

Wonderful 413: In Thickness and In Health

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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: Welcome to Wonderful! This is a podcast where we talk about things we like, that's good, that we're into. And you know, spring is sprung, and we're all—we've sprunged ourselves. And it's a time for growth and new life—revival.

Rachel: I don't think people need this. [chuckles]

Griffin: You know what? I think you're right! I think the first order of the first thing we can clean up for the spring cleaning honda sales event is this beleaguered introduction.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: This long-winded, completely unnecessary introduction. People come here for two things. One, just to be near our romance.

Rachel: Vibes. Just vibes.

Griffin: Just the vibes of our romance, to be sort of party to that is—

Rachel: Tastemaker.

Griffin: I have heard, an enriching experience. I personally think it is, but I'm one of the members of the romance. And so, of course, it's enriching for me. The other thing is the tastemaker thing, yeah. They do not come here for... me, almost always, kind of bloviating about whatever the fuck.

Rachel: [chuckles] And you know what's sad?

Griffin: What is sad?

Rachel: And I don't know if people realize this, like peek behind the McElroy curtain... sometimes, we'll start over.

Griffin: Oh, yeah.

Rachel: Sometimes it becomes very clear like, you've started recording and you don't have a thing.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And you'll be like, "That's nothing." And we'll start over. And I don't think people... need a thing.

Griffin: I don't think people need a thing, no. And—

Rachel: A lot of shows just start.

Griffin: What gets me—what gets me is that I do prep for this show.

Rachel: Except for that part, it—

Griffin: I do prep for this show.

Rachel: It's like the Small Wonders, like I still don't prep Small Wonders.

Griffin: No, the—Small Wonders, a thing we have done all—every episode—

Rachel: [chuckles] Every episode.

Griffin: All 400, however many episodes we've done.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Always catches me by surprise! Oh, yeah!

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And in fact, jump scare, what's your Small Wonder this week, my love?

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I've got an easy one and I'm hoping you don't yoink it.

Rachel: Okay, I'm not going to. Because I'm thinking... right now... So, a while ago, off Etsy, I got a little sign that said—is based on The Good Place, and it says, "Welcome, everything is fine."

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: And today, my therapist noticed it in the background and she was so excited.

Griffin: Oh...

Rachel: And I just thought like, this is... this is nice.

Griffin: I love a kindred spirit moment.

Rachel: Yeah, especially with somebody who you have like a professional relationship.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: Therapists typically don't reveal much personal about themselves. You know, like there's not a lot of like knowing your therapist outside of therapy.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And so, it was just kind of fun to know, oh, she likes that show. And of course she does, it's a great show.

Griffin: Beyond this relationship, this professional relationship. we are the same. That helps—that helps me out a lot too. I took Henry to the orthodontist today, and the person working at the desk had a mug that was covered in Pokémon stickers. And it really set something ablaze in Henry and made him feel a lot more at ease. So much so that now I'm wondering if that's like part of the—part of the deal.

Rachel: I mean, that's why pediatricians have like fun offices.

Griffin: Yeah, that's true.

Rachel: And like you know... I don't know. You go to a kid-friendly office for a reason.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: Can I ask, I've never asked you this in front of Henry because I don't—I don't want to put him on blast. How is his Pokémon retention? Like—

Griffin: Oh, it's insane.

Rachel: Is he Griffin McElroy level?

Griffin: You have to keep in mind, honey, like Pokémon came out in the States in 1998, 1999, I want to say.

Rachel: I have to keep that in mind.

Griffin: You have to—you must bear this in mind.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: It came out in the States around then. So like, I was—and I was like

maybe a year behind, so I was like probably 11 years old when I started playing Pokémon. Henry played his first Pokémon game, Pokémon: Let's Go, Pikachu.

Rachel: At like four?

Griffin: When he was four, yeah. So like, already my man has like—because those are really formative years. We've basically been Suzuki method training our son in Pokémon.

Rachel: [laughs] In Pokémon.

Griffin: And it's beyond now just the games, like he's read almost all of the like official Pokémon adventures manga. It's like pretty deep in. So much so that when I read the manga to him, he is correcting my pronunciations.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: He is correcting my—which is wild, right? Because it's like, you're not hearing people say those names out loud either, so how—

Rachel: Well, on YouTube, YouTubers—

Griffin: Yeah, I guess so—

Rachel: Not that they would know—

Griffin: I guess YouTubers.

Rachel: For sure. But he asked me a lot of questions like, if you could have a Pokémon for a pet—

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Which Pokémon would you want? You know, and I almost always say Bidoof, just because he's such a cute little guy.

Griffin: I love that answer, babe! I love Bidoof as an answer!

Rachel: He's such a cute little guy. But I don't think Henry realizes that's like one of—I mean, I know a fair amount at this point.

Griffin: Yeah, you do.

Rachel: But like one of maybe 12 that I know. And I'm wondering kind of like, is he—is he like in the 100 level—

Griffin: Oh, yeah, for sure.

Rachel: Wow.

Griffin: I think there's about 1000 of these bad boys, so, yeah.

Rachel: Wow.

Griffin: So, yeah, he knows a lot. I was—I mean, that could be my Small Wonder right there.

Rachel: I thought that was going to be your Small Wonder, just the—

Griffin: I mean, I was just going to talk about how Robert Thomas, after a sort of disappointing season, scored a hat trick against the number one ranked Colorado Avalanche last night, to win a—

Rachel: Until you watch—

Griffin: Hugely important, hugely vital game, three to two. So good.

Rachel: You watched all those like—because it was a late game.

Griffin: It was a late game.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I was—I was staying up anyways and had the game on. And it was so stressful, because they're basically at a place now—I mean, when this episode comes out, the die may have been cast, but it's like—

Rachel: True.

Griffin: If they're going to make the playoffs, they need to win every game, and like they need the Predators to lose every game.

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: Like, it's like pretty dicey.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: I think they're three points back with six games remaining. So like, it's not completely impossible, but it was way more impossible before they beat the Colorado Avalanche last night, who are number one, I think in the whole league and like favorites to win the Stanley cup.

Rachel: Well, they're number one in the Western Conference. I don't know about the other conference.

Griffin: Yeah, that was incredible. Incredible. Robert Thomas is like, has been kind of the de facto backup captain type guy I feel like for a couple of seasons now. And when Brayden Shen was traded, there was a lot of talk about like, okay, Robert Thomas, it's time to step up. But Jake Neighbours also really wants it, he's stepping up in a major fuckin' way. And Robert Thomas hadn't been able to really, I don't know, get there—

Rachel: But now he found it!

Griffin: But now he's like, he's getting assists every game—

Rachel: It's—it's—

Griffin: And then he got a fucking hat trick!

Rachel: It's the chemistry, man.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: The che—the thing—and this has always been true with the St. Louis Blues since I've been watching. If they lose a game, the kind of, the first order of business is to change up the lines.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Like okay, well, now you're going to go on the ice with these guys, and maybe that'll make the difference. And I just feel like Thomas and Snuggerud—

Griffin: Snuggerud and Holloway.

Rachel: And Holloway.

Griffin: Yeah, dude.

Rachel: Like, they're all such like fast thinkers and like, and real savvy on like—

Griffin: Really different discip—like Snuggerud and Holloway are young blood, like fast as fuck, like really, really, really talented guys. And Thomas is too, but like he hasn't been on a line like that in a while.

Rachel: No.

Griffin: Great game! Great game. They're playing the Avalanche again tomorrow.

Rachel: I know...

Griffin: Not loving that.

Rachel: No.

Griffin: Because again, if they lose any of these games, that's it. We've sort of become—I don't know, I've accepted the fate. It's out of our hands at this point.

Rachel: I know.

Griffin: It's—I mean, it's always out of our hands, because neither of us are players on the St. Louis Blues hockey club.

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah.

Griffin: There's very little we can do, you know, above and beyond.

Rachel: No matter what merchandise we wear in what order—

Griffin: It doesn't matter.

Rachel: On top of like which appendage.

Griffin: Doesn't matter.

Rachel: Doesn't matter.

Griffin: But hockey's so fuckin' good. Hockey's so great. Even when the team's not doing great, it's—I think it's just the best game.

Rachel: The net is so tiny.

Griffin: The net is so tiny, it's so hard, and it's the most exhausting thing to do ever—

Rachel: And it's—

Griffin: That humans have come up with!

Rachel: Even if you're an incredible ice skater, you will like slip and fall.

Griffin: A lot!

Rachel: Every game.

Griffin: Every game, you do! But you get back up. Sometimes they fight! And the reason that they fight is to just kind of like change the vibe.

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah.

Griffin: Truly, not a joke, they fight to change— "The vibes all off. Let's fight, to reset."

Rachel: Yeah! Or like the crowd has like lost interest, or we're losing them. And they get so much momentum from the crowd that they will like try and do something to make the crowd cheer, so they can all feel the vibes again.

Griffin: This is our annual sales pitch for hockey—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Coming up here, just before—

Rachel: Playoff hockey—

Griffin: The playoff break.

Rachel: Y'all, like even if the Blues don't make it, playoff hockey is so great. It's like the Olympics.

Griffin: If you have a team that is near you, that is going to make the playoffs, watch one of those games, man. It's the best hockey, the—it truly is like on a whole other level when it's—when it's playoff time.

Rachel: And I will say, the announcers are always so thoughtful about explaining what is happening.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Like unlike football, which I feel like I can't really watch because no one really tells me what's going on—

Griffin: [chuckles] Uh-huh.

Rachel: I feel like the announcers in hockey are always like, "Let me show you why that was offside. Let me tell you about that penalty."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Because they know like their audience is confused.

Griffin: I especially think after, honestly, after a heated rivalry, I would be surprised if they weren't banging that drum a little bit louder even, of like, "Hey, welcome newcomers."

Rachel: Hey, guys—

Griffin: "Welcome to hockey."

Rachel: After somebody scores a goal, they all hug each other. And that's basically heated rivalry.

[both chuckle]

Griffin: More or less, yeah. Okay, you go first this week.

Rachel: Yeah. My thing... So, here's a confession. Sometimes when I'm trying to come up with a topic, I will just spend some time in the '90s.

Griffin: Oh, sure.

Rachel: Trying to tap into that nostalgia because, you know, that's like a wonderful thing in itself.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I understand the problems with nostalgia, but when you're doing a weekly show—[chuckles]

Griffin: Sometimes there's the—sometimes the current stuff isn't so good. And so, you need to go back to a simpler, better time.

[both chuckle]

Griffin: Which was the 1990s.

Rachel: I mean, better from our perspective.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: Probably not—

Griffin: I don't even think that's true, man. I think I'm probably pound for pound happier now than I was from the years 1990 to 1999.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Because Pokémon came out in 1999. I had to spend that whole fuckin' decade, just a man without a—without a—

Rachel: What was your thing?

Griffin: Church. Yeah. Then I supplemented that, with Mr. Mime.

Rachel: [chuckles] My wonderful thing this week is novelty landline phones.

Griffin: Novelty landline phones! *Yeah!* Oh, babe, that's a fuckin' banger.

Rachel: Thank you.

Griffin: That's so good. We had a football phone, so good.

Rachel: Okay, this is what I was gonna ask.

Griffin: I know you're going to talk about the football phone, I don't want to spoil it, but—

Rachel: No, I'm not really going to talk about the football phone, if you wanna get into it?

Griffin: Oh, I'll talk about the football phone. It was a phone in the shape of a football, and I do think it was part of some like sports illust—if you subscribe to Sports Illustrated, I believe you got the football phone.

Rachel: Oh?

Griffin: Because I know a lot of people who had the fuckin' football phone.

Rachel: I had one of the other popular novelty phones, which was the clear phone, where you could see all the little insides.

Griffin: I don't even think that's not—to me, that's just cool. That's like cyberpunk, cyber deck, cool shit.

Rachel: [chuckles] I found this like chart that lists all the like famous phones through like television and film.

Griffin: I'm getting burger phone?

Rachel: Burger phone is from Juno.

Griffin: Juno!

Rachel: I know, because I was remembering burger phone too. And I was like, where did I see that? Juno. The clear phone, Clarissa Explains It All.

Griffin: I was just thinking, Clarissa had one too!

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: But that's the clear one.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: I didn't understand kind of why they became so popular, specifically in that time period, you know? Like, why all the sudden novelty phones? Like obviously like media properties and '80s and '90s, like there was a real youth culture movement. But like, why then? I didn't realize that until the early '80s, many customers had to rent their phones from AT&T.

Griffin: That's... that's wild.

Rachel: There was a big monopoly breakup of AT&T in 1982, and—

Griffin: Which was the last time a monopoly was broken up.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: That might actually be true. I said that as a joke, but it may very well be true.

Rachel: There's a lot you can look into about that, I became really curious about it, but like—

Griffin: Can you imagine? Sorry to interrupt, but can you imagine today if the government would be like, "This company too big and successful!"

Rachel: I know.

Griffin: "Gotta smash 'em up!" No!

Rachel: No.

Griffin: Now they're like, "You can't do that, the company is a person, and that's murder. You can't mar—you can't chop up a person, you fuckin' weirdo."

Rachel: They tried to do that recently with Google, didn't they?

Griffin: I think so? Don't remember it going so great, but...

Rachel: [chuckles] Anyway, so, and if you think about it, this is kind of what cable boxes are like—

Griffin: Sure, or modems now still.

Rachel: But in many States, AT&T would only rent phones to customers. In the early 1980s, the rental fee was about \$1.50 to about \$5 per month. And you would get like a basic phone with that plan, kind of like a cable box.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And then in 1982, you know, all the sudden, AT&T is not regulating like who—

Griffin: All of the phone—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: There was an interview with a former CEO of Conair, which was the company that made the clear phone. And he said in the interview, "In the phone business, you have to understand that after phones were deregulated, the industry went from one company being our phone supplier, to two years later, there were over 300 companies supplying telephones."
[chuckles]

Griffin: That's very cool. And also like, I don't know, I feel like... the extent to which that has, I know this is not the point of your segment, but the extent to which that has not happened for cell phones or internet, sort of just being run by like five different companies is wild.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So at that point, AT&T sort of gave everyone the phones. And then after that point, you could buy your own—

Rachel: Yeah, like there was nothing stopping anybody else from making a phone and just selling it anywhere.

Griffin: Okay, that's interesting.

Rachel: Yeah, so that explains why in the '80s and '90s, you saw the Garfield phone.

Griffin: The Garfield phone?

Rachel: Have you not seen the Garfield—

Griffin: Show me the picture of the Garfield—that just looks like Garfield in repose. And he is sitting, he's—like he's basking in the sunlight.

Rachel: When you picked up the phone—

Griffin: His eyes open?

Rachel: His eyes open, yeah.

Griffin: I love that. That's a strong phone, I'd like that.

Rachel: Yeah. A lot of these—

Griffin: Get me that!

Rachel: [chuckles] A lot of these—

Griffin: Please?

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Babe, it's my birthday—

Rachel: We don't have a landline?

Griffin: My birthday is coming up soon, and I want a Garfield phone, please.

Rachel: We don't have a landline, honey. What would it do?

Griffin: Sit in the background of my shot—

Rachel: It would just sit?

Griffin: And look cute.

Rachel: It would look really cute.

Griffin: It's rare to see a cute Garfield. A lot of people think of him as like a trickster or a stinker, or a layabout. But in that phone, he looks pretty cute actually, which is rare. It's a rare, cute Garfield.

Rachel: You can, apparently you can get it on Etsy right now for close to \$300.

Griffin: That's too much for me, for my blood.

Rachel: Another phone I didn't know about was the Bart Simpson phone.

Griffin: Now, that's Bart Simpson. That's just Bart Simpson, and it looks like he's got a phone cord coming out of his butt. What's his—

Rachel: His eyes glow red when it's in use.

Griffin: Where's the receiver? I didn't see the hands—the handset part of that phone. Is it not—is it not pictured? Does he just kind of hold it in his hands?

Rachel: That's a really good question, how does that work?

Griffin: Does his fuckin' head pop off and you just talk into it, like an old-timey rotary phone?

Rachel: [chuckles] Let me see if I can find that out right now, I didn't think about like how that would actually work.

Griffin: I need a video or an animated GIF of the Bart Simpson phone in action.

Rachel: Oh?

Griffin: Being deployed.

Rachel: [chuckles] His back opens up.

Griffin: His back—look at that! His back just opens up and there's numbers back there, and I guess you talk into the—

Rachel: And there's like a little speaker in his head.

Griffin: There's a speaker in his head—

Rachel: Where you would listen, I guess.

Griffin: And you talk into his butt, guys!

Rachel: And you'd hold up the whole Bart Simpson.

Griffin: You hold up the whole Bart Simpson! It does not look particularly ergonomic.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: That's crazy, man.

Rachel: [chuckles] Look at the lighting on this one.

Griffin: That's awfully sinister, and that's only \$20. So, that one's—

Rachel: Wow...

Griffin: That one you can get for a song.

Rachel: Well, it probably doesn't work.

Griffin: Probably doesn't work.

Rachel: I mean, not that it would matter.

Griffin: Yeah, really. Cool!

Rachel: [chuckles] In case you're wondering, and I was immediately, was there an Alf phone? Because I—like, we're talking time period, Alf was king. It was basically just a stuffed animal with a phone attached to it.

Griffin: I don't like that. I don't like that one bit.

Rachel: So, it's just like a regular phone—

Griffin: What a waste.

Rachel: And it looks like he's holding it up.

Griffin: Let me pry his big mouth open and let me use it as the—as the whole handset.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: That's—I mean, I—it's a great Alf. The funk sh—the phone functionalities does seem kind of tacked on—

Rachel: What a hazard to like plug something furry into the wall.

Griffin: Oh, hey, good point! Didn't even think about that.

Rachel: You have to imagine that got real hot and dangerous.

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: So, that's novelty phones. I love 'em. I really got the urge as I was looking, I—man, I shouldn't say this, my dad's gonna buy me a bunch.

Griffin: Uh-oh!

Rachel: [laughs] I got the urge to have them.

Griffin: David, if you're grabbing 'em, man, if you see a Garfield phone out there for less than 300 bucks—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I don't want you to like blow your savings on it.

Rachel: In your backdrop? Like that would—

Griffin: It would look so good!

Rachel: It would look really good—

Griffin: it would look really good.

Rachel: And then you could pretend like you were answering the phone sometimes.

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, it would be pretty good. But again, not for—I would feel so guilty.

Rachel: You know what I saw that made me think of your dad? Was that you used to be able to buy like a Bat Phone.

Griffin: Oh, like a Batman phone?

Rachel: Yeah, but it was labeled like the Bat Phone.

Griffin: Okay, cool.

Rachel: So, you could pretend like you were Batman.

Griffin: That's just a red phone with a sticker on it that says "Bat Phone."

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Be cool if they had a brown phone with a sticker that just said "Alf" on it.

Rachel: [chortles]

Griffin: That's a strong phone, too.

Rachel: This is an Alf phone.

Griffin: It's great—

Rachel: Look at this Pac-Man one! How do you use that?

Griffin: I think you just open up his mouth and then you talk into him.

Rachel: Yeah, I guess so.

Griffin: I think that's—I think that's what you—I think that's what you do.

Rachel: What I'm looking at right now is an AOL.com, 12 vintage novelty phones collector's website.

Griffin: Yeah. I'd love to see—

Rachel: Here's Cabbage Patch. She looks like one of those guards at Buckingham Palace. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah, not even really holding the receiver particularly well. Sort of draped over her arm in a way. I would love to see like a very polished Apple press conference where they do one of their super-detailed close-up product

shot videos, for the new Alf phone. And it's just like zoom—just flying across his face, his deep black, marbled eyes.

Rachel: Yeah, like a press conference—here's the thing, you can't pull that out of your pocket and unveil it.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: You'd have to have somebody wheel it out on a cart. [chuckles]

Griffin: He would come down from the rafters, like an east—

Rachel: Fly in.

Griffin: Like an Easter pageant. Amazing. Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

[theme music plays]

[ad break]

Griffin: I have a musical artist to talk about this week that I am very excited to talk about. There is not a lot out there about this musical artist, which made it very—

Rachel: How did you find this musical artist?

Griffin: I found—Jeena, is the artist's name. J-E-E-N-A, not spelled, I don't know, I guess the more traditional Gina spelling, in my mind.

Rachel: G-I-N-A, yeah, no.

Griffin: It's J-E-E-N-A. I got recommended through Spotify, not even from a Spotify recommendation playlist. I do not even really click into those anymore, because my—our kids have so thoroughly just ravaged my algo. Just my algo is absolutely useless to anyone. So now like, I don't know, if you're on the main page, it'll be like, "Here's an artist you think—we think

you'd like." And they put up a song by Jeena. About a year ago, I think, I found sort of on of—

Rachel: Wow?

Griffin: One of her songs. And then she has a new single out, just like a month ago, that I can't stop listening to.

Rachel: Is it—is it the second one you sent me?

Griffin: No, it's the first, it is "Flood."

Rachel: Okay. I really like the second one.

Griffin: I love 'em both! So, Jeena is a Korean singer, songwriter/actor/skincare company CEO.

Rachel: All right, I mean, that's—

Griffin: Which is a wild combination—

Rachel: That's on par, though—

Griffin: Of careers.

Rachel: That's on par. I feel like a lot of artists now have skincare.

Griffin: Yeah, yeah, I guess so. She wears a lot of hats, which I always admire, as a multiple hat wearer myself. Should I be a skincare CEO? I don't—I do take it fairly seriously.

Rachel: Yeah, I mean, what would you make?

Griffin: Creams.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Let's not get sidetracked.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Gina only has like four singles and a four track EP out there. So, joining the bandwagon now really gets you in on the ground floor. I wasn't able to find a ton of stuff about her. One, because like—fairly early in her musical career. But number two is because like some of the work that she has done has been like performances for Korean television, which is just because of kind of the language barrier, difficult to get the search results you want. So, anyway, let's—I'll play a little bit of "Flood," the new single that just came out a month ago here, I—it rules. Here's a bit of it right now.

[an excerpt of "Flood" by Jeena plays]

Griffin: I listened to this song a lot in the last month, and I think part of it is, one, I think it rips, but two, it has so many different elements that I find like kind of nostalgic in a way. Like, it reminded me of a few different things, and it took me a long time to kind of put my finger on it. It's got this like chunky, syncopated kind of guitar running under the whole thing that really gives it a, and tell me if this comparison is like way too wild, but kind of a Duncan Sheik vibe.

Rachel: Whoa.

Griffin: Kind of that like...

Rachel: I don't think I thought of that.

Griffin: It hit me like a kind of—it sounded almost like the opening musical number of like a Spring Awakening or something like that, which I—

Rachel: Well, what was the Duncan Sheik song?

Griffin: Was it "Barely Breathing?" Was that Duncan Sheik?

Rachel: Oh. That sounds right.

Griffin: Anyway. Maybe I'm wildly off base, but I don't know, the guitar sound so like fuzzy and crunchy, which I always really enjoy.

Rachel: I mean, to me, it was reminding me of... hm... kind of like a Snail Mail—

Griffin: Okay, interesting! Her voice is like crazy powerful, crazy range, very brassy. And again, like it was something that felt like... I realize it's maybe gauche to just sort of like talk about a musical artist, or any artist, just through comparisons. But I—for whatever reason, this is how I received the song, is a—

Rachel: Hm.

Griffin: It became like a mystery where I was like, gosh, she sounds so much like... And what I came up with was like a non-twangy Shania Twain. Like if you had Shania Twain—

Rachel: Oh?

Griffin: And she didn't have like an accent, then that would be—I don't know, it just has big pop singer, '90s kind of energy.

Rachel: Yeah, I definitely got the '90s, like because, yeah, it just reminded me of like Soccer Mommy and Snail Mail, and like those kind of grungy lady bands.

Griffin: Yeah! So, I don't know, I think the song is just so insanely catchy and has just been in the rotation nonstop. Her history has been kind of tough to piece together, here's what I've got. She was born in Seoul, South Korea. Came to the States I believe to attend UC Berkeley, to study acting and business administration. The latter track was, I think, more immediately useful, because during the pandemic, she moved back to Seoul for a while and founded a Gen Z-focused skincare brand called City Face, that I was able to find more stuff about than her musical sort of, her musical career.

Rachel: There's been a big surge of like interest in Korean skincare here in the States.

Griffin: I believe it, right? Like, I feel like there—and I'm talking completely out of my ass here, but like the mask game was pretty strong over there before it was really even a thing over here. And—

Rachel: Yeah. Well, and I think there's like, there's a lack of regulation here in the US, that means sometimes the quality of our products are not as good—

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: As in other places, where they're more thoughtful about what they put in things. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah, the whole thing with the brand is like living in a city, like Seoul or Los Angeles, like it is—it has an impact on your skin, just the kind of like—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: You know, ambient pollution and smog and what have you. And so, this is a brand that's sort of about that. I haven't tried the skincare stuff, but the music is really, really good.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: After she graduated from UC Berkeley in '22, she did some acting and voice acting performance stuff in South Korea. She was on a Korean reality singing competition show called Girls on Fire, which is a really cool name. And it was a show about like, it was sort of a Making the Band, like Building the Band type thing, like trying to put together a five piece like female pop group in Korea. And there's like a 200 million won prize overall. She made top 24. I can't find any other details about the performance on this—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: But it sounds sort of, I don't know, it sounds familiar enough, like a—

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Like an American Idol or Making the Band type thing. And then in November 2023, she started to put out music. She put out her first single called "Ocean," which I think she self-published? She has a, according to like the notes on her music, was published by a label called City Face Records. So I think it's all sort of independently owned and operated over there, which I like. But since then, just put out, again, four singles and an EP. EP is called For What It's Worth, which is short, but dense with bangers, one of which is "Flourish," which is the song you really liked.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: What is it that you liked so much about "Flourish?"

Rachel: Just more rock and roll to me.

Griffin: You are more rock. I'm a little more country.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: And you're a little bit more rock and roll, I would say.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's great. Let's play a little bit of that, just to bookend this segment. Here's a little bit of Jeena's "Flourish."

[an excerpt of "Flourish" by Jeena's plays]

Griffin: Again, like so early. And I think these songs are really, truly catchy as hell. And I have to imagine that she will be blowing up at some point. And maybe then I will be able to find an interview or like any other sort of details. [chuckles]

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But I've just really been so into, you know, this small handful of music that she has put out, that I wanted other people to hear it too.

Rachel: You should text your music friends and see.

Griffin: I'll text my music friends.

Rachel: Sometimes they know about things that, you know, most people don't. [chuckles]

Griffin: Maybe. Yeah, that's a good point. I'm glad I have music friends.

Rachel: You do have music friends!

Griffin: I do have music friends.

Rachel: It's very cool.

Griffin: It's really cool. Thank you. I do think it's cool to have music friends also.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: So, that's Jeena, J-E-E-N-A. I want to talk also about what our friends at home are talking about.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: If I may. Max says, "My Small Wonder is finishing a dip and the dip vehicle at the same time. I've been going back and forth for months with getting new hummus, then getting new wheat thins, then getting new hummus, et cetera. Today I finally got to the end of both at once, and it rocked."

[pause]

Rachel: That's really good.

Griffin: [chuckles] Yeah. You made a face and there was like a pause there, as you were like—

Rachel: I was really thinking about it.

Griffin: Yeah, I could tell!

Rachel: I mean, here's the thing, with Griffin and I, if you get out a dip and a cracker, we will just absentmindedly eat—

Griffin: I'll house it. Forget it.

Rachel: Eat it until the dip is gone.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But I will say like, normally when I sit down with a meal, like I really thoughtfully go around my plate so that I have a little bit of everything until the very end.

Griffin: Oh, that's good.

Rachel: But I don't do that with a dip.

Griffin: No, you can't do that with a dip.

Rachel: With a dip, I just go to town.

Griffin: I like this in a sort of micro scale, when you like plate out some chips and salsa for yourself, and you get—and it's just right. It's just right. You don't get it so like there's no more salsa and you have like three more chips, or you finish the chips and there's like, you know, two tablespoons of salsa left and you're like, god damn it, what do I do now? I'm with you, Max, that's a good one. Zosia says, "My Small Wonder is the power of letting a grimy dish soak. It's so awesome to look at a bowl with sauce caked onto it

and think, man, that'll take forever to wash, only for a minute full of warm water to make it easy-breezy."

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: You gotta be so careful, Zosia.

Rachel: This is big with oatmeal.

Griffin: *Huge* with oatmeal!

Rachel: Like cereal and oatmeal, this is one of Griffin and I's big fights. [sighs] Hah...

Griffin: It's okay.

Rachel: Sometimes he will eat a bowl of cereal or oatmeal, and he will not put water in the bowl after he does.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And it'll sit in the sink, and the stuff in it will get so, so hard.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And I'm like, oh, if only he'd put water in it right after he put it in the sink.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But to the point of this listener, if you add water late, it still comes—

Griffin: It still comes off. Right. So, why do we fight so bad about it, do you think? [laughs] This show is in so many ways therapeutic.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I think it is—this show has saved our marriage more times than I can count.

Rachel: We have real problems and this is—

Griffin: We have *real* shit, guys!

Rachel: The only place we can work them out. [chuckles]

Griffin: This is the only time we get to talk without our kids climbing on us.

Rachel: God, it's so true. That is the hardest thing about the end of our day, is Griffin and I will try and have a fraught conversation about what we accomplished, and our children will not allow it. [chuckles]

Griffin: Not allow it, say—they will no—they will not sit by idly and listen to us.

Rachel: They just start talking.

Griffin: They just start going! Middle of the convo.

Rachel: Griffin and I will be in the middle of discussing something, and then Henry will just shout out something that he saw on his iPad, just as if he doesn't even hear us.

Griffin: Yeah, it's wild, it's—but again, I do think the crosstalk gene is dominant. So, that is—that's sort of just how things are—

Rachel: I have the opposite of that.

Griffin: No, I know.

Rachel: I've had to really learn how to talk when I am not invited to speak. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah, no, for sure. Again, this show is just leaps and bounds, the growth on every front.

Rachel: True.

Griffin: Hey, thanks so much for listening! Thank you to Bo En and Augustus for the use of our theme song, "Money Won't Pay." You can find a link to that in the episode description. And thank you so much to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go over to maximumfun.org, check out all the great stuff they've got going on over there.

Maximum Fun Drive is coming up very soon! We're going to have a bunch of bonus content and rewards and all kinds of stuff coming down here in just a few weeks. So, get—start getting pumped for that, because I certainly am. Got some merch over in the McElroy Merch Store, mcelroymerch.com.

There's a Miggy prayer candle, there's "20 Make It Stick" stickers. Sorry, I—Jesus Christ... This—I want to make—sometimes I like to paint sort of—just sort of illustrate what the work environment is like for me, in my life, which is that I just opened up Slack, our sort of like group chat sort of thing that we use for commu—for comms, company comms.

Rachel: People, I think, are familiar with Slack.

Griffin: Okay, good. And just the first—I just clicked it because I was like, what else do we have in the McElroy Merch Store? And instead what I get is an enormous picture of Russ Frushtick's sunburnt foot.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Just posted right in The Besties Slack channel, takes up the whole screen, his sunburnt foot. How am I going to do the rest of the show now, now that I've seen that? You know? mcelroymerch.com is where you can go to get all—

Rachel: You could send—like he could send that off thread in like a text? I mean, I don't know that you'd ever need to see it.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But if you're going to, like let's keep it out of the workplace?

Griffin: Please. Hey, also, the final Adventure Zone graphic novel comes out in just a few months now, and you can preorder it at theadventurezonecomic.com. We're going to be getting our copies like real soon.

Rachel: Mm-hm!

Griffin: I'm very excited. I'm excited just to see the thickness of it. I'm excited to see—

Rachel: Right?

Griffin: The just... just the scale of this bad boy. It's gonna be big. It's gonna be bigger than The Beatles.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: It's gonna—our—things are really going to take off for us after this book.

Rachel: In thickness, it's going to be bigger than—

Griffin: In thickness and in health.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: There's something there, right?

Rachel: In thickness and in health. [chuckles] I mean, it's definitely reality-show-ready.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Ready and packaged up.

Griffin: Could it be a pa—a pre-packaged podcast outro, though? Like—

Rachel: In thickness and in health?

Griffin: Amen.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: [guffaws]

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

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