

00:00:00 Jesse Thorn Host Welcome to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. This week, "Contempt of Torte." (*Contempt of Court.*)

Matt files suit against his wife Bryn. Bryn loves to bake cakes, and Matt can't stop eating them. He would like her to bake fewer cakes, or get them out of the house.

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

00:00:23 Sound Effect Sound Effect [*As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.*]

00:00:24 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and presents an obscure cultural reference.

00:00:30 Sound Effect Sound Effect [*Door shuts.*]

00:00:31 John Hodgman Host Oh, yeah! I remember Amber Carbonelli! I borrowed her pog collection! Oh, and then I sold them to Bucky Rinfus! And when Amber asked me about it, I said they were stolen. By a werewolf. Buuut, turns out, Amber was totally into werewolves! It was like, exciting for her. We went up to Drain Park on a werewolf hunt to get her pogs back, and we ended up making out by the light of the full moon. And then she dumped me for Trip Kowalski, 'cause he had a full beard at age 12. Man.

[*Someone stifles laughter.*]

Eighth grade was fun. Bailiff Jesse, swear them in.

00:01:05 Jesse Host Matt, Bryn, please rise and raise your right hands.

00:01:06 Sound Effect Sound Effect [*Chairs scrape.*]

00:01:08 Jesse Host Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God or whatever?

00:01:14 Matt Guest I do.

00:01:15 Bryn Guest I do.

00:01:16 Jesse Host Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that it's thanks to Mickey we have cake every morning?

00:01:22 Bryn Guest [*Laughing*] I do.

00:01:23 Matt Guest [*Chuckles.*] I do.

00:01:24 Jesse Host Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

00:01:26 John Host Matt and Bryn, you may be seated.

00:01:27 Sound Effect Sound Effect [*Chairs scrape.*]

00:01:28 John Host I—Jesse, I don't even understand that cultural reference. What are you talking about?

00:01:30 Jesse Host That was *In the Night Kitchen*. That's how *In the Night Kitchen* ends.

00:01:33 John Host [*Gasps.*] Oh, yeah!

00:01:36 Jesse Host "Thanks to Mickey, we have cake every morning."

00:01:37 John Host Oh, yeah.

00:01:39 Jesse Host "Milk in the batter! We bake cake, and nothing's the matter!"

00:01:42 John Host Look. Maurice Sendak, obviously a genius. I was too up in my

Edward Gorey at that time. You know what I mean? That's where I went.

00:01:49 Jesse Host

Oh, wow.

00:01:50 John Host

That's where my dark imaginings went.

[Jesse laughs.]

Matt and Bryn, for an immediate summary judgment in one of yours' favors, can either of you name the piece of culture I referenced when I entered the courtroom? And let me start by saying: You're never gonna get it.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

No, you're never gonna get it.

[One or both litigants laugh quietly.]

00:02:06 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John & Jesse: Not this time!

00:02:07 John Host

[Laughs.] There are two reasons why you're never gonna get it, but I'm gonna give you a chance anyway, Matt. What's your guess?

00:02:14 Matt Guest

Um, I'm gonna guess, like, one of the *Goosebump*, uh, teen novels?

[Someone laughs.]

That's the only thing I can think of that would combine high school and dating and werewolves. So.

00:02:27 John Host

That's—you know what? You're actually closer than I would have thought. That's a good guess.

00:02:32 Matt Guest

Oh!

00:02:33 John Host

Put it in the guess book. Bryn? What's your guess?

00:02:38 Bryn Guest

Uh, I think it's from a flashback scene in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

00:02:44 John Host

Flashback scene in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Bryn? Not as good a guess. Sorry.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:02:52 Bryn Guest

[Laughing] Okay.

00:02:53 John Host

Good! But not good. But guess what? All guesses are wrong. You know why you're not gonna get this one? Because... you're Canadian.

[Bryn laughs.]

00:03:05 Matt Guest

Oh.

00:03:06 John Host

No—*[laughs]*—no offense. I happen to see here, you are in Alberta, Canada.

[Matt laughs.]

One of the few provinces that I have never visited in Canada. And also, you're not time travelers. Because what I was quoting from is a short form animated show co-created by me and David Rees, the

name of which I cannot say on this program.

[The litigants laugh, John stifles laughter.]

Due to its family friendliness. Specifically, episode nine of this particular show, "The Mystery of the Impossible Car," which you have not seen, because you're not time travelers. It comes out tomorrow night, as of this recording, August 27th of 2020. And guess what? This show is not available in Canada, sadly. Sorry.

[The litigants laugh.]

But—

00:03:55 Bryn Guest

I know, I tried. I tried to watch it.

00:03:56 John Host

You tried. Yeah, it's—it's, uh—it's a great show. Just 11-minute episodes. Ten of them, that David Rees and I made, about a former boy detective, à la a boy detective you might have read in a series of young adult books. That's why that *Goosebumps* guess was pretty good, Matt.

00:04:15 Matt Guest

Thank you.

[Bryn laughs quietly.]

00:04:16 John Host

A former boy detective who has now grown up, but has failed to thrive in his life, and is still solving crimes for teenagers. And David Rees is his partner. That quote was my poor imitation of the inimitable David Rees playing the role of David Purefoy remembering eighth grade.

And this particular episode, which airs tomorrow night, August 27th, it is our penultimate episode, and it features the incredible actor Obehi Janice as Heather Culbreth of Lake Patrol in the town of Richardsville, North Carolina, from which we take the name of the show, which I cannot say. But please, everybody, we're getting into the final run, the final few moments of this show. This is the second-to-last episode. If you haven't checked it out, please check it out. You can watch it tomorrow night on... what show, Matt and Bryn? Not the name of our show. But it's part of another show.

00:05:11 Bryn Guest

Cake!

00:05:12 John Host

That's right!

00:05:13 Bryn Guest

Caaake! [Laughs.]

00:05:14 John Host

See? It's not just a plug!

00:05:15 Matt Guest

[Chuckles.] Oh!

00:05:16 John Host

There's a genuine connection.

[The litigants laugh.]

Our show, which cannot—shall never be named on the Judge John Hodgman podcast, is part of *Cake*, which is FXX's half-hour anthology of short form animated and non-animated weirdsies, including our show which shall never be named. Cones on ten PM, tomorrow night, August 27th, on FXX. Or check it out the next day at

Hulu, and if you wanna catch up on all the previous episodes, so long as you are in the United States of America, you can do so by going to Bit.ly/dicktown. That's just a weird short URL that was assigned randomly to this page.

[The litigants laugh.]

Bit.ly/dicktown. Okay. So, anyway. *Cake* is a show on FXX, but the cake we're talking about is the kind of cake you bake! Not you, plural. But you, specifically, Bryn. You bake a lot of cakes.

00:06:12 Bryn Guest Yes.

00:06:13 John Host You make a lot of cakes, is what I hear.

00:06:14 Bryn Guest I do. Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:06:17 John Host Now, Matt, you bring Bryn to court because you think that there are too many cakes.

00:06:22 Matt Guest Um... *[Clears throat.]* Well...

00:06:25 John Host Alright, I guess not!

00:06:26 Matt Guest There are too many cakes—

00:06:27 John Host Thanks! Nice podcasting!

[The litigants laugh.]

Thanks for bringing that Canadian heat to the courtroom.

[They laugh again.]

00:06:35 Matt Guest It's not just that there's too many cakes, it's also—she enjoys baking cakes, but she doesn't really enjoy eating cakes, so she bakes these cakes and then she just leaves them in the house.

00:06:48 John Host Oh!

00:06:49 Matt Guest Uh, tempting me for days on end.

00:06:50 John Host Oh!

00:06:52 Matt Guest So... yeah, I find that particularly sort of perverse—

[Bryn laughs.]

—to just bake cakes and then leave them around, for—you know, and they're not going anywhere unless I eat them.

00:07:04 John Host So out of a natural Canadian contempt for waste, you're—you're shoving your pie hole full of cake. All the time.

00:07:11 Matt Guest Yeah! I mean, what reasonable person would leave a perfectly good cake to just go stale on the countertop?

[Beat.]

00:07:19 John Host Oh. Sorry, Matt, you can't hear me raising my hand. I would leave it to go stale! Don't like it. Don't like sweets.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:07:28 Matt Guest Don't like sweets at all?

00:07:31 John Host Oh—you know nothing of my work, Matt!

00:07:34 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* He's basically built a career on not liking sweets.

[Jesse, Bryn, and John laugh.]

00:07:39 Matt Guest I thought you were a pie man, not a cake man.

00:07:41 John Host Well, a pie—I'll go for a pie, if it's a pork pie.

00:07:45 Matt Guest Oh.

00:07:46 John Host I push towards savory. Sweet, get thee behind me! Not interested. Not interested. That's alright, though.

00:07:53 Matt Guest Well—I—I think that's a, uh, a view shared by my wife, which is why she's able to just leave these cakes sitting around. But I have had a lifelong weakness for sweet baking. So, uh—so I eat these cakes up.

00:08:10 John Host So Bryn, you and I, we're—we're together on this. And it seems—we've spoken before, right? Weren't you a guest on my life Instagram cat and dog talk show, *Get Your Pets?*

00:08:20 Bryn Guest Yes! My cat and dog were guests, I guess.

[Matt laughs.]

00:08:24 John Host And name your cats and your dogs again, please, for me?

00:08:24 Bryn Guest Our cat is Calamity Jane, and our dog is Ethel.

00:08:30 John Host Yeah. Calamity Jane and Ethel. And did you know that this episode of *Judge John Hodgman* was named by a *Gets Your Pet-er?*

00:08:39 Bryn Guest No, I didn't!

00:08:40 John Host Yeah. Llama.

[Bryn laughs.]

Unless there's a different person named Llama who listens to this show, which is obviously possible. If not probable. Llama out there in Reading, England, with her cockatoo Cocky.

[Bryn laughs.]

They also have two dogs, Coco and Chloe. Do you know what breed of dogs those both are? Cockapoos.

[The litigants laugh.]

So, Bryn. Not only are we old Internet pals, but we share—apparently—a disinterest in sweets, and yet you are a-baking cakes all the time. Would it be fair to say you're baking a lot of cakes?

00:09:13 Bryn Guest Yeah, I think, um, more—more than most people.

00:09:18 John Host How many cakes a week would you say you bake?

00:09:20 Bryn Guest I would say if you averaged it, maybe I bake a cake every two weeks.

00:09:25 John Host Oh, that's not so much.

00:09:26 Bryn Guest Yeah, I don't think so.

00:09:27 John Host Matt!

[Bryn laughs.]

That's not so much. Are we talking about pre-pandemic, or pandemic?

00:09:32 Bryn Guest I think I was baking more cakes pre-pandemic.

00:09:35 John Host Weird! 'Cause I'll say there is a young woman who lives in our house.

[Bryn chuckles.]

Who has spent the pandemic just pushing out cakes every other day, basically.

00:09:47 Bryn Guest Wow.

00:09:49 John Host I feel like baking—baking is a—one of those—that and sourdough culturing has become one of those stay-at-home hobbies that people have really gotten into.

00:09:59 Bryn Guest Mm-hm.

00:10:00 John Host But you—you let up on the cake-baking during the pandemic. Is that correct, Bryn?

00:10:03 Bryn Guest A little bit, yeah. It's hot here. It has been very hot. And baking isn't as—as, uh, pleasing, when it's hot out. *[Laughs.]*

00:10:10 John Host Okay. So how long has this been going on, and how did it get started, this baking of cakes and then leaving them around for Matt to gorge on?

00:10:19 Bryn Guest *[Laughs.]* It started on his 36th birthday, which was two years ago.

00:10:23 John Host Mm-hm.

00:10:24 Bryn Guest I made him a birthday cake.

00:10:25 John Host Oh!

00:10:26 Bryn Guest And I really enjoyed it. And, uh, yeah, I just got into it, and then my parents got me America's Test Kitchen cake book.

00:10:36 John Host Oh! Look. This is—it's old home week here at the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, 'cause America's Test Kitchen is the employer of Afton Cyrus, a former litigant.

00:10:45 Bryn Guest Oh!

00:10:46 John Host Her sister—by the way, I'm up here at WERU in Orland, Maine, 89.9 Blue Hill, 99.9 Bangor, all over the world at WERU.org.

[Bryn chuckles.]

With summer producer Joel Mann. Hey, Joel. How are you?

00:10:58 Joel Mann Guest Good, John.

00:10:59 John Host Did you know that Afton Cyrus was a litigant on our podcast? She took her sister to court, Hannah Cyrus. Did you know that?

[Beat.]

00:11:07 Joel Guest Yes.

[Beat.]

00:11:09 John Host Okay.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:11:10 Jesse Host Good, well, the matter is settled! *[Laughs.]*

00:11:11 John Host Do you know where Hannah Cyrus works?

00:11:13 Joel Guest Blue Hill.

[Bryn laughs.]

Blue Hill Library.

00:11:15 John Host She works in the Blue Hill Library!

00:11:16 Joel Guest Right! See, I know.

00:11:17 John Host Jeez, Joel, you really...

[Joel or Matt chuckles.]

You really messed up my set-up there. You're always keeping me on my toes. I thought you were gonna say no, then I would explain it. But that's good. Yes, you're right. Absolutely.

00:11:27 Joel Guest No, I don't.

00:11:28 John Host That's right. Well, she works at the Blue Hill Library.

00:11:30 Joel Guest Oh! Wow.

00:11:31 John Host Yeah.

[Jesse laughs.]

Anyway...

00:11:32 Jesse Host Let's take a quick recess! And hear about this week's *Judge John Hodgman* sponsor. We'll be back in just a moment on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:11:40 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:11:42 Jesse Promo Every episode of *Judge John Hodgman* is of course supported by our listener members, all the folks who've gone to MaximumFun.org/join. This week, we're also supported in part by our friends at Sun Basket! You can eat delicious, healthy food without having to go out. Skip the grocery store, and get oven-ready meals delivered to you each and every week.

These are nice meals, too. My friend Tyler from college makes sure of it. Yes, that's right! My friend Tyler from college.

00:12:15 John Promo Yeah, look. Everyone knows that Jesse Thorn is friends with great people. You wouldn't be here if you didn't trust Jesse's vouch. When Jesse Thorn says Tyler is a good person, making good baskets full of good food, you can believe him!

Now, I personally am suspicious. Wary. Cynical. I was like, "Yeah.

Alright, Jesse. I know your friend is involved in this company. But I'm not gonna take your vouch. I'm gonna test it out for myself." So I got some Sun Baskets, and guess what? They're great. They're delicious. All kinds of incredible, and delicious, and nutritious meals. Southwestern turkey and sweet potato skillet.

Uh, hey! You, uh—you like pappardelle? (*Pah-puh-dall-ee.*)

Uh, or do you—do you not know how to pronounce... pappardelle? (*Pah-par-dehl-ay.*)

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

Well, guess what? Sun Basket's here to help you, by giving you pappardelle (*pah-par-dehl-ay*), and showing me how to pronounce it here. 'Cause I never knew. "Pappardelle with wilted spinach, swa—sweet peas, and fresh ricotta."

("Pah-par-day-lay with will-tied speen-ahitch, swa—sweet pee-ahs, and fresh RICK-it-uh.")

[Jesse laughs.]

00:13:15	John	Promo	No, it's delicious. Delicious meals that I have made for my family members, and they have turned to me and said, "This is better than the food you usually make." If you wanna support a company that is run by one of Jesse's nice friends, that gives you oven-ready meals that are free of antibiotics, hormones, and steroids, that are also delicious and sustainable, and are better than what I can make at home, and make <u>me</u> feel bad, Sun Basket is for you.
00:13:42	Jesse	Promo	Right now, Sun Basket is offering \$35 off your order. When you go right now to SunBasket.com/hodgman , and enter the promo code "Hodgman" at checkout.
00:13:54	John	Promo	That's SunBasket.com/hodgman , enter promo code "Hodgman" at checkout for \$35 off your order. That's—honestly, that's quite a bargain for a chance to join my children in humiliating me. SunBasket.com/hodgman. H-O-D-G-M-A-N.
00:14:11	Jesse	Promo	Let's get back to the case.
00:14:13	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:14:15	John	Host	Let's go to the evidence. You sent in a bunch of evidence. And indeed, this birthday cake, it would seem to me, is exhibit A. So, all these photos will be available on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> page at MaximumFun.org , as well as our Instagram, @judgejohnhodgman on Instagram. In exhibit A, we have this birthday cake, 36th birthday cake. It is a—I think culled, perhaps, from your Instagram. Your own Instagram account, Bryn, is that correct?
00:14:47	Bryn	Guest	Yeah, probably. Yeah.
00:14:49	John	Host	Yeah, 'cause you—'cause it comes from your Instagram Story, and you have typed in, with—with—

[Someone stifles laughter.]

—probably the greatest example of Canadian bragging, "I made this cake," period.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:15:03 Bryn Guest

Yeah.

00:15:04 John Host

And you did! You made it. It's a birthday cake. It's covered in confetti sprinkles, with the numbers three and six. And then—oh, this is not just exhibit A. This is like, one—wow, there are a lot of cakes here!

[Bryn laughs.]

One, two, three, four... five, six, seven... I think... *[Laughs quietly.]*
Matt, you sent in 17 photos of cakes?

00:15:24 Matt Guest

Yeah, and that's just some of the cakes. That's just—just a random sampling.

00:15:29 John Host

Just a random, uh, cake sample?

00:15:31 Matt Guest

Yeah.

00:15:32 John Host

So we'll enter these, then, as exhibits A through... Q.

[Bryn laughs.]

And boy, there are a lot of them. They're all—they're all very beautiful! One of them just says—one of the captions just says, "Cake."

[Bryn laughs.]

That one seems to be a coconut cake?

00:15:46 Bryn Guest

Yep.

00:15:47 John Host

Then there's a tarte Tatin.

00:15:50 Bryn Guest

Mm-hm.

00:15:51 John Host

Where you say, "Room for improvement. *[Canadian accent]* Sorry."

[The litigants laugh quietly.]

Then there's a cake that looks like a huge stack of pancakes.

00:15:58 Bryn Guest

A crêpe cake!

00:15:59 John Host

It just says, "She pretty."

[Bryn laughs.]

What is it?

00:16:02 Bryn Guest

It's a crêpe cake.

00:16:03 John Host

A crêpe cake?!

00:16:04 Bryn Guest

Mm-hm.

00:16:05 John Host

You gotta get those crêpes thinner, 'cause they look like pancakes. Sorry.

[Bryn laughs.]

Here's one with a beautiful, glossy frosting, that just says, "She done." Are all—are all your cakes...

[Bryn laughs quietly.]

...use "she" and "her" pronouns?

00:16:16 Bryn Guest

No, some of them are "he"s.

00:16:17 Jesse Host

Can I just—I'm sorry to interject here, John.

00:16:18 John Host

Sure.

00:16:19 Jesse Host

You're not Canadian, so you might not—and I know you're not a huge hip-hop fan, so you might not, uh, pick up on these references. But, uh, "I made this cake, period," "She done."

[Bryn laughs.]

These are all the names of Drake mixtapes.

[John and the litigants laugh.]

00:16:37 John Host

I didn't realize that.

00:16:38 Jesse Host

Yeah.

00:16:39 John Host

I supposed this caption is also a Drake lyric, "Tried to make this crêpe cake look like a flower"?

[Bryn laughs.]

00:16:44 Jesse Host

Yeah. *[Laughs.]* *Room for Improvement* is actually one of his better—one of his better efforts.

00:16:50 John Host

And then it goes on to say, "I failed prrreeettyy baaad."

[Bryn laughs.]

That crêpe cake does not look like a flower. But it's—all these—a lot of these cakes are beautiful. You're obviously having a good time exploring, and along about exhibit P, in the A through Q of cakes that you have presented us, there is a caption that seems like more than just experimenting. There's a caption that frankly feels like a threat. "Gonna make so many cakes in 2019."

[Bryn laughs.]

00:17:20 Matt Guest

I thought that was particularly damning, that one.

00:17:22 John Host

Yeah. You're feeling invaded by cakes, it sounds like to me.

00:17:27 Matt Guest

Yeah, and Bryn was saying that she's making less during the pandemic, but I would say there was a period at the start of the pandemic where she was making even more cakes, for a bit. And it was also even more of a problem, because one of my strategies would be to take the cake to work with me, and give it to my co-workers. But I—we were just trapped in a house together.

[Bryn laughs quietly.]

So I was just trapped in this house with this woman who was baking all these cakes, and there was no way to get them out of the house except to eat them. And then... you know, have them pass through me.

00:18:03 John Host Yeah.

00:18:04 Jesse Host Bryn, when you make these cakes, do you have a destination in mind for them? Are you making them for someone?

00:18:10 Bryn Guest Um, well... during the pandemic, no. But before, I work in a restaurant. And—or worked in a restaurant. And I would make the men and women who worked in the kitchen cakes for their birthdays. And that was kind of my outlet.

00:18:27 John Host Right. But now you have no outlet.

00:18:29 Bryn Guest No outlet.

00:18:30 John Host 'Cause you're—you're at home.

00:18:31 Bryn Guest Mm-hm.

00:18:32 John Host And Matt, you're—what is your profession? Are you also at home?

00:18:35 Matt Guest I'm a medical student, so, um... I was off for two and a half months. But now I'm back in the hospital.

00:18:42 John Host And is it possible, is it hygienic, is it allowed by Canadian law—

[Bryn laughs.]

—for you to bring in cakes, and just leave them hanging around?

00:18:51 Matt Guest It—it is against the hospital policy for, uh, staff to share food during the pandemic, unfortunately, so...

00:18:59 John Host Yeah, but—but you're not sharing food. You're gonna give every colleague their own individual cake, it sounds like.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:19:06 Bryn Guest I also—I would just like to say, sometimes the cakes I make aren't good. And Matthew still wants to give them away, and I would prefer to just throw them out. Like, I don't wanna give people bad cake.

00:19:19 John Host Yeah. That will—let's put a pin in that, 'cause that's very wasteful.

00:19:21 Bryn Guest *[Laughing]* Okay.

00:19:23 John Host But let's go back to the beginning. Matt—

00:19:26 Matt Guest Mm-hm.

00:19:27 John Host This 36th birthday cake that got this all started off, when is your birthday?

00:19:31 Matt Guest May 14th.

00:19:33 John Host So this was May 14th of 2018, this started?

00:19:36 Matt Guest Yes, sir.

00:19:38 John Host And what is the significance of the date June 12th, 2018?

00:19:42 Matt Guest Uh, that is the date that I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes.

00:19:46 John Host Oh.

[Beat.]

That changes things.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:19:50 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:19:51 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* A little.

00:19:52 Jesse Host And if there are folks at home who aren't medical students, uh, there are various types of diabetes. Type 1 is also known as "cake type."

[Bryn laughs.]

00:20:03 John Host *[Chuckling]* Cake-type diabetes?

00:20:05 Matt Guest It's called cake-sensitive diabetes, yeah.

00:20:07 John Host For those listening at home who may not know, and for those co-hosting this podcast who might be a little fuzzy on it, 'cause I forgot to look at Wikipedia this morning...

00:20:15 Matt Guest Sure.

00:20:17 John Host Type 1 diabetes is different from type 2 diabetes in what way, and what does it mean in terms of how much cake you can put in your cake hole?

00:20:25 Matt Guest So, diabetes is basically... an inability for your body to regulate the amount of sugar in your blood.

00:20:35 John Host Mm-hm.

00:20:36 Matt Guest So it's like, the—for some reason the hormone insulin isn't working properly, or there isn't enough of it. The most common kind is type 2 diabetes, which is where it's sort of caused by eating a lot of carbohydrates and not exercising a lot, and then your body kind of has to make more insulin for the extra carbohydrates you—that you're eating, and eventually it kinda wears out, and it can't make enough insulin, and then your blood sugar gets too high, 'cause you can't make enough.

00:21:09 John Host Right. That's type 2.

00:21:11 Matt Guest That's type 2, which is the more common kind.

00:21:13 John Host Right.

00:21:14 Matt Guest Type 1 diabetes is where it's an autoimmune disease, so basically, for some reason, your immune system mistakes the cells in your body that produce insulin for a virus, and starts attacking them.

00:21:29 John Host Mm-hm.

00:21:30 Matt Guest And just basically kills them off, and then your body doesn't produce any insulin, which is the hormone that reduces your blood sugar. So, uh, you have to inject yourself with insulin whenever you eat a carbohydrate. Otherwise your blood sugar's gonna go too high.

00:21:46 John Host So what does it mean practically, in terms of how much sugar you can eat? How much cake should you eat, in your life?

00:21:55 Matt Guest Uh, well, so the trick is matching the insulin with the carbohydrates.

So I can eat as much carbohydrate as I want, if I can figure out exactly the right dose of insulin to inject, which is something that, like, you know, a healthy person who doesn't have diabetes, their pancreas is always doing that for them, and just releasing the exact perfect amount of insulin. But I'm always having to guess, whenever I eat something, how much insulin I should inject.

00:22:20 John Host You know what you need?
00:22:21 Matt Guest What's that?
00:22:22 John Host To figure out what—what insulin goes with what cake? You need an insulin sommelier.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

An expert in pairing insulin with food.

00:22:33 Matt Guest You know, I've thought of that! If—in, uh—in my diabetic utopia, every restaurant would have an insulin sommelier, who would recommend a dose for you. But, uh... alas.
00:22:43 John Host Look, obviously there's a lot—there's a lot we have to work on.
00:22:48 Matt Guest Yeah.
00:22:49 John Host In our nation. By the way, good job keeping—keeping the doors closed.

[John and the litigants laugh.]

You're doing everything right up there. And in your nation, as well. We can't go back to normal in any way. We have to build a big—a new and better normal. And I'm with you, Matt. In a new and better normal, every restaurant would have—when we can re-open restaurants again—would have an insulin sommelier.

00:23:09 Matt Guest Mm-hm. Thank you. Yeah. I think that's an important initiative. Um... Yeah, so—but basically, it's the more—the trick is, the more carbs you eat, the harder it is to guess. You know, if you're only eating something with a tiny amount of carbohydrates in it, you only need a tiny amount of insulin, and you're only likely to make a tiny mistake. But if you're eating something like half a cake—

[Bryn laughs.]

—you're almost guaranteed to, you know, go over or under, right? It's a disaster waiting to happen.

00:23:40 John Host So Bryn, how do you feel about the fact that your cake-baking hobby—which spiked, like Matt's blood sugar level, almost immediately after he got his diagnosis...

[Bryn laughs.]

You're literally leaving around what he calls disasters waiting to happen, around your house.

00:24:00 Bryn Guest Right. Um, well, a couple things. Matthew manages his diabetes really well. I think that if he didn't manage it well, it would be different. And, um, I don't really have any other hobbies. *[Laughs.]* Like, uh,

this is just one thing that really brings me a lot of pleasure. And I do do most of the cooking, and I try to cook low-carb stuff for our main meals, and I've changed other things in my diet. He's a vegetarian, so I don't cook meat.

Um, yeah. I think I've made lots of concessions, and I'd like to just hold on to this. This one thing.

00:24:39 John Host Well, setting aside what an—what a—what a nightmare Matt is, in terms of his pickiness, and medical requirements...

[The litigants laugh.]

...to cook for. Tell me about what baking cakes means to you. What—how do you feel when you're making them? What does it bring to your life? 'Cause obviously you're not making them for him. You're—you could be destroying your husband with them.

00:25:04 Bryn Guest

Right. And—

00:25:05 John Host

So you're making them for yourself.

00:25:06 Bryn Guest

[Laughs.] This isn't—I know—*[laughs]*.

00:25:07 John Host

And you don't like them. So tell me what you like about baking.

00:25:10 Bryn Guest

I do—that's—well, I do like them. I do eat some of the cake.

00:25:14 John Host

Alright.

00:25:15 Bryn Guest

But, uh, he just eats them very quickly. So I don't... *[laughing]* have a chance.

00:25:19 Matt Guest

Objection.

[Bryn laughs.]

00:25:20 John Host

Ohhh!

00:25:22 Bryn Guest

Uh—so I—

00:25:23 John Host

Uh, you objected, Matt? Hang on, I'll allow his objection.

00:25:26 Bryn Guest

Okay. *[Laughs.]*

00:25:27 John Host

What's your objection, Matt?

00:25:28 Matt Guest

Well, I think I—I eat them at a—well, sometimes I do eat them quickly.

[Bryn laughs quietly.]

00:25:32 John Host

You can't control yourself.

00:25:33 Matt Guest

But Bryn eats them barely at all. Like, she—

[Bryn laughs.]

She will have like, one small piece, maybe two small pieces, but, uh... the cake is gonna just go just—just gonna go stale, if Bryn's the only one eating it. I think my wife will concede that.

[Bryn laughs.]

00:25:48 John Host

Yeah, that's right. Blame the staleness for your own cake greed.

[The litigants laugh.]

Objection overruled. Bryn—
Augh.

00:25:56 Matt Guest

[Bryn laughs.]

00:25:57 John Host

Bryn, go ahead, please.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:25:59 Bryn Guest

Um, yeah. So to answer what I guess I like about baking cakes, or why it brings me pleasure, is, um... it's tricky, right? It's a—you don't know until it's all done if you did it right.

00:26:12 John Host

Yeah.

00:26:13 Bryn Guest

So the stakes are kind of high. And when you get it right, it just—I have a real sense of accomplishment.

00:26:21 John Host

And is it hard for you—have you ever tried to not bake?

00:26:25 Bryn Guest

[Laughs.] Um, I tried making some keto cakes.

00:26:30 John Host

You made some keto cakes for Matthew.

00:26:32 Bryn Guest

I did, yeah.

00:26:33 John Host

That's where instead of sugar, you just use lard?

00:26:36 Bryn Guest

[Laughs.] Uh, no—

00:26:38 John Host

Oh no, he's a vegetarian.

00:26:41 Bryn Guest

[Laughs.] Yeah. There's, uh, various alternative flours, and sugar, or sweetening ingredients that you need to do keto baking.

00:26:49 John Host

Gotcha. To lower the carb count.

00:26:51 Bryn Guest

Mm-hm.

00:26:52 John Host

Okay. But that doesn't answer my question. How does it feel when you're not baking? Is it hard for you to not bake?

00:26:59 Bryn Guest

Um, it's not hard, but I—I guess an example I'll give is at the beginning of quarantine, I was, um... feeling pretty—like, just pretty down, I—as most people were, I think.

00:27:10 John Host

Why?

[The litigants laugh.]

Why would you? Sorry, go ahead.

00:27:14 Bryn Guest

Just existential dread. Um...

00:27:17 John Host

Yeah.

00:27:18 Bryn Guest

I—yeah. And then I remember I made a cake, and I—it really, like—it took me out of it. Like, I felt like I had just been sitting, like, looking at my phone for like, days on end. And to get up and make a cake and finish something, start something and finish something in a day, um, it really changed my mood. It really helped me.

00:27:37 John Host

So—*[sighs]*. Are there any other outlets for these cakes besides Matt's mouth?

00:27:44 Bryn Guest *[Chuckles.]* Um... not really. We have some friends in the neighborhood. And so we'll drop cake off to them sometimes. It is more difficult during a pandemic, I guess.

00:28:01 Matt Guest Can I clarify that I actu—

00:28:02 John Host *[Bryn laughs quietly.]*
Overruled.
[Bryn laughs harder.]
No, you're fine. You're fine. I'll allow it.

00:28:05 Matt Guest *[Laughs.]* I do see that baking cakes brings Bryn a lot of joy, and I actually, uh, would be sad if she stopped baking cakes. What I am asking is just either that she get the cakes out of the house, like she—uh, when she's baking a cake, maybe have someone in mind that she's baking the cake for, and then expediently deliver the cake to that person once she's baked it.

Or, alternatively, as she's mentioned, explore baking that is not a danger to my... livelihood and existence on this planet.

[Bryn laughs quietly, John stifles laughter.]

00:28:45 John Host You're livelihood? Well, I guess as a medical student, you have to be—you have to be alive. I guess that's true. *[Laughs.]*

Bryn submitted some evidence. Specifically testimony from—this is not a photo. Testimony from a friend of Bryn and Matt's, who is a professional baker. And this professional baker, who is named Simon, writes:

"To whom it may concern..." Well, that's kind of vague. Could have just said, "Dear Judge John Hodgman."

[The litigants laugh quietly.]

What, do you have—you have this letter on hand for anyone?
[Inaudible.] What, are you gonna bring this—you gonna bring this letter to *The Flop House*, another podcast?!

[The litigants laugh.]

Alright. "To whom it may—to any podcaster!" *[Scoffs.]* Simon says, quote, "There is no joy in gluten-free baking. Gluten-free baking is a job, not a pleasure, and benefits the recipient of the baking. Sometimes, but rarely, the baker themselves.

Signed,
A professional baker, *[stifles laughter]* Simon."

00:29:40 Bryn Guest *[Laughs.]* That's another Canadian brag.

00:29:43 John Host *[Laughs.]* "Professional baker, period."

[Bryn chuckles.]

So... Matt is saying that he would like you to bake more low-carb or keto cakes. You present this evidence from another baker suggesting it's no fun. Is it no fun?

00:29:59 Bryn Guest

It's no fun. Yeah.

00:30:00 John Host

Tell me why.

00:30:02 Bryn Guest

Um, I think for me—like... part of making a cake is the ingredients, obviously. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:30:10 John Host

Right.

00:30:11 Bryn Guest

And just working with, like, flour and sugar is such a basic part of making the cakes, and I've gotten much better at that. I understand those ingredients better. And yeah, keto cakes are—it's like a lot of frothing egg whites.

[John laughs.]

And I just don't... and like, folding in the ingredients. It's just not fun, and it's not—it doesn't taste as good. I still like to have a piece.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

00:30:36 John Host

Right. Uh, further evidence you provided are photos from your Instagram Stories of these keto cakes.

00:30:42 Bryn Guest

Mm-hm.

00:30:43 John Host

In which your enthusiasm is much lower. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:30:45 Bryn Guest

Yeah. *[Laughs quietly.]*

00:30:46 John Host

Including what looks to me like a—a wonderful, like, some—something topped with berries. What is this?

00:30:54 Bryn Guest

I don't—what was that one? Do you remember? I don't remember what the base of that cake was. It was like a—um—

00:30:59 John Host

You don't even remember.

00:31:00 Bryn Guest

[Laughs.] I just don't care about it. Um, *[laughs]* yeah.

00:31:05 John Host

It was just a big bowl of Stevia?

00:31:07 Bryn Guest

Yeah. *[Laughs.]* Yeah, there's like a weird aftertaste. It's... it's no fun.

00:31:13 John Host

Your caption here just says, "Matthew wanted a keto cake. Fine."

[Multiple people laugh.]

Very aggro. Very aggro.

00:31:22 Bryn Guest

Yeah. I will also say he—I came home one day, and he was like, "I bought you a gift!" And I was really excited, and then it was, uh, a keto baking book.

00:31:31 John Host

That's a gift for Matt, not for you.

00:31:32 Bryn Guest

Yeah.

00:31:33 John Host

Matt, that's you just conscripting Bryn into making you bad cakes.

[Matt laughs.]

I'm not gonna say "bad" cakes. I can hear the—the keto and low-carb people typing to me right now.

[Bryn laughs.]

I'm sure there are some delicious, low-carb cakes.

00:31:46 Matt Guest Well, I—I have had my share of, uh, disappointing low-carb cakes. But I have—it is possible to make a good low-carb cake, and the first time I had a good low-carb cake, I thought of the—there's a quote at the start of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. He says, "He who makes himself a beast takes away the pain of being a man."

[Bryn laughs.]

And I think that was a reference to, like, the release of taking drugs. And I thought of that, 'cause I thought, like, me eating a tasty, sweet, baked dessert that doesn't make me anxious about my blood sugar, it was like taking away the pain of being a diabetic who loves sweet baking. So it, uh—it was really changing for me. And I was very hopeful when I bought that cookbook that this was gonna be a way we could both exist together. *[Stifling laughter]* But it didn't work out that way.

00:32:46 John Host Right. And here in this next photo is a photo of the book. Timestamped five minutes later, the book is now in the garbage.

[The litigants laugh.]

The garbage, with a bunch of old cakes and some Canadian pizza. Weird. No, that's not true. The other photo here is Matt, you staring at a cake.

00:33:06 Bryn Guest Yeah.

00:33:07 Matt Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm.

00:33:08 John Host What cake are you staring at?

00:33:09 Matt Guest Uh, I don't have the photo in front of me, Judge, but, um—

00:33:11 Bryn Guest It's—it's a peanut butter pretzel cake.

00:33:15 Matt Guest Oh.

00:33:16 John Host A peanut butter pretzel cake??

00:33:18 Bryn Guest Yeah.

00:33:20 John Host ...Ugh.

00:33:22 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Bryn:** You might—it—

John: I like both of those—those—

[Bryn laughs.]

00:33:25 Bryn Guest It's a good cake for someone who, uh, likes savory better. It's a salty cake.

00:33:31 John Host Yeah, it—*[sighs]*. You would think that I would like—I'm—I'm a—I'll just eat peanut butter out of a jar with a pretzel.

00:33:38 Bryn Guest *[Laughs.]* Yeah.

00:33:40 John Host I don't need to make it round in order to feel normal. I know I'm abnormal. Nice skyline of Alberta behind you, though, in this photo, Matt. It looks appropriately bleak.

[Bryn laughs.]

It looks empty and bleak. It looks like a... a 1970s David Cronenberg movie out there.

00:33:59 Matt Guest That's accurate.

00:34:00 Bryn Guest Our nickname for the city is Dirt City, so...

00:34:02 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Dirt City?

00:34:03 Bryn Guest Mm-hm. *[Laughs.]*

00:34:05 John Host Oh... Alright, you have one more piece of evidence that we need to get at before I go to my verdict. And this is a video that you sent it, Bryn. Correct?

00:34:13 Bryn Guest Yep. Yes.

00:34:15 John Host Alright. Tell me and Jesse what we're gonna see on this video.

00:34:19 Bryn Guest You're going to see Matthew reviewing a cake I made. This is very popular in my Instagram Stories, *[stifles laughter]* when Matthew reviews my cakes.

00:34:29 John Host Uh-huh.

00:34:30 Bryn Guest Yeah, there will be some squeaking in the background 'cause my dog.

00:34:33 John Host Is this all just buzz-marketing for your Instagram?

00:34:35 Bryn Guest *[Laughs.]* No, no! No, not at all.

00:34:38 John Host Go ahead, say what your Instagram is.

00:34:39 Bryn Guest It is @BrynBW.

00:34:41 John Host B-R-Y-N-B-W.

00:34:43 Bryn Guest Yep.

00:34:44 John Host Alright, I'll follow it.

00:34:46 Bryn Guest Oh!

00:34:47 John Host Uh, look. I've reviewed this video. And before we play the audio for the listener—and Jesse, I'd like you to watch along here—I just need to warn the listener, and you, Joel... This video's a little creepy.

[John and Bryn laugh.]

It's a—*[laughs]*—kinda—it's a little like a hostage video, or like a videotape found on the floor of an abandoned cabin in Alberta, Canada.

[Bryn laughs.]

Matt is—I'll paint the picture for the listener, before they hear the audio. Matt is seated in front of a completely blank wall. At a table that is bare, except for a plate of cake and a glass of milk.

[The litigants laugh.]

And Matt is adorable in this video, but very wide-eyed. And I feel like his pupils are extra dilated?

[The litigants laugh.]

Like he's... received an injection of sodium pentathol, or something? We'll make it available on the show page and the Instagram. But, uh—but just as you hear it now—also as you hear it now, I wanna warn you, there are some audio triggers that some people might not like.

00:35:49 Bryn Guest

Mm-hm.

00:35:50 John Host

You are definitely gonna hear the sound of eating, which some people do not like to listen to. As well as the sound of a fork scraping a plate.

[Bryn laughs.]

Which—is—I'm getting—and also the word "moist" plays heavily into this audio.

[Bryn and John else laugh.]

And Matt at one point says, "Yummy" in a... weird way.

[More laughter.]

That said, it is still worth watching all the way through, for the cameo at the end of Ethel the burnadoodle. Let's take a look.

00:36:18 Clip Clip

Matt: Is this a video?

[Fork clanking.]

Matt: Chocolatey! Creamy.

[Chewing.]

Matt: Sweet.

[Dog toy squeaking.]

Matt: Mm! Delicious! Let's try it with a bit of milk here.

00:36:44 John Host

Yaaay, Ethel!

[Bryn laughs.]

00:36:48 Clip Clip

Bryn: Is it the moistest chocolate cake you've ever had?

[Bryn outside of the clip laughs.]

[Pause.]

Matt: *[Mouth full]* I think so.

[John and Matt outside the clip laugh.]

Matt: It's almost a pudding.

[More squeaking.]

[Clip audio ends.]

00:37:01 John Host

[Stifling laughter] Alright!

[Bryn laughs.]

I stand corrected! He didn't say "Yummy," he said "Delicious." In a weird, druggy way.

[Bryn laughs.]

And the wall behind him was not completely blank. There was one weird mid-wall double outlet electrical outlet, with nothing plugged into it.

00:37:19 Bryn Guest

[Laughing] Yeah.

00:37:20 John Host

That was strange. But otherwise adorable. What did you wanna prove with this, Bryn? Before I go and make my verdict.

00:37:27 Bryn Guest

Uh, that he does enjoy the cakes.

00:37:29 John Host

He enjoys—of course he enjoys the cakes! No one—he started this out by saying he loves cake!

00:37:36 Matt Guest

Yeah, that's exactly the problem, that I enjoy the cakes.

[Bryn laughs.]

00:37:39 John Host

You're leaving all this temptation around. You're filming him as—as you are destroying his bodily functions.

00:37:47 Bryn Guest

[Laughs.] I mean, I think he—again, I'll say he takes very good care of himself. He manages his diabetes very well.

00:37:56 Matt Guest

I think there was like, a—after I got diabetes, there was like, this... this, like, two-month period where Bryn was like, really careful about, like—she was like, researching how to, like, cook meals that were good for it. And then I think it became evident that I was doing a really good job of taking care of it, and then I feel like she just went, like, completely the other way, and just started making cakes all the time. *[Stifles laughter.]* So...

Which I don't—I don't—I feel is maybe unfair. It's like, because I'm doing this extra work of taking care of myself, is it fair to just... leave all these cakes around all the time, and make it even harder? So.

[Bryn laughs.]

00:38:35 John Host

Bryn, let me ask you a serious question here.

00:38:37 Bryn Guest

Sure.

00:38:38 John Host

When you make a cake, does the pleasure come in finishing the cake in a way that you deem successful? Or is the process not complete until you kidnap your husband and film a video of him

saying that it's delicious? Is that part of it for you?

00:38:55 Bryn Guest So when I was taking the cakes out of the house, and like, taking them to work to give them to the cooks, he would always ask me to save him some. So... often, he's asking for the cake even when I'm doing what—what he—

00:39:12 John Host Don't dance around my question, Bryn.

00:39:14 Bryn Guest Um, I do—I think, as you said—

00:39:16 John Host Is it enough to bake a cake?

[Bryn stifles laughter.]

Or does Matt have to eat it? In order for the pleasure cycle to be complete.

00:39:23 Bryn Guest Um, no. He doesn't have to. He doesn't have to. But I do enjoy those—as you said, he's very adorable. I do enjoy his reviews.

00:39:32 John Host Yeah.

00:39:33 Bryn Guest They're funny.

00:39:34 John Host Joel, what'd you—what'd you think of that audio?

00:39:36 Joel Guest It was pretty creepy, but I would—

[Bryn and John laugh, Joel stifles laughter.]

I would just say, has an insurance policy been taken out on Matt recently?

[John and Bryn laugh harder.]

00:39:43 John Host Good question. Good question. *[Sighs.]*

00:39:49 Bryn Guest I'm not trying to kill him. That's not...

00:39:52 John Host *[Sighs.]* That—that's the Canadian way of saying you are trying to kill him!

[The litigants laugh.]

No. Obviously you're not—

00:39:59 Matt Guest I did say at one point, "If you want a divorce—like, if you don't want me around, we can have a divorce. You don't need to slowly murder me with cakes." But...

00:40:06 John Host Why is this getting so DARK?!

[The litigants laugh.]

Oh, right. *[Stifles laughter.]* Right, it's two in the afternoon. It's already—it's getting dark in Alberta, I forgot. Sorry.

00:40:14 Matt Guest Yeah.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:40:15 John Host Even in the summertime. *[Stifles laughter.]*

Alright. Uh, I think I've heard everything I need to. Real quick

question, just so that I understand. Matt, you're not asking that Bryn stop baking cakes. But she has to get them out of the house within 24 hours, before you turn into a cake monster and eat it.

00:40:32 Matt Guest Yes, and/or explore baking cakes with less carbohydrates in them, using... Yeah.

00:40:39 John Host Eh, no, no, no. Forget—forget that, buddy. No.

[The litigants and John laugh.]

You can do that for yourself. That's your hobby.

00:40:47 Matt Guest Alright. Okay.

00:40:48 John Host Where do you propose these cakes go?

00:40:51 Matt Guest Um... to someone who will appreciate them. Yeah, to our friends or family. Um, I guess—I suppose if they just—if she just took them into the back yard and threw them in the trash, I would still feel uncomfortable with that. So, someone who's going to appreciate them.

00:41:10 John Host Bryn, do you have friends and family that you can foist these cakes off on? For real?

[Pause.]

00:41:16 Bryn Guest I do. Yeah. But I would like, uh, to be able to decide if the cake was good enough to share.

00:41:24 John Host Right. So if it's a sub-optimal cake, then it gets shoved into Matt's hole?

00:41:29 Bryn Guest Well, I—I'm okay with throwing it out.

00:41:33 John Host Alright. I think I've heard everything I need to. I'm gonna go into my night kitchen.

[Bryn laughs.]

I'll take a moment. And I'll be back with my verdict.

00:41:40 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape, footsteps.]*

00:41:41 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

00:41:46 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

00:41:47 Jesse Host Matt, how are you feeling?

00:41:49 Matt Guest Uh, I'm feeling pretty good that there's gonna be some kind of ruling that will be protective to my health. But, uh, I'm a little disappointed that he seems to have totally disregarded the idea of encouraging low-carb cakes, because that would be my—

00:42:04 Jesse Host Ugh!

[Bryn laughs.]

00:42:05 Matt Guest —my ideal outcome. Because that way I get to actually enjoy some cakes.

00:42:11 Jesse Host Awww. Eughhh.

[The litigants laugh.]

Bryn, how are you feeling?

00:42:15 Bryn Guest Uh, yeah, I think, uh, the fact that Matthew... has diabetes, is— makes me look kinda like a monster. Uh, so... not—I don't—I don't think he's gonna rule in my favor. *[Laughs.]*

00:42:30 Jesse Host I mean, if you really are hard up for people to send cakes to, A, I'm willing to accept a cake, and B, my neighbor Chris—I've been going through a hard time at home. My neighbor Chris has been baking bread and leaving it on the fence between our houses for me. And I haven't really made anything for him in quite some time, so maybe you could send one cake to Chris, and one cake to me.

00:42:52 Bryn Guest *[Laughs.]* Sure!

00:42:53 Jesse Host And just—I mean, I would be willing to do that every other week, let's say.

00:42:59 Bryn Guest *[Laughing]* Okay.

00:43:00 Jesse Host So that pretty much takes care of the cakes, right? Problem solved!

00:43:01 Bryn Guest Yeah, it does! Great!

00:43:04 Jesse Host *[Chuckles.]* Well, we'll see what the judge has to say about all this when we come back in just a second.

00:43:08 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:43:10 Promo Clip **Teresa McElroy:** "Shmanners. Noun. Definition—"

Music: Sophisticated electronic/string music.

Teresa: "Rules of etiquette designed not to judge others, but rather to guide ourselves through everyday social situations."

[Music stops.]

Travis McElroy: Hello, Internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

Teresa: And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis: Every week on *Shmanners*, we take a look at a topic that has to do with society or manners. We talk about the history of it, we take a look at how it applies to everyday life, and we take some of your questions. And sometimes we do a biography about a really cool person that had an impact on how we view etiquette.

[Music fades back in.]

Travis: So join us every Friday and listen to *Shmanners* on MaximumFun.org, or wherever podcasts are found.

Teresa: Manners shmanners. Get it?

[Music ends.]

00:43:52 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:43:55 Jesse Promo Judge Hodgman, we're taking a quick break from the case. Let's go

into chambers, talk about what's going on. You know, you've had this amazing television show that you created with David Rees.

00:44:05	John	Promo	Yes, that's right.
00:44:06	Jesse	Promo	It stars you and David Rees. I don't know what the <u>name</u> of the show is. I know that it's been airing on <i>Cake</i> on FX.
00:44:14	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:44:15	Jesse	Promo	...Now it's just done forever, and no one could ever watch it, right?
00:44:20	John	Promo	No. <i>[Laughs.]</i> No. You can watch it.
00:44:22	Jesse	Promo	Oh! Really?
00:44:23	John	Promo	You can—you can watch it—yeah. You—as I was saying earlier, you can watch it live on FXX Thursday nights at ten. The last two episodes are airing the next two weeks, as part of <i>Cake</i> . Uh, and yet, you know, sometimes people Google search " <i>Cake</i> ," and all they find are Bryn's Instagram account, and other pictures of cake. If you wanna go direct, and catch up on all of the previous episodes of my and David Rees's animated show, and see the new ones as soon as they roll out, it's very simple.
			As I've mentioned before, and I'll say again, for some random reason, Bitly assigned us this short URL. Will take you directly to the Hulu page, with <u>all</u> seven, eight, nine, ten eventual episodes of this unnamed show. Bit.ly/dicktown . That's Bit.ly/D-I-C-K-T-O-W-N . All small letters. It matters when it's a Bitly. What about you, Jesse? What's going on with you?
00:45:24	Jesse	Promo	Oh, John, I continue to host the comedy show <i>Jordan, Jesse, Go!</i> There was a wonderful thread on the Maximum Fun forum at MaximumFun.Reddit.com of people who had been delighted to discover <i>Jordan, Jesse, Go!</i> <u>through</u> <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> .
00:45:37	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:45:38	Jesse	Promo	I'm always grateful for those people. <i>Jordan, Jesse, Go!</i> is a relentlessly pleasant and notably, uh, vulgar and explicit—although that is not our subject matter, it just works out that way—
00:45:49	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:45:50	Jesse	Promo	—uh, comedy podcast with me and my friend, professional comedy writer and performer, Jordan Morris! Who folks might have seen on <i>Good Mythical Morning</i> . He's worked a lot with those guys, among other—many other outlets. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> In the, uh, failed Sandra Bullock movie <i>All About Steve</i> . Might have seen Jordan in there.
00:46:07	John	Promo	Uh-huh!
00:46:08	Jesse	Promo	One of the funniest guys around, and lots of great guests, including relatively recently your friend and mine, John, Mike Mitchell from the <i>Doughboys</i> podcast. So—
00:46:15	John	Promo	Ohhh, the spoon man!
00:46:16	Jesse	Promo	The spoon man! So check out <i>Jordan, Jesse, Go!</i> Just search for " <i>Jordan, Jesse, Go!</i> " in your favorite podcast app, and it is 75 or so minutes a week of meaningless nonsense, but we're—we're good at it. We've been doing it a long time.
00:46:30	John	Promo	It's really, really funny.

00:46:32	Jesse	Promo	Thank you.
00:46:33	John	Promo	And I enjoy it so much. And, uh, <u>because</u> of <i>Jordan, Jesse, Go!</i> and the time that I got to spend on there, I also created a Reddit community around my favorite sport, the sport of extinct hockey!
00:46:47	Jesse	Promo	Mm-hm. <i>[Laughs quietly.]</i>
00:46:48	John	Promo	Which, by the way, Jesse, is now <u>thriving</u> with 1.6 <u>thousand</u> followers.
00:46:52	Jesse	Promo	<i>[Laughing]</i> Wow. Incredible.
00:46:54	John	Promo	One-point—one-point—sixteen hundred Redditors!

[Jesse exhales appreciatively.]

Are contributing found logos of extinct hockey teams. And just a little update, friends and family update: I recently made former Judge John Hodgman editor, and brilliant comedian and super egoist Mark McConville a moderator.

[Jesse laughs.]

'Cause he's really into extinct hockey. I don't know if he's gonna do anything with these new powers. *[Laughs.]* But I've given it to him.

But *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*—I mean, this is how it started for me, listening to you and Jordan on the original *Sound of Young America*, back when I was merely a listener to what would become the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. And it's just a pleasure to hear you guys riff with each other every time. So everyone should check it out. *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*

00:47:37	Jesse	Promo	Let's get back into the courtroom.
00:47:39	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:47:41	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]</i>
00:47:42	Jesse	Host	Please rise as Judge John Hodgman re-enters the courtroom.
00:47:46	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Door shuts.]</i>
00:47:47	John	Host	So one piece of evidence that I—that I did not have time to get to, but I still think is fascinating, and we'll post this on the show page as well, is that Matt sent me a research article. Which of course I did not read, 'cause I don't do homework just 'cause you thought it was a good idea, Matt.

[Bryn laughs.]

So I did not read this article, but here is Matt's summary. Quote:

"Basically this article describes an experiment where they put people in a room smelling of fresh chocolate cookies, showed them the cookies, and then forbade them to eat any cookies, and then forced them to eat radishes instead."

It's like—frankly, that sounds like... a great deal. *[Laughs.]* I like that.

[Bryn laughs.]

Did they have butter and salt with them?

"Then the researchers asked them to try and solve a puzzle. The puzzle was impossible to solve, but they didn't tell them this. And the researchers timed how long it took to give up. They found that the people who were forced to eat radishes gave up sooner, compared to the people who got to eat the cookies. Thus concluding that willpower is a finite resource that can be depleted by tasks, like resisting baked goods."

00:48:53 John Host I don't know what kind of... cockapoo science is going on up there in Canada.

[Bryn laughs.]

Like, is this a real research article, or are you describing your own wife locking you in a room with a bunch of cake? *[Laughs.]* Forcing you to smell it, and then watching your willpower crumble?

00:49:12 Matt Guest It is eerily similar to my situation.

[Bryn laughs.]

But it is in fact a landmark study that developed this idea called "ego depletion" a bit, that willpower could be depleted.

00:49:25 John Host I take it from your submitting this evidence that you feel your willpower is being tested.

00:49:31 Matt Guest Well, yes, and then that that in turn affects the rest of my life. You know, if I'm trying to study for med school, and at the same time I'm trying to resist eating cakes, it's harder to do both at the same time.

00:49:44 John Host I will say this.

[Bryn laughs.]

If I were in that room, I would be so excited to eat those radishes. I don't understand Matt. I do not have whatever genetic make-up it is, that I feel that if I don't eat those cookies that I've been shown and smelled, that I will not be able to solve a puzzle.

[Bryn laughs, John stifles laughter.]

That I will not be able to live a productive life. I feel very, very neutral. *[Stifles laughter.]* In a way that I appreciate Matt and lots and lots—I—and probably many, many more people in the world do feel that their willpower is tested, and their internal life essence is sapped, when they are tempted with a cake that they must deny themselves. I believe Matt's struggle is real, and he didn't have to give me a piece of homework to prove it!

[The litigants laugh.]

I just believe him! It is as the basis of one of the oldest precepts of this court: People like what they like. They crave what they crave. They need what they need. And of course, in balance with this, we

have... Bryn! Who likes to bake cakes. And specifically traditional, sugar and flour, carb-heavy, non-lardy Stevia cakes. And she likes to do it in a vacuum! The output—the completion of the pleasure for her, does not seem to be getting Matt to eat it. Her disinterest in them being eaten is so great to the point that she would risk his life to leave a cake around. She doesn't care whether he eats it or not. Nor does she care to eat it.

The completion of the pleasure is showing the cake on Instagram. And if that comes across as damning, I don't mean it that way. Like, that's just the way it is. Whether or not we're in the midst of a global pandemic, when we are feeling stress in different ways, and when we are feeling stress and seek to ease it, we need meditative practices. To make things. To distract our brains. To make our time feel less difficult.

00:52:22 John

Host

Now, some people build models. Some people play solitaire. Some people do needlecraft. Some people, like me, uh, make bacon egg and cheese sandwiches.

[Bryn chuckles.]

I don't care whether anyone ever eats them. I just like making them. I like creating order out of that eggy chaos.

[The litigants laugh.]

Some people do jigsaw puzzles. Do you know what I mean?

00:52:46 Bryn

Guest

Mm-hm.

00:52:47 John

Host

And some people do jigsaw puzzles that are un-solvable, after they have been shown chocolate chip cookies!

[Bryn laughs.]

Everyone's got weird things that they do! So ultimately, I wanna respect both of these things. Matt has no willpower; he can't help himself. He's gonna eat himself into some kind of sugar shock. Gotta be careful about that. But Bryn, you should be able to make as many cakes as you want. And the mystery here is, how do we do this? 'Cause when you solve a jigsaw puzzle, and you have that feeling of completion that you did it, you just break up the puzzle and put it away. But a cake has to be eaten, or else it is purposeful waste, which is shameful.

So in no way am I going to order Bryn to make more keto cakes for Matt. That's not part of her thing. That's not her hobby. She and professional baker Simon are snobs about it.

[Bryn laughs.]

And while I don't like his attitude at all, I appreciate that that preference is real. You bought that book, Matt. Pull it out of the garbage. Make your own keto cakes, it that's what you wanna eat.

[Bryn and John laugh.]

But in the meantime, Bryn, you gotta get those cakes outta the house! Your boy has no willpower!

[Bryn laughs.]

00:54:05 John Host Can't—he can't help himself! It's like—you know, like... What is it that ca—that dogs can't eat? Chocolate?

00:54:11 Bryn Guest Yeah.

00:54:13 John Host Let's say you were really into tempering chocolate, and making fine chocolate, and making chocolate things. Chocolates. Right? And you're just pumping out the chocolate, and then you're just like, "I don't wanna eat this. I just like the—the process and ritual of making it." And then you just dump it on the floor. What's Ethel gonna do? Gonna eat all that chocolate off the floor! Then you gotta go to a Canadian vet.

[Bryn chuckles.]

That's no good. Gotta get those cakes outta there! You gotta find someone to take your cakes!

Now, look. Here's the solution. We already plugged your Instagram. BrynBW.

[Bryn chuckles.]

I don't know if you have enough followers that you can see where most of your followers are. But surely there are more than a few in—what's Dirt Town the nickname of? What's the town?

00:55:00 Bryn Guest Edmonton.

00:55:01 John Host Edmonton. Alberta. Canada.

00:55:05 Bryn Guest Mm-hm.

00:55:06 John Host Surely there are enough—you have enough followers in Dirt Town.

00:55:09 Bryn Guest It's—sorry, it's Dirt City.

00:55:10 John Host Now, when you make—

[Bryn laughs.]

Oh, excuse me. *[Laughs.]* Surely you have enough followers in the Dirt Metropolitan Area.

00:55:18 Bryn Guest *[Laughing]* Yeah.

00:55:21 John Host That you can post a picture of the cake. *[Stifles laughter.]* And then... and then list the intersection in Dirt City where you're gonna be leaving that cake for someone to get. It's gonna be a cake scavenger hunt for your followers. First person to comment on it gets dibs. Maybe the first person who gets there gets dibs.

You make your cake using as best pandemic protocol as possible. Explain. You know, be—be—be hygienic, is what I'm saying.

00:55:54 Bryn Guest Mm-hm.

00:55:55 John Host Right? Bake your cake. Take the pic. Post it on Instagram. And then

say, "Leaving this in spot 37b in Edmonton Oiler's Plaza," or whatever.

[Bryn laughs.]

"Parking lot." *[Laughs.]* "Come and get it." You can keep one cake per... you say it's every two weeks?

00:56:22 Bryn Guest

Yeah.

00:56:23 John Host

Well, you can keep a cake a month. That you and Matt can enjoy, along with a little insulin chaser.

[The litigants laugh quietly.]

But for your experiments—even the ones that go wrong—someone will take pleasure in that cake. Someone out there will wanna eat that cake. And you should—you know, when one is—when one has a hobby, and when one makes mistakes, one should not hide or throw those mistakes away. Own them! Post those pictures and say, "I'm gonna leave this," you know, "on this park bench." Or here, or there. "Take cake at your own risk." Call it Take A Cake.

[Bryn chuckles.]

It's gonna be the new Instagram sensation. Listeners, if you're in or near the Dirt Metropolitan Area—

[Bryn laughs.]

—go follow BrynBW! Get ready to get some free cakes! It's gonna be like geocaching, but cakes! Cake-o-cache!

[The litigants laugh.]

I don't know. I can't figure it out. *[Laughs.]* But you gotta get those cakes outta there before Matt and Ethel eat themselves to death. While Calamity Jane the cat just smiles.

[Bryn laughs.]

That's been Calamity Jane's plan all along. *[Laughs.]* This is the sound of a gavel.

00:56:23 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[An egg timer ticks seven times, and then rings.]

00:57:37 John Host

Judge John Hodgman rules; that is all.

00:57:38 Sound Effect Sound Effect

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

00:57:40 Jesse Host

Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

00:57:43 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[Door shuts.]

00:57:44 Jesse Host

Bryn, how do you feel about this compromise?

00:57:47 Bryn Guest

I think it's fair. Yeah. I feel good about it.

00:57:50 Jesse Host

You know, if you come to my neighborhood, there's the Mount Washington Produce Collective. You could put out your cakes, and then you go around and collect everybody's lemons and limes and

stuff.

00:57:59 Bryn Guest That sounds nice.

00:58:01 Jesse Host Matt, how are you feeling?

00:58:02 Matt Guest Uh, pretty good. This is gonna work. Maybe, um, if—yeah, if there's people out there in Dirt City—

[Bryn laughs quietly.]

—that wanna follow Bryn on Instagram, maybe we can get a lot of eager mouths for these cakes. Who knows? Maybe there's someone out there who's, uh—just loves making low-carb cakes, and their partner hates them, and we can—we'll form an exchange with them. It could all work out.

00:58:25 Bryn Guest *[Laughing]* This was all just Matthew wanting keto cakes. That's all he wants.

[Jesse and Matt laugh.]

00:58:31 Jesse Host I'm just trying to imagine a person who's like, "Oh, I gotta make some low-carb cakes today!"

[The litigants laugh.]

"Lemme at that spelt!"

[Bryn laughs.]

00:58:41 Matt Guest "But I don't like—" *[Laughs.]* "But I don't like eating them, I just love making them and leaving them around my house."

[Bryn laughs.]

"What can I do with them?"

00:58:48 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* "I simply prefer to cook with confusing ingredients not suitable for the task!"

[The litigants laugh.]

I—hey, look. If anybody out there likes making keto cakes, God bless ya.

[Bryn laughs.]

It's not my lifestyle. But I—I wish you the best in yours. Um, Bryn, Matt, thanks for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast!

00:59:09 Bryn Guest Thanks for having us!

00:59:10 Matt Guest Yeah, thanks, it was fun!

00:59:11 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:59:14 Jesse Host Another *Judge John Hodgman* case in the books. In a moment we'll dispense Swift Justice. First, our thanks to Llama Mattingley for naming this week's episode, "Contempt of Torte." If you'd like to name a future episode, like *Judge John Hodgman on Facebook*. We regularly put out calls for submissions on Facebook.

Follow us on Twitter at [@JesseThorn](#) and [@hodgman](#). Hashtag your *Judge John Hodgman* Tweets [#JJHo](#), and check out that MaxFun subreddit, [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](#). We're on Instagram at [@judgejohnhodgman](#), where you can see some of these beautiful cakes, and their Drake song title captions. *Judge John Hodgman* produced by the ever capable Miss Jennifer Marmor.

Now, let's get to Swift Justice, where we answer your small disputes with quick judgment. Kevin says:

"My wife insists on pronouncing it 'sher-bert.' Please make her stop."

01:00:11	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> I've—I've always hated this word, and I've always hated this product! Not just because I dislike sweets. But I—when was the last time you <u>had</u> a sherbet (<i>sher-bit</i>)?
01:00:24	Jesse	Host	Oh, I don't know. I was probably nine years old. It was before I learned that ice cream is better than sherbet (<i>sher-bert</i>).
01:00:30	John	Host	Have you—you call it sher-bert?
01:00:32	Jesse	Host	I don't know, sher-bit?
01:00:33	John	Host	Sher-brit?
01:00:33	Jesse	Host	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Either way.
01:00:34	John	Host	I don't...
01:00:35	Jesse	Host	I don't know. My dad's from Missouri, and he used to say "warshing."
01:00:38	John	Host	Warshing??
01:00:39	Jesse	Host	So... there's a lot of extra Rs in my ancestral speech.
			<i>[Both laugh.]</i>
01:00:43	John	Host	I thought you meant he called sherbet "warshing." <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:00:46	Jesse	Host	No, no. <i>[Laughs.]</i> He's—he would—he would clean his clothes using the warshing machine.
01:00:50	John	Host	According to the <i>American Kitchen Magazine</i> from 1902, and this is according of course to Wikipedia... there is a distinction between what is called a "water ice"—like what you call "Italian ice" or a, uh, "sorbet," from sherbets, saying that "Sherbets are water ices frozen more rapidly, and egg white or gelatin is often added to give a creamy consistency." Or milk, or another dairy is added to it.
			Now, if you grew up in Southern New Jersey or Philadelphia, you don't say "water ice." You say "warter ice."
			<i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>
			So I order—[laughs]—I don't like sher-bert. I don't like sher-bet. I understand <u>why</u> sher-bet is often pronounced sher-bert, 'cause it <u>feels</u> like there should be an R there, but they both sound gross. So from now on, Kevin's wife, just called it "warter ice plus milk."
01:01:40	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> I support it.
01:01:43	John	Host	Alright. Thank you.
01:01:44	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 talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

01:01:57	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
01:01:59	Joel	Guest	I prefer to drink my cake.
01:02:01	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Let's just drop that in somewhere. We were still rolling on that, right?
01:02:08	Joel	Guest	Rolling.
01:02:09	John	Host	He's still—yeah, I think he's been drinking cake all morning, frankly. I don't know what's going on out there.
01:02:13	Music	Transition	A cheerful guitar chord.
01:02:15	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org.
01:02:16	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:02:18	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:02:19	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.