

## **Wonderful! 202: BTP, Before Two Princes**

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[theme music plays]

**Rachel:**

Hello, this is Rachel McElroy.

**Griffin:**

Hi there, this is Griffin McElroy.

**Rachel:**

And this is Wonderful!

**Griffin:**

Hello, and welcome to Wonderful.

**Rachel:**

Hi.

**Griffin:**

Hey there, what's up, this is Wonderful. How's it going?

**Rachel:**

Hi, I've got my voice back mostly.

**Griffin:**

Rachel's got, I would say, about 64% of her voice back.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, that's fair. That's fair. Probably by the end of the show, I will be down to 37.

**Griffin:**

Yes. I would say last week when it was time for us to record this sh— well pretty much all last week you were at, I would say a good 13.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, it was bad.

**Griffin:**

Maybe 11.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

It was, it was hard to hear you for a, quite a long time.

**Rachel:**

I kept clearing my throat, you know, like sometimes you do that and your, your full voice comes back, so I kept trying and it was just nothing. Just nothing happened as a result.

**Griffin:**

Yeah, it's been a wild two weeks since we last recorded [laughs], I would say.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, yeah.

**Griffin:**

Uh, ever— everybo— except for me, I did not get sick this past fortnight, but I feel like pretty much everybody else did, uh, which is cool.

**Rachel:**

I mean, you say sick, but what it, what was going on for me was really seasonal allergies. I don't think I had a virus.

**Griffin:**

No, but I mean you still felt like dog dookie. Yeah?

**Rachel:**

Yeah. Yeah, no that's true. I guess so.

**Griffin:**

That's sick, you know what I mean? Like, that's not, you're a healthful person, I would say. What with all the wheatgrass that you consume.

**Rachel:**

Well... [laughs]

**Griffin:**

That's a joke, I've never...

**Rachel:**

You've never seen me consume wheat grass.

**Griffin:**

No, no. Um, but this is Wonderful. we're back. We're health... healthier.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Um...

**Rachel:**

Ready to talk about the good stuff?

**Griffin:**

The good stuff. We just ate a bunch of broc-moli.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

We took a bunch of vitamins and did a bunch of jump-imi-jacks and...

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

...and now we are clean-living and ready to do a clean podcast.

**Rachel:**

Yeah. Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Give me a small wonder?

**Rachel:**

Oh man. I mean just having enough hangers to put your clothes on.

**Griffin:**

I honestly, swear to God, I think you said that as your small wonder last week, or last episode.

**Rachel:**

No.

**Griffin:**

No, you don't think so?

**Rachel:**

No...

**Griffin:**

You are, you're, you're wild for these hangers...

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

...and so it would not surprise me if, uh, if...

**Rachel:**

All right let me see.

**Griffin:**

Okay. Part of our, um...

**Rachel:**

I said Halloween décor.

**Griffin:**

Okay, that's better then. Uh, yeah, since our, uh, a third of our house got destroyed in the ice storm, uh, earlier this year? God, time means nothing anymore.

**Rachel:**

I mean, it was February.

**Griffin:**

February. Uh, we've been trying to get our shit fixed up, uh, and we just finally got a closet back that we can put our stuff in so that we don't have it scattered hither and yon across the house like a scavenger hunt.

**Rachel:**

Well, and, yeah and I intentionally ordered more hangers because what had happened to me, at least, was that I could only hang up my clothes if I had some dirty clothes.

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

You know? Like, the idea of having all my clean clothes meant I did not have enough hangers.

**Griffin:**

Yes. So, uh, yes, that's very exciting.

**Rachel:**

So, yeah. It is exciting to know that regardless of my, my laundry cycle...

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

I have enough hangers to hang up my clothes.

**Griffin:**

Yeah, sure. Um, I'ma say hockey's back!

**Rachel:**

Hockey's back!

**Griffin:**

Hockey's back baby, now's the time to get on board with this wonderful new sport they call hockey.

**Rachel:**

You may have to download an app and pay for it. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

You will definitely have to download an app and pay f— I mean there's, yeah. Hockey is...

**Rachel:**

If you are fortunate to have a local team, you will most likely be able to watch your local team on a local television station, but we do not have that.

**Griffin:**

We do not.

**Rachel:**

And so, our only way of watching hockey that we want to watch is through an app.

**Griffin:**

Yes. I wou— if you are interested, uh, this is not a, uh, a paid advertisement for the electronic sports programming network...

**Rachel:**

There you go.

**Griffin:**

...which is what I think ESPN stands for.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

But they have like a \$60 a year package, which is a whole season of hockey. Which compared to other apps that show hockey is a steal.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

And they have most of the games on. That's what we've been watching.

**Rachel:**

And sometimes if you have TNT you can watch hockey games.

**Griffin:**

Sometimes, why the fuck not?

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Why TNT? I don't know.

**Griffin:**

USA's got characters? TNT's got hockey.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

And that's what's up. And you can tune in and watch the undefeated St. Louis Blues.

**Rachel:**

As of this recording.

**Griffin:**

As of this recording.

**Rachel:**

Probably...

**Griffin:**

It's gonna be up tomorrow. They, I mean they have a game to...

**Rachel:**

Okay, okay.

**Griffin:**

We'll be, we'll be fine.

**Rachel:**

Okay, okay.

**Griffin:**

Five and, five and O now? Six and O?

**Rachel:**

Five and O.

**Griffin:**

Baby!

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

You can't beat it! You can't beat Vladimir Tarasenko coming at you with the, the two nastiest goals I ever saw.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

One game. Fuckin' good stuff, hockey is.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

I'm loving it.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

David Perron scoring an accidental open net goal...

**Rachel:**

The big toothy smile!

**Griffin:**

From a, there with a big toothy grin, what a good lad. A sweet lad, winning and winning and winning. Hey, do you wanna go?

**Rachel:**

Yeah, I do. Uh, my first thing is something that I have been, uh, dipping into recently. And that is the rom-com.



**Griffin:**

Interesting.

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

You have been devouring these.

**Rachel:**

I have.

**Griffin:**

That's funny. On our last episode, I brought a song called Rom-com 2021.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, uh...

**Griffin:**

Do you think that's what gave you the itch?

**Rachel:**

[laughs] No, it was more that, like, we were, we were stuck at home with our baby...

**Griffin:**

Mm-hmm.

**Rachel:**

...uh, and I wanted to watch something that I knew would be light and fun.

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

Uh, that I could stop and start, you know without too much headache.

**Griffin:**

Can I, uh, quick aside.

**Rachel:**

Yes.

**Griffin:**

Do you worry about Gus, who is almost 7 months old, uh, seeing something that you are watching on TV and being like, oh he shouldn't, he shouldn't be watching that. I shouldn't be watching anything like scary or...

**Rachel:**

I mean, I will say I intentionally do not watch anything like violent or loud or where people are yelling at each other. 'Cause I have found that if I watch something where people are arguing, it does make him upset. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

Yeah, okay.

**Rachel:**

Um...

**Griffin:**

This is a bad time for me to confess that I have watched Midnight Mass with him a couple of times.

**Rachel:**

Oh...

**Griffin:**

But it's on mute, so, like... And if there's scary stuff that happens, I just turn him away.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] You just turn him away.

**Griffin:**

Yeah. He's very easy to, like, position however you want to position him.

**Rachel:**

That's fair. That's fair. Um, so recently for the first time, I watched Notting Hill which I had never seen before. Uh, I watched Broadcast News not long ago which I had never seen before. Uh, just watched The Long Shot which I hadn't seen. Um...

**Griffin:**

It's every time I see you...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...by yourself, you've been watching a rom-com.

**Rachel:**

This morning, Gus woke up early, I started *The Mirror has Two Faces*, never seen that one.

**Griffin:**

I've never even heard of that one.

**Rachel:**

It's Barbra Streisand, Jeff Daniels.

**Griffin:**

Well then.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, get there. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

Get there. Hockey and Barbra Streisand.

**Rachel:**

Um, I, I think I like, I, for a while I felt real snobby about the rom-com.

**Griffin:**

Sure.

**Rachel:**

You know, they, like, have gotten kind of a bad rap, um, because they are so targeted, uh, towards a particular kind of person who wants, like, a love story, you know? And a will-they-won't-they.

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

Um, and I thought, like, oh no I only like, uh, *film*. Um, but I...

**Griffin:**

Well, that was really good, babe.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, all right. [laughs] That character?

**Griffin:**

It was powerful.

**Rachel:**

Yeah. But um, I don't know, lately I've just been kind of enjoying it. And I found a great article that kind of gets at why I think I like it. Um, but first I'd just, for, for those of you who are like, "What's a rom-com?" This is another character.

**Griffin:**

I think most of our friends...

**Rachel:**

This is another character I'm trying out. "What's a rom-com, Rachel?"

**Griffin:**

Most of our friends at home know. That's a good, that's really good.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Um, I thought it was kind of nice to, like, see it broken down a little bit. Um, but it says in a typical romantic comedy, the two lovers tend to be young, likable, and seemingly meant for each other, yet they are kept apart by some complicating circumstance. Uh, until, surmounting all obstacles, they are finally united.

**Griffin:**

Sh— yeah, definitely. I'm trying to think of a rom-com that breaks that mold and it does not exist.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, no. That's, I mean, that's, that's kind of always it. Um, it's, it's something that, like, often gets pronounced dead. Uh, like, in the 1970's people started saying the rom-com is dead and 20—

**Griffin:**

In the 70's?

**Rachel:**

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Griffin:**

What the fuck had come out before the 70's that was—

**Rachel:**

Oh, see you're not, you're not thinking of the, like, Katherine Hepburn, Cary Grant...

**Griffin:**

No, I'm not.

**Rachel:**

Yeah. The rom-com, I mean...

**Griffin:**

I guess.

**Rachel:**

...rom-com existed, like, way back in like silent film, like, with like, you know, Charlie Chaplin kinda stuff.

**Griffin:**

I guess so. I just think that if it came out before the song Two Princes was out...

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Yeah?

**Griffin:**

...it doesn't count. It wasn't a rom-com.

**Rachel:**

Okay. [laughs] That's, uh, BTP and ATP...

**Griffin:**

Yes, exactly.

**Rachel:**

...is how you... time works?

**Griffin:**

Abs- absolutely.

**Rachel:**

Uh, 2016, Washington Post declared it dead. 2019, Variety Magazine did. Um, a lot of that is because, uh, you know, like, f— the film industry has stopped investing in the romantic comedy. Um, it used to be a huge money maker. For example, My Best Friend's Wedding was made on a 38 million dollar budget and brought in more than 299 million.

**Griffin:**

Jesus.

**Rachel:**

Uh, Pretty Woman, uh, was made for 14 million, brought in 463 million. Like, it used to be just a huge ROI.

**Griffin:**

Yeah, I mean there's no CGI in Hitch.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] I haven't seen it, that's my next.

**Griffin:**

I, th— I said that, and then I immediately was like, is there fucking CGI in Hitch?

**Rachel:**

I haven't seen Hitch, that's another one I need to watch.

**Griffin:**

There's probably a thing where, like, Kevin James, like, you know, f- f- falls into a big thing of elephant poop and then the elephant sits on him...

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

...and they couldn't do that safely and so it is like a computer-generated elephant.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Or a computer-generated Kevin, Kevin James.

**Rachel:**

Um, and then more recently there, you just haven't seen that kind of return. Fool's Gold with Kate Hudson and Matthew McConaughey, um, was made for 70 million and only grossed 111 million.

**Griffin:**

Shameful!

**Rachel:**

I know. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

A shameful 40 million dollar profit.

**Rachel:**

So now what you see mostly are these, like, huge blockbusters. You know, like these, these incredibly expensive movies, which you'd think would be riskier but are kind of what everybody's making right now.

**Griffin:**

I will, I will grant you that with a caveat of, like, streaming services are still pounding that drum pretty fucking hard.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, and that's what I saw in the article too, is that Netflix makes tons of these things.

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

And you see a lot of, like, serial, like, uh, sitcom kind of, like, explorations of this thing too.

**Griffin:**

But you also get, like, if you get a sic— if you... What is the, uh, there's like The Kissing Booth I think is one of them that's had like three.

**Rachel:**

Oh.

**Griffin:**

And then To All the Boys I've Loved Before...

**Rachel:**

Yeah, huh?

**Griffin:**

I've not watched any of these films, but I—

**Rachel:**

Yeah, no, I haven't either.

**Griffin:**

Every time I turn on Netflix, it's like, damn, All the Boys I've Loved Before Again, Once More 2?

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Holy shit!

**Rachel:**

Um, so, uh, they're not as, like, escapist and wish fulfillment as they used to be.

**Griffin:**

Yeah.



**Rachel:**

Um, which is fine by me. Example I saw was, uh, The Big Sick.

**Griffin:**

Yeah!

**Rachel:**

Which can be...

**Griffin:**

That was a, that was a really good one!

**Rachel:**

...considered a romantic comedy. Although the article did point out that the female-lead is in a coma most of the film. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

That is another good point.

**Rachel:**

But, that it, it just, it, like, it tends to explore more, like, the individual, uh, than, you know, like—

**Griffin:**

The love between this—

**Rachel:**

The, the pairing, yeah. Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Right, yeah. That's interesting, I've never thought of that before but most, most rom-coms that I can remember coming out in the last decade that I enjoy do not involve any amount of, sort of, codependency [laughs] whatsoever.

**Rachel:**

Yeah. So, so here is, there's a 2019 New York Times feature by Wesley Morris that's talks about, kind of the absence of the rom-com, uh, and kind of, like, our inexplicable love for it. Uh, and he says, and I, I just, I felt that, I really appreciated this, "romantic comedy is the only genre committed to

relatively ordinary people, no capes, no spaceships, no infinite sequels, figure out how to deal meaningfully with another human being.”

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

“These are the lowest stakes movies we have that are also about our highest standards for ourselves. Movies predicted on the improvement— Movies predicated on the improvement of communication, the deciphering of strangers, and the performance of more degrees of honesty than I ever knew existed. Gentle, cruel, blunt, clarifying, TMI, strategic, tardy, medical, sexual, sartorial. They take our primal hunger to connect with one another and give it a story and at their best they do much more. They make you believe in the power of communion.”

**Griffin:**

Yeah, I mean when I think about How to Lose a Man in 10 Days...

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

No, I think that that, that is, y— poignant and true of certain rom-coms, but I also think there are some that are...

**Rachel:**

Well, I just like, this, this whole idea of, like, banter, you know? This idea of, like, two people kind of, like, sparring with each other and, and figuring out who they are and what they can get from one another. Like, you only see that in rom-coms.

**Griffin:**

Yeah, true.

**Rachel:**

You know? Uh, and, and even the bad ones I feel like you get a little of that. Like, I, I've kind of enjoyed watching the ones that are less good just because it's like, sometimes you get some really, some really nice sparring, you know?

**Griffin:**

Sure.

**Rachel:**

Uh, and, uh, I don't know.

**Griffin:**

You mean, sort of, verbal sparring and not like they do martial arts practice...

**Rachel:**

Yes. Yeah, yeah.

**Griffin:**

Okay.

**Rachel:**

Although, Mr. And Mrs. Smith, you know?

**Griffin:**

I would not in a million years call that a rom- a r—

**Rachel:**

Uh, it did come up when I was, when I was researching.

**Griffin:**

Jesus, okay.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, so the, so the rom-com as I mentioned has evolved. 30's and 40's it was Katherine Hepburn and Cary Grant. Um, and, you know, and then we had, you know, When Harry Met Sally which is like, kind of the gold standard.

**Griffin:**

I was going to ask you, is it, is that your favorite romantic comedy?

**Rachel:**

I mean, when, when I was coming up, yeah. For sure.

**Griffin:**

It's, it is mine, still today...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...with, with a bullet.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

I can't think of anything that comes, even close to it.

**Rachel:**

Yeah...

**Griffin:**

I think you turned me onto that movie for the f— I watched that movie for the first time with you and I was like, there's no way that I am going to care about Billy Crystal's romantic status.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, I know!

**Griffin:**

And then by the end of it, I'm like, yes!

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

They found love in a hopeless place.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Um, Sleepless in Seattle, another Meg Ryan joint.

**Griffin:**

Another good one, yeah.

**Rachel:**

Another very good one. I mean that's what's kind of fun is that, if, and early enough in their career where they still kind of have to take these big roles, um, you see a lot of good actors in rom-coms.

**Griffin:**

Sure, of course.

**Rachel:**

Um...

**Griffin:**

Thomas Hanks.

**Rachel:**

Thomas Hanks. Yeah. For some reason, like, not really a leading man type, but like, definitely works. Just so likable.

**Griffin:**

Not in a, uh...

**Rachel:**

You feel safe with Tom Hanks, you know?

**Griffin:**

That's what it is, right? Like, usually, it's a McConaughey sort of like...

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...stone cold handsome, like, that's a good-looking dude, right there.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Tom Hanks, a good-looking guy, but uh...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Not the kind that you think is, like, going to be pursued in any way but, damn. Sleepless in Seattle, that's...

**Rachel:**

I know.

**Griffin:**

What a dr- dreamboat.

**Rachel:**

Uh-huh. There was a Vanity Fair article I was looking at that ranked the best romantic comedies. Uh, another Meg Ryan, You've Got Mail.

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

Also Tom Hanks. Um...

**Griffin:**

That's funny.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

That's funny that they did the one, and everybody was like, I can't wait to watch these two get together.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] I know.

**Griffin:**

And then you finish the movie and, spoiler alert, that is, of course, what happens.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

But then, You've Got Mail it's like, wait are they the same fucking people?

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

Is this in the part of the, Sleepless multiverse?

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Um, 10 Things I Hate About You, which, you know, points to the, the kind of, one of the creators of romantic comedy, Shakespeare.

**Griffin:**

Yes, of course.

**Rachel:**

Um, which, I also enjoy that film. Groundhog Day, one of your faves, on the list.

**Griffin:**

Yeah, um, I mean, if you want to talk about a film about personal improvement...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Yeah, absolutely. But I don't know that necessarily...

**Rachel:**

It centers around him trying to win over... Andie MacDowell.

**Griffin:**

Yes, but once again, Andie MacDowell doesn't get a ton of agency or, like, growth during that, that film.

**Rachel:**

True...

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

But it is a romantic comedy.

**Griffin:**

It is... there is romance and it is certainly very funny.

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm. Um, and, yeah there's, there's any number of, of movies on this list. Uh, I mentioned My Best Friend's Wedding, another one. You'll notice, a lot of these, largely white. Uh, heterosexual...

**Griffin:**

Yes, of course.

**Rachel:**

...um, but of course, you know, we're seeing, we're seeing some improvement in that area in the recent years.

**Griffin:**

Sure. I mean Jennifer Lopez, like, made an indelible mark on this whole genre...

**Rachel:**

Yeah, it's true.

**Griffin:**

... I feel like there was a streak of...

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

Uh, I haven't seen all of her romantic comedy work, but there were certainly, uh, a lot of them in a very short period of time.

**Rachel:**

Another one I haven't seen, Moonstruck. I've been curious about that one 'cause it always comes up on these lists and I don't know it.

**Griffin:**

Is that Cher?



**Rachel:**

Yeah, that's Cher.

**Griffin:**

That's Cher, baby.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Um, yeah. I, I don't know, like, it's not like my favorite film is a romantic comedy but if I am sitting in front of the TV and I wanna watch something that I know is going to be fun...

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

...and, you know, I'm gonna have a good time...

**Griffin:**

Sure.

**Rachel:**

...romantic comedy.

**Griffin:**

Is Dune a romantic comedy?

**Rachel:**

No.

**Griffin:**

Okay.

**Rachel:**

I would not say comedy is a, is a signature feature of that film.

**Griffin:**

Yeah, there needs to be like a romantic sci-fi. You know what I mean?

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

Man, I wish I was clever enough to think of how to fuse those two words, but sometimes I just don't got it, you know what I mean?

**Rachel:**

[laughs] I mean, Battlestar Galactica had some romance.

**Griffin:**

No.

**Rachel:**

Not enough. I guess, is what we're...

**Griffin:**

Not enough, if you ask me.

**Rachel:**

What my work presupposes...

**Griffin:**

Mm-hmm.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Hey, can I steal you away?

**Rachel:**

Yes.

**Griffin:**

Awesome.

[musical stinger plays]

[ad break]

**Griffin:**

We have a couple grumpo-grabs here and I would love to read the first one, because it is for Mariah and it is from Dan who says: "Hi Mariah, you are wonderful and I hope that you, Gwen and Cleo are having a wonderful day. Happy birthday and I hope you enjoy this gift of a birthday message on your favorite chill-out podcast. You're perfect, valid, and loved. I love you, from your favorite spice, Dan."

You know, I don't think that this is a chill-out podcast. I don't think of it that way.

**Rachel:**

Oh yeah?

**Griffin:**

I think of it as like a high-octane thrill-ride...

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Uh-huh.

**Griffin:**

...through, um, d- different experiences...

**Rachel:**

Uh-huh.

**Griffin:**

...and art, but it's a, I mean, hold on tight or else your butt's gonna go flying off the seat, you'll go flying up into space.

**Rachel:**

People often remark upon my high-octane energy.

**Griffin:**

Yeah...

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

...they always say, she's a, she's a thrill-seeker and a thrill-giver.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

Uh, can I read the next one?

**Griffin:**

Oh, please.

**Rachel:**

It is for Jonathan, it is from Rosemary. "Happy anniversary and congrats on ascending to candidacy. We're probably playing video games as you hear this and I am definitely expecting a big kiss right about... now. Between cats, vid games..."

**Griffin:**

That's a c— way, the cool way to say video games.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] "...road trips and being goofs, life together is one big wonder after another. Thanks for being a great friend and a wonderful partner. I love you, ya big handsome."

**Griffin:**

That is delightful.

**Rachel:**

It is.

**Griffin:**

I'm guessing ascending to candidacy means that Jonathan has reached 35, which is when you can be pres— president.

**Rachel:**

Oh, I thought it was some kind of doctor thing.

**Griffin:**

Oh, you know it might be that too. You know, I, I c— I could be the president next year.

**Rachel:**

Oh!

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

Well, I, I think you probably need to start working now.

**Griffin:**

No, I'm gonna, I'm figuring I'll come in there, like, uh...

**Rachel:**

You think, like, on your birthday?

**Griffin:**

Yeah, I'm a nor— I'm a, but I'm a normal guy!

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

All these other posers just will tell you what they wanna tell you for your vote. Wouldn't it be fun though?

**Rachel:**

I heat my hotdogs up in the microwave, like a regular guy.

**Griffin:**

Wow, babe.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Wow!

**Rachel:**

Well, that, that could be your platform. Regular guy.

**Griffin:**

Who heats his hotdogs up in a microwave?

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

I got a lot more going on than just that.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Well, but, I mean, how are you gonna, else are you gonna approach the common man?

**Griffin:**

Yeah, I mean that's the only thing that we all have in common in this big blue marble we call the Earth.

**Rachel:**

Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

[upbeat music plays]

**Renee:**

Well, hello. I'm Renee Colvert.

**Alexis:**

Hi, I'm Alexis Preston, and we're the hosts of Can I Pet Your Dog?

**Renee:**

And, we got breaking news, we got an expose, all the beans have been spilled via an Apple Podcast review that said "This show isn't well researched". Well yeah, no duh. Of course, it's not. Not since the day we started has it been well researched. Guessing and anthropomorphizing dogs is what we do.

**Alexis:**

The Can I Pet Your Dog promise is that we will never do more than 10 seconds of research before telling you, excitedly, about any dog we see.

**Renee:**

I'm gonna come at you with top 10 enthusiasm, minimal facts.

**Alexis:**

We're here for a good time, not an educated time.

**Renee:**

So if you love dogs, and you don't love research...

**Alexis:**

[laughs]

**Renee:**

...well, you know what? Come on in to Can I Pet Your Dog? podcast every Tuesday on Maximum Fun network.

**Alexis:**

[laughs]

[music ends]

**Griffin:**

Uh, we bill this as an enthusiast podcast.

**Rachel:**

Yes.

**Griffin:**

And so my topic for today might be a little too on the nose, but it's when people are very into extremely niche hobbies. How do you say that word? Ni— do you say ni-? Niche or Nitch or Nitche?

**Rachel:**

[laughs] I say niche.

**Griffin:**

I say Frederick niche whenever I say that word.

**Rachel:**

Some people say nitch.

**Griffin:**

Nitch? I never even, God, there's so many fun ways to say that word.

**Rachel:**

I mean any time we see a French word, it's just like do what, do what you want.

**Griffin:**

Do what you, have fun with it.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Um, I, I find when somebody is enthusiastic about their hobby and it's one that I don't have any interest in necessarily, or have never attempted, I find that very, like, contagious, most, most of the time. Like, that enthusiasm makes me happy just knowing, like, that that person has something that they are happy about and really into that I don't know anything about. Um, and sometimes, yes, it makes me want to get into that thing too once I learn about it. Uh, case and point, sausage making. Uh...

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Yeah.

**Griffin:**

We watched a lot of, uh, oh God I can't remember his name! The sausage, oh my God. The dude from Chicago, I'm emb— I feel so embarrassed.

**Rachel:**

I mean, you need to look it up.

**Griffin:**

I need to look it up. Nah, I'm too busy doing my segment.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

But you all know what, I, I've talked about sausage guy on this show before.



**Rachel:**

The sausage, the YouTube, the sausage man.

**Griffin:**

The YouTube sausage man. Uh, and so I, Rachel got me, I think sausage making stuff for, like, my birthday which I did want, and it wasn't for me, but still it was fun...

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...to watch it. Um, that is the thing, honestly, with most of the YouTube stuff that we used to watch together before we had a child sleeping in the same room with us.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, the knife-maker.

**Griffin:**

There was the knife-maker

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

There was sausage guy...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...there was art restoration guy.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, we didn't ever take that on. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

No, like 'cause I don't give a shit about that stuff...

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Yeah.

**Griffin:**

But, like, watching somebody who is... take the art restoration guy. Like, I have no artistic eye whatsoever. Whatsoever, not even a little bit. I go to museums and I nod at things. Oh cool...

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

...cool shapes and colors, right?

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

But to see somebody who's like, here is the special hammer that I use...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...to take the takes off the— I'm like that's radical.

**Rachel:**

Yeah. Yeah.

**Griffin:**

And it's awesome that you like it too. That is honestly why I feel like we watch so many YouTube videos. Whether it's like somebody who, like, I just put up a million dominoes, or like, I'm gonna teach you crokinole strategies. Like, I, I don't know those things but it's fun to see you be into those things. Um, the thing that, honestly, made me think about this is, uh, folks who build and paint miniatures, like for, for games. For role-playing games and tabletop games and strategy games and stuff like that.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, okay.

**Griffin:**

Um, because it's, uh, I, I've, I'm obviously quite into RPG's and D&D and stuff like that since we started doing Adventure Zone and I've been into the idea of, of the small and meticulous work that goes into painting a, you know, two-inch tall, little figure.

**Rachel:**

With that big magnifying glass.

**Griffin:**

With like... Yeah, I mean you get to use a fucking jeweler's loop.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Like, that's rad!

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

And also you get to use a little, uh, air brush and all this thing...

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

I, I have a few friends that I follow on socy who, like, uh, paint and are, are really, really into this scene. And you wa— I, I've watched them, like, start a project. And you're like hey here's my new, like, uh, little war bishop from, you know, Warhammer or whatever, uh and I'm gonna start working on it. And then three weeks later, they're like "I just finished the second coat." I'm like, that thing is so little!

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

It's such a little thing and it takes you a month to make one of them.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

There's something very admirable to me about that. But, they're also, like, they speak in a vocabulary that I don't know.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

And so, I get to learn about the thing too, but mostly it's like, you guys are spending so much time and effort working on these very small things solely because you are so into this scene. And that's awes— like, it's hard not to get excited about that.

**Rachel:**

Yeah. That, that, it kind of speaks to our interests in, in shows like Ninja Warrior, too.

**Griffin:**

Sure, yeah.

**Rachel:**

Of these people who have spent so time, so much time on a very particular skill, you know, with its own set of, like, rules and requirements. And it's just kind of fascinating, uh, because it's this, like, whole other world that you're peeking in on.

**Griffin:**

Yeah. You know what's messed up though, is I feel like you only appreciate that when you watch that show, for some reason, as much as we watch it.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Yeah, yeah.

**Griffin:**

Where you, like, see how excited that they get about a new obstacle and watch them, like, all try to figure it out, one at a time, it's like...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

But I feel like when you start watching Ninja Warrior, it's like look at how high that guy jumped. You, like, you, it requires a certain amount on Ninja Warrior acumen.

**Rachel:**

That's, yeah, it is funny. I have talked to people who are like, I don't really get it, I don't really get why people like that show so much. And I'm just like, well you're just not watching enough of it. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

You know, you gotta... It's, it's a commitment. Here's, here's another big one. Model trains, right? You hear about somebody...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...being into model trains. What, was it, uh, Bake-off? We were watching some show where...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...somebody was like, and here's my enormous model train. And you see that and you think that's strange, like that's a, that is objectively a strange hobby. It, you have to use a room in your house for it. This is my bedroom. This is a three bedroom, two bathroom, one train room house...

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

...listed on Zillow. Like, that's wild and yet you see my man Rod Stewart, from music, who has spent 30 years making the same model train s—

**Rachel:**

[laughs] I don't think I knew that.

**Griffin:**

I'll, m— pause.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

[distantly] You gotta see Rod Stewart's model train. Oh, I, I actually looked it up already. Look at this shit.

**Rachel:**

Oh my gosh, that looks like a real city skyline.

**Griffin:**

It looks like a real city, and he's been working on it for 30 years!

**Rachel:**

Wow.

**Griffin:**

And what's funny is, the perspective of all these pictures, where he's standing with it...

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

...it does look so much like a normal city that it makes Rod Stewart look like a Godzilla who's about to come smashing down.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

It's so wild. And what, what I appreciate so much about it, is it makes you realize that Rod Stewart, from music, has been an incredibly successful songwriter and, uh, performer and he has had that career, apparently just to fund his remarkable model train hobby.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, you know, this makes me wonder how long it is before one of the McElroys gets a train hobby.

**Griffin:**

I mean, we have enough hobbies. This is the thing though, like...

**Rachel:**

You say that, but I, I think it's unlimited. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

[laughs]

**Rachel:**

There's unlimited capacity for hobbies in this family.

**Griffin:**

That is a fair point. Uh, it's, it's, I, there are things that we're into, right? Like Juice is into, uh, woodworking now.

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

Travis is, Travis has bread-making and blacksmithing and a bunch of other hobbies that start with B.

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

Uh, I do some, like, uh, you know, game console restoration stuff.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, you get your mods.

**Griffin:**

But, that's not even remotely cl— I'm not even close to Rod Stewart level...

**Rachel:**

No, no. You're not.

**Griffin:**

...obsession with any of these things. And...

**Rachel:**

Yeah. You're still young yet. There's still time.

**Griffin:**

Yeah, I mean I'm sure, I, you know, if I start now I could put a 30 year train set together.

**Rachel:**

I would say that, that model trains is something that, you know, as you mature, you're able to invest more time and resource into.

**Griffin:**

Yeah, exactly. I particularly love this example of Rod Stewart because when you learn about, like a, uh, a notable person...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...like a famous person, and then you find out, like, you know, you thought that music was his passion. But, actually, let me talk to you about his fuckin' trains 'cause there's a...

**Griffin:**

It's like Richard Garriott, the game developer...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...who basically created Ultima as, and it, like, was foundational for this entire genre of video games.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Uh, but he was just doing that so that he could raise enough money to go to space. That's awe—

**Rachel:**



[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Like, that, when you learn something like that about a person, like it shows you a, a secret side of them that is awesome.

**Rachel:**

That's like, uh, aforementioned Tom Hanks is a big typewriter fan.

**Griffin:**

But that does not surprise me.

**Rachel:**

He's got lots of typewriters.

**Griffin:**

See, that's the thing. I think it also has to be surprising. Like, Tom Hanks, you know, collects and restores typewriters. Yeah, ok— yeah I, I could see that.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Okay.

**Griffin:**

Rod Stewart, from music, has been working on the same model train set for 30 years.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Like, what? What?

**Rachel:**

Shaquille O'Neal is into bonsai.

**Griffin:**

Yes! That's, that would be fantastic...

**Rachel:**

I know, it would be.

**Griffin:**

...to watch his very big hands cutting around a very small tree.

**Rachel:**

[laughs] Yeah, little tiny scissors.

**Griffin:**

Oh god!

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Can we get Shaq, if I start sending Shaq just, like, cold call bonsai kits...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Do you think, like, I could plant the seed? I don't know where one gets a bonsai kit.

**Rachel:**

If you put it in like a, uh, like a pizza box...

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

...or, like, uh, like an IcyHot package...

**Griffin:**

Yes.

**Rachel:**

...and then he opens it thinking it's a product that he knows and loves. And then he, like, oh hey...

**Griffin:**

Yeah, or that he has to, like, sponsor and t—

**Rachel:**

...it's a bonsai tree.

**Griffin:**

Yes, absolutely.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Um, yeah. I don't know. I, I probably will never have a hobby to the Rod Stewart level, right?

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

And I also will never pick up a lot of the hobbies that my friends have that I admire so much because of their dedication to it and how much I learn from them. But like, that's enough for me. Like, to be able to get that second-hand...

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

...fascination and excitement and enthusiasm about something is a, is an incredible thing.

**Rachel:**

It is incredible. I, I will say, you know, as somebody that is very practical, I am grateful that you do not have that level of hobby. Be— uh, because we have two very young children.

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

And any time I watch these shows where somebody, like, has the room of, like, the big train set and I think how much time their partner has spent away from them [laughs] managing real life.

**Griffin:**

You know, Rod Stewart may have a partner that is also deeply in... I feel like if you live with Rod Stewart, you will get into trains.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Like it would be outrageous for you, "Oh this is the train room, I never go in there."

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

No way! Are you kidding me?

**Rachel:**

I would be curious about that. I wanna research that a little bit just to find out, like is this a shared interest between the two.

**Griffin:**

I would love to see an episode of MTV Cribs hosted by Rod Stewart. This may exist, where he's "Like yeah, here's the foyer, here's my bedroom, here's my infinity pool, and there's the, this is the, I have four refrigerators and, uh, there's all my gold records. But, come with me."

**Rachel:**

Come with me.

**Griffin:**

To the big show.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

"Toot-toot, everybody." And then he has like a little train that you ride on that takes you to the train room.

**Rachel:**

Yeah!

**Griffin:**

Oh my god.

**Rachel:**

A little, like, train engineer's caps that you put on as a guest.

**Griffin:**

Yes, yes!

**Rachel:**

Mm.

**Griffin:**

God that's good.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Do you think he wishes he lived in a train, like on Snowpiercer?

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

And just like, was on an eternal train that never stopped?

**Rachel:**

By the, the fun, buddy romp, Snowpiercer [laughs].

**Griffin:**

The rom-com, Snowpiercer. Um, hey. Thank you to our, uh, uh, to bo en and Augustus, our bo en and Augustus...

**Rachel:**

Yeah, sure.

**Griffin:**

For the use of our theme song, Money Won't Pay. You can find a link to that in the episode description. Um, I wanna say thank you to everybody who tried out some new stuff at the MaxFun block party. It was a, it was a, a lot of fun.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

And, there are so many shows on the network, so many new shows on the network.

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

Um, that, you know, if you've never given a shot, try giving it a shot 'cause you never know what, you know, little test you might take on a new show that will then become your favorite podcast.

**Rachel:**

Yeah, de— the cool thing about Block Party is there was a lot of crossover so you get an opportunity to kinda stick with somebody you know but try out something new.

**Griffin:**

Yes. Thank you all also for bearing with us last week. It was, uh, it was, even compared to some other times we've had this year, a real shit-show.

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

Um, but we've, we've, uh, we're back on, on track here and um, we, we missed, we missed doing the show last week.

**Rachel:**

We did, yeah.

**Griffin:**

And now we're back to talk about Rod Stewart at length.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

**Griffin:**

Uh, I think that's it. We got some stuff at mcelroymerch.com if you want to check that out.

**Rachel:**

Mm-hmm.

**Griffin:**

And, um, there's a live—

**Rachel:**

More live shows.

**Griffin:**

There's a live TAZ show coming up, virtual live TAZ show next Friday. Uh, and you can find, uh, all the details about that at, um...

**Rachel:**

themcelroy.family

**Griffin:**

Um, that's it.

**Rachel:**

I cannot stop thinking about Shaquille O'Neal with little scissors doing bonsai now.

**Griffin:**

He might do it. Would it be a bigger tree?

**Rachel:**

[laughs]

**Griffin:**

For a bigger, for a, a bigger guy?

**Rachel:**

For a bigger gentleman?

**Griffin:**

Yeah.

**Rachel:**

He walks into the big and tall bonsai store. [laughs]

**Griffin:**

Yes! Aw, what a beautiful dream.

**Rachel:**

Yeah.

[theme music plays]

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