

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:00:02	Jesse Thorn	Promo	<p>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, it's MaxFunDrive! The final week of the MaxFunDrive. You might have been spacing out during our previous MaxFunDrive messages, and not realized that Maximum Fun is primarily supported by our members. Folks who go to MaximumFun.org/join and support our shows directly.</p> <p>And that includes <i>Judge John Hodgman</i>! This isn't an advertiser-driven show. This is an audience-driven show. And it's been a really tough year for all of us, and for those of you who are in a position to join us, right now... we'd be very grateful if you did.</p>
00:00:45	John Hodgman	Promo	<p>Yeah. I echo O Bailiff, My Bailiff, and friend Jesse Thorn's message of thanks to those of you just for listening. Giving <u>us</u> the gift of allowing us to keep you company during some very hard, and confusing, and uncertain times that are continuing.</p> <p>MaxFunDrive <u>is</u> about... driving some funds to MaxFun. But it's also a time of year that's about us getting a chance to reconnect with you, the listeners. Share special bonus content with you. Remind you—and remind us—why MaxFun is so special: <u>because</u> it is made possible <u>directly</u> by your support during MaxFunDrive and throughout the year. And for that, I say thank you.</p> <p>And that support may only take the form of dropping us a line and saying thanks, which lots of people have been doing. Or telling another person to have a listen. That's <u>more</u> than enough.</p> <p>But if you are in a position to join for the first time, or to upgrade your membership, we make it as quick and easy as possible. Just go to MaximumFun.org/join. That's MaximumFun.org/join. And you'll also see there all of the thank-you gifts that we're offering at each and every level of membership. You know, you start at just \$5 a month, you get <u>all</u> of the great bonus content over the years, which is now a pretty large library. Including the famous supercut of Jesse Thorn laughing at different pictures of different dogs and cats, which is great. <u>Really</u> a tonic for the ears at this time.</p> <p>At \$10 a month, you get to choose a cool enamel pin designed by Megan Lynn Kott for your favorite show. You'll also have the option to purchase other pins for other shows as you like, for a little bit of money, and that money goes to charity.</p>
00:02:32	John	Promo	<p>At \$20 a month you get the MaxFun custom game pack, with MaxFun dice in a velvet bag. MaxFun dice in a velvet bag?!</p> <p>And of course, at the Leadership Squad level or above, if you join or upgrade at that level in support of <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> and send me via email at hodgman@maximumfun.org your receipt, I will very happily and gratefully mis-pronounce your name in a thank-you message that I will post to Instagram. And I've had a great fun doing that, as always, every year! And if you get your upgrade or membership in before the end of MaxFunDrive this week, I'll make sure to thank you by mis-pronouncing your name on the Internet. We'll get 'em all done. So thank you for that.</p>

Again, that's MaximumFun.org/join.

00:03:19 Jesse Host Now! This week's case: "Animal Crossing Examination."

Kelly brings the case against her wife Maureen. They both play the video game *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*. Kelly says that Maureen is adept at earning bells, which are the game's currency. Kelly would like Maureen to share her profits. Maureen is opposed.

Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide.

00:03:43 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]*

00:03:44 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and presents an obscure cultural reference.

00:03:49 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

00:03:51 John Host "Listen to me, Coppertop! We don't have time for Twenty Questions!"

...That's it! Bailiff Jesse Thorn, swear them in.

00:03:58 Jesse Host Kelly and Maureen, please raise your right hands. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God or whatever?

00:04:06 Kelly Guest I do.

00:04:07 Maureen Guest I do.

00:04:08 Jesse Host Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the narrow range of fruit trees he owns?

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:04:15 Kelly Guest I do!

00:04:16 Maureen Guest I do.

00:04:17 Jesse Host Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

00:04:19 John Host That's gotta be an *Animal Crossing* reference, correct, Bailiff Jesse Thorn?

00:04:23 Jesse Host Yeah. I can't say that I've played *Animal Crossing* since... my senior year of college, 2003, with my friend Nathaniel Chapman.

00:04:31 John Host Mm-hm.

00:04:32 Jesse Host In our apartment in the beach flats in Santa Cruz, California, but I remember it was really important to have different kinds of fruit trees.

00:04:37 John Host You need different kinds of fruit trees in this life!

Kelly and Maureen, you may be seated.

00:04:42 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Chairs scrape.]*

00:04:43 John Host For an immediate summary judgment in one of yours' favors, can either of you name the piece of culture that I referenced as I entered this courtroom? Kelly, let's start with you.

00:04:52 Kelly Guest Is that from *The Matrix*? Or one of the movies? *[Laughs.]*

00:04:56 John Host "Is that from *The Matrix*, or one of the movies?" More a question than

an answer.

[The litigants laugh quietly.]

00:05:02 Kelly Guest It feels like I remember hearing "Coppertop" from there, but it's been a long time.

00:05:07 John Host Mm-hm! Okay. Shall we say *The Matrix*, or one of the *Matrices*?

00:05:11 Kelly Guest Yeah. One of the many *Matrices*, yes.

00:05:14 John Host One of the *Matrices*.

00:05:15 Kelly Guest Mm-hm.

00:05:16 John Host Eh, I'll—I'll allow that.

00:05:17 Jesse Host Coppertop, maybe, was Cornel West's character in *Matrix 2*?

[John snorts.]

00:05:21 Kelly Guest Mm. *[Laughs.]*

00:05:25 John Host They had a—they had an underground rave...

Maureen. What is your guess?

00:05:29 Maureen Guest Yes. I have no idea. I did not prepare for this.

00:05:34 John Host There's no way to prepare!

[The litigants laugh.]

Because you know why? I'm like a trickster! I'm like a tanuki! I'm like a Tom Nook, a Japanese raccoon dog! Tricking you! Always mixing it up. There was nothing you could guess.

[Maureen laughs quietly.]

You wanna guess one anyway?

00:05:51 Maureen Guest I'm gonna go for specifics with *The Matrix 2* since she said *The Matrix*, *[laughs]* in case you don't give it to her for being a general trilogy.

00:06:01 John Host I love specificity. Did you mean to say *The Matrix 2... Reloaded*? Or *The Matrix*?

00:06:09 Maureen Guest Uh, *2 Reloaded*. I'm gonna go for the middle one.

00:06:13 John Host I see. Because I'm here at WERU, up here in Orland, Maine. In a hermetically sealed room. Looking through a cloudy glass window at Joel Mann, our summertime stoic producer up here. How are you, Joel?

00:06:28 Joel Mann Guest I'm doing very well, Judge.

00:06:29 John Host Right, so we're adapting to some new audi—not only a whole new world of social distancing, but also some new audio tech here as we record up here. Did you hear Maureen say *The Matrix 2: Reloaded*, or just *The Matrix*?

00:06:45 Joel Guest Just *The Matrix*.

00:06:46 John Host Yeah, that's what I heard, too. *[Laughs.]* I mean, I heard not "2." I only heard *The Matrix*. Because guess what? Kelly and Maureen!

You guessed *The Matrix*, you're both right!

[The litigants laugh.]

00:06:59 Kelly Guest

We both win!

00:07:00 John Host

You cancel each other out! But even if only, Kelly, you had guessed *The Matrix*, and Maureen, you had guessed *The Matrix 2: Reloaded*...

[One of the litigants laughs.]

I still would not have given it to Kelly. Do you know why? Kelly and Maureen?

00:07:16 Maureen Guest

No.

00:07:18 John Host

'Cause you didn't name the characterrrr!

00:07:19 Kelly Guest

Ohhh.

00:07:21 John Host

Look. There are a lot of *Matrix* quotes.

00:07:24 Kelly Guest

Mm-hm.

00:07:26 John Host

Long, recognizable ones. Kelly, I applaud you.

[Kelly laughs.]

For remembering that term, "Coppertop." Which is a reference to the fact that Neo—Keanu Reeves, as we all know, in the *Matrices*... begins life in the simulation. He doesn't realize that he is a human battery. So they call him Coppertop. But who calls him Coppertop? Kelly or Maureen? Going once, going twice... No sale.

00:07:48 Kelly Guest

Morpheus?

[Maureen laughs.]

00:07:50 John Host

Nooo! Switch!

00:07:52 Maureen Guest

Ohhh. That makes sense!

00:07:54 John Host

Minor character! Yeahhh! Switch! Like Nintendo Switch.

00:07:57 Kelly Host

Mm-hm.

00:07:58 John Host

Which is what you play *Animal Crossings* on.

00:08:00 Kelly Host

Ohhh, that's so clever.

00:08:02 John Host

See?

00:08:03 Kelly Host

Mm-hm.

00:08:04 John Host

And what I did not learn, Kelly and Maureen... and this is a short quote, but this is a long explanation. *[Laughs.]* But I did not know until I was frantically coming up with a cultural reference in the dirt parking lot of WERU here in Orland, Maine—89.9 Blue Hillet, 99.9 Bangkor, and online at WERU.org—I did not know that the character Switch, portrayed in *The Matrix* by Belinda McClory, was called Switch because they had different genders inside *The Matrix* and out. At least as originally scripted.

00:08:38 Kelly Guest

Oh, wow!

00:08:39 John Host

Yeah, I know! Cool, right?

00:08:41 Kelly Guest That's so cool!
00:08:42 Maureen Guest That's so cool!
00:08:43 John Host Yeah! It may—I mean, it's—why not—I mean, well, we know why not. It was 1999.
00:08:49 Kelly Guest Yeah.
00:08:50 John Host Warner Brothers freaked out.

[John and one or both litigants laugh.]

Couldn't handle it. But I mean, within the world of *The Matrix*, it would make a million times sense that you would have a character who, as scripted, Switch was gender-assigned-at-birth male in the real world of the Nebuchadnezzar, like, underwater spaceship or whatever it is.

00:09:09 Kelly Guest Mm-hm.
00:09:10 John Host But in the simulation, switched to present as female. And Warner Brothers said, "Uhhh... No!" *[Stifles laughter.]* Booo. But in any case, I'm sure they would do it differently now. That was the origin—it was just so fascinating!

So anyway, here we are. This is not about *The Matrix*. This is about *Animal Crossing*. Who comes to my court to seek justice? Maureen or Kelly?

00:09:30 Kelly Guest I do. Kelly.
00:09:32 John Host Kelly, what is the nature of the injustice that you face?
00:09:37 Kelly Guest Well, Your Honor, back in March when *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* was released—
00:09:43 John Host Yes.
00:09:44 Kelly Guest —my wife Maureen and I both purchased copies of it. We're both very big gamers. We actually met gaming.
00:09:50 John Host Mm-hm.
00:09:51 Kelly Guest And we decided to have our own islands, but they would be, like, sister islands! So we decided to help each other out as we built these islands. At the same time, *[stifles laughter]* we ended up coming down with COVID—

00:10:04 John Host Whoa!
00:10:05 Kelly Guest —very shortly after we bought the game, so the game became very important to us. It was the only thing that we could do from our beds for the... month that we were very, very, very sick.
00:10:17 John Host I am so sorry to—I mean, obviously *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* has been important to a lot of people's lives during this time of social isolation and staying at home. Never mind having COVID!

[One of the litigants laughs.]

Would you feel comfortable describing what the experience was like?

00:10:35 Kelly Guest Sure. We had similar experiences, but I'll let Maureen tell her own. I have lupus.

00:10:40 John Host Mm.

00:10:41 Kelly Guest So for me, in the beginning, I was like, "Is this a lupus flare?" But I pretty quickly got very sick. I did have some difficulty breathing, and needed an inhaler, and had to use a CPAP machine, which I had never used. Just during the day, to kind of get some oxygen in at times.

[John makes a sympathetic sound.]

I was one of the first people I knew to get H1N1 back in the day, and at the time, I said, "This is the sickest I've ever been outside of lupus." I would definitely say COVID beat that. It was... very painful as far as the coughing, was very hard.

00:11:16 John Host Yeah.

00:11:17 Kelly Guest Difficult to breathe, the headaches, all-over fatigue. It was—it was definitely a very rough illness.

00:11:26 John Host For lots of people who get COVID-19 and are diagnosed, you know, who recover at home as you did, more or less, what people don't know is that the recovery is extremely... prolonged.

00:11:39 Kelly Guest Yes.

00:11:40 John Host And you're uncomfortable for a very, very long time. That it really takes quite a bit out of you.

00:11:46 Kelly Guest Yes. I would say even now we are still, to degrees, recovering. I still have some difficulty breathing. I still need an inhaler.

00:11:55 John Host Right.

00:11:56 Kelly Guest And I would say that I've definitely not gotten my sort of pre-COVID strength back. And of course it triggered a lupus flare, too, so that was fun.

00:12:06 John Host Maureen, was your case of COVID as severe, would you say?

00:12:10 Maureen Guest Um, it was not. *[Laughs.]*

00:12:13 John Host Great. I find in Kelly's favor. Thank you very much. This is the sound of a gavel.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:12:16 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:12:20 Maureen Guest I mean "It was horrible!" No—

00:12:22 John Host No.

00:12:23 Maureen Guest Mine was more mild, for sure.

00:12:24 John Host Mm-hm.

00:12:25 Maureen Guest I had a lot of joint pain.

00:12:26 John Host Yeah.

00:12:27 Maureen Guest I had very, very bad fatigue. I had a lot of gastrointestinal issues and headaches.

00:12:32 John Host Mm.

00:12:33 Maureen Guest I had less the shortness of breath, the classic shortness of breath and coughing. Which I think really takes the cake, but it's not the

illness Olympics.

[Kelly laughs quietly.]

00:12:45	John	Host	And I understand from my briefing here that you are in St. Louis, Missouri.
00:12:49	Maureen	Guest	That's correct.
00:12:50	John	Host	Yeah. And how is Missouri doing, in your opinion?
			<i>[Kelly laughs.]</i>
00:12:54	Maureen	Guest	Hoo... very bad.
			<i>[One of the litigants laughs.]</i>
			Governor Parsons is kinda like, "Open it up!"
			<i>[Kelly laughs.]</i>
00:13:00	John	Host	Ugh.
00:13:01	Kelly	Guest	Yeah.
00:13:02	Maureen	Guest	That's how I feel.
00:13:03	John	Host	I've got a message for Mike Parson, Governor of Missouri. You know what Missouri is called, right, Jesse Thorn?
00:13:10	Jesse	Host	Oh, what's that, John?
00:13:11	John	Host	The "show me" state. Mike Parson, you got shown! Kelly and Maureen—
			<i>[Someone laughs quietly.]</i>
			It's not a joke! <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> It's not a joke, it's not a hoax.
00:13:19	Kelly	Guest	Not at all.
00:13:20	John	Host	People are sick and suffering. You got shown. I'm sure he listens to this podcast.
			<i>[One or both litigants laugh quietly.]</i>
			Right? Probably that's true. Kelly, Maureen, I'm very glad that you're recovering as best as you can. I hope you're as okay as possible. Thank you for joining us on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm glad that you have enough personal, physical, and emotional reserve, having faced this disease, and continuing to face it... I'm glad you have enough emotional and physical reserve to get really petty.
			<i>[The litigants laugh.]</i>
			And come on a podcast to fight about <i>Animal Crossing</i> .
00:13:57	Kelly	Guest	<i>[Laughing]</i> Yes.
00:13:58	John	Host	I'm glad there's still that space in your life. Hey, Joel Mann, you ever play <i>Animal Crossing</i> ?
00:14:02	Joel	Guest	No idea what you're talking about.

00:14:03 John Host Okay. Maureen, tell Joel what *Animal Crossing* is, and why it's so... compelling.

00:14:10 Maureen Guest Okay, Joel. There is tanuki who's gonna give you a loan to build a house, to make friends with the neighboring animals, and they will sometimes give you presents.

00:14:21 Joel Guest Wow.

00:14:23 John Host *[Laughs quietly.]* Joel.

00:14:25 Joel Guest That sounds like fun!

00:14:26 John Host Do you know what a tanuki is?

00:14:27 Joel Guest Nnnope.

00:14:28 John Host It's a Japanese raccoon dog.

00:14:30 Joel Guest *[Laughing]* Well, there you have it.

00:14:32 John Host Famous in Japanese and Asian folklore in general. Embodied in *Animal Crossing* by the character of Tom Nook, who is the—kinda... kinda the Godfather of the *Animal Crossing* world.

00:14:44 Maureen Guest Accurate.

00:14:46 John Host He owns a shop. He loans you money, that you have to repay by working for him. And you play—and you can correct me, Maureen and Kelly, where I get it wrong. 'Cause I have not played or seen any of this new *Animal Crossing*. All of my information goes back to *Animal Crossing: City Folk* circa 2008 on the Wii.

But you play a human living in a open-ended world full of anthropomorphic animals, and basically you build a life for yourself. You get a house, or you get a mortgage for a house from Tom Nook. *[Stifles laughter.]* Predatory lender. You furnish it with stuff you buy from Tom Nook.

00:15:26 Jesse Host I mean if he's a tanuki, he's literally a predatory lender, right?

00:15:28 John Host *[Laughs quietly.]* Yeah. That's right. They are, uh, predatory animals. Right? I think they—they seek prey. And they seek high interest rates. Everyone knows, right, Jesse?

00:15:41 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:15:42 John Host Yeah.

00:15:43 Joel Guest And this all happens in Missouri?

[The litigants laugh.]

00:15:45 John Host Correct.

00:15:46 Joel Guest *[Laughing]* Okay.

00:15:48 John Host Alright, Joel. *[Laughs quietly.]* Getting a little too feisty across the glass. No, it all happens in the video game!

In the video game, you make money—which is called bells; instead of dollars they have bells—by working, and by raising what, Kelly?

00:16:11 Kelly Guest By raising fruit trees, by raising turnips...

00:16:15 John Host Mm-hm.

00:16:16 Kelly Guest And in particular, playing the stalk (stock) market. So—

00:16:20 John Host *[Snorts.]* S-T-A-L-K.

00:16:22 Kelly Guest Yes. Yes, Your Honor. So essentially, you purchase turnips from your local turnip vendor every Sunday, hopefully at a good price. Preferably below 100 bells.

00:16:35 John Host Mm-hm.

00:16:36 Kelly Guest And then you have two options. You can wait on your island and watch the turnip price fluctuate throughout the week, and hope you get a really good deal. Or you can be bold, and meet other people who are playing *Animal Crossing*, and see if they have a better deal to sell, and then sell your turnips on their island.

00:16:54 John Host So, Kelly and Maureen, the stalk market is kind of at the center of your debate. Correct?

00:17:00 Kelly Guest Yes.

00:17:01 Maureen Guest Mm-hm.

00:17:02 John Host Alright. You have separate islands. That is to say, you each have your own sort of world. You are not collaborating. Correct?

00:17:12 Kelly Guest Correct. Not directly, correct.

00:17:13 John Guest Alright. And so, Kelly, what is Maureen doing in the stalk market that brings you to this court?

00:17:20 Kelly Guest Well, Maureen is very, very good at playing the stalk market.

00:17:24 John Host Mm-hm. Buy low, sell high.

00:17:26 Kelly Guest Exactly.

00:17:27 John Host Right.

00:17:28 Kelly Guest She immediately dived into that area of the game.

00:17:30 John Host Mm-hm.

00:17:31 Kelly Guest She was able to network with other random players, and go onto their islands and sell for very high.

00:17:41 John Host Right.

00:17:42 Kelly Guest *[Stifles laughter.]* She also does something called time traveling.

[Maureen laughs.]

Which allows her to buy turnips multiple times per week—per our week—and sell them multiple times. So she's a bit of a trickster, as well.

00:17:56 John Host Wait a minute, Maureen. Are you a Time Lord? Are you a Doctor Who?

[Kelly laughs.]

00:18:01 Maureen Guest I am the Doctor Who of *Animal Crossing*, yes.

00:18:02 John Host What is time traveling in the game?

00:18:06 Maureen Guest It was previously quite frowned upon by the *Animal Crossing* community, and there was a character who would come yell at you when you'd do it. It's when you change the clock on your console, so for me, I change it on the Nintendo Switch. Because the game operates in real time each day. It's set to your console clock.

00:18:27 John Host Uh-huh.

00:18:28 Maureen Guest So I'm like, "Alright. I'm gonna change my clock 'til tomorrow, so that I can play tomorrow today, instead of going to bed like a normal human being."

00:18:38 John Host *[First word a whispery exhale]* Ohhh. So... you're hacking the system.

00:18:42 Maureen Guest Yes.

00:18:43 John Host You're putting a glitch in the matrix!

00:18:46 Maureen Guest *[Laughs.]* Oh, no, it came full circle.

00:18:48 John Host You're seeing two cats instead of one! Because, if I understand this correctly, you can only purchase turnips on a certain day. And you're tricking the program into thinking it's that certain day, day after day after day.

00:19:03 Maureen Guest Correct.

00:19:04 John Host Correct. Alright! And you say this was previously frowned upon by the *Animal Crossing* community, which, correct. I would frown—I'm frowning. Sorry.

[Maureen laughs.]

Frown. If you're a Doctor Who, you're supposed to be out there saving the day, not hoarding turnips. But...

00:19:22 Jesse Host Yeah, I bet Doctor Who doesn't even have two or three turnips. I'd say maximum, Doctor Who has five turnips.

[One of the litigants laughs.]

00:19:28 John Host But Jesse Thorn, can I tell you something? *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:19:31 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:19:32 John Host At some point, Jesse, you and I really should have—maybe we should do this someday for a MaxFunDrive special episode, like bonus content for members only. Because you, Jesse Thorn, are an expert in men's garb.

00:19:47 Jesse Host Yeah. True.

00:19:48 John Host I would really love to sit down with you and hear your opinion and reaction to the clothing of every Doctor Who. 'Cause some of them get a little wacky.

00:19:59 Jesse Host Yeah. I'm on board for that. Sold.

00:20:01 John Host That's good, right? The sixth Doctor Who not only wore sort of—like a cricket sweater and white pants and trainers everywhere. He dressed like a cricket batter all the time. But he also wore a tan jacket with red piping around the lapel, and on the lapel he pinned a stalk of celery. For no reason. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:20:26 Jesse Host Wow!

00:20:27 John Host Could've been a turnip!

[One of the litigants laughs.]

00:20:28 Jesse Host That's like... Prince Charles will wear a thistle on his lapel, because

he's, uh... King of Scotland, or whatever.

[Jesse and John laugh.]

00:20:35 John Host Sure.

00:20:36 Jesse Host I don't know exactly how it works. Sorry, Britons and, uh, citizens of the United Kingdom. But it was a celery stalk. That just indicates that—probably that he likes to make sure he gets his fiber.

00:20:49 John Host Yeah. You know what, Jesse, I'm gonna send you a picture of him wearing this celery stalk right now. I just—I can't—and by the way, everybody, stop emailing me. Everyone's time traveling to email me angry letters right now, even though this hasn't even been released yet.

[One or both litigants laugh.]

'Cause I said the Sixth Doctor. It was the Fifth Doctor! Sorry! Peter Davison. Stand by one second, Jesse, I'm gonna send you a link.

00:21:14 Jesse Host Oh, wow.

00:21:14 John Host *[Laughing]* Yeah.

00:21:17 Jesse Host Wait, this guy's from, uh—is this guy from *All Creatures Great and Small*?

00:21:20 John Host Yesss! He's the junior vet in *All Creatures Great and Small*!

00:21:24 Jesse Host So in the television show *Doctor Who*, does he play Tristan Farnon from *All Creatures Great and Small*?

[John laughs quietly.]

But he became—he becomes a Time Lord? Or does he play one of the other characters from *All Creatures Great and Small* who's become a Time Lord?

00:21:40 John Host *[Laughs.]* The BBC never aired the final episode of *All Creatures Great and Small*. Because it was too controversial. *[Stifles laughter.]* Because Tristan was made into a Time Lord at the end of it. It was a tie-in.

[Jesse and one or both litigants laugh.]

00:21:54 Jesse Host Like, "That is not in the books!"

00:21:55 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:21:57 Jesse Promo John, let's take a quick break from the case to talk about the MaxFunDrive! We'll be back in the courtroom with more *Animal Crossing* action, more turnip news, in just a minute. Uh, but first! *[Stifles laughter.]* Our office staff has collated a few of the comments that we've gotten about the MaxFunDrive. They're always so heartwarming.

00:22:14 John Promo Yeah!

00:22:15 Jesse Promo Do you have a favorite here, John?

00:22:17 John Promo Well, I love what [ClydeUmney](#) said. "Podcasts have been such a comfort during a pretty remarkably bad year here, the MaxFun network more than most. #JJHo—" That's us! "—brings Clyde

wisdom, and empathy, and laughs."

And Sarah Anotchmius, @SarahAnotchmius, said that the podcast helps keep her feel balanced, and that we are both funny and wise. "Thanks, Hodgman and Jesse Thorn." I say thank you to you, Sarah, and to you, Jesse. I mean, I mentioned earlier on that the MaxFunDrive is a chance for us all to connect with one another. And this year in particular it's been just very gratifying to hear from people, and appreciate that we're offering at least some welcome distraction from whatever else might be going on in their lives.

Truly, if all you can do this year is just send a Tweet out into the world, not only will that be a karmic good feeling for both you and us, but maybe some deranged millionaire will read that Tweet and give MaxFun a hundred gazillion dollars. So, that's enough.

00:23:23	Jesse	Promo	I know this, John. This has been, for me, pro—I was gonna say "probably," but certainly the hardest year of my life. And one of the things that has made it so hard is that we are—so many of us are facing huge challenges. And... we feel very lonely, in facing them.
00:23:41	John	Promo	Yes.
00:23:43	Jesse	Promo	I know that's how I feel. And you know, that's even though I'm surrounded by my wonderful family. And I know that for <u>me</u> , doing this show is an amazing connection to some people who are special to me, and to new people who I haven't met yet. And it also provides me with this community of wonderful, kind, thoughtful MaxFun listeners and <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> listeners for whom I'm <u>so</u> grateful.
			It's been a great comfort to me, and <u>listening</u> to MaxFun shows has also been an incredible comfort to me. I was just listening to <i>The Flop House</i> this morning, for example.
00:24:22	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:24:23	Jesse	Promo	And I know that there's probably a lot of folks out there who feel that way, too. And you know, to me, as the person who conceived of MaxFun many years ago, I am very proud that the part of it where I thought, "Maybe this could be a way to connect people, beyond just connecting people with their favorite podcast, or their favorite media outlet, but connect people with each other" feels like it has been the case this year.
00:24:49	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:24:51	Jesse	Promo	And I'm really proud and grateful for that. I know there are a lot of folks out there who are not in a position to support us by becoming a member this year, and we understand that entirely. And we just—we don't want you to feel bad about it, if that's the position you're in. There's lots of stuff you can do.
00:25:07	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:25:08	Jesse	Promo	That doesn't cost any money. Like just talk about liking the show to a friend, or the checker at the grocery store or something. But if you <u>are</u> in a position to become a member, we're very grateful for it. And you can do it at MaximumFun.org/join ! It's very easy and very quick.
00:25:22	John	Promo	Yeah, one of the ways in which Maximum Fun is unique among

podcast networks is that, by design, it really is—started as, and developed even more into, a community of creators and listeners. And you know, one of the things about MaxFunDrive's past, is that it's always been as much about fun as it is about drive. It's always been, for me personally, a chance to really reflect and enjoy the fact that *Judge John Hodgman* listeners—and indeed, all Maximum Fun podcast listeners—are fun, funny, smart people that I'm glad to have in my life.

And this year in particular, as Jesse has said, it's just been... a true honor—"true honor" is a cliché to say, but I'm—it is both true and an honor. To know that you are letting us into your homes and your ears as you drive and work and do chores, and... I don't know how I would have gotten this far into 2020 without you all. And with you, Jesse, and Jennifer. So I'm very, very glad you're here. And thank you just for letting—just knowing that you're out there is truly contribution enough if that's all you can do.

And if you're in a position, you can go to MaximumFun.org/join. Or... maybe you wanna bring someone into this community! Because for the first time, we have an opportunity for you to get a subscription for a friend! Help a friend become a member. To gift membership to someone else. You can get a subscription for a friend for one year, and that way both you and the friend can enjoy all the bonus content, and the swag. You can give this to a good friend, a distant friend, a family member who you think might enjoy it, or even someone you've never even met!

00:27:25	Jesse	Promo	You can give it to an enemy to punish them, if you want to.
00:27:28	John	Promo	You can give it to an enemy! ...Joel!
00:27:32	Joel	Promo	Yes, Judge.
00:27:33	John	Promo	Joel at WERU, are you a member of Maximum Fun?
00:27:36	Joel	Promo	No, but I plan to be.
00:27:37	John	Promo	Well, nope, you are now, 'cause I'm gonna gift you a membership.
00:27:39	Joel	Promo	Well, I'm gonna get a membership anyway and give <u>that</u> to somebody.
00:27:41	John	Promo	You know what, pay it forward, exactly!
00:27:43	Joel	Promo	That's right! Alright.
00:27:44	John	Promo	It's a fun new way to bring more people into the community. And obviously it helps support Maximum Fun, and keeps the podcast going. So again, that's MaximumFun.org/join . When you go over there, just check the Anonymous MaxFunster box when filling out the online form, <i>[stifles laughter]</i> and you can give it to someone—to some anonymous person! MaximumFun.org/join .
00:28:05	Jesse	Host	Let's get back into the courtroom for more "Animal Crossing Examination."
00:28:09	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:28:11	John	Host	Anyway, you're a time traveler, Maureen. You're not using your powers for good. You're using your powers for acquisition. You're hoarding up turnips at a low price, selling 'em at a high price.

[One of the litigants laughs.]

What was the animal that would come and yell at you?

00:28:25 Maureen Guest He was a mole, I think? He was Mr. Resetti. Like, "reset." Like, "Hey, I caught you resetting your game."

00:28:33 John Host *[Laughs.]* Well, did they take that feature out? Is that now just part of the game? Now that all norms are shattered, and society has basically collapsed, they're like "Do it. Do whatever you need to do"?

[The litigants laugh, John stifles laughter.]

00:28:44 Maureen Guest Yeah, I think they were like, "You guys need this."

[Someone laughs.]

"We're not gonna yell at you anymore." Which we took as permission.

00:28:51 John Host And by "we" you mean you, Maureen.

00:28:54 Maureen Guest *[Laughs.]* I mean me and every other time traveler, because it's quite popular right now to be a time traveler.

[Someone laughs.]

00:29:02 John Host Well, as long as everyone's playing by the same rules.

So Kelly, I don't understand what the dispute is here. Maureen is playing the game her way. Hoarding turnips, time traveling. Sounds like a lot of fun. How is this frustrating you?

00:29:17 Kelly Guest Sure. So at the time, I felt that we were having and sharing a very collaborative *Animal Crossing* experience, both as a partnership and as people with COVID. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:29:28 John Host Mm-hm.

00:29:29 Kelly Guest Recovering. And... the first time that she actually made the bells, I will admit, it was with my help. They were very low on my island, and she was able to sort of sell them very high on her island. So that's where she learned the trick.

00:29:46 John Host Ohhh. So what you're saying is... turnips—you sold turnips from your island to Maureen at a low price. She turned around, classic pump-and-dump.

00:29:58 Kelly Guest Yes.

00:29:59 John Host Sold them for a high price. And she made a lot of bells as a result.

00:30:03 Kelly Guest Yes. And she did give me a portion.

00:30:05 John Host That turned her into the Wolf of Turnip Street.

[Maureen laughs.]

00:30:09 Kelly Guest It did. It did. And I was, you know, just kind of accepting of it. And I took my portion of the profits, and continued to pay off my mortgage. We then began to where I was able to gather and craft things for Maureen because she couldn't, because partly she was busy making turnips—or buying turnips, and selling them. And so I felt that we had a sort of collaborative experience, much like in our real lives, where

we share an income. We do share a lot of the same hobbies.

00:30:40	Maureen	Guest	Mm-hm.
00:30:41	Kelly	Guest	As I said, we did meet through gaming. I feel that if she's going to continue to make these acquisitions, which is something she loves to do, and something that I'm not very good at doing, and in fact do not like to speak to strangers on other people's islands— <i>[stifles laughter]</i> —
00:30:57	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:30:58	Kelly	Guest	—that she should split some of the profits with me, especially as I am busy creating things for her and finding her things she likes. I <u>don't</u> believe it should be 50%. I will say that.
00:31:10	Jesse	Host	What's an example of something that you've created for her that she likes?
00:31:14	Kelly	Guest	So in the evidence I submitted, you'll see a picture of our <i>Animal Crossing</i> avatars on a shell set. Sort of a pearlescent outside cafe area with a fountain and a table, and it's sort of a cute little area, and I created all of those for her.
00:31:32	John	Host	So we're gonna share these images , obviously, on the show page at MaximumFun.org as well as on our Instagram, at @judgejohnhodgman on Instagram. I just— <i>[laughs]</i> —mm. I just need to... I need to acknowledge the caption of this particular piece of evidence. The caption is, "Important evidence... showing how cute we are in game."
			<i>[The litigants laugh.]</i>
			And I—absolutely you have proven your case.
00:31:57	Jesse	Host	Yeah. It's definitely adorbs.
00:31:59	John	Host	Yeah. Incredibly cute avatars. But what you're trying to show here, Kelly, is that these pearlescent shells—is that something you <u>made</u> in the game?
00:32:09	Kelly	Guest	Yes. I made the entire furniture set for her as a gift, or as part of my imaginary, I guess, exchange.
			<i>[Maureen chuckles, Kelly stifles laughter.]</i>
			The partnership I believed.
00:32:20	Jesse	Host	You basically have your avatar swallow a grain of sand. Then you time travel forward far enough, and then you vomit up one of these shells.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh quietly.]</i>
00:32:29	Kelly	Guest	Exactly.
00:32:30	John	Host	Is that true?!
			<i>[Beat.]</i>
00:32:31	Kelly	Guest	No.
00:32:32	John	Host	Oh.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:32:35 Kelly Guest

No, *[inaudible]*.

00:32:36 Jesse Host

That was speculative on my part, admittedly. *[Laughs.]*

00:32:39 John Host

So these are two cute—for those listening, these are two very cute, adorable avatars, having a little afternoon hang. By a table made out of an iridescent sand dollar, that was created... by Kelly, in game. And sitting on little beautiful iridescent shelled stools, also created I guess by you, Kelly, right?

00:33:05 Kelly Guest

Yes.

00:33:06 John Host

Right. And whose island are you on? Where are you having this little party, this smile party?

00:33:12 Kelly Guest

[Reluctant] It's on Maureen's. This is Maureen.

00:33:15 John Host

Okay, Maureen. I got it. You're partying on your island. With stuff that Kelly made for you. And you don't wanna give her any bells. You don't wanna share the bells that you've made in the turnip market. Is that correct?

00:33:28 Maureen Guest

Well... kind of.

00:33:31 John Host

Let me ask you a question, Maureen. How many bells you got?

00:33:36 Maureen Guest

So I currently have 42 million.

00:33:39 John Host

Ugh.

[Someone snorts. John laughs.]

Ugh! *[Long sigh.]*

00:33:46 Jesse Host

Being a bell millionaire is inherently immoral.

00:33:48 John Host

[Stifling laughter] Yeah.

[One of the litigants cracks up.]

Right? I was afraid you were gonna have a billion.

[One of the litigants laughs.]

Forty-two million, though... Getting there. How many bells do you have, Kelly?

00:34:01 Kelly Guest

I currently have a little over one million.

00:34:06 John Host

This is a disparity. Would you agree, Maureen?

00:34:09 Maureen Guest

A little bit.

00:34:11 John Host

Do you know what I find millionaires—or in this case multimillionaires are really good at doing?

00:34:17 Maureen Guest

No, what?

00:34:18 John Host

Justifying their existence.

[The litigants laugh.]

And also explaining why they should be rich. *[Stifles laughter.]* Why should you have 42 million bells, and why should you not share them

with your wife Kelly?

00:34:36 Maureen Guest *[Laughs.]* So I have 42 million bells because once you complete the game and you have completed the content—because they update for different holidays. They're always putting out new content. But when you time travel, you burn through it pretty quickly. So what I'm trying to do to entertain myself in *Animal Crossing* now is decorate my island. And I've created, like, additional humans to live on the island, and I'm upgrading their houses. So they have, like, a little beachfront cafe, and a little, like, place for my friends to go so they can look at clothes and tell me what clothes they want, and I will send them the clothes.

00:35:17 John Host And you're spending bells on this.

00:35:19 Maureen Guest So I'm spending a lot of bells on this.

00:35:22 John Host And this is on your island, Maureen.

00:35:23 Maureen Guest And it is on my island.

00:35:25 John Host What you're saying to your wife is, "I can't share any bells with you because I'm too busy spending all my bells creating a perfect society without you."

[Kelly laughs quietly.]

00:35:35 Maureen Guest Welllll, now, there was—there was an—

00:35:36 John Host "I'm creating new friends."

00:35:38 Maureen Guest *[Laughs.]* There was an incident, Your Honor.

00:35:41 John Host Alright.

00:35:42 Maureen Guest Where I decided to redo my island one night. And I didn't wanna lose the things that I had. And I asked if I could store them temporarily on her island, and she did charge me rent.

[Multiple people laugh quietly. Jesse laughs out loud.]

00:35:59 Kelly Guest I would like to clarify why I charged rent, if possible.

[More laughter.]

00:36:02 John Host Alright, Kelly. Go ahead.

00:36:04 Kelly Guest It's because she did not move her items from my island for two weeks. *[Stifles laughter.]* And it was affecting my in-game rating.

[Maureen laughs.]

I thought it would make her hurry.

00:36:14 John Host It's hard for me to describe the look of confusion... and concern... and even disgust on Joel Mann's face right now.

[One of the litigants cracks up.]

00:36:26 Joel Guest I think they should go out to Matinicus and see how many turnips those bells will buy.

[One of the litigants laughs.]

00:36:32 John Host Talking about Matinicus Island here in Maine?

00:36:33 Joel Guest Yes. Yes.

00:36:34 John Host Yeah. That's all they got over there. They're lucky if they have a—a turnip. Matinicus, a very depopulated island in Maine. Very remote.

You know, Joel expressed some confusion about why this is a game.

[Multiple people laugh.]

Since what you're describing's like, "I have to pay my mortgaaage."

[One of the litigants laughs.]

"She left her stuff in my room for too long, so I charged rent." Like, this whole virtual world is just full of what we would call some of the most mundane real-world problems! Is it fun? Kelly?

00:37:09 Kelly Guest It's actually very fun. I would argue that especially in this time, those mundane problems are kind of nice. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:37:16 John Host Okay.

00:37:18 Kelly Guest So especially at the time, I would say that it was—it was just sort of bonding, and nice to talk about mortgages, and also to be able to pay them off. As millennials, that's something that both of us have to think about a lot. *[Stifles laughter.]* Maureen's contracts, her jobs at the time, had been paused due to the pandemic. And I was actually on disability at that time for my lupus.

00:37:42 John Host Mm-hm.

00:37:43 Kelly Guest And so it was sort of a tough financial struggle at the time as well, and so I think there was this nice feeling of being able to live a very comfortable virtual life.

00:37:55 John Host Yeah. Okay, I gotcha. It's a kinder form... of capitalism. One in which there is the potential to succeed. Would that be fair to say?

00:38:04 Kelly Guest Yes. I would definitely say that it is a much kinder form.

00:38:08 John Host One extremely kind form of capitalism... would be no capitalism at all.

[Maureen laughs.]

00:38:08 Kelly Guest *[Emphatically]* Yes.

00:38:15 John Host Socialism. Redistributed wealth. Right, Kelly? You're what Ayn Rand would call a moocher.

[Kelly laughs.]

Maureen's out there moving her money around, playing the market, having the interactions with the strangers—which, by the way, I don't wanna have, either. She's earned these 42—arguably, she's earned these 42 million bells. And now you just wanna confiscate that wealth?

[One of the litigants laughs quietly.]

Who are you? AOC?

[Both litigants laugh.]

By the way, I love AOC. Incredible.

00:38:52 Kelly Guest

We do, too.

[Maureen laughs quietly.]

00:38:53 John Host

Yeah. Your argument would be, Kelly, that Maureen should give you a percentage of her bells because you're married. Right?

00:39:02 Kelly Guest

Also I because I felt that, reflecting our marriage, I was also contributing to the partnership.

00:39:09 John Host

Right. You're giving her all these iridescent shells! Now, Maureen, do you take value in these iridescent shells? Is this just garbage that you're storing on your island rent-free 'cause you don't wanna hurt Kelly's feelings?

[The litigants laugh.]

00:39:21 Maureen Guest

That's a great point. I have a lot of your items on my island that I'm not charging you rent for, but just kidding, I love them. They're wonderful.

[John snorts.]

They bring me joy.

00:39:31 John Host

Alright. You are getting value. I mean, like, you wouldn't have these shells. 'Cause all you're doing—you're like Lin-Manuel Miranda as Hamilton in *Hamilton*. And Kelly is like Daveed Diggs as Jefferson.

[One or both litigants laugh quietly.]

You know, she's creating! You just wanna move your money around. Right?

[Both litigants laugh.]

00:39:52 Maureen Guest

I will say that since I time travel, I do collect rare materials to make recipes with. And recipes and DIYs are what you get to make the shells. So I'll be, like, a season ahead, like, "Oh, I've got acorns! Would you like an acorn wreath?" So I do sometimes give her things as well.

00:40:13 John Host

And do you accept, Kelly—do you accept these misbegotten gains?

00:40:18 Kelly Guest

[Chuckles.] I do. I admit it. They're very pretty.

00:40:21 John Host

[Knowingly] Mm-hm.

00:40:22 Kelly Guest

And they look very good on my island.

00:40:23 John Host

Mm-hm. There is no ethical capitalism.

[One or both litigants laugh.]

Maureen, you're out there cheating! You're cheating. You know that you're cheating.

00:40:33 Maureen Guest

Mm-hm.

00:40:35 John Host

Right?

00:40:36 Jesse Host Wait, John! I have one.

00:40:37 John Host Alright.

00:40:38 Jesse Host ATAB. All Tanukis Are Bad.

[John and one or both litigants laugh.]

00:40:48 John Host From where I sit, Maureen, you're out there—you're—it's an accepted cheat at this point, but you're cheating the system. I mean, you are—you're a super capitalist, right? You're just acquiring wealth, and you're using your wealth to gain more wealth, and exponentially you get more and more wealthy. You're using every loophole to your advantage. You're hoarding wealth. From your very wife! Tell me a reason why I shouldn't order an "eat the rich" edict!

00:41:17 Maureen Guest *[Laughs.]* Oh my gosh, that's so funny, 'cause my flag is actually "Eat the rich."

[Kelly laughs.]

You have a town flag.

00:41:24 John Host Maureen—!?

00:41:25 Maureen Guest It's, uh—

00:41:26 John Host You have a town flag that says "Eat the rich" on it?!

00:41:29 Kelly Guest *[Laughing]* Thank you!!! Ironically, she does.

00:41:31 John Host That is pure performative progressivism!

[Kelly and/or Maureen laugh.]

Rich, eat thyself!

[More laughter.]

Why do you have a flag that says "Eat the rich"? Are you a Motörhead fan?

00:41:49 Maureen Guest No. Because in real life I'm a pretty big anticapitalist socialist.
[Laughs.]

00:41:54 John Host Mmmmm.

00:41:56 Maureen Guest But I'm, uh—

00:41:58 John Host This is getting delicious.

[The litigants laugh.]

IRL... you agree that capitalism is a rigged system, perpetuating greater and greater inequality of wealth.

00:42:12 Maureen Guest *[Stifling laughter]* I do.

00:42:14 John Host But when you get on your island... *[stifles laughter]* you looove hoarding those bells! Don't you?

00:42:19 Maureen Guest *[Cracking up]* I'm sorry! Hold on!

[Recovering] I do.

00:42:26 John Host Yes! I appreciate your recognizing that you are under fake oath, and telling the truth!

[Maureen laughs.]

That's fun. Roleplay is fun! Roleplay is fun. Playing a different version of yourself, maybe one that goes against some of your principles, in a game-like environment? That's a—that's a—an emotional release. I get it.

00:42:48 Maureen Guest Yeah, like when you pick the mean answer in *Dragon Age*. *[Laughs.]*

00:42:52 Jesse Host Yeah, it's like when you pick the mean answer in *Dragon Age*. That's just what I was thinking.

00:42:55 John Host Uh-huh.

[Maureen laughs.]

00:42:56 Kelly Guest Yeah!

00:42:57 John Host Yeah, Joel, it's like when you pick the mean answer in *Dragon Age*. You know.

[Kelly and Maureen laugh.]

00:43:00 Joel Guest Yeah, Parcheesi.

00:43:02 John Host Right.

[More quiet laughter from multiple people.]

So Kelly, how much bells do you want?

00:43:09 Kelly Guest You know, Your Honor, I'm honestly just looking for a percentage. I don't need 50%. Uh, maybe... 25%.

00:43:17 John Host Twenty-five percent... tax.

00:43:22 Kelly Guest Yes.

00:43:23 John Host Right? In consideration of shared income IRL. And in consideration of stuff that you make.

00:43:31 Kelly Guest Yes.

00:43:32 John Host Mm-hm.

00:43:33 Jesse Host Just a basic bookie's vig.

00:43:34 John Host Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:43:35 Kelly Guest Exactly.

00:43:36 John Host Yeah. *[Laughs.]* Twenty-five percent—you want 25% off the top, right now? Or 25% of what she has, and 25% of everything going forward?

00:43:46 Jesse Host Yeah, is this an income tax or a wealth tax?

[One or both litigants laugh quietly.]

00:43:49 John Host Yeah. There we go. Thank you.

00:43:50 Kelly Guest Uh—

00:43:51 Jesse Host And are you prepared to take the wealth tax all the way to the

Supreme Court?

[One or both litigants laugh, Jesse stifles laughter.]

00:43:55 Kelly Guest Well, I thought that's where we are now, the *Animal Crossing* Supreme Court.

00:43:58 John Host Ohhh. Who do you think I am, a finger-wagging mole?

[The litigants laugh.]

Animal Crossing has its own—its own court system! I'm not part of that!

00:44:07 Jesse Host Judge Hodgman is the court in the court of Sea-man! The man-faced fish that lives inside your Sega Dreamcast.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:44:18 Kelly Guest I'm comfortable with a continued portion throughout time. It doesn't need to be every run. Maybe once a month.

00:44:26 John Host Once a month you're gonna take 25% of Maureen's wealth? Is that what you're saying? Be specific.

00:44:32 Kelly Guest If we both agree that the services I've provided, and also in the name of our wonderful marriage, yes.

00:44:40 John Host Hm. Well, but you don't both agree, right? Maureen, why is 25% confiscatory?

00:44:48 Maureen Guest Because... of the rent incident, I was not under the impression that it was, you know, an arrangement where I was receiving goods for bells. I thought that I was returning that with other goods that I gave her. So... I think it's just—

00:45:06 Kelly Guest Such—

00:45:07 Maureen Guest —taking advantage of the situation. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:45:11 John Host Did you have a conversation about what it would mean to have different islands when you chose to play separate islands, as opposed to one island?

00:45:23 Maureen Guest Absolutely not.

00:45:24 Kelly Guest The only conversation that we had was... "Boy, I'm sure glad we each have our own console, and that we can play with our own islands any way we want, and decorate them however we want."

00:45:37 John Host Mm-hm—

00:45:38 Jesse Host You guys have two Nintendos?!

[The litigants laugh.]

00:45:41 Maureen Guest Yes!

00:45:42 Kelly Guest To be fair, we both had them before we were married.

00:45:47 Jesse Host But then you got two different *Animal Crossings*.

00:45:50 Kelly Guest We did.

[Maureen laughs.]

00:45:52 Jesse Host Wow. This is a—John, it's possible that this is the next level in your

two beds, two bedrooms argument for married couples!

[John laughs.]

Two beds, two bedrooms, two Nintendos!

[One of the litigants laughs.]

00:46:03 John Host Yeah, you're right, Jesse. That isn't the point.
Kelly, how does it make you feel when Maureen doesn't share bells with you?

00:46:10 Kelly Guest I admit I'm hurt.

00:46:12 John Host Tell me more.

00:46:13 Kelly Guest Well, one thing I will say is that Maureen's parents also play the game.

00:46:19 John Host Mm-hm.

00:46:20 Kelly Guest And when I asked them initially about this question, they also said that they share their income, because they have always shared their life together. Which I thought was a very sweet and romantic sentiment, Maureen. And I will say that it hurt my—it hurt my feelings a little bit.

00:46:37 John Host How do you respond to that, Maureen? How does that make you feel?

00:46:41 Maureen Guest Uh—*[laughs]*. Well, my bad, I'm very sorry.

[John snorts.]

00:46:51 John Host But we have never shared income in any other video game before. Most sincere apology ever, by the way.

[One or both litigants laugh.]

00:46:55 Maureen Guest I love you very much. You're the light of my life. If you want some bells, I can give them to you! But just not like... you know, an obligatory every run, 'cause that puts pressure on me.

00:47:07 John Host You hear what she's saying, Kelly? You have to beg.

00:47:09 Maureen Guest Yes.

00:47:10 Kelly Guest I do. I hear that.

[Jesse and someone else laugh.]

00:47:15 John Host Do you share your income in real life?

00:47:16 Kelly Guest Yes, we do.

00:47:17 John Host Alright. Share everything else equally, right? Kelly?

00:47:20 Kelly Guest Yes, we do. We even wear the same shoe size.

00:47:23 Jesse Host But you have two different Nintendos.

00:47:26 Kelly Guest *[Laughs.]* We do.

00:47:27 John Host There is precedent for not sharing certain things. Even wear the same shoe size! This gets adorable and adorabler.

[Maureen laughs.]

00:47:36 Kelly Guest Yeah, we share clothes, and shoes, and everything.
00:47:39 Jesse Host Do you ever dress up like those old lady twins that used to walk around downtown San Francisco, all suited and booted?
00:47:46 Kelly Guest I would like to. I've mentioned that. I used to live in San Francisco, so I would like to do that. *[Stifles laughter.]*
00:47:51 John Host Who are these people, Jesse?
00:47:52 Jesse Host There were these two lady twins—I'm gonna look it up.

[One or both litigants laugh.]

00:47:55 John Host Yeah, send me a—send me an image.
00:47:56 Jesse Host *[Audible typing.]*

"Old..." I'm—I'm Googling "San Francisco old lady twins." They had matching perms—"The Brown twins, Marian and Vivian Brown, were two American identical twin actresses who also appeared on television talk shows and television commercials. They were icons in San Francisco, known as the San Francisco twins!"

[John laughs.]

"The had identically bright, snappy outfits, and hats atop meticulously coiffed hair."

[One or both litigants laugh quietly.]

Matching perms. That's the secret. Matching perms.

00:48:26 John Host Will you text me an image?
00:48:28 Jesse Host Yes.
00:48:29 John Host Great. I'll look at it in my chambers in a moment. Kelly, unless I were to intercede and order some redistribution of wealth, is your position that you would stop helping Maureen source DIY recipes? That you would stop making shells for her? That you would withhold these goods?
00:48:46 Kelly Guest I'll admit that I would not stop.
00:48:48 John Host Right. Right. You just can't help being ground down by this system! Maureen, she loves you! She's gonna make those shells even if you don't give her some bells!
00:49:01 Maureen Guest I know, I'm very lucky.
00:49:02 John Host She's making shells for no bells!

[One of the litigants laughs.]

This is how you treat the love of your life? You hoard up those bells?

00:49:10 Maureen Guest *[Laughing]* Apparently!
00:49:11 John Host Uhhh, if I were—if—
00:49:12 Maureen Guest She made me pay rent!

[Maureen and John laugh.]

00:49:15 John Host That was one thing! That was one—UGH.

00:49:21 Maureen Guest Do you know how much money she charged me?!

[Both litigants laugh.]

00:49:22 John Host No, how much?

00:49:24 Maureen Guest *[Laughing]* What was it?

00:49:26 Kelly Guest Just one million bells.

00:49:28 Maureen Guest Yeah.

00:49:28 John Host Should've been 42 million bells.

[Maureen cracks up.]

00:49:32 Kelly Guest *[Deadpan]* I see that now, Your Honor.

00:49:35 John Host Maureen, you sound just like an URL millionaire.

00:49:40 Maureen Guest *[Laughs.]* Oh nooo.

00:49:41 John Host Do you know what I mean?

00:49:42 Maureen Guest But it's a video game! *[Laughs.]*

00:49:43 John Host Oh, s—"One of my employees looked wrong at me once, so therefore I will never help them again." Mean. It's like the mean answer from *Dragon Age*. You picked it.

[Kelly laughs quietly.]

00:49:54 Maureen Guest I do pick them sometimes...

00:49:55 John Host Yeahhh, I can tell. Alright. So if I were to find in your favor, it would be whatever. You would only give bells to your beloved wife if she asked the right way.

[Maureen laughs.]

What would be the right way? Maureen, do your imitation of how Kelly should ask you for bells that would work.

00:50:13 Maureen Guest "Hey, babe, I need to build a bridge. Can I have two million bells?"

"Okay, sure!"

00:50:19 John Host I don't believe that.

[One of the litigants laughs quietly.]

Don't you want her to be obsequious? Groveling?

00:50:27 Maureen Guest I would not make her do that.

00:50:29 John Host So you're just saying if Kelly asked you for a few bells to work on a project, you would invest in that project, like *Shark Tank*.

00:50:37 Maureen Guest Correct. I just don't like the pressure of being obligated to share, like, every run, is how I feel right now.

00:50:45 John Host Kelly, you wanna ask Maureen for some bells right now, on air?

00:50:48 Kelly Guest Um, Maureen?

[Maureen laughs.]

I have a small project I'd like to complete. It will be 42 million bells.

[John and Maureen laugh.]

May I please borrow those?

00:50:58 Maureen Guest Uh, no.

00:50:59 John Host Alright, I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision.

[The litigants laugh.]

I am going to go to the—my own private island of my mind. Which is located not in *Animal Crossing*, but underneath this plastic conference table in the studios of WERU. Where I hope it'll be slightly cooler, 'cause we have the AC off. At my request! It's better for the sound. I'll cool off, I'll think it over, I'll be back in a moment with my decision.

00:51:22 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape, footsteps.]*

00:51:23 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

00:51:26 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

00:51:27 Jesse Host Maureen and Kelly, how many other of these video game machines have you got?

[The litigants laugh.]

00:51:32 Maureen Guest Um, we have—

00:51:33 Jesse Host You got any ColecoVisions?

00:51:35 Kelly Guest No, we're not that cool.

00:51:37 Maureen Guest No. If you're asking for real, we have, uh, like a PS4, an Xbox One, and some, like, older gen stuff. And some portable systems.

00:51:49 Jesse Host A nice man sent me one of those PlayStations so I could pretend to be Spider-Man. It was a lot of fun. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:51:54 Kelly Guest That's a great game.

00:51:55 Maureen Guest It's a very good game.

00:51:56 Kelly Guest It's a very good game.

00:51:57 Jesse Host It's great. He's Spider-Man, he's jumping around, shooting webs. Who wouldn't believe this stuff this guy does?

[Someone stifles laughter.]

00:52:00 Kelly Guest I love that game.

00:52:03 Jesse Host Uh, you got any hot tips for—for a *Zelda*?

[Someone stifles laughter.]

'Cause my friend Jordan gave me his Nintendo Wii U, and I've been playing *Zelda*, and I don't know, I guess I need some recipes or

something.

00:52:12 Kelly Guest Oh, Maureen's good at *Zelda*.

00:52:13 Maureen Guest Oh, you're playing *Breath of the Wild*?

00:52:16 Jesse Host *[Dolefully]* Yeah...

00:52:17 Maureen Guest I was like, if you're playing *Skyward Sword*, I have no help for you. *[Laughs.]* You need a good controller.

00:52:24 Jesse Host Was there really one called *Skyward Sword*? *[Laughs.]*

00:52:26 Kelly Guest There was.

00:52:27 Maureen Guest There was!

00:52:28 Jesse Host Wow, what an awkward name!

00:52:29 Kelly Guest I know.

[All three laugh.]

00:52:31 Maureen Guest Yeah, and you had to, like, hold the Wii remote in the air, pointing it up. It was very uncomfortable.

[More laughter.]

00:52:38 Jesse Host How do you feel, Maureen, about your chances in this case?

00:52:41 Maureen Guest I'm feeling pretty bad right now.

[One or both litigants laugh quietly.]

00:52:43 Jesse Host Mm. Yeah. Kelly, how are you feeling?

00:52:47 Kelly Guest I'm going to reserve judgment.

00:52:49 Jesse Host Yeah, we'll see what the judge has to say about all this when we come back in just a moment.

00:52:54 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:52:57 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]*

00:52:58 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman re-enters the courtroom and presents his verdict.

00:53:01 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

00:53:02 John Host So, Bailiff Jesse Thorn pointed out that your... two Nintendos, two islands lifestyle is in line with this court's precedent of encouraging a certain amount of physical and emotional independence within a marriage. Which is specifically, you don't have to sleep right on top of each other. If you have the means to get a king-size bed, do it. And ideally, you could each have separate bedrooms, connected only by a slender slate walking path over a reflecting pool. That would be an ideal bedroom. For me.

...I don't think that's true. I love—I love spending time with my wife! And it's just a fantasy that I have from time to time. And what we're talking about here is a fantasy that you have from time to time. You know, you're cute in game. That's been proven by evidence. And though we've not met in person, I don't believe, it's been really fun to talk to both of you. You both deserve better from the Governor of St. Louis. *[Stifles laughter.]* Governor of Missouri, I mean. Mike Parson.

[Maureen laughs.]

You deserve better in your state government. You deserve better in your federal government, to say the least. You deserve a functioning federal government that mobilizes information and resources in a coordinated way across the nation to respond to a... not just national but worldwide health crisis that affected you both personally. You deserve better.

You deserve better in the real world than an economic system that is obviously unfair, and favors the wealthy. As I was explaining to Joel Mann, every game of Monopoly ends in tears, because it is presented as a game—as a capitalistic game—of fair play, where everyone starts at the same spot on the board. But the first person to randomly accrue any wealth whatsoever? Exponentially grows wealth until the rest are crushed and ground beneath their feet. Ha ha! Fun for a family! *[Stifles laughter.]* Very representative of what happens in capitalism as it is practiced today.

00:55:15 John

Host

And I'll be honest, you know, I consider myself a capitalist! I am a small business! I don't create iridescent shells. I create words and ideas that I put out into the marketplace, and I hope people value them, and pay me for them! That's the only way I understand how to live, is to have work like you, Kelly, that I can put my hands on. Small-scale stuff, making... pretty shells. And giving them away, or selling them away, whatever makes you happy.

I don't understand the high finance of this—of the turnip market. I'm never gonna play those markets. I don't get it. And if it weren't for a lot of luck in my life, and a lot of privilege in my life, I would have been ground down out of existence. My funny jokes, or whatever—nothing. I've had a lot of good turns in my life. Never mind the fact that I was born looking this way, and I was born in a stable family that had some—not generational wealth behind it, but economic stability.

Right? I think we all understand, in the midst of this crisis, that we all deserve better. And I think one of the great awakenings of this moment is that a lot of people who never thought that they were going to be laid off, a lot of people who the system sort of favored as it worked every day, a lot of people who were never gonna have to get food stamps, a lot of people who were never gonna have to get unemployment insurance, a lot of people who were never gonna have to seek disability, suddenly had to. And they realized how faulty the system was. They realized that the system that other, less privileged people were interacting with every day was not helping them or anybody.

And meanwhile, these turnip billionaires are floating above the Earth. Whining—that's what you sounded like, Maureen, like Elon Musk. Whiiiiing! About how, "Eugh, California isn't being nice to me 'cause I can't make my electric cars fast enough because people are dying of COVID." Gross. Gross. Maureen? Gross.

00:57:15 Maureen

Guest

[Fighting laughter] Yes?

00:57:17 John

Host

[Pleasantly] No, it was just—it was just a rhetorical "Maureen."

00:57:20 Maureen Guest *[Still fighting laughter]* Okay.

00:57:21 John Host In real life, you both deserve better. Than what has happened. We all do. 'Cause we're all human beings.

Sometimes, you pick the mean answer in *Dragon Age*. Games... are a place to explore fantasies. Games are a place to play a role. Games are a place where it can feel good! To actually pay off a mortgage! When IRL, paying down a mortgage, paying off a student loan, is often a seemingly impossible feat. Given the structure of even a functioning economy such as what we had prior to March.

You made a decision to have separate islands. That was a lifestyle you chose to explore in this game. You could have had the same island! Look. Maybe you can't in *Animal Crossing*. I don't know. But you see what I'm saying. You made a decision to have separate islands! To play the game in different ways. Is Maureen... a monster, in *Animal Crossing*?

[Someone stifles laughter.]

Yes! Is she as bad as Tom Nook? No. Yes, capitalist monster! In game. Progressive activist out of game! Good balance. She deserves, don't you think, Kelly, the right to play the game that gives her the most pleasure, however perverse that pleasure may be? *[Stifles laughter.]* She not only is making a lot of money on a financial market, but is frankly exploiting your labor, Kelly.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:59:16 John Host She's frankly taking shells from you, knowing that you would keep making them even if she didn't ever pay you for them or reimburse you for them. The symbiosis of your relationship in this game is sadly more resonant of the toxic symbiosis between labor and capital in the real world. That's why Joel Mann doesn't ever wanna play this game. Dude has a mortgage.

[One of the litigants laughs.]

Joel, I don't wanna get personal with you, but you've had a mortgage in your life, right?

00:59:48 Joel Guest I have one mortgage now; I don't want another one.

00:59:50 John Host Right, exactly. Not even a fake one. Sold to you by a folkloric raccoon dog?

00:59:54 Joel Guest I wouldn't be able to sleep at night.

00:59:56 John Host No, I know. But that's okay! That's how you have fun in the game. Maureen is having fun in the game!

And now that it is clear that she wants to continue to have this exploitative, accumulative, capitalistic fun in the game, even at the expense of her wife's feelings... Now that that's clear, now that you both know this about each other, you'll have some interesting conversations outside of the game. Perhaps.

[One of the litigants laughs quietly.]

But in the meantime... I want Maureen to play the game that she is playing, and Kelly, I want you to play the game that gives you pleasure. So for that reason, I cannot approve a 25% confiscation of Maureen's wealth, which would be applied at some obscure—obscure timeline, from time to time. I mean, Kelly, let's face it. You didn't make a—you didn't have a very clear program. You need to have a plan for that.

01:01:06 Kelly Guest That's fair.

01:01:08 John Host But in honor of someone who had a plan for everything and still does, Elizabeth Warren... two percent wealth tax. Annually. That's what you get, Maureen! 2% wealth tax.

01:01:22 Maureen Guest That sounds fair!

01:01:23 John Host Eight hundred and forty thousand bells. I order you to transfer annually. Or, you know, 2% of your total wealth, transfer annually to your wife. Because you move that money around, uh, but you didn't build that iridescent sand dollar table. You benefit from her, as well.

That's why I order a transfer immediately of 840,000 bells from Maureen to Kelly for the year—fiscal year 2019 into 2020. We will re-evaluate next year, if we're still playing this game. This is the sound of a gavel.

01:01:58 Sound Effect Sound Effect Brief *Animal Crossing* sound effect plays.

01:01:59 John Host Judge John Hodgman rules; that is all.

01:02:00 Sound Effect Sound Effect [*As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.*]

01:02:01 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

01:02:04 Sound Effect Sound Effect [*Door shuts.*]

01:02:05 Jesse Host Kelly, how do you feel?

01:02:07 Kelly Guest I feel like it was a very fair verdict. I liked his plan, and this is why I brought this to Judge John Hodgman.

01:02:15 Jesse Host Yeah, well, Judge John Hodgman, he has a plan for that! Maureen, how do you feel about the verdict?

01:02:22 Maureen Guest My fear is that it will apply to *Animal Crossing* years, and since I time travel, I will be transferring this amount of money about weekly, but otherwise I feel very good about it.

01:02:31 Sound Effect Sound Effect [*Door opens.*]

01:02:32 John Host I'm talking about *Judge John Hodgman* years! Regular years!

01:02:37 Maureen Guest [*Laughing*] Okay.

01:02:39 Jesse Host Do you remember that *Saturday Night Live* sketch where Steve Forbes was trying to convince them that he wasn't pitching the flat tax 'cause he was Steve Forbes, but rather because he was Teve Torbes?

[*John snorts, Jesse stifles laughter.*]

Who just happened to support the flat tax?

[John laughs.]

That was just a little tax plan thing I was thinking about, and just smiling to myself.

01:03:02	John	Host	Teve Torbes...
01:03:03	Jesse	Host	Kelly, Maureen— <i>[laughs]</i> —thanks for joining us on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast.
01:03:07	Kelly	Guest	Thank you!
01:03:08	Maureen	Guest	Thank you so much!
01:03:10	John	Host	I echo my bailiff's thanks. Before we let you go, I rarely do this, but I'm gonna go ahead. You sent in as "evidence," quote-unquote, your <i>Animal Crossing</i> Instagram account? So I'm gonna say Instagram.com/queens_crossing . Queens_Crossing. Check it out. And good luck in real life, and... on this plane. Of existence.
01:03:31	Jesse	Host	Thanks very much to both of you.
01:03:32	Kelly	Guest	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Thank you.
01:03:33	Maureen	Guest	Thank you. You, too.
01:03:34	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
01:03:35	Jesse	Promo	Another <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> case is in the books! Our thanks to everyone who listens to our show. Our thanks to everyone who's listened through the MaxFunDrive and through all of our pitches, and our thanks to everyone who's done something for our community. Recommending the show, sharing it with someone, reviewing it in a podcast app. And especially, particularly, thanks to everybody who has become a member. We're <u>so</u> grateful for you. We know it's tough times, and we're glad to have this wonderful job where we get to hang out with our friend.
01:04:10	John	Promo	Yeah! I mean, that's the—the hard thing about this time is that you feel... you feel overwhelmed. You feel powerless, at times. You feel... disconsolate. And yet, for all of those hard feelings, you have to get up and keep going, and do your day-to-day stuff. And it's really meaningful to me that <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> , along with I'm sure all of your other podcasts, that <u>you</u> , like me, use podcasts as a way to get up and go and do your day-to-day stuff.
			So <u>thank you</u> for helping us, and tolerating us, and being patient during these weeks of MaxFunDrive, while we got up and did our day-to-day stuff. The stuff that needed to get done to keep MaxFun going. To keep MaxFun independent. To keep MaxFun producing the content that you enjoy, that I enjoy. I'm a member, obviously.
			Just letting us know that you're out there has been <u>so</u> great. And thank you so much for <u>all</u> of your support, both emotional and otherwise. MaximumFun.org/join. I look forward to mis-pronouncing your name on the Internet.
01:05:28	Jesse	Promo	Thanks, everybody.
			In a moment, we'll have Swift Justice. First, our thanks to Briana O'Sullivan and Emily JoAnn Holasek for naming this week's episode, "Animal Crossing Examination." If you'd like to name a future

episode, like *Judge John Hodgman* [on Facebook!](#) We regularly put out our calls for submissions there.

You can follow us on Twitter at [@JesseThorn](#) and at [@hodgman](#). Hashtag your *Judge John Hodgman* Tweets [#JJHo](#), and check out the [Maximum Fun subreddit](#) to discuss [this episode](#). We're on Instagram at [@judgejohnhodgman](#). Make sure to follow us there for evidence and other fun stuff.

And this week's episode was edited by Hannah Smith. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor.

01:06:10	Jesse	Host	Now, Swift Justice! Where we answer your small disputes with a quick judgment. Eva says: "My colleagues and I are both Spanish teachers, but neither of our first languages is Spanish. They pronounce the 'Panera' part of 'Panera Bread Company' with a Spanish accent. I think it's really pretentious. What say you, Judge Hodgman?"
01:06:28	John	Host	<i>[Snorts.]</i> So they're saying, <i>[Spanish accent and rolling the R]</i> "Panera"?
01:06:31	Jesse	Host	<i>[Spanish accent and rolling the R]</i> Panera?
01:06:32	John	Host	<i>[Again]</i> Panera?
01:06:33	Jesse	Host	<i>[Again]</i> Panera?
01:06:34	John	Host	Sooo, interestingly... Kelly and Maureen are in St. Louis. Panera Bread—I'm gonna say <i>[in his usual accent]</i> "Panera Bread"—was founded in 1993 as the St. Louis Bread Company! Guess what, Joel? They wanted to go national. And literally, the creator said, "I want something that we can take to Portland, Oregon, or Portland, Maine."
01:06:53	Joel	Guest	Good idea.
01:06:54	John	Host	Right?
01:06:55	Joel	Guest	Yeah.
01:06:56	John	Host	That is a national strategy to reach white people. Okay. <i>[Joel laughs quietly.]</i> So they renamed it Panera, which means "bread basket" in Spanish. Bread basket bread. That's a little history lesson. But basically, I'm gonna say... Just say "Panera." I agree. "Panera"? No es bueno. Too pretentious. It is what it is. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> It's a fast food company. Panera Bread.
01:07:18	Jesse	Host	That's it for this week's episode. Submit your cases at MaximumFun.org/jjho , or email hodgman@maximumfun.org . No case is too small. We'll see you next time on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast.
01:07:31	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
01:07:32	Music	Transition	A cheerful guitar chord.
01:07:33	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .

01:07:35	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:07:36	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:07:37	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.