

Wonderful! 356: Money Energy 2025

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

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: Welcome to 2025. It's time to renew. It's time to reinvest...

Rachel: [titters]

Griffin: In the stock market.

Rachel: We have a presentation; we'd like you to sit down.

Griffin: We have a portfolio of exciting stock options for you here in 2025. We're recording this well in advance, it's like the 20th of 2024 still, December. And so like I don't actually know when this episode is going to be up. I think it's going to be in 2025, and if that's the case, we have some exciting stock options for you.

Rachel: [chuckles] When are you going to start thinking about your future? The time is now, invest today.

Griffin: If you put all your funds in a mutual 243-C account—

Rachel: [chuckles] Uh-huh?

Griffin: And you get limited bonds, then you could be rich.

Rachel: See, you went to the bank today, so you're just brimming with slang.

Griffin: I did go to the bank today. I got some of that good bank energy just rubbed off on me.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: People love going to the bank because they come home thinking like, "I got—I have money energy on me now."

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And that's what—we're past Christmas at this point. That's what matters.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Money energy, having it in '25, and going so strong into the future.

Rachel: And Christmas was great?

Griffin: I don't know, it's five days from now. I'm over it already, though. I'm all about money energy this year.

Rachel: Yeah, is that your resolution?

Griffin: My energy—my resolution this year is money energy 24/7.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: 365.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Is this a leap year? No. Was 2024 a leap year. Dang, I didn't even live it up like I should have.

Rachel: Yeah. I—

Griffin: I think it was, I think it's multiples of four?

Rachel: Yeah, that sounds right.

Griffin: All right. Well, dang.

Rachel: Dang!

Griffin: I guess we'll catch 'em in 28.

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: Shoot!

Rachel: It's never too early to start planning for 2028 today. Invest in—

Griffin: Invest in our bonds!

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Do you have a small wonder?

Rachel: Uh...

Griffin: You can, you can. You can... You have it inside of you. This is fear. It's the fear talking.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: This is the fear talking.

Rachel: Do you have one? Would you like to go?

Griffin: Survivor was dope this season.

Rachel: Oh, okay, that's good.

Griffin: This was an all-timer, I think. This is an all-timer. There's some real good shit at the, I would say, last six episodes of Survivor. There's a whole

underdog movement to launch this secret campaign that they called the, what, the Italy...

Rachel: Operation Italy.

Griffin: Operation Italy, because they formulated it while eating like Olive Garden on a reward.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: There were big swings, and there were big hits and big misses. And damn, I was just all fired up. We have a friend who just started watching Survivor this season, and I think it's a pretty good one to cut your teeth on. Had a good time watching it. Did you think of something?

Rachel: Okay, all right. This isn't... this isn't exciting.

Griffin: Good setup. I'm looking forward to hearing what you're about to say.

Rachel: [laughs] A lot of—well, not a lot. But anyway, two of my medical providers here have used like a web-based message service.

Griffin: Yes?

Rachel: In which they encourage you to send them what are basically E-mails, and then typically they respond to them within the same day.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: This is a completely novel, new concept to me.

Griffin: Absolutely, it is.

Rachel: If you wanted to get in touch with a doctor, as far as I know, as recent as three years ago, there was no way to do it. Like you had to make an appointment three months from now.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Now, I just send them a little message and they get back to me later in the day. They're like, "Hey, take this medicine, not that one."

Griffin: I like that.

Rachel: And it's like, wow, I didn't have to go anywhere. Thank you.

Griffin: That's very chill, yeah. It's weird, I've never thought about that as being weird and bad. But it is pretty weird and bad that if you need help from a doctor, you do have to kind of go to them, on their schedule. And you can't just shoot 'em a—shoot 'em an E-mail.

Rachel: Yeah, super easy. It was—

Griffin: "As per my last email, the rash is back." You don't have a rash.

Rachel: Or—[chuckles] no, I don't. Or leave like a phone message.

Griffin: Yeah. And then never—

Rachel: And then you wait for them to call you, and most times, they won't call you back, because you're not like, "I cut off my arm." You're like, "Hey... can I have a refill?"

Griffin: It's—but, you know, you take the good, you take the bad. There's a lot of parts of our healthcare system that are amazing and work so good.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: No problems... You go first this week, and I cannot wait to hear about your topic.

Rachel: Okay, so this one fell on my lap, in the best possible way. I am not in a habit of texting your brothers, just individually.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: Typically, we do our communication through you.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Which makes sense, you talk to them every day.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: But your oldest brother, Justin McElroy, tastemaker, bon vivant—

Griffin: Sure, yeah. Kingmaker, even, I would go so far as to say.

Rachel: Yeah. Sent me a musical group and said, "I think you would like this. I can't stop listening to them." And he was exactly right.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And this is a band, from what I can tell, that does not have an album out yet. They just have songs on Bandcamp.

Griffin: I was wondering about that, because I was trying to listen to their body of work—you should say the name of the band.

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles] The band is called Boys Go To Jupiter. They are a New York based band. And the song that I shared with you, by the way, I think just dropped on Bandcamp December 7th.

Griffin: Okay, so this is hot. Hot off the presses.

Rachel: [chuckles] Yeah.

Griffin: Great.

Rachel: This is a... more often than not, three-piece band. Although they have played performances with like up to eight people.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Like...

Griffin: I was gonna say, that's a surprise. Because there's a lot of brass in some of the songs.

Rachel: Yeah, saxophone, trombone, trumpet, depending on what kind of show they're doing.

Griffin: Right, right.

Rachel: And it's just like so feel good vibes.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Like there's a lot of... I mean, there's a lot of talent in the lead vocalist, who is named Jess Kantorowitz. And then the two other songwriters are Caleb Martin-Rosenthal and Luke Folkert.

Griffin: I don't know who plays guitar in this band, but it's some of the cleanest, nastiest guitar picking I've heard.

Rachel: That is Luke. So, Luke plays guitar and Caleb plays keys.

Griffin: I'll tell you what it kind of gave me, it gave me sort of The Beths vibes, like a Western Hemisphere The Beths.

Rachel: Yeah. Uh-huh.

Griffin: If you will. And some of those like bigger, brassier numbers have more... like some Lawrence energy, maybe a lite. Just a little bit.

Rachel: Just real poppy, but like very obviously like indie rock, you know?

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Like not necessarily poppy in a radio way, but like in a very like danceable—

Griffin: Absolutely.

Rachel: Good energy way.

Griffin: For sure.

Rachel: So the song that Justin shared with me that I wanted to play first is called Virginia.

[excerpt of "Virginia" by Boys Go To Jupiter plays]

Lyrics: Living in the shadow of a light of other people's dreams. Never did too well in class, a curse that never seemed to pass. Her temper had a fire, but inside she had a heart of glass. Tired of performing for a crowd that never seemed to care. Virginia saw her chance she had to get up and get out of there.

[excerpt ends]

Rachel: Yeah, so as I mentioned, this was just released on Bandcamp December 7th. Their album is supposed to come out in the spring, 2025. And the album is going to be called Lovers Always Lose.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: It's gonna have 10 tracks on it.

Griffin: That's another single that is out right now that I listen to.

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah. You can find—you can find a lot of—a lot of stuff on YouTube. Which is, I mean, I'm not a real Bandcamp person.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: I feel like Bandcamp is for musicians that want to share their music with other musicians. Is that true?

Griffin: I mean, I use band camp to sell all the TAZ music.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So it's, I don't know, it is easy to distribute. It's like the easiest, I think, online self-publishing place to distribute that I know of.

Rachel: I did find an interview with them. And in it, Jess, who's the lead singer, said that she met Luke through Hinge. [chuckles]

Griffin: Whoa? Okay.

Rachel: Like three years ago, they went on a date, and had a good first date. Apparently, they bonded over music and How I Met Your Mother.

Griffin: Sure!

Rachel: [chuckles] And then they, by the third date they were kind of like, this is more of a friend vibe. Like they were kind of—they had similar interests, but like nothing was happening.

Griffin: Yeah, yeah.

Rachel: And Luke, at the time, was living with Caleb. And so the three of them got together and formed band.

Griffin: It's so cool. It's so—it's just—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I mean, that's so fuckin' cool, man. Like I genuinely can't—this is not sarcasm. I think it's cool to go on online dates with somebody enough times that you realize like, "Actually, we're best pals." And that you can stick to that. That's cool, man.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I didn't know that could happen.

Rachel: So, their music, in this interview I read, they were talking about kind of the nostalgia element in their music. They said they're big musical theater people. They love Wizard of Oz, Peter Pan.

Griffin: Wow. Okay, that actually unlocked a lot of stuff. I listened to a lot of their music today, and that really paints it in a different way.

Rachel: Billy Joel, Elton John, David Bowie, ABBA, Paramore, Electric Light Orchestra.

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: Which explains some—there's like a disco vibe, definitely, in that song.

Griffin: There is a huge disco vibe in Virginia, and a couple other of their songs, that kind of... kind of jump scares you.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Kind of jump scares you out of nowhere.

Rachel: Everything I read said that their live shows are incredible.

Griffin: I bet. Yeah, I bet.

Rachel: Just like very high energy, like very crowd engaging. Which is exciting, because they are going on tour starting March 6th.

Griffin: They coming here?

Rachel: Yes, they'll be in DC March 13th.

Griffin: 8:30? Or 9:30 club? Where are they doing—Atlanta?

Rachel: No, it's even smaller.

Griffin: Whoa?

Rachel: It's one I haven't heard of.

Griffin: Oh, shit.

Rachel: It's called Pie Shop.

Griffin: Okay! That sounds cool. I mean, it sounds like a cool venue name.

Rachel: Yeah, they're also gonna be... they're doing a couple shows in Ohio, Indiana. And then they're doing a lot of shows on the East Coast, New York, Pennsylvania.

Griffin: Sick.

Rachel: Vermont, Massachusetts.

Griffin: Are you gonna play the other song that you sent me? Because it's probably my favorite.

Rachel: Yeah, so the other song I wanted to play, that Justin didn't actually share with me, but I kind of found through my own digging that I really liked, and that song is Tiltawhirl.

Griffin: Hold on to your asses. This one shreds.

[excerpt of "Tiltawhirl" by Boys Go To Jupiter plays]

Lyrics: She met her on the Tilt-A-Whirl. Uh-oh, it's you. Same old shit but your hair is new. Uh-oh, round two. Tell me again what you've been up to. I guess you'll do. I can live through an hour or two with you. Who would've thought that I'd see you again after Cathy and Julie and Carly and Jen? Played the game, I guess we're losers, looks like beggars can't be choosers!

[excerpt ends]

Rachel: Yeah, this is just—I mean, this is just indie rock right here.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: This is just—this is just everything you want from indie rock. Apparently, they—so, they're all in New York, as I mentioned. And they filmed the music video at Coney Island, which I guess you're not allowed to film rides while you were there, but they definitely did on the sly for this video.

Griffin: That's wonderful. That's great.

Rachel: So, yeah, the band is Boys Go To Jupiter. Sometimes three-piece, sometimes six-piece, sometimes eight-piece band. And yeah, their upcoming album, *Lovers Always Lose*, is supposed to come out spring 2025. But you can find their stuff on Bandcamp right now.

Griffin: I ran a bunch of errands this morning, and you sort of sent me the link to this music this morning also. And it sent me down this rabbit hole of other sort of like female vocalist like indie rock bands that I'd never heard of before. It's wild, I feel like I didn't discover a ton of new music this year. Like I just didn't go seeking it out.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And then right here with 11 days left in the year, I found like four or five bands that like I was like, I saved on Spotify. Like, yup, that's good stuff too, that's all really great.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Great.

[theme music plays]

[ad break]

Griffin: Very musical episode this week. Last week was our movies episode—I guess two weeks ago was our movies episode. This is a musicals one, because I want to talk about Auld Lang Syne. Which is probably not surprising, because I do have I believe the Wikipedia article pulled up on that monitor right there.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: You probably did see it.

Rachel: Have you talked about this before? Probably not.

Griffin: No, I have not, according to wonderful.fyi.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: So we just watched It's a Wonderful Life, which is like probably the most essential Christmas movie for us. And one of my favorite movies probably ever made.

Rachel: Griffin and I always—just like we are devastated by that movie every year.

Griffin: The ending—I mean, there's several parts throughout that movie, but the ending specifically is set to Auld Lang Syne, as they all sort of sing it together as like a whole town. Except for Potter, fuck him.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: But it always makes me cry big, fat, wet tears down my face every time.

Rachel: There's just such a sense of like community in that scene.

Griffin: And it got me thinking, it is weird that there is this official theme song for New Year's Eve/Day.

Rachel: That's a good point, I never really thought about that. [titters]

Griffin: Like, Christmas has tons of songs, obviously. But like, not a theme—not one official sort of theme song. So, I got curious about how that happened. Vox did a great sort of explainer video about this, as they do. So, if you want a quick six-minute visual version of what I'm about to talk about, you can find that.

Rachel: You can turn off this podcast and go. [chuckles]

Griffin: Turn off this—yeah. So Auld Lang Syne is a Scottish folk song with a kind of like strange creative history. It was attributed to a very famous Scottish poet named Robert Burns in 1788. But it was actually sort of a remix of an older Scottish folk song that was printed in 1711, by James Watson.

Rachel: Well, but Griffin, it isn't, because at the beginning, nobody comes on and says, "It's the remix."

Griffin: Yes. I believe, actually—

Rachel: Oh, in the original version—

Griffin: In the original version, T-Pain did come in and—

Rachel: And shout, "It's the remix."

Griffin: [sings] "It's the remix!" So that original version called Old Long Syne, the lyrics go, "Should Old Acquaintance be forgot, and never thought upon; The flames of Love extinguished, and fully past and gone: Is thy sweet Heart now grown so cold, that loving Breast of thine; That thou canst never once reflect on Old long syne."

Rachel: Whoa.

Griffin: "On old long syne, my jo, on old long syne. That thou canst never once reflect on old long syne."

Rachel: Wow, that's kind of a burn, it feels like.

Griffin: It does, it has a different energy to it, for sure.

Rachel: It's a diss track. [titters]

Griffin: In the—in most modern—in a lot of sort of modern Scottish versions of this song, they do say 'my jo' instead of 'my dear,' which I really do like a lot. That version had a different melody that was traced back to around 1700, that apparently Robert Burns was not so hot on. But in 1799, the song appears in a like song book, like a book of traditional Scottish songs.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: With the version we know today, which is like this very memorable pentatonic scale like melody that is so pervasive and so like famous. But I wanted to actually play a little bit of the original melody from a band called—a Scottish band called The Cast, off their album The Winnowing. And apparently, also it's—was on the Sex and The City movie? Which I didn't see.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: But this is the original melody of Auld Lang Syne performed by The Cast.

[excerpt of "Auld Lang Syne" by The Cast plays]

Lyrics: Should auld acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot dor auld lang syne? For auld lang syne,
my dear, for auld lang syne. We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet for auld lang
syne.

[excerpt ends]

Griffin: So like, what's that mean? Why is it so popular? Auld Lang Syne translates literally to old long since. So like, the main hook for the chorus

sort of translates to 'for the sake of old times.' It is a song of remembrance for old friends and acquaintances. So like, it makes sense for New Year's Eve, right? It kind of fits there. But it also is sometimes observed out at like funerals and graduations, and apparently for like scout troops at the ends of their jamborees that they hold, it is customary to sing Auld Lang Syne. Robert Burns insisted, when this song was like published, that the Scots language parts of it remained and would not be translated.

Rachel: Oh?

Griffin: He is quoted as saying, "There is a naïveté, a pastoral simplicity in a slight intermixture of Scott's words and phraseology." And part of the reason that it is thought to have spread so quickly is because its melody is so like, I don't know, iconic and catchy. And so, it was actually used for different purposes around the world, with the lyrics being dramatically changed. The most sort of like wild version of which is up until 1948, this was the melody of South Korea's National Anthem.

Rachel: Oh?

Griffin: Just like with different lyrics about South Korea, of course, but set—I mean, the melody was Auld Lang Syne.

Rachel: Huh?

Griffin: Which is wild, I had no idea. So how did it get to be a New Year's Eve song? There was a radio presenter named Guy Lombardo who started this annual radio show every New Year's Eve, I think in 1928. Where at midnight, he and his band would play—they would close out the show with Auld Lang Syne. And this radio show was incredibly popular, and it went on for decades. And so, you know, people would gather around the radio and listen to this song at midnight. And it kind of wormed its way into the subconscious of American radio listeners. Then in 1976, I want to say—I don't know why I didn't write down any of these years.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Dick Clark kept that tradition going with New Year's Rockin' Eve, man.

Rachel: Oh! There it is.

Griffin: New Year, as soon as the ball drops—

Rachel: There it is.

Griffin: Boom, Auld Lang Syne. Obviously, Seacrest continued that tradition with his observation. [titters] But that is how it became a New Year's Eve song, is through this radio show, and then through Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve. Which, I was surprised, I thought for sure it was—it had some sort of pre-existing reason for being a theme for this one specific holiday. But like at the same time, it doesn't—in large parts of the world, it is not a New Year's Eve song. It is just a song with no holiday connotations, just a song you sing that is about thinking about old friends who are not present. Which is a really lovely sentiment, I think, any time of year outside of, you know, whatever. And obviously, it makes it a great—a great closer. A great stinger for It's a Wonderful Life as well. I just love it, and I never really bothered to look into it until today. And I'm glad I did, because I think it's interesting.

Rachel: No, that is cool. That is cool. And I really, I do like that song a lot. Even though I don't really know half of the words of it.

Griffin: No, I mean—

Rachel: I just always jump in there.

Griffin: I mean, the first verse is easy enough to get through.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: The later verses have a lot more Scots language parts to them, which then are very difficult for me to remember.

Rachel: Yeah, of course. [titters]

Griffin: But they are very fun. They're all basically like, let's have a—let's have—variations on, "Let's have a cup of kindness. Let's raise a glass to our friends." So, that's Auld Lang Syne. Do you want to know what our friends at home are talking about?

Rachel: Please!

Griffin: Peter says, "My small Wonder is when you peel the plastic off a candy cane in one piece. It gives me so much satisfaction for such a tiny victory." Incredible. When you get that seam?

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: That seam of the plastic just right? Oh, I love that. I do like to leave a little bit on, on the curve. To have a little handle to protect myself.

Rachel: Yeah, like a banana.

Griffin: Like a banana, I don't want to get sticky fingers.

Rachel: Now, here's the thing, do you start from the curved end or the straight end?

Griffin: I start eating the straight end.

Rachel: Okay. I assume so. But I didn't know, I mean—

Griffin: Who starts eating the curved end?

Rachel: Honey, you eat a banana backwards. I thought maybe you ate a candy cane backwards.

Griffin: Well, a banana is... okay, let's get into this. A banana is—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Symmetrical, right? One end obviously has the stem, and one end does not.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I mean, you cut a banana in half, it's gonna look the same. There is no—there's no cross section of a candy cane, unless you go at it height-wise, that is going to be sort of the same. So like, if a banana ended with a fuckin' hairpin turn, I probably would hold it by that—

Rachel: I withdraw my question. I withdraw my question.

Griffin: Giovanni says, "I just watched Groundhog Day for the first time and was absolutely bowled over watching the flyover footage of Pittsburgh at the beginning of the movie. I've never seen another movie that features the road I take to get to work every day." I love this.

Rachel: Oh, that's great!

Griffin: I love Groundhog Day. I love this small wonder. It made me think about when We Are Marshall came out, and was filmed, and it was so crazy seeing, you know, Fourth Avenue.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: And seeing like—

Rachel: No, that's a good point.

Griffin: The campus and seeing all the stuff.

Rachel: I still haven't—well, did we watch—

Griffin: I have not made you watch We Are Marshall.

Rachel: Yeah, I don't—

Griffin: It's a fine football flick. It's a fine—it's no Rudy.

Rachel: I feel like I've seen parts of it.

Griffin: I don't know how that's possible.

Rachel: I don't know, I feel like somebody had it. Like you or Justin—

Griffin: This is how it goes. You're at a party... [chuckles] and your friends are all passing around We Are Marshall—

Rachel: You're like, "I'm just gonna take it easy tonight. I'm not going to do anything crazy."

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: And then We Are Marshall comes out.

Griffin: Yeah, and then kids start passing it on the left-hand side!

Rachel: [titters]

Griffin: Thank you to Bo En and Augustus for the use for our theme song, Money Won't Pay. You can find a link to that in the episode description. And thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go to maximumfun.org, check out all the great stuff they have going on over there. I don't know—we definitely have merch going up, I don't know what it is, because we're recording this episode well in advance. But if you go to mcelroymerch.com, you can see all the new stuff we got ready for you for the month of January and the year 2025.

Rachel: Oh, yeah. And if you haven't listened to the naming of the year, will that be out yet?

Griffin: I don't know! We haven't recorded it.

Rachel: Probably not. Probably not.

Griffin: You just—

Rachel: But it's coming.

Griffin: You just sent a gurgle of stomach acid to rise up in my esophagus.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Just thinking about how we're going to have to do that again. Do you understand?

Rachel: [chortles]

Griffin: We don't have to get into it, but it's... it's so hard.

Rachel: I'm just looking at your 20 Fungalore poster and it—

Griffin: Really strong.

Rachel: It made me think about it.

Griffin: Really strong. And I look at it too, and I think, Jesus. Like, I don't know where that came from. It came from somewhere else outside of me.

Rachel: It was like 40 minutes of riffing, I feel like, and you got there.

Griffin: Riffing makes—riffing, that verb, makes it sound effortless, in a way.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: It was a tightly edited 40 minutes of riffing carved out of an hour and a half long panic-fueled sort of—every time we do that, and this always gets edited out, there's a moment where one of us says, "Let's stop recording and walk away, because I just don't think we have it."

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And then we power through that moment, and eventually we get there.

Rachel: Especially now that you do like video footage, like I imagine that adds some pressure.

Griffin: It's like naming a pope. Anyway, we'll have a new pope for you soon, so stay tuned and... bye!

Rachel: Bye!

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

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