

Wonderful! 189: Soup and the Fugitive

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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:

This is a show, a special show, made by lovers.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

That is on the internet, that you can download on, uh, a website, or whatever.

Rachel:

Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Griffin:

I don't, can I say something?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I have been making podcasts for a l- for over 11 years now, longer than that even.

Rachel:

Wow.

Griffin:

And I still don't know how to listen to one of these dang things.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Like, you get like, a computer pro- like a computer program.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Griffin:

Um, I don't know where you get, get it. Like, I don't think they have s- like, computer stores anymore where you go to get the programs, but then once you have the program, like, you can download it.

Rachel:

You burn it onto a CD.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

And you put it in the CD player in your car.

Griffin:

I've been making podcasts for so long, that I have done that before.

Rachel:

Uh-huh, [laughs].

Griffin:

I have a CD somewhere I believe that has, like, uh, episodes of, of Jordan, Jesse, Go! on them, probably.

Rachel:

Yeah, 'cause cars didn't used to have, like, the function to, to play a-

Griffin:

No, sadly, no. They didn't. They hated podcasts, cars did.

Rachel:

Yeah, you didn't actually say what our show was about yet.

Griffin:

This is a show where we talk about things that we like, things we think are good, things we're into. Do you have any small wonders?

Rachel:

[laughs]. Um ...

Griffin:

Is it that hat, that hat that you're wearing?

Rachel:

You know, here's the thing about hats.

Griffin:

Yeah?

Rachel:

I- I will make hats my small wonder, but the thing that is an obstacle for me, is the entire time I'm wearing a hat, I am thinking only, I'm wearing a hat, I'm wearing a hat, I have a hat on, I have a hat on. I'm wearing it, I'm wearing the hat.

Griffin:

Right.

Rachel:

Because I do it so infrequently, that it's like a thing to totally occupy my mind.

Griffin:

Right.

Rachel:

But I do, I do like a hat.

Griffin:

Uh, yeah. Um, I was a- I had one since, I- we both have heads that ...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

We have challenging heads.

Rachel:

Yeah, you know, a lot of people don't know that about me, but my hat is only sl- or my head is only slightly smaller than Griffin's. [laughs].

Griffin:

What's your, what's your, do you wanna say your hat, so do know your hat size?

Rachel:

I think I'm seven and a half.

Griffin:

Okay, that's quite, that's much smaller than-

Rachel:

Well, yeah, but it's still pretty big.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Uh, I used to have a Cincinnati Reds cap that fit me just right, and then I lost it. Uh, and then I had a Houston Astros hat that fit me just right, and I also lost that one. But that one I had imposter syndrome for, because I didn't really know anything about the Houston Astros. I just went to a game and found a hat, [crosstalk 00:02:49].

Rachel:

Yeah, it's hard to find hats in your size.

Griffin:

True.

Rachel:

I have tried many times, and I have found you a couple hats, but none of them have made your, uh, your every day carry.

Griffin:

The shortlist, yeah.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

My, my, my off court buddies. Yeah.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Griffin:

Uh, I'm going to say arpeggios.

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

Uh, I like that, I've been working on a lot of, uh Ethersea-

Rachel:

Oh, I thought you were talking about the restaurant.

Griffin:

Oh, no, yeah. There is a w- w- Mediterranean restaurant that also has pizza, uh, called Arpeggio Grill.

Rachel:

Uh-huh, which is not uncommon. Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, uh, well what is uncommon is that they service like, in, like 48 inch-

Rachel:

Yeah, like you have to put it in your trunk, it won't fit in your front seat.

Griffin:

Even then, like it, yeah, the, it has to squish into the trunk at sort of a rakish angle.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

No, I mean, I was going to talk about sort of fast like, beedly deedlies, and music. But I think I do wanna actually just stick with, uh, this Mediterranean restaurant that sells huge, um, sort of like-

Rachel:

[laughs]. I would love some more music theory though, on the beedly deedlies.

Griffin:

Yeah, I just think they, I think it's cool, and it's also a fun way to sort of, if you have a midi k- keyboard, like, make things that sound cool but you're very lazy, 'cause you just hold some keys and it does the beedly deedlies for you, which I appreciate.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Um, I go first this week.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I'm gonna talk about sleepovers.

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

Which, when I got on the wonderful.fyi website to see if this was a subject we'd discussed before, I saw that you had discussed sleep, which is great.

Rachel:

[laughs]. I- I still stand by that.

Griffin:

Yes, it's objectively good. But it's like, saying, like, uh, br- like, breathing.

Rachel:

You know what?

Griffin:

You know what, I think we've already done breathing in-

Rachel:

Yeah, and I've also talked about hands.

Griffin:

Yeah, I'm guess.

Rachel:

Like, I'm grateful for just getting up every day. [laughs].

Griffin:

You, yeah, you sure, you sure do.

Rachel:

Um, interesting thing about sleepovers, not a lot of sleep. At them.

Griffin:

Hmm. Well, it depends, it depends on-

Rachel:

Oh, man. That's the whole appeal of the sleepover, staying up late.

Griffin:

That's a good, yeah, I- I- I guess I- uh, I definitely was not living my healthiest life at, uh, at, at my childhood sleepovers. Of which I took part in a great deal, because I moved in that community theater circuit, and like, theater parents are pretty wild.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Theater parents are like for me, like paramount, like, "Yeah, guys. Go-everybody having fun in here?"

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Like ...

Rachel:

"I brought some more popcorn."

Griffin:

Yeah, uh-

Rachel:

"Put your shirts on." [laughs].

Griffin:

[laughs]. "I'm gonna turn the lights on." Uh, I- I- I just, they were the most exciting thing for me growing, growing up.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, regardless of their, or, of their scale or the activities that took part during the sleepover. The fact that-

Rachel:

Can I- can I say that I bet you were a really great sleepover guest.

Griffin:

I was. I was very respectful to the parents.

Rachel:

Yeah, polite to the parents, down for fun games.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

You know, like-

Griffin:

I could stay up, uh, I wasn't one to crash early.

Rachel:

Yeah, uh-huh.

Griffin:

Could make some snacks.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Griffin:

Um, yeah. My sleepover activities were very rarely, uh, anything that would be frowned upon by an adult.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Unless-

Rachel:

You weren't destructive in your sleepover tactics?

Griffin:

Well, maybe self destructive because, uh, I used to spend my night at my buddy Clint's a lot, and we would more or less just play Nintendo 64, like, 'til the sun came up, and we would eat nachos that we made out of like, corn chips and mozzarella cheese, and pepperonis and hot sauce.

Rachel:

Ooh, oh man.

Griffin:

Yeah, it'd fuck you up, but it's good, it's good gamer grub.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

And then we had our, our, our friends, uh, Minskies, we turned their basement into a rec room. I think we did a whole segment on rec rooms.

Rachel:

Yeah, yeah.

Griffin:

But man, we got, we did a lotta ... I was, after we, we did that sort of remodel, uh, we spent the night there. I spent there night there probably like, every weekend for a while.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Um, and we would like make, like, really stupid movies and just goof around. I- I did a lot, I think I probably did more sleepovers than the average, than the average bear.

Rachel:

Yeah. I mean, the theater scene kind of sounds like it lent itself to that. Like, would you go straight from a show to the sleepover, or was it a totally distinct ...

Griffin:

It was usually a distinct thing. We, I don't think I ever did a sleepover cast party, if that's what you're asking.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Okay, that's what I was wondering, yeah.

Griffin:

And for me, it wasn't even like, the excitement of like, "I'm sleeping somewhere that's not my house." I'm just the type of person that like, gets really excited to have activities on the books, or, or time for activities, and that's all a sleepover is.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Is saying like, "You and me are going to hang out for this entire evening, and there's nothing you can do about it."

Rachel:

Yeah, my calendar is booked, I am, I am done making plans, this is a, this is a full 12 hours or more.

Griffin:

My calendar says nachos and Zelda on it.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

And I'm looking at your Google Calendar, yes. It also says that.

Rachel:

Do you remember, I still remember the anticipation of asking your parents if you could spend the night at somebody's house.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Like, I still remember that kind of like heart pounding moment of like, "I want this, I want this." [laughs].

Griffin:

I feel like I did it so much without, uh, running afoul of, of parental guidelines that it, it became pretty, pretty easy for me to-

Rachel:

Well yeah. I'm sure if you've got three kids, like, that's, that's a thing I've thought about more that we have kids, so the idea that somebody else will be in charge of your child for the evening is like, kind of, kind of thrilling. [laughs].

Griffin:

Yeah, I thought about that while preparing this. It's like, uh, this segment is probably one of the more likely segments on this show that will be used against me in a, in a, uh, house court of law when Henry or Gus are trying to, uh, convince us to let them spend the night somewhere.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Like, "Exhibit A, uh, this episode of *Wonderful!*"

Rachel:

I just think like, you get like a date out of and you don't have to pay anybody. [laughs].

Griffin:

That's so good, that's an excellent, that's an excellent point. This is sort of a broad category I guess, 'cause you could fold in slumber parties and like, lock-insurance. I don't know if you ever did a lock-in?

Rachel:

Oh, I did one lock-in at my friends church.

Griffin:

That's, yeah. I did two lock-ins at church.

Rachel:

And it was not what I expected. I thought it was going to be a lot more fun than it was. [laughs].

Griffin:

I remember, I did a lock-in at church where at one point, we ate soup and watched *The Fugitive*.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

And I was like, "What the fuck are we doing here? What are we doing here?"

Rachel:

So a lock in for people over 60? [laughs].

Griffin:

"We're at church and I'm eating ..." I think it was loaded baked potato soup, and we watched the Fugitive. Now, the soup was fantastic.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

The movie is the Fug-

Rachel:

Tommy Lee Jones, incredible performance.

Griffin:

It's the Fugitive. You know what you're getting into with the Fugitive. There was also another church lock-in where we played volleyball, and I was bad at it, and I was like, "Well, I guess this is my night."

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

I was also not a big slumber party fan, because the amount of societal pressure that is placed upon you during a- a bigger sort of slumber party.

Rachel:

Oh yeah.

Griffin:

Especially, like, in like, oh my god, there's an episode of PEN15, there's so much about PEN15 that is, is a tough watch for somebody who like, really lived through that shit with an eerie amount of accuracy.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

But there's a slumber party episode that is, uh, haunting.

Rachel:

Yeah. Folks can turn on you, uh, you get a real, like, uh, mob mentality. I remember, I had a slumber party for second grade, and this is when everybody was saying psyche, all the time.

Griffin:

Oh no, yeah.

Rachel:

You remember that? And so we were all in the extra bedroom, and a girl was like, "There's somebody, I saw somebody outside your door." And I was like, "No, there's nobody there," and she's like, "No, no, no. I did, I did." And I was like, "I really, you didn't see anybody." And she's like, "No, you have to check." And then I got up to check and she was like, "Psyche," and everybody laughed, and I was like, "Okay, come on."

Griffin:

That was nothing.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

I- I sort of objectively, speaking though, not just sort of like, leaning on nostalgia, 'cause I do have a lot of like very fun sleepover memories, I think sleepovers as a concept are kind of a cool idea for like, the introduction of autonomy to kids in a hopefully, controlled setting.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It is a, you know, sleep- sleeping somewhere other than your house when you're a kid is like, uh, uh, an exciting thing no matter what. But with the sleepover you have this kind of built-in extended period without adult supervision, necessarily, and that introduces a level of sort of independence that is kind of important to learn how to handle, and handle responsibly.

Rachel:

Yeah. Yeah. No, that's true. I remember, like, watching my first R rated movie at a friend's house for a- a sleepover and feeling like, "Oh my gosh, should I be doing this, or..." [laughs].

Griffin:

Yeah, there's a lot about the sleepover sort of rite of passage that, like, makes you feel more adult.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Which is why all of that sort of pressure exists around it, and why a lot of that pressure, and when it gets a little too big, in a slumber party setting, becomes sort of performative in a way.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Of like, "Ha ha, well I'm, I rule the roost at this adult function that we're a-that we're having." [laughs].

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Um, I found a Washington Post article from November 16th 2000, that discussed the trend of big coed sleepovers as like, a recent development, which I guess makes sense. I could, I could see that being a, um, a construct of, of sort of our generation, uh-

Rachel:

I feel like the first one I went to was prom night, I think that like, I made it all the way basically through my childhood without, without being permitted that experience.

Griffin:

Yeah, but what, around what time, uh, around what year would that have been, like 2000?

Rachel:

Oh, two, 2000. [laughs].

Griffin:

Yeah. [laughs]. So exactly precisely when, well, yeah.

Rachel:

Yeah. Actually, that article was written about my coed slumber party.

Griffin:

Oh, I see. See, this is was also like, when, this was, this would've been late middle school for me, this would've been in like, eighth grade. So like, that's about when I started doing that also, with our like, theater friends.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, and y- you know, the headline of the article is like, "Parents have mixed feelings about coed sleepovers." Uh, but they also sort of argue, and it's mostly the kids arguing this point, and some cool parents, that like, it is safer to have an event like this in a- in, in your house, in a controlled environment without knowing, you know.

Rachel:

Yeah. Yeah, of course.

Griffin:

Without having it happen in a place where you don't necessarily know what's going on, um-

Rachel:

Yeah, yeah. There was a lot of fear in that time period, when parents were kind of bred, and this is probably still true, to think, you don't know your child. Your child is going to do things that you can't even imagine. I just remember feeling like, so frustrated by that narrative, 'cause it's like, "Come on, you know me. Like, I'm not going to do crazy stuff."

Rachel:

But like, every, every news station, like every article, and you still see that today, is like, "Here's what your kid is doing when you're not looking. Like, you have no idea what the secret life of your child... "

Griffin:

Yeah, but I- I- I would suspect that that is true for every generation, like every generation like has that, has that thing.

Rachel:

Yeah, I guess so.

Griffin:

But that said, I don't know what, I- I don't know what the norms are now. Like, I genuinely don't. It's easy to say, "Like, well, it's you know, kids are, kids these days are cooler than we ever were," so that's probably like they do coed sleepovers all the time, it's like, who gives a shit. Um, but it was a big deal back then, and it was like a- a big topic of conversation, um, because there's this, I don't know, there's, even when you're following the, the letter of the law, as we always did, there was always this feeling of like, "Should we be doing this?"

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Um, and yeah. It was, um, I don't know. It was, it was just a huge learning experience that I consider very positive, and helped form some very deep friendships, and uh, sort of got you to view, uh, it, it introduces social dynamics that have not existed up to that point in your, in your friendships, and I think that that's just like a valuable thing.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, and I was just such a good boy that it, it was never even that.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

I say that, there was one post homecoming party where I think me, there were like eight of us, and we drank like four Smirnoff Ices between us.

Rachel:

[laughs]. Uh-huh.

Griffin:

It was like, the worst thing we ever did, and we got just fully, Herbie fully loaded, man.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Oh, that's so gross.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Hey, can I steal you away?

Rachel:

Yes.

[ad break]

Griffin:

We got a couple of bumblebuns and I wanna read this first one, because it is for Eli, and it's for Rebecca, who says, "To Ellie Bear. You're wonderful. Thank you for all the amazing things you do and for being my best friend and partner. You make my life so much better. Thank you for showing me all of the McElroy shows, they have brought us even closer together, and catching up on Wonderful and TAZ has made this year much more bearable. I love you."

Rachel:

I like the two uses of bear, there's Ellie Bear, and then there's bearable, and I know that probably wasn't intentional, but it warms my heart.

Griffin:

Yeah, no, I think it wasn't intentional maybe.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Griffin:

But, um, I'll be honest, this is-

Rachel:

I just like to think this is a message between two bears.

Griffin:

And that's exactly what scared me about it.

Rachel:

[laughs]. See, I liked it.

Griffin:

I was reading it and I was like, "This is sweet, this is sweet." But in my, like, back of my head, I was really scared.

Rachel:

[laughs]. Uh, can I read the next one?

Griffin:

Uh-huh.

Rachel:

This is a message for CD. It is from Mary Darling. "Happy 30th birthday, you are my wonderful thing every day and I am so grateful that we get to be alive at the same time. I can't wait to marry you, love always, your dove."

Griffin:

Oh, 30th birthday.

Rachel:

You remember that one?

Griffin:

Oh, no. No, I don't.

Rachel:

[laughs]. I think, I think that was, uh, I think we did, like a thing, and, 'cause i was celebrating 35 and you were celebrating 30, and I think we did like, a house or something, maybe.

Griffin:

Well I- I also, we would've had a several months old baby at that point.

Rachel:

Yeah, no. I think that was the house where we like, where we set up Henry in a pack and play.

Griffin:

That's right.

Rachel:

And said that birthdays are important! [laughs].

Griffin:

And we all rented motorbikes, and we jumped, uh, I jumped from one roof of the, one house to the roof of another house on the motorbike, and I was like, "I'm 30, I'll never die."

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

You remember that?

Rachel:

Yeah, it sounds like you.

Griffin:

That was a fun one.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Raleigh:

Hello, I'm Raleigh Smirl.

Sydnee:

I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor:

And I'm Taylor Smirl.

Raleigh:

And we host Still Buffering, a cross generational guide to the culture that made us.

Taylor:

Every week we share media that made us who we are.

Sydnee:

Things like Archie comics.

Taylor:

Sailor Moon.

Raleigh:

And lots of Taylor Swift.

Sydnee:

And now that Raleigh's an adult, it comes with 100% more butts.

Raleigh:

And now I am totally comfortable with it.

Sydnee:

So check out new episodes of Still Buffering every Thursday on maximumfun.org. Butts, butts, butts. Join in Riley, butts, butts, butts, butts, butts, butts.

Raleigh:

Butts, butts, butts, butts, butts, butts, butts.

Sydnee:

butts, butts, butts, butts, butts, butts.

Raleigh:

[laughs].

Griffin:

What do you have to discuss with us on your topic today?

Rachel:

Uh, my topic, uh, is children's literature.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

And this is something we've kind of addressed before, but-

Griffin:

I mean, we've discussed specific pieces of children's literature.

Rachel:

Yes. What I'm talking about more is the idea that there are books made for children's enjoyment.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Which is a relatively recent thing.

Griffin:

Can you dial in specifically, are you talking about young adult?

Rachel:

Early, yeah, I'm talking about early readers, like, like first, second grade.

Griffin:

Okay, okay. Okay. Like, um, I- I mean, I don't want to cast aspersions here, 'cause anybody can enjoy a book of any age, but are we talking, um, something in the sort of, Captain Underpants, uh, yeah?

Rachel:

Yeah, like those books where you, you know, the language is accessible enough for uh, a child to read individually as they are learning.

Griffin:

Okay, okay.

Rachel:

Yeah. This is something I remember, it's so funny, because when I was in first grade, we had these Carolyn Haywood chapter books, that were literally written in like, the '50s. Uh, like Carolyn Haywood, the author, uh, was born in 1898.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

[laughs], and I was in first grade in the '90s, and I guess it would've been late '80s, and we were still reading these books, but it was just like having the, um, you know, the ability to, to read something, you know, myself, that was about kids like me, was incredible.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, and it was like for enjoyment. I mean, obviously I was building skills, but like, it wasn't like a, you know, like a boring A is for apple kind of thing. It was like a story with chapters.

Griffin:

I mean, this is the conceit of the Scholastic Book Fair.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Which I know we talked about Scholastic Books on this show before, I don't know if we talked about the book fair itself.

Rachel:

Haven't done the book fair, it's coming.

Griffin:

But just having a, like, shopping mall full of books like this, uh, was intoxicating.

Rachel:

Yeah. Yeah. So, uh, there's an NPR article, N- NPR article, oh, it's funny how hard that is to say.

Griffin:

I like that portmanteau, yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, from 2016 that talks a little bit about kind of the emergence of children's literature, because like I mentioned, initially it was just like, uh, primers (pronounced "pry-murs"), primers (pronounced "Prih-murs").

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

I don't know how, I would say primer("Prih-Mur"), but I- that sounds a little highfalutin'.

Griffin:

And you're very British.

Rachel:

[laughs], which was mostly about, like letters and syllables to help people learn the Bible. You know, it wasn't like a, "We wanna encourage people to be lovers of literature."

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

It was like a, "Here's what an A looks like."

Griffin:

Right.

Rachel:

Uh, and it wasn't really until, like, Lewis Carroll in 1865 with *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* that was like, imagination.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Kids can imagine things and it's powerful.

Griffin:

Damn, are we calling that a kid's book though?

Rachel:

Well, no.

Griffin:

I was going to say that's, that, some of that stuff is like, uh, tough to get through.

Rachel:

No I know. Yeah, yeah. This is like Peter Pan, Tom Sawyer, Little Princess, uh, Secret Garden, you know.

Griffin:

Goosebumps.

Rachel:

[laughs]. It was a little before Goosebumps.

Griffin:

Oh, it was?

Rachel:

Yeah, a little before.

Griffin:

Okay, I guess I don't know.

Rachel:

[laughs]. Uh, but just this idea of like, of writing books for kids so they could get excited about reading. Um, and those books while popular, were not actually really taught in schools, uh, largely because they kind of took an anti-education stance.

Griffin:

Yeah, sure.

Rachel:

[laughs]. This idea that like, you could be a very logical person and still be dealing with these fantastical things and not have the skills to understand them.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

So it was like, uh, I don't know if I wanna teach kids in school that they don't need to actually go to school.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Like if you think about like, Huck Finn, like it's just like a, oh-

Griffin:

Huck Finn is fiercely anti-education.

Rachel:

You mean there's a whole world out there that is exciting and nourishing and it's not school?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Like they were not, they were not taught in school. Uh, but what kind of changed things, is in the mid 20th century, US was very competitive, with like, the Soviet Union. This whole idea of like, there are other countries and their children are performing better than our children.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

You know, on tests and have better outcomes, and so there was an article, uh, in Life Magazine titled, "Why Do Students Bog Down On The First R?" And also a book called *Why Johnny Can't Read And What You Can Do About It*. Uh, and both these pieces kind of talked about how we are, we are giving children kind of boring, you know, what specifically was called like Dick and Jane readers.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Which is like, "See Dick. See Dick run, run, Dick, Run." Like, like not really encouraging them to like, immerse themselves. You know?

Griffin:

Yeah, I- I- I- any progress we have made with Henry reading has been built upon the promise that once he is able to do this, he can read these books he likes himself.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Like, that is the, that's the carrot for him. It is not enough for him to just be like, "I want to have this knowledge in my brain."

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It's like, "I wanna read these Spider-Man stories."

Rachel:

Yeah, my obsession, and the reason I thought about this, is that, like, I have been obsessively buying Henry books for a very long time now, and I always feel good about it, because it's like, oh, books are good. Uh, but we have way more than we could possibly need for, uh, a roomful of children. Uh, and so much so now that Henry will be like, "Do, any new books, any new books today?" Like, like, he expects new books every week. [laughs].

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, and part of the reason I get them is that it's just like, it's so fun to see these stories and to think about kind of what learning there is to be done from them. And then also to like, kind of get him excited about like, new, new things that he can play, and, and you know, come up with.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

So this idea that we were not getting kids excited about reading and, and thus they were not becoming better students, uh, kind of took off in this period, and that's when we started to get like, Berenstain Bears, you know?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Like this idea of like, "Hey, let's do like, a whole story, and sure, they'll, they'll learn something, but like there's, there's characters and there's drama and, and... "

Griffin:

Action.

Rachel:

[laughs]. Brother bear, sister bear, like, what's happening in that tree?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

You know.

Griffin:

They're, they're, they're learning, they're learning martial arts.

Rachel:

[laughs]. Yeah, so that's, that's I don't know. I thought, uh, it's definitely a broad topic. But just the idea that, that books would be written specifically for kids to get excited about reading. And I've talked, I mean, obviously you all know this is important to me 'cause I talked about Reading Rainbow not long ago.

Griffin:

Right.

Rachel:

Uh, but, if you think about it, it's a relatively new thing.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Do you have, this may be too, uh, broad reaching a question. But do you have like, a seminal piece of children's literature that you read that like, you remember activating you? That you remember thinking like, oh, okay. I like, I- I like reading. This is reading? I like this.

Rachel:

[laughs]. I mean, it's hard to go back too far. Uh, you know, 'cause I- I remember the stuff I was reading in like, second grade. Um, but I mean, *Where the Wild Things Are* is a great example.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

You know? Like the, the illustrations were really exciting, like, the kind of the mystery of the story. Um, I remember really liking that, and then when I got a little older, like *Harriet the Spy*.

Griffin:

Okay, yeah, that's more [crosstalk 00:29:06].

Rachel:

And like, also like, oh, Judy Blume and Beverly Cleary, I really loved the *Ramona* books. Um, yeah. I mean this, this was a big thing for me.

Griffin:

For me, I think it was *Wrinkle in Time*, oh.

Rachel:

Oh. So that was a little bit older?

Griffin:

Yeah, I gue- I don't know, I read that like, early in elementary school, I think.

Rachel:

Yeah. I mean, probably, I feel like that was, like, second or third grade, yeah.

Griffin:

That was the first book that I remember being like, "This story is fucking cool."

Rachel:

Yeah. [laughs].

Griffin:

"Like, this is a cool ass story that's cool in the way that like, my video games are cool."

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

"And I wanna do more of this."

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Like that I remember, that was a hu- that was just very important book for me.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Griffin:

I never saw the movie, I don't know if it was any good or not.

Rachel:

Yeah, me neither.

Griffin:

Maybe we should check that one out.

Rachel:

Oh, yeah we could.

Griffin:

Once Henry is interested in, uh, movies that don't have, uh, Lego characters in them, um, may- maybe we'll try slipping that one into the, into the portfolio.

Rachel:

Yeah, you don't wanna rush it though. You know? Like there's this real concern that if you show a kid something too early, they're going to think it's dumb, and then they will always think it's dumb.

Griffin:

Yeah, that's a good point. Hey, thank you so much for listening. Thank you to Bo en and Augustus for the use of our theme song, Money Won't Pay, you'll find a link to that in the episode description, and thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the network.

Rachel:

Yeah. Thank you Maximum Fun. Uh, love, love a lot of the shows on there. Mostly, mostly listen to the funny ones, um, but I think, uh-

Griffin:

But there's sad ones on there too.

Rachel:

[laughs]. There's a lot of like, culture ones that are, are helpful to kind of learn about what's going on. You know, Griffin and I, we, we tend to fall into nostalgia, but if you wanna, if you wanna hear what's going on right now ...

Griffin:

Ton of shows on Max Fun to help you with that.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, and uh, hey I, we just put out a new graphic novel that, it would be cool if you would think about buying it and reading it, and enjoying it.

Rachel:

Yes!

Griffin:

Uh, if you go to mcelroy.family you can find out about this graphic novel, it's called **The Adventure Zone: Crystal Kingdom**, in bookstores now, and uh, we gotta bunch of merch at mcelroymerch.com. There's a besties T-shirt, there's an Adventure Zone mug, there's a, there's just a whole, a whole bunch of stuff, and um, you know, that's life, isn't it?

Rachel:

Uh-huh. [laughs].

Griffin:

How you feeling about that hat now?

Rachel:

I mean, I'm probably going to take it off, uh, any minute now.

Griffin:

Really?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Aww.

Rachel:

Do you like the hat?

Griffin:

I mean it's giving me, uh, you know how I have like, uh, uh, like a League of Their Own thing.

Rachel:

[laughs]. I didn't know that actually.

Griffin:

I don't actually think that's true.

Rachel:

Oh. I got really excited when you said that. [laughs].

Griffin:

That I have, uh, uh, an In A League of Their Own fetish?

Rachel:

Yeah, I love that movie, I just watched it not long ago.

Griffin:

Now, I love that movie, everybody loves that movie. But I- I don't have some sort of-

Rachel:

I thought you were going to say like, "You look like Geena Davis," and I was going to say-

Griffin:

You do have Geena Davis qualities.

Rachel:

Thank you.

Griffin:

You've got Geena Davis eyes, and she'll tease you.

Rachel:

[laughs].

[theme music plays]

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