

Wonderful 427: Delightful Brain Garbage

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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! It's a podcast where we talk about things we like, that's good, that we're into. That is what it is. This time? It is what it is. We've been experimenting with the format lately, I'll say, as we get our sea legs back under us. We had so many responses to the notes episode, my love.

Rachel: Oh, really?

Griffin: We had so many people send in their own absolute brain stew, absolute incomprehensible, delightful brain garbage. And I appreciate it so—I—it's—I sympathize and empathize with it so much. And it meant so much to me that people would be so vulnerable to send in their absolute brain dookie.

Rachel: For those of you that maybe don't remember last week's episode, or are listening to these out of order for some reason, Griffin and I shared notes we had made to ourselves in our phone.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Just over the years. And then Griffin at the end put a call out for people to do the same thing.

Griffin: I did not expect so—I didn't expect this to be such a universal thing. But wonderfulpodcast@gmail.com, that's where you can send in your own small wonders, which we usually do at the end of the show. But not a joke,

dozens, if not hundreds of people just sending in screencaps of their thing, and it's just, like, lists that's just like, "Bazoobles!"

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: "I scrummed my ding-dang!" Like, whoa, holy shit, guys! Like, we're all just—our brains are all producing straight refuse, all the time.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And we all feel compelled to catalog that. And I've never felt closer to our listeners, or really the rest of humankind.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I really appreciate it. Thank you all, everybody, for sending those in.

Rachel: Before, when you were, like, a young person, you would write those all down in somebody's yearbook.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: At the end of the year, to kind of memorialize your inside jokes.

Griffin: You would write down like, "Jeff Foxworthy TED Talk, lol, get it? Have a great summer, LYLAS."

Rachel: [laughs] Uh-huh.

Griffin: "Check you—check you next year. Stay cool. Stay fresh." I never had a yearbook quote written down in my own yearbooks that I felt like was particularly personal to me. A l—I got a lot of like, "I signed your crack," a lot of that. This to me—

Rachel: This says a lot about you, Griffin.

Griffin: This was healing! This was—this was—

Rachel: To hear that, right now?

Griffin: No, to get all these notes in. That was not—that was damaging to share what I shared.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: But to get all of these—just to get all of this just absolute... and I mean this in both the kind of, like, musical but also toilet way, just scat that people were just throwing in our inboxes.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I really appreciated it. I really loved it. Do you have any small wonders?

Rachel: Small Son started swimming, sort of.

Griffin: Holy shit, man! It's so weird to have one of our boys just, like, do something kind of challenging without much pushing from—

Rachel: Well...

Griffin: Well, okay, we did swim classes for a long time, but—

Rachel: He had swim classes for years. Like, literal years. But, you know, he was tiny.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: You know, he was, like, three years old. So—

Griffin: He looked like the Nirvana baby. [laughs]

Rachel: [chuckles] Uh-huh. But this is consistent with Small Son, in that it doesn't matter how much effort we put in. One day he will decide on his own that he's going to do something.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: Usually when we have stopped pushing entirely.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And that happened over the weekend. He had just—we've been putting, like, a life vest on him, even though we knew in swim class he hadn't been using one.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And then he was like, "I'm gonna try it without this." And then he just went underwater and started kicking. And now all of a sudden, that's all he wants to do.

Griffin: Yeah, also true of Small Son: now he only wants to swim, and he's mad that our house isn't submerged in water.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That there isn't a pool immediate—and it's like, dude, we live in... we live in DC.

Rachel: Big city.

Griffin: Big city. The swamp is everywhere, just go swim in that, if you know what I'm saying. But he doesn't understand those kinds of jokes. But yeah, man, really, really delightful stuff. I think Big Son's gonna get there. I think Big Son will—I think Big Son will take to the water too.

Rachel: Yeah, I mean, Big Son, you know, he had a significant obstacle in front of him, which was that he could not get his ears wet for a very long time.

Griffin: For a decade, yeah, basically, let's call it what it is, yeah.

Rachel: [chuckles] Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, we're still—we're still recovering from that. I'm gonna say we went to Huntington, West Virginia, the jewel of the mountain state, the pride of Appalachia, for my dad's birthday this past weekend. And it's, like, always amazing, it's always delightful to, like, stay with Juice and watch all our kids play, and all that stuff.

I'm going to give a special shout out to the Peddlers Mall over on the west end of Huntington, West Virginia. It is an enormous... antique? How would you—what—flea market? I guess you would call it a flea market.

Rachel: An antique mall.

Griffin: An antique flea market.

Rachel: A flea market, I think, usually implies that the seller is present.

Griffin: The seller is not present, but the store is divided up into, like, booths that people have, like, set up their—

Rachel: Yeah, that's an antique mall.

Griffin: That's an antique mall? Okay, I didn't know the terminology. Just so great, just so great to go poke your nose around through, like, someone's DVDs. Like, very clearly, like—and there's a lot of, like, crap in there as well. There's, like, some booths that are just, like, selling license plates of AI art.

Rachel: Or Christmas candy.

Griffin: Christmas candy.

Rachel: A lot of, like—

Griffin: Which is a little weird to me.

Rachel: ...leftover Christmas candy. But it was interesting, too, one thing that's fun about an antique mall is that you get your own little booth space and you can set it up however you want. And some of them really get into it.

Griffin: So into it! I love that. That's my favorite part about it.

Rachel: They make their little booth space like you've walked into their home. And, like, everything is on theme and, like, sorted by pleasing color. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah, it was a great run. I got a board game, an old Milton Bradley board game that's like Arcade Madness or something like that, that has, like, a little card-based arcade game that's, like, a core component of the thing.

I'd never heard of the thing, but it was, like, 20 bucks. I was like, hell yes, I'll buy this old-ass arcade-based board game I've never heard of before. I also got a beautiful Frisch's Big Boy, that I'm showing him to you like you weren't there for—oh, I left the price tag on.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: This was 25 bucks!

Rachel: Wow, Griff, you really blacked out on that one.

Griffin: I really blacked out in the booth. But, I mean, can you blame me?

Rachel: He's very cute. And this is in reference to the MBMBaM theme this year, right?

Griffin: It is, yeah, I'm throwing heaters for him specifically.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Him and the Lord.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You go first this week!

Rachel: I do!

Griffin: What would you like to talk about?

Rachel: Well, because this is kind of our first return to form in a while, I wanted to do something that made me feel comfortable and safe. And that is a trip to the Poetry Corner.

Griffin: [sings a tune and laughs]

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: I don't know if you—I don't know if that—did you see the panic on my face?

Rachel: [chuckles] No, I missed it.

Griffin: It was, I—I went "*bow bow*," and then I had, like, a full-blown kernel panic where it was like, okay, so hold on. Are you doing the, like, Step by Step theme song? Or is it—

Rachel: Oh! I immediately thought Caramello, right? Isn't that what it was from? Or what was the commercial? It is in Ferris Bueller's Day Off.

Griffin: Oh, okay, that is my association with "Bow bow chicka."

Rachel: But it was also in a commercial, I think Caramello, some candy bar.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: That they used to play that song, too.

Griffin: Okay, that was not the association I was making. I just, like, freak—I freaked the fuck out.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: I freaked out.

Rachel: That is not usually the tone we bring to the Poetry Corner.

Griffin: You're right.

Rachel: But I'll take it! It is—i can be considered appropriate for this—

Griffin: I guess so.

Rachel: ...poet.

Griffin: Oh, really?

Rachel: In particular. Yeah.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Is it—is it Matthew Broderick?

Rachel: No.

Griffin: Oh.

Rachel: I guess I'll have to do some explaining on why I think that song is appropriate.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: The poet I am talking about is Analicia Sotelo.

Griffin: Cool.

Rachel: Who is a poet that lives in Houston. And her first book was called Virgin, and it came out in 2018.

Griffin: Oh, wow. Hot off the—hot off the—well, it's eight years ago.

Rachel: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: But still pretty hot off the presses.

Rachel: She has an MFA from University of Houston, and currently lives in Houston and works for Writers in the Schools.

Griffin: Cool.

Rachel: The reason I thought that song was appropriate is that it has kind of an intro that sounds oddly sexual to me.

Griffin: [in a deep voice] Oh, yeah.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That one? It's hard to get that deep, I can't do it.

Rachel: I mean, I wouldn't expect you to.

Griffin: If I was bigger, I could probably get, like, my vocal cor—

Rachel: If you were bigger. [chuckles]

Griffin: If I was bigger, my vocal cords would be, like, bigger, and so I could get deeper probably. I think that's how it works.

Rachel: Oh? I never thought about that. It's possible, I guess.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And yeah, so her book, *Virgin*, was kind of, I mean, it was definitely written from the perspective of somebody who is experiencing virginity late in age, I guess, is a way. And she never identifies whether this is a personal

story for her or not, because part of her argument is like, that's nobody's business.

Griffin: Sure! [chuckles]

Rachel: But she also writes about her experience as, like, a Mexican-American woman, and her experience of just kind of coming of age and how that, you know, changes her perspective on her relationship with her family and her sense of place. And so I wanted to read the opening poem from that book, *Virgin*.

Griffin: Cool.

Rachel: So, the poem is called *Do You Speak Virgin?*

"This wedding is some hell:

a bouquet of cacti wilting in my hand
while my closest friends

sit on a bar bench,
stir the sickles in their drinks, smile up at me.

The moon points out my neckline
like a chaperone.

My veil is fried tongue and chicken wire,
hanging off to one side.

I am a Mexican-American fascinator.

Let me cluck my way to an empty field

where my husband stays silent
& the stars are the arachnid eyes

of my mother-in-law: duplicitous,
ever-present in the dark.

I'm not afraid of sex.

I'm afraid of his skeleton
knocking against the headboard

in the middle of the night.

I'm afraid I am a blind goat
with a ribbon in my hair, with screws for eyes.

I'm afraid wherever I walk, it's purgatory.

I meet a great lake with rust-colored steam
rising, someone somewhere

has committed murder, hides
in the bushes with an antique mirror.

The virgins are here to prove a point.
The virgins are here to tell you to fuck off.

The virgins are certain there's a circle of hell
dedicated to that fear you'll never find anyone else.

You know what it looks like:

all the lovers—cloaked in blood & salt
& never satisfied,

a priest collar like a giant tooth
in the midnight sky.

I want to know what's coming in the afterlife

before I sign off on arguments
in the kitchen & the sight of him

fleeing to the car

once he sees how far & wide,
how dark & deep

this frigid female mind can go."

Griffin: Shit, man.

Rachel: Isn't that powerful?

Griffin: It's very powerful. It's a very—that was a—that was a poem-ass poem, man. I hope that doesn't come off as reductive, but it was just, like, so... I don't—I don't know... unsettling, I think, a lot of the time? Which is a... a very powerful brush to paint with, when you're talking about something as historically kind of delicate as grown virginity, I guess.

Rachel: Yeah. I think you can really kind of go back and forth in the poem. The poem really takes you in and out of itself, if that makes any sense. Where you're kind of, you're understanding these very tangible, real... you know, things that she is talking about. And then she gets very kind of metaphorical.

Griffin: "The creature's collar is a giant tooth in the midnight sky," or something like that?

Rachel: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Griffin: It was like... I love when poems do that, and I feel like you've brought quite a few where, yeah, you start to get a foothold on it. And it's like, oh, I understand, you're writing about an anxiety that I am finding very, very relatable. And then you throw this fuckin' haymaker out of nowhere that kind of, like, I get stuck on for a little bit, trying to decipher.

Rachel: She gave this interview in The Adroit Journal, where she talks a little bit about that. She kind of, just to paraphrase, she says that poetry, we read what we don't understand. And then, direct quote, "We intuit the rhythms of language and use it before we really know how to, but that's just

it. That's how it's meant to be used, in a fragmented and growing state that feels like discovery."

Griffin: Love it! Love that shit!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: That's so good.

Rachel: Yeah! Yeah! I, you know, I tend to kind of shy away from poetry that's too abstract, because I feel like that can be alienating to a lot of people. But I really like this balance that she has of kind of rooting you, and you're in the place with her, And then suddenly you're, you know, a thousand miles away.

But she kind of returns you to this very, like, you know, easy to understand language. And I really like that. This book about virginity, and a hundred other things, but obviously the title is Virgin, kind of came out of this exploration of kind of the different ways that virginity is discussed. And the movies that she cites in this article that she did in The Adroit Journal, she cites Can't Hardly Wait.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And she cites Real Women Have Curves, which is not a movie that I'm familiar with. But she talks about how, like, virginity in films is either this kind of thing that can be, like, a suggestion of purity and something that you're supposed to maintain, especially depending on what culture you're from.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: Or it can be this thing that you have to get rid of as soon as possible. [laughs]

Griffin: Right, yeah!

Rachel: Like, you can't hardly wait! And so she talks about some things in this poem that I just read, Do You Speak Virgin? She says, "The poem became a monologue in which every virgin could speak back and answer the question, what is this virginity thing for you? And through that monologue came potential answers. Virginity is the apprehension of love. Virginity is morbidity and the awareness that we have one life to make love right, or to keep it a while."

Griffin: Holy shit!

Rachel: "Virginity is purgatorial, is never ending, if one does not want to let it go. Virginity is its own territory that should be respected, it is private and public. It is not mine and it is not yours. It is whatever you define for yourself and however you choose to love, and why and when, and for how long, and may it be ecstatic. May it be."

Griffin: Bo-po here in the Poetry Corner.

Rachel: [laughs] Bo-po, yeah, exactly.

Griffin: As you throw a fuckin', a spare at me. That shit rules!

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: That's so good! It's not a thing that—yes, whenever people do talk about this thing, it is—it is one of two directions that you go. And I feel like very little attention is paid to, like, what a person who is a virgin would think about that, or how they would sort of receive those kinds of [crosstalk].

Rachel: Yeah! I mean, we watch a lot of reality television, a lot of reality dating television.

Griffin: Sure.

Rachel: And the producers on those shows tend to just kind of haphazardly pick somebody who hasn't had sex before, and then make it a whole plot line.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: And make it every conversation, and make it a, like, deal breaker potentially for the match if—because people assume that it says a lot about you.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: I mean, her and her Mexican-American heritage, she speaks a lot about... and that was the example of Real Women Have Curves, of how, you know, there's, like, cultural and religious reasons, and it can say more about you in that way. Or you know, or is it just you're making a thoughtful choice or, you know, a hundred different things. But people assume, like, it means something.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: There's a reason, it's very deep to who you are. It's going to say a lot about you. So yeah, so I really... it just made me think more deeply about that experience, which I thought was a pretty big accomplishment.

Griffin: Yeah! No kidding. Yeah.

Rachel: So that's Analicia Sotelo, and the book is called Virgin. And I would recommend it.

Griffin: Hell yeah. Can I steal you away?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Thanks.

[theme music plays]

[ad break]

Griffin: Speaking of reality dating television shows, my topic today is inspired by the new season of Married at First Sight that we've been

watching. Have we talked about it? I think we must have talked about it at some point on here, because we've been watching it for a couple of weeks now.

Rachel: Yeah, I mean, I think we just introduced that we had just started, and we weren't willing to kind of say anything about the season as a whole, but that we had noticed some—

Griffin: And I think that's wise!

Rachel: ...differences. [laughs]

Griffin: I think that's what—yeah, there's some differences in the production of it.

Rachel: It used to be a Lifetime thing, right?

Griffin: It used to be a Lifetime thing and now it's a Peacock thing, and we don't have to go on, like, a whole thing, because my shit is not actually about Married at First Sight.

Rachel: Okay. [laughs]

Griffin: It was just sort of inspired by it. In this latest episode, there were two dates that were kind of featured that I thought were interesting sort of comparisons. On one, a guy named I think Adam, whose whole personality is jet skis and pickleball—

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: ...took—went on a double date with his wife and another couple to play pickleball. And he was so horrible to his wife, just, like, cutting her off, not letting her actually play, chewing her out—

Rachel: Obviously super competitive—

Griffin: Really competitive.

Rachel: ...and frustrated when she would make a mistake.

Griffin: There was another date where they played horse.

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: A couple played horse. I'd like to talk about horse. It's better than pickleball in every conceivable way.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: And it's my favorite sort of iteration of basketball.

Rachel: Yeah! I was telling Griffin as we were watching it, same for me. Like, I'm very intimidated by basketball, not because I—well, not just because I don't have a lot of experience and don't really understand the sport.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: But as a small person...

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: [chuckles] It is very difficult for me to be successful. But horse is something that is so approachable.

Griffin: Yes.

Rachel: And, like, and two people—

Griffin: Two people—

Rachel: ...can play.

Griffin: ...can play it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: You don't need a—you don't need a whole lot of stuff, you just need a ball, you need a hoop. And then you need a friend, or a lover.

Rachel: [chuckles] Or a lover.

Griffin: Or a lover. This is maybe known lore to, like, our longtime listeners, but we had a small basketball court installed in our backyard when I was in, like, sixth grade. And it was like, it was not very big, you couldn't play real basketball in it. You could play, like, sort of play Chicago 21 or, like, other kind of, like, half court variations, but you could play horse as much as you wanted. And that was my preferred way to play whenever friends came over and we shot hoops.

Rachel: Do you—I know that you suggested that your dad was trying to instill some kind of sportiness in you all.

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: Was there, like, a decision point for this basketball hoop?

Griffin: I don't remember being consulted.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Because we had a grass backyard.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And then we had, like, a family room extension built onto our house. Partially because, like, our house was too small for the five people living in it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Where we only had one bathroom. And so, like, we needed to rectify that situation pretty urgently.

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: I don't remember being consulted on the installation of the basketball court, but, like, the family room cut our yard, like, in half. And so it would have been a very, very small play yard or whatever, or a medium-sized backyard basketball court, I guess.

Rachel: Yeah! Because I know that you had basketball ambitions for a while.

Griffin: Well, that's, yeah.

Rachel: And I didn't know if that was before the hoop or after the hoop.

Griffin: Well, okay, my basketball ambitions were inspired by Space Jam, and...

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: You know, like, after the '96 Bulls season, just, like, fuckin' every kid, like—

Rachel: True.

Griffin: I never watched basketball, but I appreciate it as a cultural sort of object.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And I don't know, I really enjoy shooting a basketball. I'll give the creators of basketball this credit. It's very—it's very pleasing to shoot a basketball, especially when it goes in the hoop.

Rachel: Yeah, the sound, too.

Griffin: The sound!

Rachel: That seems very intentional—

Griffin: The swish sound or the—

Rachel: ...doesn't it? It seems like the net was designed specifically to make a pleasing sound when the ball goes through it. [chuckles]

Griffin: And I don't know if it wa—I think it probably serves other purposes, but... virtually every other aspect of basketball I could do without. The running, the dribbling, defending or being defended against. Having the ball stolen from you is a—is a psychic wound sort of every time. Passing is okay, but not being passed to feels bad.

And so, if we could just kind of really narrow this thing down to just shooting baskets, that's my ideal version of basketball. And that is—that is what horse is.

And what I really liked about horse is, like, I didn't have a whole lot of stamina, but my hand eye coordination has always been, like, pretty good. And so I could kind of hold my own at horse. And so when, you know, kids would play basketball at school, if they played horse, I could ha—like, I could kind of hang. And there were not a lot of similar sorts of experiences that I had athletically throughout my primary schooling sort of career.

Rachel: [chuckles] Uh-huh.

Griffin: So, other great stuff about horse, it's fully modular. If you don't have a lot of time, you can play pig. If you do have a ton of time, you can play, like, brontosaurus or whatever.

Rachel: Yeah, okay, I never thought about that.

Griffin: Yeah. I mean, horse isn't, like, so—you're not riding horses while you play the g—there's... it's not like—

Rachel: Yeah, there's no reason—

Griffin: ...so integral. Like, you can have it be—

Rachel: ...for it to be 'horse.'

Griffin: ...sort of whatever you want it to be.

Rachel: Should you explain what horse is? [chuckles]

Griffin: What horse is? The game?

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Oh, yeah, sure. So, you shoot a basket and then someone has to shoot the same way that you did it, and make it. And if they don't, they get an H.

Rachel: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: And then so on and so forth, adding accruing letters as penalties. This is what's largely colloquially known as a penalty game, which has sort of different iterations across different sort of... you know, other sports and leisure activities.

And if you spell the whole word, you lose. That's it. So you do, like, trick shots, and you try to match those trick shots. That's horse. So, I would watch basketball if it was just horse, I think. I do enjoy watching people do cool trick shots. Apparently it was incorporated into the NBA All-Star weekend sort of festivities in 2009.

Rachel: Yeah, makes sense.

Griffin: But it was only included for two years before they canceled it in 2011. I don't know—I don't know why. I guess maybe—like, the dunk contest probably sucks all the oxygen out of the room. And don't get me wrong, I love that shit as well. It's not really something I resonate with, because I have never been a dunker.

Rachel: It might be hard to figure out who gets to compete...

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: ...in horse.

Griffin: Right.

Rachel: Like the dunk competition, okay, it's people that obviously are very good at dunking. But, like, how do you decide who's the best horse player?

Griffin: Well, I mean, you look at the—you look at the NBA Jam statistics on each player, and it's like, you know, Alan Iverson's three point stat is, like, 10.

Rachel: Oh, okay.

Griffin: So maybe he's—he's the—but you can dunk in horse. It can be a dunk.

Rachel: Yeah! Exactly.

Griffin: And you gotta copy that too. So you're looking for all-rounders, I think. I don't know fucking anything about basketball, man.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: So there is a tradition of similar kind of penalty-based spelling games going back to, like, ye olde tavern times, that used similar kind of livestock terminology to designate who was worst at the game. Whether it was, you know, stuff like darts or pool or whatever, livestock names.

This is my take on the etymology of this game, because it doesn't exi—like, you can't find it. Like so many, like, folk games that we've done here on this show, like, there isn't like a, well, it was John Basketman who in 1904 said, "I'm shooting baskets like a real horse today!" And all—

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Like...

Rachel: The first game was played against a horse. That's what it was.

Griffin: It was, yeah, it was played against a horse. There's no rules that say a horse can't play basketball.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: There should be a rule that's—someone's going to get hurt out there.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: So yeah, I guess the suggestion is that horses can't play basketball. And so if you spell out horse, you're bad, you're bad at the game. That's about as specific an etymology I can find.

Rachel: There are a lot of animals.

Griffin: There's a ton of animals that can't play basketball.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: The ones that can, hamsters or mice. I've seen that happen.

Rachel: Little, yeah, little.

Griffin: Little mice. One dog.

Rachel: One dog. [chuckles]

Griffin: I think that's it.

Rachel: I feel like there's gotta be a movie where a—like, a chimpanzee shoots a basket.

Griffin: Oh, yeah!

Rachel: Animated characters.

Griffin: Yeah, I guess so. I mean, yeah, rabbits, but that's not... you know that's not real.

Rachel: [laughs] I don't know. The fascination with Lola Bunny suggests that there was something real about that film.

Griffin: There was something very real about Lola. And I'm glad—

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: ...I'm glad to hear you accept and address that. So, like, the origins of the game are also kind of difficult to tack down. There started to be kind of, like, written acknowledgments of the game of horse as early as the 1930s.

But really it was just sort of like, it came up alongside the sort of introduction of basketball as a national sort of sport, as an informal kind of variant that you could play in your paved driveway.

And it wasn't until the 1977-1978 NBA season, CBS Sports was... were airing the games. This is kind of where it went nationwide. What they did is, during that season, they pre-taped games of horse played between, like, the best players of the era. And then during, like, halftime stuff, they would show these—

Rachel: That's great!

Griffin: That's fucking great, right? I think I—I never—we watch every Blues game, we watch a lot of hockey during hockey season. We consume a lot of sports television entertainment, I would say, on a given week, depending on what time of year it is. I have never, like, loved the intermission stuff of like, okay, so now we're gonna just sort of—you guys are going to talk about the stuff we all just watched.

Rachel: Or bring somebody into the booth that isn't particularly good on camera.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And interview them for an interminable, like, length of time, and they have nothing really interesting to say.

Griffin: Now, show me a little skills competition?

Rachel: Yeah!

Griffin: Don't just do all that shit during one weekend where it's like, let's see who's the fastest skater, let's see who's the best shooter. Like, put that —

Rachel: Or—

Griffin: ...in the breaks!

Rachel: Or show me the weird competition they're playing in the break. You know how, like—

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: ...when they're—when the players are taking a break, they will bring out people in the audience to do some kind of—

Griffin: Yes!

Rachel: ...weird thing. Like, I'd love to watch that.

Griffin: I'd love to watch that.

Rachel: Get a sense of kind of the stadium and the culture.

Griffin: Yeah!

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: This is—this brings me to my sort of main point here today. I think there's an opportunity for our nation's sports leaders to really streamline a lot of our national pastimes, and boil them down to their best components, really just focus in on what works. For football, I'm thinking maybe just field goal kicking at long range.

Rachel: Really?

Griffin: Or long passing.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: It's tough—football is tough to kind of, like, boil down to, like, a specific—

Rachel: Long passing is good.

Griffin: Long passing is pretty good, right? For hockey, let's get whole games that are just shootouts. That's cool to me.

Rachel: Yeah, that is cool.

Griffin: I like whole—and maybe a fight every once in a while.

Rachel: [chuckles] Then it's a different sport, kind of.

Griffin: I guess it is a different sport.

Rachel: You're watching boxing at that point.

Griffin: You're just kind of watching boxing. For baseball, you might think I would want, like, a home run derby.

Rachel: Exactly, yeah.

Griffin: But it's actually, I don't really care so much—somebody hits a long bomb and it's like, I've seen—they all kind of look the same.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Like a big grand slam, like, that's cool. It all sort of looks the same to me. For me, the clips that, like, show up on my soshi, of like outfielders doing *insane dives!*

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And catching it and then fuckin' heating it all the way back to third base or whatever?

Rachel: Yeah, that is good.

Griffin: That's the shit right there!

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: So like a—just a f—long ball fielding competition, which I think we could accomplish. My main issue with baseball is the pitching. All that stuff that happens at the mound, like, it takes forever! So if we just did T-ball basically, and then it's just, like, you slam it and it'll be a home run, or not. And then the outfielders are going to have to do some crazy shit to get it—that's cool. That is something I'd watch. Also three innings, not nine.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: Get me in, get me out, I don't need all that much baseball.

Rachel: So you would have a second inning stretch.

Griffin: I would have a—well, before the third inning, you would do a little stretch.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: You've been there for 40 minutes.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: You have not finished your first beer.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: Your nachos are still—there's a healthy amount of those left. Anyway, horse is great. And I don't play basketball really ever. Sometimes we go to a playground that has, like, a basketball hoop, and I will shoot, and I'm fuckin' bad. I'm, like, really, really bad.

Rachel: It's been a long time.

Griffin: It's been so long.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: And also, our basketball hoop sunk into the ground a good, like, foot and a half, I think, when it was installed improperly.

Rachel: You're used to a lower—

Griffin: So I'm used to a lower basketball experience.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: But I still love shooting baskets, man.

Rachel: Yeah! I think I remember having, like, a two month period where I wanted my parents to buy a basketball hoop. And it was only because it was a sport that, without practice, you couldn't really get better at. And to practice, if you didn't have a hoop at home, you would have to go to a court where other people were.

Griffin: Yes!

Rachel: Which I didn't want to do.

Griffin: No!

Rachel: And so it was, like, one of those things. It's like people that have a pool table.

Griffin: Uh-huh.

Rachel: It's like, well, if I'm ever going to play this with other people, I need to practice, and I would like to do so in the privacy of my own home. [chuckles]

Griffin: It's—it's the—it's—you gotta get the feel. You gotta get the feel for it. I love—there's clips of—I think it's Steph Curry, like, dribbling a basketball, like, pregame, and stopping because he, like, drops it. And then he, like, dribbles on one spot of the court and, like, calls people over, and they look at the board and realize, like, one of the floorboards is, like, improperly kind of, like, set and so it's not bouncing the basketball the right way.

Or there's one where he's, like, shooting baskets and kept missing, and he called them over and they measured the distance, and it was, like, a half inch off. [crosstalk]

Rachel: Wow!

Griffin: I'd love to be that keyed in, to anything!

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: Anyway, that's horse. Do you want to know what our friends at home are talking about?

Rachel: Yes.

Griffin: Here's a—here's one of the many notes that was sent in.

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: Context-free. Seth sent this one in. "Carbonara flavored meat pie. I stumble upon this note from time to time and dream of bringing this flaky, egggy dish to life."

Rachel: That would be really good.

Griffin: Yeah, but how do you accomplish it? I don't know how one captures carbonara flavor in a meat pie setting.

Rachel: I mean, you'd make the sauce, and then you would thicken it.

Griffin: You're losing me a little bit. Meat pie is already, like, a pretty heavy sort of situa—I—this is probably why Seth has struggled to bring this—

Rachel: Well, you'd have pieces of chicken.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: And then the sauce.

Griffin: The bacon and the egggy.

Rachel: Yeah, and then the sauce... in a pie.

Griffin: Okay, maybe it's not that hard.

Rachel: I got it.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: I got it.

Griffin: You crushed it. So here we go, Seth.

Rachel: [laughs]

Griffin: This is service journalism we're providing here. Elise says, "My small wonder is the spray nozzle on a kitchen sink. It's so helpful for washing

awkwardly big pans, cleaning the trash can, rinsing canned beans in a colander, sending food scraps down the drain, the list goes on." Freaking love it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: I wish ours was 10 times more powerful. It's all right. But I would love one that—it's so good when you're like, ew, I'm going to have to touch this peanut buttery butter knife. But then you get the spray going and it's strong enough to do it without touching it.

Rachel: Yeah, I—water pressure is something I have really valued, because I don't think we've had particularly good water pressure anywhere we've lived.

Griffin: No, not at all.

Rachel: And I don't know what the secret is. [crosstalk]

Griffin: It's us. It's something we did.

Rachel: We seem like a softer people.

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And as such—

Griffin: Fair!

Rachel: ...the utilities company does not give us as much water, because they know that we'll put up with it. [chuckles]

Griffin: We won't do it right, yeah. We'll get hurt too. We'll hurt ourselves with strong water.

Rachel: What if it's just making a phone call and saying, "Hey, I don't have great pressure."

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: And they're like, "All right, hold on, let me divert some pipes. Okay, how's that?"

Griffin: Awesome. Yeah, they do it on the phone with you.

Rachel: Yeah! [chuckles]

Griffin: That's cool. No, I like that. Thank you so much for listening to our show. 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.

And thanks to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. Go over to Maximumfun.org, check out all the great stuff they got going on over there. We got merch up in the merch store! Some new logo merch for Sawbones and Shmanners, got a McElroy Family Clubhouse pin. A bunch of other stuff over there at mcelroymerch.com.

Our book is out, the final TAZ graphic novel, The Adventure Zone: Story and Song. You can go to theadventurezonecomic.com and grab that. I'm super proud of that book.

And The Besties, if you listen to my gaming podcast I do with Russ Frushtick and Chris Plante, and formerly Justin McElroy, we're all getting back together in October to do a show in New York City.

Rachel: To squash the beef.

Griffin: To squash the longstanding beef.

Rachel: [chuckles]

Griffin: You can get tickets for that at bit.ly/bestiesonbroadway.

Rachel: I just came up with an idea for your live show.

Griffin: Okay.

Rachel: Can I share it with you—

Griffin: Yeah, please.

Rachel: ...on air?

Griffin: Yeah.

Rachel: You do, like, a The Wizard style competition of playing video games in front of the audience.

Griffin: That's pretty cool.

Rachel: Yeah.

Griffin: We could just do all of the shit from The Wizard. Like a...

Rachel: A whole Wizard recap.

Griffin: Just a whole Wizard live stage experience. There's something there.

Rachel: I bet you win, baby. I bet you win. You're an incredible gamer.

Griffin: Yeah... But it's not—the others are kind of scrubs. Like—

Rachel: Oh?

Griffin: You know—

Rachel: So it would be a blowout?

Griffin: It would be a blowout—

Rachel: It'd make you uncomfortable?

Griffin: Yeah, it would be like... you know, because I'd be up there with Mario and I'd be at the finish line and shit, and they would still be, like, getting fuckin' aced by a Hammer Bro or whatever.

Rachel: Yeah...

Griffin: Also, Russ calls him May-rio, and it makes me so upset every time I hear it. So I don't want to invite that energy on stage.

Rachel: Well, I never said you had to play Mario. [chuckles]

Griffin: Oh, I just assumed. I mean, Mario 3 is what they play in The Wizard at the end.

Rachel: Oh!

Griffin: That's sort of the climactic—

Rachel: Okay.

Griffin: ...sort of battle.

Rachel: I see. I see.

Griffin: But anyway, I'll call Jenny Lewis.

Rachel: Please!

Griffin: Rilo Kiley frontwoman, and see if she's available.

Rachel: Just to cheer you on?

Griffin: Just to sort of just to—just to cheer me on, participate, and call the Nintendo Power Helpline whenever I need tips.

Rachel: Good.

Griffin: It's gonna be a kick-ass show, just as this episode was. Thank you so much for listening, and join us again next week for a new episode of Wonderful. And... have a good—have a good evening.

Rachel: Ooh?

Griffin: And if I don't see you, good afternoon, good morning, and good night.

Rachel: Love it.

Griffin: Truman Show.

Rachel: [chuckles]

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

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