

Wonderful 425: Faucet Donkey Cat

Published July 22nd, 2026

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

Rachel: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy.

Griffin: Hey, this is Griffin McElroy.

Rachel: And this is Wonderful!

Griffin: Welcome to Wonderful! This is a podcast where we talk about things we like, that's good, that we're into. And it's, I will say that those things have been in short supply.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Those things have been in short supply for... a little while. For a little bit now.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: We're back, and we're doing a bit of a flyer. We're giving it—we're do—we're taking an easy sort of... nervous step back into the waters of podcasting.

Rachel: Yeah. I was gonna say, it's literally the way that I get into a pool, which is like inch by inch. [chuckles]

Griffin: Now, if I have my druthers, you know me, I'm a big cannonball boy. I like to make a big splash, get it all over with, one and done, and do like a four-hour long podcast after not podcasting for a week or two.

Rachel: [chuckles] Podcasting is how the McElroys really figure out kind of where they're at.

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Rachel: Where they want to be.

Griffin: A lot of people get on us for that. They say, "Why do you turn your life's most challenging and most tragic sort of occurrences into content?" And I say, that's how we heal.

Rachel: Yeah, we don't know any other way.

Griffin: I don't know any other way. It's lucrative. But it's how we heal. And it's not my choice.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: It's just the cards that life and God dealt us.

Rachel: Mm-hm. Yeah, those of you that are on social media may have seen Griffin's post. My dad passed away, I mean, as of recording, a week ago. He had been dealing with cancer. He had—he had had cancer over a decade ago, and it had gone away. And then it came back about, I mean, almost a year ago.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And he'd been doing lots of treatments and been having a lot of success. And then like anything, eventually they had to see if it was going to stick. And so he took a break from treatment, and then everything came back and had spread. And the kind of the recommendation of all the, you know, doctors that he'd been working with was that... that he just not pursue further treatment, based on the spread. And then everything happened really fast after that. He'd been in the hospital for two weeks. And we had made the decision to pursue hospice. He went home on Wednesday from the hospital, and then he passed the following Monday. So, it was just... I mean, you know, I had never been through anything like this before, so I didn't know what to expect, but it was outside even my realm—

Griffin: Yeah, no, I mean, it's—it is different for—the timeline's different for everyone.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: You know, your grandmother was sort of in assisted living sort of—

Rachel: For years!

Griffin: Hospice care for years.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And obviously that was a different situation. But my mom kind of had a similar—a similar kind of timeline, where she was in remission for a while, and then it came back, and it just came back super, super, super fast.

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: Super-duper aggressive...

Rachel: So, you know, we're doing okay. You know, like I said, he had been sick for a long time. So in some ways, it was always kind of a consideration. But we had to make a lot of decisions really fast, and Griffin was really helpful in doing that. And then yeah, towards the end, you know, my dad wasn't as lucid. He wasn't himself as much. So those last few days were really kind of confusing and difficult. But luckily, we had kind of made some decisions in advance. And so we were able to kind of, I mean, you know, go forward as peacefully as possible, I guess.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And feel like we were doing kind of everything we could. But yeah, you know, I've talked about him on the show. He's always been kind of... like a big presence in kind of a lot of things that I have brought week to week.

Griffin: He listened to every episode, as does your mother.

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles] Maybe not—maybe not there recently.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: With everything going on, but...

Griffin: It's so horrible, and I feel like in this exact situation, it would be appropriate to kind of memorialize or honor or—and I don't know that either of us are really equipped to do that. [chuckles]

Rachel: Yeah! I mean, it was a week ago, so I'm not ready to really do that.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: I will just say like... he has been a presence on the show, he will continue to be. And you know, I will continue to talk about him.

Griffin: Yeah, I think that's good. And in your—in your time. It's been a week, no one's really expecting—

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: No one's really expecting anything—

Rachel: Yeah! And I really appreciate, you know, if you were able to see what Griffin shared, I thought it did a really nice job kind of capturing a lot of the things that made my dad so special. And I really appreciate everybody who kind of commented and passed along their condolences. I don't think he ever expected to have that kind of reach. [chuckles] So it was cool for me to see kind of like people all over the place kind of offering that support.

Griffin: Yeah. This is—this is the podcast, Wonderful. We do thing—we talk about things we like, that's good, that we're into. That's just the fact of the matter. So we're just going to do small wonders today.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: We didn't really want to prep much, because most stuff is a lot harder than it was a month ago.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And so we're just—we're just going to do some little—some little stuff. Most of mine is like things I have enjoyed over the past, you know, month or so where we've been recording sort of sporadically.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But just kind of some lightweight—some lightweight stuff as we get our feet back under us. I'm sure the folks at home are understanding.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I would love to read the email from one of our dear, sweet listeners who's like, "Uh..."

Rachel: [chuckles] When I donated during the Max Fun Drive, I expected a certain level of enthusiasm in every episode.

Griffin: It's never happened. I need to stop—I have a bad habit of imagining terrible members of the commu—

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: I don't know why—what that is.

Rachel: I mean... [chuckles]

Griffin: It's not that—I mean, it's—

Rachel: You have some history with the internet.

Griffin: I do have some history with the internet. But this particular sector of the internet has bucked those, you know, those fears at every turn.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And they have been immensely supportive. And it has been a, just a truly a, just apocalyptically shitty time. But I don't know, I've been looking forward to doing this with you today.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: We have done this show when things have been hard. Specifically, like when your dad was in the hospital, and you know, we were dealing with stuff like—

Rachel: When we had stuff with our kids going on too that was hard.

Griffin: Stuff with our kids, yeah. And just kind of taking a little bit of time to, I don't know, shoot the shit.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And talk about things that make us happy, is a—is a really nice exercise, I found.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Do you want me to kick things off?

Rachel: Please.

Griffin: Mine is—I don't—let me know if you don't want me to tell this story.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: But there was a moment that happened in the midst of everything.

Rachel: [chuckles] Yeah, this is a good story. You can tell it.

Griffin: Okay, good.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: So while David was in hospice, it was like the second or third night of him being home. We had a lot of hospice aides and home health aides that came out to basically be with him, and help out your mom. And these people were literal angels. Particularly this one woman, whose name I guess I won't—I won't say, but she was able to come out a few times. And she was so smitten with your dad, and was just such a calming, very kind of affectionate sort of presence.

Rachel: Yeah, and clearly very capable and skilled and kind of aware of, you know, what she could do to help the situation, and to kind of make everybody more comfortable. And... and just a very thoughtful person.

Griffin: Just really incredible. And as she was about to leave, you know, for her, the end of her shift, Rachel and I were in the bedroom with David, and she came in and said, "Do you mind if I pray over Mr. David?" And you said something along the lines of like, "I don't—I like it when other people do it. It's not my c—" [chuckles]

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah.

Griffin: "It's not my cup of tea, but it's cool when other people do it." And so she—

Rachel: Yeah, like I always appreciate it.

Griffin: So she started to pray over him. And the specific intersection between like God stuff and like dying stuff like hits... like is a pretty like... efficient way of making me get very, very emotional, very, very quickly. And so I started to—I started to tear up as I was sort of sitting in the—in a—in a chair in the corner of this room, while this very kind woman prayed over your dad. And meanwhile—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Rachel was on—

Rachel: An activity I had started well before she made this request—

Griffin: Had started an activity before she made this request!

Rachel: I wanna be clear.

Griffin: That's so cle—so important.

Rachel: She didn't start praying and I thought, I'm gonna do something else right now. [chuckles]

Griffin: You thought, "I'll put some music on." Which we had done in the hospital, we've done at home, and like in his times where he was not so lucid, like it was truly helpful. And so you were putting on... I think it was the Beatles anthology like documentary thing on YouTube, on their TV that was in the room. You were like searching up this thing as she was praying and I was crying. And you loaded it up. And the only problem is that your parents are not YouTube premium subscribers, so an ad did start playing very loudly, and it was the Verizon commercial with Dr. Evil in it. And so in the middle of this prayer, just to my left—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I just hear, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have devised the most diabolical sche..."

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: And it was like a—it was like a spear of light pierced the clouds. And it was the quickest inversion of like, oh, fuck, this is so sad, to like, holy shit, is that Mike Myers as Dr. Evil from the Austin Powers movies? We managed to hold it together until she had left the room, but I don't know, man, that moment really pulled me back from the brink in a way.

Rachel: She was undeterred. She continued her prayer.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: She did—I hope at least did not find it like, you know, disrespectful or, you know—

Griffin: She came back, so it wasn't like she was so put off by it. But man, I don't know, you gotta take what you can get when you're going through something like this. And it was so, it was, it was just very funny.

Rachel: It was very funny—

Griffin: It was just very funny.

Rachel: And I was telling Griffin that my dad would have also found that very funny—

Griffin: Extraordinarily.

Rachel: So I did not feel like it was a bad story necessarily. [chuckles]

Griffin: No. So yeah, thank you. Thanks, Mike Myers, again.

Rachel: [chuckles] Again.

Griffin: Mike has come through for me personally in my times of greatest need so many times, and I didn't even expect him or Seth or Rob or the rest of the gang to show up for me in the way that they did in this Verizon commercial. So, thank you. Thank you, Mike.

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles] I'm trying to think of how to follow that. And so, I will say... when a sandwich comes with a pickle.

Griffin: When a sandwich comes with a pickle! Now we're talking! Can I tell you something? I like this. I'm not a big pickle guy, but when a sandwich comes with a pickle, and it gives you—

Rachel: And I'm talking specifically about the side pickle.

Griffin: Oh, the spear pickle wrapped in foil maybe even for like—

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah. And they don't really advertise it in the menu.

Griffin: Mm-mm.

Rachel: You know? It's kind of a surprise pickle in most cases. I know like a Panera they like. They like tuck it under one of the layers of wrapping so it's easy to forget about and/or you don't see it.

Griffin: Mm-hm...

Rachel: And yesterday we were having lunch over at my mom's place, and everybody kind of at the same time discovered their like bonus pickle.

Griffin: I didn't get a bonus pickle?

Rachel: I think we probably did, and we didn't notice it, right?

Griffin: Oh, god.

Rachel: Unless they don't put it with the specific sandwich we got, which I don't understand why—

Griffin: I don't understand why.

Rachel: I think you and I just wolfed down our sandwiches with such like... a sense of obligation.

Griffin: Pretty hungry.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Toasted caprese. Hey, Panera, keep it up. That toasted caprese garden sandwich is fucking lit. It's so good.

Rachel: [chuckles] Yeah. So anyway, so that is honestly how I discovered I liked pickles. I was not a big pickle eater. And then I was in a situation where the sandwich came with one and I was like, I'll give it a go. And then I was like, I really like these pickles!

Griffin: It's a nice little textural kind of little side quest that you can go on.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: When you're eating a lot of sandwich.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And you're like, I need salty, squishy.

Rachel: Not too squishy, though.

Griffin: Not too squishy, though!

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: Watch it... Vlastic.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I'm gonna say, okay, we've been rewatching Friday Night Lights.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: I'm glad we've been rewatching Friday Night Lights. It's been—it's been—it's been good. It's been there for us. I'm not recommending that anyone else watches Friday Night Lights. I feel like it is a show that has very personal kind of implica—we got together while watching Friday Night Lights. When we first started dating, I moved to Austin, we watched Friday Night Lights and fell deeply, deeply in love to Friday Night Lights.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: There's a lot of stuff that Friday Night Lights does that is not my favorite. We are in the second season now, which happened during the writer's strike. And it's famously bad, like there's storylines that I won't spoil, but they're so bad. And they're so out of left field. And all the characters for half the season act in a completely different way than they normally do before they kind of get back on track.

Rachel: Yeah! It's like you're watching like a pitch session where they all had different ideas, and then they ended up choosing all of them.

Griffin: Uh-huh.

Rachel: And what happens in the third season is they pretty quickly abandoned most of the things.

Griffin: Everything. All of it.

Rachel: And so last time we rewatched it, which was probably when one of our children was born, I don't know, we skipped the second season.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Basically entirely. We were like, this doesn't—nothing from this season keeps, let's just skip it. And then this time around, we are actually watching—

Griffin: Because there's actually a lot of good stuff in the second season. A lot of good Buddy Garrity stuff.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: A lot of good—a lot of good Smash Williams stuff.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: A lot of bad Smash Williams stuff, but a lot of good Smash Williams. It's just, it's a—it's a hugely uneven thing, but man alive... There's probably a lot of people listening to this who did not watch Friday Night Lights, because it's a football team drama. And I don't know that there's a ton of overlap necessarily with our audience and that. But I'm talking about Kyle Chandler turning in the performance of his lifetime. I'm talking about Connie Britton turning in the performance of a lifetime. Gaius Charles I think is who plays Smash, fucking absolutely crushes it. Smash's mom, I don't know who that actress is, but she's fucking fantastic.

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Griffin: Adrienne Palicki. We tried to sing along with the theme song like we did with the West Wing, we try sa—but it's Explosions in the Sky. Which is a fun game at home, even if you don't watch Friday Night Lights, is to listen to Explosions in the Sky and just try to sing along with it, because it's not possible. It comes off like [spoofs silly singing].

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: But man, it's just, it's nostalgic. And some of those performances absolutely just wreck shop, and some of the football storylines are like really, truly great. You get so invested. That pilot kicks ass too. Just watch the pilot.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Just watch the pilot. It kicks ass.

Rachel: Yeah, it's... it's interesting. I was telling Griffin when I first watched the show, like Connie Britton and Kyle Chandler were just kind of bonuses. Because I was watching it more from the perspective of like a young person who remembers this time of high school very well. Fast forward—

Griffin: [laughs]

Rachel: What, like 15 years.

Griffin: We are older, I think, than Kyle Chandler and Connie Britton—

Rachel: Probably!

Griffin: Were when they made the show.

Rachel: Yeah. And I realized now I'm watching it more as a parent.

Griffin: Yeah. Yeah.

Rachel: And I'm like, ooh, wow, a lot of really bad like dads and moms in this show, really bring Connie Britton and Kyle Chandler to the top.

Griffin: Yeah. Yeah. Uneven! Uneven show. But I'm glad we've been rewatching it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's been nice.

Rachel: It's nice.

Griffin: To have ol' reliable.

Rachel: When a fridge has a water and ice dispenser.

Griffin: Ah, god...

Rachel: In the summertime?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: We have been in different locations, like the hospital, obviously, my mom and dad's like condo, lot of access to ice dispensers. And I get so excited. And I treat it like we are going on a journey whenever we leave these locations, I will go and I will fill our water bottle with ice, because I'm like, all right.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: We're about to leave this area of plenty.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And go back to our house, where our ice dispenser has not worked for a very long time. And we have no water dispenser in our fridge. And it's just—

Griffin: It's a wa—it's a German brand of specialty. We didn't buy it. It came with the house.

Rachel: No! It—

Griffin: And I wouldn't do this if you gave me the choice again—

Rachel: Our kitchen is such where everythi—it's one of those everything is hidden kitchens, where they try and make it look like it's not a kitchen.
[chuckles]

Griffin: Drives me crazy! No guest has ever found the garbage can without like a map and compass, because they fuckin' hide it. We create garbage!

Rachel: The dishwasher also like—

Griffin: Shh! Don't tell 'em! The speakeasy dishwasher.

Rachel: And the fridge, for whatever reason, they didn't want it to look like a fridge, which is a—I feel like a very specific time period in kitchen history. And so when you open the fridge, there's just a bunch of drawers there. There is no external water dispenser or ice dispenser, and I miss it so much.

Griffin: I do too. I think it might be time. The problem is to replace like the fridge in our house, we would have to replace just about every—[chuckles] everything in that kitchen because it's so—

Rachel: I haven't looked to see like if it's like a weird size that we can't replicate.

Griffin: I don't know, man. Every place I've called like, "Do you do this weird German brand of refrigerant?" Nope, no one does. No one does it. I have started to—I might in—I might go to a trade school, just so I can—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Equip myself with the skills that I need.

Rachel: If nothing else, if we could replace the ice maker?

Griffin: That's it, yeah.

Rachel: Because right now we have an ice cube tray, and it feels like we need to be like very thoughtful about how we conserve this ice cube tray.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: So I'm like, well, surely I can't put more than two ice cubes in this glass. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah, I love it. I do love how when we—when we leave your mom and dad's place, you dump out our water bottle and put fresh cold, that good shit. Like we're nomadic desert explorers or something.

Rachel: Yeah, yeah, it does. It feels like, well, who knows when we'll have access to this again? [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah! Key lime pie. We've done it on the show before, talked about it before. We just had some good shit last night from an Italian place. My dad and stepmom are in town helping us out for a bit. They came by brought some food, brought some key lime pie. Fucking good stuff. Good stuff.

Rachel: Yeah, our wedding cake was key lime flavor, right?

Griffin: You're right! It was like key lime and vanilla... vanilla flavored, I wanna say?

Rachel: I don't remember exactly.

Griffin: God, it was so good. God, it was so good.

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, it feels like summertime, one.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And two, it is such a great mix of like citrus and sweet.

Griffin: It's a little bitter sometimes, like when you get that like really rindy shit. And I love that. I love that—

Rachel: Usually got like a—like a graham cracker—

Griffin: Graham cracker crust! A sweet cream on top! Now we're talking. I love that shit. It might be my favorite pie.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: It might be my favorite pie. I like strawberry pie a lot still too, but man, key lime pie is always exciting to me.

Rachel: Mm-hm. It's almost cake.

Griffin: It's almost, isn't it?

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: It's on the cusp.

Rachel: Mm-hm. When someone else takes the pictures.

Griffin: Okay?

Rachel: I am kind of typically the documentarian of our family.

Griffin: Mm-hm.

Rachel: Which I don't mind doing at all. And I like, I really delight in pictures. Just generally, I'm just a very much a pictures person. Like if I am like, looking for some kind of like signposts for something we did, it's less to me about like buying the stuff, and more about having the pictures.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: But the relief I feel when somebody else is taking the pictures is like palpable for me.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: Of like, okay, this is being documented. Good.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I will have these photos and I will not have had to take them.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Because I'm like a...

Griffin: You're a great photographer.

Rachel: Eh, B minus.

Griffin: You're good. You capture the essence.

Rachel: I think you are a better photographer than me.

Griffin: But I'm always wet, aren't I?

Rachel: [chuckles] You're usually like in the mix with the boys like doing the stuff that I want to capture on—

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: On a camera.

Griffin: And usually that stuff gets me wet. And I can't touch the phone.

Rachel: Yeah, messy in some way. Or—

Griffin: Messy or whatever.

Rachel: Or like pinned to the ground.

Griffin: Pinned, climbed upon.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: So I do think, I mean, you know, and you have taken like a photography class, correct?

Griffin: Yes, it was part of the sort of broadcast journalism program.

Rachel: Yeah. I never have actually taken a photography class. So I find that your pictures tend to be just like artistically better than mine.

Griffin: Hm.

Rachel: But I get in there, man. Like, if you're going somewhere that I don't know if we're going to go back or having an experience that is unique, like I get 'em.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But it's always nice when somebody else does. [chuckles]

Griffin: I will redouble my efforts to be a better photojournalist of our family's exploits. It will become easier when our children do not do activities exclusively that make me wet or covered in—

Rachel: Are you able to look at a picture of yourself through a lens of like, oh, that is a picture of me? Or when you see a picture of yourself, do you tend to be like, oh, I don't like how that came out.

Griffin: Oh. I mean, if it's a picture of me like with you, or like playing with the boys, then I don't really look at it with a particularly critical eye. I look at it like, oh, that was fun. But like, I don't know, I probably do that more with

like when we went to the wedding and I see pictures of me trying to look nice.

[both chuckle]

Griffin: I guess when there's effort being applied to looking nice—

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: I do I judge it a little bit more than like if I'm in the pool, you know, chasing our kids around or whatever.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: Yeah. I'm gonna say Thrasher's Beach Fries. I don't think that's what they're called, but we went to Rehoboth Beach—

Rachel: They are called Thrasher's.

Griffin: They are called Thrasher's, I don't think they're called Thrasher's beach fries.

Rachel: Yeah. You don't order that when you go up to the window.

Griffin: We were able to get to Rehoboth Beach, where we've gone the past couple of summers, just for a couple days, just for a quick kind of—

Rachel: It was like two full days.

Griffin: Two full days, just a quick kind of break, honestly, from everything that was happening. And we've gone—we've gone before and we've, you know, enjoyed fun land. We've enjoyed the rides. We've enjoyed the carnival games, the arcade games and what have you, and the beach. It's a—it's a nice beach. It's, you know, you go and you rent a chair from a college student and an umbrella, and you just sit and you chill.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: There's a big boardwalk, and about every 75 feet on this boardwalk, there is a Thrasher's business, and all they do is they sell you French fries. They got three sizes of French fries, three sizes of soda pop. That's fuckin' it, man. They don't do ketchup. They have a little thing of malt vinegar and salt.

Rachel: Do they have other foods?

Griffin: No!

Rachel: It's just fries.

Griffin: And it's, I'm not joking about the proximity of these French fry restaurants. Off the main drag, right next to the entrance of the boardwalk, there's a Thrasher's on one side of the street, and there's a Thrasher's on the opposite side of the street. Literally, literally across—you could throw a French fry from one Thrasher's and land it in the other Thrasher's.

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: But these French fries, I think they like do 'em up in peanut oil or something. Probably not, because that would be a huge allergy risk.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But so, so, so good. So... floppy, not crispy, just like really deeply fried and oily, and so satisfying when you've been at the beach and you got that salt—that salty spray.

Rachel: What do—oh, Popeye's. I think—because Gus made the point that like, they are obviously not Popeye's French fries, but they are seasoned as heavily.

Griffin: Yes!

Rachel: And that is kind of a rarity, I would say.

Griffin: A fun mix of shapes. I like that!

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: Some like little normal sized guys, and then some big steak fry sized guys.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: You never know. And you get a big bucket of 'em!

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: And you gotta cover it with a towel or something, because the gulls will come and they'll take it from you.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Take them from you by force if necessary.

Rachel: I think we have never gotten them before, because I think the very first year we went, most aggressive seagulls I have seen, and have not really seen since, where they were dive bombing people walking on the boardwalk.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And we had very small children at the time and I was like I don't—I don't trust that they wouldn't get hurt. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah. But we were willing to take the risk. [laughs]

Rachel: Well, they're bigger now!

Griffin: Our boys are bigger. They can't be picked up by a gull—

Rachel: Before I wasn't so sure.

Griffin: Or a few working together, to take them off to their sort of seabird lair.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: Should we take a quick break?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: And then come back and do more—okay. Oh, can I steal you away?

Rachel: Please.

[theme music plays]

[ad read]

Brea: Hi! My name is Brea Grant and I host Reading Glasses and Reading Smut. And I'm here with Max Fun Member of the Month, Nick Roy.

Nick: Thank you so much.

Brea: What episode would you recommend to a new listener who's just jumping in for the first time?

Nick: Oh, definitely the one where it's like, let's talk about Reading Glasses.
[chuckles]

Brea: Oh? [chuckles]

Nick: Because as someone who started listening, what, seven years in, I—even I was like, oh, that's why we say that.

Brea: [laughs] Oh my god, Mallory's gonna love that you said that, because she really was like, "We gotta—we gotta people more about ourselves." I'm like, we just talk about ourselves every week! What would you say to other people who are considering supporting Max Fun shows?

Nick: I would say if you want to keep listening to content that you enjoy and you want to support the creators, oh, no, I just won't get a Starbucks once a week and I give you guys 10 bucks a month? Sounds good to me.

Brea: I love that. And listen to Nick. Nick's a librarian. He knows what he's talking about, so...

Nick: [chuckles]

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[break]

Brenda: Hi there! Sorry to interrupt your podcast listening time. I know you're doing the dishes right now. That's okay, that—I don't—don't worry about it. You might not know me, but I'm Brenda. And I'm here to tell you about the podcast I host with my good friend, Austin. It's called Secret Histories of Nerd Mysteries, and we cover all kinds of pop culture topics.

Like did you know that there was a real life replica of the Simpsons house in Las Vegas, Nevada? Or that Flint, Michigan was once home to an indoor amusement park themed around the automobile? If those things sound interesting, you should definitely check us out every Tuesday on Maximum Fun, or wherever you get podcasts. Goodbye! You can get back to your dishes now, it's fine.

[break]

Griffin: What would you like to talk about next?

Rachel: Along the beach theme—

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: Beach plane advertising.

Griffin: Beach plane advertising is so good. You can never predict what it's going to be about.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Every time I see the plane coming and the banner is too far away to read, I'm so excited, because it's like it could be anything. It could be about a mini golf course. It could be about... like a psychic who offers her services over the phone.

Rachel: Yeah, like a real estate agent. Like I just, I marvel at the process of deciding you want one.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And then what goes on there.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And then like the times of day, you know? Like I imagine there are a lot of logistics involved.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: And it's just always a surprise, because you're—I mean, sky, ocean, right? Like that's what you're expecting.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And then all of a sudden—

Griffin: Plane?

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Words?

Rachel: [chuckles] Plane like, oh, text on? Okay.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: What is this? Oh, interesting.

Griffin: It's simple, but it's crazy to see words up way high. You're not used to seeing words up way high.

Rachel: Yeah. I saw one recently in Florida that I took a picture of, because I was so surprised. Here we go, I'm pulling it up now. Dolly Parton's Pirates... oh, I can't read the rest of it.

Griffin: Oh.

Rachel: Dinner and show.

Griffin: Oh?

Rachel: Yeah, Dolly Parton's Pirates, dinner and show. And it has what looks like Captain Jack Sparrow on it.

Griffin: That's cool.

Rachel: It was such a combination of things that I couldn't reconcile.
[chuckles]

Griffin: Well, I think of Dolly Parton as being a fairly landlocked sort of persona. I don't think of Dolly Parton, and then I think of the wind and waves and the roiling seas.

Rachel: Yeah. And pirates, Dolly Parton and pirates, that was a surprise.

Griffin: I think of her on the prairie. I think of her on the plains. I think of her maybe in the hills. I do not think of her as being out there on the—on the big blue.

Rachel: Yeah. Dinner and show, yes.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: Dolly Parton dinner and show, yes.

Griffin: Yeah! Absolutely!

Rachel: Pirates dinner and show?

Griffin: Hm...

Rachel: How does Dolly Parton like, how does she get in there? Does she? Or is she just, it's her venue? I don't know.

Griffin: Maybe the pirates thing is referring to the unlicensed nature of this—of this entertainment. It's a pirated Dolly Parton—

Rachel: Oh.

Griffin: Like these are Dolly Parton pirates.

Rachel: But the picture? The picture of Captain Jack Sparrow.

Griffin: Yeah, no, that definitely pokes a hole in my theory, for sure.

Rachel: [chuckles] I don't know, I didn't Google it. I'm never going to.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: But that was the beach advertisement I saw and I thought, what a delight that this exists.

Griffin: It's really good.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I'll be chewing on that for a minute, thinking about what—

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: What is she doing out there? What are you doing out there?!

Rachel: And if she's not out there, like is it a thing that changes week to week? Or month to month rather. So it's like Dolly Parton's...

Griffin: Aliens!

Rachel: Yeah. Like—

Griffin: Dolly Parton's ghosts!

Rachel: Exotic animals, like—

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: Does she always—puttin' together something?

Griffin: She's always got something cookin' up in the brain lab.

Rachel: She has her own like Bucky style truck stop now.

Griffin: She's got everything.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: She's got everything. You've never been to Dollywood, I don't think.

Rachel: No, we talked about it for a while, because we used to do—you know I grew up in Missouri, so we used to do Silver Dollar City in Branson.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And from what I understand, like Dollyworld is similar.

Griffin: Dollywood, I think.

Rachel: Dollywood, you're right. But I've never been.

Griffin: That's all right. I am going to say, our kids' sudden, passionate interest in Weird Al Yankovic.

Rachel: Oh my gosh.

Griffin: And his works. I will say that... recently, like and Henry has been obviously spearheading a lot of this, being the older brother, his musical tastes have begun to become very cool and stuff that I genuinely enjoy listening to. He's a big Tally Hall guy now.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Like a huge Tally Hall guy. And one day, a couple of months ago, he was like, "Can you please play "Amish Paradise" by Weird Al Yankovic?" And I was so charmed by his—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Feeling the need to explain to me the artist behind "Amish Paradise." And since then, they have just wanted to listen to it a lot. We started to watch the music videos of like his stuff, which are like incredible for kind of where they're at and their age.

Rachel: And a lot of stuff that, I don't know about you, but I didn't know about.

Griffin: No! Yeah! For sure.

Rachel: Like He has continued to put out parody songs like in the past decade that I was not aware of, and now I'm in—becoming familiar with.

Griffin: Yeah. And I don't know, I adored Weird Al Yankovic growing up. For me, as someone in the Southern Baptist Church who was like pretty deep in it, I remember very distinctly like hearing people at the church talk about how "Amish Paradise" is like bad and it's wrong, and you shouldn't be listening to this. Because—and I remember having this thought of like, well, that's nothing. That's dumb.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Like that's crazy that that—I remember that being kind of the first sort of pinprick in the like, maybe secular stuff isn't all kind of bad inherently. So I do hold Weird Al Yankovic in a weird sort of place of honor in my heart.

Rachel: We let our children watch it because he is, I mean, 99% of the time, like a completely clean—

Griffin: Super family friendly, right?!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That was it! It was that, and honestly, when... you know, when the church started to come for Pokémon I was like, cheque, please.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Among other, obviously, more serious social—[chuckles]

Rachel: [laughs] Yeah, right?

Griffin: Social issues.

Rachel: You were okay with all the other stuff.

Griffin: The other stuff! The—the—no. I didn't stick with Weird Al, I guess, listening like you—like you said. Like I missed a lot over the last decade, and so watching all those old music videos has been great. And then watching the new stuff has been really great, too. And he's genuinely so inspiring, like making as much funny, silly stuff as he makes.

Rachel: This gives us an opportunity, actually, I'm glad you brought this up. So, one of the parody songs in like—well, it's not a parody song, as much as it's one of his polkas, which is where he puts a lot of songs together that are popular.

Griffin: Oh, man. [chuckles]

Rachel: One of the songs that appears in a more recent polka is Cardi B's song. Which...

Griffin: Wap!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I don't know the right way to say it.

Rachel: I don't know if it's WAP, when people talk about it—anyway. Our boys multiple times now have asked what that stands for.

Griffin: Right. And in the song, Albert handles it by playing sound effects. So like now you're messing with the—

Rachel: And then there's a pictu—and this is how they know that it stands for something, because there is a picture of—

Griffin: Like a leaky fauc—

Rachel: A mop.

Griffin: Is it a mop?

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I thought it was like a water droplet coming out of a faucet?

Rachel: No, it's a mop, I think.

Griffin: Oh.

Rachel: A donkey—

Griffin: Donkey, for ass.

Rachel: And then a cat?

Griffin: A cat.

Rachel: Yeah. And they keep asking. My approach has been to say that I forget.

Griffin: Or no one knows. That's my jam.

Rachel: Or no one knows. That's good, too.

Griffin: Dangerous, though, because you don't want them to google it.

Rachel: Yeah, they have not—

Griffin: They're so curious and they want to—they want to... they want to get to the bottom—

Rachel: Can we come up with something, though? This is what I'm asking. Because I, especially with the pictures, you're kind of hemmed in.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: But it has to match the letters—

Griffin: I mean, we gotta see—we have to seed ass. We can't lie to them about ass. That's a donkey.

Rachel: Oh?

Griffin: And a donkey is sometimes called ass.

Rachel: I thought we were going to have to seed wet, but you're saying—

Griffin: Wet ass... and then it's really the last—

Rachel: A cat!

Griffin: I'm more conce—I would say I'm most concerned about the last word. Not to be a prude, but they're nine and five.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: They are nine and five years old. I don't know, man.

Rachel: Yeah. Anyway, that's been fun for me and Griffin to navigate. And—

Griffin: We could say wet and gushy! Which was the radio edit of the song.

Rachel: That's what I was trying to remember, I couldn't remember—

Griffin: But they don't—it's—they don't have the G in there.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Albert used the P, and so here we are.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: That aside, it's been great. It's been really great reconnecting with—

Rachel: Yeah! We've been trying to push the boys to go, he's coming to Columbia, Maryland very soon in August. And I think Henry would be into going. Gus, I think, knows himself well enough to know that he could not sit through a concert.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Rachel: So I don't know that we're going to make it—

Griffin: We should just do it, dude. We should just do it.

Rachel: I don't know that we're going to make it to the show.

Griffin: Gus can take care of himself at home.

Rachel: Your brother, Justin and Sydnee brought their girls, and they seem to have an amazing time.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: So, we have—

Griffin: I've never seen him. I've never seen Weird Al live.

Rachel: No, me neither.

Griffin: Seems wild.

Rachel: I think, I mean, my peak listening was at an age where I could not really make decisions—

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: About the concerts I went to.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Okay, I am going to say... like the phenomenon of what I think they're calling recovery slides, which are the super puffy... sandals that you can buy.

Griffin: Hm.

Rachel: You know my purple ones—

Griffin: Oh, sure.

Rachel: That I've been wearing? That are kind of designed to be extremely comfortable. Typically not something that you would wear out in the world. But I, you know, because my dad was sick and I felt like we really needed to be available, all hours of the day, I hadn't really gone to the gym in a

month, basically. And so I went last week. And while I was at the gym, I thought this is going great. And then the day after, I thought, okay, we're doing all right.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And then I don't know if you all have had this experience, but it's not the day after, it's the day after the day after where my body's like, "Hey, I didn't like that."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And my hip really has started bothering me. But I have felt a lot of confidence in the recovery slide, because in the past, if I wear that for like a full day, next day, so much better.

Griffin: Interesting.

Rachel: It's just like, it's just the, kind of the, the goofy way that I pronate. I think I put a lot of pressure on the inside of my foot, which does seem to cause hip issues for me. And if I just wear a supportive shoe for like two days in a row?

Griffin: It's all it takes.

Rachel: It's all better. So yeah, I looked 'em up and they're called, I think, recovery slides. But they're just big old puffy sandals. They just have a real thick sole. The popular thing now is the big, thick sole.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And it makes a lot of difference for me.

Griffin: There's a lot of different ones. A lot of different recovery slides—

Rachel: Yeah, I would recommend it. I know that you are—

Griffin: Big for trail runners.

Rachel: Oh. I mean, makes sense. Like the changes in...

Griffin: Your foot's having to move all—

Rachel: The...

Griffin: Crazy like—

Rachel: Surface.

Griffin: To get over those trails.

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: Cool. I like 'em. I'm glad they work for you. I'm glad you have tools.

Rachel: I'm wondering if—I could get you some—

Griffin: I tried! What were they, Texas? I didn't rock with that.

Rachel: That's not the same.

Griffin: I don't like a lot of—I don't like a lot of stuff happening down there. You know me.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I like it fla—I like 'em just a flat shoe. No—

Rachel: Mm-hm.

Griffin: No funny business.

Rachel: I did get you a supportive flip flop?

Griffin: You did. I like it.

Rachel: Yeah. You don't want to go puffy, though.

Griffin: I don't want to go puffy!

Rachel: Okay. That's your right. [chuckles]

Griffin: That's my right as an American. I'm going to do one more, because we've been going 40 minutes.

Rachel: Okay, great.

Griffin: I don't know how many more you have. But I'm going to say summertime spider webs. I, this is a very—

Rachel: Whoa, interesting?

Griffin: Very conditional thing for me! Very conditional.

Rachel: Interesting.

Griffin: I don't usually love these guys. I understand the place they have in our ecosystem. Fuckin' miss me with the spider... spider police out there. I get it, but I'm not usually stoked to see a spider. But we have—we have a few kind of pretty decent sized spider webs that are growing like around our front door area outside, around our sort of like kitchen window outside. These are all outdoor summertime spider webs. I do not want these things in the house. Outdoors, when I see a mosquito up in one of these?

Rachel: Okay!

Griffin: When I see a spotted lanternfly inside of one of these—

Rachel: Okay!

Griffin: I'm like, fuck yeah, you sweet little—

Rachel: Now—okay—

Griffin: Eight-legged warrior. Get out there and—

Rachel: [chuckles] I was wondering about the specificity around summer, but now I get it.

Griffin: The one in our front by our front door has two spotted lanternflies in it, which is like, you gotta be stoked for that spider. Because that spider is like, one, he's like obviously doing a great service for—

Rachel: Exotic treat!

Griffin: Four our ecosystem. Two, exotic treat! Gotta taste probably pretty good. I've gooshed a lot of these guys.

Rachel: Then you're—

Griffin: Which you're supposed to do.

Rachel: You're supposed to do!

Griffin: You're supposed to do it.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Because otherwise they ravage the entire kind of ecosystem. But they, they are, they're gushy in a way like a Hakuna Matata bug is. And you gotta think the spider's loving that. He's protecting our family from mosquitoes.

Rachel: You don't see them, at least here, you don't really see them year-round.

Griffin: No.

Rachel: So it's gotta be like a—like a seasonal strawberry for them.

Griffin: Mm-hm.

Rachel: Of just like, oh, man, they're good. They're good right now.

Griffin: They're good right now.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: But we... I don't know. DC is a—DC is a swampy area, and we do get lots of insects in the summertime that I would rather not fuck around with. And I've just got to give it up to the spider webs. Every time I look at one of 'em, they got something in 'em that I don't want to deal with.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: And that includes the spider that has made it the home, but we—I give them their space, they give us ours. It's a symbiotic kind of like—

Rachel: Hey, when a spider isn't in the spider web, where do they go, do you think?

Griffin: Yeah. Work.

Rachel: [chuckles] Uh-huh.

Griffin: They go to spider jobs.

Rachel: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: That's enough for me.

Griffin: Yeah. Do you want to do anything else, or you wanna just hear what our friends at home are talking about?

Rachel: I would just like to hear what our friends—

Griffin: Ashley says, "My small wonder is child sized shopping carts at grocery stores. I loved to push them around at my small town grocery store when I was little, and it makes me smile every time I see them now knowing it will make some little kid's day."

Rachel: Yes! I feel like I haven't seen one of those in DC?

Griffin: Nor I. I also never really did it when I was a kid. I did—

Rachel: I think Trader Joe's has them sometimes?

Griffin: Oh, that's fun.

Rachel: I feel like I can picture like a little cart in a Trader Joe's aisle.

Griffin: I'll tell you what I do love, is the half size shopping cart for adults.

Rachel: Oh, yeah.

Griffin: If I'm just going and I'm picking up some produce, and a six pack for my buds? Perfect size. I love that.

Rachel: Yeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: I love that. Laura says, "In my own hometown, every summer we had something called Venetian Nights. Boats decorated like parade floats with lights would slowly drift along the Fox River while we sipped sodas and got bitten by mosquitoes, and I think that was wonderful. The town no longer holds it, but I feel lucky to have gotten to experience it." I googled this to find out like where Fox River was, and I think there are some towns—this is like a tributary in Illinois.

Rachel: Okay?

Griffin: The Fox—The Fox River. There are some places that still do it, because I googled Venetian Nights and it does—it looks lovely. It's just like a bunch of—bunch of boats going down the river with like pretty lights and stuff on it.

Rachel: Oh?

Griffin: And then just go and chill and sit. I just thought it sounded nice.

Rachel: So you get like a—like a little like gondola ride? Or...

Griffin: You don't ride on the boats. You just kind of watch 'em. It's not like a—

Rachel: Oh?

Griffin: It's not like a form of transportation. It's like a show—like a regatta. Like a regatta.

Rachel: Oh, yes, of course. No, I'm very familiar with the regatta.
[chuckles]

Griffin: You always try to other me when I talk about the regatta. You try to make me sound like a real one percenter. When I was—I'm talking about the Ohio River regatta.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Ga—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: God's brownest river.

Rachel: I think the Mississippi is pretty brown?

Griffin: I don't know, man. The Ohio feeds into the Mississippi, where do you think—where do you think she gets it?

Rachel: Do you think I can—do you think if I asked google, I would get a search result that would indicate—

Griffin: Search "God's brownest river."

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Because the Ohio one routinely, especially during a rainstorm, does look like the one that did claim Augustus Gloop's life, in the Charlie—in the Charlie factory. I cannot wait to see what God's brownest river is.

Rachel: Oh... okay, hold on. I don't—I don't want to use...

Griffin: Wait—

Rachel: The AI answer.

Griffin: I don't either—

Rachel: But I will just—

Griffin: Unless he agree with me.

Rachel: I will just say, the Mississippi River is, according to NASA, significantly browner than the Ohio River. [in a high-pitched voice] *What-what?* Muddy Mississippi, have you heard that?

Griffin: No.

Rachel: They call it—they call it the Muddy Mississipp sometimes.

Griffin: I don't—you know me, I don't—I don't—

Rachel: I'm weirdly proud of this—

Griffin: I'm extremely proud! I'm happy for you.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I know that this was your kind of river growing up. And I had my river, and I felt so confident that it was the brownest, because I can't imagine anything browner.

Rachel: Now, Ohio may be more polluted.

Griffin: Okay, yeah.

Rachel: I am not going to look that up.

Griffin: Beautiful! Still beautiful. Hey, listen. All rivers are beautiful.

Rachel: Mm-hm. Mississippi starts like up in Canada, goes all the way down to the Gulf.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Like... I don't know how big Ohio is. Does Ohio like... well, I'm not talking about the state, I'm talking the Ohio River. Is it like, does it go a lot of places?

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Wherever you need it to go.

Rachel: [chuckles] Anyway, this has been River Talk.

Griffin: This has been River Talk! Thanks for joining us here on Wonderful. 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. Thank you to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go to maximumfun.org, check out all the great shows they have over there. We got merch over at the merch store. I got a—

Rachel: Your book's out!

Griffin: My book is out, The Adventure Zone: Story and Song. It's the last graphic novel. I'm so proud of it. And I—if you enjoy TAZ: Balance, please consider picking it up, because it's a... it's out there. You can just go read it. And it's been really great seeing people's sort of reactions to that. I don't really have a ton else—

Rachel: We made—I—you know, depending on... I don't—we may continue to do this small wonder format.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: For a little while. I can't say for sure either way. I just know that I want to continue to make this show. And so if we are having a challenging week, we may revert to this small wonder format.

Griffin: And hey! Wonderfulpodcast@gmail.com, if you got your own ones, to help us sort of...

Rachel: [chuckles] Oh, I thought you were gonna say, "And if you don't like it, here's our email."

Griffin: No, no, no! Don't email us that!

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: But you know, some small wonders of your own. You know, one or two sentences about stuff you're into, that's always helpful for us as well.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And thank you all for being so patient and so kind and supportive over these past few weeks, because it's been—it's been really helpful. Really great.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So that's it for this episode. Thanks for joining us on Wonderful.
Now get that—now get out of here.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Get lost! [chuckles]

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

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