

## Wonderful! 412: Borat is About to Get Bing Bonged

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

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

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

**Rachel:** And this is Wonderful!

**Griffin:** This is Wonderful, a podcast where we talk about things we like, that's good, that we are into. One thing I'm into, and you know this about me, because I'm always banging this drum real loud, is sustainability.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Sustainable business practice, green, eco.

**Rachel:** Have you thought about—

**Griffin:** Eco the Dolphin, they call me.

**Rachel:** [chuckles] That game was so hard.

**Griffin:** That game was freakin' hard. They didn't tell you anything, man! I mean, they did, but you had to like know like, I gotta honk at this blowfish and he'll be like, "Jump through the third ring to—" Yeah.

**Rachel:** It's also really stressful to see an animal in danger.

**Griffin:** Oh, sure. Terrible noises Eco made when he was—when he was in peril.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Anyway, what were we...

**Rachel:** Oh, I'm bringing this up, not because I'm a bad person— [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Okay?

**Rachel:** But how good did you feel like this morning, and then this afternoon, when people were walking by our house and seeing the solar panels being put up?

**Griffin:** Yes. So, we're bringing up our solar panels here, not to brag that we have harnessed the power of the sun, but perhaps to explain the loud drilling noises you will hear in the background from time to time.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** For they are installing these panels immediately above my desk, straight above my desk. And I told them I need it Frankenstein style. I said I need it Frankenstein style, where I can just channel it straight downward, like in a column.

**Rachel:** Oh?

**Griffin:** Straight to the goof zone, right to my goof center.

**Rachel:** The solar—the solar energy?

**Griffin:** The solar—the sun's energy, right above my desk.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Coming straight down in a column, Frankenstein style, I told them. So I—in a pillar of energy, to the goof quarter.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** So—

**Rachel:** DC—

**Griffin:** If the show sounds different, then it's because of the energy of the sun, we've unleashed it.

**Rachel:** I want to say, DC has this great program right now, where they have set forward a projection that X percentage of the homes in the area will be solar powered. And that means that there's a bunch of funding available to support that goal. So—

**Griffin:** I assume this exists only because they haven't caught it yet. Sort of at a sort of federal level, they haven't learned about the fact that this exists or that we're doing it, or else there—I'm sure there would be an executive order—

**Rachel:** There are—

**Griffin:** By the afternoon.

**Rachel:** There are a lot of places that subsidize it, or like offer you huge tax credits, or I mean, there are a number of states anyway that do.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** From what I can tell, we're not paying for this. I keep waiting.

**Griffin:** Sick.

**Rachel:** I have not given any payment information. I don't know if we're going to get a bill for this later. But from what I can tell, everybody I've talked to has indicated this is at no cost to me, that they are putting solar panels on our roof. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Not us. Next episode, "Hey, gang, welcome to Wonderful. We're ruined. We're financially ruined."

**Rachel:** Because I really did say like, "Give me as many as will fit. I want all the panels."

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure.

**Rachel:** And now I'm kind of wondering—[chuckles]

**Griffin:** I said give me more than will fit. I want it hanging over the sides, precariously.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** I want it to look—I want to look like some sort of mad wasteland sort of scientist at the edge of the world. Give me a whole big dusty array, please.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** They are really going hard up there. That sounds like a rivet gun, what do you think? Milwaukee? Milwaukee brand?

**Rachel:** We know it's Milwaukee, because they had their big charger on the front door.

**Griffin:** Huge! Fuckin' rad. They plug—

**Rachel:** With a bunch of batteries in there.

**Griffin:** Just a dock full of batteries for their tools. It looks so cool. Anyway, do you have any Small Wonders, my love?

**Rachel:** We acquired some children's dessert snack products.

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Rachel:** One of them was a tasty cake, which I've never had before. And then what was the little chocolate guy? It was like—

**Griffin:** It was like a little hostess—just a little Hostess cupcake.

**Rachel:** What was that? I didn't know if there was a—

**Griffin:** Yeah, just a little chocolate hostess cupcake.

**Rachel:** A fun name for that.

**Griffin:** Henry didn't like those, by the way. That was the feedback we got on including that in his lunchbox today. He said, "No, thanks."

**Rachel:** The chocolate cupcake one.

**Griffin:** The chocolate cupcakes, he said, "No, thanks." And the tasty cakes, he said, "No, thank you." And so, now we just have tasty cakes and we do have chocolate cupcakes, just like hanging.

**Rachel:** Great.

**Griffin:** Hanging around.

**Rachel:** I will say, Gus is a big fan of the fruit roll-up.

**Griffin:** Yeah, of course that's going to hit.

**Rachel:** Anyway, these are all foods I did not have in my house growing up, or have regular access to. And now they're just in the house.

**Griffin:** You can just have 'em.

**Rachel:** And I don't even think I'll really be eating them, but it's thrilling to be a home that has them.

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure.

**Rachel:** You know?

**Griffin:** For sure.

**Rachel:** Like if we had kids over, which I guess we will for Gus' birthday—

**Griffin:** And we have, yeah.

**Rachel:** And they open that drawer?

**Griffin:** They'll be like, "Wow, damn."

**Rachel:** They're going to be like, "This child is so lucky."

**Griffin:** "This child's so lucky, they have—"

**Rachel:** "I have to stay friends with him."

**Griffin:** Yeah, and we'll say, "Take all the tasty cakes you want... peed—  
Peter."

**Rachel:** Peed Peter. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** His name is Payder.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** He's our son's best friend. And he loves tasty cakes.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** I'm going to say new season of Last One Laughing, gang. Last One  
Laughing UK.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** A bunch of very, very funny people up on there. Including—

**Rachel:** It's on the Amazon Prime.

**Griffin:** Yes, including Bob Mortimer, the returning—

**Rachel:** Back.

**Griffin:** Champ of season one.

**Rachel:** Mel from Bake Off.

**Griffin:** Mel from Bake Off. Philomena Cunk, whose name I can't—Diane... I can't remember her last name, is in there. Romesh, a lot of Task Master sort of—

**Rachel:** Yeah, a lot of Taskmaster folks.

**Griffin:** Sam Campbell. Just a killer—just a killer lineup. We've only watched, I think, two episodes, but—

**Rachel:** Two. We watched two last night and I was like, I could watch this every day for the rest of my life. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** It's just a—if you didn't listen to—I think we did a whole episode on it. It's just 10 British comedians, and they get locked in a room for six hours. And if you laugh, you get a yellow card. If you laugh again, you get a red card, you're out. That's it.

**Rachel:** [chuckles] The thing that delights me and Griffin so much is that a lot of them will kind of go on the offensive.

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Rachel:** They will go up to a person, and they will start saying funny things. And like, "I'm going to get you." But there's a point, inevitably, where it's gone too far, and they have to walk away from each other. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Literally, just people will be having a conversation, and one of them will say something obviously like ridiculous, and the two of them will just kind of freeze up, and just get up and walk away.

**Rachel:** And walk away. Like they have to—

**Griffin:** There's a break that someone has after someone plays their joker, which is like a special sort of gag that you prepare, and everyone has to sit

and watch. Someone emits a pained laughing—did you just watch that guy climb up past the office window?

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** It's pretty sick. Someone like "*whoa*," like scream laughing. It's really, really strong, and we're only two episodes in, so—

**Rachel:** That has happened to me before. I don't know if you've experienced this, but like for example when we went and saw Chris Fleming—

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** Where you start laughing so much that your body really does get confused.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** Like I really related to her explanation of like—

**Griffin:** "It was so funny, it made me sad."

**Rachel:** "I feel sad." [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** Like you start kind of almost sobbing in a way, because it's like your body is so confused. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** I love it. I go first this week! I'm going to talk about a YouTube channel, a musician-performer who showed up in my algo maybe a couple months ago, and popped back up today. And so I thought, that's fate. Let's take some time and talk about TV on Guitar, is the name of the channel.

It is a classical guitarist whose name is Adam Monica. And the whole thing with TV on Guitar is that he plays classical guitar covers of like TV theme songs and video game soundtracks, that he also sort of arranges those

classical guitar covers of. I couldn't find hardly any information out there about TV on Guitar—

**Rachel:** Yeah, I bet.

**Griffin:** I found his real name, which is great. And he has a bio on YouTube that explains that he's been playing classical guitar since he was a little kid, **but** he took like a long break. And then had an idea for a DuckTales cover on classical guitar, and had been watching like YouTubers who were playing like their covers on YouTube, and he wanted to do that.

So, his first video on his channel is him playing DuckTales, and it's very good. But yeah, man, his covers of especially some of the wilder, kind of faster, more upbeat video game soundtrack selections is some of the most impressive guitar playing I think maybe I've ever seen.

**Rachel:** Yeah, like even better than your Uncle Chris.

**Griffin:** Well, don't... just calm down.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Just calm—it's a totally different discipline, the jazz guitar and the classical guitar. Totally different—a whole different world. There's a touch to jazz. Do you know what I mean?

**Rachel:** Oh? I would like to hear you talk more about it, actually, if you could.

**Griffin:** No, so, if you're not familiar with classical guitar, it's a guitar, but with a wide-ass neck, like the widest neck ever. And typically, nylon strings. And the only people who can play them are sort of long-fingered demigods—

**Rachel:** Yeah, right?

**Griffin:** With a level of coordination that is like kind of unimaginable. It's hard playing, for me, like playing a bar chord on a regular guitar. The idea of like moving my fingers around in the way that this guy moves his fingers

around and plays each string with just such perfect sort of timing and... it's really, really a marvel to behold. I'll play a little bit of his most recent video, which was posted two months ago. I have to imagine this process takes a very, very—

**Rachel:** Yeah, I bet.

**Griffin:** Long time, both to like compose it and to—well, not compose it, but arrange it and record it, and then recover from it.

**Rachel:** Did you see one of the comments on one of the videos you sent me was the guy talking about like, the face on that man and the relief he must feel when he finally nails this take. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure, it's—the video I think you should watch, it's like a minute long, both of these things I'm going to talk about today. And the look on this man's face is like truly agonizing.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** But it's, I mean, when you see his hand moving in the way that it does, you understand like, yeah—

**Rachel:** Unreal.

**Griffin:** That would probably hurt. So, here is a little bit of his arrangement of the athletic theme, sort of the—one of the overworld level themes from Super Mario Brothers 3. It just looks like the most difficult guitar performance I've ever seen.

[an excerpt plays of the Super Mario Brothers 3 theme song, by Adam Monica on classic guitar]

**Griffin:** It's not like he's playing chords and a melody, like he's also playing counter melody and harmonies and bass lines. And he's doing it at a hun—I timed it out, at 170 BPM.

**Rachel:** Geez.

**Griffin:** Which is considerably faster even than the original version of this song in Super Mario Brothers 3.

**Rachel:** Oh, is that true?

**Griffin:** Yeah, the original is about 150, so he put some fucking stink on it.

**Rachel:** Wow.

**Griffin:** For, I guess, just doing it for the Vine. But what I appreciate about all of this guy's videos, like they are all really impressive. If you don't have a ton of like guitar experience or like musical performance ability, just reading the comments really demonstrates kind of the skill that is required for these performances, because it's just people saying like, "I've been playing classical guitar my entire life, and this is fucking disgusting." This is the nasty—

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Like, "Jesus Christ, how on earth did you do this?" Or you could just look at his face, which is constantly deadlocked in a grimace—

**Rachel:** I have trouble, like just your standard acoustic guitar, putting my finger on a string and not dampening the strings around it. Like, it is hard for me to even have that kind of nimbleness. I can't imagine moving quick enough and like maintaining that like perfect sound.

**Griffin:** Yeah!

**Rachel:** Unbelievable.

**Griffin:** What's really cool about his videos is like the performances are insane. And yeah, obviously, I bet each one of these videos takes many, many takes to get this performance right.

**Rachel:** Yeah, god.

**Griffin:** Playing this insane song that was composed by Koji Kondo, who did like almost all the old Mario music. And like all of the music from those games is like pretty upbeat and perky. He has one of the Super Mario Brothers 2 theme songs, which is like—[spoofs the Super Mario Brothers 2 theme song] Like it just goes really, really hard.

It's not just the playing it that is impressive, it's also the arranging of it, right? In order to take a song and play kind of all of these different parts of the song that all kinds of different instruments are playing, and arrange it so it can be played by a single person on one guitar in one sitting—like none of this is like looped onto another thing, like it's just him playing the one guitar.

Like, figuring that out, I imagine, must be like almost impossible. Like, you have to really know what your hands are capable of doing in order to make that kind of arrangement happen. And what I really do appreciate is that for some of the songs, he has provided like the tabs of his arrangements.

**Rachel:** Oh?

**Griffin:** And there's like a slower version of him playing through the song with the tab kind of underneath that he puts up on YouTube.

**Rachel:** Oh?

**Griffin:** As if, you know, most people are going to be watching that thinking like, "I could fuckin' do—"

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** "Yeah, man! Easy!" I saw symbols on this tablature that I have never seen before in any kind of music charting whatsoever.

**Rachel:** I would love to see like the bloopies for this one.

**Griffin:** Oh, man.

**Rachel:** Where it's just like, his mom calls in the middle of it.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** And it's like him on the phone angry like, "Ah! Mom!"

**Griffin:** He's just tapping on the receiver. *Rrra-tap-tap-tap! Tap-tap-tap!*

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Yeah, so there's like a ton of Mario on there. There's a couple Final Fantasy songs, a bunch of Undertale songs, but then there's also like TV title theme songs on there as well. One of my favorite arrangements, I'd seen this guy's videos before, but I didn't know about this one until today, is his arrangement of Deja Vu off the album Ataraxia by Mort Garson, which is the theme song to Adventure Zone: Balance.

**Rachel:** Oh, yeah!

**Griffin:** To the first season of The Adventure Zone. And a bunch of comments for like mentioning that, which made me feel very nice.

**Rachel:** Oh, that's cool.

**Griffin:** But it's like a really rad version of it, so we'll play a little bit of that here too.

[an excerpt plays of "Deja Vu," by Adam Monica on classical guitar]

**Griffin:** Yeah, that's it. I, again, don't know much about this person, because they don't have like a huge sort of footprint. But they've showed up on my algo enough times and is like so—I'm always so grateful when the algorithm serves up something that is like, oh, yeah, perfect, absolutely. I will go down this rabbit hole and watch all these videos. But that's TV on Guitar, on YouTube. Check it totally out. Can I steal you away?

**Rachel:** Yes.

[theme music plays]

[an airplane intercom chimes]

**John:** This is John Hodgman and Janet Varney, coming to you from the flight deck. Please be comfortable, we have now reached our cruising altitude.

**Janet:** Oh, that's correct. You are now free to listen to the latest season of E Pluribus Motto. As always, this season will discuss the official models of US states and territories for your enjoyment.

**John:** If you look out the window, you'll see local iconography and creatures of all sorts that'll be discussed this season, including California quails.

**Janet:** Puerto Rican frogs.

**John:** North Dakota horses.

**Janet:** Spiders of New Hampshire.

**John:** And all matter of official and unofficial state critters.

[an airplane intercom chimes]

**John:** I've now turned on the enjoyment sign. So, please start enjoying new episodes of E Pluribus Motto, every other week on Maximum Fun, and wherever you get your podcasts.

**Janet:** Sit back, relax and enjoy your listen.

[break]

**Advertisement:** Saginaw, Michigan; Galveston, Texas; Albany, New York; the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul; and Muncie, Indiana. We've just added these cities to the growing list of meetups on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, for Max Fun Meetup Day. Didn't hear your city or don't know where your local meetup is? Head to [maximumfun.org/meetup](http://maximumfun.org/meetup), and we've got all the details there.

And if you still don't see your city listed, host your own. Find somewhere, a park, library, café, bar, any public space a small group can hang, then fill out the form at [maximumfun.org/meetup](http://maximumfun.org/meetup), and we'll add you to the page so other folks in your area can find you. That's [maximumfun.org/meetup](http://maximumfun.org/meetup). Hope to see you on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

[break]

**Griffin:** What do we got? What's going on?

**Rachel:** All right, my Wonderful thing this week is a trip to the Poetry Corner.

**Griffin:** I felt it—I feel like I could feel—

**Rachel:** Did you feel it?

**Griffin:** Even like in the middle of segment, I was like, Poetry Corner coming.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** [sings] *Cha-cha-cha, cha-cha-cha, cha-cha-cha. Sha-ka-cha, cha-ka-cha-cha.* Baby, I hear the poetry calling, but poems of you to stay.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** [sings] *Cha-cha-cha.*

**Rachel:** I was thinking, we have started experimenting with video.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** That people might expect to actually see a corner.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** Now that we're filming, and—

**Griffin:** No.

**Rachel:** And all I can say is that maybe the corner of this couch here?

**Griffin:** Yeah, that's cool. The poetry corner of the couch, I like.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Because none of the corners of my room would be great for video or audio purposes, really.

**Rachel:** No. So, if this ever, you know, makes it to air—

**Griffin:** That's great. You have the corner couch.

**Rachel:** This is the corner.

**Griffin:** I've got the solar column, blasting me.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** We're both like in an—like irradiated with poetry power and solar power.

**Rachel:** I love that.

**Griffin:** I love that too. Who are we talking about today?

**Rachel:** Okay, this name is gonna be so fun to say.

**Griffin:** Awesome.

**Rachel:** I almost can't bring myself to do it. But the poet's name is Keetje Kuipers.

**Griffin:** Keetje Kuipers?

**Rachel:** Keetje Kuipers.

**Griffin:** That's such a fucking good name.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** That's just a good name, guys.

**Rachel:** I don't know how you say it and not make it musical.

**Griffin:** [sings] Keetje Kuipers.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** [sings] *Keetje Kuipers. Keetje-Keetje Kuipers.* Yeah, that's—that hits every time.

**Rachel:** Isn't that lovely?

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** Okay, so she is the author of four books of poems. Her most recent collection is *Lonely Women Make Good Lovers*, came out in 2025. Her first book came out in 2010. So, she's, I mean, to me, I would say relatively new to the scene, in the context of, you know, Poetry Corner authors that I bring.

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Rachel:** She has lived in a variety of places, including Seattle, Washington. She was a professor at Auburn University... I don't know where that's from.

**Griffin:** Auburn?

**Rachel:** Yeah, do you know?

**Griffin:** No way, dude. [chuckles] Auburn, I want to say Georgia somewhere.

**Rachel:** Oh, Alabama.

**Griffin:** Alabama! Dang it.

**Rachel:** Close.

**Griffin:** Go Tigers!

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Love those Auburn Tigers.

**Rachel:** And now she lives with her wife and two children in Missoula, Montana.

**Griffin:** Okay?

**Rachel:** So, she's been all around this great country of ours. She has been one of the judges for the National Book Award in Poetry. She frequently teaches at writers' conferences and MFA programs. Her third book, *All Its Charms*, which came out in 2019, was published in both the Pushcart Prize and Best American Poetry anthologies.

**Griffin:** God dang.

**Rachel:** And the poem I want to read today is from her most recent book that I mentioned at the top, *Lonely Women Make Good Lovers*. And it is called *Now That We've Been Married All These Years*.

**Griffin:** I have asked the solar power installation team—

**Rachel:** To hold?

**Griffin:** To hold, please, the riveting.

**Rachel:** And then—

**Griffin:** Because I'll be riveted to my wife and her delivery of this beautiful poem.

**Rachel:** I hope to hear them snapping through the roof.

**Griffin:** I don't want to hear the sound of snapping through our roof, because that means that there's been some infrastructural issues—

**Rachel:** Well, I meant like finger snapping.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Rachel:** Yeah, anyway... Now That We've Been Married All These Years. Tiny prop planes drag banners against the sky, selling us things we already have. And whatever else crosses the landscape, smoking engine of the trawler, polka-dotted lanternfly, tendril of melted ice cream, snail sticking your wrist's golden expanse, is just one more thing I don't have a choice about loving.

I know there was a time before I met you, but that fact is like knowing that the length of my veins could wrap around the Earth four times, or that each year on Saturn, it rains 10 million tons of diamonds. Imaginable, but just barely.

Because love before your arrival has been an idiopathic thing, pain without a diagnosable source, a sensation that divided me from the people I loved because I was the only one who could feel it. When some people get married, they're making a pact with another person. When I married you, I made a pact with the world. I live in it now and refuse myself nothing.

**Griffin:** That's gorgeous.

**Rachel:** Isn't that gorgeous?

**Griffin:** That's so good! I love... I love that poem for a lot of reasons. It felt so like, for the first two thirds of it, like so poetic. Like, this is a—

**Rachel:** [chortles] I know!

**Griffin:** Capital P-ass poem!

**Rachel:** I know.

**Griffin:** And then the sort of message of it at the end, which is maybe a very reductive way of talking about the poem, I don't know, it got—it got pretty real!

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** It got less allegorical, I feel like, in a way, and more... I don't know, very, very moving.

**Rachel:** I love... you know, so there are a lot of love poems. I think people a lot of times will look for like a poem to read at their wedding, or like an anniversary or whatever. And I feel like this kind of fits the bill, but in a surprising way, because it is not a poem entirely about what they love about their partner.

**Griffin:** No!

**Rachel:** Like, it is very much like a—like a bigness of the world and this other person with you in it. And I really enjoy that about it. You know?

**Griffin:** Yeah!

**Rachel:** Like, I don't—that I'm not hearing about like how beautiful and smart and incredible their partner is, but instead like this world that they live in with their partner. And how much like more like mystical it seems because of—

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure. I really, really, really like that, and I think prefer it to the glowing sonnet about how cool you are.

**Rachel:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Griffin:** The message of like "you re-contextualized the concept of love for me" is like way more romantic than, you know, just a bunch of compliments.

**Rachel:** I looked up some interviews with Keetje Kuipers, and I found one from 2025 with the Writer's Center about this book. And the interviewer asked her about love poetry and what she thinks love poetry is. And she said, "The truest love poem has to do with forgiveness.

Forgiveness of the self and forgiveness of the beloved. I think that forgiveness is the site of greatest intimacy we can have as people. Forgiveness allows me to continue to love, and to love not only those that are still in my life, but those that are no longer in my life. It allows the endurance of love.

I don't think marriage is about making compromises with the other person, I think it's about making compromises with yourself. Marriage is about saying, I don't get to be that angry anymore, or I don't get to hold myself apart in a certain kind of pain. Now I have to share that pain."

**Griffin:** That's gorgeous.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** That's just gorgeous.

**Rachel:** She has like a very like cosmic attitude towards it. And a lot of her interviews about this book, talk about this kind of humility, this kind of like embracing romance in the world. She said in another view with the Adroit Journal that she's a—she talks about romantic, and she said, "That's a part of me that used to be much larger and more dominant, and more open.

Some of what I've experienced in my adult life has taken romance from me and shut me down to that. So, part of it is getting back to a person and a place in myself, reclaiming and reconciling in this book. Humility is a big part of these poems. These poems help me see how far I still have to go."

**Griffin:** Must be cool to have a book of very sort of open and sort of vulnerable poetry about you kind of reconnecting with the idea of romance.

And then kind of just like having that as a sort of time capsule almost of like how—

**Rachel:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** I definitely feel like I went through phases where I felt like, really my whole life, I felt like this is the most poignant and important—

**Rachel:** [laughs] Uh-huh!

**Griffin:** And romantic thing that has ever happened to me or will ever happen to me. Only to be kind of like, you know, proven wrong months later. But this one feels so huge and grand and—

**Rachel:** I know.

**Griffin:** Cosmic that like, it must be cool to have that sort of out there to look back on and reflect on and stuff.

**Rachel:** Yeah, she dedicated this book to her wife. She has two children as well, I mentioned, living in Montana, a five-year-old son and a 12-year-old daughter.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** So, a lot of the poems are about not just her wife, but her family and kids.

**Griffin:** There's like a really small voice. It's not at all like an intrusive thought that could actually guide my actions in any kind of like noticeable way. It's like so faint, and the faintness of it is interesting to me that every time you say "her wife," like I want to be like, [spoofing Borat] "her wife." But it's like bare—it's so—I feel like Borat is about to get bing-bonged out of my—

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Active sort of memory base.

**Rachel:** What an incredible moment that would be.

**Griffin:** It'll be huge! I almost thought it was there, because like again, it was just like, "*her wife*." Like so far away, so distant, so quiet, that it felt like he had already fallen into like the, you know, brain-forgetting... canyon.

**Rachel:** Pit.

**Griffin:** The pit, the canyon.

**Rachel:** Yeah, I don't know.

**Griffin:** Anyway.

**Rachel:** Well, I'm proud of you, I guess.

**Griffin:** I'm proud—I'm proud of me too, I guess.

**Rachel:** I want to spell this poet's name, because—

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Rachel:** I had to make a note for myself phonetically, because her name is Keetje Kuipers, but her first name is spelled K-E-E-T-J-E. And her last name is spelled K-U-I-P-E-R-S. So, I imagine—and based on her website, this gets mispronounced constantly.

**Griffin:** Oh, for sure.

**Rachel:** Most of the like informational articles I found about her included a pronunciation of her name, because it must be a difficult road that she's had. But—

**Griffin:** I'm glad they did provide that, because it's so fun. It's so good.

**Rachel:** Yeah. Keetje Kuipers.

**Griffin:** It feels great in the—in the mouth, this—

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** That was a very good poem. Thank you for bringing—for bringing it.

**Rachel:** You're welcome.

**Griffin:** And to our friends at home. Do you want to know what our friends at home are talking about? Talking about our friends at home, speaking of them, do you want to know what they're talking about?

**Rachel:** Yes, please.

**Griffin:** As long as we're speaking of them, we may as well. How about this one from Jane, who says, "My Small Wonder recently has been my local wildlife cams. I live in an area with peregrine falcons and they have just come back for the season. It's nice to put it on in the background while I work. I like the seasonal ones, because they feel like an event every time they come back around." I wish I—I wish I was into birds.

**Rachel:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** I truly wish I was into birds. I get so excited when I see certain types of birds! Just most types of birds, I see 'em and I'm like, meh.

**Rachel:** I feel like I'm missing something, like the people that like birds have something that I don't have.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** Like a part of my brain is missing.

**Griffin:** Yeah, the bird part.

**Rachel:** The bird part.

**Griffin:** Yeah. They're cool, though.

**Rachel:** They're very cool!

**Griffin:** Yeah. Whenever anyone's like, "I found this long-billed, very rare duck." And they send a picture of the duck, I'm always like, "That's cool." But I'm not about to put on my galoshes.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** I'm not about to put on my galoshes and go out into the bog.

**Rachel:** I have an aunt, as I think most people probably have an aunt, that really likes birds.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** And has taken a lot of beautiful pictures and videos of birds.

**Griffin:** Well, she lives near Central Park.

**Rachel:** Yes.

**Griffin:** Not to dox your aunt, but like that's a *primo spot* for bird watchers, I bet.

**Rachel:** Yeah, so she has a lot of like bird content.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** And I imagine that's a pretty big aunt thing.

**Griffin:** Yeah. But there was no name provided with this one, but I really liked it, it's from RC Caufield... I think, maybe? "My Small Wonder is a little game I like to play, especially with people who are not as familiar with either category, hockey player or Pokémon."

**Rachel:** Ooh!

**Griffin:** And they sent four examples. One I know you're gonna get, but I'll just go down and you tell me hockey player or Pokémon. Kecleon.

**Rachel:** Pokémon?

**Griffin:** Correct. Roo... Ruhwedel. Ruhwedel.

**Rachel:** I mean, the fact that you had trouble pronouncing it makes me think it's not a Pokémon, so I'm gonna say hockey player.

**Griffin:** That's correct.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Snuggerud.

**Rachel:** Aw!

**Griffin:** Snuggerud plays for the Blues—

**Rachel:** Snuggerud made it!

**Griffin:** He's choice, I—and it is very Poké—like, Snuggerud is a Pokémon.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** For sure.

**Rachel:** For sure.

**Griffin:** It's also the name of a very promising, promising—

**Rachel:** Having an incredible season.

**Griffin:** Having a great season so far.

**Rachel:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** I don't know his first name.

**Rachel:** Jimmy.

**Griffin:** Jimmy Snuggerud. How could I forget Jimmy? Jimmy-Jimmy Snuggerud! That's such a good fuckin' name, too. So many good names out there in the world. Articuno.

**Rachel:** Pokémon?

**Griffin:** That's correct. Yeah, that's the—babe, you got 'em.

**Rachel:** I mean, here's the thing, like, if you know how to pronounce it, it's probably a Pokémon.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

[pause]

**Rachel:** Yeah, full stop. [laughs]

**Griffin:** Yeah, fair point! Fair point. Yeah, you got me.

**Rachel:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** So, thank you so much for listening. Thanks to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our theme song, "Money Won't Pay." You can find a link to that in the episode description. We got some merch over at [mcelroymerch.com](http://mcelroymerch.com). "Helping is Always a Free Action" tee over there, "20 Make It Stick" pin over there, waiting for you.

And we're gonna have new stuff in April, so check that totally out. I've got a book out, *The Stowaway, Choose Your Own Adventure*. 10 bucks, [bit.ly/griffinstowaway](http://bit.ly/griffinstowaway). I'm doing an event this week, but I think actually it will probably be happening by the time this episode comes out. So... but if you live in DC—I think it's sold out, too. So, I don't know why I'm saying all this.

**Rachel:** They opened up some more tickets not long ago.

**Griffin:** Oh, did they? Okay, well, yeah—

**Rachel:** Yeah, I don't know if they're still available.

**Griffin:** Is doing an event. Anyway. Okay, so that's it for our show this week. Thank you so much for listening. Join us again next time on Wonderful. Push it—break it—push it to the limit and...

**Rachel:** Mm-hm, uh-huh.

**Griffin:** Stay true to your heart, and that'll never lead you astray.

**Rachel:** Have a kick-ass summer.

**Griffin:** And have a kick-ass summer, you guys.

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

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