Welcome to the Judge John Hodgman podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. We're in chambers this week, clearing the docket. And joining me from Orland, Maine, is... a man wearing a mons—a T-shirt that says "monster"! I guess a human monster! Judge John Hodgman!

It says "monster" on my T-shirt, which you can see, Jesse, because though you are in Los Angeles, where there be monsters—end of the map.

And here I am across the country, through the... [reluctant and stifling laughter] I guess miracle of teleconferencing?

[Jesse laughs.]

I don't know. The—

[Laughing] The burden of teleconferencing, yes.

The curse-blessing, the—the clessing of teleconferencing? You can see that my T-shirt says "monster." It's an antique brand of fireworks. The rest of the T-shirt has a picture of a monster on it.

Yeah. That's a cool T-shirt!

But what I realized, looking—well, thanks. I saw an ad on Instagram and just had to have it.

Yeah.

But what I noticed is—because in teleconferencing I can see myself, which is bad. But I'm reversed, also. And I never realized that—that—d'you know what "monster" spells backwards, Jesse?

What?

"Restroom."

Almost.

Yeah, pretty much.

Almost spells "restroom."

You know, John, I had a friend in middle school—still a—a friendly acquaintance.

Sure.

Patrick Michaels.

Right.

And Patrick—

You were also in middle school at the time, let's be clear.

Yeah.

Right.

I—that—thank you for clarifying that. Um, no, I was in elementary school; I was just super cool.
[Giggles.] Wow! You hung with the older kids.

My friend Patrick Michaels, uh, could say any phrase backwards. Immediately. Instantly. It was the most extraordinary gift, skill, talent that I've ever observed in person. He can still do it. I talked to him a couple years ago. He works for ProPublica now. He's a journalist.

Sure! Yeah!

And, uh, I—confirmed. He can still do it. It's amazing. I mean, honestly, when he went to interview at ProPublica, I imagine that they said, "Okay, we've taken a look at your investigative reporting. And it looks pretty good. Can you say phrases backwards? Instantly?" and he was like... "Yitslani" or whatever. [Laughs.]

Acil... bup... orp.

Yeah. Acilibuporp.

"ProPublica" backwards.

There you go.

"Show me—show me to the backwards monster, please. I need to use the toilet."

[Joel laughs.]

That's a common phrase. Jesse, I am here—I'm here live in the studios, of course. The solar power studios of WERU.org. We're gonna clear... the docket, and dispense some justice. Is that correct?

I believe that is correct. Uh, let's take a look at what we have from Heather in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania:

"It's sweet corn season here in Pennsylvania. I like to roll my hot corn on the cob directly on a stick of butter for maximum butter coating of the cob."

Mm. Can I make an objection already?

[Laughing] Yes.

It's not sweet corn season in Pennsylvania. It's sweet corn season everywhere! In the East of the United States.

Yeah. Sure.

Don't be so—[sighs]—so biased! Joel, do you eat corn?

Yes I do.

Sweet corn season here in Maine, right?

Yes it is.

How do you butter your corn?

I make an herb butter.

Okay...

And then brush it on.

Yeah.

Boy, oh boy. I didn't know this was gonna get so involved.

[Stifling laughter] Joel and his compound butters.
[John or Joel laughs quietly.]

00:03:25  John        Host  Wow.
00:03:26  Jesse       Host  So sick of Joel's compound butters. [laughs.]
00:03:28  John        Host  Wow. Wow. Then brush it on...
00:03:31  Jesse       Host  America's Test Kitchen over here.
00:03:32  John        Host  Alright, I—-I overrule my own objection to get back to this case. Joel, you made me overrule my own objection!
00:03:38  Joel        Guest  Sorry.
00:03:41  Jesse       Host  [Laughing] "My husband thinks—"

[Recover.]

No apology is acceptable for compound butter talk.

"My husband thinks the only civilized way to butter corn is to place butter on a slice of bread—"

00:03:52  John        Host  Oh!
00:03:53  Jesse       Host  "—and use the buttered bread to smear butter on the corn."
00:03:56  John        Host  Oh!
00:03:57  Jesse       Host  "As our family's sole meal planner, shopper, and cook, I feel I have the final say in butter management. Please order my husband to stop trying to control my corn-buttering."

00:04:11  John        Host  Mm! Interesting. Jesse, is it sweet corn season in California?
00:04:16  Jesse       Host  Yeah, I think it is, but I think that because California is America's fruit basket...
00:04:22  John        Host  Right.
00:04:23  Jesse       Host  ...uh, we have plenty of tasty things to eat all year round. [laughs.] And so it's less of a big deal. I know that, like—
00:04:30  John        Host  Yeah.
00:04:31  Jesse       Host  For example, in visiting my family in Washington, DC as a child...
00:04:35  John        Host  Right.
00:04:36  Jesse       Host  ...the height of sweet corn season was a—a big cultural event.
00:04:41  John        Host  Right.
00:04:42  Jesse       Host  Whereas for me, I'm like, "Great. We can get cherimoyas right now."
00:04:46  John        Host  Yeah. You can dip your satsumas in olive oil any old time there in, uh, Southern California.
00:04:51  Jesse       Host  Exactly. I got grapefruits growing in my back yard, John.
00:04:55  John        Host  Right!
00:04:56  Jesse       Host  They fruit twice a year!
00:04:57  John        Host  When you would visit your—you people in the District of Columbia, would you put butter on your corn?

00:05:03  Jesse       Host  Yes, of course.
John Host
Would you brush it on with a brush?

Jesse Host
No! John, no! [Stifles laughter.] They had a corn set, John!

John Host
Tell me what a corn set is.

Jesse Host
They had little corn-shaped skewers that you stick into either side of the corn.

John Host
Mm-hm. Right.

Jesse Host
And they had a butter stick holder that had a plunger on one end, and a round-y part on the other end—

John Host
Whoa.

Jesse Host
— that you could use to rub the end of the stick of butter onto the corn. It was fantastic! One of my fondest childhood memories.

John Host
You would pick up the stick of butter? With this... device?

Jesse Host
The stick of butter was inside—if you imagine... a box. If you imagine a butter stick–shaped box.

John Host
Okay.

Jesse Host
In one end of the box, you can push in, like a plunger.

John Host
Right.

Jesse Host
And the other end of the box has a concave shape, like, uh, the shape of a piece of corn.

John Host
Right.

Jesse Host
And so you hold the box, and you go, "vrip, vrup, vrip, vrup, vrip, vrup." You're turning it with your little corn-shaped skewers.

John Host
Boy, oh boy.

Jesse Host
And what do you got at the end? A perfectly buttered piece of corn! There's no butter on your hands. You didn't have to mess with a butter knife. Uh, you didn't have to—[cracking up] ruin a perfectly good piece of bread!

John Host
[Stifles laughter.] I don't know! I—!—[laughs].

I grew up in a "roll the corn in the butter" family.

Jesse Host
Mm-hm.

John Host
And I would say—I will not recuse myself, simply because that is... the best way to butter corn. What I'm gonna say is the best way to butter corn—until I heard about this bread mechanism—the best way to butter corn is roll it in the butter.

Second best way: Brush it on. Third best way: Use some weird box. I don't even understand that thing. I don't believe in it. And I don't understand it. Sorry.

Jesse Host
It's fantastic. Fantastic device.

John Host
But where does the bread—does the bread overtake rolling it in the butter? Now, here's one of the things about rolling the corn in the butter. This was fine for me and my mom and dad. We were a small group of corn-rollers. We were all on board for it. We didn't mind. It was not gross to any one of us.
But in mixed company, you gotta be sure that everyone is on board with rolling that corn in the butter.

Oh, it’s so—it’s such—because it is a very—it is a very wonderful sensation to just feel that butter melt under that hot corn. And it leaves a very satisfying impression. Reverse impression of the corn cob in the butter. But that could be gross to some people!

So I kind of admire Heather’s husband’s solution here! Because you are getting full—if you don’t have the special box. The magic butter box that Jesse Thorn had in the District of Columbia.

00:07:42 Jesse Host Northern Virginia, but continue.
00:07:43 John Host Sorry, Northern Virginia. You might as well be saying, uh, Vermont now. Northern Virginia.
00:07:49 Jesse Host And Central Virginia.
00:07:51 John Host Yeah, forget about it. Blue state.
00:07:52 Jesse Host Fairfax.
00:07:53 John Host But if you have that piece of bread and butter, that is self-contained. That is at your plate. You are not sharing that butter. You’re not grossing anybody else out, necessarily, by dipping your food directly into a shared condiment.

Now, I thought that this guy had just made this thing up, Jesse. I thought this guy made it up, and he thought it was the best. But you know where he got it from?

00:08:12 Jesse Host Where?
00:08:14 John Host A movie! Called *WarGames*.
00:08:17 Jesse Host They do that in *WarGames*?!
00:08:18 John Host Yes! I looked it up on the Internet! Using the Internet, I found out... that Matthew Broderick’s pretend dad in the movie—the actor William Bogert—there’s a dinner table scene where he does exactly this! He butters a piece of white bread. Rolls the corn... in the bread. And then takes a bite of it, and goes, “Ogh! This corn is raw!”

And his wife goes, “Can’t you just taste all the vitamins and minerals?”

It's a weird moment of... comedic relief? But if you look at the video of him buttering this corn... John Badham, who directed this movie? Must have been really excited about this corn-buttering technology. [Stifles laughter.] Because—as much as he was excited about a modem. Because there—so much screen time is given to this guy slathering butter on his bread. I’m gonna get to the bottom of this! If you have access to John Badham, or you worked on the movie *WarGames*, or you know where this came from, get in touch with me.

I also had remembered this exact scene, except I remembered it from *Breaking Away*. But it was *WarGames*, it turns out. So this goes back to 1983, at least.

00:09:21 Jesse Host We’re taking this podcast to DEFCON 5.
[Snorts.] Now that I've heard the technology described, and I've seen it in action, I have to say there's something, uh, appealingly dad-ish about it, for sure. But in order to slather that butter on that bread, that butter would have to be so soft that if you were to— to roll corn in that butter? The butter itself would immediately liquefy, and spill all over the table.

I don't like to split the baby in half. But I'm gonna say... there is no one way to enjoy your corn. And in times past, when I have served guests corn, I give them a stick of butter to do with as they will. And I take my own stick of butter, and that one's just for rolling. Will I go through the whole stick of butter? Probably. It's not wasteful. But I would rank— now that I've seen this technology, I would rank:

Rolling in butter. Basting it with a brush. You're welcome, Joel.

Thank you.

Moving a box over it. And then... butter on bread. Also good. And a great callback to WarGames, and to the very accomplished working actor William Bogert, who appeared in many, many TV shows and movies until he passed away last year at the age of 84.

And who also, by the way, it turns out, was married to a woman named Eren Özker... who was the only woman Muppeteer on The Muppet Show for the first season. She performed Janice. And... basically that character, 'cause there are no other female characters in The Muppets. Sorry. They gotta do something about that. [Stifles laughter.]

Heather can do it her way, and her husband can do it his way, and the— neither of them need to control the other. Do it the Hodgman way. Just get as much butter on the table as possible, to use in as many ways as possible. Next time, uh, sweet corn season rolls around in Pennsylvania, why don't you have one stick of butter for rolling, one stick of butter for brushing, one stick of butter for... breading, and one stick of butter for boxing? Have a corn-buttering party!

[Suddenly intense] But never—the worst of all is taking a knife and trying to butter your corn with a knife. It's the stupidest way of buttering corn in existence.

[Three gavel bangs.]
And they have... bad food... at the California Science Center.

Mm-hm. Astronaut Ice Cream, I presume.

They do have Astronaut Ice Cream, which is—there's no more consistent disappointment than Astronaut Ice Cream.

Space Pen, pretty good!

Astronaut Ice Cream, pretty bad. So—

How would you feel about an Astronaut It's-It? A freeze-dried It's-It.

You know they have mini It's-Its now.

[Stifling laughter] What?! Min-It's-Its?

Yeah. I'm pretty excited about that. Yeah. It's a new—new development.

So anyway, we decide we're not gonna eat inside the California Science Center and pay science museum food court prices for science museum food!

Because right outside the California Science Center, there are a number of vendors set up, selling the street foods typical of Southern California.

Sure.

So my kids got hotdogs.

Right.

You know, Southern California–style hotdogs, wrapped in bacon.

That's right.

Very tasty. And I got esquites, which is, you know, corn off the cob. And typically with, uh—it's the off-the-cob equivalent of elotes, which are barbecued with mayonnaise, and cheese, and usually chili and lime.

Yeah.

And off the cob, there's usually also cilantro and—and, uh, you know, sometimes there's fresh chilis in there.

Nice!

Um—and, uh, you know—

So far, no disaster. No disaster to this story.

A favorite food of mine! You know? Love—love to get it.

Mm-hm.

Feeling—feeling a bit peckish. Walking around in Los Angeles. Stop and buy some from, uh, somebody that's pushing a special cart.

Right.

And, uh—[laughs]—my esquites came with corn and mayonnaise.
So far, all good.

00:13:39  John  Host  I love it.
00:13:40  Jesse  Host  And a little bit of nacho cheese sauce, and that's it. [Laughs.]  
00:13:45  John  Host  Mm!
00:13:48  Jesse  Host  [Laughing] And it was intensely gummy.  
00:13:49  John  Host  Hm!
00:13:55  Jesse  Host  [Laughing] And to say it lacked flavor contrasts really—
00:13:59  John  Host  Mayonnaise and nacho cheese sauce? That's—that was not a winner for you?
00:14:02  Jesse  Host  Ju—[laughs]—just a little nacho cheese sauce.
00:14:06  John  Host  You know what you need to fix that disaster?
00:14:08  Jesse  Host  What's that?
00:14:09  John  Host  Well, you know, you can't take nacho cheese sauce away. You can't take those ingredients away; you have to add something. You know what you have to add?
00:14:15  Jesse  Host  What?
00:14:16  John  Host  Compound butter.
00:14:17  Jesse  Host  [Laughs.] “This needs—”
00:14:18  John  Host  What's in your compound butter, Joel?
00:14:19  Joel  Guest  Uh—[clears throat].
00:14:20  Jesse  Host  [Laughing] Please say cilantro and jalapeños.
00:14:24  Joel  Guest  A little hot sauce.
00:14:25  John  Host  Okay.
00:14:26  Joel  Guest  Um, a little, uh, celery salt, maybe.
00:14:29  John  Host  Whoa. What's going on? Joel, keep going!
00:14:32  Joel  Guest  Um, and melted butter. I microwave it, and... make a liquid out of it.
00:14:36  John  Host  Right. So you—you melt the butter, and you infuse it.
00:14:40  Joel  Guest  Right.
00:14:41  John  Host  With hot sauce and celery salt.
00:14:42  Joel  Guest  Right.
00:14:43  John  Host  And then you baste it on with a brush.
00:14:45  Joel  Guest  Right.
00:14:46  John  Host  That's pretty hot, Joel, I gotta tell you.

[Joel laughs quietly.]

It's pretty good. I would've thought up in Maine, it would've just been all... mayonnaise and nacho cheese sauce.

00:14:51  Joel  Guest  Well, I'm from the District of Columbia, too. Just like Jesse.
00:14:55  John  Host  Everything's getting very confused.

[Joel laughs quietly.]
Let's move on with the justice.

"I bring suit against my wife Chelsea. We've been living in several different basement apartments during the COVID pandemic uncertainties, with varying levels of dampness and worse, spiders."

"I believe that spiders have no place in the home. Personally, I squish them."

"Chelsea believes there's no harm in having them scurry about, doing their business, as long as they're not crawling on her. This leads to spider scares. Finding them behind the toilet, in the shower, and most upsettingly, in a coffee cup I was about to use.

Chelsea says I should just get used to it. Judge, please order Chelsea to either kill, or trap and transport outside, every spider she sees to save my poor nerves."

Jesse, what's your spider protocol? Kill, or catch and release?

I'm not bothered by spiders, personally.

Right.

However, my wife is.

Yeah.

And I will kill whatever bug my wife asks me to kill. Because we share a great love.

Right. I am bothered by spiders personally, and by personally I mean very personally.

Mm-hm.

Like, they prank call me.

[Stifling laughter] Right.

You know? Like—and they—

They're—they're constantly ordering pizzas sent to your address?

Yeah. Somehow it's a—it's a number that I recognize, and I answer the phone like a dope, and it's a spider! And he goes, "Mid-tier comedian." That's what he says to me. "Mid-tier comedian John Hodgman has answered the phone."


[Both laugh.]

How dare—[stifles laughter]—don't put Jim Gaffigan in mid-tier with me. Jim Gaffigan is Diamond Medallion!

No! They had to move down a tier! From the Gaffigan tier. [Laughs.]
No, they're like, "Hey, John. Hey, John. Mid-tier comedian."

I'm like, "Ooh, you spiders! Why are you—?"

They're like, "Don't take it personally, man. It's just a prank call." It's hard not to take that personally!

But I don't squish 'em. One day my dad said, "Don't—spiders are your friends. They eat the other bugs. If you don't want 'em in your room, pick 'em up with a little piece of paper. Put 'em outside." And to this day, it is hard for me to squish a spider.

Jennifer Marmor, what do you do with spiders?

When I lived alone, I would usually try to pick them up with a piece of paper and put them outside.

Um, because squishing it is just gross to me, even though... I want it—

It can stain your wall.

Yeah! It's disgusting. Now I just say... [quavering] "Shaaane! There's a spiderrrr!" [Laughs.]

And my husband gets it.

And—but—and what does he do with it?

He usually squishes it. 'Cause he doesn't care. And I don't care as long as it's dealt with. [Laughs.]

[Chuckles.] Shane's a real macho dude, that's why.

[Multiple people laugh.]

Really. [Laughs.] [Stifling laughter] He's one of those big tough cartoonist types.

Yeah.

Let's go around the J-Squad. Around the horn with Joel. What do you do with spiders?

Squash 'em.

Squash 'em.

[Beat.]

Guys, put your spiders outside! I'm not shy of—of killing a bug. It's not uncommon after, uh, my wife who is a whole human being in her own right falls asleep before me... and the lights are out in the bed... and I'm going down a deep Wikipedia hole about this actor William Bogert and his wife the Muppeteer. And in the dark. And, you know, the screens are not very good in our bedroom.

And all of the sudden, [stifles laughter] I got all kinds of bugs flying onto my phone screen! They love that phone screen! And I squash 'em with my thumb. On the screen. [Stifles laughter.]
I'm not shy about it! Not shy about it. I don't mind killing a moth, especially a—-a browntail moth. Right, Joel?

Joel Guest

Absolutely.

Yeah, those guys are the worst. They're worse than spiders! A browntail moth comes from a caterpillar called a browntail moth caterpillar invasive to this area of Maine. And if you get—-[stifles laughter]—if you touch one of these things, you get a rash for a week. If you inhale its little—its little fur? You could have respiratory problems that send you to the hospital.

Browntail moth caterpillar, get outta here! I'll kill a browntail moth any day. One that I will not kill? Rosy maple moth. I found the most beautiful moth hanging around my kitchen. [Chuckles.] It was drinking a cup of coffee and having a cigarette.

And I'm like, "Do I gotta squash a moth tonight?" And he said, "No, look at me!" And I looked at him, and it's like, this beautiful moth. With these, like, fuzzy—fuzzy pink legs, and fuzzy pink wings, and beautiful, uh—what—you know Peeps? The yellow marshmallow, uh, ducks? Or chicks, or whatever they are?

He had antennae the color of Peeps. So cute! Took a picture of him. Put him up on @johnhodgman Instagram account. Everyone's going, "That is a rosy maple moth. You're the luckiest guy in the word to see one."

It's not fair—it's not fair, bugs! I'm sorry. Some of you get up on my screen, and you get squashed. Some of you show up sporting some fuzzy pink wings, and I save you. Some of you are not insects, you're arachnids, and my dad told me you are my friend! And so I don't squash you.

The baseline is, how—whatever your policy for dealing with spiders, everybody in your basement apartment has gotta get on board with it. If Helen is not feeling the spiders in her life... well, then, Chelsea, you gotta take care of... your wife, who is a whole human being in her own right, and get rid of the spiders when you see 'em! Take 'em outside. Do what I do. Take 'em outside. Get 'em on a little piece of paper. Climb up the ladder to the tiny window just under the ceiling in your basement apartment. Open it. It's probably painted shut. I'm painting a very sad picture here of your lives together in Boulder. Let it out! And I hope, Helen, for your sake, that you, um, eventually enjoy the non-subterranean life that you would obviously prefer.

Jesse, what were the bugs that came outta the walls when you were sleeping in the basement? Mongolian bloodworms?

Yeah, I told my—I told my therapist about that the other day. I lived in a basement room at my dad's house. And sometimes when I was asleep, they would have to go through my room to get from the garage to the rest of the house. Just 'cause of how the house was
built; it was not a legal room. And they would leave my door open, and... slugs would come in.

00:21:22  John  Host  [Stifling laughter] That's what it was.
00:21:24  Jesse  Host  And then there would be slug tracks in my room.
00:21:27  John  Host  Yeah.
00:21:28  Jesse  Host  And then a couple times there was this—this bug called a Jerusalem cricket that's genuinely terrifying.
00:21:34  John  Host  Oh, I don't know that one.
00:21:35  Jesse  Host  Don't Google it.
00:21:36  John  Host  I'm going to!
00:21:37  Jesse  Host  And... [stifles laughter] it's so gross. And, uh, I told my therapist about this, just in a different context—
00:21:43  John  Host  OH MY GOD.

[Beat.]

00:21:44  Jesse  Host  [Laughing] Yeah, it's awful. It's so, so gross.
00:21:47  John  Host  Why did you tell me to Google it?!?
00:21:50  Jesse  Host  I told you—[laughs]—Jennifer just Googled it, too, dang it!
00:21:52  Jennifer  Producer  [Laughing] I had to! I had to see what we were talking about!
00:21:56  Jesse  Host  I know. And you should've used DuckDuckGo! Now all you're gonna get is, uh, targeted ads for Jerusalem crickets. [Laughs.]

00:22:02  Jennifer  Producer  Augh, Google!
00:22:04  Jesse  Host  So, anyway—!
00:22:06  John  Host  Joel, I'm texting you this thing.
00:22:08  Joel  Guest  Okay.
00:22:09  Jesse  Host  This is terrible.

My therapist says to me, "You know, they should've just gone the other way, or closed the door behind them."

00:22:18  John  Host  Joel just flinched.
00:22:19  Joel  Guest  Yikes.
00:22:21  John  Host  [Laughs.] I'm sorry. What were you saying? I'm all about a Jerusalem cricket right now.
00:22:26  Jesse  Host  My therapist told me they could've just gone the other way, or closed the door behind them. Uh, or done something about it.

[John stifles laughter.]

And I was like, "Uh, yeah! Now that you mention it, I guess they could've done those things."

00:22:38  John  Host  [Stifles laughter.] I thought you were talking about the Jerusalem cricket could close the door behind it. Like it would wander into your room—
00:22:42  Jesse  Host  Oh, yeah. [Laughing] I mean—
—and just, like, creeek shut. And it’s like, "Hello, Jesse." [Laughs.] "I am a potato bug."

It's big enough! I mean, that guy's like—[laughing] that guy's like four inches long!

I don't care for it.

Terrifying! Terrifying creature.

Don't care for it. Yeah.

Anyway, we're gonna take—[stifles laughter]—we're gonna take a quick break to hear from this week's partner, uh, Jerusalem Crickets Inc. You might've seen them in your Google searches.

We'll be back with more cases to clear from the docket on the Judge John Hodgman podcast.

[Three gavel bangs.]

It's the Judge John Hodgman podcast, and as always, our show is brought to you by you. The members of MaximumFun.org. Our thanks to every single one of you.

We're also grateful this week to have the support of Rotman Business School.

Rotman Business School is the business school associated with the University of Toronto. Hey, are you getting the most out of your job? The answer is almost never, "Yeah!" Sometimes it's, like, "Mm, I don't know!"

Could that whole thing that you do for eight hours or more a day be better than it is? Probs. It's a good question to ask yourself from time to time, anyway. Maybe you can do something about it.

Whether you're looking for new opportunity or wanna make yourself a stronger candidate for promotion, how you present yourself is key to taking the next step. Jesse, you know what you have? Executive presence.

Thank you, John! That's very kind of you.

Well, you—you run an organization, and you—you carry yourself with confidence. You show your colleagues support and care. And your communication skills are top notch. That's what I call executive presence, and that's also... what the University of Toronto Rotman Business School calls executive presence!

You know, John, my father went to business school when I was a kid! When I was, like, 12, 13 years old...

Right.

...he enrolled in business school and got an MBA. And you know, he used his experience getting an MBA—it was immensely valuable to him in his work running an NGO! So, you know. If you think that the only people who go to business school are, uh, evil arbitrage guys, or whatever... uh, no! The skills that you learn in business school can be immensely valuable. My dad ended up teaching in business school. He taught business communications.
So, uh, yeah! I encourage people to think about a graduate degree as an adult, or remotely, or whatever works for you, and Rotman seems like a great choice to me.

Yeah, the University of Toronto Rotman School of Management is ranked number 17 in the world for open enrollment executive education by the *Financial Times*. It's one of the best schools in Canada.

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Visit [UofT.me/executivepresence](UofT.me/executivepresence)—that's UofT, as in University of Toronto, dot M-E/executivepresence—to learn more and apply. Classes start September 15th, so start your application today. Save your seat.

That's [UofT.me/executivepresence](UofT.me/executivepresence). Rotman! Here's where it changes.

We're also supported this week by our friends at Brooklinen! Oh, we love Br—

[Beat.]

Yeah, we love Brooklinen for many reasons, not least of which is that—[laughs]—

Jesse: [Stifling laughter] It’s the name of Hodgman’s hometown with an N at the end.

With an N at the end. Brookline-N.

I mean, if there was a Sanfranciscon that made—

Shh! Don't give that away! That's gonna be—that’s gonna be a company!

—[stifling laughter] that made premium—premium home goods at reasonable prices, I would probably be pretty pumped about that, too, so I get it, John.

Jesse, we know each other very well, so you know very well—you know me good. You know that one of the questions I'm always asking is... "Does it come without buttons or zippers?"

Yeah, you ask that at restaurants, which is weird.

"I'll have the [Kung Pao chicken](#). Wait a minute!"

[Jesse laughs.]

"Does it come without buttons and zippers?" I'm not talking about food! I'm talking about loungewear!
Brooklinen loungewear comes without buttons or zippers. Expect tees and tanks that drape as only jersey can! And joggers that project an athleticism you'd almost leave the couch to live up to.

I love to project athleticism. I don't like to participate in athleticism—but I like to project it.

Yeah. Brooklinen, I love you very much. But if I put on those joggers, I'm just gonna be projecting, uh, nap time. No one will believe that I'm an athlete.

The folks at Brooklinen sent us some of this loungewear.

You know what I'm doing 24/7? Lounging, babyyyy.

Kick back. Crack a cold... cola.

Brooklinen's loungewear has classic cuts, and guess what? No zippers, for limitless comfort. So you can luxuriate in coziness all day.

If you're like me, you're sick of being limited by zippers! Well, Brooklinen's got your back, and bonus points: They offer bundle deals on loungewear, so you can get more comfort for less money. Look, there's a reason that Brooklinen has over 75,000 five-star reviews and counting. We shan't tell you what it is, but perhaps you can infer it!

It has something to do... with cozy bundles.

Brookline-N! I'm saying it that way so you know how to spell it! Go to Brooklinen.com and use promo code "Hodgman" to get $20 off with a minimum purchase of $100.

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.

That's Brooklinen.com, promo code "Hodgman."

Let's get back to the docket!

Welcome back to the Judge John Hodgman podcast. We're clearing the docket this week, and we have something here from Cheryl in Bellevue, Washington.

These aren't even true crickets, it turns out! They're not true crickets—

Yeah.

—nor true bugs! Because they're not part of the order of Hemiptera—

What are they, lobsters?!

—nor are they native to... Jerusalem! Yeah, I know. They're land lobsters. Mmm. A delicacy.
[Laughing] Oh no! I'll stick with the bucket of scallops, please.

[Laughs.] "Their highly adapted feet are used for burrowing beneath moist soil." Eugh!

[Jesse voices a groan of despair.]

"To feed on decaying root plants and tubers. They are not—"

[Stifling laughter] Aw, I shouldn't've left those tubers around!

"They are not venomous, [stifles laughter] but they can emit a foul smell, and are capable of inflicting a painful bite."

Guess what? Jerusalem crickets? You're banned from listening to the show. If I see you crawling on my screen, I'm gonna smush you with my thumb. You're no rosy maple moth! Nor are you my friend the spider. Get outta here! Banned.

"Hi," says Cheryl. "My name is Cheryl Crow. You might recognize my name from my infamous 'I Make My Sunbaskets at Night' song and video."

Oh, it is Cheryl Crow!

So, we were spo—

The famous Cheryl Crow!

Yeah, the one from the "Sunbaskets at Night" video on Instagram.

Yeah! She posted on the—she posted, uh, her video on the Maximum Fun subreddit, of her singing—

[Singing to the tune of Corey Hart's "Sunglasses at Night"]

I make my Sunbaskets at night... so I—

I can't even remember the rest of it. I was so excited to see that. Is there another Cheryl Crow?

I don't—I honestly couldn't tell you. There is one other song with that melody.

What is it?

It was during the hyphy era of Bay Area hip-hop. It went—

[Singing]

I wear my stunna glasses at night!

[Speaking]

Big part of hyphy was wearing stunna shades.

Oh!

"Hand over your stunnas."
It's also the tune of the alphabet, and... [stifles laughter] uh, "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." Same tune! Did you know that?

Well, there you go!

Yeah!

"Anyway," Cheryl says, "I've been a longtime fan of the show, and I have a dispute with my husband regarding our microwave. He thinks I should give him a grace period of around a minute or less after his item has been microwaved before I take his item out and put mine in.

I contend it's the job of the original microwaver to time their presence accurately if they want the option to further heat their item. Please order that he stop complaining when I take his items out of the microwave.

PS,
This may or may not relate to the fact that I warm up my coffee in the microwave approximately 35 times a morning."

[Snorts.] Oh, I didn't realize that Cheryl Crow is also my mother-in-law when she visits.

[Jesse laughs.]

Um, I have a confession to make, Jesse.

What's that?

I let Cheryl Crow slip through on this one 'cause she's adorable. And she made that song.

Right.

This is a—this is a nothing case. It's an obvious solution. Get your stuff out of the microwave, Cheryl's husband.

[Three gavel bangs.]

There's nothing really to discuss here. I just like Cheryl Crow. I love her song. Her—what's her famous song again? "I Make My Sunbaskets at Night." So I hope that you're happy, Cheryl, that I ruled in your favor. I was biased in your favor to begin with, 'cause you're adorable, and you did a great job with that song.

Get your stuff out of the microwave.

I sent it to my friend Tyler from college, and he liked it a lot.

Yeah!

If you leave your stuff in the microwave, then it might as well be garbage. Get it outta there! Wait. Wait until it's done. Unless you're defrosting a roast, in which case you're defrosting things wrong. The only thing you should be using your microwave for is softening butter, making compound butter, making popcorn... heating up rice. That's good. Heating up water if you don't have a kettle handy.

...That's about it, right? That's all you need—that's all you can really use a microwave for. Heating up coffee, if you... don't care about how coffee tastes.
You know, John... I have a friend who has a, uh, podcast. My friend Adam Lisagor.

Yeah, of course!

Has a podcast called "All Consuming," where he, uh—he and his co-host try products from social media advertisements.

Mm-hm?

Very fun podcast. And, uh, he and his co-host reviewed this mug with a chip and a heater inside it.

Ooh!

And the mug itself keeps your beverage at a certain temperature. Sort of like a sous vide.

Oh! It has a little heating element inside of it?

Yeah! And you re-ch—and a re-chargeable battery.

That sounds pretty good!

And I thought... I thought, "That's a ridiculous idea." But you know what? They used it; they said it works great; they loved it.

Maybe they could be a partner of our—

Just saying, Cheryl Crow!

[Stifles laughter.] Uh—I could—I could see why your husband and you might be, uh, having somewhat of a standoff over this 35 times a morning hyperbole. But, uh, yeah. Cheryl's husband, get your stuff out of the microwave. Jesse, I got—I—just got some—speaking of food. I just got some news that's really bumming me out.

What's that?

I just got a letter from a listener in Japan named Craig. And Craig—you remember how I have two secret ingredients to this new high-concept burger that I'm trying to put out into the world? And one of them is secret, and the other one is a hash brown?

Yeah.

Well, guess what? They put hash browns on hamburgers in Japan all the time!

Holy cow.

All—he sent me pictures! Pictures of hamburgers with hash browns on them! Including the McDonald's Idaho Burger!

Hm!

And then Jan wrote to me saying, uh, "Yeah, they put hash browns on burgers in Germany as well! They call them rösti burgers."

Hm.

And you know where Jan is writing from, specifically?

Where? Hamburg?

Hamburg! [laughs quietly.]

For real!

Wow. Wow.
But I still got my secret weapon. That other secret ingredient. I revealed it to Chuck Bryant the other day. He seemed to appreciate it.

I have two big secrets. One is the secret ingredient to the—my special hamburger concept. And the other is what I did in the urinal next to Harold Bloom, uh, when we were on a break from the class that I took with him at Yale. Famous Shakespearean—Shakespeare scholar, and author of The Western Canon. The book about the Western canon.

I will reveal one of those secrets after the credits. So listen to the rest of the show.

Here's something from Bethany in Milwaukee, Wisconsin:

"After a long, isolated winter spent entirely indoors, I made plans with my BFFs Sarah and Kate to regularly visit local beer gardens in our hometown. We agreed to take turns picking the location. When it was Kate's turn to pick, she insisted on going to a lakefront beach with cabanas instead of an actual beer garden.

I protested, as a beach is clearly not a beer garden. A proper beer garden should be reminiscent of the original type of German [brief German accent] biergarten."

Just doing my best there. I don't know if I got that right.

Sure.

Yeah.

"With outdoor communal seating, and an atmosphere of... [harsh and with German accent] gemütlichkeit!"

[Someone laughs quietly.]

That means "geniality." Geniality. Friendliness and geniality.

Yeah.

Yes.

[Stifling laughter] That's why I said it with typical German friendliness and geniality.

[Stifles laughter.]

[Harshly and with German accent] Gemütlichkeit!

"A beach with cabanas evokes an entirely different vibe!"

I would agree.

She wants something that's more like a, uh... you know, a classic dirigible hanger.

[John laughs.]

"Kate believes that the beach can also be considered a beer garden, as it is an outdoor seasonal space in which to drink. It just has, quote, 'sand instead of grass.'"
00:36:37  Crosstalk  Crosstalk  \textbf{John}: Wow. Kate.

\textbf{Jesse}: Period, end quote.

00:36:39  Jesse  Host  "I'm requesting an injunction against Kate. I ask that she desist in picking a non-beer garden establishment for our beer garden hangouts."

00:36:50  John  Host  Wow. And where do they live?

00:36:52  Jesse  Host  Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

00:36:53  John  Host  Milwaukee, Wisco—oh, okay. So this lake beach, this is a Lake Michigan beach.

00:36:59  Jesse  Host  Yeah.

00:37:00  John  Host  I don't like that. I don't like that at all. I know—I know that these Great Lakes have beaches. I know that they have tides. I get it. But you know me; I don't like lakes. They make me nervous. Where's that water coming from? Where's it going? It's just sitting there. Just—things are rotting at the bottom. That's where the Jerusalem cricket comes from, is my bet!

00:37:20  Jesse  Host  Yeah. I feel like it's impossible to know a lake's plans.

00:37:23  John  Host  Yeah! You don't—it's just—it's—it's plotting! Is what a lake is doing. It's just sitting there scheming.

00:37:29  Jesse  Host  Mm-hm.

00:37:30  John  Host  The ocean's rolling all over the place! It doesn't care about you!

00:37:34  Jesse  Host  No.

00:37:35  John  Host  It doesn't care whether you live or die. It's gonna roll in; it's gonna roll out! It takes its trash with it. A lake is just sitting there staring at you on the beach. "Beach." Come on.

But even so—even though a Milwaukee... lake beach... is not precisely the Caribbean vibe, it is certainly not a beer garden. It is not filled with, uh, gem—gem—gemütlichkeit. Geniality. A beach bar is filled more with, um, what they call... fehlender salzstreuergeist.

That's the—that's the feeling of not being able to find your lost shaker of salt. Did you know that?

00:38:15  Jesse  Host  \textit{[Laughs.]} No, I did not know that.

00:38:19  John  Host  I—I'm sorry that I translated that poorly, Jan. Jan in Hamburg, I apologize. I translated it and probably pronounced it poorly. But that's what Google told me to do, after it got tired of... sending me pictures of Jerusalem crickets, which is all I see now. Thanks, algorithms.

00:38:34  Jesse  Host  Yeah. Inside your eyelids.

00:38:35  John  Host  A beach bar is different. Than a beer garden. So if you've made an agreement to go to a beer garden, go to a beer garden. There's nothing wrong—I mean, it's not—look. It's not for me. I don't wanna go to a beach in Milwaukee and have a lake stare at me. That's not fun for me. No matter how thoroughly it embraces Jimmy Buffett—style Margawaukeeville. But you can go to it if you wanna do that. If you live in Milwaukee. It's great.
But what is Milwaukee known for? Dark 'N' Stormies? No. Beer. Hasenpfeffer Incorporated! For heaven's sakes, go to a beer garden if you're in Milwaukee! What a great thing to do! Don't pretend that you're somewhere else. Be where you are! But if you have to go to that beach, that lake beach, just—just admit what it is. It's a lake beach, not a beer garden.

[Three gavel bangs.]

Don't like 'em. Don't like lakes! Toddy Pond isn't bad. You like Toddy Pond, Joel?

Don't like lakes or spiders.

Really?

Nope.

What about Craig Pond?

No ponds. Ocean.

Alright. I take it back. I was gonna give Toddy Pond a pass. I take it back. For Joel. No lakes.

I'm gonna take a vacation in Milwaukee, do some snorkeling.

I'm—you know what? Milwaukee is terrific. One time—[stifles laughter]—one time, I did a show in Milwaukee with our friends Kristen Schaal and Eugene Mirman, at the Pabst Theater. A beautiful theater! The band Hanson had just passed through the Pabst. And they had left behind their—in the—the—in the beautiful green room of the Pabst Theater, Hanson had—the three brothers Hanson left behind several, uh, cases of their new endeavor, which is a Hanson-branded beer. Did you know this?

I had heard about this, yeah!

So you know what the name of the beer is.

It's on-brand for them.

Yeah.

I don't remember what it is, but it's a pen.

MmmHops. [Laughs.]

MmmHops! That's what it is. [Chuckling] Yeah. I remember.

MmmHops!

Yeah.

I love—good for you, Hanson. And then Eugene Mirman took us to a late-night establishment, a bar, that was created by some uber-dad at the tail-end of the Cold War. It was, like, this James Bond-themed bar that you could only enter through a secret door in the back of another bar? In which case you would sit down in a booth, and it would rotate you into the secret bar, or go through a different side door, and you'd have to do a humiliating little dance. And then it would let you in through a, um—it would let you in through a fake bookshelf.

And then at some point, Eugene said, "Here. Sit in this—[stifles laughter] sit in this chair." And I did. And everyone laughed at me. I'm like, "Why are you laughing?" And then I was strapped into the chair
and lowered through the floor—

[John and Jesse laugh.]

—to be deprogrammed. It was a wild scene! Place is called SafeHouse. It's not a surprise! People in Milwaukee know about it. People in Milwaukee are probably rolling their eyes that I went to this dad bar. But I had a great time, and it was full of people having a good time!

When I rolled back through Milwaukee again with our friends from RiffTrax, Kevin Murphy and Bill Corbett, I was like—and we did a performance at Turner’s Hall, I said, “Let’s—I have a place to take you. After the show.”

And I took them there, and we did the humiliating little dance that we had to do. We went through the bookshelf. And... we were the only ones there. No—it was a—it was a Friday night. And it was not early, nor was it particularly late. It was primetime. But it turns out... Eddie Vedder was playing in town. [Stifles laughter.] So all the dads went to that instead.

[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]

So Murphy and Corbett and I just—just had a sad beer in this basement, with this one bartender who is bored out of his mind, and his girlfriend was lying in a booth, asleep.

Milwaukee! I can't wait to come back and visit you. Let's go there and do a show, Jesse.

I’d love to. Special guest Robin Yount.

Let's take a quick break. When we come back: A listener who has married themself.

[Three gavel bangs.]  

Music: Fun, cheerful music.

Kirk Hamilton: Video games!

Jason Schreier: Video games!

Maddy Myers: Video games! You like ’em?

Jason: Maybe you wish you had more time for them?

Kirk: Maybe you wanna know the best ones to play?

Jason: Maybe you wanna know what happens to Mario when he dies?

[Kirk chuckles.]

Maddy: In that case, you should check out Triple Click! It's a podcast about video games.

Jason: A podcast about video games?! But I don't have time for that!
Kirk: Sure you do. Once a week, kick back as three video game experts give you everything from critical takes on the hottest new releases—

Jason: —to scoops, interviews, and explanations about how video games work—

Maddy: —to fascinating and sometimes weird stories about the games we love.

Kirk: *Triple Click* is hosted by me, Kirk Hamilton.

Jason: Me, Jason Schreier.

Maddy: And me, Maddy Myers.

Kirk: You can find *Triple Click* wherever you get your podcasts, and listen at MaximumFun.org.

Maddy: Bye!

[Music finishes.]

00:43:28 Sound Effect Transition

00:43:32 Jesse Promo Judge Hodgman, we’re taking a quick break from clearing the docket. We’ve got something very exciting coming up. For all of the Judge John Hodgman fans out there, or as I like to call them... Judge John Hodgman fans!

00:43:45 John Promo We have a very, very special online streaming event coming up. It's the London Podcast Festival! We've been so lucky to visit the London Podcast Festival in the past. We hope to do it again in person in the future. But in the mean time, we're thrilled that the London Podcast Festival is coming back to King's Place with a mix of live in-person and virtual streaming events, like ours.

Judge John Hodgman online streaming event, London Podcast Festival, will be occurring! On Thursday, September 9th. Take out your Filofaxes. I'll say it again. Thursday, September 9th, at 12:30 PM Pacific, 3:30 PM Eastern, and 8:30 PM... British Summer Time.

And since it's online on the King's Place pay-per-view player, if you have a ticket and can't watch it live at any of those times, the show's gonna be available for you to review for a few days after that. So don't worry if you don't have any idea what British Summer Time is. Neither do they!

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

00:44:35 Ticket Taker

Tickets at—

00:44:42 Jesse Promo That's the one week a year when they can eat a tomato.

00:44:44 John Promo That's right. It's high corn season! But they call it maize.

Tickets and more info at KingsPlace.co.uk/londonpodfest. And if that's not confusing enough for you, I also made a Bitly. Go to

Wow. Or you could just Google "London Pod Fest Hodgman" or something. [Laughs.]

Jesse: Here's the point, John—!

We don't know when we're gonna be able to go on tour safely and effectively. We would love to come personally to your town, and one day we will again, but right now every single Your Town in the world... can watch a live Judge John Hodgman from the London Podcast Festival, or via the London Podcast Festival, on September 9th. It is gonna be a lot of fun. We will have live litigants. I will be wearing my little outfit. Yeah, that's right! I have a little outfit, and I'm gonna wear it.

I will wear my judge's robes! And by the way, I know we have a lot of great listeners in... England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland... in the Republic of Ireland...

Lot of listeners in Puppy Dogs' Tales!

[Snorts.]

And—and throughout the European continent and beyond, but, uh, we need some cases for this London Podcast Festival. So I will be giving special consideration to people who have English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh accents. Uh, please make them authentic. Don't, uh—don't pretend. Don't pretend to have an accent.

Yeah. Don't do a voice.

This is mostly for my uncle—for my Uncle John in Belfast.

[Uh, speaking of Belfast, there's a town in Maine called Belfast that is, um, about an hour south of here. And I am in Maine, in the studios of WERU.org. I'd like to just give a little shout-out to WERU. Joel! You listening?]

I am listening.

I'm shouting out to the radio station. You know why?

Why?

It's good.

I listen to it from time to time, but lately—normally I put on like, uh, public radio in the background. But—[struggles]—the news could be better these days. Right? I need something else to put on.

You get tired of it.

Get tired of it. So I've been listening—and also, WERU, we can always get it. Can always dial it right into our stereo receiver. And I was listening on Sunday morning. Acadian Highway?

Oh, yeah.

Incredible!
Joel Promo
Yep.

John Promo
All, uh—all Franco—uh, Franco-American-Canadian-French language music. From the Acadian—in the Acadian style. It was great!

And then in the—and then I went on listening, and in the evening, uh, the show Women’s Windows?

Joel Promo
Yeah!

John Promo
With Linda Washburn?

Joel Promo
Yeah!

John Promo
Played—all the sudden I’m listening to, "If I Knew You Were Coming I'd've Baked a Cake"!

[Joel chuckles.]

And then the whole—the whole house was toe-tapping to it. WERU.org. It's a great—[stifles laughter]—it's a great station! Put it on in the background! Or listen to it actively. WERU.org.

Jesse, what do you have going on?

Jesse Promo
You know, John, people always talk about the incredible influence that the Judge John Hodgman podcast has had on the podcasting community as a whole.

John Promo
Sure.

Jesse Promo
You know, uh, we’ve been doing this for a decade.

John Promo
Mm-hm.

Jesse Promo
And, you know, in that time, many other podcasts have started. Um—

John Promo
Oh, really?

Jesse Promo
At one point Snoop Doggy Dogg was going to do a podcast with our same format, but it never happened. I’m surprised that Snoop Dogg would not follow through on a commitment. He seems like a reliable guy.

But I, the other day, went on a podcast called god or whatever.

John Promo
Oh!

Jesse Promo
Which of course is a beloved catchphrase from the Judge John Hodgman podcast. I went—I agreed to go on this podcast simply because it was called that. [Laughs.]

John Promo
Wow!

Jesse Promo
Apparently that's—that's my criterion! But it was a really lovely conversation. It's a podcast about, uh, faith in its many forms. The host is a, uh... a hospital chaplain, I believe.

John Promo
Oh!

Jesse Promo
Recent—as of recently, a divinity school graduate. And, um, had a really... emotional, and deep, and for me, moving conversation about... faith, and, um, my experiences working in a church for several years as an atheist. [Laughs quietly.]
And, uh, my experiences coming to terms with the passing of my father, and... all kinds of things. I—I thought it was a really beautiful conversation. And I think the podcast—uh, I did not check how many people listened to it before I agreed to go on it. As I said, I agreed to go on it 'cause, uh—

00:49:19  John  Promo  'Cause of its name.
00:49:20  Jesse  Promo  —it was named after a catchphrase from our show, yeah.
00:49:22  John  Promo  Yeah.
00:49:23  Jesse  Promo  Uh, I think, like—I think, like, 30 people listened to it before. But I thought it was really good, so... I'm—I wanna give it the Judge John Hodgman bump.
00:49:31  John  Promo  Hey, everybody! Go check out the podcast god or whatever! And, oh! Coming to me over the wire here on Google—eugh. First of all, pictures of Jerusalem crickets.
00:49:41  Jesse  Promo  Yeah.
00:49:42  John  Promo  Yeah, you better go right away to god or whatever podcast, [stifles laughter] 'cause apparently Snoop Dogg is suing them. For using his catchphrase; weird.
00:49:48  Jesse  Promo  Wow.
00:49:49  Jesse  Promo  Jesse: Hm! Huh! Huh!

00:50:19  John  Promo  John: Weird! Huh. Snoop Dogg, no!
00:50:53  John  Promo  Leave this podcast alone! Listen to it; you might get something from it, Snoop Dogg!
00:50:59  Jesse  Promo  Very litigious. Not chizill at all.
00:50:03  John  Promo  You should listen to this, uh, podcast, Snoop, before you sue it. You might get something out of it! god or whatever, it's called. Go search for it. We're very happy to share that catchphrase, for free.
00:50:12  Jesse  Promo  Anyway, [stifles laughter] let's get back to our docket.
00:50:15  Sound Effect  Transition  [Three gavel bangs.]
00:50:17  Jesse  Host  Welcome back to the Judge John Hodgman podcast. Now, Judge Hodgman. Before we went to break, I teased a listener who married themself.
00:50:26  John  Host  Right.
00:50:27  Jesse  Host  Uh... I don't know—[stifles laughter]—I don't know what that means. I don't have any context on this; I did not read the script before we started recording. So what does it mean? A listener who married themself.
00:50:41  John  Host  Actually, it's a reference back to episode... 521, which was "The Mighty Eagle of Mid-Tier Comedy Podcasting."
00:50:48  Jesse  Host  [Stifling laughter] I don't listen to Judge John Hodgman. Mostly listen to this one baseball podcast.
00:50:53  John  Host  Well, you—during this we were—we had a dispute over how generous one should be when giving a wedding gift if you're not attending the wedding. And in passing, you mentioned the idea of a person marrying... oneself. In other words, having a wedding
ceremony just for themselves, and not getting married to anybody else.

And I said, "Well, if we have any listeners who married themselves at any time in history, please write and let us know. Uh, because I'm sure that's a thing." And I meant it sincerely! And we got a very sincere response back from our friend of the court, Hannah Cyrus!

I don't mind saying her last name! She's a fixture on the Judge John Hodgman. She and her sister Afton were featured in episode 282, when we did our live show in Portland, Maine. Afton wanted Hannah to get a phone that—a cell phone that worked. Because she was living here in Blue Hill, Maine. And working at the Blue Hill Public Library. Where I would see Hannah quite a bit! Uh, over the past couple of years, because it's a lovely place to work, and she's a—she's a librarian!

She's since got a new job. By the way. She left the Blue Hill Library. Did you know that, Joel?

00:51:56 Joel Guest No, I didn't!
00:51:57 John Host Hannah's up in the Bangor Library now.
00:51:59 Joel Guest Step up.
00:52:00 John Host It's a pretty big job. She's still commuting. She's still in—
00:52:03 Jesse Host That's the big leagues.
00:52:04 John Host Yeah. Yeah. That's the one. Different—whole different county. But in any case, Hannah wrote in saying that she, in fact, held a wedding...for her. self. A non-wedding for her 30th birthday, which occurred just before the COVID lockdown. She said:

"I invited all my friends from the different parts of my life to come together for a big party, and dinner, and dancing. I made a wedding-style website. I rented out the very affordable Central Hall for the purpose of the party. I got catering from a local restaurant. I made homemade bunting from old scraps of fabric, and hung up twinkle lights."

Boy, oh boy. Hannah Cyrus is in—in the—neck-and-neck in the adorable contest with Cheryl Crow.

"The whole thing was very festive. People gave toasts, including my sister Afton. Many of my friends had a sleepover at the Blue Hill Public Library"?! What?!

00:52:54 John Host "And everyone had a great time. It sounds self-indulgent, and it was. But I love my birthday, and I realized by the time I was turning 30 that I had no desire or intent to ever get married. But I still wanted the opportunity of a great party that friends could attend from near and far, meet one another, and celebrate. I was so pleased that many of my loved ones made the trip, and honestly, thinking back on it during the pandemic is one of the things that kept me going."

That's amazing, Hannah! We miss you at the library! I go—I go to work there, Jesse. I sit by Hannah's old desk, and people keep coming up, going, "Where's Hannah? Where's Hannah? Where's
Hannah?" And the—and the person who has replaced Hannah, who seems very nice and I'm sure is very competent, says, "Hannah's hit the big time. She's up at Bangor."

00:53:35 Jesse Host Yeah.
00:53:36 John Host Bangor Public Library.
00:53:38 Jesse Host She's a millionaire now.
00:53:39 John Host I know, but this whole thing about—now that I know that sleepovers at the Blue Hill Public Library are allowed? Hannah, don't tell them. I'm gonna start Airbnb-ing the audiobook section. I'm gonna start renting it out.

[Jesse laughs.]

It's hard to find—it's hard to—

00:53:52 Jesse Host It's quiet there.
00:53:53 John Host Hard to find rentals in Maine this summer!
00:53:55 Jesse Host Yeah.
00:53:56 John Host You'll bring your own sleeping bag. And you can nestle in underneath the—the... display of Rowantrees Pottery. It will be great. Two hundred dollars, please.

00:54:04 Jesse Host [Laughs.] Wow! Does that come with a bucket of scallops, or?
00:54:10 John Host It comes with a—it comes with a half gallon of scallops.
00:54:12 Jesse Host Okay.
00:54:13 John Host Yeah.
00:54:14 Jesse Host [Laughing] Fair enough.
00:54:15 John Host They have good—
00:54:16 Jesse Host [Laughing] In a—
00:54:17 John Host They have good—[stifles laughter]—they have good Wi-F—
00:54:18 Jesse Host In a cardboard milk container?
00:54:20 John Host Yeah. They have good Wi-Fi there. If you're a member you get access to their high-speed Wi-Fi, which is fantastic. I happen to know that they have a complete set of Alan Moore's League of Extraordinary Gentlemen. Which is great.

Uh, and, uh—and, you know. If you wanna buy a copy of... a novel called Chang & Eng for $2, you can get it outside.

00:54:41 Jesse Host It's a bargain at any price.
00:54:42 John Host It is. I love you, Darin.
00:54:44 Jesse Host Our docket, clear. That's it for another episode of Judge John Hodgman.

Our producer, Jennifer Marmor! This week's episode edited by Valerie Moffat. Our engineer in Maine is Joel Mann, program and operations manager at WERU Community Radio in Orland, Maine.

You can listen to WERU at WERU.org, and you can follow Joel on
Instagram! His handle is @themainemann. M-A-I-N-E-M-A-N-N.

Follow us on Twitter at @JesseThorn and @hodgman. We're on Instagram at @judgejohnhodgman. Make sure to hashtag your Judge John Hodgman Tweets #JJHo! And of course, check out the Maximum Fun subreddit to chat about this week's episode at MaximumFun.Reddit.com.

You can submit your cases—and we ask you to do so!—at MaximumFun.org/jjho. Or email them to hodgman@maximumfun.org. Helpful if you let us know if you've got any, uh, recording equipment at the house, but that is not a requirement, for you to have access to recording equipment, but useful to know. And, uh, throw your telephone number in there so Jennifer can give you a call if she wants to talk to you about your submission!

00:55:58  John  Host  We promise you, only Jennifer will call you, not spiders.
00:56:01  Jesse  Host  [Laughs.] MaximumFun.org/jjho, or email hodgman@maximumfun.org. We'll talk to you next time on the Judge John Hodgman podcast.

00:56:11  Sound Effect Transition  [Three gavel bangs.]

00:56:15  John  Host  Secret post-credits sequence, deploy! Thank you for hanging around to listen to my secret. I am going to reveal one of the two secrets. And Jesse, normally, I encourage you—'cause you're a busy fella.

00:56:30  Jesse  Host  Yeah.
00:56:31  John  Host  I encourage you to go on about your day.
00:56:32  Jesse  Host  I'm usually busy projecting... executive presence.
00:56:36  John  Host  That's right.
00:56:37  Jesse  Host  And athleticism.
00:56:38  John  Host  That's right. [Stifles laughter.] And I know—I know you've got other podcasts to oversee, and produce, and create, and so forth, but... thank you for sticking around here in the post-credits sequence to hear my secret.

Now, I have two secrets that I can share with the audience. One is... the non–hash brown secret ingredient to my high-concept burger. The other is... what happened when I stood at a urinal next to Harold Bloom the famous literary critic during a break during the Shakespeare Tragedies course I took with him in college.

Which do you think I shall reveal?

00:57:10  Jesse  Host  I'm gonna say... that you will reveal... what happened when you stood next to Harold Bloom at the urinal.
00:57:17  John  Host  Yeah. Yeah.
00:57:18  Jesse  Host  When you took the Shakespearean Tragedies course from him in college.
00:57:23  John  Host  So, I told the story. That I had used the urinal next to Harold Bloom. And it was a very scary thing to do. 'Cause he was—he was a very—very big deal on campus. BDOC. But that's a lie. I didn't use that urinal. Because as soon as Harold Bloom came in to use the urinal
next to me, I couldn't pee-pee anymore.

And I was so embarrassed about this that I reached down and I agitated the water to make it sound like I was peeing. So that Harold Bloom would think I was peeing.

[Jesse cracks up.]

For some reason, that was important. [Laughs.] I didn't want Harold Bloom to think... that I couldn't pee next to Harold Bloom.

And as far as my second secret ingredient for my high-concept burger? Chuck Bryant knows it. You know it, Jesse. You know it, Jennifer. Joel, you know it. Right?

[Beat.]

This thing is gonna—this thing is gonna go great. As soon as I get it together, Jesse, I promise you.

John, you know, you weren't the only one with a celebrity literature professor.

Yeah? Who'd you get?

Kasey Mohammad. You know what he said when, uh, he was explaining metonymy to our class?

No.

He said it's when you refer to something... by something with which it is associated. Like if you have a friend... who lives in the swamp, [stifling laughter] and you call him Swampy Swamperson.

[Both laugh.]

Kasey Mohammad was a cool—is—is a cool guy. He's a cool guy.

That's so weird that Harold Bloom used the same explanation. Swampy Swamperson!

Well, he was—they were both quoting from Chaucer, so... [Laughs.]

That makes sense. Now I understand.

Okay, goodbye, everybody!

[Someone laughs.]
00:59:13  Speaker 3  Guest  Artist owned—
00:59:14  Speaker 4  Guest  —audience supported.