

Wonderful! 267: What is a Short Podcast if Not Poetry

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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hello, this is Griffin McElroy!

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: And almost—it felt like I was trying to set up the all musical episode that we've been...

Rachel: [laughs] Oh, god.

Griffin: For such a long time.

Rachel: Please don't. Please don't ever make me do that.

Griffin: Would you prefer that, if I did do that, I sort of, like, sprung it on you?

Rachel: No!

Griffin: No, you would want to know ahead of time.

Rachel: No! No to both!

Griffin: See, I think you would have an easier time if you didn't have to prepare. Like, if you knew the musical episode was coming up, it's gonna stress you out for an extended period of time. As opposed to I just start singing when we start recording and you're like, "Well, this sucks. But..."

Rachel: [sighs]

Griffin: "... you know, at least it's gonna be 40 minutes or so and then it's over and done with."

Rachel: Here's the thing. Like, I really like to "yes, and" your choices on this show?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And if that's not true, I want it to be true. [laughs]

Griffin: I feel like it's mostly true.

Rachel: And I feel like on a musical episode, I would be so miserable!

Griffin: You'd beat box. [pause] You just—you'd—you could do the beat box.

Rachel: I can't do that either!

Griffin: Oh, shoot.

Rachel: I—

Griffin: Flute?

Rachel: I mean, maybe? It's been a long time since I've played it. I don't even know where it is. I don't know if I still have it.

Griffin: Your flute? You have it in, like, a hard shell case like you're a hit man, like you're a sniper. You know?

Rachel: Do they usually put flutes in soft cases?

Griffin: I—I don't know.

Rachel: I don't think they typically put instruments in soft cases, because you really don't want that thing to get, you know, beat up.

Griffin: I don't know. I assume a flute is pretty, uh, pretty strong. I don't think I could bend a flute over my knee. I've never tried, though.

Rachel: Yeah, but—

Griffin: Why don't you go find your flute? I'll try to bend it over my knee like a big, strong man.

Rachel: It's just there's a bunch of, like, click-clacky keys on there, and they can get all out of whack.

Griffin: Yeah. And no one knows what they do, what the buttons on the flute does.

Rachel: [through laughter] Uh-huh.

Griffin: That's weird—that's wild. Like, even you, you just kind of press the buttons until the sound is, like, right.

Rachel: Yeah, no, you just learn, like—

Griffin: [simultaneously] Okay, it's just guesswork.

Rachel: —which finger. I mean, it's like guitar. It's like, oh, these two go here.

Griffin: "I think."

Rachel: And that sounds... sounds like...

Griffin: That sounds like music.

Rachel: ... music, yeah.

Griffin: This is Wonderful! A show where we talk about things that are good, things we like, things we're into. Do you have any small wonders for me to snack on? [smacks lips] Yum, yum.

Rachel: [laughs] Uhhh... I'm still playing Stardew Valley.

Griffin: Oh yeah. Don't say anything else though, 'cause if they wanna hear that, they gotta dish out!

Rachel: I know! I was thinking maybe we should set some kind of pledge goal where I provide, like, an update on my experience.

Griffin: Oh, sure.

Rachel: Because I am in year two.

Griffin: We should do a video where I get to tour your farm. Although you've warned me that your farm is not quite, um, aesthetically...

Rachel: It's okay. It's okay.

Griffin: You've been very secretive. Even to me, your husband! Your partner.

Rachel: Well, I still don't know what I'm doing.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I'm enjoying it, obviously. I feel like maybe even I'm on year three now.

Griffin: Good Lord almighty.

Rachel: I just entered year three.

Griffin: I don't think I've ever made it to year three.

Rachel: Really?!

Griffin: I think I usually get all my business done within the first two calendar years, and then I'm on to the next.

Rachel: [simultaneously] Oh, see, ooh... [mumbling]

Griffin: Well, no, I'm not saying I'm better at the game than you.

Rachel: [laughs quietly] It sounds like it.

Griffin: I played in a fundamentally cruel and broken way.

Rachel: I have started Googling a lot, which surprised even myself. Of like, I gotta know. I can't catch a sturgeon. What am I doing wrong? And, like, you realize after you do that, oh, it's only available in this one season in this one place. Like, that's crazy!

Griffin: That's wild.

Rachel: But it's been a nice thing for me to do, uh, you know, when I want to check out for a little bit and maybe listen to a show, and I'm enjoying it.

Griffin: Good! I'm really glad to hear that! Um, I say... um... I say... what I say—I should've come up with something while you were talking.

Rachel: [laughs] You get so excited when I talk about Stardew Valley. It's like you can't help but—

Griffin: I can't think. I just start thinking about Stardew Valley and then, like, the rest of the thing is... just goes off the rails. Umm...

[extended pause]

Rachel: You want some help?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Television. Music. Snack foods.

Griffin: Well, no, you're just yelling things. We talked about Perfect Match I think already.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: We talked about the—sort of having that big garbage bag to climb inside every night. Like a—and just make a warm little garbage tent for.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Um, how about...

Rachel: We've talked about bubbles before. We've been doing a lot of bubbles lately.

Griffin: We've been doing a ton of bubbles.

Rachel: Any variations on bubbles?

Griffin: This is the most I've ever struggled with this, I think.

Rachel: [simultaneously] Yeah, I know!

Griffin: Um... my—Henry makes little crafts at school sometimes!

Rachel: Yeahhh.

Griffin: And they're so sweet, 'cause sometimes he makes them specifically for us.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Yesterday he made a little, uh, little boxy little orange man made out of orange tape that was me, and it said "Number One Dad" on it, and the one is backwards! It's, like, sooo...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... unbelievably cute.

Rachel: He made a little smiling Groot, which is like...

Griffin: And wrote "Happy Groot" on it! And he spelled "happy" H-A-P-E-E!
It's, like, so freaking cute!

Rachel: Yeah. They really do kindergarten right now.

Griffin: They do it so good.

Rachel: I feel like he comes home and you can tell he did it himself without help, and put the work in, and did it his own way, and I'm just—I feel like he is supported, and creative, and it's exciting.

Griffin: When I pick him up from school—I pick him up from—I do the conveying of the biggest son, and when I pick him up from school he comes out of the door, and if he's made something to show me he, like, stops right there. Like, first thing he says, like, "I made something for you!" And just, like, pulls it out of his b—it's so good.

Rachel: And then he'll come home and he'll tell me. Like, "Go—go look in my backpack at the thing I made for Daddy."

Griffin: "It's gonna blow your mind." I go first this week.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: I'm very excited.

Rachel: Yes.

[pause]

Griffin: I'm talking about Petey. I'm talking about Petey. I was sent a song by my oldest brother, Justin McElroy, a couple nights ago.

Rachel: Justin McElroy, tastemaker for this household.

Griffin: Tastemaker, for sure. Uh, since receiving this song two nights ago, I've listened to it, like, 20 times.

Rachel: [strained] Yeah!

Griffin: It's absolutely incredible. That song is called Don't Tell the Boys by Petey. I'm gonna play that a little bit later after I talk about Petey. But that song has been like a chain letter for me since first hearing it, 'cause I've now sent it to... many of my friends, who I assume it will resonate with in a similar way. And the success rate on that assumption has just been 100%. Uh, it's very, uh... it's been very meaningful to a lot of people in my life, which I think speaks to the strength of the song.

Rachel: Can you tell me who Petey is, or anything about Petey?

Griffin: So, yeah. So, a little background. Petey is Peter Martin. He was born in Detroit, lives in California now. Uh, he has been making music for a long time now. He started out in an emo band called Young Jesus back in 2013.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, and so he's been making music for a while, but right when his music career started to kind of blossom, COVID hit and sort of put the brakes on it. Uh, and so he did what the rest of us did and he joined TikTok. And... I'd seen a few of his TikToks before hearing any of his music, and they're so completely my shit. Like, that—

Rachel: Are they always musical in nature? Are they sometimes—

Griffin: [simultaneously] No, not at all.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: They're very, uh, sort of absurdist wholesome humor, that are fairly long form, I would say, for the TikTok platform. He has a whole series of TikToks about Puff Sullivan the Cig King of Central High who gives cigarettes out to all of his, like, grateful friends to solve all their problems. Uh, I'm not gonna go on to describe this man's entire body of TikTok work, but it's exceptional. It's one of few I think TikTok creators who I can just, like, get on his page and just watch every one of them, and have a lovely little time.

So his TikTok blew up during the peak of COVID, and his music career has kind of followed in step. He's released an album—he's released two albums over the last two years. They've both been excellent. I've been listening to all of them over the last few days. Um, and there's still definitely I would say a particular kind of, like, emo streak that pervades his music. Uh, there's a lot of LCD Soundsystem-esque sort of synth hooks happening there, and just super, super powerful scream-singing.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: It's giving me, like, Lucero, it's giving me Band of Horses.

Rachel: I got a little—maybe it's because of his voice and how deep it is, but I got a little, like, The National in there too.

Griffin: The National, for sure. Frightened Rabbit, I think, uh, is in that same sort of zone. Uh, and it's been a while since I've kind of—all the bands I've mentioned I've enjoyed at some point or another in my life, but mostly when I was, like, younger and had more time for angst. Uh, it's hard to make time for angst in my life now, as it is.

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah...

Griffin: But man alive, I have been really reconnecting with my roots over the last 48 hours.

Rachel: I bet.

Griffin: So the song Justin sent me was called Don't Tell the Boys, which is just this... just this "hell yeah" ballad of profound vulnerability. Just this full-throated appreciation for deep and platonic friendship? And a lot of his music is like this. Like, a lot of his music is, you know, talks about angsty or very vulnerable things, but delivered through this, like, very thick lens of, like, yeehaw machismo.

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah!

Griffin: That is, like, funny. Like, it is funny that those two things are up against each other, but then very quickly that humor gets peeled back just enough for you to see, like, the—the angst inside of it. And holy shit, that is, like—that feels very targeted for me.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So I'm gonna play a little bit of Don't Tell the Boys, by which I mean editor Rachel's gonna play some of Don't Tell the Boys now. Uh, this verse that I want to play swept the legs out from under me for obvious reasons. I will say, spoilers for The OC?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Skip ahead, like, a minute if you are ever planning on hearing The OC. But if not, um, please enjoy Don't Tell the Boys.

[clip plays]

Singer: Don't tell the boys that we done spent the week inside
And watched 3 seasons of the OC, 'till Marissa fucking dies
You know at times I'm more like Ryan
You're a little more like Seth
You're so quick witted when we talk about what happens after death
I heard your brother's in the desert
He's been fighting for our freedom
He's been chasing nameless faces ever since he finished rehab
Can we support the individual?
Without supporting the whole damn complex?
It's either shooting guns or heroin
At least one of them pays for college
Ah, shit

[clip ends]

Griffin: This is like a perfect example of what I'm talking about, his music being so disarming, because there's this just upfront humor about talking about The OC just in the middle of this song, which is very funny. But then it

hits you with a line like "You're so quick—you're more like Seth, you're so quick witted when we talk about what happens after death."

It's like, oh, damn! Like, you're over here looking at this OC joke and then, fwoomp. Comes at you from the other way. Oh my god, it's so good. Uh, I'm a s—I'm a—I am a sucker for this type of well-constructed...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: ... uh, sort of deep thought music.

Rachel: It's so, like, epic in what it... like, what it covers, you know?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Like, there have been a lot of songs I think that try and, like, tackle this theme of, like, friendship. But, like—like, it's—his—the song is, like, about that, and what it means to be, like, a man, and—

Griffin: Right. And it's—

Rachel: You know? [laughs]

Griffin: —between these lines that are like, "Join my little cult, we'll talk about the childhood traumas that shaped us as adults." And then you just hear him go like, "C'mon, now!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's like, those things back up against each other in a way that is—it feels earned, and it feels, like, completely authentic, and genuine, while also being super funny and poignant. Like, it's masterful.

Rachel: I found—I was glad you sent me the video, 'cause I found the video really charming, too.

Griffin: The video is just him and his buddy just, like, going hiking and spinning around and, like, lounging in bed, and watching The OC in their underwear. Like, it's very pure and good.

Rachel: Yeah. And then, like, wrestling out in the woods? [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, so Don't Tell the Boys has joined this, like, pantheon of "Oh, I'm gonna listen to this song for the rest of my life." But I wanted to also highlight one of his first breakout songs is called Haircut, which features vocals from returning Wonderful! Artist Miya Folick. Or is it Miya Folick?

Rachel: I actually don't know.

Griffin: I don't remember. This was a long time ago. This was, like, episode 50 that you brought Miya Folick to the show.

Rachel: Yeah. I still listen to her music, though.

Griffin: She fucking rules.

Rachel: It's incredible.

Griffin: Yeah. And she's very good on this song too, so I'm gonna play a little bit of Haircut to take us out.

[clip plays]

Singer: I was in a quarter-life crisis and I couldn't explain
I'd been feelin' so different about all the same things
Remember that summer that I shaved my head
Just to prove that I have control over something
I played The Sims 'til I was 21
I had a little life that I always wanted
'Til you dragged me along to your best friend's party
Where the conversation always started

Both Singers: I make jokes when I been feelin' uncomfortable
Am I alright? I really think I'm in trouble

[clip ends]

Griffin: So yeah. I am, like, in the nascent stages of this afterglow of finding this artist whose work I think just rules, and feels like it was made for me. And also his TikToks are just, like, universally hysterical, which doesn't feel especially fair. It feels like... you're sucking up all the talent and keeping it just for yourself.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: But yeah, that's Petey. He's PeteyUSA on TikTok if you wanna watch that. But if you've liked the two songs I've played here, just go listen to the rest of his music. 'Cause it's, like... it's all—it's all really good, man. Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Thanks!

[ad break]

Griffin: I see a book!

Rachel: Yeah, you know what that means.

Griffin: It could mean anything, but I assume it means that we're gonna go... to not one of the sides of the room... but where those sides conjoin.

Rachel: And that is a corner.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And the corner has poetry.

Griffin: [hums Poetry Corner theme, increasing in pitch] [strained] Poetry.

Rachel: I like that you switched it up.

Griffin: Yeah. If you—I don't wanna be predictable.

Rachel: I wanna keep—yeah, I wanna keep things fresh, you know?

Griffin: [simultaneously] Yeah, that's important.

Rachel: I don't want people to be like, "Ugh, Poetry Corner again."

Griffin: In a marriage and in a podca—podcast is like a marriage.

Rachel: Ooh, okay.

Griffin: Let's explore that.

Rachel: Okay, sure! I mean, I was gonna talk about my thing, but—

Griffin: I really would prefer that.

Rachel: Okay. [laughs] I wanted to just start by reading the poem!

Griffin: What the fuck?!

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Baby?!

Rachel: 'Cause that's how I found this poet.

Griffin: Okay, let's see it.

Rachel: I've started picking up anthologies because I'm trying to find poets I wouldn't find otherwise.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Um, and so I went to a bookstore not too far from where we are called Politics and Prose, and it's really a wonderful bookstore.

Griffin: The most DC-ass name for a business I've ever heard.

Rachel: I know, right? I walked in and I thought it was gonna be all, like, New Yorker cartoons on the wall, but it is not. [laughs] It is very friendly. It is very accessible.

Griffin: The building you've just described sounds so hostile to me.

Rachel: Yeah. I thought it was gonna be New Yorker cartoons and, like, I don't know, like, pictures from Meet the Press. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, pictures from Meet the Press for sure.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Meet the Press is always putting out some really high-flyin' pictures. What are we reading today?

Rachel: [laughs] So, the book I got, the anthology I got is called The Path to Kindness: Poems of Connection and Joy. And it is just an anthology of, like, you know, good vibes. [laughs]

Griffin: Good!

Rachel: Uh, and so the poet I found in this anthology is called Brad Aaron Modlin. In fact, one might say his name is Brad Aaron Modlin. It's not just that he's called that.

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: I'm not sure why I framed that that way.

Griffin: I don't know. It's fun. You gotta keep it fresh.

Rachel: The po—[laughs] the poem title is What You Missed That Day You Were Absent from Fourth Grade.

"Mrs. Nelson explained how to stand still and listen to the wind, how to find meaning in pumping gas,

how peeling potatoes can be a form of prayer. She took questions on how not to feel lost in the dark

After lunch she distributed worksheets that covered ways to remember your grandfather's

voice. Then the class discussed falling asleep without feeling you had forgotten to do something else—

something important—and how to believe the house you wake in is your home. This prompted

Mrs. Nelson to draw a chalkboard diagram detailing how to chant the Psalms during cigarette breaks,

and how not to squirm for sound when your own thoughts are all you hear; also, that you have enough.

The English lesson was that *I am* is a complete sentence.

And just before the afternoon bell, she made the math equation look easy. The one that proves that hundreds of questions,

and feeling cold, and all those nights spent looking for whatever it was you lost, and one person

add up to something."

Griffin: That's great.

Rachel: Isn't that great?

Griffin: That's really great.

Rachel: The poem... I mean, the title and, like, the concept of it is genius.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Like, this feeling as you become an adult that you just missed a bunch of, like, critical information.

Griffin: [through laughter] Uh-huh.

Rachel: And then being able to pinpoint those days you were absent and think like, "Was that... did it happen and I missed it?" [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Like, I have a very telling story, specifically in middle school, when I was sick almost the entire week that teachers were covering sex ed.

Griffin: Oh, honey!

Rachel: [laughs] There was this big—I remember I was there the first day, and there was the suggestion that we were going to, like, have a whole unit on it in our science class, and then at the end we would watch a baby be born. And everybody was like, "Oh god, oh god, oh god!"

And then I was just sick—literally, like, actually not faking sick—the rest of the week. And now when I [laughs] pinpoint some of my sexual awkwardness I think, was it that week? Was the that week? [laughs]

Griffin: And I also remember when you were pregnant with Henry, there were a lot of sort of misconceptions there about, like... you were like, "Is it gonna hurt like my—" You were like, "Is it gonna hurt my butt when the baby comes ou—" and—

Rachel: [through laughter] Uh-huh.

Griffin: —I—even I, and the doctor, were like "Oh. Oh, Rachel. That's not, um... that doesn't—that's not part of it."

Rachel: [laughs] Um, but yeah. I love this poem. I love a poem that, like, kind of deftly includes humor, without being, like, specifically a funny poem, you know?

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: So I got really excited about this poet, and then I did some more research on him. As I mentioned, it's Brad Modlin. He is an associate professor at the University of Nebraska Kearney. He's originally from Ontario. And the book that this poem comes from is called *Everyone At This Party Has Two Names*.

Griffin: That's good.

Rachel: [laughs] Which I love. Yeah, he got his PhD in creative writing, his MFA in creative writing, and then his Bachelors was in English with an emphasis in creative writing. [laughs] So, like...

Griffin: That seems—how much can you learn about creative writing?

Rachel: He really put all his eggs in this basket, and it worked out for him.

Griffin: I guess so. It'd be a shame if he was like, "I'm kind of over creative writing." 'Cause it feels you've really kind of pigeonholed yourself a little bit.

Rachel: [laughs] It's a really dangerous path to take.

Griffin: Don't you wanna do some, like, technical writing? Just write some technical manuals?

Rachel: [laughs] Uh-huh?

Griffin: Not that that's not hard work, but you can kind of, you know. You can be a little bit more right-brained.

Rachel: The poem I read has actually been featured in a few places. It was in this podcast that I wasn't familiar with actually until recently called The Slowdown. And it's just a podcast that comes out every, like, workday, and it's just a five minute long podcast with a poem.

Griffin: Wow!

Rachel: And so they have, like, a poet pick a poem, and the poet actually that picked this poem was Ada Limón which I thought, like, oh my gosh.

Griffin: Oh, sure!

Rachel: We keep crossing paths.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Um—[laughs]

Griffin: Serendipity.

Rachel: Um, but yes. She featured it. It was also on another poetry podcast called Poetry Unbound, which has kind of a similar concept of "Hey, here's a poem. That's your podcast. See you next time."

Griffin: You need to start doing the circuit of poetry podcasts, I feel like.

Rachel: I mean, these aren't chat shows. These are just "Hi, I'm this person and I like this poem, and now I'm gonna read it."

Griffin: Yeah, that's profoundly different from what you literally just did.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And are currently still doing on this podcast right now.

Rachel: Yeah, but who am I? I'm not a poet laureate.

Griffin: No! You just went to school for poetry for like a hundred years.

Rachel: Well, so do a lot of people.

Griffin: You're basically a child sort of, uh, reading Shel Silverstein—no, babe. Come on!

Rachel: Come on!

Griffin: Come on!

Rachel: Well, alright. I guess if you're listening now and have a poetry podcast, let me know.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I shouldn't volunteer you to cohost like that.

Rachel: Yeah. What if I like that other podcast better?

Griffin: Your hair looks so good today.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Rachel just got a haircut and I think it looks great. I'm not saying this to you to, like, butter you up and keep the heat here.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh-huh?

Griffin: I'm not, like, scared about losing the heat from this podcast. Like, I know you're ride or die. Um, I just think your hair looks really cute.

Rachel: Thank you! I mean, not to derail the show, but I have learned—you know how they tell you, like, "Oh, you should get your hair cut every six weeks."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And I thought, "Come on." No, you should. [laughs]

Griffin: You sh—[laughs loudly]

Rachel: It really helps!

Griffin: It's a month—did you know? It's a month for me. If I go longer than a month it starts to get... I'm like five weeks now and it's gettin' a little... a little bit wild. I love a haircut, though.

Rachel: [simultaneously] Should we—

Griffin: Still trying to find that special someone here in DC.

Rachel: Ohh.

Griffin: Been bouncing around. Do you have any recommendation—it's—it's—this is your segment and I don't wanna run roughshod all over it talking about the sort of difficulties of having my special hair.

Rachel: [laughs] Usually when I read the poem of a poet that is currently practicing and publishing, I will reach out to them via any social media I can find and let them know, "Hey, just so you know, we're gonna talk about your poem. I wanted you to know because I'm celebrating your work."

But I feel like Brad is gonna be really let down if I reach out to him and say "Hey, we talked about your poem. We loved it. We also talked about haircuts for about 15 minutes in the middle."

Griffin: You know, but that's—is—what is that if not poetry?

Rachel: Uh... [laughs]

Griffin: See, and you can just play—see, this is why poets are so easy. 'Cause you can just say it back, right?

Rachel: I know! And there was part of me that was like, "Oh, is it?"

Griffin: Yeah. In fact, I would say in pretty much any social circle, if you're ever uncomfortable with the way the conversation is going, you can just say the sentence "What is that if not poetry?"

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: And the people will either be like "Oh, wow." Or they'll be so confused, but that'll give you some time to get outta there.

Rachel: Maybe we should stop calling this segment the Poetry Corner and start calling it What Is...

Griffin: What Is That If Not Poe—

Rachel: What Is That?

Griffin: —If Not Poetry?

Rachel: If Not Poetry?

Griffin: Ooh, that's a good name for your poetry podcast!

Rachel: If Not Poetry!

Griffin: If Not Poetry... it sounds weird, actually, when you sort of separate it without the context.

Rachel: No, I like it.

Griffin: If Not Poetry... ? Question mark?

Rachel: Um, just kind of—to close out our very brief segment, I will say that the other thing I like about this poet is he is very collaborative. He's done poetry that has been the basis of orchestral scores.

Griffin: Wow!

Rachel: He worked with an artist for a Brooklyn art exhibition. He's done speeches, meditations. He's also got a book of short stories. Um, yeah. He's—I mean, he's a talented poet. Uh, somebody who is very early in their career, and I was excited to find him and get on board.

Griffin: Fun!

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Fun! We brought similar stuff from different fields, I think.

Rachel: Yeah! Yeah, just kind of a—like a funny but full of heart kind of episode.

Griffin: That poem hit me hard 'cause I missed so much school.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs quietly]

Griffin: And I think it's what sort of imbued me with the... absolutely all-encompassing imposter syndrome that I struggle with on a day-to-day basis.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: 'Cause it's like, at a certain point you missed too much school, and then you feel like "Oh, shit." They introduced some sort of, like, topic here that the rest of this math is going to build upon for the rest of the year, and I just pretend like I get it.

Rachel: There are a lot of books—I'll be like, "Griffin, you know, remember when everybody had to read *Catcher in the Rye* in school?"

And you're like, "Did we?"

Griffin: Well, okay. I wasn't—

Rachel: "Did we?"

Griffin: I wasn't so absent for school that I fully didn't read a book.

Rachel: I feel like maybe you missed a whole book.

Griffin: I just was never assigned that book. I just didn't read that book. I don't know, man. I read lots of other books.

Rachel: I think you would like it.

Griffin: Ask me another book! I bet I read it.

Rachel: Grapes of Wrath.

Griffin: No. That's a big one, huh?

Rachel: That is a big one. [laughs quietly]

Griffin: Is that the one about the two guys who work at the farm, and one of 'em's, like, the rabbits... and then there's a—

Rachel: Of Mice and Men you're thinking of.

Griffin: That's Mice and Men! Read that one.

Rachel: Alright.

Griffin: Is that a play?

Rachel: Yeah. Sometimes. Sometimes play, sometimes book.

Griffin: I love that.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [wheezes loudly] Thank you to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our theme song, Money Won't Pay. You can find a link to that in the episode description. And thanks to Maximum Fun for having us on the network.

Rachel: Yeah! The buzz, the buzz about the drive—

Griffin: [simultaneously] The buzz is building.

Rachel: —has started.

Griffin: Oh shit.

Rachel: We got our special early access to some of the pledge gifts this year.

Griffin: Very exciting stuff.

Rachel: Very exciting.

Griffin: We have a virtual live MBMBaM coming up next week, March 17th. Uh, I believe it's 9 o' clock Eastern Time, PM. Uh, and you can get tickets if you go to mcelroy.family. You can find a link to that. We also have some tour dates coming up. You can check those out as well. Uh, I don't know what's announced so I'm not gonna just sort of, like, guess. We did just announce that we're gonna be doing Moon Tower in Austin, which is exciting.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: In April. I believe the 13th. Against, I'm just shooting from the hip here. We don't have notes up for this segment of the show, and I'm just— I'm so sorry. I'm doing my best.

Rachel: [through laughter] Yeah, no.

Griffin: But go to mcelroy.family. It's all there. And, yeah. We have merch over at mcelroymerch.com too, if you like that kind of stuff. If you're into that kind of thing.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: That's it, though. This is a short one. But that's fine. 'Cause now you can get back to doing... whatever it is you're doing. Now we've filled your cup.

Rachel: Yeah, and what is a short podcast if not poetry?

Griffin: Mm-hmm! Oh, god. It's so—the potential is so huge!

Rachel: [laughs] I know!

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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