

MBMBaM 743: Combination Taco Bell and Travis House

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Intro (Bob Ball): The McElroy Brothers are not experts and their advice should never be followed. Travis insists he's a sexpert, but if there's a degree on his wall, I haven't seen it. Also this show isn't for kids, which I mention only so the babies out there will know how cool they are for listening. What's up, you cool baby?

[theme music, "My Life (Is Better With You)!" by Montaigne plays]

Justin: Hello everybody. Welcome to *My Brother, My Brother And Me*, it's an advice show for the modern era. I'm your oldest brother, Jingle Justin McElroy.

Travis: Ooo! What's up, Trav Nation? Jingle jangle, old Chris Krangle, Travis "Big Dog Woof Woof" McElroy.

Justin: Don't— You didn't do anything. You didn't do anything.

Griffin: What's up, Trav Nation?

Travis: What—

Griffin: [imitates jingle bells ringing]

Travis: I didn't finish!

Griffin: [imitates jingle bells ringing]

Travis: [sings] "Hark, hear the bells. Sweet silver bells. All seem to say. Woe, cares away."

Griffin: [simultaneously] [continues imitating the ringing of bells in the song "Carol of the Bells"] "Candlenights is heeere!"

Justin: [simultaneously] [sings to the tune of "Carol of the Bells"] "Ding dong ding dong."

Travis: [simultaneously] [sings to the tune of "Carol of the Bells"] "What up, Trav Nation? I am your middlest brother, Travis "Big Dog Woof Woof" McElroy. McEl, McEl, McEl beeb, doop."

Justin: As you've certainly guessed now, it's our Candlenights spectacular [chuckles] here at the McElroy Ranch.

Travis: Mm.

Justin: Griffin has frozen completely. No, he's back, okay.

Griffin: That was just my body, dude!

Travis: It's a good old-fashioned brother snow down.

Griffin: That wasn't a glitch, I was just— I just kinda stopped for a bit.

Justin: This is the one that you can gather the family around and say, "This is that show I warned you about," [chuckles] and then play it for 'em—

Travis: From— Yeah.

Justin: — and everybody can have a good time listening, 'cause we're not gonna swear this time.

Travis: So get your Mee-maw, get your Pop Pop, get your Little Mee-maw, which is what I assume you call the baby, because she's little and wrinkled too, she looks like Mee-maw, right? And it's just like, "Oh, that baby looks a lot like—"

Griffin: Get Baby Mee-maw.

Travis: Get Baby Mee-maw, get Big Mee-maw, get Medium Mee-maw, your middlest Mee-maw, all the Mee-maws, and –

Griffin: Unstack your Mee-maws of different sizes, and set them up in front of the radio.

Travis: Yeah, get all your—

Justin: The trick—

Travis: There's one Mee-maw inside each Mee-maw—

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: — until you get down to a little egg, and that's Baby Mee-maw inside that egg.

Griffin: That's the Mee-maw life cycle.

Travis: And they can all listen.

Griffin: That's the Mee-maw life cycle.

Travis: That's true.

Justin: 10 years ago we invented this holiday of Candlenights. That's my understanding, as far as I can—

Griffin: What did we do the first four years?

Justin: Huh?

Travis: We just cursed up a storm, every Christmas.

Justin: We just cursed.

Griffin: Oh, we were on that Christmas creep, if memory serves, for a while, yeah.

Justin: Yeah, we were on that Christmas creep, and then we eventually invented our own holiday, where the money is.

Griffin: Right.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: And we wanted to come to you. If you— I will say this, if you didn't catch our video special, our Candlenights— annual Candlenights special, you can still go to bit.ly/candlenightstickets2024 and watch it.

It's just five bucks, and the folks at Harmony House could really use your donation, they are the beneficiaries of all ticket sales this year, and so if you wanna go watch that special, you can pledge five, you can even kick in a few extra bucks if you wanna be a real sport about it.

Travis: And there's merch.

Griffin: There's merch too.

Travis: We got Candlesnights posters, Candlesnights ornaments, and like the special, imagine like you're hearing this, right, and you're like, "How could it get any better than this?"

Griffin: I see.

Travis: But then imagine just three silver foxes, comin' to you live.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And also Dad's there, so a fourth older, much creakier silver fox is—

Griffin: More of a white fox at this point.

Travis: A white fox, like a ghost is there.

Griffin: Sounds like his *Metal Gear Solid* like agent codename. [whispers] The White Fox.

Travis: Yeah, there you go, Ghost Old Fox. And then we—

Justin: I really wanna see Dad dressed up as Old Snake now.

Griffin: That would kick so much [jingle bell bleep plays], dude.

Justin: That would be so cool.

Travis: Silver Snake.

Griffin: That would be so cool.

Justin: That would be cool, honestly.

Travis: And we've got guests, and there's segments, and there's a, I will just say, amazing, my favorite. Justin, I loved— You put in the work and did like four different segments.

Justin: Oh yeah, I did a lot of segments this year.

Travis: They— Griffin, and one point, they got a DJ.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And Rachel dancing.

Justin: They got a professional DJ in. How can I compete with that?

Travis: Amazing.

Justin: It was amazing.

Griffin: A professional DJ and fly dancer, so you can't beat that.

Justin: Incredible.

Griffin: [Bit.ly/candlenightstickets2024](https://bit.ly/candlenightstickets2024), I believe is the link, so.

Justin: Please go do that. And now we're gonna help you.

Travis: You're welcome.

Justin: "The other day, my young nephew asked me if my 17-month-old daughter quote 'has gotten an Elf on the Shelf yet'. I said not yet, but my husband and I have no interest in having an Elf on the Shelf, or doing any of the work that goes into its day-to-day lore—"

Or sorry, "— lore day to day. I don't wanna do the Elf, but I also don't wanna spoil anything for my nephews in regards to the magic of the holidays. They ha— live in an active Elf home.

I feel like I got away with this, my kid is still very young, but I feel like next year the same questions are posed. Brothers, any advice on how to keep the magic alive, but not yet bring quite as much of it into my home—”

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Justin: “— via an Elf.” That’s from My Shelves are For Books and Knickknacks Only.

Griffin: You have control... over the mythos in your home.

Travis: Sure.

Griffin: You don’t have much control over... much stuff in your home, but the mythos you do have control over. If your kid comes and asks, you say, “That’s made up.”

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: You say, “A lot of the— I know you probably think a lot of the stuff we do seems... wild and out of pocket. A man who can go through ventilation? Into our home? To give us free things?”

Travis: Like some kind of Solid Snake?

Griffin: Like some sort of Solid Silver White Snake? That’s pretty farfetched. You can say, “No, that one’s real. If you can believe it, that one’s real. The Elf?”

Travis: That you can buy at Walmart?

Griffin: You can buy an Elf at Walmart?

Travis: He’s in a box at Walmart.

Justin: Guys

Griffin: “Do you want me to show you the box the Elf comes in?”

Justin: You are pulling at a very delicate sweater, my boys.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: You're pulling at a reeeel delicate sweater. That's gonna raise a lot of questions that you may not feel so jazzed about answering about what is and isn't real, and may— you may find it's a little easier just to buy the [jingle bell bleep plays] Elf and... let him live in your home.

Travis: Let me offer this. Let me offer this.

Justin: The real Elf, by the way, just to be clear... The Elf is real. Travis and Griffin, they're kidding.

Travis: Let me offer this. You tell your child that the Elf is only assigned to kids who are kinda on the bubble.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: And like Santa's keeping track, needs a closer eye on them for the naughty and nice list, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: But if your fate's already decided one way or the other, no need for an Elf.

Justin: We have an Elf. We have an Elf, and I will be comfortable telling my kids that, that they're kind of on the fence, and they don't—

Travis: They're on the bubble, yeah.

Justin: They need a little extra help—

Griffin: I would—

Justin: — to get them back on the straight and narrow.

Griffin: I would, and this is why screen time's so important. I would simply load up their iPads to the Wikipedia article for the Elf on the Shelf. If I may! This was a book and toy that came out in 2005.

This is not a Chri— It's not even 20 years old yet. Christmas tradition this does not make. I refuse to let the— this... this tiny little embodiment of the police state into my home to watch my kids, and have to be in all kinds of wild scenarios.

Justin: I think that's—

Griffin: "I'm climbing out of the blender today."

Justin: Mine doesn't—

Griffin: "Woo!"

Justin: I think that's adorable when people who subscribe to Santa grouse about the police state in the ra— in regards to the Elf on the Shelf.

Travis: That's different.

Justin: Not in any way different.

Travis: Santa's just a judgmental neighbor.

Justin: What?

Griffin: This is a— This is volun— See this breaks—

Justin: Santa is a man who's watching everything you do—

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: — and deciding whether or not you get gifts. You cannot draw this like, "I don't want some space cop—" That's Santa, okay?

Travis: But I don't get to choose!

Griffin: Santa—

Travis: To Griffin's point!

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: I don't get to choose if my kids are— like know about Santa.

Griffin: Yes, Santa's omniscient, right? There's nothing we can do about that. Elf on the Shelf infringes upon my fourth amendment rights in a direct and physical, tangible way.

Travis: I don't have to install a Santa simulacrum in my house to watch my kids.

Justin: I want you to know—

Griffin: Exactly.

Justin: — that if your adorable kids walk into my home and start talking a bunch of yay about Clarice and her relative realness, I will hang your kids out to dry as the heretics that they are.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: I will say that they aren't getting anything for Christmas.

Travis: That's fair, Justin. I get that.

Justin: They're bad kids. [chuckles] Okay.

Travis: Here's all I would do.

Justin: They're liars and bad kids, and they're confused.

Travis: I would load up, on my kids' iPad, every TikTok video I see related to Elf on the Shelf, which seems to be one of—

Justin: Sorry, are you doubt— Sorry, just let me clarify.

Griffin: Wow, you flipped.

Justin: You downloaded TikToks, Grandma? [wheezes]

Travis: I don't know.

Griffin: Sounds like you've got to.

Travis: But one of two— They're always in one of two veins, which is one, looks like the Elf destroyed your toy, ate your food—

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: — cut up your pajamas, what a jerk. Or two, a child, younger sibling usually, has touched the Elf, and now—

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Travis: — everyone's lives are ruined.

Griffin: Yeah. [chuckles]

Justin: It's hard to have kids, for sure, it is.

Griffin: What is— [laughs]

Justin: They're always touchin'— [chuckles] touchin' things and screamin', but sometimes you just gotta get the Elf and move 'im around, you know? It's tough.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: I have never seen a single video of a child like going "I love that this Elf is here."

Justin: No, they're bad, they're objectively bad. [chuckles]

Griffin: I wanna know about the algo your frickin' surfen' on, dude. Where you're gettin' Elf on the Snelf— [chuckles] Elf on the Shelf snuff films. [laughs]

Travis: My—

Griffin: Elf on the Snelf, just like—

Travis: My TikTok—

Griffin: — “Oh man, it’s late at night. I wanna just see some kids touch elves, and watch them perish.”

Travis: My TikTok is like, “Oh you like videos where it looks like the dog is having a conversation with this person? And you love, aww, this toddler said a funny thing. Cool. Here’s a child killing magic in their home. Did you like that? Is that—?”

Justin: Why is it better for the— Why is it better than watching Travis kill magic when he looks at his daughters and he says, “It’s just a toy?” That’s magic killing.

Travis: I didn’t advocate for “It’s just a toy.” I advocated for on the bubble.

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And—

Justin: On the bubble, okay.

Travis: And “That’s not one of the real elves, that’s a store-bought version.”

Justin: Now Travis, when I see the color of your monitor flashing as you desperately search for something on the internet.

Griffin: I was just reading the Wikipedia article for the Elf on the Shelf.

Justin: If you give your kids—

Griffin: Frankly, my dudes.

Justin: If you give your kids Wikipedia access, you might as well move out.

Griffin: That’s a good point.

Justin: `Cause it’s done.

Griffin: I’m not gonna crack that open.

Justin: It's done. It's over.

Griffin: Yeah. I'm just saying, it seems like we could come up with a way, way cooler Elf on the Shelf that would then turn into its own sort of multimedia like uber franchise in the way—

We got a stuffed animal once, and it was an official Elf on the Shelf Saint Bernard, and he came with his own book about how the Elves on the Shelves use these Saint Bernards to store up Christmas spirit, so that they can use it when they I guess spy on the kids for Santa Claus later in the year.

And we didn't know Elf on the Shel— Well my kids didn't know what Elf on the Shelf was. To them, this was like getting a Battle Cat without a He-Man knowledge. And so that's their entry point into the series.

Travis: We should— Okay, what about this? Hey, okay parents. I'm gonna do it for yah. You don't have to buy anything new, right?

Griffin: Cool.

Travis: What you're gonna do is just every year, pick a different toy that already exists, and you're gonna wire 'em up with a microphone.

Griffin: Cool.

Travis: And you're gonna tell your kids that there's a mole, Santa's got a mole on the inside.

Griffin: That's cool.

Travis: And you don't know which one it is, and now... it's you gotta find that mole.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: Who's the confidential informant? Who's narking on them, you know what I mean?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And then it's like, "Oh, what's that?"

Griffin: [chuckles] Sure.

Travis: "Oh, Raggedy Anne is wearing a wire." Right?

Griffin: I don't know if the concern here was we're gonna have to spend a bunch of money on... on elves. I think it's probably— My concern would be I'm gonna have to think of clever situations for this little scamp go get into every day. For me, that's the point pushing against it, 'cause otherwise, you could just say, "Yeah, there's an Elf on the Shelf in our house now. He's really..."

Travis: Lazy.

Griffin: "Really good at hiding."

Justin: [chuckles] "He's the best in the bizz."

Travis: [chuckles] Oh, I see.

Griffin: "He's really good."

Justin: I don't think you guys have fully appreciated one thing, that there is a good... three to four minutes every morning that my kids spend lookin' for the Elf—

Griffin: [sighs] Ooph.

Justin: — that they do not spend talking to me. [wheezes] It is—

Griffin: But how much time of your own private time did you spend looking like, "Out of the bread box? No, we've done that. [sighs]."

Justin: Ah! No no no no, Griffin, you're confused. That's High Justin.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: That's his problem.

Travis: Also I'm pretty sure the Elf moves on its own, Griffin. The Elf—

Justin: He's great at it, he loves it, honestly. He loves the challenge.

Griffin: What's— I'm curious what High Justin brings to this operation.

Justin: Yesterday the Elf was hanging upside down on the lamp, and underneath where the Elf was hanging, I put a pile of mini M&Ms, and I said, "Syd, does that read? 'Cause I'm not sure it reads."

Griffin: [wheezes] [claps]

Travis: Like he threw up?

Griffin: [laughs] Or like think these fell out of his pockets. I think it reads, man.

Justin: That's kinda what I was goin' for.

Griffin: Yeah yeah.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Justin: I was like I spent a good... two minutes, let's be fair 90 seconds, trying to figure out how to suspend an M&M in midair to have like the effect.

Griffin: Oh cool. Yeah.

Justin: Land. But no no no.

Griffin: Some craft glue.

Justin: It's just a fun little tableau. You know what, I don't actually mind doing it, 'cause it makes my kids happy. And I guess that's—

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Oh, come on, you don't have to.

Travis: Alright.

Justin: And that counts, I mean I hate the—

Travis: Okay, you can't pivot from "three to four minutes where my kids kinda don't talk to me"—

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: — to "I do what makes my kids happy."

Justin: But I contain multitudes! [chuckles] "My brother-in-law messaged me, letting em know what he'd gotten my husband for Candlesnights. It's not something he'd like at all, to the point where I'm not sure where he came up with the idea."

Griffin: Yes.

Justin: "It's slightly more my speed. Gotta catch `em all, you know how it is, but barely. [chuckles] What is the best way to lie to my brother-in-law to tell him the gift is fine, without laying it on too thick? 'He'll love it' is so far beyond the truth that I can't bring myself to type it.

Please, brothers. I've already pretended I haven't seen the message for like 15 minutes, I can't go silent for too long." That's from Present Panic in the Palmetto State.

Griffin: I will say this about parenthood, this is one thing that it— you gotta confront pretty quickly.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: `Cause we get a lot of these texts, I would say every year from multiple people. "Yeah, I'm gonna get... Henry here the complete works of William Shakespeare."

"Don't do that! He won't—"

Travis: But Griffin, you just—

Griffin: "He won't like that."

Travis: In there, you hit the nail on the head. First of all, Question Asker, you're not in the wrong because your brother-in-law texted you past tense, "I got this for them already." That's where they messed up. It's gotta be—

Justin: The only thing you can say is "Oh, he'll love it. He'll love it."

Travis: Right, at that point just say, "Oh, sounds great. Oh, he'll love it." But that's why you text and say, "I'm thinking about getting this, I'm going to get— This is what I'm looking at."

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: "Would they like this?" Because once they've made the purchase, that— No, I'm not gonna give you negative feedback at that point.

Justin: Yeah, course not.

Griffin: But you don't wanna... ruin Christmas. One— Christmas is gonna be ruined for one of these two people, the gift giver or the gift receiver, right?

Justin: Right.

Griffin: 'Cause if you get it— Guys, we're all adults here, the presents aren't even what it's about for me anymore.

[pause]

Travis: Okay, it's the money?

Griffin: Applause, please?

Justin: It's about religion?

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: Just a little recognition—

Justin: You wanted more of like a...

Griffin: — that what I said was pretty huge. And pretty like cool, I thought. It's not even about the presents for me anymore. But if I get a real stinker of a present—

Travis: [claps]

Griffin: Thank you, Travis, thank you.

Travis: You're welcome, Griffin.

Griffin: I thought I cussed, and you were clapping to mark where Rachel will edit it.

Travis: No no no, that's why I didn't clap the first time, but then you seemed to really need it.

Justin: You needed it.

Griffin: I did need it.

Justin: And that's his Christmas gift to you.

Griffin: It's not even about the pre—

Justin: That's his [sings] grown up Christmas wiiiish. [wheezes]

Griffin: It's— I'm kinda grown up now, 'cause for me it used to be about all the presents.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Okay, so it's definitely not now, Griffin.

Griffin: But it's definitely different now.

Justin: Religion?

Griffin: But— It's not about religion, it's about I guess the time you spend with your family.

[pause]

Travis: Opening presents?

Griffin: Not even about that for me anymore, but if I do get a real stinker of a present, I'll be in a mood.

Justin: Really?

Griffin: "How could you get me so— How could you get me—"

Justin: I don't think that's true, what you're saying, I think you're lying to them.

Griffin: I wouldn't be in a mood, but you may be referenced. I will say, there is definitely historical reason to believe this, that you will be made the butt of a joke for the rest of their lives.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Yip.

Griffin: I'll say this.

Justin: Yeah. I love that—

Travis: Especially if it's a real wild pull.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: If it's like, "What? I— Why would I want these like Hummel figurines?" or like whatever, right? That's gonna be referenced.

Griffin: I love our dad. I think I'm on record saying that, in a lot of places.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: I love you, Dad. Dad might see this, or listen to this. I love you, Dad.

Justin: Yeah. Griffin has been clear about that since at least 2021.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: [chuckles] That he loves his dad.

Griffin: I'm huge on that. Covid, I really did a lot of work to love Dad.

Justin: He really—

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: He fell in love with his dad all over again.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: I love my dad as of Covid. But one—

Travis: At least.

Griffin: One Christmas... within the last decade, so as an adult man, Dad [chuckles] came up to me after the Christmas stuff was done, and had another little present for me. He was like, "Here, this one's for you too, I forgot to put it under the tree," I was like, "Oh okay, cool."

Thinking like, "Here we go. [claps to emphasize each word] Red Rider BB Gun. It's a Nintendo 64. [normal] There's something a little special something else that Santa sneaked away there." And I open it up, and it was a biography about Frank Sinatra. Ol' Blue Eyes.

Travis: Huh.

Justin: [chuckles] Heck yeah, is it that way you wear your hat?

Griffin: It's I guess the way I wear my hat, and my cool general—

Justin: [chuckles] No no no!

Travis: No no no!

Justin: The book. [chuckles]

Griffin: Oh, no. I thought you were saying why did Dad think that is—

Travis: Do you wear your hat in an interesting and unique way?

Griffin: I don't know how to say this more clearly. I don't are about Frank Sinatra—

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: — or that whole vibe at all. I think it's so boring, and I do not understand it.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: [chuckles] I think he sucks, and he's boring. He's the Snoopy of dudes, and Dad—

Justin: Is it—

Griffin: Dad, apropos of noth— I don't even like books!

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Especially not biography books about a dude I don't like.

Justin: Yeah. [laughs] Dad— We didn't have a ton of money growin' up, and a lot of times Dad would have promotional items from the radio station that people would send for like review, that would end up as like, "Well, who is this the best suited for?" Like you might end up with a season one of Billy Rae Cyrus's *Doc* on DVD, for example.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: And you're kinda like, "Oh, I guess I do have a DVD player, it's a good call." [chuckles]

Travis: Yeah, that's a good fit.

Griffin: The point of that story being that when we do reference like a way out of left— way out of pocket present pick, we do— me and Rachel do usually use a Frank Sinatra biography as shorthand for what that

would be. Which is a gift! Which is a kind thing to give someone an inside joke, even if you are the butt of it.

Travis: I remember a year, after *Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl* came out, which I saw in theatres nine times.

Griffin: Was that the first one?

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Correct. And Dad got us all replica swords. And if I remember correctly you guys got, like I don't know, the Sword of Gondor, or like the Bride's Blade, you know Tori Hanzo.

Griffin: I got the Buster Sword, dude.

Travis: The Buster Sword. And then I opened mine, and it's like this four-foot-long broadsword, where the hilt was a huge skull and crossbones.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And you could pull two of the bones out and they were daggers.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And Dad said, "You know. Like this is a replica of the sword from *Pirates of the Caribbean*."

Griffin: [chuckles] [claps]

Justin: [jingle bell bleep plays] Yeah, that's so good.

Griffin: That one was—

Justin: That was a good gift.

Travis: And it simply is not. It simply is not from *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And also—

Justin: Is there a notable sword in *Pirates of the Caribbean*? A fa— A beloved sword?

Travis: There is a sword, or two, they use swords quite often. None of them are like two-handed broadswords—

Griffin: [chuckles] Yeah.

Travis: — with a giant skull in the middle of it.

Griffin: You don't see Orlando Bloom bring out— [chuckles]

Justin: It ruled though, Travis.

Travis: It did rule, but I was also in college in Oklahoma and I had to fly back and forth for school. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah yeah yeah.

Travis: And I know that you can check some things in a bag. I did not have a suitcase capable of checking—

Griffin: No.

Travis: — a four foot long, two-handed broadsword.

Griffin: But it—

Justin: You need an extra seat for your steel.

Griffin: What I love about that story is that it does cover both ends of the surprise, out of pocket present gambit, which is that me receiving the Buster Sword, that was a very good Christmas present.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: That one was a— That one hit real good, I used that to cut up watermelon in my first apartment I lived in, that thing ruled.

Travis: I remember that.

Griffin: That was good.

Travis: What's fun is if Dad is listening to this right now, I know that that... pirate sword, big skull thing is hanging on the wall of his office.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And he's probably looking at it right now, maybe realizing for the first time that it is not a replica sword from *Pirates of the Caribbean*, and in fact just a giant pirate broadsword.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Do you guys remember— Hey. Do you guys remember when we find that sword behind the bushes?

Travis: I do.

Justin: Can I ask you about that? I just think about it.

Griffin: This is— [chuckles] You are about to like establish some deep, deep McElroy lore that I can't believe is not out there.

Justin: Okay, but Travis is— Travis remember— Okay, so—

Griffin: I remember it.

Justin: Okay, so we all remember. At one day— So in front of our house, our ancestral home on Tenth Street in Huntington, West Virginia. It was a row of bushes outside the porch, and one day we went behind the bushes, and that was a thing.

Going behind the bushes was an issue, right? You had to really get back there, it was a whole production, you would usually get poked by thorns, so nobody wanted to go behind the bushes.

So one day we went behind the bushes, and we found a... I would gue— I mean I— Without knowing anything about swords, it looked like a Civil War era saber, right?

Travis: Correct.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Like that kind of thing?

Travis: That's exactly how I'd describe it.

Justin: And it—

Travis: Very beat up, like the—

Justin: Very beat up.

Travis: I remember the—

Griffin: The sheath was falling off.

Travis: The scabbard, like the end of it was like broken off.

Justin: Yes, so here's what I wanted— And so we, for years, as you can imagine, being young boys finding a... sword behind some bushes, it's like incredible.

And we, for years, like we had this sword, we talked about it and wondered about it. It is occurring to me now Trav and Griff, talking through this... Dad definitely bought that sword—

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Justin: — and didn't want Mom to know he bought the sword.

Travis: 100,000%, Justin.

Justin: There's a— It's— I would— Guys, I'm 44 years old.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And I realized 20 minutes ago, Dad definitely bought the sword.

Travis: Bought it at like an antique store, or a rummage sale, or something.

Justin: And he put it behind the bushes as a fun little thing, or because he didn't want Mom to be mad at him, it was one of the two.

Travis: Yeah. "Whoa, a sword? How weird!"

Justin: "How did this get here?"

Travis: "I guess I should keep this in my room."

Justin: "I guess it chose me."

Griffin: Hard disagree, guys.

Justin: Oh yeah?

Griffin: I think a big Civil War fight happened outside our house.

Travis: Mm.

Griffin: And I think a general from back—

Travis: In the year 1994?

Justin: Yeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: No, in the Civil—

Justin: 'Cause it wasn't there when we moved in, I wanna be super clear about this.

Travis: And it wasn't buried, Griffin, it was just sitting on the ground.

Griffin: You don't know it wasn't buried and tectonic shifting pushed it upwards, oil.

Travis: Mm.

Justin: Had a 3.3 earthquake here in Huntington this week, these things happen.

Griffin: It happens, it unearths old Civil War swords, every time that that happens, there's a whole— There's a whole strata of them under the surface. It doesn't take much for one of 'em to poke up.

Travis: Happens all the time.

Griffin: And so this sword, which does have magic properties, was very real and a relic, and I don't know what— where it is right now, if it got thrown away. Did it get thrown away? Probably, it was an old sword, it was pretty beat up.

Travis: And it was definitely for the Union, so don't ask. So!

Justin: Wait.

Griffin: It was a magic Union blade.

Travis: Hey, everybody, it's holiday season.

Justin: Oh.

Travis: And you know what that means.

Justin: Do I?

Travis: It means holiday specials.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And who makes the most beloved holiday specials? Well that's right, Rankin Bass. But what you may not know, folks at home, Rankin Bass has a huge list of specials that they have made that you may not have heard of. And so I would like to play a little game that I'm callin' *Rankin Bass or Stankin* and I have to say, "Butt" here. But I think you can infer.

Griffin: [wheezes]

Justin: *Rankin Bass or Stankin' Butt.*

Travis: I think you're able to infer.

Griffin: I think that is basically— You made everyone think a cuss.

Justin: That's good.

Griffin: Which is like in some ways worse than saying them.

Travis: Unless they don't know it.

Justin: That popped up.

Travis: If they think the cuss, it's their fault.

Justin: If they think the cuss, it's on them.

Griffin: Yeah, that's true.

Travis: I'm gonna give you three titles.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: One of them is an actual Rankin Bass special, and two of them I have made up. This is inspired by of course *Telly Title Tellers*, which you may have seen on— on *McElroy Family Clubhouse*.

Griffin: [sings] *McElroy Family Clubhouse*.

Travis: Okay. First round, I got four of these, you ready?

Griffin: Yup.

Justin: Four rounds, or four titles?

Travis: Four rounds, three titles each.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: For a total of 12.

Travis: Sure. Just like there are months in the year, think about it folks.

Justin: [wheezes] Sure, if you say so.

Travis: Sure.

Justin: [chuckles] Alright, John Nash. [wheezes]

Travis: Alright.

Justin: Calm down.

Travis: *Willy Mayes Haze and the Say Hey Kid, Hank Aaron and the Wind-Up Toy Boy, Nolan Ryan and the Cat With No Name.*

Griffin: That's cool.

Justin: Wow.

Griffin: All those are cool, cool names.

Justin: This is— Wow Trav, I didn't think you would— I was expecting like *Year Without a Santa Claus* or somethin'.

Griffin: Give them one more time, 'cause you—

Justin: Yeah, one more time.

Griffin: All I heard was just like names flyin' past me.

Travis: Okay, *Willy Mayes and the Say Hey Kid, Hank Aaron and the Wind-Up Toy Boy, Nolan Ryan and the Cat With No Name.*

Griffin: [chuckles] I gotta do—

Travis: I could probably say the Wind-Up Toy Boy, not the Wind Up Toyboy.

Griffin: No, there's no way to say it that way.

Justin: [chuckles] Yeah.

Griffin: It is— I feel pretty strongly it's *Hank Aaron and the Wind-Up Toy Boy*. That hits right.

Justin: I think the *Say Hey Kid*. That seems so weird for Travis to come up with.

Griffin: *Willy Mayes* sounds like the oldest one, and Rankin Bass movies are... pretty old.

Justin: What do you got, Trav?

Travis: It is *Willy Mayes and the Say Hey Kid*.

Justin: Yes.

Travis: A guardian angel agrees to help Willy Mayes win the National League pennant—

Griffin: Interesting.

Travis: — if Mayes agrees to take care of Veronica, a lonely, mischievous orphan girl. Veronica makes Mayes's life difficult, but when relatives show up to claim her after hearing that she's inherited money, Mayes's heart softens.

Justin: Wow.

Griffin: Is this a animated film?

Travis: It is.

Griffin: Cool, it's the ABC Saturday Super Star movie.

Travis: Okay, you ready for the next one?

Griffin: Gotta catch that. Yeah.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: *The Fairy's Holiday Trove, The Leprechaun's Christmas Gold, or The Mermaid's First Christmas.*

Griffin: First— What was the first one again?

Travis: *The Fairy's Holiday Trove.*

Griffin: And the second one again, what was that?

Justin: [chuckles]

Travis: *The Leprechaun's Christmas Gold.*

Griffin: And go ahead and give me that third one one more time.

Justin: Travis, if I may be so bold. [wheezes]

Travis: *The Mermaid's First Christmas.*

Justin: It's the first one, I think, *The Fairy's Holiday Trove*. That's my guess.

Griffin: I—

Justin: I think that that is... I don't know, "trove" just seems like a strange word for you to use.

Griffin: Yeah. For sure. I really like *The Leprechaun's Christmas Gold*, a lot.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: Because I feel like there's a lot of story potential there, so I'm gonna— I'll pick that one.

Travis: Griffin is correct.

Justin: Really?

Travis: And I actually love this movie. It's on a weird Rankin Bass collection we have, that includes the Frank L Baum *The True Story of Santa Claus*, that includes him becoming immortal because a band of fairies gives him immortality.

Griffin: Awesome.

Travis: But in *The Leprechaun's Christmas Gold*, a young Irish boy on a ship passing by an island realizes it's Christmas, and he paddles a boat over to get a Christmas tree, and in digging it up frees a banshee from her prison.

Griffin: Whoa.

Travis: And she tries to steal Christmas gold, and she's a shapeshifter, and the only way to know if she's always crying. And with the help of St Patrick, the leprechauns have to trick her into turning to liquid, so they can replant a pinecone to trap her back under a Christmas tree.

Griffin: This movie sounds lit, actually.

Travis: It [jingle bell bleep plays] rules.

Justin: Yeah, it kinda sounds good.

Travis: It's so good. And it has some great songs in it. But [chuckles] my favorite is the casting, where Art Carney plays Barney Killarney.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: [hisses in amusement]

Travis: And just saying it, makes me so happy.

Justin: Oooooooo.

Griffin: Yowzah.

Travis: Okay, next one. *Tommy McBlunder and his Marvelous Wonder*, *Willy McBean and his Magic Machine*, or *Suzie McCarvell and her Miraculous Marvel*.

Justin: Oh.

Griffin: Willy McBean sounds— hits— I'm nostalgic for Willy McBean, and I don't even know who he is.

Justin: But is that because you're—

Griffin: Thinking of Willy Bemis? The SEGA CD point and click adventure game? I don't know, I thought of that.

Justin: Hmm.

Travis: What do you think, Justin?

Justin: It's in your brother's heart somewhere. [pause] I think it— Say the names one more time, I just wanna hear.

Travis: *Tommy McBlunder and his—*

Justin: But look at my eye— Take your sunglasses off. Take your sunglasses off.

Travis: They're just regular glasses, I can't read it—

Justin: Just take off your sunglasses.

Travis: I can't read it.

Griffin: Put `em back on.

Travis: *Tommy McBlunder and his Marvelous Wonder.*

Griffin: [forcefully] Put `em back on, put `em back on, put `em back on.

Justin: Put `em back on.

Griffin: Put `em back on.

Justin & Griffin: [simultaneously] Back on, back on, back on.

Justin: Okay, hair down—

Travis: *Willy McBean*—

Justin: Hair down, glasses off. [wheezes]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: *Tommy McBlunder and his Marvelous Wonder.*

Justin: Okay.

Travis: *Willy McBean and his Magic Machine, Suzie McCarvell and her Miraculous Marvel.*

Justin: I'm gonna say *Suzie McCarvell and her Miraculous Marvel.*

Travis: The correct answer is *Willy McBean and his Magic Machine.*

Justin: [growls in frustration]

Travis: The film tells the story of Will McBeam, a young schoolboy who teams up with an anthropomorphic monkey named Pablo to prevent the villainous professor—

Griffin: That's right.

Travis: — Rasputin von Rotten—

Griffin: That's right.

Travis: — from changing the history of the world using the newly created and duplicated magic time machine.

Griffin: Magic time machine.

Justin: Heck yeah, man.

Griffin: Yeah, I remember that one.

Justin: That sounds good.

Griffin: Yeah, that was a good—

Travis: So right now it's two to one, Griffin leading.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Huh, okay.

Griffin: It's sad at the end of that movie—

Travis: So—

Griffin: — when Pablo gets pulled into the time fan.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Which is the sort of propulsive force on the machine, and is de— his body's destroyed and scattered throughout history.

Travis: But there is one molecule of Pablo in every—

Griffin: In everything, we are all Pablo.

Travis: In everything.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: We are all Pablo.

Griffin: [inhales and exhales deeply]

Justin: Yeah, I just have five molecules. [chuckles]

Griffin: Breathe in that monkey's red juice.

Travis: Okay, here's the last one. *The Godzilla Show*, *The Ultra Man Show*, or *The King Kong Show*.

[pause]

Griffin: I mean—

Justin: Oh, I think Rankin Bass did a... What was the first? I think they did a—

Travis: *The Godzilla Show, The Ultra Man Show, or The King Kong Show.*

Justin: I feel like Rankin Bass would've done... I feel they would've gotten Japanese companies to do the first two properties, to me I feel like an American company would've gotten *King Kong*.

Griffin: Um...

Justin: Or they may be an English company, but either way, I...

Griffin: I—

Justin: Yeah, I would say *King Kong*.

Griffin: I like *Ultra Man*. So I'll—

Justin: Me too, he kicks butt.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: So I'll—

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I'll say him.

Travis: You'll say *Ultra Man*. Justin's correct, it's gonna tie it up. We're ending here on a tie, everybody wins. In this, *The King Kong Show*, in this series, the giant ape befriends the Bond family, with whom he goes on various adventures.

Justin: [chuckles] James Bond? Heck yeah!

Griffin: Cool.

Travis: Fighting monsters, robots, aliens, mad scientists, and other threats. Unlike King Kong's destructive roles in this film, the cartoon turned him into a protector of humanity.

Now what's interesting Justin is you got the answer right, but for the wrong reason. This was actually the first animation— anime made by a Japanese company for American audiences, teamed up with Rankin Bass.

Justin: Ohhhhhh, interesting.

Griffin: Ohhhhh.

Travis: Written by Rankin Bass, but animated in Japan, and sent over here.

Griffin: Wow.

Travis: There were a lot of those, by the way. They made several like kaiju style movies.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Written by Rankin Bass but made in Japan.

Griffin: "In this one, King Kong wanted to be a pediatricist."

Travis: Uh-huh.

Griffin: "And he had to leave Skull Island, in order to get to the—"

Travis: Hey, did you know Rankin Bass made *Thundercats*?

Griffin: I didn't know that.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: But I also, but I also never really cared to find out.

Travis: Okay, cool.

Griffin: On my end.

Justin: What a fun energy, and—

Griffin: I'm not saying that— No no no, I'm not saying I resent what you just did for me. I'm saying I personally would not have sought that information out.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: I'm not mad that you've given it to me.

Justin: On this— On that cheerful, high-energy note, we will take a break and follow us into—

Griffin: I'm not saying the content is bad, Justin!

Travis: Happy Candlesnights!

Griffin: I don't like being characterized—

Justin: Follow us into the Money Zone.

Griffin: — like I said the content's bad.

Justin: You're alone in the room.

Griffin: I think the content's great. It's just—

Justin: We left the room.

[theme music fades in]

Griffin: — would I have done it? [wheezes] Not on my own, no.

[transition theme music plays]

Justin: I'll tell you what you could do on your own, Griffin, and that's find a doctor. Thanks to Zoc Doc, right?

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: I mean—

Griffin: Oh yeah. I went on Zoc Doc, and it's a shame that this is our Candlenights episode because there are some ideas that are about to be expressed that may be challenging for young ears. But to get a special... sterilization operation. I went on Zoc Doc. Do you guys understand what I'm saying?

Travis: And it wasn't mandatory, this wasn't like a state-enforced thing, Griffing chose to.

Griffin: It wouldn't— Nor was it mandatory from, as a client, [chuckles] Zoc Doc wasn't like, "And also, if you could go use our service to find someone to..."

Travis: "In order to you the service, you will need to—"

Griffin: "In order to use the service."

Justin: "You will need— For us to pay— We will pay you— We will pay [chuckles] [wheezes] you— We will pay you—"

Griffin: Go ahead and say, Justin, 25 bucks,

Justin: No, I don't think it's a good— I don't think it's that good energy.

Griffin: I'll take it.

Justin: Zoc Doc won't even make you get a surgery that you don't wanna get. [chuckles]

Travis: That's true.

Griffin: No.

Justin: 100%.

Griffin: No, but they did—

Travis: They're really flexible about that kinda thing.

Justin: [wheezes]

Griffin: They did genuinely help me find... my number one dude at this point, who did my vasectomy, and just a really bang-up job. Really spectacular.

Zoc Doc is a free app and website where you can search and compare high-quality, in network doctors, choose the right ones for your needs, and click to instantly book an appointment. It's what I did.

We're talking in-network appointments with more than 100,000 healthcare providers across every specialty, from mental health to dental health, eyecare to skincare. [pause] Gonad stuff. Do you know what Henry calls—

Travis: To no nad stuff. [chuckles]

Griffin: I have to share this, guys. Do you know what Henry refers to— And he knows it's not right. Like he knows it's not a good thing to call your privacy something other than like the technical like terms, we try to enforce that, but he started callin' it his "gunky stuff."

Justin: Oh.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: And that's real terrific. That's really terrific.

Justin: Wow, that's good.

Travis: That's amazing.

Justin: That's really good.

Griffin: He kinda— When we say anything else at this point, he's trying to get it started, which I appreciate.

Travis: Mm.

Griffin: As a fellow content creator. Anyway, so much more of— Zoc Doc appointments happen so fast, within 24 to 72 hours of booking.

Travis: For all your gunky stuff.

Griffin: For all your gunky stuff, you can even score same day appointments. Stop putting off those doctors appointments, go to zocdoc.com/mybrother to find and instantly book a top-rated doctor today. That's Z-O-C-D-O-C.com/mybrother, zocdoc.com/mybrother.

Travis: You know what's comin' up, folks? A new year.

Griffin: Mm.

Justin: Woo.

Travis: And it could be time for a new look!

Justin: Woo.

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Maybe change your look up with StitchFix.

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Sometimes, man there's been stuff that StitchFix has sent me, that if I were like just in a store shopping for myself.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: I don't even know if it would've caught my eye, because I would've only been thinking about the stuff I normally wear. And then like I get that and I'm like, "Huh," and I put it on and I'm like, "Yes, I would wear this every day if I could."

Griffin: Absolutely. I'm H to T in StitchFix pick ups from my last box today.

Justin: Wow.

Griffin: And it is...

Travis: Amazing.

Griffin: Got me feeling—

Justin: I like that sweater, I was gonna tell yah.

Griffin: Oh thank you.

Justin: You look really good it in.

Griffin: It's from a brand I have bought clothes from before, not through StitchFix, and StitchFix was like— has me so dialed in that they were like—

Justin: Mm, yeah.

Griffin: — “We know exactly what you like,” and they were right.

Travis: And that's because you work with a stylist, a personal stylist, who's going to like take the things that you say you like to wear, your budget, your size, your style, all those things into consideration, pick out stuff just for you, no subscription required, send it to you, and then you can pick and choose which of those pieces you wanna keep, and only pay for the stuff you keep.

Or keep the whole box, if it all works for you. But send back the rest, you only pay for what you keep, it's an amazing service that we've all been using for years and years now. Go sign up with StitchFix, try somethin' new. Make style easy, get started today at [stitchfix.com/brother](https://www.stitchfix.com/brother), that's [stitchfix.com/brother](https://www.stitchfix.com/brother). A right down the middle, normal—

Griffin: I loved it, yeah.

Travis: — Candlesnights advertisement.

Justin: Just a normal one. For a change.

[pause]

Jordan Morris: It's hard to explain what *Jordan, Jesse, Go!* is about.

Jesse Thorn: So I had my kids take a stab at it.

Speaker One: Probably weird stuff.

Speaker Two: You talk about...

Speaker Three: Jobs that are annoying.

Jesse Thorn: Mm-hmm.

Speaker One: Hmm, business.

Speaker Two: I think you probably learned your lesson after talking about business a couple of times.

Speaker Three: Grown up jokes that I don't understand and there's no point in making, and— [giggles] All the podcast sort of a way.

Jordan Morris: Subscribe to *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*

Jesse Thorn: A comedy show for grownups.

Justin: Hey Sydnee, you're a physician, and the co-host of *Sawbones*, a marital tour of misguided medicine, right?

Sydnee: That's true, Justin.

Justin: Is it true that our medical history podcast is just as good as a visit to your primary care physician?

Sydnee: No Justin, that is absolutely not true. However, your podcast is funny and interesting, and a great way to learn about the medical misdeeds of the past, as well as some current and not so legit healthcare fads.

Justin: So you're saying that by listening to our podcast, people will feel better.

Sydnee: Sure.

Justin: And isn't that the same reason that you go to the doctor?

Sydnee: Well, I— You could say that, but—

Justin: And our podcast is free?

Sydnee: Yes, it is free.

Justin: You heard it here first, folks. *Sawbones*, marital tour of misguided medicine, right here on MaximumFun, just as good as going to the doctor.

Sydnee: No no no, still not just as good as going to the doctor, but pretty good.

Justin: It's up there.

[pause]

Justin: "Hi Brothers McElroy. This year, for Christmas I'm getting both of my parents some video games for the Switch we have in our household."

Travis: How far we've come.

Justin: "I've already figured out the games, the only issue is I bought them digitally, so there isn't actually anything I have for the video games to put on the tree. Just saying like 'Hey, I bought games, you can't unwrap them they're digital' feels awkward. Any solutions would be appreciated." That's from *Wrapping in Washu*.

Griffin: Um.

Justin: I mean I personally would love for my kid to hand me their homemade *Snipperclips* box art. I think I would—

Griffin: Ooph.

Justin: That would really mean a lot to me.

Travis: Ooo.

Griffin: That's pretty good.

Justin: If they made their own little *Snipperclips* box. Get a, you know, boring clothes box and just draw on it the game art, and then wrap it up.

Griffin: Yup.

Justin: And then they're gonna be really excited to get a little art from you too.

Travis: That's way better than what I was gonna say.

Justin: Aw Travis, no don't say that, you don't know. Let's hear it.

Griffin: What were you gonna say?

Travis: Well I was gonna say find an empty box with like a cool present, but it's just the box, and when you look at it, you're like, "Oh my god! You got me a cool—" And when you open it, it's just a note that's like, "I got you *Animal Crossing*."

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Yeah. Yeah.

Travis: "It's on your Switch already."

Justin: That is worse.

Travis: Yeah, I was just trying to—

Justin: I'm sorry, I should've let you—

Travis: Yeah, you encouraged me to say it—

Justin: I shouldn't have made you say that.

Travis: — after I admitted yours was better, I don't—

Justin: I [chuckles] shouldn't have made you say that out loud, for sure.

Travis: I don't understand why you made me do that.

Justin: Egg on my face. [clicks tongue]

Travis: It wasn't very kind, I had conceded. And yet—

Griffin: You actually can't give anyone a digital gift.

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: I'm so sorry. It's the one thing— It's the only thing. And I get it, like holy crap it would be so much easier and better for everyone if we could just say like, "And also, I bought you a digital copy of that movie you like so much," and have it hit. But it hasn't hit ever for anyone.

Justin: It's hard, you just can't go it though.

Travis: You can't?

Justin: I mean it would be nice, but it's— You can't, I guess you can't do it.

Griffin: You can't, 'cause it's not real and they don't own it.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Is the only other thing.

Travis: Huh.

Justin: Because of the license. [wheezes]

Griffin: You have— You are being— "The gift have given you is I have temporarily, because of my money, allowed you to watch..."

Justin: "Rented you a license to play *Snipperclips*."

Griffin: Yes. For now. Until this store goes belly up, and then who knows. Who knows, at that point.

Travis: Well that's why you download it, and then you take your whole thing off the grid.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: They can't take it back.

Justin: And then they can't take it back from you.

Griffin: They can't take it back at that point.

Justin: I like that, Trav. "I give you a fully jailbroken [chuckles] one of my—"

Travis: That's why I'm downloading all my TikToks now.

Justin: Airlocked, air gapped.

Travis: I'm just going through.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And just downloading every TikTok I can while there's still time.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And just saving 'em all. Then eventually I'll have my own offline TikTok.

Griffin: That's cool.

Travis: And the legend— There would've been time now!

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: I can scroll through every TikTok til I reach the end.

Griffin: I am not worried about the ban, you guys.

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: I will just get access to Travis's private stuff.

Justin: [wheezes]

Travis: Yeah, man.

Griffin: [chuckles] Travis's special stuff.

Justin: I like what—

Travis: My TikTok is finite, the only new TikToks after it will be my own.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: That I make, where I'm just gonna take old TikToks and remake them—

Griffin: That's awesome.

Travis: — in my own image.

Griffin: Yeah. There's not a digital gift you can give that's gonna hit. But you could give a small gift, really an anything, anything. You could have them a little capsule toy capsule and say, "Merry Christmas. Also, I—"

Travis: Just the capsule?

Griffin: "Also, I got you digital *Snipperclips*." No, there would need to be a toy or prize or present inside.

Justin: Nice

Griffin: Give 'em a little "Here's a candle."

"Okay."

"And also I got you *Snipperclips*."

"Awesome!"

You can't do either one of those on their own. "I got you a candle."

[mildly disappointed] "Okay."

"Turn on your TV, there's *Snipperclips* on it."

[mildly disappointed] "Oh, cool."

Justin: [wheezes] Now, this is great.

Griffin: Together.

Justin: You could've given 'em a thing that they liked, but instead [wheezes] you've given them a thing, and also something that they like.

Griffin: A thing.

Travis: Oh, that's great.

Griffin: So you have tied the present— You've tied the good present to a tangible object.

Justin: It's to a physical candle!

Travis: Yeah, so you've tied an idea, a concept.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: The illumination and scent of the candle is secondary, the value of the candle is its symbolic attachment to *Snipperclips*.

Travis: Now, you do have to be careful though, because sense memory is very strong.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And like everything I— every time I think about *EverQuest*, I immediately think of the Dave Matthews Band album "Crash," which I listened to on a boombox after getting it for Christmas, while playing *EverQuest*.

Griffin: Ooph! Travis, that was—

Travis: So now with the two—

Griffin: Hold on, can I catch my breath from that story you just told about your childhood?

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I need a minute to recover from what you just sort of just shared, 'cause wow.

Justin: Crashed into him pretty hard.

Travis: Yeah, the two inextricably linked in my mind.

Griffin: [exhales heavily] Okay, cool.

Travis: *EverQuest* and Dave Matthews.

Griffin: Alright, cool, go on. Cool life.

Justin: [giggles]

Travis: [chuckles] Thanks! Thanks, brother. Happy Candenights to me!

Griffin: You've already— Who— Sorry.

Travis: I don't still do that, Griffin! I have—

Griffin: No no, I know, cool part of your life.

Justin: [giggles]

Travis: I have friends and family now that I spend time with.

Griffin: Sure. [exhales heavily]

Travis: And I've moved on, that was me at like 15.

Griffin: Yeah, so sad.

Travis: Or whatever.

Griffin: [chuckles] I know, to think about, cool.

Travis: No! What? No! At the time, it was very cool.

Justin: [giggles] It's chilling, Trav.

Griffin: Yeah, awesome man. For sure.

Justin: We're all— Yeah, we're sufficiently bummed.

Travis: You did stuff too, we've all [chuckles] had periods we're not proud of.

Justin: Yeah. I don't agree.

Griffin: Yeah man, but I don't talk about it on our huge podcast, man.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: I keep that stuff.

Travis: I guess I'm just more vulnerable and open—

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: — to sharing who I am.

Griffin: Yeah, I guess so.

Travis: I'm not ashamed of who I used to be.

Griffin: I am, I put him away, he's gone.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: I'm not—

Travis: "I killed that Griffin."

Griffin: I didn't kill him, but he sure ain't gonna get talked about on this podcast. Against my will, no way, thanks. Can't do a digital gift.

Justin: [imitates rock guitar] [imitates cymbal crash] [imitates rock guitar]

Griffin: Huh?

Justin: Yeah. [imitates rock guitar] [sings] I wanna munch!

Travis & Griffin: [sing simultaneously] Squad!

Justin: [imitates rock guitar] [sings] I want to munch!

Travis: Squad?

Griffin: Squad!

Justin: [imitates rock guitar] Welcome to *Munch Squad*, it's a podcast within a podcast, profiling the latest and greatest in brand eating. I thought here, this late into the year, we'd be talkin' about the holidays, the Yule still.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And then look who strides into the room yesterday.

Griffin: Oh no.

Justin: Ready to get just like absolutely upset the apple cart. I'm gonna open the image, and I'll just like— And I think that this one... speaks for itself. There it is.

Travis: Wait. Hold on.

Justin: There it is, guys.

Travis: Hold on.

Justin: Taco Bell nuggets.

Travis: Whoa.

Justin: Yeah, it's happening.

Travis: Whoa.

Griffin: [sighs]

Justin: And they've coupled nuggets with [chuckles] maybe the most unhinged press released I've read all year.

Travis: Can I just say? Just first blush, first look, what's wild to me Justin. They look just like perfectly normal, maybe even above average, nuggets.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Yeah, you're gonna be— Yeah. So let's hear about 'em.

Travis: There's no like weird taco-fied, we wrapped these—

Griffin: Well...

Justin: Ah, well yeah, huh.

Griffin: Let's let him finish.

Travis: Oh boy.

Justin: "In a world where chicken nugget loyalty runs deep, Taco Bell is daring to push the boundaries of innovation yet again with the introduction of Crispy. Chicken. Nuggets. And a lineup of—"

Griffin: I appreciate that. Can we just say, first of all, when you try to slip 'em in there like, "bites."

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Or "popcorn"— "popcorned"—

Justin: Yeah, they're nuggets. And it's "a lineup of irresistible dipping sauces that's sure to challenge people's devotion to their typical favorites."

Travis: Oh my god, they're gonna lead me astray?

Griffin: Alright. I'm listening.

Travis: They're gonna cause me, oh, to be a philanderer to my chicken nugget commitments.

Justin: If you're listening, Griffin, then let me let you hear this. "Entirely distinct, yet universally familiar, the tender—"

Travis: Haunting.

Justin: "— all-white meat chicken bites are marinated in zesty jalapeño buttermilk flavor."

Travis: What?

Justin: That's weird. Let's talk about that.

Travis: Let's unpack that for a moment.

Griffin: You don't have a spicy variant.

Justin: Sorry.

Griffin: This is spicy, it sounds like.

Justin: That's weird, but listen, the "chicken bites are marinated in zesty jalapeño buttermilk flavor." That shouldn't be a flavor.

Travis: No.

Justin: It should be a jalapeño buttermilk. [chuckles] It shouldn't be the essence—

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: — of jalapeño buttermilk.

Griffin: Fair, yes.

Travis: Those—

Justin: That's just troubling.

Travis: Those also seem like two things that would cancel one another out. Right?

Griffin: No.

Travis: Like if I ate jalapeños and I had a spicy mouth.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: And then I drank some milk, it would—

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: — cool that down.

Justin: Well what they've done, Travis, is they've also "breaded with a blend of breadcrumbs and crunchy tortilla chips."

Travis: Huh.

Justin: "To deliver the ideal balance of flavor and crisp that take the everyday chicken nugget to the next level."

Griffin: I'm still here, man. I haven't run for the door.

Justin: I know you are.

Griffin: I'm still here, man.

Travis: But it is important to me to know if they're spicy, 'cause there is the word "jalapeño" in there, and if I tried to—

Justin: Well you're gonna get a little spicy.

Travis: If I took my kid— This feels like a weird prank to pull on my children, where I'd be like, "You guys like chicken nuggets, right? Here you go."

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: [giggles mischievously]

Justin: “What’s a nugget without an epic sauce pairing? In its culinary journey to find the perfect complementary sauce, Taco Bell—”

Griffin: [giggles]

Justin: “— tested over 100 sauces to curate not one, but three irresistible dip pairings. Introducing the exclusive new Hidden Valley Fire Ranch Sauce, and brand-new signature Bell Sauce, and a sweet and hot Jalapeño Honey Mustard Sauce.”

Griffin: You’re not givin’ me a lot of safe road to walk here, Taco Bell.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah, man.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I was so interested, but you are like, “Now that we’ve hooked you, do you wanna eat poison, poison, or poison for your sensitive tummy?”

Justin: “The star of the trio—,” and which I don’t think they should say this, but “The start of the trio is the new Hidden Valley Fire Ranch Sauce, a fiery twist on America’s—”

Travis: A Travis McElroy of sauces.

Justin: Of— “A fiery twist on America’s Favorite Ranch inspired by the passion of Taco Bell and Hidden Valley Ranch fans. More than just a sauce, it’s a groundbreaking innovation—”

Travis: Whoa.

Justin: “— that blends the iconic flavors fans love from both brands.”

Travis: So words just don’t mean anything anymore, huh?

Griffin: [exhales heavily]

Justin: "As the in—"

Griffin: "Hot" and "ranch" are about—

Travis: But you're throwing out "groundbreaking innovation" like it's—

Justin: "Groundbreaking innovation."

Travis: Like you just cured something, or figured out how to reach the moon.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: You ready? Taylor Montgomery has— is gonna lay it out for you like this. Not to be— [chuckles] Not to be saying this too overgrand, but here's Taylor's read. "As the inventors of Nacho Fries—"

Travis: Mm.

Justin: "Taco Bell is fully aware that reinventing an American classic with a Taco Bell twist—"

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Justin: [chuckles] "— is a responsibility we don't take lightly."

Travis: Wooooow!

Justin: "But in a world dominated by chicken cravings, it was time to show the world how Taco Bell does chicken nuggets. Unexpected and undeniably bold, the Crispy Chicken Nuggets deliver a crispier, more flavorful nugget experience, and combined with the Hidden Valley Fire Ranch Sauce, we hope it will test people's devotion to their favorite nuggets."

Travis: I am moved... by the passion and dedication shown in that. Like that feels like a speech that like the President gives like climbing on top of the car to be like, "The aliens are coming, and you know what? It's time for Taco Bell to get into the chicken nugget game."

Griffin: But.

Travis: And I'm in it. I'm moved.

Griffin: But... when McDonald's... did bratwurst for a little while.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Griffin: And people would come in, it probably wasn't like super confusing, because like the name of the restaurant isn't Burger Clown, or Hamburger Clown.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: But when people go to Taco Bell, they're gonna be confused about this extremely not taco, or even taco adjacent—

Justin: This is— Griffin, this is where I am really getting hung up about it. Because they sell the fries, and they sell the chicken nuggets.

Griffin: Uh-huh.

Justin: And they sell the pizza. I'm worried that they're starting to lose touch with their like authentic Mexican roots.

Griffin: [wheezes]

Travis: Oh no.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah man, I mean yeah, for sure.

Justin: You know?

Griffin: I think that's—

Justin: I feel like—

Griffin: There's a danger there, for sure.

Justin: There is a danger of that.

Travis: Can I tell you what's trippin' me up? And I have just realized, because it's been a long, long time since I've been to a Taco Bell, or eaten Taco Bell.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Why?

Travis: Do you think that they have—

Justin: [more forcefully] Why?

Griffin: [wheezes]

Travis: Just haven't. There's not one near me.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: Do you think that there's ketchup available at Taco Bell?

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: How confident are you in that?

Justin: Uh, are you confident, Griffin?

Griffin: That there's ketchup at Taco Bell? Let me check.

Justin: Are you sure?

Griffin: Do they sell French fries?

Justin: [chuckles] Yeah.

Travis: They sell nacho fries.

Griffin: Remind me again! Remind me again. Do they sell French fried taters?

Travis: Nacho fries.

Griffin: 'Cause I think that— Yeah yeah yeah.

Travis: They have nacho fries.

Griffin: Okay. Well, they— then they'll have the ketchup for 'em.

[pause]

Travis: You seem very confident.

Griffin: Is it— Justin, you look like you're Googling this, and I need you to confirm if you're Googling this or not.

Travis: No, don't dox my address and tell me where the closest—

Justin: [chuckles] I just wanted to point out.

Travis: Don't send me Taco Bell. I don't want any Taco Bell.

Justin: I'm just saying it's not that far, Trav. You could just— It's pretty close.

Travis: It's far enough.

Justin: It's— Like you could get there. I'm just demonstrating, you could totally get there.

Travis: If it's next door, Justin. If I lived next to— If I lived inside a Taco Bell, I would go get some right now.

Justin: [sings] I'm at the Pizza Hut. I'm at the Travis House.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: [sings] I'm at the combination Taco Bell and Travis House.

Griffin: I'm trying to figure out if Taco Bell has ketchup.

[pause]

Justin: Can we call Ta—? One of you guys need to call.

Griffin: Can we call time out on the—

Travis: I'm not—

Griffin: Yes, they have ketchup at Taco Bell, I see a picture of it now, next to the mild sauce and the fire sauce.

Travis: There's ketchup! Say it with passion, Griffin.

Justin: So they are already out. You can—

Griffin: There is ketchup at the Taco Bell.

Justin: You can go to Taco Bell right now and get the nuggets, so let us know what you think.

Travis: I wanna know how spicy they are, like on a— if you're a child.

Justin: Right.

Travis: Like imagine a child is eating it.

Justin: Right.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: You can text Travis at [extended jingle bell bleep plays]

Travis: No!

Justin: [chuckles] Okay. Here— Let's one more question. "Once a year, I do a Christmas show for some local theatres. We dress up as characters and do a little preshow before the movie *White Christmas*. We have someone who dresses as Santa, Mrs Claus, and Cousin Eddie.

I dressed up as Ukon Cornelius, who's popular enough but doesn't have the same depth as those other characters. I'm also not great at improv, and I also find myself letting the fellow actors carry the performance

when unexpected things happen. How can I stand out from the crowd and deliver a memorable performance?"

Griffin: Rules.

Justin: That's from Cornelius in Cincinnati. [chuckles]

Griffin: That's so good, such a good question, thank you.

Travis: Yeah. Yeah.

Griffin: Thank you for this. We need—

Travis: You are—

Justin: I would love to pretend to be Ukon Cornelius for an hour. I feel like improv-wise, it wouldn't be funny, but I would have the time of my life.

Travis: Here's the thing though.

Griffin: We need to establish who this is for the people who were not alive.

Travis: Oh, he loves silver and gold, from the Rankin Bass movie... *Rudolph*.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*.

Justin: He's the one, he's the prospector who says, "Bumbles bouts!"

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: That's very good, Justin.

Griffin: That's very good.

Travis: Here's the thing... One thing you gotta know about Ukon Cornelius, that's a haunted man.

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: Because one thing we don't talk about a lot is there were 12 of them when they started out on this trek to find gold.

Griffin: That is— Yeah.

Travis: He's the only one left. What has he been through? He falls off into a cliff with the Bumble. What happens down there? We don't know. So while everyone else is improving their scene, I want you to have just a dark backstory.

Griffin: An emptiness.

Travis: And have him stare off. An empty-eyed, as—

Griffin: It sounds like you're doing that already, which is great.

Justin: Sorry, I just wanna be— Trav, I— I hate to challenge what you're saying but I did watch the film recently.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Justin: And we do know what Ukon Cornelius did once the Bumble and he fell off of the cliff.

Travis: Oh, that's right, yes.

Justin: What did he do?

Travis: He pulled his teeth out, Justin.

Justin: He pulled his teeth out, kids.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: Ukon Cornelius removed the Bumble's one method of feeding himself.

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: Really broke his spirit too.

Justin: And pulled his teeth out. And then! And then, get this! Ukon Cornelius is like, "You're never gonna believe it, but Bumbles are really easy to get along with, and they wanna help us!" I bet!

Griffin: [chuckles] Yeah. When you mutilate it.

Justin: I bet they do, Ukon!

Travis: Yeah, "A shame I didn't find that out before I pulled all his teeth out!"

Justin: Yeah, "I still have my nails! I don't want you to pull those out too, Ukon."

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: "All of his teeth were flat, like a cow's! He's a—"

Justin: [cackles]

Travis: "Turns out he's a leaf-eater."

Justin: "He said 'I only eat carrots'! And then he said [mutters about carrots], you couldn't understand him anymore! Ha ha ha!"

Travis: "Anyways, watch him put the star on the tree."

Griffin: "He got in my way once."

Travis: "Now mush up his food real good for him."

Griffin: "He got in my way while I was trying to accumulate wealth! I'm the good guy!"

Travis: [chuckles]

Justin: Wait. Hold on. Ukon Cornelius removed all of Bumble's teeth. Wait. I can't believe he would do that, when he knows the only dentist on the planet. [wheezes]

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: That's the other thing that's twisted about Ukon Cornelius, he knows the one person that invented the idea of pulling teeth out.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: And then this guy doesn't even go to that one guy that he knows.

Travis: You would think— I wanna see the deleted scene when after all is done, Hermie's like, "Ukon, can I talk to you over here for a minute?"

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: "Hey man, what's that about?"

Justin: "Cool, huh."

Travis: "Like you know I'm trying to set up a business here, trying to establish myself. You couldn't float me some business my way? You couldn't be like 'Hey Hermie, show 'em how good you are, pull your teeth out'?"

Justin: [wheezes]

Travis: "You tryin' to step to my territory, man?"

Justin: "Pull your own teeth out, Hermie."

Travis: "Come on, man."

Justin: "You're such a great dentist."

Travis: "What are you doin'? This is— Do you see me out there trying to mine up silver and gold?"

Justin: [giggles]

Travis: “No, I recognize that that’s your thing. This is my thing. Come on, man! Show some respect!”

Justin: Yeah, so anyway, this is all really good stuff. Just use these jokes.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah yeah yeah.

Justin: It’s no problem. That’s—

Griffin: Just between every sentence, just go “Bumble!” and shout and point at the back of the theatre.

Travis: “Sorry.” Yeah.

Griffin: “Sorry, I thought I saw a Bumble.”

Justin: Okay.

Travis: “Sorry, sorry. Ohhh, when it gets dark and cold out there, you gotta eat your fellow min— Sorry, what were you sayin’, Cousin Eddie? Ah.”

Griffin: “I said to sleep within a Bumble carcass once.”

Travis: “You thought they smelled bad on the outside. They smell wonderful on the inside! I love doin’ it!”

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: “I do it when I don’t need to! I’m settin’ up an AirBnB inside a Bumble! One of the Bs is for Bumble!”

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: Okay guys. Listen. [chuckles] Thanks for listening, thanks for supporting us, thanks for— One more plug for Candlesnights.

Travis: “Well I’ve orphaned so many Bumbles.” [laughs]

Justin: Okay, go and watch it.

Griffin: The Candlenights plug is important.

Justin: [Bit.ly/candlenightstickets2024](https://bit.ly/candlenightstickets2024), please go do that if you haven’t done it. You can watch it until, I don’t know, first week of January?

Travis: January 4th.

Justin: There you go.

Griffin: Bit of a slower year on ticket sales.

Justin: Yeah, if you could—

Griffin: And Harmony House genuinely, really could use some help, funds-wise, so.

Justin: So even if you’ve already streamed, if you wanna hop back in there and kick in a few more bucks, that would be killer, thank you.

Travis: Or if you had a great time and you have friends who you know would love it, tell them about it.

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Share the link with people, make sure they check it out. It’s a great cause and a great show. Make sure to share it with folks. Also wanna let you know, Champions Grove 2025 packages are on sale now, that’s the immersive gaming event that I did last year. Doin’ it again this year at Ravenwood Castle in Hocking Hills, Ohio. You—

Justin: Don’t sleep on it, it’s really fun.

Travis: Thank you. You can go to championsgrove.com for all the information, and get your packages there to come and hang out with us, May 23rd through to the 26th, it’s gonna be a great time.

Also, we got merch! If you haven't checked it out, mcelroymerch.com, including some Candlesnights merch over there. 10% of merch sales this month are also gonna go to Harmony House, so make sure you check that out. Get your Fungalore merch before the season ends, we've also got a Miggy merch bundle over there.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: With a mug and a sticker for \$25, so go check it out.

Griffin: Yeah. Um... This is—

Travis: Oh, we should also, say, reminder. There's not gonna be any new episodes the 24th through the 30th, so no—

Griffin: For any of our shows.

Justin: Yes.

Travis: Yeah, so no *My Brother, My Brother And Me* next week, no McElroy shows, but we'll be back in the New Year.

Griffin: Yeah, so this is our last wish of the year for Fungalore, huh.

Justin: Wow.

Travis: Oh yeah, I should've remembered to pull it.

Griffin: Wow, you really didn't, did you? I wish... I wish...

Travis: This is from Griffin?

Griffin: I wish... I— You know what? I wish for Fungalore to get... Fungalore's wishes heard.

Justin: Woooow, Griffin.

Travis: No Griffin, actually that would cause a feedback loop.

Griffin: I set him free. Fungalore, we're listening to your wish now. That's what you don't know about 20-Fungalore, is in 20-Fungalive, he is gonna actually need something from you this time.

[theme music fades in]

Justin: Wow.

Griffin: And saying that sentence out loud, I just realized I am gonna be pushing for 20-Fungalive, and that's—

Justin: Oh wow, okay well that'll be a stirring way to return. My name's Justin McElroy.

Travis: I'm Travis McElroy.

Griffin: I'm Griffin McElroy.

Travis: What a cliffhanger.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: This has been *My Brother, My Brother And Me*. Kiss your dad square on the lips.

[outro theme music plays]

[ukulele chord]

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