

Wonderful! 253: Our Favorite Washington, DC Stuff, Live!

Published November 23, 2022
[Listen here at themcelroy.family](https://themcelroy.family)

[theme music plays]

[audience cheers]

Audience Member: Let's go!

[audience cheers]

Rachel: Paul opened my can for me, so I can't do the thing when you open it.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: Hi, I'm Rachel McElroy.

[audience cheers]

Griffin: Hi, this is Griffin McElroy.

[audience cheers]

Rachel: And this is *Wonderful!*

[audience cheers]

Griffin: This is a show where we talk about things that are good, things that we like, that's that we are into. You probably know already that I am very into the Cheesecake Factory's chicken piccata, because I realized moments before walking out here that it is all over my shirt!

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Rachel: I thought you were gonna reference that we are also very into DC, because we live here now.

Griffin: Oh, that's true, we do love DC.

[audience cheers]

Griffin: And let me... let me tell you. 'Cause we get out a *lot!*

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: We have discovered this really charming delicious bistro...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, and it's, like, Italian/Tex-Mex/sort of, uh, East Asian/hamburger/— it's called the Cheesecake Factory?

Rachel: Mm-hmm. But when you hear factory you think, like, "Oh, this must be a blue-collar establishment."

Griffin: You would think that!

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: No. [wheezes]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Anything but. Hi, everybody. We moved to Washington DC in August. We are, I would say, old souls here now.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: We've been all over. The Cheesecake Factory...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... Build-a-Bear Workshop... a lot of, like, industry, uh, here.

Rachel: How comfortable are you saying DMV now?

Griffin: Not. [wheezes] Not at all.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: Yeah, I'm the same way. District, similar. I can't. Not ready yet.

Griffin: No, yeah. The Deece.

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah, does anyone say that? [laughs]

Griffin: Does anyone say "The Deece?"

Audience Members: No!

Griffin: You do now.

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Um, if you— who here has not listened to our podcast before? Don't be ashamed.

[audience cheers]

Rachel: Wow, alright!

Griffin: Alright. Were people booing the people who were cheering or was that like a "Woo"?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Don't— we don't need this sort of rivalry, now more than ever. This is a— we really do just talk about things that we like and things that are good. And when we do live shows we tend to do local goods, and that is going to be the case today. We are going to tell you the best things about yourself, Washington, DC.

[audience cheers]

Rachel: We've interviewed all of your friends and family.

Griffin: True.

Rachel: And we got their feedback, and we've compiled it into three short segments each.

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, we did not talk to your friends or family. We can't be bothered. Uh, we played rock, paper, scissors backstage to determine who goes first. I won. [laughs quietly]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Rachel always throws rock.

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah, I do.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: It's so easy, 'cause you're already like this.

Griffin: [laughs] Yeah.

Rachel: And then you just stay there.

Griffin: I will admit this—

Rachel: I hope nobody took a photo of me doing that just now. [laughs]

Griffin: You looking super angry?

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Um, I did find— I came up with a couple things that I love dearly about DC.

Rachel: Are we gonna do small wonders?

Griffin: Oh shit! I can't believe I forgot small wonders.

Rachel: Oh.

Griffin: I figured when I talked about the chicken piccata at the Cheesecake Factory that that would qualify as my small wonder?

Rachel: Okay. [laughs] And that's evergreen, too. You could talk about that any day. Uh, I am really enjoying this beverage here, from Peabody Heights Brewery.

[audience cheers]

Rachel: That's my small wonder.

Griffin: That's great. I'm gonna give a shout out at the Detroit airport. I had a long layover today. Sat down on a massage chair, and folks, massage chair technology has advanced...

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Maybe it was during COVID, less people were getting out there using massage chairs, so they were able to take a few of 'em back to the shop.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: This thing had infl— inflatable... sort of cushions on the inside that were hot? And it felt like there were marbles in it?!

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: I want to talk about—[wheezes]

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: I want to talk about— this first segment I want there to be, like, a campfire that I can throw the dust into. I hope nobody took a picture when I was doing the—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —throwing dust into a campfire motion, 'cause it definitely looked like something else. Submitted for the approval of the Midnight Society. I want to talk about... the Capitol Crypt. Oooh! Y'all have some silly stuff here. You know, there's a crypt in the Capitol Building, and they use it for, like, the launchpad for a lot of tours and things, so a lot of people are here like, "Yeah, the Capitol Crypt, duh." There's also a empty tomb that they wanted to bury George Washington in, but they didn't?

[audience laughs]

Rachel: So it's still just open and empty?

Griffin: Maybe. [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: They built the Capitol— they started building it in 1793, when ol' G-Dubs himself was still around. He laid the first stone, so he was complicit.

Rachel: That's pretty dark. Like, "Build your own grave, George." [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Well, in 1799, after he beaved, the building designers went to Martha and were like, "Hey. Can we put George in a special tomb underneath the Capitol building?"

And she was like, "Let me check his will. It says no, but... I think it would be pretty cool, so let's— let's do the damn thing."

But then, uh-oh, war of 1812 happens. Capitol building gets all burnded up, and that's embarrassing for everyone. [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: So they didn't finish the central, like, rotunda of the Capitol building until 1827, at which point the designers were like— they got out their IOU for one George Washington bones.

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: And they were like, "Hey, let me get that presidential body, please." And then the then-owner of Mount Vernon was like, "Uh, gross?"

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And George Washington's will was like, "Ew, no, gross! What's wrong with you? Stop."

Uh, so they didn't move the bod. And so they have this empty tomb. In 1830, somebody tried— have you heard about this thing, man?

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Someone tried to steal George Washington's skull from Mount Vernon in 1830?

Rachel: No, I don't know about that at all.

Griffin: I blame those fuckin' National Treasure movies.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: Is that, like, your Twitter bio? Like, minute one, like, "I believe those National Treasure movies."

Griffin: Yeah, that's my—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I actually just got back on Twitter. 'Cause it seemed like a cool time to do that.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: Yeah, now's the time. [laughs]

Griffin: They ended up stealing someone else's skull from Mount Vernon, which is... one of the wilder parts of this story, but then Congress was like, "See? You can't be trusted with these famous bones. Put them in our great tomb."

But then John Washington was like, "I'll just put more security in," so that's what they did. They didn't end up getting it. They did not get George Washington's body. So the tomb lay empty, but it wasn't a total loss, because they used the crypt for a bunch of stuff. In the late 1800's and early 1900's they used the Capitol crypt for bike parking, which rules!

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Rachel: It's so roomy, you know? You got— yeah.

Griffin: It's so spacious.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Uh, yeah. I want to do a quick sidebar and give a shout out to— the Capitol building also has its own cryptid, the demon cat. Um...

[scattered cheering]

Griffin: Y'all also know that this is a big nothing burger, right? Because the story of the— the grimalkin— I don't know if I'm saying that correctly, which is also a great term— in 1862, Union soldiers were, like, holding down the fort, and the fort was... the Capitol building. And some— one of the, like, night watchmen reported seeing a black cat that approached him that grew to the size of a tiger before pouncing, causing the soldier to open fire. But then the demon cat

disappeared. [pause] And then it's like, so a cat turned the corner and you got a little bit scared? Listen, tensions are high. I get it.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I get why you would shoot when you saw even the littlest bit of movement, be able to that was a little kitty cat. You didn't have to make a whole ghost story up about it.

Rachel: So it's, like, still a thing? There's, like, a painting of it or something? Like, what—

Griffin: Well, apparently it comes out in times of national crises.

[audience laughs]

Griffin: But I would— I would argue that... I would argue that probably cats also appear at the Capitol building not around times of national crises.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So it's a law of large numbers thing. What is your first segment today?

Rachel: My first thing. Okay, so as I mentioned, or as Griffin mentioned, we moved here in August.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Uh, and when we moved here in August, I heard about something called Chuck Brown day. Which...

Griffin: Okay.

[scattered cheering]

Rachel: Led me to go-go music, so I wanted to talk about that.

Griffin: Okay, please.

[audience cheers]

Griffin: Go-go music?

Rachel: Go-go music.

Griffin: Okay. That's what I shout when I get really excited about the music that's playing.

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: "Go music!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Go ahead, I interrupted you for nothing, for literally nothing.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, so this is something that, um, I mean, I was familiar with but I didn't know I was familiar with. Because it is everything. It is jazz, it is funk, it is R&B, there is call and response, there is groove.

Griffin: God, I love groove!

Rachel: Yeah.

[audience laughs]

Griffin: I love when groove is in it.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs] Um, and there's percussion and cowbells and it's— I mean, it's everything.

Griffin: I don't know how you would have groove without percussion.

Rachel: That's a good point.

Griffin: Yeah, thank you. [wheeze-laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, and so in my research into groove is how I found Chuck Brown.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: And DC local, in a big, big way. 70's and 80's is kind of when he came on the scene, and I wanted to play a song that apparently plays at Capitals and Nationals games, and that song is called "Bustin' Loose."

[audience cheers]

["Bustin' Loose" by Chuck Brown plays in the background]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [singing] My laptop just died.

[lyrics begin]

Griffin: Uh-oh!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [singing] How am I gonna finish the show? I don't know!

Rachel: [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] Can you appreciate the music, though, while you—

Griffin: Absolutely I can! While I have a panic attack onstage.

[audience laughs]

Griffin: I've had a dream like this once.

[audience laughs]

[music reaches chorus]

[audience cheers]

Griffin: This is a jam. Oh, Paul, please. I have it on— I got the phone. It's fine. Thank you. I got 15 on the phone. I know. Sorry, I'm walking all over this bit.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: This is a great, great track.

Rachel: That's good, Paul. Thank you.

[music ends]

Griffin: I feel ready to watch some sports right now.

[audience cheers]

Rachel: Uh, so Chuck Brown is considered the godfather of go-go. And that's because he created this kind of music that was a combination of blues, and jazz, and gospel, and soul. And he was a huge fan, apparently, of James Brown. And I came to know the song "Bustin' Loose" from a 2002 song created by my hometown hero called "Hot in Herre," by Nelly.

Griffin: Yes.

[audience cheers]

Griffin: Are we about to hear "Hot in Herre," or are you just—

Rachel: No. [laughs]

Griffin: Okay, well, listen. When you leave a pregnant pause like that, I expect at any moment Nelly is going to, like, jump onstage.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I've never been so disappointed.

Rachel: [through laughter] I'm so sorry.

[audience laughs]

Griffin: It's okay.

Rachel: I could— I mean, I could get Nelly. Like...

Griffin: If this was a St.— yeah, right? You could probably actually.

Rachel: [laughs] I could get Nelly. So yeah, so Chuck Brown is celebrated here. There is a day, there is a park, and there is several years of music festival built around Chuck Brown. I would be remiss in talking about go-go music and not talking about the other song that familiarized me with this music, and that is a song that Paul and I were talking about before we came out onstage, and that is "Da Butt"?

["Dabutt" plays in the background]

[audience cheers]

Griffin: Oh my.

Rachel: [laughs] This is how I fell in love with Griffin. These— this face and these moves? [laughs]

[music continues]

Rachel: Oh, man. We're not gonna get to that for a while, are we? [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Can you just—sorry, Paul. Can you scrobble forward to "Da Butt," please?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: If we can turn "Da Butt" down, now.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Thank you. I was getting a weird Doppler effect on "Da Butt" and so I was getting it in, like, half-time also. It was a really— I had a dream like that once, also.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] So, in February 2020, go-go was named the official music of Washington, DC, in a unanimous vote by District City Council, and I love it. A+. A+.

Griffin: I love it too. A+. Great job, "Da Butt."

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: I we are— we went pretty hard on our first two subjects. I'm gonna turn my next one into a mini subject. 'Cause I think we can really get through this pretty fast. Um, I want to talk about Initiative 71. Y'all realize it's very, very silly, right? We can all agree. Like, I'm not complaining, but it's a little bit silly. If you don't— who here doesn't know what that is?

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience cheers]

Rachel: I thought you were gonna make everybody, like, out themselves as drug users. [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: "Who here... " [laughs]

Griffin: I'll make this very brief. You can't sell weed to people in Washington, DC.

[scattered booing]

Griffin: But you can sell them a sticker!

[audience cheers]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That's about it. That's all Initiative— that's all you really need to know. If you go to a weed store and say "One *sticker*, please... "

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] I will say, this was very exciting to us, having come from the state of Texas.

Griffin: Yeah, where it's— you don't— stickers are illegal in Texas.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's silly to me, especially now that Maryland just passed recreational—

Rachel: Right?

[audience cheers]

Griffin: Great work, all. That pretty much no matter where you are in DC at any given moment, if you break out into a full dead sprint in any direction... eventually you'll be in a place where you can just go ahead and not even need to worry about the sticker part. Just do the weed part. I am burning through our savings on just the stickers, of them.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I don't know why these stickers cost 70 fucking dollars.

[audience laughs]

[ad break]

[music plays]

Jo: Maaanolo! Guess what? Manolo, guess what?

Manolo: What, what, what?

Jo: *Dr. Gameshow* has made it to 100 episodes on Maximum Fun!

Manolo: Oh, that's true. I knew that.

Jo: Well, to celebrate, we're releasing our entire Earwolf archives to Max Fun members. That's anyone who gives \$5 or more monthly to support podcasts like *Dr. Gameshow*.

Manolo: That's 63 episodes with in-studio comedian guests like Jason Mantzoukas, Bowen Yang, and Matt Rogers, Joe Pera, Todd Barry, and Janine Garofolo, Conner O'Malley, Chris Gethard, and more.

Jo: Plus three bonus episodes that include two pilot episodes. Wow, two pilots! Must be good!

Manolo: Find the feed at [Maximumfun.org/boco](https://maximumfun.org/boco), B-O-C-O.

Jo: Stands for bonus content. Mm-hmm!

[music and ad end]

[music plays]

Speaker 1: Presenting the new maxfunstore.com! We've got shirts for your torso, hats for your head, drink ware for your finest beverages, and so much more! Starring your favorite Max Fun shows with new and classic designs. Find the perfect gift for the podcast fan in your life. Heck, that could be you! We're not judging. Head to maxfunstore.com now. That's maxfunstore.com.

[music and ad end]

Griffin: What I really want to talk about is, um, I love it when cities and states and regions have, like, official local symbols, like in a bunch of different categories. And now that we lived in DC, like, I wanted to learn some of the big ones here. Like, DC's official tree? You would think cherry blossom. It's a scarlet

oak, you know? Official fruit's the cherry, of course. Official bird is the wood thrush. Official dinosaur is the Capitalsaurus. Like, normal stuff like...

[scattered cheering]

Rachel: Griffin, you're not pausing for applause after each of these. [laughs]

Griffin: Oh. I was doing a joke structure where I tried to slip "Official dinosaur is the Capitalsaurus" in there.

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Um, DC has an official dinosaur called the Capitalsaurus, and the story behind this is very good to me. In 1898, workers were building the sewers beneath DC, 'cause they had just invented... them.

[audience laughs]

Griffin: And someone found a single vertebra from the base of some dinosaur's tail in the rock, and a few other sort of non-important bone chunks. In 1911, a paleontologist named Richard Swann Lull named the dinosaur it belonged to the *Creosaurus potens*, theorizing "Oh, this is a theropod like the T-Rex from 110 million years ago, right in the Cretaceous Period."

Ten years after that, Smithsonian paleontologist Charles Gilmore was like, "[mockingly] Mmm, actually, uh, that appears to be a *Dryptosaurus* [stammers]..."

[audience laughs]

Griffin: "Dryptosaurus fossil discovered in New Jersey at the end of the 19th Century."

And so paleontologists were just, like, bickering, like [mockingly imitates speech]. In 1990, a local paleontologist named Peter Kranz united all of the world's paleontological society.

Rachel: [laughs] Mm-hmm?

Griffin: Um, when he did an interview with the Washingtonian and said that it came from the Capitalsaurus.

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Every other paleontologist in the world was like, "Well, that's... that's cl— that's not— like, we disagree, but we know that's not it, right, Peter?"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: He tried to get this going. The Smithsonian refused to acknowledge this heroic discovery.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Saying "Unfortunately, this specimen was used to try to name a new genus Capitalsaurus in honor of the nation's Capital. [mockingly] This is not scientifically justified, and the name Capitalsaurus has no validity!"

[audience laughs]

Griffin: So then Peter Kranz made a move that I feel like has big Capitalsaurus energy.

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Where he went to the DC Council and he was like, "Y'all have to recognize that this is from a dinosaur named the Capitalsaurus, which was like a even bigger, more badass T-Rex."

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: And so in 1998, the official dinosaur designation act of 1998 was passed.

Rachel: Oh my god.

[audience laughs and cheers]

Rachel: We used to be able to get stuff done, you know?

Griffin: We did.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It is a long resolution. I will read some of the highlights.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "The Capitalsaurus was a large, meat-eating reptile which may be the ancestor of the," in parentheses, "(Tyrannosaurus) Rex." [splutters] Who was— did you originally write "Ancestor of the Rex. You know the one."

[audience laughs]

Griffin: "About 100 million—" this isn't... this thing starts with "[pompous] Be it enacted by the council of the District of Columbia. [switches to conversational tone] About 100 million years ago, the Capitalsaurus lived in the District of Columbia with many other dinosaurs, including herbivores."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: What?! Yeah, of course! Like, yeah, sure!

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uhh... [laughs] the, uh— so one smart thing Peter Kranz did is he teamed up with local elementary schools to petition to DC Council.

Rachel: Oh my god.

[audience laughs]

Griffin: Which, like, you can't say no to them.

Rachel: Just bags and bags of letters placed on that desk.

Griffin: It all ends with "The Capitalsaurus shall be the official dinosaur of the District of Columbia." Not just that. If you ever find yourself at 1st & F Street, you will find where they discovered this fossil. It has been named Capitalsaurus Court. There is a sign hanging over the intersection declaring it as such. January 28th, the day it was discovered, also Capitalsaurus Day.

[audience cheers]

Griffin: And to this day, the world's top dinosaur scientists are like, "[angrily] What are you doing?!"

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Rachel: That's beautiful.

Griffin: In 2010 in an interview Peter Kranz said, "To say we have a dinosaur here in Washington, it's a piece of city pride and educational inspiration. Local kids ask me all the time, "Do we have a T-Rex here?" And the answer is basically yes."

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: That's the Capitalsaurus.

[audience cheers]

Rachel: My next thing is a trip to the Poetry Corner.

Griffin: [gasps]

[audience cheers]

[pause]

Griffin: Oh, sorry. [briefly starts scattng] I— I was waiting... I don't know what I was—I was waiting for the actual *Frasier* theme song to play. I see Paul panicking over there. [imitates *Frasier* theme] "[singing] Hey baby, I hear the [speaking] Poetry Corner. [singing] Tossed salad and scrambled eggs."

Rachel: I'm thinking about that large percentage of people that have never listened to our show before that are just unbelievably confused.

Griffin: That's alright. There's some die-hards out there that are rollin' right now.

[audience cheers loudly]

Rachel: Uh, I mean, the background behind this is that I took out loans to attend graduate school to study poetry, and so I have worked it into this podcast.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Very deliberately. [laughs]

Griffin: It's a tax write-off

Rachel: Uh, so I wanted to take advantage of the broader DMV area to talk about the poet laureate of Maryland, which is Grace Cavalieri.

Griffin: Okay.

[scattered cheering]

Rachel: No— wait, is that cheer for Maryland or the poet?

Audience Member: Both!

Griffin: Both. [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] Uh—

Griffin: "I like the poet, but fuckin' hate the state!"

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience cheers]

Griffin: It's an amazing state. Stop it. You know that.

Rachel: Um, so you may know Grace Cavalieri because she is the longtime host of a radio show/now podcast called *The Poet and the Poem* which has been around for over 40 years.

Griffin: Wow!

[audience laughs]

Griffin: I for real didn't know there was that much poetry.

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: I guess they're making more of the stuff every day.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] She— on her show, she has had over 2500 poets in 42 years, so... right?

Griffin: Yeah, again, same point. Didn't know there were that many—[wheezes] that many poets. I guess there's a lot of people on Earth.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Some of 'em gotta be poets. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Rachel: That's beautiful. Um... [laughs] Uh, so not only is she the host of that show, she has written 26 books and 26 plays. Uh, and yeah, this podcast is still going. The most recent episode was published November 5th. Each episode is, like, 30 minutes long. I would recommend if you are a poetry enthusiast, I recently listened to an episode that had Ada Limóné on it.

[scattered cheering]

Uh, and— gosh, man, I love that, guys.

[scattered cheering]

Rachel: I love that I can say a poet's name into a microphone and people cheer.
[laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: Um, she is 90 years old. She's incredible. Her whole focus of getting this radio show, she approached the radio station manager. She found out there was gonna be a new station, and she brought poets with her, and she had them read aloud to the station manager, and said "This needs to be a show." [laughs]

Griffin: Wow!

Rachel: Uh, and that was in 1977. And then she had a weekly show on in prime time, and went live regionally, and then now the Library of Congress puts it out, and so she is national. Uh, and that's been the case for 22 years.

Griffin: Now, why do you think it is that the Library of Congress does not publish our shows?

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Probably 'cause then it'd get stole up by Nicolas Cage and all of his thieving cronies!

Rachel: It's your conspiracy theories, Griffin. That's—

Griffin: Yeah. Every episode of all of our shows, actually, do have maps in 'em.

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: You just haven't decoded it yet. All the clues are there.

Rachel: [laughs] So, I read an interview with her in the NEA Artworks podcast 2019. I read the transcript, rather. And she talks about play writing versus writing poetry, and I thought it was interesting, because she talks about how play writing is very collaborative. Everybody's kind of a part of making it better. Um, but she says, quote, "Poetry, nothing's at stake, because there's no stall in the marketplace. Nobody wants it." [laughs]

Griffin: [wheeze-laughs]

[audience laughs]

Rachel: "You can write it, but that doesn't mean anyone has to read it. It is the most freeing, meditative part of my life. It is when I know who I am, and finding out who I am as I go through the poem. It is truly an act of self-discovery. It is a very interior process, and if someone publishes it, that's wonderful, and if someone reads it, you can't believe your good luck, because that's not why you write it."

Griffin: Wow.

Rachel: Isn't that lovely?

Griffin: That wasn't even the poem.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, so I wanted to read a poem of hers that I just found really charming. Um, you know, as a 90-year-old woman she has a lot of stories from her childhood that are just of a completely different experience than we have now, and so I wanted to read the poem— and it is going to sound funny, but I want to communicate that it is very sincere— it is called "The Hot Dog Factory."

Griffin: Rachel...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I can't believe you've done this to me.

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Babe, "The Hot Dog Factory"?

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: If there isn't one episode of one of our shows titled "The Hot Dog Factory," I will be— I will be...

Rachel: We have talked about hot dogs quite a bit on this show.

Griffin: We do like a hot dog around these parts.

Rachel: Yeah we do. Okay, "The Hot Dog Factory."

Griffin: Hope I don't get hungry.

[audience laughs]

Griffin: [muffled laugh] Probably gonna use fancy descriptive words.

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Rachel: "Of course now children take it for granted but once we watched boxes on a conveyor belt, sliding by, magically filled and closed, packed and wrapped. We couldn't get enough of it, running alongside the machine. In kindergarten Miss Haynes walked our class down Stuyvesant Avenue, then up Prospect Street to the hot dog factory. Only the girls got to go as the boys were too wild."

[audience laughs]

"We stood in line, wiggling with excitement as the man talked about how they made hot dogs, then he handed us one, and Jan dropped hers, so I broke mine in half. This was the happiest day of our lives, children whose mothers didn't drive, and had nowhere to go but school and home, to be taken to that street to watch the glittering steel and shining rubber belts moving, moving meats, readymade. I wish I could talk with Jan, recalling the miracle and thrill of the hot dog factory, when she was alive, before it all stopped."

[audience applauds]

Oh. One more line. [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Rachel: [clears throat] "Bright lights, glistening motors, spinning wheels."
[laughs]

[audience cheers and applauds]

Griffin: There was a pause after you read the poem and I realize now, they were all waiting for that last line.

Rachel: [laughs] 'Cause everyone knows this by heart.

Griffin: I will also admit that I thought at one point the poem would be like, "And then Jimmy got pulled into the gears and became hot dogs."

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: "It was 1931, so he became hot dogs. And everyone was like, 'Aw, man.'"

Rachel: Some say there's a little bit of Jimmy... uh—[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Rachel: Um, I... I found that poem so charming. Not only does it speak to, like, big field trip energy, which you know I love.

Griffin: I love a field trip.

[scattered cheering]

Griffin: Especial— I've never gone anywhere remotely as cool as the hot dog factory!

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Um, but just, like, the sincerity of it, and the genuine joy, and something that she could very easily, if she were a more cynical person, kind of poke fun at.

Griffin: Oh, for sure. There's a version of that poem where they're like, "They showed us how they make-a the hot dog, and then they were like, "Do you want a hot dog?" And I was like, "Are you fucking kidding me?"

Rachel: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Griffin: "I just watched it! Do you know the phrase 'How the sausage gets made'?!"

Rachel: "And us stupid kids thought it was so cool."

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: No, I just— it's a very charming poem, and it's very sincere and beautiful, and if you have not checked out Grace Cavalieri, I would recommend it.

Griffin: Now you know.

Rachel: Now you know.

Griffin: Now you know to do that. That's it for us. Thank you to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our theme song, "Money Won't Pay." It is a bop.

[audience cheers loudly]

Griffin: Thank you to Paul.

Rachel: Thank you, Paul.

[audience cheers]

Griffin: And, uh, thank you to the DAR Constitution Hall for having us. It's a lovely venue. We're so happy to be back here. And thank you, DC, for having us here as your newest... your newest residents.

[audience cheers loudly and applauds]

Griffin: I don't have a funny outro.

Rachel: Yeah, see, this is the problem is that we don't have an outro.

Griffin: So instead, we can hype up the next act that— or, wait. Dad's gonna come out and do a intro. [snorts] So everyone—[wheezes]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Start your engines! And get revved for... C-C-C-Clint McElroy! Bye, everybody!

[audience cheers loudly]

[theme music plays]

[chord]

Maximumfun.org.
Comedy and Culture.

Artist Owned.
Audience Supported.