

Wonderful! Ep235: Ghostbusters

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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Oh, hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is *Wonderful!*

Griffin: The show about stuff we like that is good and that we are into. And that's the new direction. We've talked about sorta okay stuff that we're ambivalent about in the past.

Rachel: Oh. Uh-oh.

Griffin: But this week, I think we should talk about things that we like and things that are good and things that we are into. I'm into you.

Rachel: Oh, wow.

Griffin: Can I say that right now, at the top?

Rachel: Thank you.

Griffin: Really feeling you lately. We went... Me... Me and Henry went on this latest tour to Boston and Mashantucket. And it was the- We realized like right before the trip that it is the first time you and I have been apart in this pandemic... What? Like, I cannot re- I cannot remember.

Rachel: I can't either.

Griffin: It was so brutal.

Rachel: And then you did it again this last weekend.

Griffin: I did. I went on a trip to Houston with some friends. Took in some art. Took in some sushi.

Rachel: The space.

Griffin: Took in the Space Center. Hung out with my good friends, Gus Grissom—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ...and John... Oh, shit, I can't remember the other guy's name. The sandwich space boys.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: On their Apollo III mission. Havin' a fun time and a delicious lunch up there in the cosmos.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Um, and it made me- The distance did make this damn heart grow fonder.

Rachel: Oh, thanks honey!

Griffin: Do you wanna say... Do you maybe wanna say something about... ?

Rachel: [laughs] I...

Griffin: You don't have to... No, no, no, no, no.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Seriously, for real, like don't even... Don't worry about it. It's... I know how you feel about me, and um, it's... uhh... It's like, okay. It's like whatever, you know? Like it's so chill around here.

Rachel: I did... I did really miss you.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: Mmm... sorry.

Griffin: Uh, are you do- Is something going on?

Rachel: Oh, I'm trying to prepare my thing, my Small Wonder.

Griffin: You should have done that before- Oh, your Small Wonder.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Oh, okay. Are you googling...

Rachel: I can't remember-

Griffin: ... "things I like", "things Rachel likes."

Rachel: No, I can't... I couldn't remember what it was called. Um, because it has a very long title.

Griffin: Okay, what is it?

Rachel: Uh, *The Woman in the House Across the Street from the Girl in the Window*.

Griffin: How is it?

Rachel: [laughs] I really enjoyed it. So this is the Kristen Bell kind of spoof on—

Griffin: Love a spoof.

Rachel: ... on like the true crime, murder-mystery kind of stuff.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: The phenomenon. And I was worried it would be a little too, like, *Scary Movie*. Like, "Haha and this trope. Haha!"

Griffin: By which you mean so fucking funny that you bust up so hard.

Rachel: [laughs] Um, and I watched the trailer and I was like, "Ah, I dunno. It's still kinda risky." I really enjoyed it!

Griffin: Oh good!

Rachel: Yeah. Because it kind of like... It does stand up as like, kind of a good murder-mystery.

Griffin: Okay...

Rachel: I mean, the outcome is pretty silly. But I found myself compelled each episode.

I mean, it is very funny.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But uh, I would recommend it if you're kind of on the fence about it.

Griffin: Uh, I have two. I wanna... I wanna give a special mention to *Stranger Things*.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Because the fourth... Uh, half of the fourth season's out. I guess the next half comes out on July 1st.

And we were so cool on it, like when it... When season four dropped we were like, "Enh. Not really... I don't really know if that's something I really care about."

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And it... And it was so mystifying as to why I felt that because I loved the first season, kinda liked the second season—

Rachel: Well—

Griffin: And I didn't remember how I felt about the third season but I really liked it too.

Rachel: I will say, like, we have been hesitant because we have such a short amount of time at night.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And that time at night is so unpredictable. To watch anything that's gonna be kind of dark and unsettling.

Griffin: Yeeep. This—

Rachel: Which it is.

Griffin: This season goes pretty deep in the pain.

Rachel: It is. But *Stranger Things*... Like the cast and the tone like, can be so delightful.

Griffin: Just a glut of characters.

And I think that coolness was because it has been three years since the last season came out.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Which is a ridiculous amount of time to go between seasons of television or anything. But I'm really liking it.

Rachel: The most recent episode we watched had some like, flashbacks to the early seasons. And it is just remarkable how much—

Griffin: Babies. Little babies.

Rachel: ... much these children have grown.

Griffin: I know. I also wanna shout out Foam Roller.

Rachel: Yeah [laughs].

Griffin: When I was in Houston visiting our friends Clint and Natalie. Natalie was like, "You gotta try this. You gotta try this foam."

I was like, "What is that beautiful little cylinder?"

She was like, "Put your back on that and roll."

And I was like, "[spine crackling noise] Wow." That was the noise that my body made involuntarily.

Rachel: We have invested so much in like—

Griffin: Back health.

Rachel: ... back massage products. And I thought for sure we had a foam roller, just assuming.

Griffin: Nope.

Rachel: But no, we didn't.

Griffin: I am five inches taller.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: My eyesight has improved. It's just amazing.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's just so good. Can I do a third one? Can I do a third Small Wonder?

Rachel: Alright, sure. Let's go for it.

Griffin: In my drive to Houston... It's what, like a three hour drive there and three hours back? I started listening to the latest season of *Dimension 20* called *A Starstruck Odyssey*, I was telling you about it a little bit. That's uh, Brendan Lee Mulligan and company.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: The thing they do for Dropout at CollegeHumor. It's an actual play thing. And it is probably some... My favorite actual play thing I've ever really tuned into.

Rachel: Wow.

Griffin: It is delightful from the jump. It is fan-fuckin-tastic.

Rachel: Brennan has such a sensibility that I feel like is so similar to you and your brothers.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: That it's just like... It's very like, soothing. You trust him entirely—

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And you're just delighted.

Griffin: And the cast is just like... out of control. It's mostly folks, I think, from um... Uh, *Fantasy High*? And man it's just so good. It's so good. I cannot recommend it enough. Go listen to it. Even if you only kind of like actual play stuff, it is such a treat from start to finish.

Rachel: Yeah, I bet.

Griffin: Okay. I go first this week.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: I wanna talk about a computer software, an instrument, a little doohickey, called the Vocoder.

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: You know, it is amazing how many things you like.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: I say that because—

Griffin: I could leverage that at you. We have gone pretty much blow for blow here on *Wonderful!*

Rachel: Well, it's just every time you bring something up, I'm like, "Surely we've covered that", because that's something you like so much.

Griffin: I do like a Vocoder.

Rachel: And I realize like, "Oh no. He just likes a lot of things."

Griffin: I do. I've been diving back through my Spotify playlists from past years. And I just stumbled back onto and became deeply obsessed with Bon Iver's 2016 album, *22, A Million*.

And it is... I-I-I... I'm feeling a little bit- I'm excited and nervous about the move and stressed, but also a little bit melancholy. Like a little bit like, bittersweetness.

Rachel: Well I should hope so!

Griffin: And I find that this album is really meeting me where I'm at right now. I don't know how deep into it you got. I loved all of his albums that came out before that.

For Emma, Forever Ago was like—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I had that on for months when that album first came out. But *22, A Million* is a really wild conceptual sort of futuristic thing that is like laced with these very Bon Iver-style pretty acoustic melodies and falsetto singing.

And then also just these booming robot choirs from the like, very complicated Vocoder software.

Rachel: Do I know this?

Griffin: *22, A Million*? I don't know. So this came out around the time that... I think it was his next album after he won the Grammy and started to collaborate with a bunch of people. He did a song on *Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy* with Kanye and I think maybe even a couple other things with Kanye.

But this sound kind of became his trademark sound. And just kind of flourished from this album on.

And so he had dabbled with this sound, this Vocoder sound in the past, but in *22, A Million* it just goes beast mode.

And I wanna play a song off of that album called "715-CRΣΣKS", with like sigma signs instead of Es.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Because it's a very weird album. And I'll play a little bit of it now.

[“715-CRΣΣKS” by Bon Iver plays]

Rachel: It sounds like if Bon Iver had a robot brother.

Griffin: Or like, 15 robot brothers.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: There is a lot happening there sort of harmonically. It's like some of the best Vocoder in the business. And it's actually a special proprietary effect chain, like hardware and software effect chain called "The Messina", which is named for the sound engineer who designed it for Bon Iver.

Rachel: Chris... Chris... Chris Messina?

Griffin: Yes, exactly.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: From Loggins and Messina, I don't know... Probably not?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Probably not. It's just like a bunch of effects that he triggers with a keyboard while he sings, which then runs it just through all of these different patches and returns these like, super rich, like wet layers of Vocoder harmonies.

And it's just... It sounds so amazing.

He got some shit when that album came out, because it was... you know. He uses it so much that it becomes maybe a little gimmicky at times.

But I am such a sucker for it. I think it sounds so cool.

Rachel: Yeah, you—

Griffin: Especially like, in a car with the bass kind of up.

Rachel: I know.

Griffin: Hearing the like, [deep voice] *really deep* parts of the harmony. Like rattling your buttocks.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's really, really incredible.

Rachel: You've played around with this before, right?

Griffin: A little bit. So mostly I did um... Oh god, what's a good... Voc... Vocaloid.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Which is a different thing. That like where you use computer software to like, synthesize singing from nothing. There is no... There is no dry signal. There is no input from you singing into the microphone.

Like, it is all created from... I've never really messed around with a Vocoder. Although it is pretty easy to kind of get plugged in. This is a variant on a type of Vocoder called a Prismizer, like "prism-mizer."

And it is just like... It lets you sing while you play a keyboard and then the notes you play on the keyboard, it creates your voice along with it in real time.

Which is basically just like what a Vocoder does, but you know, more complicated. More voices sort of coming back at you at once.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the song that took *The O.C.* , and then *SNL*—

Rachel: Oooh.

Griffin: ... and then the world by storm.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Which is Imogen Heap's, "Hide and Seek."

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: It has been so thoroughly meme-ified, and I understand that. It had special significance to me because I watched *The O.C.* before the whole "Dear Sister" thing happened on *SNL*.

And so like, when that sketch dropped, I was like, "What is... How are my worlds crossing in this way?!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And then everybody was like, "Did you see that... Did you hear that... you remember that song from the *SNL* sketch?"

[barely-contained anger voice] "No! It's the song when Marissa Cooper shoots Trey."

Anyway. Uh, I'll play a little—

Rachel: Oh, spoiler! Spoiler! Spoiler!

Griffin: God, that show's a hundred years old.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I'm gonna play a little bit right now.

["Hide and Seek," by Imogen Heap, plays]

Griffin: Uh, you know that song.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I went through like a big phase and like—

Griffin: You love Imogen Heap.

Rachel: Well, I mean, enough that I like downloaded discreet songs when I was in Chicago, 2006-2007, I rode my bike a lot and I'd always get out my iPod mini—

Griffin: Yeah?

Rachel: ... nano?

Griffin: Yeah?

Rachel: Whatever. And just jam on my bike. And so yeah, that was in the playlist.

Griffin: She was a... She was at the vanguard. She was a pioneer in this like, prismizer sort of style of electronic music.

Fun fact, that song dropped as a single from an album she released in 2005, the same exact day that the episode of *The O.C.* that it was featured in aired.

Rachel: Wow!

Griffin: *The O.C.* was always at the cutting edge and also launched a million ships of like... Not that Imogen Heap, you know, arguably needed the boost at that point.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But then, holy shit, I remember hearing that, I wanna say two or three different movie soundtracks, that same song was on the...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: All of them. And even though it's like a... you know, a gag at this point, I still love that song.

Rachel: Oh, for sure.

Griffin: It still gives me like, goosebumps every time I hear it.

Rachel: For sure.

Griffin: So that is the prismizer which is sort of an evolved version of a vocoder.

And a vocoder, you know, strictly defined, is a machine that takes vocal input and returns it in a digital format. So like, it wasn't a music thing when it was first invented.

It was invented in 1938, from a Bell Labs engineer named Homer Dudley. And it was... I mean, it was literally used for what it says on the tin. Like, recording voice and returning it in a non-analogue format.

And it was actually like, a huge step forward for telecommunications. Like a lot of different sorts of, like, CODEX and stuff like that, sprung forth from this invention that was not inherently used for music. Um—

Rachel: What was... What was the value of it?

Griffin: I mean, it was a machine that recorded your voice and could turn it into a... turn it into a digital thing.

Rachel: So for like, character work? Or like... ?

Griffin: For just recorded voice. I mean, it was... It was... Instead of recording to tape or any kind of analogue format, it could return...

Rachel: Oh. Okay.

Griffin: You know, the... I don't have enough technical know-how.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But it stands apart. It's the difference between using an audiocassette to record your voice and a like, digital voice recorder to record your voice.

Rachel: Okay. Okay. Yeah. I was trying to figure out like, what the intended purpose was initially.

Griffin: Yeah. This is 1938. That's wild to me.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: That seems way ahead of its time.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And so many inventions came out of that.

The 60s were, for... The 60s were a really cool foundational, fun time for electronic music, because it was so theoretical and it was so cutting-edge of technology.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That was being like... It wasn't happening in someone's basement, it was like happening in laboratories, and it was happening at universities. In like, departments specifically founded around the synthesis of sound and music.

I think that's really cool.

Rachel: Yeah-huh.

Griffin: Because obviously it has graduated from that to become this, like, infinitely accessible thing that even a decade later, like people were doing all kinds of wild shit with.

In 1968 the first like, real-time solid-state vocoder for music was invented by none other than Robert Moog, who is arguably like, the most important figure—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: ... in all of electronic music. And that's why—

Rachel: Yeah. I've heard of that.

Griffin: ... so many... so many synthesizers carry the Moog name.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: And he was the first one to get the vocoder off the ground, alongside so many other sort of things with, you know, synthesized electronic sound.

Um... Yeah. I don't- Obviously, like, it is a thing that you can do a whole lot with. And it is a broad category, right? Like autotune I guess you could qualify under this.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And certainly we had... You know, autotuning music is still a very common, standard practice in the music industry.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: But in the, you know, in the early 20-teens it was very prominent and it was very like, not something they were trying to disguise. It was a feature and not a bug.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: And you know, like, T-Pain made a lot of money off of that specifically.

But the vocoder has been used for music for forever. Like fuckin' "Mr. Blue Sky", by ELO uses a vocoder.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Like there's so many different artists who have done so many different incredible things with it. And it has only like, continued to evolve. And like, this 2016 album from Bon Iver with the Messina, that's nothing I've ever heard before that album came out.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So it's still kind of evolving and people are still finding cool things to do with it, and I think that is rad.

So, and I don't care- And you know what? I don't care who disagrees with me.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: I see you over there. You're lookin' at me like, "I like the real deal. Give me a beautiful opera performance [sic]."

Rachel: [sarcastic] You know, just acoustic. Unplugged, you know?

Griffin: [sarcastic] Unplug it, you know?

Rachel: [sarcastic] Yeah.

Griffin: [sarcastic] To snap the- Cut the wires. Cut yourself free.

Rachel: [sarcastic] Uh-huh.

Griffin: [sarcastic] Experience the true sound.

Rachel: [sarcastic] Put a hat on the ground, you know?

Griffin: [sarcastic] Put a hat right on the ground.

Rachel: [sarcastic] Make your money that way.

Griffin: [sarcastic] And make money on it.

Oh, I thought you meant just like, in protest of—

Rachel: [laughs] No. I'm just saying like, take it to the streets.

Griffin: Busk it.

Rachel: You know?

Griffin: Busk it and bust it.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. That is my motto.

Griffin: That is your- That's still... You said that to me yesterday.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

[*Home Improvement* theme plays, ad break begins]

Griffin: We have a couple of Jumble Jars here and I would love to read the first one if I may be granted permission to do so please.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: This one is for Adrian. It is from Aaron, who says, "Happy birthday Adrian.

"I hope things are going better at the city and I hope you know how glad me and Freddy are to have you in our lives, helping us with our weird brains while we try to help you with yours.

We should go to Hearst Castle again soon now that these unprecedented times are hopefully mostly over.”

That is quite an adventure. Do you know about Hearst Castle?

Rachel: No.

Griffin: Dracula [sic] live there. Dracula [sic] live there.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Scary. Scary man. Do you know hi- Do you know about his work?

Rachel: Uh, the cape?

Griffin: I mean, he’s got a lot more going on than just... A lot of people wear capes.

Rachel: Mm, the teeth. And the teeth.

Griffin: The two... Specifically the two teeth that he uses for biting.

Rachel: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Griffin: The eating.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: [Dracula accent] Of the flesh!

Rachel: [laughs] [sarcastic] Good! You're so good at that.

Griffin: Yeah. A very scary castle. Good luck, bring a whip. And a cross. And holy water.

Do you wanna do this next one?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Okay, good.

Rachel: This is for Laura, it is from Stevie.

“Laura, my sweet baby sister. What can I say besides thank you for introducing us to the McElroy extended universe and for just generally being the coolest sibling I could ask for.

“I’m incredibly proud to be your sister, and I can’t wait until our next long-overdue trip to PGH. I’d say you’re going to be amazing, but let’s face it, you already are.”

Griffin: That’s so sweet. And of course you know what PGH stands for.

Rachel: Ohh... Umm... Pepper [holds it]

Griffin: Pepper...

Rachel: [still holding on Pepper]... Garbanzo?

Griffin: Garbanzo.

Rachel: [exhales wordlessly]

Griffin: [exhales wordlessly]

Rachel: [continues exhaling wordlessly] [laughs]

Griffin: What’s that last... What’s the last part of it again? What’s the “H” stand for?

Rachel: [continues laughing]

Griffin: I know it’s pepper garbanzo... [exhales wordlessly]

Rachel: [laughs]

Both: [exhale wordlessly] ... hen.

Rachel: Hen.

Griffin: Hen. They're going to Pepper Garbanzo Hen. That's my favorite sort of poultry and pepper and bean restaurant.

Rachel: It's like White Hen, in Chicago, you know?

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: But...

Griffin: More peppers and beans.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

[ad plays]

Rachel: You ready?

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: My topic.

Griffin: Mm.

Rachel: Artificial turf.

Griffin: Artificial turf!

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: [aggressively enthusiastic] Yes!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Whenever I got to any kind of playplace and I see they have artificial turf on the ground?

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: I'm like, "I can just chill."

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: "I can... I can relax now."

Rachel: Yeah. When... So when you took Henry on tour, my whole objective was to take Gus places that were outdoors.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Uh, so as to keep him from the germs.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Um, and also that I could just kind of let him go that he wouldn't get dirty.

Because he doesn't... He doesn't really wear the shoes.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: You know? And so I specifically sought out like, turf playgrounds, and there are a lot now.

Griffin: A lot, a lot, a lot.

Rachel: Yeah. People like me... are looking for that.

Griffin: Oh, I thought that was the end of that sentence.

"People like me."

Rachel: "People like... [laughs] Unrelated."

Griffin: "I don't know if you know this, Griffin."

Rachel: "Unrelated, people like me."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And I was curious about this stuff. I thought it was like, made for the sports. Like day one, let's make it for the sports.

Griffin: Uh, what, like minigolf? And... and...

Rachel: No, like the football. The football and the baseball.

Griffin: I mean, are those not real grass fields most of the time?

Rachel: There's some turf out there.

Griffin: I guess so, yeah.

Rachel: Yeah.

But actually it was developed specifically for urban areas for the kids.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Um, so... [laughs uncomfortably] I mean, it does go back to war, of course.

Griffin: Everything does. The vocoder was actually invented in World War II, as a way- No.

Rachel: [laughs] So during the... When they were recruiting for the Korean War, the U.S. Army noticed that individuals from rural areas were more physically fit than their urban counterparts.

And so they... In the 1950s they were looking to develop outdoor playspace that—

Griffin: That is... Okay, this just got pretty sinister, pretty fast.

Rachel: Right?

Like, "How do we... How do we get more people physically fit so we can put them—"

Griffin: "In war!"

Rachel: "... in battle."

Griffin: That's... Okay-

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: The shine... I will be honest babe, the shine has come off the astroturf apple.

Rachel: [laughs] So, it's interesting that you call it that. Uh, initially it was called ChemGrass.

Griffin: ChemGrass!

Rachel: Which also adds to this kind of dystopia.

Griffin: Yeah. For sure. It skyrockets the dystopian sort of rating of this idea.

Rachel: First installed large-scale at a school in Rhode Island in 1964-

Griffin: "Come children, play on the ChemGrass!"

Rachel: "The ChemGrass!"

Griffin: "Become soldiers, on the ChemGrass."

Rachel: [laughs] The reason you called it astroturf though, is in 1965 the Houston Astrodome was built and conditions were such that they could not keep grass alive.

Griffin: 'cause it's in Texas.

Rachel: Well, and the overhang, right? Like, isn't the Astrodome like-

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: You know? Like, closable?

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: Uh, it's-

Griffin: I mean, I don't know if it was in 1960-whatever, but...

Rachel: But, yeah... So they just couldn't keep anything alive and so they were looking for some kind of turf.

Griffin: Interesting.

Rachel: And so in 1966 they began playing on ChemGrass.

Griffin: [laughs softly]

Rachel: Uh... [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: Would-

Griffin: So, this sucks. This is a good segment and I love this stuff, but it's... It... It's... Conceptually it sucks.

Rachel: Well, only because I started calling it ChemGrass, right? You didn't feel so strongly about until—

Griffin: No, I loved it until you told me that the military invented it to make stronger children!

Rachel: [laughs] I mean... What're you gonna do?

Griffin: What are you gonna do? It is soft and when you fall down on it you don't get hurt and you don't get dirty.

Rachel: A lot of good inventions have come out of the need to put people in battle.

Griffin: I... Yeah.

Rachel: And here we are. Here we are. The military has driven-

Griffin: You gotta break a few eggs to get a safer child playground.

Rachel: ... driven a lot of inventions. Uh, and here we are.

Griffin: Here we go.

Rachel: Uh, okay. So... So, astroturf, as you and I would know it. The first iteration, pretty... Uh, pretty hard. And not particularly forgiving. There was a lot of burns and blisters from the friction of the turf.

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: Um, just the sports. The balls would bounce a lot harder and roll faster on the surface.

Griffin: That's fun though, that makes the sport more fun doesn't it? Not the rug burn as much, but the speed of the ball. Love that.

Rachel: I will say, I read something where an individual that played sports on it talked about like, you could guarantee that you would get good traction on every play. Like, grass is kind of unpredictable depending on the weather.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But at least, you know , you knew what you were dealing with with turf.

Griffin: That is... That is... Hockey has illuminated how important that is.

Rachel: Yes!

Griffin: Because you will watch hockey games where you're like, "Everyone's doin' a pretty shitty job today."

And it's like, "Oh. that ice looks bad."

Rachel: "That puck is bouncing everywhere."

Griffin: "That puck is bouncing all over the dang place."

Rachel: I'll also say, and I have noticed this... I don't know if this is still true in like, the big leagues, but when I take Gus to a turf playground, you really have to find the shade because-

Griffin: Hoo, man.

Rachel: ... in the olden days, at least in sports, and what I still notice on playgrounds, it gets very hot.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Does not have the same cooling effect as grass, and so you really have to be careful.

I once took Gus to the playground in the afternoon and it was just like... It was... I had to corral him to like, a very small shady space.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Because there was nowhere he could put his hand without...

Griffin: Gosh, I do like that about grass. You ever just- When was the last time you just like, laid down in some grass?

Rachel: I don't know man.

Griffin: It's been about six years for me.

Rachel: I don't know. I mean, it's been a little more recent than that for me. When we go to a lot of the neighborhood pools they have like a grassy area now.

Griffin: Yeah, but I always put a blanket down on that because our neighborhood pools also have a lot of neighborhood ants.

Rachel: That's true.

Griffin: I'm just talkin' about me and nature.

Rachel: [laughs] Evolution of turf. 1970s there was a new version introduced as Shag Turf, because it was the 70s I guess, and everything was shag.

Griffin: Was it called ChemGrass Deluxe?

Rachel: Nn...Nn... No. [laughs]

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Rachel: No, I think at this point everybody is kind of calling it AstroTurf.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Rachel: Although I mean, I imagine still, you know, it's like Kleenex. Like still—

Griffin: DARPA, DARPA still calls it ChemGrass in their deep fuckin' shadow compound.

Rachel: So the new material is polypropylene, which is less abrasive and looks a little... a little nicer.

Griffin: Just call it that. "Come kids. Come kids, let's play on the polypropylene [sic]."

Rachel: [laughs] "Oofoloofolyne."

Uh, the tufts were spread more widely apart, to look more like grass.

Griffin: Mm. Love a wide tuft.

Rachel: So this second round was better for like, field hockey, but wasn't as great for soccer, because it was... Just the ball was just different on it.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: You know? Like you train on grass and then you get out there and it's just all... all goofy.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And then 1990s is when we changed polypropylene to polyethylene.

Griffin: Oh!

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: Upgrade!

Rachel: I know, right?

Griffin: Upgrade!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Glow up! I don't know what that means.

Rachel: Uh. Longer... longer fibers.

Griffin: Oh, sure.

Rachel: Um...

Griffin: How are the tufts, though? Still pretty wide?

Rachel: I mean... [laughs]

Griffin: Got no complaints.

Rachel: This is like when we purchase an artificial tree, and you're like, "How many... how many points though?", right?

Griffin: You can't pr- You can't pretend that now that doesn't matter to you.

Rachel: I know, it's true.

Griffin: Of course it matters to you.

Rachel: And also less stress on players' joints, with the good traction.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: So, as I mentioned, like early turf, like not great for the injuries.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But now... Now we've got some good... We've got some good stuff out there.

Griffin: Now we got great turf out there, yeah.

Rachel: Yeah. It is very expensive. So when we were looking to kind of rehab our green space out back which we cannot keep green.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: I was like, "What about turf?" And the gentleman I was talking to was like, "It's like four times as expensive."

I mean, which makes sense, right? Like, you don't replace it.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Like, looks good, low maintenance, obviously. But, uh, pricey.

Griffin: I don't love it at the home. I like the... I like `em... I like for all of our many, many ecological troubles, at this house that we live in for a few more weeks...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, I do enjoy the naturalness of it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Even... Even though parts of it have been... We have been run roughshod over by Mother Nature.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It is... I don't know. It's neat.

Rachel: Yeah, and I will say is that another problem with turf that I've found is it really kind of destroys the biome underneath, obviously.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: It's just like puttin' a big plastic tarp down on some dirt and like-

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: You know? But... But... But... It's nice for a playspace.

Griffin: That is true.

Rachel: I really... I like it a lot. I think it looks good.

Griffin: I like you a lot. I think you look good.

Rachel: You are just...

Griffin: I'm tellin' you man.

Rachel: You're goin' hard today.

Griffin: Yeah. Um. Thank you.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Thank you.

Rachel: Thank you!

Griffin: And thank you for listening. And thank you to bo en and Augustus for the use of our theme song, "Money Won't Pay." You can find the link to it in our episode description.

Rachel: And thank you to Maximum Fun!

Griffin: Oh, Maximum Fun! There's all kinds of good shows on Maximum Fun.

Rachel: Yes. I... You know, I was dippin' into *Jordan*, *Jesse*, *Go!* the other day.

Griffin: Dippin' into *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*.

Rachel: Yeah, it had been a while.

Griffin: Dip your toes into the cool, refreshing waters of Jordan and Jesse.

Rachel: Yeah. They get some great guests on there.

Griffin: As they go.

Um, we are gonna be doin' some more shows later in this year of ours. San Diego, Portland, uh... and Salt Lake City. that tour is almost actually sold out.

Hey, thanks a lot west coast!

Rachel: Oooh! Dope!

Griffin: Really do appreciate that.

Rachel: I have... I have never been to Portland or Salt Lake City or San Diego so I'm very excited about this tour.

Griffin: You're gonna have a hell of a time.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's gonna be... It's gonna be a hoot.

Rachel: I've heard it's a—

Griffin: I adore all three of those cities.

Rachel: ... very pretty out there.

Griffin: It's so pretty!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Um, and you can find links to that at mcelroy.family. We also got shows coming up in DC, Detroit, Cincinnati and maybe a couple other places. I'm not a hundred percent sure.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: But keep it locked there. We have stuff at mcelroymerch.com, too. Always addin' more stuff there every month. And if you enjoy any of our shows I bet you'll find something that you'll enjoy.

Or if you have a special someone in your life who likes our stuff, I know you'll find something.

Rachel: Yeah. You know those people... Those people with the summer birthdays, you know?

Griffin: It's hard.

Rachel: It's hard, right? Like everyone's traveling or you're not in school and you like never get to celebrate your birthday and... Give 'em something—

Griffin: To talk about.

Rachel: ... from the McElroy family.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: To brighten their day.

Griffin: We should make a new shirt that says, "Busk it and bust it" on it. And it's just... There can just be a hat. But it's—

Rachel: It seems a little *Ghostbusters*, I'm gonna be honest.

Griffin: I mean, sure?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: What about Ghostbuskers, and it's like a—

Rachel: Oh, that's something.

Griffin: ... spectral jam band—

Rachel: I like that a lot.

Griffin: ... on the streets of New Orleans.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Um. that's it. Thank you for listening. Thanks for being here. Thanks for listening to us.

Thanks to you. Thanks to me. Thanks to... the... Thanks to—

Rachel: Thanks for continuing to give us an opportunity to do this show.

Griffin: Yes!

Rachel: It is very difficult to feel positive and grateful for a lot of things right now.

Griffin: But it gives me... It gives me strength.

Rachel: But this show helps me focus on what I like.

Griffin: Me too.

Rachel: And I am grateful for an opportunity to do that.

Griffin: Me too. I have been thinking of nothing else but foam rolling out my back since the beginning of this show, so may I...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: May we be... May we be excused from the table?

[theme song, "Money Won't Pay", starts playing]

Rachel: Are you asking me? Or our listeners?

Griffin: I'm asking the audience. I'm asking the listeners.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Hold on, listen.

Thank you, bye!

[theme song continues]

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