

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. This week, "There's an APPellate Court for That."
			Patrick brings the case against his dad, Rudy. Rudy says he has a billion-dollar app idea. Patrick says this app will never work! Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide.
00:00:22	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]</i>
00:00:23	Jesse	Host	Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and presents an obscure cultural reference.
00:00:29	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Door shuts.]</i>
00:00:30	John Hodgman	Host	I've heard it said many times: the original is often the best. Bring the original <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> back! Not necessarily on all future devices, but the ability to download it would be sweet. <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> subsonic, as good as it looks in its 3D colors and electrotunes, just doesn't have the same <u>feel</u> as the original.
			Bailiff Jesse Thorn, please swear the litigants in.
00:00:54	Jesse	Host	Patrick and Rudy, please rise and raise your right hands.
00:00:58	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Chairs scrape.]</i>
00:00:59	Jesse	Host	Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God <u>or</u> whatever?
00:01:06	Rudy	Guest	I do.
00:01:07	Patrick	Guest	I do.
00:01:08	Jesse	Host	Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that he <u>rarely</u> orders apps for the table?
00:01:16	Rudy	Guest	Yes.
00:01:17	Patrick	Guest	I do.
00:01:18	Jesse	Host	Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.
00:01:19	John	Host	Look at these two adorables, actually raising their hands! That's what I get now that we teleconference on this podcast! I can see you, Rudy, and you, Patrick, actually raising your right hands <u>as</u> instructed! Father and son adorables!
			<i>[Someone laughs quietly.]</i>
			Alright. For an immediate summary judgment in one—first of all, you may be seated.
00:01:39	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Chairs scrape.]</i>
00:01:40	John	Host	And, uh, thank you for not actually standing up. For an immediate—'cause it seems like you might have! For an immediate summary judgment in one of yours' favors, can either of you name the piece of culture that I referenced as I entered the courtroom?
			Let's start with you, Patrick. You are the young man who seeks justice before this court. What is your guess?
00:02:01	Patrick	Guest	Boy. Um...

00:02:02 John Host You will not get it.

00:02:04 Patrick Guest Yeah. Is it a—

00:02:05 John Host It's an En Vogue situation.

00:02:06 Patrick Guest Some sort of, like, a HP ad?

00:02:08 John Host Like you're never gonna get it.

00:02:11 Patrick Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Like a—some sort of a—

*[Someone chuckles.]*

00:02:12 Jesse Host Not this time.

00:02:13 Patrick Guest Like a weird, like, Eastern European ripoff of the—

00:02:14 John Host *[Singing]* Not this tiiime...

00:02:16 Patrick Guest —Mac/PC ads, but for HP or something?

*[Someone hums.]*

00:02:18 John Host Ah, I liked your reference there! I'll add that. Mac vs. PC ads. I find in Patrick's favor... Sorry, Rudy...

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

00:02:26 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:02:28 John Host *[Stifles laughter.]* Rudy—Rudy, how's the reception up there at Big Toad Road?

00:02:32 Rudy Guest Big Toad Road, clear as... crystal.

00:02:35 John Host Coming in loud and clear from Big Toad Road, unnamed state, USA, presumably.

*[One or both litigants laugh.]*

Before we were recording, Jesse—of course, all the fun stuff happens before we hit record on any podcast; that is the truth. And I learned that Rudy, Patrick's dad, lives on a road called Big Toad Road, and he didn't want me to mention it, 'cause he's afraid of podcast paparazzi—

*[Jesse laughs.]*

—paparazzing 'round his home there!

00:02:59 Rudy Guest That's right.

00:03:00 Jesse Host *TMZ* reports on all our past litigants. *[Laughs.]*

00:03:03 John Host Let me—let me just say, to all those listeners who delighted in using Google's satellite to find that pool in Maine that I said probably didn't exist, and had to prove it to me... Do not hunt down Patrick's dad.

00:03:19 Jesse Host No.

00:03:20 Rudy Guest It's okay, because it's actually technically called Big Toad Way, so they probably wouldn't find it.

00:03:24 John Host Oh—! Well, there we go. Now all the secrets are—all the IP is going out—

*[A litigant laughs.]*

—being revealed now. Which is, in fact, part of what we're gonna discuss here in a moment. But! Do you have a guess, sir, as to the source of my quote?

00:03:38 Rudy Guest

I—I have no idea.

00:03:40 John Host

You're never gonna get it.

00:03:41 Rudy Guest

I was hoping you would do something from *Cheers* I might recognize, but... so my guess is that it's—

*[Someone sighs.]*

—something post-1985 cultural reference, which by definition I would not get.

00:03:52 John Host

It is post-1985. It is, in fact, from 2009. And the reason you are never going to get it is this website that I am quoting from, uh, is no longer extant. I actually got it via The Internet Archive. January 2009, a blog post on a website called *Conversations.Nokia.com*, the official Nokia phone blog. Specifically, *[pronouncing the colon]* "The History of Nokia Part 2: *Judge John Hodgman*."

Now, *Judge John Hodgman* is not the thing—the actual thing that is being discussed in the quote portion. Specifically, I was quoting Adam F. from the comments of this blog post. Adam F. was saying, "I heard it said many times the original is often the best. Bring... blank... back."

Now, this blank—which you might take another guess at; I'm giving you a lot of hints, giving a lot of chances here. Big Toad Road deserves it. This thing that I am referring to, this blank that I am asking you to name, is considered by some to be the first mobile app. Certainly one of the first and most popular mobile games that was put onto the Nokia 6110 mobile phone in 1997. The game was created by Taneli Armanto. Can either of you name the game?

I know that there are *Judge John Hodgman* listeners screaming into their email machines at me right now. But we're gonna give Patrick and his dad Rudy a chance to guess.

00:05:26 Patrick Guest

Is it Snake?

00:05:28 John Host

Is it Snake?

And Rudy, what is your guess?

00:05:30 Rudy Guest

No idea.

00:05:32 John Host

Snake is correct! I—I ruled rightly. It is—I rule in favor of Patrick. But since we're beaming in all the way from Big Toad Road, we will not grant the summary judgment, 'cause neither of you technically got the cultural reference. And now we will hear the case.

Before we begin—Rudy.

00:05:50 Rudy Guest

Yes.

00:05:51 John Host

Thank you for joining the podcast. Do you have—I—I love podcasts,

myself. We just finished our incredible MaxFunDrive, supporting our community of many podcasts. If MaxFun were looking to invite to its community of podcasts, I don't know, a podcast on ultimate Frisbee, is there one you would recommend?

00:06:11 Rudy Guest I can think of several. You really want the best one?

*[John and Jesse crack up.]*

00:06:16 John Host You know what? I don't care if it's the best. I just wanna know, is it the most popular?

00:06:21 Rudy Guest Well, the most popular happens to be the best. It's called *Sin the Fields*, and it features, uh, Patrick Stegemoeller and another guy. Tad Wissel.

00:06:33 John Host What is it called? Patrick, this is your ultimate Frisbee podcast?

00:06:36 Patrick Guest Yeah! It's called *Sin the Fields*.

00:06:38 John Host *Sin the Fields!*

00:06:40 Patrick Guest *Sin the Fields*. It's—

00:06:41 John Host Sounds scary!

00:06:42 Patrick Guest Yeah. It's a sort of deep reference from within the ultimate community that—

00:06:47 John Host Whoa.

00:06:48 Patrick Guest —it makes it impossible—outside of just the fact that it's about ultimate Frisbee, but that—

00:06:51 John Host It's a deep ultimate Frisbee cultural reference?

00:06:54 Patrick Guest Right. So it just makes it impossible to market to anyone outside of the handful of people who actually care about ultimate. But, uh, you know! You gotta stick—*[stifles laughter]*—gotta stick with your brand.

00:07:03 John Host I gotta give credit for your dad, 'cause that was the other thing that happened before we started recording, was Rudy did a very dadly thing and recommended your podcast, and I wanna recommend it to all of our listeners. What do you play—what kind of—what ultimate Frisbee position do you play? Is that a thing?

00:07:18 Patrick Guest Yes—!

00:07:19 John Host Power forward? Strikeback?

*[Someone chuckles.]*

00:07:20 Patrick Guest I'm a—I'm a handler.

00:07:21 John Host Spin—spin thrower? Plate spinner?

00:07:23 Jesse Host A handler.

00:07:25 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** A handler?

**Patrick:** A handler.

00:07:25 Patrick Guest Yeah.

00:07:26 John Host Oh! Yeah.

00:07:28 Jesse Host I actually have a pretty serious rivalry with, uh, Patrick. My podcast *Bag The Chains* is about frolf. Frolfing.

00:07:36 Patrick Guest Mm.

00:07:38 Jesse Host Um, and I have nothing but contempt for ultimate Frisbee and its podcast.

*[Someone laughs quietly.]*

00:07:43 Patrick Guest There's a lot of bad blood there.

00:07:45 John Host One of the great rivalries.

00:07:47 Jesse Host Mm-hm.

00:07:48 John Host Ultimate Frisbee and Frisbee golf. It's a li—you know, I gotta say... In a world in which Frisbee golf exists, as well as regular Frisbee, it's a lot for your sport to declare itself the ultimate.

*[Jesse and the litigants laugh.]*

00:08:08 Jesse Host That's a big move that I never really felt was justified. I don't think—  
And that's—John! That's to say nothing of halftime shows featuring dogs doing incredible Frisbee catches, which is by far the king of all Frisbee sports.

00:08:18 John Host That seems ultimate to me. I don't know that it—anything can go—that is ne plus ultra in the Frisbee world. But... it's fair. It's established that that is its name from now on.

*Sin the Fields. S-I-N the Fields.*

00:08:32 Patrick Guest S-I-N. *Sin the Fields*. Hosted by myself and my, uh, incomparably named podcast partner, Tad Wissel.

*[John and Jesse laugh.]*

00:08:46 Jesse Host Um, which is his real name. Just, uh—yeah. *[Stifles laughter.]*  
Did he get that name because his parents anticipated he would grow up to be an ultimate Frisbee enthusiast? *[Laughs.]*  
They're like, *[stifling laughter]* "It's—it's either that or water polo."

00:08:59 John Host Tad—

00:09:00 Jesse Host Tad Wissel (*hWhistle*).

00:09:02 John Host —hhWhistle!

Anyway, I guess we gotta hear this case. I would love to talk about Tad Wissel of—*[stifles laughter]*—of—the ultimate Frisbee, uh, athlete and podcaster. But we're here for you, Patrick! 'Cause you have dragged your own father into court, all the way down from Big Toad Road, seeking justice. What is the nature of your dispute?

00:09:23 Patrick Guest My father Rudy keeps pitching this app—

00:09:27 John Host Mm-hm!

00:09:29 Patrick Guest —uh, that's not a good app.

*[John snorts, Patrick stifles laughter.]*

And it's—it's really—it's really creating some friction. Um, I don't

know if you would like me to define what I think the app concept is, or let him get the first in.

00:09:40 John Host No, no, I will—I'll give it to the creator. I don't need you to steal his IP.

00:09:44 Patrick Guest Right.

00:09:45 John Host Uh, I'll give it to the creator—a fair chance to elevator pitch me in a second.

00:09:48 Patrick Guest Mm-hm.

00:09:49 John Host But when you say, Patrick, that Rudy, your dad, is pitching this app idea... He's pitching it to, what, venture capitalists, titans of industry, app developers? Who is he pitching it to?

00:10:00 Patrick Guest Mostly just loved ones—

00:10:02 John Host Mm-hm.

00:10:03 Patrick Guest —whose time that he gets to spend with them is limited, and he... consciously decides to use it pitching over and over again this app.

00:10:10 John Host Uh—okay.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

And how long has this been going on? This app pitching. I mean, does it go back to the time of Snake: 1997, the Year of the Snake!

00:10:18 Patrick Guest No, it's—it follows on the heels of Snake. I'd say about 2017? Summer 2017.

00:10:23 John Host Alright!

00:10:24 Patrick Guest So about four years now is how long this has been going.

00:10:25 John Host Alright. Alright.

00:10:28 Patrick Guest You correct me—correct me if I'm wrong on the timeline there.

00:10:29 John Host No, I wanna—let's turn it over to Rudy. Rudy...

00:10:32 Rudy Guest Well, first I would quarrel with his characterization of how frequently I am mentioning this, much less pitching it. I think I pitched it... once. *[Chuckles.]* And after that, I'm just sort of more taunting them with it. But—

00:10:49 John Host *[Laughing]* Okay!

00:10:50 Rudy Guest Yeah. Taunting 'em with their failure to—to cash in on the opportunity that I gave them.

00:10:56 John Host Right. You—but—uh, but no one else has taken up the opportunity. It's not like they've missed the opportunity. The opportunity remains to be taken.

00:11:03 Rudy Guest The opportunity is still out there. Yes. It's—although I think we're sort of blowing it wide open by doing this podcast, so someone—someone will—certainly one of your astute listeners will pick it up, I have no doubt. Become an *[inaudible]*.

00:11:15 John Host Well, I'm gonna ask you to describe the app. And...

00:11:17 Rudy Guest Okay.

00:11:19 John Host I don't know. Jennifer Marmor, maybe we should just bleep it all out? Just to protect his IP?

*[Multiple people laugh quietly.]*

Just—just a long—

00:11:25 Rudy Guest No, no—

00:11:26 Jennifer Marmor Producer I mean, this show will then be 50 minutes of one long bleep.

00:11:29 Rudy Guest *[Chuckles.]* No, it's okay. They had their chance.

00:11:34 John Host Oh, I'm going—that's right. The world has had its chance. Rudy—*[laughs]*. You've already revealed your son's podcast. I think you revealed his last name. You've corrected me about the name of your road; it's Big Toad Way. You are definitely triangulatable at this point.

*[Rudy laughs.]*

And I—and I am—urge the listeners of *Judge John Hodgman*, an honorable group if I've ever met one... Do not go find Patrick's dad. He's a good dad who deserves his privacy. And he's got a—by the way? A great ceiling fan. Love a ceiling fan in the background. Good for you, Rudy. I'm leaning in your favor at this point.

And also, he's got some IP. Don't steal his IP! Okay? This is an opportunity that Rudy has extended to his son Patrick, and by the end of this podcast Patrick is going to have to take it up or drop this legacy in the dirt. Like a used Frisbee that's no good anymore.

Rudy. What is the nature of the app?

00:12:38 Rudy Guest Okay. It's actu—it's a very simple concept, actually. Alright. So you start with a virtual bar. You know. An online gathering place. Make it look like a bar. Right?

00:12:50 John Host Mm-hm. Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

00:12:52 Rudy Guest And then you have some mechanism for people to, uh—to go off and have conversations with each other in the bar. Right? So—!

00:12:59 John Host Alright. Right.

00:13:01 Rudy Guest You're hitting it off with someone in a bar—

00:13:02 John Host So like a—so like a booze Zoom so far.

00:13:04 Rudy Guest Booze Zoom. Right.

00:13:05 John Host *[Enunciating]* Booze Zoom. Booze Zoom.

00:13:06 Rudy Guest Right. And the value—here's the value added. So you're hitting it off with somebody in a bar. You wanna buy them a drink.

00:13:13 John Host Right.

00:13:14 Rudy Guest So how do you buy a drink for somebody at a virtual bar? Well—

00:13:17 John Host You Venmo them.

00:13:19 Rudy Guest —this is what the app does. So Jack and Jill—

00:13:21 John Host PayPal...

00:13:22 Rudy Guest Jack and Jill are talking, hitting it off. Jill says, "What are you drinking?"

Jack says, "Gin tonic."

Jill says, "Great! Next one's on me."

Alright? Jack goes into his kitchen. Makes himself a gin and tonic in his kitchen.

00:13:32 John Host *[Laughing]* Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

00:13:34 Rudy Guest Two buttons get pressed. Six dollars leaves Jill's account. Five dollars goes into Jack's account.

00:13:41 John Host Yes.

00:13:42 Rudy Guest With a modest stipend for the website operator. And with any luck, 20 minutes later... you know, it happens again the other direction. Everybody's happy. Just solid gold. Gold.

00:13:54 John Host What is it called?

00:13:57 Rudy Guest It's called Rudy's Place.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

00:13:59 John Host Mm-hm?

00:14:01 Rudy Guest I don't know what it's called!

00:14:02 Jesse Host Okay, I'm back on board!

00:14:02 Rudy Guest I—*[laughs]*.

00:14:03 John Host Yeah. I—

00:14:05 Rudy Guest I don't know—I don't know what it's called. That is the—

00:14:07 John Host I mean, look. I'll tell you something. Now that you know that—now that it's called Rudy's Place, what I wish, honestly, nothing more, is to buy you a drink. Well, I want to transfer you a lot of money to develop this app. I love this idea so much now that it's called Rudy's Place. If only there were some existing way for humans to transfer money to other humans using online... but that hasn't happened yet, 'cause you invented it, apparently!

*[John and one or both litigants laugh.]*

00:14:35 Jesse Host Well, John, that's—you're overstating the situation here! Uh, Rudy has invented something. He's invented adding a bar-themed skin to Zellee.

00:14:49 John Host *[Laughs.]* That's the other one! The—has anyone ever used that cash transfer thing? That's the one my bank wants me to use.

00:14:56 Jesse Host Yeah, it's the one that lives inside your bank.

00:14:59 John Host Yeah...

So Rudy, let me—I—I'm... I think this is a lovely idea, and I get it. But—so, are you talking about—the lucky developer of this app, in your vision, would create a virtual conference space like a Zoom or a Google Hangouts, or—what we're using now. Right? But there would be a little button down below that would say—you would be encouraged to drink an alcoholic or non-alcoholic drink. It is a social place. Where strangers meet? Do strangers come? Can they drop



in, sort of like a Clubhouse situation?

00:15:33 Rudy Guest Um—I assume so.

00:15:37 John Host Right. Right.

00:15:38 Rudy Guest Honestly, what I just described to you is the full extent of the thought I've put into this app. So—

00:15:43 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Okay.

00:15:45 Rudy Guest I just threw it out there to Patrick and his sister Brigid, and a couple of their cousins of similar age, when we were at a—a extended family shore vacation. And I thought they would snap it up, and I was surprised that they just scoffed and mocked it.

00:16:06 Jesse Host You thought they would snap it up on the basis of the fact that they are what is known as "app-aged."

00:16:11 Rudy Guest Sure. *[Laughs quietly.]* Whatever that is.

00:16:15 John Host Patrick, why did you scoff your dad?

00:16:20 Patrick Guest Why—

00:16:21 John Host Why did you, and your sister Brigid, and all of your cousins down the shore, have a scoff party and laugh at your dad for pitching this app?

00:16:32 Patrick Guest You know, I think that—uh, you have to—*[stifles laughter]*—you have to take into consideration my father's history with technology. And his present, current situation with technology. And just that I—the fact that he would be pitching an app, in and of itself, was a humorous idea. And then when that pitch seemed to disregard, uh, multiple decades of preexisting apps, and companies, and websites—

*[Someone coughs or stifles laughter.]*

I think PayPal was founded in... 1998? Or something like that? So, um—

00:17:06 John Host It was invented by Snake. Snake invented it the next year. Snake became sentient and invented PayPal. Yeah.

00:17:08 Patrick Guest Right. Right. *[Chuckles.]* Um—

00:17:13 John Host That's tech—that's history of technology. That's just science.

00:17:16 Patrick Guest *[Laughs.]* So at a surface level, that was I think where the—the initial scoffing came from. And, you know, maybe it's uncharitable for a bunch of app-aged individuals to just scoff at the mere idea of a, you know, a more distinguished, older person pitching an idea for an app. Uh—

00:17:34 John Host Rudy, I just want to say that I don't know what "app-aged"—This is the first I've ever heard this term, ever, either. So...

00:17:39 Rudy Guest Thank you.

00:17:41 John Host Both Jesse and Patrick are making fun of both of us now. Is this a real term, or one that you guys just made up in the chat to make fun of us? Patrick and Jesse? Youths?

00:17:53 Jesse Host No, I think it's a—it is a bit of illustrative language that I created to illustrate, uh, Rudy's description that he pitched this app to Patrick, his sister, and some of their cousins, who are all about the same age.

00:18:09 John Host Gotcha.

00:18:11 Jesse Host Which is—seems to be, from my perspective, what Rudy understands venture capitalists to be.

*[One of the litigants chuckles.]*

00:18:19 John Host Yeah. Rudy, do any of—may I ask if Patrick or Brigid or any of the cousins have a background in investing, or developing... apps?

00:18:30 Rudy Guest Uh, hmm... Certainly not—

00:18:33 John Host I mean, Patrick, what do you do for a living, aside from being an ultimate Frisbee podcaster?

00:18:36 Patrick Guest Well, my side gig, in addition to being an ultimate Frisbee podcaster, is I'm an attorney.

00:18:42 John Host Okay. Gotcha. Rudy, go on. What about Brigid, or any of the cousins?

00:18:47 Rudy Guest I think some of the cousins might be a little more involved in technology. But I'm just assuming that someone who's in their 20s and gets excited about an idea can take it and run with it.

00:19:00 Jesse Host When you say they might be a little more involved in technology, do you mean that, like, *[stifles laughter]* they bought one of those refrigerators with a screen on it or something?

*[Someone laughs.]*

00:19:10 Rudy Guest I don't know. From my perspective, everybody's more involved with technology than I am, so...

00:19:16 Jesse Promo Let's take a quick recess! And hear about this week's *Judge John Hodgman* sponsor. We'll be back in just a moment on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:19:24 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:19:26 Jesse Promo It's the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, and as always our show is brought to you by you: the members of MaximumFun.org. Never more so than now after the MaxFunDrive, our gratitude to every single one of you.

We're also grateful this week to have the support of SunBasket. Known the world over as the only meal service delivery outfit co-founded by my friend Tyler from college.

00:19:53 John Promo Now, Jesse, I had a question about that.

00:19:54 Jesse Promo Is your question, "Did Tyler once wear a holographic puffer jacket when we went to see David Cross at the Punch Line in San Francisco?"

*[Stifling laughter]* 'Cause if so, the answer is yes, and it was very embarrassing.

00:20:06 John Promo That was on my list of questions. I didn't think we'd have time for it, so I'm glad you answered it. Thank you.

00:20:11 Jesse Promo Okay.

*[Stifling laughter]* Was it, "Did—did Tyler win *The Amazing Race* one time?" 'cause the answer to that is yes, too.

00:20:18 John Promo Uh, I didn't even know to ask that question; this Tyler is an amazing person.

00:20:21 Jesse Promo He is.

00:20:22 John Promo My question to you is: When Tyler first mentioned SunBasket to you—

00:20:27 Jesse Promo Mm-hm.

00:20:28 John Promo —and this idea of this meal and meal kit delivery service using super-fresh, delicious food products that are perfectly proportioned, no waste, sent to you in the ecologically sustainable way, etc... were you mean to your friend, and wrong, and say, "That will never work"?

00:20:44 Jesse Promo Yeah. I had not tried it yet, and then I tried it, and I was like, "Oh, Tyler, this is really good." *[Laughs.]*

00:20:50 John Promo I only ask 'cause I'm gonna tell a little story about that later in this episode.

00:20:52 Jesse Promo Okay.

00:20:53 John Promo But listen. You're a good friend.

00:20:54 Jesse Promo Yeah.

00:20:55 John Promo And you know what else is a good friend? SunBasket. SunBasket's a good friend to people who love fresh, delicious food, sustainably sourced and perfectly portioned, but maybe need a little help and inspiration in the kitchen in the form of good food sent to them in a good box. That's SunBasket.

00:21:10 Jesse Promo SunBasket right now is offering fresh and ready meals for just \$8.99. That's a really reasonable price for a really tasty meal delivered straight to your door. All you have to do is toss it in the oven, uh, cook it up a little bit. You don't have to chop anything or prepare anything; it is ready to go.

I'm talking about, John... braised beef panang curry, with jasmine rice and sweet peas.

00:21:34 John Promo Right.

00:21:36 Jesse Promo Talking about shrimp paella. The—the choices are extraordinary, John! At [SunBasket.com/menu](https://SunBasket.com/menu), you can check out all of the choices, 'cause there are some really great ones.

00:21:48 John Promo And whether you're a vegetarian, whether you are eating paleo, whether you're on a crab-conscious diet, SunBasket has everything that you could possibly want. Whether you want a meal kit that you put the ingredients together yourself based on really good recipes they send you, or as you say, Jesse, a fresh and ready meal, which is just ready to go as it is. It's amazing.

00:22:08 Jesse Promo SunBasket's offering \$90 off your first four deliveries, including free shipping on the first box, when you go right now to [SunBasket.com/hodgman](https://SunBasket.com/hodgman) and enter promo code "Hodgman" at checkout. That's [SunBasket.com/hodgman](https://SunBasket.com/hodgman), and enter promo code "Hodgman" at checkout.

We're also supported this week by Brooklinen. Not founded by my friend Tyler from college, but founded by people who wanted to work directly with manufacturers to make luxury available to you without

luxury markups. They're making all kinds of beautiful stuff, John!

00:22:50 John Promo Yeah. You know, I—I'm very excited. Because we're living in a time of science. People are getting vaccinated. David Rees is coming back to Brooklyn to work with me on a secret project.

00:23:04 Jesse Promo Wow.

00:23:05 John Promo And I gotta get some new sheets for him, for the old foldout couch! 'Cause he's gonna be staying here! And guess where I'm gonna get these sheets from!

You—you can probably guess the John Hodgman Collection at Brooklinen. Whether it's spelled Brookline with an N, or Brooklyn with an—Y and then an N, you can't spell Brooklinen without naming a place where I, John Hodgman, have lived.

Whether it's for you, or for those newly vaccinated friends and family coming back into your home, go ahead and check out those extra soft sheets, super-plush towels, maybe a new waffle-knit guest robe, from Brooklinen.

00:23:35 Jesse Promo Brooklinen are so confident in their core products, they come with a 365-day warranty. That's a full year three out of four times! They've received over 75,000 five-star reviews and counting.

00:23:52 John Promo And just some personal experience—

00:23:53 Jesse Promo Yeah.

00:23:54 John Promo Only about a thousand of those five-star reviews are by me. I mean—

*[Jesse laughs.]*

And I'm—and those are genuine. I'm just like, "This weighted comforter is still the greatest."

00:24:04 Jesse Promo Yeah.

00:24:05 John Promo "These sheets are still amazing."

*[Jesse chuckles.]*

I gotta give it up a thousand times. But the rest of them are all just, you know, other people!

00:24:11 Jesse Promo So give yourself the comfort refresh you deserve and get it for less at Brooklinen. Go to [Brooklinen.com](https://www.brooklinen.com) and use promo code "Hodgman" to get \$20 off with a minimum purchase of \$100.

00:24:22 John Promo That's B-R-O-O-K-L-I-N-E-N.com, and enter promo code "Hodgman" for \$20 off with a minimum purchase of \$100. Again, that's [Brooklinen.com](https://www.brooklinen.com), promo code "Hodgman."

00:24:37 Jesse Promo Let's get back to the show.

00:24:38 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:24:40 John Host So—*[sighs]*. Patrick, let me just understand. The issues are, you—I mean, when I said, "Why were you scoffing your dad?" basically you said, "This is a—"

You know, to summarize. "The idea itself is dumb, and my dad

doesn't understand technology, so he's pathetic." Mean! I'll say mean. That's a hard scoff.

Explain to me—and to your dad, who loves you—and to the members of the audience, who are maybe thinking about investing their hard-earned cash at this moment, *[stifles laughter]* who have not yet seen the flaw in the plan of Rudy's Place... What do you see as the flaws in this app?

00:25:21 Patrick Guest

Well, I think partially because... after you hear the concept for the first time, one of the first things that springs to mind is about the only way that this could become profitable is if it was used for some illegal activity, illicit behavior, something like that.

00:25:38 John Host

Uh-huh.

00:25:39 Patrick Guest

And again, the idea of a—a—you know, a... someone inadvertently pitching a new, you know, Silk Road, or something like that—

*[John laughs, Patrick stifles laughter.]*

—is, uh—you know, *[inaudible]* best intentions, ending up in this situation, that's... pretty funny.

00:25:53 John Host

I believe the new Silk Road is called Big Toad Road, from now on.

*[Everyone else laughs.]*

That is the new—the new home of the Dark Web.

00:26:01 Rudy Guest

It's actually made of gravel, but...

00:26:04 John Host

*[Laughs.]*

So it's basically a Dark Web application with sinister uses. What else? What other—your other arguments? What would you caution someone before investing in this new app?

00:26:16 Patrick Guest

Well, there's also just a lot of competition in the online dating app space right now, I would—I would imagine. I mean, Tinder, Bumble, Hinge, presumably other ones that I don't even know about.

*[Chuckles.]* Um—

00:26:31 John Host

What's the favorite online dating app among ultimate Frisbee players?

00:26:34 Patrick Guest

Oh, just being an ultimate Frisbee player.

00:26:36 John Host

Wow.

00:26:37 Patrick Guest

Because there's only seven of us, anyways.

00:26:39 John Host

00:26:40 Patrick Guest

So you can—it's a—*[laughs]*—

00:26:43 John Host

It's a—it's a cluster of friends.

00:26:45 Patrick Guest

Yeah.

00:26:46 John Host

Yeah, I see. Okay.

00:26:48 Patrick Guest

So there's that. And then also, again, as we've already pointed out, the functionality already exists easily, in so many different ways, with Venmo, with Zelle, with PayPal. So you're already trying to box out

multiple industries at once here, to try to turn a profit on this.

00:27:08 John Host Rudy, I may have misunderstood. I just felt like what you were proposing was... a place where everybody knows your name.

00:27:17 Jesse Host Mm-hm.

00:27:18 John Host Where you can go to forget all your troubles.

00:27:19 Rudy Guest Mm-hm!

00:27:21 John Host And you just hang out in a convivial atmosphere, and if you feel like being nice, you buy your friend a drink within this ecosystem called Rudy's Place. I didn't get the impression—and maybe I'm wrong here—is the idea that people will—would... date out of this experience? That they are buying drinks for each other to lead to in-real-life or virtual hugging and kissing?

00:27:48 Rudy Guest I can't speak to that. I mean—

00:27:50 John Host Okay. *[Inaudible.]*

00:27:51 Rudy Guest People do whatever they wanna do! My—

00:27:52 John Host Right. Whatever happens at Rudy's Place stays at Rudy's Place, right?

*[Jesse laughs.]*

00:27:55 Rudy Guest Exactly! Exactly—

00:27:57 Jesse Host Look, just making your way in the world today takes everything you've got!

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

00:28:02 Rudy Guest The only value added that my idea offers is that there is a conviviality involved in buying a drink for somebody, and then returning the favor if—if you're still talking ten minutes later. And there's a social lubrication that occurs there, and this would offer that. That's my pitch. That's it.

00:28:26 John Host Well, Rudy, you pitched it to Patrick and his sister Brigid, and all of his cousins by the dozens and his aunts down there on the shore.

00:28:33 Rudy Guest Mm-hm.

00:28:35 John Host The market spoke. It said, "Scoff."

00:28:37 Rudy Guest Right.

00:28:39 John Host To quote the great Megan Amram, who wrote that line for me in *Parks and Recreation*.

Uh, why are we even still having this conversation? Patrick accuses you of bringing this up time and time again. You have said that you are merely taunting them at this point. What is going on?

00:28:57 Rudy Guest I continue to think that it's a billion-dollar idea. If somebody would just do it.

Now, this was all pre-pandemic! I mean...

00:29:05 John Host Do you think it's changed now?

00:29:06 Rudy Guest I think it made sense before the pandemic.

00:29:09 John Host Right.

00:29:10 Rudy Guest I think during the pandemic, people actually couldn't even go to bars. It would've been just absolute solid gold, multi-billion dollars.

00:29:17 John Host How would the app be making money? Would Rudy's Place be taking a percentage of every transaction?

00:29:22 Rudy Guest Yes. Yes.

00:29:24 John Host I see.

00:29:25 Rudy Guest Or maybe just stealing the data and selling it to hackers somewhere. I don't know.

00:29:29 John Host You're nothing if not honest and forthright. Thank you.

00:29:32 Jesse Host *[Chuckling]* Yeah.

00:29:33 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Appreciate that.

00:29:35 Jesse Host If only we could get Google to be so frank.

00:29:39 John Host *[Laughs.]*

00:29:43 Rudy Guest Yeah!

00:29:44 Jesse Host *[Chuckling]* Yeah.

00:29:45 John Host Right. Why not?

So we have a—we have evidence of your taunting. Or reaction to it, in any case. We have an affidavit from Patrick's aforementioned sister, Brigid. I'm going to read a—a shortened version of it here for you now, to put it into the record.

"Dear Judge Hodgman,

"Patrick represents the dozens of family members and friends who have found themselves barricaded in the corner of a family party—"

*[Someone laughs quietly.]*

"—stuck in an argument they don't want to have, trying to explain the basic components of apps to a man who still pays for his email account." Oof. Damning. Damning evidence.

*[Jesse is laughing quietly.]*

00:30:24 John Host "Every critic makes him more adamant. As he sees it, genius is often misunderstood.

"It's made even worse knowing that my dad has no plans to create this app! He's just frustrated that no one else is willing to commit their lives—*[stifles laughter]*—to the million-dollar idea he has handed us."

Now, I think that must be a typo. Because Rudy, you said it was a billion-dollar idea, correct?

*[Jesse cracks up.]*

00:30:45 Rudy Guest At least. Yeah.  
00:30:46 John Host Alright. That's a typo, Brigid.  
00:30:48 Rudy Guest Yeah.  
00:30:49 John Host You might wanna—you might wanna double-check. Give your things a proofread before you send them in to *Judge John Hodgman*.

Continuing from Brigid:

"So without a chance to be proven incorrect, *[stifles laughter]* his commitment to the idea is unrelenting; it's been years. Rudy's Place is half—"

Oh, boy. Brigid's really—is Brigid a lawyer, Patrick?

00:31:10 Patrick Guest No, but she's showing some chops.  
00:31:12 John Host Yeah. What does she do for a living, if I may ask?  
00:31:15 Patrick Guest She does fundraising for children's hospitals.  
00:31:18 John Host Well, I bet she gets some money. 'Cause she is bringing it home here. Listen to this:

"Rudy's Place is half of a terrible idea—"

*[Someone laughs quietly.]*

"—that deserves no one's time or attention. But it has somehow become the hill my dad is choosing to die on. I don't know if it's a quixotic pursuit of greatness now that he's retired, or a bizarre way for him to process his deep misunderstanding and fear of technology. *[Stifles laughter.]*

"But either way, it's ruining our family's beach trips. Any support you can provide is deeply appreciated."

Signed, Patrick's sister Brigid.

Alright. Rudy, I wanna ask you about this last paragraph in particular.

00:32:02 Rudy Guest Okay.  
00:32:03 John Host How do you respond to the accusation that this is a quixotic pursuit of greatness now that you've retired? And/or a bizarre way for you to process your fear of technology. Do either of those statements have any resonance with you?  
00:32:19 Rudy Guest Uh, not the former. Maybe the latter. *[Inaudible.]*  
00:32:24 John Host That latter being misunderstanding or fear about technology. Tell me *[inaudible]*.  
00:32:28 Rudy Guest I wouldn't say misunderstanding or fear. I would say understanding and loathing.  
00:32:34 John Host Ah!  
00:32:35 Rudy Guest I don't like technology. I don't like the Internet. So I guess, honestly, this is really just a way of sort of taunting my—the younger generation with the absurdity of the culture that they have been forced to live in.



*[John laughs.]*

That's really what it is.

00:32:52 John Host You're doing it—you're doing it for the lulz.

*[Jesse cracks up.]*

You're trolling your children. And their cousins! With this idea which you don't truly believe in, because it produces pleasure for you.

00:33:09 Rudy Guest Well, now, wait! Now, wait. *[Clears throat.]* I still believe in the idea!

*[Jesse cracks up again.]*

The fact that it is ridiculous and grotesque is not mutually exclusive with it being a billion-dollar idea on the Internet.

00:33:21 John Host Rudy, it says here that you retired last year from a career in energy and environmental policy, and you are now pursuing a doctorate PhD in philosophy focusing on technology, the thing you claim to hate!

00:33:36 Rudy Guest Yes.

00:33:37 John Host Why are you taking this doctorate in technology?

00:33:40 Rudy Guest *[Laughing]* You really wanna go down this road?

*[Patrick cracks up.]*

00:33:44 John Host Yeah, I wanna go down that Big Toad Road! *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:33:46 Rudy Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Okay—

00:33:47 Jesse Host Let's meet the toad, baby!

00:33:50 Rudy Guest Okay—

00:33:51 John Host I'm gonna ride 'til I can't no more!

*[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]*

00:33:54 Rudy Guest I—I mean, to—*[laughs]*—we can spend a lot of time on that. I guess I—I'm pursuing the theme that technology is reducing the human self to an aggregate of commercial data. It's empowering totalitarian surveillance states. It's reducing mental functions to replace judgment with obedience. It's erasing the notion of objective truth, where information and truth are just what feels good, and since people spend their whole lives staring at screens, it turns out what feels good is rage.

So... I could go on.

00:34:30 John Host I like this podcast a lot.

*[Rudy chuckles.]*

You know, *Judge John Hodgman* began as a segment on Jesse's podcast here on the Maximum Fun network, *Jordan, Jesse, Go!* And then it spun off into its own podcast. So I kinda feel like maybe, Patrick, the solution here is for your dad to have a segment on *Sin the Fields*.

*[Patrick laughs.]*

Where he—you know what I mean? Where he just talks about the danger and evils of technology. You're not—are you talking about podcasts in the—in your portfolio of woe that you just laid out there for us, Rudy?

00:35:01 Rudy Guest I—okay. At risk of sounding like I'm sucking up, I will say I do like podcasts.

00:35:08 John Host Mm-hm.

00:35:09 Rudy Guest Podcasts are probably the closest that the Internet comes to actually fulfilling the promise that it made 30 years ago.

00:35:16 John Host Mm-hm. Back when Snake was invented. Mm-hm.

00:35:19 Rudy Guest Mm-hm.

00:35:21 Jesse Host It is the most superhighway-like of the Internet's information.

*[Patrick laughs, Jesse stifles laughter.]*

00:35:27 John Host So—so, okay. So you—podcasts themselves are not just a—a vehicle for rage and obedience and totalitarianism.

00:35:37 Rudy Guest Right. Not—well, not this one. Not yet, anyway.

00:35:40 John Host So—*[sighs]*. Patrick, what do you—what—what do you want me to rule in this situation?

00:35:48 Patrick Guest Well, I think that Brigid really hits the nail on the head here. Getting at the deep irony of how this man who loathes technology, uh, burden-shifts technical know-how onto all of those around him, as evidenced by the—just everything that went into getting this podcast appearance in the first place—is now essentially trolling his family, and becoming the monster that he claims to be trying to save the rest of us from.

00:36:21 John Host Yes, but he's not using technology to do it.

*[Someone laughs.]*

He's stoking rage for his own enjoyment in person. The way it used to be done.

*[Patrick laughs.]*

00:36:29 Jesse Host Classic meatspace trolling.

*[Everyone else laughs.]*

00:36:35 Patrick Guest So I would like you to rule that, um—you issue an injunction on him continuing to pitch this app idea. Which, despite what he has said earlier, is... one of the three things that he talks about with the rest of the family at this point.

00:36:52 John Host He misrepresents how often he brings up Rudy's Place.

00:36:55 Patrick Guest This is correct.

00:36:56 Rudy Guest Only when we get together.

*[Patrick laughs.]*

00:37:01 John Host Okay.

00:37:02 Patrick Guest This is true; he's not sending blast emails out to people. It is mostly—it's an analog pitch. It's an in-person pitch, I'll give him that.

00:37:08 John Host What are the other two things that are in his repertoire for conversation down the shore?

00:37:13 Patrick Guest Um, the tension between his love of seafaring craft and his fear of sharks.

00:37:18 John Host Great.

00:37:20 Patrick Guest And—

*[Someone laughs quietly, Patrick stifles laughter.]*

00:37:21 Jesse Host I mean, easy answer to that one: Gonna need a bigger boat!

00:37:24 Patrick Guest Right.

*[John laughs.]*

You actually have no idea how scarring just even quoting *Jaws* is for him. He's—he's still got deep *Jaws* trauma.

00:37:32 Rudy Guest It's true.

00:37:33 John Host Sure!

00:37:34 Patrick Guest And, uh, I would say the other one is probably extolling the virtues of the 1970s Minnesota Vikings defensive line.

00:37:42 John Host This is three great dad conversations. I mean... I dare say you're lucky to—you know, you're lucky to have a—a dad. And a relationship with your dad that is positive. Most people who have those things get one dad conversation. This is three great topics!

00:38:03 Jesse Host Yeah. Usually when you're talking to your dad, you don't get—you have to talk about big block vs. small block. Something like that. You don't get to talk about the Minnesota Vikings' legendary Purple People Eaters!

00:38:16 Rudy Guest Thank you!

00:38:17 Patrick Guest To be clear—to be clear, I'm not asking that you make him not my dad. That—I don't know if you have the jurisdictional capabilities to do that.

*[Jesse and John laugh.]*

00:38:22 Jesse Host Thank you for clarifying that, Patrick! *[Laughs.]*

00:38:26 John Host I hadn't considered that.

00:38:27 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* Counselor so stipulated!

00:38:29 John Host I do—I forgot that I do have that power.

*[Jesse and Rudy laugh.]*

Rudy, if I were to rule in your favor, how would you have me rule?

00:38:36 Rudy Guest Um, I have to say, having heard Patrick's... plea, there... I don't know if this ever happens on your podcast, but I realize—he's made me realize that I have been, uh, expressing my technophobia, and taking

it out on innocent people like Patrick and his sister and their cousins.

00:38:58 John Host Oh, because he said that you were—you were, like, trolling them.

00:39:01 Rudy Guest Yeah!

00:39:02 John Host Yeah.

00:39:03 Rudy Guest Whatever that means.

00:39:04 John Host Yeah, yeah, yeah. Just to point out—uh, I love that you love your son, but I said it first. It's fine if you wanna credit him.

*[Patrick laughs.]*

00:39:08 Rudy Guest Okay. Well, thank you!

00:39:10 John Host But I really teed that up for him.

00:39:11 Rudy Guest Yes.

00:39:12 John Host But go on! Please say—continue saying your touching things.

00:39:14 Rudy Guest I'm gonna give the credit to my son, though.

00:39:16 John Host I'll give that IP away.

00:39:17 Rudy Guest Okay. I have to concede that I should probably... stop! Because I'm not honestly pitching a billion-dollar app to them anymore. I'm just taunting and tormenting them for being young Internet people. And that's not their fault. So I don't know—here's what I would like, though.

00:39:41 John Host Yeah.

00:39:42 Rudy Guest I would like to—you can reverse your charge to your listeners that they not take this idea. Open it up. Any of your listeners wants to take it and run with it, please do. But you need to order them that if they do it, they have to call it Rudy's Place.

00:40:00 John Host Absolutely so ordered!

00:40:01 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:40:02 John Host Even before I make my verdict, which now seems a foregone conclusion, but... we'll have to see.

00:40:09 Jesse Host John, that's a—that's a Creative Commons CCRP license. *[Stifles laughter]*. Uh, it's a standard sublicense that you can use it for commercial purposes, but you have to call it Rudy's Place.

00:40:21 John Host And if they make a billion dollars on it, sir, can they buy a superyacht?

00:40:25 Rudy Guest No! Please.

00:40:27 John Host Oh! Why not?!

00:40:28 Rudy Guest Because I hate superyachts. I don't want to—

00:40:30 John Host Somehow I knew that!

00:40:31 Rudy Guest I don't want to be part of somebody getting a superyacht.

00:40:34 Jesse Host Yeah. Too big of boat, John.

00:40:36 John Host Yeah, but—it would seem that of all the boats, a superyacht might be the—the most shark-proof!

*[Jesse laughs.]*

00:40:43 Rudy Guest Yes.

*[John stifles laughter.]*

Superyachts produce more carbon than a small country. So... But that's a whole nother topic.

00:40:51 John Host One last thing before I go into my chambers to make my decision. Rudy, when Patrick and Brigid and their cousins by the dozens and their aunts down by the shore... scoffed your idea initially and ongoing, how did it make you feel?

00:41:10 Rudy Guest Honestly I was surprised the first time. Because I—I thought, and continue to think, that it was a commercially viable idea. Um... Didn't make me feel upset in any way.

00:41:24 John Host Okay.

00:41:25 Rudy Guest But I—I—you know... *[Sighs]*. I would like to reserve the right, if possible, to bring it up... occasionally.

*[John laughs.]*

Just occasionally! I can't just let it go.

*[John laughs.]*

Especially if somebody does it! It becomes Rudy's Place, and—and is a billion-dollar—someone becomes a billionaire, then I certainly have to be able to taunt them.

00:41:46 John Host Well, that is a different situation. Yes. If a listener to *Judge John Hodgman* takes the idea of Rudy's Place, calls it Rudy's Place, runs with it... you get to keep the money, as long as you don't buy a superyacht. But Rudy himself retains bragging and taunting rights. Fair enough?

00:42:06 Rudy Guest That sounds fair.

00:42:07 John Host Alright. Now, as to the decision as to whether you're ever gonna mention this idea again in the future or not, that remains for me to decide. I am going to go into my chambers now, which I'm a little embarrassed to say are here on my superyacht.

*[Rudy laughs.]*

I'm going into the planetarium in my superyacht. I'll be back in a moment with my verdict.

00:42:23 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]*

00:42:24 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

00:42:28 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

00:42:29 Jesse Host Patrick, how do you feel about your chances?

00:42:31 Patrick Guest You know, I mean, I think I'm a little... unclear on exactly what the ruling is going to be, or what even the terms of the ruling could be, based on the admission that my father Rudy just made. I feel that, particularly with the great assist from Brigid, we've made a very

compelling case that both, uh, this is not an app that is going to be successful, and that it's basically impossible for us to conclude anything other than that he's just tormenting us at this point by continuing to bring it up. So I think with those two pieces of evidence established pretty well, I think that the judge will rule in our favor.

00:43:12 Jesse Host Or, to use the language of your podcast... You're ready to kick a field goal!

*[One of the litigants chuckles.]*

Rudy, how do you feel about your chances?

00:43:23 Rudy Guest Uh, I feel... I feel a little chastened, as I—as I listened to Patrick, and Brigid's affidavit, and the judge, and came to realize that I have just been tormenting this younger generation for something that's not really their fault.

On the other hand, I don't—I feel pretty confident that this is a good idea—that the judge will believe that it is potentially a good commercial idea. So as long as I'm still allowed to mention it... at least once a year, I'll feel okay.

00:44:00 Jesse Host Rudy, do you know that you basically invented the hot Silicon Valley-guys-talking-to-each-other-on-the-phone app, Clubhouse?

00:44:09 Rudy Guest *[Laughs.]* I—I'm not gonna be responsible for the use that people make of this thing.

00:44:19 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* Okay. Patrick, you've been making fun of your dad's idea this entire time, and he's basically literally describing the hottest startup app in the world.

*[Patrick and Jesse laugh.]*

I mean, it's not bar-themed, or called Rudy's Place, but I think we can all agree that that would make the existing app better!

*[Jesse and Patrick laugh.]*

00:44:39 Patrick Guest I will agree that Rudy's Place is certainly a better name than Clubhouse.

00:44:43 Jesse Host Well, we'll see what Judge Hodgman has to say about all this when he comes back in just a moment.

00:44:48 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:44:50 Promo Clip *[Pouring rain, accompanied by thunder and/or crashing waves.]*

**Griffin McElroy:** We have wasted this world. Our magic put a storm in the sky that has rendered the surface of our planet uninhabitable. But beneath the surface... well, that's another story entirely.

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*[Music fades out.]*

00:45:35 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:45:38 Jesse Promo

Judge Hodgman, we're taking a break from the case. Let's talk about what we have going on.

First of all, John, we have an important priority here.

00:45:47 John Promo

Please.

00:45:48 Jesse Promo

Our thanks to everyone who has become a member of MaxFun.

00:45:52 John Promo

Absolutely. The generosity of spirit and gesture that you showed us over the past two weeks is just astonishing, mind-blowing, mind-reconstructing, and then mind-re-blowing. So, so grateful to be part of this community with you, you listeners and members who have supported *Judge John Hodgman* and all of the Maximum Fun community so meaningfully. Over the years, and over this last MaxFunDrive in particular. We know that it's been a challenging number of months. And we're really, really touched by your support.

I just wanna say I'm—I'm continuing to have fun mispronouncing the names that you sent in. The members who upgraded or boosted to the Leadership Squad level or above, or who simply showed me reasonable proof of their vaccination. Thank you for being a good citizen. I will continue. I've got a huge—as I always do every year—a huge list of people that I will be thanking over the coming days.

I have to let you know that the offer is now closed. You don't—you'll have to wait 'til next MaxFunDrive if you haven't gotten your name on the list and a confirmation from me already, we'll see you at next MaxFunDrive. So that's continuing to go on, and that's on my Instagram page, @johnhodgman on Instagram.

Also on my Instagram page—what am I, 95? *[Sighs.]* Also on my Instagram, *[stifles laughter]* you will see a post of the last "Get Your Pets" that I did during the MaxFunDrive, which I'd like to draw your attention to. It's always fun to do "Get Your Pets" on Instagram. We meet with a lot of listeners there, and a lot of amazing cats and dogs and other pets. But we had a surprise appearance—Jesse, I'm not sure if you saw this. I truly did not know this was gonna happen, that Aidan, the kid who co-runs the Spirit Halloween wiki?

00:47:36 Jesse Promo

Yeah.

00:47:38 John Promo

Jumped onto "Get Your Pets."

00:47:39 Jesse Promo

Oh, now we're talking.

00:47:40 John Promo

With his various cats, and his one-eyed dog, and his frogs and turtles, and his mom. It was an incredible, incredible moment. I really—go check it out, over at [Instagram.com/johnhodgman](https://Instagram.com/johnhodgman). You can see it archived there on my... Instagram TV tab? I don't know what the words are for these things.

00:48:01 Jesse Promo Yeah.

00:48:02 John Promo But the thing that I really wanna plug just in this moment, Jesse, something very important to me... is a show called *Antiques Roadshow*.

00:48:09 Jesse Promo Uh-huh.

00:48:10 John Promo That I went on. Jesse, did you know this?

00:48:11 Jesse Promo Go suck a lemon, John. Go suck a lemon.

00:48:12 John Promo *[Cackles.]*

I got a call—out of nowhere! Me! Just a casual fan of the roadshow! Love it!—saying, "Would you like to be on the *Antiques Roadshow* on our celebrity edition?" And after I stopped weeping for... for the work that they must have done calling all those people before they finally got to me—

*[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]*

Felt so bad for them. Uh, I said yes, and you can [check it out at PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org). It's a great episode! But the thing that I wanna talk about—I brought some original art from one of my favorite artists to be appraised. Alice Provensen. Alice and Martin Provensen are the authors of a whole bunch of great children's books, including one of my favorites that I've recommended time and time again, which is *Our Animal Friends at Maple Hill Farm*.

00:49:01 Jesse Promo Oh, what a wonderful book that is. Such a—such a wonderful book.

00:49:06 John Promo Yeah. I'm gonna give that a big old plug. And I'm also gonna say, apologies to Norton Juster! Because when we talked about *The Phantom Tollbooth* the other week, I couldn't remember the name. And a number of listener—the name of the author, that is. And a number of listeners wrote in to say, "Hey, uh, you dummy, it's Norton Juster," and boy, oh boy.

I didn't even know enough about Norton Juster's life! Norton Juster was born in Brooklyn. He was in the Navy, posted at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where I used to go be on television sometimes, 'cause that's where Steiner Studios is. *[Stifles laughter.]*

And then when he got out of the Navy, he got together with Jules Feiffer, and he made something called The Garibaldi Society, which was this fake secret society, and the whole point of it was to reject anyone who applied for membership.

*[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]*

And then—and then he was an architect his whole life, and then he moved to Northampton, Massachusetts! Home of WRSI The River, where Monte Belmonte holds down the morning show. And he lived there and just passed away this past March. And I had no idea that Norton Juster was a member of the Pioneer Valley community, never mind this really fascinating, interesting life, and all the other books he wrote besides *The Phantom Tollbooth*, which, honestly, if you're gonna write one book, that would be enough!



But he did a lot of other amazing things, and I do apologize to his family and his memory for not knowing about them.

- 00:50:27 John Promo And speaking of the Pioneer Valley, one last thing. The place where I discovered Alice and Martin Provensen and so many great children's book authors that I didn't know about when I was a very young parent, was right there in Hadley, Massachusetts. The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art! It's an amazing resource.
- And now that museums are opening up, and this happens to be International Museum Day... if not the Eric Carle Museum, think of a museum near you where you might want to take a child who is in your life. Because it's a really wonderful thing to do, and we're so lucky that we're able to do it, thanks to vaccines!
- Anyway, Jesse, what do you have going on?
- 00:51:07 Jesse Promo Oh, just the usual stuff. Everybody should come check out my comedy podcast *Jordan, Jesse, Go!* And, uh, look. While we were not doing any plugs during the MaxFunDrive, *[stifles laughter]* we—we did get a few more non-sports trading cards in the Put This On Shop.
- 00:51:24 John Promo Oh, boy!
- 00:51:25 Jesse Promo So go to [PutThisOnShop.com](http://PutThisOnShop.com)—
- 00:51:26 John Promo Here I go. Here I go!
- 00:51:27 Jesse Promo If you want to get—well, let's see what we got. Well, number one, we still have some *Dark Crystal* cards. Uh—*[stifles laughter]*—
- 00:51:35 John Promo What—those aren't sold out yet?! I'm gonna change that right away.
- 00:51:37 Jesse Promo No, we've—we've honestly—we've gone through so many boxes of them. We still have [Rad Dudes cards](#).
- 00:51:43 John Promo Yeah.
- 00:51:44 Jesse Promo We got some new *Yo! MTV Rap* cards. Uh, we still have some cards from *Dinosaurs*, the TV show.
- [Both stifle laughter.]*
- And *Bill & Ted* cards. But probably second most importantly, we have *ALF* cards. And most importantly, we now have *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* cards. *[Laughs.]*
- 00:52:02 John Promo Wow!
- 00:52:04 Jesse Promo The best *Star Trek* thing ever.
- 00:52:05 John Promo That's the most San Franciscan of the *Star Treks*!
- 00:52:08 Jesse Promo It's the—*[laughs]*—it's the only *Star Trek* thing I truly love. There's other *Star Trek* things I've enjoyed, don't get me wrong.
- [Laughing]* But I truly love *Star Trek IV*, because—remember when Sco—
- [Scottish accent]* "Hello, computer!" *[Laughs.]*
- 00:52:21 John Promo I was just—when Scotty holds up that computer mouse, and says—

*[Scottish accent]* "Hello, computer!"

*[Jesse laughs harder.]*

*[End of Scotty impression.]*

I tell you what, listeners. Get on this. Go to [PutThisOnShop.com](http://PutThisOnShop.com). If any one of you out there gets a *Star Trek: The Voyage Home* card set that has a card of Scotty talking into the computer mouse, like Jesse was just saying, send me a picture of it, and I'll—I'll send you a special prize. I don't know what it's gonna be yet. But I will send you a very special prize. So don't miss this opportunity to get a very special prize. Go to [PutThisOnShop.com](http://PutThisOnShop.com).

00:52:55 Jesse Promo Look. Get something beaut—like, get some *ALF* cards, but then look through the other parts of the store and get yourself something beautiful; you deserve it. Okay?

00:53:04 John Promo Absolutely! I don't want to change Put This On Shop just—

*[Both stifle laughter.]*

—to be a *Dark Crystal* and weird trading card shop. There's incredible stuff there!

00:53:12 Jesse Promo I mean, I'm glad to sell *ALF* cards. Don't get me wrong. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:53:14 John Promo Sure! That's not—yeah!

00:53:15 Jesse Promo Everybody loves the alien life form from planet Melmac. *[Laughs.]* Let's—let's get back to the show.

00:53:21 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:53:23 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]*

00:53:24 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman reenters the courtroom and presents his verdict.

00:53:28 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

00:53:29 John Host How old are you, Patrick?

00:53:30 Patrick Guest I'm 28.

00:53:32 John Host Twenty-eight years old. When I was in my 20s, when I was your age, it was—oh! Just, uh, two years after Snake was loaded onto the Nokia 6110. And—but around that time, you know, we had the Internet. And there—and someone we knew was dating an older fella. And he had the idea for creating what we now know to be a social network. It had not existed before that time.

And this guy Barry, he wanted to create a place where people could hang out together online. And he hired two younger people to consult on this project with him, to create this website where people could hang out together online. And they ultimately parted. Because—*[stifles laughter]*—Barry insisted, against their objections, that this online meeting place should be called, um... HangoutTown.com.

*[Stifles laughter.]*

And I agreed with those younger people at the time. But Barry was right! We—the idea of people hanging out online had not been invented yet! And Barry did it! HangoutTown.com! And if only he had gone forward with that terrible, terrible, terrible domain name, maybe he would be—and maybe he is now a multibillionaire! I don't know! I'm just saying, historically, I have a bad time evaluating business ideas.

Around the same time, I was on a bicycle in Central Park, in New York City, where I live. Jonathan Coulton, my friend, was on the bicycle next to me. We were biking together! Like friends! In a French movie. And as we biked slowly along, he says, "I have an idea for an online business. This business—people don't have time to cook."

00:55:32 John

Host

Bear in mind, this is around the time—you know, 1998 or so. "People don't have to cook. The business I am proposing is that we send perfectly portioned ingredients to people at their homes, as a meal kit. And they make the food at home."

This dude invented SunBasket right next to me. Sorry, Jesse. I know that SunBasket is the creation of your friend from college. But I'm just saying that Jonathan Coulton was right there, on a bicycle with this idea, 15, 20 years early! And—and it is the idea that allows podcasts to exist! And you know what I told him? "It'll never work."

"Hangout Town won't work. Proto-SunBasket won't work." Then Jonathan Coulton came to me a few years later and said, "You know what exists? Podcasts—" and I said, "—will never work!"

I'm glad I was wrong. In all cases. To me this idea, I have to tell you, Rudy, does not seem good. But then Jesse started saying it was basically Clubhouse in another form, and I'm like, "What do I know? What do I know?"

So I can't evaluate the business savvy of getting in on this idea on the ground floor, or even the basement or the second floor. I don't know! I don't know if this thing'll work. Sounds—it sounds like it doesn't need to exist. But then, plenty of things exist that don't need to, in any case. That is not the wisdom I can offer you.

00:57:05 John

Host

The wisdom that I can offer is this: Patrick, you have an interesting dad. Rudy, you live—what I've taken from you is that you like to live in—in tension, between opposing ideas. You know. You have this loathing of technology, and strong feelings about it. And yet rather than just throw it all aside and go out and run a horsepower farm, and ignore technology altogether, you are taking a PhD—using technology, presumably, these days—in order to learn how to hate technology more!

*[Rudy chuckles.]*

You love ships and hate sharks! A normal position. And yet your hatred of superyachts is such that you would refuse that protection. You would rather die by shark than own a superyacht. You are a fan of the Minnesota Vikings. A football team. And yet you have, even

before it's begun, the most popular segment on the most popular ultimate Frisbee podcast in the world.

That's good stuff. That's interesting. I'm sure Patrick and Brigid and all of the cousins and everybody else appreciate that about you. And I don't think you deserve to be scoffed for pitching this idea once. *[Stifles laughter.]* 'Cause you—you almost were telling the truth for a second. You had a moment of clarity where you realized, "Yes. I pitched the idea once. I got scoffed. And now I'm coming back at them again and again just to bug them." You opened the show that way!

*[One of the litigants chuckles.]*

00:58:59 John Host You have stared into the technological abyss, and whether you know it or not, you are stoking rage in order to get attention for yourself, and to get lulz out of it. That's trolling, my friend! Look it up. Look it up on the Encarta CD-ROM Encyclopedia. Trolling.

*[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]*

You are now operating not in good faith, but in bad faith. Now, I—I'll give dads a lot of latitude to bug their children on this podcast. It is one of the few consolations that we enjoy as we shuffle off into irrelevance and... the grave.

But. This has been going on, on and off, for... seven... 2017, 18... You know how terrible I am with subtraction.

*[Beat.]*

More than four years. You gotta knock it off. Gotta knock it off with Rudy's Place. The market has spoken. Patrick and his sister and his cousins and his aunts, they don't want this thing. They don't want it. They're not gonna make it. Now, you've chosen the right path. You've come here. I hate to call it this, 'cause I know how you feel about it, but basically the *Shark Tank* of fake Internet law podcasts.

You were right to give this idea to the *Judge John Hodgman* listenership. Maybe among them, there'll be someone who will be able to crack this code, make a billion dollars, give you the taunting rights, and not buy a superyacht.

01:00:32 John Host I am... ruling in the children's favor. You must relent. I hate to take away one of the topics of conversation. *[Stifles laughter.]* But the other two are so great! I—there's just so much you can do with Minnesota Vikings and sharks and boats.

But I have to stop your bad-faith torment of your children. In light of your own words! Your own understanding of how technology sparks the use of rage as a—a dopamine hit. And you gotta cut yourself off from that.

I absolutely encourage you to come up with another app idea.

*[John and someone else stifle laughter.]*

That would be fine. But in the meantime, Rudy's Place is now... the public square. The public domain. *Judge John Hodgman* listeners, go for it. Make it happen. I will donate \$100 to a pitch that makes sense to me. Eugh. Why am I doing this?  
hodgman@maximumfun.org.

*[Jesse and someone else laugh.]*

If you can make sense of this idea... I will—I will invest \$100 of my own money! That makes me the Chris Sacca of this podcast.

Patrick? At the same time, I order you, don't scoff at your dad! You're lucky to have an interesting one. And also... you gotta give him a segment on the podcast.

*[Patrick laughs.]*

01:02:13 John Host You gotta, at this point. Everyone's dying for it! People are writing me right now! The segment on *Sin the Fields*, Rudy's Place, the top segment on the number one ultimate Frisbee podcast. This is the sound of a gavel.

01:02:23 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Dial-up modem tone.]*

01:02:29 John Host Judge John Hodgman rules; that is all.

01:02:31 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Jesse speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]*

01:02:32 Jesse Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

01:02:34 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

01:02:35 Jesse Host Patrick, are you satisfied with this verdict?

01:02:37 Patrick Guest Absolutely! I don't think I could ask for anything more. Uh, I would certainly appreciate the judge's ruling that I need to not scoff at my father, and appreciate him, because I certainly do appreciate him, but I can always appreciate him more. Because he is very interesting, he's a very loving father, and I can't have asked for anything more for one. So as far as I'm concerned, I've come outta here, uh, with a father, and potentially now another great segment on my podcast, so a win-win for me!

01:03:05 Jesse Host Rudy, how are you feeling?

01:03:08 Rudy Guest Uh... *[Sighs.]* I think it's fair. I might need a little clarification, because... there will be moments when I don't have to say a word, but just... raise an eyebrow, and they'll know what I'm thinking. And whether that constitutes—

*[Jesse bursts out laughing, Rudy stifles laughter.]*

Whether that constitutes a—a prohibited taunt or not, is—is something that I, uh—I might need a further clarification on.

01:03:41 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door opens and shuts.]*

01:03:42 John Host Here's my ruling on that, real quick.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

You can raise your eyebrow whenever you—god-or-whatever-damn please, Rudy. And if Brigid or Patrick comes to you, or any of those cousins, and they say to you, "You're thinking about Rudy's Place, aren't you?" you just say... "What? No, I'm not!"

*[Jesse and Rudy or Patrick laugh.]*

"I'm—I'm thinking about ethics in gaming journalism!"

*[Jesse laughs.]*

01:04:08 Rudy Guest

Fair enough!

01:04:10 Jesse Host

Well, Patrick, Rudy, thanks for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

01:04:13 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

01:04:16 Promo Clip

**Music:** Kicked-back funky synth loop.

**VO:** The 2021 pin sale has begun! Thank you so much to everyone who participated in the MaxFunDrive. This is the last year for a while that we'll be doing pins for MaxFunDrive, and the fifth year that we'll be selling pins and donating all proceeds to charity.

The past year proved what we already knew: that having access to the Internet at home is a necessity for work, school, healthcare, and keeping in touch with family and friends. So the proceeds from this year's pin sale will go towards EveryoneOn, a nonprofit working to bridge the digital divide. We're grateful that with your support, we'll be able to help low-income folks gain access to affordable computers, Internet services, and digital literacy programs.

The sale will run until May 28th. Folks at the \$10 monthly level and above will have access to all of the pins from the Drive. That's 38 pins, one from every show on the network. We also have a special 2021 MaxFunDrive pin that all members can purchase.

Go to [MaximumFun.org/pinsale](https://MaximumFun.org/pinsale) for more info. And to learn more about EveryoneOn and support them directly, you can go to [EveryoneOn.org](https://EveryoneOn.org).

*[Music fades out.]*

01:05:26 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

01:05:28 Jesse Host

Another *Judge John Hodgman* case in the books. Before we dispense Swift Justice, our thanks to Jen Cunningham for naming this week's episode, "There's an APPELLATE Court for That." If you'd like to name an episode, like *Judge John Hodgman on Facebook!* That's where we ask for your suggestions.

Follow us on Twitter at [@JesseThorn](https://twitter.com/JesseThorn) and [@hodgman](https://twitter.com/hodgman), hashtag your *Judge John Hodgman* tweets [#JJHo](https://twitter.com/hashtag/JJHo), and check out the Maximum Fun subreddit—that's at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/MaximumFun)—to discuss the episode!

We're on Instagram at [@judgejohnhodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman). Make sure to follow us there for evidence and other fun stuff. Our producer, the ever-

capable—and always with a made bed... Jennifer Marmor.

*[John laughs.]*

You can see her bed behind her in the video conference now.

01:06:17	John	Host	Very well—very well—you got—look. In the age of Rudy's Place, you gotta look good! You gotta come correct!
01:06:21	Jesse	Host	Yeah. Jennifer's bringing decorative pillow game! Okay. Now let's get to Swift Justice—I can never figure out what to do with them when I'm asleep. Decorative pillows. I'm like, "Do I just put it... on the floor? That seems weird."
01:06:32	John	Host	I put it—I—
01:06:33	Jennifer	Producer	I put it on my desk chair.
01:06:35	John	Host	Yeah. I put one between my knees. I'm a side sleeper.
01:06:38	Jesse	Host	Oh, that's smart.
01:06:40	John	Host	Yeah.
01:06:41	Jesse	Host	That's smart; that's good for your back.

Now, Swift Justice, where we answer your small disputes with a quick judgment. Jennifer from Arizona says:

"My husband insists on seasoning the cast iron pans every time we use them! We can't just clean them and put them away. We have to clean them, oil them, and bake them in the oven for an hour."

*[John laughs.]*

"It's an argument every time."

01:07:04	John	Host	Yeahhh. Jennifer's husband, you don't know what you're doing with a ca—that's not how you take care of cast iron pans over time. You season them once. And then after each use, you sleep with them between your knees. Everyone knows this.
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*[Jesse bursts out laughing; John stifles laughter.]*

Nooo. I mean, I—I saw Jesse Thorn shaking his head there, too. It's not sleep between the—sleep with them between your knees. You just gotta clean them, and then you give 'em a little bit of oil! A little oil coating. And that's it! Right, Jesse?

01:07:35	Jesse	Host	Yeah. I mean, you don't even have to give them a little oil coating, frankly. The whole point of cast iron is that once it's seasoned, as long as you're not cooking something super-acidic in it for a long time, or really scrubbing it with a Brillo pad, that you can just cook with it indefinitely, essentially rinsing it out between uses, and it will get better and better over time.
01:07:58	John	Host	Yeah. It's beautiful because it's <u>im</u> perfect, not because you're trying to perfect it every time. You know, you can make errors in a cast iron pan. You can mess a cast iron pan up, and then <u>re</u> season it. You know, to paraphrase David Rees, uh, the author of <i>How to Sharpen Pencils</i> —and also the co-creator of <i>Dicktown</i> on Hulu; <a href="http://Bit.ly/dicktown">Bit.ly/dicktown</a> —uh, the pursuit of perfection is the way of sadness.

So... take it easy on your pans!

If it looks dry—

*[Drops to a whisper.]*

If it looks dry, add a little oil. Add a little oil between uses if it looks dry.

01:08:25	Jesse	Host	That's fine with me.
01:08:26	John	Host	<i>[Quiet but no longer whispering]</i> Right. Okay.
01:08:27	Jesse	Host	That's it for this week's episode. Submit your cases at <a href="http://MaximumFun.org/ijho">MaximumFun.org/ijho</a> , or email <a href="mailto:hodgman@maximumfun.org">hodgman@maximumfun.org</a> . No case is too small. We'll see you next time on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast.
01:08:40	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
01:08:43	Music	Transition	A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:08:44	Speaker 1	Guest	<a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> .
01:08:46	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:08:47	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:08:48	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.