

Wonderful! 355: Get Me Pictures of Christmas

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[theme music, "Money Won't Pay (feat. Augustus)" by Bo En plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hi, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: Welcome to Wonderful! The show where two in love people—for real in love married couple, Rachel and Griffin McElroy, that's us—talk about things we like, that's good, that we are into. This is gonna—this is like our holiday episode, really.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Because we won't have a new one out next week. Which is a weird way to start out the episode—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: By telling you we won't be doing one next week.

Rachel: You better like this one.

Griffin: But next week is... Christmas. And so that is—we won't have an episode then. Because we'll be deeply contemplating the birth of Christ and celebrating with family.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And so, thank you for joining us. The weather outside is frightful, but our... this podcast is so delightful.

Rachel: [chuckles] I love when you tap into your like radio DJ ancestry, and just pick these like seasonal expressions—

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: To like transition into another topic.

Griffin: I'll be honest, I got distracted because outside my office window, I saw two helicopters in the sky at the same time. You never see that, do you? Two helicopters at the same fuckin' time?

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Only in Washington D.C., man. Only at our nation's capital.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Do you have any small wonders, my sweet Christmas baby?

Rachel: [chortles] Whoa? I really like the vibe that you're setting.

Griffin: I'm trying my hardest.

Rachel: Yeah, it's good.

Griffin: Thanks.

Rachel: I will say that my parents, fans of the show—

Griffin: What's up, Dave and Linda!

Rachel: [chuckles] Are now residents of the DMV region.

Griffin: Welcome.

Rachel: It was definitely a rocky transition into the space. A delayed moving truck.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: A lot of unexpected hiccups. But they are now living in our area.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: And that is a long time coming.

Griffin: Yes, it is. They finally got out of St. Louis... Stinkberg City! I would never actually—

Rachel: You would never!

Griffin: Say anything mean about St. Louis. I love—

Rachel: Because you are a hockey fan now of the St. Louis team, you have many items of clothing that have—

Griffin: Have the name of the city on it, yeah.

Rachel: St. Louis on it, yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, that's true, that's true. But I am glad to have your parents here. I'm gonna say... Hot Frosty!

Rachel: Oh my gosh, Hot Frosty!

Griffin: It's, gang, it really... you gotta believe the hype on this one. It's really good, Hot Frosty.

Rachel: It's so good!

Griffin: I'll go ahead and say that my main topic is also a Christmas movie, because it's the reason for the—

Rachel: So is mine!

Griffin: [gasps] Hah! Uh-oh. Okay, well fingers crossed we haven't doubled up.

Rachel: This will be interesting!

Griffin: This will be very interesting. Hot Frosty, though, it is—it scratches the itch, man. It's about a snowman that comes to life and falls in love with Lacey Chabert. And she falls in love with him too. But, man, pretty quickly Rachel and I both kind of decided we are both picking up what this movie is putting down.

Rachel: [chuckles] Yeah, you know, I used it actually the other day, we had our like work holiday gathering. And one of the women there was talking about how she was going to see Craig Robinson on tour. And I said, you know, "Have you seen Hot Frosty?" And then we talked for a while about it and how good it is, because it knows exactly what it is.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: A lot of comedic talent.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Very charming.

Griffin: Can't remember the guy... Alexis' boyfriend from Schitt's Creek. I can't remember the actors name, which is a shame, because he's so good. And so hot! Holy shit!

Rachel: [chuckles] It was hard for me, honestly—

Griffin: His vascularity is insane, dude.

Rachel: A lot of vascularity. He's a very attractive man. But one thing they did is they cast like a pallor over him?

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: So that you wouldn't forget like—

Griffin: He is a snowman.

Rachel: Hey—[chuckles] this is a snowman. Snow first, man second.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: And so I found myself more concerned by his like ill appearance—

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Than his attractive bod and face.

Griffin: I'm so glad to hear that, baby. I don't know what I would have done—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: If you had been just fully paying attention to his attractive appearance the whole time. Just a lot of fun. A movie that knows what it is, and it seems like they had a ton of fun making it. It's got bloopers at the end.

Rachel: It's Dustin Milligan.

Griffin: Dustin Milligan. That's a very memorable name. I should remember that. Hysterically funny. Funny, good times, self-aware, footloose, having fun, love it. Hot Frosty.

Rachel: Yeah, and not if you're like I have to sit down with my family and watch a film and—

Griffin: His penis doesn't come—well, okay, hold on.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: His penis comes out. But you don't see it.

Rachel: You don't see it. It's comfortable to watch, let's say, with your grandparents, I would say?

Griffin: Hm...

Rachel: I would watch it with Nonny.

Griffin: I'd watch it with Nonny, yeah. But Nonny—

Rachel: Nonny's cool.

Griffin: Nonny is cool.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: All right, I'll do my movie. This is gonna be a star-studded one. What is it—what if it's the same one, baby?

Rachel: I know, I'm having this moment. I was just thinking—

Griffin: We've never done this before.

Rachel: We've literally done hundreds of episodes. We have never picked the same topic. Even though we spend every day together.

Griffin: All right well...

Rachel: Is this the moment?

Griffin: This might be the moment. It's a movie that I have discussed as a small wonder on this show before. But after watching it again with you and your parents, I gotta talk about I Believe in Santa.

Rachel: Oh! It's different.

Griffin: Ah! Okay.

Rachel: We did different movies.

Griffin: Okay, good.

Rachel: Whew!

Griffin: Gotta make some space for I Believe in Santa as a full segment. Because it is I think a tradition. This is our third year in a row of observing I Believe in Santa.

Rachel: [chortles]

Griffin: On the Netflix application. And—

Rachel: This is a film that Justin and Sydnee enthusiastically showed us, I guess it would have been—

Griffin: Three years ago.

Rachel: Three years ago. And it was so much fun to watch with them.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: They both were so delighted by it, and it was definitely contagious. And now we watch it every year.

Griffin: It is—we are no strangers to like the bad Christmas movie like genre. We enjoy—I enjoy going down that that particular well. I don't, for whatever reason, and I know this is true of a lot of people, I'm fully willing to suspend my usual kind of like quality bar for one and a half to two hours. It's never two hours. It's like one and a half hours tops for these like Hallmark Christmas movies. I'm willing to suspend that so that I can just kind of like see what they went with this time.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's all variations on a theme. And for that like I can watch a bunch of these and get really into it. Like you're—like a Hot Frosty, which goes so

far down the direction of like shitty Christmas movie that it kind of slingshots around it back towards brilliance. *I Believe in Santa* definitely scratches that itch, but it is also such a thought provokingly strange piece of cinema storytelling that I think it stands apart from the rest.

Rachel: It's one of those films—because we sat down to watch with my parents. And the first 20 minutes are pretty straight. You know? Like the big twist doesn't happen right away.

Griffin: Yeah, you got—it makes you work for it a little bit, in *I Believe in Santa*.

Rachel: So at first, like I would encourage you, if you sit down to watch this, to give it like a good 30 to 45 minutes, and *really* understand the premise.

Griffin: It really has a few drops.

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: Where like once you hit one of those drops, the film kind of reveals itself for what it is. And what it is, is truly bewildering. It is a love story, and it follows the journeys of divorcee Lisa, who is a magazine writer. Who's beat is apparently just writing sort of *Sex in the City* think pieces about different holidays?

Rachel: [chuckles] Holidays, yeah.

Griffin: So she starts out writing about how kick ass Fourth of July is and how it's so much better than shitty Christmas, which sucks. And we learn a little bit about Lisa through that article, and what she thinks about it. And then on the other end, we got Tom, who's an adult man who celebrates Christmas harder than any other 30 people combined.

Rachel: Which you don't know right away.

Griffin: You don't know right away. That, when it's revealed, is not so surprising.

Rachel: He does dedicate himself to the season specifically, unlike, let's say, Kumail's character in *Only Murders in the Building*. This is not a 365 Christmas enthusiast. This is like a...

Griffin: December One, he gets—

Rachel: December one, yeah.

Griffin: Fucking nasty on it.

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: So they meet cute at the—well, it's not that cute. They meet at a Fourth of July cookout. Her daughter goes kind of missing, and he finds her, and then she thinks he's kidnapping—

Rachel: It's suggested to be a meet cute, because he sees her from like across the fairgrounds.

Griffin: Yeah. But she thinks he's fully trying to kidnap her daughter.

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: Which is like not that cute. And they fall in love, and they go—they're dating for a few months, until December rolls around. And then Lisa learns that Tom is an enormous like Christmas pervert.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: And this is bad for Lisa, who at this point you've probably guessed, hates Christmas. But she agrees to like go along with him on his daily, exhaustive, sometimes like outrageously labor-intensive Christmas traditions. One of them is like he makes Christmas cookies all night. He makes—he's up until like two AM making Christmas cookies for all the people that he has to make Christmas cookies for. And it is at this point in the film that one becomes worried about Tom. Like Tom is doing way, way, way,

way, way too much, to a degree where it's not an enjoyable thing for anyone else in Tom's life.

Rachel: You think like the hook of this film is just the fact that this man goes too hard at Christmas.

Griffin: And then there's another big reveal, when Tom and Lisa are having dinner with their adult friends. And at one point, Tom had to talk to Lisa's daughter about Santa Claus because someone told her Santa Claus isn't real. But Tom's like, "Uh, he's real." And has like a whole thing going. And Lisa was like, "Thank you for saying that." And Tom was like, "Why wouldn't I say it? It's true."

Rachel: It's true.

Griffin: I believe in Santa.

Rachel: I believe in Santa.

Griffin: And like to the film's credit, everyone is extremely patient with each other in this film.

Rachel: Yeah, they really let him play it out. It's not like, "Oh, you're crazy." End of scene.

Griffin: They pry apart his belief in Santa.

Rachel: They start doing the like, the juvenile questions that you start dealing with where it's like, "Well, how does he do all those houses in one night?" [chuckles]

Griffin: And he does answer most of those with 'Christmas magic.'

Rachel: Christmas magic. [chuckles]

Griffin: He has, I would say, a practiced poise as he delivers his essentially Santa Claus apologetics to his friends. And it

Rachel: His best friend already knows this about him.

Griffin: His best friend, Hassan, knows about his beliefs. And is very much like, "Oh, here we go."

Rachel: Lisa and her gal pal are flummoxed.

Griffin: They are... this is a movie about the suspension of disbelief. And it requires that suspension from you, the viewer. It is a sort of diegetic suspension of disbelief, which is like pretty heady stuff, like constantly. There are no fewer than three different scenes where Lisa wields mistletoe suggestively. Like, "Oh, look what I... look what I got here. Time for some kissing." Three different times. Which begs the question like, is Tom so into Christmas that the only way to get him going is by observing this particular Christmas tradition?

Rachel: I think—here's the thing that that hits me. Can I reveal my big behind the scenes knowledge that blew my mind?

Griffin: I would—yeah, sure.

Rachel: Okay, so these two are supposed to be crazy about each other. So much so that she is willing to kind of give him some time with this 'I believe in Santa' revelation. I think the reason they do all these mistletoe exchanges is because the two of them do not have much on screen chemistry. I do not get the sense that they actually like each other. Which made the revelation that they are, in fact, a married couple kind of—

Griffin: In real life, yeah.

Rachel: Kind of wild to me. Because I was like, wait, those two have chosen to spend the rest of their lives together? Like, they are not particularly hot and heavy in their exchanges.

Griffin: Well, it's because we get a lot of explanation and a lot of evidence as to why Tom is so into Santa Claus. [chuckles] And not as much for him being into this woman, Lisa.

Rachel: That's true, there's no—

Griffin: I would say the split is like 80/20, development of his relationship with Santa Claus versus his relationship with these—

Rachel: There's not a lot of history for him, right? Like we find out that she has had, you know, the father of her child, who is kind of an unreliable character, I guess, in their lives.

Griffin: In so much as we don't see him in the movie.

Rachel: So, yeah, we know that about her romantic history. I don't think we know anything about him?

Griffin: No. We also know her reason for hating Christmas is she found a Barbie in her parent's closet. And when she asked them about it, they said, "You weren't supposed to see that."

Rachel: "You ruined it."

Griffin: And then they didn't give it to her because they said Santa took it away, because she saw that and asked too many questions. And then also, her parents never got her another Christmas present ever again.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Which is like—

Rachel: It just like escalates so much.

Griffin: I fully get, Lisa, why that would put a bad taste in your mouth.

Rachel: [chuckles] About your parents.

Griffin: About your—I would say it would make me more... probably angry about my parents than Santa Claus.

Rachel: To be upset about the holiday for your parents doing this unreasonable thing.

Griffin: Outrageous, monstrous thing, yeah.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I'm—

Rachel: The parents are great. The holiday, though? Really, really flawed.

Griffin: There is also a whole plot about this, the whole time, and I mean for over a month, Lisa's editor is breathing down her neck to get in this Christmas think piece. Without which the magazine website won't get any clicks.

Rachel: [chuckles] Clicks, yeah.

Griffin: Which is awesome. You see like there's a half dozen scenes, like transitional scenes, where you see her sitting at her laptop trying to write like a first sentence of the article. Like, "Christmas, you're either on the bus or you're under it." And then she erases that like, "No, this is shit."

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: And then like her final piece is like four paragraphs long. And at the end of the movie, you see the editor reading it, getting all like misty-eyed. This is simply not how any of this works.

Rachel: The editor, by the way, is like a very Spider-Man—

Griffin: Very J. Jonah. Get me pictures of Christmas.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Except he is a softie. You learn that at the end. And then when she turns in her Christmas think piece after Christmas has already happened, he's like so moved by it.

Rachel: [chuckles] I didn't even think about that.

Griffin: [chuckles] It's insane!

Rachel: [laughs] I never thought about the fact that they published the article after Christmas.

Griffin: After Christmas. You really—like as a former journalist, I'm always eating good around Christmas time for depictions of my former craft in Christmas movies. Because I would say maybe half—

Rachel: That's true. They love doing that.

Griffin: Half of protagonists in Christmas movies are journalists? And it's always like—

Rachel: Or there's some kind of like news story about some issue that is the obstacle for our Christmas heroes.

Griffin: I know you all at home are probably worried this film is going to have a super religious message. And let me assure you—just based on the whole sort of like puritanical vibe of it all, I assure you, this is explicitly about Santa's Christmas. That line is spoken out loud.

Rachel: Yeah! They do not—

Griffin: I don't think Jesus' name is mentioned once in the film.

Rachel: No. And that's why I hate it. [chuckles]

Griffin: The only time religion comes up at the film is when Tom's friend, Hassan, equates persecuting Tom's belief in Santa with his own religious

persecution as a Muslim man living in Denver, Colorado. Which is a pretty fuckin' bold screen writing choice!

Rachel: He's like, "I'm kind of an outsider too. And so who am I to judge Tom?" [titters]

Griffin: Which is... okay! Are you—if you're sure, I Believe in Santa. This movie has so much to offer. And it's not stuff that I feel like usually exists in bad Christmas movies where it's like, oh, this writing is very stilted. Or oh, that thing that happened is very obviously going to happen. There was a kick ass time when we watched this movie with your parents, while they were staying with us, waiting for the delivery truck to arrive. When Lisa's daughter goes to Santa Claus and is like, "Oh, I thought of what I want for Christmas." And she whispers something in his ear. And then David just goes, "I bet I know what she asked for."

Rachel: [chortles]

Griffin: And it is for Tom and Lisa to get together at the end of the movie, which does happen. Which everyone reacts to like, holy shit, is Santa Claus real? Because she wished for this romance to happen.

Rachel: And it's such a buildup too, because they're like all together in this ski lodge. And everybody sitting there is just waiting for the moment to happen. And it takes forever. [chuckles]

Griffin: This movie though is like different from a Hot Frosty or Christmas Prince, or Christmas Switch, or Yes Chef Christmas. Because it exists in this like other world where like our societal and cultural norms are different or non-existent sometimes. And people act certain ways and say certain things that is so just non... non-real, that it almost becomes like an abstract sort of absurdist, sort of storytelling experience. It is intoxicating, this film, and I cannot recommend it enough.

Rachel: Not particularly like—it doesn't fill me with the spirit of the season, per se. Interesting from for a movie that is entirely about Christmas and Santa, I don't watch it and feel like... like, I'm in it now. [titters]

Griffin: No, but I enjoy it so much and I only watch it this time of year. And so I associate those things together. We did also finish *Spirited* last night. That one does get me—that one kicks ass, and gets me in the spirit. This one is just really very—

Rachel: It's just fun.

Griffin: Very, very funny and strange.

Rachel: It's on Netflix. You'll probably have to search for it. Your algorithm will not push it to you. [chuckles]

Griffin: It will not surface this voluntarily. When you click into it, there's actually a prompt that appears like, "You should—are you sure?"

Rachel: [chuckles] "This one?"

Griffin: "Did you hear about this on a podcast? Because..."

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

[theme music plays]

[ad read]

Rachel: Okay, so, listeners may remember earlier in this episode, when Griffin said he was talking about a Christmas movie, and I held my breath. And then he talked about how the—we had talked about it as a small wonder before. And then I was sure he was going to say my Christmas movie, because mine was also a small wonder.

Griffin: Uh-oh.

Rachel: And then maybe moments ago, you just heard him say it out loud, because the name of the film is Spirited!

Griffin: Fuck yes!

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Oh, man, it's—when I said that I was like, man, now I kind of wish I just talked about spirited.

Rachel: Well, hey, guess what I did?

Griffin: Talked about Spirited?

Rachel: Or I guess I'm about to.

Griffin: Man alive. Spirited, unlike I Believe in Santa, is one that I can't—I don't understand why it's not a holiday classic for everyone who watches Christmas movies.

Rachel: Yeah. It could get there. It could get there. It's relatively new.

Griffin: Yeah, I guess. And it's on a subscription service that maybe not everyone has access to.

Rachel: Yeah, right?

Griffin: It was a shame.

Rachel: Yeah. Okay, so, Spirited. Apple TV released 2022, came out November 18th, 2022. And we have mentioned this as a small wonder before, because it's just... the performances are great. The music is great. Like, the pacing, the whole thing is just—

Griffin: It's just top-notch fucking stellar the whole time.

Rachel: It stars Will Ferrell as the Ghost of Christmas Present. So this is like another play on A Christmas Carol. Charles Dickens' 1843 novella. Apparently, there are more than 100 versions of A Christmas Carol on IMDb.

Griffin: [chuckles] That is not surprising.

Rachel: But this is the first one, from what I can tell, that is kind of told from the perspective of the ghosts. So, Will Ferrell is Christmas Present. He is part of an operation of people that each year pick somebody to give kind of the Scrooge treatment.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: So him and his team decide to pick Clint Briggs, played by Ryan Reynolds, to help him re-examine his own past, present and future. In the effort to... I guess, get him to turn his life around?

Griffin: Yeah, he's sort of like a social media PR sleazeball guy who like stirs up controversy for, you know, clicks and notoriety.

Rachel: Yeah. The idea is they pick somebody who has made a lot of poor, like selfish decisions throughout their life. And then the hope is that at the end of one night, very similar to A Christmas Carol, they will like get them to see the error of their ways.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: And... there's a lot about it I didn't know. So we talked about how the music is incredible.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: It comes from the song writing duo Benj Pasek and Justin Paul.

Griffin: Isn't it the Dear Evan Hansen folks?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Yeah. So they are graduates of the University of Michigan. They met there in 2024. They became the 20th and 21st EGOT winners.

Griffin: Wow? [titters]

Rachel: Because not only have they done Dear Evan Hansen, they wrote the song Get Back Up Again for Trolls, which is wild. They did that song that Meryl Streep sang, Look for the Light and Only Murders in the Building.

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: They are apparently writing a new song for Disney's upcoming live action remake of Snow White.

Griffin: Okay?

Rachel: And they collaborated with Pharrell Williams on his upcoming semi-autobiographical—

Griffin: Lego movie? [chuckles]

Rachel: Lego movie. [chuckles]

Griffin: What a fucking wild career!

Rachel: I know, I know. They have been all over the place. The music is incredible. The song that really hooks me in at the beginning—I feel like every time we watch this, I always turn to Griffin during this song and say, "This is incredible." And that is Bringing Back Christmas, which is Ryan Reynolds' like first big musical production.

Griffin: Oh, man. There's probably a name for this in like musical theater. And it's probably weird that I don't know what the name of this is. But it's like the... showstopper charlatan kind of number. Kind of a sit down, you're rocking the boat vibe.

Rachel: Yeah, exactly.

Griffin: And this one gets to it, and I believe it's the second song in the in the film. And it's insanely good.

Rachel: Yeah. So his character—it's the third song, actually.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Rachel: That Christmas Morning Feeling is first.

Griffin: And then Will Ferrell's song about—

Rachel: Present's Lament, yeah. And then Bringing Back Christmas. So, Ryan Reynolds' character is brought in front of the like...

Griffin: National Christmas Tree Association?

Rachel: Christmas Tree Association. [titters] And the idea is, their big problem they're like talking about at the convention is the fact that everybody is buying artificial trees. And they are trying to get people to invest in real trees again.

[song excerpt plays]

Ryan Renolds: [sings] We're bringing back cozy nights, those twinkly lights, the glow of yesteryear! Now it's some slight manipulation, but it's what we've gotta do. See, we need some confrontation, or your message won't get through. We're bringing back decency! We're bringing back Christmas. And that means the piney scent of a real authentic tree!"

[song excerpt ends]

Rachel: I wanted to share, some of the lyrics just like speak to how much we love the music. "See, what you're really selling is the way things ought to be. So your pitch becomes compelling, selling more than just a tree. It's a symbol of your values. It's your ethics and your cause. You can either be

fake, like the trees they make, or take a stand for Santa Claus." Just like so clever and like, and catchy.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I love the song. So, I read an interview with Will Ferrell and Ryan Reynolds about their experience making this movie. This is from Entertainment Weekly, when it came out. And they talk about how neither of them really had any significant musical experience. Ryan Reynolds' only performance singing sincerely was, he was on The Masked Singer in South Korea.

Griffin: Yes! I've seen this.

Rachel: [titters] In 2018.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And he sang Tomorrow from Annie. [titters]

Griffin: So strange.

Rachel: He said, "That was before The Masked Singer was ever in the United States. So I was thinking, 'This is an obscure South Korean show. No one's ever going to see this or know about this.' It was so terrifying and traumatic, but fun. I thought, 'There's my singing career, beginning middle and end, all in three minutes.' Little did I know..." [titters]

Griffin: Man, everyone though kicks ass in this movie. Octavia Spencer is great. Sunita Mani is the ghost of Christmas Past.

Rachel: Yes!

Griffin: She's been in a ton of stuff. She was in the fuckin' Turn Down for What music video, and Everything Everywhere All at Once. She's—

Rachel: She was in Mr. Robot too.

Griffin: She was a Mr. Robot, yeah. And Tracy Morgan as the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. It's so... it's so funny and clever, and the choreography is just like insane. The number of jams in this one musical is truly... truly impressive.

Rachel: The article talks about Good Afternoon.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Which is Will Ferrell and Ryan Reynolds, and they're walking through Boston, and they're leading 45 professional dancers through the street. And apparently, they were filming that in the middle of summer. And so they're wearing these like full, old, traditional like... costumes. You know, like in A Christmas Carol, basically.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: And just like tweed and wool and like sweating. And what kept happening, because it's like, it's partially a tap dance number too.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Is Ryan Reynolds says, "One of us would screw up, and you'd have to go back and start again." Apparently, they were soaking wet by the end of it, and just like hugged each other so hard at the end, because they had actually completed it.

Griffin: It's such a wild—like in the middle of this movie, there's just a full like Oliver Twist kind of grand overture, like song and dance routine that lasts for like 15 minutes. [titters] It's like a really, really, really long song.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: With really impressive—

Rachel: It's fun to see these two actors together. You get a real—I mean, Will Ferrell is always reminding us like, "Hey, I'm also a dramatic actor."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And this movie kind of has like a mix of that.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And I don't know, I love it. I want everybody to watch it.

Griffin: Yeah, it's on Apple TV. So you have to be an Apple TV subscriber in order to watch this film.

Rachel: I know...

Griffin: But it's really a knockout, I think.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Do you want to know what our friends at home have been talking about lately?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Okay. I got one here from Ray, who says, "My small/giant wonder is the Malabar giant squirrel. I already love squirrels, but knowing there are more than—some that can grow up to three feet long and have more than half the colors of the rainbows strewn across their bodies is incredible." They attached some pictures. I can't believe these guys are real.

Rachel: Whoa?

Griffin: Look at those bright, colorful—

Rachel: That doesn't seem real at all.

Griffin: Long-ass squirrels. These look fake. They look fake. And I don't want to call you a liar, but these seem like fake squirrels.

Rachel: A three-foot squirrel is definitely an exciting prospect.

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, most of its tail—

Rachel: True.

Griffin: Malabar giant squirrel... Just Googling to make sure. Yeah, no, I mean, these are—

Rachel: [chuckles] That's a real guy. It's the colors, honestly, that make it seem so unbelievable.

Griffin: Yeah, he's a real Starburst of a fella. So big too, Jesus Christ. Look at this picture of one with a person. It's like a pretty big squirrel. It's like the size of their whole hand. Big guy! Big, beefy guy. Wouldn't mind giving him a big hug!

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Leora says, "Hey, Rachel and Griffin. My small wonder is getting a new pair of glasses. Everything is so much sharper, it's clean. It's like switching to ultra 4k HD vision. Plus new frames is a fun way to switch up your vibes and feel good about your looks." Hell yeah.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Love getting new glasses. Love getting new glasses, in both directions. Looking out of them is cool, and looking at me in them is always exciting. It's like a new face feature for me.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: You don't get as into this as I do. But it's...

Rachel: No, it's mainly because I don't really need glasses day-to-day.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I'm able to kind of read things that are up close and far away pretty easily. It's only when I'm in front of a computer all day that I wear them.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: So I just hang with the same pair for sometimes five, six years.
[titters]

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And then switch it up and we're like, "Oh, yeah, this is great!"

Griffin: Yeah. Well, that's it for us... this year, I think? I think our next episode is due out like January 1st, perhaps. So...

Rachel: Whoa...

Griffin: Thank you all so much for joining us for another year of Wonderful. We hope you have a happy and delightful holiday season. Thanks 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. If you missed our Candlenights spectacular, you can still catch it on VOD. We talk about videos that get you in the mood for the season then—this is one of them!

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: [Bit.ly/candlenightstickets2024](https://bit.ly/candlenightstickets2024). Come see all the fun stuff we made and all the fun guest bits we've got. And we got an ornament and poster for sale. And benefits from the show and the ornament and the poster all go to Harmony House, which is a great organization in Huntington that works to provide services to people experiencing homelessness. We've also got a bunch of other merch. If you if you want some Fungalore stuff, now's the time to do it, because the year is almost—the year of fungus is almost behind us. And that's all at mcelroymerch.com. Thank you all so much. Have a warm and lovely Candlenights. And... and... you know... Santa's watching.

Rachel: [titters]

Griffin: I hate to end it that way, but like... Santa's watching.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: *He's real. He's watching.* He knows all about it too. And right now, you're thinking about that one thing that certainly no one—knows about that too. So, best behavior.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Rachel's giving me a look like, where's this going?

Rachel: Well, I'm trying to think like if Hanukkah has any kind of equivalent, and it and it doesn't. But...

Griffin: There's no panopticon that I know about in Hanukkah. Which is honestly like a huge relief.

Rachel: Moses isn't watching.

Griffin: I don't know... I don't know.

Rachel: Maybe he is? I don't know. Maybe he is. [laughs]

Griffin: Maybe he is... It's kind of exciting now, actually.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I have two grown mystical men watching me.

Rachel: Just watching, all the time. That's hot.

[group chuckle]

Griffin: Do you think the two grown mystical men watched me get my vasectomy? Because if so, I'm uncomfortable with that. I will—that was a private time for me.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And the doctor... I don't actually want to talk about my vasectomy—

Rachel: Yeah, I figured you probably have talked about it as much as you want to.

Griffin: Yeah, I'm all vasectomied out. Good night.

Rachel: [chuckles]

[theme music, "Money Won't Pay (feat. Augustus)" by Bo En plays]

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