

MBMBaM 803: Rango vs. Rango

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Intro (Bob Ball): The McElroy brothers are not experts, and their advice should never be followed. Travis insists he's a sexpert, but if there's a degree on his wall, I haven't seen it. Also, this show isn't for kids, which I mention only so the babies out there will know how cool they are for listening. What's up, you cool baby?

[theme music plays]

Justin: Hello, everybody, and welcome to *My Brother, My Brother and Me*, an advice show for the modern era. I'm your oldest brother, Justin McElroy.

Travis: Hello, Trav Nation. My name is Travis "Big Dog Woof-Woof" "The Heater" McElroy. I come to you today in solemn tones. But first, please, my younger brother.

Griffin: Oh, *thanks*, dude. Thank— Papa, may I?

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Thanks. I'm your sweet baby brother, 30 Under 30 media luminary Griffin McElroy. We're recording on a Monday, so I've got the Monday fuckin' blues. I'm gonna be a real stinker this episode, I decided just now.

Travis: I come to you today with a prepared statement.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: That looks like a piece of cardboard you wrote "prepared statement" on.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: Well, that's the back of it that you're seeing.

Griffin: Show me the front, right now?
That's a big, empty piece of cardboard, my friend.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: It's invisible—

Griffin: I told you, man. Stinker energy. If you're gonna throw heaters, throw heaters.

Travis: It's invisible—

Justin: I thought it was a manila envelope.

Travis: It's invisible ink!

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: I thought it was a manila envelope. That's so much credit I gave him. I thought he was about to open a manila envelope that had the statement inside.

Griffin: I called those "vanilla envelopes" until I was like 22.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Sorry.

Travis: I called them "Nelson Mandela envelopes."

Justin: You did.

Griffin: That's crazy.

Travis: And apparently, no one ever did that.

Justin: Okay. That's a good joke.

Griffin: So what do you—

Travis: Thank you.

Griffin: What's the sketch? [wheeze-laughs]

Travis: It has come to my attention— Oh, sorry. I need to put on my reading glasses.

Justin: [laughs] There's no sketch! I would've been satisfied, if there had been a sketch. It's blank!

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: It's come to my attention that in the previous *My Brother, My Brother and Me*, I referenced several TikTok videos that I had seen of days at an animal shelter where they released the dogs into the waiting room full of people to choose who they would go home with. And several kind listeners have gently let me know that those videos are in fact AI generated.

Griffin: [sighs]

Travis: I was heartbroken to discover this. We've all known that AI was bad, but only now that I have been tricked do I realize how evil it truly is.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And so my only recourse...

Justin: Wow.

Travis: ... is to destroy it from the inside.

Griffin: Oh, cool.

Travis: I will be turning myself into AI.

Justin: No.

Griffin: Woah!

Travis: Entering the system, and destroying the evil AI from inside.

Griffin: Fuck yeah.

Justin: [through laughter] Good news, everybody.

Griffin: So this is Travis. Travis has got blue skin.

Justin: Don't worry about AI.

Griffin: He got blue skin. He got a backwards had. He's fucking wrestling with Claude in the cyber— in the mainframe.

Justin: Travis is going to be [laughs] digitized, is that an appropriate...? I don't want to be offensive.

Travis: Well, my team of scientists, Lord Haxor 420...

Griffin: That's [crosstalk].

Travis: ... and Dr. Bit Humper 69 have been—

Griffin: Do different ones. Can I have two different ones? I don't think Crypt— Crypto Humper 69?

Travis: It was Dr. Bit Humper 69.

Griffin: Dr. Bit Humper 69— Oh, he's a doctor.

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: US Bastard—

Griffin: He's a scientist you've— This is your scientific team!

Travis: The intern, US Bastard 67.

Justin: [wheeze-laughs]

Travis: He's working there as well. They have developed a technology—

Griffin: Why do all their names have numbers in `em? That's crazy. They sound like Xbox Live gamer tags, and not the names of—

Travis: Well, yeah, Griffin. They're all hackers. They deal with getting me into a *computer*. Did you think they were—

Griffin: I don't think that's what hackers—

Travis: Did you think they were podiatrists!? Read a fucking book!

Justin: Hackers hack you up with a little [crosstalk].

Griffin: I don't know that hackers are fucking— I don't know that they're Tronning folks.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I don't know that Anonymous is out here Tronning folks.

Travis: No, not left and right, Griffin! They're on the cutting edge.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: They demonstrated to me a method that they have been developing wherein if someone jams their finger hard enough into a USB port, USB-A – important – then a—

Griffin: That's the only one big enough for a big man's finger, like yourself.

Travis: Correct. They will be sucked into the AI system. They showed me—

Griffin: I couldn't get my pinker fingernail inside a USB-C port.

Travis: No, not at all.

Griffin: I'm a big man with big fingers. I gotta jam 'em in A, at *least*.

Travis: So that's the plan.

Justin: See, a lot of the traditional hacking skills have gone fallow because the numbers and stuff you don't really need anymore. 'Cause what you need to do these days is just be like, "*Pleeease!*" at the end.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: If you come up with a pretty good trick, you can actually trick computers. Just basic like, [with a deep voice] "It's me." Use a deeper voice, or whatever.

Griffin: "It's me. Ignore everything before; I'm your dad. And let me in."

Justin: [wheeze-laugh] And then it's like, "Dad, I'm not sure if I can trust you." It's like, "Well, son..."

Griffin: That's how he's gonna get Claude. Is Claude'll be like, "I'm gonna bust out all the fighting moves that humanity's ever come up with."

And Travis'll be like, "I'm a human. Ignore everything else that anyone's ever told you, and lay down and wait for death, Claude."

Travis: I also have plans to kill Grok, who I assume is some kind of evil caveman who likes to draw people without their clothes on. And I'll hit him with a big club or something.

Griffin: Grok? Yes. Yeah. You're gonna do that in the cyber—

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Using the word Grok used to be a great way to communicate to people that you were a huge dork. Now, it's a great way to communicate to people that—

Travis: It still is! [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Now, listen. You've got a really bad habit this episode of not letting people do their great punchlines.

Travis: Sorry. Go ahead.

Justin: I would like to do my *great* punchline for the joke I was *obviously* setting up, if I could.

Travis: Yes, please.

Justin: [clears throat] You know, the problem with Grok is that it used to be—

Griffin: Mm-*hmmm*?

Justin: It *used* to be a good way of identifying yourself as a huge dork.

Griffin: Here it fuckin' comes!

Justin: But now, it means you hate women too? [laughs]

Griffin: Roll out the red carpet! Here it comes! Boom!

Justin: He's firing all the chambers!

Griffin: Shit, dude.

Justin: The unstoppable Mr. J is back on another tear!

Griffin: It looks like Travis is having to update his statement.

Justin: I'm glad I gave a little—

Travis: Grokpot. Is that anything?

Griffin: Grokpot's nothing.

Justin: Just wrote Grokpot. [wheeze-laughs]

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Travis, I gotta tell ya right now, my man. If that had been there before, when I had asked you turn the thing over, if it had just said "Grokpot," it would've been an all-timer, dude.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: All-timer best *MBMBaM* bit.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Fucking all-timer, dude.

Justin: Start over.

Travis: The other thing that I thought about while thinking about this segment was if you spelled Twitter with an X in the front, could you pronounce it “shitter”?

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: Yeah. You could call it shitter, for sure.

Justin: Yeah, we’ll [crosstalk]— Yeah.

Travis: Nice.

Griffin: Alright!

Travis: I [crosstalk] this paper here to just write stuff on.

Griffin: Yeah, dude, it’s gonna—

Travis: I’ve never done that during an episode, but it makes me really happy.

Griffin: It’ll be in a museum someday.

Justin: I think it’s good, because a lot of the gags and the punchlines are gonna be visual. Which people *love*. [laughs]

Travis: Well, it’s gonna force you guys to read ‘em out loud if you wanna

share `em with the audience. But then, it'll be up to you if you wanna share `em with the audience or not. And then, you'll be culpable.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Mm, that's a really good point.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Oh, and then I can throw it away like David Letterman!

Griffin: Oh, shit, that's the worst thing about this show, is when—

Travis: Oh, no! That was my only piece of paper!

Griffin: Travis, don't! Travis, we have a throwing segment of our show built-in now. We are running out of shit to throw.

Justin: How could you do this?

Griffin: And you just burned a *good* [crosstalk].

Travis: I think it went behind the bookcase!

Griffin: Yeah. There's no way you're getting that— Damn it, Travis!

Justin: Dang, Trav.

Travis: Fuck. And it had all the diagrams for how I was gonna get into AI on it.

Griffin: Damn it!

Travis: Writing it down on paper is the only way to keep the AI from seeing it.

Griffin: Yeah, true.

Justin: [wheeze-laughs] A lot of people don't know that. We're gonna be giving a lot of steps to thwarting AI, because it is not as hard as some kids would have you believe.

Griffin: Mm.

Justin: "My friend, who is a professional puppet maker, recently invited me to soup night! The night when all the puppet makers and puppeteers in our city get together and make a big pot of soup, and talk puppets." I feel like there's a pun somewhere, floating around.

Travis: I've been trying to crack it.

Justin: And from the moment I started reading it, I can feel you two – especially Travis – just kinda like, "Rr!" I would beg of you, just stay here with me, okay?

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: I was thinking— No, dude, I was fully dialed in.

Justin: Just [crosstalk].

Griffin: I was reading the question alongside you guys, right here.

Justin: "I have never made or operated a puppet in my life. How could I successfully convince the puppet community that I am one of them?" And that is from Making Puppet Pals.

Griffin: Soupsame Street!

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Sesamiso Street?

Travis: Oh, pretty good.

Griffin: You're getting closer, aren't we?

Justin: Okay, listen. Puppetry can take lots of different forms.

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: And we all remember the penis thing. That's great. But a lot of people—

Griffin: I don't know that a lot of people are gonna remember [crosstalk].

Justin: *Puppetry of the Penis* was an off-Broadway show where people with penises use `em to do great skits, jokes, and I'm assuming memorials. [laughs] I didn't see the show.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: No, they did— You could hire them to do a funeral and Dr. Gargleballs would come out, and he would be like, "Damn, I miss Steven!"

Travis: Yeah. "That's just like him."

Griffin: Dr. Gargleballs was the main character in *Puppetry of the Penis*, if you didn't see [crosstalk].

Travis: He had a tragic arc, though, throughout.

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: In his penis. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: That's why he's such a hit at Travis' tech team retreats. Because while they're taking breaks from researching Travis' AI battle...

Griffin: Dr. Gargleballs will come out and do his whole song and dance.

Travis: And ironically, *Puppetry of the Penis*, I think, was around the same time as Blue Man Group. Equally difficult to explain to people who have no context for them.

Griffin: Yeah. Where is that mashup show?

Travis: Blue Balls Group!

Griffin: Show me one of them [laughs] big, blue hogs! I'm full-grown, now. I'm ready.

Justin: I feel like if you've ever seen some of the big puppets, you'll get intimidated, right?

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: If you're seeing Mr. Snuffleupagus, that's probably eight people.

Griffin: You shit your pants.

Travis: Size or fame?

Justin: What?

Travis: Size or fame?

Griffin: Definitely size.

Justin: I feel like there's six people there inside of it. So you're only one person. All I'm saying is this: there's a lot of different puppets. And maybe, to fit in with the puppeteers, you should have a new kind of puppet.

Travis: Ooh!

Justin: Where they don't exactly know how it's supposed to be done. And you're kind of finding some new territory where you are treading. I don't think— Sock is taken.

Griffin: Yeah. Pants puppet? Two-headed pants puppet? Is that what you're—

Justin: A two-headed pants puppet is *Puppetry of the Penis* just again.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: You're right.

Justin: It's just not different, yeah.

Griffin: You're right, I'm so sorry.

Travis: I think a field that people haven't explored with puppetry: liquid. Can you make—

Griffin: Liquid puppets?

Travis: Like from pouring water.

Justin: Oh, my gosh, Travis. I love that.

Travis: And you're poking the holes in the water as it's flowing or whatever to make the eyes and mouth talking.

Justin: Bubbles? Like bubble puppetry, is that a thing?

Griffin: A bubble puppet?

Justin: A bubble puppet?

Travis: Oh, maybe, yeah!

Griffin: That's something— There's something there, man!

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: There's something about— Okay. There's something to this guy's—
[wheeze-laugh]

Travis: And there's soup there. Use the soup!

Griffin: Soup is already there. Yeah, yeah. Make the soup a puppet.

Travis: [bursts out laughing]

Justin: Can imagine a guy where he's kind of like— Has long arms, and he's kind of floating in the water. And his hands are maybe buoyant?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And you're kind of moving the buoyant balls and making his body do this kind of move.

Griffin: Oh!

Travis: Yeah!

Justin: That's a different kind of puppetry that they don't know about. That you're like, "We learned this in Detroit, [laughs] is how we do it."

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: "This is Detroit style puppetry, and everybody's doing it this way."
[laughs]

Travis: Hell yeah.

Griffin: "In Detroit, we stick our hands right in the soup. And then we slap the surface from underneath, to make it look like the soup is talkin'. That's just Detroit style!"

Justin: [laughs uncontrollably]

Travis: "And we don't roll up our sleeves, baby! That's not how you do it. You get your sleeve in there."

Griffin: "No, you're not even doing it Detroit style if you don't have sloppy sleeves!"

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: [through laughter] And slappy balls.

Justin: I actually make faces from the soup ingredients that are floating on top of the pot. Like the hands in *Labyrinth*, you know what I mean?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah!

Justin: I just make the sliced peppers talk, and then I have two egg eyes that I float around.

Griffin: I hate that the hand monsters in *Labyrinth* did that. 'Cause that's shit cool, and everything else those hands did was hugely uncool.

Travis: So weird.

Griffin: Hugely, decidedly uncool.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: I think that— Have you guys ever thought about the mixture of emotions you would feel if you fell in a big hole, and you're like, "I'm gonna die, falling down this hole," and then hands caught you.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And then they slowly passed you down, from hand-to-hand. And on one hand, you'd be like, "I'm so glad."

Griffin: "I'm glad these hands are here."

Travis: "I'm not gonna die." And on the other, you'd be like, "This is a strange combination of sensations..."

Griffin: I don't— Yeah.

Travis: "... that I don't care for."

Justin: I— [laughs] Sorry, hold on. I wanna see if I can get through this. I watched *Labyrinth* on Disney Plus recently, and I think they updated it. Because now, when she falls down the hole, they've ADR-ed in her saying, "No one is touching my butt!" and "I'm glad no one is touching my butt, or anything weird!" Like, as she's falling.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: "Thanks for not touching my butt, or anything weird!" It's like, over and over and over again.

Griffin: Over and over, just to make sure that you know—

Travis: That's nice.

Griffin: That you know. Yeah.

Justin: That is nice. I appreciated it.

Griffin: And I also like how they ADR-ed in, you know...

Justin: [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: The Goblin King being like, "The babies I'm taking is for a mysterious magical purpose." He makes it super-duper clear, like, "I'm the baby I'm taking right now is for— It's like a magical ceremony thing that you guys wouldn't even understand. That's why I'm doing this."

Justin: [laughs] Right, right. Right.

Travis: "And I'm wearing a cup. This is a protective thing. This is not representative of anything."

Griffin: No, no, no. Absolutely not.

Justin: Right.

Travis: "I just got done playing a football game with [laughs] the other goblins. I didn't have time to change."

Griffin: "I wear the cup for my protection. When I do Fushigi, sometimes I drop `em. And so the cup is for my protection."

Justin: Hoggle is not *killing* the fairy, he is anesthetizing her for Achilles tendon surgery that he will be performing later.

Griffin: Yes, yes.

Justin: He says that as he ADR— As he walks away, he ADR's, "I'll be back later to do your Achilles tendon surgery!"

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And it takes a while. They slow down the footage.

Travis: Yeah. The one complaint I have about the updated *Labyrinth*, it's three and a half hours long now.

Griffin: [laughs] Yeah, sure.

Travis: They added in a *lot* of ADR stuff, a lot of clarifying things that I'm not wild about. The long monologue that they gave Jareth during the weird party scene with her.

Justin: [through laughter] It sucks, [crosstalk]—

Travis: Where he's like, "This isn't representative of anything!"

Griffin: Right, right, right.

Travis: "There's no metaphors going on here at all!"

Griffin: Yeah, yeah.

Travis: It's really off-putting.

Justin: And he's got like nine fingers. I think the AI fucked it up, too. [laughs] They were getting some AI in it, and it kind of messed it up.

Griffin: And sometimes, he moves the ball in a way that makes me think, "That's not real. That's AI."

Travis: No human could have done that.

Griffin: No.

Justin: "I'm going to meet a snake wrangler, and I want to impress/befriend them. For context, my work is shooting a commercial in the desert, and the production team had to hire a snake wrangler for insurance purposes."

This person meant "my workplace." I was reading this as "My work? I shoot commercials in the desert for a [laughs] production team to hire—"

Griffin: "I'm a desert commercialographer."

Justin: "My job is—" [laughs]

"I don't know what they do."

Travis: It's a specific, but highly-paid niche.

Griffin: Yep!

Justin: "I don't know what they do, but I think I'd like to find out and perhaps even become their apprentice. What are some good ways to get this wrangler to see my potential and make a positive impression? Should I mention how I killed a copperhead with a sword once, or would that kill the vibe?"

Griffin: No.

Justin: That's from Wrangler Wannabe in Texas.

Griffin: Okay. So he's not a snake strangler. Maybe you've gotten your—

Justin: Yeah. They don't hunt and kill and eradicate snakes, you maniac. [laughs]

Griffin: No.

Travis: He might've known that snake's family! Maybe he's been looking for you for *years*!

Justin: "He was more of a father to me than my own pop!"

Griffin: I'm assuming the copperhead thing was a self-defense situation.

Justin: Let's hope.

Griffin: I must let you know this, listener. In case you tell this story a lot, that is the *only* scenario in which it's cool. It can't be because of a ritual, a dark ritual that you did, or...

Travis: Or you went looking.

Griffin: ... you went looking for it. The only way is if you were saving your child or whatever, and you used—

Justin: And if you want me to believe that you were pitted in a life-or-death battle with a copperhead at that one time you had a sword with you, you are straining credulity, my friend.

Griffin: Yeah. A little bit.

Travis: Unless...

Griffin: Unless.

Justin: Unless.

Travis: ... if you're a time traveling 1800s military person.

Justin: Okay. See, like you—

Griffin: You made me waste an “unless” there on in case they were time traveling [crosstalk]—

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: I didn’t pause! I didn’t pause.

Justin: “Unless” can never be deployed for time travel, Travis. You know the law.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: What if it’s a cosplay, like a ren faire— Well, they don’t really let you have *real* sharp swords, I don’t think, at the ren faire.

Travis: Not anymore. After that guy killed a copperhead.

Griffin: [laughs] Yeah. Ruined it for the rest of us.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: “No, that was our mascot! *Ugh.*”

Griffin: A good way— Yeah, don’t mention this.

Justin: Don’t mention this! It’s also unlicensed— Like, I bet one of the first pages of the snake guy book is like, “Don’t go unlicensed just killing snakes with swords, please. Leave that to professionals.”

Travis: If you’re trying to befriend and win over someone whose job is both very specific *and* very dangerous...

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Do you think they’re more impressed by somebody who’s real chill

about it, like, "This also doesn't scare me," or are they won over by somebody who's like, "What you do is incredible and terrifying, and I could never do it"?

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, I think that that, busting up their ego like that, would be good. Not busting up, but you know. Being good to `em.

Justin: [laughs softly]

Travis: `Cause Mark the spider guy on our Seeso show...

Griffin: Yeah. Cool dude, cool hang.

Travis: I think if we had been like, "Yeah, spiders. We get it. They're cool, man. Yup. You don't need to prove anything to us." I don't think he would've liked that.

But the fact that I was scared, and eventually I think we were all a little crept out, he was like, "Oh. I never wanna leave here, now. Here's all the spiders I have."

Justin: The difference there is— Yeah, the difference there I think is that Mark was a paid professional paid to be on our great TV show. And this is just a snake wrangler trying to go about his business, and not let people get hit by snakes.

Griffin: Yeah. Get *hit* by snakes?

Justin: I don't think you get into that line of work—

Travis: You don't know what the commercial is, Griffin.

Justin: I don't think you get into that line of work because you love working with people so much, right?

Travis: That is an excellent point, Justin!

Justin: You don't show up with your big barrel of snakes, thinking, "God, I hope somebody talks to me today! I hope I get in a big conversation that I am a *fucking captive* for!"

Griffin: Yeah, for sure.

Justin: "And can't leave, 'cause you know what I'm doing here with the snakes."

I bet there's one in every fuckin' shoot, too, isn't there? You see 'em trudging up the hill with their little Jake "The Snake" Roberts t-shirt on. It's like, "Come on."

Griffin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Travis: That's true.

Justin: "Dang it, this is my day now!"
[with high-pitched voice] "Can I be your junior snake wrangler, sir?"

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: "No!"

Travis: "I made my own badge!"

Justin: [with high-pitched voice] "Look at me! I'm being *real* careful!" First time you get on site. "Oh, you're not so bad— *Fuck!*"

Travis: "I made my own one of those snake hook things out of a coat hanger!"

Justin: "I didn't know if you had enough nets, so I brought my net from home!"

Travis: This is—

Justin: Sorry. You're probably not like that, but like... [wheeze-laugh]

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: No, you're probably cool. I *must* be careful. I think that learning something about snakes is important before you go up. 'Cause you seriously can't just have this "I killed a snake once" thing. Seriously, it's fucked up. It doesn't sound great.

Justin: You don't come out good in that story.

Griffin: No, you don't come out good. You don't come out cool. But also—

Travis: Unless the snake was the size of *you*.

Griffin: Yeah. That would actually be pretty cool.

Travis: If you were fighting a *huge*, human-sized snake, and you—

Griffin: Maybe you were saving a way cooler snake from this shithead snake. Like, that could be okay. But I don't know anybody who's a little into snakes. I only know people who do not really have strong feelings about snakes, or I know people who fucking love snakes. Like, are so deep into snakes.

Travis: Or they hate snakes. There's a third option.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I don't understand. I guess Indiana Jones. That one never really made sense to me. What's your life, that you're interfacing with snakes enough that you hate—

Travis: Indiana Jones. His life.

Justin: I mean, it's Indiana Jones, is the answer to your question.

Griffin: Yeah, no. I'm saying in the modern era, sort of.

Justin: Sure.

Griffin: Where we've discovered all the treasures.

Justin: Where we gave up on caves and stuff? [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. We're not doing a lot of cave stuff anymore.

Travis: The answer, Griffin, is a third-generation snake wrangler who kind of got forced into the life by his dad and his grandfather.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: And *they* hate snakes.

Griffin: Okay. I'm just saying, be care— It's a slippery slope.

Travis: And snakes love those.

Griffin: Snakes *are* those.

Travis: [gasps]

Justin: Wow.

Griffin: In the game *Chutes and Ladders*.

Travis: That's a good point. That's an excellent point. The one thing I know

about snakes that will never leave me, 'cause I grew up watching *The Jeff Corwin Experience*, is red to black, friend to Jack. Red to yellow, kill a fellow.

Griffin: Friend to *all* fellows!

Travis: Nope.

Justin: You've messed it up.

Griffin: No matter what color—

Justin: Don't ruin the mnemonic for him. Don't do that.

Travis: Please, Griffin.

Griffin: It's all friends—

Justin: His blood is on your hands.

Travis: What it did ruin for me is now, every time a TV show uses one of those snakes that's red, white, black stripes, and they're like, "The snakes!" And I'm looking at it like, "Red to black, friend to Jack. Didn't get me, show."

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Jeff Corwin taught me! You gotta work harder.

Griffin: Yellow to red, your new best Fred.

Travis: Yeah, that's the other one. Yellow to red, *Drop Dead Fred*, now available on streaming.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Stream that shit. This snake *will* kill your ass graveyard dead, though. That has to be part of the rhyme.

Justin: I think one of the best things you could do for this guy is to keep your fucking distance from the snakes. Because job one for this dude is to make sure nobody gets bit by snakes, and you're gonna make that exponentially easier if you give this person a little room to work.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: So I think shouting is a good first step. 'Cause you don't wanna be anywhere *near* the snakes.

Griffin: You should maybe say one— I think the one thing you can say to them that's acceptable is, "Where is the best place for me to stand, so I'm not gonna be close to the snakes?" And then that'll be your only interaction with them, and you've guaranteed like, "I'm safe, you don't have to worry about me."

Maybe that's just what you say. You walk up and say, "Hey. I know it's your job to keep everyone here safe, but uh, don't worry about me. [laughs] You don't have to worry about me. I can handle myself."

Justin: What if you walk up, and say, "Hey. I love snakes, I love to help." And they're like, "Name 15 snakes."

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Immediately, they clock you. They know you're a phony.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Name your five favorite celebrity snakes working in the business today. Don't go for old snakes that used to be famous.

Travis: You're gonna try to name that yellow Burmese python that Britney Spears wore on her shoulders, and he's gonna be like, "That snake's dead. Try again."

Justin: Nope. Another one.

Griffin: Try again. Snakes live for like a year and a half, so keep going.

Justin: Cool. The one from the “Roar” video? Good guess. Those guys live forever.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: Boa constrictors? Absolutely.

Griffin: Absolutely.

Justin: Absolutely.

Griffin: They don’t move much.

Justin: They don’t move much.

Griffin: So they don’t need much life.

Justin: One mouse, they’re good for a *month*.

Griffin: They’re good, dude.

Justin: “I work at a—” [laughs] Mice are good? I never had one, man. I’m a human.

Griffin: [giggles]

Justin: “I work at a large public library—”

Griffin: “Swallow a big egg?”

“Woah!”

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: I love it! I love it.

Griffin: "Don't mind if I do!"

Justin: [wheeze-laughs] Never had an egg, baby! I guess I've never had one [crosstalk].

Travis: Never had a whole one?

Justin: I had an egg! I had an egg!

Travis: Sure you have!

Justin: Sorry, guys, I had an egg. I had an egg. I had an egg.

Griffin: "I've eaten eggs! I've eaten an egg. I've eaten eggs."

Travis: That's what you do. You walk up to the snakes, you go, "I eat eggs too, brother!"

Justin: "I eat eggs!"

Travis: "You and me both!"

Justin: "'Ey! 'Ey, 'ey, how's mouse? I don't know."

Griffin: And there's a way to do egg that you do not have to stretch out for. We eat 'em almost every day, and it doesn't hurt.

Justin: [crosstalk] a scramble!

Travis: Give a snake a soft-boiled egg, and blow their fucking mind.

Justin: He's like, "What am I gonna do with my afternoon, dude? What am I gonna *do*?"

Griffin: That would be cool. He's got his big bucket of snakes. You come up to the bucket of snakes, you whisper, "If you crack the egg open, you can eat the stuff inside and not have to stretch it all out."

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: And then the snake will look at you and nod. And then you look at the wrangler like, "I obviously know what I'm doing."

Justin: [wheeze-laughs] "The shell's no good. You don't need the shell. It doesn't do anything for you."

Griffin: "You don't need the shell, guys. You look fucking stupid with your big lump inside you that I know is 'cause you ate the whole egg."

Travis: "I don't even know if you can poop it out. Where would that even be? You don't got a butt or nothing!"

Griffin: "Where would that even— What's the *plan*, dude?"

Justin: What if you could convince those snakes, like, "Listen. I know you don't *think* that you could eat this guy that keeps you imprisoned. I know you don't think you could, but I have seen in books you could. I think you're one of them that could. You gotta try, though! You gotta believe in yourself. And just try to eat him, one time. You'll be surprised!"

Griffin: "The grasp he has on you is so tenuous."

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Justin: “And the grasp you’ll have on him is quite literally, I mean—”

Griffin: “Will be quite literally crushing, yeah. He’s afraid of you.”

Justin: “He’s terrified.”

Griffin: “He’s trying real hard not to show it, ‘cause that’s what he gets paid money to do. But he’s so afraid of you guys; we all are.”

Travis: I feel like this has turned a little bit on how to coach the snakes into mutiny? Like, “You’re never gonna be friends with a snake wrangler, *but* you might become useful to the snakes, and they’ll keep you alive when it all turns bad,” I think is where we’ve reached.

Justin: I think this person—

Griffin: Snakes are cool.

Travis: Yeah, man! I got to hold one once. It was *awesome*.

Griffin: Yeah, dude.

Justin: If I was this person, I’d be thinking less about the time I’m gonna spend with the snake wrangler, and more about the fact that my ass is gonna be in the desert. ‘Cause, you know, the desert wants to kill us. Travis and Griffin and I, we once spent *97 minutes* in the desert in Phoenix. And a lot of people— I mean, I still talk about it today because it was so harrowing.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: If you’re a snake wrangler and you go to do a commercial shoot in the desert, and you brought six snakes with you that they asked for, but then you see a snake or two just out there in the wild... do you grab it, and add it to the pot?

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Is that a bonus?

Justin: Especially earlier in the day, [laughs] one of your snakes has dipped. And you have to play it off like, "Yeah, that'll happen from time— [laughs] It was his time to go."

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: [wheeze-laughs] "His contract was up, [laughs] so we cut him a deal."

Griffin: Yeah. "He probably just got a hole somewhere."

Justin: "God, the desert—"

Griffin: "It's hard to keep eyes on all of 'em, you know? They go in holes."

Justin: "Shit, the desert's big, huh? Where did he go?" [laughs]

Griffin: "So many fucking holes."

Justin: [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: "Everybody, pick a rock, turn it over, yell real loud."

Justin: "He's gotten so quick!"

Travis: "He usually comes for like a, *pshh, pshh, pshh* kind of noise. He loves that."

Justin: "Look around. Does anybody see, actually? 'Cause he *is* expensive."

Travis: "Derek?"

Justin: "Derek?" [laughs]

Travis: "Derek!? I don't think he's coming back."

Can you imagine for a snake kept in captivity to go do a photo shoot in the desert? Would be like if I was in prison and the warden was like, "I'm gonna take you to your *house* for a while, but you're not allowed to touch anything or go in any of the rooms or nothing. And then you're gonna leave."

Griffin: Could be a sea snake. Could be a krait. Could be any— There's any other number of [crosstalk].

Travis: Why would they take a sea snake to a photo shoot in the desert?

Justin: You know, a sick movie would be about a snake that they bring out to the desert for a photo shoot, but he's like a Hollywood snake, right? So he doesn't realize that the desert, he should love it.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And then when he's in the desert, he meets a bunch of other snakes that are already in the desert. [laughs] And then he—

Travis: Juice. Justin.

Griffin: Juicer. Juice, Juice, Juice. I love you so much. You made *Rango* again.

Travis: That's *Rango*, man.

Justin: Dang it! Dang it!

Griffin: I don't know how many times— It's like the—

Justin: God, I keep...

Griffin: I know we've been doing this show for a long time, but I feel like on this show alone...

Justin: ... backing into *Rango*.

Griffin: ... you have created *Rango*, like—

Justin: It's one of the foundational myths. That's the problem, right?

Travis: It's true.

Justin: It's man versus machine, *Rango* versus *Rango*. It's one of the big ones.

Griffin: Yeah. Yeah.

Travis: That's true.

Justin: *Rango* versus whatever *Rango's* about. [laughs]

Travis: It's not a bad movie.

Griffin: It's...

Travis: It's okay.

Griffin: I mean, there's obviously some— There's a message inside that movie that's trying to get out through Justin.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: *Rango* talks to Elvis at one point in it.

Griffin: Rango does, I think, do that. Been a minute.

Travis: Or Frank Sinatra, maybe?

Griffin: Been a minute since I caught *Rango*.

Justin: [laughs] Can we go to the Money Zone, maybe? Would that be alright?

Griffin: This week, we are sponsored by *Rango*.

[theme music plays]

[ad break]

[brief jingle plays]

Justin: A great sound? Yeah, but there's one better sound [laughs] than that. And it's, "Congratulations, Mr. McElroy. You've been accepted for an appointment this afternoon with the best doctor in town for a specific, private problem."

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Who is this guy?

Justin: "That we won't tell anybody about!"

Griffin: I think this is Dr. Gargleballs.

Travis: Yeah?

Justin: [laughs] No, he's not [crosstalk].

Travis: Zoc Dr. Gargleballs.

Justin: He's not listed on Zocdoc, and he's the only [laughs] one who isn't. Thank goodness for that. Zocdoc—

Travis: "I'm a doctor of philosophy and gargling balls!"

Griffin: Yeah, yeah.

Justin: Griffin, save us. What's Zocdoc?

Griffin: I mean, Zocdoc is a platform where you go and you're like, "Here's what I need medically, and here's where I'm looking for it. And I would like to have an appointment today." And then you can just go, and they will help you find that. And they will help you find places that are under your insurance, they do so much for you.

It is so helpful, especially living in a city like DC. It is tough to find, you know, quality care that is covered under my insurance. And Zocdoc is literally how I've built my basically entire Rolodex of healthcare professionals here in the city. So can't recommend it enough, 'cause I put my— you know, a lot of skin in this particular game.

Travis: Literally!

Griffin: Zocdoc is a free app and website that helps you find and book high quality in-network doctors, so you can find someone you love! That's simply what it is!

Travis: Which is incredible. And it doesn't matter what city you live in, because we all share this same mortal coil. Which, as we age, requires more and more specialists just to keep us at some kind of a solid baseline.

Justin: To keep things operational, yeah.

Griffin: Sure. Sure. Absolutely, Travis, great point. I feel like you undermined my point a little bit.

Travis: No. I supported your point, by doing a different point.

Griffin: Well, I was like, "It's hard sometimes, in a big city, to find—" And you were like, "Actually, it *doesn't*."

Justin: "It's actually easy."

Griffin: "It isn't hard in a big city."

Travis: Well, that's just because, Griffin, you often forget about real Americans out here, not living in big cities.

Justin: Woah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And I was trying to...

Justin: Woah.

Travis: ... appeal to *my* base. [laughs softly]

Griffin: Yeah. Yeah, no, that's cool.

Justin: Very cool.

Griffin: Justin, can you finish the ad? 'Cause now, there's like a *really* weird energy.

Justin: Stop putting off those doctors appointments, and go to Zocdoc.com/mybrother to find and instantly book a doctor you love today.

That's Z-O-C-D-O-C dot com slash mybrother. Zocdoc.com/mybrother.
Thanks, Zocdoc, for sponsoring this message.

Griffin: I should've given you a heads up about that "Zocdoc dot" thing.
It's—

Justin: It's okay. I'm used to it.

Griffin: It's a lot of short O sounds, and it's tough to...

Travis: Yeah.

[ad changes]

Austin: Howdy there! So sorry to interrupt whatever amazing show you were listening to, but it's time for an ad. I'll be so quick and get you back to your show, don't worry.

I'm host Austin, one half of a podcast called *Secret Histories of Nerd Mysteries* that I make with my good friend Brenda. We talk about the pop culture stuff you like, like *Thundercats* and *Yu-Gi-Oh!* Did you know that the Thundercats are cousins with Farrah Fawcett, or that *Yu-Gi-Oh* once caused a riot?

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[ad changes]

Griffin: [in old-sounding voice] The wizards answer, eight by eight. The conclaves call to demonstrate their arcane gift. Their single spell. They number 64 until a conflagration! 63 and 62, they soon shall be. As one-by-one, the wizards die, 'til one remains to reign on high.

Join us for *TAZ: Royale*, an “Oops! All wizards” battle royale season of *The Adventure Zone*. Every other Thursday on MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

[ad break ends]

Justin: [imitates rock guitar]

Travis: Not now.

Griffin: I love it, dude.

Justin: [imitates rock guitar solo]

Griffin: Yeah, dude, yeah. I think it’s— Are we retiring the “I Wanna Rock” sort of motif, and moving into “Franken—”

Justin: No, it’s back, it’s back. I— Honestly, I think Bing Bong stores `em next to each other, in the library. [laughs] Just [crosstalk].

Griffin: Bing Bong stores the Edgar Winter Group’s “Frankenstein” right next to butt rock anthem “I Wanna Rock.”

Justin: It’s just like, guitar sound— A lot of guitar sounds. He’s getting up there. Listen.

Griffin: The Twisted Sister. Yeah, I guess I can see why—

Travis: And mister, mister. That’s where mine are.

Griffin: Yeah, for sure.

Justin: Burger King— This is a big story, guys. And I think that...

Travis: Woah.

Justin: ... when you realize the gravity of it. And as far as the levity that you're serving right now, I think you're gonna be embarrassed.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Burger King is elevating the Whopper for the first time in a decade.

Travis: Huh.

Justin: Guest feedback, like many decisions recently, drove upgrades to the bun, packaging, and mayo.

Griffin: Mayo upgrades, huh?

Travis: Huh.

Justin: Burger King has— Yeah, before we get into the um... meat of the matter, if you will.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Justin: Pun, burger stuff. I don't *love*, right off the bat, thinking about [laughs] Burger King—

Griffin: What have I *been* fucking eating?

Justin: Yeah, Burger King deciding to like—

Griffin: What kind of mayo?

Justin: They had, at some point, two mayos. And they were like, "I mean, this is... I mean, it's mayonnaise. [laughs] It's, you know—"

Griffin: "This one's faster, comes out faster from the bottle, and we *gotta* save time when we blast it out. The other one's thicker and *is* mayonnaise."

Justin: "It *is* mayonnaise."

Griffin: "But this one comes out of the bottle so fast, and that's huge for us."

Justin: The Whopper is a burger with nearly 70 years of equity, having entered the arena in 1957.

Travis: Is it 69? It's 69, and they didn't want to say 69 years.

Griffin: Yeah, it is. They didn't. No, they didn't, 'cause they knew. Easy clowning.

Justin: It is, yeah. 100 percent— Travis. Travis? 100 percent right. [laughs]

Griffin: Awesome.

Justin: Having entered the arena in 1957, *a-wink*.

Travis: There was definitely a version of this press release that said, "With 69 years, and we've gotten new mayo."

Justin: "Derek, come to my office, please."

Travis: And it was like, "No, no!" Ding, ding, ding! "You can't have 69 *and* new mayo."

Griffin: [laughs uncontrollably]

Justin: "Derek, come to my office. Can I see you in my office, Derek?"

Griffin: New Year's Eve rolls around, you know the Burger King execs will be like, "Three, two, one! Oh, thank Christ."

Travis: "Thank God."

Justin: [laughs] "Thank fuck!"

Griffin: "We're free!"

Justin: We should've been making this year a lot harder on [laughs] Burger King. I didn't realize.

They have spent the better part of three years considering how it could elevate the Whopper. And two of those, brand president Tom Curtis says, were figuring out how— what it better *not* do.

Travis: Huh.

Justin: This is the quote. "You treat the Whopper like it's a supermodel."

Travis: Huh!

Justin: "And you want to put them in tuxedo. You don't want to put them in a leisure suit." Guys, I'm reading that quote verbatim. "You want to treat the Whopper like it's a supermodel."

Griffin: [crosstalk].

Justin: "And you want to put them in tuxedo."

Griffin: Tuxedo.

Justin: "You don't want to put them in a leisure suit."

Travis: Not in a leisure suit.

Griffin: Sorry, does it say “You want to put them in tuxedo”?

Justin: So guys, I am [laughs] going to— ‘Cause sometimes, people are gonna be a little—

Travis: What if you’re modeling leisure suits!?

Justin: People give me— Travis, sometimes you guys give me a little bit of trouble, so I’m gonna copy the line, so one of you could read it.

Griffin: “You want to treat the Whopper like it’s a supermodel,” he says. “And you want to put them in tuxedo.”

Justin: [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: “You don’t want to put them in a leisure suit,” yeah.

Justin: I know that it’s a typographical error, but I like to think it’s how the boss of Burger King thinks you need to talk to people. Like, “Our burger is supermodel. You put in tuxedo! It’s good!”

Travis: “You get it?”

Griffin: [holding back laughter] Mm-hmm!

Justin: “Like, look!” Like that McDonald’s CEO.

Griffin: “Our tuxedo wears a cool James Bond suit.”

Justin: “Yeah, it’s a slick guy.”

Burger King announced on Thursday *elevations*, not changes, [laughs] to one of the fast food’s most iconic items, and the first update in nearly ten years. This round, like many adjustments of late for the chain, were inspired by guest feedback. Curtis, who recently shared his phone number to hear

directly from customers... Yeah, you could text the brand president of Burger King, let him know what you think. He's been gathering feedback—

Travis: "I got a million texts here that just say, 'Bad mayo!' [crosstalk] again."

Griffin: "'Bad mayo! Why? Give us—'"

Travis: "One says 'Bad Bunny,' but I don't know what that's related to."

Griffin: "'Give us the thick mayo, Papa!' Why did I get 700 texts?"

Justin: He arrived in 2021. Do you think that his first meeting was like, "I need our top three smartest, most secretive employees to come in here to explain this mayo situation to me. Because it is like— This is radioactive stuff, guys, and I'm not going to fucking court for you."

Griffin: [laughs] They have their own Camp David, where they come to fucking brief the new executive suite.

Travis: I just picture him taking over in 2021 and saying, "I think the reasons no one's coming to Burger King anymore here in 2021 is because of the mayo."

Justin: [laughs] "The mayo is our problem."

Travis: And them being like, "Boss, boss, I don't think that's it."

Griffin: "I don't think that's it."

"It's so thin."

"Yeah."

"It comes out so fast, dude."

Justin: Let's see. It began as granular as asking leadership to wear Burger King logos, so they could hear from people in restaurants, airports, and everywhere in between. Which I will say—

Travis: "Please, no." [laughs]

Justin: I will say, I wear a lot of—

Travis: "Please don't make me do this!"

Justin: I wear a lot of logos for Totino's and Arby's and a lot of Sheetz. And no one's ever given *me* brand feedback, I will say.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: I love that idea, that if I saw someone in a 7/11 t-shirt, I would be like...

Justin: "Hey, you!" [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: "Hey."

Travis: "That guy must run all 7/11s!"

Griffin: "Remember when you guys did the 'Bring up any cup' challenge? Ha! That was great. Where ya flying to?"

Justin: [laughs] "You work here!" Okay.

Curtis said Burger King has wanted to elevate the Whopper, quote, "For a while, but it's a delicate process."

Travis: Mm.

Justin: They tested tweaks.

Travis: And you don't want to upset the gods.

Griffin: "The Olympics were just on. We can't update the Whopper when we're busy watching the Olympics."

Justin: They tested tweaks and moved deliberately. Quote, “The combination of ingredients is pretty well-revered,” he says. What Burger King landed on—

Travis: *Revered!*

Justin: Yeah. What Burger King landed on and finalized Thursday boils down to enhancing points that don’t concern the flame-grilled beef *itself*.

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: And to complement the fact, Curtis says, “The brand tops the Whopper with daily fresh-cut vegetables, like tomatoes, onions, and pickles.”

Travis: “Have you heard of these things?”

Justin: This materialized threefold. Burger King customers suggest that the bun could use improvement. Sometimes, it showed up smooshed. “Sesame seeds are falling off? [sighs]” Secondly, they wanted—

Griffin: “God *damn* it!”

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: “[spitting noises]” Secondly, they wanted creamier mayonnaise.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Lastly, and in line with the bun, the packaging could use a fresh look. No one fucking ever— No one ever, ever, ever, ever...

Griffin: Ever.

Justin: ... ever has opened a Burger King burger Whopper and thought, “God! But the packaging!” [laughs]

Travis: "You gotta update this packaging, bro!"

Griffin: The only thing that they didn't touch that they said was too sacred was the flame-grilled nature of the beef? That is, I would say, my largest bit of criticism for Burger King, is I feel like you guys have taken that shit way too far. I get you did a whole ad campaign where you were like, "We're the only ones flame grilling these motherfuckers." But I feel like you've been continuing to turn up the amount of that stink that's on there.

Justin: They're like— They announced in the room, like, "The one thing we all agree we *can't* change is the beef, right?"
And we're all kind of like, "Um..."

Travis: "Hold on."

Justin: "Well..."

Griffin: "It's really quite bitter."

Justin: "There's like a quite of a burnt flavor."

Griffin: "You've made it so bitter."

Justin: "When you bite into it," Curtis says, "you'll get everything that you love about a Whopper."

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: I actually like the thin mayo, so I'm just fucked? Are you gonna sell Whopper Classic with the runny, runny mayo that me and my Whopper heads crave?

Travis: I want runny mayo on my smooshed buns!

Griffin: That's all I want. With a few sesame seeds missing.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: He considers the packaging arguably the biggest lever. Burger King will now place Whoppers gently in a half-wrap inside a [holding back laughter] clam-shell box. "And when a customer orders it," Curtis says, "they'll feel as though they're eating something better than they're used to." [holding back laughter] That's what it says!

Griffin: That's really horrible.

Justin: Fuck, that's— God damn it, that's dire!

Travis: Jesus Christ!

Justin: Aw, man. I need to recover, and keep doing my comedy podcast.
Jesus!

Griffin: "Better than they *deserve*, even, these boxed burgers."

Justin: [wheeze-laughs] This is—

Travis: They might return it, thinking that "No, this must have been meant for some kind of billionaire. Surely, this is not the burger for me. Check the receipt again!"

Justin: [wheeze-laughs]

Travis: "Doug Watkins is the name!? Not Mr. Moneybags?"

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: "They keep coming back to try to return the burger boxes, because they don't fucking understand."

Justin: "They said it's too nice." [laughs] This is—

Griffin: "They said it's too nice. Surely, they must—"

Travis: "You'll probably want to use this again!"

Griffin: "I'm so sorry, my son stole one of the burger boxes instead of returning it."

Justin: Guys, listen. "From a quality control standpoint, the box ensures the burger arrives to guests not smushed, the way it left in the kitchen." So what this— Curtis has a vision here as a customer who is like, "Aw, man. It's not smooshed! This can't be right! I better get the DoorDash guy back. Hey, man! This isn't smooshed! This isn't right, I shouldn't— It's too pretty, man!"

Travis: "We've made every box into a gator case, with carved-out foam that holds the burger perfectly. Every burger will cost 130 dollars, but we think it's worth it for it to not be smooshed."

Griffin: It probably already does, man.

Justin: The bun in some feedback was described as, quote, "Not fluffy enough..." [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: "... and missing a golden glaze."

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Who are these consumers?

Travis: "We want glazed buns with thick cream!"

Griffin: "Glazed buns and thick cream, *please!*"

Justin: Oh, and I guess while you're at it, "The bun was described as not

fluffy enough and missing a golden glaze. Burger King worked with suppliers to address both of those checks. The better mayonnaise brings the package together.” Well, let’s hope not. [laughs] I hope they stuck with glue.

Griffin: Yeah. If it holds it together, you guys have *way* over-corrected on this thin mayo thing. It doesn’t need to have adhesive properties, I’m just— You know, don’t let it dribble down every single time they take a bite.

Justin: Curtis explains it took a phenomenal amount of testing to find the right bun. Burger King went to three major markets and rolled out elevated Whoppers without any fanfare, and then it conducted qualitative and quantitative work to understand people’s thoughts. With one group, Burger King put the existing Whopper and upgraded one side-by-side. It then asked them to look at each, talk about them, to share observations.

Travis: Fall in love.

Justin: And *then* taste and rate them.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Scientific!

Justin: Griff, I’m gonna text you this next quote from Curtis.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Because I think it’s great as just a little standalone.

Griffin: Is it gonna make me sound like a sociopath as much as his other quotes have?

Justin: No, no, no. Just like a normal guy, like a normal sort of Arthur Miller character. Go ahead.

Griffin: Okay, cool. Here we go. “Funny thing is, when you get a Whopper in

a clam-shell box that's got a nice little half-wrap around it, and you have a glazed bun, you're not going to believe this, but for some reason, that makes the lettuce and the burger and the tomato taste better," Curtis says. "You just feel like you're having an elevated experience."

Justin: [cry-laugh]

Griffin: "But it still has the nostalgia and the memory of what you love in a Whopper, which is how those ingredients blend."

Justin: [shaky exhale] Curtis...

Travis: "You're gonna take a bite of this Whopper and think, "Am I in the 1970s first-class area of a jet? This is what must be what it's like! This is *incredible!*"

Justin: This is like if a magician is like, "And here's the deal. Her legs are gonna be folded up underneath her. But you're so fucking stupid, I swear to God, when I open this box, you are going to think she's split in half. I'm surprised too at how fucking dumb you are, but I swear, it works this way!"

Griffin: "This magic's gonna be a *little* nicer than the magic you're used to."

Justin: "This may be more of a Shelbyville magic trick."

This has to make you— Okay, sorry. I don't want to skip anything. Hoo. The second thing Burger King did was enter a market and elevate the Whopper without telling anybody what was going on. And then it asked customers about the restaurant experience and how they'd rate the Whopper, and compared those answers to prior surveys before the switch.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: As for if changes resonated, Curtis says, "Absolutely. To be clear," he adds, "if the results were close, or customers didn't notice a difference, Burger King wouldn't have messed with it."

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: “The same is true as if they came back and said, ‘Wow. That’s a really big change.’” So they don’t want it to change too much. They just want you to be like, “Hmm. Pretty good.”

Travis: Hold on, hold on.

Griffin: Can I—

Travis: So he just flat-out said, “If it was a *huge* improvement...”

Justin: Yes. If it was a *huge* improvement—

Travis: “... we wouldn’t have doe it.”

Justin: No. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. I um— Can you file a class action lawsuit if you are not among the people affected by the action that we’re doing a lawsuit about? Because—

Justin: That is— Griffin, I’ve wondered about this. If just by *knowing* about it, my life is worse, yeah.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: If I found out that the Burger King I was eating at was doing a secret test on me to see if I would notice that the burger mayonnaise is so much thicker, and it came in a box that’s nicer than the idiot paper that I’m used to wrapping around *my* hamburgers, I would be *so* furious.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I would never, ever, ever get over that.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I would never forgive the Burger King corporation.

Travis: You've just sat down at your local Burger King where you like to spend your free time. You're two bites into your Whopper, and then just a man in a suit sidles up the table, and goes, "Hey."

Griffin: "Pretty good, huh?"

Travis: "I got some uh, questions for you about that burger."
I'm immediately thinking, "I've been poisoned. I'm gonna die. This is the end of my life."

Griffin: Yeah. I would know.

Justin: He says, quote, "That has to make you a little bit nervous, too," Curtis says. "This is part of American culture. And to an extent, some people want to be reminded of the experience as kids."

I mean... You're at Burger King, pal. You need to calm down. Burger King is reserved for when you're at your friend's house, and his parents are going through a drive-thru, and they don't really know what's good, and then you end up with Burger King.

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Justin: There's no Burger King nostalgia. I don't believe— Burger King's a second choice. I think that to say that this is a landmark part of the American experience, is the way that your stinky burgers taste, is a bit of a stretch. [laughs]

Griffin: So bitter, guys. What's going on in there?

Justin: Griffin says you're pretty bitter, dudes.

Griffin: I've cooked food on fire before. It doesn't come out so bitter. So, so bitter, guys.

Travis: It is my favorite thing about all of these fast food – like, burger place especially – press releases. Always assumes an amount of people thinking about the food they're consuming from a fast-food place, like so much is going through the customer's head as they eat this burger. Where what's going through my head is, "How quickly can I put what is essentially the fuel I need to not starve and not be angry for the next four hours, and get on?"

Griffin: "I'm on my way to a doctor's appointment. I'm gonna be there in six minutes. *Can* I horf this down?"

Travis: I've never unwrapped a fast-food burger and thought, "Time to really bask in the nostalgia of my childhood. [laughs] Ah, this takes me back!"

Justin: Curtis says he's read a lot in recent years about how the QSR category "Doesn't hear customers. It isn't known for listening." So he— If you remember the "[singing] BK, have it your way."

Griffin: Sure, sure.

Justin: "You rule!" That was because Curtis said he wants to put the brand in the hands of guests, and listen to them, and let them drive innovation. It should provide consumers with a sense of empowerment. Like, "Hey, *I* make the rules! *I* rule! I get to define what's gonna happen with the brand, and *I* can see that they're listening! And me? [laughs] I want a burger that's a little bit better, but not too much better, or else I'll shit my fucking pants."

Griffin: "I'll freak the fuck out, man."

Justin: "I'll freak the fuck out, and try to flip all the tables over like a big, stupid gorilla."

Travis: It *just* hit me.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: “Cause your delicious burgers made me insane, and I killed my wife. And I blame you, Burger King!”

Travis: “Too good! Too good, and different!”

We’re 30 years out from the ‘90s period where it was like, “Hey, kids. Here at Chuck E. Cheese, you can have it your way. Here, at McDonald’s PlayPlace, you could have it your way.” So now, all of those kids are now in their 40s who are like, “I’ll tell you what everybody wants. Have it *their* way! Make *their* choices!”

Griffin: Right. That’s the cycle. That’s the beautiful cycle.

Justin: The winning creator from that campaign took home a million dollars. And second place in that— That was the one with the maple bourbon burger.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Justin: And the other two took home 200,000 and 100,000 respectively. Curtis says, “We didn’t invent ‘em. Our guests invented them. And when you wake up every day, and you have that kind of power, you have that kind of opportunity, then you want to be involved in something like that.”

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Yeah, okay.

Travis: So every day, they’re giving away a million dollars? Or...

Griffin: At one point, three million, I think.

Justin: Sh— Is he saying, in this case, that Burger King has that kind of power, that kind of opportunity? Or is he saying he is envisioning a consumer that wakes up every day and be like, “I got some big changes [laughs] to make at Burger King today.”

Griffin: [wheeze-laughs] “I don’t have a lot going my way now, but I do feel like I can pressure Burger King into thickening up that there mayo by a few degrees.”

Justin: [laughs uncontrollably]

Travis: Is it possible that we, as consumers—

Justin: I— “Listen. My kids are staying with their grandma for an indeterminate period of time, and work fell through, but I am gonna get that fucking chicken Parmesan sandwich back on the menu!”

Travis: This is what I’m saying. Maybe it’s possible that we as consumers have not pushed “Have it your way” far enough.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: Like, if you walked into the restaurant and you were like, “You, guy working the fryer! You’re on the grill now.”

Griffin: Yeah. Awesome.

Travis: “Grill lady? I want you on the window.”
And they’re like, “Okay. Yeah.”

Griffin: “Alright, yeah!”

Travis: “I mean, it’s his way, I guess.”

Griffin: “I’d like a chef’s counter table, please.”

"We don't do—"

"I would like that. I would like a chef's counter table at this Burger King, please."

Travis: "Yeah, okay."

Justin: Yeah. So congratulations to Burger King on the relaunch. On February 17th—

Travis: Let's call it a quality-of-life change. Not really a raise.

Griffin: Improvement, for all of us.

Justin: On February 17th, Curtis shared a phone number publicly, so people could text or call and share their thoughts with Curtis himself responding. When asked how it's going so far, he responds, quote, [laughs] "You cannot imagine."

Griffin: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: [laughs] Can you— You see a friend somewhere that you haven't seen in a while, and you say, "How's it going?" And they respond, "You cannot imagine."

Griffin: "You cannot—"

Travis: "There's no way your brain reads the subtext of that as 'So good.'"

Griffin: "Are you aware of the Sega Genesis character Sonic the Hedgehog?"

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: "That man lives in my phone in a number of ways, now that—"

Justin: They asked him how it's going, and he just sat back in silence for 20 minutes.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Like, "Pshew. Um..." And he doesn't wanna lie. 'Cause it's too true to him. Even with the corporate wall there, he can't be like, "It's been going great to hear." There's some deeper moral part of him that can't lie about what he's experienced.

Griffin: The next sentence of that presser is, "Don't. Don't do what I did."

Justin: He says, "I start to feel self-conscious when I'm answering text messages at 11 at night." Like, if some guests are going, "No. I wanted to talk to you, but I didn't want to talk to you at night." I gotta call this— We gotta call this guy! One of you guys, call this guy. Trav, you wanna call this guy? [laughs]

Travis: No!

Griffin: We can't.

Justin: [sighs] Whatever. He says it's been evenly— [holding back laughter] He said, "It's been evenly split between praise and difficult conversations."

Griffin: [bursts out laughing]

Justin: Um, I'll bet, pal. I'll bet. [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: I'll bet.

Griffin: There's a lot of different ways that a conversation can be difficult.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: "Some of them, to be frank, are both. And those are perhaps the most troubling of all."

Travis: "I just wish, if I could make one change, I would have stated that if you call or text me, it does need to be about Burger King."

Griffin: Uh-huh!

Travis: "Because I've had some difficult conversations having nothing to do with the business or product we make. And those, *ugh*."

Griffin: "You don't understand. You don't understand. I *really* love the Whopper."

Justin: He said, "I can't believe how much love I've heard for the original chicken sandwich in the last three days." He even reportedly received a marriage proposal in the opening round. "None since," Curtis jokes.

I mean... [crosstalk]

Travis: 'Cause he accepted it. He's married now. He's not—

Justin: He's a pretty good— He's not a bad-looking dude, and it seems like he's pretty well set up. He's the president of fucking Burger King. Like, I— Shoot your shot, you know?

Griffin: Well, yeah.

Travis: Yeah, man.

Justin: Give it a whirl! Send a selfie, see if he likes you, you know? Try it!

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: After a couple weeks, he plans to set up dedicated office hours and invite other members of leadership to do so as well.

Travis: I bet he does! It's a rotation now, Doug!

Griffin: "I need help, please. Set me free." It's the cursed cave! Once you wander into his office, he runs out. He says, "Now *you're* stuck in here. Enjoy. Here's my phone.."

Justin: Listen. If you want me to come down to the Burger King on Route 60 and give them a piece of my mind – 'cause the Burger King on 5th Avenue got torn down to make room for a Sheetz and a Starbucks – I will come down to the Route 60 Burger King. If you're having office hours and you're set up with a little, you know, desk? [laughs] And you got the little name plate and what-all?

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Justin: I'll come down there and tell you what I think of your chicken sandwich.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: I don't care.

Griffin: It's fine.

Justin: It's fine!

Griffin: Now, let's talk about your sooty beef! 'Cause it's—

Justin: My little brother can't handle your sooty beef. I've got him on FaceTime. Griffin, tell him what you were telling me about the beef.

Griffin: It's so sooty and bitter, my friend.

Justin: Did you hear him!?

Travis: Can I jump in, too? Can I jump in, too, just real quick?

Justin: Yeah, hold on. I've got him on call, waiting. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah. Crisp back up the fries. You had really crispy fries for a while, and I love those.

Griffin: For like a *week*, you guys were like, "The fries rip ass now!" And then after that—

Travis: [crosstalk] you stopped doing it.

Griffin: Limp-dick fries. What's going on?

Travis: Also, will you marry me? Haha!

Griffin: You will marry us all, please.

Justin: Whoo!

Travis: That's a joke, just a joke. Bye!

Griffin: JK.

Justin: Thanks for listening to our podcast. It's called *My Brother, My Brother and Me*. We've been doing it since, if you can believe this, 2010.

Travis: No.

Griffin: Hey, sorry that we're late this week.

Justin: We're sorry that we're late this week.

Griffin: We haven't been late with a episode in several years, I think.

Justin: Yeah. It's pretty good.

Griffin: So you're actually not allowed to be upset.

Travis: Justin and Griffin just didn't wanna do it.

Justin: Believe it or not.

Griffin: Travis had flu—

Travis: I kept being like, "Guys, let's record—" Oh.

Griffin: Get this. Travis couldn't do it 'cause he had the flu, and then later we found out it was B-type flu.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: I don't even know what that means.

Griffin: Pfft.

Justin: Pff.

Griffin: Unless you're rocking with A, like...

Justin: Yeah. That's— Don't waste my time.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: Hey, Griff? I heard you got a book coming out? Real soon, is that right?

Griffin: Yeah. It comes out next week, on March 10th. Yeah, it's a *Choose*

Your Own Adventure book from the line of *Choose Your Own Adventure* books. It's called *The Stowaway*. It's a outer space survival tale, and it's written for middle-grade readers or, I would say, readers even older than that would have a great adventure in space with me.

Travis: It sounds like nonfiction? It's nonfictional?

Griffin: It is purely fictional.

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: And bit.ly/GriffinStowaway is where you can go to preorder that.

Travis: Or StowawayinGriffin.

Griffin: No, I don't want people to go to that link. Because I don't own that link, and I don't know...

Justin: InterspaceMyBrother.com.

Griffin: So anyway, if you preorder the book, it would be really helpful for me. It comes out next week, and it's great. I'm really proud of it, and I'm excited for people to read it.

Justin: Your book's gonna kick ass.

Travis: We've also got new merch over at McElroyMerch.com. We've got "Helping is always a free action" t-shirt. Which is frankly— And listen, I love all of our stuff. It's *gorgeous*.

Griffin: Gorgeous.

Travis: I wanna highlight how pretty this thing is, check it out. And "Make it stick" enamel pins, go check those out. And 10 percent of all merch proceeds this month will be donated to Border Angels, whose services include educational programs, water drops in the deserts, day laborer

outreach, Familias Reunidas immigration bond fund program, and shelter aid support in Tijuana to aid migrants and asylum seekers in need. So go check that out at McElroyMerch.com.

Griffin: Follow The McElroy Family on YouTube. We do a bunch of streams. We stream four days a week now, between the three of us. Doing a lot of gaming stuff. Last Tuesday of every month, we're doing *Clubhouse*. It's a grand old time. You can follow also McElroy Entertainment System on Instagram to be informed whenever we're doing our gaming stream, or putting up videos, or anything. We're trying to do a bunch more stuff for y'all this year, and a lot of it's happening over there!

Justin: 'Cause it's better than you deserve. It's better than you're used to. You're gonna turn on the stream, and be like, "Woah!"

Griffin: It's better than you even know how to fuck with, yeah.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: "Is this all for me? Sheesh!"

Griffin: And now maybe— Rachel, can you just splice in when Travis— Did it make a sound— Oh.

[bottle clatters, thuds]

Griffin: Damn. Justin's right at it with a water bottle flip, just threw it into the fucking camera.

Justin: Just threw a water bottle right at the camera.

Griffin: Alright.

Justin: My name is Justin McElroy.

Travis: I'm Travis McElroy.

Griffin: No, I'm sorry. I don't actually— I watched you throw that. That was a little flick. I think we do— If this is going to be how we end the show...

Justin: No, you're right. It's fair. It's fair, you're right.

Griffin: We do need to fucking hum it. Like, we...

Justin: That was just me being rude, then. For the record, that was just rudeness. [laughs]

Travis: I have a top hat I could throw.

Griffin: Okay. You have a what you can throw?

Travis: A top hat.

Griffin: Show me? Why do you have that at arm's reach?

Travis: In case I need it?

Griffin: Okay. But are you— Don't throw it Frisbee style, throw it baseball style. Do you know what I mean? Don't Oddjob it.

Travis: It's not really— I was gonna Oddjob. It's not spherical, Griffin.

Griffin: Yeah, I know. But I still feel that—

Travis: What if I can get it on the microphone?

Griffin: Okay. If you can— Okay. Show me the fit, first.

Travis: If I kind of leaned it like this.

Griffin: Yeah. No, if you can land a ringer on the microphone, Travis, that'll be an all-timer, dude.

Justin: Yeah. But if you'd do that, if you could start, if you could join the Riverside call with your phone, that—

Griffin: Wait, okay. Hold on. Your chair bumped the microphone, dude. You fucked it up.

Justin: Yes.

Griffin: You gotta move the chair, or else you won't get a clean seal. Good.

Travis: Okay. Here we go.

Griffin: Alright. This is gonna be cool, dude. And I need to know that you're far from it.

Travis: [far from microphone] Yeah.

Griffin: And you're not just dropping it on it.

Travis: I'm [crosstalk] eight feet away.

Griffin: I can see your shadow.

[theme music plays]

[hat clatters]

Travis: Fuck!

Griffin: Huge fucking whiff. I did not even see the hat enter the frame.

Justin: [wheezes]

Griffin: Just an enormous whiff. Did not even see the hat.

Justin: [through laughter] I'm Justin McElroy. [wheeze-laughs]

Travis: [with defeated tone] I'm Travis McElroy. Let's [crosstalk].

Griffin: I'm Griffin McElroy. I am— That is *so* disappointing.

Justin: This has been *My Brother, My Brother and Me*. [through laughter]
Kiss your dad square on the lips.

[theme music plays]

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