

Wonderful! 232: Neutron Hall Pass

Published June 8th, 2022

[Listen here at themcelroy.family](https://themcelroy.family)

[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is *Wonderful!*

Griffin: A show about the goods.

Rachel: The things we like.

Griffin: The good— we got the goods, bay-bee! So that's the new tagline I've been kicking around?

Rachel: Oh, see, I don't like that...

Griffin: Well, it seemed like you— you smiled at me really— people couldn't hear it, but you smiled at me super big—

Rachel: [simultaneously] Well, that's—

Griffin: — and you mouthed [whispering] I love it!

Rachel: Yeah. But I was talking about something else.

Griffin: What were you talking about? The Charlie XCX song?

Rachel: No, the... your...

Griffin: What?

Rachel: You— a sexual thing about you.

Griffin: Ohh!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Your parents listen to this show.

Rachel: I know. That's why I did the best I could. [laughs]

Griffin: That was the be— that was—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That was the best you got!

Rachel: Well, I didn't get specific.

Griffin: Okay, that's fair. Uh, let's— programming note. You're probably gonna hear some foley work coming from outside of my office. We do have, uh, King Kong. We have a King Kong problem here in Austin.

Rachel: Yeah, that's true.

Griffin: Uh, and he knew about all of our bananas... that we have. And so he is really trying pretty hard to get into the house.

Rachel: Very slowly and methodically.

Griffin: Yeah. You would think that he would just try and do one big smash with his huge fist, but no, he's, uh— he tried to pick the lock earlier. Which I was like, "Wow!"

Rachel: Can I ask you— this is somewhat related— why our son thinks that I love, uh, Donkey Kong so much?

Griffin: I didn't know that— was that on the qu— the *Wonderful!* questionnaire that he filled out about you one time?

Rachel: [laughs] No. No, it's because when we are, like, playing with toys we have a little Donkey Kong in a car figure. And he's always like, "I know which one you want, Mommy, 'cause this one's your favorite."

Griffin: I don't know. We may have been talking about our Super— like, our *Mario Kart* sort of picks.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I don't think I told him that Donkey Kong was your jam.

Rachel: I must've said it offhand years ago, because I don't—

Griffin: That boy's mind is a steel trap.

Rachel: [through laughter] I know. I know.

Griffin: Um, no. Somebody's— we're getting some construction done on our house.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Um, and so you might hear that. But just, like, it's ambiance. You can pretend like you're us living in our house, being smashed apart by a big King Kong. Do you have any small wonders?

Rachel: Oh man. You really ran into that full force. Uh—

Griffin: I can go first. Before you do it.

Rachel: Please, please do.

Griffin: Our— *Our Flag Means Death*. It's a big, bold—

Rachel: We're watching it now!

Griffin: It's a big brave stance I'm taking and saying that *Our Flag Means Death* is a good television program.

Rachel: We have been told that for—

Griffin: Six months? I don't know how long this show has been out.

Rachel: Months. Just— months.

Griffin: But months and months and months.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: And we are terrible about, like, watching the shows that people watch these days.

Rachel: Well, we're real, like— we're real thorough in that if we are watching a program, like a reality program, we will make sure that we watch each episode that comes out each week.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And we only have about two hours a night to really consume media. So a lot of times we're like, "Oh, we've gotta watch— you know, we've got this episode of *Survivor* that we haven't watched yet, so let's watch that." And oh, whoops, that's our whole evening.

Griffin: It gets especially out of hand during the hockey season, because that's like, you know, three or four nights a week.

Rachel: Yeah, every other day.

Griffin: That our, you know, nighttime TV viewing is spoken for. But that's not a issue anymore! [disingenuously] Big thanks to Colorado Avalanche, moving on to the third round, guys! Good job out there!

Rachel: We have complained about Colorado enough.

Griffin: I know. We have a lot of Colorado fans in the audience, and I begrudge them nothing. It's good— I'm glad that your team is good.

Rachel: They're a good team.

Griffin: They're very— they are— they are terrifyingly good.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: At the sport they do. You know what else is terrifyingly good? *Our Flag Means Death!* Jesus Christ! So good!

Rachel: I didn't realize how ambitious that show was going to be. Because, like, you know, it could've been enough just to have been kind of a funny pirate show.

Griffin: It's so much more.

Rachel: But there's a lot going on!

Griffin: It's very sweet. It's very romantic. It is very...

Rachel: It's very modern.

Griffin: Very modern. And, like, at the same time, like the swashbuckling adventure is there and is fun. There's so many characters, so many B plots in every episode, and all of them are, like, firing on all cylinders. It's one of those shows where everyone in every step of the production is just crushing it.

Rachel: Yeah. It's cast perfectly, and there's a lot of fun cameos.

Griffin: Yes. Uh, yeah. It's fantastic. I'm sure we are the last people on Earth to watch this television program, but if you have not dipped in yet... dip in! 'Cause it's good. As good as people say. Was that enough time for you to think of a small one?

Rachel: Oh. I have one.

Griffin: Oh. Yeah.

Rachel: So, we have had a trampoline for a while. We've been a trampoline family.

Griffin: Oh, fuck yeah!

Rachel: Uh, which is not anything I ever saw for us, but I'm glad that we have it.

Griffin: Oh, it makes so much sense.

Rachel: And our friend Evan said "You know, they make this thing that's pretty cheap where you can attach a hose to one side of it, and there's a little sprinkler that goes on top, and you can put a sprinkler above your trampoline."

And I said "Well, that sounds dangerous." Not realizing that, like, the water goes through. The trampoline isn't a slippery surface inherently.

Griffin: No, not at all.

Rachel: And so we put a little sprinkler on top of our trampoline for, like, eight bucks or something, and it's a game changer.

Griffin: The best.

Rachel: It is already incredibly hot, as it is in most parts of the country, and the trampoline would be pretty much out of commission if not for the sprinkler.

Griffin: We went out there this past weekend, got both boys up on that bouncy boy, hit the sprinkler, filled up a bunch— a bunch of balloons.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And you know how we feel about them. And just let it ride, baby.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And it was the most fun. Gus was just, like— Gus doesn't— Henry is a little bit trepidatious about, like, getting a bunch of water on his face, and I get it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That sucks.

Rachel: Of course.

Griffin: Gus is like... doesn't care.

Rachel: No.

Griffin: Gus will waterboard himself.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Which he d— appar— our nanny has told us he does frequently.

Rachel: Yeah, when he goes to—

Griffin: When he's at a splash pad.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, 'cause he doesn't care. That boy is just, like— just a wild one.

Rachel: Well, he did— we had kind of a rocky start, 'cause he was pretty hangry when we got out there. And I was like, "Oh, we gotta just feed him."

Griffin: But then we had some wet trampoline rice crackers.

Rachel: We had to feed him on the trampoline just to kind of keep the momentum going.

Griffin: Yeah. He's gonna be walking soon. We're boned.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: We're so boned.

Rachel: He's already doing that thing babies do where they want to hold on to your fingers and walk everywhere. Uh, which is hard on the back.

Griffin: Super exhausting.

Rachel: Uh, and yeah. And it is, uh, a lot of work.

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, I believe you go first this week, with the big stuff. Do you wanna—

Rachel: The big wonder?

Griffin: The big wonder.

Rachel: So this actually is interesting. I don't think you know this. You know what my topic is, 'cause it's a song, and I wanted to share the song with you.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: You don't know how I found this band. And I found this band because Paul Sabourin tweeted about them on June 1st.

Griffin: So the first music video you sent me, I realized I had seen a long time ago. And I'm wondering if Paul is the one who hooked me up with that.

Rachel: Ohh, that's very possible.

Griffin: But I like— maybe it— it must've been, like, backstage at a show, 'cause I didn't, like, watch all of it. I just watched some of it. And I was like, "Oh, this is fucking fresh." And then today you sent it to me like, "You need to check this out," and I watched all of it, and it's another one of those things that you do sometimes on this show where you're like, "Hey, check this band out. It's called Snail Mail. This band's called Soccer Mommy."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "It's my new favorite fucking band."

Rachel: The band is called Lawrence.

Griffin: It's Joey Lawrence's—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: — sort of techno pop...

Rachel: You know, it is a family, though. It is a family affair.

Griffin: Is it? I didn't know that.

Rachel: Yeah. Much like the Lawrence brothers, this Lawrence family is brother and sister.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Uh, we have Clyde and Gracie Lawrence. They are three and a half years apart. And this is their band. They're two of an eight piece band, uh, and it's incredible.

Griffin: It's so— do you wanna play a song, or do you wanna talk about the song?

Rachel: Uh, well, I will just give a little context. So, you know, I'm really bad with, like, music genres. You know how there's, like, different names for different types of music?

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: I was excited to find that this band is called a soul pop group, which, uhh... is exactly kind of my jam.

Griffin: Yeah. I would, uh, slot it in next to... well, a lot of Vulfpeck songs kind of run the gamut, but I think that it— their work reminds me a lot of the songs from Lawrence that I listened to today.

Rachel: Uh, yeah. So, so, uh, the song that I am going to play was featured on a Microsoft Surface Pro 8 Tablet commercial. [laughs]

Griffin: Oh boy.

Rachel: Which really kind of blew up for them.

Griffin: Okay, good.

Rachel: Um, but it is from the album *Hotel TV* that came out in 2021. The song is "Don't Lose Sight."

["Don't Lose Sight" by Lawrence plays]

Griffin: The first time that she hit that, when I was watching it and she was like "[high pitched singing] Boop boop boop, gonna sleep at night!" I was like, holy shit!

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah. She's got some pipes.

Griffin: She has some major pipes. And she's very small, and that's always fun for me, when a very small person—

Rachel: [laughs] That's very true.

Griffin: — can, like, fucking belt it.

Rachel: That's true. Uh, so... their *Hotel TV* tour hit 53 cities.

Griffin: God almighty.

Rachel: Um, they have also opened for Vulfpeck, which I feel like would have been an incredible show.

Griffin: Yeah, the best show.

Rachel: Um, but they have performed at music festivals like Coachella and Bonnaroo, which seems like exactly the kind—

Griffin: Absolutely.

Rachel: You know how, like, you go to a music festival and you have your bands you want to see— and I've talked about this on the show before— and you have the band that you, like, discover there. This is exactly that band. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. Man, my first Bonnaroo was so wild, because I had so many like gaps in the schedule where I was like, "I'll go see... The Magic Numbers. Who are these guys?" And fall in love with them. "Oh, who's this? Old Crow Medicine Show? That's a silly name for a band. Let's check 'em out."

Rachel: [laughs] Uh-huh, uh-huh. So, uh, super energetic, like, super joyous.

Griffin: That song is a live studio performance, the music video that I watched for it, and it is... the most fun I've ever seen a group of people have, I think.

Rachel: So, both Gracie and Clyde went to Brown. Gracie did not finish her degree but, you know, they're three and a half years apart and very close. And,

like, six of the members of that band, or five, all also went to Brown. They're, like, their friends.

Griffin: Oh, that's fun.

Rachel: They're, like, their friends that they met along the way. But, uh, you wanna hear about their influences?

Griffin: Yeah, absolutely.

Rachel: It's interesting. They said from a songwriting perspective— this is an interview from *Unclear Magazine* in 2021.

"From a songwriting perspective, Carole King, Randy Newman, The Beatles."

Which I was like, I don't think I hear any of that in that music.

"But from a vocal perspective, Etta James, Aretha Franklin, Amy Winehouse, Janis Joplin, Linda Ronstadt, Debbie Harry." You know.

Griffin: There's a lot— there's a lot in that sort of, um, vertical that I think is, uh, very, very evident when you listen to Lawrence.

Rachel: Uh, they also talk about kind of the soulful quality, and they mentioned Stevie Wonder, Chicago, Earth, Wind, and Fire, and that feels exactly right to me.

Griffin: Yeah, definitely.

Rachel: So the album is not all, like, crazy joyous jams like this.

Griffin: No!

Rachel: Um, I've been listening to some of the other songs on *Hotel TV*, and they kind of— they run all over the place. So I would encourage y'all to check them out.

Griffin: Do you want to play the other song that you sent me?

Rachel: Oh, so that is actually off of a different album.

Griffin: Ohh. I feel like we could still play it though, 'cause I feel like it displays quite a bit of range from this outfit.

Rachel: Yeah. So, that song, the other song that I sent you is from their 2018 album *Living Room*, and the song is called "Make a Move."

Griffin: And it's—

Rachel: And it's also very good, so we can play a little bit of that.

["Make a Move" by Lawrence plays]

Rachel: Oh, so the thing about— so these two are from New York. Their dad is Mark Lawrence, who is a screenwriter and director.

Griffin: Huh!

Rachel: Uh, and Clyde got his start— his dad was working on the 2000 movie *Miss Congeniality*.

Griffin: [through laughter] Oh gosh.

Rachel: And they were trying to find a song to play as the Miss United States pageant theme, and they couldn't find one they wanted to use, and so they had— they put a pool together, and then Clyde, who was five years old at the time—

Griffin: God almighty.

Rachel: — wrote his own version, and his dad kind of put it in with a mix of songs to choose from, and the producers ended up choosing it.

Griffin: That's so great!

Rachel: So that song led him to be the youngest member of the Songwriters' Guild of America. [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] That's great.

Rachel: Um, but he wrote parts of the original score for *Music and Lyrics* that came out in 2007.

Griffin: Oh yeah. That was the Hugh Grant, Drew Barrymore feature?

Rachel: Yes, yes. Uh, and has just done a lot of stuff. Gracie is also an actress that has been in several TV shows and movies. They're just— they're performers.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Just, like, top to bottom. But yeah, so this— *Hotel TV* came out in 2021. They have a live album that came out in 2020, and then *Living Room*, which I mentioned, in 2018. And then *Breakfast* that came out in 2016. Um, but yeah, just super, super fun, super high energy. They said in an interview— they were talking about kind of the... just the energy behind their music, and they were talking about— the interviewer— this is from an article in Affinity Magazine in 2018. And the interviewer was talking about how they felt like there was some, like, Broadway influence in their music. Clyde said, quote:

"We're super focused on the dynamics. It's super important to us for there to be a lot of peaks and valleys in music hits and moments where everything drops out. It's really important for us to tell a story in the music. Unfortunately that doesn't happen a lot in pop music. It's more built on a consistent loop. We want each song to be a real story with a beginning, middle, and end."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Which gives it kind of the Broadway flavor.

Griffin: Yeah, definitely.

Rachel: They were also asked in that interview, what's it like to work as siblings? Is there a familial chemistry that makes it easier? I thought you would relate to this.

Griffin: Got that blood harmony, man.

Rachel: [laughs] Clyde said, "You know, it's funny you ask that question that way, because people phrase the question, 'How's it working with your sibling? Is it really terrible? Is there a lot of sibling drama?' And that's what they assume. We always kind of have to correct them and say that there's actually a familial chemistry that makes it easier to work together. We don't have that much

problem working together, and are actually able to share a type of sixth sense where whether it's in the studio, a meeting, or in the middle of a show, we're able to give each other a certain look and know that we're saying, hmm, maybe don't bring this up in the meeting."

Griffin: [amused] Yeah, man!

Rachel: [laughs] "Or I feel good enough to go for the higher harmony, and we never say that out loud. We just give each other a look." [laughs]

Griffin: I'm glad that that level of projection upon family performers exists just outside of podcasting, and is just sort of native to every art form. That puts me at ease a little bit.

Rachel: Yeah, no. I think— and there is that assumption of like, "Oh, it must be terrible, huh?"

And they're "Actually it's a huge asset for us."

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: And I thought you would relate to that.

Griffin: I definitely do.

Rachel: 'Cause I feel like you and your bros feel the same.

Griffin: Yeah, for sure. Thank you for turning me onto this band. I'm going to be listening to them... a lot.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Uh, and I encourage everyone else to do the same, 'cause it's fucking— it's feel-good music, man!

Rachel: Uh-huh!

Griffin: Summer bops. Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

[ad break]

Griffin: Got some Jango Fetts here, and I would love to read this first one, if I may be allowed to do that, please.

Rachel: Please.

Griffin: Mis— Mistress.

Rachel: Please do.

Griffin: Okay. So this one's for Stephen and it is from Natalie, who says:

"Hi, Stephen/baby/sweetheart! I love you and our very comfy and cozy life, and will even when we're just energy out in the universe. Can't wait to marry you. Love Natalie/baby/cariño."

And we haven't talked about what our plan is vis a vis when we become energy in the universe, like, where we're gonna— it's good to have, like, a meetup point.

Rachel: Mmm.

Griffin: Um... so I was thinking, like, Betelgeuse? The star?

Rachel: Ohh, okay.

Griffin: 'Cause it's fun— you know that's my favorite movie.

Rachel: I thought you were gonna say whether or not we have hall passes when we're energy out in the universe.

Griffin: Oh yeah. If my neutrons...

[both laugh]

Griffin: I would never! I would never!

Rachel: Can I read the next one?

Griffin: I wish you would.

Rachel: This is for Otis. It is from Caroline.

"So many wonderful things about you, but with limited space I'll just name a few. You're loyal, altruistic, honest, and funny. You care about bees, you're philanthropic with money. Before we say what's up to our cool baby, know I'll always love you, even when life's crazy. Like the humble rancho, babies aren't that scary, especially 'cause you I married." [laughs]

Griffin: That's— uh, that was delightful. I love the pro-rancho message in there. This is still... a cause that is near and dear to my heart.

Rachel: Well, and I like that people care about bees. Like, for me I want to care about bees, but it's better if people really care about bees.

Griffin: But— but, like... [sighs] everyone already cares about bees.

Rachel: See, I don't think they do. Not enough.

Griffin: I think folks get it about— like, we get it! They're endangered and essential to our whole ecology. But... ranchos have such bad marketing, still!

Rachel: I know, mm-hmm. Yeah, I see what you're saying.

Griffin: And I've done everything I can! I have exhausted every avenue available to me.

Rachel: You did that thing that you did years ago!

Griffin: I did that thing, once, years ago.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Hearts and minds.

Rachel: Yeah.

[pause]

[music plays]

Dan: Hi! I'm Dan McCoy.

Stuart: I'm Stuart Wellington.

Elliott: And I'm Elliott Kalan!

Dan: And the three of us host *The Flop House*. It's a podcast where we watch a new bad movie, and then we talk about it.

Elliott: Dan, you say it's hosted by the three of us. We've had a lot of great guests cohost, like Gillian Flynn, Jamelle Bouie, John Hodgman, Jessica Williams, Wyatt Cenac, Joe Bob Briggs, Josh Gondelman, Roman Mars—

Stuart: Yeah, and you said new movies, but what about the time we did *Meatballs 2*?

Dan: Okay, okay, yeah. Sometimes we do older movies, and sometimes we have guests, but mostly it's about us talking about, like, recent bad movies.

Stuart: And don't forget about the ones where I made you do a roleplaying game where you played cartoon dogs!

Dan: Alright, yeah, but—

Stuart: Shouldn't a promo be a really simple explanation about what our show is about? So what's the show about, Dan?

Elliott: What's it about?

Dan: [sighs]

Stuart: What's it about?

Dan: It's about friendship, alright?! It's about our friendship and how we love each other!

Stuart: The Flophouse: it's a podcast mostly about bad movies, on Maximum Fun.

[music and ad end]

[*Star Trek* comm noise]

Ben: Do you sometimes wonder what ever happened to the kids at your school who really loved *Star Trek*?

Adam: You might remember a kid like me, the one who read the *Star Trek* novels and built star ship models. I also took music classes to avoid taking gym classes that required showering after, but I don't see what that really has to do with—

Ben: Or a kid like me. I introduced myself to kids at my summer camp one year as Wesley, but when the school year started and some of those kids were in my new class, I actually had to explain to my friends that I had tried to take on the identity of my favorite *Star Trek* character. The shame haunts me to this day!

Adam: I'm sure some of those *Star Trek* fans from your childhood grew up to have interesting and productive lives, but... we ended up being podcasters.

Ben: On *The Greatest Discovery*, you'll hear what happens to two lifelong *Star Trek* fans who didn't grow up to be great people, but just grew up to be people who love jokes as much as they love Trek.

Adam: So listen to our new episodes every week on Maximumfun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

[*Star Trek* comm noise]

[ad ends]

Griffin: [singing] Let's talk about dice!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Andrew Dice Clay.

Rachel: Okay, no thank you.

Griffin: My favorite... comedian. I love his bit that he does where he's like... [grunts] "[strained] I'll tell you about my wife."

Rachel: Yeah? [laughs] Wouldn't that be a shock?

Griffin: "[strained] I'll tell you about my wife. She burned all the spaghetti."

Rachel: You know, Griffin McElroy, who are your biggest comedic influences?

Griffin: Definitely Dice, bay-bee! No, I'm gonna talk about the little guys that you roll, and they have numbers on 'em.

Rachel: Yeah! You know, you have a lot of these guys.

Griffin: I do, but they are tools of the trade, so I do not feel guilty.

Rachel: Well, and they take up almost no space.

Griffin: That's... I guess it depends on— if you get enough of 'em...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: They can take up all the space, I guess, presumably. But yes, I would say I have a reasonable amount of dice, and I do not discriminate. I have a big bag of cheap, like, plastic yellow dice with black number text on them, which I feel like is just the meat and 'tatoes of gaming dice.

Rachel: [laughs] Do you remember how old you were when you found out that you could get multiple sides?

Griffin: I mean, it was... I probably would've been in, like, elementary school or something. There was a place called The Hobby Shop.

Rachel: Wow!

Griffin: In downtown Huntington. That was, like, our, you know, Magic the Gathering, you know, figurine painting, like, all that jazz. And I went in and I was like, "Look at all those little colorful... polygonal shapes!"

Rachel: I feel like I was 30 years old. [laughs]

Griffin: Oh wow!

Rachel: I feel like it was after I met you, when you were like, "Look at this one!" I was like, "What?!"

Griffin: I mean, I was always glancing off the edges of groups of people who played roleplaying games. Like, I definitely had some really good friends in high school who played roleplaying games, and they would bring their, like, you know, source books into theater class, where obviously we weren't doing anything, so I would just, like, read them and be like, "Oh, this is fucking cool! Too bad I'll never play them."

Uh, so I definitely had some exposure. But, like, I have lots of dice. I got cheap dice, I have one that is made from fake Swarovski crystals that I got from some event that I don't really break out, 'cause it doesn't— it doesn't have the best sort of finger feel.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, my big jam on this topic is that there are so many, like, indie companies out there who are making and selling, like, super high end, artisanal dice. And I get unsurprisingly served a lot of advertisements for these companies when I'm on the socie, and it is—I always will stop and be like, "Let me see what's going—let's see what's going on with these dice. What do we got going on in here? Ooh, these ones glow in the dark!"

Rachel: How do they— like, how... one thing for you— and this is true with a lot of your equipment— is heft.

Griffin: Yes, oh my God.

Rachel: You like to know what the feel is. When you are, like, reading about dice, how do they describe that? Do you know? Like, if you were like, "Well, but how heavy are they?" Does it, like, tell you?

Griffin: I mean, that's an impossible thing, I think, to gauge from pictures and descriptions. But then there's certain things that are like... you know, on the super high end— usually whenever you're looking at, you know, these indie dice

manufacturers, you're talking about, like, resin with cool shit inside. Whether it is sparkly stuff, or a little skull—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: — like the bowling ball in *Mystery Men*, or, you know, um... there are higher end dice though that are like, these are made from straight tungsten. And you're like, those are gonna be some heavy boys!

Rachel: Yeah, that's fair.

Griffin: My very favorite set of dice that I own is from a company I believe called Wormwood, and it is this really nice set, one of each sort of—you know, a D4, a D6, a D8, D10, D12, D20, and they are made from these, like, super intricate, almost like woven kind of... steampunk-y industrial bronze dice that came in a long, like, dark wooden box, with my name embossed in gold on it?

Rachel: Oooh!

Griffin: And Brennan— Brennan Lee Mulligan from *Dimension 20* gifted that to all of us who played in Tiny Heist. And it was like... the most thrilling. Like when I saw it and it had my name on it, I was like, "Ooh, what's this?" And I cracked it open and I was like, "Ooh, ahh!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Like the Ark of the Covenant. I still rock with those. 'Cause the box is just really, really nice. And so, like, whenever I tour, uh, when we do live TAZ shows, those are always the dice that I bring. I remember actually when I was doing one of the D&D camps with Austin Bat Cave with the kids, I was, like, showing them, like these super nice dice, and people were passing them around, and then they, like, didn't come back to me. And I looked around and, like, everyone was holding on to one. I was like, "Oh. Those aren't... for you all to... "

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "Those aren't for you all to keep... I do need those back... "

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It was a little uncomfortable.

Rachel: Yeah. I could see why they would think, like, "Oh, how nice! We all get a little take home, like a little goodie bag."

Griffin: No way!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Not of these fancy dice. Uh, so obviously D&D and other sort of roleplaying games, the rise in prevalence of those games is what has sort of brought about this whole industry of indie dice makers. But there's an infinite amount of games that use dice from, you know, Monopoly to Craps. Which, Craps is my favorite, like, gambling experience. I don't have many gambling experiences, but whenever we would go on the JoCo Cruise, y'know there is a casino there, and I have very fond memories of playing Craps with just, like, everybody at the JoCo Cruise, because it's a very— you lose your money. That's the secret to all gambling games is you lose all your money from it. But it's a very social way of losing all your money? Like, you share in each other's sort of successes and misfortunes, and when someone rolls a 7 at the bad time to roll a 7, everyone together is like, "Oh, man."

Rachel: I feel like everybody's first introduction to that game is through some kind of movie. And so every time, like, you play it or see it played, it feels very cinematic. It's like, "*I'm in the movie now!*" [laughs]

Griffin: In my experience, the ultimate way that Craps has been depicted in a movie is *Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2*—

Rachel: [tired] Oh, here we go.

Griffin: — a film with which I am intimately familiar.

Rachel: Here we go.

Griffin: Because he walks up to a Craps table, and it's like he just got to casino, and someone's like, "Oh, you wanna play Craps?"

He was like, "Oh, yeah, I don't really know how."

And he, like, exchanges all his money for chips. And then the dealer is like, "Okay, you wanna put some here, you wanna put some on the pass, you gotta put some on the low line and some on this—" I don't know. I'm still pretty unfamiliar with the rules of Craps. And then some— and then he rolls the dice and he gets a 7, and he loses all his money instantly. That's about how it... goes.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, but its— it can be fun. I just— I love that human beings have, for millennia, created these sort of very rudimentary random number generators, using nothing but, like simple materials and physics. That is very cool and very human to me. The predecessors of dice are, like, you know, the casting of bones or what-have-you for soothsaying purposes, to aid in those soothsaying purposes, oftentimes those bones or whatever would have, you know, different sides with different sort of things etched into them.

Rachel: [through laughter] Okay. I pictured it like somebody had, like, a big bag o' bones that they just dumped out, and it was like tea leaves. Like, "Well, this bone landed on this bone."

Griffin: I mean, that is essentially what we are talking about.

Rachel: Yeah, I guess that's fair. [laughs]

Griffin: And there are still definitely, you know, there are still some parts of the world where that is a practice that is done. But then six-sided cube dice and four-sided pyramid dice are about the same age, and they've been found, appropriately enough, in Egyptian tombs dating back to, like, 2000 BCE. Um, whoever, like, invented dice is sort of, like, a contested topic.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Because, like, throughout time historians have been like, "Well, it was the... Greek, uh, emperor... uh, who did it during the siege of Troy."

And it's like, no, actually we just, like, dug up this Chinese set of dice from 600 years earlier. The earliest complete board game using dice that's ever been sort of uncovered was the Royal Game of Ur, which was a Sumerian sort of artifact dating back to the 3rd century BCE. I think I've talked about the Royal Game of

Ur on the show before, maybe. Uh, I would love to play it. I wanna know what Ur— I bet it's, like— like, um, Sorry.

Rachel: [laughs] I think I have no idea what you're talking about. What is this?

Griffin: The Royal Game of Ur. It was the earliest board game.

Rachel: Oh, okay.

Griffin: Ever— ever discovered. Earliest complete board game, uh, using dice.

Rachel: Like Chutes and Ladders, kind of.

Griffin: Like— just like Chutes and Ladders. Um, even as dice kind of began to take on more complex shapes and more complex like, materials, right? Because the Greeks did start making them out of ivory, and metal, and different sort of stuff like that. Uh, it wasn't until the 17th century that mathematicians started to, like, study them in terms of probability and randomness. Up until that point it was thought that, like, whatever the dice landed on was fated, or some sort of divine, you know, intervention. Which I find super duper fascinating. I just— man. I— I— all I know is, a good set of dice in the hand— because you're right, I am a sucker for a good... thing in the hand...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: A good— a good— a nice object...

Rachel: A good— a good thing in the hand.

Griffin: A nice, smooth, heavy object in the hand is like, you cannot beat that.

Rachel: What about the sound? Is the sound important to you?

Griffin: The sound is difficult for me, right? Because I work in an audio medium.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: So those— those wormwood dice that I love so much, I don't usually use when we are recording at home, because it hits the desk and it sounds like a, you know...

Rachel: Now, do you feel like a little felt box is— is, like, not appropriate?

Griffin: You know, I want there to be some sound.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You know? Although now we mostly use, when we're recording at home, we use D&D Beyond, which has a whole suite of virtual dice, because that way our dad doesn't have to do math using numbers on a piece of paper.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It— the computer does it for us. That's dice. That's the show. Thank you all so much for listening. There's a bunch of shows on the Maximum Fun Network you should go listen to. Oh, thanks to Bo En and Augustus for use of our song "Money Won't Pay".

Rachel: Yeah, talk about a joyous bop.

Griffin: No kidding. That one still comes up. I oftentimes will, when I'm perusing Spotify, I'll just go to my liked songs playlist that is, like, 400 songs long at this point, and it'll pop up sometimes, and every time it comes on I just fucking groove to it. Um, hey. We have shows coming up next week for *MBMBaM* and *TAZ*. We're gonna be in Boston, and at the Foxwoods Casino in Mashantucket, uh, and you should come out and see us. It's gonna be a very good time. It's next Friday that that very short tour starts. And then in July we're gonna be in Portland and Salt Lake City and San Diego for Comic Con, so you should come out to see us for that as well.

Um, preorders are open for *The Adventure Zone: Eleventh Hour* graphic novel.

Rachel: Ooh!

Griffin: Which I cannot stress enough how proud I am of how that one turned out. It was a very, like, involved, all-hands-on-deck affair to get that book written, and it— I think it turned out fucking radical, and I can't wait for people to read it.

Rachel: Do you think it could be kind of a standalone in a way?

Griffin: It's interesting. I— I think—

Rachel: I'm wondering if it's the kind of thing where you could, like, give that to somebody who's not at all familiar, and they could just, like...

Griffin: I think you could enjoy it that way.

Rachel: I think so too!

Griffin: Because— especially when you think about it in the con— not to toot my horn or anything, but when you think about it in the context of a D&D arc, like a D&D campaign, like, it was my favorite, I think, of all the campaigns, just because figuring out that time loop aspect was so novel and such a fun like, exercise. Anyway, I don't have the exact link on hand for where you can preorder that, but I bet if you go to mcelroy.family you can check that out. You can get tickets to the shows. We have merch at mcelroymerch.com that you're just gonna eat up and love. You don't eat it. I don't think we have anything edible. I do believe we have dice on there. Very nice TAZ themed dice.

Rachel: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah!

Griffin: Um... is that it?

Rachel: I think so.

Griffin: Okay. Be good... out there, everyone.

Rachel: And our signature sign-off.

Griffin: Be good, everyone.

Rachel: Be good, everyone.

Griffin: We've heard a lot of— I don't wanna name names, but we've heard about some bad behavior.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And we do not condone that. Be good out there!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah! Please?

Rachel: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

[chord]

Maximumfun.org.

Comedy and Culture.

Artist Owned.

Audience Supported.