

Wonderful! 004: Good as Hell

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[theme music plays]

Rachel:

Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin:

Hi, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel:

And this is Wonderful!

Griffin:

This is a show about finding the bright points of light in the darkness. And I wish somebody else was doing Wonderful so that I could listen to it this week...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

...because it's been, how would I describe this week? It has been a sort of barf covered nightmare.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

A sort of— I just realized as I was sitting down to record that I actually have a little bit of baby vomit on my jacket...

Rachel:

Oh, no.

Griffin:

... that I'm wearing now. And I was surprised by that, right? But then like, thinking about it, why was I surprised by that? Because what objects at this house don't at least have a little bit of that stuff on there somewhere?

Rachel:

Uh, so Sunday our, our baby boy, now 10 months old, came down with some kind of stomach bug, uh, that still plague's him on and off to this day.

Griffin:

Still hitting, still hitting.

Rachel:

Uh, hit Griffin pretty hard.

Griffin:

Oh yeah. Got me good. Nipped me.

Rachel:

Started on Tuesday.

Griffin:

Yeah, nipped me good. Got deep down in my gullies and made some stuff happen down there.

Rachel:

Um, I will say, knock on wood...

Griffin:

Rachel hadn't gotten it, but this weekend I'm looking forward to...

Rachel:

[laughs] I've not gotten it yet. I, unlike the other boys in this house, big hand washer.

Griffin:

I wash my hands. Don't say that. Henry doesn't because he's a baby at doesn't have to. I wash my hands all the time. I honestly think Henry went on a fucking cruise by himself, like without telling us...

Rachel:

Mm-hmm .

Griffin:

... brought home some of that good, good oceanic norovirus.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Say, "Hey dada, kissy kiss time." And I was like, "Oh, here we go." And then passed it on to me.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I think it was, I think it was intentional. I think he is—

Rachel:

You know what it is too?

Griffin:

What is it?

Rachel:

So our son has been pretty much constantly teething, which means he puts everything in his mouth all the time...

Griffin:

Yeah, sure, sure, sure.

Rachel:

... which babies do anyway, but him, especially at this juncture.

Griffin:

He's a real Typhoid Jerry is what he is.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, but we're... That's why this episode's late. Sorry about that, I was dying yesterday, but now I'm doing okay. I'm stabilized. So we're gonna talk about some stuff. If I'm being honest, like the stuff that I could bring is I binge watched all of The Good Place, which is a good little show...

Rachel:

Yeah. I'm so glad you did.

Griffin:

... from Michael Schur who made Parks and Rec, which we talked about last week. Um, it's good. It took a little while for it to click with me, I watched like the first five episodes a while ago and then kind of fell off but it, it does some interesting stuff there at the end and I'm all caught up so we have another show we can watch together. Also like Ginger Ale, I could talk a lot about Ginger Ale, specifically Werner's, which we don't have, but you know, that's my jam jam.

Rachel:

I can get that for you if you want. I got a guy.

Griffin:

You got, is it Werner himself?

Rachel:

No.

Griffin:

Is it Werner Herzog?

Rachel:

It's the liquor store near my work.

Griffin:

"I'm Werner Herzog. Life is meaningless, but my Ginger Ale is amazing."
Um, I started last week if you want to kick things off this week.

Rachel:

Yeah, of course.

Griffin:

What you got?

Rachel:

Um, I'm trying to decide between my topics. I think I'm going to go with a particular artist I'm excited about right now...

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

... a particular song by that artist.

Griffin:

Ooh.

Rachel:

The artist is Lizzo.

Griffin:

Lizzo.

Rachel:

You remember seeing her at ACL?

Griffin:

Yeah, we saw Lizzo at ACL. Tell me all... I have listened to a little bit of Lizzo stuff on Spotify. By the way, I also have a musical artist...

Rachel:

Oh good.

Griffin:

... so this is gonna be a very musical episode. Um, so yeah, I've heard little bit of Lizzo, but can you tell me some more about Lizzo?

Rachel:

Yeah. So Lizzo has been making albums since 2010. Um, I first saw her at a Minnesota showcase at South by Southwest. It was after you moved here. I think it was, uh, 2013 maybe.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

I don't know if it was Minneapolis or Minnesota showcase, but she was touring for a while with Har Mar Superstars.

Griffin:

Oh, shit. Cool. Okay.

Rachel:

Um, and she's, she's kind of a solo hip hop artist, although she does always have backup dancers.

Griffin:

The backup dancers were an enormous component of the show that I saw. There was a lot of, sort of, choreographed moments in it that were pretty exceptional.

Rachel:

Yes. Uh, she also opened for Sleater Kinney in 2015. How great is that?

Griffin:

Unusual pairing...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... but I'm very, very into it.

Rachel:

Uh, the song that I'm excited about is actually from 2016, it's called Good As Hell.

Griffin:

Oh, that's a very good one. And because of radio magic, we can play a clip of it right now.

[Good as Hell clip plays]

Rachel:

Um, this is actually from the movie Barber Shop: The Next Cut, which I did not see.

Griffin:

I did not see that either, but that's great. Wait, did you— When you say from, was it like the, like, was it—

Rachel:

It was on the soundtrack.

Griffin:

But was it made for the movie?

Rachel:

Um...

Griffin:

Probably not, right?

Rachel:

If you watch the music video, there are a lot of scenes inside a barbershop.

Griffin:

Oh, there's a music video, okay.

Rachel:

Yes. Uh, so the reason I like this song, besides it just being a jam, uh, is it's kind of a breakup song, but it's done in a way where there is not a lot of dwelling on the person that has left the relationship.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

You know?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Like the whole message is, it's over, feel good about yourself.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Like, get it.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

And I like that.

Griffin:

I like that a lot too.

Rachel:

'Cause there's a lot of breakup songs that are very much dwelling on how terrible the person was that has wronged them...

Griffin:

Sure.

Rachel:

... and how angry they are. And that, I mean, that might have some catharsis with it, but for me, I like the songs that are like, "Hey, you're, you're incredible."

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

"Good luck out there."

Griffin:

I'm trying to think of other examples of this. Um...

Rachel:

I like Florence and The Machine's Dog Days Are Over.

Griffin:

Oh yeah. That's a really good one. Yeah, sure.

Rachel:

Uh, 'cause there's not a lot of focus on the ex, there's just focus on the like we are coming out of this stronger and I like that.

Griffin:

Yeah. Sure.

Rachel:

I like that a lot. Um, so the, the line, the only line that really references the ex that I like is, uh, it says, "If he don't love you anymore, just walk your fine ass out the door." How great is that?

Griffin:

That's very good.

Rachel:

That's so great.

Griffin:

This is probably her most popular song, right?

Rachel:

Um, she's got a couple other ones, but yeah, I think... I mean, she's got some recent singles, actually the, uh, her more recent is, uh, Coconut Oil, which, uh, this is another fun fact about Lizzo, Lizzo from eighth grade through college, played the flute and the piccolo in marching band.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

This is not a factor in her act as far as I can tell.

Rachel:

Well, in the single Coconut Oil, she plays the flute.

Griffin:

Oh, that's extremely good.

Rachel:

How good is that? Um, but she... So I read this interview with her, uh, where she talks about kind of her philosophy of recently. Um, and she said, "I felt like I had maxed the level of self love and I started to move into self care, which is super important and still super important. I was kind of creating a foundation of strength so that when these building blocks get higher and higher, the harder it is to knock me down. When you listen to these songs, you don't hear any vulnerability, you hear a lot of strength. I think I needed that as my thumbprint in the world and as my first adventure into the mainstream and major label world. I think I needed that as my identity. I'm really proud of this song." She's referencing Coconut Oil, uh, on the EP that came out. Um, and I just, I like her, her attitude.

Griffin:

Yeah. That's, that's an incredible message. And, and her music really is like, uh, it is empowering, but it is also like, uh, like you said earlier, a fucking jam. Like...

Rachel:

Yeah,

Griffin:

... this was... We went to ACL last year. You were a hundred months pregnant and I was really worried 'cause like I don't really go to outside, I think, is what people call it. I don't go to outside very much. Like I hadn't been... I used to go to music festivals all the time, but now they bring me a lot of anxiety. So I was kind of anxious, but I also recognized, like, this is our last chance to do something like this before we have a baby. And our first thing that we went to was Lizzo.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And I was...

Rachel:

It was like...

Griffin:

I was like, "Okay, I'm—"

Rachel:

One in the afternoon or something.

Griffin:

"Now, I'm fucking ready to take on the day."

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And it ended up being like a really terrific day because Lizzo filled me with, with strength and power...

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

... and vitality.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, it's really good.

Rachel:

So, not taking away from any of the, the women that do, uh, kind of scorned, uh, ex-lover songs, but I'm really feeling Lizzo right now and the, kind of, the empowerment she brings.

Griffin:

Yeah. Sure. And all of her, in all of her songs...

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

... have that connective tissue. Um, that's great. Yeah, Lizzo's great. Now you made me wanna go listen to Lizzo.

Rachel:

Mm.

Griffin:

I'm gonna save my music one for the second one so we don't do them back to back. So my other thing that I'm gonna talk about this week is naps.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, and maybe this one is sort of illness fueled because I took... I've taken probably a cumulative total of about eight hours of naps over the last two days.

Rachel:

Did you do research on naps?

Griffin:

I did. I did a lot of research on naps. Um, I love a nap, I love a good nap. Sometimes naps sometimes can, can twist on me 'cause sometimes I'll take like an hour nap and that's never gonna be, that's never gonna be great.

Rachel:

Naps, naps hit Griffin like a bolt of lightning. Like I will be sitting with him on the couch and he will turn to me and he will just say as if, uh, a light bulb appeared over his head, "I think I'm gonna take a nap."

Griffin:

Yeah. I will—

Rachel:

And then he will just do it. He will just go on [crosstalk]

Griffin:

I'll just go on and I'll do it. I work hard and I play hard is the thing that I made up about me. I made up, I work hard and I play hard. I made up pobody's nerfect and I made up— What are some other ones I made up? Same, same clowns, different circus or...

Rachel:

Yeah, saying hashtag anything, that was Griffin.

Griffin:

Hashtag anything. I invented the hashtag.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Winning, Charlie Sheen got that from me.

Rachel:

Yeah. No that's true.

Griffin:

Uh, yeah, those are all things I came up with. So, uh, naps are really terrific and you get them in the middle of the day and you're good to go. There's a cutoff point, I think at like... For me, it's like 3 PM. Can't take a nap after 3 PM.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

'Cause then it's too close to sleepy time.

Rachel:

How early can you take a nap though?

Griffin:

I...

Rachel:

I have seen you... Yeah

Griffin:

I mean, I push the, I push the boundaries of...

Rachel:

I've seen you attempt to nap at like 9 AM.

Griffin:

Well it's because well I get... you know. You'll usually get up with Henry first and then I'll chill with him but there are some days where like if he gets up super early, I will get up with him and it's like 5:35—

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... and I just like, can't like...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Once he, once he is back down, it's like, "Okay, I'll, I will..." That's the thing they say about babies is like you sleep when they sleep.

Rachel:

That's my...

Griffin:

And so, I don't-

Rachel:

That is... For me, that is the most satisfying nap ever now.

Griffin:

Yeah. 'Cause you've earned it. You worked for that nap.

Rachel:

It's like he is asleep, we are all asleep.

Griffin:

It's very good.

Rachel:

Yes. It's good.

Griffin:

Um, I also like I have a bad habit to staying up too late at night because I it's, it is... Unless I'm, like, dog tired, it is actually kind of tough for me to fall asleep at night and so if I have a bad night and I am up late and then the baby wakes up early, like, you know, a naps gonna happen before 10:00 AM, like, guaranteed. Um, naps are really terrific though. And so I did some research about naps, um, specifically about the idea of the power nap, uh, which is a 20 minute long nap that you take in the middle of the day.

Rachel:

Yeah. Is that actually good?

Griffin:

So the idea with the power nap is that it... 20 minutes will terminate the nap before slow wave sleep, which so it's like before you get in like a particularly deep REM cycle.

Rachel:

Yeah. Okay.

Griffin:

So it's just like your body shuts down for like 20 minutes and then you just get a little, little get up and go. That's what fucks me up is the hour long nap is like, I am asleep. I am, uh, asleep. I am unconscious. I'm out.

Rachel:

Yeah. But 20 minutes doesn't seem like it could actually be restorative at all.

Griffin:

That... It is the generally sort of general consensus, like best time. I think it's between 18 and 26 minutes is like the ideal time to get in there before you hit slow wave. Uh, and you know, I don't get in there with that slow wave.

Rachel:

Um, are you gonna talk about Pzizz at all?

Griffin:

Okay. So we had an app that Justin turned me onto. There was... What was it? Pzizz? There was like a, a nap Pzizz and a sleep Pzizz. And this is an app where a gentleman with a deep, wonderful voice would talk to you. "Hello, it's time to release all of the stresses of the day. Let them drip down to your toes."

Like very much like deep sleep hypnosis shit. And so for the sleep app, it would just be like, I'm gonna talk to you for however long you want me to, and then it'll shut off. And usually there's some soothing, like, you know, waves and music and shit. But it was kind of like a guided meditation into sleep. And then the nap time one is just, you set how long you want your

nap to go and he'll just talk to you the whole time. I swore by it. I remember talking to you about Pzizz the day we met...

Rachel:

Uh-huh .

Griffin:

... or at least the weekend we met. I was like, "Hey, what's up? I'm Griffin. I'm from Chicago. I think I'm in love with you but I use this app, this guided meditation nap app. Um...

Rachel:

Yeah, you played it for me and I remember...

Griffin:

It worked.

Rachel:

... making fun of you that, that you needed the gentle voice of a man to get you to sleep.

Griffin:

The most soothing, gentle voice of the most soothing gentleman. Uh, you used it once though, didn't you? Haven't you used it before? I know you've napped with me while I used it.

Rachel:

Yeah. I feel like you've tried to get me into it.

Griffin:

It works, it works, is all I'm gonna say.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

Um, but I don't really use it anymore, I just like a good nap because I'm...

Rachel:

You have got me hooked on that white noise though. I need that now.

Griffin:

Oh, yeah. I gotta use white noise no matter what. We have a air purifier in our room, which does it for me most of the time.

Rachel:

Do, do you wanna talk about the pillows too or no?

Griffin:

Uh, we've talked enough about the pillows.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I sleep with four pillows. One under the head, a second one under the head and then one for my elbows where they connect and one of my knees where they connect, which those latter two can be fulfilled by one long body pillow. That's it.

Rachel:

I actually bought a body pillow for Griffin.

Griffin:

It was a really amazing gift.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I use it every day.

Rachel:

It actually got me more pillows too. I got access to my pillows again.

Griffin:

It unlocked two more pillows for Rachel. So, okay, 20 minutes can help refresh the mind, improve overall alertness, boost mood and increased productivity. Napping may benefit the heart. In a six year study of Greek adults, researchers found that men who took naps at least three times a week had a 37% lower risk of heart related death. That's pretty good.

Rachel:

That's significant.

Griffin:

That's extremely good. Um, and so there's like a lot of research into like, uh, sleep, uh, being introduced in the middle of the day and various health benefits and some of it is kind of tenuous. Like even that one, uh, the 37% lower, uh, risk of heart related death is like, well, okay, but if you're able to take a nap in the middle of the day, that probably...

Rachel:

Yeah. That's a good point.

Griffin:

... says a lot of other things about the lifestyle that you are living, vis-a-vis like employment and stress and all kinds of other stuff.

Rachel:

I literally no joke today thought about going out to my car and taking a nap in the parking lot, uh, cause I was so dead tired.

Griffin:

Yeah. There... So I— Except for a very few like extreme cases, like in most Western cultures, like napping during the workday is not acceptable, right? I think that there are probably some, like, startup sort of environment places like Google...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... Google definitely has those nap pods that you can go to.

Rachel:

Huge beanbag chairs.

Griffin:

And like, I've worked from home for a decade and I cannot imagine not having that available to me because like sometimes I will go and I will eat my lunch in four minutes and then I'll just naparoo. I'll just get a... I'll get a quick nappy nap in there. It's really good. I don't mean to brag.

Rachel:

Sounds great.

Griffin:

Um, but there are other cultures, uh, specifically in, uh, the Mediterranean and uh, Southern Europe and Spain, uh, where the siesta is like a thing. The, the... A siesta is like the post lunch sleep session.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, it is, uh, the... What is... According to Wikipedia, "the traditional daytime sleep of Spain and through Spanish influence, the Philippines and many, many Hispanic American countries." Uh, what I... so I was reading about the siesta, 'cause obviously like, I know what it is, but I don't know like how widely it is practiced or why it is practiced. Uh, "factors explaining the geographical distribution of the modern siesta are high temperatures and heavy intake of food at the midday meal." Literally, like, it's because it's hot and you just ate a bunch of food at noon...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... and now it's time to just go to sleep for a little bit. That is like sort of the, uh, most common explanation for where the siesta came from. Um, and so like I've heard of the siesta, right? But uh, apparently it is not as, and I... again, this is just sort of a cursory search that I did, but in Spain, at least, uh, today it's not, like, super prevalent, it is not like everyone does it.

Um, in modern Spain in the midday nap during the working week largely has been abandoned among, uh, the adult working population. According to a 2009 survey, 16.2% of Spaniards pulled claim to take a nap daily, whereas 22% did so sometimes, 3.2% weekends only, and the remainder 58.6%, never. So at least in Spain, it's not like every... It's like ding ding. Oh, it's noon. Goodnight.

Rachel:

Yeah. Well, I mean with a global economy, I imagine that you can't say, "Oh, I would love to meet with you via teleconference at two, but I will be napping."

Griffin:

"I will be napping." Um, obviously there are other countries in which this is practiced and I don't have those exact, uh, statistics, but, um, I thought that was interesting. I also wanted to talk about polyphasic sleep or biphasic sleep.

I guess if you sleep from, you know, 10 PM to 7 AM, and then you get a nap in there, you're— You have two sleep cycles throughout the day, that's biphasic sleep. And anything more than that is, is polyphasic sleep. And this is something that like... it's mostly apocryphal, but like people will talk about different sort of geniuses and polymaths throughout history and it's like, "Oh, Benjamin Franklin, you know..."

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

"...he would sleep—" There's very little like evidence of maybe Benny Frank...

Rachel:

People always talk about Ben Franklin for some reason.

Griffin:

Benny Franklin probably did. He's probably got some shit on the books, but like people say like, "Oh, Plato only slept..." blah, blah, blah. Uh, but the idea is that like you have a sleep schedule where you just take little naps every few hours or so, and that it's all that you do.

Rachel:

That sounds terrible to me.

Griffin:

It sounds really, really bad to me. Uh, it's designed though for those who have lifestyles requiring 24 plus hours of wakefulness in a day. Actually it wouldn't be in a day because there's only 24 hours in a day, but you know what I mean? Um, or any other sort of scenario where normal, like, circadian sleep rhythms are impossible. So like things like if you're in the military, uh, or if you're working for certain emergency services.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It could be something that kind of makes sense. Uh, there's a sleep researcher named Sarah Mednick who wrote a book called Take a Nap, uh, about this topic and she says, "This practice rests upon one important hypothesis that our biological rhythms are adaptable. That means we can train our internal mechanisms, not only when to sleep and wake, but when to get hungry, have energy for exercise, perform mental activities."

Uh, inferred in this hypothesis is that we have the power to regulate our mood, metabolism, core body temperature, endocrine, and stress response, basically everything inside this container of flesh we call home. It's a tall fucking order and this is why it is not something that most people do.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, the generally like understood sort of, uh, analysis of this thing is that acclimating to a polyphasic sleep schedule is extremely difficult and any success stories that have come out of it are mostly anecdotal and it's pretty much unsustainable for a normal person.

Rachel:

Yeah, yeah. Anybody I know that has worked night shifts has never really been able to switch over.

Griffin:

Yeah. So that's the most extreme nap case. I'm a huge advocate for taking a midday nap because like, I genuinely have had days where I can't imagine not having them in the middle of it. Um, and some days coffee just don't cut it. You know what I mean?

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Big fan of naps.

Rachel:

Yeah. No, I, um, I've noticed a change in you, uh, as a napper.

Griffin:

Oh.

Rachel:

I think, I think it's a good pick me up. Oh, I will say...

Griffin:

Uh-huh.

Rachel:

... it kind of creates a cycle where you continue to stay up very late at night and nap during the day, um, because you're just kind of reinforcing that habit.

Griffin:

Maybe. But I do have day... I don't nap everyday. I just nap a lot of days.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I'm not like Winnie the Pooh over here.

Rachel:

I do love a nap on the weekend, I will say.

Griffin:

A weekend nap is the best. A Saturday nap, you start up your Saturday and it's like, anything's possible. And then you eat a bunch of French toast and you're like, "One thing is possible."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

And that's me being in bed right now.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

The French toast nap, the heavy breakfast food nap is a fucking delight.

Rachel:

Oh, it's so good.

Griffin:

It's so good. This is why I think brunch matters at all.

Rachel:

Oh, and Thanksgiving naps and Christmas naps.

Griffin:

Oh, Thanks— We were robbed of our Thanksgiving nap by our selfish baby who just had to be born that day.

Rachel:

[laughing]

Griffin:

Selfish, selfish... I was already for a big old Turkey belly and to watch my Cowboys get up, [whispers] I don't like the Cowboys. [normal volume] Get up there and watch the... my Dallas Cowboys get up there and do the great big hat passes and touchdowns.

Rachel:

America's team.

Griffin:

And our baby was like, no, it's labor time.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Started punching his way outta you.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Horrible manners.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, do you think it's 'cause all the Turkey pushed him out. We've never really talked about this, but, and maybe this is the exact circumstance where... But Rachel went into labor with our son on Thanksgiving last Thanksgiving, and I think it's because you had a bunch of pie and turkey meat and mashed 'tatoes and they just were pushing on him and he was like, "Oh, I guess it's time to go. Somebody else had got... Somebody else is trying to move into my apartment here. I need to go."

Rachel:

I actually, when we showed up at the hospital and I was in labor, I thought like, "Oh, I bet there's gonna be a lot of women here." Like I thought, like, this is a thing. Uh, not the case.

Griffin:

No, we were basically alone.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, hey, should we talk about our advertisers?

Rachel:

I would like to do that. Uh, hey, Griffin.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Can I steal you away?

Griffin:

Mm-hmm. [vocalizes] Boo! Happy Halloween.

Rachel:

Oh, that's nice, that's nice. I like that. Although you're... you've burned it very early.

Griffin:

No, you're gonna do it every month, every week of the month October.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

God, we need to figure out our costumes and if we're even gonna bother.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

We don't leave the house after six anymore so I don't know what the use case of that is.

Rachel:

It's what we wear when we sit out in front of the house to keep people from ringing our doorbell.

Griffin:

The kids don't give a shit.

[ad break]

Rachel:

This message is for Nicole. It is from SC. "These last four years together have shown me how incredibly lucky I am to have someone like you in my life. No matter what challenges I face, they're always made easier knowing I'll have you by my side, even if it does mean I'll always have to buy the fancy parmesan. Happy anniversary, you nerd. I love you. PS, you're the cutest. No take backs." Oh gosh. That is sweet.

Griffin:

It is sweet, but you should not be grouching even a little bit about having to buy the fancy parmesan.

Rachel:

Oh, yeah. That makes a huge difference.

Griffin:

It's a huge difference, it's a huge difference. It's a huge difference.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Buy in like a cheese that's like a little bit more than the other cheese, it's never not a good idea. Uh, I've got another message. This one is for Alicia and it's from, uh, Crystalie who says, uh, "Alicia, I hope grad school is fun. Thank you for welcoming me into your family and giving me your parents. I love being your sister and I'm glad I can talk to you about anything. You are wonderful for spreading your enthusiasm about our big, beautiful green earth by teaching kids and me about the environment and sustainability." That is so sweet.

Rachel:

That's very sweet.

Griffin:

Alicia, trying to protect our world. I appreciate that.

Rachel:

What a good group of messages.

Griffin:

This is a lot of good love in this, in this. I feel God in this podcast tonight.

Rachel:

[laughs]

[Max Fun ad]

Ben:

Hi, I'm Ben.

Adam:

And I'm Adam.

Ben:

And we host the Greatest Generation and, uh, we're here to announce a new show.

Adam:

The Greatest Discovery is Maximum Fun's new podcast about the new Star Trek series, Star Trek Discovery.

Ben:

We're gonna be recapping every single episode. It's gonna be a limited run podcast and we hope you'll join us. It's a show that we're really excited to watch and we're really excited to talk about it and provide our signature fucking fart joke coverage of a new entry in the Star Trek franchise.

Adam:

So if you like irreverent adult humor, irreverent again, [laughs] and Star Trek, we really hope you'll join us on Tuesdays on Maximum Fun or wherever you get your podcasts, to the Greatest Discovery.

Ben:

Oh, they made us edit [censored] out of the last promo that we submitted so...

Adam:

You should keep that part in the promo.

Ben:

[laughs]

[ad break ends]

Griffin:

Uh, do you wanna do your second thing, baby?

Rachel:

Yeah. Uh, my second thing, dandelions.

Griffin:

Okay. Didn't expect this from you.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

I never thought of you as a dandelion person. Is that the concept of them or do they fill some sort of role? I guess I'll find out. I'm on pins and needles.

Rachel:

[laughs] Uh, so I... Okay. Dandelions are weeds, obviously.

Griffin:

I was about to say. It's a weed.

Rachel:

And they're super obnoxious. Uh, and that they spread themselves everywhere, all over your yard all the time. But as far as weeds go, kind of interesting, super lovely.

Griffin:

Yeah. They're definitely... The dandelions and the... Oh, is dandelions also the ones that turn into the little puff balls that you can blow around.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Why's that happen? Sometimes they're yellow and sometimes they're little puff balls. Why does that happen?

Rachel:

Dandelions have, uh, been thought to evolved from 30 million years ago in Eurasia.

Griffin:

Oh, damn dandelions.

Rachel:

So like when all those continents were still smooshed together.

Griffin:

Yeah, sure.

Rachel:

Yeah. That's incredible. Uh, dandelions also, another fun fact, uh, they close up at night. Did you know that?

Griffin:

Yeah. They, they go inside of their little...

Rachel:

I didn't know that.

Griffin:

... their little husk.

Rachel:

Yeah. Uh—

Griffin:

A lot going on in these little weeds.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm. Their scientific name is Taraxacum.

Griffin:

[laughs]

Rachel:

What are you laughing about?

Griffin:

It's just the things that you've selected to talk about. The dand— The humble dandelion it's just... it's charming the pants off me.

Rachel:

Well, so the dandelions comes from the French, uh, dent de lion, meaning...

Griffin:

One more time.

Rachel:

Dent de lion, meaning lion's tooth.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

I think it's 'cause of those leaves, those, like, sharp pointy leaves on dandelions. Um, I... So, okay, I'll admit. I don't, I don't think they're wonderful when they're all over my yard, but the dandelion by itself, it's pretty.

Griffin:

I like the concept, I like the concept of a weed...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... with some aesthetic value.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Like if roses were weeds, like, wouldn't that be kind of dope? Like, "Oh man. There's violets all over my fucking yard. There's orchids all over. I hate these orchids."

Rachel:

Okay. So to your point, uh, the flower heads mature into spherical seed heads, uh, called blow balls.

Griffin:

That can't be what they're called.

Rachel:

That's what it says. Blow balls or clocks.

Griffin:

Clo— Like C-L-O-C-K?

Rachel:

C-L-O-C-K. Yes. Uh, in both British and American English.

Griffin:

Both are really good. I don't know which of those I like be— Look at all these clocks—

Rachel:

I kind of like blow balls.

Griffin:

... and blow balls. I mean, blow balls is extremely good.

Rachel:

Uh, so as you know, they contain many single seeded fruits. Uh, and each fruit is to, uh, fine hairs which enable wind aided dispersal over long distances.

Griffin:

That's what I like about these guys. These...

Rachel:

That's what I think is cool.

Griffin:

These motherfuckers are like, "I know how to get there to be a billion of us all over."

Rachel:

Yeah. They don't need to be pollinated. You know, they don't need bees. They can just pick up, transport themselves.

Griffin:

And you can eat them.

Rachel:

Yeah, you can.

Griffin:

I've never nor would I ever, but you can saute these little guys up in a pan and eat them for a little dish, I guess.

Rachel:

Little dandelion greens can go on a salad.

Griffin:

I always enjoy the concept of it, just a thing you can just pick up out the ground and eat.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm. Me too.

Griffin:

Did you ever have, um...

Rachel:

Like honeysuckle?

Griffin:

Honeysuckle? I had a honeysuckle bush in my neighbor, Courtney's, yard and we'd go over there and just like pop... we just drop some, some suckle.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Um-

Rachel:

[laughs] That's no... I don't like that expression.

Griffin:

We would drop some honeysuckle and it, it was so, so good.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm .

Griffin:

And I always liked that. I always felt like I was fucking Swiss family Robinson, just like living off the land, having my little drops of, you know, flower candy.

Rachel:

Yeah. They're, they're not great for people that have pollen allergies, uh, but I think that they're lovely for a weed. Uh, I have no problem with them and I just wanted to give a little shout out to the humble dandelion.

Griffin:

Thank you, dandelions.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, all right.

Rachel:

It's dent de lion.

Griffin:

Dent de lion. Uh, I... My last thing is, like I mentioned earlier, a musical artist, uh, who is Nick Drake, uh, who I mentioned last week, I think.

Rachel:

Yeah. Your fall playlist.

Griffin:

Yeah. Somebody mentioned the fall playlist and I have a few artists on it and I mentioned, uh, Bryter Layter by Nick Drake. And I realized like, um, that I wanted to talk more about Nick Drake because I think he's a super

fascinating guy and his music means, like, a whole lot to me. Um, and it is like this time of year where it's just like, you can attest to this. Like it's all I listen to.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I get these periods, especially like right when it starts to cool down, I don't know why. I wanted to talk more about the phenomenon of seasonal music. I don't know why it happens like that, but like every fall I have like three or four artists that I wanna listen to with the windows open and Nick Drake is, like, chief among them.

Um, so Nick Drake, uh, if you never heard him before, which is pretty unlikely if you've ever seen like a movie or a television show or a commercial, uh, is a British folk artist from the sixties and seventies. Um, I'm gonna play a song here just to like set it up for folks who've never listened before. Uh, yeah, so this is Pink Moon. This is probably, uh, one of his best known songs.

[Pink Moon clip plays]

Griffin:

So he, he is fascinating because, uh, Nick Drake has become like widely loved and recognized almost entirely posthumously, like almost completely. He received almost no recognition at all in his day.

Rachel:

I didn't realize that.

Griffin:

Yeah. Uh, so he started making music when he was in college. He actually dropped out of Cambridge to start making music, um, and, uh, when, when he was making that music, uh, the thing that kind of defines him and you can hear it in all of his songs is, and the thing that, like, I appreciate so

much about him, is he used these very, uh, non-standard guitar tunings, a lot of open tunings, uh, with these, like, weird cluster chords.

So, like, just the songs themselves sound very unique and there was just not very many folk artists like that, uh, out there. There's like not a whole lot of music out there that sounds like Nick Drake's music. Um, but also like his lyrics were very heart wrenching and, um, poignant and they were delivered with vocals that were like the most gentle vocals of... in a human being who's ever recorded music before.

Um, so he, he released his first album in 1969, uh, Five Leaves Left, uh, in... when he was just 21. And there were a lot of great tracks on it, Time Has told Me, River Man, Thoughts of Mary Jane. Um, and it was a great album. Like, you can listen to it now and it's like a really terrific folk album, but he was pretty much ignored by the folk community and his album was never critically or popularly well received.

Rachel:

Well, this was during like protest song time, right?

Griffin:

That's true. Like, yeah, the, the thing... the common criticism was like, people want a chorus in, in your song...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... and that, that was like super, super not his, his style. Um, and pretty much instantly, like, he stopped playing live performances and this would never be another, like in his whole career, it would never be like, a facet of his, mostly because he played these weird open tunings. So like between every song you would have to like stop the concert...

Rachel:

Oh, yeah.

Griffin:

... and be like, "Hold up. I need to get to like CAC, GDE real quick."

Rachel:

Unless he was one of his musicians that just had like 15 guitars on stage.

Griffin:

Yeah. He's... I don't think that was him 'cause he, like, paid, like, 15 pounds for his first guitar. I don't think he was like... He was never really strapped with cash. Um, and so he was pretty much ignored, um, except by, like, some, like, hardcore fans of his.

And so in 1971, he released Bryter Layter, which I mentioned last week. Uh, and he incorporated some more, like, jazzy influences and more, like, bluesy influences into his music, um, and there's some really good songs on that one, At The Chime of A City Clock, One of These Things First, uh, Northern Sky. Uh, and that album had contributions from members of Velvet Underground and the Beach Boys.

Rachel:

Wow.

Griffin:

Um, it sold fewer than 3000 copies.

Rachel:

Oh my gosh.

Griffin:

Uh, and so he became like deeply, deeply depressed after that. He suffered from like depression his entire life. Uh, but after Bryter Layter, like, tanked after he thought that it was gonna be this huge phenomenon, um, he, he became, like, extremely reclusive and uh, his... the, the record label that was releasing these albums at the time was called Island, they did not

expect him to ever do another album and yet same year in 1971, he came back to them and gave them Pink Moon.

Um, which, Pink Moon was his final album. It was just paired down him and his guitar, that was it, no Beach Boys jazz on it. Uh, I think Pink Moon actually has some piano in it that he played, but that was it. The rest of it's just him and his guitar. And finally Pink Moon was like, well received by critics. And people were like, recognizing like, "Okay, this guy is legit." It sold worse than his other two albums though.

Rachel:

What gives?

Griffin:

Just nobody bought it. Well, the big reason is because Drake was like hyper reclusive and so he refused to do any promotion for his albums at all. And back then, like promotion and live performances were like...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... big, big deals. Um, and that was very frustrating for the publisher of this music, obviously, because like the people at Island were like, "Oh, man, this album is fucking fantastic. Please do some live performances. Please get out there." And he, he would not do that. Um, and so after, after Pink Moon tanked, he retired from music. Um, and his health deteriorated in the years following Pink Moon's release until he, uh, died from an overdose of the antidepressants he was taking, uh, at age 26.

Rachel:

Oh, man.

Griffin:

Yeah. It's, it's very, very, it's very awful. And there was very little, like, fanfare following his, his death in, I think '74. Um, in '78, uh, Island, the

record label that had published his three albums, compiled them all into a box set called Fruit Tree.

And that was a only like an effort done by people at Island who thought he was this fucking poet genius. It sold very badly. Nobody bought it. But his posthumous popularity and relevance grew, like, really steadily in the decades following his death. Uh, fun piece of trivia, Robert Smith, uh, of the Cure...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... uh, named the Cure, the Cure after a Nick Drake lyric from Time Has Told Me, uh, a lyric that goes, "A troubled cure for a troubled mind." That's where the Cure comes from.

Rachel:

Oh, wow.

Griffin:

It's from a Nick Drake song. Uh, he was cited regularly as inspirations for various British performers and those citations him finally gain recognition from, uh, music critics who sort of found him to be this doomed, uh, what had... The quote that was pulled on Wikipedia was "doomed romantic hero." Uh, there were a couple documentaries released about him in '99 and 2000.

And then later in 2000, The Guardian placed Bryter Layter at number one in his... uh, in its, uh, alternative top 100 albums ever list. And now his songs are everywhere in TVs and movies. Um, he has music in the soundtrack for The Royal Tenenbaums. I was actually turned onto Nick Drake by the soundtrack to Garden State, which I do not think is a film...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... that has held up especially well but that soundtrack is like... was very informative to me when I was 16, 17, however old I was when Garden State came out, um, that, that Garden State had One of These Things First, which is like one of my favorite Nick Drake tracks. It's also on TV like Parenthood and This Is Us. Um...

Rachel:

I remember very strongly Pink Moon being in a car commercial.

Griffin:

Yeah. Pink Moon was in a car commercial. There was some commercial that had, um, From The Morning in it, which I... is a beautiful, beautiful song that I love so much.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And one last thing about, sort of, his posthumous, like, um, following is that, interest in like his very unique style of music, led people to, uh, learn more things about his family, 'cause he came from like a family of artists. His sister was an actress, um, and his mother was a poet, a musician, Molly Drake.

And she also wrote and recorded with Nick at the family home where he lived for the final years of his life. She wrote these beautiful, like, heart wrenching songs that were also delivered like really softly. And you hear them and it's such a unique thing hearing the songs by his mom that sound like, "It's... Oh, this is where you got it. Like, this is why you do the music that you do. It's because of your mom." And so like, only a couple of years ago, uh, the first full album of Molly Drake music was, was released...

Rachel:

I haven't heard that.

Griffin:

... and it's absolutely beautiful stuff.

Rachel:

I have to look into that.

Griffin:

And it was like a, and it was like a key into the life of this, like, super secretive, super reclusive, very, like, sad genius who released this beautiful, like, sorrowful but sometimes, like, uplifting, very soothing music. Um, I don't know. I think... Nick Drake's music is like... I have been listening to it since high school, I guess, since I saw Garden State and uh, yeah, it, it, it occupies a very singular space in my life of just like, there are... there is no other music or musician that, like, has made me feel the way that Nick Drake makes me feel.

Rachel:

Yeah. Well... And there's something about it... Like, there is a sadness to it. I feel like Nick Drake has this kind of... I don't know, it's, it's not dour, you know? Like when I listen to Nick Drake's music, I don't feel like this overwhelming sense of darkness.

Griffin:

There's definitely like a lot of sadness in a lot of his lyrics, but I...

Rachel:

But it feels contemplative, you know, it doesn't feel like—

Griffin:

Yeah, sure.

Rachel:

... like dwelling on a particular.

Griffin:

I don't think if I had... Like, I knew some of this stuff before researching for this episode. Um, and so I knew he was like a fairly depressed dude, but I don't think you get that just listening to his, just listening to his music. Um, it's very good music to fall asleep to, also, so it goes hand in hand with my naps.

Rachel:

Oh, that's nice. Little theme, little theme episode.

Griffin:

My naps thing earlier. Nick Drake it's... He's, he was a genius and um, I'm glad that like he gained the recognition that he did partially because, like, he absolutely deserved it, but also I would not have... How many other artists are... This is what this mostly makes me think of is like how many other artists are there throughout time who have created music that is this beautiful and poignant, but wasn't well received at its time and then didn't gain recognition afterwards.

Rachel:

Well, I mean, we wouldn't...

Griffin:

We wouldn't know.

Rachel:

We wouldn't know.

Griffin:

That's a, that's what I'm saying though, is like, if, if Nick Drake's music hadn't been like, uh, cited by all of these, like, UK artists and hadn't been, like, finally recognized by these different critics, like, would we be talking about this right now? Like how many other artists are there out there who have made like this, this genius stuff that just for whatever reason, nobody liked, nobody liked at the time and nobody bought at the time. I don't know, man.

Rachel:

Yeah. I mean, the person that comes to mind whenever I hear about Nick Drake is Jeff Buckley.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

This is the same kind of story of somebody who was very talented, very young and died surprisingly before they really became huge.

Griffin:

Yeah. Um, so [laughs], hey.

Rachel:

I know. Griffin, this is supposed to be Wonderful.

Griffin:

I know. I think it is, I think it is... He... His, his life was sad, his life was sad. He was a, he was very sad man and very little was done, uh, by the, like, consumers of music at that time to, I guess, make him feel accepted or whatever. And so that, that sucks. And that happens a lot for a lot of artists throughout, like, the fullness of time.

But I think it is, like, incredible that like, there are lots and lots of people who love his music and love him very, very, very much that he'll never know about but like he, he... I don't know. Like he has gained a sort of relevance that is stretched far, far beyond...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... anything that he probably expected in some of his like sadder days. Um.

Rachel:

Yeah. And I, to imagine that was his ultimate hope, you know. I think anytime you create something that's that personal and that raw, you're hoping at some point somebody will connect to it.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

So hopefully your, your connection and our listeners connections to it is, is a good thing.

[Nick Drake clip plays]

Griffin:

That is our episode, this week, of Wonderful. This is a soothing episode, I thought. We, we came at you with Lizzo first and you're like, "Ah, yeah, party time." And then we're like, "Well, hold on. Naps, dandelions and Nick Drake."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

There's a sort... That was the crescendo and then we're just gonna come down gentle, come down soft.

Rachel:

Um, uh, Griffin, do you wanna thank people for the stuff we got in our P.O. Box?

Griffin:

Uh, yeah. We got a lot of great stuff lately. Uh, thank you to Stephanie and Dana for sending us some very, very cute blizzard-themed baby gear. I appreciate that a lot. We got a Lucio onesie that I'm very excited to put on our boy. Uh, we got a, uh, "I do love you," cross stitch, uh, and that was from Jess. Thank you, Jess. Uh... Oh, I've broken my phone. Sarah sent us a capybara-themed baby book called The Wump World, which I'm very excited

to dig into, and Sasha made us a little crocheted taper, which I'm very excited about.

Rachel:

I think it was knit, actually.

Griffin:

Oh, knit. A knit taper. Um, and yeah, we've gotten a lot of great stuff. Um, oh, and we forgot to do, uh, wonderful submissions from listeners. I have some here, do you wanna hear them?

Rachel:

Yes, of course.

Griffin:

Uh, this is one from Chase who says, "I have a strange enthusiasm for buying physical media and specifically the inexplicable joy of unwrapping the plastic on movies, music, and video games. My wife makes fun of me, but she still honors me by usually saving them for me to do the honors." Um, yeah. I love cracking open some plastic on a DVD or a game...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... that I know I'm about to play. I used to have one of those little things and it was like a little...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... half of a puck with a blade in it that you just like—

Rachel:

Those were nice.

Griffin:

Ooh, those were nice. Um, Connor says, "I'm an adult man who keeps buying juice and other drinks and pouches like Capri Sun. Does it remind me of a simpler time? Yes. Does it feel a bit like I'm sucking the juices out of a bug? Also yes." Yeah. We got those, uh, honestea...

Rachel:

Juice pouches.

Griffin:

... pouches.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Ooh, damn. I fucking wrecked those.

Rachel:

[crosstalk] ...putting that little pointy straw through the little aluminum.

Griffin:

It's barbaric and satisfying.

Rachel:

It's wonderful. Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, also, I mean, I can get like a, a good two gulps out of a pouch. I wish, I wish they made like big pouches. I guess that's what like a Camelback is. Anyway, uh, Emily says, "I recently got into cake decorating and hot diggity shit, if I could spend every minute, uh, every waking hour of my day baking and decorating cakes, I would. There's something so satisfying about having an idea in your mind and making it come to life with frosting and chocolate." Yeah, she also sent some pictures of some Moana-themed cakes that she made.

Rachel:

Oh, that's neat.

Griffin:

With the little oar thing that, um, Maui used and it was very... They looked very tasty and good. You know this is my shit. You know I stay up until 2 AM watching tasty videos in bed, just like...

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

I cannot see enough mirror glaze cakes, I can't see enough mirror glaze cakes.

Rachel:

I'd ask Griffin, I was like, "Haven't you watched this video before?" And he said, "No, there are a lot of mirror glaze cake."

Griffin:

They're very, very hot right now.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, Seth Carlson, thank you, Seth, uh, also sent one in, uh, said, uh, "For the last five or six years, I've had a routine where some nights, uh, when I go to bed, I pull up a radio app on my phone, pick a random station in a foreign country and listen to it for an hour or so before falling asleep."

Rachel:

Oh, that's cool.

Griffin:

My family never really traveled when I was growing up and I only traveled out of the country for the first time in the last year and so I've always loved hearing these small slices of other cultures. Last night, I found a radio station in Osaka that played back to back Hatsune Miku and Bob Dylan."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

That's extremely good. Uh, that's a really good one.

Rachel:

That's, yeah, that's a really clever idea.

Griffin:

Delivery man delivers on across all the podcasts.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, yeah, I think that's it. Thanks to Maximum Fun for having us. You can go to MaximumFun.org, check out all the great podcasts there. Uh, you can go to McElroyShows.com to see our other podcasts and video stuff that we do. Um, anything else, babe?

Rachel:

No, that's it.

Griffin:

Oh, thanks to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our theme song, um, Money Won't Pay. It's a very, very good track and you can find a link to it in the description. Uh, I think that's it. Thanks for listening. Until next time. We really need to talk when we're not recording ourselves...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... about what we're gonna say at the end here. Um, I don't think this is it, though. This isn't it.

Rachel:

Uh, what about, [old timey newscaster voice] join us next week for more wonderful Wednesday tales from Griffin and Rachel McElroy!

Griffin:

That's it. We're gonna say it exactly like that-

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... in those exact words every week. You got it, babe.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

So do it, just do it again right now, just as a clean run. Again, word for word, exact same tone. Just to wrap it up and that'll be the last thing people hear.

Rachel:

Join us again next week.

Griffin:

[laughs]

[theme music plays]

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Ricky:

Hi there, I'm comedian and movie buff, Ricky Carmona and I'm excited to tell you about a new show I'm doing called, Who Shot Ya? Join me, LA Weekly film critic, April Wolf...

April:

I'm gonna call Star Wars and it comes out the Clint Howard project.
[laughing]

Ricky:

... film reviews, editor for the rap, Alonso Duralde-

Alonso:

Everything Charlize Theron knows about killing somebody with a high heeled shoe, she learned from a single white female, trust me.

Ricky:

... and our dope best friends each week.

Speaker:

I think we need to end this pernicious belief in our society, that there is anything remotely fuckable about rich dudes who are emotionally unavailable.

Ricky:

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