[*Gender Reveal* theme song begins]

**Molly**: Welcome to Gender Reveal, a podcast where we ask intrusive personal questions, and hopefully get a little bit closer to understanding what the hell gender is. I’m your host and resident gender detective, Molly Woodstock.

[*Gender Reveal* theme song ends]

**MOLLY**: Hey friends, welcome back to the show! It’s so nice to be back for season three. Thank you all for sticking through the break and showing up for a new season. We’ve got a lot of great chats for you this season. I don’t want to give all of them away right now, but I can tell you that this episode is very exciting. It's with Archie Bongiovanni, who you may know from *Grease Bats*, or from *Fist You*, or from *Sweatgasm* or from *A Quick and Easy Guide to They/Them Pronouns*. Archie has really big news I'm excited to share.

But first, just a very quick reminder that Gender Reveal is sponsored by you! We have a website, we give out grants, we have transcriptions of almost all of our episodes. We make Gender Reveal stickers and glittery pins. And all of that is only possible because of all of the folks who donate to Gender Reveal every month. If you're a long time listener, especially if you're a cisgender listener, please consider pitching in to keep the show going. Think of it as a birthday gift to me, your favorite gender detective.

Okay. Quickly, before I start talking about Sagittarius season, let's go to This Week in Gender.

[This Week in Gender music plays]

A lot has happened in the past two months. We already talked about the fact that the Trump administration has suggested defining gender to mean biological sex based on external genitalia at birth; a total nonsense thing. There has also been a lot of spiciness on trans Twitter, which I’m going to skip over, at least for now. Because if you don't already know about it, there's no way I’m going to be able to explain Andrea Long Chu's entire existence to you in three minutes. So, I guess today let's talk about a different part of Twitter. Namely, the Twitter conduct policy.

In October, Twitter expanded its hateful content policy, making it more than three times longer than the previous version.

Because most folks don't read the terms and conditions of a website, nobody really noticed the update until a week or two ago, when folks started pointing out a very important change. The section now reads, "We prohibit targeting individuals with repeated slurs, tropes or other content that intends to dehumanize, degrade or reinforce negative or harmful stereotypes about a protected category. This includes targeted misgendering or dead naming of transgender individuals."

In other words, folks can now get suspended from Twitter for intentionally misgendering or dead naming you, so report that shit.

Twitter also created a new section of its terms of service called Consequences, in which it promises to ban accounts that repeatedly break the rules or engaged primarily in abusive behavior. In fact, they've already banned Meghan Murphy, founder of the Canadian TERF website Feminist Current, for repeatedly misgendering trans women or insisting that trans women are men, so again, report that shit.

As expected, some TERFs and right wingers are calling this a violation of freedom of speech and expressing outrage and dismay that they aren't allowed to debate "transgenderism" in the public marketplace of ideas that is Twitter.com. But, obviously, being trans isn't an idea that's up for debate and the first amendment protects you from being thrown in federal prison for dead naming someone, not for being suspended on a whole website for intentionally misgendering women. And you know, maybe that's sinking in, because even Breitbart didn't really explicitly talk about this policy being bad. They wrote two articles about it, but it mostly looked just like all the other articles about it, except that half the words, like dead naming, were in quotation marks.

In conclusion, congratulations! People are no longer allowed to intentionally misgender you on Twitter, so put your pronouns in your bio, and one more time, report that shit.

This has been This Week in Gender.

[This Week in Gender music plays]

[Transition music plays]

Archie Bongiovanni is a sex educator and cartoonist living in Minneapolis. They draw monthly comics for Autostraddle, the queer feminist website, and their new graphic novel *A Quick and Easy Guide to They/Them Pronouns,* has sold more than 11,000 copies. They've also been featured on The Nib, Pride.com, Teen Vogue, Everyday Feminism and more.

Archie is also an avid zine maker and self-publisher, and is always looking for new projects to work on and collaborate on.

[Transition music fades]

**Molly:** The way we always start the show is by asking in terms of gender, how do you identify?

**Archie**: I identify as genderqueer. I use they/them pronouns.

**Molly:** Cool. I had a bunch of questions, but we need to skip to the most important thing, which is that you had a very exciting announcement yesterday.

**Archie**: I did! I did have a very exciting announcement. Yeah. So, I could finally talk that I'm getting another graphic novel with BOOM! Studios, which is awesome. And, it's going to be a collection and includes new work of the Grease Bats comics, which I publish for Autostraddle, and so far, they've only really been previously published online, so I'm really excited to get them in print. And I'm excited to be working with BOOM! They're awesome. They did *Lumberjanes*. They do a lot with comics, especially queer comics and I'm excited to see what we can produce together.

**Molly:** Yeah. Do you have any sort of idea when it will be out or when people can pre-order it?

**Archie**: Probably pre-ordering it this winter, but I'm not exactly sure. But, it will be out in July.

**Molly:** Hell yeah.

**Archie**: So a nice summer release.

**Molly:** Yeah. I want to talk a little bit more about *Grease Bats*. It reminds me so much of *Dykes to Watch Out For*, and I say that in the most positive way, because it's my favorite. Is that something that you explicitly set out to do?

**Archie**: Not at all. When I first was approached to draw a comic for Autostraddle, I was like, "Well, I want it to be fiction, but I also want it to be based like, my life, and the people I know, reflect multiple side of my community." And, at the base line, I really wanted it to be about friendship, 'cause it's really important to me. And then, it kind of ended up being like, something that would be serialized monthly, so I draw it once a month. I wasn't actually even super familiar with *Dykes to Watch Out For* at the time, years ago, when I started this comic, and then, I became acquainted with it, and I was like, "Right. This is super rad." And I was like, "Oh, this is kind of similar," but it wasn't at all meant to mimic or be like an updated version, but it just kind of is.

**Molly:** Do you think that your mission with the comic or the way you think about the comic has changed at all in the like, wow, five years or so that you've been doing it?

**Archie**: Yeah, five years. Yes and no. Like, I think the heart of the comic is to represent myself and the people I know and the nuances and the differences. And I've always wanted to draw characters that were kind of like, complicated, and that kind of like, make mistakes sometimes and fuck up and have multiple parts of their personalities.

So, Andy's one of the characters who's like, a trans, genderqueer, more masculine or center person who also paints their fingernails, loves super short shorts, and will have experiences of sometimes doing fucked up things. Like dating their best friend's ex, or something like that. That's what I really wanted to get to the heart of is there aren't right or wrong ways to be. And so, I think kind of stayed true in all five years.

**Molly:** Yeah. I think it did, too. I feel like, reading it, it even challenged me, 'cause sometimes Andy will do things where I'm like, "Hmm, like, you know what? That's a valid person to be!"

**Archie**: [laughs] Yeah!

**Molly:** So, I appreciate you doing that.

**Archie**: Yeah. You know, I love drawing it, 'cause it's about, for those that are unfamiliar, there's multiple characters, but at the root of it, it's like, two best friends; Andy and Scout. And, Andy is a little bit more sexually adventurous. They're polyamorous. They let loose. And then, Scout's a little bit more uptight in different ways, and it's just been a fun dynamic to play with.

**Molly:** Yeah. But, like you said, they're really well-rounded also, which I appreciate.

**Archie**: Yes.

**Molly**: So, before I forget, I have to address a very important thing. Which is that earlier this year I bought yourcoolgaydad.com. And then someone alerted me to the fact that you were selling your Hot Gay Dad merch.

**Archie**: [laughs]

**Molly**: So, I'm sorry I infringed on your brand, but with a different temperature. Do you think we can be co-cool dads? [laughs]

**Archie**: I think we could! I think they could! Where's the lukewarm dad?

**Molly**: [laughs]

**Archie**: [crosstalk] That's what I want to know!

Yeah, that's fine. But, yeah. I have a T-shirt that's like, "Your Hot Gay Dad." And, I think, "Your Cool Gay Dad," is different enough. I think it's fine. I'm not stressed about it.

What are you going to do with that website?

**Molly**: I think right now, it just loops back to my other website. Because I don't know what I'm doing with it yet. But I just made it an impulse buy around father's day because I was being everyone's cool gay dad 'cause everyone's dad sucks.

**Archie**: Yeah.

**Molly:** So I was, you know, being a volunteer dad. I don't know. And then, I just needed something to do to make me happy for five minutes, so I bought the URL.

**Archie**: I'm so glad you snagged it before anyone else did. That's like, an important investment.

**Molly:** I agree.

**Archie**: I feel like it's limitless. [laughs]

**Molly:** Yeah, I can do anything!

So, let's talk about your book that already exists tangibly in the world.

**Archie**: Yes.

**Molly**: Yeah. You had a book come out this year. It's called A *Quick and Easy Guide to They/Them Pronouns*. I assume, that if people listen to this podcast, they probably know about it. Because, it seems like it's doing really well. You've sold, what? More than 10,000 copies? Is that right?

**Archie**: Yeah! Yeah! I don't know the exact number recently, but last I heard from my editor is we sold 11,000.

**Molly:** Wow!

**Archie**: So, that's been rad. It's going in for its second printing, so that is exceeding my expectations for sure.

**Molly:** Yeah, I was going to ask what your goals were going into that.

**Archie**: Goals were to finish the project. [laughs]

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Archie**: And like, have it exist.

I couldn't fathom any other goal. You know? I was like, excited that is was released during Pride Month, which was awesome and just good timing and smart timing on the part of Limerence, who published it. They did a really big push before it came out to make sure it was in the hands of librarians. Especially like, school and teen librarians, which was also really important. And like, in the developmental process, when I first started talking to Ari, my editor, it existed as a zine, and that zine was like, three bucks. And I was like, "It's really important to me that we can keep this as low as possible price-wise, even if it means I'll make less profit."

Ideally, I wanted it under 10, which it very much is. They worked on me with that process. So, that was really important, 'cause then, it was like, oh, it's not like, a big financial investment for someone who's young. You know? Or, somebody who doesn't have a lot of money to be able to purchase this and either keep it for themselves or give to a friend or family member or boss or coworker.

So, I guess maybe those were my goals; was that it would remain an accessible resource, and it worked.

**Molly:** Yeah, it's so funny, 'cause I'm like, "Wow, I want to buy a copy for my parent. I want to buy a copy for my other parent. I want to buy a copy for my work." And then, I'm just like, "Wait. Why do I have to pay eight dollars per person?"

**Archie**: I know!

**Molly**: ... [laughs] to educate them? They should be paying themselves!"

**Archie**: Absolutely.

**Molly**: No. It's good. It's a good price point.

**Archie**: Yeah. "Happy holidays. Here's a link to Amazon."

Or like, whatever. Ideally a local place. But, if you really don't want to spend, it's like, three bucks on Amazon right now, or something. [laughs]

**Molly**: Oh my gosh. You co-created the book with a cis guy. Can you talk about that choice?

**Archie**: Yeah. Absolutely. So, when we first made the zine, 'cause that's how it started as, I approached my friend Tristan. I've known Tristan for like, a long time. He and I were pals before I came out as genderqueer. So we kind of like--after I came out and was navigating pronouns, and like, talking to new people and old friends, he was kind of alongside with me, also navigating those questions and fielding what it was to be best friends with someone who was coming out as genderqueer.

We started making the zine because I was really frustrated at having to explain certain things over and over again and getting really tired of it. I was like, "What if I just had something cheap and easy that we could just toss at our pals and toss at people, and give away, and it'll do the explaining for us?" And so, Tristan and I came up with that zine together. It was nice, because I can talk about things from my own perspective, but it's hard for me to get out of my perspective to think about it from a cisgender person's point of view. Where if something, to me, is like, "Oh yeah. This makes sense. Of course. Why is this hard?" Well, it's not that way for everyone.

So, having Tristan on board was really awesome, because he also implemented using gender neutral language at his place of employment, and works really hard to make sure the employees he has, who are like, queer and trans, feel safe and that it's a good work environment for them. So, he has that kind of background, and both of us have worked in retail, and in restaurants, as servers, et cetera. So, we kind of have an idea of what it's like on both sides of what it means when you're misgendered at work, or like, how to not misgender someone while you are working.

**Molly:** Has anything surprised you about the way that the public has reacted to the book, or any stories you've heard about it?

**Archie**: I think it's been a little bit more positive than I thought it was going to be.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Archie**: [laughs] But, I think I just had really low expectations.

I have been surprised and kind of a little bit in awe and humbled by the number of people that have sent me messages, which I love hearing. But, people who have sent me messages that it has helped a parent, or someone close in their life, reach an understanding.

I recently had someone send me in a letter that was like, "My dad was really against this, didn't really understand. And I was like, 'Why don't you just like this? Try this comic.’ And then, he came to me and he wasn't 100% on board, but he has questions. It was the first time we were able to have a conversation about it." So, that has been like, super rad to hear that it's actually working. And, that's awesome.

And I think maybe something that's also, I haven't gotten too many, but I've gotten a handful of messages and letters from folks who say that reading that book has reassured them enough to come out as genderqueer, or to start identifying outside the binary. Which was not the intention of the book, but something in it inspired them to make them think that it wouldn't be hard, that they can do it. Or just like, hearing those voices was enough of an inspiration to kind of move forward with something they were probably already thinking about. So, that's been surprising and really awesome to hear, too.

**Molly:** Yeah. You know what's so funny, is that it's actually really similar feedback to what I get from Gender Reveal, which is not what I meant to do at all.

**Archie**: Oh, awesome.

**Molly:** But, I get a lot of, like, "Oh, this podcast made me realize that I’m non-binary." And I was like, "Oh!" [laughs]

**Archie**: [laughs] Okay!

**Molly:** And also, people recommend the very first episode we did, as like, sort of a Gender 101 terminology thing for cis people.

**Archie**: Oh, that's so awesome.

**Molly:** And yeah. It's the same kind of thing of sending it to your friends. I feel like we have a multimedia starter pack, where it's like, first you give your parents Archie's book.

**Archie**: Yes!

**Molly:** And then, you tell your parents to listen to this one episode of a podcast, and then...

**Archie**: [laughs] But I think that's stuff that's so important and that's why I was like, I think it's great that I can do this as a comic. Because, yes, there's already blog posts and stuff that's written about it, and YouTube videos and podcasts. But I think that the more different ways we can share information, the better, because not everyone learns from the same style.

**Molly:** Totally!

**Archie**: You know? I love video, but I learn the most from reading. And then, there's some concepts that I'm not going to understand from a book, but maybe, if it's through a comic, I can comprehend it. So, I'm excited to be a part of something like that. And it's exciting that podcasts and stuff also exist.

**Molly:** No, totally. I mean, I think though, the comic is probably the most useful form for a lot of people. 'Cause you can't leave a podcast in the break room, and you can't leave a YouTube video in the break room. But, you can leave a copy of your book in people's break rooms, and people do that!

**Archie**: [laughs]

**Molly**: Right? Like, people buy a copy of your book.

**Archie**: Yeah.

**Molly:** And they leave them at work, which is amazing.

**Archie**: Yes.

**Molly:** Or, my friend of the show, Z, who, apologies for telling this story on the show. But, is known that they got the book and just kept putting it in front of their mom, like, all day every day, until finally, their mom handed it back and just like, "I have read the book. Please stop handing it to me." [laughs]

**Archie**: [laughs] Subtle.

**Molly:** So, you can't do that with a podcast!

**Archie**: No. You can't. Yeah.

**Molly:** So, I think it's good.

**Archie**: Yeah, and also, with a comic, there's something very non-threatening about it.

**Molly:** Yes.

You were making queer comics under your dead name for several years before you changed your name, and I’m just wondering how you've handled having a mid-career name change, and having so much work still out there with your previous name.

**Archie**: Yeah. I'm actually happy you asked me that question, 'cause I have several people in my life recently--but also it's going to just kind of continue--but I have a number of friends who have thought about changing their name. But, I think it's always a concern to be like, "Well, I have stuff under my old name, and like, whatever." It was definitely very nerve-wracking to make a switch. It definitely felt like I may be leaving behind my audience. Are they going to find me? Are they going to follow me? Are people and readers going to comprehend that the person who wrote this comic is the same person that wrote this comic? And if they change my social media, or my website, are folks going to be able to ... like, what happens if they type in my old name? You know?

But, the thing I realize is that, audiences and people who like your work are so willing and so supportive to find you. And if they like your stuff, if they stumble across a zine, which has happened for me. If they stumble across a zine under my old name, they'll do the research to find me now. And I think that's awesome.

So, the thing I learned was that I have to give readers credit.

**Molly:** Totally.

And, especially for queer and trans people, I would assume that a lot of your audience is queer and/or trans and/or familiar with queer and trans people. We change our names all the time. [laughs]

**Archie**: Yes! Absolutely. You have to try some stuff out. And, it was like, honestly, it was the straight, cisgender folks who were like, very vocal when I was thinking about changing it. It was nerve-wracking, 'cause I had a table of zines and mini-comics and they were under two different names. I was like, "Is this going to confuse people? Am I going to have to answer a bunch of questions about it? What if I'm not feeling good about?" But everyone was super quick. I don't know if that was like, the zine community, or maybe I just lucked out. But, people will absolutely find you. They'll follow you. I think that's been really nice to learn.

Also, I've had librarians and especially zine librarians; they're super radical and super awesome, and they'll contact me and be like, "Hey, so we have your old zines, but we're going to file them with your new name. Is that okay?" I was like, "Oh yeah, this is awesome!"

**Molly:** That's really great. Do you still have your podcast? Is that still a thing you're doing?

**Archie**: Oh my God. I have no idea.

**Molly:** [laughs] Well, do you want to tell people about your podcast, and then, they can at least listen to like, the existing episodes?

**Archie**: Yeah, go listen to the old episodes. They're still really goofy. I did a podcast with my friend Ethel. It was called the *Fist You Podcast*. That's y-o-u. And, it was exactly about that. It's a sex podcast, where we talk a lot about sex and weird stuff with sex, and specifically, kind of like, review sex toys.

**Molly:** It's really fun! And good. You're really good at talking about sex publicly, and there are a lot of folks who are not. I don't know. I think that that's something that I really like about Andy, in *Grease Bats*, too. And about the *Fist You Podcast* and just all over the content that you make. Even stuff for Autostraddle. I'm just thinking there's a lot of people who have a lot more internalized shame to work through, still. And I was just wondering if you have advice for people in how to get out of their own head?

**Archie**: Oh my gosh, I've worked really hard at adopting. This is a title of one of my poetry zines, but I like, don't want to overthink what feels good in my life.

When I started the podcast, I was like, "Sex feels good. Specifically, sex toys feel good. I want to do and try. You've got like, one life, so you might as well experiment and play and figure out what works and what doesn't." The more open you are about that with yourself, and then, with partners or potential partners, you can only have better sex from it. So, a little bit of it is just kind of like, practicing talking about it, and so, you are. You know? And then, I think I'm just always trying to be open about it. I'm really lucky with my group of pals. We'll be able to just talk about masturbating. It's like a common occur. [laughs] I don't know if everyone's friends are like, or if it's just mine. Is it? Is it just my friends?

**Molly:** Um ...

**Archie**: This is a question. [laughs]

**Molly:** I think it varies. I think it's definitely not just your friends.

**Archie**: Great.

**Molly:** But your friends might have it a little bit more frequently than some other friends, but like, it is. I feel like a lot of this is different, but I feel like a lot of people's group chats are also like, nude sharing group chats, right?

**Archie**: Perfect. Yes.

I think I'm just lucky to have pals, so I don't want to take it for granted that I was born this way.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Archie**: You know, I had some training, a little bit, about it, too.

But, there's a certain amount of freedom that can come with being super super open, because I feel like a lot of folks have maybe shame or hang ups or hiccups about what their body is like or what their body does during sex, but the more open you are about it, the more you realize that there's like, folks who are experiencing something similar, or have similar backgrounds or who get off in similar ways. I think it's just awesome.

**Molly:** Yeah! I was thinking about the very beginning of that answer, when you were just like, "You only have one life!" And I was just thinking, to me, at least, it is honestly easier to give out up most of my hang ups when I think about how quickly the world is collapsing. I'm just like, "You know what? Fuck it. YOLO. Whatever." [laughs]

**Archie**: Absolutely! Absolutely. I had like, a small series of art pieces that were just like, my face being like, "Do you really want to die without blah blah blah blah blah? Do you really want to die without licking someone's feet?" [laughs]

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Archie**: You know, I'm not going to go into it, but it was like, a whole varied list of just fun and weird sex things. And it's like, "Well, don't you want to try that? It's cool if ya'll don't. But, you should think about it."

**Molly**: Speaking of sex stuff, you wrote a piece about flagging for Autostraddle.

**Archie**: Yeah!

**Molly:** And, it's a great piece. People should read it. But, you said in the piece that there's a reason that there isn't a flag for platonic talking, or cuddling, or veganism. And I was wondering if you could like, unpack that a little bit.

**Archie**: Yeah, for sure! The veganism line came from Chingy, which is C-H-I-N-G-Y. They also make a bunch of really amazing queer memes. So, I recommend folks finding them on Instagram. It's awesome.

But, basically, the root of flagging is cruising. It's like, to find someone for a hookup for casual sex. Sometimes, that can lead to something more, which is like, a beautiful awesome thing, but at the root of flagging, it is to like, find someone to hook up with. And so, I feel like switching it so it's using flagging to find a platonic partner or cuddling or something like that. You can do that with other forms of trying to find people. You know? Like, you can do that with peronals or with just asking people on the internet or Tinder or something like that. But, flagging started as a non-communicative way to get to what you want; to signal what sexual interests you have.

I know it's not a hill I want to die on, but I might. [laughs]

**Molly:** [laughs] No, I think it's interesting and good, 'cause I think not everything is for everyone, right?

**ARCHIE**: Yes. Yeah. You can be queer and not flag. It's okay. If casual sex and casual hookups aren't your thing, that's 100% valid. That's okay. Maybe you don't need to have a handkerchief right now. You know? In a back pocket.

**Molly:** Yeah. Can you tell me about Sweatgasm?

**ARCHIE**: Yeah! Sweatgasm is ... um, I'm partial to it. It is one of my favorite games.

**Molly:** [giggles]

**ARCHIE**: It's basically a sexy, queer truth or dare game that I developed. Right now, it's only sold either at Smitten Kitten, which in Minneapolis, currently only in the store. Not online. Or, She Bop.

**Molly:** Yeah!

**ARCHIE**: Which is based in Portland. Yeah! So, that's awesome, so they sell it on the internet, which is great. Because, I don't ship it out myself anymore, 'cause I hate going to the post office.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**ARCHIE**: So, anyways, it's a sexy, queer, truth or dare, and I developed it because I was at my day job, looking at a bunch of couple's games and sex games, and they were very cisgender, very heterosexual, and very tame. A lot of the truth questions were like, "Have you ever tried anal?" And I got so upset, because I was like, for a lot of people, anal is how you have sex.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**ARCHIE**: There's nothing weird or kinky about it. It's just part of regular hooking up. So, I wanted to make a game of my own. So, it's a hundred truth cards and a hundred dare cards, and it's got a little bit of queer references. But I tried to make it as inclusive to everyone, so there's no assumption of genitals or the bodies of people playing. I tried to make it as trauma informed as I could. There's no questions like, "How'd you lose your virginity?" 'Cause I fuckin' hate that question.

But more like, "Tell us about a funny straight crush you had," or something like that. Yeah, I tried to make it kind of goofy, but also sexy, so some of the dares will be like, "Alter your clothes and do a runway walk," or like, "Nuzzle someone's neck for the next round. And then, I'll also be like, "Pee on a friend. Lick a butthole."

**Molly:** Ha!

**ARCHIE**: [laughs] I get the most reactions from that pee on a friend one. But, you know, so I wanted to have a goofy range, where nothing's really quite off limits.

And then, the truths would be like, "Give your orgasm a nickname."

**Molly:** [laughs]

**ARCHIE**: "Message," I think this is the dares, "Message someone in a dating app right now." But, the truths; they can be really cute. It's like, "Go around and give a compliment about everyone's body."

**Molly:** Aww.

**ARCHIE**: Something like that as well as like, "Are you a dirty pig?" Or something like that. [laughs]

**Molly:** [laughs]

I just love when you said, "It's goofy but also sexy," because I just feel like that's extremely your brand. Which is like, the best brand. [laughs]

**ARCHIE**: It's 100% my brand! You are right! [laughs] Goofy and sexy at the same time!

Anyway, that's available to purchase. I recommend go to She Bop, 'cause it's real easy to find. It's fun for two players. It's fun for couples, or couples that play together. I guess, orgies. [laughs]

**Molly:** [laughs]

**ARCHIE**: Or like group playing.

**Molly:** Big ol' piles of people.

**ARCHIE**: Right, right. I've also played it though, just like, the truth cards with a group of friends at a bar and that's also really fun.

**Molly:** Gosh. I had one more question that I meant to ask you about your book, and I totally forgot, so I'm going to go backwards in time.

**ARCHIE**: Okay.

**Molly:** So, you wrote this whole book about using they/them pronouns, and I think that some people might see that and think, "Wow, Archie is the most they/them and the most out," and you know?

**ARCHIE**: The Jesus. [laughs]

**Molly:** Super out. But then, you say in this part of your book, where you say that your parents, for example, don't use they/them pronouns for you and you're just okay with that. So anyway, I was wondering why you chose to put that in the book, 'cause I thought that was really important that you said that. Because, I think people sometimes think of it as sort of all or nothing, and it's really not.

**ARCHIE**: No, I know. I think it's just like, honestly, with the way things are, it's impossible for it to be all or nothing. Even if you have supportive friends, you might not have supportive family. If you have supportive family, strangers on the street are going to say whatever they want. Or, you work a service industry job, and it's just how things are at the moment. And it was important for me to include that, because I was thinking about who might be the audience of this book, and I was like, in my mind, I was hoping a lot of young folks, a lot of teenagers. And, it sucks in general to be misgendered and it sucks to have family who's like, being difficult or not responsive or, disrespectful. And then, it also sucks to lose your family, too.

I think it's important to kind of like, frame it in a way where it's like, maybe they won't get it right away. But, that doesn't mean it's going to last forever. Maybe they won't get it right away, but they support you in a lot of other ways, and to kind of make sure that folks have as well-balanced of a support system and a community, in case folks that you do love and do care about aren't going to be able to meet you quite halfway.

I think that's kind of like what I was thinking when I included it, and I also just really wanted to be like, honest about my experience and was like, "You know, this isn't something I necessarily super ask for or expect from all of my family members." And that's okay, because I have other community that supports and loves me, and that I can, if I have a day that I have to spend with family, whenever I get misgendered or whatever, I can call a friend and decompress with them. Or, shout into the internet void and have people shout back. And, I think that's really important. Especially, when, I guess, they're supportive in a bunch of other ways. So, it doesn't have to be all or nothing. You can pick and choose your battles, a little bit. I think that's kind of an important skill, so you're not just upset and angry constantly. Just being like, "I'm not going to win this one! But you know what? I'm going to hang out with my group of pals, or whatever that's going to sustain me in a different way."

I also included in that book, like, you know when it's best for you to walk away from a relationship, or to put down a hard, fast line. I didn't want to tell people where that was.

**Molly:** Yeah, totally. I was just thinking, also, in the book, you mentioned, "Here's the one specific time when my parents did use they/them pronouns for me," and like, that shit is so real.

**ARCHIE**: [laughs]

**Molly:** I feel like every week I go to therapy, and I'm just like, "Here's this one specific person who said this one specific pronoun about me. Let me tell you all about it."

**ARCHIE**: Yes! [laughs]

**Molly:** "It's just kind of logged in my head forever."

**Molly:** I know. [laughs] I know. So, when I told my folks, I was like, "I got a book deal!" And they were like, "What is it? What's it on?" I was like, "Oh, it's going to be called A Quick and Easy Guide to They/Them Pronouns!" My dad was like, "Oh, cool. You should do one about you are, you're and your!"

**MOLLY**: [laughs]

**ARCHIE**: [laughs] And I was like, "Oh no! You really aren't getting this!" [laughs] Like, at all. But, since then, he's been great. He read the book, and he wrote me a postcard, and he was like, "Am I calling you Archie now? What's happening?" And I was like, "I'm not going to ... I'll work on this later." [laughs]

**MOLLY**: Aww.

**ARCHIE**: We're working on it. We're getting there.

**MOLLY**: Yeah, it's a slow process.

**ARCHIE**: Yeah.

**MOLLY**: This is the part in the show where I ask you if there's anything else that sounds fun or interesting or important to talk about that we haven't talked about yet.

**ARCHIE**: Ooh, I am, eh, uh, not sure. I think everyone should be following Limerence Press right now, and what they're producing. They're making a lot of really cool books in this line of Quick and Easy Guides. So, I think that's important for folks who especially like my book, to kind of look at. I know a little bit of what's not been announced yet, and it's really, really, exciting.

**MOLLY**: Oh yeah. So, where can people find you on the internet?

**ARCHIE**: Great question. I am mostly on Instagram. That's my favorite way; that. And my name is BabyWrist, like a baby's wrist. [laughs]

**MOLLY**: [laughs] Thank you for the clarification!

**ARCHIE**: Yeah, BabyWrist on Instagram is my favorite place; my favorite kind of social media, but I'm also pretty active on Twitter, so that's @grease\_bat, named after my book. And then, you can always find me at like, archiebongiovanni.com.

**MOLLY**: All right. The way we always end the show is by asking, in your ideal world, what would the future of gender look like?

**ARCHIE**: Oh my God. I would love it if everyone could define it for themselves, feel like they have the language and capacity to explain it to other people, and that other people would have the language and capacity and empathy to understand and support.

[Gender Reveal Theme Song plays]

**MOLLY**: That's going to do it for this week's show.

If you had a good time, or this felt important to you, please consider doing any of the following things as a birthday present to me, your favorite gender detective:

You could share the episode with a friend, or a family member, or anyone else who might benefit from Archie's work, which is obviously anyone, because people could either learn more about they/them pronouns, or have a goofy time, but also sort of a sexy time. But anyways, some other things you could do; well, you could give us a five star rating and a review on iTunes. That would be cool. You can make a donation to the show on patreon.com/gender, or PayPal, or Cash App. All of those things, not only support us, they also support other projects, like the Gender Reveal Grant, and the money we give to other trans people to transcribe the show.

If you have comments, concerns, suggestions, feedback, or questions about gender, you can reach us via our website, genderpodcast.com, where you'll also find transcriptions of the episodes, and all sorts of other fun information.

You can also find us on Twitter and Instagram @gendereveal.

Today's episode was produced and edited by me, Molly Woodstock. Our logo is by the talented Michelle Leigh, and our theme song is by the legendary Breakmaster Cylinder.

I'm so happy that you've listened all the way to the very end, and I'll see you here next week with more feelings about gender.

[Gender Reveal Theme Song ends]