

Sawbones 373: Jimmy Buffett

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Justin: Hi everybody, Justin McElroy here. I have quite the interesting curio for you. Uh, literally days before coronavirus swept through our nation and much of the globe, we recorded an episode of *Sawbones* on the Jonathon Coulton cruise, and it was a wonderful time, but it's honestly been a little bit hard to listen to because of how precipitously things collapsed after we recorded this.

We're hopeful that now with a little bit of distance from, it we can see it as the—[holding back laughter] the—the tragic irony of the whole thing is maybe a little less stinging. Uh, if we're not as, uh—treating the coronavirus scenario with as much gravity as it seems like we should, forgive us. We knew not what we did. Um, but hopefully you'll still get a kick out of this very strange episode of *Sawbones*, and the naivety displayed within. Enjoy, and we'll see you next week.

Clint: *Sawbones* is a show about medical history, and nothing the hosts say should be taken as medical advice or opinion. It's for fun. Can't you just have fun for an hour and not try to diagnose your mystery boil? We think you've earned it. Just sit back, relax, and enjoy a moment of distraction from that weird growth. You're worth it.

[theme music plays]

Sydnee: Oh, just project.

Justin: Hello. There we go. Hello!

Sydnee: Use your theater voice.

Justin: Welcome to *Sawbones*, a marital tour of misguided medicine. I'm your cohost, Justin McElroy.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: And I'm Sydnee McElroy.

[audience cheers loudly]

Sydnee: Thank you! [laughs]

Justin: You know, it's funny. The—the sea air plays such tricks with the sound.

[audience laughs]

Justin: I could've sworn Sydnee's applause was louder. Hello, everyone. Welcome to the cruise. Uh, if—

Sydnee: Thank you for coming back. I thought you would only watch me if I was talking about Tyra Banks' book, *Modelland*, now. So...

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: I'm relieved.

Justin: Um, so if you've been paying attention to the world at large for the past month or so, you've probably already guessed what we're gonna be talking about this evening here on our medical history program. And so let's, uhh... just bring it down a little bit. Calm down, and let's have a frank and open discussion about the music of Jimmy Buffett.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: So, the last couple years on the cruise, we've done some stuff that was pretty gross.

Justin: Challenging.

Sydnee: Challenging. And we thought, you know, the world is hard right now. Maybe we need to relax. And who's better at relaxing than Jimmy Buffett? No one. And there is a lot you can do with his body of work. [laughs] When you look at Jimmy Buffett's music, there's a lot of, uh, medical... you know, applications, a lot of history, a lot of—a lot of things we can read into it, if you wanna make a podcast about that. And so—[laughs] so we're gonna take an in depth medical look at some of the works. There are so many. Some of the works of Jimmy Buffett.

["Margaritaville" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Sydnee: Just launched right in there.

Justin: Just went right in. What's this one, Syd?

Sydnee: What song is this?

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: This is "Margaritaville."

Justin: Okay.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: I feel like this is the next best thing to—we're not gonna get to go to the big Margaritaville on Grand Turk now, so...

Justin: We're bringing Jimmy to you.

Sydnee: You're there.

Justin: Trust us, we're heartbroken too. I was certain that James would be waiting for me at the door with a lei or something like that, waiting to greet me. So this, I'm assuming you all have heard the song "Margaritaville" in the past. This is "Margaritaville."

[music ends]

Sydnee: Yes. I would say probably the most well known Jimmy Buffett song. So, there's so much to get into here. First of all, I'm concerned if—and I'm gonna take this view on all these songs as if the person who's singing them is like our narrator. [laughs quietly] Our—our—perhaps our protagonist, I don't know, if you will.

But, uh, the narrator of this song, I'm really concerned about some unhealthy habits. First of all...

[scattered laughter]

Sydnee: He's hangin' out on his front porch nibblin' on sponge cake. That's a weird, like, treat, right? Like, to just have a sponge cake? And you're, like, sitting on a porch swing, eating cake? Just, like, chillin'? I think that that speaks to—maybe we have developed some generally unhealthy dietary habits, right?

Justin: Yes, fair.

Sydnee: I think that's—

Justin: Completely fair.

Sydnee: That's fair to say. He is gonna eat some shrimp later, I guess.

[scattered laughter]

Sydnee: We could debate the nutritional merits of that. But one way or another, cake comes first. And that's fine on a cruise, of course.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: Uh, now, when we discuss losing his shaker of salt, I actually think this is a big bonus for the singer, for—you know, if we assume it's Jimmy Buffett, that's great.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: 'Cause then he can't use it, and that's great for his blood pressure.

[scattered laughter]

Sydnee: So perhaps it should stay gone.

Justin: I don't feel like this person has a problem with their blood pressure, generally speaking.

[scattered laughter]

Sydnee: Now Justin, just because it does not appear that this singer has a high stress lifestyle does not mean that they are immune to hypertension.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Genetics do play a role.

Justin: Oh, God.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Justin: You're ruining all the songs, aren't you?

[audience laughs and cheers]

Justin: Do you have... do you have anything else to ruin about this American classic?

Sydnee: Yes, I do. Uh, the—

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: —we learn that—later in the song that he has a new tattoo that is a real beauty, but how it got there, he hasn't a clue. Now, I'm concerned. First of all, why don't you remember where or how or when or who gave you the tattoo?

Justin: That's problematic.

Sydnee: Uh, and since you don't remember, do you know if it was done using, you know, appropriate sterile technique? You have no idea. So already, I'm concerned about blood borne infections. I'm concerned about infection in general. Were you given proper tattoo care guidelines after the procedure? You clearly don't remember it, so you don't remember what to do!

Justin: Yeah! You're not puttin', uh, tattoo goo on there. You're not—you don't moisturize. You don't know what to do with the thing!

Sydnee: So there's a lot of concerns with the tattoo, and if that wasn't enough, we now find out that he blew out his flip flop and stepped on a pop top. So now tetanus is an issue...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: ... that Jimmy Buffett needs to be worried about. When was his last tetanus shot? It's not... it's not in "Margaritaville." I don't know. Is he up to date?

And then we gotta think about, how deep was this wound? What kind of pop top are we talking about? Like, was this a deeper puncture wound, and we have to

worry about, like, gas forming organisms? Is gangrene going to develop, you know?

[scattered groans]

Sydnee: Sorry, that was the only gross part. That was for Melissa, who specifically asked for a gross part.

Justin: [groans quietly]

[scattered cheering]

Justin: So gangrene, maybe, for James.

Sydnee: Maybe. I mean, we don't know.

Justin: Okay. I'm moving on. There's no way you can ruin this one.

["Cheeseburger in Paradise" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Sydnee: So, you're playing "Cheeseburger in Paradise" as an example of a song that there's no way I could have anything to say about?

Justin: It's just a fun—it's just fun.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

[music continues to play]

Sydnee: Okay. I see some issues already.

Justin: You gotta let him get to the good part. Hold on.

Sydnee: Oh, okay, hold on.

Justin: Come on, everybody. [singing] Cheeseburger in para—paradise!
[normally] Okay.

Sydnee: Alright.

Justin: James Buffett's "Cheeseburger in Paradise." What on Earth could be wrong with this song, Sydnee?

Sydnee: Well, there's some hopeful notes in the beginning because we find out that our hero is trying to amend his carnivorous habits, so perhaps he's pursuing a plant-based lifestyle.

[scattered cheering]

Sydnee: That's a great thing, right? Like, we know that's a really heart healthy—like, for longevity, this is a great turn he's taken, um, away from red meat, perhaps meat in general. We don't know. We think. Uh, and he's been losing weight and eating sunflower seeds and drinking carrot juice. Now, if that is all he's eating and drinking, this is obviously a concern. But in addition, you can turn orange if you drink enough carrot juice consistently, so there is that. I don't know...

Justin: Yeah, I mean, I think it's a concern. The man's a—a—a one-person industry. I don't think we want him turning orange, certainly.

Sydnee: And aside from his diet, he also notes that he's soaking up rays, and just from a skin health perspective I have to frown on that immediately.

Justin: Not great.

Sydnee: I mean, I really applaud your turn towards veganism, but if you could wear some sunscreen... that would be better.

Justin: Anything else?

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] Of course, Justin.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: He's—he's celebrating hamburgers. Cheeseburgers, excuse me.

Justin: Specifically, yeah.

Sydnee: Specifically cheeseburgers. So, uh, first of all, he's dreaming about eating a cheeseburger. Now, just the fact that he's dreaming about it makes me concerned for perhaps an iron deficiency.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Uh—[laughs] I know that this was something that I suffered from through pregnancy, and I would often dream about hamburgers. [laughs] And so I have to—I have to be concerned about, you know, is your body telling you something? Maybe you don't need a cheeseburger. Maybe we need an iron supplement, Jimmy.

Justin: So "Iron Supplement in Paradise" maybe might be a better tune, you think, Sydster?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: In addition—

Justin: Oh my God.

Sydnee: If we are going to indulge in the cheeseburger, we have to be concerned about colon health. All that red meat. How often are we gonna eat these cheeseburgers, Jimmy?

Justin: Well, it sounds like quite a few, Sydster. He's been playing this song for 40 years.

[audience laughs]

Justin: We got to him too late, I'm afraid.

Sydnee: I mean, it's great that he wants to throw some vegetables in the mix on top of the burger, but then he's gonna pair it with some french fries and beer, so...

Justin: Not great.

Sydnee: Which is delicious. I'm not saying it's not.

Audience Member: [faintly] And plant-based!

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] And plant-based, yes.

Justin: Yes, the lettuce and tomato and french fries are plant-based, that's true.

[audience cheers]

Justin: You ready to move on?

Sydnee: Yeah.

["Grapefruit—Juicy Fruit" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Justin: Now, this is le—probably this one's less well known, I would say.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. We're gonna really know who the parrotheads are. [laughs quietly]

Justin: Yeah.

[a single whoop]

Sydnee: There's a—alright! Alright. There's one.

Justin: Just us and that person.

Sydnee: [laughs] There's another in the back. We got two.

[music continues to play]

Justin: This song is called "Grapefruit—Juicy Fruit." And it's about, um... [pause] it's just about enjoying yourself.

Sydnee: It's about fun. [laughs quietly]

[music continues to play]

Sydnee: Alright. That's all you need.

[music stops]

You get the idea. He's talking about grapefruit. That's the joke. So, grapefruit is—[laughs quietly] first of all, on the surface this is good, right? Grapefruit is good for you. It's got vitamins A and C and E. It's got some calcium, it's got some

phosphorus, it's pretty decent on the glycemic index, if you're worried about that. Which... we are. [laughs] Uh, in terms of fruit—

Justin: I wasn't, but I am now. Thank you, Sydnee.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Well, I mean, all fruit has sugar, and so if you're looking for, like, natural sugars that are a little better for you, grapefruit has a lot to offer, and so I—I personally think it tastes awful. I'm sorry, um, to everyone in the 80's who ate it all the time. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: And my mom, who eats it every day, but I don't. I don't like it, but I can see where he's coming from with the grapefruit. My main concern is that, uh, grapefruit is known to interfere with a number of medications.

[sustained scattered laughter]

Sydnee: So... [laughs quietly] once again, when you approach Jimmy Buffett music from a medical perspective, you realize pretty quickly that there's a lack of medical history. Um, I don't know. Like [crosstalk]—

Justin: Yeah, it's weird. It's like, none of his songs give a complete medical history.

[audience laughs]

Justin: Do you have a family history of colon cancer? It's never addressed!

Sydnee: I mean, it isn't, though! Like, you're joking, but I'm serious.

Justin: Okay.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: So grapefruit is gonna decrease the activity of a certain enzyme. Do you wanna know the name, Justin?

Justin: Oh, I know, but why don't you tell everybody else?

Sydnee: [laughs] Cytochrome P450.

[scattered cheering]

Justin: P450.

Sydnee: Specifically 3A4 is the enzyme it's gonna interfere—big fans.

Justin: I was gonna say, you should specifically—

Sydnee: Big fans of cytochrome P450 in the house.

Justin: Yeah.

[loud cheering]

Justin: Some of y'all are liars, but that's fine. You're—

Sydnee: No.

Justin: —you're dressed extremely well, so we're going to let it slide.

Sydnee: If there was an audience where there would be big fans of cytochrome P450, this is the audience.

Justin: This is the audience, yeah.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: Justin, we've found our people. [laughs] This is the audience.

Justin: That is fair.

Sydnee: So [laughs quietly] as a result, that enzyme's ability to break down other medicines that you are taking to eliminate them at the appropriate rate is gonna be interfered with, and so I have a lot of concerns. You know, grapefruit, it's healthy. Good, I'm gonna start eating a lot of it. But without knowing, like, is he taking Lipitor? Is he taking Xanax? Is he taking Viagra?

Justin: That last one, like, we all feel pretty confident about.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: It could interfere with the activity of any of these medications, and we don't know!

Justin: [sighs heavily]

[ad break]

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] Would you like me to ruin another song?

["Knees of My Heart" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Justin: This is called "Knees of My Heart."

[music continues to play]

Sydnee: Alright, that's good.

Justin: Everybody's enjoying it, though.

Sydnee: Oh, okay. Well. I don't wanna kill your buzz. Go for it.

[music continues to play]

Justin: Okay, you get the idea.

[music stops]

Sydnee: You get the idea, and it's just ridiculous from an ama—ana—anatomical standpoint, and I just wanted to say [holding back laughter] that just bothers me. That's it.

[scattered laughter]

Justin: All that, for that?!

Sydnee: It's also a good song that I enjoy. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

["A Frenchman for the Night" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Sydnee: This may be my sneaky way of introducing you all to Jimmy Buffett music that's lesser known.

Justin: Yeah, you're goin'—you're goin' out to the boneyard. This one is called "A Frenchman for the Night."

[scattered cheering]

Sydnee: That's right. Romance.

[music continues to play]

Sydnee: He even speaks French in the song!

[music continues to play]

Sydnee: Alright. He spoke French. That's all—I just wanted to prove that.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Alright. So, obviously you can't just be a Frenchman for the night, but that's not really the—[laughs] that's not really a medical issue. Um...

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: What... what I was thinking about as I was pondering the concept of becoming French for one night was, are we referencing a little known ailment, a rare disorder that is called Jumping Frenchmen of Maine?

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: This is actually the name. I—like, as in "I have Jumping Frenchmen of Maine." [laughs] "You have Jumping Frenchmen of Maine."

Justin: I do?!

Sydnee: No, but that is how you would use it in a sentence. I was just demonstrating. It is the full name of the condition. It was discovered by George

Beard in 1787. You might have already guessed [laughs quietly] the population amongst which it was discovered. They were French... men. [laughs quietly] Uh, it was this strange—so it was actually French-Canadian lumberjacks. There were a group of them, all in the Moosehead Lake region of Maine.

[one loud cheer]

Sydnee: And they had this very strange startle response where even the slightest sound or movement, something that wouldn't necessarily startle the rest of us would result in them... jumping. Or screaming, or sometimes punching or kicking [laughs quietly] someone near them. And so he described what he called the Jumping Frenchmen of Maine disorder. And he wrote extensively about just—and it was this very isolated disorder. It was only known among these Canadian lumberjacks who experienced it, and, uh, they were also noted to be specifically ticklish [laughs quietly] and shy, which he wrote about a lot 'cause he thought maybe that had something to do with it. [laughs quietly] If you're very shy and ticklish, you may be prone to Jumping Frenchmen of Maine.

[audience laughs]

Justin: Good to know.

Sydnee: You are ticklish.

Justin: Yeah, any shy ticklish people out there? You should go get checked when you get home. You may have this extremely rare condition.

Sydnee: Over time, this has actually—this has been looked into a lot, I think because it's so unique and interesting. And people have begun to wonder if it's more of—like what we think of like a culture-bound syndrome. It's actually what we would consider, like, a—a cultural response to things. You begin to accept that a normal response within your kind of isolated region of the world to some sort of thing happening would be to pass out or to start laughing a whole lot, or to jump or kick. And you see it perpetuated in these, like, isolated kind of little microcultural areas, and that is probably what this is. It's actually been found in other parts of the world, and there's different names depending on where you see it. And my favorite that I found is that there is a similar response that they found among isolated populations in Louisiana.

[a single loud cheer]

Sydnee: And they called it Ragin' Cajun.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: So if you live in Maine, you might have Jumping Frenchmen of Maine. But if you live in Louisiana, you may have Ragin' Cajun. It just depends.

Justin: And this ties into James how?

Sydnee: Jimmy Buffett—[laughs] Jimmy Buffett sang a song with Frenchman in the name, so... you know, there you go.

Justin: Okay, I'm moving on.

Sydnee: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: I just really wanted to talk about Jumping Frenchmen of Maine!

["A Pirate Looks at 40" By Jimmy Buffett plays]

Justin: You're stretching to ruin that one. This song is called "A Pirate Looks at 40."

Sydnee: That's my dad's favorite song. There's some trivia for you all. [laughs]

Justin: If that comes up at some of the geek trivia later... Sydnee's—

Sydnee: What is Tommy Smirl's favorite Jimmy Buffett song?

[music continues to play]

Sydnee: Just makes you need to get out there, doesn't it?

Justin: We are literally out there.

Sydnee: Oh yeah, that's right.

[scattered laughter]

Justin: We are currently out there.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Justin: Could not be more out there.

[music continues to play]

Justin: Alright.

[music stops]

Sydnee: Alright, so this pirate is looking at 40, and I assume—

Justin: I can already tell I don't like this. I'm 39 years old and I don't like what you're about to do already with my heart and my mind.

[audience laughs and cheers]

Justin: Do I have a pass? Is there one pass where I can hit a buzzer and say "No whammies" and we skip one? Is that a possibility?

Sydnee: [through laughter] No. No. Has there ever been on *Sawbones*?

Justin: Never.

Sydnee: Uh, so I can only assume that as this pirate looks forward at 40, he's thinking about his preventive health care, and what kind of, you know, screening tests he might need, and what he might need to talk with his primary care physician about at his upcoming well check, right? That's what we all think about, [through laughter] right? That's normal.

Uh, and so I—I just went ahead and looked up some recommendations for Jimmy Buffett. I'm gonna assume that this is a male, just because Jimmy Buffett's singing the song, and there's some questions if you're gonna look at, like, the US Preventive Services Task Force recommendations for health screening. There are a couple questions. So, for male—

Justin: For a pirate looking at 40.

Sydnee: For a pirate looking at 40. Tobacco user—I went ahead and plugged in "yes."

[audience laughs]

Justin: Safe bet.

Sydnee: I feel like a lot of pirates probably smoke, right? Probably?

Justin: Safe, safe bet.

Sydnee: Uh, the... [laughs] it's something. The other question is "sexually active." Definitely plugged in "yes" for that, right? Pirates?

Justin: That's a big yesarooski, for sure.

Sydnee: Right? Okay. So I apologize for the pirate assumptions. [holding back laughter] If you—if you are a pirate and I got that wrong, I apologize. I shouldn't make sweeping generalizations. So... [laughs quietly] for this pirate who's looking at 40, we're gonna definitely want to check a blood pressure and discuss, you know, regular monitoring of your blood pressure. There are also some screening tests. We need to screen for HIV, for syphilis. We definitely need to talk about tobacco cessation. I know that's hard. It's a pirate lifestyle. Probably all your buddies are smoking too. But it's not good for you.

Justin: It's worth the effort.

Audience Member: [faintly] Scurvy?

Sydnee: [laughs] Scurvy is actually not in the Preventive Services Task Force. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Recommenda—I know that seems weird. [laughs] There's no screening test for scurvy. Although certainly if my patient was a pirate, I would bring it up.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: That's where we got Grade A evidence. Now, as we go ahead and include some of the Grade B recommendations, 'cause we like to do things that

are evidence-based, and we may as well expand to the evidence that's not quite as strong as Grade A, but still pretty good—it's Grade B. So we're gonna screen for depression, for diabetes. We're gonna talk about unhealthy alcohol use.

[scattered laughter]

Sydnee: I have to assume this is an issue, or could be! He's a pirate, remember? [laughs] Uh, and we're gonna talk about some, like, healthy exercise, nutrition, definitely getting plenty of vitamin C, because we are a pirate. Um, safe sex, and maybe we need to start some sort of cholesterol lowering medication for this pirate who's looking at 40.

["Island Fever" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Justin: "Island Fever." This is from *Don't Stop the Carnival*, right? Which was supposed to be a musical, and then...

Sydnee: Yeah.

Justin: ... more of a concept album. Syd's gonna ruin it now.

[music continues to play]

Sydnee: I bet you know why I picked this one. It's got fever right there in the name.

[music stops]

Sydnee: I like this song 'cause I feel like it's a diagnostic puzzle.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: This is how I approached it. [laughs quietly] So, he has island fever. Uh, now we do not have a specific location other than "island."

Justin: [simultaneously] Island, yeah.

Sydnee: Mr. Buffett, that does not give me enough information. There are many islands! The only clue we get later in the song—there is the line, "I think I'll take my shoes off and go walking down beside the Caribbean sea."

Okay. Now... in the Caribbean sea, there are technically 7,000 islands.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: So that's not a great clue.

Justin: Not super helpful.

Sydnee: But it gives us a region of the world, and that definitely is helpful when we start talking about, like, what sort of tropical disease may have caused this island fever. Now, some common culprits. We actually have to think about malaria. Very common worldwide. Probably not the first thing I would consider for this person, but definitely on the differential—

Justin: Probably not, Syd. Probably not. Probably not malaria first thing. Yeah, I wouldn't think of malaria the *first* thing, for my pal, James Buffett.

Sydnee: Justin. If a traveler comes back from a malarious region of the world and they have a fever, it should be the first thing you think of.

Justin: [sighs heavily]

Audience member: Yeah!

[scattered cheering]

Sydnee: I'm surprised you haven't learned this from me yet.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] I'm a little disappointed.

Justin: So, okay. We're in the Caribbean sea.

Sydnee: Alright. So malaria, certainly. Dengue, definitely on the differential. Typhoid, leptospirosis, of course. And then that doesn't even begin to touch on all the common illnesses like influenza that you have to consider, 'cause those happen everywhere, right? Like, just because you were on an island doesn't mean you can't get the flu. And again, no history. We don't know. Did he get a flu shot... like he should've? I don't know.

[audience cheers and applauds]

Sydnee: So, he—later in the song, he says he thinks that it found its way to his brain.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: So I am gonna interpret this line as a neurological complication of the disease.

Justin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sydnee: Naturally.

Justin: Yeah, naturally, naturally.

Sydnee: Uh-huh. So, while malaria, dengue, leptospirosis, we could all have some possible neurological complications. Those aren't the first things I would think of, 'cause they usually manifest more as, like, drowsiness. Um, and he talks about how he's fighting the urge to join a parade.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Which... why fight it, first of all?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Join the parade. But if that's the kind of, like, delirium that has ensued, that would actually take me in a different direction. And so I am gonna guess that he has typhoid. [pause] Jimmy Buffett.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: From this song, "Island Fever." Now, the bad news is that—

Justin: The bad news is...

Sydnee: —I mean, well, other than that he has—

Justin: ... Jimmy Buffett has... okay.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly] Jimmy Buffett has typhoid. But obviously that's bad news. But also he didn't listen to any of my advice about vaccines, because he could've been vaccinated against typhoid before he left.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: And he didn't do it. So that's a big tsk, tsk. But on the good news is that we—you know, there is treatment for typhoid. So, you know, he can come to me. I will—I will take care of him. I can provide him with either a fluoroquinolone, a third generation cephalosporin, and we can just get him fixed right up, so.

[scattered cheering]

Sydnee: Don't worry.

Justin: Great. Great. Good news.

Sydnee: We solved the diagnostic puzzle and saved the day!

["Math Suks" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Justin: Fantastic.

Sydnee: I love puzzles.

Justin: There's no way you can ruin this song. It's called "Math Suks."

[scattered laughter]

Sydnee: Will you spell it?

Justin: S-U-K-S. Math... Suks.

Sydnee: That's how Jimmy Buffett spells it.

Justin: That is how it's spelled in the song title.

[music continues to play]

Sydnee: He's talking about math! I bet nobody here agrees with this.

Justin: No, no, no. This is not the crowd for informing them that math sucks. Some people here probably even like math.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: I do. [laughs quietly] Are you just waiting for him to say it?

[chorus plays]

Justin: [laughs loudly]

Sydnee: There it is. [laughs]

[scattered booing]

Justin: Hey, hey!

Sydnee: You are gonna feel so bad when I tell you all that I am concerned that this poor singer has dyscalculia. Uh, this is a condition that affects about 3 to 6% of the population. It involves some sort of dysfunction in the intraparietal sulcus of the brain, and it makes math very difficult. So now don't you all feel bad?

[scattered laughter]

Justin: They don't seem to be feeling bad, Syd.

Sydnee: Uh, it can resolve as we age. We see it—we diagnose it more in kids, and sometimes it goes away, but in some adults it persists, and I guess for poor Jimmy Buffett, math has continued to suck for him, and his experience of math, anyway, has been hard ever since. It's interesting, 'cause we're still not sure—it might have something to do with the, like—how we actually, like, make concrete numeric characters, and that patients who have it can actually still do conceptual math without, like, an actual number. I think that's fascinating. And apparently—[laughs]

Justin: Jimmy Buffett wrote this song in his 60's.

[scattered laughter]

Justin: I very much enjoy someone who gets to 60 and they're like, "You know what? I still don't like math."

[audience laughs]

Justin: "I didn't like it earlier. I don't like it now. I'm going to write a song about that, 'cause I still don't like it! And I've given it a big opportunity. It's had six decades. I don't like math! Here's a song about it."

Sydnee: Well, but I think it's fascinating to think that it's not that he doesn't like concrete math, or not that he doesn't like math, it's that conceptual math might work for him! We just haven't found the right way to teach Jimmy Buffett math!

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: That challenge is out there—

["I Will Play for Gumbo" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Sydnee: And we could teach him and make him love math! [laughs quietly]
Probably not me. You don't seem convinced.

[music continues to play]

Justin: This is a very good song.

Sydnee: This is not a song I'm discussing.

Justin: No it's not, Sydnee, but I needed to hear this song to take a break from your songs.

Sydnee: This is Justin's favorite Jimmy Buffett song.

Justin: No, no, no. That's probably "10 Cup Chalice," but it's up there. You know why, Syd?

Sydnee: When did that change?

Justin: [singing along] I will play for gumbo.

[chorus plays]

Sydnee: This is called "I Will Play for Gumbo." I wasn't gonna talk about it.

Justin: This is a song called "I Will Play for Gumbo." Ruin that one, Sydnee!

[music stops]

Sydnee: You can have it. You can keep that song.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: That one.

["Please Bypass This Heart" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Sydnee: Do you wanna introduce the title of the—

Justin: This is called "Please Bypass This Heart."

[audience laughs]

Justin: Writes itself, I guess.

Sydnee: I mean, he just does this for me, I feel. It's just for me.

[music continues to play]

Sydnee: I never thought I was a country music fan, but I do like Jimmy Buffett. So what does that mean?

Justin: Well, I don't necessarily think of his music as country. The genre has often been defined as gulf and western, which I like. It's hovering in between a lot of different styles. He of course incorporates some, uh, country melodies, country structures, but he's also got a lot of the island [crosstalk]—

Sydnee: Do you mean golf or gulf? Do you mean G-U or G-O?

Justin: G-U-L-F.

Sydnee: Gulf? Okay.

Justin: Okay. Please Bypass This Heart.

[music stops]

Sydnee: I think this just sort of speaks for itself.

[scattered laughter]

Sydnee: The American healthcare system is so broken—

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: —here we have this person begging a cardiothoracic surgeon—

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: —to save their life and bypass their heart because they probably don't have insurance and can't pay for it. And I just think we all need to remember that until we have medicare for all, Jimmy Buffett is gonna have to write these kinds of songs, so.

[audience cheers]

["Son of a Son of a Sailor" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Sydnee: You'd think he could afford it, though. [laughs]

Justin: He probably can afford it now. Fair. Mmm, take me away, James.

Sydnee: You like this one?

Justin: It's a good one, yeah.

Sydnee: It's a good one, it's a good one.

[first verse begins]

Sydnee: Yeah, we've got a few people who've heard this one.

Justin: We good?

Sydnee: Yeah. It's called "Son of a Son of a Sailor," and he, like, says it right there, which is convenient.

Justin: Thank you, James.

[music stops]

Sydnee: For this podcast. Uh, it's really important to have a firm grasp on your family history.

[scattered laughter and cheering]

Sydnee: To understand your risk for different, you know, genetic disorders, and the more that you can understand about that, you know, the better informed your primary care physician can be, and the better care they can take of you. Now, as we've already covered, scurvy is not a genetic disorder, so that's good. Not beriberi or pellagra or rickets, which are all caused by nutritional deficiencies. And, you know, as the son of a son of a sailor, they may have been at risk for. But the singer is not. However, we do worry about high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease among sailors today.

Justin: Ah, well.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Justin: And their sons? And their sons of sons?

Sydnee: Well, them too, 'cause as we know, there is a genetic component to these disorders, and we see a slightly higher rate among sailors, and their lives are full of stress, and often poor nutrition and lack of exercise because, you know, they're trapped on their sailboats. [laughs quietly] Or bigger boats. Uh, and possibly things like smoking, which we've already discussed, so.

Justin: Huge sailor problem.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. So every time I hear that song I think, about genetic disorders.

["Growing Older But Not Up" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Sydnee: Do you not?

[first verse plays]

Sydnee: We're really rockin'. Not the music, the boat. [laughs quietly] You know the, uh—

Justin: This song is called "Growing Older But Not Up."

[music stops]

[scattered laughter]

Sydnee: So, Benjamin Button disease...

[audience laughs]

Justin: There's no way Benjamin Button disease is real!

[audience laughs]

Justin: Please don't pretend like Benjamin Button disease is real! You know how afraid I am of Benjamin Button disease!

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: We're just—

Justin: This is targeted!

Sydnee: I know it's hard, honey. We're going opposite directions, but we've met right now, in the middle.

Justin: No we're not! You tell me all the time Benjamin Button disease is not real!

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: And now for you to get up on the stage and pretend like it is? Betrayal. *J'accuse!*

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: If it's in a Jimmy Buffett song...

Justin: Don't you dare. I'm skipping this one. There's no way Benjamin Button disease is real, and I'm not gonna let you tell these fine folks that it is. They believe in you, and they trust you.

Sydnee: [laughs]

[pause]

Sydnee: I'm just saying.

[a single note plays and abruptly stops]

Justin: You're not! You're not saying it, Sydnee!

[audience laughs]

Justin: Take it back!

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Justin: Play on a person's fears like that. Here on the JoCo Cruise. I'm gonna report you.

["A Mile High in Denver" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Justin: This is "A Mile High in Denver."

[music continues to play]

Justin: This is very early. This is, like, from his first record.

Sydnee: Yeah. I think sometimes he likes, um, smoking marijuana.

Justin: No! Now, you aren't saying that this is a song about smoking marijuana, do—are you, Sydnee?

Sydnee: Well, I mean, when you hear "A Mile High in Denver," the first thing you think of is, of course, altitude sickness.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: So... we've all been there, right? I mean... [laughs] you've got, like, what kind of symptoms is he talking about? He's a mile high in Denver. I'm gonna assume, since he's still singing, that we're probably dealing with, like, acute mountain sickness. So, like, he's dizzy, he's got some headaches, maybe some trouble sleeping. He could be vomiting, I don't know. He doesn't say that. Do you think—do you think he's vomiting?

[scattered laughter]

Justin: [sighs heavily]

Sydnee: How much have you thought about whether or not Jimmy Buffett is vomiting when he sings these songs?

[audience laughs]

Justin: You know, Sydster, it never crossed my mind actually, if you can believe that or not. Never crossed my mind.

Sydnee: He talks about admiring the scenery, and things like that that you probably wouldn't feel like doing if you developed, like, a further stage of altitude sickness like high altitude pulmonary edema. So, I mean, with that much fluid in your lungs, [through laughter] you're not gonna be admiring the scenery. Right?

So probably not that, or high altitude cerebral edema, where you get swelling in your brain. Which... I mean, maybe you admired the scenery before you fell asleep.

[scattered laughter and applause]

Justin: I'm not enjoying this as much as I thought I would, Syd.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Either way, he could have prevented this if he had just ascended more slowly. You don't have to get altitude sickness. Uh, so obviously he just—I mean, he probably flew there, right? It was like a gig. He probably just flew there and he—

Justin: Probably had to do a gig.

Sydnee: Yes. He's ascended too quickly. Um, and the best thing, because now he has less oxygen available at the higher altitude, that's why he's sick—so the best thing for Jimmy to do at this point, I would say, is to, you know, descend. Go to a lower elevation. Um—

Justin: 4,000-some feet high in Denver doesn't really have the same ring to it, though.

Sydnee: I don't know if he has Diamox available, which is a medication you can take to help with altitude sickness. It doesn't always prevent it, but it can certainly help.

Justin: Not a lot of great rhymes, there, with Diamox.

Sydnee: It's—I just think it's cool. Diamox is cool.

[clip plays]

Jimmy Buffett: I better check my watch, 'cause I believe it's about five o' clock somewhere [unintelligible]

[live performance of "It's Five O' Clock Somewhere" plays]

Sydnee: [sighs] I have mixed feelings about this song. It's always nice when something that somebody that you love, like a musical artist you love, like, really hits mainstream and everybody's listening to them all of the sudden, but then it's for this song, "Five O' Clock Somewhere." [sighs] There's just so much better work.

Justin: There is better songs in the catalog, Syd, but every one of those iTunes purchases, a little slice goes to Jimmy, and you gotta celebrate that. Any few bucks that guy can cobble together, I gotta celebrate it. Oops, here it comes!

[volume increases and the chorus plays]

Sydnee: I mean, I get it. It's catchy. I get it.

[music continues to play]

Justin: "[singing along] It's five o' clock somewhere!" It's a good tune.

[music stops]

Sydnee: So, as you probably already guessed from listening to the song, "It's Five O' Clock Somewhere" and what it's obviously referencing, that our singer is suffering from dyschronometria.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: I know. It's really a shame. Um... [laughs quietly] which obviously we all know is the inability to distinguish the passage of time.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: And so for Jimmy it's—I mean, he doesn't—it's five o' clock anytime, anywhere. He just doesn't know. It's 5, it's 4, it was 2, now it's 10. He can't tell anymore! I know, that's a rough...

Justin: Yeah, you've painted a rough picture for sure, Syd. It almost saps some of the fun and whimsy out of the song.

Sydnee: I mean, especially when you consider that it—

Justin: And commemorative plates and flip flops and... t-shirts and wind chimes and Christmas ornaments, and all manner of things that—wall clocks that say "Five O' Clock Somewhere" on them.

Sydnee: Well, I mean, it's even sadder if you think about that it's usually the result of, like, some sort of trauma to the cerebellum. So, like, what kind of history does Jimmy have that he can no longer, you know, tell what time it is, or how long it's passed? Or perhaps this was from a stroke. Or a seizure of some sort. I know, we have to consider all this in the differential. We really aren't given enough information to make a firm diagnosis, so I'm just doing the best I can.

Uh, in addition to the inability to mark the passage of hours and therefore, you know, tell time effectively, if you have this disorder you're also gonna have issues with spacial recognition and with short term memory, and I really think that if you're familiar with more songs from Jimmy Buffett, this is all starting to come together.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: There are other songs called things like "Who's the Blond Stranger?" "I Heard I Was in Town."

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: "If the Phone Doesn't Ring, it's Me." "I Used to Have Money One Time." "Nobody from Nowhere." "She's Going Out of my Mind." That's rough. And "Where's the Party?"

Justin: Where is the party? [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: He can't find it!

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Everybody celebrates this song, and I just—it's hard for me—you know, it's hard for me to understand.

Justin: You just find it too...

[a short section of "Cheeseburger in Paradise" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Justin: ... too awfully depressing. Um, thank you, folks, for enjoying with us the music—

Sydnee: You just playing some "Cheeseburger" there at the end? You just—

Justin: Yeah, I was just playing us out with some "Cheeseburger." I thought we'd get to the fast part and all kind of share it together.

["Cheeseburger in Paradise" by Jimmy Buffett plays]

Justin: We're so happy that we got to sit here and just kind of goof around. [laughs] And share the music of Jimmy Buffett with you.

[audience cheers]

Justin: Um, thank you to The Taxpayers for the use of their song "Medicines" as the intro and outro of our program. Thanks to the Jonathan Coulton Cruise staff

for making this show come together and ask us on the boat and everything. So, thank you very much. Thank you for coming. You're all the best. I love you.

[audience cheers]

[music volume increases]

Justin: So, as we say every week on the show, my name is Justin McElroy.

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Justin: And, as always, don't drill a hole in your head!

[audience cheers]

[music plays and ends]

[chord]

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