

## **Wonderful! 398: Ba-ba-ba-basketball**

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

**Rachel:** Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

**Griffin:** Hey, this is Griffin McElroy.

**Rachel:** And this is Wonderful!

**Griffin:** Welcome to Wonderful! This is a podcast where we talk about things that we like, that we are into. And we're into...

**Rachel:** I mean, the holiday spirit?

**Griffin:** Yeah...

**Rachel:** [chuckles] I've been dragging—been dragging Griffin over this line in the sand.

**Griffin:** No, I mean, I'm definitely full of like, you know, the spirit and the holidays and all that. You—the extent to which you have been really, really banging that big old timpani drum—

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** That big old holly crusted sort of snare, has been really pretty—

**Rachel:** I have been—

**Griffin:** Outrageous.

**Rachel:** Examining every quadrant of our house.

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Rachel:** And thinking about, how can I infuse this quadrant with the holiday spirit?

**Griffin:** True. Sectors, you call—you call them—

**Rachel:** Yes.

**Griffin:** You call them joy sectors, and I'm like, that's crazy.

**Rachel:** Yes, traditionally, it's just like a dining table fireplace situation.

**Griffin:** No.

**Rachel:** This year, I incorporated some hanging decor.

**Griffin:** Baubles hither and yawn!

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** The halls have been so thoroughly decked.

**Rachel:** Yeah. You know, I just like things to look pretty.

**Griffin:** Yeah, sure. For me—I told you this, and you seemed very disappointed. I gotta get across the Candlenights finish line. You know that that is a big—

**Rachel:** I know.

**Griffin:** You know that's the—that's a big deal to me, and it is—

**Rachel:** You're a real mile marker guy.

**Griffin:** I love a mile marker.

**Rachel:** Like, if you have something in front of something else, you can't think of the next thing until you finish the one in front of it.

**Griffin:** I am also an anxious stage fright guy, which explains why, typically, my on-stage appearances must be mile markers.

**Rachel:** Can I ask you, like, what shows have you seen at the Keith Albee?

**Griffin:** I mean, not a ton. So, *Candlenights* is this Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, at the Keith Albee theater in Huntington, West Virginia. You can still get tickets over at [bit.ly/candlenights2025](https://bit.ly/candlenights2025). You can also get the video on demand streaming tickets, which we're going to put up on December 19<sup>th</sup>, and going to be in the live chat when that premieres on that day. But the Keith Albee has been in various sort of states of use like my entire life.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And it has been undergoing renovations for a very long time. This show is going to be the first show that the Keith Albee is putting on since the renovations have completed, which mounts the pressure.

**Rachel:** You did an episode of *MBMBaM* there, right? The TV show.

**Griffin:** We did do an episode of *MBMBaM* there, where we met up with The Blues Club.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And we explored. And most of that didn't make any of the episodes.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** There was a great bit where I pretended to be, I think Taft, and I got stuck in a toilet, and yelled at my brothers about my goiters. And that was good stuff, and it didn't make the episode.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** But it was not like—it wasn't open and running stuff—

**Rachel:** This is the one where you talk about the tunnels, right? That run—

**Griffin:** Yes, the tunnels are there.

**Rachel:** Yeah. That's where the Justin McElroy meme, right?

**Griffin:** The "it's trash," that was there too, yeah. It's an incredible, beautiful wonder theater. One of, you know, a handful of surviving wonder theaters across the country.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And I am so stoked! And so scared.

**Rachel:** And also apparently nervous too. This is your home turf, dude, you've got this.

**Griffin:** That actually makes it worse. I can bomb in Biloxi—

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And they won't—

**Rachel:** I did get nervous in St. Louis this last time, because I casually invited every friend I had in St. Louis—

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Rachel:** And literally every friend showed up. And that was not what I was expecting. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** No, not at all. Do you have any Small Wonders?

**Rachel:** I got Little Son a squishy advent calendar.

**Griffin:** I *love* these advent calendars.

**Rachel:** I had the good thought that I almost never have, which is around Thanksgiving, I realized, you know what, I should go ahead and get those

advent calendars now, so they get here in time. And literally, both of them arrived just barely before December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** And Little Son wanted a squishy advent calendar where each day is a squishy, and I noticed he's already opened tomorrow's.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Oh, really? Did he?

**Rachel:** Somebody must have gotten there.

**Griffin:** Yikes.

**Rachel:** So, that might be a problem for us tomorrow, but—

**Griffin:** Well, we're just always going to be one day ahead.

**Rachel:** These little squishy guys...

**Griffin:** Love 'em.

**Rachel:** They're remarkable.

**Griffin:** Yeah, Henry got a dope little robot toy one, those tick bots. Those are—those are neat too.

**Rachel:** I—can I—sorry, I just want to make sure that everybody knows, Henry didn't pick it out. I did the research and the work, and I don't want that—

**Griffin:** Oh, yeah!

**Rachel:** To go overlooked.

**Griffin:** No, you crushed it. You smashed it, babe.

**Rachel:** Yes, that's why it's my Wonder. What's yours?

**Griffin:** I'm going to—mine is also Small Son related. He has been very into drums and drumming, and I showed him Garage Band on the iPad, and he is in love with that.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And put together a song that sounded like scary monster music, that was pretty convincing and good. But then also wanted me to keep adding more and more drops to it.

**Rachel:** Yeah. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Not really understanding like what that means. It's such an abstract concept, it's not like there's a button I can press to add a drop. That is like a pretty advanced musical concept, where there has to be a sort of build, and there has to be a sort of break, and there has to be a sort of payoff.

**Rachel:** He was trying to explain Garage Band to me, because before you woke up this morning, he wanted me to add a drop. And I just had to keep telling him, "I understand—"

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** "You've shown me where all the buttons are."

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** "I still don't know how to create a drop."

**Griffin:** This song is 24 measures long, and there's about five drops.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Quite dense with drops, but yeah, it's been a lot of fun just messin' around on there with him. And I've been bustin' out some of my old like teenage engineering sequencers, and he's been having fun with those, even though they're a little bit complicated.

**Rachel:** Both of our sons are—they're real makers.

**Griffin:** They're makers—

**Rachel:** And it's one of—

**Griffin:** They're creative—

**Rachel:** The proudest things—

**Griffin:** Creative types, yeah.

**Rachel:** For us, for sure.

**Griffin:** My topic this week is also a celebration of creativity.

**Rachel:** [chuckles] This is one of the ones that Griffin had to send me beforehand, so he could make sure that I fully appreciate it and—

**Griffin:** Yes. It's a—it's a broad sort of thing, but I'm going to focus in specifically on a video. The video is three minutes and 48 seconds long, and it is that video of John Tesh explaining how he wrote the NBA on NBC theme song, which is titled "Round Ball Rock," which is one of the all-time greatest titles for—like...

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** There's so much about it that's like amazing. There's so much about this—John Tesh's whole style on the stage, his—the fact that he wrote the basketball theme song is amazing. The fact that he called it "Round Ball Rock," like that he gave it a name—

**Rachel:** It makes me wonder—

**Griffin:** Is so amazing.

**Rachel:** It makes me wonder if there was already a basketball rock, or he didn't want to pigeon hole himself into one sport.

**Griffin:** Oh, wow.

**Rachel:** And he thought, "Well, if baseball wants to use this—"

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Rachel:** "Or soccer," those are also round balls.

**Griffin:** Those around balls, yeah, for sure. If you don't know what the fuck I'm talking about, which is entirely likely if you weren't, you know, alive in 1990, I'll break it down sort of beat by beat. John Tesh was originally a radio and TV presenter. He was the co-host of Entertainment Tonight—

**Rachel:** Yes!

**Griffin:** For a decade.

**Rachel:** With Mary Hart.

**Griffin:** From 1986 to 1996. That was his job, and he was successful at it, which—evidenced by the fact that he co-hosted Entertainment Tonight. He also, his real passion was music, which is evidenced by the fact that he re-orchestrated the Entertainment Tonight theme song two times during his tenure there, in 1990 and 1994, which is kind of amazing. So, in '87, while he was fully employed by Entertainment Tonight, he had this deep desire to perform on stage with other musicians. So he went to his pal, Yanni, and said, "Hey, Yanni, I play the keyboard pretty good. Do you need a keyboardist?" And Yanni was like, "Hell yeah, dude. Let's roll."

**Rachel:** Do you wanna tell people who Yanni is?

**Griffin:** Yanni, gosh, Yanni was a—I said Yanni "was," because I don't know if Yanni is still around. Yanni is still around, 71 years old. He is a, I mean—

**Rachel:** How do you classify the type of—

**Griffin:** New age, contemporary—

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Kind of stuff, fusion...

**Rachel:** It was kind of a big punch line for a while in the late '90s, like people love to kind of poke fun at that like—

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Rachel:** Genre of music.

**Griffin:** Super-duper-duper '90s music using like instruments from all over the world, and also sort of like keyboard synthesizers and... was a—was a sort of multicultural, sort of recording artist type guy. John Tesh was like, "Let me get up on that." Yanni was like, "yes, yes." So, he went on tour—Yanni's first tour, he was the keyboardist for them, just for one short run, 12 shows across the country. 1990 was a very busy year for John Tesh. While he was still at Entertainment Tonight, where he did the fuckin' theme song, he also wrote the theme song to Bobby's World. And I don't know if you're familiar with that—

**Rachel:** [chuckles] I didn't know that.

**Griffin:** [sings] Pa, pa, pa! Ba-ba-ba, ba-ba-ba, ba-ba-ba-ba, pa-pa. It's like this insane sort of playful circus nightmare. And it is... kind of amazing that John Tesh, host of Entertainment Tonight, wrote that. But his highest profile gig, he was asked to write the theme song for NBA on NBC, and that is "Round Ball Rock." And you might actually know the song, even if you are not a basketball fan, or were not a basketball fan in the '90s. NBC stopped carrying NBA games in 2002, but they continued to use it for their other sports coverage.

**Rachel:** For sports. Yeah, 'cause—

**Griffin:** Specifically the Olympics. The Olympics, it got quite a bit of—

**Rachel:** Oh! Okay.

**Griffin:** Of play time. And I'm gonna play a clip from it here in just a second, when we get to the specific video I'm talking about. This video I'm discussing today, it's a clip from John Tesh's performance at the Red Rocks Amphitheater, which is already fuckin' amazing.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Which is already incredible conceptually. He is performing to a sold-out crowd at Red Rocks, and he's telling the story of "Round Ball Rock." And that story is, he was traveling with his wife in Europe. He had been asked to write this theme song for the NBA on NBC, specifically. He had no access to a piano. He was, I imagine, riding the Eurail, backpacking, a romantic voyage with his bride.

**Rachel:** [chuckles] Okay.

**Griffin:** And he had the idea for the hook for "Round Ball Rock."

**Rachel:** Uh-huh.

**Griffin:** And so, what he did was he called his home answering machine and he left himself a message that would change sports history forever.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** On stage, at Red Rocks, at this show, he pulls out the answering machine and he plays the message, which I would like to play right now.

[excerpt plays]

[an answering machine beeps]

**John Tesh:** Hi, this is a message for me about the NBA theme. Here's my idea, it goes like this. [sings] Bow, tecke-tecke, teck-edé! Tene-pucke-buduh-tudeh-deh, bump-teh-deh, bum-bum! Bum-tecke-tuhduhtuh.

[an answering machine beeps]

[excerpt ends]

**Griffin:** And while the audience is like cheering for that, he puts a hand up to silence them and starts air drumming a pretend basketball, to like a kick drum beat, before he just dashes behind his keyboard and just fuckin' lays into it.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

[an excerpt of "Round Ball Rock" by John Tesh plays]

**Griffin:** It's just a—it's just a wild watch, this video, because it's like a little story time, and then it's the NBA on NBC theme song "Round Ball Rock" with a full orchestra, playing parts of the song that I've never heard before. Because you really—

**Rachel:** True.

**Griffin:** You pretty much only hear like the beginning. [sings] Pa-pa-pa-da, pa-pum, pa-ba! You don't hear like, you know, the entire odyssey. You don't see like the two dudes who come out. [chuckles] One is wearing like a bright red sequin vest, and the other one is wearing like a Sergeant Pepper's epauleted jacket. He's playing a violin, the other guy's playing a guitar, and they're doing like dueling solos back and forth to each other. John Tesh is dressed in like full '90s-ass regalia. He looks like a blackjack dealer.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** And he's just like shredding on the piano, just so fuckin' into it, kind of like guiding the band. And after the song, full standing ovation, because how could you not?

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** It's just an incredible—it's an incredible little time capsule. It is—there's like a form of creative transparency that lets you sort of feel like you have really stepped inside of the artist's mind to see like what's going on in there.

**Rachel:** And this is—I mean, what he did, really, is what now has become like voice memos.

**Griffin:** Right, exactly.

**Rachel:** Like this idea of like, "I have an idea for a beat, I need to record it down somewhere."

**Griffin:** I've done this. I used to do this a lot when I was, you know, making a *lot* of music for TAZ, back when I had all the time in the world. And I would leave little voice memos like on my phone of like a melody or something, which, again, Gus dug up when he got around to making music in the voice memos app of the iPad, which he found very enjoyable. But like, I don't know, John Tesh playing a voicemail he left for himself, scattering the NBA theme, presumably in like a European hotel room while his wife nodded approvingly, is like primo shit—

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** That I do love to imagine. And it's like sort of the full package artistic dream of you had a notion, you captured the notion before it flitted away from your fingertips, and then you created one of the most memorable sort of athletic songs of all time.

**Rachel:** I wish we had like all the other answering machine recordings where he like stumbled and was like, "Nope, that's not it. That's 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas.' Uh-oh. Start over."

**Griffin:** Yeah. I want to hear him like buzzed off his ass—

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Like, "Got the Bobby's World jam. [sings] Pe-pe-peh! Pa-daba-beh-ba, bah-be-be-be."

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Really, really good stuff. The video is just three minutes and 48 seconds of a dude who is very passionate about his work, and his work is new age rock musical theme songs, and I'm just absolutely here for it. Plus like, you get the reference to the incredible SNL sketch where—

**Rachel:** Yes.

**Griffin:** John Tesh, played by...

**Rachel:** Jason Sudeikis.

**Griffin:** Jason Sudeikis and his... I imagine fictional brother, Dave Tesh, played by Tim Robinson. [chuckles] Performed for the NBA like execs—

**Rachel:** With the lyrics.

**Griffin:** While Tim Robinson, [sings] "Ba-ba-ba-ba-basketball! Gimme-gimme-gimme the ball, because I'm gonna dunk it!"

**Rachel:** [chuckles] I've had that stuck in my head all day.

**Griffin:** Oh, yeah, me too, in a major way.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** That's very good. I don't think it's as good as John Tesh playing his voicemail for the sold-out Round Rocks audience. But you can find that, you can google that clip, and you will find it, and you will be transformed by it. And inspired by it. Can I steal you away?

**Rachel:** Yes.

[theme music plays]

[ad break]

**Griffin:** What have you got?

**Rachel:** Okay, this is a topic that is going to evolve, because as I began researching it, I became fascinated with the like... the historical figures that were involved in it.

**Griffin:** Okay?

**Rachel:** So like it kind of starts out like, this is the thing I like, but then you learn about some people associated with it, and then that's like, all I wanted to research.

**Griffin:** Okay?

**Rachel:** So, I started with paper snowflakes.

**Griffin:** Okay?

**Rachel:** Because part of my holiday decor this year was to kind of buy large versions of these snowflakes to hang in our kitchen.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Rachel:** And there's nothing more delightful as a craft than folding up paper and then kind of making random cuts in it, and then unfolding it, and seeing this kind of beautiful display that is, usually, for me, anyway, a total surprise.

**Griffin:** Yeah. [chuckles]

**Rachel:** And/or accidentally cutting the wrong spot and then having four—

**Griffin:** Yeah!

**Rachel:** Snowflakes.

**Griffin:** I would usually create a sort of septagon with a big kind of hole in the middle of it. And that's not really—

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** That's not anything.

**Rachel:** But it's like, it's just always impressive. I can't entirely explain it. I think it's the surprise element.

**Griffin:** Sure!

**Rachel:** It's the unfolding, and then seeing what you get.

**Griffin:** My mind is so bad at spatial reasoning, and I think this is the skill that is sort of mostly employed when creating paper snowflakes. I have a very difficult time sort of envisioning what this thing is going to look like when I snip into it.

**Rachel:** Yeah. Oh, 100%. So, there's kind of three characters I want to talk about in the story. First is Francis Chickering, who published an illustrated volume of prose and poetry that included paper cutouts of snowflakes. The book was called *Cloud Crystals: A Snow-flake Album*.

**Griffin:** Okay?

**Rachel:** And what happened was she accidentally got kind of a close look at a snowflake, and became totally fascinated with it, and then used dark fur cloth, or dark fur, or cloth, to catch the snowflakes, and then a strong magnifying glass. And then she would quickly cut them out of paper from memory. [titters]

**Griffin:** Whoa! That's wild! And put 'em in a book?

**Rachel:** Yeah, so this book that she created has just dozens of different kinds of snowflakes in it. She shared them with a scientist at Harvard University, who advised her to measure the air temperature and other conditions as she examined the snowflakes. And that she found that snowflakes that fall on warmer, humid days have more rounded angles than snowflakes that fall on cooler, dry days.

**Griffin:** That's great.

**Rachel:** So, she published her observations, and a copy of this is apparently at the American Institute of Physics in College Park, Maryland.

**Griffin:** That's amazing!

**Rachel:** Okay, so that's how like somebody said like, "I'm gonna turn a piece of paper into a snowflake."

**Griffin:** Right.

**Rachel:** How it really became popularized is two women that really were kind of instrumental in bringing origami to the United States.

**Griffin:** Okay?

**Rachel:** First is Lillian Vorhaus, who became Lillian Vorhaus Oppenheimer, no relation.

**Griffin:** Okay. Gonna say, that is wild dynamic—

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** What did you do—

**Rachel:** I checked on that one!

**Griffin:** "What did you do today?"

"Well, we cracked the paper snowflake thing. What about you?"

"Well, made a—made a... made a monster out of men, with the bomb."

**Rachel:** So, she became interested in this kind of recreationally, and then had a friend who was a therapist at Bellevue Hospital, who started—who learned from Lillian and started teaching origami to those who were interested from groups at the Red Cross, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, nursing home residents. Oppenheimer was friends with a concert pianist at the time who knew a journalist at the New York Times, and so Oppenheimer had kind of sent some articles and crafts that she had developed around paper folding. And then the New York Times printed a column on her—

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Rachel:** Which outlined the history of origami and described some of her favorite action models, including the flapping bird, which is the one—

**Griffin:** I love flapping bird.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** God, I'd love to know how to do one origami. I know that there's probably people who are like—

**Rachel:** I know, we've gotta get in there!

**Griffin:** Again, the spatial sort of—

**Rachel:** My dad used to know how to make the crane, the flapping bird.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Rachel:** And then a little balloon out of paper.

**Griffin:** Oh, wow.

**Rachel:** And I just, as a kid, it was just like totally fascinating to me.

**Griffin:** Absolutely!

**Rachel:** So, because of that article, she was interviewed on The Tonight Show, with Jack Parr at the time, which really popularized it. And then all of a sudden, they're getting all these demands from people who want to have lessons. And she is informing an instruction group that she calls the Origami Center. The first meeting took place at the Japan Society in New York, in 1958, which is where Florence Temko learned all about origami and origami instruction. Apparently, she had met Oppenheimer in the hospital while their husbands were both there, and they became friends. And so then, she went to Oppenheimer's class and became kind of another origami pioneer.

**Griffin:** That's great!

**Rachel:** I will say, another interesting thing before we move away from Oppenheimer, as she became older and was in her second marriage, she became friends with the puppeteer Sherry Lewis.

**Griffin:** Whoa!

**Rachel:** Who inspired her to take up amateur ventriloquism and puppetry. Oppenheimer went on to hold frequent puppetry meetings in her apartment, where she built a puppet theater. She was a founding member of the Puppetry Guild of Greater New York.

**Griffin:** Just like a lot of interest, it sounds like?

**Rachel:** [chuckles] It's just kind of—

**Griffin:** Like a person with a lot of... stuff going on.

**Rachel:** You can see how like at first I was like, oh, cool, folding paper and snowflakes. And then I was like, wait, tell me more about these ladies.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** Okay, so Florence Temko learns origami, offers to give a talk in New Jersey. She only expected six to eight people, but 48 showed up. And so she's like building kind of a reputation, while deciding to take a job as a travel agent. So, this opened up the possibility of her visiting other countries

at 75% discount, and she went on to go to Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Bangkok, Singapore... Switzerland, Spain. And on all those trips, she is like visiting with paper folding experts.

**Griffin:** That's amazing.

**Rachel:** Yeah. She first went to Japan in 1964, and then again in 1977. And she was kind of the first person for the purposes of paper folding to visit Japan since Lillian Oppenheimer visited in 1959.

**Griffin:** Carrying the torch.

**Rachel:** Carrying the torch. So, she decides, "I'm going to do a book on paper folding." She submits it to 30 different publishers, Platt and Munk, which was one of the publishers, didn't want to publish that book, but asked her to publish a book on paper cutting.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Rachel:** Which she—

**Griffin:** A related discipline.

**Rachel:** Yeah. Which she decided to call kirigami, not realizing that kirigami was already a Japanese word.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Rachel:** Kiri is to cut, and gami is from paper. Anyway, so she creates this book that sold 600,000 copies. But unfortunately, she had transferred the copyright to the publishers for a fixed payment, and did not receive any royalties from this book.

**Griffin:** Dang, dude.

**Rachel:** She goes on to write a bunch of other books, *Party Fun With Origami*.

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Rachel:** Ultimately publishing 80 books.

**Griffin:** Jesus Christ!

**Rachel:** [chuckles] She demonstrates origami with Steve Allen on television. She goes on to publish a book in 1977 called The Magic of Kirigami, which she wrote jointly with Toshie Takahama, which they collaborated on 10,000 miles apart.

**Griffin:** Cool.

**Rachel:** Via mail.

**Griffin:** [chuckles] Yeah, I was gonna say this was pre-Zoom.

**Rachel:** [chuckles] And that's, I mean, that's like—

**Griffin:** That's incredible!

**Rachel:** Those like—those ladies are kind of the big reason not only that we like know a lot about snowflakes, but also that we know a lot about paper folding and paper cutting. So yeah, so like, cool, paper snowflakes, but all of a sudden, I found like these incredible people who had like really invested spirit and like enthusiasm—

**Griffin:** Yeah! That's super neat. I love that. Hey, do you wanna know what our friends at home are talking about?

**Rachel:** Yes.

**Griffin:** Ash says, "My Small Wonder is that my neighbors are selling local honey out of a cute little wooden box they mounted on the tree in their front yard. It's got a slot to deposit cash and a QR code to use Venmo to pay, all on an honor system. I bought a mason jar's worth of honey the day it went up. It feels so quaint and idyllic, and it makes me smile every time I see it." And they sent—they sent a picture of the little honey box.

**Rachel:** Oh, I love that so much.

**Griffin:** It's so cute, it's like a tiny library, but for honey, and you pay for the honey, and you buy the honey. Look at this. Look at this big, beautiful mason jar.

**Rachel:** Oh, that's a lot of honey.

**Griffin:** You say that, we'd go through one of those—

**Rachel:** Yeah, we're really—

**Griffin:** In a week in a half.

**Rachel:** Into honey these days.

**Griffin:** Yeah, I'm a real honey boy. I drink so much tea, I put honey in, and our boys need it for their poor... you know—

**Rachel:** Constant coughing.

**Griffin:** Bronchitis and what have you.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** How about this one from Erica, who says, "My Small Wonder this week, and for all the cold, snowy weather months, is getting to end conversations with the phrase 'stay warm out there.' You can say it to pretty much anyone, because we all know it's cold, and it feels like sending someone a little wish for their comfort and happiness. The same with its variation, 'stay safe, stay warm,' when roads get icy and travel can get treacherous. It's just a nice little seasonal way of showing others you care. Stay warm out there!" Thanks, Erica, you too. I do love that. It feels... like a little bit more personal, I guess, than like, you know, "see ya." It's a good well wish that isn't like, you know, nosy or... infantilizing.

**Rachel:** It makes me like envision like somebody bundled up going into like a nice coffee shop.

**Griffin:** Oh, yeah!

**Rachel:** And like purchasing a cup of coffee, and then on their way out the door, hearing "stay warm out there."

**Griffin:** Make me—

**Rachel:** It feels very charming.

**Griffin:** Make me think of the Campbell Soup when the—where the snowman melts.

**Rachel:** Oh, god, I love that one.

**Griffin:** Didn't we do that is a segment for this show? I feel like I've heard you talk at length about the Campbell's Soup commercial.

**Rachel:** No, I don't think so?

**Griffin:** Where kid starts as a snowman and then drinks the soup, and then turns—

**Rachel:** I mean, I've definitely—I talked about like the Taster's Choice and like the Fulcher's—

**Griffin:** The Fulcher's—the weird Fulcher's ad, yeah. Yeah! Hey, thanks for listening to our show. 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 song in the episode description. Thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go to [maximumfun.org](http://maximumfun.org), check out all the stuff they've got going on over there. No matter what you're into, they'll have something for you, I guarantee it. Again, one last time, we are performing the Candlenights live spectacular in my hometown of Huntington, West Virginia, on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. We hope you will come out and see us. It's going to be—

**Rachel:** It's going to be games and skits and—

**Griffin:** Games and skits and—

**Rachel:** Special appearances and—

**Griffin:** We're doing bits from Clubhouse, we'll do a little bit of MBMBaM stuff. There's a lot of—there's music and there's a whole bunch of stuff! And all of the proceeds for that go to Harmony House, which is an amazing organization in Huntington that's working to end homelessness in the area with a bunch of supportive services.

And they, you know, they really need the help. If you can't come to the show, we're going to be putting up a video of it on December 19<sup>th</sup>, that'll be available on demand for a while, you can get tickets for that too, all over at [bit.ly/candlenights2025](https://bit.ly/candlenights2025).

New merch up in the merch store at [mcelroymerch.com](https://mcelroymerch.com), including Candlenights ornaments, some new stuff for 'Til Death Do Us Blart, which has also gone up recently. And if you are a Monster Factory fan, we have also put up the final episode of our return to the Final Pam miniseries, that is available now on our YouTube channel.

**Rachel:** [chuckles] It makes me feel like it's like a PBS—

**Griffin:** It is, yeah.

**Rachel:** Like Masterpiece Theater kind of.

**Griffin:** It is very much. We did get Laura Linney to introduce every episode.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** And it was very, very expensive. So, check all that stuff out! And stay warm out there, we'll check you next time. Maybe that could be our new sign-off, but then like in the summer—

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** In the summertime it would be like, stay—

**Rachel:** I mean, it would have to be cool, right?

**Griffin:** Yeah... And that's like, I don't know, I don't want to be responsible for people's sort of body temperature regulation.

**Rachel:** You know we can never find a sign off, right?

**Griffin:** You're right. The show is too general-purpose sort of with the topics, it's impossible to really dial in on something. So, stay warm out there, bye!

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

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