

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:00:02	Jesse Thorn	Promo	Welcome to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. With me, as always, Judge John Hodgman. Before we get into the courtroom for this week's case, let's talk about the MaxFunDrive! Which is going on right this very moment.
00:00:19	John Hodgman	Promo	Yeah! It's been such a wonderful, low-key, hot and hazy summertime MaxFunDrive. We really wanted to reach out to you. Mostly to express our gratitude for your hanging in there and <u>remaining</u> members, some of you are <u>new</u> members, some of you have <u>upped</u> your membership. It's <u>so</u> wonderful.
			But obviously, it's a bit of an unpredictable time. So we tried to keep it Maximum Fun, Minimum Drive. And boy, oh boy, have the listener members of Maximum Fun really stepped up to the plate. And now's a great—that's a sports metaphor, Jesse. Baseball. You like it, right?
00:00:52	Jesse	Promo	Thank you.
00:00:53	John	Promo	You're welcome.
00:00:54	Jesse	Promo	I just learned about it, but it seems interesting.
00:00:55	John	Promo	Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Thank you for stepping up and staying... stepped? Also, I think, a baseball term?
			And this is that great time when we get to tell you about all the things that we get to give back to <u>you</u> in the Maximum Fun department. MaxFunDrive is usually when we release our bonus content for the year, and we've heard from a lot of people about how much the bonus content is helping to brighten their day. So now seems like a great time to remind you that this bonus content is here for you when you join at MaximumFun.org/join .
00:01:27	Jesse	Promo	Including, this year, our bonus content which is Judge Hodgman adjudicating disputes <u>between</u> MaxFun hosts!
00:01:34	John	Promo	<i>[Laughing]</i> Yeah.
00:01:35	Jesse	Promo	So we put out a call to MaxFun's talent base, which is prodigious.
00:01:39	John	Promo	<i>[Emphatically]</i> Prodigious!
00:01:41	Jesse	Promo	<i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> Folks like Dan McCoy and Elliott Kalan from <i>The Flop House</i> , and Tre'vell Anderson and Jarrett Hill from <i>FANTI</i> , and the folks behind <i>Dr. Gameshow</i> , and lots of other MaxFun hosts had beef. And we found out about it and decided upon it.
00:01:55	John	Promo	The Carrie Poppy vs. Ross Blocher, AKA—subtitled "Dawn of Justice" ruling? It's gonna—I mean, your jaw's gonna drop. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> Did <u>not</u> see it going the way it went.
00:02:08	Jesse	Promo	<i>[Laughs quietly.]</i> You can become a member at MaximumFun.org/join . There's hopefully an amount that fits within your monthly budget. Five, ten, or twenty dollars a month or up. If you're not able to do it right now, we understand. Tough times. If you are, we are very grateful, and we're very grateful to <u>any</u> way that you support us. Whether it's through money, or by spreading the word about the MaxFunDrive, or whatever.

You can go to MaximumFun.org/join, and you can sign up and check out all the cool thank you gifts, and we just wanna say thank you to

everybody who's stuck with us, everybody who's joined up, everybody who's bumped up, everybody who's increased their membership, and everybody who's done something else to support our work. It's... wonderful that you've done that for us, and we're very grateful.

00:02:50	John	Promo	Yeah, we're gonna say thank you by telling you about the thank-you gifts <u>later</u> ! And instead getting on with the case. What's it called, Jesse?
00:02:57	Jesse	Host	Now on to this week's case, "Birthday Parties to the Dispute." Ann brings the case against her husband, Kevin. Ann says that Kevin is too judgmental about how she celebrates her birthday. He says he doesn't have a problem with birthday celebrations. He just thinks her side of the family makes too big a deal out of them. Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide.
00:03:21	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]</i>
00:03:22	Jesse	Host	Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and presents an obscure cultural reference.
00:03:25	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Door shuts.]</i>
00:03:26	John	Host	<i>[Sniff, sniff, sniff.]</i> <i>[Sighs.]</i> Oh my god, that—that delicious smell! That—that intoxicating aroma!
00:03:34	Jesse	Host	Ohh, it's an <u>enchanting</u> emanation! Judge John Hodgman, that smell can only mean one thing!
00:03:40	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<i>[John gasps.]</i> Jesse & John: Podcaaaasts!
00:03:43	Jesse	Host	It's a podcast! It's just cooling on that windowsill!
00:03:48	John	Host	Oh. My. God, or whatever. We have <u>got</u> to <u>get</u> that podcast!
00:03:52	Jesse	Host	Oh, you said it! But how?!
00:03:54	John	Host	Ughh, there's <u>got</u> to be a way!
00:03:57	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Jesse & John: Hmmm. Hmmm!
00:04:00	John	Host	Bailiff Jesse! I got it! <i>[Laughs.]</i> I'll just, uh... I'll just start the podcast! Bailiff Jesse Thorn, swear them in.
00:04:09	Jesse	Host	Ann and Kevin, please rise and raise your right hands.
00:04:10	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Chairs scrape.]</i>
00:04:12	Jesse	Host	Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God or whatever?
00:04:17	Ann	Guest	I do.
00:04:18	Kevin	Guest	I do.
00:04:20	Jesse	Host	Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that, as we record right now, he has a four-inch scar on his forehead—

[John, Jesse, and someone else laugh.]

—because he was laughing too hard at a British sitcom?

00:04:35	Ann	Guest	<i>[Chuckles.]</i> I do.
00:04:36	Kevin	Guest	I do.
00:04:38	Jesse	Host	Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.
00:04:41	John	Host	Anyone who needs to hear that story can ask me in person someday. In any case, uh, Ann and Kevin, you may be seated.
00:04:45	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Chairs scrape.]</i>
00:04:46	John	Host	For an immediate summary judgment in one of yours' favors, can either of you name the piece of culture that both Bailiff Jesse Thorn and I <u>expertly</u> performed as I entered the courtroom? Ann, let's start with you.
00:04:58	Ann	Guest	Okay. I'm gonna say that it's a scene between Gilligan and the Skipper...? From <i>Gilligan's Island</i> .
00:05:05	John	Host	<i>[Thoughtful, comedically extended "Ah!"]</i> A Sherwood Schwartz joint! <i>[Ann laughs.]</i> Alright! Sherwood A Schwartz. Excuse me, estate of Sherwood A Schwartz. Okay. Yep. I'll put that in the guess book. That's a solid guess. Three-hour tour. Kevin, what's your guess?
00:05:20	Kevin	Guest	I'm going to guess it is a original <i>Looney Tunes</i> Bugs Bunny/Elmer Fudd cartoon, circa 19...58.
00:05:33	John	Host	Oh, too bad! It's '57. <i>[Laughing]</i> No. <i>[The litigants laugh.]</i> I appreciate your specificity. I will put that in the guess book. But of course, all guesses—however specific—are wrong. It's a much more recent piece of culture. Jesse Thorn, do you wanna tell 'em what it is?
00:05:50	Jesse	Host	Yeah. That is probably my favorite comedy sketch that I've ever seen performed live. It's one of the original sketches by the sketch comedy group the Birthday Boys.
00:06:00	John	Host	Get it? Birthday? Birthday?
00:06:02	Kevin	Guest	<i>[Amused]</i> Okay.
00:06:03	Jesse	Host	And I don't know what <u>they</u> called it. Obviously a stage sketch doesn't exactly have a title card at the beginning of it. But I have always referred to it in my mind as, "Ooh! Gotta get that pie!" <i>[John and Ann laugh.]</i>
00:06:15	John	Host	Yeah, in the sketch, they're not looking for a podcast.
00:06:18	Kevin	Guest	Ohhh.
00:06:19	John	Host	No one's looking for a podcast in this life.

[Ann laughs.]

They're all over the place.

00:06:22 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:06:23 John Host They're much harder to get than pies cooling on a windowsill. But there is a recording of that, shot at the UCB Franklin Theater from 2008, that I would highly recommend, featuring our friend Mike Mitchell of the Dough Boys, plus all the birthday boys. Do you know who wrote that particular sketch, Jesse

00:06:38 Jesse Host Uh, I don't know. I would imagine Tim Calpakis wrote it, because it is a very Tim Calpakis-y sketch comedy premise. But I think they all work together on those sketches.

00:06:49 John Host Right.

00:06:50 Jesse Host I saw that at SketchFest NYC. I was there to do *The Sound of Young America*, the precursor to *Bullseye*.

00:06:55 John Host Yeah!

00:06:56 Jesse Host And they put that pie up on a ladder, and they all got underneath it and said, "Oooh! Ooh, we gotta get that pie!"

[Jesse, Ann, and John laugh.]

And I can't even look at a pie without thinking about that.

00:07:08 John Host Alright, that was from the Birthday Boys. And so we now roll into the birthday... well, I—you know. Person. Ann.

00:07:17 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]* Yes?

00:07:18 John Host *[Laughs.]* Would it be alright to say "birthday woman"?

00:07:21 Ann Guest Sure! Mm-hm.

00:07:22 John Host Alright.

00:07:23 Ann Guest Yep. Yep.

00:07:24 John Host Now we roll into the birthday woman, who is having a dispute with her husband, Kevin, over how to celebrate her birthday. Ann would like to have a party and celebrate her time on Earth. Kevin is like, "That's boring. I don't wanna celebrate you." I've got that right. Pretty much?

[Kevin or Jesse laughs quietly.]

00:07:38 Ann Guest That's pretty much it. That's pretty much it. Yep.

00:07:41 John Host Ann, you come to this court seeking justice. Tell me about the dispute.

00:07:44 Ann Guest Okay. Well, every year, around the time of my birthday—

00:07:48 John Host Which is when?

00:07:50 Ann Guest February 3rd. Day after Groundhog's Day.

00:07:52 John Host February 3rd...

00:07:54 Ann Guest Yes.

00:07:55 John Host Groundhog Boxing Day.

00:07:56 Ann Guest Yes. *[Laughs.]* That's right. I like that. I will use that. Forever.

00:08:00 John Host Well, I—I just stole from the Birthday Boys, so I guess you can steal from me.

00:08:02 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]* Okay. Yeah, I guess I could ask for permission. Rather than just declaring. I'm—but anyway—

00:08:06 John Host I didn't ask permission, so, uh, I owe the universe one. I pay it forward.

00:08:10 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]* Okay. Perfect.

So, yes. Every year around February 3rd, my birthday will come up. The way that my birthday is scheduled, and due to my profession, my birthday always gets crowded out by events. Which is fine. I am an adult, and actually since long before I was an adult, I've always had to kinda reschedule my birthday. Which is fine.

00:08:30 Jesse Host We should explain that your profession is groundhog wrangler.

00:08:33 Ann Guest *[Laughing]* Yes.

00:08:34 John Host *[Laughing]* Yeah, right.

00:08:35 Ann Guest Yes, I'm very exhausted—I'm exhausted on the 3rd.

00:08:38 John Host What are you, the Mayor of Punxsutawney?

[John and Ann laugh.]

00:08:41 Ann Guest Exactly.

00:08:43 John Host What is your profession?

00:08:44 Ann Guest I am a singer and a voice teacher.

00:08:46 John Host Oh, and February's your busy month? *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:08:48 Ann Guest It kinda—well, you can laugh, but it would—

00:08:50 John Host Okay. I—I was, and I apologize.

00:08:52 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]* Yeah, no, it's fine. Well, yes. In—way—I wear—like a lot of professional musicians, I freelance doing lots of different things, and one of the things I do is music education. And there are so many festivals at that time of year, it's just—there's no brainer that there's gonna be a festival on or on the weekend of my birthday every year.

00:09:12 John Host Mm, not anymore.

00:09:14 Ann Guest Oh right, no. *[Laughs.]*

00:09:15 John Host Not anymore!

00:09:16 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]* Yeah. Woo! I can really celebrate this year. *[Laughs.]* Looking forward to silver lining.

00:09:19 John Host Yeah, this coming February is probably gonna be pretty clear for you! *[Laughs.]*

00:09:23 Ann Guest Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:09:25 John Host If I rule in your favor, Kevin's gonna be very sad.

[Ann and Kevin or Jesse laugh.]

'Cause it's gonna be six more weeks of birthday for Ann.

00:09:30 Kevin Guest It's true.

00:09:31 Ann Guest *[Laughing]* Exactly.

00:09:32 Kevin Guest It's true!

00:09:33 Ann Guest So, yeah, anyway—well, and then not to mention, it almost always coincides with Super Bowl Weekend, so with those different icebergs floating in there—

00:09:39 John Host Right.

00:09:40 Ann Guest —I always kinda have to plot, "When are we gonna do this?" So it does seem like it always comes up as a calendar discussion. You can't just observe it on the day. And every year, I feel like Kevin gaslights me—

[Someone exhales sharply.]

—and tries to convince me that adults do not celebrate their birthday. And makes me feel like I'm...

[John shudders.]

...somehow weird, or entitled, or princess-y, that I want to celebrate my birthday.

00:10:07 John Host Before we get into that serious accusation against Kevin, how do you like to celebrate your birthday? Like, for example, this past February...

00:10:16 Ann Guest I will give it to you.

00:10:17 John Host Like, just tell us a story about how people used to get together.

00:10:19 Ann Guest Yes. In the before times.

00:10:20 John Host In a restaurant.

00:10:21 Ann Guest Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:10:23 John Host How did they do it, Grandma? How did they celebrate birthdays?

[Ann and Jesse or Kevin laugh.]

00:10:25 Ann Guest Okay. So, my birthday this year on Groundhog's Day, we—I closed a show. I had my last performance of a show. And so then that—my birthday was a Monday. And Monday is my big, big, big, marathon voice teaching day, and I hadn't seen my students for about three weeks, because I had been in a run of a musical, and I needed to rest my voice.

00:10:47 John Host Uh-huh.

00:10:48 Ann Guest And so I could not reschedule them yet again, so on my birthday, I went to the dentist in the morning, and then I taught nine voice lessons back to back. And that was my birthday.

So on Tuesday, we had rescheduled with the—my—our daughters. We have two daughters. And I feel like it's part of my job as a mom to show them how birthdays are traditionally observed in my culture, anyway. *[Stifles laughter.]* And so we went to a make-your-own-pizza restaurant, and had pizza, and came home, and had ice cream.

My parents live less than a mile from us, so they tagged along. It was great. And there—I think simple presents were exchanged. It was not a big deal. And then what I wanted for my birthday, Kevin and I did not wanna spend any big money on a gift for me. What I wanted, because I had just finished a show, is Kevin and I went out for dinner the following Friday night. And that was pretty much my birthday!

00:11:40 John Host So two celebrations.

00:11:41 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

00:11:43 Jesse Host And you said gifts were exchanged. Were you passing out gifts on your birthday?

00:11:47 Ann Guest Well... I mean, I was there—no, I'm just kidding. Um, no, I was—no! I did not pass out gifts.

00:11:52 Jesse Host Gifts were transferred.

00:11:53 Ann Guest Gifts were transferred. Yeah. That's a better way to say it.

00:11:55 Jesse Host Got it.

00:11:56 John Host Gifts were accumulated, by you.

00:11:58 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]* Yes. Yeah!

00:12:00 John Host Right. I gotcha. You went to make-your-own-pizza.

00:12:03 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

00:12:04 John Host With your daughters and your parents.

00:12:05 Ann Guest Mm-hm. And my husband. Kevin was there, too.

00:12:08 John Host Kevin, what if I ruled you didn't have to do that?

[Ann laughs.]

What if I ruled you didn't have to go to make-your-own-pizza?

00:12:14 Kevin Guest Well, I mean, I like pizza.

00:12:17 John Host 'Cause what I'm hearing is there are—there are two birthday celebrations.

00:12:20 Kevin Guest Right.

00:12:21 John Host One family celebration, and one personal celebration between the two of you.

00:12:26 Kevin Guest Right.

00:12:27 John Host Is the number of celebrations the issue here? Or what is your beef?

00:12:31 Kevin Guest Yeah. Thank you. Good. Here's... the thing. I think that there is—

00:12:38 John Host Holy moly. We got—we got Alec Baldwin on the line.

[Ann laughs.]

That's a little public radio joke. Sorry.

00:12:44 Kevin Guest Do you think I'm Alec Baldwin because I'm... handsome? Is that what is happening?

00:12:47 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jesse:** Because you said—yes.

John: Yeah. Yeah.

Jesse: It's because you're handsome. Yes.

Kevin: Oh. Thank you. Good. *[Laughs.]*

Jesse: It's not because you said the name of his public radio show.

[Someone laughs.]

00:12:52 Jesse Host But rather... because you're as handsome as famously handsome person Alec Baldwin.

00:12:56 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

00:12:57 John Host Your steely blue eyes.

00:12:59 Jesse Host Also because you were great in *Glengarry Glen Ross*. The movie version.

[One or both litigants laugh.]

00:13:01 John Host That's what it was. Yeah.

00:13:03 Jesse Host The character that was added for the movie.

00:13:05 Kevin Guest Right.

What is an appropriate number of celebrations for an adult's birthday, Judge? Must we celebrate it on the day, and then have a family celebration, and then, if I'm recalling correctly, Ann also went out to lunch with a colleague to celebrate her birthday a third time.

Now, that's fine. But what is my responsibility in an appropriate number of celebrations for an adult's birthday? I understand and accept that for a kid's birthday, you know, there's parties. You might go to, you know, Chuck E. Cheese or whatever. But for an adult's birthday, is there a limit? Like, should we celebrate multiple times in multiple ways? And if so, how many, how often? And what is my responsibility as a loving husband?

00:13:58 Jesse Host Which part of this, Kevin, was the most difficult lift for you?

[Ann laughs.]

00:14:02 Kevin Guest Hm.

00:14:03 Jesse Host Was it when you went out to dinner with your children, *[laughing]* or when you went out to dinner with your wife?

[John snorts, Ann laughs.]

00:14:07 Kevin Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Right. Thank you. Yes. Mm-hm.

00:14:09 Jesse Host 'Cause those are the things I'm hearing that you did.

[Jesse and Ann laugh.]

These are things I do throughout the year, in better circumstances.

00:14:16 Kevin Guest Right. So, it's not the act of those things. Those things are enjoyed by most normal people. It's that—this is, I think, one of the conversations that Ann and I have, and I think why she brought this

case against me—is the amount of planning and conversation that has to go into the birthday festivities. Right?

00:14:37 John Host Mm-hm.

00:14:38 Kevin Guest So I don't mind going out to dinner with my kids or my wife. In fact, most of the time I enjoy that! It's the planning that takes place, and the conversations that must take place.

00:14:47 Jesse Host Like you have to decide what toppings to put on the make-your-own-pizza?

00:14:51 Kevin Guest Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

00:14:53 Jesse Host Basil. The kids aren't gonna like that.

00:14:54 Kevin Guest Yes. They're not.

00:14:56 John Host Anchovies.

00:14:58 Kevin Guest Anchovies.

00:14:59 Jesse Host Pepperoni might be too spicy. Some kids don't like pepperoni. What's their problem?

[Ann laughs quietly.]

00:15:02 Kevin Guest Correct. Correct.

That's my question. That's why I'm standing before the court today, is what's the appropriate number of celebrations for an adult's birthday? And let me be clear. I love my wife. And I am grateful that she continues to celebrate birthdays, and I want her to continue to do so for as long as humanly possible.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

But how many celebrations is an appropriate number?

00:15:29 John Host So let—let the record show that I can see the litigants, because we are now using teleconferencing to record these. Let the record show that Ann's jaw dropped in disbelief.

[Someone laughs.]

And I'm not sure whether it was dropping in disbelief at Kevin's contention that he doesn't mind how many birthdays she—he doesn't mind how she celebrates her birthday, or his contention that he loves her.

[More laughter.]

What were you responding to in disbelief?

00:15:55 Ann Guest Well, I guess it was probably—I think what he—I—now that I'm reviewing it in my mind, he might've just meant he would like me to not die, and he'd like me to celebrate multiple birthdays.

[Someone laughs.]

But it was the—just the fact that he used the word "celebrate."

00:16:06 John Host Right.

00:16:07 Ann Guest And said, "I'd love her to celebrate her birthday." That has never been... uttered. *[Laughs.]* And I—

00:16:15 Kevin Guest Sure.

00:16:16 Ann Guest I don't wanna give Kevin fuel for his fire. But I will say the other thing that he touched on is that I do think he's irritated by the amount of planning and discussion of planning. That even though they're very small events that don't warrant this much discussion, I think this is something that he brings up about me, and dare I say the female line of my family or origin. Is the planning.

00:16:40 John Host Okay. So this goes back into your ancestry.

00:16:42 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

00:16:43 John Host Tell me about the family traditions, and tell me about the planning. Let's hear Kevin make the argument. I—may I note, by the way, I don't know where you guys are in the world, but I do know that Ann, you're in a living room, and Kevin, you're—you're in your shirt closet.

00:16:58 Ann Guest No, I'm in a teaching dungeon. This is our basement.

00:17:01 John Host Oh. Okay.

00:17:02 Ann Guest Like, it's freezing down here. There's spiders.

00:17:04 John Host That's where you do your remote teaching? And Kevin, you're in the clothes closet of your house.

00:17:09 Kevin Guest Right. Also, podcast studio.

[Someone laughs.]

00:17:12 John Host Right. Where are you both in the world?

00:17:13 Kevin Guest Yeah, we live in Spokane, Washington.

00:17:16 John Host Oh, alright! Cool.

00:17:17 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

00:17:18 John Host So Kevin, I'm gonna let you describe your wife's family's birthday traditions and planning. And—but as—before I do, quick question. In that closet behind you, you got a petard in there? 'Cause I wanna see you hoist yourself up on it.

[Jesse and John laugh.]

00:17:34 Kevin Guest What's a petard, Judge?

[Ann laughs.]

00:17:35 John Host I don't even—I don't even know. I don't think it's even something that would be in a closet. *[Laughs.]* Alright, let's hear it. What's the complaint about the planning? What's the complaint about Ann and her family?

00:17:44 Kevin Guest So, thank you, Judge. My wife's family is what I would classify as very plan-y. Alright? And let me give some examples.

00:17:51 John Host Mm-hm. It's a plan-y fam.

00:17:53 Kevin Guest That's exactly right. *[Stifles laughter.]* My wife's mom and her aunts, so my mother-in-law and my mother-in-law's sisters, are so well known for their planning abilities that in fact, we—and Ann and I have both done this—we make fun of how far in advance they plan

things.

00:18:10 John Host Mm-hm.

00:18:11 Kevin Guest So right now, we're taping this podcast in the summer. It would not surprise me to get a text or an email from one of—from my mother-in-law or one of my mother-in-law's sisters to start planning the Thanksgiving meal, or the Christmas holiday meal. Like, they just think that far in advance.

00:18:26 John Host *[Exhales deeply.]* Whoa.

00:18:28 Kevin Guest And I'm talking, you know, spreadsheets and multiple emails. And in fact one aunt goes so far as to say, "When we gather, please make sure you have—" you know, "Who's bringing the salt? Who's bringing the pepper? Are there any additional utensils that need to be brought? How many packets of salt and pepper? Because we're going to assume that each person may use one to two packets per day." And then, you know, have some equations where it's all worked itself out.

00:18:52 John Host I have a—I have a lot of questions.

[Ann laughs.]

Keep talking.

00:18:55 Kevin Guest So this level—as you can see, Judge—

00:18:57 John Host *[Lost/dismayed]* Packets!

00:18:59 Kevin Guest —this level of plan-iness is... well, it can be overwhelming at times! So here's a couple of things. One, I have to live up to this level of plan-iness. The level of detail and care, if we can call it that, that goes into planning these events. This is a lifetime of planning and care that my mother-in-law has given to my wife, and now here I am, just trying to be a loving husband. Just trying to do some nice things for my wife. And I can't possibly live up to it.

So what happens is, there's multiple celebrations. There's multiple plans to be made. Multiple decisions to make. And... it's too much. It's too many. It's too much and too many. I... I—I think there's just—it's an—it's, uh, a maybe oppressive amount of birthday that has to be planned and celebrated every year.

00:19:53 Jesse Host Kevin, what are some examples of decisions that you had to get involved in planning for this birthday that we heard described? A dinner out with just your wife.

[One of the litigants laughs.]

And a dinner out at a family restaurant with your children and in-laws.

00:20:08 Kevin Guest Right.

00:20:09 John Host Yeah, tell me about the spreadsheet for make-your-own-pizza.

[Ann laughs.]

00:20:12 Kevin Guest Well... *[Sighs.]* First of all, we have to decide when and where we're going to go. And that could take several phone calls, or texts, or

emails. What day of the week is best, what time of day is best, and then what restaurant. Because there's, as in I think probably most American families these days, certain dietary restrictions. Right? "Who's eating gluten, and who can't eat gluten and sugar and not-sugar?"

00:20:34 John Host Right. Right, right, right.

00:20:35 Kevin Guest So what restaurant we're going to go to, what time we're going to go there, and—

00:20:39 John Host Yeah.

00:20:40 Kevin Guest —and who's going to drive what vehicles, and...

00:20:42 John Host Right.

00:20:44 Kevin Guest And here's the thing. We ended up settling on a restaurant that is literally walking distance from our neighborhood, and it took several different conversations to make sure that all of it could happen.

00:20:54 John Host Were you party to these conversations?

00:20:56 Kevin Guest I was party to many of these conversations, yes.

00:20:58 John Host Why?

[Ann laughs.]

00:21:00 Kevin Guest Thank you! That—thank you, Judge! Thank you!

[John laughs quietly.]

I'm not gonna rest my case, but I feel vindicated. Thank you.

[Ann laughs.]

00:21:07 Sound Effect Transition [Three gavel bangs.]

00:21:10 Jesse Promo Let's take a quick break to talk about this year's MaxFunDrive. We'll be back in the courtroom with more birthday justice in just a minute. But first, you know, Maximum Fun is supported by its members. That's about 70% of our total income. And that's true for every show in Maximum Fun. This is how we keep the lights on, is all the folks who voluntarily go to MaximumFun.org/join and become a member of MaxFun!

00:21:37 John Promo Yeah. [Stifling laughter] 70%, is that true, Jesse?

00:21:39 Jesse Promo Yeah, it's about 70%. Yeah.

00:21:41 John Promo Whoa! We're really counting on 'em! Hoo! Well... thank you, everyone! And also, thank you for the kind words that you've been sharing all over social media! It's been so much fun to follow along with the MaxFunDrive hashtag. [@MsBrownover](https://twitter.com/MsBrownover) on Twitter said, "Your efforts are appreciated by your listeners." I quote:

"JJHo is the brightest part of my week. Thank you for all you do. I increased my membership this year because I couldn't get through 2020 without MaxFun. *I, Podius* basically kept me sane." End quote.

I, Podius being the MaxFunDrive-inspired bonus podcast that Elliott Kalan and I did! It was so much fun.

00:22:20 Jesse Promo *I, Podius* kept her as sane as *I, Claudius* is insane.

00:22:24 John Promo That's ri—well, ri—*[laughs]*—no, no, *I, Clau*—*[sighs]*. Never mind. Listen to the—listen to *I, Podius* and you'll understand.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

It's free for anyone who wants to listen to it now.

Also on Twitter, @StevieKJ—I know StevieKJ out of Vancouver!—told our producer Jennifer, quote:

"JJHo is one of my weekly rituals. Always an immediate download! I so appreciate all the work that you, Jennifer Marmor, and John Hodgman and Jesse Thorn do. And I, StevieKJ of Vancouver, am proud to get to support all of you and the show." End quote. Look, I'm—I'm putting some sauce on that, but it really is very—very, very touching to hear these words.

And, you know, as Jesse mentioned earlier, during this Maximum Fun, Minimum Drive, if all you can do is say to a friend, "Hey! Maximum Fun is creating content that I think you would really love, and could be distracted by during a time when you might need distraction," that is an incredible gift to us.

00:23:23 Jesse Promo Yeah. I know that Maximum Fun has filled that role in my life lately. Some of our great shows that I turn to when I am... not feeling great, and need something to get me through the next hour. And I know that to varying extents, that's true for many of you. If you're in a position to become a member, we're very grateful for your membership. You can go to MaximumFun.org/join to become a member.

So here is some cool news this week. In the past, when we've had these pin giveaways, which are very popular—

00:24:02 John Promo Yeah.

00:24:03 Jesse Promo —we let you, all the members at \$10 a month and up, choose a pin from the many show-specific, inside-reference-y enamel pins that we create. And at the end of the Drive, if we've met our goal in the past, we have had a big sale of those pins to benefit various charities.

This year we don't have a goal, but we have decided to just go ahead and announce that we are going to do that, to benefit COVID-19 relief, direct aid for people who need it. So if you join at the \$10 a month and up level, you will have the opportunity after the Drive to buy as many pins as you want! As many pins as you want, so if you want a bunch of pins, don't worry, the opportunity will be available to you at the end of the Drive. We promise. And all the net proceeds will go to COVID-19 relief.

00:24:53 John Promo Megan Lynn Kott has designed MaxFunDrive-exclusive enamel pins for each and every MaxFun show. We do a new one every year. You can check them all out at MaximumFun.org/join. People generally like to get more than once, 'cause they're all so cool. And at, you know, \$10 a month at MaximumFun.org/join, you get to pick a pin. You get the opportunity to buy further pins to benefit COVID-19 relief. And I just wanna point out that there are fun gifts at every level that you are comfortable with.

Starting at \$5 a month, you get all the bonus content. You can check all of the gifts out at MaximumFun.org/join. And as always, if you join or update in support of *Judge John Hodgman* at the Leadership level, not only do you get a cool, blue, vintage-inspired camping mug adorned with the MaxFun rocket logo... if you send me a screenshot at hodgman@maximumfun.org of your receipt, I of course will mispronounce your name in a thank-you message on my Instagram account, @johnhodgman. That's a tradition that I always do every year, and I'm looking forward to doing it this year as well.

So those are some ways that you can contribute, and some of the things you get back if you do go to MaximumFun.org/join. But of course what you really get back is more important. It is knowing that you have helped us in the precise and exact way that we need your help in order to keep the lights on, to keep the virtual tape decks rolling, and to keep giving you podcasts that we're so glad and grateful you want to share in your lives, and share with others.

And if you're not able to financially help us out, simply spreading the word, or even just giving us a good thought is truly enough. I mean, I mentioned last time I spoke about this, how one of the things I learned about making a podcast is that it's extremely intimate. You know, when you make a podcast, you are—someone is trusting their ears and their brains and their free time with your voice and good company. Podcasts keep you company. They keep me company when I listen to them, and I hope that we keep you good company, too.

00:27:18 John Promo I mentioned, you know, people working overnight. You know, late hours, when they're alone. Podcasts keep them company, and a lot of people wrote back to me on Twitter to say that that meant something to them, and I'm very glad that it did. Podcasts keep me company when I'm feeling really lonely. This is a time when we should remind each other that we're not alone.

It's very, very gratifying to be making podcasts for you. And it is very, very gratifying that you enjoy them. So... thank you.

Let's get back to the show?

00:27:47 Jesse Promo Let's get back to the show.

00:27:48 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:27:51 John Host Ann, why was Kevin part of these conversations? He doesn't care.

00:27:54 Ann Guest Well, I would just say that his part in the conversation—and I mean, I guess he can countersue for me to not do this—was for me to go, "Okay. My parents wanna know if we wanna carpool over there. Do you care? Okay, you don't care? Okay, Mom, we'll just drive our own car."

Like, that's—so I could just make, you know—

00:28:11 John Host Have you ever lobbed that kind of information at Kevin, where the answer is, "Do you care?" Has he ever said, "I do care"?

00:28:21 Ann Guest *[Thoughtful breath.]* I'm try—I—

[Jesse and possibly someone else laugh.]

00:28:22 John Host Let the record show Kevin's in his clothes closet, shaking his head "no" vigorously.

00:28:26 Ann Guest Yeah, that's—well—

00:28:27 John Host Kevin does not care.

00:28:28 Ann Guest Yeah.

00:28:29 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* He looks like my dog Coco if she caught a squirrel.

[John cracks up.]

00:28:33 Ann Guest Yeah. I—yes. I think that the overall marriage history of all plans—

00:28:40 John Host Yeah?

00:28:41 Ann Guest —any decisions ever, the answer would probably be—

00:28:43 John Host Right.

00:28:44 Ann Guest —in the single digits, the number of times Kevin has had an opinion, or cared about what we're gonna plan or do.

00:28:49 John Host So you're looping him in as a courtesy?

00:28:52 Ann Guest Well, yeah! And I want—you know, I want to grow with him in our marriage, so I feel like it'd be good for him to know what's going on!

[Ann and John or Kevin laugh.]

00:29:02 Jesse Host And Ann, it sounds like you also wanna honor your family tradition.

[Ann laughs, Jesse stifles laughter.]

00:29:06 Ann Guest Planning makes me happy. I'm not gonna lie. I—I would—yeah.

00:29:10 John Host Yeah. Well, tell me about that feeling, when you're planning.

00:29:14 Ann Guest Well, for sure, I will absolutely 100% stipulate to some control issues. You betcha. I got it. Big time.

00:29:21 John Host Yeah.

00:29:22 Ann Guest And so there is some security in feeling like you have some sort of control over your life. I know it's an illusion, but don't tell my conscious self that. And then the other thing is that, um, I think it's fun!

00:29:34 Jesse Host Ann, I don't mean to interrupt you, but just don't let your conscious self read the newspaper.

00:29:38 Ann Guest Oh, I know.

[Everyone laughs.]

00:29:39 Jesse Host Give it a year.

00:29:40 Ann Guest I know. I know. I know. Yeah, no, and I think—the other thing is I just think it's really fun to try on different possible adventures. And even if the adventure is just, "Should we go to this pizza restaurant where you pick your own toppings, or should we drive out to another part of town and go to this Asian Fusion restaurant we like to go to?" I just think it's fun to consider possibilities of future plans. I think it's fun to talk about.

00:30:06 John Host Kevin, do you take pleasure in planning, yourself?

00:30:09 Kevin Guest No—no, sir. None at all.

[Ann laughs quietly.]

00:30:11 John Host Not even your own, like, shirt-wearing schemes? I am only saying that 'cause your—your background by some beautiful shirts.

00:30:19 Kevin Guest No.

00:30:20 Ann Guest I—

00:30:21 Kevin Guest No. In fact, I, um—

00:30:22 John Host Will you let—please let Kevin answer the question, Ma'am!

00:30:23 Ann Guest I'm sorry. Okay. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

[Someone laughs.]

00:30:25 John Host You're part of my plan. Don't worry.

00:30:26 Ann Guest Okay.

00:30:27 John Host I'll get back to you.

[Someone laughs.]

00:30:29 Kevin Guest I don't like—uh, don't like plans. I—I'm not—I don't avoid them. But the conversations especially with my wife's family around planning is significant, is detail-oriented, and sometimes are around details that just don't need—it's not important.

For example, what shirt am I going to wear tomorrow? Or later this week? Especially in the time that we're living, it doesn't matter what you wear, ever. Right?

00:30:59 John Host We're living in very specific times.

00:31:01 Kevin Guest True.

00:31:03 John Host What I'm just trying to ascertain is that you don't—'cause I feel Ann. I like to plan. But when other people are planning, not only does it annoy me because... those plans are gonna be wrong, and I should be making them.

[Ann laughs.]

But since they are going to be wrong, 'cause I'm not making them, I'd rather not know about them and just be told what to do. Do you know what I mean? So I'm asking you, like—you obviously seem completely disinterested in the planning hobby. The back-and-forth and calls and texts and emails that belongs to Ann and her side of the family. And I just wanted to verify that for yourself, you take no innate pleasure in planning for yourself, either.

00:31:44 Kevin Guest Correct. I do not. I do not.

00:31:46 John Host This is not a situation where the crux is you feel like you could pick a better make-your-own-pizza restaurant.

00:31:52 Kevin Guest No!

00:31:54 John Host And you're mad because you're not given that—you feel like that's being taken away from you. Right?

00:31:58 Kevin Guest Not at all. Not at all. In fact, just tell me when and where to show up, and I will show up and be...

00:32:03 John Host Right.

00:32:04 Kevin Guest ...happy and celebratory about it.

00:32:06 John Host Which make-your-own-pizza restaurant—we can buzzmarket now, 'cause all these businesses need help.

[Ann laughs.]

Which make-your-own-pizza restaurant in Spokane did you go to?

00:32:14 Kevin Guest Well, here in Spokane there's a restaurant called MOD, which is an acronym for Made On Demand. MOD Pizza.

00:32:21 John Host Yeah. See, Ann, 'cause I got five—in the Spokane area, I just looked up five better make-your-own-pizza restaurants.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

You made a big mistake.

00:32:28 Ann Guest Oh, I'm so sorry.

00:32:30 John Host It also would've been a lot easier—I mean, just thinking—'cause I know you could walk from your neighborhood—I could have, uh, plotted through a much better carpooling option than the one you did, I'm sure.

00:32:40 Ann Guest *[Laughing]* I'm sure you could!

00:32:41 John Host Just—I'm just looking at the map of Spokane right now, and it's like... it's like *A Beautiful Mind* up in here.

[The litigants laugh.]

I'm seeing equations.

00:32:49 Jesse Host I only go to Rocker make-your-own-pizza restaurants.

00:32:52 John Host Right.

00:32:53 Jesse Host But, you know...

[Ann laughs, Jesse stifles laughter.]

We're held together by our Dr. Martens boots.

[Beat.]

00:32:57 John Host *[Bursts out laughing.]* It took me a long time to get that joke, Jesse!

00:33:02 Jesse Host Yeah, it was barely a joke. I mean, "joke" even seems generous.
[Laughs.]

00:33:07 John Host Are you a MOD or a Rocker?

00:33:09 Ann Guest Mm. Right.

00:33:10 John Host Alright. So Kevin, how do you feel about your own birthday? Do you celebrate it? When is your birthday? Do you know?

00:33:17 Kevin Guest My birthday is in July. July 30th is my birthday.

00:33:21 John Host Oh, coming right up as of this recording!

00:33:23 Kevin Guest Yes! Yes.

00:33:24 John Host What are you gonna do?! What's the plan?!

00:33:27 Kevin Guest Well, we're going camping. My family and I are going camping, 'cause that's the time that we could get away, and we're going to go to the woods, and, uh... and sleep outside.

00:33:35 John Host *[Exhales appreciatively.]* Nothing goes better without planning than camping.

[Ann and Kevin and/or Jesse laugh.]

00:33:39 Kevin Guest *[Laughing]* Yes.

00:33:40 John Host Just a spontaneous, "Let's see, what do I need? What I'm wearing, maybe this flashlight, a pen. That's pretty good. Let's go."

[Ann and Kevin laugh.]

00:33:50 Kevin Guest Right. Yes!

To answer your question more generally, I don't have a need to celebrate my birthday. I like it to be acknowledged, like, "Hey! You were born! Good job!" But we don't have to have parties. I don't get it. I don't get why some people make a big, big deal about birthdays. Especially as an adult!

[Someone sighs.]

00:34:08 John Host Yeah, you opened your arguments with a kind of rhetorical question. How many birthdays—*[stifles laughter]*—is it appropriate for an adult to celebrate?

00:34:19 Kevin Guest Yes.

00:34:20 John Host And I chose not to answer that question, because I—A, it was rhetorical, and B, this podcast is not about my making a moral judgment. It is my making a practical judgment, about whether or not one of yours' behaviors is causing the other one hardship that needs to be addressed.

But let's go into the realm of the purely intellectual.

00:34:42 Kevin Guest Hm.

00:34:43 John Host In your mind, Kevin, should adults celebrate their birthday? Is there something unseemly about adults celebrating their birthday, to your mind?

00:34:52 Kevin Guest In general, no. To be more specific—

00:34:56 John Host "Specifically my wife, yes."

[The litigants laugh.]

00:34:58 Kevin Guest Well, no! I think I'm reacting to a couple of things. I'm reacting to people who make their birthdays a huuuge deal. Like—my wife does not do this. And so I will admit and, uh, state that for the record.

00:35:12 John Host Eh, you sure? Mm.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

00:35:15 Kevin Guest But there are some people who will say—

00:35:16 John Host Not sure we'd be here if you didn't—okay.

00:35:19 Kevin Guest There are some people who say, like, "It's my birthday week," or "It's my birthday month."

00:35:22 John Host Yeah.

00:35:23 Kevin Guest And there's multiple celebrations, and they'll, you know, get on social media or whatever and share, like, "It's my birthday week!" and multiple celebrations and multiple pictures. I find that unseemly. I think that's just too much!

00:35:36 John Host Mm-hm.

00:35:37 Kevin Guest Too much. But in general, no. I think that adults are—it's good! To celebrate milestones. Good job! You've survived another year on this planet. Which, lately, is—is a feat.

00:35:51 John Host It's not getting any easier, that's for sure.

00:35:53 Kevin Guest *[Laughs.]* It's not. But I think the people that put too fine a point on celebrating their birthdays, I—I could do without that.

00:36:00 John Host I'm gonna admit a little bit of bias. I'm not gonna recuse myself. But I do have a certain bias, which, like—we've had some "birthday week" conversations on this podcast before. And I—there is a little bit of an internal cringe for me, when people seem to be celebrating themselves that hard. I get it. But none of those people... are married to you.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

And my question is, Kevin, do you think that—let's say this last birthday was too much? Was it too much? Honestly. You're under fake oath.

00:36:34 Kevin Guest No. No.

00:36:36 John Host I'm not talking about the planning. That's a separate issue. I'm talking about the celebration of your wife's birth. Did she overdo it in your mind? We came right off of that, where you went to go make-your-own-pizza, and you said, "Some adults go to Chuck E. Cheese!"

And I was feeling like, "Oh, yeah. There's a thin line between make-your-own-pizza and Chuck E. Cheese."

[Ann laughs.]

And Kevin is blurring that line on purpose. I felt that.

00:37:00 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]* Gaslighting. It's gaslighting!

00:37:03 John Host Was that—

00:37:04 Jesse Host *[Stifling laughter]* Typically that line is defended by a series of animatronic musicians.

[John and Anna laugh.]

00:37:12 John Host Was it too much, Kevin?

00:37:13 Kevin Guest It wa—this year, no, it was not too much. Because I will acknowledge and admit that the time of year that Ann celebrates her birthday is

very busy. There's multiple things going on, and so it is appropriate and good to find some time to acknowledge and celebrate your birthday. This year, it was... perfectly fine.

00:37:36 John Host I feel—I don't—I don't believe you.

[Ann laughs.]

I'm sorry.

00:37:39 Kevin Guest Well—

00:37:40 John Host I'm holding you in contempt of court. I think you are concerned—

[Jesse and the litigants laugh.]

I don't think we would be here if you didn't think it was too much, a little bit too much! I mean, you opened your argument with "I don't think adults should celebrate their birthday in a certain way." Why would we be here if you didn't have this feeling about your own beloved Ann? She knows you love her! I know you love you. But this had to have been somewhat too much, or else we wouldn't be here!

Let me ask you this question.

00:38:09 Kevin Guest Yes.

00:38:10 John Host If you had been offered the opportunity to not go to grown-up Chuck E. Cheese, but just take your wife out to dinner for her birthday, would you have taken that opportunity?

00:38:21 Kevin Guest Yes, without question. No hesitation.

00:38:26 John Host Ohhhkay, see? Now I believe you.

00:38:29 Kevin Guest Thank you.

00:38:30 John Host Let the record show Ann is speechless.

00:38:31 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]* No, I'm not. I'm trying to be respectful and not talk. But augh, I got things to say! Yeah. Yep.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

00:38:39 John Host Well, the plaintiff may respond.

00:38:41 Ann Guest Well, I think for me, the reason that I brought the suit in the first place is Kevin generally—well, not generally. Always is willing to hang out and do pretty much whatever with me, happily, it seems like. And so I don't think any of the plans are the problem. But in the middle of it, it just seems like somewhere in the run up to the festivity or festivities, he'll say this line, like, "I don't get why your family makes such a big deal about birthdays." Like, adult birthdays specifically. He's like, "I just have never known anybody that makes such a big deal about birthdays for adults."

And so...

00:39:21 John Host Right.

00:39:22 Ann Guest I don't wanna do my own crux-finding, but I think part of it is that he is such a giving—he is the giver in our relationship, *[stifles laughter]* and I think I'm the taker, so it just makes me feel like I'm being princess-y, and that I'm being demanding, and—like—but like, am I

really? I just wanted to go out for dinner! Is that so...? Okay. Maybe I'm being too demanding.

00:39:45 John Host Yeah, but wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute.

00:39:47 Ann Guest Okay.

00:39:48 John Host I feel you on this. Like, Kevin saying "Adults don't celebrate their birthday like this" is gaslighting.

00:39:55 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]*

[Cheerfully] Hey!

00:39:56 John Host I'll just—we'll just lay that out there.

00:39:57 Ann Guest Okay.

00:39:58 John Host Pre-verdict verdict.

[Ann laughs.]

Right? Because that's an argument that is saying, "You're not normal. And I know what normal is, and this isn't it."

00:40:05 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

00:40:07 John Host When what he really wants to say is, "I don't like this, and I don't wanna be a part of it." Right?

00:40:12 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

00:40:13 John Host Because there are lots of people who celebrate their birthdays like this, well, at every age. You know?

00:40:18 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

00:40:19 John Host Even bigger celebrations. Even more ludi—like, there are adults who probably go to real Chuck E. Cheese! Not fake yuppie Chuck E. Cheese like you went to.

00:40:27 Ann Guest *[Laughs.]* Right. Well, and I was gonna say, even—the other thing is, is his family. I did submit some evidence that his family celebrates birthdays! His family of origin.

00:40:38 John Host Yes, I see the evidence here. All these photos, of course, will be placed on the—

[Someone laughs quietly.]

—*Judge John Hodgman* page at MaximumFun.org. Most of this evidence are pictures of your cat, Asher.

00:40:48 Ann Guest Well, I like it—I like it when Jesse laughs at pets. I can't deny it. *[Laughs.]*

00:40:52 Jesse Host You got—if you're g—look. I'm not a dancing monkey.

[She laughs harder.]

No offense.

00:40:58 Ann Guest It's fine.

00:40:59 Jesse Host It is established precedent on this program—

00:41:00 Ann Guest You don't have to.

00:41:02 Jesse Host —that if you want me to laugh at a picture of your pet, your pet has to be doing a dumb, funny thing. Just a—look! It's a beautiful cat.

[Ann laughs.]

I encourage everyone to go to [Instagram/judgejohnhodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman), take a look at this beautiful cat. Asher's got beautiful eyes. But it—make it, uh—put a chef hat on it, or something!

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:41:26 John Host Wait a minute. Asher—let me just say this. Asher looks great. Jesse's right. He's got an—is it a he cat?

00:41:31 Ann Guest Yeah, he. Mm-hm.

00:41:32 Kevin Guest It is.

00:41:33 John Host He's got incredible eyes, very judgmental. Kinda looks like a Mandalorian. But Jesse, look at the one where he's got the magic wand in his paws! He's about to cast a spell!

00:41:43 Jesse Host Oh, that's a magic wa—I thought it was a ray of sunlight!

[Ann laughs.]

00:41:45 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** No! It's his mag—

Jesse: Yeah, well...

00:41:46 Jesse Host I mean, this cat thinks he's magic. That's pretty funny.

[Jesse and Ann laugh.]

What's he gonna do? Cast a spell? Come on, gimme a break. It's a cat. *[Laughs.]*

00:42:00 John Host Gonna CATS a spell, right, Jesse?

[Jesse laughs.]

00:42:01 Ann Guest Ahhh!

00:42:02 John Host Cats—cats a spell. Cats a magic spell.

Allright, and we have a statement from Kimberly, Kevin's younger sister...

00:42:11 Kevin Guest Wait, what?

00:42:12 John Host "I'm writing today in support of Ann."

[Ann laughs.]

Yeah!

00:42:14 Kevin Guest What did my sister say in support of Ann??

00:42:17 John Host I'm sorry you were not provided discovery, *[laughs]* when this was submitted into evidence. This is a gross, uh, malpractice, Ann. You had to have shown him your evidence. Then hear this, I'm gonna read it out loud in court.

00:42:29 Kevin Guest Oh, boy. Okay.

00:42:31 John Host "I'm writing today in support of Ann, and in support of birthday celebrations, and the inherent right to celebrate them. The facts are, growing up in the last-name-redacted household, Kevin's household, birthdays were celebrated. Particularly as children. We had some roaring birthday parties as children. With magicians involved!

As adults, birthdays continue to be honored and celebrated. Though they become—they have become increasingly met with resistance by Kevin as years go on. Ann is not unreasonable in her desire to celebrate her birthday. To her knowledge, she hasn't hired a magician. Not once.

Have you, Ann?

00:43:05 Ann Guest No.

00:43:06 John Host "Mostly it involves going out to eat in small gatherings with friends. Allow me to offer this interpretation." Alright, Kimberly.

[Ann laughs.]

"Birthday celebrations aren't just for the person who's being celebrated! Perhaps recognition and attention on your birthday brings to mind thoughts of mortality." Oh, boy, I love where Kimberly's going now!

[Ann laughs.]

"Mortality, fear of time slipping away, aging, change, un-met expectations, and the unknown. The gifts, the celebrations, they seem unnecessary." All of a sudden Kimberly is—is in a Paris cafe in black and white.

[The litigants laugh.]

"Why celebrate getting older? 'Cause birthday celebrations aren't about getting older. Allow the people in your life to celebrate your existence and significance in their lives by honoring the day that you arrived! If you hadn't arrived, their lives wouldn't be the same! Let them have that joy. My brother, Kevin, let them have that joy.

Signed,
Kimmy."

Didn't know Kimberly was nicknamed Kimmy. That's the darkest letter signed "Kimmy" I've ever read.

[Anna cracks up.]

00:44:06 Kevin Guest Yeah.

[Kevin and/or John laugh.]

00:44:09 John Host Alright. And then—but Kevin, you submitted some counter-evidence.

[Someone laughs.]

The red birthday plate!

00:44:15 Kevin Guest Yes. The red birthday plate is my counter—I did not have time to gather a friend of the court brief like my wife did. But the evidence I've submitted is a red birthday plate which says, in white lettering around the edges, "You are special today."

00:44:32 John Host Yes, I see it here.

00:44:34 Kevin Guest Early in our marriage, I learned that when we celebrated birthdays in my in-laws' home, they would take the plate down off of the shelf, and serve a meal to the birthday boy or girl—or the celebrant, if you will—on that plate.

00:44:48 John Host Mm-hm.

00:44:49 Kevin Guest This plate had a place of honor above my mother-in-law's sink for several years. Until very recently. It's gone missing. Which I had no part in whatsoever.

00:44:59 John Host Yeah. I know. I know where it is, it's smashed up in the bottom of that closet behind you.

[Ann laughs.]

00:45:05 Kevin Guest I—I deny that vehemently, Judge. That is not true.

00:45:10 John Host Uh-huh.

00:45:11 Kevin Guest But this was one of my first exposures to the amount of intensity with which my in-laws' family celebrates birthdays. A special plate that you only eat off of once a year?

00:45:23 John Host Sure.

00:45:24 Kevin Guest Your Honor, that's a little weird, right?

00:45:26 John Host Yeah, I don't need to ask you if you found that to be a little weird. Your tone of voice conveyed that perfectly.

[Ann laughs, Kevin stifles laughter.]

00:45:32 Kevin Guest Thank you.

00:45:34 John Host Ann, what do you think happened to this—the "You are special today" plate?

00:45:34 Ann Guest Probably that my mom changed her decorating color scheme and put it away! *[Laughs.]* It was all red for a long—

00:45:46 John Host It had been above the sink for years!

00:45:48 Ann Guest Well, I don't wanna take away Kevin's one piece of evidence, so I'll try not to argue too strongly about this. But I literally can remember two times in my life that I ever ate off that birthday plate growing up in the house. She—I think she kept it because it's red. And she is committed to her red color scheme in her kitchen, and it is called the red plate, 'cause it's red.

00:46:11 John Host Who's gaslighting whom now, Ann?

[The litigants laugh.]

Are you telling Kevin that his lived experience of watching your mother take the plate off the wall to give to the birthday celebrant—that his lived experience of observing that was only the product of his

lying eyes? That it meant nothing? She only had it 'cause it was red? How dare you? How dare you?!

- 00:46:36 Ann Guest I—I am actually going to say that that is—that—to my memory, that plate has not been used in the time of our marriage.
- 00:46:46 John Host Yeah. Kevin, everybody has a "You are special plate" above their sink.
- [Someone laughs.]*
- 00:46:50 Ann Guest No, I don't think that! *[Laughs.]* They are mass-produced, though. *[Laughs.]*
- 00:46:56 John Host Kevin, do you wanna respond to that... that open gaslighting? I mean, that was an unsealed burner on a gas stove.
- [Ann laughs.]*
- 00:47:04 Kevin Guest Now I can't remember if it actually happened. Here's what I do remember. I know it was above the sink. I know it was above the sink for many, many years. And I know that my first, uh, response was, "Huh. A birthday plate. That's weird."
- Now, whether or not I can tell you beyond a shadow of a doubt that it was taken off of the shelf and served on a table...
- 00:47:23 John Host Mm. Mm.
- 00:47:26 Kevin Guest Well, now my—my mind is a blur—my mind's all mixed up. I'm—I'm—I don't know what to believe anymore!
- 00:47:32 John Host One of those intergenerational family mysteries, like the Gray House from *Judge John Hodgman* year one that we'll maybe never chase down exactly.
- [Ann laughs.]*
- Alright. We've gotta move along here. Kevin, if I were to rule in your favor, what would you have me rule?
- 00:47:46 Kevin Guest I would ask you to rule, Judge, that one significant celebration per year per adult birthday is sufficient.
- 00:47:54 John Host So just one.
- 00:47:55 Kevin Guest Yes, sir. Just one.
- 00:47:58 John Host So either Ann has dinner with you, or... make-your-own-pizza with the gang and you, and you'll show up if you feel good about it.
- [The litigants laugh quietly.]*
- 00:48:08 Kevin Guest When you say it like that, Judge, it sounds like a threat! No! Uh—
- [Ann laughs.]*
- 00:48:11 John Host Well, that's either two or one. There were two before. In the future, you want there to be one.
- [Beat.]*
- 00:48:20 Kevin Guest Your Honor, what I'm here is to answer the rhetorical question I asked at the beginning of the episode, which is how many, how

often, and how much?

00:48:27 John Host Rhetorical questions don't have answers! Rhetori—I—you're out of order, sir!

[One or both litigants laugh.]

Kevin.

00:48:35 Kevin Guest Yes, sir.

00:48:36 John Host Has Kimmy always been an existentialist philosopher?

[Ann laughs.]

00:48:40 Kevin Guest Uh, no. No. Well, here's one—may I just add this, uh, to the evidence presented? My sister, who is several years younger than I—her birthday is only seven days before mine. And so most of our growing-up years—

00:48:54 John Host Ohhh.

00:48:55 Kevin Guest —we celebrated one birthday celebration for both of us.

00:48:58 John Host Ohhhhh.

00:48:59 Kevin Guest Which is why, when we were children, that it was such a big deal. We're—birthdays are only seven days apart.

00:49:04 John Host And she's your younger sisterrrr.

00:49:07 Kevin Guest That's correct. And so all of my birthdays as a child were both and. Right? So we had to do the G.I. Joe and the Barbie, and the—you know.

[Ann exhales in revelation.]

The baseball and the ponies, or whatever. Not—metaphorically, of course. Not real ponies.

00:49:21 John Host So you've had this psychic wound since, you know, near birth! Of having your birthday stolen from you, year after year. You've never had a "You are special today" plate in your life! It was always you and Kimmy!

[Ann laughs.]

And now you're trying to salve that wound by taking Ann's birthday away from her. Sir, my question to you is... I appreciate your going into your clothes closet to record. Much better acoustics than where I feel you probably wanted to record, which was sitting on the floor of the shower while crying.

00:49:56 Kevin Guest Also true, yes.

[Ann and John laugh quietly.]

00:49:59 Jesse Host Kevin, my question for you... is what is your problem with pony baseball, the sport of kings?!

[John, Ann, and maybe Kevin laugh.]

00:50:06 John Host Ann, what would you have me rule if I were to rule in your favor?

[Beat.]

00:50:10 Ann Guest Um, I'm recovering from the shock. Man, my mind is blown. There's a whole—I'd had no—I had no idea that it was causing him that pain. Okay. I would like you to rule that he just not say that my family makes—just don't say it out—think it! Fine. But don't say it out loud around my birthday time, that I make too big of a deal out of my birthday!

And then—you know, honestly that's it. *[Laughs.]* Just don't say that I make too big of a deal out of my birthday. That's what I would like you to rule.

00:50:40 John Host Okay. I've heard everything I need to. I'm gonna go into my bouncy house. *[Laughs.]* That I have installed here in my chambers. Hang on, I've gotta wipe down my bouncy house with Purell first, and then I'm gonna go into it.

[Ann laughs.]

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

00:50:53 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape, footsteps.]*

00:50:54 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

00:50:57 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

00:50:58 Jesse Host Ann, how are you feeling about your chances?

[Beat.]

00:51:01 Ann Guest Well... *[Sighs.]* I mean, I feel like what I'm asking is pretty small. *[Laughs.]* So I feel—I feel pretty good about my chances! I feel pretty firmly that birthdays are real, and that a lot of adults celebrate their birthday. I feel like I'm standing on strong ground right now.

00:51:20 Jesse Host Do you think that you're—would be capable of delivering a birthday celebration that didn't require your husband's approval at every twist and turn in the planning narrative?

00:51:32 Ann Guest I—you know, I probably could do that. I probably could give him a break on the planning... updates.

00:51:38 Jesse Host Kevin, how are you feeling about your chances?

00:51:41 Kevin Guest Well, I think... the judge made it clear he's not gonna answer my rhetorical question.

00:51:46 Jesse Host *[Stifles laughter.]* It was allll riding on that.

[Ann laughs.]

That and the pony baseball thing.

00:51:49 Kevin Guest *[Stifles laughter.]* That's right. That was it.

I'm reeling somewhat from the psychological wound that the judge just uncovered from my childhood. But I—I'll be honest with you, Bailiff Thorn. I think the judge is gonna rule in favor of Ann. Because... everyone deserves to have a birthday. And if I can extricate myself from the extensive planning process, that would be fine.

00:52:12	Jesse	Host	Well, we'll see what <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> has to say about all this when we come back in just a moment on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast.
00:52:19	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:52:21	Jesse	Promo	So here's a cool thing that's going on. Over the past few years, we have had these enamel pins at the \$10 a month level. And because there's a pin for every show, and people wanna get one for their favorite show or maybe they just wanna get their favorite pin or whatever, then they email us afterwards and they say, "Hey, but I love these other shows, too. I would love to get <u>those</u> pins."
			At the end of the Drive most years, if we've made our goal, we have sold the pins to those members that were in excess of the one they got for their membership, and used the proceeds to make a big donation to charity. Last year, for example, it was over \$100,000 that we raised.
00:52:56	John	Promo	Wow.
00:52:57	Jesse	Promo	This year, because we don't have a Drive goal, <i>[stifles laughter]</i> 'cause we're trying to be chill about this, we decided, "Well, we'll just go ahead and have that pin sale right in the middle of the Drive."
			So if you join at the \$10 a month level or above, you'll get an email from our membership department, and it will give you instructions on how to buy more pins if you so desire them. And 100% of the proceeds from those sales will go to COVID-19 relief. Direct relief for people who need help in the aftermath, or in the midst of this horrible world crisis.
			So you can buy some pins, feel good that you're supporting MaxFun, and feel good that you're supporting people who need them. And MaxFun will not be taking any money from the sales, other than the cost of manufacturing and shipping them out. So please, if you are a \$10 a month or above member, go wild!
00:53:51	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:53:53	Jesse	Promo	This and every episode of <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> is supported by Maximum Fun's members, all the folks who've gone to MaximumFun.org/join to support the show, and other MaxFun shows if they so choose, directly.
			We're also supported this week by our friends at Babel.
			I don't know, are you thinking about re-learning some language that you, like, learned a little bit of in school, and then allowed it to atrophy? I took <u>Russian</u> in high school, John.
00:54:22	John	Promo	Really? ... <u>Really</u> ?
00:54:23	Jesse	Promo	Yeah.
00:54:24	John	Promo	Huh!
00:54:25	Jesse	Promo	Yeah. Well, the Spanish teacher and the French teacher were horrible, so...
			<i>[Both laugh.]</i>

I went with Russian.

00:54:31 John Promo How do you say "atrophy" in Russian?

[Beat.]

00:54:35 Jesse Promo Uhhh, you spell it in Cyrillic, I know that.

00:54:38 John Promo *[Snorts.]* Well, that's the point! You don't remember how to say "atrophy" in Russian. Or in Spanish, or in French. Or in any number of other languages. Babbel is the application that can help you!

And I've got—we have two human children. Both of whom are facing down an uncertain school year. And they will both be doing language class remotely. And I was like, "Well, great! Not only can you get a jump on it, but I can help you by re-learning my French, re-learning my Spanish, using [Babbel.com](https://www.babbel.com). And then I can speak to you in those languages, and as a weird dad, find new ways to embarrass you in a different language!" It's great.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

Babbel. The daily lessons are 10 to 15 minutes, and they start by teaching you words and phrases you will actually use. They're not gonna start with "atrophy." Okay? They're gonna probably start with "Hello. Can I taste that food?" or something.

[Stifles laughter.] Then sentences gradually get more complex. They add on "atrophy." Soon, you're practicing short conversations! Your conversation is no longer atrophying! Your conversation is muscular, and developed!

That's enough of that metaphor. What else? *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:55:53 Jesse Promo There are 14 different languages, including Spanish, French, Italian, and German, all learnable! Through Babbel. Right now when you purchase a three-month subscription, Babbel will give our listeners three additional months for free with the promo code "Hodgman."

00:56:13 John Promo Yeah! That's three additional months free if you go to [Babbel.com](https://www.babbel.com) and use promo code "Hodgman" on your three-month subscription. That's Babbel—B-A-B-B-E-L—two Bs—dot com. Classic end of a website. Promo code "Hodgman." H-O-D-G-M-A-N. B-A-B-B-E-L.com, promo code "Hodgman."

And I can tell you this. In Spanish, it's "atrofia."

00:56:42 Jesse Promo We're also supported this week by our friends—and I mean our literal friends, our real-life friends—at the podcast *Vote! The Podcast*. It's a podcast about voting and voting rights!

00:56:55 John Promo If you have ever felt powerless, overwhelmed, or just plain lost when it comes to voting or elections, you're not alone! A lot of voting, from state to state, county to county, is kept purposely obscure in order to... eh, limit the number of people who vote! Look it up.

But *Vote! The Podcast* is here to explain it all for you.

00:57:19 Jesse Promo The hosts Kat and Andrea are experts from [Vote.org](https://www.vote.org) and Spread the

Vote, and they've got lots of cool guests, including experts and celebrities and activists, and voting rights crushes. All kinds of amazing folks on the show. They just put out an episode with the hosts of *Call Your Girlfriend*. I love those ladies. Great show. And the actor and activist Bradley Whitford. Great in everything, including *Vote! The Podcast*, talking about voting by mail!

I'm a permanent absentee voter myself here in the city of Los Angeles. I'm glad to be! It helps me remember to vote every time. I don't ever worry—have to worry about having a scheduling conflict or whatever.

00:57:58 John Promo

Yeah!

00:57:59 Jesse Promo

It's great. And *Vote! The Podcast* is produced by our former producer, Julia Smith! So you should definitely listen to it.

00:58:06 John Promo

Vote! The Podcast! It's part of the *Judge John Hodgman* family of podcasts. *[Stifles laughter.]* And it's available now! Subscribe, please, to *Vote! The Podcast* in Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher, or wherever you listen to this podcast.

Just search for *Vote!*—exclamation point—*The Podcast*.

I wanna vote by mail, Jesse! New York, we can't do it yet. We should do it. Universal vote by mail.

00:58:29 Jesse Promo

Oh, wow.

00:58:31 John Promo

Don't let your voting rights atrophy! Subscribe to *Vote! The Podcast*.

00:58:36 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:58:38 Jesse Host

Court is back in session! Let's return to the courtroom for more justice.

00:58:42 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]

00:58:43 Jesse Host

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

00:58:47 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[Door shuts.]

00:58:51 John Host

[Pause.]

Sorry, I just got lost. I was somehow transported back to the Daily Cafe, during my college years in New Haven, Connecticut, smoking a Gauloise, re-reading this existential tract by Kimmy.

[Ann laughs.]

It's a lot—there's a lot going on in this letter! A lot that I agree with! You know, I—I—I admitted my bias towards your point of view, Kevin. That, you know, kids enjoy birthdays 'cause they're kids! And young people enjoy birthdays because they're young, and there is the sense that your life is important, that starts to get interrogated and ultimately evaporates when you hit middle age.

And then as you get older, birthdays take a new significance, because—you know. Beyond middle age, it's kind of amazing that you're living as old as you are. And the people who love you want to

celebrate you, and celebrate that and you.

But there is this moment in the middle. And I'm—I am aware of your ages from this document. I am aware of my own age. We're in the middle together somewhere. Which is the sort of gray area between the exuberance of youth and self-celebration of youth, and then the sort of honorific celebration of older age. We here in the middle... matter nothing.

[Ann laughs.]

We are being abandoned by our children, *[stifles laughter]* as they go on to their own lives. And we are witnessing the end of life of many of our own parents and grand—if we're lucky, still grandparents and so forth. It is definitely a time when one might be inclined, naturally, to sit in one's shirt closet and close the door on one's birthday.

[Ann laughs.]

01:00:42 John

Host

I mean, you chose where to go! I—no one said, "Go sit in the closet."

Whereas others, like Ann, might look around the four walls of her remote learning teaching dungeon, or wherever she is in the basement of your home in Spokane, and be like, "I wanna get out there and have fun!"

[Ann chuckles.]

"It's still my birthday! I'm still young!" Both of those impulses are natural and normal. And deserve respect, mutual respect, either—both ways.

I mean, this is gonna be one, Kevin, honestly, where... the ruling is really based on what you guys asked me to rule. Right? Because Ann is absolutely correct that it is inappropriate for you to, you know, guilt her around her birthday by trying to suggest this is not how birthdays are celebrated. That is a form of—of gaslighting, of psychological manipulation.

By the same token, Ann, you are not allowed to gaslight Kevin into believing that your family didn't have this "You are special today" plate!

[Ann laughs, John stifles laughter.]

And it obviously touched a nerve in him! I mean, whether my psychological read—whether my, frankly, Langley—Langley-quality psychological profile of Kevin is correct or not, he saw what he saw. And when he saw that "You are special today" plate, for whatever reason, it weirded him out!

01:02:19 John

Host

You know, the celebration of one's specialness—we are all special, obviously. But people have different comfort levels at different times in their lives at how special we are allowed to say we are. Do you know what I mean? And Kevin's just in a place where—when, you know, that plate is a little bit like—I don't—that's a little, as we've said, unseemly. It's a charming family tradition in your house, which

you get to enjoy. But you also, in the same way Kevin can't... yuck your yum, as *My Brother, My Brother and Me* would say...

[Ann chuckles.]

...nor can you deny that your family has a certain way of doing things that is not in the same—that caused a little friction in Kevin's inner life. Right?

Now. I can't rule that you should only have one celebration. Because you had two in February. And they were fine. There was one crypto-visit to Chuck E. Cheese. Adult Chuck E. Cheese.

[The litigants laugh quietly.]

That Kevin did not think was fun, but went anyway, 'cause he loves you.

[Ann laughs.]

And then one, you know, intimate, private dinner between the two of you! Which was, I presume, much more to Kevin's liking. As we know, 'cause he said he would have opted out of the—out of the one or the other. And both of those are fine. You know what I mean?

I have to find in your favor, Ann. Because all you're asking is that your husband not... emotionally manipulate you during this period of time.

[Ann chuckles.]

01:03:48 John Host That rather, he be straightforward in expressing his contempt for your choices.

[John and the litigants laugh.]

Acknowledging that they're your choices, that they fall under your family's tradition, but they're not his thing. Right? That's at least truthful.

01:04:00 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

01:04:01 John Host Do you know what I mean?

01:04:02 Ann Guest Mm-hm.

01:04:03 John Host So, obviously I'm gonna find in Ann's favor. But Ann, I need you to listen to this: Kevin doesn't wanna be looped in. Kevin doesn't need to be looped in. The pleasure that you take in planning does not give Kevin any pleasure.

So when you're cooking this stuff up with your fam, with your plan-y fam, just have fun on your own. That's your thing. It's not Kevin's thing. Tell him when to show up.

[Ann laughs.]

And tell him how many... packets of salt to bring?! How come we didn't talk about that more?! Don't you people own salt and pepper

shakers?! Is that illegal in Spokane? Why are you bringing packets of salt and pepper to Thanksgiving?

[Ann laughs.]

Kevin doesn't need to be in the spreadsheet for these big events that you do. Whether it's your birthday or anything else. That, I think, is fair. There are people in my life—well, my dad—*[laughs quietly]*—who wants to know where we're going to be at three PM, August 19th, 2021, so that he can plan when to visit us. That's not—that's—in a time when we're all supposed to be lessening the burden on each other, the psychological burden at the very least, you know, he doesn't need that psychological burden. So lift it. Take that off his shoulders.

And I think if you do that, there'll be a lot less conflict around these events in general. I don't think, Kevin, honestly, if Ann gives you the option to skip out on yuppie Chuck E. Cheese in the future, probably don't—that's not cool. Don't do that. Go to her birthday parties.

[Ann and John laugh.]

01:05:39 Kevin Guest

Right. Good idea.

01:05:40 John Host

I mean, I knew that you wouldn't—I know that you weren't really gonna do it, but, you know, we were just trying to get to some hard truths there.

[Kevin chuckles.]

And, you know, in so far as you ask Kevin to respect your feelings about this arbitrary date, that has no meaning whatsoever, even, you know—and changed, once we shifted from the Justinian to the Gregorian calendar. It's just arbitrary. Let him have his feelings. Let Ann have her feelings. And make an anchovy pizza for me, please, 'cause no one ever gets one.

[Kevin makes a dismayed sound.]

And also, get salt and pepper shakers in your lives. They're a pretty good invention.

[Ann laughs.]

This is the sound of a gavel.

01:06:18 Clip Clip

Multiple Speakers: *[Singing]* Happy birthday to you!

Single Speaker: Cha cha cha! *[Accompanied by maracas.]*

01:06:21 John Host

Judge John Hodgman rules; that is all.

01:06:22 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[As Jesse speaks below: chairs scrape on the floor. Footsteps.]

01:06:23 Jesse Host

Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

01:06:26 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[Door shuts.]

01:06:27 Jesse Host

Kevin, how do you feel?

01:06:30 Kevin Guest

Quite frankly, I think this was as I expected the Judge to rule. And I

will abide by it. And I will enjoy celebrating my wife's birthday the next time it comes around.

- 01:06:43 Jesse Host Ann, how are you feeling?
- 01:06:44 Ann Guest I feel really good! I got what I asked for, and I now know that—*[stifles laughter]*—I will not involve him in any of the planning of it, but boy, I better come hard with some sort of baseball-themed birthday party for Kevin every year, so that he feels fulfilled from what he got left out of.
- [Ann and Kevin and/or Jesse laugh.]*
- 01:07:02 Jesse Host Listen, I'm a big baseball fan. I'll tell you. First step is renting the ponies.
- [The litigants laugh.]*
- After that, everything else is pretty straightforward. *[Laughs.]*
- Ann, Kevin, thank you for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.
- 01:07:16 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*
- 01:07:19 Jesse Host Another *Judge John Hodgman* case is in the books!
- 01:07:24 John Promo So once again before we go, I just wanna say thank you again to all of our listeners, all of our members, for supporting whatever great Maximum Fun content you have been able to support. We're truly grateful you've chosen to... *[emphatically]* step up to the plate, for us!
- [Chuckles.]*
- [Sighs.]* Oh, baseball...
- [Jesse laughs quietly.]*
- And support us, and helping us be able to create this show in a way that's authentic and beholden to no one but our audience. And you know, I don't wanna belabor the point, but... you know, when Jesse pointed out that 70% of what makes MaxFun go is listener support, I mean, I wasn't totally feigning surprise. It astonishes me every time I realize not only that such a large portion of what makes the show go comes directly from listeners, but how great that is. What an incredible vote of confidence in us that is, and what a wonderful way to make podcasts or any creative endeavor, because we know we are beholden to you. We are making it for you, and we're glad and grateful to do it. So thank you.
- 01:08:36 Jesse Promo If you wanna become a member, you haven't had a chance yet, it's at MaximumFun.org/join. And thanks.
- Before we dispense some Swift Justice, we wanna thank... I'm gonna say... Rebe Staines (*Rebby Stanes*). But could be Reeb Stines!
- [John chuckles.]*
- Could be Rebay... Stain-ess. *[Stifles laughter.]* Uh, really not a name

I'm confident I know how to pronounce. But thank you for helping us name this week's episode. If you wanna name a future episode, you can like *Judge John Hodgman* on Facebook. We regularly put out our calls for submissions there.

You can follow us on Twitter at @JesseThorn and @hodgman. Hashtag your *Judge John Hodgman* Tweets #JJHo, and check out the MaxFun subreddit at MaximumFun.Reddit.com to discuss this episode! We are on Instagram at @judgejohnhodgman, complete with photographs of magical cats.

This week's episode edited by Hannah Smith. Our producer is the ever capable—and, right now, childless... Yes, that's right, the baby's with the grandparents!

01:09:43	John	Host	Oh!
01:09:44	Jesse	Host	So Mommy can produce podcasts!
			<i>[John and Jesse laugh.]</i>
01:09:48	John	Host	Sorry, Jennifer...
01:09:49	Jesse	Host	Jennifer Marmor!
01:09:51	John	Host	Hey, Jesse, let me just jump in to confirm... Tim Calpakis <u>did</u> write the Birthday Boys sketch "We gotta get that pie." I have that on good authority from former Birthday Boy Mike Mitchell of the Dough Boys. There you go. Thanks for letting us steal your work.
01:10:05	Jesse	Host	Oooh, we gotta get that pie! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:10:07	John	Host	Gotta get that PIE!
01:10:09	Jesse	Host	It's on Vimeo, right? People can search for "Birthday boys pie" and they'll find it.
01:10:13	John	Host	Yeah, it's very good.
01:10:15	Jesse	Host	Okay, Swift Justice, where we answer your small disputes with a quick judgment. Meg asks:
			"Can I put jam on a fried egg sandwich? I think it's delicious. My husband acts like I'm committing a federal crime in the kitchen."
01:10:29	John	Host	<i>[Audibly shudders.]</i> Augh, this is a hard one, because I was—I <u>just</u> —I mean, the— <i>[sighs]</i> .
			I love a fried egg sandwich so much. And jam would definitely yuck <u>my</u> yum. But that said, if it's your yum, I can't yuck it. As <u>gross</u> as that sounds to me, Meg, based on the precedent <u>just</u> set on this very podcast? I gotta say... go for it, Meg. It is not a felony to add jam to a fried egg sandwich. It is, frankly, a misdemeanor in my eyes, but you go for it.
01:11:03	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughs quietly.]</i> Yeah, I wanna make it clear that I'm pressuring my representatives to make it a felony to feed <u>me</u> a fried egg sandwich with jam on it.
01:11:11	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Yeah. That's right. If you were <u>making</u> your husband <u>eat</u> that jammy fried egg, then you should go to jail. That's terrible. But go ahead. Do whatever you want to your tastebuds. They're yours.
01:11:25	Jesse	Host	I support it. I'm excited any time I hear about some weird sandwich

somebody's eating. Like the security guard puppet on the public television show *Today's Special*.

[Both suppress laughter.]

01:11:35 John Host I am—I'll tell you what. Any time I get an email where the subject line is "Sandwich," I am not excited.

[Jesse laughs.]

But that's just because—*[laughs]*—I've been traumatized by the "Is a hotdog a sandwich?" debate.

01:11:46 Jesse Host That's it for this week's episode. Submit your cases at MaximumFun.org/ijho, or email hodgman@maximumfun.org. No case is too small! We'll see you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

01:11:58 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

01:12:00 Music Transition A cheerful guitar chord.

01:12:01 Speaker 1 Guest MaximumFun.org.

01:12:03 Speaker 2 Guest Comedy and culture.

01:12:04 Speaker 3 Guest Artist owned—

01:12:05 Speaker 4 Guest —audience supported.