

Wonderful 23: Eatin' All the Takis

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[theme music plays]

Rachel:

Hey, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin:

Hello. This is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel:

And this is Wonderful!

Griffin:

Hey. [laughs] I didn't see you come in there. You startled me. Here I was, sitting in the podcast and the door just creaked open.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

And you came inside without fucking knocking and we could have been doing anything in here. Necking.

Rachel:

We? Who's we?

Griffin:

Me and you.

Rachel:

Oh, you're... Okay. The audience is the surprise.

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

I thought I was.

Griffin:

Let's start over. "Oh, no, you caught us necking." And now play along, say the next. Read... It's a... Look at the script where it says Rachel and I highlighted it for you. So just read the next line.

Rachel:

It says, "Griffin, you're such a wonderful lover."

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

That's weird.

Griffin:

It's weird cause' you wrote it.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, thanks for listening to Wonderful, it's a podcast where we talk about the stuff that we're feeling, the stuff that's good, the stuff that you like, that you think is good. And I'm just really excited to record this podcast with you. I'm sorry that we are a day late at this point. Um, but you know, everybody's perfect, um.

Rachel:

He said it!

Griffin:

But I put my own fun Griffin McElroy twist on it, which is where I, uh, switch letters around sometimes.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

I love the way you're holding that tea right now.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

You look like Conan O'Brien. Um, we had talked about doing, like, a new segment. I don't know if you'd given it any thought here at the top where like, I struggle sometimes to think of things to talk about on this show, not because I have a dearth of... Is a dearth a lot?

Rachel:

That's scarcity. You're right.

Griffin:

I have a... It's not like I have a dearth of, like, great things to talk about. It's just, like, sometimes it's hard to talk for 10 minutes about the things that you're into, because all you have to say about them is they're very good.

Rachel:

Yeah. And not be, like, asinine about it.

Griffin:

Yeah. Um, and so we had talked about doing kind of, like, the episode we did where we just kind of rapid fired, like doing, like, one or two things that we're into right now that maybe couldn't, uh, be a whole segment, but we wanted to talk about, and I don't have a hot name for this segment, but maybe just like hot segment.

Rachel:

[laughs] You're a brand generator, Griffin McElroy.

Griffin:

What's in the hot segment today? What are you into that we can't really go too deep into, but what are you into?

Rachel:

I mean, lemons? I really thought about talking about lemons this week.

Griffin:

Lemons have really been on the brain lately for you.

Rachel:

I just got over a cold that I caught from Henry and I wanted to put some lemons up in my bevs. And then I realized like, I just always wanna have lemons around.

Griffin:

Yeah, sure.

Rachel:

Uh, but that's not a lot to talk about there.

Griffin:

That's why Rachel...

Rachel:

It's just great.

Griffin:

That's why Rachel hates Carfax cause' they have a lemon free guarantee.

Rachel:

Whoo.

Griffin:

So, um...

Rachel:

What's your thing?

Griffin:

I played this game called Celeste, uh, that I wanted to talk about. But then I was like, you know, it's one of those games where, like, it does some really cool stuff in the last, like, couple hours and I don't wanna spoil it. Suffice to say that, like, it's a phenomenal game and if you play any games, it's out on, like, everything. So if you play any games, you should go play, but it's just like a cool little mountain climbing platformer game.

Rachel:

Is this for your phone or?

Griffin:

Uh, I played it on Switch.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

Uh, but it's on, like, Switch, PC, PS4, a bunch of stuff.

Rachel:

Huh?

Griffin:

Um, it's by the guy who made Tower Fall. You remember that game?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

It's, like, a multiplayer.

Rachel:

Oh, my gosh. You were so into that.

Griffin:

Yeah. So it's by the same guy and the platforming, like, the controls are, are just as tight. Um, but it does some really interesting stuff with... The main character suffers from depression and anxiety and it really tackles those

issues more than you would think this, like, pixelated platformer was going to in a way that is like really, really thoughtful and ultimately kind of becomes the focus of the game, which I thought was really fascinating and, uh, handled really well. I just finished it a couple days ago and I'm absolutely bonkers about it. So, hmm, that's what I'm into right now. There's other stuff too.

Rachel:

This was a good hot segment.

Griffin:

We've been watching a lot of, um, Terrace House Boys × Girls Next Door, which was the original, uh, series that aired in Japan in like 2013. Uh we're about 50 episodes into it now, it ran for about 100 and sweet God, it is...

Rachel:

It's incredible. I think it's on...

Griffin:

... excruciatingly good.

Rachel:

... Terrible House?

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

If you're looking to find it, uh, you can find out more about it in our, uh, Wonderful Facebook group.

Griffin:

Wink, wink, nudge, nudge.

Rachel:

Um, but it, it's, it's probably my favorite...

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

... cast right now. We're about halfway through, like, Griffin said and the folks they have in the house right now are...

Griffin:

It's phenomenal.

Rachel:

... stupendous.

Griffin:

That was the hot segment. Um, I think it's my turn to start.

Rachel:

What's the music for the hot segment?

Griffin:

[to the tune of the Hot Pockets jingle] Hot segment.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

So here's my first thing. Are you ready for it?

Rachel:

It sounds a lot like Hot Pockets. [laughs]

Griffin:

Well. They stole it from me. Um, I wanna talk first...

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

... about puffins. It's been a while since we did an animal. Not since the lovely wombat.

Rachel:

Okay. I didn't know if you were talking about the cereal Puffins.

Griffin:

No, fuck the Puffins cereal. That's...

Rachel:

Oh, that's really good though.

Griffin:

No, it's not. It's twosome.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, puffins are great. Listen, when we talked about wombats, we started sort of a movement, uh, worldwide movement and now wombats are the hottest thing. They are... They would be in the hot segment if we hadn't already talked about them.

Rachel:

Oh, by the way, if you have seen the book *Diary of a Wombat*, um, and have been interested in sending it to us, uh, we already have it.

Griffin:

Yes. Thank you very much for the folks who sent that our way. Uh, puffins though, here, let me hit you with this puffins: wombats of the sky and sea. They can go both places. This is what I learned when talking... When researching the Puffin.

Rachel:

Wait, how are they similar to the wombat? Or are you just saying that...

Griffin:

I like them. I like them. I like them a lot. They're the best bird. Uh, if... I didn't really appreciate puffins until we watched a television show for children called Puff and Rock, that is on Netflix.

Rachel:

Oh, yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, it is pound for pound maybe the cutest television show ever made.

Rachel:

Oh, so relaxing.

Griffin:

It's got... Who's that dude, the Irish... Chris O'Dowd? He was in Bridesmaids.

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

Uh, yeah, he's like the narrator for it. It is a very cute show about some puffins that live up on a rock. And I was like, "Hey, you know what? I like these animals. I wanna talk about them on the show. And here I am doing that. These squat little guys, they got little black and white bodies, kind of penguin like, but then they got these big round colorful beaks, their beaks actually change color, uh, seasonally.

Rachel:

Whoa.

Griffin:

So they can attract mates during mating season.

Rachel:

Ooh, I like that.

Griffin:

Yeah. It's just like, "Look at my mouth, you like? Ooh-hoo-hoo." Um, you see these little guys and they got these weird wings and you're like, "Oh, great, Griffin is talking about another flightless bird." Nope, these fucking guys can fly super fast. Their wings flap 400 times a minute.

Rachel:

Oh, like little hummingbirds, almost.

Griffin:

Like little hummingbirds, except that they can go up to 88 kilometers per hour. They can travel back in time.

Rachel:

Can you translate that to miles per hour for me?

Griffin:

Yeah. It's like 89.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

You know, and back to the future whenever they did it and literally any other country on Earth, they had to, uh, you know, do the, do the conversion to kilometers per hour. And it's about...

Yeah, well for kilometers per hour, from 88 miles, it would be 87. Anyway, it's just plus one that's my little shorthand for the conversion is it's just kilometers plus one. Anyway, and they can also dive under the water down to 60 meters. There is no escape from these puffins.

Rachel:

Well, what is with this metric article that you've put together?

Griffin:

I'm just saying they can go up to 88 kilometers an hour in the sky and then they can dive down quick 60 meters below the surface of the ocean. I can't go down that low...

Rachel:

So is that 61 miles, is that it?

Griffin:

It's 61 miles.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, they mostly live in Iceland, which has 10 million puffins, which in my mind sort of moves Iceland up the rankings of, like, the best...

Rachel:

Wow.

Griffin:

But there's some areas in Iceland where they do eat the puffin. And that bums me out in a pretty major way. I don't wanna tell them how to do their business and I would never look down on their customs, you know, that's not me. It makes me sad to think about eating a Puffin and that's all.

Rachel:

Of course.

Griffin:

Yeah. Because...

Rachel:

I'm picturing like a whole Puffin on a skewer and it's very upsetting.

Griffin:

It's not ideal. And thank you for giving me that mental image and our millions of listeners. Uh, and I know you're probably asking yourself, where do they live? Up in a tree nest?

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

No. No, they burrow down into the ground and they make little holes. They make little houses under the ground in little caverns that they dug out.

Rachel:

How do they protect themselves from predators?

Griffin:

From their... With their caverns. Most of their predators are like, um, uh, birds of prey and they ain't going in a fucking hole.

Rachel:

That's true.

Griffin:

I'm a big hawk. I see a hole in the ground. That's not for me.

Rachel:

Yeah, you can't dive down.

Griffin:

I'm a sky bird. I'm not a fucking puffin. Um, when mating season comes around, they usually congregate around the, um, the north Atlantic Ocean islands and typically, they try to get down with the same partner that they had the previous year and some puffins... Puffins have a life expectancy of 20 years. Some of those mating, like, pairings are for life.

Rachel:

That's nice.

Griffin:

And it's great 'cause it's, like, "Where's Sheila. I'm back. Where's Sheila? Sheila? Oh, there she is."

Rachel:

Do you know why they do that, I wonder?

Griffin:

Uh, they feel love.

Rachel:

Oh, okay.

Griffin:

They formed these long term relationships with their partners and they only lay one egg a year. Just one. They just roll the hard six on this one egg.

Rachel:

What's the incubation on those eggs? I wonder.

Griffin:

I don't know. I don't know.

Rachel:

Probably like 61 meters. [laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, they lay one egg a year. They do it down in their hole house, uh, and the eggs hatch, and you know what comes out?

Rachel:

A puffin?

Griffin:

You wanna guess what a baby puffin is called?

Rachel:

Pufferino.

Griffin:

That's very good. It's a puffling.

Rachel:

Oh, that's nice too.

Griffin:

Oh, God, can you imagine? Um, so what happens though if their little burrow isn't big enough for a Puffin to really express themselves with the way that they like to make love, what do you do? Oh, what do you even do?

Rachel:

You are just asking all the questions on the tip of my tongue.

Griffin:

Well, sometimes Atlantic puffins, which is one of the three types of puffins that there are in the world, they'll go where rabbits make their burrow and they'll find a rabbit burrow and they'll get down in there.

Rachel:

Ooh.

Griffin:

How good is that? "Hey, you're not using this anymore, right other animal? 'Cause I'm gonna just scoot into your zone and I'm gonna make it my own with my musk, my sex scent."

Rachel:

Interesting.

Griffin:

Are you kidding me, puffins? They're resourceful. They're pragmatic. These are good birds. This is also a plot point on Puff and Rock where, sometimes, I think there was like a rainstorm and the puffins were like, "Can I live with you for a bit, rabbit?" And the rabbit was like, "Yeah, come on inside." They did not make love.

Rachel:

Griffin business idea.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

An app for puffins.

Griffin:

[laughs]

Rachel:

So they know where all the caverns are.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

For when they want to get frisky.

Griffin:

What's the install base for smartphones, for puffins. 'Cause I have a business idea. Smartphones for puffins.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

And then we're gonna load these little guys down with apps.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, it's just wild. I'm gonna use this rabbit house. Anyway, that really tickled me. Uh, another great thing, they have these big beaks. They use them to scoop up fish and plankton and they bring it on home to their kids a

couple times a day and they can fit like 10, 12, 50, 100 meters of fish in that big, big mouth.

And because there's such diligent parents, they don't have to eat the food and then yurts it for the kid to eat, like every other bird. They just hold it in the little fish prison of their mouths to feed it to the kids. It's a little ready station at a nice fancy restaurant.

Rachel:

I bet that leads to some kind of awkward conversations 'cause like a Puffin will get home and they'll be like, "Hey Jeremy, how was your day?" And they'll be like, [muffled noises]. Like, "Oh I'm sorry, I didn't realize you were making dinner."

Griffin:

Didn't realize you had 50 meters of fish.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Anyway. That's all I have on puffins. Best birds. Look at these little guys. You know what Puffin looks like, yeah? Little guys.

Rachel:

Yeah. I mean, I know what the television show tells me puffins look like.

Griffin:

It's 100% right, anatomically, except they don't get down, but I guess they only get down... Do they only get down once a year? Do they get down for funksies too? Who knows? Who knows?

Rachel:

We could do a whole puffin podcast.

Griffin:

Puffin talk? It's nothing.

Rachel:

Nothing. No.

Griffin:

Um, what's your first thing?

Rachel:

Uh, so my first thing is probably not gonna come as a surprise to many people as far as, you know, like there are a lot of people out there that probably aren't familiar with puffins, but I imagine most of our listeners are familiar with Tiny Desk Concerts.

Griffin:

Oh, Tiny Desk Concerts!

Rachel:

But just in case you're not, I thought I would talk about it 'cause it's super cool.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, it's an NPR music production, uh, that started in 2008. The All Songs Considered host Bob Boilen, uh, attended a show in South by Southwest and was frustrated that they couldn't hear the music over the crowd noise.

Griffin:

Hmm.

Rachel:

Uh, so they were seeing an artist, uh, Laura Gibson, who's a folk singer and they kind of joked that she should come to record at their desk, uh...

Griffin:

They just have one... People don't know this.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

At NPR, they have one desk. They all have to take turns. Ira's like, "Can I please..." This is my Ira Glass impression. "Can I please use the desk?" So that's pretty good.

Rachel:

Oh, weird. He sounds so much like you.

Griffin:

Also, is he on NPR still? I don't know. Anyway, it's so political!

Rachel:

Specifically Boilen's desk, I should say.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Uh, and so a month later she did that and they did an impromptu recording, posted it online. Uh, at that point, NPR music had only been around for about five months. And so Bob himself filmed it, had no team or anything.

Griffin:

Sorry that cracks me up. They were that, like... "You know, people seem to really be into this music stuff."

Rachel:

[laughs] "We should really start something." Uh...

Griffin:

NPR Music is great though. They do a lot of, like, those early listen things like I used to...

Rachel:

Before an album comes out?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I used to be really into that.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm. Uh, so as of November, 2016, more than 550 concerts have been conducted there, um, and viewed about 80 million times on YouTube. Uh, and so this is something that used to be kind of just for, kind of, indie artists. If you look at some of the top views, uh, Tallest Man on Earth is up there, Iron & Wine is on there, the National...

Uh, but in 2014, uh, the, then co-host of the Microphone Check podcast noted, there was a lack of hip-hop artists. Uh, and so since then, they've really focused on having more diversity. Uh, in 2014, uh, they brought T-Pain on.

Griffin:

Fantastic.

Rachel:

Which apparently is the top viewed performance. Uh, T-Pain is known for, uh, his auto tune pitch correction.

Griffin:

I almost called... I couldn't... I was sitting here trying to remember what it was called and I almost called it Vocaloid. Like, T-Pain was like really into Hatsune Miku. Um, he might be, we don't know.

Rachel:

Uh, so he showed up with just a keyboard and, uh, did an impressive vocal performance that I think wowed everybody 'cause they were used to his auto tune work and so...

Griffin:

Yeah, they are talking shit about T-pain.

Rachel:

Yeah. And so it's made a big movement for, uh, Tiny Desk Concerts.

Griffin:

I think I've seen a Chance the Rapper one...

Rachel:

Yeah, for sure.

Griffin:

... and Run The Jewels, I think, did one as well.

Rachel:

Yeah, so just recently on the 19th, they had Big Daddy Kane do a performance and then George Clinton and the P-Funk All Stars were on...

Griffin:

Holy shit.

Rachel:

... January 24th. Yeah. So they're like, they've really kind of expanded their oeuvre recently.

Griffin:

Yeah, for sure.

Rachel:

Uh, so as, as much as I like, you know, like the Avett Brothers, like it's a broader audience now. Uh, so now they have a whole team that goes into recording these, but for those of you that aren't familiar, it's really, it's a literal desk in a literal NPR office. Uh, and it's like the most intimate performance you'll see...

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

... for most of these people. Uh, and so now they have a whole and multiple cameras that capture the performances, they have between three and five cameras that now capture it. Uh, and they have a sound producer that uses a set of shotgun mics, um, and he forgoes a PA system, which allows him to really crank up the volume on the mics.

Um, so yeah, I love it. I mean, as I mentioned, there's over 500 videos now you can watch them all on YouTube. Uh, and it's a really cool way to see some of your favorite artists in, like, a really, like, intimate setting.

Griffin:

Yeah. It reminds me, uh, I don't think we could do this now that we just did Tiny Desk Concerts. Have you ever seen AV Undercover? The AV Club series where they get band to come in and pick songs?

Rachel:

No.

Griffin:

They have, like, a list of 30 songs, like, iconic songs from throughout, uh, you know, modern music history and then they have just a bunch of bands come in. And when you come in, you get to pick a song off the list and then you have to cover it.

Rachel:

Oh, yeah.

Griffin:

It is a fucking great series.

Rachel:

No, you have told me about that before.

Griffin:

Um, cool. Uh, hey, can I steal you away to the place where the commercials live?

Rachel: [smacks lips]

Griffin: Oh, gross.

Rachel:

There's all some smooches there.

Griffin:

I know. Wipe them off. Yuck.

Rachel:

Oh, Griffin. Come on. One of these days you'll grow into it.

Griffin:

No, never. You've got Takis breath. Just kidding you don't..

Rachel:

Oh, hey!

Griffin:

No, you don't have Takis breath.

Rachel:

I'm all for improv, but come on!

Griffin:

[laughs] No, baby. You have to say, "Yes, I do have Takis breath."

Rachel:

No!

Griffin:

And, and...

Rachel:

No, but.

Griffin:

"Yes, I have Takis breath and I'm sorry."

[ad break]

Rachel: Okay. I have a few messages to read. This message is for Beth and it is from Nicholas. "Hey baby, we've been together for over a year by now. And it's been, well, wonderful. You've made me happy in so many ways, whether it's when we make dinner together, play video games, or leave parties early because we're both sleepy and wanna relax with some Netflix."

Griffin:

That's love.

Rachel:

Oh, that's us.

Griffin:

What a love.

Rachel:

Well, when we used to go to parties.

Griffin:

Yeah, we don't even do that. [laughs] We skip to... We cut out the middleman.

Rachel:

"I simply can't wait to see where we go from here. I love you."

Griffin:

I love you too, babe.

Rachel:

No, it's the message.

Griffin:

You don't love me?

Rachel:

Ever, ever since that Takis comment, I a little feel mixed.

Griffin:

We'll, stop eating so many dang Takis all the time with every time.

Rachel:

I should. Okay.

Griffin:

I know you say it's full of good nutrients and fish oil and stuff. It's good for your heart, but I think you just like the spicy flavor on your mouth. So, okay. Am I wrong? Take me to jail.

Rachel:

[laughs] Okay.

Griffin:

I'm wrong.

Rachel:

Okay. This message is for Ray. It is from Elizabeth. "Dear Ray, I'm the worst girlfriend for traveling to another country over your birthday. But I hope this, a happy birthday from Griffin..."

Griffin:

Hey, happy birthday.

Rachel:

"... makes up for it a little."

Griffin:

Yo, hey, happy birthday for real, though.

Rachel:

[laughs]. "And happy anniversary month too. These past two and a half years have been the best. I love you so much and I can't wait for all the adventures the future holds for us. All my love, E."

Griffin:

Ah, that's a nice one. You remember that song? Hey Baby, by Gwen Stefani?

Rachel:

Uh-huh. You wanna sing a little bit of that for us?

Griffin:

I do not.

[Max Fun Promo]

Emily:

Hi. I'm comedian Emily Heller.

Lisa:

And I'm cartoonist Lisa Hanawalt.

Emily:

And we're the host of Baby Geniuses.

Lisa:

Do you wanna learn weird new facts?

Emily:

Do you like hearing successful creative women talk about their poop?

Lisa:

Do you want the scoop on Martha Stewart's pony?

Emily:

If you answered yes to any of these questions, our show is for you.

Lisa:

We interview people like Paula Tomkins.

Emily:

Kristin Shaw.

Lisa:

Michael Shane.

Emily:

And more. So check us out on Maximum Fun.

Lisa:

And let us mess up your brain.

Emily:

Yes, please.

[Baby Geniuses theme plays]

[Ad break ends]

Griffin:

I have my second thing here.

Rachel:

Wait, Griffin, before you start, do you wanna stop eating that huge bag of Cheetos that you're eating right now?

Griffin:

Okay. See, now we're both having fun.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Okay. And now I can be like, "Uh, uh-oh, sounds like we've got ourselves a real crunch wars."

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

So build on that.

Rachel:

Isn't this fun?

Griffin:

Build on that.

Rachel:

This improv?

Griffin:

But mine was accurate and I... About maybe, well, I don't... I guess I don't eat that many Cheetos. Okay, anyway. I wanna talk about my second thing and I'm nervous about it, 'cause I'm worried it's gonna make me sound like a 54 year old man. Um, which, oh God, that's just 24 years from now. I need to get living.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Um, I'm worried it's gonna make me sound like I'm out of touch with the teens.

Rachel:

I guarantee whatever you say, I will not know.

Griffin:

You might actually know this one. Uh, it's a meme.

Rachel:

Yes, you've already...

Griffin:

Please don't turn off the show.

Rachel:

You've already lost it.

Griffin:

But it's the steamed hams meme. Do you remember steamed ham?

Rachel:

I mean, the Simpsons reference?

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

I know that.

Griffin:

Okay. That, I mean that's all, that's what it is.

Rachel:

It's a meme now?

Griffin:

It's a meme now. Welcome to 2018. It's a meme now.

Rachel:

Oh, it's a meme now.

Griffin:

Uh, so I'm not like, I'm like a big meme fan 'cause I think most of them are like... A lot of it is just, like, lazy kind of recycled jokes, I feel like, like, oh yeah.

Rachel:

I feel like memes lost me after success baby.

Griffin:

Success baby was the peak, right?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

But there's also mean memes and also hugely racist memes and those are obviously not great. But what I love about steamed hams is how creative folks have gotten with it and...

Rachel:

What's the intent? Is there an underlying intent to all the memes?

Griffin:

Well, I will... Hold on. Are you asking me like why people enjoy memes in general or just steamed hams?

Rachel:

No. Specifically using the Simpsons clip. Like what is the purpose they're using it for?

Griffin:

Yeah. So that's the next thing.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

And the next reason why I enjoy it is because as far as I can tell, it's sort of rise is completely nonsensical. It makes no sense. So if you... Okay, for starters, 'cause I'm sure everybody who listens to this show is a hip and, you know, loves to surf the web.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin: And go to their favorite pages and join some of their favorite boards and leave cool forum posts.

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, and so I'm sure you know what it is, but if you don't, uh, the original steamed hams is a sketch from a really weird episode of the Simpsons called 22 Short Films About Springfield, which is actually I think in my opinion, one of the best Simpsons episodes probably ever.

It's, like, literally exactly all it is, just 22 little short stories. Um, and in, uh, the sketch is called Skinner and the Superintendent I think, and in it Skinner invites a superintendent Chalmers over for dinner and realizes that he burned the roast that he'd made and Chalmer questions him about the smoke that's coming out of his oven, which Skinner explains is the steam from the steamed clams that he's making for dinner.

And then he sneaks off to Krusty Burger to get some krusty burgers and then explains to Chalmers that he actually said steamed hams, which is what he calls hamburgers, which is a New York regional dialect and Chalmers kind of grows increasingly incredulous and, boy, talking about something that is already funny is not funny at all.

Uh, but, but the, the bit is like, it's fucking phenomenal. It is also 22 years old. It came out in 1996, which that alone is kind of, uh, existentially terrifying. But like, why is it just now popping off? There is no explanation for it and that is so, so, so wonderful to me. Uh, Simpsons jokes are like, there is a, they're a weirdly rich vein for shit posting just, like, people who...

Rachel:

Will you explain what shit posting is too? Because I didn't know until about a week ago.

Griffin:

Yeah. It's, like, low effort, purposefully, low effort jokes, probably memed most of the time, that are still, you know, funny. Uh, I mean they're, they're more nonsensical— It's like a nonsensical low effort meme most of the time.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

God, we're gonna get so many fucking tweets about this bit.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Why did I choose this? Um, but there's lots of... There's a lot of, like, Simpson's shit that has been turned into these very, very long running shit posting memes. Um, and for whatever reason, steamed hams is kind of the gold standard. But I feel like calling it shit posting is kind of dismissive because there's a lot of genuine artistic and comedic masterpieces in this one.

Uh, so in October of last year, I feel like this is where things kind of, uh, exploded for steamed hams. There's a YouTuber named Expnand Banana who posted steamed hams, but it's a custom Guitar Hero song, which charts every word, musical stinger, and sound effect from the original steamed hams sketch to a Guitar Hero level, like, bar graph. I have prepared some videos on my computer really quick to give you some...

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

... instruction on steamed hams.

Rachel:

Okay. [laughs]. That is inspired.

Griffin:

Yeah. It's extremely good. Um, and I think, this, it has, like, a million views on YouTube and, and kind of, I think activated this to become, 'cause people were doing shit like this before, but it kind of caught fire after this video went up. Um, and since then, people have been doing so much incredible stuff with steamed hams.

Uh, there's a YouTube user named Finn MK, who does mostly, like, improvisational, uh, like, piano pieces over spoken word stuff. But every time a word is said, he like plays a little melody so that it matches up. And I can actually include this one in the episode because you can hear kind of what he does where every time a character says a word, there's a corresponding piano note in the composition that is so good.

[Steamed hams meme clip plays]

Rachel:

That's incredible.

Griffin:

Yeah. That one is very, very good. Um, these, these, by the way are kind of sort of broad categories of steamed hammed memes, uh, of just, like, including something that dubs over the sounds of the video perfectly or...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, so the Guitar Hero one is, is great because a big trend is editing, uh, steamed hams with, like, UI elements and sounds from any number of video game franchises. And there's literally, like, no reference to granular, uh, there, or is one for Persona, which is, like, one of my favorite game franchises ever.

There's one for, uh, the one I'm gonna play just some audio of, because I think it comes through really well, is from the Ace Attorney series, which is a

Japanese adventure game series where you are a lawyer who is sort of conducting these, uh, trials. Uh, there's a lot of sort of trial-based video games that it has been dubbed over. This is steamed hams, but it's Ace Attorney.

Skinner:

Oh, well, that was wonderful. Good time was had by all, I'm pooped.

Chalmers:

Yes, I should be... Good lord! What is happening in there?

Skinner:

Aurora Borealis.

[Ace Attorney court music plays]

Chalmers:

Aurora Borealis at this time of year, at this time of day and this part of the country localized entirely within your kitchen?

Skinner:

Yes.

[sound effect sting]

Griffin:

And then there's so, so, so much, uh, YouTube poop edits, which I don't know if you're familiar with what those are, but it's...

Rachel:

I don't know.

Griffin:

... it's YouTube shit posting essentially. Uh, it's just called YouTube poop. Uh, that really do it for me. Uh, this is one called steamed hams, but every word is replaced with its first occurrence where every time a word is repeated throughout the length of the sketch, they cut back to the first time that that

word was said in the sketch until it becomes just an incomprehensible, just toilet.

[chaotic steamed hams clip plays]

Rachel:

Oh, my God.

Griffin:

Uh, so that's steamed hams. I like the... okay. Like I wanna to include...

Rachel:

There is a level of craftsmanship to this that I was not anticipating.

Griffin:

And that's what I love about it. It is a canvas. Steamed hams is a can... I know it's kind of busted, like, I was not joking earlier when I said about, like, trying to talk about funny things as one of the least funny things I feel like you can do on this earth, but I like this because it's you, it is a launchpad for whatever you wanna make it. And it's such a, like, harmless enough, like, meme with actually really good source material.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, that every time a new one comes out, I find it just so, so, so delightful. And I think it probably helps that, like, a lot of the, like, video game edits are...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... like, stuff that really, really speaks to me, but I just... I don't like many memes. And so I find... I get so excited when I have one that I feel like I can participate in.

Rachel:

How do you know when a new one comes out?

Griffin:

Uh, okay. So, uh, Allegra at Polygon...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... has a, uh, a post at Polygon that she wrote a while ago about the steamed hams meme.

Rachel:

Oh, she updated?

Griffin:

She's updated it like nine times, uh, with, like, oh, there's a Metal Gear Solid one. It's so good. Um, and so every time that get pushed up to the top of our side, I'm like, "Oh yeah, new hams."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Thank you for indulging me.

Rachel:

You're welcome. Do you wanna hear mine?

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

Mine might be a little basic, but I think it's worth mentioning. Crying at television shows. [laughing].

Griffin:

Why not just crying in, in general? Is it just...?

Rachel:

There is a special kind of crying.

Griffin:

[laughing]

Rachel:

Well, first of all, you know me, like, I'm not a particularly expressive person on a regular basis.

Griffin:

Sure. Sure.

Rachel:

Uh, television shows really provide me with kind of an outlet uh, to just let go.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

You know, so I did some research on this, which I thought I would share.

Griffin:

Okay. There's research specifically about crying at television shows?

Rachel:

Uh, yeah.

Griffin:

Interesting.

Rachel:

Uh, so this is from a Time article, uh, from 2017, Why it's Healthy to Cry Over TV Shows. Uh, "research shows that becoming attached to television personalities can be healthy. Psychologists call the types of relationships we form with fictional characters parasocial or one directional, because we know all about these individuals, but they don't know a bit about us."

Uh, there is an assistant professor, uh, of psychology at the University of Oklahoma that says that our brains aren't really built to distinguish between whether our relationship is real or fictional.

Griffin:

Whoa, first of all, that's wild.

Rachel:

I know.

Griffin:

Second of all, it's wild, but also it kind of sucks. [laughing]. I mean, I'm sure it is accurate, but, like, it sucks that's how our brains work.

Rachel:

Well, I think it's, it's, it explains why, like, art and media can be so powerful.

Griffin:

Yeah [crosstalk].

Rachel:

It can trigger your brain to react in a way that, that it would, if anybody were to experience what you're seeing. Um, so crying over sad television, uh, can include self-esteem boosts, decrease loneliness and more feelings of belonging.

Uh, crying over sad television is also a modern example of what philosophers have referred to for thousands of years as the paradox of tragedy, which, uh, sadness is a negative emotion, but you can, you know, still enjoy tragic fiction because it is sad.

Griffin:

Huh.

Rachel:

Yeah. Um, one theory about behind the paradoxes that tragic fiction can provide catharsis, as I was mentioning, or a purge of negative emotions, uh, and people tend to feel better after crying. Uh, fictional TV dramas, um, research also shows that it can improve people's ability to read the thoughts and feelings of other people. And this is interesting. In a 2015 study Barnes, the professor I mentioned earlier, uh, found that people that watched an episode of the Good Wife were better able to correctly identify the emotions being conveyed in photos of human faces...

Griffin:

[laughing]. Thank you. Thank you, Julianna Margulies.

Rachel:

... compared to those who watched a nonfiction documentary or no television at all.

Griffin:

Healing the nation with Julianna Margulies.

Rachel:

So the reason I reference this, um, there are a lot of shows that I watch without Griffin because they're kind of my purge shows.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, those include shows like This is Us. Before that, it was Parenthood. I still am one of...

Griffin:

Jesus.

Rachel:

... the few people that is following along with Grey's Anatomy.

Griffin:

Parenthood, I would walk into the living room and you'd just like, turn up to me, just...

Rachel:

Covered.

Griffin:

... soaking with tears. And I'll be like, "I will comeback."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

"Are you doing okay? It's the TV show, right? Okay, good."

Rachel:

Yeah, uh.

Griffin:

I have two questions.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

One, do you remember the first time you cried at a television show?

Rachel:

Gosh. No. Do you?

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

Okay. Continue.

Griffin:

I guess I remember, like, uh, I was probably in like middle school, maybe...

Rachel:

You're, like, "What is happening to me?" **Griffin:** ...maybe, like, high school. Well, no, I remember like seeing my, uh, you know, my parents cry when we watched like a movie or like...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I would come in and they were watching, like, ER or something and they would be crying and I'd be like, "Oh, okay. I don't get it." And then I watched the series finale of Boy Meets World and I was...

Rachel:

Oh my gosh, broken.

Griffin:

... fucked up, dude. I was fucked up.

Rachel:

You heard that, "Class dismissed," and you just fell on the floor.

Griffin:

When he turns off the light and says, "Class dismissed," and I say, fucking tears dismissed from my eyes and face and ducts. Always, always, always. Um, second question. Hardest you've ever cried at a TV show? Probably Parenthood?

Rachel:

Oh, um, I mean Parent— Friday Night Lights is another, I feel like.

Griffin:

For me it's Friday Night Lights, the episode where, um...

Rachel:

No spoilers.

Griffin:

It's not really a spoiler, but uh...

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

There's, like, it's a episode arc where, uh... Oh my God, I can't remember Taylor Kitsch character's name.

Rachel:

Oh, Riggins.

Griffin:

Riggins', uh, brother, like, kicks him out of the house cause he is being a jag...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... and he doesn't really have anywhere else to go and some other bad, I forget what like bad shit happens to him. Uh, but they get in this big fight. It's the episode where they get in like the big, like, actual fist fight in their house. Uh, and he gets kicked out.

And then at the end of the episode, like he's like some terrible stuff's happened and he comes home and his brother like makes him a sandwich and gives him a beer and kind of like cleans up a, like, knocked over a stool and they just sit there and he puts his hand on the back of his neck and it's playing that, um, that iron wine song. I'm about to start crying...

Rachel:

I know.

Griffin:

.... right now on the podcast, that shit gets me so bad.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Yeah. It's a phenomenon that I guess I wouldn't expect would apply to me. Um, because I'm not, as I mentioned earlier, a particularly, like, sentimental or weepy person. Uh, but there is something that is so nice about sitting down with a show and just getting it out there.

Griffin:

Just getting a good cry on.

Rachel:

Yeah. My So Called Life is another one that used to really get me on that.

Griffin:

We mentioned, uh, Terrace House Boys × Girls Next Door earlier in the episode.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I've cried maybe four or five times.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And that's really unique for me because I don't really cry at most reality shows.

Rachel:

Yeah, reality shows.

Griffin:

Especially when they get, like... If I get a whiff of, oh, this is bullshit, there's no chance of it. But there's some genuinely pretty heartbreaking things that happen.

Rachel:

Yeah. It's not, like, it's not from conflict that seems motivated by some kind of device.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

You know, it's from real people having these kind of real, like, depth of emotion about their connection with another person usually.

Griffin:

Sure.

Rachel:

And it's powerful.

Griffin:

It's very good.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, I think that's it. Do you want some submissions?

Rachel:

Yes, please.

Griffin:

Here's one from Gary who says, "A local children's theater company recently needed an emergency replacement actor and I took the job. The stress of learning an entire show in three days was pretty substantial." Oh my God. I just got like...

Rachel:

[laughs] Do you need a wave?

Griffin:

I got winded from the fear of that. Uh, "...but today after my first show, the elementary school we performed at thanked us all by dabbing at the same time, if 300 children hitting a dab at the same time isn't absolutely wonderful, I don't know what it is."

Rachel:

Oh, my God.

Griffin:

Did the building fall over from the power, from at least the sheer wind force...

Rachel:

Yeah, exactly.

Griffin:

... that was displaced by 300 heads hitting 300 elbow pits? Uh, Jake says, "One of my favorite things is watching videos of astronauts demonstrating how things work, aboard space stations. On the YouTube channel Video From Space, the ISS crew showcases mundane actions like sleeping, washing your hair, uh, and preparing food that are made infinitely more entertaining by the crazy space tech and lack of gravity. Even just watching them move around the station makes me feel something that you could reasonably describe as childlike wonder."

Love this shit. I watched a video on Facebook the other day of this astronaut, who was like, I wonder what happens if you try to ring out a wet

cloth in space and did it, and the water just kind of like forms a weird barrier around the cloth that just kind of stays there. And I was like, "Oh." And you could see him too. Like, "Whoa, okay. That's what happens. I'm a scientist."

Rachel:

And you love that space.

Griffin:

I do love that space. Get me up there please.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, final one here. Emma says, "At my high school during lunch, they have been playing the Olympics on a big projector. I think it's so wonderful to hear everyone at lunch making reactions to figure skating or snowboarding, and I wanted to share that with you guys." Doesn't that sound nice?

Rachel:

That does sound nice.

Griffin:

Eating a big square pizza and just looking up at the, you know, the big snowboard jump. Oh, I should have brought the woman who made the Olympics for the, uh, halfpipe ski competition just by sort of like going to all the qualifiers and not falling over.

Rachel:

That could have been our hot segment.

Griffin:

Yeah. Well, we can do a hot segment at the end of the show too, of the things that we remember just during the 45 minutes of the recording.

Rachel:

Um, I wanted to thank a few listeners that sent us things in our PO box.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Uh, we got some, um, hand designed valentines, uh, from, uh, an Etsy shop. That's, uh, eatmedrinkmeco.etsy.com. Uh, we got a book called Nobody Likes a Goblin, which I really appreciated. Uh, we got a calendar called Brick of Chicago and it's just every month is a photo of different bricks around Chicago from Will. Uh, so thank you for that.

Griffin:

Emily B. sent us a catnip toy for Cecil.

Rachel:

Oh, my gosh. He destroyed it.

Griffin:

He fucking... I've never seen anything like it.

Rachel:

He was so happy.

Griffin:

He went wild.

Rachel:

We had never given him catnip before.

Griffin:

Well, we, we actually have, and he didn't, like, go for it, but I guess now in his old age, he is.

Rachel:

Uh, we also got some great shirts and I'm actually not sure who sent them to us, but there's a Texas shirt of the month club.

Griffin:

Yeah, they're really nice.

Rachel:

Uh, and they're beautiful. So this is just some of the things that we've gotten in our PO box. Thank you so much.

Griffin:

Yeah. It's PO box 66639, Austin, Texas, 78766.

Rachel:

We only check it about once a month.

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

So I apologize for all those people we aren't able to mention.

Griffin:

Um, I wanna thank bo en and Augustus for the use of our theme song, Money Won't Pay. You can find a link to it in the episode description. And I also wanna thank Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go to MaximumFun.org and check out all the amazing shows there. You are going to just love all of them to bits and pieces. Um, there's stuff like Heat Rocks, who probably has their own hot segment. Uh, Jordan, Jesse, Go!

Rachel:

Go Fact Yourself, the new one.

Griffin:

Go Fact Yourself is a new one. There's a bunch at MaximumFun.org. And I think that's it, huh?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Griffin put down that big bag of Double Stuf Oreos.

Griffin:

Should put down a big bag of dry duke. You're coming at me with all my snacks. I hate this game. Rachel's never eaten Takis in her life.

Rachel:

Thank you.

[theme song plays]

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I'm Jesse.

Jordan:

I'm Jordan.

Jesse:

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Jordan:

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So we asked our fans to do it for us.

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Speaker 2:

...two best pals...

Speaker 3:

...two hilarious friends...

Speaker 4:

The hilarious smart kids.

Speaker 5:

Talking about hilarious stuff that happens to them.

Speaker 6:

Mostly, really stupid stuff.

Speaker 7:

Awkward anecdotes, insane tangents, heartfelt stuff.

Speaker 8:

It's like being thrown in the middle of a hilarious conversation between you and your best pal.

Speaker 9:

It's a show that makes me laugh every week, which is pretty rare and wonderful.

Speaker 10:

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Speaker 12:

And it's the best part of my week and has kept me company for the past seven years through all sorts of life. I love those guys.

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