

Wonderful 24: Tearaway Turtleneck

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[theme music plays]

Rachel:

Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin:

Hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel:

This is Wonderful!

Griffin:

Let's keep it casual this week, huh?

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

I know we try to bring a sort of businesslike sort of mindset to this, and we're always talking about business tips and we're trying to remain formal with our audience.

Rachel:

Griffin's wearing shorts right now.

Griffin:

Today is a shorts day.

Rachel:

That's how casual he's keeping it.

Griffin:

Do you not like the shorts?

Rachel:

No, I like the shorts. I'm just I'm trying to paint a picture.

Griffin:

Rachel yells at me every time I wear shorts.

Rachel:

That is not true. I love when you wear shorts.

Griffin:

That's not true. I think you hate it when I wear shorts. [laughs].

Rachel:

[laughs]. Okay. Well, he said, she said.

Griffin:

Yeah. Well, we'll let the audience... That they're gonna side with you.

Rachel:

No, they will for sure.

Griffin:

But they won't believe all the mean things you say about my shorts.

Rachel:

Well, wait, just what's one of 'em I think?

Griffin:

You say like, "I bet you couldn't hold many marbles in those pockets." And you say things like, "Hey, great knees." And you'd be... That one is sincere. I have wonderful knees.

Rachel:

And they smell wonderful too.

Griffin:

Here's a thing that is true.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

So Rachel smells my knees sometimes and swears up and down that I have these Downy fresh knees.

Rachel:

[laughs]. Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

And I don't know why. I mean, I run with fabric softeners, like three hours a day...

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

... but that's me. That's, like, my life.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Why do you hate my fucking shorts so much?

Rachel:

I love the shorts. They're great.

Griffin:

Um, did you ever own a pair of pants that could be zipped or torn, strate—

Rachel:

No.

Griffin:

Oh, that could... You didn't let me finish.

Rachel:

No, no.

Griffin:

You didn't let me finish.

Rachel:

I'm pretty sure the answer's no. [laughs].

Griffin:

So that the butt could hang out completely. No, that go from long pants to shorts?

Rachel:

No. [laughs]. Did you?

Griffin:

Yeah, I owned a couple. I... Listen, I was a theater kid.

Rachel:

Why would that be useful in the theater?

Griffin:

It's not, it has nothing to do with practicality. It's just like when you're a theater kid, you feel like you are able to get away with more, sort of, fashion risks.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm. Were these like a khaki material?

Griffin:

One was a khaki material. Yes.

Rachel:

What was the other?

Griffin:

Sort of more of a stretchy fabric.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

And-

Rachel:

Was this for when you would run off the stage onto the court?

Griffin:

Yeah, when I went..

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

When I left the stage where I was...

Rachel:

A la high school musical?

Griffin:

Yeah. When I was doing, you know, Oklahoma and we'd finish and be like, "Oh, the farmer..." And like, "Oh, shit, coach is gonna be so PO'ed if I don't get to practice right now." And then I would dribble on over to basketball practice.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Um, no, that's not a joke. I owned a couple. It's fun. It's fun to just be like, "Well, you know what?" [imitates fabric ripping] "Well, you know what I think about this?" Rip, rip! "Here's my freaking knees."

Rachel:

What would you... Here's a practical question. What would you do with the discarded fabric once it was...

Griffin:

I'm so glad you asked.

Rachel:

... zipped off.

Griffin:

I would zip them onto my arm zippers.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

So this was a look, um, that was popularized by, uh, JC Chasez. Uh, if you'll remember from all the great music videos, he would take the two sleeves and he would just sort of mix them around where they would live on his body. And so he would do like maybe right arm, left leg or...

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

... both arms or super long turtle neck.

Rachel:

Yeah. [laughs]. I like that.

Griffin:

This is nothing. Can we do the hot segment? Actually, somebody on Twitter suggested that we call it, um, small wonders.

Rachel:

Yeah, I was [crosstalk].

Griffin:

And I love that very, very much.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, we had a couple people suggest that. I'm sorry, I do, I did not take your names. Um, do you have anything that you're, like, very much into right now?

Rachel:

I had, um, a couple things that I wanted to bring up.

Griffin:

Hit it.

Rachel:

See, when you say right now...

Griffin:

Mm-hmm.

Rachel:

... like for me, these are kind of timeless.

Griffin:

Okay. [laughs].

Rachel:

Just very quick.

Griffin:

Hit it.

Rachel:

Log flumes. Like the ride.

Griffin:

Oh yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Rachel:

Love 'em.

Griffin:

Did you, what, what's your main exposure to log flumes?

Rachel:

Um, I mean Six Flags.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

But I like how they always went through kind of like a tree naturey area.

Griffin:

That part's great.

Rachel:

You know?

Griffin:

That part's great. And I really did love that and I wish that...

Rachel:

And, like, a very minimal splash at the end usually.

Griffin:

Oh, see, I only got those big dunks.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

So we had one at Camden Park, which was Huntington's, uh, own amusement park that was... Spent a lot of time there, had some fun. The log flume, when you ride on it, the nature of the water that they never changed...

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

...is as such that it was kind of like a mosquito beer bong...

Rachel:

[laughs]. Yeah. Okay.

Griffin:

... where you would go down and just sort of shotgun a few dozen 'squitoes.

Rachel:

Okay. I don't remember that part at all.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Yeah. I always kind of enjoyed the, kind of the naturey jaunt...

Griffin:

No, that's nice.

Rachel:

... through the trees.

Griffin:

It's nice. And then you're a little scared at the end. [laughs]. But that's life.

Rachel:

Um, and the other thing, looked into decided not to discuss, Skee-Ball.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Love Skee-Ball.

Griffin:

Yeah. It's rigged.

Rachel:

It's great. Anytime I go anywhere, if there's a Skee-Ball machine, I'm playing it.

Griffin:

Skee-Ball's one of those things where I feel like for, like, everybody, you look at a Skee-Ball machine and you're like, "Huh, I know my way around a Skee-Ball." You almost certainly don't.

Rachel:

No.

Griffin:

I feel like there's like eight people in the world who are good at Skee-Ball and everybody else is just a, "Oh, Skee-Ball, I'm good at that." And you roll one ball and you're like, "Oh, wait a minute. I fucking stink at this."

Rachel:

Can I tell you something that will absolutely not surprise you?

Griffin:

What?

Rachel:

Austin has a competitive Skee-Ball league.

Griffin:

Oh, fucking, of course, it does.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Um, what did I wanna bring?

Rachel:

What are your small wonders?

Griffin:

Here's it. This lamp.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

I bought a new lamp for the office. I've had many different lighting solutions for this office, including a weird sort of LED ball that I thought was...

Rachel:

We discussed that on the show. Remember it changed colors...?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

And you were very excited about it.

Griffin:

It's very bad. It lasts for about a half hour, and then you have to charge it. Why I think I wanted a permanent lighting solution for my office that involved, like, charging a ball. I do not know. Let me silence my phone. That's just rude of me. That's just rude of me, that I'll get you kicked out of the Voice Actor's Guild if you do that in a session. What did I miss though? Looks like Henry had a diaper change. I also had a very small lamp with, like, one of those shitty, like, candelabra light bulbs in

it. Again, why I thought that could, like, light an entire space? I do not know.

So I went and I got, like, a nice, like, full size LED light bulb, uh, table lamp. And man, look around this space. It— Don't look around. It's very messy in here, but it's so nice and you get so much light and it's, you know, we've lived in this house for four years now and it's kind of wild that it's taken me this long to actually find a light that makes this room look good, but it changes everything. And I spend so much time in here. It's nice to be able to like see things and not have it be like Gollum's fucking crypt or whatever.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And also scientists say, I did some research on this.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Griffin:

This is turning into a long segment. That light, the right amount of light in a room can extend your lifespan by 30 years.

Rachel:

Wow. [laughing]. That's significant. You think you'd be hearing more about that little stat.

Griffin:

Yeah. And I did learn about that. So who goes first this time?

Rachel:

I have no idea.

Griffin:

Uh-oh. I think it's me.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

My first thing is a little sort of, um, it's a universe, it's a experience. It's a philosophy, a life philosophy. It is a, um, just sort of a way of getting through this, this crazy adventure that we call living. It is Pokémon.

Rachel:

Oh, no.

Griffin:

Oh, yes.

Rachel:

He's doing it guys.

Griffin:

I'm really doing it this time. It was only a matter of time.

Rachel:

Now, can we agree at the beginning of the segment that it will not be very, very, very long? [laughs].

Griffin:

It's gonna be as long as it's gonna be.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

I've been— It's been pinned up inside me for, like, 20 years.

Rachel:

No, that's true.

Griffin:

And this is it. This is the, I feel like this is part of my brand or whatever. Uh, especially at, like, the Polygon side of things, 'cause I am a fan of this video game and also cross-platform, multimedia franchise. Uh, which I think, I don't know, people, uh, treat it with, like, humor, right?

Because it's part of my brand or whatever, despite the fact that I'm a 30 year old man. But I don't think that really matters cuz I actually think it's a very good thing and not just like a weird vestigial part of my childhood that I refuse to let go of or whatever.

Rachel:

Can I ask you a question?

Griffin:

Yes, please.

Rachel:

Why now?

Griffin:

Why am I talking about it on this episode of Wonderful?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, I didn't have— Couldn't think anything else.

Rachel:

[laughing]. Okay.

Griffin:

Um, so I've been playing the Pokémon video games from, uh, Nintendo and Game Freak and the Pokémon Company since I was in middle school. And my sort of, like, appreciation for the core concept behind the games hasn't really, uh, diminished.

It was first released, uh, in Japan in 1996. So how old is that? That's like 22 years old? Okay. Not bad. Um, and then it made its way to other countries over the following few years as Pokémon Red and Blue.

It comes in multiple versions 'cause each one has different Pokémon you can catch. So this was, this is kind of nefarious, but it also kind of like makes like the whole idea of like, "Oh you have to trade them back and forth to collect them all." Or you can just buy both like I did because friends were hard to come by. It's easier to buy two Game Boys than it is to make one friend.

Rachel:

[laughs]. Griffin has that stitched on a little cross stitch in his room.

Griffin:

It's true. So the core games have had, like, multiple rereleases and special editions. There's six sort of core sequels that have come out, uh, throughout the past couple decades across all of Nintendo's handhelds, still rolling strong. The latest game came out last Fall. If you've never played one, Pokémon's all about collecting various of these titular Pokémon in an effort to fill out an encyclopedia called a... How much do you know about Pokémon?

Rachel:

Pokédex!

Griffin:

Fuck yeah, dude. Yes.

Rachel:

[laughs]. I have absorbed so much just being in your presence.

Griffin:

Okay. Good. Uh, and in addition to that, you also train a team of six Pokémon that you take with you, uh, that you take to the world's various gyms and battle them to collect their badges and ultimately become the strongest trainer in the land. Um, each Pokémon has, like, different kind of moves that they can do in fights.

They have different elemental types like fire and water and rock and bug, you know, the element bug. Uh, that one's on the period— I think it's like right under argon. Um, and basically, you're just trying to figure out how to make a versatile team that can take on each gym. That's, like, basically what every game is about.

It hasn't changed a whole lot for better and, and for worse. Pokémon can evolve, take on different forms, um, and become sort of stronger. And you can trade Pokémon with a friend or online to, like, fill out your collection. So like, that hasn't changed really since 1996, when this game first came out in Japan in Pokémon Red and Green.

Uh, I played Pokémon Blue was my first one in 1998 or something like that. Um, and so it hasn't changed, but I cannot stress enough. And the reason that it became such a success and really became such a big like, uh, thing I was such a big fan of, uh, is because of how revolutionary this game was back in the 1990s. Did you ever have a Game Boy? I know you didn't have like a lot of video game sort of exposure growing up.

Rachel:

No, I mean, well, what was tricky for me was that I entered high school in 1996.

Griffin:

Ah, okay.

Rachel:

And that was kind of where the roads diverged a little bit.

Griffin:

I think so.

Rachel:

Like if you were gonna continue playing video games in high school, you were gonna be, like, a gamer.

Griffin:

I definitely don't think that that's, that categorization happens today when, like, it's— Everybody's doing it.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

But yes, back then it was like...

Rachel:

But back then, yeah.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

It was, it wasn't quite so ubiquitous. So, um, yeah, so I, as I mentioned before, had a Sega and we had some PC games, but in high school my interest kind of fell off...

Griffin:

Sure.

Rachel:

... and that was kind of mid '90s, right? When you were really...

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

... leaning in.

Griffin:

So back then, uh, if you had a Game Boy, which I had one, I think I also got like a Game Boy Pocket or something like that, which was, like, the smaller, but still black and white, uh, Game Boy, it's not black and white. It's like four shades of green or something like that. Anyway, I really liked it. Like I liked being able to play video games while I was on the go. We took a lot of big family vacations. We would drive down to, you know, Myrtle Beach or something. It's like a 10 hour drive right down to Florida, which was like a

bonkers 18 hour drive, and I liked having my Game Boy cause I played games on it. Problem was there weren't that many, like, big games for the Game Boy.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

There were a lot of like, here's a version of a game that came out on NES or Super NES that is so, like, boiled down and it takes you, like, 15 minutes to beat or it's just, like, not very good.

Rachel:

Well, it's basically like the screen on a graphing calculator, you know?

Griffin:

It wasn't just that. There were, like, tons of technical limitations...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... to these things. Like the storage on a Game Boy cartridge was, like, nothing. Um, and there— That's not to say that this is the only good game or anything like that. Like, Super Mario Land 2, like, owns, getting those six golden coins, that's very good. Like, a lot of the Nintendo, like, first party stuff was very good, but I love RPGs. Like I have loved Final Fantasy and stuff like...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... this my whole life and there's just not really anything great. They made a few Final Fantasy games for Game Boy that I didn't really ever get into. Pokémon came out, here was this game that was enormous and had this social element to it and this collection element to it and this, like, really kind of cool RPG system to it. And it would take you dozens and dozens and

dozens of hours just to beat it and then, you know, hundreds, if you wanted to try to collect 'em all.

And this was in the thing that you could keep in your pocket. And in 1998, that was, like, that didn't happen. This was the first time that that happened for me. Uh, and it was so, like, that's kind of still how I like to play games. Like, this is why I like the Switch so much, is because I can like play it on the go and I have these big experiences that I can take with me and have control over where I wanna play them and I feel like an ownership over them because I know I can play them wherever I want to.

And this was the first time that really happened for me and for everyone who played it. Um, and then you combine this idea of just, like, "Here's my team. Let's see what you're working with. Oh, I don't have that one. Can I get that one? You wanna battle our teams and see who's got the better..?"

Like all of that shit made this, like, the best, like, gaming experience for me ever back in 1998 when this came out. Um, and so that's kind of, like, why it occupies such a special place in— Also, like, it's not just, like, the RPG, like, battling stuff. The idea of, uh, collection game is really enticing to me. Um, the game...

Rachel:

Yeah. I've noticed that.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

You're very thorough in your...

Griffin:

And it's not...

Rachel:

... completion.

Griffin:

... it doesn't come from, like, a compulsory thing. It's just, like, a different activity that you can do in a video game other than the typical video game

stuff. And I think that's really special. Uh, this game was first thought up by, uh, Satoshi Tajiri who wanted to make a game inspired by his childhood hobby, which was insect collecting.

Rachel:

Yeah. Interesting.

Griffin:

That's very good. And it's like, it's about, like, going out into the world and finding these things and having a collection and being in this, like, kind of interesting big open, vibrant world. Um, all of those things were so unique to me back in 1996 and, or back in '98 rather. Um, and I still, like, I don't know, I still enjoy it. Like, I still enjoy that being a part of like my gaming diet, in addition to, like, playing, you know, more violent fare or, you know, deeper, more adult sort of RPGs...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... or other things like that. Here's this, like, just kind of nice game where you can get in there and get lost for a long time.

Rachel:

Can I ask you something?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Are they still making, like, new Pokémon?

Griffin:

Oh, yeah. Yeah. Uh...

Rachel:

So like when you open up a new game, is there like, "Oh, hey, there's a new guy."

Griffin:

I think there's like 750 somewhere around there.

Rachel:

Cool.

Griffin:

Yeah. There's a ton. I collected 'em all back in Red and Blue. Uh, I got all 151.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Uh, it was heartbreaking. I got up to like 115 and my friend tried to use some cheats on my cartridge. We were trading Pokémon back and forth and he just got in a GameShark, but he is too afraid to use it on his own cartridge 'cause he thought he might lose the file. So he did it on mine. Killed it, lost everything, had to start over. But I did, fought back, tooth and nail backstage, 2000 at the Easter pageant. Maybe it was 1999, is the Easter pageant. I'd already done my scenes at the Easter pageant.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

But me and my friend, Travis, were back there, not my brother, another Travis don't worry about it. And he was like, "Hey, guess what? Um, I need a Kangaskhan." And I— Wait, no. How did it happen? We were playing...

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

... and he traded me next to last Pokémon I needed." I was like, "All I need is Kangaskhan." Went to the Safari Zone, caught Kangaskhan. First time, all 151.

Rachel:

Can you tell me a little bit about that Pokémon?

Griffin:

Sucks to catch 'em. Only get 'em in the Safari Zone and they, like, run away right away. So you just have to throw a ball and just hope for the best. This has been 20 minutes. I have done literally...

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

... what you asked me not to do.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

What's your first thing?

Rachel:

I decided and I appreciate those of you that, uh, beared with us last week. I was very sick, had no voice. Uh, so I decided to start off my return with a return to the poetry corner.

Griffin:

Oh, hey, we're back.

Rachel:

We're back.

Griffin:

Let me, uh, pick up the knitting I was doing last time I was here.

Rachel:

Oh, yeah.

Griffin:

Oh, no. It's full of bugs. I was eating a jelly sandwich over my knitting last time. I guess I left a little bit of jelly in there. Gotta start over. It's okay. We'll fight back. Who's the poetry this time?

Rachel:

[laughs]. Uh, the poet I'm bringing this week is Bob Hicok. Uh...

Griffin:

Wild Bob Hicok.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

[laughing]. You bastard. You rotten mouth bastard, wild Bob.

Rachel:

He, uh, he actually has kind of a, something in common with some of the other poets I've brought in that he has a very, um, kind of working class upbringing.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Um, he, you know, isn't like the highly trained academic poet. Um, he actually, before he began teaching, ran a successful automotive dye business, uh, in Michigan.

Griffin:

Why is it automotive dye?

Rachel:

Oh, you know, I don't know.

Griffin:

[laughs].

Rachel:

[laughs]. There's only so much research I can do, Griff.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Um, and it was only in 2004 after publishing four collections of poetry, um, he earned an MFA after having previously no undergraduate or graduate degree.

Griffin:

Wow.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I didn't even know you could do that.

Rachel:

He got in there. He, uh, was born in the '60s. So, you know, this is pretty, pretty late in life for him...

Griffin:

Yeah, sure.

Rachel:

... to get started. Uh, so the poem I am bringing is from 2008. You can find it in the New Yorker, it's called A Primer or 'Primmer'. So I'm just gonna read it. Is that cool?

Griffin:

Yes, please.

Rachel:

It's kind of a fun poem. Don't worry. It's not, not anything too, uh...

Griffin:

There's not sexual content in it, is there?

Rachel:

I don't believe so.

Griffin:

Okay. I just wanna give folks a heads up before you read anything with sexual...

Rachel:

You did DeAngelo that one week. So we can't...

Griffin:

And we gave a big...

Rachel:

... pretend like we're prudish.

Griffin:

I didn't hear the final episode, but I put in a big, like, um, you know, uh, earthquake alarm right before.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

And it was like, "Bow! Here comes sexual content." I'm gonna put it in here just in case it does get sexual, but...

Rachel:

Okay. I guess it depends how you feel about Michigan. Uh, A Primer. "I remember Michigan fondly as the place I go / to be in Michigan. The right hand of America / waving from maps or the left / pressing into clay a mold to take home / from kindergarten to Mother. I lived in Michigan / forty-three years. The state bird / is a chained factory gate. The state flower / is Lake

Superior, which sounds egotistical / though it is merely cold and deep as truth.

A Midwesterner can use the word "truth," / can sincerely use the word "sincere." / In truth the Midwest is not mid or west. / When I go back to Michigan I drive through Ohio. / There is off I-75 in Ohio a mosque, so life / goes corn corn corn mosque, I wave at Islam, / which we're not getting along with / on account of the Towers as I pass. / Then Ohio goes corn corn corn / billboard, goodbye, Islam. You never forget / how to be from Michigan when you're from Michigan.

It's like riding a bike of ice and fly fishing. / The Upper Peninsula is a spare state / in case Michigan goes flat. I live now / in Virginia, which has no backup plan / but is named the same as my mother, / I live in my mother again, which is creepy / but so is what the skin under my chin is doing, / suddenly there's a pouch like marsupials / are needed. The state joy is spring. / "Osiris, we beseech thee, rise and give us baseball" / is how we might sound were we Egyptian in April, / when February hasn't ended. February / is thirteen months long in Michigan.

We are a people who by February / want to kill the sky for being so gray / and angry at us. "What did we do?" / is the state motto. There's a day in May / when we're all tumblers, gymnastics / is everywhere, and daffodils are asked / by young men to be their wives. When a man elopes / with a daffodil, you know where he's from. / In this way I have given you a primer. / Let us all be from somewhere. / Let us tell each other everything we can."

Griffin:

That's very good.

Rachel:

Isn't that nice?

Griffin:

It is very nice. It's weird. Like, what's your take on that? You're a poetry... You're a poetry fan.

Rachel:

I'm a poetry gal.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, Bob Hicok is one of those poets that I think, like, the academic types find kind of, uh, um, too accessible [laughs], I guess.

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

Uh, he's very conversational. He's kind of funny. And so a lot of like the people that kind of spend their lives studying poetry, find him to be a little too simplistic. Uh, but I really enjoy how easy it is to connect with him and what he's saying and the very concise way he gets at like, truths about like, for example, like February being 13 months long in Michigan.

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

I feel like is a very kind of fun way to explain what it's like.

Griffin:

Just a reminder. Rachel is not from Michigan.

Rachel:

I'm not from Michigan, but I'm from the Midwest.

Griffin:

Sure.

Rachel:

Uh, and gosh, those last two lines, you all know how I'm a big sucker for a...

Griffin:

For a good button.

Rachel:

Yeah. For the end of the poem and the fact that this poem and this, these lines stick with me, like when I was thinking about what to bring this week, these lines just, like, I couldn't remember the name of the poem, couldn't remember what it's about, but I could remember, "let us all be from somewhere, let us teach each..." or "let us tell each other everything we can." Like, I love those two lines.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Like it's just, there's this urgency to it. Just, like, I just told you this really long rambling kind of poem about the places that I've lived and what I know about it. And the reason I'm doing that is I think it's important for all of us to kind of share these parts of ourselves and these experiences. So that's, that's my poem this week.

Griffin:

That's a good one.

Rachel:

Thank you.

Griffin:

Uh, I would love to tell you a poem in Griffin's poetry corner.

Rachel:

[laughing]. Okay.

Griffin:

But it's fell with a K and it's backwards that it's like [laughs], crayons and he is like, "What's he doing?"

Rachel:

Oh, I thought you were getting ready to do the stinger.

Griffin:

I am.

Rachel:

Oh, okay. Continue

Griffin:

Yeah.

[ad break]

Rachel: Okay. I have a message for Carissa and it is from Oliver. "Hey, snuggbug. I know our anniversary only really comes up once every four years, but I figured hearing this message from our favorite podcasting couple would make up for that fact. This counts as a non-gift for our non-anniversary. I love you so much and you make my life truly wonderful."

Griffin:

Is this a leap year marriage?

Rachel:

I think so, because they asked for it as close as possible to 2/28.

Griffin:

That's so great.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

But also not because, like, that means you only get to go to Red Lobster once every four years.

Rachel:

Oh, no.

Griffin:

Everyone does that by the way. Right? Like, we do it. Red Lobster on the anniversary, get some garlic butter boys and just slop them down, pick out the lobsters we want and then we take 'em home and free 'em and then we have a little lobster fight in the kitchen.

Rachel:

Can I break the bit for a second?

Griffin:

And then we kiss. What?

Rachel:

Can I break the bit for a second?

Griffin:

Uh-huh.

Rachel:

I've never been to Red Lobster.

Griffin:

What?

Rachel:

That's very true.

Griffin:

Did you never graduate from high school?

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

'Cause you go to Red Lobster as part of that...

Rachel:

No, I didn't.

Griffin:

... the ceremony. We would walk right off the stage...

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

... and keep walking the two and a half miles.

Rachel:

You'd throw up your cap and put on your bib.

Griffin:

No. [laughs]. Um, uh, we gotta get you to...

Rachel:

I know.

Griffin:

... Shrimp Fest, babe!

Rachel:

I know.

Griffin:

I'm gonna ruin you with crab legs.

Rachel:

Oh, that's beautiful.

Griffin:

What's the next one? You're back in the poetry corner, by the way. That was a poem.

Rachel:

Oh, okay.

Griffin:

There's a short one like E.E. Cummings. You just couldn't see the punctuation and stuff.

Rachel:

I feel like E.E. Cummings is your go-to.

Griffin:

Yeah, yeah.

Rachel:

[laughs]. Uh, this message is for Benji. It is from Emma. "Hey Benj. Thanks for being my ermine and partner in science and for letting me nap in your room. I hope this message finds you, well. I think you are wonderful." I like the name Benji.

Griffin:

Uh, yeah. Uh, I like also the name Benj, just sort of shortened down, which is what they said in the message here and I like that a lot. What's an ermine. Do-do-do... Google away. Gonna find out what an ermine is. An ermine is a stout, a stoat, especially when it's white winter coat. It's a stout bodied moth that has cream or white wings. No, it's not. You're showing like a fucking ferret, but like the dictionary's like, "It's a moth." But Google's like, "No, dictionary. It's a ferret."

Rachel:

I've only ever heard it in clothing terms.

Griffin:

Oh, no. They use these guys for clothing?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

That stinks. Look at these guys!

Rachel:

Like an ermine stole.

Griffin:

Look at him!

Rachel:

I know, he's very cute.

Griffin:

Oh, shoot.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Oh, no. We got to get all the ermines.

Rachel:

[laughs, starts coughing].

Griffin:

The only way I can protect that... Oh, God. Are you okay?

Rachel:

Sorry.

Griffin:

The only way we're gonna be able to protect all these ermines is if we go find 'em all wrangle 'em up and keep 'em in our house with us.

Rachel:

I don't think our cat would handle that well.

Griffin:

I think our cat would be like a little dad.

Rachel:

Aw.

Griffin:

[laughs].

Ben:

Hi. I'm Ben.

Adam:

And I'm Adam.

Ben:

And we host The Greatest Generation and uh, we're are here to announce a new show.

Adam:

The Greatest Discovery is Maximum Fun's new podcast about the new Star Trek series, Star Trek: Discovery.

Ben:

We're gonna be recapping every single episode. It's gonna be a limited run podcast and we hope you'll join us. It's a show that we're really excited to watch, and we're really excited to talk about it and provide our signature and fucking fart joke coverage of a new entry in the Star Trek franchise.

Adam:

So if you like irreverence, adult humor, irreverence again...

Ben:

[laughs].

Adam:

... and Star Trek, we really hope you'll join us on Tuesdays on Maximum Fun or wherever you get your podcasts, do the Greatest Discovery.

Ben:

Oh, they made us edit [censored] out of the last promo that we submitted. So...

Adam:

You should keep that part in the promo.

Ben:

[laughs].

[ad break ends]

Griffin:

My second thing is massages.

Rachel:

Ooh.

Griffin:

I have never really talked about this, like, on this podcast or really any other, 'cause I worry, it makes me sound, like, super bougie. Um, but I fucking love massages.

Rachel:

Griffin sits at a desk like 12 hours a day, at least, every day.

Griffin:

Yes. Um...

Rachel:

And it hurts his back very badly.

Griffin:

It sucks a lot. Um, it's funny, like the, I was nervous about talking about this, cuz it's not like I'm working in the salt mines or... I always go— That's not like a good, go-to...

Rachel:

No.

Griffin:

... like, physical labor job because there are so many jobs that involve actual, like...

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

... moving your body. But the fact is, like, sitting hunched over a desk for a very long time is also fucked up for your back for a lot of different reasons. But um, I love massages for this, for this kind of reason. And I'll get into that, but I usually try to get them like every month if I can, once a month. Um, so I don't wanna dive into like the kind of alternative medicine side of this, which isn't to say that it doesn't have like physiological benefits...

Rachel:

Yes, just not your area.

Griffin:

... but, like, you can cure anything with the right kind of massage?

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, I don't wanna dive into that, but studies have found that massage can help with, uh, a number of issues ranging from like, uh, headaches, uh, soft tissue strains and sports injuries, uh, to like other kinds of issues like stress related problems like insomnia and uh, and anxiety, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Um, it is generally viewed as an effective way of relieving stress and pain and muscle tension, which like Rachel said, like, I sit at a desk for long, long stretches of the day and I recognize that that's not the healthiest thing. I did just buy a new standing desk.

I'm very excited about that. Look forward to that on some episode of Wonderful in the future where I'm like standing up is so great and I make really trying to sell it, but really I would just love a good seat right now.

Rachel:

This week, you know what's wonderful? Standing!

Griffin:

I think at that point, I'd be, like, sitting.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

I took it for granted. Um, so I get this, like, bonkers amount of tension in my shoulders and my back, I have also kind of engineered a profoundly stressful life for myself, which exacerbates those physical problems and also introduces what I would call, like, a significant mental strain as well. And a couple years ago, I started making regular appointments to see a massage therapist about once a month and I can't drive home enough, like, how genuinely helpful it's been.

Um, which again, I was worried would make me sound very bougie, but this really doesn't have to be cost prohibitive. Um, in Austin there are places where you can go and get one hour treatments either like the tissue or Swedish massages or whatever for like 30, 35 bucks, which isn't nothing, but, like, once a month to get this done and have it very, very much help, I think, is totally worth it.

Or you can splurge and go in for like a \$100 or plus dollars session somewhere if you want the works. Um, and I've always been really bad about taking self care seriously. Like in, in general, especially lately when I've become like busier and, um, we have had a child.

But this one sort of element of my life is, um, I'm very grateful that I think of it as like non-negotiable, um, because when I leave after getting massage, I always feel much more like relaxed than I did when I went in and that bonkers amount of tension is so much better. Um, but what I really appreciate is having this opportunity to lie down and not think about anything for an hour.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Which is ancillary. And it's not to say that like I'm not also enjoying the physical element of the massage, but, like, I've never really gotten into meditation, which I know I probably would be very helpful for me, but I find it so hard to just kind of empty my thoughts for an extended period of time. I've definitely tried and it's really hard to make that stuff quiet down. I'm always, always thinking about something, usually something that I have to do. In a massage, I don't really have any other option, right? Like I'm nude and I'm in a strange place. I can't just, like, pull out my phone and check my email or whatever.

Rachel:

Or look at the Pokémon.

Griffin:

I can't look at the Pokémon.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Which the way Rachel says that I just have a little book that I pull out and...

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

... is has some of my favorite guys in it. Um, there's something about, like, making this decision to take a break for an hour, um, that makes me take it seriously. That makes me take this, like, kind of self-care...

Rachel:

Well, and the investment too.

Griffin:

... very seriously. There is an investment, too.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Yeah. Um, and it's helpful for two reasons. One, like, I desperately, and I didn't realize this until I started doing it. I desperately need those times where I'm not worried about anything. Even for an hour, that doesn't sound like a long period of time, but it is essentially a reset of this like accumulation that builds up, um, that is like, so, so vital and two, and this is gonna sound kind of counterintuitive, I actually find that that is the state in which I am able to think up some of my best ideas.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Which is not to say that, like, I go get a massage so I can finally crack that, you know, new Adventure Zone arc or whatever, although that definitely did happen, but that's not my goal. Right? Because that's kind of a shitty way to think about it, but it is only when I can sort of push everything outta my brain and...

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

... just kind of relax for an hour and not be constantly worried about how else I could be spending that time because I am nude and I spent some money to be there.

Rachel:

Well, and I will also say another thing that comes with a massage is the understanding that there will be silence between you and the masseuse. Uh, which I know, for example, we've talked about before, when Griffin gets a haircut, I think he tends to feel this social pressure to kind of engage and be charming. And...

Griffin:

Yeah. And...

Rachel:

... and I think with a massage, you aren't expected to kind of keep up any kind of chatter.

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

Which is probably helpful for you.

Griffin:

When you— I am an anxious person. And so that, that's not, like, a joke, like, when I have to then engage in a conversation, um, with somebody who isn't, somebody who I, like, absolutely, absolutely trust or whatever, it's really hard for me to like qualify that, but it does causes me some amount of, like, mental, like, work.

Rachel:

You know what I've noticed?

Griffin:

What?

Rachel:

This is kind of the difference between me and Griffin that I've noticed so long we've been together. When we are out in public and we are in a kind of a service environment, uh, I think Griffin will do his best to have a conversation and be friendly and warm. I don't...

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

... [laughs] feel that pressure. And I feel like that probably ultimately puts more pressure on Griffin, but I am more than happy to sit silently until the time allotted has passed. [laughs]. Whereas Griffin will have a conversation about the weather or something that is happening.

Griffin:

And it's not to say I don't enjoy that, but it does like, it is, like, um, it is stressful, I guess, in a way. And so, yeah, like, not having the, the onus of that on me during a massage is also very, like, it is a place of complete, just like...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... it's a void that I'm like, I'm floating in this sunken place. And it's like I'm able to think and, or not think, like, and all of that, I don't mean to make this sound like it is just a great place to go and chill out for a while. Like, uh, massage therapists are incredibly talented and the work that they provide is really vital, um, to people like me and also people who are suffering from, you know, worse things that can only find relief or can find, uh, you, you know, major relief through massage. Um, there's so many benefits of doing it and I'm just really glad I started doing it. I guess, just like, uh, I am glad that I have, like, a self-care thing that I can kind of...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... return to and, and come back to because, uh, that is not something that I thought of at all for years and that was not sustainable at all.

Rachel:

Yeah. You didn't start doing this until you moved to Austin. Right?

Griffin:

I didn't start doing this until like 2016 or so.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, and yeah, I think it's important to practice self care. Just, like, no matter what it is, if it's not massage, whatever, but like, I also think it's important to have like a appointment, like an appointment for self care.

Rachel:

Yeah, yeah.

Griffin:

And that is what this is for me.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

What's your second thing?

Rachel:

Okay. My second thing is a new single from Janelle Monae.

Griffin:

Ooh!

Rachel:

[laughs]. Uh, her last album was Electric Lady in 2013.

Griffin:

Holy shit.

Rachel:

Yeah. Which I was a huge fan of and downloaded.

Griffin:

Yeah. I didn't realize it was five years ago.

Rachel:

Yeah. Nothing since then. Uh, so this, her new album isn't out yet. Doesn't come out until, uh, April 27th. It's gonna be called Dirty Computer. Uh, but the single is Make Me Feel. It came out end of February, so it's fresh.

Griffin:

Can I listen to it a little bit?

Rachel:

Yes. Please do.

[clip of Make Me Feel plays]

Griffin:

Um, this is the best, uh, song in the, uh...

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Let me think, hold on. Let me think of the best songs. Uh, no, this is it. This is the best song...

Rachel:

It's the best song.

Griffin:

... ever, uh, recorded.

Rachel:

Here's what, like, I mean, obviously this song is incredible. Um, this song made me come to terms with my, um, sorrow about Prince's death, because Prince is still very much alive and well in this song.

Griffin:

Yes. And sort of this spirit of, uh, this very...

Rachel:

Yeah. It, it reminds me a lot of the song, Kiss.

Griffin:

Oh, for sure. Like, it's got Prince vibes down, but it's also, like, I also think it's like super hip, like it's, um...

Rachel:

Oh yeah.

Griffin:

... like that main hook of that [imitates music beat].

Rachel:

I know. [laughs].

Griffin:

I could, I'm gonna hear...

Rachel:

It sounds good.

Griffin:

... that in my dreams tonight.

Rachel:

It's so good. It's like, it's not even— For me, you know, normally when we do a song, we like will cite some of the lyrics. And for me, like, it's less about the lyrics and more just about like the sound and energy of the song and just kind of the cadence of it. Uh, it's such a jam.

Griffin:

So this song is being kind of heralded as kind of a, like, powerful, uh, Anthem for bisexuality, which just like, "Hey, go watch the music video, listen to the song and whatever, but go watch the music video. It's Janelle Monae and Tessa Thompson and it's like fresh as fuck. There's like a lot of,

uh, I've seen some people call it kind of... Have you actually seen the video or just listened to the song?

Rachel:

Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Uh, people think it's kind of referring to, um, the episode of Black Mirror, San Junipero, uh, just the, kind of the aesthetic of...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... sort of the core narrative part of the video seems kind of..

Rachel:

Well, it's very, like, '80s inspired.

Griffin:

... familiar there. Which was a story about, uh, two women who fall in love in this. Well, I don't wanna give anything away. It's a really cool episode though. But, um, and so it's being, there's a lot of imagery of just like, uh, Janelle Monae and Tessa Thompson, sort of, uh, flirting with Janelle Monae and also a dude.

And also there's the pre chorus, which goes, uh, "It's like I'm powerful with a little bit of tender, an emotional sexual bender." And talking specifically about this song, about Make Me Feel, uh, she has a quote here on a Glad article, uh, where she says, "It's a celebratory song. I hope that comes across. That people feel more free no matter where they are in their lives, that they feel celebrated. Because I'm about women's empowerment. I'm about agency. I'm about being in control of your narrative and your body."

So there's like nothing explicit in their, um, saying, you know, "This is a song about bisexuality," but I, I understand why people, you know, seeing the visuals in the video and reading the, the lyrics to the song. Like, I think it's totally understandable. I don't think it's a, I don't think you have to take a very, very long walk to get there.

Rachel:

Bottom line, it's a jam.

Griffin:

I think we can all agree that it's a fucking jam.

Rachel:

It's a jam. Just came out, made me feel super hip to bring that to Wonderful this week.

Griffin:

Yes. It's a very, very good song. I'm so glad you've shared it with me. Oh man. I'm gonna listen to this song a million times today.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Uh, do you wanna hear some submissions from our friends at home playing the home version of the Wonderful game?

Rachel:

[laughs]. I would like that very much.

Griffin:

Jamie says, "This is a little nerdy. Okay. A lot nerdy, but I derive a lot of happiness from Microsoft Excel. I love tidy tables with all the cells filled in. I love color coding my data so I can glance at the screen and see what's going on. And I love, love, love the feeling of triumph when I finally get a formula to do what it's supposed to do. I hope it's not just me."

Rachel:

I actually have to use Excel a lot for my job..

Griffin:

Oh.

Rachel:

... to make budgets for grant submissions, do a lot of the, uh, a lot of the auto sum features adding up, adding up some columns and such.

Griffin:

Real spreadsheet wizard.

Rachel:

Yeah. [laughing].

Griffin:

I don't, I can't even do the auto sum. I tried to the other day and I fucked it up. I was like, "All right. So all these numbers added together, equals J 206." Nope.

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Incorrect. Uh, Kate says, "The Bob Ross streams still going on on Twitch. And the community still..." Okay. I feel like I should maybe explain this. Twitch is a video game streaming website. And, uh, I think like last year they started showing Bob Ross episodes live streaming. Obviously he's not making them, he has passed away, I believe. And so they're just like showing these episodes and then there are thousands of commenters, all like, "Yeah. Dope strokes."

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

Um, "and the community is still all these years later. From people in the chat reacting to him, paint in real time to a counter bot for the number of times Bob has beat the devil, which is what he calls cleaning the brush by hitting it on the leg of his easel..." That's awesome.

Rachel:

Oh, my God.

Griffin:

"...to a finished painting, always ending with a congratulatory chorus of GG in chat. It always warms my heart to see everyone still enjoying his paintings and genuinely cheerful outlook."

Rachel:

That's awesome.

Griffin:

It's very good. It's all, it... I watched one of these ones when it, like, first came out and it was like a little bit Twitch, like, toxic, like, uh, all sort of chat for certain communities can be...

Rachel:

That's not how I wanna imagine it, Griffin.

Griffin:

But no, it's... I imagine now it's only, like, the people who are here for Bob.

Rachel:

[laughing]. Yeah. That's a good point.

Griffin:

Uh, Kimberly says, uh, "We have had a very great winter that has been ruining my spirits and a friend of mine suggested I watched the new Queer Eye for a boost and I am so glad she did. I knew I was in trouble when I was crying 10 minutes into the first episode." Yep. [laughs].

Rachel:

[laughs].

Griffin:

So, I know, I love crying at TV too. "I love how they chose guys from the south. I love how the fab five tailored their advice to the individuals, like, showing one older guy how to shop at a thrift store, but showing the busy dad how to shop at Target, where he could go get groceries and clothing at the same time. Finally, I love how personal the show's got and how it really

seemed like the participants became real friends with the fab five every single time. My only complaint is that this wonderful show's only at eight episodes." We watched those in about two days. Sweet Jesus.

Rachel:

We did.

Griffin:

Um-

Rachel:

The cast is incredible.

Griffin:

I enjoyed the old Queer Eye. I didn't watch like a ton of it, but also mostly because I never had cable. Uh, this is very good. Uh...

Rachel:

Jonathan Van Ness, who is the, uh, the grooming guru, uh, used to have a podcast on the Max Fun network called Getting Curious. Uh, and he is incredible.

Griffin:

He's fantastic. Yeah. They're all fantastic.

Rachel:

And so...

Griffin:

Karamo? Karamo!

Rachel:

Karamo. Karamo hosted a season of, Are You The One?

Griffin:

Are you the one? I think, Are You The One: Second Chances maybe?

Rachel:

And we watched it and we thought, who's this guy? He is incredible.

Griffin:

He's very good.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Uh, he's good on that show too. Um, yeah, it is a very— It is a show with, like, so much heart.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: It is absolutely a beautiful, beautiful thing. Um, and it's also, uh, it's just Queer Eye right now. Not Queer Eye for the Straight Guy. There is one episode, uh, where a, uh, a gay man who is like out to his friends, but still like closeted to some other people in his life, um and also kind of, can't, like, take care of himself. It's more about, like, the show is a case study in like masculinity and...

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

... uh, a, the idea of that essentially, like, translating to, you're not supposed to take care of yourself. You're not supposed to... There are things that you're not supposed to worry about, in terms of how you present yourself to the world. And that's such a like universal thing and...

Rachel:

Yeah. Well, and what that does for your self esteem and your confidence. Um, it's really interesting to see the transformation of these people as they kind of finally start to take a moment to recognize that, uh, investing in themselves would potentially change their whole life.

Griffin:

Yeah. And...

Rachel:

It's incredible.

Griffin:

... analyze the people around them.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Like, and that is the, that is such an important topic right now. And it's...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... like, this show handles it so, uh, like for the most part, like, so deftly.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Um, that's it though. Thank you all for listening. 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 at the episode description. Uh, well, Max Fun now.

Rachel:

[laughs]. Thank you to Maximum Fun. Uh, you can find any number of Wonderful podcasts. Ha-ha. Um, on that network. We love being a part of it.

Griffin:

Yeah. They got shows like Judge John Hodgeman and, uh, Stop Podcasting Yourself and Switchblade Sisters and Tights and Fights and a bunch of others. I think that's it though.

Rachel:

Okay. [laughs].

Griffin:

I don't have one this time. Say something. Do a skip, quick baby. Do a skip. I can't think of one.

Rachel:

Uh, oh, Griffin, uh, Pokémon situation. Uh, let's say I am in a battle and I am needing a Pokémon that is fast and powerful.

Griffin:

Maybe like Scyther? I don't know.

Rachel:

[laughs]

[theme song plays]

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Speaker 1: Going into a Bullseye interview, I know it's somebody who does amazing work, but it's an actual conversation. I don't know where it's headed.

Speaker 2:

Absolutely, like you're absolutely right. You said it actually better than I did. So I have to think about what that means. [laughs]

Speaker 1:

[laughs]. Hey, these are, this is, this is the straight talk that, that you're gonna get on this show.

Speaker 3:

Bullseye, creators you know, creators you need to know. Find it at MaximumFun.org or wherever you get podcasts.