

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:00:02	Jesse Thorn	Host	Welcome to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. And with me is Judge John Hodgman, from Brooklyn, New York City.
00:00:11	John Hodgman	Host	Yeah! That's where I am. I am also—like you, Jesse Thorn—in the past. Like all podcasts, we record these a little bit ahead of time. And so we are recording this the <u>week</u> before election day. We do not know the outcome of the election, certainly in the past, and maybe there in the future when you're listening to this, you <u>still</u> don't know. I hope you do, though.
			But since the future is uncertain, we thought maybe this would be a good time to break the settled law that nostalgia is a toxic impulse, and take comfortable refuge in the past, with one of our most beloved episodes.
00:00:48	Jesse	Host	This is the one where, when people ask me for an example of what <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> is, this story is the story I tell them. It's the Bat Brothers!
			<i>[John laughs quietly.]</i>
			From 2012! Eight years ago! Eight years, these brothers have been pinging around inside my mind.
00:01:09	John	Host	Yeah. Adam and Noah share a home that they bought together out of foreclosure.
			<i>[John and Jesse laugh quietly.]</i>
			And the problem is— <i>[stifles laughter]</i> —that it's infested with bats. And Adam and Noah have very different ideas of how to deal with the bats.
00:01:23	Jesse	Host	I have to say, John, in retrospect? The element of this <u>amazing</u> tale that sticks with me the most—the one that comes back to me more often than any other—has nothing to do with bats flying into bathrooms.
00:01:39	John	Host	Right.
00:01:40	Jesse	Host	It's merely that as a resident of a large, coastal city, where homes cost \$1.5 million—
00:01:46	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:01:47	Jesse	Host	—I often think of the Bat Brothers buying a giant house to save money.
00:01:50	John	Host	That's right. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> Uh, you—so enjoy this trip into the past. This is going all the way back to 2012. As Jennifer Marmor pointed out, pre-mustache logo <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> . The old stuff! A wonderful vintage episode of <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> that should, I hope, bring you pleasure no matter <u>how</u> you're feeling right now. You in the future.
			So without further ado, let's get to the courtroom!
00:02:15	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>

00:02:16 Jesse Host Welcome to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. This week's case: "Die Flederhaus."

Noah and his brother Adam got a deal on a house in foreclosure, and now they live there together while they're slowly fixing it up. The issue is that the house is infested with bats that slip through the cracks in the bathroom walls. Noah is disturbed by the bats' presence—can't imagine why—and prefers to avoid them at all costs by shutting them into the bathroom. Adam thinks Noah is being a wimp, and should confront the bats head-on.

How should they deal with their flying mammal problem? Only one man can decide.

00:03:01 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor.]*

00:03:02 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom.

00:03:06 John Host *[Singing the tune of the Batman theme]*

Na na na na na na na na, na na na na na na na, justice!

[Someone stifles laughter.]

Na na na na na na na na, na na na na na na na, justice!

[More stifled laughter.]

Na na na na na na na na, na na na na na na na!
Na na na na na na na na, na na na na na na na!

Na na na na na na na na, na na na na na na na na... bat justice!

[Singing stops.]

Uh, Jesse, would you please just check and make sure the courtroom is free from bats and snakes?

00:03:30 Jesse Host *[Stifling laughter]* I'm not gonna check!

00:03:32 John Host Okay, swear them in, but I'm gonna continue to wear my helmet.

00:03:34 Jesse Host What do you think I am, the bailiff?

[Multiple people stifle laughter.]

Please stand and raise your right hands.

00:03:39 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Chairs scrape.]*

00:03:40 Jesse Host Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God or whatever?

00:03:45 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Mostly.

Noah: Yes.

00:03:47 Jesse Host Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that he himself has been known as a creature of the night?

00:03:56 Noah Guest Oh, even more so.

00:03:57 Adam Guest Sure.

00:03:58 Jesse Host Very well. Judge Hodgman?

00:04:00 John Host Okay, you are both brothers. Noah and Adam. Noah is the plaintiff bringing the case. Noah, are you the older or younger brother, please?

00:04:08 Noah Guest The older.

00:04:09 John Host You are the older brother?

00:04:10 Noah Guest Yes, sir.

00:04:11 John Host And you two live together in a house that was foreclosed, and there is a problem with bats, Noah?

00:04:17 Noah Guest Yes.

00:04:18 John Host Why don't you tell me more about the problem with bats?

00:04:22 Noah Guest Well, the fact that they're here is probably the biggest problem.

00:04:25 Jesse Host *[Bursts out laughing.]* They shouldn't be in a house! *[Keeps laughing.]*

00:04:31 John Host Alright, let me—

00:04:32 Jesse Host They should be in a cave!

00:04:33 John Host Yeah. Uh, let me get a little bit more information of the house. Is your house a house that is built upside-down, hanging under the bridge in Austin, Texas, the largest urban bat colony in the world?

00:04:45 Noah Guest No, but I do know April 1st is going to be very interesting for them.

00:04:49 John Host Why is that? 'Cause they're known in some cultures—in Native American cultures—as a trickster god?

00:04:55 Noah Guest No. More about the *Today in Ragnarok* entry where the bats are gonna be screaming, nesting in visitors' hair, begging for asylum.

00:05:04 John Host Oh.

00:05:05 Noah Guest That part's a little worrisome.

00:05:06 John Host You are making reference to my book *That Is All*.

00:05:10 Noah Guest I have to. Yes.

00:05:11 John Host Is this Noah speaking now?

00:05:12 Noah Guest Yes.

00:05:13 John Host Alright. I reject your pandering.

[Someone snorts.]

00:05:15 Noah Guest Ah.

00:05:17 John Host Mark him down! Mark him down one on the justice scale. That's down. Minus one for you. Pandering.

00:05:21 Noah Guest That's fine. I'll—I'll accept it. Is that an actual scale?

00:05:25 John Host It is. It's the scales of justice.

00:05:28 Noah Guest Alright. *[Laughs quietly.]*

00:05:29 John Host Alright. Take one off for the other brother, too. Noah.

[One of the litigants laughs.]

No, for Adam. Take one off for Adam. One—*[stifles laughter]*—one— it's the scale of justice, and it's piled high with bats on both sides.

[Jesse and one or both litigants laugh.]

And as you offend me, I will take a bat away. And the—and, uh—and the other party will be closer to justice. This was how it was done in colonial times, by witches. In witch court.

Now listen to me. Tell me more about the house. It is not on the underside of a bridge in Austin, Texas. Where is it located?

00:06:03	Noah	Guest	In Paola, Kansas.
00:06:05	John	Host	Okay. And it's a house that was foreclosed. So—
00:06:09	Noah	Guest	Several times, as far as I understand.
00:06:11	John	Host	Okay. And describe the house to me?
00:06:15	Noah	Guest	Uh, a small, two-story house with, um... well, holes where there shouldn't be. Mainly this bathroom area is an unfinished room where—that we have kind of insulation nailed up and things, but it's a lot of wind, and things have access to that area.
00:06:35	John	Host	And is it your belief that the bats are living <u>inside</u> the house, or just <u>coming</u> inside the house?
00:06:40	Noah	Guest	Uh, I hear them in the walls.
00:06:42	John	Host	Okay.
00:06:43	Noah	Guest	So I am thinking that they are at least here most of the time.
00:06:48	John	Host	And you two are brothers? Is that correct?
00:06:50	Noah	Guest	Yes.
00:06:51	John	Host	And are you ghost hunters?
			<i>[Multiple people laugh quietly.]</i>
00:06:55	Noah	Guest	Nnno.
00:06:56	John	Host	Okay.
00:06:57	Noah	Guest	We haven't had ghosts yet. Uh, so I think we're okay.
00:06:58	John	Host	Okay, so describe to me the reality television show that you are shooting where the two brothers, uh, buy up foreclosed, bat-infested homes and live in there together. What show is that? Is that on HGTV? Is that <i>Bat Brothers</i> ? Is that you?
00:07:12	Noah	Guest	Not yet, but it sounds like a good pitch.
00:07:14	John	Host	Okay, why are you doing this to yourselves? Why are you living together in a bat-infested home?
00:07:19	Noah	Guest	It was cheap.
00:07:21	John	Host	Are you from Kansas originally?
00:07:22	Noah	Guest	Yes. Yes. I'd been overseas for a bit, and they had—my brother and parents had bought this house, and when I came back I've kind of moved in. Although I guess the bats were here first, so maybe I'm the problem.

00:07:34 John Host And how much did this depressing, haunted home with holes in the walls and bats all over the place cost you?

00:07:41 Noah Guest Twenty-seven thousand.

00:07:42 John Host Twenty-seven thousand dollars. Well, that's not—not bad. I don't know the Kansas haunted house real estate market particularly well, but that's a pretty good deal, huh?

00:07:49 Noah Guest Yeah!

00:07:50 John Host Once you get rid of all the bats in this house and replace it with snakes, you're gonna flip it, and how much will you sell it for?

00:07:57 Noah Guest Uh, this is mostly just a living-in house.

00:07:59 John Host Okay.

00:08:00 Noah Guest We just took advantage of pre-flippers.

00:08:01 John Host Okay.

00:08:02 Noah Guest If that's the term.

00:08:03 John Host I gotcha. Describe to me what it is like for you, Noah, when you are in the bathroom and a bat comes in.

00:08:10 Noah Guest If you've seen the evidence, the pictures that I sent you, it's pretty much, uh, fear-inducing, and a lot of shrieking like a girl and running out of the room.

[Someone snorts.]

00:08:21 John Host Well, I—you did send in evidence, photographs of the bathroom.

00:08:24 Noah Guest Yes.

00:08:25 John Host I have a feeling that this is doctored evidence, because there's a picture of—is that you?

00:08:29 Noah Guest Yes. I had one that was not doctored and one that was.

00:08:32 John Host Okay.

00:08:33 Noah Guest Just so you could compare.

00:08:34 John Host First of all, it is never necessary for anyone to send me photographs of themselves sitting down in a bathroom. Let's just put that down. Take a bat off the scale for him!

Okay. Second of all, you are staring at a doctored photograph of a gigantic bat with the head of the famous *Weekly World News* Bat Boy on it. That is not the problem. Right? That is not real.

00:08:55 Noah Guest That is—yeah. That was my emotional reaction to the situation.

00:08:58 John Host Okay. Take another bat off for doctoring photographs. It's not looking good for you, Noah.

00:09:04 Noah Guest Oh, well.

00:09:05 John Host Okay. So I do—but I mean, I do see these pictures of the bathroom. And, um, they are terrifying, but not because of bats. This is a grim scene. What we have here is... uh—it—it looks like a cabin made out of old boards, with a—a fiberglass insulation roof. Some pieces of drywall haphazardly stacked against one another to form a shower. A shower curtain which, as far as I can tell, is... a navy blue towel clamped to something. And then you have a—your—I don't think

there's a single right angle in this photograph. Everything—it's like a weird, gross lean-to that you're in. It's a tearer-downer. Is it not?

00:09:54 Noah Guest It was at one point. It's slowly being resurrected.

00:09:58 John Host Oh, so you are renovating it.

00:10:01 Noah Guest Yes. As money and things come in. We're both students at the moment and not working, so it's kind of—that's why we haven't paid money to exorcise the house of the bat problem.

00:10:12 John Host What are you studying, Noah?

00:10:15 Noah Guest Instructional design and technology.

00:10:17 John Host 'Kay, that's meaningless. Adam, what are you studying?

[Noah laughs.]

00:10:20 Adam Guest Respiratory therapy.

00:10:23 John Host Respiratory therapy?

00:10:24 Adam Guest Yeah.

00:10:25 John Host Okay. So you're helping people in the world.

00:10:27 Adam Guest *[Inaudible.]*

00:10:28 John Host And you're the tough brother, obviously. Noah?

00:10:30 Noah Guest Yes.

00:10:31 John Host When you're in there, sitting down in the bathroom, tell me about a bat coming in. A real experience.

00:10:37 Noah Guest Yes. This was why I took it from that angle. Just, um, because that's what I was looking at. Where the bat is at is approximately where it came out through the wall. At the top there.

00:10:46 John Host Okay, and then I have a picture here of the corner—the top corner above the shower, where there is clearly a bat hole.

[Someone snorts.]

00:10:55 Noah Guest Yes.

00:10:56 John Host Between the top of the wall, and the piece of pink fiberglass that you are using as your roof right now.

00:11:03 Noah Guest Yes. That's where it had come out. And I was, um—well, occupied at the moment when it did, and like I had mentioned, the whole screaming and running part. But, you know...

00:11:12 John Host So tell me again. The bat starts coming out. What color is the bat?

00:11:16 Noah Guest Uh, it was... at least a darkish brown to black. I couldn't—I would say a very dark brown, probably.

00:11:24 John Host So it was not a—a golden—a giant golden, uh, head, fox bat?

00:11:30 Noah Guest With the *Weekly World News* head? No.

00:11:32 John Host Okay.

00:11:33 Noah Guest It was—that was just one that I'd found on a very quick Google Image search.

00:11:36 John Host And so when it crawled out, what did it do next?

00:11:38 Noah Guest Uh, came straight for my face.

00:11:42 John Host Did it look around and say, "Oh my god, it's gross in here. Goodbye"?

00:11:45 Noah Guest No, I think they were part of the renovation problem. So, yeah. They—I think that they're used to it.

00:11:50 John Host It came—so it came straight at your face? Really?

00:11:53 Noah Guest Well, that was kind of a—if you see the picture, it was pretty much just a straight—that was just the first straight path for it to come at. It didn't really have a lot of room.

00:12:01 John Host I don't wanna talk about the picture anymore, 'cause we've established that the picture is phony. Okay?

00:12:05 Noah Guest Yeah, I mean where I'm sitting. Where you can see—

00:12:07 John Host You might as well have sent in a Thomas Nast engraving of a bat attacking a guy.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

I don't care. I want you to draw me a word picture that is accurate, and not word-Photoshopped. Do you understand? Starting now.

00:12:17 Noah Guest Yes.

00:12:20 John Host Bat comes out. Describe it to me, narratively.

00:12:21 Noah Guest Yes. Okay. It was a smallish bat, probably about the size of my fist.

00:12:25 John Host Start by saying it was a—no. You don't know how—I'm a professional writer. Listen to me.

00:12:29 Noah Guest Okay.

00:12:30 John Host Start by saying, "It was a dark and stormy night."

00:12:32 Noah Guest Yes. It was... a dark and stormy night.

00:12:34 John Host Okay.

00:12:35 Noah Guest It wasn't, actually. But yes, the bat crawled out. It was probably—it was after dusk, probably when they were out feeding and moving around. It may have become lost trying to get out of the attack, to go eat mosquitos and whatnot.

00:12:49 John Host Mm-hm.

00:12:50 Noah Guest I heard the rustling in the wall area that goes from the basement up through that shower.

00:12:56 John Host Mm-hm.

00:12:57 Noah Guest And then I—it emerged from that area, and flew straight towards me. It then kind of just bounced around in that area until I was able to kind of jump out and run for the living room.

00:13:11 John Host Did it bang its gross, mousy, greasy body against your face?

00:13:17 Noah Guest It did not. I was lucky in that way.

00:13:18 John Host Did it make any contact with you whatsoever?

00:13:21 Noah Guest No.

00:13:22 John Host Alright. And what—and what sound did you make as this was happening?

00:13:26 Noah Guest Uh, I don't know—I think it's like the Confederate Yell, where you

can't really make it unless you're in that situation. But I imagine it was very high-pitched, and not very manly.

00:13:35 John Host Okay. Let's do it this way. I'm a bat, you make the sound.

[John imitates a bat flapping its wings.]

That's the sound of my wings—

00:13:42 Noah Guest *[High-pitched]* Eeee!

00:13:43 John Host What? Are you a bat, too?

00:13:45 Noah Guest No, that was the kind of eek that would come out. It was a very girlish—

00:13:48 John Host Come on. No. Take another bat off the scale! Don't Photoshop it, just do it. What did it—what do you sound like when you scream? We need to—we need to, uh, get a sense of this.

00:13:59 Noah Guest I don't scream enough to really be able to tell you what it was like. It's probably like, "Whoa!"

00:14:03 John Host Okay.

00:14:04 Noah Guest And... yeah.

00:14:05 John Host Alright. So you weren't that scared.

Adam, describe to me the bat problem you have in your house. Are there a lot of bats, or is this a one-time occurrence?

00:14:17 Adam Guest *[Unfazed]* Approximately every three months, one comes out until I kill it.

00:14:20 John Host What?!

[Jesse cracks up. John laughs quietly. The audio briefly cuts out mid-laughter.]

Okay. One comes out every three months, until you kill it. Every three months a bat emerges, from the bathroom?

00:14:39 Adam Guest No. Um, I've had 'em come out through my room. Basically, this house was originally built in around 1890, and then the people that added onto it just kinda put rooms in places. One of my closets used to be the exterior.

00:14:54 John Host Uh-huh.

00:14:56 Adam Guest So like, there's siding inside the closet. It's, you know, a hodge-podge house, basically. And—

00:15:02 John Host What's that supposed to mean, sir?

00:15:04 Adam Guest Like if you took two or three different houses and kind of put 'em together.

00:15:08 John Host Oh, a hodge-podge house?

00:15:10 Adam Guest Yeah.

00:15:11 John Host Three bats off. Take three bats. That's offensive.

00:15:14 Adam Guest Wh... what? *[Laughs.]* Oh. I get it.

00:15:17 John Host Offensive. Yeah.

00:15:18	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: Okay. Anyways, so they're coming from different areas.
			John: Alright. Alright. So it's basically—
00:15:22	John	Host	It's the Winchester Mystery House that you're living in. Bunch of different rooms added onto one another. There was no code observed when building it.
00:15:30	Adam	Guest	Doubtful.
00:15:31	John	Host	Okay.
00:15:32	Jesse	Host	Let's take a quick break from this classic episode of <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> .
00:15:36	Sound Effect	Transition	[Three gavel bangs.]
00:15:39	Promo	Clip	Music: Ethereal, sustained bells.
			Benjamin Partridge: <i>The Beef and Dairy Network</i> is a multi-award-winning comedy podcast here on Maximum Fun. And I would recommend you listen to it. But don't just take it from me. What do the listeners have to say?
			[Two internal phone signals.]
			Speaker 1: I would rather stick a corkscrew inside my ear, twist it around, and pull out my ear canal like a cork, than listen to your stupid podcast ever again. <u>Please</u> stop contacting me.
			Speaker 2: Hell would freeze over before I recommended this podcast, <i>The Beef and Dairy Network</i> , to <u>anyone</u> .
			Speaker 1: Not in a million years. Actually, scratch that. Um, make it a <u>billion</u> years. No, how long's infinity?
			Benjamin: That's <i>The Beef and Dairy Network Podcast</i> , available at MaximumFun.org and at all good, and some bad, podcast platforms.
			Speaker 1: Disgusting.
			[Music stops.]
00:16:23	Sound Effect	Transition	[Three gavel bangs.]
00:16:25	Jesse	Host	Welcome back to a classic episode of <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> . Let's go back into our time machine, in 2012.
00:16:34	John	Host	And so bats will emerge from <u>any</u> place, once every three months or so. And then describe to me what—how do you—what do you do? How do you take care of these things?
00:16:43	Adam	Guest	Uh, I think the first time it happened, I was asleep, and then I noticed a bat coming at me. So I... laid there trying to figure out if I was still asleep, and then I got up and got a book, and hit it.
00:16:56	John	Host	And—
00:16:57	Adam	Guest	And that's basically—variations of that have happened sometimes. Basically any flat, aerodynamic object becomes a cudgel.
00:17:04	John	Host	And when you say the bat was coming at you, like, was it—
00:17:08	Adam	Guest	Well—

00:17:09 John Host Was it crawling up your chest? Or was it fluttering around?

00:17:11 Adam Guest No, just—it just flew near enough to me to startle me.

00:17:17 John Host Did it look like it was freaking out, and was trying to get out, or did it look like it was coming at you?

00:17:23 Adam Guest No, I think they're trying to get out.

00:17:24 John Host Mm-hm.

00:17:25 Adam Guest And I've actually a couple times tried to, you know, usher them out. But they don't cooperate, so eventually, since I don't want rabies, I end up, you know, killing them.

00:17:33 John Host Well, right. I mean, that's an important thing. Right? Because bats are vectors for a lot of different diseases. Most humans who get rabies get them from bats, according to my research. They also are a vector for, uh, the respiratory ailment known as SARS, which I would think could—would concern you, as a repertor—uh, respiratory therapist in training. You don't wanna have to trach yourself, do you?

00:17:57 Adam Guest No, I think it'd concern anybody with lungs. So—

00:18:00 John Host So why do you—so why do you wanna live with these bats?

00:18:03 Adam Guest I don't necessarily want to. We've looked into getting them done, and areas around here say they don't do that. The people we've contacted.

00:18:11 John Host Really??

00:18:12 Adam Guest I just wanna throw some poison up in the attics, and I've been, uh, vetoed.

00:18:15 John Host Oh, I'm—I'm perfectly confident that you are willing and eager to take matters into your own hands. With poison and cudgels. *[Stifles laughter.]* But is there really—

00:18:24 Adam Guest I'm very pragmatic.

[Adam and John laugh.]

00:18:26 John Host Yeah. Yeah. I—I'm sure you would trach all these bats to death in one night, if you had—if you were given leave to. But if you, uh—but there's no professional exterminator that you've researched that will take care of all these bats?

00:18:38 Adam Guest Not yet. I'm sure there—

00:18:39 Noah Guest Not in our price range.

00:18:41 John Host Ohhh, okay. That's a different story. Noah, what's your take on this?

00:18:46 Noah Guest Uh, there are none very close. There's some within maybe 40 miles or so, but they are charging more than we're willing to spend at this point, not having jobs.

00:18:57 John Host Everyone knows you live in the scary bat house of Kansas. What's the town again?

00:19:01 Noah Guest Paola.

00:19:02 John Host Paola.

00:19:03 Noah Guest Yes.

00:19:04 John Host Payola, Kansas? Like P-A-Y-O-L-A?

00:19:08 Noah Guest P-A-O-L-A.

00:19:10 John Host Oh, Paola. Okay. Uh, the—you know, you live in the creepy house—you live in the creepy bat house of Paola, Kansas. You're the two brothers who were fool enough to buy this place. No one's ever gonna go, uh, a bat-wing's length near it. But if they're not giving an estimate, how do you know that it's outta your price range?

00:19:29 Noah Guest Well, they wouldn't look around to really pin it down, but they said just the bare minimum would be about \$400. Just for them to look around, and—and that wasn't—just kinda off the top of their head.

00:19:42 John Host Right. And you guys are living in a fiberglass and drywall shack full of bats.

[One or both litigants laugh quietly.]

Sooo I'm just gonna stipulate that \$400 is more than you are able to pay for the peace of mind.

00:19:56 Adam Guest No, I'd pay that if that was, you know, for the job, not to just come and look.

00:20:00 John Host What's the maximum amount you would pay? To get the bats out?

00:20:03 Adam Guest About \$600.

00:20:04 John Host Six hundred dollars. Okay. 'Cause at that point, they're gonna be doing with fancy machines what you could just do with a dictionary, right, sir?

00:20:12 Adam Guest Or poison.

[Jesse or Noah laughs quietly.]

00:20:13 John Host Or—what kind of poison would you put up there?

00:20:16 Adam Guest I don't know. Like, the—those bombs they put, you know—when they put in when they tent a house.

00:20:22 John Host Uh-huh.

00:20:23 Adam Guest I figure that should kill pretty much anything.

00:20:25 John Host Right. But your house has completely porous walls. There's no way a bug bomb is gonna work in there. What—

00:20:31 Adam Guest I don't know. I mean, you throw a couple of them in there, it should be alright.

00:20:33 John Host So Noah, your brother seems extremely eager to pump your house full of toxins and try to take care of this bat problem. Why is that not sufficient for you?

00:20:42 Noah Guest Uh, well, in addition to being a coward, I also would prefer not to harm animals if at all possible.

00:20:48 John Host What?!

00:20:49 Adam Guest *[Glumly]* Yeah.

00:20:50 Noah Guest They're not—I mean, they're good for the—you know, getting mosquitoes and everything else. They didn't ask for us to move in. I mean, they're not malicious in their intent. They're just confused, and visiting where we'd prefer not to have them.

00:21:02 John Host So what solution do you propose?

00:21:04 Noah Guest If we could bat-proof the house at some point, to where they could get out, but not come back in. So basically just make them homeless, but not dead.

00:21:13 John Host Noah, how are—bat-proof the house? How are you gonna—? So there's a colony of bats clearly living—you have a basement?

00:21:20 Adam Guest Yeah.

00:21:21 Noah Guest Yes.

00:21:22 John Host Okay. And you think that's where the bats are?

00:21:23 Adam Guest No.

00:21:24 Noah Guest Uh, they're—they have access through the attic, basement, and all over. They run the house. It's—yeah.

00:21:30 Adam Guest They're most likely in the chimney. That, from research, seems to be where they go in older houses.

00:21:34 John Host So you've done some research into bats?

00:21:37 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Noah:** Mm-hm.

Adam: Yes.

00:21:38 Adam Guest It's not uncommon, apparently. Just... uncommon to keep them there.

[Jesse laughs.]

00:21:43 John Host And so how—how could you possibly, without—

[Jesse laughs harder.]

Just, as an alternative...

[Jesse is losing it. John stifles laughter.]

As an al—okay, Bailiff Jesse? I think you have been bitten by a bat, and you've now gotten laughing rabies.

00:22:02 Jesse Host *[Recovering]* "It's just uncommon to keep them there..."

[One or both litigants laugh quietly.]

00:22:06 John Host But I don't know that—

00:22:07 Jesse Host 'Cause there's bats in their house! That's why!

00:22:09 Noah Guest I'd prefer they be just relocated, but not slaughtered.

00:22:14 John Host Sure.

00:22:15 Noah Guest And just for maybe the fact that I know with Adam's method of beating them with whatever seems to be handy, uh, that some of the diseases can be transmitted through saliva and blood, which he could easily be covered in, so I would, you know, kind of prefer to urge them out.

00:22:29 John Host I—in my mind, I pictured him covered in saliva and blood right now.

[Someone snorts.]

That was the mental picture that I had.

00:22:36 Noah Guest I haven't seen him lately. It's possible.

00:22:39 John Host Uh, and how are you guys—what are you guys, at the public library? How are you reaching me via computer? You live in a room full—a shack full of holes and bats. *[Stifling laughter]* You have broadband up in there?

00:22:51 Noah Guest Yes.

00:22:52 John Host Huh. Yeah. I wonder what your priorities really are. So you wanna get rid of the bats. What's the method that you're gonna suggest?

00:23:00 Noah Guest I guess I'd—um, just waiting until they're out. I've looked at sealing up holes and things, but giving them some kind of exit when they go out to feed at night, and then sealing it up so they can't come back in.

00:23:12 Adam Guest Or a drum circle. Whatever. *[Sighs.]*

00:23:15 John Host Okay. Uh, I don't know! That mean—that seems like a more or less effective method. If you seal up the holes in the bathroom, right?

00:23:26 Noah Guest Mm-hm.

00:23:27 John Host And if you seal up all the other holes that the bats are coming through—which I would recommend you do anyway, right? And then you I guess wait. Maybe you both climb onto the roof. And wait until dark of night, and watch all the bats fly out of the chimney. And then seal up the chimney. Would they—wouldn't that solve the problem, Adam?

00:23:51 Adam Guest No, because one, we don't have a count of them. Two, they're like mice. They can squeeze their body and get through lots of areas. It's not really feasible. I mean, without basically plastering the entire house over, you know, from the foundation up. It's not gonna happen. It would go into many thousands of dollars, rather than... poison.

00:24:13 John Host Well—just before—just to consider your hypothetical bat accost further, if you were to poison them all, Adam, wouldn't that mean your house would be packed full of bat corpses that would just rot there?

00:24:27 Adam Guest Yeah.

00:24:29 John Host Well, does—do you happen to know whether professional bat removal actually removes the carcasses of the bats?

00:24:37 Adam Guest I'm not sure, no. I don't know.

00:24:40 John Host Okay.

00:24:41 Noah Guest I believe they do, but if we don't seal up the house, then there's—they're just gonna—a new brood will come in at some point.

00:24:48 John Host What do you mean? There's another gang of bats next door just waiting to move in once these guys are killed?

00:24:54 Noah Guest Could be. I—I haven't kept tabs on the bat population.

00:24:58 John Host So let me just make sure I understand. Noah, you're saying you wanna go through a house-sealing-up process and hope that the bats self-deport, basically, right?

00:25:10 Noah Guest To urge them along that way, but in the meantime, don't make it easy for them to come out of that bathroom area and surprise us.

00:25:17 John Host How would you accomplish that?

00:25:19 Noah Guest Keeping the lights on, and keeping the door closed. If you see that one picture where I have cardboard blocking the top area, so they can't squeeze through.

00:25:29 John Host Oh, yeah. You really know how to do it up nice, that's for sure.

00:25:32 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Noah:** We're good.

Adam: Finish the ceiling.

00:25:33 John Host Yeah. You're like the Renovation Brothers on HGTV. "You know how I got some cardboard and I put that up? Here's what I see." Is that the Renovation Brothers, Jesse? What are those two weird Canadian dudes? One of 'em's a magician.

00:25:46 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* Wait a minute.

00:25:48 John Host Property Brothers!

00:25:49 Jesse Host You're just describing Cirque du Soleil.

00:25:52 John Host *[Stifles laughter.]* Well, no, it's true! *Property Brothers.* Two Canadian guys go around renovating houses, and one of 'em's a part-time stage magician in Las Vegas. You can tell he's the magician 'cause he's got blond highlights. And, uh—*[laughs]*—and they go around describing their vision. And you're like those guys. Like, "Let's just put up some cardboard."

I see the cardboard here, and the duct tape solution.

00:26:17 Adam Guest Yes.

00:26:18 John Host Guys, I have to ask you, what's your long-term plan for this house?

00:26:20 Adam Guest That's not representative of the rest of the house. But there was mold in there when we got it, and it just hasn't—the ceiling hasn't been put up. That's due to, basically, laziness and procrastination.

00:26:31 Noah Guest Yeah, most of the house is much nicer than that. That's just—I think they're coming through there because that is the open area.

00:26:39 John Host Well, how much would it cost for you to finish this bathroom? Why don't you just finish this bathroom up good?

00:26:44 Noah Guest I'm not sure how much it would cost. We'd have to look into that.

00:26:48 Adam Guest Not very much. We have the ceiling materials.

00:26:51 John Host So it's just through laziness and procrastination?

00:26:53 Adam Guest Pretty much.

00:26:54 Noah Guest In part.

00:26:55 John Host Whose laziness, and whose procrastination?

00:26:57 Adam Guest Both, for both.

00:26:58 Noah Guest It's a group effort.

[Adam laughs.]

00:27:00 John Host The two of you are fixing this up yourselves?

00:27:02 Adam Guest No. Obviously not. *[Laughs.]* My dad is going to help us with it. Neither of us is very happy. I've started on it, but if I do it, it'll just be...

it'll be done, but it'll be ugly.

00:27:17 John Host Okay. Uh, I think I have everything I need to make my decision. Uh, let me go into chambers. Jesse, clear the chambers of snakes and bats. I'll go in there, and I'll hide for a little while, and then I'll come back.

00:27:30 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape.]*

00:27:31 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

00:27:36 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

00:27:38 Jesse Host Noah, can you sleep at night with the constant threat of bat attacks?

00:27:43 Noah Guest It's difficult, because they also come out right next to my bedroom here, and I hear them in the walls of my bedroom. So it's a little scary.

00:27:51 Jesse Host Have you thought about renting?

00:27:54 Noah Guest That'd be—that would be more expensive. This is a very cheap—our house payment's maybe \$200 a month, so it's kind of a tradeoff.

00:28:00 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* Holy mackerel! So this is actually a cheaper solution than living in a car.

00:28:11 Noah Guest Probably! If it was a halfway decent car, yes.

00:28:14 Jesse Host Wow. Adam, are you really more lazy than you are afraid of being attacked by a bat while you're asleep?

00:28:24 Adam Guest No, I'm less handy than I am anything. But yeah, it doesn't really bother me that much. It happens on occasion, and finishing the bathroom just fixes that one room. Like I said, they've come in through my room a couple times. They go up through other areas. Killing the bat's the solution to that.

00:28:43 Jesse Host Wouldn't the bats just—wouldn't different bats just come? If you killed the bats that were in the house?

00:28:47 Adam Guest That's Noah's theory. I don't know.

00:28:50 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* Adam, I get the impression that there's not a lot that bothers you.

00:28:57 Adam Guest Uh, I guess not. *[Laughs.]*

00:28:59 Jesse Host *[Stifling laughter]* When you say that you've lived in places that were worse—

00:29:03 Adam Guest I lived in a basement that flooded on occasion, 'cause of a slum lord, in college. So yeah, this is better than being constantly sick due to mildew.

00:29:11 Jesse Host Fair enough! We'll see what Judge John Hodgman has to say. Before we get to the verdict, I'm gonna head over to the chambers—

00:29:18 Adam Guest Alright.

00:29:19 Jesse Host —so that the judge and I can, uh, briefly discuss the MaxFunDrive.

00:29:23 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door opens and shuts.]*

00:29:25 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:29:27 Promo Clip *[Radio interference followed by laidback music with a snare drum beat. A phone rings as the DJ speaks.]*

Radio DJ: Welcome back to *Fireside Chat* on KMAX. With me in-studio to take your calls is the dopest duo on the West Coast, Oliver Wang and Morgan Rhodes.

[Click.]

Go ahead, caller.

Caller: Hey. Uh, I'm looking for a music podcast that's insightful and thoughtful, but like, also helps me discover artists and albums that I've never heard of.

Morgan Rhodes: Yeah, man. Sounds like you need to listen to *Heat Rocks*. Every week, myself—and I'm Morgan Rhodes—and my co-host here, Oliver Wang, talk to influential guests about a canonical album that has changed their lives.

Oliver Wang: Guests like Moby, Open Mike Eagle, talk about albums by Prince, Joni Mitchell, and so much more.

Caller: Yooo! What's that show called again?

Morgan: *Heat Rocks*. Deep dives into hot records.

Oliver: Every Thursday on Maximum Fun.

[Music suddenly gives way to static and a dial tone.]

00:30:13	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:30:16	Jesse	Host	Please rise as Judge John Hodgman re-enters the courtroom.
00:30:17	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Door opens. Chairs scrape. Door shuts.]</i>
00:30:22	John	Host	Guys. You gotta do something about these bats.
			<i>[John stifles laughter, Jesse laughs.]</i>
00:30:26	Jesse	Host	They're inside your house!
00:30:28	John	Host	I lived for a period of time in a house that was infested with, uh, mice. Which are very similar to bats, except less creepy. And I can understand how even good-intentioned people can come to live as animals.

[Someone snorts. Jesse laughs.]

As the presence of an invasive species seems more and more intractable and normal, and such that you do not pause when you open your silverware drawer to find it, uh, full of rolling mouse feces. Nor do you pause to continue to invite friends over for weekends in the country! And serve them food from silverware that has touched mouse feces! This is a terrible, terrible, uh, animalistic spiral, that the two species are going through together. You are being dragged down to a Winchester Mystery House–style craziness by these bats. And I don't think the bats are enjoying it very much, either.

[One of the litigants laughs.]

The two of you have to end this codependent relationship as soon as possible, and you need to begin living again like humans. In many ways, *[stifles laughter]* the problem is not that you're living with bats. The most interesting problem is that you're living with each other!

00:31:54 Adam Guest

Yeah.

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:31:56 Noah Guest

I would agree, yeah.

00:31:57 John Host

It's—you guys have very different—different worldviews, and I'm trying to put my finger on exactly what pop cultural reference I can make, but there may not be one! You're certainly not the same—

00:32:07 Noah Guest

The Rabies-Infested Odd Couple.

00:32:09 John Host

Yeah! Alright, there you go! See, this is what I'm saying! *Rabies-Infested Odd Couple!* That's better than anything I could've come up with. Who's that?

00:32:17 Noah Guest

Noah.

00:32:18 John Host

Alright, Noah. You—*[stifles laughter]*—you seem to be the one with your finger on the pulse of entertainment. Here's what you're gonna do.

00:32:24 Noah Guest

Yes, I—I have no life. Yes, I agree.

00:32:25 John Host

Here's what you're gonna do. You are gonna call up—I don't care who it is. TLC. Discovery.

[One of the litigants laughs.]

History Channel. It's gotta be a historical—is there any history to this house?

00:32:37 Noah Guest

I've—haven't researched. It's old enough to be—

00:32:38 John Host

Well—

00:32:39 Noah Guest

—but we're in a area that it's probably just very... sad.

00:32:43 John Host

Let me put it—*[laughs]*—let me put it this way. Is there anything in the house that you could potentially sell at a pawn shop?

00:32:50 Noah Guest

Mm, no. If there was anything at that point, then it was taken whenever we moved in.

00:32:55 John Host

I'm trying to—I'm trying to help you here.

00:32:58 Noah Guest

Yes, I understand.

00:32:59 John Host

Just say, "Yeah, I suppose there's something."

00:33:00 Noah Guest

Sure, there's gotta be something.

00:33:02 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Adam: There's Transformers.

John: Great. Then it's for the History Channel.

00:33:04 John Host

HGTV. You call them up, you explain to them. "It's like *Rabies-Infested Odd Couple*. We're the Bat Brothers! We live in a crazy, foreclosed home full of bats. And every now and then, they come out and frighten us. And one of us screams like a baby, and the other one smashes it with an OED. Come down and film this. Just give us enough money to take care of the bats!"

[Stifles laughter.]

Because here's the thing. There is a big part of me that really wants to tell Adam, "Go for it! Bug bomb those bats out of existence!" Uh, because I think it would be amusing. *[Stifles laughter.]* To him.

[Noah laughs.]

00:33:45 Adam Guest

Yeah.

00:33:46 John Host

And, uh—and would go a long way to getting rid of the problem. But I don't think a solution to this problem involves adding onto this house that is plugged up with cardboard and fiberglass, the problem of walls and basements full of bat corpses slowly decaying. I don't think that's gonna be a good solution.

But you really do need to get rid of the bats, because—you know, I don't mean to be... alarmist. There are those who believe that bats come into your house—it's a superstition. Uh, that that is an omen of your death. I do not believe in that. But I—it is the case that bats are vectors for a lot of different diseases. Bat bites can be very subtle, and you might not detect them until it's too late to be properly vaccinated against rabies. It's a big deal. This is not a way that you wanna live your life.

Um, so I order you—and I order everyone in the audience—to contact everyone you know at every cable channel, and encourage them to contact the Bat Brothers, via me, to do an episode of some TV show. Or maybe even a series. *The Deadliest Bats*.

[One or both litigants laugh.]

And allow that to subsidize the bat removal that these guys aren't willing to pay for. And if that does not come to fruition, I am telling you guys: put a bat jar aside. And every time your brother kills something, or every time your other brother screams, put \$5 in there, and raise the money to get some professional bat removal experts down there and get rid of it. Or else you don't deserve to live—

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

—in a ramshackle shack. This is the sound of a gavel.

[Imitating a bat screeching] "Wee! Wee! Wee!"

Judge John Hodgman rules; that is all.

[Three gavel bangs]

00:35:50 Jesse Host

Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

00:35:52 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[Door opens. Chairs scrape.]

00:35:55 Jesse Host

Noah, Adam, you're... living in nightmarish squalor. *[Laughs.]* But at least you have the comfort of a firm decision. Right?

00:36:07 Noah Guest

Yes, it's more cut and dried than many that I've heard from this podcast.

00:36:12 Jesse Host Noah, has Adam ever not grumbled about anything? Like, if I told Adam I was getting him a Maserati for his birthday, would he grumble about that?

00:36:24 Noah Guest Um, you heard that he likes to beat things with blunt objects, and I live in the same house. What would you answer?

00:36:30 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* Well, Noah, Adam, I—I hope we've helped a little bit.

[One of the litigants laughs quietly.]

Thank you very much for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:36:39 Noah Guest Yeah, thank you.

00:36:40 Adam Guest When's that Maserati coming?

[Jesse laughs.]

Put that in with the TLC or whatever deal.

00:36:47 John Host And, uh—and with all due respect, Jesse?

00:36:51 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:36:52 John Host The next time you have another child, or you have to go to Europe to put on some ties and special socks, or whatever it is you do that takes you away from this podcast from time to time, I would like to recruit Adam as a new guest bailiff in the future.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:37:08 Jesse Host *[Stifling laughter]* I think Adam is much better equipped to be the bailiff than I am!

00:37:11 Adam Guest Yeah, thank you.

00:37:12 Noah Guest Later, guys.

00:37:13 John Host Good luck with the bats!

00:37:15 Adam Guest Take care.

00:37:16 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:37:18 John Host So that was our classic episode! I would dare say, Jesse Thorn, that you as a vintage enthusiast—you might call it a vintage episode.

[Jesse laughs.]

A flea market episode of *Judge John Hodgman*, if you will! Uh, if you—

00:37:30 Jesse Host All *Judge John Hodgman* episodes are flea market episodes, let's be honest.

00:37:34 John Host That's true. That's true. When it comes down to it—*[laughs]*—you know, I kinda wish that this were true, that it was just you and me and a ratty card table in a middle of a parking lot, selling podcasts.

[Jesse laughs.]

On a Sunday afternoon.

00:37:45 Jesse Host You know what, John? Flea market episode may be too generous. Swap meet episode.

[John cracks up.]

We are selling tube socks at the drive-in movie theater.

00:37:55 John Host *[Recovers.]* But if you wanna catch up with what the Bat Brothers were doing at least in 2013, go to our show page at MaximumFun.org. There's a follow-up interview from a year later. And if you wanna know at least what Noah Bat Brother is up to these days, you can join me in following him on Instagram. He's NoahKSturdevant. N-O-A-H-K-S-T-U-R-D-E-V-A-N-T.

The brothers no longer live together. Noah has traveled the world. Has a child. And they're all doing fine, and the bats in that house are free to live.

[Both laugh.]

Uh—

00:38:32 Jesse Host They actually ended up selling the house to the bats.

00:38:35 John Host That's right. *[Stifles laughter.]* The bats—and you know what? The bats flipped it.

[Jesse laughs.]

The bats totally—

00:38:39 Jesse Host Put in some of that horizontal fencing.

00:38:42 John Host Yeah. Yeah. They got, uh—they put subway tile on the kitchen walls, broke it out into an open living space, and they flipped it for a lot of bat money. Luckily, none of the bats were Draculas. I looked into it, Jesse. None of the bats were Draculas.

00:38:56 Jesse Host Thank goodness.

00:38:57 John Host However you're feeling out there in the world about the world, I hope you enjoyed this vintage episode of *Judge John Hodgman*. Jesse Thorn, my bailiff and yours, and I shall return next week with a brand new episode of *Judge John Hodgman*. Until then, please take good care!

00:39:13 Jesse Host Our producer is the ever-capable Jennifer Marmor. Back then, it was the great Julia Smith! You can find us, of course, on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com). You can find us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com). And you can submit your cases at MaximumFun.org/jiho. We do not accept cases against, uh, elected officials. Unless the elected official is down. I mean, if the elected official is into it, uh, we might.

00:39:42 John Host *[Laughs.]* Uh—yeah, you can—look at this! Here's—Noah posted a photo from 2019. "Look what I found in a used bookstore in Bangkok" on his 40th birthday. A copy of *The Areas of my Expertise!* This—if nothing else, this episode reminds us that time is a thing. It does pass. And things do change.

00:40:00 Jesse Host And we'll talk to you next week on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:40:02	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:40:05	Music	Transition	A cheerful ukulele chord.
00:40:06	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
00:40:08	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
00:40:09	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
00:40:10	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.