

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:00:02	Jesse Thorn	Host	Welcome to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> Podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. This week: "The Skeleton Brief."
			Kris files suit against his fiancée, Bonnie. Bonnie loves to decorate the home for the fall season. Kris thinks she starts decorating too early in the year.
			Bonnie says she wants to enjoy her favorite time of year as much as possible.
			Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide.
			Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and presents an obscure cultural reference.
00:00:28	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[During above: Door opens, footsteps, chairs scrape against the floor.]</i>
			<i>[Door closes.]</i>
00:00:34	John Hodgman	Host	My mission in life is to make everybody as uneasy as possible. I think we should all be as uneasy as possible, because that's what the world is like.
			Bailiff Jesse Thorn, please swear them in.
00:00:48	Jesse	Host	Kris, Bonnie, please rise and raise your right hands.
00:00:50	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Chairs scrape.]</i>
00:00:51	Jesse	Host	Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God or whatever?
00:00:56	Kris	Guest	I do.
00:00:57	Bonnie	Guest	I do.
00:00:58	Jesse	Host	Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that he himself is a spooky skeleton?
00:01:05	Kris	Guest	<i>[Laughing]</i> I do.
00:01:06	Bonnie	Guest	I do.
00:01:07	Jesse	Host	Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.
00:01:10	John	Host	Thank you for revealing my darkest secret.
			<i>[Scattered quiet laughter.]</i>
			The actor that I hired to go on our <i>Live Justice</i> tour this November is not the real John Hodgman. I'm actually a plastic spooky skeleton.
			<i>[More laughter.]</i>
			With red light-up eyes. I need someone to change the little disk battery in the back of my head, 'cause my eyes aren't lighting up properly anymore.
00:01:29	Jesse	Host	I picture them as the kind of red light-up eyes that kind of go "BZZT! BZZT!" when they turn on. <i>[Laughs.]</i>

00:01:35	John	Host	Well, <u>you</u> can picture them perfectly! Because you've seen me in my true form.
00:01:38	Jesse	Host	Yeah!
00:01:39	John	Host	Because we are old friends.
00:01:40	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> Oh, yeah, of course! Since our days in the Skull and Bones society.
00:01:44	John	Host	No, I was not a member of Skull and Bones at Yale University, the four-year accredited institution in southern Connecticut that I got my Bachelor of Arts degree from.
00:01:52	Jesse	Host	Bad news, John! <i>[Laughing]</i> I <u>was</u> a member of Skull and Bones at UC Santa Cruz in Santa Cruz, California!
00:01:59	John	Host	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> One of our franchises.
00:02:00	Jesse	Host	It wasn't so much a secret society as a, you know, <i>[laughing]</i> group of kinda chill pals who would go out in the meadow and eat mushrooms.
00:02:09	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> It's kind of like the TEDx of Yale secret societies.
			<i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>
			No, I was not in Skull and Bones, buuut I did gain entry into Book and Snake, a different secret society at Yale. And you can read all about it in <i>Medallion Status</i> , the new book by me, John Hodgman, available October 15th, <a href="http://Bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS">Bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS</a> .
			<i>[Rapidly]</i> That's B-I-T dot L-Y slash MEDALLIONSTATUS, all one word, all capital letters. Always be plugging.
			I'm sorry about that, Kris and Bonnie, you had to stand throughout that entire plug! Please be seated.
00:02:36	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Chairs scraping.]</i>
00:02:37	John	Host	Now, for an immediate summary judgment in one of yours' favors, can either of you name the piece of culture that I referenced when I entered the courtroom?
			This is a direct quote from a <u>person</u> , and only the name of the person is necessary. I don't think that you would be able to guess the other source. You know, the—the contextual source. The person's name is fine.
			Kris, you bring the case. Why don't we start with you?
00:02:59	Kris	Guest	I had a couple topical references to use today that I had in my back pocket, and that quote was definitely not from either of those.
00:03:06	John	Host	Yeah, they probably were better than mine! <i>[Laughing]</i> What did you have in mind?
00:03:09	Kris	Guest	The one that I was gonna use that was kind of the curveball that I would use— <i>Halloween is Grinch Night</i> . So I'm just gonna go with that, even though I'm certain it's not correct.
00:03:19	John	Host	What is that from?

00:03:20	Kris	Guest	<i>Halloween is Grinch Night</i> is a lesser known sequel to <i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</i> .
00:03:25	John	Host	Oh, it's a television special! And a <u>prequel</u> to <i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</i> ! It won the 1978 Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Children's Program.
			It premiered October 29, 1977. It was <u>never</u> a Dr. Seuss book, it was just a cartoon. Interesting! I'd never heard about that! That is an obscure cultural reference... that is probably not correct, but I appreciate it anyway.
			<i>[Kris and Bonnie laugh.]</i>
			Thank you very much. But I can't say that it's wrong yet, 'cause I haven't heard Bonnie's guess yet. What is your guess, Bonnie?
00:03:57	Bonnie	Guest	I definitely don't have anything definitive, but I get kind of... Carl Jung vibes from that quote? That's my guess.
00:04:04	John	Host	Hmm! Philosophical! What were you thinking— <u>you're</u> the one who's got all this Halloween junk all over the house. What <u>would be your</u> favorite thing to quote that would have something to do with your situation?
00:04:15	Bonnie	Guest	Oh!
00:04:16	John	Host	<i>Nightmare Before Christmas</i> , right?
00:04:18	Bonnie	Guest	Probably not. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:04:21	John	Host	Jesse Thorn, we found the person who doesn't love <i>A Nightmare Before Christmas</i> .
00:04:25	Bonnie	Guest	I love it, but it's probably not my <u>most</u> beloved.
00:04:28	John	Host	What's your most beloved?
00:04:29	Bonnie	Guest	I'd probably have to go with the ever classic <i>Hocus Pocus</i> .
00:04:32	John	Host	<i>Hocus Pocus</i> ! I do know what that is, but I forget. Tell me.
00:04:36	Bonnie	Guest	Story of kind of your three cantankerous witches.
00:04:39	John	Host	Oh, this is the Kathy Najimy and Sarah Jessica Parker and Bette Midler movie.
00:04:43	Bonnie	Guest	Yes, exactly.
00:04:45	Jesse	Host	Otherwise known as <i>Lady Millennial Space Jam</i> .
			<i>[Everyone laughs.]</i>
00:04:50	John	Host	I actually, uh—I've never seen that movie. But that's your favorite Halloween movie.
00:04:55	Bonnie	Guest	Yeah, I would say so.
00:04:56	John	Host	I'm glad I didn't go to it for a quote.
			<i>[Bonnie laughs.]</i>
			'Cause you might have gotten it right. But instead, you got it wrong. ALL guesses are <u>wrong</u> . I was quoting the author and illustrator Edward Gorey.

Edward Gorey is one of my very favorite author and illustrators, with a particularly morbid, I dare say Halloween-y, imagination. Most famous, probably, for *The Gashlycrumb Tinies*, *[stifling laughter]* which is his darkly humorous book of children's rhymes regarding children who, uh, pass away in various bad fates.

"A is for Amy, who fell down the stairs. B is for Basil, assaulted by bears. C is for Clara, who wasted away. D is for Desmond, thrown out of a sleigh."

00:05:33 John Host Oh... I love it. All with really dark illustrations. He also did, obviously, the opening credits for *Mystery* on PBS, and the, uh—famous for his dark, carefully drawn, crosshatched, tiny little detailed spooky little scenes.

And I thought of him because this is a story about spooky decorations, among other things. And the evidence that you submitted, which was voluminous and beautiful and we will talk more about it in a moment—there's a little picture of ghosts telling ghost stories to another ghost that looked like an Edward Gorey illustration.

And I thought, "If this is what Bonnie has in her house, then I'm 100% for it. There is no problem here. I don't know what Kris is complaining about."

But then...

*[Bonnie laughs.]*

00:06:14 John Host I saw the rest of the evidence. We'll talk more about that later.

*[Kris laughs.]*

*[Stifling laughter]* So we'll hear the case.

Kris, talk about what's in your house! Aside from this cute, Edward Gorey-ish illustration of ghosts telling ghost stories to each other.

00:06:27 Kris Guest So, as of now, near the end of September, there is a lot of Halloween everywhere, and you can see that in the evidence. There's pumpkins everywhere, there's ghosts everywhere, there's skeletons everywhere.

While I don't typically have a problem with the decorations themselves, as Jesse mentioned for the case, I have a problem with when they actually go up.

00:06:48 John Host So already I'm taken by surprise, Kris, because when you sent in the photos of all the Halloween decorations in your house, I had presumed this was from last year.

But you're telling me that this stuff is up now.

00:06:59 Kris Guest They are up right now. I could go home right now and take the same pictures.

00:07:03 John Host *[Laughs.]* That would be an interesting art project.

*[Kris laughs.]*

But it would achieve nothing. It would be cool if you went back and took the same pictures and there were ghosts in the background of all of them, or if everything had been moved slightly while you were away.

That's not going to happen, because A, I believe in science, and B, it's not yet the haunting season, Bonnie! It's September 24th as we record.

This is the very first day of fall; it was summer yesterday! What are you doing putting up all this Halloween stuff so early?!

00:07:30 Bonnie Guest

Well, I guess I should preface this by saying I truly and thoroughly hate summer. *[Laughs.]*

So part of the reason why some of the decorations go up as early as they do is because it's kind of a coping mechanism for me.

00:07:45 John Host

How early did these guys go up?

00:07:47 Bonnie Guest

I decorate for Halloween on September 1st. There are decorations that could be deemed Autumn decorations, I guess, that go up before that, but it's not like the house explodes with seasonal decorations.

There's kind of just a sprinkling of things that I don't consider to be Halloween that Kris does.

00:08:04 John Host

Okay, so aside from the Halloween decorations, there are sort of generic Autumn decorations.

What are those, and when do those come into your life?

00:08:15 Kris Guest

There are pumpkin-themed decorations going up in mid-July in this household.

00:08:20 John Host

Whoa! Okay! Bonnie, you don't dispute that, do you?

00:08:24 Bonnie Guest

I don't dispute that there were two two-and-a-half-inch pumpkins with our initials on them, that are not even orange, that went up in July. *[Laughs.]*

*[Someone started laughing quietly as soon as Bonnie insisted "two."]*

00:08:35 John Host

*[Stifling laughter]* So when you said pumpkin-themed decorations, Kris, you meant pumpkins.

00:08:40 Kris Guest

There is also a pumpkin candy bowl out year-round, that I have allowed just because we were a little bit too lazy to put it away after Halloween.

00:08:49 Bonnie Guest

We have no other candy bowl.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

So I contest that it is the only one that we can use in the meantime.

00:08:55 John Host

How old are you people?!

00:08:56	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Kris:</b> We're both twenty-s—
			<b>Bonnie:</b> 27. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:08:58	John	Host	Okay. So look, you're a generation behind me. Is this something that 27-year-olds are doing now, <u>candy bowls</u> , like their grandmas?! Are you putting—are you putting out Werther's Originals in a crystal cut bowl?!
			Is that a thing that 27-year-olds normally do?
00:09:12	Bonnie	Guest	There's always candy in the house. I would say Kris eats it more than I do, but I like to have the little candy bowl on the table.
			That is kind of a nostalgic grandmother thing for me. I will admit that.
00:09:23	John	Host	So in mid-July, basically you're rocking two small gourds with your initials on them <u>and</u> <i>[stifles laughter]</i> last Halloween's candy bowl full of stale candy corn.
00:09:32	Bonnie	Guest	The bowl does get replenished.
00:09:34	John	Host	You just leave out the pumpkin candy bowl all the time.
00:09:37	Bonnie	Guest	Yeah, it's like a—a small—I'd say it's like a six-inch bowl that has a lid, that sits on the coffee table.
00:09:41	John	Host	It's a never-ending flame. It is a constant reminder that Halloween is coming.
00:09:45	Bonnie	Guest	Exactly.
00:09:46	Kris	Guest	Correct.
00:09:47	John	Host	Bonnie, where do you live?
00:09:49	Bonnie	Guest	We live in Pennsylvania, in the suburbs of Philadelphia.
00:09:52	John	Host	So you experience seasons, right?
00:09:54	Bonnie	Guest	Yes, very much so.
00:09:55	John	Host	Right. You're coming from an <u>actual</u> summer, going into an actual fall.
00:09:58	Bonnie	Guest	Correct.
00:09:59	John	Host	Why do you hate summer so much, and why do you like fall so much?
00:10:02	Bonnie	Guest	I don't do well in heat. I have very pale complexion, so the sun is harmful to me. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:10:08	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:10:09	Bonnie	Guest	As to why I love Autumn, and by extension Halloween so much, I just find it to be a supremely <u>cozy</u> time? It's kind of that dark, warm, and quiet moment right before everything goes to sleep for winter.
			And that's kinda when I feel most comfortable, and most at home.
00:10:27	John	Host	It's the time that makes you think of what it must be like—that cozy moment just before you close your eyes and die.

*[Everyone laughs.]*

00:10:35 Bonnie Guest Yeah! Kind of!

00:10:37 Jesse Host For our listeners who aren't right now looking at [@judgejohnhodgman](#) on Instagram and seeing this evidence—I think "cozy" is a very apt description.

These are not spooky Halloween decorating elements. These are not retro Halloween decorating elements, or edgy Halloween decorating elements.

00:11:03 John Host Yeah, it's not scary.

00:11:04 Jesse Host If Mervyn's Home Goods had a goth section, this is where these adorable throw pillows—

*[John and Bonnie laugh]*

—would be sold. *[Laughs.]*

00:11:15 John Host Well, let's go to the evidence. As always, all these images will be shared on the *Judge John Hodgman* page at [MaximumFun.org](#), or you can go follow us on Instagram at [@judgejohnhodgman](#), all one word.

And here you will find an array of charming photographs from the home—is this your home right now, Bonnie? Or one that you share with Kris?

00:11:35 Kris Guest We share. Yeah. We moved in, uh, to this house back in December of last year.

00:11:40 Jesse Host Just in time for Memorial Day decorations to go up!

*[John and Kris laugh.]*

00:11:48 John Host We have an array here of antique medicinal bottles, blue, green, and purple. They're lovely bottles.

The caption here is "Spooky art up year-round," and I don't think these bottles are particularly spooky; I just think they're handsome; I like 'em.

00:11:59 Jesse Host I think the second picture is the spooky art.

00:12:02 John Host Yeah. No, there's the spooky art. This is the wonderful Edward Gorey-esque line illustration of a ghost telling a ghost story in a graveyard. I think that's adorable, I like that very much.

And then there's also a couple of shelves of taxidermed butterflies and crystals, and a skull of some kind. This is some kind of altar? And I think I can see—either I see your reflection in the mirror on this altar, taking the photo, Bonnie—

*[Bonnie laughs quietly]*

—or it's a g-g-g-g-ghost!

*[Kris and Jesse laugh.]*

00:12:31 John Host But this is a shrine of crystals and power elements and skulls and a

little fondue pot. Tell me about this shrine, Bonnie.

00:12:40 Bonnie Guest Yeah. I wouldn't necessarily call it an altar, but it's definitely kind of where I've housed my collection of natural history items.

00:12:49 John Host It's got two palantírs on either end of it. It's got two—two orbs!

*[Scattered quiet laughter.]*

One on the left, and one on the right. If that's not an altar, I don't know what an altar is. But go on. This is just your personal collection of things.

00:13:00 Jesse Host If it's not an altar, why is there a fondue pot in it?!

*[John laughs.]*

00:13:05 Kris Guest I believe you're speaking about her cauldron.

00:13:07 Jesse Host Oh, there you go. Fair enough.

*[Kris laughs.]*

00:13:10 John Host Alright. Bonnie, we have talked over you enough. But I do think you got some 'splainin' to do with regard to these two shelves in your home.

Tell me the significance of these two shelves and some of the items on there.

00:13:21 Bonnie Guest I like to collect rocks and minerals and crystals, mostly because it stems from my interest in geology, and I think they're very beautiful things and it fascinates me that it is the Earth's creation that, you know, has been kind of manipulated in such a way that we can collect these things in our homes.

00:13:38 John Host Let me be clear, Bonnie. To me, these two shelves—they're dope. I like the way this looks. You don't need to be on the defensive about this. I'm with you.

Tell me about the skull. The animal skull.

00:13:49 Bonnie Guest Same type of thing. I kind of like to collect things from nature, *[stifling laughter]* so I fully admit that I have skulls throughout the house, on the wall.

However, Kris has claimed that he actually likes those, so I don't think those are a matter of contention; but I do absolutely agree that they could be construed as spooky. But I would also argue that that's kind of my overall general aesthetic.

So that's why the lines kind of blur sometimes between what is a Halloween decoration and what is just a Bonnie decoration.

*[Laughs.]*

00:14:17 John Host Well, that's interesting. I'm not sure the lines are so very blurry, because when we scroll down to some of the other decorations here, this is just a kind of Bonnie-style, central Pennsylvania, von Pier memento shelf.



I like it.

And you know, Kris, you like these skulls, too. Who's the man pictured in this photograph on the righthand side of the shelf?

00:14:40 Bonnie Guest

That is an older picture of my father.

00:14:42 John Host

Oh, I see. You were putting a curse on him?

*[Everyone laughs.]*

00:14:47 Bonnie Guest

No, I—I actually—I have both my parents represented on that shelf. There's a smaller picture of my mother, just as kind of—I don't know, an honor to them.

00:14:54 John Host

That's lovely. And the cauldron?

00:14:56 Bonnie Guest

So while it looks like a cauldron, it's actually not. It's an old kerosene pot.

*[John responds affirmatively and makes a sound of acknowledgement as Bonnie continues.]*

So you'll see there's, like, kind of a wand object coming out of it? That has like, a bulbous end to it on the inside that would collect this kerosene gel, and it would be used as a smudge pot to actually, like, light things.

00:15:14 John Host

Oh! Okay.

00:15:15 Bonnie Guest

But I have a lot of kind of odd industrial antiques like that, 'cause I think their history is really fascinating, so that's also why the bottle collection is pictured.

*[Stifling laughter]* But it's one of the items that Kris tends to poke at me for pretty often.

*[Kris laughs.]*

00:15:28 Jesse Host

Bonnie, would you characterize yourself as gothic in any way?

00:15:31 Bonnie Guest

Not really. I definitely have a dark aesthetic, but I wouldn't call it gothic.

00:15:35 Jesse Host

Can we make "cozy goth" a thing?

00:15:37 Bonnie Guest

Absolutely.

00:15:38 Kris Guest

I would definitely qualify you as a cozy goth.

00:15:40 John Host

Cozy goth!

00:15:41 Bonnie Guest

Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:15:42 John Host

Jesse Thorn, I think you just created a whole new lifestyle.

00:15:45 Jesse Host

Move over, summer goth! Here comes cozy goth!

*[Kris laughs.]*

00:15:49 Bonnie Guest

You should trademark that. *[Laughs.]*

00:15:51 John Host

I shouldn't say you "created" a lifestyle, 'cause Bonnie's already living the lifestyle. I think the three of you and me listening have identified a bold new aesthetic school of interior decorating.

00:16:01	Jesse	Host	I'm working right now on a deepfake of Glenn Danzig holding a cup of herbal tea with both hands and inhaling deeply.
			<i>[Everyone laughs.]</i>
00:16:12	John	Host	So Kris, you're down with that cozy goth lifestyle. You don't mind these shelves, right? You kinda like it, right?
00:16:18	Kris	Guest	Yeah, it does look good. Sometimes she can get a bit overboard on it. Sometimes the shelves get pretty packed, but overall I do like the aesthetic, <u>generally</u> .
00:16:26	John	Host	But <u>then</u> Bonnie says the lines blur between her cozy goth lifestyle and the Halloween decorations, and I will say the lines are not blurred in the least. It is a brightly drawn line.
			'Cause all of a sudden <u>now</u> we're looking at a shower curtain that just has black cats and pumpkins on it, with a pumpkin bath mat, which I hope to... the great void that is not there year-round, Bonnie.
			<i>[Bonnie laughs quietly during the above.]</i>
			You don't have that pumpkin bath mat there year-round, do you?
00:16:52	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Bonnie:</b> No, no.
			<b>John:</b> Alright.
			<b>Bonnie:</b> I'm—I'm not a lunatic. <i>[She and Kris laugh.]</i>
00:16:55	John	Host	And then as I scroll through more, I mean, we're talking about <u>very</u> —I dare say not cozy goth—I hope you'll accept this as just my observation, but it's very <u>kitschy</u> goth.
			I mean, not even goth. It's—it's kitschy Halloween-y, like Christmas store-level, Halloween-style decorations.
			So we have like, ghost fairy lights. There's a little statuette of a man with a jack-o'-lantern head. Kind of <u>cutesy</u> goth, that I think is a very different aesthetic from the cozy goth, the Bonnie goth, that I see represented in your shrine.
00:17:26	Jesse	Host	The coffee area appears to have a sign that says, "A cup a day keeps the ghosts away."
			<i>[John or Kris laughs quietly.]</i>
00:17:32	Bonnie	Guest	That's correct.
			<i>[She and Kris laugh.]</i>
00:17:34	John	Host	That feels like a <u>different</u> expression of your personality, Bonnie. That you have a kind of a—I don't know, an insouciant 55-year-old mom approach to decorating for Halloween.
			<i>[Scattered laughter from the other three during the above.]</i>
00:17:45	Bonnie	Guest	Yeah, I would say that my Halloween style is definitely somewhere at the intersection of spooky and cute. Any kind of haunting going on in our house is a friendly one. <i>[Laughs.]</i>

			<i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>
00:17:55	John	Host	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Sure.  And speaking of cute, there is a cat here wearing a jack-o'-lantern vest, that I gotta show to my bailiff, Jesse Thorn.
			<i>[Jesse, Kris, and Bonnie laugh.]</i>
00:18:06	Jesse	Host	<i>[Coming down from laughter]</i> The cat's like, "Come on! A jack-o'-lantern vest?!"
			<i>[Everyone else laughs again.]</i>
00:18:12	John	Host	What is the name of this cat who you put into this jack-o'-lantern vest?
00:18:16	Bonnie	Guest	His name is Appa.
00:18:17	John	Host	How do you spell that?
00:18:18	Bonnie	Guest	A-P-P-A.
00:18:19	John	Host	A-P-P-A. That's a cool name. Does it mean something that I don't know?
00:18:23	Bonnie	Guest	Appa represents 50% of our cats, so they—they're a duo, and their names are Appa and Momo, which are characters from a hit cartoon series that Kris and I both enjoy, um, called <i>Avatar: The Last Airbender</i> .
00:18:37	John	Host	Oookay! There it is. Everyone who was just yelling " <i>The Last Airbender</i> !" into their, uh, Internet radios can now be quiet. I finally got to the bottom of it.
			<i>[Bonnie laughs.]</i>
00:18:44	Jesse	Host	Let's take a quick recess. We'll be back in just a moment on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast.
00:18:49	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:18:50	Jesse	Promo	We're taking a quick break from <i>Judge John Hodgman's</i> court proceedings to talk about <i>Judge John Hodgman's</i> proceedings across this great nation of ours.  <u>And</u> overseas! <i>[Stifling laughter]</i> If the sea is the border between the United States and Canada.
			<i>[Both laugh.]</i>
00:19:06	John	Promo	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> That's right, the—the great sea of Niagara Falls.  Yeah. You all know by now that Jesse Thorn and I are going on tour in November, bringing <i>Live Justice</i> to the lawless lands of Toronto; Durham; Atlanta; Washington, DC. And Portland, Maine!  But what you might not know is... we need cases!  That's right! We can't have a <i>Live Justice</i> show without some disputes to settle! And that dispute could be yours. If you live in any

one of these places, or are planning to travel to them to see this show, think about someone you have a bone to pick with.

Think about someone who you might have an argument with that you've long wanted to settle on stage, with me and my bailiff, Jesse Thorn.

If you have a dispute for one of these live dates, please write in to [hodgman@maximumfun.org](mailto:hodgman@maximumfun.org), or [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://MaximumFun.org/jjho) for the form.

00:19:55 John

Promo

Make sure that you say, "This is for Toronto."

"This is for Durham."

"This is for Atlanta."

"This is for Washington, DC."

"This is for Portland, Maine."

And if we hear your case on stage, guess what? You get in free! And I say hello to you. And Jesse Thorn says hello to you, too.

So please consider having a fight with someone.

You may also know that I'm going out solo, in support of my new book *Medallion Status*, to a number of great cities all across this land. Los Angeles, San Fransisco, Boston, New York, St. Paul, Chicago.

00:20:27 John

Promo

*Medallion Status* is my new book of true stories from secret rooms, and I'm very excited and proud of it, and I hope that you will check it out, if you please, at [Bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS](https://Bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS).

That's all—I know I've said it before, but I'm saying it again, 'cause it's important. 'Cause Bit.ly will send you somewhere else if you don't make it all capital letters, all one words, MEDALLIONSTATUS.

I'm pushing the pre-orders so hard because I am told by my publisher that it's the best way to give this book the most successful launch that it can have, and it's important to me that it have a successful launch, for obvious reasons I hope.

You don't have to buy it, but if you'd like to support me and the book, and this kind of work that I do, please consider ordering it at [Bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS](https://Bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS).

00:21:12 John

Promo

I'm not gonna punish you if you pre-order it! If you come to tour, and you see me on tour and you get another copy, then I'm gonna give you a special Double Corgi Status pin! As a thank you from me to you.

And even if you just come to tour and buy a copy, you'll get a Famous Corgi Pin. And even if you're out there and you just get a copy, you'll know I think very, very fondly of you, and I'm grateful for your support.

[Bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS](https://bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS). It's coming out next week!

Okay. Bailiff Jesse, shall we get back to the case?

00:21:38 Jesse Promo

Yeah! Let's do it.

00:21:39 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:21:40 John Host

The most pertinent evidence, though, is this A-B comparison between your living room year-round vs. your living room how it is now decorated, for Halloween, as of September the 1st.

You have a nice sectional sofa. A nice, cozy rug. Orange paint on the walls, which may or may not be Halloween-themed, but it's subtle.

00:22:04 Kris Guest

That's how the house came.

00:22:05 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**John:** Alright, that's—

**Bonnie:** Yeah, total coincidence. *[Laughs.]*

**John:** Yeah.

**Kris:** Yeah.

00:22:07 John Host

*[Laughing]* Right.

00:22:08 Kris Guest

So as much as I'd like to put that on her, I cannot. That's—that's how the house came.

00:22:13 John Host

Yeah. That's just a happy accident where Bonnie walked in and said, "I like these walls. We're taking the place."

00:22:17 Bonnie Guest

Basically. *[Laughs.]*

00:22:20 John Host

There are two skulls hanging. I don't know what animals these are skulls from, but they are non-human skulls, right, Bonnie?

00:22:27 Bonnie Guest

Correct. One is a cow and one is a goat.

00:22:29 John Host

And they are definitely from the cozy goth collection.

*[Bonnie and Kris or Jesse laugh quietly.]*

Because they're non-intrusive. No one's gonna walk into this room and not automatically know that Bonnie, if not Kris, is living that cozy goth life. It's tasteful, I think. I like it.

Now flip over to Halloween time: holy moly!

*[Kris laughs.]*

You have a lot of Halloween throw pillows!

00:22:53 Bonnie Guest

That's—that's true. *[Laughs.]*

00:22:55 Kris Guest

It's a lot.

00:22:56 John Host

One, two, three, four—at least four ghost or skeleton-y decorated throw pillows for your sectional sofa, plus one blankie that is full of ghosts and one blankie that is full of jack-o'-lanterns.

And it's all very cutesy. And we go from this sort of like, restrained,

sort of tasteful, Edward Gorey-ish, uh, slight spookiness to like, "Oh, uh, Jack Skellington came in here and threw up."

*[Kris laughs.]*

Is this what you object to, Kris?

00:23:30	Kris	Guest	I think—I think it's a little bit much, so... not even early in the fall season, <u>before</u> the fall season even hits. It's a—it's a bit much.
00:23:37	John	Host	When Bonnie brought out that first pumpkin this year, how did it make you feel?
00:23:40	Kris	Guest	It made me feel like we were skipping over the entire summer. Skipping the rest of the warm and going straight to the dead trees and the cold.
00:23:48	John	Host	Do <u>you</u> enjoy summer, Kris?
00:23:50	Kris	Guest	I enjoy summer. I'm also fair-skinned. I obviously don't like being in the sun very long.
00:23:55	John	Host	Join the ranks of the vast majority of <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> listeners.

*[Kris and Bonnie laugh.]*

00:24:01	Kris	Guest	I burn easily, but I do like the heat. I like going to the beach. We don't do it too often because we have trouble finding the time, but, um, my—I <u>would</u> still say my favorite season is the winter.
00:24:11	John	Host	You have trouble finding the time <u>and</u> the <u>beach</u> . Where do you go to the <u>beach</u> in Pennsylvania?
00:24:15	Kris	Guest	Jersey Shore. It's only a couple hours away from us.
00:24:17	John	Host	Yeahhh. Where do you go on the Jersey Shore, Kris?
00:24:19	Bonnie	Guest	Ventnor.
00:24:20	John	Host	I'm an Ocean City, New Jersey guy.
00:24:22	Kris & Bonnie	Guest	Okay.
00:24:23	Bonnie	Guest	I can respect that.
00:24:24	Kris	Guest	Mm-hm.
00:24:25	John	Host	Ocean City respects Ventnor, too.

*[Bonnie laughs.]*

The nice thing for pale people is you sit under the boardwalk.

00:24:30	Kris	Guest	Of course.
00:24:31	John	Host	It's the greatest.
00:24:32	Kris	Guest	While I do like summer, I would still say my favorite season is the winter, because I do definitely prefer the cold to the warm.
00:24:37	Bonnie	Guest	The literal antithesis of summer. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:24:40	Kris	Guest	Well, it's my favorite. I still—I still like the seasons! I don't like skipping over them.
00:24:44	John	Host	Do you feel anxious when Bonnie starts trying to wish time away to

			get to the only period of the year when she feels comfortable?
00:24:52	Kris	Guest	I would say a bit, yeah. I've always liked the seasons, so just skipping over them, it just kinda—it stinks.
			Another thing that goes along with that, I have a birthday that falls around a holiday. Around Thanksgiving, specifically, and people like to put Christmas decorations up way too early, and I feel like when they start putting up Christmas decorations before Thanksgiving, I feel like everyone's trying to skip my birthday.
			<i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>
00:25:15	John	Host	Alright. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Kris laughs.]</i>
			No one's trying to skip your birthday. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:25:19	Kris	Guest	Thank you.
			<i>[Bonnie and Jesse laugh.]</i>
00:25:22	John	Host	That's just a cultural pressure to get people to start spending money as quickly as possible, because brick and mortar retail is dying.
			<i>[Kris laughs.]</i>
			It's not personal. They're just trying to get—just trying to get the pressure on.
			Bonnie, people really do take issue with stores, for example, start putting up Christmas decorations or other holiday decorations at the beginning of November, or Halloween decorations at the beginning of September—tend to feel this way as well.
			'Cause I'm <u>older</u> than you, and I feel like time is already slipping through my fingers. Personally, it makes <u>me</u> anxious to go into the Walgreens or the CVS or whatever and see the Halloween candy on August 15th.
			'Cause like, " <i>[Noise of despair]</i> , don't take my time away!"
			<i>[Bonnie and Kris or Jesse laugh quietly.]</i>
00:26:02	Bonnie	Guest	That's fair.
00:26:03	John	Host	Do you think that Kris is feeling some of that, or is that just me projecting onto him?
00:26:07	Bonnie	Guest	I understand his feelings about it, but the issue I take with it is that he doesn't speak up <u>sooner</u> in the decorating process.
			So more often than not, he'll be with me if I'm at, like, a home goods store, for instance. And I'll ask him his opinion on something, and I'll be lucky to get as much as a shrug.
			So he literally helped me put these pumpkins onto a shelf. And <u>then</u> <i>[laughs]</i> took it upon himself to complain.

So I would never wanna put something up that he genuinely disliked or felt uncomfortable with, but it's after it has started to bring me happiness that he's all the sudden taken a sour turn. *[Laughs.]*

00:26:45 John Host He's the kind of guy who saves his feelings and opinions for expressing on podcasts only.

*[Kris laughs.]*

00:26:50 Bonnie Guest So it would seem.

00:26:51 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Bonnie:** I had no idea about this hurt about his birthday.

**John:** Oh no! How does—

*[Bonnie and Kris laugh, John stifles laughter.]*

00:26:55 John Host And you could really feel it in his voice!

00:26:57 Bonnie Guest Yeah, it seems like a sore subject. *[Laughs.]*

00:26:59 John Host I mean, you guys just moved in together. Prior to this, Bonnie, were you rocking Halloween in the middle of July happily on your own, and did you know that this would be an issue when you decided to cohabitate?

Did you have any conversations about how to compromise on this before you moved in together?

00:27:15 Bonnie Guest We did actually live together prior to moving into this house. We've lived together for I'd say probably a little over two years.

00:27:22 Kris Guest Two and a half, yeah.

00:27:23 Bonnie Guest And I mean, in our previous house, it was similarly spooky. Um, he knew I was spooky *[laughs]* getting into the relationship. This is not something that comes as a surprise to anyone who knows me.

But I will admit that I probably had a bit more excitement and maybe over-eagerness in my decorating schedule this year, since it is our first owned home. Um—

00:27:43 John Host Yeah!

00:27:44 Bonnie Guest So that might have lent to the timing, to a degree.

00:27:48 John Host It's a brand new house! You're excited. You wanna put your cat in a pumpkin vest and get gourds all over the place as quickly as possible.

00:27:55 Bonnie Guest That's absolutely right.

*[She and Kris laugh.]*

00:27:57 John Host So Kris, one thing that I think we need to get to the bottom of here before I can make my verdict, is:

Is it the timing of the decorating that is the primary issue for you? Or the stuff itself, once it comes out of the closet?

00:28:11 Kris Guest I like the decorations, once they're up. They do look nice. But I do think it's the timing.



And to combat her, um—her statement on why I am indifferent, I support her in her decorating desires. Typically it's only onesie-twosies, like, "Do you like this? Can we put this up?"

And we might put up one or two things at a time, and then one day I'll sit down on the couch, look around, and I'm surrounded by all these different decorations for next season, and I'm caught wondering, "How did this happen?"

00:28:38 John Host *[Laughs.]* It's a slow, spooky creep, is what you're saying.

00:28:42 Kris Guest Exactly. It's a very spooky creep.

00:28:44 John Host But you do have to be responsible for offering your opinions if you have them. And now you know. Unless you speak up and say whether you really like something or not, you're soon gonna be surrounded by kitschy pumpkins.

And they're going to kill you in your sleep.

*[Bonnie and Kris laugh.]*

Just a little lesson.

00:29:02 Kris Guest Of course.

00:29:03 John Host If I were to rule in your favor, Kris, what would you have me rule?

00:29:06 Kris Guest I would say we shouldn't start decorating for Halloween until, like, October 1st, and then—

00:29:12 Bonnie Guest *[Gasps.]*

00:29:14 Kris Guest *[Laughs.]*

00:29:15 John Host You just heard an audible gasp. That wasn't a spooky ghost, that was the love of your life, gasping.

00:29:20 Kris Guest *[Laughing]* It sure was.

00:29:23 John Host October 1st for Halloween.

00:29:25 Kris Guest So yeah, Halloween October 1st, and then fall... Oh, I don't know, probably like, Labor Day?

00:29:30 John Host When does this stuff get put away? Does it get put away in a timely manner after October 31st, or does it linger? Is that an issue?

00:29:35 Bonnie Guest I've committed to November 1st for taking down all the Halloween.

But I would argue that fall is reasonable to keep up in November.

00:29:43 John Host What is fall? 'Cause all I'm seeing is this Halloween stuff in my evidence. I'm not seeing more of the generic fall stuff that you're talking about.

00:29:51 Bonnie Guest Yeah, small pumpkins. I have like, a pumpkin wreath that goes out front. Things like that.

00:29:56 Jesse Host Cornucopia costume for the cat.

00:29:58 John Host *[Delighted]* Cornucopia costume for the cat!

*[Bonnie and Jesse or Kris laugh.]*

			Jesse Thorn, you need to invent that right away. That would be <u>great</u> .
00:30:04	Bonnie	Guest	Catucopia.
00:30:05	John	Host	That's right.
			<i>[Bonnie laughs quietly.]</i>
			<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> To subject an otherwise proud cat to being—have its little head come out of a horn o' plenty.
			<i>[Jesse, Bonnie, and Kris laugh.]</i>
			That would be so cute!
00:30:12	Bonnie	Guest	So delightful.
00:30:15	John	Host	Bonnie, what would you have me rule if I were to rule in your favor?
00:30:17	Bonnie	Guest	I would think that if Kris has such strong opinions about the decor, <u>or</u> the timing at which they are put up, that he should have to voice those opinions earlier on in the process, rather than after they're already assembled.
00:30:30	John	Host	Kris, do you not express your opinions because you think that they're not valued, or it doesn't matter?
00:30:35	Kris	Guest	I wouldn't say that it's not <u>valued</u> . I just feel like—like I said, as it's coming at me onesie-twosie, I don't really care that much, because I personally don't have a lot of decoration desires, so...
			I know before I lived with Bonnie, all my walls were bare. I didn't have any decorations. So I didn't have any desires to decorate.
			So once I moved in with her, there's decorations everywhere, all the time, which can be a bit of whiplash, when, uh, <i>[laughs]</i> you're going from that bachelor life to cohabitating with, uh, someone else.
00:31:07	Bonnie	Guest	I would say I've pumpkin spiced up his life.
00:31:09	Kris	Guest	Oh my god...
			<i>[Everyone laughs.]</i>
00:31:12	Jesse	Host	It truly is ironic that your home before moving in with a Halloween enthusiast was <u>dramatically</u> more spooky.
			<i>[Jesse, John, and Bonnie laugh quietly.]</i>
00:31:22	John	Host	Yeah. A bare-walled dorm room that Kris inhabited, maybe with one Choices poster on the inside of a closet.
00:31:31	Bonnie	Guest	Accurate.
			<i>[Kris laughs.]</i>
00:31:32	Jesse	Host	I had a fellow RA in college who lived in a dorm room that was <u>entirely</u> without adornment. Other than some textbooks, it was exclusively those things which had been issued to him by the University of California at Santa Cruz.

A closet, a bed, and so forth.

And once I asked him, like, "What are you doing in there?"

And he just said, "Sit-ups."

*[Everyone laughs.]*

He was a nice guy, though!

00:32:02 John Host Was he keeping a daily count of his sit-ups, and also his bathroom visits, just like Adam Sax did in his dorm room college?

00:32:09 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* Sounds right, yes.

00:32:12 John Host Shout-out to my old friend Adam Sax. He went on a very, very strict regimen in college.

But anyway, Bonnie, do you think Kris has a style? Does he need some style?

00:32:23 Bonnie Guest I should say that being in a place with lack of decor, at least to the degree that his old apartment was in, *[laughing]* gives me anxiety. Like, I—

00:32:32 John Host *[Laughing]* Okay.

00:32:33 Bonnie Guest I feel like it's—you're, like, interning yourself somewhere if there's no expression of your personality around you, like, whatsoever, so I feel like there's always a happy medium.

And anything that he would be interested in decorating with, I would be on board for.

I think the only thing he has on display in our house is his drinkware collection. Beer glasses.

00:32:53 Kris Guest Yeah, you can actually see those on the shelf above the coffee station in that evidence photo.

00:33:00 John Host They're from various bars that you've gone to, is that what it is?

00:33:02 Kris Guest Various breweries, various—I think I've got some sports teams on there. Lots of variants in there.

00:33:07 Bonnie Guest That wraps around about half of the kitchen.

00:33:09 Kris Guest Yeah. There's a lot more than you can see on that one shelf.

00:33:12 John Host Oh, wow! Well, the difference between a hoarder and a collector is a display shelf, so...

*[Bonnie and Kris laugh.]*

00:33:18 Kris Guest Well...

00:33:19 John Host I'm—I'm going to have to give this one to you, as a collection, Kris.

00:33:22 Jesse Host I would say that what is apparently Kris's Carnage from Spider-Man mug—

*[Kris laughs]*

—is perhaps the spookiest thing in this whole house!

*[Kris and Bonnie laugh.]*

00:33:34 Kris Guest

I'm glad you caught that one, though.

00:33:35 John Host

One question before I go. Bonnie, you asked me to rule that Kris give his input when he has input to give, and not wait 'til it's—the deed is done.

You made reference to the fact that he—*[laughs]*. He helped you put in these two small pumpkins. I'm not sure how much help you needed to put a pumpkin on the windowsill, but apparently he helped.

00:33:54 Bonnie Guest

Uh, I'm not tall. *[Laughing]* This was a shelf above the television.

00:33:57 Kris Guest

I'm a good bit taller than her.

00:33:59 John Host

Gotcha, okay. I should've thought. And he—and without complaint. But if in that moment, that you are at the gourd store in the middle of July, and you're like, "Let's get a couple!"

*[Kris laughs during the above.]*

And Kris said, "You know what? Uh, I'd rather wait. I'm not ready for these yet. Let's—let's wait. Here is my input. Let's wait a little while before we start putting gourds in our home."

*[Kris and Bonnie laugh quietly.]*

Would you indeed be able to accept that answer, you know, honestly?

00:34:24 Bonnie Guest

I would be overjoyed if he expressed—

*[Kris laughs]*

—that level of an opinion at all when it came to decor, so...

00:34:30 John Host

Wow, okay!

00:34:31 Bonnie Guest

I could find something else to put up there, even if he didn't have a suggestion that wasn't so seasonally inappropriate as he seems to feel.

*[She and Kris or Jesse laugh.]*

00:34:40 John Host

What would you put up instead of the gourds? A crazy model of a black cat?

00:34:45 Bonnie Guest

I don't know, perhaps more skulls. *[Laughs.]*

00:34:49 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**John:** His own?

**Kris:** Just buy another skull.

00:34:50 Kris Guest

A third skull for the skull wall.

00:34:51 John Host

There's always skulls.

I think I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. I am going to go into the storeroom here in my chambers, where I store all of the many thousands of unsold sexy *Judge John Hodgman* costumes that I tried to bring to market last Halloween.

*[Scattered, muffled laughter.]*

I'll be back in a moment with my verdict.

00:35:08 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

00:35:11 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[During above: Door opens, footsteps, chairs scrape against the floor.]*

*[During below: Door shuts.]*

00:35:14 Jesse Host Bonnie, in your home, next to your keys, there's a figurine of—well, it's a pumpkin man with a bowtie, what looks like cuffed blue jeans, and loafers. Is this... some kind of pumpkin Dave Shumka from *Stop Podcasting Yourself*?

*[Slightly distant laughter from John.]*

00:35:31 Bonnie Guest *[Laughs.]* I describe him as the dapper jack-o'-lantern.

00:35:36 Jesse Host *[Laughing extensively]* How are you feeling about your chances in the case, Bonnie?

00:35:43 Bonnie Guest I feel like there's probably a reasonable middle ground here that would probably satisfy us both. I'm thinking that John will probably lean that way.

00:35:53 Jesse Host How are you feeling about the impending flood of memes on Twitter and Instagram with the hashtag [#CozyGoth](#)?

00:36:01 Bonnie Guest I'm—I could not be more excited. *[Laughs.]* To finally be recognized.

00:36:07 Jesse Host Kris, how are you feeling?

00:36:10 Kris Guest I'm feeling better than I did at the beginning, when you guys were talking about how much you loved her decorations.

I was nervous that you were going to let her keep up all her cozy goth decorations—well, those will stay up—all her, uh, *[laughing lightly]* kitschy Halloween decorations year-round.

I'm feeling a little bit better now. It sounds like kind of what Bonnie was saying. We may have worked towards a middle ground here that, uh, we'll both be satisfied with.

00:36:34 Jesse Host One that reflects her love of contemporary Halloween kitsch and your love of... *[stifling laughter]* I guess craft beers or something?

*[Kris and Bonnie laugh.]*

00:36:44 Kris Guest Pretty much.

00:36:46 Jesse Host We'll see what Judge Hodgman has to say about all this when we come back in just a second.

00:36:50 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:36:52 Promo Clip *[Ocean sounds in the background.]*

**Speaker 1:** *[Piratey voice]* Ahh. There's nothing quite like sailing in the calm, international waters on my ship, the S.S. *Biopic* (*bi-AH-pic*).

*[Ship's horn toots.]*

**Speaker 2:** *[Piratey voice]* Avast! It's actually pronounced... "BI-oh-pic."

**Speaker 1:** No, ya dingus! It's "Bi-AH-pic!"

**Speaker 2:** Who the hell says that? It's "BI-oh-pic!" It comes from the words "biology"—

**Speaker 1:** It's the words for "biography" and "picture!"

*[Car horn honks.]*

**Speaker 2:** If you—

00:37:14   Promo   Clip

**Dave Holmes:** Alright, that is enough! Ahoy! I'm Dave Holmes; I am the host of the rebooted podcast formerly known as *International Waters*! Designed to resolve petty—but persistent—arguments like this! How? By pitting two teams of opinionated comedians against each other with trivia and improv games, of course! Winner takes home the right to be right.

**Speaker 1:** What podcast be this?

**Dave:** It's called *Troubled Waters*! *[Car engine revving, driving off.]* Where we disagree to disagreeeee! *[Voice trails off into the distance.]*

00:37:41   Sound Effect   Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:37:43   Sound Effect   Sound Effect

*[During below: Door opens, chairs scrape, footsteps, door shuts.]*

00:37:44   Jesse   Host

Please rise as Judge John Hodgman re-enters the courtroom and presents his verdict.

00:37:50   John   Host

You know, a lot of times with these disputes over how to decorate and how to share a home, especially among couples who have just moved in together for the first time, the crux of the case tends to be the discomfort of having to say "I don't like a thing" to another person.

And the natural friction that occurs as people try to meld two different lives, styles, ways of doing things, and really start to see each other for the first time in a way that they didn't have to when they lived separately.

I worry, and often these cruxes have to do with power and self-assertion. And this is not one of those situations. I think that Kris and Bonnie are extremely well-suited to live together.

For one, there are no surprises. They have seen each other. You can't not know who Bonnie is, because she's showing it to you on her double-shelf shrine of skulls and crystals.

00:38:46	John	Host	<p><i>[Kris and Bonnie laugh quietly.]</i></p> <p>Because she's cozy goth for life.</p> <p><i>[More laughter.]</i></p> <p>And Kris loves her for that. And there is no real concern about assertion of one's own personal style here, because—in this case, Bonnie has one and Kris doesn't.</p> <p><i>[They laugh, then so does John.]</i></p> <p>Kris's expression, at least in terms of decoration, is to collect pint glasses from various craft breweries. And he has a big, big display of them, and Bonnie has seen that, and they are displayed nicely in the home, and she does not object to that even though, if I were living with you, Kris, I <u>would</u> object to it.</p> <p><i>[They laugh.]</i></p> <p><i>[Stifling laughter]</i> That's why <u>we're</u> not living together, Kris. That's the one reason.</p>
00:39:28	John	Host	<p><i>[Kris laughs.]</i></p> <p>That's why you and Bonnie are living together, and I think living together very successfully, obviously for two years and now you have this new home.</p> <p>None of this is the anxiety, I think, of, you know, "How do I assert myself in this new environment? How do I make sure that I maintain some autonomy in this home and feel like it's my own?"</p> <p>I don't feel any of that anxiety here. You both like what you like, and you accommodate each other in what seems to be a very healthy way. So good job.</p> <p><i>[Someone laughs quietly.]</i></p>
00:40:04	John	Host	<p>With the exception of, perhaps Kris, your <u>over</u>-accommodation. Insofar as: I think Bonnie is really asking you if you have an opinion about something, that you say so!</p> <p>Because it is very supportive—take it from me, once you've lived in this house for a long time, you're gonna have all kinds of junk, and that basement's gonna be full of all kinds of things, and you're gonna make changes and adjustments and decorative changes, and they're not always gonna go smoothly.</p> <p>And sometimes you <u>are</u> just gonna have to roll over and just say, "I don't like that, but I can tell you really do, so I'm just gonna live with it and that's fine."</p> <p>That's an <u>active</u> choice to surrender to another person's decorative impulse. It's healthy, so long as it goes both ways and there is open conversation.</p>

But this sort of passive-aggressive thing of like, "I put a gourd on a shelf. No problem, honey. I'm supporting you."

*[Kris laughs.]*

00:40:41 John Host And then five weeks later going like, "What the hell? It's August. Get that gourd off the shelf."

*[Kris and Bonnie laugh.]*

That's actually not supportive or healthy for either of you. You need to be able to say, "This gourd feels wrong." And that's not easy! Knowing how you feel in the moment is not always an easy thing to do.

It would behoove you, Kris, I think, to take Bonnie's request seriously that you tune in to what it is you like and you don't like, and respectfully say, "I would rather not. It's not gourd time yet for me."

*[They snicker.]*

"I don't want to wish my time on this Earth away so that I can speed directly into spooky near death, right near Halloween."

00:41:15 John Host That said—Bonnie? I'm going to leave my own opinions about your decorations out of this.

I'm gonna say them.

*[Bonnie and Kris laugh.]*

I find a lot of your cutesy Halloween stuff not to my taste. To balance that, I will say—cozy goth? Love.

*[More quiet laughter.]*

Love the skulls. Love the crystals. Love the kerosene pot. Love the curse-your-father spooky picture.

*[Kris laughs, John stifles laughter.]*

Love that self-expression, love that you showed that to Kris, your partner, and everyone who comes in. And I think it's tasteful, too. I think it looks pretty good.

00:41:53 John Host You know, I'm not putting a cow skull in my house, but I can't say that that looks bad.

It's only when all those jack-o'-lantern throw pillows get in there that I start having a panic attack, 'cause I'd be like—

*[Bonnie and Kris laugh]*

—I live in New York. I wouldn't even know where to keep those things.



*[They laugh again.]*

But even though that's not to my taste, set it aside; that's not the point. I believe Kris when he says it's not the content of the decorations so much as it is the timing.

And I have to say... that I think Kris's request—the generic fall decorations start in September, and Halloween waits 'til October—is perfectly reasonable and exactly how it should be.

I'm sorry, Bonnie. I'm calling it for Kris on this one.

00:42:37 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**Kris:** *[Whispering]* Yes!

**John:** Generic fall starts in September.

00:42:40 John Host

Halloween starts in October.

The Halloween candy bowl has to be out year-round.

*[Kris laughs.]*

Absolutely, I think that's the greatest thing I've ever heard of.

*[Bonnie laughs.]*

You can restock that all the time. Let that be the eternal flame that keeps your love of Halloween and Autumn and death going all the time.

*[Kris and Bonnie laugh.]*

You gotta find a way to enjoy the time that you actually have, and not wish it away with gourds.

*[Kris laughs.]*

If I walked into a house that was full of gourds in the middle of August, I'd be like, "I'm walking out. No."

*[They both laugh again.]*

00:43:10 John Host

That's truly spooky.

And I will make one other order, and Bonnie, you may do with this as you like. You need to take a lot of pictures of Kris, and have them put onto a lot of throw pillows.

*[Kris and John laugh.]*

And I'm sure there's services to do this. And get a lot of—a lot of models of Kris, and a lot of, like, statuettes of Kris, and when it's Kris's birthday, I just want you to Kris out the whole place. *[Laughs.]*

*[Kris and Bonnie laugh.]*

As many blankies and throw pillows with Kris's face on it as possible.

			<i>[Kris is cracking up.]</i>
00:43:45	John	Host	And that—every birthday, he'll be like, "Wow, it's me all over the place!"
			<i>[Kris laughs.]</i>
			And then you can decorate to your heart's desire, and also show Kris that you care about him. At <u>least</u> as much as you do about an arbitrary Pagan holiday.
			This is the sound of a gavel.
00:43:59	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Spooky moaning/creaking sound.]</i>
00:44:02	John	Host	Judge John Hodgman rules; that is all.
00:44:04	Jesse	Host	Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.
00:44:06	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[During above: Door opens, footsteps, chairs scrape against the floor.]</i>
			<i>[Door shuts.]</i>
00:44:09	Jesse	Host	Bonnie, your hyper-long and hyper-adorable Halloween is over. How do you feel?
00:44:17	Bonnie	Guest	I am okay accepting it based on the sole concession of the year-round Halloween candy bowl. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>
			That way I have <u>something</u> to look forward to, even though I now have to truncate my active Halloween decorating period. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:44:31	Jesse	Host	I guess my main concern with a year-round Halloween bowl is that even if you keep refilling it, eventually it'll just be totally full of unwanted Almond Joys.
			<i>[Kris laughs.]</i>
00:44:43	Bonnie	Guest	That does happen. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:44:45	Jesse	Host	Kris, how do you feel?
00:44:47	Kris	Guest	I'm feeling pretty good, too. I get to keep the holidays where they belong, the seasons where they belong, and now I get an <u>extra</u> special birthday.
00:44:55	Bonnie	Guest	That remains to be seen.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:44:57	Jesse	Host	Are the two of you ready for the onslaught of <a href="#">#CozyGoth</a> deepfakes of Glenn Danzig enjoying a mug of hot cocoa and Elvira, Mistress of the Dark, warming her tootsies in front of the fire?
			<i>[Kris laughs during the above.]</i>
00:45:12	Bonnie	Guest	I personally cannot wait. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:45:14	Kris	Guest	I'm gonna start using that hashtag, too, I think.

00:45:16	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughs.] Thank you both for joining us on <i>Judge John Hodgman</i>.</i>
00:45:19	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:45:21	Promo	Clip	<i>[Sweet, gentle piano music plays.]</i>
<p><b>Janet Varney:</b> <i>[Sweetly]</i> Hi, I'm <i>The JV Club</i> podcast's Janet Varney, and I used to suffer from indecision. I couldn't choose between <i>Star Wars</i> and <i>Star Trek</i>—whether to call or text, or the best way to cook my eggs. But now, thanks to my weekly dose of <i>We Got This</i>, on Maximum Fun? My decisions are made <u>for</u> me! Thanks, Mark and Hal!</p> <p><b>Mark Gagliardi:</b> Warning, <i>We Got This</i> may cause: shouting, phone throwing, the illusion that the hosts can hear you, laughter on public transit, and death.</p> <p><b>Hal Lublin:</b> <i>We Got This</i> with Mark and Hal. We know what's best.</p> <p><i>[Chord comes to a resolution and ends.]</i></p>			
00:45:54	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:45:55	Jesse	Host	Another <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> case locked into the books.
<p>Before we dispense Swift Justice, our thanks to Susan Crum for naming this week's episode, "The Skeleton Brief."</p> <p>If you'd like to name a future episode, like <u><i>Judge John Hodgman on Facebook</i></u>.</p> <p>You can follow us on Twitter <u>@JesseThorn</u> and <u>@hodgman</u>. Hashtag your <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> Tweets <u>#JJHo</u>, and your deepfakes <u>#CozyGoth</u>.</p> <p>You can check out the Maximum Fun subreddit at <u>MaximumFun.Reddit.com</u>. We're also on Instagram <u>@judgejohnhodgman</u>.</p>			
00:46:31	Jesse	Host	Make sure to follow us there for evidence and cozy goth inspiration pics.
<p>This week's episode was recorded by Jennifer Tambellini at Forge Recording in Oreland, Pennsylvania. Our editor is Jesus Chui Ambrosio.</p> <p>This episode produced by Hannah Smith <u>and</u> Jennifer Marmor! Double teaming this thing.</p> <p><u>Now</u>, Swift Justice! Where we answer your small disputes with quick judgement.</p>			
00:46:56	Jesse	Host	Christopher says:
<p>"My friend calls streaming services TV. I think without scheduling, it's not TV. Should we all call streaming services TV now?"</p>			
00:47:08	John	Host	You know, there's a very fun and interesting chapter of my forthcoming book— <i>Medallion Status</i> by me, John Hodgman—that

talks about the confusion and fracturing of the culture now that there is more television than could ever be watched in one's lifetime because of all the screens and pads and tablets and seat backs that we have.

And that was just a plug for my book, *Medallion Status*. *[Mumbling quickly]* [Bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS](http://Bit.ly/MEDALLIONSTATUS), always be plugging.

*[Laughs quietly.]*

But at no point did I ever think to myself, "We really should come up with a different term for streaming content to differentiate it from TV, because it lacks a schedule."

00:47:46 John Host And I've never thought about that because I have a healthy brain.

Christopher, relax. *[Laughs quietly.]* It's TV!

We live in a time when not only is there no television anymore as we used to understand it when we were kids, but at the same time, there is only television. And it is all around us all the time.

And it is all something that you see and is brought to your eyes by a service. Tele-vision. TV.

Sorry, Christopher. You're wrong.

00:48:16 Jesse Host That's about it for this week's episode. Submit your cases at [MaximumFun.org/ijho](http://MaximumFun.org/ijho), or email [hodgman@maximumfun.org](mailto:hodgman@maximumfun.org).

No case is too small! We'll see you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:48:29 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:48:31 Music Transition *[A cheerful guitar chord.]*

00:48:32 Speaker 1 Guest [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org).

00:48:34 Speaker 2 Guest Comedy and culture.

00:48:35 Speaker 3 Guest Artist owned—

00:48:36 Speaker 4 Guest —audience supported.