

## **Wonderful! 201: Keep it up, Tetris Boy**

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[theme music plays]

**Rachel:** Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

**Griffin:** Hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

**Rachel:** And this is Wonderful!

**Griffin:** I've lost my fun voice.

**Rachel:** Oh.

**Griffin:** My fun deep voice! Welcome to the block party. If this is your first episode, you don't even know that I was sick last week and had a fun deep voice. This is a very special episode.

**Rachel:** Oh, okay.

**Griffin:** Not in the, like, Saved by the Bell sense where we're gonna talk to you about, uh, drugs and stuff.

**Rachel:** Yeah, to my knowledge neither of us has a problem that we need to confront the other one about.

**Griffin:** Yeah. Except, uh, I'm kind of a... choc— I love chocolate. So much.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Um, this is a show where we talk about things that are good and things that we like and things that we're into. I'm Griffin, that's Rachel, we are married!

**Rachel:** We are married!

**Griffin:** We have two kids.

**Rachel:** Uh-huh.

**Griffin:** We live in Austin and we like to party.

**Rachel:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Griffin:** And what other things do we need? What other sort of bio bullet points?

**Rachel:** Um, I would just say that initially we started a show that was a reality dating show podcast.

**Griffin:** Specifically The Bachelor, but we did occasionally—

**Rachel:** But we did some other shows. Uh, and we would make jokes and we would bring our—

**Griffin:** Tell me more about these— Tell me more about these jokes.

**Rachel:** These jokes. Well, so, you know a lot of people on the show were funny, either intentionally or not intentionally and then we just started to kind of feel uncomfortable with the whole premise of the franchise and...

**Griffin:** It made us feel bad to do it.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** So, we did this literally diametrically opposed podcast.

**Rachel:** Yeah, so approximately 200 episodes ago we switched to this format where we just talk about things we like.

**Griffin:** This is 201 so, like, whole new era.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Our seasons are 100 episodes long, so welcome to season three. Um, yeah. It's literally all we do and we like to start things off with a little discussion, maybe not like, things that could inspire a grand discussion. We call them small wonders.

**Rachel:** We do.

**Griffin:** Do you want— Do you have— And typically how this segment works is I ask Rachel if she has one.

**Rachel:** Now, I'm ready this time.

**Griffin:** Oh, shit, okay!

**Rachel:** [laughs] Containers.

**Griffin:** Yeah, oh my God.

**Rachel:** [giggling]

**Griffin:** Intoxicating! To see new containers in the house.

**Rachel:** I have found since the pandemic began that I've spent a lot of time in this house and I have slowly set out on a path to organize every piece of this house that is frustrating to me and...

**Griffin:** It's been very gradual. Not a read on...

**Rachel:** Very gradual.

**Griffin:** ... the speed with which you've been accomplishing this goal, but I feel like you've been very contemplative about it.

**Rachel:** Because it's intimidating to open a drawer, see it full of random stuff and want to put the time into organizing it. But I, yesterday, purchased some containers...

**Griffin:** Oh, gosh.

**Rachel:** ... for our snack drawers which... we have many. [laughs]

**Griffin:** Yeah, and again, if you're new to the show, we like to snack!

**Rachel:** We like to snack. Uh, [laughs] and what I've found a lot of times is we just leave stuff in that snack drawer for literal years.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** And then our child would pull a snack out and we'd be like, "Whoa-whoa-whoa-whoa, wait!"

**Griffin:** "Not that one!"

**Rachel:** "Don't eat that one, that's from 2019!" Uh, so...

**Griffin:** Those Fig Newtons have fermented.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Those Fig Newtons will get you fucked up, fam.

**Rachel:** Uh, so I went through the drawers, I threw away all the old food and then I organized them into containers. And now I open that drawer and I just feel...

**Griffin:** And Henry is so stoked. Henry is our big son. He is so stoked.

**Rachel:** Is he?

**Griffin:** Oh, my god, yes, this morning he was, like, "Um, I want something from the snack drawer. Let me show you." And he opened it up and he was, like, "These where all my gummies is."

**Rachel:** [laughs] Good!

**Griffin:** "These are my mini Z-Bars."

**Rachel:** Oh, he's my child.

**Griffin:** He is, absolutely. Uh, I'm gonna say a video game. If you've never listened to the show before, I'm kind of a gamer.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Um, there's a new Metroid game and it's really, really good.

**Rachel:** Is that what you've been playing?

**Griffin:** It's what I've been playing. Metroid is, uh... Because I don't think you ever played one or have— You've been dipping your toe into some of the Nintendo waters but I think this one's still fresh to you. Uh, it's just like a series of action platformer games that have been going since the NES. Uh, only this one's scary! This one has robots that chase you...

**Rachel:** Oh...

**Griffin:** ... and kill you instantly if they touch you. It's very good October stuff. It's really good Halloween stuff, I'm liking it quite a bit.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** But actually— Shit, we're talking about it on Besties this week, so... I just spoiled my thoughts on it. So please pretend— Don't tell the other boys that I did that.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Please pretend like you don't know how I feel about Metroid.

**Rachel:** Okay.

**Griffin:** It's excellent though. Um... I go first this week.

**Rachel:** Okay!

**Griffin:** So, in this show we each talk about one— We used to do two things, but then we had two kids and so now we do one thing.

**Rachel:** And this gives us a little more time to really explore the space of our thing.

**Griffin:** Yes! Which is good because my subject this week is a bit abstract. We talk a lot about food, music, uh... food again. But sometimes we get a little bit more... I don't know.

**Rachel:** Conceptual.

**Griffin:** Conceptual!

**Rachel:** Yes.

**Griffin:** And so I— The title of my segment that I have is, uh, I wrote it down and was like, preparing it and then I realized I could summarize it much more quickly. So the original title was "that feeling of satisfaction you get when you do something you're scared of." Um, but then I realized that I could just sort of reduce that to "fear."

**Rachel:** [laughs] Well, wait. That makes it sound like you thing fear is wonderful.

**Griffin:** I think that harmless fear is absolutely wonderful.

**Rachel:** Oh. What about overcoming fear?

**Griffin:** That is another good thing, yes. Absolutely.

**Rachel:** Okay.

**Griffin:** There is so many ways of phrasing this.

**Rachel:** I just don't want it to sound like you're saying, like, "You know what is the greatest human emotion? Fear."

**Griffin:** No, I mean, I am a hugely anxious person.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And so, I would not describe that as something that has been particularly fulfilling. Um, but I was— This was, again, a thing that was sort of inspired by hanging out with Henry, our four-year-old son, almost five.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Um, because watching the pride that he has and the excitement that he gets from doing something that he was scared of is, like, awesome. It's so good and it's so relatable.

**Rachel:** I have— I appreciate that you are, like, glass is half full about this because I tend to just feel guilty that our child is fearful and that we have somehow done that to him.

**Griffin:** Oh, yeah, for sure.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** No, that's unavoidable, absolutely.

**Rachel:** So I'm sitting there, in that emotion, just feeling full guilt and you're cheering him on and really reveling in the moment where he overcomes it.

**Griffin:** We are both anxious parents and so it is tough not to pass that along to our kids.

**Rachel:** I know.

**Griffin:** And I think we're extremely, like, aware of that now.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** But as new parents, like, it's tough. Especially with the first kid because, like, they are in your anxious eyes, a little Fabergé egg that the world is trying very hard to destroy.

**Rachel:** [laughing] Yeah.

**Griffin:** Um, and you know, four, almost five years down the line and with two kids under our belt— That's not where we keep our kids, but you know what I mean. Like, we know that that's not the truth and so, like, we are fighting a bit of programming here.

**Rachel:** Yeah, for sure.

**Griffin:** Um, but it's also a great gift we've given him. Because every time he conquers one of those fears, it's amazing. So he just started a swim class and the first time that he put his head underwater, which is not something he really does, he came up and he was, like, stoked.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** And, like, really excited about it. He did it a second time that didn't go quite as well.

**Rachel:** [laughing] Yeah.

**Griffin:** And so he wanted to quit swim classes after that, so it's a, you know...

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** It's a give and take. Um, but like, when I was a kid, I remember. Like, some of my most potent memories are from these times. For instance, I used to be terrified of rollercoasters.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** We went to King's Island a lot and King's Island is dope. Like, it's a great theme park. Um, but I would only want to go on the rides that were, like, you know, the theater rides where the chairs move around or like the haunted house ride or whatever. If it was like a rollercoaster, I couldn't.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Which sucks because King's Island has a ton of great rollercoasters. Uh, but then I remember I went on the Outer Limits: Flight of Fear. The, like, the spring break preview that our dad took us to, like, the year it opened. And they were like— Dad told me and I realized, no, this was a terrible trick. He was like, "It's indoors. How scary could it be?"

**Rachel:** [laughs] I love that. That is such a nice, like Clint McElroy, like, salesman pitch.

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Rachel:** Of just like, "Huh, yeah, no, that's a good point." And then later, "Wait. Is it?"

**Griffin:** "Wait a minute." Uh, the answer to his question, his mean-spirited question, when I got off the ride was, "Hugely scary!"

**Rachel:** Yeah! Almost—

**Griffin:** "Very fast and terrifying!"

**Rachel:** Probably scarier in some ways.

**Griffin:** The scariest, yes. But also that— I was into rollercoasters after that. Like, I was so exhilarated and proud of myself for doing that scary thing and, like, those very strong emotions are why I remember that so vividly.

**Rachel:** Yeah, no that's— That's a really good point, because I remember the first rollercoaster I went on and then once I did I was like, "Okay, now I can do rollercoasters!" You know?

**Griffin:** Yeah!

**Rachel:** And then I will say, then it was like, "Well, but I'm not gonna go upside down." [laughs]

**Griffin:** Oh, okay! See, I really pulled the bandage off with the Flight of Fear.

**Rachel:** Yeah see, I like, put another restriction on there that took me into another year of, like, "Well, now I do rollercoasters but I don't do the ones that go upside down."

**Griffin:** Right.

**Rachel:** And eventually I, you know, I overcame that too. But, uh, but yeah. It's interesting how you do it and you're successful and you're like, "Well, I just do it now," you know?

**Griffin:** Yeah! It's— I realized it in sort of writing down my thoughts on this that you could extrapolate this out to cover, like, a lot of things that are appropriate for this very spookiest season which is to say, like, haunted houses and scary movies, like in general.

**Rachel:** Yeah, it's true.

**Griffin:** Um, both of them sort of do the same stuff to your brain and they are exciting and fun. Um, and a lot of that is, like, chemistry, right? Like you're—

When you get scared, your body produces adrenaline obviously which, like, causes heightened senses and just a bunch of stuff that happens to your body that is, again, in a harmless environment, like exhilarating but it can also produce dopamine, uh, which is thought to sort of, like, cement your fight or flight response to specific things.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Because it's like the reward system for your brain that conditions you to, like, feel certain ways— like, pay attention to certain things and

so, like, those two things kind of go hand in hand and there is a marked difference between feeling those hormones in a situation that you subconsciously know is not actually that dangerous versus a situation where you are, like, in danger, right?

Like, that's not fun. That part is not quite as fun. Like, watching *Scream* in theaters and getting those jump scares and knowing, like, in the way, deep down, back of your mind that, like, it's okay. I'm not actually going to be murdered here. That's where you get the, like "Ah! Ha ha ha!" But if *Ghostface* is really chasing you with a very real knife, that is— You don't get the second part.

**Rachel:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Griffin:** You just get the first part, obviously. Um, but like, yeah. I think it just— A lot of it is hormones, but I think it goes beyond that. I think it is the sense of discovery about yourself, like...

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Knowing what you are capable of, finding out what you are capable of is amazing. It's amazing as an adult, right? Like I get stage fright every time we do a live show. I'm anxious all day, like it really fucks me up. Like I feel super exhausted and sick to my stomach, like, all day if we're doing a live show.

**Rachel:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Griffin:** Even though we've been doing this for years and years and years and years. But then when the show's over and we walk off the stage it is indescribable how good it feels.

**Rachel:** Yeah, the transformation is kind of incredible because I— You know I've been able to attend some of these shows and backstage you and all your brothers, I would say, are just kind of like, quiet balls of nerve and then to see you perform, it's just like a totally different experience. Like, it just, like, feels like going downhill on a rollercoaster of like, all of a sudden you guys are on stage literally screaming.

**Griffin:** But that's, like— But that goes back to when we were doing, like, children's theater. I was terrified every time we did any show, uh, and we did a lot, right? But when you're out on stage and you're kind of on show mode, like, you start that...

Descent is a good way of putting it, like, down the rollercoaster and when you get off stage it is that sense of discovery, it is still that adrenaline pumping, but it's also a sense of relief of just, "Oh, thank god."

**Rachel:** [laughs] "It's over!"

**Griffin:** "We made it through!" I am, full disclosure, we have not done a live show in front of a crowd since last... March? I genuinely don't even remember.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Uh, and I'm scared— I am genuinely scared of doing it again but I also know, like, I will probably be fine, I am there with my family, um, not in any immediate danger and so I am also weirdly looking forward to that feeling that I get when I get off the stage.

And I think that feeling more than makes up for the anxiety and I think it's probably why I do what I do. I think it's probably why I did children's theater my whole life growing up and why I do this now. Uh...

**Rachel:** Some people do parkour, you know?

**Griffin:** Some people do parkour, but...

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** For me, doing butt jokes on a stage in front of some people makes me feel alive. And it's honestly, and this is sort of my last thought about this, is like... It's the best part of being a parent, I think. At least of kids that are the age that Henry is growing into now.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Is... You get it twofold. Like, Henry, just to use a very low-stakes example, but Henry is scared of slides, like...

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** He's scared of slides. He thinks that they are scary but when he does go down one, you can see, like, he wants to do it a thousand times. And you can see that excitement, you can see that relief, you can see all of that but you can also see the pride that he feels that he's able to do that. But also, you feel it, too.

**Rachel:** I know, that's the thing is that now we are so used to him being kind of fearful that I feel like we kind of, like, amp up a little bit. Like, "Is he gonna do it? Is he gonna do it? Can we get him to do it?" And then when he does and we have that same feeling of, like, "Oh God, he did it!"

**Griffin:** We, uh, rented a swimming pool over the summer, like somebody's house's swimming pool. And we had done it a few times with

Henry and he had gotten over his fear of just, like, swimming, uh and he loves the water now.

But we were just, like, hanging out with our friends. We had a couple of friends that were there and he pushed this little plastic slide up to the edge of the pool and went down it into the water. And me and Rachel looked at him and looked at each other like, "What!? Are you kidding me!?"

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** It's so awesome, it's so rewarding and exciting and it genuinely is. Like, it brings me so much joy to see that.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And... yeah. All of that is to say, like, fear can be cool when it's not, you know, something that is going to hurt you, something that you know is not going to hurt you.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And it is, uh, I'm not like, saying anything anybody doesn't know, I'm sure. Like, you know whether or not you like scary movies or whatever, um, but I just find it so fascinating how formative it can be and how...

**Rachel:** It's true.

**Griffin:** It's just everywhere. It's been with you your whole life, like your reaction to these kinds of things and I think it's amazing. I think it's so good. Can I steal you— This is a thing that we say, leftover from the Bachelor era. We never changed it, which is weird.

**Rachel:** Well, we also still play the Home Improvement song inexplicably.

**Griffin:** That's good, though. But yeah, we're about to go do our ad-ver-tiss-a-ments and grand-bo-trams. Then we say, "Can I steal you away?"

**Rachel:** Yes.

[ad break]

**Griffin:** Got a couple of bubble-tubs here and I would love to read this first one because it is for Jared and it from Isabelle who says, "Jared, I don't know when you will be hearing this but I just wanted to send you a messaging saying that I love you through this good, good podcast. You're my best friend, favorite person, and I love being your girlfriend. Here's to

many more years of cuddles, smooches, and silly late-night conversations. Love, your girlfriend, Isabelle."

**Rachel:** Should we explain since this— I believe this is our block party episode?

**Griffin:** Oh, sure.

**Rachel:** That when you say "bubble-tubs..." [laughs]

**Griffin:** Oh, my...

**Rachel:** What you mean is Jumbotrons?

**Griffin:** These are called Jumbotrons. And that's— Typically people send sweet love messages.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Like, uh, Isabelle has done for Jared here.

**Rachel:** Oh, my gosh...

**Griffin:** And sometimes— But you know me, I like that sort of irreverent South Park humor, so I'll the Jumbotrons different words.

**Rachel:** [laughing]

**Griffin:** Although somebody, I apologize that I don't have the name of that person on hand, made a compilation of all the weird names I've called Jumbotrons and I say, like, "grand-bo-tram" a lot.

**Rachel:** A lot!

**Griffin:** Most of— I would say 50% of the times I come in here—

**Rachel:** You also say "jumbo prawn," which is great.

**Griffin:** Jumbo prawns are— Yeah, but that's a real—

**Rachel:** Which is great.

**Griffin:** You want to read this other one?

**Rachel:** Yes, this message is for Sheena. It is from Jessie. "Hi, Sheena. I love you very much and can't wait to be with you forever. You will always be my favorite person. Hopefully one day we can have a cat cafe or

escape room, but until then just you and the two fluff-butts and some gay TV shows are enough. I love you, Jessie."

**Griffin:** Why do those two things have to be separate? Cat escape room.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** You're going around solving puzzles...

**Rachel:** And there's kitties!

**Griffin:** But there's kitties everywhere and they're just ruining everything.

**Rachel:** Yeah! I like that.

**Griffin:** "Okay, so the chess board— There are pieces on the chess board and when you look at them, it'll tell you that— Oh, the cat's knocked everything off..."

**Rachel:** What a degree of difficulty. Also, I think you couldn't do that because I'd think people would be convinced that there was some kind of clue within the cat.

**Griffin:** Yeah, that's a good point. The cat would be, like, coughing up a hairball and the people would just be like, waiting... "He's coughing up a key!"

[ad break]

**Griffin:** I would love to hear what you have prepared for the class today.

**Rachel:** Well, in the spirit of the block party and kind of bringing people to some of the, uh, some of the concepts and ideas that we typically discuss on the show...

**Griffin:** Yeah?

**Rachel:** I'm doing a poetry corner.

**Griffin:** [imitates bass guitar] This is no longer a stand-up bass.

**Rachel:** [giggles]

**Griffin:** It used to be a stand-up bass, it's become something else. It's like a very baritone sitar at this point.

**Rachel:** [laughing] Um, this started many episodes ago. Uh, I like to think, you know, Griffin has a lot of interests that he has become kind of expert in because he has spent many years interested in these things.

**Griffin:** I would love to hear what you think some of those are.

**Rachel:** Well, I think... I mean, there's a lot of music that you're interested in. There's a lot of, obviously, video games. I don't wanna reduce you to video games, but that is...

**Griffin:** You love that shit, though. You love that. You're— When we're not recording, you guys should hear it. It's vicious. She's like, "Keep it up, Tetris Boy."

**Rachel:** [through laughter] Tetris boy?

**Griffin:** And I'm, like, "What does that mean? What is that, it sounds mean spirited."

**Rachel:** Uh—

**Griffin:** "Get going, Mega Man-head."  
"What are you saying to me?"

**Rachel:** But I think part of what makes that interesting is that I don't know a lot about video games and so a lot of times when Griffin and I talk, I learn a lot of new things.

**Griffin:** The same is true about this segment in reverse, absolutely.

**Rachel:** So I was trying to think, what is something that I know that maybe not a lot of people know? And that is poetry.

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Rachel:** Uh, and Griffin doesn't know a lot about poetry.

**Griffin:** I'm learning!

**Rachel:** He is learning!

**Griffin:** Through you.

**Rachel:** Um, and so I started what I call the poetry corner, which is I'll talk about a poet and read a poem and we all leave better for it, is what I'm gonna say. [laughs]

**Griffin:** We grow together, hand in hand.

**Rachel:** We grow together! Uh, so the poet I am going to talk about today is Tony Hoagland.

**Griffin:** Oh, sure!

**Rachel:** Sure!

**Griffin:** Love Tony!

**Rachel:** Tony! Tony!

**Griffin:** They do great stuff. They do the ones with the rhymes in it, yes?

**Rachel:** Not typically.

**Griffin:** Even that is a 50/50 shot!

**Rachel:** Yeah, uh-huh. Not even 50/50, really, honestly.

**Griffin:** Yeah. They use pentameter and verse. And verse. And meter? In their— And visual language. They're that one? Tony? That Tony?

**Rachel:** [laughs] Uh, okay. So Tony Hoagland, born in North Carolina. Grew up in what he called— Uh, as an army brat. And so he lived in Hawaii, Texas, Alabama, Louisiana, and Ethiopia.

**Griffin:** Whoa!

**Rachel:** Uh, born in 1953 and, uh, published just a lot of books until he passed in 2018 from pancreatic cancer. Um, what I will say that I like about him, super funny. Um, gives me kind of a Billy Collins feel, if you'll remember Billy Collins.

**Griffin:** Sure, I do!

**Rachel:** Um, somebody who writes, like many of the poems that I bring to this show, like, accessible poems that are kind of funny, um, and you know, he's won prizes and awards for that and I wanted to read one of his poems today.

**Griffin:** Please do that.

**Rachel:** It's called Summer in a Small Town.

**Griffin:** I already love this poem a lot.

**Rachel:** [laughs] It is not a Bruce Springsteen song, it is a poem.

**Griffin:** [singing] Hot dogs in a small town!

**Rachel:** [laughing] Summer in a Small Town.

"Yes, the young mothers are beautiful,  
with all the self-acceptance of exhaustion,  
still dazed from their great outpouring,  
pushing their strollers along the public river walk.

And the day is also beautiful—the replica 19th-century paddle-wheeler  
perpetually moored at the city wharf  
with its glassed-in bar and grill  
for the lunch-and-cocktail-seekers  
who come for the Mark Twain Happy Hour  
which lasts as long as the Mississippi.

This is the kind of town where the rush hour traffic halts  
to let three wild turkeys cross the road,  
and when the high school music teacher retires  
after thirty years

the movie marquee says, "Thanks Mr. Biddleman!"  
and the whole town comes to hear  
the tuba solos of old students.

Summer, when the living is easy  
and we store up pleasure in our bodies  
like fat, like Eskimos,  
for the coming season of privation.

All August the Ferris wheel will turn  
in the little amusement park,  
and screaming teenage girls will jump into the river  
with their clothes on,  
right next to the No Swimming sign.

Trying to cool the heat inside the small towns  
of their bodies,  
for which they have no words;  
obedient to the voice inside which tells them,  
"Now. Steal Pleasure."

**Griffin:** That's good!

**Rachel:** Isn't that a good one?

**Griffin:** That's really good! Now you grew up in a big city.

**Rachel:** Well...

**Griffin:** So you maybe don't resonate with a lot of this, what with your big city living? Um, but us West Virginians, oh, this hits home.

**Rachel:** Yeah?

**Griffin:** It's home. I remember my many days swimming in the Ohio River and the many, many chemical burns I received.

**Rachel:** I, um, I really like the line about the music teacher...

**Griffin:** Yes!

**Rachel:** ... and "Thanks, Mr. Biddleman" on the movie marquee? Oh, God, that's so perfectly done.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** He talks a lot about his experience of, you know, trying to kind of... make poetry more accessible. You know, he went to undergraduate at University of Iowa which has this famous Master of Fine Arts program in creative writing.

And he was just surrounded by people who took poetry very seriously and wrote about very serious things. And his kind of desire was to kind of react against that and, you know, make his poetry relatable and accessible. Um, and I really think he does that.

**Griffin:** Yeah, sure.

**Rachel:** Very well. I will also say, uh, he talks about, uh... how he thinks poetry is best when read aloud and he said, quote, "A poem in the air is different than a poem on the page. A poem, when you read it, is getting the best attention it will have. You experience it in real time."

**Griffin:** You're big on this too, right?

**Rachel:** Yeah! Yeah, I really like going to poetry readings and reading poems out loud because you can't cheat ahead, you know?

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Rachel:** You don't know how long the poem is you don't, kind of, have words that jump out at you before you read them.

**Griffin:** That's true, I've never really thought about that but I experience the poem in a much different way than you do during the segment.

**Rachel:** Yeah, like, I can see kind of when the poem is going to end, for example.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Rachel:** But when you're listening, you don't know and so you're kind of just hanging on every word and that's what's kind of cool about reading poems on the show.

**Griffin:** It's dope to be surprised what the last line in a poem is. Like, "Now. Steal pleasure," like...

**Rachel:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** It's a really cool ending to the poem, but if you're expecting more to come after it, it just hits even harder, like it's— Yeah. That's a really interesting thought.

**Rachel:** Yeah, he, uh, he told in an interview with the Houston Chronicle, he said, "Humor in poetry is even better than beauty. If you could have it all, you would, but humor is better than beauty because it doesn't put people to sleep. It wakes them up and relaxes them at the same time."

He talks about that a lot, of like... You know, people kind of tense up a little bit when they're getting into a poem and that, like, first kind of line that you say that's kind of funny or, you know, like engaging, like... Lets people kind of relax and enjoy the poem more than they might realize.

**Griffin:** Yeah, sure.

**Rachel:** So yeah, sure. This is kind of one of those poets that fits into, like, my wheelhouse and I feel excited to bring to the show because I feel like nobody's gonna be alienated by it.

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Rachel:** They're right in there with us.

**Griffin:** I'm right there with you, for sure.

**Rachel:** Yeah, thank you.

**Griffin:** Hey, thank you to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our theme song Money Won't Pay. That was the track you heard at the top and bottom of the show. Uh, and it's so good and we're very appreciative that

we can use it. Find a link to that in the episode description. And hey! Celebrate this Max Fun Block Party with us by checking out some other Max Fun shows!

**Rachel:** Yes!

**Griffin:** There's so many! Uh, Rachel's an enormous fan of Stop Podcasting Yourself.

**Rachel:** Yes.

**Griffin:** A devotee, I would say.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Uh, but there's so many shows. There's so many ways to explore this wonderful community. There's gonna be some events and fun stuff happening pretty much all week. Um...

**Rachel:** Yeah, there's some crossover stuff, um...

**Griffin:** Yeah!

**Rachel:** You're gonna see a lot of fun stuff. I would recommend also The Jackie and Laurie Show.

**Griffin:** Yeah!

**Rachel:** It's, like, real funny ladies kind of talking about their experience being funny.

**Griffin:** I like Mission to Zyxx. It's a sort of funny space opera fiction podcast that's really good.

**Rachel:** Oh, and Depresh Mode is really good too.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** Um... That's like a great show, John Moe brings on people to talk about, kind of, mental health and their personal experience with it. Uh, which can be just really kind of cathartic to listen to.

**Griffin:** If you go to [MaximumFun.org/blockparty](https://MaximumFun.org/blockparty), you can find out about all the stuff that's going on during this week. There's an awesome poster...

**Rachel:** Oh, I love it!

**Griffin:** ... that I really need to grab, uh, designed by Paul G. Hammond. It's fantastic, um, and there's a block party playlist that everybody added songs to on Spotify that you can go listen to. So there's a lot of cool stuff going on and we would encourage you to check that out.

And if you are a new listener, if you've never listened to this show before, this is it. This is basically it.

**Rachel:** Yeah, this is about what we do.

**Griffin:** We talk about things that we like. It's short. I like that part, uh...

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** It's, you know, a half hour. In and out.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And you get a little spring in your step, I hope.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** But that's it. We got to go. We got to go, we got other stuff to do. We know you're having fun, but we can't just— You can't hog us.

**Rachel:** Yeah, I will say we have no sign off which continues to be a problem because we never know how to leave.

**Griffin:** Yeah, but we do like to try out some new stuff so this time I'm gonna try... [yells] Bazinga!

**Rachel:** Hmm...

**Griffin:** That was too loud, I think I did it too loud, but I think the concept is strong.

**Rachel:** [uncertain] Mm...

[theme music plays]

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