

Wonderful! 183: Nature's Master Chief

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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:

And right now we are traveling, uh, through the airwaves in a pretty unusual way I'd say, which is to say, by the seat of our pants.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

We're just sitting downstairs. Just got little son down for a nap. Big son started daycare again today. Now little son, fun thing about him, only sleeps in about 20 minute increments.

Rachel:

And we've talked about this.

Griffin:

But that is to say, we now know that we live our lives 20 minutes at a time.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

And so we're gonna be recording this episode probably in two chunks for the rest of...

Rachel:

Fast and the Furious.

Griffin:

Fast and furious. I have my topic prepared.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Rachel does not.

Rachel:

I do not.

Griffin:

Have you considered the possibility that this is a... gonna be a freakishly long nap? And then we're just going to be sitting here and you're gonna be, like, having to freestyle a topic for the first time.

Rachel:

I am wondering. So there- there's a real sliding doors situation where there's the topic I would have prepared had we not started.

Griffin:

Oh my goodness. Yeah.

Rachel:

And now there's the topic that I will prepare in response to whatever your topic...

Griffin:

Just by looking around at shit in the room.

Rachel:

Well, no.

Griffin:

Oh, okay.

Rachel:

To whatever your topic is.

Griffin:

Okay. I was gonna say, I got a lot of great stuff in my office. So if you see, um...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... you know, a-

Rachel:

Rug.

Griffin:

Rug.

Rachel:

I like rug.

Griffin:

Name tags.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative]

Griffin:

Nintendo 3DS charger that I have out for some reason.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative] Ceiling fan.

Griffin:

Ceiling fan. We love hiiiiim.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Then, you know what, if that's what we do this episode, that's what we do this episode. People are getting that down, dirty, raw stuff from *Wonderful!* this month, and they know what they signed up for.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

This is *Wonderful!* It's a show where we talk about things that we like, things that we are into, and we literally just ran up the stairs. I'm a little gassed as they say. Do you have any smalls?

Rachel:

I do actually.

Griffin:

Oh, what'cha got?

Rachel:

I was gonna make sure that we, we did that segment...

Griffin:

Okay. Okay.

Rachel:

... because I've been wanting to bring this for weeks and I keep forgetting and it is... And this is something that only people that have been around small infants will know.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Is getting that fuzz out from in between the fingers.

Griffin:

Oh my God. It's, I mean, if... Okay, if you don't have children, I'm gonna get nasty here. But sometimes you get some stuff out of your belly button, and it's, like, whoa that was a lot of stuff in there. I don't know. Maybe this is just a me thing. But...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

It's the same thing except the child has, what? Eight, eight of those crevices in their hands alone.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Oh that's good stuff.

Rachel:

So lil', lil' babies keep their fists clenched very often, and so...

Griffin:

Especially when they're full of rage.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And hatred. Like our small infant.

Rachel:

[laughs] And so sometimes when they stretch their fingers out, you can get some little fuzz out from there.

Griffin:

Get in the crud.

Rachel:

And it's the most satisfying.

Griffin:

'Cause it's a lot, man. It's a lot.

Rachel:

And- and it regenerates everyday. [laughs]

Griffin:

Instantly. I don't know, it's like he's grabbing garments and squeezing, just raking...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... his thing— fingers across 'em. Yeah.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, wow, in all that time I really shoulda had something, but I didn't...

Rachel:

It's fair. You got excited about the finger fuzz.

Griffin:

There was a Indian restaurant we used to eat at here all the time in Austin. And it was very reliable, very fast. Everything was pretty tasty, and then I think did we both get food poisoning, like, or just you?

Rachel:

I mean as I remember it, it was just me. [laughs]

Griffin:

You got some of the worst food poisoning I've seen from you, and we said, "No. Never again. We've been burned."

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And that was, not a joke, three, four years ago?

Rachel:

I just, like, I couldn't, I couldn't get excited about it.

Griffin:

Yeah, because you've seen it [singing] from both sides now, as Joni Mitchell says.

Rachel:

[laughs] Yeah.

Griffin:

And, uh...

Rachel:

Her favid, favorite song about food poisoning.

Griffin:

Yeah, about getting, getting sick with Indian food. Uh, but, you know what? This week, took a look in the mirror. We said, "You know what? Maybe it's time to open our hearts back up."

Rachel:

When you have dietary restrictions that rotate around dairy and soy, you start looking at cuisines that are more accessible to you.

Griffin:

Yep.

Rachel:

And Indian food is a great option...

Griffin:

Crushing it.

Rachel:

... for me right now.

Griffin:

So, uh, we both went wild. We both got two entrees each that we continue to eat over the course of, like, a whole week. I just finished mine, and, uh...

Rachel:

I think of that as, like, a Travis McElroy tip.

Griffin:

Oh yeah.

Rachel:

That, uh, I did not exercise until very recently.

Griffin:

Until you married into our...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... monstrous family, yeah. Um, do you want to know what I've prepared for you?

Rachel:

Please.

Griffin:

For my topic for this episode is...

Rachel:

Please.

Griffin:

Waterfalls. Not just the song. Although I could do a whole thing about the song.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It is, um...

Rachel:

Griffin has...

Griffin:

It's kind, it's kinda my favorite TLC song.

Rachel:

Griffin has performed that song.

Griffin:

I have. It used to be one of my, uh, it was a karaoke go to for a while.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It was an... I did it a couple times at an open mic. Uh, yes. I- I adore that song.

Rachel:

Yeah. Like a very spirited performance you give.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

It's not one of those, like, winky, like, huh-ho, can you believe I'm singing this song? It's like, no, I love this song.

Griffin:

It's a fucking good song.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It's got a beau... Like the, the hook of it is great. And...

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative]

Griffin:

... the, the verses go to some very interesting and dark places might I add.

Rachel:

That's fair.

Griffin:

Um, but, uh, no I want to talk about the actual water th... the thing. The water thing. The water feat, water feature. That makes it sound like a thing you have in your front yard. I couldn't find, like, the classification of it. It's not a body of water. It is, uh, it's a, it's just when water kinda falls.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

And there's that... that can mean a lot of sort of different things because there's a lot a different types of waterfalls. But it's just like, I think we can all agree, a nice big mountain. Love it. A big canyon. I've never been to the Grand Canyon, but I've seen some canyons before. I love a good canyon or a gulch with a river running through it. Yes please.

Rachel:

Have you been to Niagara Falls?

Griffin:

I've not even been to the big boy. No.

Rachel:

Oh, that's the biggest boy.

Griffin:

I know. You've been there. Right?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It seems like a kinda place that your parents would just kind of spirit you away to on a weekend.

Rachel:

[laughs] For sure.

Griffin:

Yeah. Um, no. I've never been to... I would say the most majestic waterfall I've seen is probably Ruby Falls in Chattanooga. Uh, which is, uh, an indoor, cavernous waterfall, uh, that is...

Rachel:

Oh my gosh, that sounds like the best beginning to a country song.

Griffin:

Ruby Falls, Chattanooga?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Or just the word Chattanooga?

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Chattanooga. It's fantastic. It was a fine, it was a fine trip.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I remember I took home a lot of, uh, fake gemstones from that trip. My Nonnie took me, um, it was a great time at Ruby Falls, but there are far more majestic... If you live in Chattanooga, I'm not trying to dis you're, you're beloved waterfall. But there's better ones out there. But any waterfall I love. And this segment wasn't inspired by some profound waterfall childhood memory that I have. Although living in West Virginia, one of my great regrets is that I was not more nature-y, because there's a lot of great

hiking in West Virginia, obviously, and a lot of great waterfalls that I found while looking, looking up this segment. Uh...

Rachel:

Yeah, you know, I will say at some point in our relationship, Griffin expressed his shock to me that I had never been whitewater rafting.

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

And then expressed to me that it was a very easy thing to come by where you lived.

Griffin:

Yeah, I mean I only did it a few times. But every time it left, like, an indelible impression on me of just, like, I need to be more outdoorsy 'cause this fucking rules. And it does.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Wh- whitewater rafting is kinda like going over a, a bunch of really small waterfalls if you think about it.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Sometimes you go over a big waterfall, but I was never a good enough rafter to do that. Anyway. Waterfalls. Uh, what inspired it is it's been raining constantly in Austin. And we have a creek that runs through our back yard, a sort of short hop from our house, and it's been going non-stop since these rains have come. And a little walk down the creek there's, like, this really nice sort of rocky step where the water just goes down, like, three feet or so over, like, a series of, of, of rocky steps. And it's so lovely. And me and Henry raced sticks and leaves down it, and it was just delightful.

And it made me think, like, any time I see a waterfall, it's, like, the one thing in nature that, like, guaranteed I will see it and just be like, "Wow." That's good stuff. Um, so, I- I have learned a lot about waterfalls today. Uh, specifically that there's a lot of different classifications and ratings, uh, and the ratings are, like, sort of on a logarithmic scale. So something like, I think Angel Falls is the tallest waterfall in the world. I believe it's in Venezuela. It's, it's very, very big. And so it's, uh, a 10 rating.

Uh, uh, Niagara Falls I think is maybe a nine. Uh, and then obviously, like, a weak one in our backyard is probably, I don't even know if it would register on the scale. But there's a ton of different types of waterfalls that I'd never even really kinda thought about before. There's lots of different ways that water can fall off a thing. Huh?

Rachel:

[laughs] I have no idea how to contribute to this.

Griffin:

Okay, so there's, there are ledge waterfalls where the water, you know, goes over the edge, and then it stays partially in contact with the wall of bedrock as it, as it goes down. And then from there those get broken down into, uh, sheet falls, where the water is wider than the waterfall is high, but on the inverse are curtain falls where it's a narrow stream that falls farther the way down. And then there are classical falls where it's just like a square. Where it's just the height and, and the length of the waterfall are the same. But that's if the water stays in contact with the wall which sometimes it does the whole way down, which are called horsetail falls.

Rachel:

Oh my gosh.

Griffin:

Which is very good. And horsetail falls you can think of as, like, a slide. Right? Like the water stays in contact with the wall the entire way down. Uh, and sure enough, that breaks down into slides, ribbons, chutes, and fans, where it, you know, splashes down and then kinda spreads out.

Rachel:

Oh my gosh.

Griffin:

Right. And then there are plunge falls where the water just goes over the edge and falls all the way down. And those are the ones that you do not want to stand underneath [laughs] because it will hurt your body quite a bit...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... when that big water falls right on you. Um, there are ephemeral falls that, uh, only run obviously after rains such as the bodacious and proud waterfall in our backyard. Uh, or glacial melt water. There's a lot of sort of glacial falls...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... in, you know, national parks and also, you know, glaciers. Um, but what I found really fascinating about waterfalls that I learned about when studying about these majestic, big beauties... And again, I don't think I ever had a sort of geological study class, like, ever in all of my tutelage.

Rachel:

Oh, I literally took geology my freshman year of college. It's maybe the worst grade I've ever gotten in a college course. [laughs]

Griffin:

I had to take... Okay, so I... same. I had to take one of the requirements to graduate from Marshall is you had to take an earth sciences class which could mean anything.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And I, I may have taken a geology class actually...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... now that I think about it. But I only went to it like three times during test days, and I just, like, studied really hard before those.

Rachel:

Oh, you people are the worst.

Griffin:

I mean I got like a C, but I, I passed the class, uh, 'cause I didn't care about, well, learning, but also geology. But now I find this stuff very, very fascinating. Um, so what I find very fascinating is that there are these ephemeral falls that only run at certain times. But in a manner of speaking, all waterfalls are ephemeral because the rate at which they experience erosion is so much faster than any other form of, of erosion you could think of, a- aside from I guess like beach side erosion where the waves are lapping away at it. Uh, you get at the edge of the water where the waterfall sort of like falls off. That erodes fairly quickly. Right. And then if it makes contact with the wall as it goes down that erodes very quickly, and it hits the bottom and splashes. And that throws water quickly up onto the, the bedrock wall which erodes that away which is why a lot of waterfalls have sort of caverns behind them.

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

And as that erodes that makes the top of the waterfall erode even faster. So, like, at, uh, at its fastest the, uh, the, like, peak of a waterfall where the water goes over the surface. That point can retreat a meter and a half every year which is...

Rachel:

Wow.

Griffin:

... super, super, super, super fast.

Rachel:

Now I'm really wondering about Niagara Falls if it's, like, gotten bigger.

Griffin:

I mean I think Niagara Falls is big enough that, uh, it, it's, it's-

Rachel:

But if it just keeps getting wider because of the erosion.

Griffin:

Yeah maybe. I don't know because naturally, like, waterfalls turn into gulches or valleys or whatever as they fall. Uh, not only that, but the erosive, which I don't know if is a word...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... uh, force at the bottom of the waterfall. Right. The water hits the, the pool at the bottom and a lot of the times that will dig a whole downward as, as the force of that water goes. And then that will form a whirlpool which will catch, you know, sediment and rocks and everything in it. And basically form this insane drill that will just burrow down into the earth as these rocks get whipped around against other rocks super, super quickly in this, this whirlpool which, like changes the, the, you know, geography of the waterfall even further.

Griffin:

Uh, I found that so fascinating. Something I'd never really considered before. Like I'm, I, I find things like the very, very slow formation of, like, stalagmites and stalactites as water drips through the limestone or whatever and over the course of, like, millions of years forms this, you know, rocky spire. Like that's rad to me. Cenotes are, like, in, like, so wild that there can be these underwater channels that run over, like, the entirety of, of, of, you know, a whole country, a whole land mass.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, that is formed just by water pressing up against a thing.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I think that's really interesting, and waterfalls, like, are doing that at, like, a nearly visible rate.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Like at a- a- a rate that you could potentially clock if you keep going back to the same waterfall over the course of a year. Um, yeah. I just thought that was really interesting.

Rachel:

I think you like geology.

Griffin:

I might like geology.

Rachel:

I think maybe you should, you know, do some more of it.

Griffin:

I just find, I find forces like that very interesting. And I think that what, I... What sort of resonated with me while learning about waterfalls was that maybe that is part of the majesty of it. Right? Like waterfalls, look, I think objectively, very cool. Like it is, uh, it is a lovely thing to see a nice big waterfall or even, like, a small babbling brook or some rapids or whatever. Like that's very interesting. But learning, like, the righteous power of these things...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... that they form these, like, hydro drills down into the ground, like, it... Is that why they're so majestic? Like is that a contributing factor of it? Like you see it and just part of you knows, like, "Damn, that's strong water right there."

Rachel:

That's powerful water.

Griffin:

That's really powerful water.

Rachel:

Well, I mean there's the whole thing with the dams. Right? Like...

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

... you, you hold that water back and you can run a city. [laughs]

Griffin:

Yeah. Exactly.

Rachel:

That's how that works. Right?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, and also I mean the biggest thing for me is that's, I mean that's God's white noise right there. That is the first...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

That's the first white noise, you know, the first...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

The first human beings to need a sort of sleep aid took a camp out by a waterfall and they were like, "Damn. That was the best sleep I ever got in my whole life."

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It must be this incredible waterfall.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative]

Griffin:

Making this soothing sound. It's not always soothing. Sometimes it's loud as hell. There's a series of falls called the Augrabies Falls in South Africa. Uh, and they just plummet, just these, a- a- a whole wall of waterfalls. A- a series of them that fall into this barren canyon that echoes the sound of the waterfall and you can hear it up to 25 miles away. [laughs]

Rachel:

Wow.

Griffin:

So that's a pretty loud one.

Rachel:

Where is this?

Griffin:

Uh, South Africa on the Augrabies Falls.

Rachel:

Wow.

Griffin:

It's, it, it... That might be a little too much white noise even for me. But, uh, waterfalls man. They're good.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

They're good, and I appreciate them. Don't let it be said, like, Griffin he's an indoor, he only likes his video games. He stays inside. He plays in Halo, and he plays on Final Fantasy. He stays inside, and he just games out with all of his internet buddies.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative]

Griffin:

That's true. That's true. But I can get out there.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I can find, uh...

Rachel:

You can go look at something.

Griffin:

I can look at a waterfall. I'm, like, that's like a Master Chief to me, but in na... but nature made it.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Waterfalls is nature's Master's Chief.

Rachel:

That's beautiful.

Griffin:

thanks can I steal you away?

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Thanks.

[*Home Improvement* theme plays]

[ad break]

Griffin:

Oh, man we got a couple barmbobombs here, and I want to read the first one. Can I please?

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

'Cause it's for bro and it's from bro who says, "Hey bro. Thanks for being the best friend a person could ever hope for. We've been through a lot over the last couple years, but I know we have nothing but wonderful things coming our way. No regrets. I love you. Also, if this is around your birthday, happy birthday." Uh, sounds like bro wanted this for early June, so just crushed it.

Rachel:

I like this 'cause there's a lot a bros out there listening.

Griffin:

There is.

Rachel:

And it's, like, is that for me? Maybe.

Griffin:

It could be. Yeah.

Rachel:

Maybe.

Griffin:

Look in your heart [high pitched] yo bro!

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

How do you say that word if you, like, if you, like, saw someone on the street and you're like, "That's my bro right there." How would you say that?

Rachel:

I would say bro.

Griffin:

You wouldn't give it a lil' bruh.

Rachel:

No. [laughs]

Griffin:

You wouldn't get... Hold on, wait. Would you give it a little bruh, bruh?

Rachel:

No honey.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Can I read the next one?

Griffin:

Oh, yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, this is for Chicara. It is from Em. "Hi Chicara, this is a message to remind you that your existence is a gift to everyone around you. The world is so much brighter because you are in it. I know the past year has been crushingly heavy. Thank you for keeping on. You are doing an amazing job. Things will get better. And you are very good. From, Em."

Griffin:

I believe it. And I didn't until this incredible message from Em to Chicara that bad sk... [singing] bad skies are gonna not be bad.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

[singing] Put on a happy face. We all had to deal with quarantine, but put on a happy face. We got vaccines all over the place... [normally] I wish you knew, like, more about musical theater.

Rachel:

[laughs] Yeah, I know. I feel like I let you down constantly with that lack of knowledge.

Griffin:

It's the only way in which you let me down constantly.

Rachel:

Aww.

Griffin:

But it...

Rachel:

It is constant.

Griffin:

It is constant. But, like, you... That means that every other way you are a perfect, perfect partner for me.

[MaxFun ad plays]

Griffin:

Rachel it's a brand new day...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... literally 'cause we couldn't finish this yesterday.

Rachel:

True.

Griffin:

But we've got probably another eight minutes here. Do you want to tell me about your topic for this week's episode which is now certainly going to be late.

Rachel:

[laughs] Stripes.

Griffin:

Oh, man. In the context of clothes? Are we talking about the zebra? Are we talking about, um...

Rachel:

We're talking about, about fashions.

Griffin:

... the white ones that you—

Rachel:

Fashion. Fashion stripes.

Griffin:

Okay. Okay. I'm wearing 'em right dang now. Aren't I?

Rachel:

Yeah. I was wearing 'em yesterday.

Griffin:

I was also wearing 'em yesterday.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative]

Griffin:

I was wearing, and I'm ashamed to admit this, striped tee-shirt with flannel over it. And I wore that to daycare to drop off our son. Isn't that embarrassing?

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I'm your husband. That might get, like, come... They might track that back to you.

Rachel:

I don't, I don't really mind your fashion.

Griffin:

Okay. Stripes then.

Rachel:

Yeah. Stripes. I love stripes.

Griffin:

Oh, for sure.

Rachel:

Always loved stripes.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Horizontal, vertical.

Griffin:

You remember that song. It's like, "polka dots, checks, and stripes was her fashion." I think it was, like, Raffi or something.

Rachel:

No.

Griffin:

You didn't fuck with Raffi?

Rachel:

I mean as much as any kid did.

Griffin:

As much as any kid fucked with Raffi I guess.

Rachel:

[laughs] Um, I, I find myself just completely drawn to stripes, um...

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

... both, like, in my clothes and then also just, like, in patterns on, like, you know, furniture and, like, you know, gear.

Griffin:

Yeah, you... Yeah. I've noticed that about you.

Rachel:

Like if I were to get an accessory, like a, like a purse or a shoe.

Griffin:

Yeah, sure. A bangle.

Rachel:

I love a stripe on it.

Griffin:

A brooch.

Rachel:

[laughs] We'll talk about a lot how you say that word.

Griffin:

Brooch[pronounced phonetically] and not brooch[pronounced "broach"]

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It's gotta be one of those, it's okay either way things. Yeah? Like aunt or aunt.

Rachel:

Oh, man. But it's what it says.

Griffin:

Yeah sure.

Rachel:

You know?

Griffin:

Stripes, huh?

Rachel:

Stripes. Um, lotta, lotta history behind stripes.

Griffin:

Um, okay.

Rachel:

Do you have a, do you have a sense, like, when you think of, like, the iconic stripe, what are you thinking of?

Griffin:

Um, like a sailor's outfit.

Rachel:

Yeah. Yeah.

Griffin:

Like blue and white like the sailors wore. I don't know if it had a functional purpose...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... like if you fell in the water, like, the stripes made it easier to see your clothes?

Rachel:

So that is part of it. Yeah. So we're talking about fishermen, French sailors in 1858, um, the stripes made it easier for people to find them if they fell into the water. [laughs]

Griffin:

I can't believe I got that right. Are you kidding me?

Rachel:

I know. Yeah.

Griffin:

That's wild.

Rachel:

You're 100% right. Um...

Griffin:

It's so rare during...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... one of your segments that I feel smart, uh, this is, uh, this is a big moment for me. I really needed this today.

Rachel:

Um, yeah. It's, it's, it's a very like French look. Like when I, like, if you do, like, a black and white stripe, you know, a little beret.

Griffin:

Yeah, like a mime, it's like a mime costume.

Rachel:

Well that too.

Griffin:

Mmm... Is that... But is that something that is, like, was a standard sort of French garment for non-mimes?

Rachel:

Um, so there's, there's a history of stripes that go back to the Middle Ages.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

And in the Middle Ages it was like not, it was like not a good look.

Griffin:

Oh.

Rachel:

It was like [laughs] The example they give, they say only the social outcasts, such as prostitutes, jugglers, and clowns wore the pattern.

Griffin:

Mm-hmm [affirmative] It's my favorite Cher song.

Rachel:

[laughs] Jugglers.

Griffin:

Jugglers. Yeah.

Rachel:

The hatred of jugglers I guess has...

Griffin:

Can I say... Can I admit something?

Rachel:

You don't really care about it?

Griffin:

I don't really even care about that anymore.

Rachel:

It's a strange, strange bit to adopt then. I think.

Griffin:

It was long time ago.

Rachel:

[laughs] Um, there are archives that say in 1310 in Northern France, a cobbler was condemned to death for being spotted wearing stripes.

Griffin:

I mean I assume that people at some point in history have been condemned to death for every conceivable thing at this point.

Rachel:

Yeah. That's fair. That's fair. Uh, and then of course, you know, prisoners, prisoners wore stripes.

Griffin:

Stripes. Yeah. So if they fell in the water, it'd be easier to see, to see them.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Griffin:

Is there a reason for this? Is there a... 'Cause now I'm thinking about, like, if there's a functional reason for stripes as prison, prisoner...

Rachel:

Well, it, it's the same as the water. Right? Like it's just easier to see. It stands out. The stark contrast...

Griffin:

I guess.

Rachel:

... you know, like if you're running away in, like, a solid color, it's easier for you to blend in.

Griffin:

Well, that's I guess why orange... I don't—I don't know if this is a thing...

Rachel:

Yeah. No we don't know. We don't know this, but, um, but yeah. I think, you know, a pattern of any kind would stand out.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, so, you know, could a been, could a been checkerboard.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

You know?

Griffin:

Sure.

Rachel:

If...

Griffin:

How come all flannel is check... Not all flannel is checkered, but, like, when people talk about a flannel shirt, flannel is the material, not the pattern. Right?

Rachel:

True.

Griffin:

That's weird, huh?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

[laughs] Um, so... And then we talk about fashion. We're talking about, like, Adidas with the three stripe pattern.

Griffin:

Yeah. Oh, yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, that's been around since 1928.

Griffin:

Adidas?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

All day I dream about soccer has been around since 1928?

Rachel:

Uh-huh [affirmative] Isn't it wild?

Griffin:

Have we... Is that the real acronym for it?

Rachel:

No. I don't think so.

Griffin:

I think that's like middle school apocrypha.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I'll have to Google that later to see if that's something that, like, my friend John in middle school told me, and I thought it was the truth until this day.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

It may not be.

Rachel:

Um, and then we're talking about, uh, about the stripes you see Tommy Hilfiger. Big on the...

Griffin:

Oh, man. I forgot about Tommy Hilfiger.

Rachel:

... the red, white, and blue stripes, you know.

Griffin:

Can I admit something?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I had a Game Boy Color when I was young, and for, like, a birthday or something, someone got me a, a customizable faceplate for it that you could snap on the front of the Game Boy. And it came with, like, little acrylic paints so you could paint whatever you wanted. And I did a red, white, and blue Tommy Hilfiger stripe pattern on it.

Rachel:

Whoa.

Griffin:

It was a pretty cool look.

Rachel:

So not patriotism? You were...

Griffin:

No.

Rachel:

You were Tommy Hilfiger...

Griffin:

No. It was... I, the only patriotism I have is for the country of Thomas...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... Hilfiger.

Rachel:

Um, and I wanted to talk a little bit about the, like, horizontal versus vertical.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

You know how people say, like, vertical stripes are slimming?

Griffin:

I put nothing behind that.

Rachel:

Yeah. And as right you shouldn't because [laughs] it has been disproven. Um, 1925, Hermann von Helmholtz created the Helmholtz illusion which was two squares containing equally space stripes, one vertical, one horizontal, uh, to kind of identify whether, you know, the horizontal lines looked taller and narrower.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Um, and so in that study it did suggest that the stripes did look...

Griffin:

No. Okay.

Rachel:

... taller and thinner as if they were... Yeah.

Griffin:

Yes. Optical illusions are, like, sort of objectively...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... true for the most part. I was saying that, like, I have never looked at a shirt...

Rachel:

Exactly.

Griffin:

... and looked at the layout of its stripes and gone, "Mm, that will change the shape of me in someone's eyes." And maybe it does or doesn't but I could give a shit.

Rachel:

Yeah. Later research suggests that when you put stripes on a body, it does, it does nothing. Like it doesn't change the, like they did research to figure out whether it changed people's perceptions and it didn't.

Griffin:

Yeah. You know I say that I don't, uh, I don't own... I don't believe I own any vertically striped shirts.

Rachel:

Yeah. I don't think-

Griffin:

But that's not, that's not because of how it makes my body look.

Rachel:

They just don't make shirts like that really.

Griffin:

Yeah. It's not... It's a strange...

Rachel:

And, and if, if they do sometimes you're in danger of, of looking like a, um, like a barber.

Griffin:

And there's nothing wrong with that. I don't know how you got there, though.

Rachel:

[laughs] I'm trying to think, when I think of a vertical stripe, I think of, like, the red and white...

Griffin:

The barber pole?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

You know that's not a vertical stripe. It's like a curly one that goes diagonal.

Rachel:

Yeah. That's right.

Griffin:

It's okay.

Rachel:

That's right.

Griffin:

I don't there is a costume that has a vertical stripe on it necessarily.

Rachel:

Oh, what about Beetlejuice?

Griffin:

Are those vert... Those are horizontal I thought.

Rachel:

Are they?

Griffin:

I would have to look at the man to find out.

Rachel:

I'm sorry. I gotta Google it. I'm not gonna-

Griffin:

I mean you could just say his name a couple more times, and he would show up here.

Rachel:

No. We can't say it out loud.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Oh, interesting. So the sleeves are horizontal, but the, the torso is vertical.

Griffin:

What a...

Rachel:

So we're both right.

Griffin:

A mold breaker.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

God that Beetlejuice is so funny.

Rachel:

You know you do have vertically striped underwear now that I'm thinking about it.

Griffin:

I do. I do. I do. And that's fun.

Rachel:

And it, it makes, it makes your business...

Griffin:

I mean all of it does.

Rachel:

... look taller. [laughs]

Griffin:

It makes my zone look like wicked tall. Yeah. For sure. For sure, for sure.

Rachel:

Um, yeah so that's my topic, stripes. [laughs]

Griffin:

Hey, it's good.

Rachel:

Was it worth the wait?

Griffin:

It was, I... You did have a full blown 24 hour period to prepare this topic, and I appreciate the legwork that went into it. Um, I think in the annals of history people are going to look back on this episode as the one where we talked about falling water and [laughs] the design of stripe and say...

Rachel:

That was an episode.

Griffin:

Was it their hardest hitting episode? No. Was it their most momentous one? No. Was it one that they had exactly about 30 minutes between the course of two entire earth days to record? Yes, it was.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, no. But I do appreciate stripes. It makes you think. Huh?

Rachel:

I just... I think we both wear a lot of stripes, and I think it's great.

Griffin:

I think it is too. I think it is too.

Rachel:

I also like a polka dot, but I didn't look into that.

Griffin:

Oh, that I don't know about.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

What about a floral pattern?

Rachel:

Oh, I love a floral.

Griffin:

Let's all go back and forth and talk about our favorite patterns on clothing.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, thank you for listening. Thank you to Bo En and Augustus for the use right theme song Money Won't Pay. You can find a link to that in the episode description. And thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Uh, go checkout all the shows on MaximumFun.org. They got a bunch of

really, really good ones like, um, *Triple Click* and *Stop Podcasting Yourself*, *Judge John Hodgman*, uh, *One Bad Mother*. There's a bunch. There's a bunch of really good shows all on MaximumFun.org. And we have other stuff at McElroy.family if you want to check it out. Merch and the like.

Rachel:

Yeah. I saw you all announced your, uh, virtual live show.

Griffin:

Yeah, we're doing another live virtual MBMBaM I believe June 25th, and you can find tickets for that at McElroy.family.

Rachel:

Sawbones is opening.

Griffin:

Sawbones is opening. It's going to be a real, a real heck of a good time.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, and yeah apologies for this short episode. Again, we're, we're... Things by the end of this month, things are gonna be, uh...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Well this is... It's not wishful thinking. We feel pretty confident by the end of this month things are gonna be kinda back to normal for us, and we'll get back to the...

Rachel:

And I am way too superstitious to say anything like that out loud.

Griffin:

Rachel does not, yeah. Rachel has knocked on enough wood to bloody her knuckles [laughs] sort of permanently. Um, but, you know, we're having a good time, and, um, the especial mem... the special memories of this time. When you cherish...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... them in your heart, it's a special, it's like you're pupating inside of the chrysalis of love that is, um...

Rachel:

And emerge.

Griffin:

You emerged and it's the memories are the special ones that you keep in your heart and where there's one set of footprints, that's where you...

Rachel:

The colors of the wings...

Griffin:

The wings.

Rachel:

... painted from the memories.

Griffin:

Of the memories of the wind beneath our wings. And that's babies.

Rachel:

[laughs]

[theme music plays]

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