed it and saw.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: Once again, another twofer there. I love it. I love it, I love it. Way to go against the grain.

Justin: [bursts out laughing] Did you read that off of something?

Travis: No, that just came to me! Just came to me, you know?

Justin: Ah, man, that was good. Can you say it again, exactly the same way?

Travis: Yeah. Way to go against the grain! Is that clean?

Justin: “[wacky voice] Hi, sorry, fellas, I don’t get it!”

Travis: Jesus! Oh, God, you scared the [censored, whirring noise] out of me, Woodso.

Justin: “Hey, I’m over here!”

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: “I didn’t get your joke. Can you explain it in detail?”

Travis: It’s going against the grain, ‘cause wood has grain in it, and you don’t want to go against the grain, ‘cause then it’s usually...

Justin: “Is that— is the grain the wood’s blood?”

Travis: No, it... I mean, the grain is—

Justin: “Muscles?”

Travis: Huh. No—

Justin: "Is the grain the wood's muscles?"

Travis: I don't think so...

Justin: "Getting hungry over here. Hm."

Travis: Okay. Oh, are you drooling blood?

Justin: "I— [laughs] you know, where I like it is the heartwood. That's right near the center. [strained] That's the sweet stuff."

Travis: Oh, God!

Justin: "Like mother's milk."

Travis: Oh, Jesus. Can we cover up that cage, please? Can we get a heavy-duty tarp over that, please?

[shutting noise]

Justin: "I'm scared of the dark, but it's always dark."

Travis: Oh, God! Oh, God! Okay...

Justin: [normally] Hey, we're having a lot of fun here, and we've got so much more fun to come, but first let's take a quick break and uh, hear from our commercial sponsor.

[cheering sound]

[light instrumentals play in background]

Justin: You know, friends? A woodworking TV show was once just a dream for my brother and I, but now we're making it a reality, and you don't have to wait for a sleazy TV producer to pull up, uh, on your lawn, and force you

to get into the back of his Jetta to go make your dreams a reality. You can just use Squarespace.

Travis: Yeah. And maybe, you know— maybe when the producer pulls up, your little brother is like, at the store or whatever. And so you two get in the car. And then you haven't seen Griffin for a while. And you know, that happens, you know? Sometimes you're away from your brother, and you need a way to communicate, and to send messages. So you can use Squarespace, you know.

You can showcase your work, or post pictures of what you've been up to, sell products and services of all kinds, including your woodworking stuff or, you know, any kind of information you have about your whereabouts, and you can promote your physical or online business and more!

Justin: Yeah. You can uh— it's free and secure hosting. They got analytics that grow in real time. There's nothing to patch or upgrade, ever. So go to squarespace.com/mybrother for a free trial. And if you see Griffin, please tell him that we're safe and we're doing our best, and we're trying to get free, and use the offer code "mybrother" to save 10 percent off your first purchase of a website or domain.

Go to squarespace.com/mybrother. For a free trial when you're ready to launch, use the offer code "mybrother," as in "my brother, Griffin McElroy," to save 10 percent off your first purchase of a website or domain.

Travis: You know, I can't remember the last time I went to the post office. Or anywhere, really.

Justin: [forced laugh]

Travis: 'Cause I just don't have the time or the ability to. And that's why I love stamps.com so much, because they allow me to mail and ship anytime, anywhere, right from my computer in this basement. And you know,

whether it's a giant office sending out invoices, or you know, you're sending postcards to loved ones, or you know, ransom notes or whatever, an online seller shipping out orders, anything like that, you know, you can use stamps.com, and they can handle it all with ease.

With stamps.com, you get discounts of up to 40 percent off post office rates and up to 62 percent off UPS shipping rates.

Justin: Wow. That's amazing, Travis. How can I take advantage of this?

Travis: Well, stop wasting time going to the post office, and go to stamps.com instead! There's no risk, which sounds really nice. And with my promo code— *my* promo code, "mybrother," you get a special offer that includes a four-week trial, plus free postage and a digital scale. There's no long-term commitments or contracts.

And there's so many contracts that I wish I hadn't signed, especially recently, that committed me to things. So isn't it nice to have no long-term commitments or contracts? You just go to stamps.com, click on the microphone on the top of the home page, and type in "mybrother." That's stamps.com, promo code "mybrother." Stamps.com: never go to the post office – or anywhere else – again.

[advertisement and music end, gentle piano chords briefly play]

Travis: Hey, so welcome back to *The New Appalachian Workshop* uh, with the McElroy brothers, but not Griffin. And uh, you know what that means: uh, we're back from the commercial break, so it's time for everybody's favorite segment: Which Wood Would You Work With, If You Could Woodwork Wood?

[bass chords play]

Travis: Now, Justin, here's what's gonna happen. I'm gonna give you some projects, and you tell me what kind of wood would you use for those projects.

Justin: Uh—

Travis: Okay, you ready?

Justin: O—okay? Is there a ri— is this kind of a right-or-wrong kind of answer?

Travis: Well, there are some preferred woods, but Justin, it's all about how you work it.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: That wasn't a joke. It is about how you work it; I mean, that's where the skill comes in. So uh, the first project is outdoor furniture and decking.

Justin: Well, uh, I personally uh, uh, would use teak.

Travis: Teak!

Justin: Teak is uh— teak is my go-to if I'm gonna be outdoors. You know, the uh, the ravages of nature are pretty savage, but teak has got the power to stand up to it, and I would probably go with uh, with teak, Trav.

Travis: Ooh, interesting. See, I would go with cedar.

Justin: Mm!

Travis: Um, it's relatively soft. It's a one on a scale of one-to-four. It has straight grain, and has a slightly aromatic smell, and it's great for outdoor projects, because it can handle moist environments without rotting.

Justin: Wow. You know what, different strokes for different folks.

Travis: Oh, absolutely. Now, Justin, if you were gonna do— oh, let me see. Um... building framing, right? What would you use?

Justin: Ah, man, I would probably— you know, building framing, especially in this market...

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: *Especially* in this market, is going to run you a pretty penny.

Travis: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Justin: I would probably still frame with pine. That's how I would frame out at home.

Travis: You know, see, I would do Douglas fir, I think.

Justin: Okay.

Travis: Yeah, it's inexpensive, and it can be used for making furniture, but it doesn't have a very interesting grain pattern, and it doesn't take uh, stain well. So mostly, I would use it for uh—you know, for framing. Especially since it's a four on a scale of one-to-four for soft wood. So moderately strong!

Uh, now Justin, one more—

Justin: Can we— People, can we talk about soft wood and hard wood for a second?

Travis: Yes, please, of course!

Justin: This distinction, once you learn it, it makes it all make a lot more sense. Soft wood comes from conifer trees.

Travis: Uh-huh. Yep.

Justin: Coniferous.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: And uh, the deciduous trees give you soft wood. Or sorry, deciduous trees give you hard wood.

Travis: Now, uh—

Justin: So coniferous like pine, that's gonna be soft wood.

Travis: And that's a tree shaped like this, right?

Justin: Yup.

Travis: And now we're talking about a deciduous tree, that's more a tree shaped like this, you know what I mean?

Justin: Yeah. So you can see on the diagram here, it's some of the differences between the two.

Travis: Yeah. And we also have this scale, uh— it's gonna be up for the rest of the episode, so you can reference it whenever you need to. The scale of the hardness of the woods and which one you want to use.

Justin: You will notice that scale has taken up the left four fifths of your screen.

Travis: Yep.

Justin: And we have been relegated to sort of the last fifth there. That's something we're working on...

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: ...in Video Toaster, and we haven't really figured that out yet, but I'm sure we'll— we'll [crosstalk].

Travis: Oh, we've also got some fun overlays coming for episode 2, so stick around for that, as soon as we figure it out.

Justin: Yes. Still in production, but...

Travis: Yeah. Uh, now, Justin, I got one last one here. This one's... [giggles] This one's a tricky one.

Justin: Okay.

Travis: Furniture joinery, flooring veneers, and musical instruments.

Justin: Ooh!

Travis: Yeah, right? I knew that one would get you.

Justin: Um, uh... I mean... I guess...

Travis: Now, you're probably trying to think of a tricky one here, 'cause the answer is so obvious, right?

Justin: Yeah, but I guess... I'd probably use... I've never made any of that stuff...

Travis: Hey, get it together. It's mahogany. Just say mahogany.

Justin: I feel like you want me say mahogany.

Travis: Just say mahogany. We have to move forward. We're almost done.

Justin: It's gotta be something trickier than mahogany.

Travis: No, just say— just say mahogany, so we can move forward, please. We have to.

Justin: If I say that and it's a trap, then everybody's gonna...

Travis: It's not a trap, Justin. It's mahogany.

Justin: If I say that and it's the wrong thing they're gonna make me...

Travis: Buddy— buddy, we're in this together. We're the only ones we can trust.

Justin: I've been trying—I've only been doing this for a few months. I'm trying, Trav.

Travis: Justin, we're the only ones we can trust in this scenario.

Justin: [strained] Mahogany.

Travis: Yes, it's called mahogany! Also called Honduran mahogany; it has a reddish brown to deep-red tint, a straight grain – which is so important, medium texture, and a hardness of around two on a scale of one to five. It takes stain very well, and looks great with just one coat – or 10 – of oil!

Justin: Now, that is a— that is a tricky one, because mahogany is not the most sustainable.

Travis: No, that is the big problem. It's not grown in sustainable forests. So that is a good reason not to make any musical instruments moving forward.

Justin: Right. [laughs] Right, no more musical—

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: There are strains of mahogany that are— that are okay.

Travis: Yeah, but better not to risk it.

Justin: That's true. You're not a— you're not a sustainability expert. Just stop using mahogany at all.

Travis: Yeah. Especially musical instruments.

Justin: Bamboo's sustainable, though. Hoo!

Travis: Yeah, well, yeah. I know, yeah. But how would—

Justin: Sustains itself.

Travis: How would you even use bamboo to make a musical instrument? You know what I mean? Like, come on. What would it be, a flute? I guess it could be a flute.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: You could probably do a flute with it, now that I'm thinking about it. It's not— hey. Buddy, you're doing so good. Just stick with it, okay?

Justin: Here's another question and I love this one.

Travis: Yeah?

Justin: "Dear brothers..."

Travis: Okay.

Justin: "How do I get over my fear of using power tools for woodworking?"

Travis: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Justin: "They are very loud and fast, and have sharp blades that can cut off my fingers. I'm a tech theater major, and I have to build flats all the time. Please help."

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Justin: "Alternatively, any hot tips for using a power screwdriver? I always *screw* it up."

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: "Pun intended." That's from Scared of Circular Saws in uh, CT.

Travis: Yeah. The thing you need to know is that all power tools *do* want to cut your fingers off. It is their domain.

Justin: I mean, kidding aside, you should be very afraid. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: That's good and healthy! That tells me you're thinking. Like, yeah, you should be wicked afraid of them. They're so sharp...

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: ... and dangerous.

Travis: When I have bought power tools in the past, it is amazing to me that I don't require some kind of permit or test or waiting process. I am buying something that could easily kill. Um—

Justin: Yeah. When— my first saw that I bought, my first power saw, was a uh, was a circular saw.

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Justin: Made by the fine folks at Milwaukee. Uh, I thought it was gonna be the only saw I'd ever own, so I wanted to get it right the first time, so I got a M18 battery powered circular saw from uh, Milwaukee. And as I was leaving, I kept waiting for somebody to stop me. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, right?

Justin: Like, "Sir, you actually don't... I can't sell that to you in good conscience."

Travis: Yes. I own, uh— now, Justin's a Milwaukee fan. Of course, I'm a DeWalt man. Um, I own a battery operated DeWalt Sawzall, which is like the shotgun of saws, of electric saws. It is terrifying to behold, and when I worked in the theater, I was often standing on top of a ladder, holding it over my head during strikes, just cutting stuff above me.

So yeah, that— but this is why it's good, question asker, that you're getting into it while you're still – I assume – in college and young, because you don't understand death as much during that time period, and you will feel a lot more invincible than you will when you reach your mid to late-30's.

Justin: And there's lots of time for those fingers to grow back.

Travis: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Justin: At your age, you're gonna be absolutely fine. But no, do be afraid.

Travis: Yes.

Justin: The time people get hurt is when they stop being afraid. [laughs]

Travis: Yes. Yes, yes.

Justin: And start getting silly, and doing some bad cuts that aren't advisable. Just do— like, do it in a proper, safe way. There's like— don't start using a tool until you've watched the videos on how to use it extremely safely.

I'll give you an example. I bring home a uh, piece of plywood, like a 4 by 8 sheet. And these things are—

Travis: What thickness? What are you talking about here, thickness?

Justin: Three-quarter inch birch.

Travis: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Justin: So I bring home that 4 by 8 sheet, and uh, it's miserable to try to work with something—they're so [censored, whirring noise] heavy.

Travis: Oh, yeah, dude.

Justin: Like, that's what you don't think about. They're so heavy. So you want to break it down as soon as possible, but— and, you know, you'll see some people just, like, turn on a table saw, and pushing across the table saw, and start roughly breaking it down like that.

And you could— anything could happen...

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: ...when you're doing that. Anything! You're talking about kickback...

Travis: Oh, boy, oh boy, oh boy.

Justin: ...from half a sheet of plywood? That's gonna cut you in half like a Play-Doh man.

Travis: Yup.

Justin: Here's what you do. And I actually got this tip from uh, Steve Ramsey, he does *Woodworking for Mere Mortals*. He puts it down, he has, like, a inch-thick sheet of insulation that he lay— in that same formfactor, 4 by 8. And he'll lay down the sheet of insulation, and then put the plywood on top of it. So then, then break it down with a circular saw.

So you're cutting into the— um, cutting into the insulation, not enough to sever it, but then you're uh— you can make your cut safely that way. That's the way to break down plywood right there.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: But you need to know this stuff, so don't just start, like, getting silly with it.

Travis: Oh, no, no, no.

Justin: You should try different stuff.

Travis: If you find yourself thinking, "Well, this isn't made for this, *but...*" Stop. Stop. Stop?

Justin: Right. Yes, exactly. "I think I can figure out a way to—" Stop it.

Travis: No. Um, and you know, ask for help. That's the other thing, man.

Justin: Ask for help, yeah... um, and make sure – you know, while we're on the topic of safety, and I don't wanna... Make sure you're using, at the very least, make sure— you know, people always think about the saw cutting you, and this is bad, and they will. But uh, don't forget about the other stuff that you should be using day-in, day-out. You should...

Travis: Vitamins.

Justin: No. [laughs] You should be wearing eye protection and ear protection. You should be uh, wearing— like, protecting your breathing airways. Trying to get ventilation and dust collection [crosstalk]

Travis: And take it from me, from personal, very scary experience: no baggy sweaters!

Justin: No baggy sweaters. What a specific...

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Justin: What a specific—

Travis: Well, sometimes, Justin – and this is a hypothetical situation in which I'm going to be uh, talking about a scary body thing, so warning – uh, but sometimes you're wearing a baggy sweater, you push it up, uh, the sleeves to your elbows. You're using a chop saw. Uh, the sweater or sleeve gets caught on the blade. Pulls your arm, uh, towards the blade. Luckily, the sweater stops the blade just as the blade touches your skin, and you only get a minor scar.

Sometimes, on the hypothetically, that could happen. Another thing, theater tech question asker, don't brag about how good you are at using a

tool while you're using it, because inevitably, that's when you will hurt yourself in front of other people.

Like, say hypothetically, you are showing a freshman – and you are a senior – how to use a pneumatic stapler, uh, and you're like, being all like, "Yeah, and you gotta be careful, man. Those things have a lot of power, and they could shoot right through your finger." And then it double fires, and you shoot a staple through your finger. And like, that.

You know, that's just a moment where God says, "Maybe you aren't unto a god in your creation, because you are fallible, as humans are wont to be, and only I can build a gazebo without double firing and shooting an inch-and-a-half pneumatic staple through my finger.

Justin: Uh, well, folks, I have a really exciting, exciting surprise for you. Here on our first uh, episode, we wanted to get a special guest, so we reached out to all the celebrity woodworkers that we know – because you know, the celebrities, they're just like us.

Travis: Oh, yeah. Absolutely.

Justin: And they're— they're out there, working wood, as well. Um, and uh, I am so thrilled to welcome to the program, uh, Bill Macy.

Travis: [as Bill] "Hi, everybody. Me."

Justin: Hey, Bill, welcome to *The Appalach*—

Travis: "Please, call me Bill."

[pause]

Justin: Welcome to *The New Appalachian Workshop featuring the McElroy Brothers (but not Griffin)*. It's so—I'm so thrilled to have you here.

Travis: “Oh, I’m so glad to be here. You know, I love talking about woodworking. I love it. I love it.”

Justin: And I love— we love watching you on *Fargo* and *Shameless*...

Travis: “Thank you.”

Justin: ...and *Mystery Men*. Uh, so what are you working on these days?

Travis: “Well, I’ll tell you, it’s no mystery. [forced chuckle] Man. We own uh, my wife’s childhood home in Colorado, and we’re uh, we’re redoing a lot of the fencing on the property, and I have saved the most gnarly boards. They’re all gray and deeply weathered and I’m using them to make benches!

“Uh, I made a jig, so I could join two boards along their length with biscuits. Then I use another jig to route a recess on the other side of the top for legs and a stretcher. And I take a palm sander, and uh, work on the more egregious spots, the places where someone’s likely to get a big splinter on their [censored, whirring noise]. [laughs] I have a lot of stains, so I use them to make sanded spots gray again. Takes me a full day to make a single bench.”

Justin: You working on anything outdoors?

Travis: “Yeah! Building staircases around the house in LA. Which is on a pretty hilly site. This is my exercise. I find it insanely gratifying to build these stairs. I call them my stairway to heaven. [laughs] And I have a great view of downtown LA from the top.”

Justin: A few years ago, when I visited, you had just completed an arch footbridge over a gully. How has that been holding up?

Travis: "I had to rebuild it! It rotted right out of its foundation. I'm not a very good carpenter. But I'm very enthusiastic about it."

Justin: So is there... a connection between woodworking and acting?

Travis: "Usually, I answer this question no. But lately? I do see a connection, Justin. Everything we do in this life involves a lot of repetition. In the shop, you design something and lay it out. But at a certain point, you realize you need 12 of one piece, and it would be best if they were all exactly alike. That's not different from what I do as an actor.

"Everyone rehearses their lines a couple times. Then a scene is blocked out, and the cameras roll. There might be an interaction between you and me in the scene, and we might do it 10 or 12 times. You want all the takes to be the same, [whispering] yet you also want them to seem spontaneous. So wisdom comes from realizing that there has to be repetition. But also, that the repetitions are never the same."

Justin: [as Woodso] "[loud, wacky voice] Hell yeah, is that Bill Macy?!"

Travis: "Oh, [censored, whirring noise]."

Justin: "*State and Main's* my [censored, whirring noise]!"

Travis: "Okay, I gotta go. Oh, what the [censored, whirring noise] is that—"

Justin: "[censored, whirring noise] hey, got any [unintelligible]?"

Travis: Oh, God. Wait, Will! No, Will, come back!

Justin: [simultaneously] "Where are you going? Why are you running?"

Travis: Come back! Oh, he jumped out the window.

Justin: "Bill!"

Travis: He's the— Woodso, you [censored, whirring noise] it up again.

Justin: "I'll go back to the crate. I know when I'm not wanted."

Travis: No, it's... [sighs] You know, I feel like I've given you a really hard time, Woodso.

Justin: "I just feel like that was my one opportunity to talk to somebody who was in *Seabiscuit*."

Travis: No, no. The horse is coming next week. That horse *loves* woodworking.

Justin: [normally] Travis, I didn't know that, but that'll be— uh, that's huge.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: And you know what else is huge? Our uh, gratitude to you for tuning into this, our first episode!

Travis: First of many!

Justin: First of many episodes on *The Appalachian Workshop featuring The McElroy Brothers (but not Griffin)*. Thank you to our guest, Bill Macy, for coming out.

Travis: Yeah. Huge.

Justin: Huge. And uh, thanks to you for uh, for listening. Our interview with Bill Macy was of course provided by uh, *Woodcraft Magazine*, so thanks to them.

Travis: I do wanna say, before I forget, Will uh, left this beautiful— he's carved a little toy rocking horse here. Um, and it is free, we're gonna give it away. Just call that number that you see at the bottom of your screen right now. Um, and the 10th caller, we're gonna get that to you, signed by William H. Macy, uh, valued at about 15,000 dollars.

Justin: Wow. That's fantastic— oh, and thanks to Massing for creating our uh, our intro and outro theme. Uh, if you want more of them, they're a great, uh, Huntington, West Virginia band. Uh, you could find them on Bandcamp. Go to massingwv.bandcamp.com. They got songs about Gino's, they got songs about basically everything. I mean, the pub witch, which is also at Gino's...

Travis: That does sound like some kind of like, witch that lives in a pub.

Justin: Yeah. They got songs about pepperoni rolls. Everything. These guys are so talented. Um, massingwv.bandcamp.com.

Travis: And of course, thank you to producer Stan.

Justin: For sure.

Travis: Without Stan, we wouldn't have to do this!

Justin: Uh, so thank you for tuning in, and as we say every week...

Both: Wood you join us next week?

[applause]

Travis: Hey, folks. Thank you so much. If you like that, um, you can...

Justin: God, just relistening to it was...

Travis: Yeah, no, listen, it was rough. But I think if we got another shot at it, I think there's a lot of things we would do differently. Probably include Griffin.

Justin: Why did they make you pretend to be Bill Macy?

Travis: Well, they said that they would fix it in post, and Stan said that a lot. Um, I don't think he knew... exactly what that entailed, 'cause I didn't know how you could fix the fact that I'm not... I mean, I was wearing that mocap suit, so that...

Justin: Maybe they were gonna deepfake it? I don't know.

Travis: Maybe they were gonna deep it.

Justin: It wasn't a mocap suit; it was just a green jumpsuit with ping-pong balls on it. I tried to tell you that.

Travis: Oh.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: Oh, that's what you meant!

Justin: That's why you look so ridiculous in the— yeah.

Travis: Okay! See, I didn't know what you were talking about then. I thought you were talking about something else.

Justin: I'm embarrassed for you, honestly, at this point.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Could we be done? Could we be done?

Travis: Well, yeah, we can. Everybody go check out, we got some new merch up for April. Mcelroymerch.com, don't forget to check that out. Uh, we got Max Fun Drive coming up pretty soon; it's very exciting. Uh, don't forget to preorder *The Adventure Zone Graphic Novel: Crystal Kingdom* at theadventurezonecomic.com.

Um, let's see. What else, Justin? Thanks to maximumfun.org. We got, oh, a really beautiful Farm Wisdom – super cute, super great Farm Wisdom pin that benefits the AAPI Civic Engagement fund, which supports efforts by local community-based organizations to combat violence and hate.

There's also a new *Adventure Zone* shirt over there. Go check that out.

Uh, and I think that's gonna wrap it up.

Justin: Well, folks, thank you so much for listening, and uh, be sure to join us again this week. We don't have to do our normal closing or anything, because this is really kind of a more archival episode for posterity's sake, but thanks again for listening, we really appreciate it.

[upbeat instruments play]

Singer: Cut up. To cut up, yeah. To cut up and put back together again. That was the new *Appalachian Workshop featuring The McElroy Brothers (but not Griffin)!*

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