

00:00:01	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:00:03	Jesse Thorn	Host	Welcome to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. We're in chambers this week, clearing the docket, and with me as always is the once and future personal computer, Judge John Hodgman.
00:00:16	John Hodgman	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> The truth can be told!
00:00:20	Jesse	Host	Yeah.
00:00:21	John	Host	It's true! It's true.
00:00:23	Jesse	Host	I see you as the human personification of the IBM PC XT that I had at home.
00:00:30	John	Host	I'll tell you something. A long time ago in a little town called Brookline, Massachusetts, a young John Kellogg Hodgman... in 1984... had a decision to make. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> Literally. Mac or PC?
			<i>[Jesse chuckles.]</i>
			At that point it was not Mac, right? In early 1980—well, no, I guess it was probably—probably 1983. 'Cause the decision was an Apple II or an IBM. And, uh, I'm trying to remember... John Lin had an Apple II. But John Wolf had an IBM clone. And it was <u>very</u> hard for me to decide. 'Cause both had different games. Apple II had, um, <i>Track &amp; Field</i> . Where to run, you had hit the spacebar all the time. I'm still really good at that.
			<i>[John mimics rapid-fire keyboard impacts with his mouth.]</i>
			And then John Wolf had a game—it may have been <i>Castle Wolfenstein</i> , the orig.
00:01:33	Jesse	Host	Mm-hm.
00:01:34	John	Host	But in any case, the— <i>[laughs]</i> —the thing—the reason that I was leaning towards an IBM PC at the time was... the keys were clickier.
00:01:46	Jesse	Host	Yeah...
00:01:47	John	Host	You know what I mean?
00:01:49	Jesse	Host	Yeah.
00:01:50	John	Host	It had those clicky keys that had the really good key action! Click-click-click-click-click-click! They'd bounce right back up!
00:01:54	Jesse	Host	I mean, John, not to brag, but...
			<i>[Jesse types loudly for several seconds. Lots of clicking and clacking.]</i>
00:02:01	John	Host	You've got clicky keys?!
00:02:02	Jesse	Host	Yeah, I got clicky keys, homie.
00:02:05	John	Host	You got a clicky key—special clicky key keyboard?
00:02:08	Jesse	Host	Yeah, but don't email me, clicky key enthusiasts. Because now it's like a thing where you build your own clicky keys, and blah blah blah blah blah blah. I'm not that deep.

00:02:16 John Host Right.  
00:02:17 Jesse Host I just found it at a thrift store.  
00:02:19 John Host Yeah. But do email him, clicky key misophonia sufferers.

*[Both laugh.]*

Anyway! I was about to press the clicky key on the side of IBM PC. But then a young John Hodgman—then in 1984... spending a weekend with my mom's old nursing school comrade Eleanor Clifford, out there in Worcester, Massachusetts. I'm watching television. The sports game is on. I don't care. An ad comes on television, directed by Ridley Scott. The famous 1984 Apple Computer ad introducing the Macintosh!

And I said, "That's for me." And so my fate was born. I told my father, "Please get a—get me a Macintosh computer."

And he said, "Of course, son. You are my master."

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

That's not exactly how it worked. *[Chuckles.]*

00:03:14 Jesse Host I had an Apple II, John.  
00:03:15 John Host Did you really?  
00:03:16 Jesse Host I had an Apple II Plus.  
00:03:17 John Host Woo!  
00:03:18 Jesse Host Yeah, not to brag! One step up!  
00:03:19 John Host Oh, yeah!  
00:03:20 Jesse Host My mom—when I asked for a computer, my mom had a computer nerd friend.  
00:03:23 John Host Yeah.  
00:03:25 Jesse Host And they went to a computer show to buy it used, because my mom couldn't afford to buy it new. And, um, this was a few years—*[stifles laughter]* this was after the launch of the Macintosh that I had an Apple II.  
00:03:37 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm. Mm-hm. Mm-hm. Right.  
00:03:38 Jesse Host But that was the—that was the last Apple computer that I used regularly. I later attended a middle school that—where all the other kids had Apples—  
00:03:50 John Host Yeah.  
00:03:51 Jesse Host —and it forever cemented in my head the unfair idea that Macs are for rich kids.  
00:03:58 John Host Sorry. I'm like a—I'm like a, uh, android in, uh, *Westworld*. What you just said means nothing to me.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

I'm sorry, I couldn't even—it was like garbled clicky keys or something. I don't even—was that even language?

00:04:09 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* They're great computers. Wonderful computers.

00:04:13 John Host So, for our non-middle-aged audience, Jesse was making reference to a series of ads that I was very lucky to be a part of for Apple Computer between 2006 and January 2010. That was our last shooting day. Ooh, I remember it... In which I played the personification of the PC—Mr. Clicky Keys—and Justin Long played the personification of the Mac Computer! And you know, when they hired me for this ad, I'm like, "I have to be the Mac! I have this whole story about clicky keys, and the—and the—seeing the ad!"

They're like, "No, we actually want a young, good-looking person to do it." *[Laughs.]*

"Oh, I guess that makes sense."

*[John and/or Jesse laughs quietly.]*

Time of my life. Greatest job—one of the greatest jobs I ever had, aside from podcasting with you, Jesse Thorn.

00:04:51 Jesse Host Thanks, John.

00:04:52 John Host And all of you listeners. And, uh—and I was just talking with Justin on his podcast, *Life is Short*. We had a really lovely conversation talking about that time in our life. And J—*[laughs]*—and I kept saying to J—Justin kept making jokes, and I'm like, "I'm not gonna make a joke about those ads, 'cause I wanna do 'em again." For... a decade. I have been waiting every day for the call. *[Stifles laughter.]*

And then two Sundays ago... it happened! They called me up! They said, "Shave your fat face, John."

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

"We need you. You're going in." So delightful, and weird, and surreal. I mean, it was very, very—you know, I—I wish Justin had been there. I wish Phil Morrison had been there. But they just needed a little PC cameo for their most recent Apple keynote. And so there—here I am now, talking to you on Zoom with—desperately trying to grow this beard back.

00:05:45 Jesse Host And desperately trying to dispense justice!

00:05:47 John Host Oh—! Alright! Let's clicky-key our way to a good segue!

00:05:53 Jesse Host Here's something from Sam. He says:

"My wife and I were recently at home, trying to figure out what to eat for lunch. For dinner the previous night I made Marcella Hazan's bolognese, which takes quite a bit of time, effort, and care. I assumed we would have the leftovers for dinner, and could just make eggs or something for lunch."

*[John snorts.]*

"My wife thought we should have the bolognese, and found my reluctance bewildering."

*[John snorts again.]*

"For me, lunch is a utilitarian meal, whereas dinner is to be savored and enjoyed. To eat the bolognese for lunch instead of dinner would have been basically wasting it. My wife's argument was that we were hungry, there was good food in the house, and we should eat it no matter the meal. Who's right?"

00:06:36 John Host

*[Laughs.]* I just—first of all, I have to comment on Sam's contempt for eggs.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

"Just have eggs or something for lunch." I eat scrambled eggs any time.

Jesse, it's coming up on lunchtime there in Los Angeles for you. Do you have an idea of what you're gonna have for lunch?

00:06:52 Jesse Host

Yeah, I'm gonna eat my leftovers from last night.

*[Both laugh.]*

00:06:55 John Host

It's not an uncommon thing to do!

00:06:57 Jesse Host

Last night I went to my favorite restaurant, La Abeja, on Figueroa Boulevard in Los Angeles, California.

00:07:03 John Host

Yeah.

00:07:04 Jesse Host

Picked up my favorite meal from that restaurant, brought it home, ate half of it, and saved the rest for lunch the next day. I mean, I—to my mind, there are two ways of looking at this, right?

00:07:17 John Host

Yeah.

00:07:18 Jesse Host

Like, there is the question of whether... I understand the distinction that Sam is offering, between dinner being—uh, it's typically a more social meal, at least in the United States. It's typically a bigger production than lunch, at least in the United States. But I wonder if there can't be an argument made for leftovers being the easy lift. You know?

00:07:49 John Host

Yeah!

00:07:51 Jesse Host

Rather than being the special fans.

00:07:54 John Host

Being the utility play, as it were.

00:07:55 Jesse Host

Yeah.

00:07:56 John Host

Yeah.

00:07:57 Jesse Host

Exactly.

00:07:58 John Host

Yeah, I—I mean, I hear you, Sam, that lunch is utilitarian. And there's a nobility in that. I think that's true. I mean, lunch is not merely a caloric refuel in the middle of the day, but an emotional refuel. An emotionally stabilizing break between your morning work and your afternoon works. And I would argue that you're right, Sam, that while dinner is enjoyed in the company of others, and you can get away with that at lunch, too—like, the best lunches I've ever had, uh, have been alone. Staring into the middle distance. Just vegging out.

00:08:37 Jesse Host

Lonely sandwiches.

00:08:39 John Host Lonely sandwiches. The best!

But—but—I will say, and I think you're right on this, Jesse, that the kind of lingering sort of late, social dinner that you savor with a glass of wine, Italian-style, hospitaliano, kind of thing, Sam... uh, you're wr—

00:09:00 Jesse Host "When you're here, you're family," that whole story?

00:09:01 John Host Yeah! That whole story. Guess what, Sam? *[Stifles laughter.]* You're wrong, and the Olive Garden is wrong. Because when you go to the Olive Garden—*[laughs]*—I know that that's not your idea, Sam, of a—of an Italian-style, late, lingering dinner. But if you were to go to Italy and have an Italian-style, late, lingering dinner, pasta would be this tiny part of it! It wouldn't just be a bunch of bolognese on a—in a bowl!

*[Stifles laughter.]* It's named for the bowl. Did you know that? It's called "bowl-style." *[Laughs.]*

00:09:30 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:09:31 John Host It's Italian for "bowl-style."

*[One or both laugh quietly.]*

00:09:34 Jesse Host "In the style of the bowl."

00:09:35 John Host No, you just have a—the antipasti, and the contorni, and the secon—look. I don't know the Italian. Just little plates of snacks and meat spread out over the night, and one of them is pasta, a little bit. Because if you're a grown-up like me, you can't shove that amount of pasta down your body anymore! You know what's utilitarian, Jesse?

*[Long pause.]*

00:09:55 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jesse:** What's that, John?

**John:** I'm waiting for—thank you. *[Laughs.]*

00:09:59 John Host Paaasta is utilitarian!

00:10:02 Jesse Host "How hot is it?!"

00:10:03 John Host *[Stifles laughter.]* Pasta is how hot it is! Pasta's a workhorse, Sam. Now you—look. Before I was the PC... Before my life was changed by Jon Stewart kidnapping me and putting me on television, and then putting me in front of Apple Computer and changing everything, I would write about food and non-wine alcohol for *Men's Journal* magazine. That's probably the nation's most prominent and prestigious magazine about men... journaling.

00:10:31 Jesse Host Yeah, it's the basis of the film *Ratatouille*.

00:10:34 John Host That's right. Since I can't eat pasta, I got to read a lot about it today for you, Sam. And here's what I confirmed in my own memory. Pasta! It's paste! *[Laughs.]* It's literally—that's what it means. "Paste." Paste of water and flour and egg. And in the 17th century in Naples, when aristocrats were selling off wheat but hoarding meat, macaroni was not a fancy dinner! Macaroni was a survival tool, and commonly known as a beggar's food!

See the painting "Macaroni Eaters," by Domenico Gargiulo, the middle—a 17 century native of Naples, showing people literally eating pasta off the street. Like, picking it up off the floor.

What about the sauce? Well, bolognese sauce, of course, is not a sauce. *[Stifles laughter.]* And it's not named for the bowl, it's named for Bologna. It's a ragù. Like the French. Ragù. It's a stew, or more specifically a braise. You look at the Marcella Hazan variation on the classic bolognese ragù from the *New York Times* cooking website, which I did, and you'll see what's happening here. Simple ingredients. Simple. Sofrito of onion, celery, and carrot, and then meat—minced beef and pork—traditionally braised in milk, white wine, crushed tomatoes, and then simmered for hours. As you point out, for hours. A lot of care and time. But you're simmering it for hours not to be fancy, but because you are getting those flavors and textures to slowly meld and braise. And then you serve it over pasta, specifically tagliatelle.

Now, Bologna is not Naples. Right? That's where the macaroni eaters live, Naples. Bologna is about 298 miles North of Naples—as the crow flies!

*[Jesse laughs quietly. John clears his throat.]*

00:12:24 John Host

*Or—[stifles laughter]—576 kilometers driving. You do the math, 'cause I guess Google Maps won't.*

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

And Naples of course has its own ragù! The Neapolitan ragù. Which is no cream, red wine, add basil, lots of tomatoes. That's like a classic tomato sauce. The ancestor of the Italian American Sunday Gravy. And meat, obviously, but not minced. Big chunks of chuck roast and pork, and other big chunks of thrifty meat cuts. Because why do we braise? We braise—we cook low and slow in liquid to break down collagen into gelatin. That's braising. So we take cheaper cuts of meat, and we make them tender! Right? It's economical.

Or in the case of Bologna, where the meat is already minced, I would imagine that it's just to make a little bit of comparatively expensive meat go much further to enhance that super cheap utilitarian paste called "pasta."

This is what a braise—it's like chili. It's like New England pot roast. It is the ancient Italian way to stretch a lira. Slow does not mean fancy, Sam. Ask anyone at a barbecue pit.

00:13:34 John Host

Bolognese is a humble utilitarian food mothered by necessity into something absolutely transcendent and amazing. I agree with you. And I think, after all that work, there's an extra amount of pleasure in knowing that tomorrow... I don't have to do it again! I can just get up, take the leftovers, heat it up in ten minutes, and eat it! Just incredibly debauched, almost, in its pleasure.

And it's gonna taste better the next day! 'Cause braises always do! Just like burrito stumps, right, Jesse?

00:14:02 Jesse Host Yep. Marinate the stump.

00:14:03 John Host *[Inaudible.]* You gotta marinate the stump.

So I think last night's bolognese sauce is a perfect lunch for a cold afternoon. Especially when your nerves are fried by global uncertainty, and your waistline's already been blown by quarantine. Go for it. And then you can have those eggs for dinner! Because breakfast for dinner is the best dinner, and that's the recipe for a perfect day.

But guess what, Jesse?

*[Beat.]*

00:14:28 Jesse Host What?

00:14:29 John Host Tha—thank you.

00:14:30 Jesse Host How hot is it?

00:14:31 John Host *[Laughs quietly.]* This is a hot—this is gonna be a hot take. You ready for it?

00:14:34 Jesse Host How hot is it?

00:14:35 John Host It's hot as three hours of simmered bolognese. I'm finding in Sam's favor!

00:14:40 Jesse Host Wow!

00:14:42 John Host Even though he's wrong, and his wife's idea is perfectly fine and reasonable. The reason that I find in his favor is because, unless I am misreading his letter, he is the one who made this thing! "I made Marcella Hazan's bolognese." And just like the driver of the car gets to pick the music, the person who makes the bolognese doles it out.

If you wanna save that thing for dinner, that's fair. That's his labor in there. But next time, Sam's wife, you want a quick bolognese for lunch the next day, you make it yourself.

00:15:22 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:15:23 John Host It's fun! It's good. I'm gonna make it this weekend.

00:15:25 Jesse Host Let's take a break. More items on the docket coming up in just a minute on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:15:31 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:15:33 Jesse Promo *[During the promo break, the leaf blower from [last week](#) can be heard faintly in the background.]*

It's the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. Every episode of *Judge John Hodgman*, of course, is supported by the members of [MaximumFun.org](#). Now more than ever, we are grateful for your monthly support. Everyone who's gone to [MaximumFun.org/join](#). Thank you very much.

We're also, this week, supported by an old friend... and a new friend!

00:15:56 John Promo Hm!

00:15:57 Jesse Promo The new friend is Ruby Coffee. So let me tell you what happened here, John.

00:16:01	John	Promo	How hot <u>is</u> it?
00:16:02	Jesse	Promo	My— <i>[laughs]</i> —my wife is a coffee snob of the absolute peak class.
00:16:08	John	Promo	Right.
00:16:09	Jesse	Promo	She's the kind of person who cares, uh, the number of degrees of heat of her water.
00:16:14	John	Promo	Mm-hm.
00:16:15	Jesse	Promo	And the type of burr grinder she uses, and so on and so forth. She used to be a barista.
00:16:21	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:16:22	Jesse	Promo	She's very serious about her coffee. She's also... badly addicted to caffeine. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:16:27	John	Promo	Mm-hm. Mm-hm.
00:16:28	Jesse	Promo	So that combination—very, very important to her. But she's very serious about the <u>taste</u> of her coffee, too. And my wife, also, is the kind of person who... It's hard to do nice things for my wife, because, uh... you know, she's just a—she thinks of others before herself almost universally. And you know, she's not a nerd about much. You know, you can't just buy her the latest <i>Battlestar Galactica</i> book.
			<i>[John snorts.]</i>
			So last winter, I'm like, "I'm gonna go on the Internet, and find out what the <u>best</u> mail-order coffee roaster in America is. And buy their most expensive coffee beans." <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i>
00:17:06	John	Promo	Right!
00:17:07	Jesse	Promo	Which, it turned out that all coffee beans cost almost exactly the same amount of money if they're fancy. Um—uh, "And I'm gonna get them for my wife for Christmas. I'm gonna get her a couple pounds—a few pounds of coffee."
			And I found this place called Ruby Coffee Roasters, which is based in Nelsonville, Wisconsin, a city with a population of 191.
00:17:26	John	Promo	Whoa.
00:17:28	Jesse	Promo	Uh, eight of whom or whatever, or twelve of whom are coffee roasters. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:17:31	John	Promo	Right.
00:17:32	Jesse	Promo	Started by a guy who was working in fancy coffee-roasting in one of those cities that's thick with fancy coffee roasters—
00:17:38	John	Promo	Mm-hm.
00:17:39	Jesse	Promo	—and decided he wanted to go somewhere where <u>all</u> he had to focus on was roasting perfect coffee.
00:17:45	John	Promo	Right.
00:17:46	Jesse	Promo	Started this company in Wisconsin. I ordered this coffee for my wife.
00:17:49	John	Promo	Ruby Coffee.
00:17:50	Jesse	Promo	Ruby Coffee.
00:17:51	John	Promo	Yeah.



00:17:52	Jesse	Promo	She was <u>totally</u> nuts about it.
00:17:53	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:17:54	Jesse	Promo	She loved it so much. She said, "This is so wonderful. These are the notes. Blah blah blah blah blah." <i>[Laughs.]</i> You know what I mean?
00:17:59	John	Promo	Right.
00:18:00	Jesse	Promo	Things that coffee people say.
00:18:01	John	Promo	"These are the flavor notes."
00:18:02	Jesse	Promo	And I got an email—
00:18:03	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:18:04	Jesse	Promo	—from the, like, customer service line, and the guy says, "Look, we're a small company. I work here, and I'm a <u>huge</u> MaxFunster."
00:18:10	John	Promo	What serendipity!
00:18:13	Jesse	Promo	I—it was extraordinary. And you know, I'm not— <i>[laughs]</i> —this does not happen to me often. I am not a famous person! Um, but I was so grateful to hear it, and I said, "Hey, listen." This guy's name is Jesse, but it's not me. I said, "Hey, listen. Jesse."
00:18:26	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:18:27	Jesse	Promo	"How about you provide us and our office with coffee? We'll do some spots on <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> as a swap." Because my wife is totally nuts about this coffee.
00:18:35	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:18:36	Jesse	Promo	There's a few other really serious coffee people in our office.
00:18:39	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:18:40	Jesse	Promo	My colleague Kevin is really serious about his coffee. And they were nice enough to do that for us. So they're the official coffee purveyor of Maximum Fun now.
00:18:50	John	Promo	They are appointed by the monarch of Maximum Fun.
00:18:52	Jesse	Promo	Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Exactly.
00:18:53	John	Promo	To be the royal coffee purveyor of the network! Ruby Coffee Roasters.
00:18:59	Jesse	Promo	Exactly. So Ruby offers roasted-to-order coffee. It's completely fresh when it arrives at your door. They rotate their menu seasonally according to what's in season on the coffee plants. They're—you can tell them when you subscribe to mail-order coffee from them, what <u>kind</u> of coffee you like. You know, you see—some people like bright, acidic coffee.
00:19:21	John	Promo	Mm-hm!
00:19:22	Jesse	Promo	Some people like rich, chocolatey coffee. I don't know. You know, I—you'd have to ask my wife.
00:19:27	John	Promo	There are all different kinds of coffees and roasting styles, and they've got something for everybody!
00:19:34	Jesse	Promo	Exactly. And they'll send it to you—it's a very reasonable price to begin with, but the good news is if you go to <a href="http://RubyCoffeeRoasters.com">RubyCoffeeRoasters.com</a> and use the discount code "JJHo," you get 20% off your first shipment of <u>any</u> subscription, or 15% off a one-time

purchase. So you don't have to commit! You can just try a pound, see how it is! Try half a pound! Fifteen percent off.

[RubyCoffeeRoasters.com](http://RubyCoffeeRoasters.com). Discount code "JJHo."

00:20:03 John Promo Jesse, can I connect personally with Ruby Coffee Roasters for a moment here?

00:20:07 Jesse Promo Yes.

00:20:08 John Promo Can I talk about a personal connection that I have?

00:20:09 Jesse Promo Yes.

00:20:10 John Promo So first of all, this other Jesse you're talking about, who works out there in Nelsonville, Wisconsin, for Ruby Coffee Roasters, who's a big MaxFun supporter? This is also, I learned—Jennifer Marmor told me before we recorded—the Jesse who was on *Judge John Hodgman* episode 320, "[Might as Well Judge](#)." He was in a fight with his friend over the comparative bass-playing genius of Michael Anthony from Van Halen!

00:20:33 Jesse Promo Yeah.

00:20:34 John Promo He was on the pro—Michael Anthony side! The side of righteousness!

00:20:37 Jesse Promo Yep.

00:20:38 John Promo So this gets even deeper! This connection cannot be unbroken! And then Jesse sent us some coffee. And I got the—I got two blends. I got the Lucia Pablo blend from Guatemala. And I got the Tomorrow blend, which is a seasonal blend, "a rotating single origin lot that features a wider selection of coffees from the farmer partners that we work with." 'Cause they work to make sure that the relationships are fair, and up-and-up, and sustainable.

Now, I've had this coffee to drink now. And let me tell you: It's incredible! Your wife is correct. Your wife is correct. But you know what happened before I had the coffee? I opened it up—

*[Rustling.]*

And I just—I smelled it for—I just—*[inhales]*—I huffed these coffee beans for like an hour.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

I just walked around the house—*[laughs]*—it's just one of the most incredible... *[inhales.]* I mean, I'm sorry, smell misophonics who are out there, but...

*[John inhales again, Jesse laughs.]*

It smells so good. I mean, it's—it's like—the—I wouldn't be able to describe the flavor notes, but this one says, "Honey, toffee, brown sugar, orange zest," and it's true! All these things are just marching up my nose! And then I made the coffee, and it's even better.

Ruby Coffee Roasters coffee. Drinking it is even better than smelling it. There. Free motto for you.

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

00:21:58	John	Promo	So! Go to <a href="http://RubyCoffeeRoasters.com">RubyCoffeeRoasters.com</a> . Use discount code J-J-H-O. Get 20% off your first shipment of any subscription, or 15% off a one-time coffee purchase. That's—once again, that's <a href="http://RubyCoffeeRoasters.com">RubyCoffeeRoasters.com</a> , discount code J-J-H-O. Purveyors to the network!
00:22:17	Jesse	Promo	You know, John, one of the reasons my wife was so excited about our subscription to Ruby Coffee Roasters is because it took one line item off her list of places she had to go on a regular basis.
00:22:28	John	Promo	Sure.
00:22:29	Jesse	Promo	She doesn't have to <u>find</u> the coffee. She couldn't get the kind of coffee she liked at the grocery store—
00:22:33	John	Promo	Right.
00:22:34	Jesse	Promo	—so she had to go to a special coffee place, and it crosses that off the list.
00:22:39	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:22:40	Jesse	Promo	And our other sponsor this week, our other supporter this week, does a similar thing! If you're sick of going to the grocery store, Sun Basket can help you by delivering fresh and ready meals every week.  Sun Basket, John, is the <u>only</u> meal service... that is co-founded by my friend Tyler from college.
00:22:59	John	Promo	Another connection! <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i>
00:23:00	Jesse	Promo	Yeah.
00:23:01	John	Promo	It's such a delight to have MaxFun friends who are involved in such amazing companies, that are doing the right thing and creating quality products. It's such a thrill to be able to introduce you to these products, and Sun Basket—I mean, I—honestly, you know, I listen to some other podcasts. I hear about some mattresses. I hear about some stamps. I hear about some food delivery services. I have skepticism, particularly about the food delivery services.  You know me! I used to write about food for <i>Men's Journal</i> magazine, the nation's most prominent magazine about journaling by and for men. I'm a snob!  But when I got the Sun Basket stuff, I was like, "Oh. These are good ingredients!" And I couldn't <u>believe</u> that I was making coconut shrimp that tasted so good my daughter didn't hate me, and actually said, "Mm, good. Good job, Dad." It was astonishing.  And you know me. I'm always trying to lead that crab-conscious life.  <i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>
00:23:56	John	Promo	I don't wanna make this ad into an in-joke. The fact is a few weeks ago, I was looking at all of their different meal plans—'cause they have stuff for people who prefer to eat paleo, they have stuff for people who can't eat gluten, they have stuff for people who are pescatarians, they have whole meal plans and menus! San

Francisco scramble with turkey, spinach, and mushrooms! Thai chicken lettuce cups! Vegetarian stuff! Black-eyed peas tostados with... shichimi cabbage and watercress salad! I learned a word! Shichimi!

00:24:21 Jesse Promo I'm excited about cauliflower macaroni and cheese.

00:24:25 John Promo Yeah. I mean, that's—and then they have a thing for carb-conscious eaters, and I was like, "Crab-conscious? That's me! I want crab. I'm trying—I'm thinking about it." They have crab cakes. But... Can I just talk about something I didn't notice on their website? Their category... soups and broths? Jesse! Sun Basket's got broths!

00:24:43 Jesse Promo Yeah.

00:24:44 John Promo You know I love a broth!

00:24:46 Jesse Promo I know you love broth.

00:24:47 John Promo Miso broth! Coconut lime chicken bone broth! Organic turmeric chicken bone broth. Butternut squash coconut curry soup. From Sun Basket.

00:24:57 Jesse Promo Nice. That sounds nice.

00:24:58 John Promo I mean, what is more autumnal than that? Just take a hot mug of butternut squash coconut curry soup, and then get into a pile of leaves.

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

I really enjoy this company. Sun Basket delivers fresh and ready meals made with high-quality fresh produce, seafood, and meats. Their chefs have won Michelin Awards. See, they're food snobs, too! And a James Beard Award! So take the night off, and let them cook for you.

00:25:29 Jesse Promo Right now Sun Basket is offering \$35 off your order when you go right now to [SunBasket.com/hodgman](https://SunBasket.com/hodgman), and enter the promo code "hodgman" at checkout. That's [SunBasket.com/hodgman](https://SunBasket.com/hodgman), and enter the promo code "hodgman" at checkout for \$35 off your order!

00:25:48 John Promo [SunBasket.com/hodgman](https://SunBasket.com/hodgman), and enter promo code "hodgman."

00:25:53 Jesse Promo Let's get back into the courtroom.

00:25:54 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:25:56 Jesse Host Welcome back to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. We're clearing the docket this week. I've got something here from Kevin:

"My wife and I welcomed our first child Thomas into the world in March, right at the start of the pandemic. He is a bundle of joy. When I'm holding Thomas and he drops his pacifier, I will often pick it up with my toes, and put it back in his mouth."

00:26:18 John Host Wow.

00:26:19 Jesse Host "My wife thinks this is gross. I'm generally clean and hygienic, but understand where she's coming from. I argue that because of the pandemic, Thomas is not getting a normal level of exposure to other children and their microbiomes!"

*[John snorts.]*

"Which would normally aid development of a healthy immune system."

00:26:36 John Host Come on, dude.

00:26:37 Jesse Host "He needs exposure to outside microstuff where he can get it, even if it's my feet. We would appreciate your medically unprofessional opinion on this matter."

00:26:47 John Host Alright. We're recording this in... November. Time still has meaning, right? So March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November. So this is a eight-month-old baby.

00:26:59 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:27:02 John Host Jesse, I have a question. You have a bunch of children.

00:27:04 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:27:05 John Host Were pacifiers part of their growing up?

00:27:08 Jesse Host A liiittle bit, but not much.

00:27:10 John Host No?

00:27:11 Jesse Host Not a huge amount.

00:27:13 John Host Did they ever have different names for their pacifiers?

00:27:16 Jesse Host Like "paci," or "nub-nub."

00:27:17 John Host "Paci." Or—

*[Both laugh.]*

Yeah, or "yub-yub." The classic Ewok cry of victory over the Emperor.

00:27:25 Jesse Host "Yub-yub!"

00:27:26 John Host "Yub-yub!"

*[Both begin to sing either wordlessly or in Ewokese.]*

00:27:28 Jesse Host *[Trails off, laughing.]* Sorry, I started singing the *Night Court* theme.

00:27:31 John Host *[Laughs.]* There's—you know what? There's an overlap, and there's a mashup to be made.

00:27:35 Jesse Host There were actually—just as there are lyrics to the *Odd Couple* theme song, *[laughs]* there were lyrics to the *Night Court* theme song, and they were all in Ewok language.

00:27:44 John Host *[Laughs.]* Ewokese. Sure. There is a mashup to be made between the *Night Court* theme song and the original Ewok victory song before they changed the music for the re-release. And any listener who wants to put that together, and spend their time that way, will be thanked by me, but not paid.

00:28:06 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:28:08 John Host Um, our son called his pacifier a fa-fa. Because that was his word for "flower," and it looked like a flower.

00:28:14 Jesse Host Cool. *[Laughs.]*

00:28:15 John Host Pretty adorable.

00:28:17 Jesse Host That's great.

00:28:19 John Host I'm just making sure that if he is listening to this podcast, that he'll never listen again. *[Laughs.]*

00:28:22 Jesse Host Uh, can I say something cute that my kid did last night?

00:28:25 John Host Yes.

00:28:27 Jesse Host My son Frankie, who's three, finished a beverage.

00:28:28 John Host Yeah. Yeah.

00:28:31 Jesse Host And asked for another one. But it was shortly before bed. So my wife Theresa didn't wanna give him another drink. You know, to keep his sheets clean and so forth. And so she said, "Not right now, sweetie."

00:28:52 John Host And he said, "What? A body needs two dinks! It's science!"  
*[Cracks up, clapping a couple times.]*  
It's science.

00:29:01 Jesse Host It's science!

00:29:02 John Host It's science.

00:29:03 Jesse Host A body needs two dinks!

00:29:07 John Host Do you know what, Jesse?

00:29:08 Jesse Host What?

00:29:10 John Host I have two butts.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

00:29:16 Jesse Host And I'll tell you about them in a second.  
Okay.

00:29:17 . Host But first to this case. So, first thing I wanted to ask—I'm neither a bacteriologist, nor am I a pediatrician. Obviously, I looked up the five-second rule, the rule about if something falls on the floor and it's less than five seconds, you can go ahead and eat it. So it's safe to put in your mouth. And it's a myth! The five-second rule is a myth. Bacteria can totally get onto that fa-fa within five seconds. No question! No question.

And yes, according to Dr. Aaron Carroll's 2016 piece in *The New York Times*—he's a bacteriologist—it's actually also true that the kitchen floor is much cleaner, bacterial colony-wise, than many other places, including the kitchen counter. And especially the refrigerator handle. Don't drop your fa-fa on the refrigerator handle. That was a famous, uh, ragtime tune.

So basically speaking—

*[Both laugh quietly.]*

00:30:19 Jesse Host I think Thomas the baby will live. By this practice. But—I have two "buts." *[Stifling laughter]* You wanna hear the first "but"?

Let's talk about your big "but."

00:30:20 John Host Let's talk about my two "buts." Thomas the baby's too young to get this joke! Thomas the baby, when you—when your father plays this for you when you're about five, hearing us talk about our two dinks and two butts, you're gonna have a great time.

But "but" number one is this. My first "but" is that while Googling the five-second rule, I accidentally found out about a different five-second rule, which I had never heard of, Jesse Thorn. Have you ever heard of the self-help book called *The 5 Second Rule*?

00:30:48 Jesse Host No!

00:30:49 John Host Okay. First of all, it's a cuckoo name! For a self-help book. 'Cause it's obviously a reference to eating food off the floor. So if you were—if—

*[Both laugh.]*

If you were like, "My self-help book is called *The 5 Second Rule*," everyone would think, "You mean I should only be eating food off the floor after five seconds?" *[Stifles laughter.]* No.

00:31:07 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:31:08 John Host This is by Mel Robbins. It's a real book. And *The 5 Second Rule*—this is a quote—

"The five-second rule is simple. If you have an instinct to act on a goal, you must physically move within five seconds, or your brain will kill it. The moment you feel a desire to act on a goal or a commitment, use the rule. Move within five seconds. If you do not take action on your instinct to change, you will stay stagnant."

Now, listen. I know Thomas the baby is listening. I know there are some young people listening. I'm sure my son has turned this off now, 'cause I embarrassed him about his fa-fa. This is a family-friendly podcast. And I don't often swear on it. But for this guy, Mel Robbins, I have some choice words, which is this:

Fornicate you, dude! Five seconds?! I gotta work on an impulse in five seconds or I'm lost forever? Look around you, buddy!

*[Both laugh quietly.]*

I know you probably didn't write this during a global pandemic, but there's one thing the global pandemic made us realize is—"Whoa, take it down a thousand! We can—we can slow it down, a bit." There's nothing good that's come out of this pandemic except for a moment that we've all had to reflect on our values, and what we want the world to be in the new and better normal, and one of the values that I really value is:

"Yeah, you can take seven seconds to act on an idea. Physically." *[Stifles laughter.]* You can even take eight seconds, or eight days.

00:32:34 John Host Oh, I just saw Jennifer Marmor's dog in the background. That was very cute.

00:32:38 Jesse Host Always nice to see George.

00:32:40 John Host George is definitely, A, eating off the floor within five seconds—

*[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]*

—and B, acting on a five-second impulse for the most part, I would imagine. *[Laughs.]* But we don't have to be this way.

Alright, now "but" number two—my "but" number two is that while it is proobably safe to suck on that floor fa-fa... that has been picked up by your dad's toes, Thomas the baby? Probably that's safe? It's definitely gross. Right, Jesse? That's gross.

*[Beat.]*

00:33:13	Jesse	Host	I love it.
00:33:14	John	Host	You love him picking up the fa-fa with his toes?!
00:33:17	Jesse	Host	Yeah, it makes me think of like, my weird hippie friends from college that had circus skills.
00:33:23	John	Host	Well, that's what this is about, isn't it?
00:33:26	Jesse	Host	And lived in yurts.
00:33:27	John	Host	'Cause it makes me think of not <u>your</u> weird hippie friends from college, but the weird hippie friends with the devil sticks in the middle of the quad in <u>my</u> college, and the Hacky Sackers, and the Society for Creative Anachronism-ers. Picking up with his toes... That bummed me out! Show-offs. Bunch of show-offs. That's what I called them.

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

Quietly to myself. I guess 'cause I can't do the devil sticks. Alright? I tried it once, it was—and it did not work. And I cannot—I am no good in the—in the Hack. No good.

I guess what bother—like, the grossness of picking it up with his toes is less gross—is gross to me, but less gross than the spinning up this whole argument about, uh, "Thomas the baby needs exposure to microbiomes." Because that's absolutely true about children. That they need to eat some dirt, right? To develop their immune systems. but I don't know at eight months, if that's when they need to be doing it. I'm not a pediatrician. I could be wrong here. I encourage you to write me a letter; I will read the first... 25 words of it.

But more to the point, that's just—you're just rationalizing that after the fact 'cause you wanna show off your circus skills, Kevin!

00:34:41	Jesse	Host	Yeah. That's true. This is <u>obviously</u> a post-hoc rationalization, not a carefully considered system. He—it fell. He didn't feel like taking a hand off the baby, and he knew that he had monkey feet.
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*[John laughs quietly.]*

So he went down there, picked it up, and then he came up with a scheme retroactively.

00:34:59	John	Host	Yeah! You know, and by the way, that's not helping his biome! He's getting plenty of dead skin cells from <u>you</u> , Kevin! Thomas the baby is
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all up in your dead skin cells all the time! Doesn't need your toe jam just to feel healthy.

You're right, absolutely, Jesse. It's an ad-hoc rationalization. Parenting involves some seriously gross stuff. And if your partner says, "That's gross to me," you don't need to add to the grossness. There's gonna be a lot of "two dinks" and "two butt" contacts for years in your house with this baby. Just don't gross them out.

But, you know, look. If a fa-fa falls, and no one's there to see it except for Thomas the baby and Kevin, and it gets picked up by some toes... Who's to know? None the wiser. Just don't do stuff that's gro—that grosses your partner out.

00:35:50	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:35:52	Jesse	Host	I've actually done a little research into health with babies and children.
00:35:58	John	Host	Yeah.
00:35:59	Jesse	Host	And I found that there's really only one immutable rule. There's a lot of disagreement on a lot of different things. The one immutable rule is that a body <u>needs</u> two dinks.
00:36:09	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> It's just science!
00:36:13	Jesse	Host	It's science. Here's something from Lizzie:  "My boyfriend Trev has <u>five</u> cast iron pans."  Five dinks!
00:36:20	John	Host	
00:36:22	Jesse	Host	"We have only one kitchen cupboard, and nowhere to put them. Please order him to get rid of at <u>least</u> two of them. Early next year, we'll be moving onto a sailboat, with even <u>less</u> kitchen space than we currently have in our studio cottage. But even if that weren't the case, I would suggest that five cast irons is more than what we need.  We're making cookies tonight, so <u>all</u> the cast irons that usually live inside the oven are out on top of the stove. The hot tray of fresh cookies is currently balanced on the left front burner in a fairly upsetting manner. In the spirit of keeping this concise and specific, I won't get into all the other kitchen appliances we don't have space for."  <i>[Both stifle laughter.]</i>
00:37:04	John	Host	So I wanted these folks for a live case, 'cause I really—you know. I <u>love</u> cast iron pans, as do you, Jesse Thorn.
00:37:11	Jesse	Host	Mm-hm.
00:37:13	John	Host	And I wanted to hear all of Trev's arguments! For why each cast iron pan is essential. 'Cause I'm willing to hear them. And I'd probably be inclined to <u>believe</u> those arguments! But Trev declined to participate. Well... I'm still going to judge them.  And luckily, I got some more information out of Lizzie. She sent me a photo. Do you have this photo of the cast iron pans, and the cookie sheet precariously balanced?

00:37:43 Jesse Host Yeah, I'm taking a look here.

*[Both laugh.]*

Wait. Okay, so—I wanna be clear. When she said that he had five cast iron pans...

00:37:56 John Host Right.

00:37:58 Jesse Host ...my immediate assumption was—like, for example. I have three cast iron pans.

00:38:04 John Host Mm-hm!

00:38:05 Jesse Host And a griddle! So I have four, in total.

00:38:07 John Host Yeah.

00:38:08 Jesse Host I have—and that's not counting enameled cast iron, 'cause I have a Dutch oven.

00:38:12 John Host Right.

00:38:13 Jesse Host But I have a big one, a little one, a grill pan—

00:38:18 John Host Yeah.

00:38:19 Jesse Host You know, with raised ridges on it. And, uh—and a griddle.

00:38:24 John Host Right.

00:38:25 Jesse Host Right? I think that's—that's pretty reasonable. The—put the griddle to make pancakes or whatever. It fits very comfortably in the cabinet, 'cause it's flat.

00:38:33 John Host Yep.

00:38:35 Jesse Host So immediately, when she said he has five cast iron pans, I said to myself, "Well, jeez. I mean, maybe he's got a—he's got a giant one, a medium one, and a little one? And then he's got a this, and he's got a that, and he's got a blah blah blah blah." I'm thinking of different cast iron pans he might have that have different uses.

Uh. He appears to have four of the same... plus a cookie sheet.

00:39:02 John Host Uh-huh. *[Laughs.]* I think the cookie sheet is not in dispute here. That's for cookie sheeting.

00:39:06 Jesse Host That's just a cookie sheet. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:39:07 John Host That's just an illustration—

00:39:09 Jesse Host Wait, five! Yeah, one, two, three, four, five! All five of these cast iron pans are identical!

00:39:15 John Host Yeah.

00:39:16 Jesse Host By looks. It looks like one of them is—so I see three that look like Lodge Cast Iron pans.

00:39:23 John Host Right.

00:39:24 Jesse Host In the contemporary style, which has a little handle on the opposite side of the big handle for lifting, if you're not strong enough to lift it just by the one handle.

00:39:32 John Host Right.

00:39:33 Jesse Host Conveniently.

00:39:34 John Host Yeah.

00:39:35 Jesse Host And then there's two that maybe don't have that handle, so they might be a different brand, or a different—you know. Slightly different style. They all look like they're, if not exactly the same size—

00:39:46 John Host Yeah.

00:39:47 Jesse Host —almost exactly the same size.

00:39:49 John Host They are.

00:39:50 Jesse Host So... wh—in what situation is this man—he's got a four-burner stove.

00:39:54 John Host Yeah.

00:39:55 Jesse Host This is not a big, you know, Viking range like in a condo that just got built, that's being sold to some, you know, yuppie that doesn't cook.

00:40:00 John Host Yeah. Yeah.

00:40:04 Jesse Host This is just a little apartment stove! Honestly, we can see in this picture that the four identical, 12-inch or whatever the standard size is, pans...

00:40:17 John Host Right.

00:40:18 Jesse Host ...would not even fit on this four-burner stove simultaneously!

00:40:21 John Host No.

00:40:22 Jesse Host Even if you wanted them to!

00:40:23 John Host No. And they live in the oven! You know, that's—

*[Jesse laughs.]*

'Cause that's their storage solution. And you know, here's the thing. You know, so I saw this photo, too, and I—I realized two things. First of all, I understand why Trev did not wanna defend himself live.

*[Jesse laughs harder.]*

'Cause this is indefensible. *[Stifles laughter.]* And two, I still needed more information, because there's one Lodge pan that's upside-down on top of the other. So I wrote to Lizzie—and this is breaking news. Breaking Chews, as they say on the *Doughboys*. I wrote to Lizzie and I said, "I need more information. What are all the manufacturers of these pans?" Because if—because I wanted to know if maybe he's a collector! Kinda—you know, like, "Does he have some vintage Griswolds or Wagners that he's really into that are, like, old ones or whatever? And what are their sizes? Like, I just need to know what I'm seeing here."

And she explained, first of all, that the cast iron pan that's turned over on top of the other, that's actually a Dutch oven with a cast iron pan lid. Which I've never seen in the history of Lodge Cast Iron. In other words—

00:41:27 Jesse Host Fun.

00:41:28 John Host Yeah, I mean, it's a cool idea.

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

But underneath that, there's an actual Dutch—it's not just a pan, it's a Dutch oven. It's a deep pan.

00:41:33 Jesse Host So in other words, that item is all that he needs. *[Laughs.]*

00:41:38 John Host Basically, yeah. And then the other thing she said was they were all Lodge, and Lodge is... a wonderful, historic cast iron pan manufacturer. I've got two Lodge pans myself. I do not need any more. You know? But there's—there's not a collector's element to this at all.

00:41:55 Jesse Host No.

00:41:56 John Host She also said they're all 12 inches except for the one on the far side, which is a 9-inch one. And... then she said something else:

"I forgot we have a sixth."

*[Both laugh quietly.]*

Which is a little—a little tiny one for a single egg.

*[Jesse keeps laughing.]*

That actually—I like the sixth one. I like the little tiny one for a single egg. That makes me feel better about Trev's pan collection.

00:42:19 Jesse Host That one does seem more convenient to wield in an act of home defense.

00:42:23 John Host Yeah! Well, you—sometimes you need to make a little single egg! Especially if you're living on a sailboat, which you're moving onto! Trev. Jesse Thorn is correct. Your Dutch oven—this thing that you have, which is apparently a Lodge Dutch oven that uses another inverted Lodge cast iron pan as a lid? If this is an actual product, I think it's cool, and you should keep it. If this is just your life hack, because the—you noticed that the pan actually works as a lid on the Dutch oven, now you're thinking like a guy who's gotta live on a sailboat, where space is very limited!

*[Stifles laughter.]* And honestly, you should probably be trying to minimize the amount of heavy cast iron in your life as much as possible, 'cause you're on a boat.

00:43:11 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah, let's talk buoyancy, here.

00:43:15 John Host Yeah. But if these aren't—if this is not a collection but simply a hoard of identical Lodge cast iron pans, I'm saying you get rid of the 9-inch, you get rid of those two 12-inches, you keep the cast iron Dutch oven, the 12-inch pan that goes on top of that one, and then keep that egg one just as a souvenir. As a—a tip of the hat from me. From one cast iron person as another, and an apology for raking you across the coals here.

00:43:41 Jesse Host I mean, is this guy a line cook? When are the times that he's cooking—like, John.

00:43:48 John Host Yeah.

00:43:49 Jesse Host You're a serious home cook.

00:43:50 John Host Right.

00:43:51 Jesse Host You know, you're the cook of your family.

00:43:53 John Host Right.

00:43:54 Jesse Host You know, you do a lot of cooking at home. Uh, what is the most number of pans you have going at the same time?

00:44:02 John Host Two.

00:44:03 Jesse Host For me—yeah, two! For me it's two. Like, I definitely am capable of having two things going at once. I'll have, you know, the green beans cooking while I'm cooking a protein in a pan. Uh, but that's certainly the limit. There's no way that I've got three pans of food going at the same time. Maybe I've got a soup on a back burner or something, while I've got a protein and a—and green beans cooking. *[Stifles laughter.]* In pans.

00:44:30 John Host But that soup might be in your Dutch oven. That's not gonna be in a pan.

00:44:33 Jesse Host Exactly! Exactly.

00:44:35 John Host You're not making a pan soup.

00:44:39 Jesse Host Or in this stew pot that's also in the picture.

00:44:41 John Host Right. *[Stifles laughter.]* Yeah, I would say in a large kitchen, three cast iron pans would probably be ideal. I do have a third; it needs refinishing. And I wouldn't get rid of it, because—even though our kitchen is a little bit challenged for space—because there does come a time, specifically like around the holidays, where it's like, "Oh, I gotta roast all these Brussels sprouts," or whatever. And cast iron pans are really good as roasting pans, as casserole pans, as chicken-roasting pans. They take up a lot of the work that a sheet pan, like a cookie sheet pan, might do, while also taking up three times the space.

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

But I would—I would say, if you—*[chuckles]*—if you have a kitchen that can support three cast iron pans, go for it. This kitchen cannot. And that sailboat cannot, as well. I also was curious as to whether all these pans were in use, and I asked Lizzie to describe two things. One, how does Trev cook? And what does he use the pans for? And two, when and why are they moving onto this sailboat? And I asked her to explain these things to me in a couple of sentences, and here's what she wrote. This just came through the wire. Live! While recording.

"We use the two 12-inch pans for the majority of our everyday cooking." Boom. Right there. There you go. That's it. "Both stovetop and the oven." Exactly.

"Trev uses the Dutch oven infrequently to bake bread. Once we fried chicken in the deep pan." Yeah. Fair.

"Trev also uses the 9-inch to cook things in his small pizza oven because the 12-inch won't fit in there." Guess what? You don't have a pizza oven on your sailboat. Or you—you can choose.

00:46:16 Jesse Host Yeah, no doubt about that.

00:46:17 John Host *[Stifles laughter.]* You can choose to either have a sailboat with no pizza oven, or a sailboat that's on fire. You can—you can pick.

*[Jesse laughs quietly, John stifles laughter.]*

"We've never used the very tiny one. We will be moving onto the boat permanently in May of 2021. It's been the dream we've been working toward for the last five years to buy a boat, live on it, and sail it around the world while working remotely. The plan is to head down the California coast next summer, and into the Sea of Cortés next fall. From there, we don't have a solid plan, but we'll most likely be heading West across the Pacific in some capacity. We anticipate the trip will take about three years, but haven't put any hard time limit on it."

00:46:55 Jesse Host This is where my therapist retired.

00:46:59 John Host To go on a sailboat?

00:47:00 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:47:01 John Host Yeah.

00:47:02 Jesse Host *[Stifling laughter]* I'm glad you've got your life priorities in order; I'm not fixed yet.

00:47:05 John Host *[Laughs quietly.]* Well... I mean, it's not something you can do with children. And it's definitely something you can only do... with two cast iron pans. You cannot—you gotta be—you gotta "stick and move," as Paula Poundstone used to say. You gotta be—travel light.

00:47:20 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:47:21 Jesse Host I wanna mention that Lizzie was kind enough to send a picture of her looking super cool on the sailboat in sunglasses, alongside a super cool dog who's also wearing sunglasses.

00:47:32 John Host *[Laughs.]* It's an incredible dog!

00:47:36 Jesse Host What a great dog.

00:47:37 John Host I would like to mention that your plan, you know, to go around the world in a sailboat? Is, you know... It's gonna—it's not in everybody's reach to do that, obviously. But if you have a big, inspiring, "get away from it all" change of life that you're contemplating, and you're young, and you have few ties, and you can try to do it, try to reach out and grab it! I think that trip sounds amazing.

00:48:06 Jesse Host Yeah. Especially if your dog already has the sunglasses.

00:48:09 John Host Exactly right. I think that Lizzie's description of that trip sounds really amazing. What it did not sound like was one or two sentences. That was a lot of sentences, Lizzie! Please, everybody! Keep your emails short!

*[Both laugh.]*

But bon voyage, and, uh—and I'm—and Trev, even though you wouldn't be on this podcast, I wish you the very—I—maybe it's a superstition to wish a sailor good luck. Uhhh, don't—don't—don't drop your pans in the ocean.

00:48:41 Jesse Host And John, if I learned anything from watching the public television show *The Voyage of the Mimi*?

00:48:45 John Host Yeah.  
00:48:46 Jesse Host Uh, if you get stranded on a deserted island with the rest of the crew of your whale-watching ship...  
00:48:52 John Host Yeah.  
00:48:54 Jesse Host Uh, you have to put a tarpaulin up on a stick, and then collect the condensation down—that comes down the tarpaulin, for freshwater.  
00:49:02 John Host Mm-hm. Mm-hm. Mm-hm. If I learned anything from... season seven of *Below Deck Mediterranean*, is Captain Sandy really didn't give Chef Kiko a chance.  
00:49:16 Jesse Host Yeah. So—

*[Both stifle laughter.]*

Let's take a break. Now that we've learned our lessons. When we come back, we'll talk about anti-LGBTQ restaurant chains.

00:49:25 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:49:27 Promo Clip

**Music:** "Money Won't Pay," by bo en (feat. Augustus). Upbeat, cheerful music.

**Rachel McElroy:** Congratulations! You've won a ticket to attend an exclusive opportunity in a relaxing environment with two lovers.

*[Laughs.]*

**Griffin McElroy:** Wow! Well, this sounds like a sort of... proposition of sorts, but really it's an ad for our podcast, *Wonderful!* It's a show we do here on Maximum Fun where we talk about things that we like and things that we're into.

**Rachel:** I'm Rachel McElroy and you just heard Griffin McElroy and we are excited for you to join us as we talk about movies and music and books!

**Griffin:** Things like sneezing. Or... the idea of rain.

*[Both laugh.]*

**Rachel:** Can you get news or information you can use?

*[Simultaneously]*

**Rachel:** I don't think so!

**Griffin:** Absolutely you cannot!

**Griffin:** Because we're here to talk to you about pumpernickel bread.

**Rachel:** You can find new episodes on Wednesdays.

**Griffin:** *[Extreeme announcer voice]* So catch th—catch the waaaave!

*[Music stops.]*

00:50:12 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:50:14	Jesse	Promo	<p><i>[During the promo break, the leaf blower from <a href="#">last week</a> can be heard in the background.]</i></p> <p>Judge Hodgman, we're taking a quick break from clearing the docket. We've got some stuff upcoming. I have to say, I have been watching your television program <i>Dicktown</i>, starring and created by you and our friend David Rees.</p>
00:50:25	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:50:26	Jesse	Promo	I have been loving it.
00:50:27	John	Promo	Thank you!
00:50:28	Jesse	Promo	<p>One of my favorite moments besides the entire episode that was dedicated to <i>Gymkata</i>—</p> <p><i>[John laughs.]</i></p> <p>—uh, my favorite bad film. A movie about gymnastics skills and karate kills.</p>
00:50:37	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:50:38	Jesse	Promo	Uh, was a moment where the two of you are in a hip dance club.
00:50:42	John	Promo	Mm-hm.
00:50:43	Jesse	Promo	Talking to a guy who is... let's say enjoying the club.
00:50:49	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:50:50	Jesse	Promo	Uh, very much.
00:50:51	John	Promo	Yeah. A lot.
00:50:52	Jesse	Promo	<p>He's in a very enjoyable state. And there's just a part where when he's done talking to you, he just slides under the table.</p> <p><i>[Both laugh.]</i></p> <p>It was really funny. <i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:51:03	John	Promo	Uh, yeah—
00:51:04	Jesse	Promo	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> My wife and I both laughed fully out loud at him just being done talking and then just sliding under the table and out onto the dance floor.
00:51:10	John	Promo	<p>I—I think that that was a David Rees joke, if I remember correctly. Executed with animated perfection by Floyd County, our animation studio that we were so happy to not only be partnered with by FX, but mentored by. I mean, they've been making <i>Archer</i> for a long time. They know how to make really good animated shows.</p> <p>And of course that character is played by Ronald Peet. R-O-N-A-L-D, space, capital P-E-E-T, Peet. Who is <u>such</u> an incredible performer. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> That character, Tucker—so if you haven't watched the show, and I—and I hope you will! It's about me as a grown-up Encyclopedia Brown-style boy detective, who's now middle-aged and hasn't left town, and still only solves mysteries for teenagers. And David Rees is my former high school bully David Purefoy, who is now the only other guy I know left in town, and has become my unlikely friend and my driver.</p>



And Tucker is the high school student of indeterminate though legal age, who is essentially our Q. He's this really, really rich teenager, *[stifles laughter]* who has all of, like, these night vision goggles, and binoculars, and other stuff that we need to rent from him to do our detective work. And Ronald Peet is so funny in that role.

So, look. You know the—

00:52:33 Jesse Promo

He's also a social media influencer.

00:52:34 John Promo

He is an—he is a total influencer. As is Anna Akana! Who is Meg in that *Gymkata* episode. Same episode. Anna Akana, by the way, is an incredible singer, sort of social commentator on Instagram, super funny, and was so great as Meg. I mean, one of the real pleasures of the show was getting to meet all these really young, talented people whom I had never heard of, but you will hear of them again.

So, uh, talent scouts, go over to your Internet and dial up [Bit.ly/dicktown](https://bit.ly/dicktown). That's Bit.ly slash D-I-C-K-T-O-W-N, all small letters or capital D. I own 'em both now.

And the other thing I'll just mention before we go is, we've now moved into a—I don't know where we are, a week into the future. But we are now in a new transitional state of political uncertainty and upheaval. The job is not done. If you would like to help Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock in Georgia win their runoff Senate seats, and take control of the Senate away from Mitch McConnell, if that's where you stand, then please join me and all—and Zach, and all our friends up at that Somerville phone bank. We're gonna keep going. [Bit.ly/CALLGEORGIA](https://bit.ly/CALLGEORGIA). That's all capital letters, 'cause it's important. [Bit.ly/CALLGEORGIA](https://bit.ly/CALLGEORGIA).

I'm gonna start on the 22nd. The 22nd of November is our first phone bank. If you wanna see me in there in the Zoom and say hi in the chat, come and join us. We'll do some phone banking to Georgia. Poor Georgia is gonna get slammed with phone calls, but you know what? It's important. And if it's not your desire to take control of the Senate away from Mitch McConnell... you're—you're still welcome to listen. But this is what I'm doing. [Bit.ly/CALLGEORGIA](https://bit.ly/CALLGEORGIA).

Jesse Thorn, what have you got going on in the world?

00:54:30 Jesse Promo

Well, I have a very exciting guest on my public radio interview show and podcast *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* this week. Um, I've been keeping this secret for a very long time.

00:54:42 John Promo

Oh boy, here we go. Here we go! Mm!

00:54:44 Jesse Promo

But it is the guest who has been at the top of my "Who would you most love to have on your show?" list for... essentially the entire run of my show. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:54:58 John Promo

Yeah.

00:54:59 Jesse Promo

In fact, I think my producer was concerned that should he book this guest, I would then end the show, given that there was nothing to top it. But it's an—a roughly hour-long conversation with David Letterman.

00:55:13	John	Promo	Whoa!
00:55:14	Jesse	Promo	David Letterman, you know, like a lot of people in comedy my age and a little older, is my performer, broadcaster, uh, all-time inspiration. And he and I talked about all kinds of things, including the things that are difficult to talk about with David Letterman. Some of the lousy things he did in his workplace.
00:55:34	John	Promo	Mm-hm.
00:55:36	Jesse	Promo	And—and family life. And we also... laughed together about a bit called "How many Spider-Mans fit in a Jamba Juice?"

*[Both laugh.]*

So it really—*[laughs]*—it really, uh, runs the gamut of an hour, and I—I will say that for me, talking to him about the difficult stuff helped me feel better about how much I admired his work as a performer. Because I did feel—and people can draw their own conclusions. But I did feel that his remorse and contrition, and hard work, were—to change—were all very sincere. And a real and big part of his life.

And I think people can—people, I think—reasonable people can disagree on whether that's enough, or whatever. But I will say it ended up being a comfort to me. I was very nervous about it. I was very worried about it, going into the interview.

00:56:36	John	Promo	Mm-hm. Mm-hm.
00:56:38	Jesse	Promo	But it was a comfort to me. And it's a—it's amazing conversation; he's obviously—you know. I could have just said, "Hey, Dave, would you mind talking for an hour?" He's a genius broadcaster. He would've been good.
00:56:48	John	Promo	Yeah.
00:56:49	Jesse	Promo	But it really—I'm very proud of the conversation, and I hope people will go subscribe to <i>Bullseye</i> , and listen to that show.

Let's get back to the docket.

00:56:59	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
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00:57:00	John	Promo	Hey there, everybody! It's your Judge John Hodgman with an emergency plug! A drop-in emergency plug! Because coming right up is Monte's March. Monte Belmonte, your summertime, fun-time guest bailiff, year after year, makes a walk. Every Thanksgiving time. From Springfield, Massachusetts to Greenfield, Massachusetts. Two field-based townships and cities in the Western part of the Northeastern region that we call New England.
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Why is he taking this long walk? Well... It's a walk-a-thon! He's raising money! Raising money for the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. This year is the 11th year he's done it. Monte Belmonte marches against hunger through the Pioneer Valley. Over two days—November 23rd and the 24th—Monte, Congressman Jim McGovern, and Food Bank of Western Massachusetts Executive Director Andrew Morehouse, and a number of supporters push empty shopping carts 43 miles from Springfield to Greenfield to raise awareness about hunger and funds to prevent hunger in the Western Massachusetts region.

And you are encouraged by me to please consider making a donation to benefit the food bank's mission. Their goal is to raise \$365,000, the equivalent of four thousand meals per day for a whole year. And if you go to [MontesMarch.com](https://MontesMarch.com), it'll show you how you can donate directly, or create a giving circle, or join a giving circle, as people raise money for Monte's March. Please consider taking a look. It's a really, really good cause, and Monte's feet get very sore. [MontesMarch.com](https://MontesMarch.com).

Alright. Let's get back to it.

00:58:43 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:58:45 Jesse Host

Welcome back to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. We're clearing the docket. Here is a question about morality and Chick-fil-A, from Ken:

"For many years, I avoided even trying a certain Southern fast food chain's legendary fried chicken sandwich because of that chain's anti-LGBTQ stance and politics. Finally, I decided it was okay to try Chick-fil-A, as long as I donate at least double the cost of the meal to the Trevor Project every time I eat said evil chicken, and as predicted, I loved this evil chicken.

Is it okay to eat at Chick-fil-A, provided that I donate to a worthy cause that seeks to undo their societal damage?"

00:59:27 John Host

First of all, if you don't know, Chick-fil-A is a chain of fried chicken sandwich... shops. Their owners have a set of values that devalue human beings who are LGBTQ or otherwise. They publicly came out against same-gender marriage, and they contributed a lot of money to a bunch of different queeestionable religious charities that people in the LGBTQ community rightfully thought dehumanized them.

And so Chick-fil-A became kind of a cultural touchstone—um, now almost a decade ago. I didn't realize it was—how quite so long ago that this really flared up in the culture, where there was a boycott of Chick-fil-A, and then a counter-boycott—or I should say a defense of Chick-fil-A by Mike Huckabee, I think then the Governor of Arkansas.

*[Jesse and John laugh quietly.]*

Encouraging people to eat there, to stand up for quote-unquote "family values." Whatever.

01:00:24 Jesse Host

You mean legendary comedian Mike Huckabee?

01:00:26 John Host

Legendary Twitter comedian Mike Huckabee. Uh, so that's what's going on with Chick-fil-A, if you didn't know it.

Now, Jesse, can you speak to the Trevor Project?

01:00:37 Jesse Host

Yeah, the Trevor Project is one of the most notable LGBTQ charities in the United States.

01:00:47 John Host

And my understanding is that one of its main emphases is to help prevent suicide among young LGBTQ people.

01:00:56 Jesse Host

Yeah, that's correct.

01:00:57 John Host So that's a very valuable thing, and I'm gonna go ahead and make a donation to it today. Because I had Chick-fil-A—I've never had Chick-fil-A in my mouth, but I had its name in my mouth for a while, and I don't like the taste of it. Have you ever had a Chick-fil-A thing?

01:01:11 Jesse Host I did. I had it once, uh, before this situation arose.

01:01:17 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jesse:** And I... thought it was okay.

**John:** People love it!

01:01:19 John Host Yeah. I mean, I don't—

01:01:21 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* I don't get it.

01:01:23 John Host I don't get it!

01:01:24 Jesse Host Honestly, for me, I have to say that I, uh... I have no emotional or... no emotional attachment to, and no cravings for. *[Stifles laughter]* any fast food chain foods. It just wasn't a big part of my childhood.

01:01:47 John Host Right.

01:01:48 Jesse Host It's not a big part of my adult life. Like, I like eating In-N-Out, but it's not like if In-N-Out disappeared off the face of the Earth, it would really mess up my life.

01:01:57 John Host Yeah.

01:01:58 Jesse Host It's something I eat every other month, maybe. And basically everywhere else, I eat never. So, yeah. It's just not a big thing for me to like, long for a—a Chick-fil-A sandwich. *[Stifles laughter.]* Like, I live in a city where there are 42 better fried chicken sandwiches that I could get at any time.

01:02:18 John Host Yeah! I mean, there are a lot of—there's a lot of fried chicken sandwiches you can eat!

01:02:22 Jesse Host I might go hit up the The Oinkster tonight!

01:02:25 John Host There you go! I mean, the thing with Ken, though—and this is kind of part of the, uh, mythology of Chick-fil-A, is that, you know, Ken had never had a Chick-fil-A before in their life. And then Ken decided to try it, sort of bought a carbon offset by donating to the Trevor Project, and said it was incredible, and is now thinking about having another one. To me, I don't get how it could be that could. I've never had a Chick-fil-A.

01:02:54 Jesse Host I have, and it was fine! I mean like, it's better than most stuff that you would get at an airport. *[Laughs.]* You know?

01:03:00 John Host Right. Well, back in the—you know, back before I knew about this controversy, mostly it wasn't available to me, being a child of New England, a region in the Northeast of the United States and the Southeast of Canada. But then, you know, once there was a controversy and I was traveling more through the South, and I—I would stroll—I would never eat there! I would stroll righteously right past the Chick-fil-A as I would then go to board an airplane and burn a lot of fossil fuels. *[Laughs.]*

Like, I get—it's pretty—it's hard to avoid moral implication when living in a capitalist society. I still use Instagram, for example, and *Judge John Hodgman* has a really fun, active, supportive Facebook group, even though Facebook and Facebook-owned Ins—you know,

Instagram is owned by Facebook, and that company has done a lot of things to kinda undermine... civilization recently.

But, you know, it's hard to extricate yourself morally. But I kinda feel like in this case it's pretty clear, Ken. You know, first of all, donating to the Trevor Project is a good unto itself. *[Stifles laughter.]* You can do that without eating at Chick-fil-A. And frankly I feel like, unlike travel and social media and that sort of thing—there's a difference between generally—a company generally being bad for humanity, kind of in the aggregate, or where it's sort of a—kinda evil tradeoff, vs. a company that holds beliefs that some people do not deserve full humanity in the first place.

So that's why I'm not gonna go eat another Chick-fil-A. I don't blame you, Ken, for trying this out and offsetting it with a donation to the Trevor Project. You explored that taboo. And now you know what it is. But I do not think continuing to donate to the Trevor Project is ultimately going to offset the clear moral choice here, which is to just go find another chicken sandwich. There're a lot of 'em.

01:04:51 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

01:04:53 Jesse Host *[The leaf blower is getting louder in the background.]*

That's it! Docket's clear! Our producer, Jennifer Marmor. You can follow us on Twitter at [@JesseThorn](#) and [@hodgman](#). We're on Instagram at [@judgejohnhodgman](#).

*[Pause.]*

The leaf blower is by my neighbors.

*[John laughs.]*

Make sure to hashtag your *Judge John Hodgman* Tweets [#JJHo](#), and check out the Maximum Fun subreddit—that's at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](#)—to discuss this episode. You can submit your cases at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](#), or email [hodgman@maximumfun.org](mailto:hodgman@maximumfun.org). And we'll see you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

*[Leaf blower continues.]*

01:05:28 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

01:05:31 John Host *[Pause. More leaf blowing.]*

The leaf blower is a character on the show now!

*[John and Jesse laugh.]*

01:05:36 Jesse Host Hey, friend. *[Laughs.]*

01:05:37 John Host Leafy!

01:05:38 Music Transition A cheerful ukulele chord.

01:05:39 Speaker 1 Guest [MaximumFun.org](#).

01:05:41 Speaker 2 Guest Comedy and culture.

01:05:42	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:05:43	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.