

Wonderful! 384: A Dip into BIP

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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: [sings] Summer time! And the TV is nasty.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Welcome, everyone, to Wonderful. It's a podcast where we talk about things we like, that's good, that we are into. This week's episode is a very special one. We're going to talk to you about prescription—

Rachel: The birds and the bees.

Griffin: Prescription drugs, and birds and the bees.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: And also, summertime television shows that we are watching. Because, when—

Rachel: Have we done this before? Probably.

Griffin: Probably. Yeah, definitely.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Are we allowed to do it once a year? We are, contractually. Check the contract that you signed as a listener, it said—

Rachel: It's true.

Griffin: Once a year, you all can let your hair down. And that's wild, because we don't have particularly long hair in the first place.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: We don't traditionally wear it up.

Rachel: And when we say you, we mean everybody, can let their hair down.

Griffin: We do mean everybody!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And there's a lot of people like, "Why don't you just still do Rose Buddies? If this is—" And we're like, "We only want to taste it."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: [chuckles] Do you understand? We don't want it to be our jobs, but we do want to taste. Just, I just need a taste of it.

Rachel: Do we recognize that perhaps our show would be more successful if it was still Rose Buddies? Yes!

Griffin: Yes, of course!

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Do we want to do the work and emotional and intellectual labor to continue talking about and criticizing shows where people fall in love—

Rachel: No!

Griffin: And hurt each other on television? No, of course not. Do we want to get a taste of that, once every fifty-two episodes? Yes, of course we do.

Rachel: I will say, if you miss that, Griffin and I will dip into Love to See It.

Griffin: Yes, with Claire and Emma.

Rachel: Claire and Emma.

Griffin: The best in the game at discussing dating shows.

Rachel: You may remember them, they did *Here To Make Friends*. They have been in the game for a while now. They're pros.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: They do great takes on reality television.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: And if you are missing that, I would recommend checking them out.

Griffin: Specifically this week, we are going to be discussing the *new and improved* Bachelor in Paradise. And Netflix's own Bachelor in Paradise, called Perfect Match. As well as a few other things. Maybe we start things off with a Small Wondie segment. I know we wanted to dip into—just, as long as we are doing the TV thing, we may as well like tell people what we think about American Ninja Warrior this season.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: If you're new to the show, Rachel and I watch this one religiously, and don't know anybody else in our lives who does. And that is a crying shame, because, folks, it's at the height of its power. These obstacle goons are absolutely hog-wild, putting their bodies on the line for us day in and day out. And we sure do appreciate them for that.

Rachel: Here's the thing, you know, unlike a lot of programs that have been on as long as Ninja Warrior, if you are a person thinking, "I can't possibly dip in now, I'm not familiar with the people or the obstacles," actually, now would be a really good time—

Griffin: Best time.

Rachel: To dip in.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Not only does Ninja Warrior bless you with a like little spotlight package on a contestant, over and over and over again—

Griffin: Over and over again, yeah.

Rachel: So that you can become familiar with them, but they're doing these head to head races that are so dramatic.

Griffin: Yes!

Rachel: And like, everything lasts—like each little obstacle run lasts like sometimes less than a minute.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: So you get a really nice little taste. Super like fast paced and like... I don't know—

Griffin: Exciting, thrilling!

Rachel: Heart pounding?

Griffin: Heart pounding!

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: There was one episode this season, where it's the semi-finals, I think, or the final qualifiers—

Rachel: Finals.

Griffin: Well, the one I'm talking about—

Rachel: Oh, I guess it is semi-finals.

Griffin: But there's a ten obstacle course.

Rachel: I don't know.

Griffin: And the very last one was called The Invisible Ladder, which is just like two suspended rings, that you have to pull yourself up on. And it's got like a, you know, a winch, so when you raise up one ring, it stays there. And you have to climb, no legs, no nothing, just your arms. And watching these seasoned pros on their doventh season crash at the—with like a foot remaining before hitting the buzzer, heartbreaking moments. Thrilling, soaring moments of victory. It's just like, folks, it's good shit, man!

Rachel: Yeah. It's really fascinating to us, because there are a lot of people that have been doing this, like, I mean, their whole professional career. And when I say their whole professional career, I mean they started when they were fifteen. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: And now they're twenty-four.

Griffin: And now they're nineteen.

Rachel: Or—yeah.

[group chuckle]

Rachel: And they own a ninja gym, or they exclusively spend their time at ninja gyms. And they don't know what the obstacles are going to be. So, perhaps they have been training all year on their speed or on their arm strength, or whatever. And then they get there, and the obstacle is something they have never trained on, and they have no ability.

Griffin: How exciting. And it's silly, it's so silly! It's a show called American Ninja Warrior, and there's a lot of like Spike TV funk still that they have not grouted—they have not scrubbed off of this thing.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: And it's like crazy whenever that shit rears its head, when you're watching these people who spend their whole lives training for this minute and a half of intense obstacle running. That objectively is rad, right? And then you get like, "And here's the five funniest nut shots!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Like, I get it, I get it, I understand. But the pressure is at the top for every single person who does this thing, because they practice so much for a minute and a half of televised athleticism.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And the drama that just happens behind that. The characters, Sean Bryan, the papal ninja, who's like a—some sort of monastic tradition. He's also forty years old. And he kicks ass for the Lord. He's just so fuckin' fit and fast. But he's racing against like this little kid that grew up, that was two years old when he first appeared on Ninja Warrior and he idolized him.

Rachel: [chuckles] Yeah.

Griffin: And now he's having to race his heroes like ten times an episode! This shit's—

Rachel: There are—there are literal introductions that are like, this competitor could be this other ninja's son.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Nacssa Garemore, who had a ninety-one obstacle streak without falling, racing against his training partner and mentor, RJ Roman, the super-fast, hard rockin' ninja. Just a fuckin' clash of the titans. Guys, it's so exciting and so thrilling and so good.

Rachel: There are a lot of—and it's just interesting to see the variants, too. Griffin and I talk a lot about these ninjas that are parents, and have clearly like taken time away from their family.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: You know, and their young children... to train—

Griffin: For us. For us.

Rachel: [chuckles] For us, yeah.

Griffin: For me.

Rachel: For us.

Griffin: It's all for me.

Rachel: [chuckles] To compete for what amounts to, you know, a few minutes. And perhaps they like slip on a balance obstacle, and then, oh, they start over again for next year.

Griffin: You get to know these obstacles really, really well, which is one of the fun parts of watching as much of the show as we have. And there was a race this season where this young guy had to do this obstacle where there's two bars suspended from these hooks. And you have to take the bars with you to swing it onto the next hook, and then you take the bar behind you. So, you're doing monkey bars, but you're bringing the bars with you.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And on his way up to that obstacle, he accidentally kicked one of the bars into the water, so then all of a sudden, he had to just take the one

bar that he had and just kind of skip it, just kind of hop it from hook to hook.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And it was the craziest shit. He ends up winning that race, coming from behind—

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Like...

Rachel: And at the end, he like is speaking to the person with a microphone at the end, whose name is Zuri Hall. And he says, "Actually, I had practiced that once in the gym."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And I can't believe it worked. [chuckles]

Griffin: Fucking crazy. Good, good show. I would change so much about it. I would change so much about it.

Rachel: We have so many questions about how these people—like, what is their—what is their diet? These little packages they get at the beginning on like, "Oh, and now I'm into playing the violin too." Like, what goes into that? How do they decide? Like, how are those produced? They have these names, like these like nicknames. Like, "I'm the cake ninja." How was that decided?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: How stuck with that are you for the rest of your ninja career? Some of them have branded T-shirts.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Like, what goes into that? Like, I have so many questions that are never answered, and will never be answered given the format of the show.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And it's such a shame.

Griffin: And it'll be like, "This is the Rubik's Cube ninja! His hobby is cubing."

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Eh, no, his hobby is American Ninja Warrior! I've seen what he does on the course, you cannot tell me he spends more time manipulating colored cubes than he does practicing his long laches on the wing nuts. No fuckin' way, man. Also, there is this—it is hysterical to me, the horniness with which this show kind of deifies the people who compete on this show, who have any kind of social media following whatsoever.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: There's a family called the Ninja Kids, who have a YouTube channel that's apparently very popular. There's some other like folks who just like have, you know, TikToks of them doing stunts or whatever. And every time one of those people come up like, "Surely, their millions of fans will want to tune in for this one!" Like, calm down, guys. You sound so thirsty.

Rachel: I think that is ultimately why they lowered the age range of the competitors that are allowed in. And I think it's funny they still put that in parentheses. Like, if somebody is under eighteen, they will put their name up on the screen, and then in parentheses, put seventeen.

Griffin: Twelve.

Rachel: Like, "We know. We know they're young. And here's their age, because we're aware of it, and it's allowed." [chuckles]

Griffin: And there's a whole generational kind of like quiet war that is happening. Of like—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: These young guns are so... they're... I've learned a lot about kind of like muscle to like body weight, frame, size ratio watching this show.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Because the children who weigh ninety-five pounds—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And are one hundred percent muscle, can fling themselves around this course. Like, it's like watching a little flea circus.

Rachel: And they don't tire out.

Griffin: They don't tire out, because they are... they're fifteen. Like they—all they have is energy. They have too much energy.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Anyway, it's been a genuinely thrilling, kick ass season of a show that I still feel pretty embarrassed that I watch. But speaking of, let's—

Rachel: And that is twenty-five minutes of our Small Wonder. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, welcome. [chuckles] We're gonna—I think, let's start by talking about Bachelor in Paradise.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: And then we'll talk about Perfect Match. We wanted to talk about these shows because they are, hm, the same show and—different in some ways. But Bachelor in Paradise, we... we're on season ten of. It's the tenth season. We have not watched the past—

Rachel: We have not.

Griffin: Few, maybe. We watched all of—

Rachel: We kind off—so, yeah, we kind of stopped watching, because we don't really watch The Bachelor and Bachelorette anymore.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And the conceit of Bachelor in Paradise is they bring back some of the most beloved contestants from the previous seasons of The Bachelor and Bachelorette. And so in our head, it's kind of like, well, what's the point of watching Bachelor in Paradise? We're not going to know anybody. But they had teased the contestants from The Golden Bachelor and The Golden Bachelorette were going to be participating. And my thought—

Griffin: Which we very much watched and enjoyed.

Rachel: Yeah, it was like, well, we watch both of those, so if nothing else, we'll know those people.

Griffin: The Goldens have had a light presence on the show. A late presence on the show.

Rachel: I'm actually surprised that they made it more than one episode.

Griffin: Yes, I thought for sure it was going to be like, "And now we're going to bring in all of these sixty to eighty year olds, and they're gonna drink Mai Tais on the beach, and then we're going to ask them to please leave."

Rachel: They'll count the—it'll be like, you know when they used to bring back like the couples? Like, "We brought in Jared and Ashley I to do one day, and counsel you on what love looks like." I thought that was what The Golden Bachelor was gonna be.

Griffin: Nah, man. They're there. They're handing out roses, they're competing. They're as much a part of the fabric of this season of Bachelor in Paradise.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: We have not watched this show in a while, and it's interesting that this is the one we kind of came back to because they didn't do BIP last year. They took a year off, as they, as we now know, really changed the face of the show quite a bit. It has gotten a, and I don't think this is an oversimplification, a like extreme Netflix makeover.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: There is a new showrunner on the show. I suspect like some of the production sort of behind the show has turned over as well.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Because it just like, I mean, every part of the production of it is kind of different. Like the cinematography is different, the location is different.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: The vibe is different, the... it feels, especially in the like confessional bits, like a bit less spontaneous. It feels less shaggy, which I do—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I do... I'm enjoying BIP okay this season, but I do miss the kind of, I don't know, how it felt so rough-shot, as compared to the more refined Bachelor and Bachelorette kind of product.

Rachel: Yeah! There was something—like, the Bachelor Mansion, for example, like has more or less been the same for like, over a decade. And it's not the nicest place anymore.

Griffin: [chuckles] No, it really isn't.

Rachel: You know? And Bachelor in Paradise was similar, in that it was like kind of like a summer camp beach. Like it looked kind of like the place that *you* could potentially afford to go this summer. [chuckles]

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: They're like, "We're sleeping in bunk beds." Like, everything looks a little run-down.

Griffin: Sharing rooms, like all sleeping in two rooms. Like it was—

Rachel: Yeah, yeah. Like, the food didn't look that great, like the places they hung out didn't look that great. Like, it looked like they were kind of roughing it. And so you weren't... I don't know, you kind of felt like, if they really did find love, like it was—

Griffin: It was against all odds? Yeah.

Rachel: [laughs] It was a little miraculous.

Griffin: But now it's like in a very fancy resort. Everyone has their—has—shares a room with only one person, which is—

Rachel: Yeah, it's like a hotel. Like a—

Griffin: It's a—they are staying at a very, very, very nice hotel.

Rachel: It flat-out looks like a hotel. And it also kind of incentivizes them to stay, more than maybe previous Bachelor in Paradise did.

Griffin: Sometimes in BIP, when people get sent home, they're like, "I can't fuckin' wait my apartment."

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "My air-conditioned apartment."

Rachel: People would opt out a lot in previous seasons of Bachelor in Paradise. They don't as much this time.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: So you know, we get like three episodes. The episodes are a million hours long. And I would say our hit rate of knowing who the people on the show are, not counting the Goldens, is maybe like twenty percent? Like I really, really didn't know hardly anybody. If I did recognize someone, it meant that they were pretty... seasoned, let's say, at that point.

Rachel: Yeah. There's Dale, from Claire's season.

Griffin: Claire left with—

Rachel: Which we did watch.

Griffin: Yes. Well, yeah, Claire's season is kind of wild because she only made it I think three episodes in.

Rachel: Claire popped out quickly.

Griffin: And it was like, "I'm gonna pick Dale, bye."

Rachel: And then Tayshia took over that season.

Griffin: Right. I recognize—

Rachel: And tail is one—[chuckles] tail.

Griffin: Tails.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Miles 'Tails' Prower from Sonic is on this season, which is like crazy.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I thought he was like a kid.

Rachel: Dale is one of the older contestants.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Like, all of the women on the show speak of him as if he is the representative man on the show.

Griffin: Which is really funny, because then considerably older gentlemen do eventually show up.

Rachel: Yeah, in *The Golden Bachelor*—

Griffin: And then I think Dale does lose a little bit of his sort of social currency.

Rachel: True.

Griffin: But yeah, for the most part, it's people who have been in the past few seasons. We recognized, obviously, people—the women who were on... Ben's seasons? What was the season we watched?

Rachel: Joey.

Griffin: Joey's season. There's a couple women from Joey's season that we recognize. But the big thing—oh, no, I'm thinking of *Perfect Match*. I'm getting my universes mixed up.

Rachel: Yeah, this is gonna be hard for us.

Griffin: Folks, this is the fuckin' hard thing. We are watching this—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: They are airing concurrently. They're both on the air right now.

Rachel: *I know.*

Griffin: I think a new batch of episodes for *Perfect Match* just dropped, and *BIP* is like maybe halfway through the season—

Rachel: And because Bachelor in Paradise worked so hard to become more like a Netflix show, it is very—

Griffin: Indiscernible.

Rachel: It would be so much easier to tell them apart if Bachelor in Paradise was like old format. But since it has picked up Netflix speed, it's like really difficult to—

Griffin: It really feels like a season of—a very tame and modest season.

Rachel: Thank god for the Golden's, because otherwise, like it would look exactly the same. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah, exactly. Let's talk about the Golden's. Eventually, they do show up. And it is, I think, like three or four women from get Jerry—Gary's... Jerry? Gary?

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Jgary?

Rachel: Gary, but it's spelled like—

Griffin: G-E-R-R-Y or something?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Yeah, no, it's more than that, because remember like, it gets down to like three golden men. And it's a big issue, because there's like six—

Griffin: Yeah, there's a blood bath.

Rachel: Golden women.

Griffin: And then, yeah, some dudes... some precious, special dudes—

Rachel: Yeah, I think it's like eight and eight, or six and six, or something like that.

Griffin: I forget. But like, the dudes who are coming back, we're talking about Captain Kim, who came up with a whole fuckin'—

Rachel: Song?

Griffin: Weird, like Pirates of Penzance style song—

Rachel: Yeah, that he wanted all the men to sing.

Griffin: That we wanted all the men to sing. There's Jack. Jack, who was definitely a radio DJ at some point in his life.

Rachel: I think he's from Chicago.

Griffin: "Chicago Radio Jack!"

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And it is fun, because they're all staying on the same beach, right? And they—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But the show is so fuckin' weird about it. The show is so, so, so weird about it, like—

Rachel: Yeah, there's definitely like, they don't handle them as your typical Bachelor in Paradise contestant.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: You are constantly being made aware of how novel and cute it is that these older people are trying to be young people. [chuckles]

Griffin: Like, and these two older people will kiss, and all the young people are there like, "Aw, how cute!" And it's like, those are people! Those are you in twenty-five years!

Rachel: Yeah, they're like playing the part. Like they're wearing swimsuits, they're wearing makeup, like they're dressing—

Griffin: They're great sports.

Rachel: They're like doing the activities. It's not like they showed up in like nursing home attire. Like, they are very vital participants. But anytime they do anything that any participant would do, it's like, "Wait, what?!"

Griffin: A lot of hugely, just like weird and inappropriate—

Rachel: "Are they kissing in the pool? In the pool?"

Griffin: Wells, I feel like, is a particular offender in this department. There was one bit where, I think April—

Rachel: Is it April or Kathy? One of the two.

Griffin: I think it was April or Kathy, yeah, I don't—I can't remember—did like a body shot or something off one of the younger dudes. And it was like, you know, played for laughs. And then Wells says like, "I don't even know if this is possible, but you might be pregnant."

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And it's like—

Rachel: Or like, "I don't know if you can still get pregnant, but you—" [chuckles]

Griffin: "But I think you're—" And it's like, fucking holy shit, dude! You can't talk to another person that way? Anyway, the big thing that is just now happening in the show—

Rachel: As of our recording this.

Griffin: As of our recording this, is that the format is now changing halfway through the season. No new people are showing up. The part of the show where, you know, people are swinging from lover to lover, like Tarzan on a vine, is over. Now, all the couples are set. And now, guess what? It's fucking Bachelor Pad, folks.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: They backdoored a reboot of Bachelor Pad into Bachelor in Paradise. Which, Jesse, the host of the show, cleared up in a clearly ADR bit where he was like introducing the concept. Like, "You guys are gonna play games for money." And then like, "It's like Bachelor Pad!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Because they knew that people would be like, "You're just doing fuckin' Bachelor Pad again." Bachelor Pad was the precursor to BIP. It was Bachelor and Bachelorette contestants, you know, from different seasons—

Rachel: It was not a—it was not about finding love. It was, you—yeah.

Griffin: It was not at all. If that happened, it was whatever.

Rachel: You found a partner. You competed with them, all Bachelor summer long.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Trying to get money.

Griffin: And then at the end, you Stanford Prison Experiment them to see if you guys split the money or if one person keeps it. And yeah, it's... that's what it is now. And—

Rachel: And they—and they decided to do that again this season. And we have just started watching under that new format, and it has revitalized the show significantly.

Griffin: So good. It's—it is—the first challenge is like some real Devil's Plan like, "Wager a set amount of chips on whether you think these answers your partner gave are higher or lower than the answers we'll show." Like, crunchy stuff.

Rachel: Yeah, like—

Griffin: And I'm here for it.

Rachel: Like, "Your partner wants to have sex this many times a week. Like, and we're saying the answer is four. Is your—is your partner's answer higher or lower than four?"

Griffin: Really—

Rachel: And then they have to wager.

Griffin: You really see the cracks in the foundation start to show up—

Rachel: We got to see a lot of them studying beforehand, which, I appreciated the like transparency of all of them like asking each other questions beforehand, trying to like prepare for what they thought might be...

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Which is wild, because a lot of them were like, "What's your favorite color?" Like, "What do you like to eat for breakfast?" Like, "Do you really think that's gonna be—"

Griffin: And then Jesse's gonna be like, "How many fluid ounces do you nut?!" And it's like, Jesus Christ, Jesse. Like really, really, really, really intrusive shit.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Yucky at times. Quite yucky at times, I will say.

Rachel: Yeah, always.

Griffin: That is part—goes with the territory.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Some of the dudes, Brian in particular, is just a real shit head. And so like, I don't know, it's not immune to that. It is not a fully unproblematic watch. But as much as I do miss a lot of the, I don't know, charm of the original production of this show, I don't—I do wish they would roll that stuff back a little bit. I do wish it didn't look like every other reality show on television. But I am excited about the potential of Bachelor Pad—

Rachel: Yeah, it still has the flaw, and I was telling Griffin about this, that once a couple hooks up, once two people get together, they stop getting any camera time whatsoever.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: It's like the show decides like, oh, they're done. Like the drama with them is over.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Like nobody's interested in them anymore. And you stop learning anything about them. And that's kind of unfortunate.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Because there's like a couple, for example, Spencer and—

Griffin: Jess.

Rachel: Jess, who get together literally episode one.

Griffin: And then *boop*, gone.

Rachel: And we have not seen them on camera.

Griffin: But now, they're a fuckin' big target, because now, all of a sudden on Bachelor Pad, you can kind of try and angle to get those people out if you think they're stronger than you.

Rachel: Yeah, everybody knows that they're a huge threat, because they've been together so long. So, they have definitely identified themselves as a threat, which hopefully means we get to see more of them. Because I do—like, I would like to see these couples.

Griffin: I like to see nice, functional romances happening on these shows.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah. That's BIP. A lot has changed. But we also want to make some space for Perfect Match, which we will do after this break. Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

[ad break]

Griffin: Perfect Match is Netflix's Bachelor in Paradise.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: They pull—

Rachel: They—yeah.

Griffin: Pretty explicitly.

Rachel: Yeah, they look at their—and not even just their programs.

Griffin: That is a big thing for this season. So, they take—

Rachel: I don't know if they used to just do Netflix programs?

Griffin: I think, yeah, so this is the third season of Perfect Match. It is still a fairly new show. We really liked the first season. I think we fell off the second, because like, we don't watch The Ultimatum. We don't watch Dated and Related. So like, we don't know who those people are. And there would be a lot of them—sometimes you'd see like someone from The Mole come in, and it's like, what are you doing here, Sneaky Pete?

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: But it was all Netflix people and—but for this, the third season, they do bring in a lot of Too Hot to Handle, they do bring in a lot of Love is Blind. Is there anyone from The Circle? I don't know that I've seen anyone from The Circle.

Rachel: No?

Griffin: It was heartbreaking. I love The Circle.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And then there's like one perfunctory Dated and Related guy that they just like put in there. But then, they put in people from a Love Island, from a Temptation Island. A Lot of islands. From a Bachelor.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Not just from Bachelor, The Bachelor.

Rachel: The Bachelor!

Griffin: They bring in Clayton.

Rachel: Nobody knows who he is [chuckles]

Griffin: No one knows who he is.

Rachel: Any one person.

Griffin: One person clocks and is like, "There's no fucking way that's *The Bachelor* Clayton." A season we didn't watch, that ended with him dumping both final two women to go after a woman—

Rachel: Yeah. Well, then he had like a big public scandal afterwards, too.

Griffin: He did, yes. He had some allegations made against him that were... there was a big court case against it that was... that was settled.

Rachel: Apparently, it was cleared.

Griffin: Yeah. But he also—also on the show is the runner-up from Clayton's season. And they end up in the house, at the same time, together.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's—

Rachel: Very savvy, by the way, on the part of casting—

Griffin: Which is just wild, because I kept thinking like, if *The Bachelor* gets back together with the runner up from his season on *Perfect Match*?

Rachel: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Griffin: How does *The Bachelor* universe talk about that?

Rachel: I know, is it canon?

Griffin: I don't know!

Rachel: Like... it's not unusual for *The Bachelor* franchise to kind of wash their hands of couples that develop kind of outside of their parameters.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: You know, like if it is not sanctioned in some way, they will kind of not endorse them publicly. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah. Clayton fucks up so bad on this show, too. Like absolutely, the—time is a flat circle, my man. Cannot stop fucking up.

Rachel: Well, let's not get too far ahead of ourselves.

Griffin: Well, yeah, I mean, I don't want to get into spoilers, I just wanted to—I feel like people hear that and they're like, "Wow, is this season all about this one dude?" No, he just kind of fucks up and then he scoots. But because I think they have broadened the net so much, and they have stopped pulling like people exclusively from one or the other Netflix reality show, the cast, I think, is very strong. By which I mean, everyone here is pretty fuckin' good at making reality dating television.

Rachel: Yeah. The sound bites are perfect. The camera presence is natural. The like performance and challenges is like impeccable. Like everybody—like everybody is exactly where they are supposed to be. [chuckles]

Griffin: And it's like, it is trashy in the kind of best way, I think. Where it's like, you know, people being kind of naughty and like kind of fun about it, without like... without too much like full-blown yuckiness kind of thing. Like, a lot of—I don't know, there's one challenge where people like, they were asked questions like, "What is your like kink, or whatever?" And one of them is like, "Ah, a vibrating butt plug." And it's like kind of played for like, "Yeah, yucks." But not like, "That's disgusting and you should be ashamed!" It's just like a way different vibe than what Bachelor in Paradise is bringing to the table.

Rachel: Yeah. Well, and I think that's kind of, Too Hot to Handle really kind of opened the playing field.

Griffin: Liberates, sure.

Rachel: Yeah. Like, it created space for shows like Perfect Match.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Because a lot of these people recognize like, "If I go on Perfect Match, like I'm gonna have to talk about my butt plug."

Griffin: Yeah, and there's—[chuckles]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, it's—there's a level of consent that is there, that is kind of refreshing. I don't know, man, it is hitting for me much better than BIP is. And I think that a lot of that is that it feels a little bit more like it's not taking itself seriously, really, at all. The concept of the show is also, I think, a little bit more compelling. There are challenges every episode. If your couple wins the challenge, you get to go into *the boardroom*. Where you then get to bring new people into the house and put them on dates with other pre-established couples, in an attempt to break them up.

So this like element of, you know, testing these relationships is so like endemic to the structure of the show. In a way that I think, I don't know, it feels more organic than on Bachelor in Paradise, where they just like bring new people in randomly. And they can try and stick their nose in to try and like get a date here or there. But the person might, you know, say no, they might, you know... I don't know, I find that element to work a lot better in Perfect Match than in Bachelor in Paradise.

Rachel: Yeah. No, I have been enjoying it. I mean, it's still uncomfortable to watch.

Griffin: A lot of—you don't like seeing people's tongues—

Rachel: I don't like seeing people's tongues. Nick Lachey—

Griffin: Guys, holy shit, man!

Rachel: [chuckles] He... he is an old man. I mean, not old in the scope of time, but compared to these contestants, very old. And he still comes in like

the life of the party, and everybody still shouts his full name. And then he asks these people—

Griffin: Vanessa's nowhere to be seen.

Rachel: Vanessa's no—and I was telling Griffin like, should Nick Lachey have to address the fact that his wife is not present? Because it's not like required for a host to always announce where his wife. [chuckles]

Griffin: No, but it is when she co-hosts a lot of shows with him.

Rachel: But yeah, she's on Love is Blind.

Griffin: And I tell you, a little bit of Vanessa would go a long way to stop Nick from coming off as the world's nastiest, most lecherous man ever! Episode one rolls up, and he's got on like fuckin' blue blocker sunglasses and a big stogie. And he's like, "Everyone kiss each other's butts!" And it's like, holy shit, dude.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: That's so—there's one bit where, in that same challenge, that was very, very much about sort of sex in general. [chuckles] It was really great, because it was structured like all of the women provided anonymous answers, and the men had to guess like which women said what. But a lot of it just kind of came down to preference. So there was one like, "What do you do for your man when he comes home from work?"

And like, a lot of them were like, "Sex or dinner—dinner and sex." And then one of 'em was like, "Making dinner and give him the best blow job of his life." And one of the other dudes like pick—not that one, and he was like, "I just assumed, if we were having sex, a blow job was implied." And you could tell the gears were turning in this dude's head, like he was working through it, like an SAT kind of like problem solving.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And Nick Lachey proffers, "Clearly, you've never been married." And it's like, gross, dude!

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: Nick, that's fucking yucky, man! You're a billion years old, don't... yucky!

Rachel: Here's the thing—

Griffin: Vanessa's not here, man!

Rachel: If you think about, typically, the host of a reality dating competition, usually, they play the role that is kind of like paternal or like older brother. You know, like if you think about... like Bachelor, like there's this idea that like they are there as this kind of wise source of comfort.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Nick Lachey cannot provide that. He just comes across as this kind of like gross, sweaty uncle, that like your parents probably told you not to spend too much time with.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And he doesn't have any kind of natural ease on camera. And he always comes in just full of effort, and it's just... I don't enjoy him.

Griffin: It's not a good—it's simply not a good fit.

Rachel: I think so many people could do a better job at hosting. I'm really surprised that they are so loyal—

Griffin: To the Lachey—the Lachey brand, yeah.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Generally speaking, I mean, how do you feel about these two—these two titans, of bip versus pm? That's Perfect Match. It doesn't—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It doesn't...

Rachel: It doesn't, yeah, it's missing a vowel in the middle.

Griffin: It doesn't shorten as cleanly.

Rachel: They're great summertime shows. I think like seeing these attractive people dress in summer wear on like a beach locale is nice at the—in like an August time.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: Like a July, August timeframe.

Griffin: This is interesting!

Rachel: I feel like it's too early to make a call on Bachelor in Paradise, because as of our recording—

Griffin: It just changed, yeah.

Rachel: It just changed to the game format, which I'm really excited about.

Griffin: Yeah. Part of me is worried that like there will be a bit of a... muddling of the motive of the contestants on this show, right? Because BIP, in the past, there was no cash prize. It was just, find love, maybe you get engaged on a beach. There's a point in the show every season where they would come up and be like, "If you're not serious about your match, you gotta leave now."

Rachel: Yeah, how are they gonna navigate all that?

Griffin: That's not going—that's simply not going to happen, right? Because now it's like, leave the show, and so you're removing yourself from the possibility of winning half a million dollars.

Rachel: Are people still gonna get engaged? Probably not.

Griffin: I don't think that's—

Rachel: I imagine they're gonna do a live finale, though, if they're gonna do the prisoner's dilemma?

Griffin: This is what I'm saying, is like the shows have two pretty fundamentally different objectives. And if they try to do both of them, it's gonna be—it's gonna feel pretty fuckin' weird, it seems like. It is cool that it genuinely seems like no one on that beach knew that this was going to happen, that it was going to become a game show. The morning after Jesse comes out and announces it, you see everyone like, "So, I guess we're on a game show now."

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: "What does that mean? Like, what does that mean for us?" And so like, that's kind of a cool angle. I don't know, yeah, and Perfect Match, you know, there's only six episodes out. It could get very, very gross—

Rachel: Perfect Match just always feels kind of slimy to me. I mean, just because the challenges are always like quote/unquote, compatibility, but then it's just like rub your butt on your partner.

Griffin: Sometimes the challenges are so unhinged and clearly untested in a way—there was one where they were suspended on these big glass containers with holes in it, and the containers were full of big like four square balls—dodge ball balls.

Rachel: Yeah. And Nick Lachey was so confident like, "You're gonna have to stand up there and twerk to get these balls to come out."

Griffin: And then it takes everyone like thirty minutes. And they're like, "We can't fucking do it, Nick!"

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: And it just seemed like they had this idea for a challenge, and didn't like put it through its paces.

Rachel: And they realize like what it takes, unsurprisingly, is that they have to kind of run around the pole. And it's not at all sexual—

Griffin: Not at all! They look pained and desperate and sad.

Rachel: So then they start relying on the like, the exertion noises as like—and they try and—start trying to present those exertion noises as sexual, because they realize like they're not actually doing anything with their bodies that is like at all erotic. [chuckles]

Griffin: No, they're all like wailing. It's been a good time for this particular type of television show.

Rachel: I will say, the thing—the thing with Perfect Match, and you and I talk about this a lot, are like the friendships between the contestants. Like—

Griffin: Holy shit, man.

Rachel: Olly and Louis are like the best like buddy cop scenario. And we've really enjoyed watching their friendship blossom.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But—

Griffin: Olly, on this show, apparently it is just like known that he has married one of the women on this show, and had a child with them.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Which is kind of fun watching this, knowing like—

Rachel: It's wild that they—

Griffin: This is an origin of this genuine romance, it seems.

Rachel: And I don't know if they got permission, or how Netflix does that. Like usually Bachelor says like, you can't talk about how you ended up until it is aired, but like—

Griffin: This was filmed a year ago.

Rachel: But like—

Griffin: And now they have a kid.

Rachel: The contestants on Perfect Match have already announced like, "Hey, we're together, and we're pregnant." And then the show started airing.

Griffin: Yeah. [chuckles]

Rachel: And it's like, oh, I guess we already know.

Griffin: We'll see what happens! Yeah.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That's it for summertime TV. We've gone quite long, I will save audience submissions for next time. Wonderfulpodcast@gmail.com is where you can go to send those in. Thank you for bearing with us as we—we gotta vent the pipes from time to time.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: You know what I mean? 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. And thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the

network. You can go to maximumfun.org, check out all the great stuff they have over there. You're going to find something that you like, I guarantee it!

Rachel: We're not watching Love Island, and I'm sorry we didn't talk about it. I know everybody is watching Love Island and we are not.

Griffin: Yeah, and not for any—I guess, obviously... principle.

Rachel: Yeah, we're just not—

Griffin: Principal reason.

Rachel: We're just not familiar with it.

Griffin: Just not familiar with it, y'all. I only have room in my—this—summertime TV is like you transition to a different phase of your media consuming life, and you have different needs and wants. Until, basically, the hockey season starts back up again, and then like four nights in a week, you know what television you're going to be watching.

Rachel: You know, you know how—

Griffin: You know how that is.

Rachel: You know how you watch hockey?

Griffin: Do you think we're the world's premier hockey, slash Bachelor—

Rachel: [chuckles] Ninja Warrior.

Griffin: Slash Ninja Warrior fancast? I believe so.

Rachel: I can't imagine there's anybody else.

Griffin: We've got merch over at mcelroymerch.com, some back to school specials. We got the Raging, Flaming Poisoning Tea of—Not Poisoning Tea of Doom back in stock. Just some of my favorite tea I've ever slurped on. And some live MBMBaMs and TAZs coming up. We're coming Atlanta at the end

of the month, for Dragon Con, to do some stuff there. And we're going to be doing a live TAZ and a live MBMBaM. So, and then we're going to be doing some more shows later on in the year, in Texas and California and Utah. Bit.ly/mcelroytours is where you can go for tickets and more information. That's it! Thank you so much for listening. We hope—don't watch these shows because of us. This is not a thing we really did responsibly enough in our time as Rose Buddies.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: It's like, don't listen to the—don't listen to this and say like, "Well, I gotta watch these shows." Look inside. Look inside your heart and see if you have room in your heart for one of these programs.

Rachel: Also, we have not finished either of these shows.

Griffin: Yes, holy shit, they could and—

Rachel: The last—

Griffin: Probably will get very bad.

Rachel: The last episode—hell, the next episode, something very terrible may happen.

Griffin: Almost certainly will. Yeah, absolutely.

Rachel: [chuckles] The contestants we named may be terrible people.

Griffin: May be.

Rachel: And probably are.

Griffin: But it's—we wanted to talk about it, mostly because, one, it's kind of fun to—I think both of us listen to Emma and Claire and are like, "Oh, man, that is kind of fun to do that."

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But also like, I don't know, it has been a while since both of these shows have hit at the same time. I mean, it's never happened, right? That both of these shows—we haven't watched BIP in forever. And as much as I don't love all of the big changes that they've made, like we are watching it for the first time in a long time, so—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: There is something to that. So, yeah, make the choice on your own. Please do not count us responsible for this.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: The shows still do endorse, and if not endorse, at least show extraordinarily problematic behavior. And that is not, you know, any—we're not fully signing off and endorsing that. So make your own choices, folks! Look inside. But it is fun. It is fun TV.

Rachel: Choose or lose.

Griffin: Choose or lose! 2008.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Bye!

Rachel: Bye.

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

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