

Wonderful! 26: A Stoplight of Eagles

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Rachel:

Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin:

No, it's not. You thought I wouldn't notice. This whole time. Imposter, faker, masquerade.

Rachel:

If you guys could see the face I'm making at Griffin right now, you would understand why I'm surprised he hasn't stopped this immediately.

Griffin:

I wish could see the, I don't know what face you're making, I mean, because you're wearing it under a mask of lies. Who are you?

Rachel:

Uh, he's Griffin McElroy, this is Wonderful!

Griffin:

Trickster, devilish.

Rachel:

It's a podcast we do together.

Griffin:

Fiend.

Rachel:

About the things we love.

Griffin:

Where is my wife?

Rachel:

As we love each other.

Griffin:

Sneaky trick.

Rachel:

Week after week.

Griffin:

Oh, a prank. Devilish trick.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Uh, so.

Rachel:

Day after day.

Griffin:

So this is a fun episode so far.

Rachel:

Year after year.

Griffin:

Year after year. We've only been doing it for like eight months, but it feels like a year.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

So, sorry we're late. We, um, what's the, our lives are a mess, a wreck, a boat, a shipwreck. Uh...

Rachel:

Well, that implies they're bad and they're not bad.

Griffin:

They're not bad.

Rachel:

They're just complicated.

Griffin:

It'll... Just like a shipwreck can be good. Just like in Lost, they wrecked the big boat, but they found love in each other. And, like, most of them died.

Rachel:

Ooh.

Griffin:

You don't think about that on Lost. It's like, they did find love and they found each other, and you get the big, happy ending I guess. But then, you do go back and you're like, he got eaten by a tiger, he got torn apart by polar bears, he got, nobody even knows what the smoke was.

Rachel:

So we moved into a new house. Uh, and I only mention that because now we do not share a wall with our infant son's room.

Griffin:

So we're going to get about this loud. Even that feels, baby, I feel like I was just, like...

Rachel:

Ooh, no, no.

Griffin:

Was just like, like Skrillex.

Rachel:

No, people don't want that.

Griffin:

Skrillex, who is famous for yelling.

Rachel:

For being loud.

Griffin:

And being a loud singer at his concerts.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

You know the song Bangarang? That's him. It's not.

Rachel:

I don't, I don't.

Griffin:

It's somebody else.

Rachel:

I don't actually know the song you're talking about.

Griffin:

It's the one on Drop Mix. Uh, that's your, your dubstep sort of lifeline. So, uh, do you want to start or should I start? Because we've got a big week.

Rachel:

I don't remember the order. Um, I'm happy to start.

Griffin:

I think it's actually my turn to start.

Rachel:

Oh, well then go for it. Uh, I do have a small wonder, do you?

Griffin:

No, but go ahead.

Rachel:

Uh, my small wonder, if you haven't checked it out yet... And this is, and this is just a little teaser. Uh, there is a documentary coming out June 8th about Fred Rogers.

Griffin:

Oh, boy.

Rachel:

The trailer was released, 2 minutes, 39 seconds. The movie will be called, Won't You Be My Neighbor.

Griffin:

Oh, boy.

Rachel:

It premiered at Sundance, the trailer. So good.

Griffin:

Such a good trailer.

Rachel:

Ugh, we need it.

Griffin:

Is that a pizza? Don't you trick on me. There's a, we're, okay. Here's my small wonder, we're waiting on pizza to show up. So when we see the delivery driver pull up outside the window, I, we will have about 32 seconds

to run downstairs and intercept the hot, gooey 'za before the 'za person delivers it, and rings the doorbell, and ruins both our lives.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

By ringing the doorbell and waking up our son. Let me check. Let me just make sure it's not the 'za. I think we're okay.

Rachel:

Uh, yeah. So the, the movie looks really, really good.

Griffin:

Uh, yeah. I'm... I haven't seen the trailer, but I'm excited.

Rachel:

I read a review that was like, "Not exactly a critical documentary." It was like, did you really want a smear piece on Fred Rogers?

Griffin:

Are those... Is one of those capable of being generated in good faith? I should...

Rachel:

His sweaters were not made in this country.

Griffin:

They were made out of dog fur.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

But not shed. They harvested... Um, the small wonder, I could probably come up with one. I took a really nice bath today.

Rachel:

I almost did baths, actually.

Griffin:

Oh, for your topic?

Rachel:

Yeah. But then I like, oh, I typed into the Google, history of baths. And I opened up it and I was like, this is too long. [laughs]

Griffin:

[laughs]

Rachel:

There's too much here.

Griffin:

I probably, I mean, it definitely predates the shower.

Rachel:

For sure.

Griffin:

What came first, the shower or the bath? This is, philosophers are always asking that question.

Rachel:

You just answered that, I think.

Griffin:

Um, so, yeah. I think I go first this week.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

My first thing is lightsabers.

Rachel:

Uh-oh.

Griffin:

Here's the thing about it. These are swords made out of lasers. And that is undeniably...

Rachel:

Fictional.

Griffin:

Radical. I was going to say radical.

Rachel:

Fictional swords made out of lasers.

Griffin:

Well, why, no. I bet there's probably a YouTube video of somebody who's like, made... They do this sometimes. They're like, real life lightsaber? And they name it that so it gets a billion views. And like, you know me, I'm in the business.

I'll name a video like, Pikachu's Butt? And people will be like, Pikachu's butt? And then they'll click on it. And then it's like, just kidding. This is a video guide to Mario.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

But I called it Pikachu's butt so you would come and click on it. And that's business 101, baby.

Rachel:

Are you going to explain how they came up with the like, [imitates light saber] noise?

Griffin:

I mean, I'm pretty sure that was just George. Uh, and he was like, "Oh no, we've almost finished the movie but we forgot to do lightsaber noises. Well it comes out tomorrow, so we got a long, a long day ahead of us. Let me just get down in the studio, see what I can do. Whizz! No, that didn't feel right."

Rachel:

[laughs] "No, that's not right."

Griffin:

"Hoop! Nope, that's not right either, but I'm getting a little closer. Badoo!"

Rachel:

"Wha...?"

Griffin:

[laughs] "Tim Allen, get out of here."

Rachel:

That could be one of them.

Griffin:

"Tim, save this. Tim though, that's a gold. Sit on it, save it for your own project. [light saber woosh] There we go." And we've got Joey Lawrence in here and we've just pitched it down a few octaves.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

And that's how they got the lightsaber noise.

Rachel:

Ooh, I love it. My turn?

Griffin:

No.

The, uh, the original lightsaber, like, design was actually crafted, like, the props manager for, uh, for A New Hope uh, actually came up with this prototype that was like a camera battery. Like an old-timey press, uh, photo-like camera battery that was huge and like, tubular in the like shape sense. But also, it turned out to be a lightsaber.

So I think that qualifies for the other meaning of tubular. Uh, and they made some modifications to it. It was just supposed to be like the prototype, and then they would like properly model one out for use in the movie later. But they ran out of time, and so this ended up actually being one of the lightsabers being used in the movie.

Um, but the concept of like, a laser sword is cool. And nowadays you think about it and it's like, well, yeah, a laser. A laser sword. Like it's so, it's one of those things where it's just like, it's always existed. But I think A New Hope was like the first popularization of it. It wasn't like the first example of it, especially in like sci-fi. Like, classic sci-fi works.

Rachel:

Yeah, that's what I was going to ask about. Because you act, acted as if this has always been a thing, but.

Griffin:

Well, I, uh, so there are a few examples. One of them, Isaac Asimov. Do you know Isaac Asimov, the sci-fi writer?

Rachel:

Yeah, he's a sci-fi writer, mm-hmm.

Griffin:

He had a series called Lucky Star, which had a force blade, which was basically the same thing. But this is obviously where it popped off. Um, originally there were just blue lightsabers, the Jedi used those. And then the red lightsabers used by the Sith.

In Return of the Jedi, the third chronologically uh, in order of release, Jesus Christ. How could they do this to us? It is going to be impossible to talk about these movies to our kids. Like no, see, at first there was four.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

You know how I taught you numbers the other day? Okay, forget all that. Um, there was just blue and red lightsabers, right? In Return of the Jedi, Luke has a green lightsaber.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And they have some like, sorry, I saw a person walking their dog. I thought it was the 'za. Folks, we are on threat level orange right now, looking for this 'za.

Um, he had a green lightsaber, and it was, they had like a story reason for it. But really, it was because they were shooting a lot of outdoor scenes for Tatooine, like the big sand crawler fight or whatever. And they wanted it to show up against the blue sky. So he had to get a green lightsaber.

Rachel:

Wow.

Griffin:

Now, this is my favorite piece of Star Wars trivia, ever.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

And I'm a published Star Wars author, so I know my shit.

Rachel:

Uh-huh.

Griffin:

Mace Windu, character played by Samuel L Jackson...

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

In the uh, the bad trilogy. He had a purple lightsaber.

Rachel:

All right.

Griffin:

Do you know why that was?

Rachel:

No.

Griffin:

It's because that's Samuel L Jackson's favorite color and he wanted it very badly.

Rachel:

[laughs] Wow.

Griffin:

That's fucking great. There's like a whole gamut of like, different colors of lightsabers throughout, like, the extended universe.

Rachel:

Ooh.

Griffin:

But in movies you get like, you get red, you get green, you get blue. And he was like, I really, really like purple, though.

Rachel:

That begs the question, Griffin McElroy.

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

If you were to pick a color for your lightsaber, what would it be?

Griffin:

Um, I like, uh, I, maybe just, like, an orange one?

Rachel:

I was going to say orange!

Griffin:

Just something sort of not...

Rachel:

That might look a little air traffic control, though.

Griffin:

I am into that, though.

Rachel:

Oh, okay.

Griffin:

I like that very much. Um, I'm glad you asked that. Because my favorite, I'm serious, my favorite thing about lightsabers is lightsaber toys. I don't know, I cannot explain why I have owned and enjoyed as many of them as I have. But I have. And maybe it's that part of me that used to own real swords, because my dad would just like get them for us for Christmas, sometimes.

Rachel:

This, yes, see, this is what I was going to...

Griffin:

I've never talked about this on the show.

Rachel:

This is what I was going to say, yeah. Clint McElroy has a tendency to buy this kind gift.

Griffin:

[laughs] He buys swords. Um, I owned a Buster Sword from Final Fantasy 7 for a long time. This is a large sword. It's a large anime sword, essentially.

Rachel:

How did you display this?

Griffin:

Uh, in the closet of my bedroom.

Rachel:

Oh, okay. So not like hanging.

Griffin:

No, they were functional. They were if, you know, I needed to fight Sephiroth, I would have my bases covered. But one time, I may have, and Henry, if you're listening to this in the future, don't listen to it. Gotten high with my stoner roommates in college.

Rachel:

Oh no.

Griffin:

And used it to cut a watermelon in a really cool way.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I gave it the old omni-slash, and I cut up a watermelon for our friends to enjoy at the picnic, and then I didn't clean off the blade and so it rusted, like, so bad.

Rachel:

Oh, Griffin.

Griffin:

And so I had to throw the Buster Sword away. But you know what? If it can't stand up to a little watermelon residue, it's not going to be able to get the job done.

Rachel:

So you're saying otherwise, you would have kept it. You would have had it today in our house.

Griffin:

It was a very neat sword. Anyway, I had lots of lightsaber toys also. Coolest one? Count Dooku from the bad trilogy, he had a curved lightsaber. It was kind of like droopy, but like, it felt like super cool. Like a scimitar, like a lightsaber. But anyway. There was a build-a-lightsaber toy that had all these different components, like different blades of different like lengths, and then the different hilts. And then you can make it like a double-edge one or a single-edge one.

Rachel:

Yeah, okay.

Griffin:

And then there were different filters that you could put over the light bulb in the center of the hilt so you could change the color of the, of the lightsaber. It was fucking radical, and I played with it so much. Lightsaber toys are just really fucking cool and fun.

Rachel:

Now, okay. So we currently, because of Clint McElroy...

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

Uh, have a lightsaber toy for our infant son that kind of collapses in on itself, and, and pops out.

Griffin:

Yeah, that's how lightsaber toys typically do it.

Rachel:

Is that, is that...? Okay. I was curious about that.

Griffin:

Uh, it's how they typically do it. Um.

Rachel:

We also had one that you won at the arcade.

Griffin:

Now, this was not an official lightsaber because it didn't collapse, and it...

Rachel:

But it did glow. You could turn it on and it would glow in the dark.

Griffin:

Mostly we used it to scoop things out from under our bed.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Like socks that went under there. So they're practical too, lightsaber toys. They're great.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

So we do have this lightsaber that our dad got us for, that my dad got us for Henry. And he's been a little into it, lately. I think he just like, he really, he's at an age now where he really likes, just like holding shit. And there are a few things you could hold that are cooler than a lightsaber, so I think he gets it.

Rachel:

Yeah, no. We um, have been playing with it around Henry, and now he recognizes that it's a powerful object and so he likes to just hold it.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Um, he also likes to hold a wrapping paper tube, though. So.

Griffin:

Yeah, he's got a big 'magination. What's your first thing?

Rachel:

Uh, my first thing. Hey guess what?

Griffin:

Hm?

Rachel:

It's Women's History Month.

Griffin:

Hey!

Rachel:

Um.

Griffin:

What, are you going to tell me, here's— You're going to tell me women's history, or a history of women's history month?

Rachel:

Griffin McElroy, I have prepared both.

Griffin:

Oh, good.

Rachel:

Uh, so March, Women's History Month, in case you're listening in the year 2022.

Griffin:

I thought you were going to say women's history. In case you're listening, women's history.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I know what month you are on and for.

Rachel:

[laughs] No, maybe not everybody listens to this the week it comes out. Maybe they listen to it a few months from now.

Griffin:

Oh, it's got a long tail. I've always said that about it.

Rachel:

So the first steps towards women's history month started in 1980.

Griffin:

That's very recent.

Rachel:

[laughs] Isn't it?

Griffin:

That is shockingly recent.

Rachel:

Uh, and it started as a week.

Griffin:

[laughs] Oh no! I shouldn't laugh.

Rachel:

[laughs] President Carter issued a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8th as national Women's History Week. So it just, knock it out, seven days. By 1986, 14 states declared March as Women's History Month.

Griffin:

I'm sorry to interrupt, but I thought you were going to say 14 days.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

So we got another week on there. We, uh, just pounding away. Oh, my god, I couldn't think of who was president in 1986. Was it Regan at that point?

Rachel:

Um, yes?

Griffin:

Yes, I think so, yes. Sorry. We're...

Rachel:

Yes, for sure, yes. Or maybe HW Bush.

Griffin:

No, because Regan was president when I was born. That was 87.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

Phew, yikes.

Rachel:

Yikes.

Griffin:

Yikes. Bad.

Rachel:

Uh, so Women's History Month started as a state-by-state action. Uh, which created momentum. And in 1987, congress declared March as National Women's History Month in perpetuity.

Griffin:

Take that.

Rachel:

'87. So this is March 1987, that's the month before you were born.

Griffin:

Yeah. I have never lived in a world without Women's History Month in it.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And thank god. Because what were we all...

Rachel:

Because let me tell you. Before, it was just a lot of Play-Doh, a lot of Sesame Street.

Griffin:

[laughs] Before Women's History Month was passed by congress, it was tough out there. Lot of diapers.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Lot of Play Doh. And a lot of coloring with crayons.

Rachel:

A lot of pigtails.

Griffin:

A lot of pigtails and a lot of Fraggle Rock. It was really rough out there.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Um, that is, that is neat. This is a— I had, I mean it's neat but it's also like, holy shit that was not that long ago.

Rachel:

The reason I like Women's History Month, because a lot of time these months, they feel kind of, uh, performative. Of just like, oh, look, we're doing our part. Um.

Griffin:

We should be clear, by the way that people celebrated them, not their very nature is performative.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Because I think they're incredibly valuable.

Rachel:

No, I think so too. I just, a lot of times it feels kind of like lip service to, uh, a cause that is actually very complex and important, that probably deserves to be recognized more than one month out of the year.

Griffin:

Absolutely. Like, the level...

Rachel:

More than one week.

Griffin:

The level of the discourse is like a tweet from Burger King, and it's like a picture of like a hand holding a burger up to a starry sky. And it's like, "Here's to you, Sally Ride." And it's like, "No, guys."

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

I appreciate the gesture, but I don't because it sucks.

Rachel:

It's like Susan B Anthony wearing, like, a McDonalds suit.

Griffin:

Yeah, or dressed up like the Honey Nut Cheerios bee. And it's like, Susan Bee Anthony.

Rachel:

Oh, Griffin. See, this...

Griffin:

Eat our cereal, eat our cereal. The next like 100 characters is just like, eat our cereal, eat our cereal, eat our cereal.

Rachel:

This, yeah. See, this is why you are, uh, the media luminary.

Griffin:

If I went into advertising...

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

I think I could really make some pretty heinous shit. [laughs]

Rachel:

Just everybody with B as a middle initial, you would just be all over it?

Griffin:

Yeah. Like, you know how you see a tweet or you see a commercial, and you're like, fuck that. But I remember it. I think I could really put together some real nasty stuff.

Rachel:

You should to have James Corden, for example.

Griffin:

Mm-hmm.

Rachel:

Sell cars as James Carden.

Griffin:

Babe, we got to go into business together. Me and you. Griffin and Rachel's Bad Commercial.

Rachel:

These are just free, guys, if you want to use them.

Griffin:

These are free. Now here's our business card.

Rachel:

Uh, okay. So the thing I like about Women's History Month is that, when I was thinking about, kind of how I could recognize it, it was very easy to find a lot of information about women in history because it is the official month.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

So I decided to talk about some famous female inventors.

Griffin:

Oh, cool.

Rachel:

Just very briefly. Uh, Mary Anderson invented windshield wipers.

Griffin:

Great work on that one.

Rachel:

Uh, Margaret Knight invented the first flat-bottom paper bag. So the machine that makes the bottom of the bag flat didn't exist before her.

Griffin:

Oh. And then how did they put like, four boxes of cereal in a bag? Just think of how poorly it'd, they probably just cut it open and poured the cereal into the bag, and then that was their cereal bag.

Rachel:

I know. Revolutionized the whole grocery industry.

Griffin:

Damn.

Rachel:

Uh, Stephanie Kwolek invented Kevlar, which is the main ingredient in the production of bulletproof vests.

Griffin:

Ingredient is a— Oh, is it here? Babe, you can't look outside when the 'za is coming.

Rachel:

Uh, Clara Barton founded the Red Cross. Mária Telkes invented the first solar home heating system in 1948.

Griffin:

What?

Rachel:

Right? Where are we now, science? Get on it. Uh, this one I thought you would like.

Griffin:

Hold on, let me take a big drink of water. Uh, what were you saying?
[laughs]

Rachel:

Rose Totino invented frozen pizza.

Griffin:

Bluh, that's me spitting the water out.

Rachel:

She was the daughter of Italian immigrants who settled in Minneapolis. Uh, and she opened a takeout pizza restaurant in the 50s. Which, if you think about it, was a time when there wasn't a lot of takeout pizza restaurants.

Griffin:

No, that was when, you know, we were just figuring out how to split the atom and make, make the microwave.

Rachel:

Well, no. That was like, that was when burgers were, like, kind of the big fast food thing.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Uh, most of the pizza concentration was in New York and Los Angeles. So to have a pizza restaurant in Minneapolis was a big deal. Uh, so she invented a way to freeze pizza crust so that her customers could bake at home.

She, uh, created the company to sell it, patented her idea in 1979, and Totino's Pizza became the top-selling frozen pizza nation-wide. She eventually sold her business to the Pillsbury company in 1975 for 20 million dollars.

Griffin:

Oh, shit. Okay, I was super worried you were going to be like, "For 10 thousand dollars."

Rachel:

I was worried about that too. Yeah, that, I had no idea.

Griffin:

Rose Totino, thank you for your service. And for...

Rachel:

No word on whether she created the roll.

Griffin:

You know.

Rachel:

I'm guessing that was after her time.

Griffin:

You know, I bet she was trying to like pack one into a package to ship off. And it was, it wouldn't fit because she got the wrong size boxes.

Rachel:

She just kept folding it up.

Griffin:

She kept folding, and folding, and folding. And she was like, wait a minute. I'm going to sell these to high gamers.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Hey, can I seal you away? Can you do, like, do a lightsaber noise?

Rachel:

[imitates light saber]

Griffin:

[vocalizes fast paced music]. That's the lightsaber fight music. Keep going.

Rachel:

[imitates light saber].

Griffin:

[laughs] Can somebody um, take the footage from Phantom Menace, with the fight with uh, Darth Maul there at the end and just sort of cut that over it, thank you very much in advance.

Rachel:

[laughs]

[ad break]

Griffin:

Hey, we got any jumbotrons? Because I heard a rumor we didn't. Ugh.

Rachel:

We do though.

Griffin:

Oh shit.

Rachel:

We have a message for Max from Princess Meow Meow. "Seven years of McElroy love strong proves you are so special. By the time the McElroys read this, you may already be a famous, high-fashion coutier..."

Griffin:

Oh, you got it.

Rachel:

"...essayist, data analyst, master chef. Whatever you are, you will still be my honeybear. And that is the specialist, specialist of all. I love you. PS, please tell me when this airs since you will hear it first."

Griffin:

[laughs] It's like a poison taster. They have to, um, make sure that the episode's not poisoned with brain poison. Do you know about this?

Rachel:

I don't, no.

Griffin:

There's some podcasts where they'll say something and it'll actually kill you with brain poison.

Rachel:

Is it dangerous to us as podcasters?

Griffin:

No, we just, it's dangerous to the listeners. I don't listen to these, are you kidding me? I don't fucking listen to podcasts, are you kidding me? It's just like, you know, two people usually just like, blah, blah, blah, blah. Let me tell you about—"

Rachel:

Just making lightsaber noises at each other.

Griffin:

Yeah, like blah, blah, blah. Now that's what I call an American life.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

[laughs] You know?

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

Or like, the episodes with like, "Welcome to my radio lab! "You know? Have you listened to that one?

Rachel:

Uh-huh. It's hosted by um, by The Count right? On Sesame Street?

Griffin:

Yeah, two of them. And then there's one that's like, [munching noises], but they don't talk because they're eating cereal.

Rachel:

Anyway...

Griffin:

Eating cereal.

Rachel:

I get it. It was very good. Do you want me to read this next one?

Griffin:

Sure. I mean, I could think of other fun, like, podcast jokes.

Rachel:

This message is for Bernadette. It is from Robert. "These past few years I've known you have been the best years of my life. I love spending literally every waking moment with you, and I can't wait to spend the rest of my life with you. I love you to the moon and back."

Griffin:

That is so very, very sweet.

Rachel:

Aww.

Griffin:

Just make sure you put on a helmet.

Rachel:

Okay, I thought you were going to say something else.

Griffin:

No, if you're going to the moon. No, filthy mind, who are you under that mask?

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

It's a convincing mask but no, you can't fool me with potty language like that?

Rachel:

Who do you think I am?

Griffin:

Who do you think I was?

Rachel:

Is this our new podcast?

Griffin:

[laughs]

Adam:

Hey guys, this is Adam Conover. You may know me from my true TV show, Adam Ruins Everything. Well guess what, now we're doing a podcast version right here on Maximum Fun. What we do is, we take all the interesting, fascinating experts that we talk to for just a couple minutes on the show, and we sit with them for an entire podcast, really going deep and getting into the fascinating details of their work. Find Adam Ruins Everything wherever you get your podcasts, or at maximumfun.org.

[ad break ends]

Griffin:

Can I tell you my second thing?

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

It is flocks of birds and their collective names. I realize that this is like the most twee shit, basically ever to include in this.

Rachel:

I feel like the only flock of birds I know is the crow of course, which is a murder.

Griffin:

A murder of crows, yes, is one. Mur— Crows actually have like five or six different ones.

Rachel:

Whoa.

Griffin:

And this is what's fucked up. Like, each bird basically has a different, uh, collective noun. Or uh, terms of ventry is, uh, what they were called originally.

Rachel:

Wow.

Griffin:

I have some of the history here, and it's fucking great. Um, but yes. So if you're not familiar, different animals... And it's not just birds, it's pretty much any animal. But birds have, by far, the best names. Uh, if you're looking at, like, a group of birds there is a special name. And I think most people know about murder of crows, um, but there's a lot more also.

But it's not just the names. Like, I really like the actual object, the actual like flock of birds flying through the sky. Um, pretty much every day when I go and pickup Henry from daycare, uh, I see these huge flocks of birds right by the highway, where like the power lines criss-cross. And I don't know, I guess grackles maybe, is what they are. What's the collective term for grackles? It should just be like, a toilet of grackles.

Rachel:

Aw, I like grackles.

Griffin:

They're, yeah, I don't know why I'm so...

Rachel:

They're rowdy. They're rowdy birds.

Griffin:

They are rowdy, rowdy. Yeah, they'll fuck you up. Um, they won't, they're friendly I think. They'll just eat the Cheeto right out of your fucking pinched fingers as you're about to put it in your mouth.

Rachel:

Tell me some of these names.

Griffin:

Okay, anyway, I see. These, you just want to hear about the names. I want to talk about these beautiful, majestic creatures.

Rachel:

I want to hear the fun names.

Griffin:

I just see these birds every day. And they bring me such, such joy. And I've always really enjoyed, like, I've always found it really mystifying when I see like a big flock of birds like, flying and performing like the same aerial maneuvers in unison. Like, I know science has an explanation for how that works, but even so, I still find it so, like, supernatural. I want to recommend, there's YouTube video called Murmuration, which is the collective name for starlings. A murmuration of starlings. That's a very, very good one.

Uh, you can search for it. It's by uh, a couple folks. Sophie Windsor-Clive and Liberty Smith. It's just the two of them canoeing, and suddenly there's 20,000 birds flying overhead and moving around like this big, black cloud. And it's set to music, it's super, super cool. Anyway, names.

Rachel:

Yes, please.

Griffin:

Murmuration of starlings first.

Rachel:

Wait, let me guess one.

Griffin:

Okay. Oh, do you... If you want, I could tell you, like, a bird, and you could try to guess what the...

Rachel:

Yeah, let's do that.

Griffin:

Okay. Uh, ducks.

Rachel:

A bowl of ducks.

Griffin:

It's actually a raft of ducks. So you were right in that it was an inanimate object.

Rachel:

Oh, close. Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, eagles?

Rachel:

A pasta of eagles.

Griffin:

A pasta of eagles?

Rachel:

I'm very hungry.

Griffin:

Yeah. When is that fucking 'za, though? A congress of eagles.

Rachel:

Oh, that's perfect.

Griffin:

Isn't that really good? Uh, uh, flamingos.

Rachel:

Oh, I feel like I knew this at one point, but now I have no idea. So I am going to say, a, uh, stoplight of stoplight of e— of— A stoplight of eagles.

Griffin:

[laughs] So for flamingos, you think their group name is a stoplight of eagles?

Rachel:

That's my new band by the way, coming out.

Griffin:

A flamboyance of flamingos.

Rachel:

Oh, I love that.

Griffin:

It's so choice. Okay, I'm going to just burn through some more of these, because this game is taking a very long time.

Rachel:

But it's so fun!

Griffin:

Uh, a mischief of magpies.

Rachel:

That's nice.

Griffin:

Uh, a pandemonium of parrots. Best all time, and I didn't know this one until today, a parliament of owls. Fuck, that's good.

Rachel:

Gosh, I'm, you know what I'm picturing? I'm picturing owls in a bunch of little powdered wigs.

Griffin:

Um, I've always really... Yes, that's a very [laughs] thank you. Sorry.

Rachel:

Consider it. Fully consider it.

Griffin:

I started talking and Rachel was like, gave me a face, like, now, hold on. Really think about it.

Rachel:

Think about it.

Griffin:

Um, the, it's really cool, right? And like, I feel like the first time you find out that these, uh, terms of venery like exist, it, like kind of became a thing I was really interested in for like a day. Where I was like, "Oh, well what do they call, you know, herons or whatever?" Um, uh. But you kind of realize like, there's too many. So I'm going to stop being interested in this.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Well, uh, this is from uh, Wikipedia. Because I was trying to find out why we have different names for different groups of animals. The tradition of using terms of ventry, or nouns of assembly, that's another fucking great way of referring... 'Za? Bye. [runs off]

[pause]

Griffin:

It smells so good. We've got to hurry, it smells so good. And the stink won't last for, okay.

Rachel:

Okay, so you said there were too many names for groups of birds.

Griffin:

Yes. So uh, this tradition of naming, uh, groups of birds different, or animals, not just birds, different things, stems from an English, uh, this is according to Wikipedia. Whew, sorry. I ran, I really ran.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

"Stems from an English hunting tradition of the late middle-ages. It was marked by an extensive proliferation of specialist vocabulary, applying different names to the same feature in different animals. In the course of the 14th century, it became a courtly fashion to extend the vocabulary. And by the 15th century, the tendency had reached exaggerated proportions."

Basically, it was this way that these gentlemen hunters used to prove how educated they were, and how smart they were, way smarter than like the common folk hunters of the time.

Rachel:

Oh, I see.

Griffin:

Because they could memorize fucking 400 different names for animals, groups of animals. And it's like, "Hey man, we just got ourselves a, just killed ourselves a bunch of eagles." And it's like, "Oh, ho, ho, do you mean a congress of eagles?"

But they would know all of them. But then within the next century, they were like, oh no, this has gotten out of hand and we have too many different name things, we have to stop. And I love that. Because like, there's a reason we don't use all these terms. And it's because it's a really dumb idea to have, like, different nouns for different animals. I think it's beautiful and great, but it is the most inefficient like way of transmitting data, ever.

Rachel:

That's very true.

Griffin:

The reason that the names sound ostentatious, like, all of them across the board sound like so ostentatious, a flamboyance of flamingos, is because they were designed to be. Now, flamboyance of flamingos is interesting, now that I'm going back to it. Because, were we hunting flamingos at some point and I didn't know about it? Anyway. Um, yeah. I just think that's great.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And then nobody uses it anymore, and it crashed and burned because of these gentleman hunters' hubris. Uh, that's my second thing. The birds flying in the sky are great. What you call them is also very good.

Rachel:

I like that a lot.

Griffin:

Thank you.

Rachel:

Okay, so my second thing is actually an app.

Griffin:

Ooh.

Rachel:

And I felt a little like, buzz markety talking about it. But the reason behind it, I think, is, is worthwhile. So I wanted to talk about Marco Polo.

Griffin:

Okay, tell me about this app.

Rachel:

Okay, so.

Griffin:

I know about it. I'm just trying to be like the, you know...

Rachel:

Oh, and I also knew the names of all those bird groups. I was just trying to be...

Griffin:

[laughs]

Rachel:

Supportive of your topic.

Griffin:

Yeah, I know the different kyber crystals used in the lightsabers of the different characters, thank you.

Rachel:

Uh, so Marco Polo is a free video instant messaging app. You put in your name, phone number, and email. And you're able to share videos. They call it kind of a video walkie-talkie with your contacts. Uh, you can respond to messages immediately from your friends, or you can watch live as they're recorded. Uh, you can also create groups of friends. Uh, and this app was actually created in 2014, it's only kind of popped off recently in the past couple years.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Um, but the reason that this has been great for me, uh, a lot of my friends have babies now.

Griffin:

Mm-hmm.

Rachel:

So I get little videos of babies. Um, we live kind of all over the place. Uh, and so we're able to kind of share information very quickly. And also, since it's kind of, like, one-way, there's something kind of nice about leaving this little message in a bottle for all your friends. And then, um, unlike FaceTime or other kind of video conference calling, it's not dependent on, you know, who's available when.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

So it's been really great lately. I have a friend, uh, that is very pregnant. And has been up in the middle of the night. And she'll send us these little videos that we can watch the next morning.

Griffin:

Oh, that's great. I mean, not great for her.

Rachel:

Yeah, for her, for her.

Griffin:

I imagine it's quite bad.

Rachel:

Uh, but it's, it's been a really nice way to keep in touch, kind of day to day. Um, I'm a big fan of drafting a long email, but not everybody likes that.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

And so it's been nice to kind of get these little videos of my friends on my phone, uh, kind of keep in touch. Um, I've really enjoyed it.

Griffin:

I'm worried if you haven't used this app, because I think it's a genuinely novel and cool idea. But I'm worried if you haven't used it, it sounds like, very basic. But I really can't stress enough, we started using it. We had some friends who were going through something sort of difficult, and they were, uh, out of the country, and really had no way of staying in touch with everybody, and sort of letting them know how they were doing.

And so we started using this app specifically because of that, uh, and I had a group of friends who were using it, and kept up with it for, like, a little bit. It really requires you to sort of be vulnerable, like, when you're— It, it feels kind of weird to film yourself for a couple of minutes, just, like, talking.

Rachel:

Because you're not getting any kind of...

Griffin:

None, yeah.

Rachel:

Gratification or response immediately.

Griffin:

And you can't edit it.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Like you're just, like, doing it.

Rachel:

And people, unlike Snapchat, you can watch it over and over again. And it kind of is stored in the app so you're able to access previous videos, and...

Griffin:

But not just that, you kind of, when you're watching what your friends are saying, you really have to lock into it. It can't be, like, you know, a message that takes you four seconds to read or whatever. I found that so fascinating, that I was, like, actually sitting there for, like, 15 minutes at a time, just watching my feed of my friends' videos...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

This is not an ad, again.

Rachel:

It's not. No, I mean, it's more just about keeping in touch, you know? I think there's a lot of intimidation now, for people in our generation, to have an actual phone conversation. To pick up the phone and go back and forth with somebody for an indeterminate amount of time. Uh, this kind of is a nice problem solving for that. Because you're able to stay in touch, uh, without

feeling the pressure of setting aside a certain amount of time, you know. And picking a night or a day of the week.

You know, you're able to just kind of, as you go, keep up this relationship. Which is really nice.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

I liked it a lot.

Griffin:

It's, like, it's like a journal. But it's for your friends, it's live. It's a live journal.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

That is a good one. Uh, look into Marco. If you have like a group of friends and want to, like, try this new way of staying in touch with them.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I really do think it is neat. Uh, I don't use it as much these days. But for a few months there, like, everyday I was like looking forward to my new messages from my buds.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Um, hey, I've got some submissions here.

Rachel:

Great.

Griffin:

Uh, this one's from Mackenzie who says, "One of my very favorite things in life is the smell of fresh-cut oranges." Psh, end of message, end of submission, crushed it.

Rachel:

That's perfect.

Griffin:

Fuck, yeah.

Rachel:

That's perfect.

Griffin:

Uh, Lula says, "I love Harvey Danger with all my heart. They were a fantastic band from Seattle who you may know from their big '97 hit, Flagpole Sitta. I only discovered them two or three years ago, so I never got to see them live. But all of their studio material is truly magical in a really unique way that I haven't found with any other band."

Rachel:

Griffin, are you submitting your own things under other people's names?

Griffin:

[laughs] I love Harvey Danger very, very much. I saw their next to last show in Chicago. Uh, it was a very special night for me and Sean Nelson, the lead singer of Harvey Danger.

Rachel:

And your brothers, right?

Griffin:

And my brothers, they were there too. But it was really all about me and Sean. Just like, "What do you want to hear, Griffin?" And I was like, "Oof, I don't know, man. Little Round Mirrors?" And he was, like, "You know I'm going to do it." So it is a good band.

Uh, Kayla says, "There are few things in this world that bring me as pure a joy as this video of Kermit the Frog singing Once In A Lifetime by The Talking Heads." You seen this fucking video?

Rachel:

I think I have, yeah.

Griffin:

"The whole thing I so dated and peak aesthetic. There's even lore behind it, which you can find in some half-complete articles on the Muppet wiki. It's just one of those things you can't help but smile during, especially because the song is such a banger." I watched this in the interest of being prepared for, for this episode of Wonderful. It's fucking bananas.

Rachel:

I need to watch it again, it's been a very long time.

Griffin:

It's literally, it is a shot-for-shot remake of the music video for the Talking Heads Once in a Lifetime. Only starring and performed by Kermit the Frog. Uh, and there's like some lore of like, there's a giganturo, some, like, gigantic Muppet who was supposed to perform the song but couldn't. And so Kermit is wearing his big, white suit, which is what...

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

Yeah. From the, yeah.

Rachel:

That's nice.

Griffin:

It's very good. Uh, hey. Hey, hey.

Rachel:

Hey.

Griffin:

Hey, uh, so go ahead and send in some submissions for us, if you don't mind. Go ahead and send them in to wonderfulpodcast@gmail.com. Uh, that is the email address, right? Let me just check because I do have it opened right here and I...

Rachel:

I never say it because I'm never 100% sure.

Griffin:

Yeah, I mean, it's a tricky one to lock down. But it is wonderfulpodcast@gmail.com. Send in your submissions, like one or two sentences long. Follow the perfect example of Mackenzie. I like fresh-cut oranges, bazinga. She didn't even say bazinga, left that off.

Um, and send those in. Because we are going to be recording our Max Fun Drive bonus episode very soon, and that one's going to be 100% listener submissions. We're going to be talking them, we're going to be evaluating them and you. No, we won't come at you that hard. But send those in, because we were going to need a bunch. Uh, once again, it's wonderfulpodcast@gmail.com.

And speaking of the Max Fun Drive, it is coming up. It kicks off April 2nd, and it's just running for two weeks. If you're a new listener, we did one on Rose Buddies last year, but we are a pledge-funded show, uh, as all of the shows on the Max Fun Network are.

Rachel:

And this is our first pledge drive as Wonderful!

Griffin:

Yeah, which we're both extremely nervous about.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Like, very, like so very, very scared about. But anyway, uh, we're going to be running our choicest episodes here on Wonderful during that two-week period. And we're going to be offering great gifts for new and upgrading members who donate to Max Fun. Uh, it's the best time to, to support Wonderful in any way that you can. Uh, and again, you'll get some cool bonuses if you do. Including a whole catalog, uh, of bonus episodes from all the Max Fun shows.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Throughout time.

Rachel:

I love that. I— Man.

Griffin:

It's so much. It is so many episodes.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Um, so do not miss it. Starts April 2nd, we're going to tell you more about it next week. Uh, what, what you can expect. Uh, but again, April 2nd, runs for two weeks. So we'll, we'll be ready to just... I want that pizza in my belly so bad, I'm going to die. Thanks bo en and Augustus for uh, the use of our theme song, Money Won't Pay. It's in the episode description. Can we please go 'za out? I'm about to fucking die.

Rachel:

If you want to check out more McElroy shows, you can find them at mcelroyshows.com.

Griffin:

[crosstalk] ...if they watch the other shows, I want the...

Rachel:

Uh, thank you for listening.

Griffin:

[aggressively patting his stomach]

Rachel:

Griffin is patting his belly. Our son is still asleep on this floor.

Griffin:

Yeah, but he's real far away. This is that loud shit.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Bye, everybody!

[theme song plays]

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