

Wonderful! 295: Hide Your Vape, Here Comes Street Rachel

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[theme music plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hi, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: This is a show where we talk about things we like, that's good, that we like them, and we're into. It's a podcast by two marrieds, like us.

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Um, I wanted to ask you...

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: Do you have any clue as to what our son is gonna be for Halloween this year?

Griffin: Wow. Um... we've kicked around a few ideas.

Rachel: I brought up a few things with him, but he doesn't seem committed to anything yet.

Griffin: He doesn't, which is surprising, 'cause it's almost the end of September. I feel like typically mid-July we're already, you know, emailing with Spirit Halloween.

Rachel: Last year he was Sonic, right?

Griffin: Last year he was Sonic the Hedgehog.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, from the video game series Sonic the Hedgehog.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And the books.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: The novelizations of Sonic the Hedgehog. [crosstalk]

Rachel: Mm-hmm. Uh-huh.

Griffin: Um, we've had, you know, some classic, uh—some classic stuff from him. I feel like this year we've talked a lot about Ash Ketchum, who he calls Ash Ketchums.

Rachel: Oh. [laughs]

Griffin: Which is great. It reminds me of the Key and Peele sketch.

Rachel: Does he know that you have also been Ash Ketchum for Halloween?

Griffin: No. I did. I was, wasn't I?

Rachel: And in fact, I was Pikachu, and I was pregnant with him.

Griffin: That's right! And people brought up a lot of sort of confusing imagery that we had maybe introduced into the Ash Ketchum's... Pikachu's...

Rachel: I bet pregnant Pikachu—

Griffin: Oh yeah.

Rachel: Will get you some stuff on the internet.

Griffin: I think [crosstalk] will get you—will, you know, will buy you a carton of milk at the grocery store.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I bet you there's lots of results for that one. I bet you Ask Jeeves is like, "Ugh, this again, huh? No probably. I have a button, actually. I have a macro set up for this search."

Rachel: The thing we have noticed that's really kind of frustrating about the world of Pokémon, at least what we can access here in the Western part of the world, is that a lot of it is for adults.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And it is difficult to find clothing items and costumes.

Griffin: So frustrating.

Rachel: That fit a child.

Griffin: Or—yeah. Henry really wanted a Pokémon jacket and I was like, "No probably. Nintendo, you got me?"

And Nintendo was like, "I got you."

Rachel: [laughs] You, specifically.

Griffin: I was like, "What about my—what about my little—my small... wiry son?"

And they're like, "Ooh... "

Rachel: "Eugh... "

Griffin: "We don't know about that. Can he wear a big shirt like pajamas?"

Anyway, thanks for nothing. We got there, though. We—[laughs] we did get Henry a Pokémon jacket that he loves, and a pair of Pikachu headphones. And together—when we had ordered them and he knew they were coming at the end of the week he was like, "I can't wait to get my hands on that Pokémon drip."

And that made me feel so proud.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: To have a son like him.

Rachel: Yeah. The other day he—I believe he was wearing a few pieces of Sonic outfit. Like a hoodie and a shirt or something. And he did refer to it as his drip.

Griffin: I love this. I didn't teach him that. That's great. Of course I didn't. I know you didn't. So that's great.

Rachel: No. No, I don't know that I've ever heard you...

Griffin: Refer to drip?

Rachel: As—yeah, an outfit choice as "Your drip."

Griffin: No, no. I mean, if anything for me it's more like droop, am I right?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Huhhh? I have a small wonder?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Hey. You got any small wonders?

Rachel: I think I can address this here.

Griffin: Okay?

Rachel: And that is my enthusiasm for The Golden Bachelor, which is coming very, very soon.

Griffin: Yeah. We've—

Rachel: I've got a lot of fingers crossed for this one. A lot of what I have found to be challenging about the franchise I am hopeful will not be present in The Golden Bachelor, and I can return to a franchise that once brought me so much joy.

Griffin: I think maybe that's tonight, actually. Or maybe even it was last night.

Rachel: [simultaneously] Is it tonight?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Ooh.

Griffin: Uh, yeah. I am... cautiously... optimistic about it. I'm not optimistic. I don't think it'll be very good. But I probably will watch it. Uh, we have dipped into, [laughs] let's say, a bit of senior romantic programming this year.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Between Love Village and Love After Divorce.

Rachel: We mentioned this last week, I think.

Griffin: I don't know that we did in the context of, uh—I mean, we've talked about our dalliance with Korean reality television programming. Love Village I believe was a Japanese show. But it is a different spice when the people are, you know, an older set than you get in the Bachelor franchise typically. So I'll be curious to see. I mean, these people, they got—their priorities are different. They're at a different place in their lives.

Rachel: Hopefully they can handle their liquor pretty well at this point.

Griffin: You would hope so, yeah.

Rachel: I don't know. We'll see.

Griffin: Um, you know how sometimes on Bachelor and Bachelorette they'll bring out, like, an old person from the limo, and then another—a young person would come out and be like, "Ha, got you!"

Rachel: [simultaneously] "Haha!" [crosstalk]

Griffin: "This is my grandma." I wonder if they'll do that in reverse where just, like...

Rachel: Ohh, that's fun.

Griffin: A young woman will get out. No, I feel like if a young woman walked into the house that the Golden Bachelor lived in, she would be... she would be destroyed summarily by everybody else that is there.

Rachel: Oh...

Griffin: That would not go down smooth on that show, I think.

Rachel: Yeah. I mean, for those of you that enjoyed when we did Rosebuddies, for a long time we also enjoyed it. And I do yearn for a time when I can talk about a reality show similar to that, you know, and feel okay about it.

Griffin: Oh, I'll talk about Love After Divorce all day long. We just polished that bad boy off last night, season finale dropped on Sunday. I'll go ahead and make that my small wonder. Here we go. Backdoor.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, it turned out pretty good I think! It certainly—the pace was a bit slow for my taste.

Rachel: Well, it's not finished yet.

Griffin: It's not finished, is it?

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Oh my, yes. So we've got a—

Rachel: We don't even know. We're—

Griffin: [simultaneously] A surprise. A special surprise.

Rachel: We are now, yeah, we are now caught up so that we are not able to access the newest episodes yet. We have to wait.

Griffin: We've been watching it weekly every Sunday when new episodes drop. It's been hot shit.

Rachel: We made the assumption, like a lot of people would I think, that the show ends after their exciting week in Cancun, but there seems to be the suggestion that they will live together, and we will watch that too?

Griffin: Which is great. That show, if you didn't hear us talk about it the first time, a bunch of divorcees live together in a house and go on dates, and some of them fall in love. We've got a few successful pairings out of the set that we've had.

Rachel: And they very slowly, intentionally reveal information.

Griffin: Which is cool.

Rachel: So, like, at a certain point the show runners will decide that they can tell each other what their age is, and then...

Griffin: Or how many kids they have, which is a big one.

Rachel: Which allows you to play along at home. [laughs] And think, like, "Alright. I'm gonna guess that this person... "

Griffin: It really was fun, 'cause we were quite wrong.

Rachel: We were always wrong, pretty much, yeah.

Griffin: On pretty much every single point of data. Like, "Oh, that guy is 27."

"I'm 46."

"What the fuck?!"

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: "That person has got maybe no kids."

"I have three kids."

"Oh, shit!"

Rachel: I think we were pretty right on who had kids, though.

Griffin: I don't think so, man. There were some surprises in there. We're not gonna spoil it for the folks at home, but yeah. I... I am enjoying that show. I can't wait to watch the people be taken out of this—this environment, this paradise of Playa del Carmen, and...

Rachel: I think—I think what I will say about The Golden Bachelor that is not present in a lot of the other reality shows we've been watching recently is that kind of, like, producer manipulation, and I am hoping that that happens less with these people on this show? But I don't know.

Griffin: Yeah, I don't know. Anyway, um, reality TV. It's poppin'.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You go first this week.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Survivor also starts back up this week. You know... I follow a lot of Survivor contestants on Instagram and it's just so exciting to watch everybody abuzz. Abuzz with excitement.

Rachel: Do we know, are there any, like, new gimmicks or twists or...?

Griffin: They all get knives.

Rachel: [laughs quietly] Um... yeah, I'd watch that. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. Also Jeff has started to say "Guys" again. [laughs]

Rachel: [laughs] That is a very specific joke.

Griffin: That the Survivor-head—I know there's probably lots of Survivor-heads out there.

Rachel: [through laughter] A very specific joke. [unintelligible] Oh, I enjoyed that. Thank you.

Griffin: Thanks! It's a good joke. What's on the plate today? I'm hungry.

Rachel: I wanted to talk this week about.

Griffin: Leggings!

Rachel: Leggings.

Griffin: I have no feelings about this.

Rachel: You are one of the few people that can say that.

Griffin: Okay!

Rachel: Uh, this is—um... hmm. Let me... hmm.

Griffin: Hmm.

Rachel: There's a few places I can start. One thing I will say is that obviously during the pandemic when I didn't have to go in front of people very often, I chose comfort, and often that meant I chose leggings.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Uh, and now it is difficult to choose anything else.

Griffin: Are you describing the... ensemble you're wearing right now as—is that leggings?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: I guess I don't know what the difference between leggings and tighter pants.

Rachel: When we were kids, they were called stretch pants. Does this seem familiar to you? Or is this maybe a regional thing?

Griffin: I mean... when I was a kid, most of the pants I wore did stretch. And so...

Rachel: [laughs] Well, there's sweatpants, which are looser, and then there's a legging, which tends to cling more.

Griffin: Yeah. It's the cling I think that does it for me, or rather doesn't do it. Doesn't do it for me on me. Does do it for me on you.

Rachel: [laughs] Thank you.

Griffin: You're welcome.

Rachel: The other thing I will say is that now that I have actually started to participate in fitness, I appreciate the... uh, utility of leggings.

Griffin: Oh, I bet.

Rachel: In that I am able to move my body in a lot of ways.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And also, um, for a curvier woman, the thigh rub is nonexistent with a legging.

Griffin: Interesting. I don't think about that.

Rachel: I didn't think about that either. One time when I went to the gym I wore just regular shorts and I got—not regular. Like, a—like a street short. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. [laughs] Rachel rolled up in her street short and [[deck?]].

Rachel: "What's up?!" [laughs]

Griffin: "[gruff voice] You guys use the internet?"

Rachel: [laughs] I'm picturing those, like, Bugs Bunny Taz graphics where, like, the hat's on backwards and there's street shorts.

Griffin: Uh-huh, uh-huh. Oh shit, hide your vape! Here comes street Rachel.

Rachel: [laughs] No, I'm talking about an athletic short. But, like, one that doesn't provide any kind of, like, thigh protection. And when you're running, like, you do get a little chafing, you know? And so anyways, so the legging, not just comfortable, protects you while you're running.

Griffin: That does sound valuable.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: That is an issue for me when I exercise is, like, down there, it's a mess.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs] You were talking about the lining, and how the lining is useful. It's a similar thing.

Griffin: I like the support I receive from a street short lining.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Just to sort of, like, contain... the zone.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So I can focus on my rowing, and what have you.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Um... so, leggings. I probably should've realized that if I was gonna talk about an article of women's clothing, I was gonna end up talking about how people had opinions about it. [laughs]

Griffin: Okay!

Rachel: Um, there was a lot—like, 2010s I feel like is when people started really talking about leggings, and whether or not it was acceptable as fashion.

Griffin: To wear, like, out in the—out in the world?

Rachel: Yeah, yeah.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: There's this whole, like... I don't know. It's interesting. 'Cause I find myself feeling insecure about it too, of this idea of whether you can wear athleisure in the world and it's acceptable, if you are not participating

in fitness. And then, like, reading this article—so, Vox did this article in 2019 called A Decade of Leggings Controversy Explained. [laughs quietly]

Griffin: Oh, that's great.

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, what it—

Griffin: That's service journalism. That's inspiring.

Rachel: Where they talk a lot about, like, just the general policing of women's bodies, and how this kind of represents that. Where people are suddenly very obsessed about whether or not leggings are appropriate. And then you kind of realize, like, well, why—why is this even [laughs] a topic?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Um... and—

Griffin: I feel like I remember this conversation taking place sometimes before COVID, and then when COVID happened and nobody saw anybody for two years—

Rachel: That's very true.

Griffin: —nobody gave a shit anymore.

Rachel: That's very true. And a lot of it too is just kind of the advances in leggings.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: I read about kind of in the 2010 period when you started seeing, like, leggings, like, three for \$10 at, like, a Wet Seal or a Forever 21. They're very cheaply made, and it was like you would stretch them and you could basically see through them. And so there was a lot of, like, concern among people about, like, whether or not girls should be able to wear them to school, because they're stretchy, and you can see... [laughs quietly]

Griffin: Stuff, sure.

Rachel: Little iotas of skin, and, you know. Um, but the—like, the... the dawn of leggings, from what I can tell, um... are you buckled in for this? [laughs quietly]

Griffin: I'm just imagining one ape strangling another ape with a pair of leggings.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And all the other apes, like, jumping up and down in, like, a primal celebration.

Rachel: There is, like, a world of fashion that I am obviously very disconnected from. Um, and so whenever you talk about a fashion trend, there's always people that can, like, pinpoint it.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Apparently there was a Vogue photo shoot of Edie Sedgwick, who was, like, one of Andy Warhol's big models, and was an actress, and she did a photo shoot in leggings.

Griffin: I feel like I know this photo shoot.

Rachel: Really?

Griffin: I feel—yeah, I feel like if I conjure an image of Edie Sedgwick in my head there's just one, and it's this—this photo shoot.

Rachel: Mm-hmm, yeah.

Griffin: It is somewhat iconic.

Rachel: And then the 70's it was, like, Olivia Newton-John in Grease.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: Uh, the 80's. [laughs quietly] Olivia Newton-John again.

Griffin: [laughs] In Grease 2.

Rachel: [laughs] Well, in a fitness context, too.

Griffin: Yeah, I don't think actually she was in Grease 2.

Rachel: [laughs] And then the phase I mentioned where all of a sudden it was like you could get leggings super cheap at, like, mall stores and whatever. And then of course athleisure blew up. And then, like, every celebrity had their own line.

Like, Kate Hudson obviously has Fabletics, and then—

Griffin: Obviously!

Rachel: Obviously. [laughs]

Griffin: Everyone knows this! If you had asked me, "Griffin, what is Kate Hudson's athleisure brand called?" I would of course said Fab... letics.

Rachel: Letics. Uh, Beyoncé I guess had an active wear line in 2016. Reebok had Gigi Hadid.

Griffin: Wait! Beyoncé had... a fitness wear line?

Rachel: She may still, I don't know.

Griffin: I was gonna say, it doesn't seem like Beyoncé has failed projects that are out there.

Rachel: Um, there's any number of celebrities that, you know, have their own type of legging. Selena Gomez was in there. Just a lot of people. And it became just a really kind of like a—a fashionable thing, like a trendy thing.

Griffin: Does Selena Gomez have a sweater line?

Rachel: Uh... and then... yeah, I mean, throughout all of this people are, like... [sighs] just... issuing their concerns about leggings.

A lot of them, as I mentioned, was in schools.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: Um, you know, any kind of, like, uh, dress code, you know, is usually designed in a way to isolate some [laughs quietly] some group of people.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Uh, and it—but what is awkward and terrible is when these people are called to defend their decisions.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And you realize just how... like, poorly constructed they are.

Griffin: [through laughter] Yeah?

Rachel: So, for example in 2013, a California junior high principal called an assembly of 450 girls between the ages of 12 and 14 and stressed to them that they were not allowed to wear leggings without a dress or skirt over them. She later told ABC News, "When girls bend in leggings, the threads spread, and that's really when it becomes a problem."

[both laugh]

Griffin: That's so... clinical.

Rachel: [through laughter] That's really—just to see people, like—

Griffin: "And that's where the issue lies."

Rachel: Um... there was another example. Um, a Republican state representative from Montana made headlines when he said that yoga pants should be illegal in public.

Griffin: Okay!

Rachel: And attempted to read you his state's indecent exposure laws to prohibit any clothing that, quote, "Gives the appearance or stimulates butts, genitals, pelvic areas, or women's nipples."

Griffin: I mean, I'll decide...

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah, right? What stimula—

Griffin: ... what stimulates my butt—what stimulates my—hey, guess what? JNCO jeans stimulate my butt. Got you! Loophole, Congressman!

Rachel: Uh, 2017, there's the big story, United Airlines. You probably remember this. United Airlines barred two young girls from getting onto the airplanes because they were wearing leggings.

Griffin: Jesus Christ.

Rachel: Which is supposedly in violation of a dress code that the airline wrote specifically for its employees and their children.

Griffin: And it's—their children?!

Rachel: Yeah. So that was the thing.

Griffin: Why does United Airlines get to decide what—

Rachel: These two people I guess were children of employees, and when they fly for free they have to, like, wear a certain...

Griffin: Jesus Christ. What a creepy hill to die on, United.

Rachel: I know, I know. [laughs] I know, and then of course, like, Delta came out like, "We don't care about leggings." You know, like—

Griffin: "We don't care. Get fuckin' nasty!"

Rachel: [laughs] Uh, yeah. And then a lot of, like, college, you know—there's always been this issue about, like, college kids dressed too slouchy when they go to class, and we need to be training them to be professionals in the world, and they shouldn't—

Griffin: Oh, whoever gives a—no one gives a shit.

Rachel: I know. And you remember, like—I remember those people that actually came to class real dressed up. And it was like, you had this impression that they were taking it super seriously, but then you remember, like, oh, wait. None of that actually impacts your ability. [laughs] Like, it isn't, like—

Griffin: No!

Rachel: Anyway.

Griffin: Also, literally no one at Marshall—like, literally I never saw anyone at Marshall—

Rachel: Like, dress up?

Griffin: The only people who did were, like, uh... you always knew in the journalism school at Marshall who was about to anchor [??? 18:35] Report, which was our, like, TV, like, local TV news thing, because they would come dressed up, and that was it. That was it.

Rachel: Oh, and there was a big—so I went to Mizzou, and there's a big Greek life community. And if I remember correctly I feel like that was a thing.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: On, like, a certain day of the week or something, they were supposed to wear ties. I don't remember. Anyway, it's like a thing, but it's not common.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: Um... so I will just end by saying, so, this article on Vox talks about, um, somebody from the Atlantic, Derek Thompson, spoke to University of Nevada fashion historian Dierdre Clemente, who told him that leggings as pants are not just about the rise of synthetic fibers or the trend of performative wellness culture, but a century-long journey towards a culture of casual. 100 years ago you would have day clothes for the street, dinner cloths for the restaurant, theater clothes, and so many genres of dress. These barriers have come down. Athleisure is the ultimate breaking down of barriers.

Griffin: Uh-oh. Uh-oh. I don't have most of those.

Rachel: [laughs] No, but I like thinking about it that way. Of, like, this is an evolution. Like, this is a, like—like I mentioned, like a utility of, like... we don't need to have specific clothes for particular events in our lives, you know? And that if you are comfortable and if you feel good about the way you look, like, that should be acceptable in any environment?

Griffin: I love that this conversation is taking place at the US House of Representatives right now as well. I don't know if you have followed the news, but they have adopted a—a more casual dress.

Rachel: No, I didn't know that!

Griffin: Uh, yeah. Like, this sesh.

Rachel: It seems so antiquated to me. And, I mean, it's definitely—like, there's a class thing, there's a race thing, there's a lot of complications to this.

Griffin: Of course.

Rachel: Like gender, as I mentioned. But it's just—to be having these conversations, to be so advanced in so many areas and to still be like, "Is it okay if women wear this kind of pants?" [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: It's just—it's wild. Anyway, super comfortable. I like them. I find them useful. I really never want to wear anything else. I have tried wearing jeans for an entire day. I can't do it anymore.

Griffin: No. It hurts the flesh.

Rachel: I will take a jean. I will bring it into the world. As soon as I return, I will take off said jean.

Griffin: Well, and if it gets wet, forget about it. It was raining this morning. My jeans got a little bit wet. I'm still wearing them, and it sucks, and it has sucked the whole day.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And I should just go put some leggings on.

Rachel: You should!

Griffin: But I don't own any.

Rachel: I would love to see you in some leggings.

Griffin: I mean, I have some sleep pants that are...

Rachel: Clingy?

Griffin: Clingy.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And they're pretty good.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Get a lot of compliments. From I guess just you.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Thanks!

[ad break]

[music plays]

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Jackie: And I'm Jackie Kashian. And we have a podcast called The Jackie and Laurie Show on Max Fun and it's very exciting, 'cause what do we talk about?

Laurie: Comedy!

Jackie: Stand-up comedy. We both do stand-up comedy, and have since the dawn of Christ.

Laurie: Well, Jackie—

Jackie: Is that offensive?

Laurie: It is offensive to me, because you've aged me.

Jackie: [laughs]

Laurie: We started in the late 80's and we're still here! You can't kill us!

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[Star Trek comm noise]

Griffin: You ready for this? [humming]

Rachel: Is that your topic? [laughs quietly]

Griffin: No. I could, though. I could probably improvise that one right off of the dome. No, I'm gonna talk about keepy uppy.

Rachel: Ohhh!

Griffin: When we are trying to get our two children, who have a four year age gap between them, to be active and play together when it is raining outside...

Rachel: Yes. This weekend was a real challenge.

Griffin: Was a real challenge. Very rainy through the whole weekend. We did some indoor stuff. Uh, and that was fine. But we had long stretches where we were just at home trying to get them to be active and entertain each other and play with each other, and if you got a balloon and a big enough open space, baby... sure, you got keepy uppy possibilities on your hands.

Rachel: Can I ask, did you call it or hear it called that before we saw Bluey?

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Really?

Griffin: Yes. So in—in my house, my experience, we worship the Lord—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: —and I've only ever played with a balloon. If you Google keepy uppy, you will of course get that one episode of Bluey that I believe was, like, the third episode ever of Bluey was them playing keepy uppy. There's also a keepy uppy Bluey board game, which is a lot of words to have to say back to back like that.

Rachel: [laughs] We like—of course I have played this game. I'm aware of this game. I love this game.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: I don't know that we called it anything.

Griffin: Just balloons, balloonzos.

Rachel: Just let's hit a balloon around.

Griffin: Yeah. Um, well, if you Google keepy uppy you find Bluey. And then you find a bunch of results about soccer, or football if you well.

Rachel: Ohh.

Griffin: Because keepy uppy I guess is a term more commonly used to refer to juggling a soccer ball with just your feet, and shoulders, and head, and chest, and legs. Anything but the hands.

When we play keepy uppy balloon style with children, hands is acceptable.

Rachel: Yeah, no. I'm just thinking about hacky sack and how—

Griffin: Now, hacky sack is also a part of this keepy uppy tradition. I would count hacky sack as keepy uppy.

Rachel: It's interesting how, uh... how I'd feel comfortable just calling that hacky sack, but I wouldn't ever just say, like, balloon.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Do you—[laughs] do you want to play balloon with me?

Griffin: That's interesting.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Um, do you want to play balloon with me...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... would've been a really strong intro for when we met, I feel like. If at the concert we met at you were like, "Hey. Do you want to balloon with me?" I would've definitely said yes and been down for sure.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, I like—soccer ball seems really hard. Straight up. That seems too hard for me. I like balloon keepy uppy 'cause you can play it with kids and it's accessible. I feel like if you had a room full of children, like at a birthday party or something, and they were all bored and you just tossed a balloon and there and you were just like, "Keepy uppy!" You could run away and just be good for, like, a half hour. Those kids—

Rachel: Yeah, no. In that moment when they were playing with the balloon I thought, "Why do we even buy toys?"

Griffin: Why do we buy toys? We do we do anything but play keepy uppy?

Rachel: We don't we just have a house full of balloons?

Griffin: 'Cause they get so into it.

Rachel: I know!

Griffin: All of a sudden not letting this balloon touch the ground becomes the world's most important—

Rachel: I know. We really had to talk Henry down for a while, 'cause he would get very frustrated with Gus, 'cause Gus didn't understand the rules, and then the balloon would fall, and Henry would be outraged. And we'd be like, you know, it's gonna be okay. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. He's chill about it now.

Rachel: He has chilled.

Griffin: But also Gus has gotten better.

Rachel: True.

Griffin: And Gus has also gotten very intense about this. And I will say, every other thing else on Earth.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, the soccer ball version of keepy uppy has a lot of world records associated with them that I'm going to tell you about, because they are absolutely wild. For soccer keepy uppy, the player can use feet, legs, chest, shoulders, and head.

The official record for the longest someone kept—

Rachel: Can I guess?

Griffin: —a soccer ball keepy uppy—

Rachel: Can I guess?

Griffin: Well, let me tell you. It was by Victor Ericsson, who just won the record just earlier this year, June 2023. How long did he keep a soccer ball off the ground?

Rachel: [through laughter] You said—

Griffin: Not touches—

Rachel: You said 2023 like I would be like, "Okay, well, historically... "
[laughs]

Griffin: No, I just wanted to impress upon you that this is hot off the presses. This is very recent. I'm not talking about number of touches. The duration, the time.

Rachel: The duration. I mean, touches would be impossible for me to guess. I have no idea on that. But I'm gonna say duration, I'm gonna say seven hours?

Griffin: 28 fucking hours.

Rachel: Whoaaa!

Griffin: Victor Ericsson did that this past summer for 28 hours. He beat the previous record by eight and a half fucking hours! That's so impressive, Victor!

Rachel: You know what I'm gonna ask, right?

Griffin: What's that?

[pause]

Rachel: How did he...

Griffin: How did he... poop—poop and pee?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Probably just didn't. Or he did!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And it was... bad.

Rachel: One of the two! [laughs]

Griffin: It was bad. He was just like, "Everyone please leave the room. Honor system. You can hear me—you can continue to hear me conk, bonk, thonk, kadonk. It's just I don't want you to see what happens next."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Or diaper.

Rachel: [through laughter] Or diaper.

Griffin: But even diaper, like, you're doing some stuff in there while keeping a soccer ball up off the ground that I do not think would be helpful. I don't want to think about that anymore, thank you so much.

Rachel: I mean, I'm already there.

Griffin: You're already right there.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Another fun wild record. In August, 2016, Abraham Muñoz ran the entire 26 mile Mexico City Marathon in 5 hours, 41 minutes, and 52 seconds, which is probably faster than I could do it while not playing keepy uppy, but what Abraham did was play keepy uppy and keep a ball off the ground for all 26 miles of it. Which... boggles the mind. Um...

Rachel: Were other people in that race with them? And, like, how...

Griffin: Confusing would it have been?

Rachel: Well, and like, how would you control? 'Cause I imagine people, like, aren't paying attention and they're, like, running right next to you.

Griffin: Good question.

Rachel: And you'd have to be like, "On your left!"

Griffin: "On your left! I'm keeping a soccer ball off the ground!" He didn't let the ball hit the ground for all 26 miles. Wild.

Not the longest distance covered. In January 2010, Dan Magness was playing keepy uppy. He played keepy uppy for 30 miles, visiting the stadiums of every premier league team in London in the process, just in a

circuit. That's so long a distance to... ambulate, let alone kick a soccer ball around.

In 2020, Imogen Papworth-Heidel performed 1,123,586 touches over 195 days to raise money for charity. Obviously not in one long stretch, but still, that's a tremendous number of times to make a soccer ball hit your body.

Um, so, there's obviously a big connection to hacky sack here, which could be played communally, albeit with a much, much smaller ball.

Interestingly enough, keepy uppy has historical roots. In Japan during the Heian Period, court nobles and other members of the aristocratic class played a game called *kemari*, which is basically... hacky sack. Like, team keepy uppy where you only use your feet to juggle a ball, keep a ball in the air. The ball is, like, soccer ball sized, but it's hacky sack sort of consistency? Like, it's full of barley. I imagine it's quite a heavy ball. Uh, but they kick it around, and it was considered a very fancy and dignified game that was in fashion for, like, a wicked long time. Uh, really until sumo wrestling became more popular in the Sengoku Period.

Uh, in the 14th century, *kemari* was, like, codified into an art form called *kemarido*, which was taught to, like, the aristocratic class, alongside poetry and, like, tea ceremonies.

Rachel: Huh!

Griffin: So it was, like, expected for you to be very good at hacky sack if you belonged to a certain class, uh, during that period of time.

Rachel: Can I ask you, have you ever been in a situation where you have been asked to hacky sack?

Griffin: Of course.

Rachel: What is that experience like for you?

Griffin: I... kick it in the air once and I'm like, "Hey, I'm pretty good at this." And then my second kick makes it go in some wild direction and I'm like, "I can save this!" And then I don't save it. [crosstalk].

Rachel: I think I have never been asked to hacky sack.

Griffin: You've never, like, been walking down the quad and, like, a wayward ball leaves it's little druid circle?

Rachel: I have—[laughs] I have watched hacky sack. I have tried to hacky sack on my own, in the privacy of, you know, my own space. I don't know that I've ever been in a circle and been like, "Alright. We're doing this." I think I have avoided it my whole life.

Griffin: It was a reward you could exchange tickets for at The Pub, which was our local arcade. And I would get a hacky sack quite often, 'cause it was only, like, 200 tickets, and you know I was always fucking rolling in 'em. And then I would go out with my group of theater friends and be like, "Hey, guys. Look what I got. Hacky sack."

And then I would kick it to someone... and it would, like, hit them in the thigh. And then they would be like, "We're done."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And that was pretty much the extent of it.

Rachel: That was the thing, is that I always felt like w—if—it's kind of like slack lining, in that you see people do it, and they seem pretty good at it. Uh, and then there's nowhere for a beginner like me to jump in, you know?

Griffin: That's not true. I bet you could slack line. No problem.

Rachel: Oh yeah?

Griffin: I think you'd be good at it.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, you can still watch people play *kemari* today, because during some festivals in the Kansai region, folks get dressed up in costumes, like, resembling Heian Period aristocrats, and they play *kemari* at Shinto shrines. And folks gather around to watch them, and it basically just looks like a bunch of [laughs] fancy bros kicking a big hacky sack around, and it kind of kicks ass to see it, actually.

Rachel: Yeah, I would be curious about that.

Griffin: Uh, I watched some YouTube videos of it, and it's delightful to watch people in, like, really ornate regalia playing hacky sack.

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah.

Griffin: It's very, very good. It's just—it's fun to kick a ball around to people. It's fun to keep a balloon off the ground with children and have them hit it back to you in turn. And I just love—I love how many cultures across human civilizations have realized that, is what I love about, like, games, particularly sort of folk games, which I guess you could lump this into that category of just like, independently, so many people realize, like, "Hey, it's actually pretty fun to do this thing."

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And then it just has all these different forms across all of civilization.

Rachel: We thought for sure, because the two things that are able to unite our children of very differing age is the balloon, and also the trampoline. So we thought [laughs quietly] we'll bring a balloon out to the trampoline. And it floated away so many times. [laughs]

Griffin: Just instantly.

Rachel: Just constantly. [laughs]

Griffin: Hey, you want to know what our friends at home are talking about?

Rachel: Yes!

Griffin: Here's a message from Alex who says:

"Bouldering is my new favorite sport to watch. It's athleticism meets puzzles, multiplied by the tension of plummeting back to Earth at any moment. Plus all the competitions are free on YouTube."

I actually have a couple friends who are, like, very into bouldering. And it's... it is a wild scene.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: It is a wild scene to see people... like, put a rock on the ground the size of a paperweight, and then they're like, "Check this shit out."

And then they just, like, go up on it on, like, four fingers to just showcase their tremendous digital strength.

Rachel: Yeah! I remember when we were Austin there was, like, a rock climbing gym and then, like, a bouldering gym. And it was, like, very clear, these are different skills. These are different communities with, like, different challenges, and it's kind of fascinating to me to think about. Like, these seem like they'd be the same thing, but they are very much not.

Griffin: I also don't know anyone who's kinda into bouldering.

Rachel: [laughs] That's true. That's true.

Griffin: Seems like an all or nothing sort of sport. Which I guess, you know, I watched Free Solo. I get it.

Rachel: Yeah. Right? You're—I mean, just in the same way that I'd be good at slack lining, you'd probably be good at bouldering.

Griffin: Uh, I mean, we did go to that—I mean, we went to a rock climbing... uh, place that was mostly for kids, but I did pretty good...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... at it. Uh, Mia says:

"My small wonder is the Big Brother season 25! It's been a chaotic wilding season with great players and a guest player of Cirie Fields from Survivor. It's been a great way to get through my year and I've been sharing it with my partner who is full-on [crosstalk]."

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Your parents are very big [crosstalk].

Rachel: They do, and my dad did make a point to tell me that Cirie was on it.

Griffin: Alright.

Rachel: Which, like, if anything was gonna entice me, that would be it.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Uh, but no. We still haven't watched it. [laughs]

Griffin: We have not. I think it's—I worry that... if we put one more big reality franchise on our plate, the whole thing's gonna fucking topple over.

Rachel: True.

Griffin: Um... did love Cirie in Traitors. Can't wait for season 2.

Rachel: Yeah, yeah.

Griffin: It's gonna be hot shit. Who did you tell me was on it? They just announced the cast for Traitors season 2.

Rachel: Oh, Sandra?

Griffin: Oh yeah.

Rachel: Is gonna be on it, which I think will be interesting.

Griffin: Oh yeah, for sure.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Um, that's it. Thank you so much 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. Thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go to Maximumfun.org, check out all the great shows that they have there, like Stop Podcasting Yourself, and The Flop House, and so many more, over at Maximumfun.org.

We have other stuff over at mcelroy.family. We have links to shows that we're doing in Philly and New York next month. We've got new merch over at mcelroymerch.com. Gonna add some more there as soon as October rolls around, which will be in just a few days, so check back there for that. And, um... we have a YouTube channel, The McElroy Family, where we're doing streams all the time. And—

Rachel: And you guys have, like, uh... you know, the, uh, uh... the... oh, hmm.

Griffin: You'll get there.

[pause]

Rachel: The TikTok. [laughs]

Griffin: [splutters] Wow! Wow!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I don't—we're not gonna say anything better than what just happened, so let's just stop there.

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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