

Wonderful! 32: 1995: A Look Back

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[theme song plays]

Rachel:

Hi, I'm Rachel McElroy.

Griffin:

Hello, this is Griffin McElroy. Yeah, I know, but you said, "Hi, I'm Rachel McElroy—"

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... and you did it in such a— This is Wonderful! It's a podcast about things...

Rachel:

This is Wonderful!

Griffin:

I liked it, though. It was very... It was different.

Rachel:

Like a news anchor.

Griffin:

"Hi, I'm Rachel McElroy, and I'm sad to report that all the pizza got got by the Noid. Breaking news today, sad news this Wednesday morning. The Noid strikes again worldwide with his neurotoxin that only affects pizzas." Brains, I guess, 'cause it is a neurotoxin.

Rachel:

You know, I bet Pizza Hut was like, "Domino's, that's such a silly gimmick." But where's Pizza Hut now?

Griffin:

Uh, still making pizza, I think, right? Or did they shut, did they shut down? Where's...

Rachel:

I haven't seen a Pizza Hut in a very long time.

Griffin:

Okay, but that could just be because... Just because you don't see them doesn't mean they're not there.

Rachel:

Well, Domino's, I know.

Griffin:

Yeah, I mean, Domino's is all over.

Rachel:

They've got that pizza truck...

Griffin:

So, there is something to be said for this strategy of, "Let's make a mascot and the mascot is just somebody who comes around and fucks up our shit."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I like that.

Rachel:

Me too.

Griffin:

So, the new Apple computers, maybe we get, uh, John Hodgman back, and he's playing the PC, but this time he just beats the fucking shit out of a bunch of MacBooks...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... and iPads, and he, you know, throws a big box of iPads in the river.

Rachel:

And then you get little posable John Hodgmans.

Griffin:

Yeah, and it's like you've got to get... You'd better get these iPads before Hodgman [laughs] throws them all in the river like some sort of Revolutionary War guy. Yeah.

Rachel:

Like the Boston Tea Party?

Griffin:

Like the Boston guy, whoever that was.

Rachel:

That what you were doing?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Yeah [laughs].

Griffin:

Um, so this is Wonderful! and this is a podcast that we do sometimes, and... uh, who... you know, uh, when we feel like it. Get off our fucking jocks. I didn't know you were our dad.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, do you have any small wonders?

Rachel:

Uh, I can't remember mine. Will you go first?

Griffin:

Yes, I do remember mine. It's that five-pound bag of jellybeans from, uh, the Starburst company.

Rachel:

Still getting in there.

Griffin:

Still working my way through those. Thank you to the listener who sent those in. It's just like a nice little... You know, if I'm walking through the kitchen and I'm doing something, and maybe sometimes I even make a little detour to go in the kitchen 'cause I know my friend the now-four-pound bag of jellybeans is in there...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... you know, I'll just stop and I'll grab a couple, you know?

Rachel:

That reminds me what mine was gonna be.

Griffin:

Oh.

Rachel:

Gummy vitamins.

Griffin:

Yeah, you have a fun way of referring to this, uh, and a way that I find...
Like, maybe it's a slam on me...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... because I eat these so much.

Rachel:

Um, Griffin is a big gummy vitamin fan, and I feel like we have containers of them all around the house.

Griffin:

Yeah, sort of little, um, dead drops, if you will.

Rachel:

And, um, there is always some in the bathroom, and so occasionally I'll grab a little pawful on my way out, and Griffin chastised me once that, "Those are my vitamins," and I said, "It's bathroom candy."

Griffin:

Yeah, which is a great point.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

It is why I enjoy them, and it is up for grabs, but it was special calcium gummies, and you know my bones.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

When I run too fast, my bones make a whistling noise...

Rachel:

Mm-hmm., yeah.

Griffin:

... 'cause of how porous they are.

Rachel:

I hear that, because you are always running.

Griffin:

Uh-huh. [laughs].

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

And the other day I spilled a soda on the floor, and I used one of my porous bones to just soak it right up. And then I wrung my bones out over the kitchen sink, and then, you know, fresh-cleaned bones. Well, kind of clean. They still had some soda in them.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I think I go first this time. Why is this always such a... Why can't we keep this straight? We need a chore wheel or something.

Rachel:

I know, we really do.

Griffin:

I'm pretty sure I go first.

Rachel:

Please go first.

Griffin:

I have two themed ones, and my theme for this week is 1995, the year it all came together.

Rachel:

[laughs] I thought you were gonna do, like, one of your My Brother, My Brother and Me-style 20... slates clean or whatever.

Griffin:

No, those are, um, two things: very, very, very hard to come up with...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... and two, not even close to worth the effort that goes into coming up with them.

Rachel:

1995.

Griffin:

'95, where were you? Where were you on your journey?

Rachel:

Oh, I mean, I was 13.

Griffin:

I was eight.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I was eight years old. Ooh, and what a good age. 13, not so great. That's eighth grade, right? Ugh.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

God, ugh. Eighth grade.

Rachel:

I mean, we both could have been at the roller-skating rink, but...

Griffin:

Well, yeah, but you wouldn't have looked my way.

Rachel:

You would have been at a birthday party and I would have been holding hands.

Griffin:

Aw, man, that bums me out to think about and I wouldn't have been invited to the party. [laughs]

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I would have been there on my own accord, you know, playing The Simpsons arcade game, 'cause that one kicked ass. But anyway, I was eight, and, um, what movie came out? What movie came out, and we just watched this movie. It is A Goofy Movie. Now...

Rachel:

That's literally the name of it. He wasn't saying that the movie—

Griffin:

It's a— But can I say something? If the shoe fits. Big, goofy shoe, it fits.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

'Cause this movie, it can get goofy. But here's the other thing: it gets serious too and I didn't even know a movie could do that.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, which I love. So, we just, we just watched it, um... We were inspired by its recent cameo on, uh, an episode of Gill and Gilbert, the very good Polygon streaming series that we, um, that we watched. And Brian sang a little bit of the music from the movie, and then this weekend I was like... We were looking for something to watch with Henry, and I was like, "Goofy Movie, here we go."

Um, there was a great arc to our viewing of A Goofy Movie, 'cause Rachel had never seen it before. And we watched a little bit of it that morning, and then later that night Henry had gone to bed, we were looking for something to watch. I was like, "How about more Goofy Movie?" And Rachel said, "No, I wasn't really enjoying it," and I said, "Who are you? But okay."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

And then I woke up the following morning, and Rachel was already up with Henry, finishing... polishing off that old nut that is A Goofy Movie. And she was like, "Okay, yes, this movie is very good."

Rachel:

It is. It's very good [laughs].

Griffin:

It's very, very good. Um, I feel like though it is, like, a '90s kids... Like, '90s kids love this thing to, like, talk about A Goofy Movie. Like, they think there's...

Rachel:

Yeah, it's like a BuzzFeed listicle.

Griffin:

It is very easy, I think, to write people off for being sort of ironic about it, or only talking about, like, the big musical numbers in it as being, like, the thing that they remember. And so, in an effort to kind of avoid that, I don't want to talk about the music. I just want to focus on, like, the movie, because I think that... Nah, just kidding. The music fucking rules.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

The music is extremely good.

[Seeing Eye to Eye clip plays]

Rachel:

I didn't realize. We started watching it, and very quickly it became clear to me this is basically a musical.

Griffin:

It is a musical, and it also is a musical about, like, the troubles between a father and son, and I don't know where the mom is. Is that ever made clear in the Goofyverse?

Rachel:

I don't think so.

Griffin:

There's probably some apocryphal Goofy... Here's the thing, though. I mean, she definitely left him, right? And not, like, she passed away.

Rachel:

Oh, man.

Griffin:

Yeah, 'cause I don't think they would get into... I mean, either scenario doesn't hit me first glance as especially goofy.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

But, um...

Rachel:

That's a good point.

Griffin:

... this movie, y'all, it has, it has no right to be as good as it is. I remember going to see it in theaters when I was eight, and I was, like, dragged there by my mom and dad, and I was like... I was already so sure that I was too cool to see this movie, which in a lot of ways made me like Max from A Goofy Movie...

Rachel:

Right?

Griffin:

... the cool sort of teenage son who thinks he's too cool for his goofy dad. But then the jams came on, and I was like, "Uh-oh, this movie is too cool for me! I feel like this movie is gonna kick me out of it for being in it, for not being cool enough."

It is, uh, an animated musical, and it's about this— You've fucking seen A Goofy Movie or you haven't, and if you haven't you don't need me telling you about what the Goofy Movie's about. Um, but it is... It dives into, like... Here's the thing.

I feel like there was a point where Disney movies, and especially, like, Pixar movies, which I know is, like, its own sort of jam, but I feel like there was a point where it was like, okay, these are going to start being these kind of, like, fun, family-friendly affairs that also start tackling some serious shit.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And it's not to say that, like, the old, you know, black diamond, whatever they were called, or blue diamond, I forget, like, the special VHSs, but, like, Beauty and the Beast and, um, uh... Wow, that's the only Disney movie I can remember.

Rachel:

That's the only one. Little Mermaid.

Griffin:

Little Mermaid. That's not to say that they didn't, like, tackle that stuff, but I'm talking about that real relatable shit that, like, all the Pixar movies, like, try to dial into.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And, like, I feel like A Goofy Movie kind of does that, 'cause it's about being embarrassed by your goof-ass dad.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And also trying to do your best for your son and not knowing how, and getting lots of unsolicited advice from a bunch of dipshits. And there's maybe something a little bit relatable...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... in me... Also, I know that I'm gonna be an embarrassing dad, and I've already come to grips with that. Um, but this movie really shows their

relationship from two perspectives: from the perspective of, like, a young person who's, you know...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... trying to fit in and trying to nurture this new, exciting relationship, um, and this dad who's, like, losing touch with his son.

Rachel:

That's what won me over, is that the movie started and it's, like, surly teen thinks dad is lame, and I was like, "Oh, I've seen this one before." Uh, and so I was just kind of going along with it, and then you really get to see the dad's side of it, and that's the heart. And then...

Griffin:

And that's the heart of it. And it...

Rachel:

... it won me in.

Griffin:

And there are lots and lots of scenes that, like, really delivers on that heart in a way that...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... like, I had forgotten about. Here's the thing about this movie, y'all, and I hope at this point you... I have, uh, broken through the surface of, like, irony. Like, this movie not only has, like— This movie is not only still a good watch, I feel like it's gotten better with time in a way.

I feel like I enjoyed the music a lot when I was a kid, um, and now, like, that sound is so fresh to me because there's nobody really making jams like that

anymore. Uh, but also, like, the themes, the family themes, like, really resonated with me a lot more on this, on this most recent watch.

Um, so, okay, we've talked about the music. Uh, the... It's a musical, right? So there's a lot of music that is sort of set to their trip. There's, like, an On the Open Road song they sing as they hit the road. But the two big numbers are sung by a fictional rock star named Powerline, and the first one is called Stand Out from the Crowd. It's fine. The second song, uh, which plays in the big, climactic finale of the movie, is called Eye to Eye, it is the slap. It is...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... so, so good. I've listened to it, like, 10 times today. The scene that it underscores is three minutes long, and it ties together the entire movie set to this fucking dope song that has a key change in it that is a gift to all of us from Tevin Campbell, who does the voice of Powerline. Uh, it is so good, and...

The song is really good, and I don't know. We just rewatched it, and it really stood out to me. I cannot think of too many movies from my childhood, and I watched the shit out of this movie as a kid, especially once it was out on VHS, that has actually, like, improved with time. I was nervous to watch it with you, 'cause I was like...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

"...Uh-oh, what if it stinks?" But no, it's a good one.

Rachel:

I really— At first I was... It felt very pat to me, like the premise and the characters, and I was just like, "I don't get it." And then I really hung in there and it paid off in a big way.

Griffin:

So, here's the thing. A Goofy Movie, much like Nick Drake, unappreciated in its time.

Rachel:

Oh, no.

Griffin:

This movie has a 53% on Rotten Tomatoes.

Rachel:

Whew.

Griffin:

Here are some of the reviews written, uh, by certain critics. Uh, Time Out says, "Insidious songs and not much story." Hey, you need to take a fucking time out in the garbage can...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... which is where you and this review belongs. "An incoh—" This is, uh, San Francisco Chronicle, "An incoherent mess that jumps from one unlikely, brainless, crash-bang situation into another." It does. Uh...

Rachel:

It, yeah, yes, it does.

Griffin:

... a little bit. Juicy Cerebellum, uh, why are you on Rotten Tomatoes? Nobody knows what this is. "Disney quickie without any heart." It has lots of heart!

Rachel:

It really does.

Griffin:

It has more heart than you have.

Rachel:

Well, also, let's go back to that previous review about the, like, the whiz-bang scenarios.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Like, that's Goofy.

Griffin:

That's Goofy. Hello.

Rachel:

That's kind of Goofy's thing.

Griffin:

I'd like you to meet my friend, Goofy. He's a weird dog with a son, which means somebody fucked him at some point.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

But anyway, all he wants is for his son to love him. He's gonna do his best and I'm sorry if he doesn't do it— He— Sorry that he's not the ideal dad there, San Francisco Chronicle. Scott Weinberg, eFilmCritic.com, says, "Yep, all Goofy, all the time." Okay.

Rachel:

There you go.

Griffin:

So, not completely unappreciated.

Rachel:

I like, I like Griffin's Movie Corner. This is fun.

Griffin:

I've done this before, talking about the Pokémon Movie, and, like, it... seeing how it got slammed. And that one's fine, whatever. A Goofy Movie is good, and people who call it out for not having enough heart and just...weren't watching the same movie as everybody else.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Anyway, A Goofy Movie. Holds up.

Rachel:

Holds up.

Griffin:

What's your first thing?

Rachel:

Lightning bugs.

Griffin:

I love these guys.

Rachel:

And they're fascinating too.

Griffin:

Did you have Louie the Lightning Bug?

Rachel:

I don't know what you mean.

Griffin:

[singing] You gotta play it safe around electricity...

Rachel:

Oh, yeah. Yeah, of course.

Griffin:

Well, you say, "of course." Who— 'Cause I thought he was, like, a local power company mascot.

Rachel:

I think they used him...

Griffin:

For all power companies?

Rachel:

I don't know, but I know this.

Griffin:

Okay, sorry. I didn't mean to distract. I love lightning bugs.

Rachel:

Are you searching for it right now?

Griffin:

No.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

He's the AP mascot, which I guess is, like, I don't know. We can't go down the... Well, next week we'll do a whole segment on Louie the Lightning Bug.

Rachel:

Uh, so, lightning bugs, um, have, uh, special light-emitting organs, usually on the lower abdomen.

Griffin:

I don't like thinking about bugs having organs.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

To me they're just kind of, like, crunchy bug stuff.

Rachel:

They have this enzyme called luciferase, uh, which in the presence of magnesium and oxygen produces light.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

But not all fireflies light up.

Griffin:

Oh, my god. This is a children's book waiting to be written.

Rachel:

Apparently, California and other places on the West Coast have fireflies, but they don't light up.

Griffin:

Then they ain't fireflies. They're weird... They're just, like, weird mosquitoes at that point.

Rachel:

Fireflies are actually beetles, apparently.

Griffin:

What?

Rachel:

Yeah, they're beetles. If you think about it, their bodies look like little beetles.

Griffin:

Yeah. Yeah, all right.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Sorry, I'm still distracted by the fact that some of them don't light up. Why wouldn't they get their own bug name at that point? Is it just like... Okay, never mind. I'm going way too deep down a rabbit hole so early on this one.

Rachel:

Um, so there are more than 2,000 species of fireflies. Um, and they don't all glow the same color, if they do light up. Have you ever seen different colors? Because they gave an example of a firefly in the southern Appalachian Mountains...

Griffin:

Hmm.

Rachel:

... which I thought maybe you'd be familiar with.

Griffin:

I mean, it... for me it's kind of like, um, light bulb colors, and maybe that's too obvious an answer, but you get some like this one, then, like, you know, lamp. Do you remember lamp?

Rachel:

I do.

Griffin:

Oh, we love this lamp, or like, oh, like the Anchorman joke.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

But it has a nice, soft yellow glow, and then there are some that have a harsh, bright white glow, and I feel like lightning bugs— But I've never seen, like, I don't know, a blue one.

Rachel:

There's yellow, orange and there is, there's blue.

Griffin:

Oh.

Rachel:

It's the Southern Appalachian Mountain one is blue.

Griffin:

I'm more western Appalachia. Um...

Rachel:

Okay. I don't really know how those mountains work.

Griffin:

Well, if it's the Appalachian Mountain region, that encompasses, like...

Rachel:

It's pretty... probably pretty big.

Griffin:

... 14 states [laughs], yeah.

Rachel:

[laughs] Okay. Um, so the flashing of the light is typically associated with males.

Griffin:

Horny.

Rachel:

Um, yeah, to...

Griffin:

Oh.

Rachel:

... to attract, yeah.

Griffin:

I was guessing, but...

Rachel:

Literally.

Griffin:

... when you're talking about animals and the weird stuff they do, answer is most of the time, "horny."

Rachel:

[laughs] But there is one species, um, of female, uh, that can perform an array of robust flashes meant to mimic the come-hither calls of females from other firefly species. Desperate to mate, males will soar to investigate what looks like an amorous female, and are promptly devoured.

Griffin:

By another lightning bug?

Rachel:

Yeah. So, the lady lightning bug will lure them in and then munch them.

Griffin:

I mean...

Rachel:

They're called femmes fatales.

Griffin:

Wait, that's really their name, or that's—

Rachel:

Yeah, like, informally.

Griffin:

Holy shit.

Rachel:

Some of them will even take to the skies and hunt blinking males on the wing. This is known as "hawking."

Griffin:

[laughs]

Rachel:

They've also been known to filch other fireflies that have become trapped in spiderwebs.

Griffin:

Holy shit.

Rachel:

So they're, like, super predators.

Griffin:

Super predators taking the other food from the other predator. You've got to be careful with that. Well, femme fatale, you're gonna get eaten up by the spider yourself.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Do you think if a spider eats enough fireflies their guts will turn glowy? Ooh, that's a Goosebumps book...

Rachel:

Ooh.

Griffin:

... waiting to happen. I'm coming up with a lot of kids' books ideas over here.

Rachel:

[laughs] Um, yeah, so... But fireflies for me now that the weather's starting to get warmer, I'm starting to get excited.

Griffin:

Oh, yeah.

Rachel:

... uh, about the return of the firefly. I never did the thing. I appreciated the, like, you crush a firefly and then...

Griffin:

Oh, God.

Rachel:

... and then it leaves the glow you, but I never did that. I thought that was bad.

Griffin:

Well, good.

Rachel:

But I know I've seen people do it and it's pretty neat.

Griffin:

[laughs] Um, I mean, I judge that, right? I remember distinctly going over to, uh, the house, like a farmland house of a kid I went to church with, and he got a tennis racquet out and killed so many fireflies with it that it was glowing...

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

... like some sort of, uh, you know, like Mjolnir or something like that. I never did that, but I did catch some of these dudes in a jar, which if you think about it is probably even worse, 'cause at least the tennis racquet, it's bing, bang, boom. The jar is a slow one.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I poked holes in it. I'm not a complete animal, but...

Rachel:

No, I don't think I ever caught them, other than in my hands.

Griffin:

Oh, it's nice, and also probably bad for them.

Rachel:

Yeah. Uh, so there— So, of the 2,000 species, there are over 125 living in the United States. Um, the fireflies produce a cold light, which has no infrared or ultraviolet frequencies.

Griffin:

Whoa.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I mean, I guess that... Huh. I guess, like, phosphorescent stuff doesn't produce heat...? Well, no. That's weird!

Rachel:

Yeah, I can't explain it.

Griffin:

Like, iridescence is a type of light that doesn't give off heat, right? Um, and so, I guess that makes sense. I don't know. Uh, God, I... Hey, babe?

Rachel:

Yeah?

Griffin:

Should we go to science school?

Rachel:

[laughs] I think so. Uh, so, yes, that's some information. I got that from, uh... There's some information on the Smithsonian website about fireflies that I thought were pretty cool.

Griffin:

There's so many animals in this world of ours.

Rachel:

It's true.

Griffin:

Hi, everybody, welcome to Cosmos with...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

...Griffin and Rachel. There are so many animals in this world of ours, and it feels like today everybody's [imitates beeping] cell phone. Uh, everybody's, you know, playing Fortnite on their cell phone.

Rachel:

Back in my day...

Griffin:

Mm-hmm.

Rachel:

... when you would see a glow at night...

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

... it would be a firefly.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

And not somebody's phone.

Griffin:

Not somebody's dirty phone. But what I'm saying is if we could get a way to make more animals be glowing, maybe people would start looking up from that phone. "Is that a big, glowing bear?"

"Yeah, it is."

Rachel:

Oh, you know, the other thing that's cool about fireflies, so, they start out as little larvae.

Griffin:

Mm.

Rachel:

Uh, and the larvae glow.

Griffin:

Oh, is that where the glowworms comes from?

Rachel:

Yeah, I think so.

Griffin:

Interesting.

Rachel:

Um, but yeah, they'll go, like, in a tree or in the, um, in the ground, and sometimes they'll, like, incubate for, like, over a year.

Griffin:

Do you think that at any point in the history of the world a spider has gotten two fireflies in each hand, and then...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... gone to a rave and just been like [imitates techno beat].

Rachel:

I hope so.

Griffin:

That would be so funny. Can I steal you away?

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

[continues the techno beat]

Rachel:

[sings musical boops and bops]

Griffin:

Not bad, not bad, not bad.

Rachel:

Yeah, I felt good about that.

[ad break]

Griffin:

Oh, nice. I'm gonna record just a bunch of those and then we can drop them in after each advertisement, it'll be, like, you know, a little stamp, little seal of approval. Do you want to read the first jumbotron?

Rachel:

Yes. This message is for, and this is what it says...

Griffin:

Uh-oh.

Rachel:

"This is message is for three jerks."

Griffin:

Oh, God.

Rachel:

"And it is from the fourth jerk."

Griffin:

Oh, [laughs] I see.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

A little self-razz.

Rachel:

"A year ago, I would never have thought that I would meet my best friends in a video game based on screaming and terror as someone chases you down to do a bad hit on you."

Griffin:

Wow, this is nice.

Rachel:

"But here we are. Thank you for talking to me as I fall asleep, for talking me down from panic attacks, for genuinely loving me and helping me learn to love myself. I love you."

Griffin:

Do you think we're talking about, like, um, Pokémon Snap, or...

Rachel:

I was gonna ask you what video game it was.

Griffin:

It's probably PUBG.

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

Wait, what is it? Three?

Rachel:

Um, screaming in terror as someone chases you down to do a bad hit on you.

Griffin:

Yeah, I mean, probably PUBG. I mean, it has teams of four. I don't know. Anyway, that's just off the dome. It's either that or Pokémon Snap. Uh, here's another jumbotron. This one is for, uh, Miako "The Alpha" Singer, and it's from Adam "The Omega" Brown. Oh, wait. I think Singer is the last name. But probably with a last name like that, you've got to have some pretty good pipes, yeah? Anyway, "Hey, Goose, happy burp day." [laughs] It's just, people are amazing.

Rachel:

[laughs] Okay.

Griffin:

Language is amazing. We can do so much with it. "Happy burp day." Wow, man. "I hope you're having a grand day, even if this message doesn't fall on your actual birthday," which was January 5th.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

So, we had our own little burp day, if you know what I mean.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

We really burped it on this one. Um, "I hope we have more bat hugs, snake kisses, and ham soups this year. Either way, do you want to get Indian tonight? I'm hoping to get some dippables going, and it's cold out, and Indian sounds nice and warm. Let me know. You have my number." This is an all-time very good message. Word...

Rachel:

Yeah, I like that a lot.

Griffin:

... pound for pound, letter for letter, you really made use of the space.

Speaker 1:

Hello. Are you looking for a new comedy podcast? In which case, can I draw your attention to the Beef and Dairy Network Podcast? It's a fictional industry podcast for the beef and dairy industries. It won best comedy at the 2017 British Podcast Awards, and it features wonderful guests such as Greg Davies.

Greg:

To my knowledge, it's the only cow circus that's ever existed in this country. In rural Russia, every small town has a cow circus.

Speaker 1:

Josie Long.

Josie:

You should have a beef. Have a beef with them. I have a beef with you, I will have a beef with you. Come round my house, and I'll have a beef with you.

Speaker 1:

And Andy Daly.

Andy:

That virus never existed. There was never any such thing as a mad cow disease. That was all, uh, an illusion that, uh, big lamb came up with.

Speaker 1:

That's the Beef and Dairy Network Podcast. Find us at maximumfun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts from. And I would recommend starting at episode one. Bye!

[ad break ends]

Griffin:

My march through 1995 continues with my next topic.

Rachel:

Ooh, please.

Griffin:

So, a little bit of backstory...

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

... and Rachel's gonna know this, 'cause it's her life. Um, Henry, who's our son, is at an age now where his personality is starting to develop and really come forward, and that process as a parent, uh, if you have kids you

probably know, is very magical. It's very cool. Your baby goes from this, like, little person who is essentially a Tamagotchi that you...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... have to keep alive by pressing the diaper button and the food button and the don't drop or let fall down button over and over again, um, but then at a certain age they begin to develop wants and preferences and ways of expressing themselves that is, like, uniquely them. And that's very cool, 'cause that feels like a new person has shown up, and it's a person that, like, doesn't exist anywhere else in the world. It's neat. It's, like, a way...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... of, like, really driving that home. However, there's one place where Henry expresses himself in a way that makes me incredibly miserable, and that is in the backseat of my car, literally at any point driving, because he does a yell.

He does one long yell that sort of goes from the beginning of when we start driving to the end. Which is a natural thing; he's learning, you know, "I can make noise," and so he's doing it. The car, however, is a place where I have to focus in order to keep, um, from driving into a ditch, uh, obviously, and so, having a screaming human being in the backseat of the car is not ideal.

Um, and so on long car drives, I resort to listening to music that keeps Henry placated. And there's one track which inexplicably always does the job. I genuinely do not know if I actually enjoy this song anymore, or if I ever enjoyed it, but I do know that I owe it a huge debt of gratitude. This is that song.

[Ants Marching clip plays]

Oh, Dave. Welcome to the podcast.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Oh, Dave, you've made it.

Rachel:

Took us a while to get you here, didn't it?

Griffin:

Took us a while, Dave. You know, your schedule is all full up, our schedule is all full up, and I'm so glad we've come together. You brought the whole band, and that's cool. Henry is asleep, so if you wouldn't mind keeping it down. Actually, your jam is his jam, so if you want to go in there and do a little tiny desk concert...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... that might be good. This is Dave Matthews Band's, uh, they call it their anthem, or I guess Dave has called it their band's anthem...

Rachel:

Oh, really?

Griffin:

... is Ants Marching, which is off their chart-topping album of the '90s, Under the Table and Dreaming. Now, I am not a big Dave Matthews Band fan. However, I am a big fan of not veering my car off the road into a ravine or something, and so I am a big Ants Marching fan, 'cause this song gets the fucking job done.

Rachel:

Also, can I say something, Griffin?

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Griffin is very shy and so he wouldn't admit this.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

But he has a really enjoyable impression of Dave Matthews, uh, singing this song.

Griffin:

Yeah. I mean, the lyrics I can't remember a lot of, but there's one, it's like, [imitates Dave Matthews singing]. I can't do it. He's asleep, and I would really...

Rachel:

No.

Griffin:

[imitates Dave Matthews singing]

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Uh, here's the problem. Now, I don't want to get into it, but a lot of...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... my impressions end up being Aaron Neville. So, um, listening to it as often as I have, which is to say four times a day...

Rachel:

Wow, really?

Griffin:

... four or five times a day, has given me time to analyze Ants Marching with an almost, like, exegetical eye, just a really, really deep, deep dive. And let me say this off the top: This song is the '90s, at least one floor of the '90s, crystallized into pure fucking amber.

Rachel:

[laughs] I don't actually really know what it's about.

Griffin:

Oh, we're gonna get into that too.

Rachel:

Okay.

Griffin:

I'm not just talking about how it was everywhere in the '90s, but just, like, musically speaking, it's got some— Do you know about Canyon.midi? This is a song that came with every Windows computer, and it is the most... It sounds like a sitcom opening that Bill Gates himself composed. He did not. There was somebody who, like, made all this music that came on, and, like, you got your SoundBlaster card and you installed it in your computer...

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

... and it'd be, like, [imitates Canyon.midi]. This song is that to me, um, for the entire decade of the '90s. Um, the dueling saxophone and violin played by the late LeRoi Moore, uh, and Boyd Tinsley, uh, could be cut out of the song and shot into space for aliens to know more about the '90s than a whole library of historical texts could possibly get across. Um, it just, it— Any song that— There is no song that sounds like this. There is no way to compare it to anything. To me, though, a saxophone in a rock song from the '90s, now we're talking. Now that's what I call '90s.

Rachel:

It reminds me of being at the, uh, neighborhood swimming pool. Uh, I don't know if you're... Well, you didn't have a lot of pool options. I know where you grew up. But they used to play the radio, and this song was constantly on the radio. And so, when I hear it I think of being a 13-year-old at the pool.

Griffin:

It reminds me of a couple of guys on the street in New York, and they're wearing sunglasses that the lenses are very small.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

And they're wearing turtlenecks and they both have denim jackets that they sort of throw over their shoulder. [laughs]

Rachel:

Yeah. Wow, that's a real vivid picture.

Griffin:

That's what this song reminds me of. The other thing about Ants Marching that I realized in listening to it so many times is that the message of the song is so [laughs] douchey and so condescending. I'm gonna go ahead and cross this bridge. I do think I like this song.

Rachel:

You do like this song.

Griffin:

I've done it at karaoke before.

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Um, I did it at karaoke before because Dave Matthews is very fun to sing, his very special voice that he does with, uh, the organs that God gave him. These are some of the lyrics from the song, and, like, you hear them on the radio. And when you listen to this song on the radio, you're just waiting for the [imitating Dave Matthews] "loose end, loose end, cut, cut." You're just waiting for that part...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... and so, you don't actually listen. But here are some of the words. Driving in on this highway, all these cars end up on the sidewalk. People in every direction, no words exchanged, no time to exchange. And all the little ants are marching, red and black antennas waving. They all do it the same, they all do it the same way.

Rachel:

Ooh.

Griffin:

Well, fuck you, Dave. I'm just— Hey, I'm sorry, Dave, that I'm going to Starbucks like a lot of other people. I need caffeine, because I was up until 2:00 a.m. last night...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... doing work on the podcast, and then I had to go in to drive Henry to daycare early in the morning. Sorry, I went to Starbucks like a lot of other people did. Can you get off my fucking balls for a second, Dave Matthews' entire band? Right? I'm sorry that I'm at the mall, but, like, J. Crew clothes fit me pretty well, and so I just thought I would dip in here on my lunch break and get a new belt, you fucking dick.

Rachel:

[laughs] It is, it is not uncommon for musicians to make the observation that people are living in a, uh, a little boxes-type existence.

Griffin:

They're sheeple. So, it's funny. We actually covered a song like that from Regina Spektor, Ghost of Corporate Future. However, I feel like Ghost of Corporate Future, while it does identify, like, this thing, it also does it in a, like, a hopeful way, and the message of that song ultimately is, like, if you realize that, like, everybody's kind of in the same boat, then that's how you get inspired to, like, try and, you know, shake things up every once in a while.

This song is, like, "You're a fucking ant to me. I'm Dave Matthews Band. I'm gonna dump my bus's whole load of poop on your boat. Handle it."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

I'm being hard on the song for comedy's sake.

Rachel:

You are.

Griffin:

But it just stuck out to me, 'cause I have sung this song and enjoyed this song in the car with my son so many times. But I think the message of you're all ants is, like, a little bit... Now, the chorus, "Take these chances, put them in a box until a quieter time, lights up, you up and die... lights down, you up and die," I don't even think there's anything especially helpful in there.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

There's nothing very prescriptive [laughs] I think in the whole song, which would have been refreshing.

Rachel:

But Griffin.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

This podcast is called "Wonderful!"

Griffin:

I— Here's the thing. I like this song. I like this song. It... The message leaves a gross taste in my mouth, but what doesn't leave a gross taste in my mouth is not driving into a building.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Um, also, the violin solo at the end fucking rules.

Rachel:

Yes, it's very good.

Griffin:

It's a very, very good violin solo. It does make it not as fun to sing it at karaoke. I'm sorry I went off on the lyrics of it. I was just surprised when I finally read the lyrics, 'cause I...

Rachel:

I know.

Griffin:

... what I had been enjoying for so long. But this song reminds me of 1995, because, and that was a good year for me, 'cause A Goofy Movie also came out that year.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

So, I'm so grateful for it. Also, one last thing. The song Ants Marching, it appeared on a live album that came out before Under the Table and Dreaming.

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

So, the song had been on an album before. That album was called Remember Two Things. The cover of that album was a magic eye picture of a hand giving you the peace sign.

Rachel:

Oh my god.

Griffin:

If that is not the most fucking '90s shit ever...

Rachel:

Oh my God.

Griffin:

... I do not know what is.

Rachel:

Gosh. That's a time capsule right there.

Griffin:

That is a time capsule, that's what I'm saying. We've got to get it up in this space.

Rachel:

Did you ever have those magic eye books? I did.

Griffin:

Uh...

Rachel:

I had, like, a book.

Griffin:

I don't think I could ever do any of them 'cause of my blind spot.

Rachel:

Even when you were little little?

Griffin:

Yeah. I guess I've always had this— I— You know, I've always had trouble diagnosing of when this blind spot showed up...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... but I've never been able to do a magic eye painting, so maybe it's really just been from birth. And I just said "magic eye painting," and that's an interesting concept, isn't it?

Rachel:

[laughs] Oh, let's go to the Louvre and take in the magic eye exhibit.

Griffin:

Like, "Hey, uh, Monet, this one sucks."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

You know, he's like [laughs]. "Get up on it and make your eyes all weird."

Rachel:

[laughs] "It's a dolphin."

Griffin:

"It's a— Oh, shit, it's a hand giving the peace sign."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

"Yeah, it is. Griffin, you want to see this one?"

"I can't."

Rachel:

No.

Griffin:

Can you describe it to me, Claude Monet?

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

What's your second thing?

Rachel:

Okay. My second thing is gonna require you to get on your computer, potentially.

Griffin:

Here we go.

Rachel:

Are you familiar with the Twitter account Faces Pics?

Griffin:

[laughs] No.

Rachel:

F-A-C-E-S P-I-C-S.

Griffin:

Okay, yeah, I'm here.

Rachel:

It is wonderful.

Griffin:

So, should I describe what I'm seeing here?

Rachel:

Sure.

Griffin:

What we're looking at here is, I'll just go line for line. Uh, this is a, uh, this is a house, and it looks like it had some blinds on it, but the blinds have been broken off in a way that makes it look like a big, scary face. Um, this is a church, but the windows are cut out in a way where it looks like the church is screaming. So, that's fun.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Here's a big rock that looks like a Dachshund, so that I enjoy. And here is a pineapple that looks like my dad.

Rachel:

[laughs] Um, so, I love this.

Griffin:

[laughs, coughs] Yeah, I mean, what's not to love?

Rachel:

I think, I mean, as Griffin knows, there are a lot of toxic things to find on Twitter.

Griffin:

Sure.

Rachel:

This is a wonderful account...

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

... with just a delightful message, which is...

Griffin:

So—

Rachel:

... there are faces in a lot of things.

Griffin:

Faces, just everywhere. Are you bringing this specific Twitter account, or the phenomenon of sometimes faces show up in things?

Rachel:

Both.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

[laughs] Uh, so, the name for the uncanny ability to see faces everywhere is pareidolia...

Griffin:

Hmm.

Rachel:

... which is roughly from the Greek, uh, wrong shape.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Uh, this is in a, uh, Mental Floss article, uh, from May 1st. So, today.

Griffin:

Oh—

Rachel:

When we're recording it.

Griffin:

Whoa, what the fuck?

Rachel:

Uh, so, human brains are attuned to perceiving faces. Uh, there's an entire region of the brain called the fusiform gyrus that is dedicated to it.

Griffin:

Oh, face lobe. We'll call it that.

Rachel:

[laughs] These studies, uh, have shown that shortly after birth, babies display more interest in cartoon faces with properly placed features than in similar images where the features are scrambled.

Griffin:

Huh.

Rachel:

The, quote, "face neurons" in people with healthy brains are so overactive that they scream "face" in many situations where there are no actual faces to be found.

Griffin:

Huh.

Rachel:

Uh, the face-detection skills combined with our brain's compulsion to extract meaning from the sensory chaos that surrounds us is why we see faces where there aren't any.

Griffin:

That is cool...

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

... and spooky as shit.

Rachel:

It is pretty spooky.

Griffin:

I don't like my brain doing... I mean, my brain is always doing shit that I didn't know I gave it permission to do. That's sort of part of, part of the deal, I guess. I don't like that it's, like, "Where's a face? Where's a face? Where's a face? Where's a face? Got to find a face." It's like, "Dude, I'm just trying to eat my Wendy's. Can you calm down?"

"There's a face in the fries!"

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

"There's not. I just want to eat my Wendy's. Can you please chill out for a second?"

Rachel:

Well, and that's the thing. The Mental Floss article talks a lot about people finding faces in their toast.

Griffin:

Jesus. They do him a lot.

Rachel:

Mm-hmm. There's actually, some of this article is dedicated to whether or not people with religious tendencies are more likely to see this.

Griffin:

Oh, a hundo percent...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... yes. Was there where they landed on this one?

Rachel:

Well, I didn't examine that.

Griffin:

Okay.

Rachel:

Uh, so, the pareidolia can be exacerbated in cases of fatigue and in some neurological diseases. Uh, on the flip side, when the fusiform gyrus is damaged due to a stroke or trauma, our ability to recognize faces is impaired. This rare condition is known as prosopagnosia or face blindness. In extreme cases, these patients become unable to identify their own faces in the mirror.

Griffin:

Fuck. I know about this from a Japanese video game.

Rachel:

Oh, really?

Griffin:

I do.

Rachel:

Wow.

Griffin:

Thanks, Zero Escape series. My...

Rachel:

What kind of game is this?

Griffin:

Oh, I'm so glad you asked. It's, uh, like, kind of a violent sort of, uh, visual novel about people who get trapped in a deadly game. Anyway...

Rachel:

Anyway.

Griffin:

... that's neither here nor there.

Rachel:

Uh, so, I have seen a lot of faces, um, in the tops of trees, like, if you're driving on the highway...

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

... and you look at the tree line. A lot clouds, obviously.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Trees.

Griffin:

It's funny that you brought this. Um, I've seen a lot of faces, and [singing] and I wrecked 'em all! 'Cause I'm a cowboy, on a steel horse I ride!

Rachel:

If you wake up our child singing that song...

Griffin:

Oh, it's gonna be fucking worth it. He would be so lucky to wake up to that beautiful version of I'm a Cowboy, Baby, by Jon Bon Jovi, not the song. I also have to always remember if it's Bon Jon Jovi or Jon Bon Jovi.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

But Bon Jon Jovi would be crazy, wouldn't it? Don't leave me. If you left me I would die.

Rachel:

Um, yeah, but anyway, all going back to this, this Twitter account is wonderful.

Griffin:

Yes.

Rachel:

I, um, discovered it today, which led me on this whole exploration of, uh, the ability to see faces in things.

Griffin:

I want to try to describe this, what I'm looking at now. It's a mixer, right? And so, it has the two holes where the, um, whisks go into, right? It's like a...

Rachel:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

... an electric whisk mixer, and it's a... But it's a stand mixer, right? And so, the part where the whisks go into is bent backwards a little bit, so you have

some clearance over the bowl to, like, plug the whisks in. But there's no whisks in it, so it kind of just looks like a long, tubular, red man with these hollow, dead...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... eyes looking sadly into his bowl where his whisks have fallen. It's very good.

Rachel:

[laughs] So, again, just for those of you that are interested, it's F-A-C-E-S P-I-C-S.

Griffin:

Faces Pics.

Rachel:

It's been around since, like, 2013, 2014.

Griffin:

And that's a good user name for y'all to have snagged. You want some submissions?

Rachel:

Yes.

Griffin:

Here's one from Juliana, who says, "Hello. I just wanted to let you..." Oh, this is less of a submission, more of an update. "Hello. I just wanted to know that typing is still in school curriculums, at least throughout the Midwest. What we use in my local, uh, middle schools is Learn to Type 3."

Rachel:

Oh.

Griffin:

Uh, I have a question, but we'll come back to it. "Our local high schools all have keyboarding classes. My friends and I sometimes have typing competitions on TypeRacer. I've never heard of the Mavis Beacon family of products, but they sound rad as hell."

Rachel:

So, I did a Twitter poll...

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

... uh, to see...

Griffin:

I got slammed.

Rachel:

...to see how many people thought Mavis Beacon was real, and more than the people that thought she was real had never heard of her.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Rachel:

Like, 45% of my respondents.

Griffin:

The biggest— The majority said, "Who is Mavis Beacon?" And that bummed me out in a major, major way. Learn to Type 3? Have we really been changing...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... typing that we've needed three editions of this?

Rachel:

Well, maybe the text you're typing about now is more, like, modern.

Griffin:

Yeah, like, you know.

Rachel:

Like, instead of, like, "I insert my floppy disk," it's like...

Griffin:

"I jam my flopper into the B drive."

Rachel:

Well— [laughs]

Griffin:

Um, here's one from Megan, who says, "One of the most wonderful things I can think of is pre-peeled garlic in the big container things. The bodega next door to me sells a big thing of garlic for maybe \$5, and it lasts me a short lifetime. As somebody who grew up in an Italian-American, uh, American household, I would say I use about five times the amount of garlic in any given recipe that it tells me I should use, and it has never done me wrong."

Rachel:

That's so nice.

Griffin:

Hell, yeah.

Rachel:

Griffin and I are big fans of...

Griffin:

Love this vegetable, nut? Herb?

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Herb? Nut? Vegetable? What is that?

Rachel:

I don't actually...

Griffin:

Is it a— Is it a herb or is it a nut?

Rachel:

I assume it's an herb.

Griffin:

It might be a vegetable.

Rachel:

It grows underground like a potato.

Griffin:

I know. It's a nightshade, it's poison. I always put about twice as much garlic as any recipe calls for.

Rachel:

Well, and I was gonna say too, anytime a grocery store will offer you something that has already been peeled or chopped, I'm a big fan.

Griffin:

I want to feel it. I want to pick it up off the thing and smell it.

Rachel:

You want to slice your own watermelon? Nobody wants to do that.

Griffin:

No, I want to pick up that melon and sniff it deep.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, here's one from Michaela, who says, "I am a teacher, and something I find wonderful is the feeling of warm paper fresh off the copier. Sometimes I enjoy placing my cheek against the warm paper..."

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

"... and just basking in all of the warm paper glory." Heck, yeah. My mom was the secretary for the church that we grew up attending, and I would go... They had two copiers, one in, like, the front room and one in, like, the back closet, and I would just go, and I would remember, like, scanning my face, not to have funny pictures of my face, but just because it felt so good to get blasted by...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... what was probably, like, radon.

Rachel:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Huh. I did this a lot.

Rachel:

A lot?

Griffin:

Is that not good?

Rachel:

No, I don't think so. It's probably not good for your eyes.

Griffin:

Oh, that's where it started.

Rachel:

Right? [laughs]

Griffin:

I could see magic eye paintings. Any... What did I say paintings again?

Rachel:

Paintings again [laughs].

Griffin:

This has been Wonderful. Thank you all so much 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 in the episode description. Oh, you know who else we need to thank?

Rachel:

MaximumFun.org?

Griffin:

Mm-hmm.

Rachel:

Thank you for hosting our podcast, and all the other great podcasts.

Griffin:

Yeah. And, yeah, if you want to hear other shows that we do, they're all at McElroyShows.com. And, uh, yeah, I think that's it. Um, thank you all so much. Come on back next time. Come on down to the ranch, why don't you? We'll have a breakfast waiting. Oh, biscuits, eggs, any way you like them, down here...

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

... at the Bob Evans Podcast Breakfast Saloon. We're gonna slop you down any way that you need with gravy on your biscuits, pancakes, and jokes written on the napkins by me and Rachel by hand. So, come on down to the Bob Evans Podcast Barn, and take it from me, you're gonna love how you feel. I guarantee it.

Rachel:

And free bathroom candy for the kids.

Griffin:

Yeah, but the bathroom costs \$5 to get into.

Rachel:

[laughs]

Griffin:

That's how we get you.

[theme song plays]

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Speaker 1:

Judge John Hodgman ruled in my favor.

Speaker 2:

Judge John Hodgman ruled in my friend's favor.

Speaker 3:

Judge John Hodgman ruled in my favor.

John:

I'm Judge John Hodgman. You're hearing the voices of real litigants, real people, who have submitted disputes to my internet court at the Judge John Hodgman Podcast. I hear their cases, I ask them questions, they're good ones, and then I tell them who's right and who's wrong.

Speaker 4:

Thanks to Judge John Hodgman's ruling, my dad has been forced to retire one of the worst dad jokes of all time.

Speaker 5:

Instead of cutting his own hair with a Flowbee, my husband has his hair cut professionally.

Speaker 6:

I have to join a community theater group.

Speaker 7:

And my wife has stopped bringing home wild animals.

John:

It's the Judge John Hodgman Podcast. Find it every Wednesday at MaximumFun.org, or wherever you download podcasts.

Speaker 8:

Thanks, Judge John Hodgman.