

Wonderful! 366: Great Grubby Hospital in the Sky

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[theme song plays]

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hello, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is *Wonderful!*

Griffin: Thank you for listening to our podcast called *Wonderful!* It's a show where we talk about things that we like that's good that we're into.

Rachel: [mimics alarm horn blaring]

Griffin: And that sound, of course, means that, one...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... Rachel's online course of mouth-based sound effects she's been taking...

Rachel: [laughter grows]

Griffin: ... *with* Michael Winslow...

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: ... is paying off a-big time, baby.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: The other thing it means is that it's the MaxFunDrive!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: What's the MaxFunDrive?

[pause]

Rachel: ... Oh!

Griffin: Yeah, I'm asking you.

Rachel: Oh, okay. It is the time of year where all of us content producers, creators, show-makers...

Griffin: I like "content producers" a lot.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That feels more... I don't know, fancy.

Rachel: Um, we ask for a little support, because you are able to access all of our stuff for free all year round, but you know, it's difficult to do things for free.

Griffin: [laughs] Yeah, sure.

Rachel: So occasionally, we will come to you - specifically once a year - and be like, "Hey, if you enjoy our show, if you believe in what we're doing, and wanna support us, here's a good time to do it, and maybe there'll be some fun stuff attached to that."

Griffin: Not "maybe." I mean, there's gonna be fun stuff. It's like, we have so much—

Rachel: Well, I wanted to like, give a tease...

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Rachel: ... so people would listen later to see...

Griffin: Yeah, I mean, we could get deep into the pledge gifts later on, but maximumfun.org/join is where you can go to help us make this show, uh, and support the whole Max Fun Network, which we are so honored to be a part of.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: It is— you know, we own the shows that we make; there's no, like, gross deals. It is a, uh... You know, Max Fun is a co-op that is sort of employee-owned, and it is a great organization, and we are lucky to be a part of it.

And if you listen to this show and you enjoy it, you can incredibly directly support us and help us continue making and growing the show, especially now that ads have become hard to...

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: I don't know if you've noticed that we haven't really run an ad on here since, like, January...

Rachel: If you listen to any of the celebrity-based podcasts, you will hear these really impressive business promoting their products, and that's pretty much the only place they're doing it now.

Griffin: [laughs] That's about it.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: So yeah, I mean, it's pretty much us relying on y'all at this point, not to put *too* fine a point on it. Maximumfun.org/join is where you can go. If you're already a member, you can boost your membership up to the next level: \$5, \$10, whatever dollars a month. Or you can just upgrade it if you want to just toss a buck or two on there.

Also new this year, you can pay up-front for a year of support, if you don't wanna... worry about the...

Rachel: Oh, that's good!

Griffin: ... recurring thing, then you can just pay for it up front!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Also, we do have lots of BoCo. If you're already a member, and you've never really known how to get at that stuff, there's a new page: maximumfun.org/howtoboco and it will explain exactly how to do it.

Rachel: Oh, that's good, too.

Griffin: I mean, I think we should say *what* our BoCo is this year.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: I think it's time for us to announce here pro— we did— Travis read the title of our BoCo for *Wonderful!* this year while we were recording *MBMBaM*, and we got a good chuckle out of 'em. Uh, I don't remember if you remember the subtitle.

Rachel: [holding back giggling] No.

Griffin: It's "Hockey Talk Badokadok."

Rachel: [bursts out laughing] Yeah!

Griffin: With our pal and *Stop Podcasting Yourself* host, Dave Shumka.

Rachel: For those of you that also listen to *Stop Podcasting Yourself*, you've probably been thinking for years, "Rachel always talks about how she loves the show; wouldn't it be nice if they all got together?"

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Well, we started with Dave. Who knows?

Griffin: We'll get Graham one of these days, yeah.

Rachel: Who knows what's gonna happen from here. But part of the reason that we picked Dave in particular is that we wanted to... tap into his hockey expertise.

Griffin: That's a nice way of putting it.

Rachel: [giggles]

Griffin: Gang, it's an hour of me and Rachel asking...

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: ... pretty rudimentary questions about what— it's ab— guys, not to get too conceptual, but this is a huge idea.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's two adults asking another adult what it's like to play this one sport. What the physical, tactile experience of playing a sport is like, specifically this one very slippery, cold sport.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Uh, it's so fun.

Rachel: We gave him no advance, like, heads-up on what the questions were gonna be. I didn't really know much about his relationship with hockey other than he had talked about playing it, and we don't—

Griffin: Which is all I need to know!

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah!

Griffin: 'Cause that's *crazy*! It's cra— we know now two people who play hockey. That's fucking *wild*, man!

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah.

Uh, yeah, so he— if you have listened to *Stop Podcasting Yourself*, he is a former stand-up comedian, very funny, and has also been hosting *Stop Podcasting Yourself* even longer than *My Brother, My Brother and Me* has been around.

Griffin: It's close, though.

Rachel: Uh, and so uh... Yeah, very fun conversation. We really had a good time.

Griffin: We also have lots of other— you know, you can get all the past years of bonus content, too. We had a year where Rachel got into *Stardew Valley*...

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: ... and we talked a lot about that. We've had a bunch of different— [holding back laughter] we had one where I got kinda high, and we watched *Dharma & Greg*.

Rachel: [giggles]

Griffin: That was a good one, too. Uh, all of that if you can help us out and support the show at maximumfun.org/join.

We'll talk more later about some of the other stuff you can get with that, but do you have any small wonders to start us out with? There's a pretty obvious one.

Rachel: Yeah. I'm trying to think if maybe we can split it up. Because—

Griffin: I mean, we could just both do it as an—

Rachel: We did two things last night.

Griffin: Check this out: medium wonder. It's a new thing I've been kicking around.

Rachel: Oh, no!

Griffin: And maybe we debut it here on the show.

Rachel: Why would you fix something that isn't broken?

Griffin: I'm just saying, if we both have the same small wonder, upgrade it.

Rachel: Oh, okay!

Griffin: We had a nice date last night.

Rachel: We did?

Griffin: Bundle it up into a medium wonder. Did you see what I did there?

Rachel: I did! Yeah, but it— well... I mean—

Griffin: Had some yummy ramen.

Rachel: The thing I like about the small wonder is that I could potentially focus on the meal, and you could potentially focus on the concert.

Griffin: You're right. Fuck the medium wonder; I'm sorry that I even...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... confused the plot.

Rachel: I'm open to it!

Griffin: It's the dr— you know how I get around the Drive when I'm, like, "Let's break things quickly, and..."

Rachel: [laughs] "It's sweeps; let's bring something new."

Griffin: "... iteration," and— yeah, for sure.

Rachel: Yeah, no, I was thinking I would talk about the meal, and then you would talk about the concert.

Griffin: Okay, that's good.

Rachel: Uh, so we went to a restaurant close to the venue that we went to last night. It was called Toki Underground?

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Which is like a ramen shop. It's a very small restaurant; there couldn't have been more than like 25 people in there.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: Um, and had some *really* incredible ramen.

Griffin: Really very, very, good.

Rachel: Uh, they apparently have a location in Baltimore, too. Um...

Griffin: Toki Underground.

Rachel: Toki Underground, yeah.

Griffin: Even though it's... above— it is well above, on the second floor.

Rachel: Yeah, yeah, you definitely have to [holding back laughter] go up the stairs to get there.

Um, but yeah, it was delicious. We had not— I don't know that we'd really found good ramen in DC yet.

Griffin: Not yet, but we hadn't looked also very hard.

Rachel: We hadn't looked super hard, either. [chuckles]

Griffin: Then, we went to the fricking Boys Go To Jupiter show, baby!

Rachel: Yes!

Griffin: At the Pie Shop— it was little, uh...

Rachel: Another upstairs bar situation.

Griffin: ... upstairs bar situation, corridor-shaped bar...

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs softly]

Griffin: They packed the fucking house and absolutely tore it apart, gang!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: This is going to be the biggest band in the universe.

Rachel: [laughs] They are there, still actively on tour, if you wanna look and see if they're gonna be near you. We would highly recommend it.

Griffin: Holy shit. Probably the best— I think it's the most fun concert I've seen in— since we've moved here.

Rachel: So— such stage presence. I told—

Griffin: Electrifying.

Rachel: I told Griffin, they're like the kind of band where you can't picture them doing anything else...

Griffin: No.

Rachel: ... because it just seems like this is so exactly what they were supposed to do.

Griffin: Funny, good...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... but then they hit you with, like, some *real* shreds. Jesus Christ. They really— I was really banging my head last night.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: What a good time. Boys Go To Jupiter: catch 'em.

Rachel: It was really delightful.

Griffin: I'm also gonna say, I've been getting so— I mean, now, I follow her, but my algorithm served me up a lot of Gabby Windey content, who— Gabby from, um...

Rachel: Yes. Yes!

Griffin: ... *The Traitors*...

Griffin and Rachel: [simultaneously] ... and *Bachelorette*... [somewhat unsure] *Bachelorette*.

Griffin: ... No, *Bachelor*.

Rachel: She was a contestant, I think, on *The Bachelor*, and then I think she was the Bachelorette, like a double-bachelorette situation.

Griffin: Okay, yes. Um...

Rachel: Anyway.

Griffin: Jesus, man. It's the— it— she's so funny, and...

Rachel: She's so funny.

Griffin: She was so funny on *Traitors*, and so it's not surprising that there's lots of funny Gabby content out there, but man...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: ... I am so glad that my algorithm has got my back on this one. On this one thing.

Rachel: Yeah. She's been doing a lot of interviews, now that the season of *Traitors* has closed, and she's been asked a lot of questions on, like, the political climate. Uh, and her answers are always just phenomenal.

Griffin: Really, really, really expertly-crafted stuff.

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah.

Griffin: Um, you go first this week. What have you brought to this, our year's most important episode?

Rachel: [laughing] Oh, God.

Griffin: [snorts, laughs]

Rachel: [giggles] How dare you.

Griffin: [laughing]

Rachel: How dare you do that to me.

Griffin: No!

Rachel: Uh, I wanted to talk about Teddy Ruxpin.

Griffin: ... Yeah.

Rachel: [giggles]

Griffin: Yeah! [sighs]

Rachel: Here's the thing, alright? So Teddy Ruxpin came out before you were born.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: So I am curious. In the McElroy house, do you remember there always being a Teddy Ruxpin...

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: ... and/or did you have one?

Griffin: Yeah, we had one.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: And it always... Its eyes wouldn't close.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And...

Rachel: [laughing] Uh-huh.

Griffin: Something happened— he got dropped a couple of times or something, where the tape would play at maybe three-quarters speed.

Rachel: Oh. [chuckles]

Griffin: “[incoherent muffled sounds].”

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Like, eyes staring at you... um, in this sort of, like, mask of death, just like... “[incoherent muffled sounds] walked into the cabbage patch.”

Rachel: [laughter grows]

Griffin: Like, it was so— I didn't fuck with it too much, 'cause it's... I was a little afraid of Teddy Ruxpin.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Now, I appreciate it conceptually...

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: ... in a major way. It's just the one we had *was*... haunted.

Rachel: [laughs] Um— yeah, I also had one. It was very much, like, a Christmas "it" toy one year.

Griffin: Yeah, for sure.

Rachel: Um, and after learning more about it, I realized how impressive it was that my parents tracked one down and bought one for me.

Griffin: Oh, wow.

Rachel: But you know, as a kid, I was like, "Oh, I wanted it, and now I have it." [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, for sure. I— it wasn't until I was in, like, high school that I started to appreciate— like, the year that they found the Nintendo 64, I was like, "God damn, Clint and Leslie. That is..."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "... really spectacular work."

Rachel: Yeah, yeah!

Griffin: "*Cannot* believe you threaded that particular needle."

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I also think Teddy Ruxpin's so far ahead of its— half the toys that get released now are just trying to be Teddy Ruxpin.

Rachel: Yeah! Or just, yeah, versions of Teddy Ruxpin.

Griffin: Like a Cyber Ruxpin.

Rachel: Yeah. Uh, okay, so Teddy Ruxpin was created by former Disney employee Ken Forsse.

Griffin: Okay!

Rachel: Um, and the more I talk about this, the more it will make a lot of sense. So for much of the '60s and '70s, Forsse worked on rides like It's a Small World and Jungle Cruise...

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: ... designing the animatronic creatures that would sing, wave, and interact.

Griffin: I had no idea!

Rachel: Not only that; he also sculpted the heads of the animatronic bears at the Country Bear Jamboree.

Griffin: Well, that... Okay, there's a pretty direct throughline.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs] Yeah, exactly.

Griffin: Now I'm looking at Teddy Ruxpin like he is some bastard child of the Country Bear Jamboree.

Rachel: I know. Well, here's the thing: Teddy Ruxpin? Not a bear.

Griffin: ... Man! Can we fu— can we not?

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: It's already so hard, and everything is so confusing, all the time. Can this one— can we just take a flier on this one?

Rachel: I have to tell you, though: so in Forsse's mind, he wasn't a bear. He was a Illiop, a species native to the fantasy land of Grundo.

[pause]

Rachel: So you got a little Tolkien there.

Griffin: Say that— no, just... I need you to say— first of all, "You got a little Tolkien in there"? What's that mean?

Rachel: Like, he created a whole world of, like, fantasy creatures...

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: ... to, like—

Griffin: Sorry. I need— can we pause? Because there's like five things that have happened in the last 10 seconds that I really wanna spend a little bit of time on.

Rachel: [giggling]

Griffin: One, I thought you were saying that an Illiop from the world of Grundo was from Tolkien.

Rachel: No. No, no, no.

Griffin: And I know that your knowledge of that whole space and that universe is...

Rachel: Very limited.

Griffin: ... limited purposefully, and I— I appreciate that.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I have— I'm not the type of person to, like, really give a shit about your media consumption or anything, but you know that it's not— you know Grundo is not a Tolkien...

Rachel: Yes. Yes.

Griffin: Okay, cool.

Rachel: No, I am saying that it's not like, "Oh, he's not a bear, he's a capybara." It's like, "No, he's a fantasy creature created by Forsse in a fantasy world called Grundo."

Griffin: Is there more Grundo content out there?

Rachel: Yeah! I mean, the books! The books that— like, there were all sorts of creatures within Grundo the Teddy would interact with. The books would come with tapes that you could put in Teddy Ruxpin; the books had all these narrative stories that existed in this world of Grundo.

Griffin: Okay. So I must have never really used my Teddy Ruxpin.

Rachel: Yeah. I don't think so.

Griffin: Because I assumed—

Rachel: Which isn't surprising, because at the time that you were, like, aware, your family had probably had that toy for a while, and I can't imagine your brothers [holding back laughter] were playing with it as it was intended to be played with.

Griffin: God, no.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I cannot imagine that they did. So he would, like, rap on his own tracks, and tell stories about Grundo?

Rachel: Yeah! I mean, you would get a tape, and the tape would be associated with these books...

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: ... and you would put the tape in, and you would read along with him in the book.

Griffin: That's cool. I just assumed the tapes were, like, literary classics. Like, he would...

Rachel: [giggling]

Griffin: I didn't think about it, clearly...

Rachel: [laughter grows]

Griffin: ... but that you would just pop in *Little Women* or something, and just...

Rachel: [as Teddy Ruxpin] "Quoth the raven: nevermore."

Griffin: Yeah. Except 75% speed.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Staring at you.

Rachel: Um, so Forsse had two parts to the Teddy prototype. One was a piece controlling the face...

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: ... and, uh, with FM radio signals. And—

Griffin: Wait, what? There's not, like, wires? What?

Rachel: Here— this is the prototype I'm talking about right now.

Griffin: Oh, okay. Right.

Rachel: Uh, it says: "As late as 1982, the puppets Forsse constructed for Disney had radio-controlled heads. As his early Teddy prototype was similar, it had two parts, with one piece controlling the face via FM radio signals.

Griffin: Okay. We should point out to our younger listeners who maybe aren't familiar: Mr. Ruxpin was an Illiop from the planet Grundo...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... and his eyes blinked, right?

Rachel: Yeah, and his mouth would move.

Griffin: His mouth moved. And if you put in a tape in him, then you would hear the story.

Rachel: And the way it was constructed, the mouth would move as soon as sound was coming out of the tape...

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: ... so you could put in an Ace of Base.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: You could put in a Boyz II Men, his mouth would move. Not like, exactly in rhythm; it was more the sound that was creating the mechanism.

Griffin: A lot of people listening— younger people probably think it's a *Five Nights at Freddy's* situation. I'm here to tell you it was not; he had no sharp teeth.

Rachel: No.

Griffin: It was just a soft, sort of padded surface in there. He could not turn his neck, if memory serves...

Rachel: No!

Griffin: ... and I am so glad for that.

Rachel: [giggles]

Griffin: If you ever see any one of them turn the neck, then you need to get out of there, mister!

Rachel: So, the thing about it was, there was like a cassette player in there, and it felt basically like you had put fake fur around a cassette player. Because it was heavy...

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: ... um...

Griffin: It was hard.

Rachel: ... not particularly cuddly.

Griffin: Not cuddly at all!

Rachel: The kind of thing that if you dropped on your foot, like, it would hurt pretty bad.

Griffin: It would hurt, and he would break, and you'd hear him break.

Rachel: Uh, so Fisher-Price passed, and then he started shopping a live-action series with HBO that also... was not picked up. Worlds of Wonder...

Griffin: Fuck yeah.

Rachel: ... got on board. Uh, and at the same time that Worlds of Wonder picked it up, Forssé also sold ABC on two live-action Teddy specials that

would premier in November and December of 1985, which is exactly when it came out.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I was trying to remember what I knew Worlds of Wonder... from. They were, I think, the original distributor of the Nintendo Entertainment System in the US?

Rachel: Yes! There's a lot of, like, crossover in this, because they talk about the bankruptcy...

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: ... and how that impacted... Teddy's future. [laughs]

Griffin: [chuckles] Yeah, sure.

Rachel: So, this thing cost between \$59 and \$79 dollars, which now is like \$200 dollars.

Griffin: Yowza. I mean, yowza mostly at inflation.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: Like, if I'm being ho— like, "Yowza, that's an expensive... Oolliot." What was it?

Rachel: Illiop.

Griffin: Illiop.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: *Illiop*? With a [makes "p" sound] on it?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: P? Okay.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: But also, it sucks that money has gotten...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... like that.

Rachel: And then, it also included— there were 60 different storybooks— storybooks. [giggling] 60 different storybooks.

And those were like \$13 dollar each. Uh, the bear was a huge hit. Uh, pulled in 93...

Griffin: I'm so sorry. Baby, I hate to do this. You *did* just refer to him as a bear, when like, it's actually important that...

Rachel: Teddy. A teddy.

Griffin: You can say Teddy, sure.

Rachel: Teddy.

Griffin: You can call him by his name...

Rachel: [giggles] Wha—

Griffin: ... if you'd like. The Teddy Ruxpin version of *Call Me by Your Name* is abridged. It is abridged. It's extremely abridged. But it gets the jo— you get, sort of, the— you could take a quiz about the movie.

Rachel: I thought you were talking about a film that [laughing] starred Teddy Ruxpin in the lead.

Griffin: Yes. It's Teddy Ruxpin, it's Timothee Chalamet, and...

Rachel: [laughs] But you're saying the story is told through the mouth of Teddy.

Griffin: Yes. Exactly.

Rachel: Okay. So—

Griffin: It's about a boy's wonderful summer vacation. That's how he sets it up.

Rachel: Yes. So Teddy resulted in \$93 million in sales in the first year, which is like, unprecedented.

Griffin: Adjusted for inflation now, that's about \$250 million dollars.

Rachel: [laughs] There were some bears that were returned, um, and claimed to be defective, although Worlds of Wonder maintained that it was operator error.

Griffin: [claps] [laughing] They returned them, and they were like, "These bears are defective." Were the people at the shops like, "Uh, it's an Illiop, you fucking dummy."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "Of course you think it's defective."

Rachel: Well, the manual apparently urged users not to poke Teddy with scissors or other sharp objects, nor was he to be submerged in the bath. [laughs] Um, but Teddy...

Griffin: S— sorry, are people doing that with stuffed animals that don't have cassettes in them?

Rachel: Good question. I don't know. I never knew anybody that took their stuffies in the bath with them.

Griffin: No!

Rachel: You would definitely do that with, like, a plastic figure, but I don't—anyway.

[laughs] Worlds of Wonder informed the media that the defective Ruxpins would have to be spent to, quote, "Grundo Hospital."

Griffin: [bursts out laughing] That's such a good euphemism that I wanna adopt...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... for so many things.

Rachel: It reminds me a lot of, like, the Cabbage Patch lore.

Griffin: Yes. Gosh.

Rachel: Like, this 1980s time of, like, putting a lot of background into a toy...

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: ... and then ultimately making a television show after.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Like, it follows a very specific formula.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Uh, so there were 65 episodes of *The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin*.

Griffin: Wow!

Rachel: Um...

Griffin: Who made that one? Was that a [high-pitched] DIC? Was that a [high-pitched] DIC joint?

Rachel: Maybe? I don't have that information in front of me.

Griffin: It seems like it was a DIC joint.

Rachel: Um... so I will say that just before the 1987 holiday season, Worlds of Wonder filed for chapter 11 bankruptcy, and by 1989, Teddy was discontinued.

Griffin: Off to that Great Grundo Hospital in the sky.

Rachel: Fast forward to 2017. Do you know they brought out another Teddy?

Griffin: I did know— I do remember that, yeah.

Rachel: He had LCD screens for eyes.

Griffin: Nope!

Rachel: Uh— [laughs] And what's funny— I pulled it up on Amazon, because you can purchase one for \$250 dollars. Um, but when Teddy was not active, the screens would just go black.

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's the same thing— they make the little Lego *Mario* sets, right? And they're *really* cool, because you can make 'em jump around, and run on courses, and there's all these interactive ele— but their eyes and mouths are LCD, and so when you turn it off, he says, [as Mario] "So long!"

And then two seconds pass...

Rachel: [laughs] And the screens—

Griffin: ... and then just... just his *soul* leaves his body.

Rachel: They sold him with a little sleep mask, so that kids could, like, cover up the eyes.

Griffin: Your product is so fucked up if you have to sell a little thing that hides how scary it is by default.

Rachel: I saw them interviewing this one woman who was, like, behind the design of the 2017 model, and in the interview, she was saying, “Listen, like, kids don’t get scared when the TV goes black, or when their iPad goes black. Like, why would black eyes on a bear scare them?” Or an Illiop. Sorry...

Griffin: [sighs] Thank you so much.

Rachel: ... for doing that, I’m sorry that I’m getting— I mean, if we could edit that out, um...

Griffin: Rachel, if you don’t mind editing out all the times that Rachel said “the bear...”

Rachel: [laughs]

Um, yeah. So that’s Teddy Ruxpin. Again, if you are interested in purchasing the new version, again, as of 2017, you can still find him online. I mean, I don’t— it’s supposed to be more cuddly. You can, like, touch the hand to choose from a library. It pairs with your iPad, and so there’s like Bluetooth technology.

Griffin: I don’t need that.

Rachel: Um... and then you can play and pause by touching the other hand. Um...

Griffin: Is there new— I guess I just wanna know if there’s new, sort of, chapters in the Grundo... kind of... saga.

Rachel: I mean, I don't know. Do you wanna learn a little bit about Grundo? Like, 'cause I could give you some lore real quick.

Griffin: Yeah, if you don't mind busting me out a little Grundo primer.

Rachel: Okay. "The land of Grundo is the country where *The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin* takes place..."

Griffin: So it's a country.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: On Earth?

Rachel: "... bordered to the North by a range of rugged mountains known as The Treacherous Mountains that separate the country from neighboring Ying."

Griffin: "Ying"? Okay.

Rachel: Yeah. Again, part of the Teddy universe. "To the South lies an unknown mountain range, and to the Southwest lies the Great Desert. Eastward lies an ocean bordered by Ben's Beach." [giggles]

Griffin: Ben's Bea— the Beach of Ben?

Rachel: B-E-N-apostrophe-S.

Griffin: Cool.

Rachel: Uh, and then to the far South is the Land of Rillonia.

Griffin: Okay. But they haven't explored, sort of, beyond the— to them, the world ends at the Desert and The Treacherous Mountains, and it sounds like they haven't even been to Ying. Maybe they kick it on Ben's Beach *sometimes*.

Do you think xenophobia is an issue in Grundo? I don't know that Teddy's going to sort of volunteer that information for free, but maybe there's some dark tapes we can get our hands on.

Rachel: Yeah. I mean, man, I really just wanna read this whole thing to you, but I recognize that's maybe not the best use of our time.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Um, but—

Griffin: I mean, save it; we can definitely talk more about Grundo, um...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: ... you know, maybe as a stretch goal [laughs] later in the Drive.

Rachel: I will just say that Grundo is a largely feudal, agrarian country.

Griffin: Um, okay.

Rachel: Um... [laughs] "Most of the residents of Grundo, who are under direct leadership are the Illipers and Perloons that inhabit the land nearest to [through laughter] King Nogburt's Castle."

Griffin: Okay, but what's a Perloon, though?

Rachel: [inhales]

Griffin: No, save it!

Rachel: Save— [laughs]

Griffin: Listen. It's the MaxFunDrive, and that means you have a chance to help us make this show, and support us to help us keep making it, and keep it growing. Um...

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Rachel and I have been doing— I mean, between this and *Rose Buddies*, we have been podcasting for... Jesus, a really long— I don't even know when we started doing...

Rachel: It was after we got married. I wanna say 2017.

Griffin: That seems late. No, we were doing it before Henry was born. *For sure*, for sure.

Rachel: Oh, yeah, you're right. I mean, maybe 2016.

Griffin: Who knows? Anyway, we've been doing this for a long time. And we, uh... the world of podcasting and the business of podcasting has changed like a half dozen times in the span of time we've been doing it.

And I would say now, sort of more than ever, we could use your support, the listeners' support, of this show and the other shows that we make to help keep things afloat. We have managed to hire people to help us make these shows, and to do all the stuff that we like to do, and make all the stuff that you all - I hope - enjoy listening to and watching.

And you can sort of become part of that during the Drive at maximumfun.org/join.

Do you wanna talk a little bit more about BoCo?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: At \$5 dollars a month, you will get access to all the BoCo libraries for all the shows throughout history.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs] Yeah. Uh, it's kind of amazing. If you have never been a member of Max Fun, you are in for a real treat. 'Cause a lot of times, I will find myself entirely caught up on all my podcasts, and I will think, "Well, what am I gonna do now, start listening to a new show?"

No. You don't have to.

Griffin: Don't have to.

Rachel: Max Fun has archived every piece of bonus content that was created by any show on the network. Uh, years over years, including *Rose Buddies*, and... there's a *lot* of stuff there to check out.

Griffin: Do you wanna hear us talk to the Bachelorette Canada, Jasmine Lorimer? 'Cause we did that on one of our BoCo episodes.

Rachel: We did do that. We did do that, and we did try to decide which one of us was Dharma, and which one of us was Greg...

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: ... which was really fun. I think about that a lot. We've talked about *Animal Crossing* and *Stardew Valley*. Um...

Griffin: Everything.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Anything you want. We got other BoCo episodes for the other shows, too. This year, for *MBMBaM*, [holding back laughter] we auditioned for *Hot Ones*.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And it's...

Rachel: And that's a video, right?

Griffin: Uh, it's listen—

Rachel: Or is it just the audio?

Griffin: You *can* listen to it. It is in the audio feed.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Um, but it— I believe it will be video, as well.

Rachel: Oof. I mean, I don't know if you'll *wanna* see it, I guess.

Griffin: Yeah. No, spicy stuff, guys. [bursts out laughing]

Uh, but— I mean, seriously, it's so much stuff. And that's just at \$5 dollars a month, which again, you can prepay for a year and just do it, and get access to all the stuff, and then not, you know, have to sweat having a recurring payment.

If you wanna learn how to get that BoCo, if you are becoming a member or already a member, go to maximumfun.org/howtoboco. \$10 dollars a month, you get the BoCo. You also get your choice of enamel pin, designed by Tom Deja of Bossman Graphics.

The *Wonderful!* pin this year, I adore. It is Jeff the Poetry Dragon.

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: I don't think you've seen it yet.

Rachel: I don't think I have, either. I just remember we decided that's what it should be.

Griffin: It is Jeff the Poetry Dragon, the official mos— mascot... and moscat...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... of the Poetry Corner.

Rachel: Oh, man, what a cool dragon!

Griffin: Got a little cool— got a little beret.

Rachel: He's like a little beatnik dragon. Um... yeah, and that— you know what I love? I love a p— a pin like that is versatile, right?

Griffin: It is! It goes with a lot of different—

Rachel: Somebody may see it, and they will think, like, "Oh, you listen to *Wonderful!*" A lot of people will see it, and just think, "Oh, that's a dragon that likes poetry."

Griffin: Yeah. Absolutely. You don't need to explain anything else to those—to anyone who would say anything about it.

Rachel: But, uh, regardless of which pin you choose, there are options for all of the shows.

Griffin: Of course.

Rachel: So while we personally love the Poetry Dragon, if you see a pin that strikes your fancy, um...

Griffin: We won't hold it against you.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: We won't.

Rachel: You're welcome to pick whichever one you want.

Griffin: But when you, uh, *do* choose to become a member and give your support, you choose the shows that you listen to, and then some of it goes to Maximum Fun to help, you know, run this big ship, and the rest goes directly to the shows that you choose.

It is a *direct* way of supporting the creators of these shows - and I guess, speaking personally, *our* shows that we create also...

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: ... and providing financial support for us to continue making it, and um, continue... continue doing this.

I am so— I get lost in the sauce a little bit, doing these MaxFunDrive breaks, because there's a lot to talk about, but I never wanna skip over the fact that I am immensely grateful for all of the support that we have gotten in the past.

Specifically, *Wonderful!* listeners have been truly amazing during past drives, and have helped us meet our goals and always been so supportive of the show, and it truly— it means the world to me to get to make this thing, and make it my livelihood because of y'all. I don't know too many other people who get to say that...

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: ... in this space, and it is because of you. So maximumfun.org/join. Please consider going there. If you enjoy the show, it would really help us out. Even at \$5 bucks a month, it truly, uh, is the reason why this show and the other shows we continue to make exist, uh, now.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Because if we were just relying on ads... [exhales] We would've— [chuckles] This thing would've sunk years ago.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Um... Do you wanna know what I have to talk about this week?

Rachel: Yes, I do!

Griffin: *The Sims*.

[pause]

Rachel: I'm familiar.

Griffin: Didn't talk about 'em. This was one I don't think I have struggled more with, like, "We have to have talked about this before." Um, but after running it through all of the different databases...

Rachel: [laughs] Uh-huh.

Griffin: ... *all* of the databases - I'm talking LexisNexis, and all of the databases - apparently, we haven't. So I'm gonna talk about *The Sims*.

Rachel: Yeah. [jokingly] We went to the Library of Congress, and we said...

Griffin: I went to the Library of Congress.

Rachel: ... "Bring out all the tapes."

Griffin: Yes, the— the tapes. And they brought out all the Teddy Ruxpin tapes, and we were like, "Not those ones."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "But yeah, actually, we will sit here for 60 hours and listen to all of them."

Uh, I have been playing a game, a new game, just like early playtest version of it. It's a Korean life sim game called *inZOI*. And it's just *The Sims*. Like, it's just literally *The Sims*...

Rachel: Huh!

Griffin: ... but kind of fancier and newer. There has not been a new full *Sims*, like, game in the mainline series—

Rachel: What platform is that on?

Griffin: Um, my computer. On my personal computer.

Rachel: Okay. Yeah, I can't imagine playing it, like, on a Switch.

Griffin: No, it doesn't have controller support, so that would be hard.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But it is kind of seizing a bit of an opportunity, because the last mainline *Sims* game came out in 2014...

Rachel: Wowzers!

Griffin: ... which is a *long* time ago.

Rachel: Why? Why? People love *The Sims*!

Griffin: Well, because they— I'll get into that.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: But it's also because they've released about 30 expansions for it, so...

Rachel: Yeah, it's true.

Griffin: ... it's become something of what's called a game's service model.

Anyway, I've been playing *inZOI*, and it really— it is— I don't know. It's fine. I haven't spent a ton of time with it, but it has— like, it instantly... I don't know, scratched this— these deep dopamine centers in my mind that I have been scratching to some extent or another since the year 2000.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And, uh, so I decided I wanted to talk about *The Sims*. If you have not played *The Sims*, that's weird.

'Cause I'm— and it's not weird, like, that anybody hasn't played *The Sims*, but specifically I feel like if you listen to this— I feel like if I did a straw poll of, like, our— the Facebook group, it would be batting about 1,000.

Rachel: Yeah. I mean, granted, I hadn't played *The Sims* since I was like a teen. Um, and when I say "teen," I mean maybe, like, 14 or 15, tops?

Griffin: Early teen.

Rachel: But I definitely put some hours in, for sure.

Griffin: Yes. So *The Sims*, if you are not familiar, it's a long-running series of life sim games developed by a studio called Maxis, and created by a designer named Will Wright. It is difficult to say that man's name normally, because he also made *Spore*, which Justin and I did a long *Monster Factory* series on, where we invented a British accent for Will Wright...

Rachel: [giggles]

Griffin: ... even though he's from Atlanta.

Rachel: [laughter grows]

Griffin: Um, but he made that. He also made, uh, *SimCity*, and— if it has "Sim" in the title, like, he was probably involved.

His first game that he designed was for the Commodore 64; it was called *Raid on Bungeling Bay*. And it was just this sort of, like, unspectacular 2D shoot-em-up where you're in this helicopter, flying around, doing bombing missions on these simple, super pixelated— it was like 1986, or something like that.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Like, very simple maps. And what he realized, after making that, is that he liked making the cities more than he liked making the game where you flew around in a helicopter and blew stuff up. Like, he just enjoyed making the different maps...

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: ... which inspired him to create his first sort of big breakout game, which was *SimCity*, which launched on Max, IBM PC, and Commodore 64 in 1989, which is a lot longer ago than I assumed *SimCity* got started.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: I think I— I was first introduced to it— it was a huge success, and it got ported to all these different platforms. There was a Super Nintendo version of *SimCity*; that was where I really played the most of it.

Rachel: Oh! Huh, okay.

Griffin: Um, *SimCity* fuckin' rules, and I could probably talk about it at length too, but to try and stay focused: in 1981, *SimCity* was big, and other *Sim* games had sort of spun off of it.

In '91, after releasing *SimAnt*... which I don't know if you've p— did you ever—

Rachel: No.

Griffin: I remember we had that one in our, um... like, talented and gifted computer lab classes...

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: ... because it was just a simulation of, like, your... you have this ant hill, and you have to attack all the fire ants, and you have to manage it, and make sure you're bringing home enough...

Rachel: Oh, man.

Griffin: ... you know, nutrients for the queen, and stuff.

Anyway, he started workshopping the idea after *SimAnt* for *The Sims*, inspired by a few things. The first was *Little Computer People*!

Rachel: Oh, I've talked about that!

Griffin: Which you've talked about on this very program.

Rachel: Yes!

Griffin: Uh, and...

Rachel: Nobody knows about *Little Computer People*.

Griffin: Will Wright knows about *Little Computer People*. You mentioned that! When you did the segment on *Little Computer People*, you were like, "The creator of *The Sims* credited it for, like, inspiring..."

Rachel: Yeah, yeah, yeah!

Griffin: "... *The Sims*, but *The Sims* didn't come out until almost 15 years after *Little Computer People* came out." And you were like, "What took him so long?" I forget what joking answer we came up with.

Rachel: [giggles]

Griffin: But the real answer is that, like, he pitched the idea to the board of directors at Maxis, and they were like, "This stinks! No way!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And so the only way that he was allowed to kind of, like, continue prototyping *The Sims* was he was allowed a single programmer who he kind of siloed off of the rest of Maxis to— so just the two of them were cranking away on this thing...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: ... while they developed other *SimCity* games.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: For, like, nine years. For a *long*, long, long time.

Rachel: Oh, my gosh. I just pictured these, like, clandestine meetings that they would have. Like at lunch, they would squirrel away and be like, "Have you built— have you built Jefferson yet?"

Griffin: I mean— yeah!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I mean, it sounds very much like a passion project.

Rachel: "We decided on long pants, didn't we? Alright. Just making sure."

Griffin: I mean, it wasn't, I imagine, quite that granular.

The Sims, it is kind of hard to stress how groundbreaking it was on a few levels, right? Like, the ability to, uh, design architecture, right...

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: ... is kind of wild. And that was— also, he credits one of the other major inspirations for *The Sims* was that Will Wright's home was destroyed in the Oakland firestorm of 1991. Uh, and so as he rebuilt his life from the ground up...

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: ... it was kind of inspiring to him to, like, "What is that process like?" inside of a video game.

The other big thing is, like, interactions between all of the different Sims, right?

Rachel: Yes!

Griffin: You had yours that you would make, and you could make like a whole family of Sims. But then you had neighbors who would, like, walk up,

and you could either— I think maybe in later games they added this; I don't know if it was there from the original *Sims*.

But they would interact on their own, and they would follow their own kind of, like, paths, depending on where their needs were.

Rachel: Yeah! That's wild.

Griffin: And that is such a complex, multifaceted sort of, like, artificial intelligence simulation. That term means something way different now...

Rachel: True.

Griffin: ... than it did, like, back in old video game days.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Back then, it was like, "How does the computer know what to do?" Um... which I guess is kind of what it— anyway. I don't wanna get lost there.

It was so ahead of its time. It was so, so, so wild to have a simulation that operated with all of these different nodes moving around each other, all having their complex sort of pathways that they were navigating.

Rachel: Yeah! 'Cause *Little Computer People* was just one guy. The house was already built for you, he had a set number of actions, he never interacted with anybody else, and he had like a cat.

Griffin: [chuckles] Yeah. No.

Rachel: You know? And he would just go up and down the stairs, and do different things in this house that was already, like... you know, you couldn't customize it in any way.

Griffin: And ostensibly, in *The Sims*, there could be a fight happening between a married couple in a house down the street that you were not witness to...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... but next time you go visit, you know...

Rachel: Yeah. Something has happened, yeah.

Griffin: ... there's a weird vibe.

Rachel: Their little diamond has changed.

Griffin: That— it is a *staggering* level of computation to even consider now, let alone back in...

Rachel: I know!

Griffin: ... the mid-'90s. Uh, and so I think one of the reasons it was so mind blowing when it came is because for nine years, Will Wright and this other programmer - who then went on to become the lead programmer of the whole *Sims* series - were just kind of figuring out these pretty major things through the course of a decade, without really showing showing it off.

And then all of a sudden were like, "Okay, well, here's 10 years' worth of work." And everyone was like, "Holy shit, man! This is..."

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: "This is really, really wild."

He credits a lot of different, like, studies and books, psychological and sociological studies that sort of form the foundation of that sort of interaction system. Unsurprisingly, Maslow's theory of motivation, which has the whole hierarchy of needs...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: ... is in there, which is represented by the eight, uh... Oh, God, I forget what they're called. Like, dri— *needs*, I think, is what they were called.

Rachel: Oh, okay.

Griffin: Like, your social stat, your hygiene stat. Hunger, fun...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Uh, all of those, and you know, there's a list of cited works for, like, how he and this other programmer designed the core foundation of how things would interact in this game. It's really, really impressive, really ahead-of-its-time stuff.

It's been 25 years since the game's release. The mainline series has had four games, right? *Sims 1* through *4*, and between those, they have had 55 different expansion packs, 29 of which are just from *The Sims 4*, which came out... 11 years ago.

Rachel: Yeah. Can we talk a little bit about— so, like, what additional features did you get through the expansion packs?

Griffin: So, I mean— okay, past *Sims* game— I think there were like seven expansions for *Sims 1*, eight for *Sims 2*, and then *3*, it started to get a little [crosstalk]...

Rachel: Is it just, like, new stuff that you could, like, put in your... zone?

Griffin: So— yeah, so there's different terminology for the different scope of the different packs. Some of them were just "Stuff" packs...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: ... and a lot of those would be themed to, like, outer space, or...

Rachel: Ohh!

Griffin: ... like, really, really specific genre-ey, wild theming.

Rachel: I feel like I always remember seeing, like, a “*Sims* Party Pack,” or something.

Griffin: Dude, if you walked into Babbage’s...

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: ... or EB Games, or GameStop...

Rachel: Just a row of— yeah.

Griffin: ... you would see— you know, back when they sold PC games in boxes, you would see— literally, there would just be a shelf that was all *Sims*, like, “Party Life,” “Space Time...”

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: ... like, “Dinosaurs, What?”

Rachel: [laughter grows]

Griffin: *Sims 4* has gotten, like, quite a bit more granular, where it’s like, “College Life,” and you know, ma— there’s magic in this one, and this one’s like, “Apartment Living...”

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: ... so they’ve gotten— but it is free to play now, right? *Sims 4* is free to play; you can download it and play it for free, and then if you want this extra stuff, there’s ways of paying for that.

Rachel: Huh! I didn’t know that.

Griffin: Uh, which is why I referred to it as sort of a game service thing.

That said, it *has* been 11 years since *Sims 4* came out. Maxis, which *did* shutter... I don't remember exactly when; I think it was after they rebooted *SimCity* back in 2016, I wanna say? They did a, "Here's a new *SimCity*," and it really didn't go very well, and Maxis kind of went under a little bit after that, but then was revived and reformed fairly recently, in the last few years, by Electronic Arts, who publishes all the Maxis games.

Anyway, they're working on a new one. It's called *Project Rene*. We know nothing about it.

Rachel: Whoa!

Griffin: I place even money on it being called *The Sims 5*, but who knows. Maybe this Korean competitor will light a fire [chuckles] under their asses a little bit.

I shouldn't say that. Developing games is really hard. Y'all, take all the time you need.

But they star— they announced they were working on it back in 2022, and we still don't know a whole lot about it. So, you know, hopefully more *Sims* is... upcoming down the pipe soon. If not, I guess we have *inZOI* to [laughs] keep us busy 'til then.

But yeah! That's *The Sims*. It's a game series that I certainly used to play a lot. I played *The Sims 4* a whole lot. I played *The Sims Online* a whole lot; that was a fuckin' wild one. Do you know anything about *Sims Online*?

Rachel: No. Are you interacting with, like...

Griffin: Other people! You just have the one Sim, and then you can build a business or whatever, and people can come to your cafe, or, like, casinos were really big. And it was *really* weird. It was basically like a chatroom, but with WooHoo. [laughs] If you know what—

Rachel: Was everybody just trying to, like...

Griffin: Pork all the time?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Sometimes, yeah. Sometimes, for sure.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It got weird in those rooms, y'all.

Rachel: I was looking, because I know John Hodgman plays— like, as part of the MaxFunDrive, he typically plays either *The Sims* or *SimCity* as, like, part of his streaming.

Griffin: Oh!

Rachel: So I would encourage you, if you are interested, to watch John Hodgman play some kind of *Sims*-related product. I'm pretty sure he does that for the Drive.

Griffin: Yes! I think that's— I think you are right. I remember.

Rachel: Right? I was trying to just look for it, because I know that he has talked about it.

Griffin: We are recording this before the Drive starts...

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: ... so that information may not be quite out there yet.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Do you wanna know what our friends at home are talking about?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Okay. Uh, Kelly says, "The small wonder I would like to share this morning is the first stretch of the day when you wake up in the morning. It just feels so good."

Rachel: Oh, that is a good one!

Griffin: God, I love the first— sometimes, it'll be like 11:00 AM, and I'll be like, "Damn. I haven't done— I haven't stretched yet." But it still hits. Like, it still hits.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Sometimes it's, like, 3:30 PM. Then I'm like, "I should stretch."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And it still hits!

Um, Maya says, "I love biking around aimlessly, and getting a bit lost, and finding new biking paths in my town. A bike is so fast compared to walking that you really don't lose much time taking detours, and it's fun looking at a map when you get home to try and figure out where the hell you were 30 minutes earlier."

I'm sure that's exciting.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: That sounds fun in, like, an exploratory, free-wheeling kind of way. Um, before I got a little clip for my bike that I could put my...

Rachel: Phone, yeah.

Griffin: ... phone and my map in, I would get three blocks away from my house, and be like, [hoarse, panicked] "Oh, no!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: “Oh, no!”

I got here, and gone, and lost, really fast.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I have no idea what to do about it. If I wait until it’s dark, the North Star will be out.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And *then*...

Rachel: And then maybe?

Griffin: ... I can start making some steps in the right direction.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: One last time: maximumfun.org/join is where you can go to become a member of the Max Fun Network, and support this show and other shows like it, at whatever level you feel comfortable with.

\$5 bucks a month, you get access to all the bonus content we’ve ever made, uh, throughout the years. This year being, of course, “Hockey Talk Badokadok” with Dave Shumka. If you’re not a hockey fan, I bet you’ll still enjoy it.

Rachel: Yeah! I mean, a lot of the questions we ask are, like, very basic. Like, “Hey, what happens when they skate over the line at the wrong time?”

Griffin: I asked him at one point, like, “Do you get scared out— do you get scared out there?” [wheezing laugh]

Rachel: [laughing]

Griffin: And the response he gave was... was, um, a little judgmental, I would say.

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah. Yeah, he said something like, um...

Griffin: "Do you need me to explain to you the basic fundamentals of sport?"

Rachel: Yeah. "I don't know how much of, like, sports you need me to explain to you." [giggles]

Griffin: Anyway, all the bonus content at \$5 bucks a month. \$10 bucks a month, you get the pin of your choice, and the bonus content. There's other levels higher than that with other really, really great gifts, but whatever level you are able to support us at. It truly is the reason we are able to keep doing this.

Rachel: Yeah! Oh, yeah, and I just wanted to say that, you know, a lot of times now, when you purchase something, you can't really speak to what is happening behind the scenes of the item you purchased.

And I will just say that Max Fun, when you give to Max Fun, you can feel pretty confident that you are supporting caring creators who are just trying to put things in the world to make people happy.

Griffin: Yeah! Um, we're gonna be doing a bunch of stuff this week. I mean, it's Wednesday when we're hearing this, so some of it's already happened. I played *Fuser* on Monday; hopefully that went well.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] We haven't done it yet, because it's Friday the week before right now. But we're gonna be streaming basically every day.

Rachel: And that's on the McElroy YouTube channel?

Griffin: On the McElroy Family YouTube channel. This week and next week, we got a bunch of really fun stuff. We've got a great new video premier that Rachel has watched of us going on our own adventure...

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: ... the McElroy brothers, on our own adventure that is very fun.

But we're— new stuff every day. We're gonna be doing a whole bunch of stuff to try and encourage people to help us reach our goals, so...

Rachel: Yeah! And I would keep an eye on different stretch goals, because the content starts to get real wild...

Griffin: Yes!

Rachel: ... the further we get.

Griffin: That is true. We will be announcing those stretch goals as we hit them. You can follow the McElroy Family Instagram account, and we will be sort of announcing when we're gonna be streaming and doing everything, and...

It's gonna be a fun couple weeks!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So maximumfun.org/join. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you to bo en and Augustus for the use of our theme song, "Money Won't Pay." You can find a link to that in the episode description. Um, I'm not gonna thank Maximum Fun, 'cause just— they've gotten a lot of real estate this—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You know what I mean? Like... they don't— like— y'all have already gotten your nut. You know what I mean?

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, that's it. That's it for— that's all we got for ya. So until next week... I've been Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: [somewhat confused] And I've been... Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: But now... [makes wooshing sound effect]

Rachel: Oh, no, who is he!?

Griffin: *I'm* Rachel McElroy!

Rachel: I— I refuse to be Griffin. [chuckles] Is that okay?

Griffin: Why?

Rachel: Is that not good improv? [laughs]

Griffin: It's not good—

Rachel: Because then you're gonna make me do my Griffin impression, and it's just not...

Griffin: So you're saying you don't wanna be me, because to be me, you would have to do an impression of me that would be so insulting...

Rachel: [laughs] I didn't say insulting! I'm just not an impressionist.

Griffin: You know what? I'm pulling back the skin mask.

Rachel: Oh, now you're not even me anymore!

Griffin: [makes stretching sounds] Aw, man, I can never get it to fit back on right.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I can never— [as *Men in Black* alien] "Sugar water."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "You should get the sugar! You should put it... in the water."

Rachel: See, you're really good at impressions.

Griffin: Thanks, babe.

Rachel: [giggles]

[theme song plays]

[acoustic guitar sting]

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