

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:00:02	Jesse Thorn	Host	Welcome to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. We're in chambers this week, clearing the docket with legendarily spooky hockey ghost—
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			—Judge John Hodgman.
00:00:14	John Hodgman	Host	You refer to my—my Halloween costume? My last-minute Halloween costume?
00:00:18	Jesse	Host	You know, you did a great job.
00:00:20	John	Host	Thank you.
00:00:21	Jesse	Host	You were dressed as a—as an extinct hockey ghost.
00:00:24	John	Host	Yes.
00:00:25	Jesse	Host	You have a passion—as long-time listeners know, you have a passion for— <i>[laughing]</i> —f-for—
00:00:31	John	Host	Dead hockey teams.
00:00:32	Jesse	Host	Hockey teams that don't exist anymore. You do not have—
00:00:34	John	Host	It's the only sport I follow.
00:00:36	Jesse	Host	To be clear: No passion for <u>hockey</u> , as far as I know.
00:00:38	John	Host	Not particularly, no.
00:00:39	Jesse	Host	Just like the idea of the San Francisco Sea Lions.
00:00:42	John	Host	I did order—I have to say, I did order a hat. This week.
00:00:46	Jesse	Host	Yeah.
00:00:47	John	Host	For a new expansion— <u>existing</u> hockey team that is about to start play. It is not a <u>dead</u> hockey team; it is a hockey team just being born. A minor league team that a listener alerted me to in Savannah, Georgia, called the Savannah Pirate Ghosts. 'Cause it's just the grest—best name for a team.
00:01:05	Jesse	Host	Yeah. That's a—it's doing a lot. The only—the only minor hockey team that I have any allegiance to is the Belfast Giants of Belfast, Northern Ireland. Uh, both because my stepmother is—is from Belfast—
00:01:18	John	Host	Right.
00:01:19	Jesse	Host	—but <u>also</u> because... You know, this is a professional hockey team, but it's a relatively low-level professional hockey team.
00:01:24	John	Host	Right.
00:01:25	Jesse	Host	There's not a <u>ton</u> of <u>ice</u> in Belfast.
00:01:26	John	Host	Right.
00:01:28	Jesse	Host	Um, naturally occurring.
00:01:29	John	Host	Right.
00:01:30	Jesse	Host	But, uh, like, one of the guys who's the—one of the people of the team. You know, there's—minor league hockey, there's three people that work for the team.

00:01:41 John Host Right.

00:01:42 Jesse Host And one of those people... is a MaxFunster! And he said any time I'm in Belfast, I can go to—*[stifles laughter]*—a free minor league—

*[John chuckles.]*

—Irish League hockey game. It's probably the major leagues of Irish ice hockey.

00:01:54 John Host Well, the problem—the problem with giant hockey is that the rink also has to be giant.

00:01:57 Jesse Host Yeah. That's true.

00:01:58 John Host Otherwise the giants have no room to maneuver.

00:02:00 Jesse Host That's a good point. *[Stifles laughter.]* That's a good point.

00:02:02 John Host And instead of Zambonis, they have 15 men with pork rinds.

00:02:05 Jesse Host Mm-hm. *[Laughs quietly.]*

00:02:06 John Host Skating over the surface of the ice to grease it. That's how you—

00:02:09 Jesse Host Okay. Sure.

00:02:10 John Host That's how you get it ready for—

00:02:11 Jesse Host Why not? *[Laughs.]*

00:02:12 John Host That's how you get it ready for giants.

00:02:13 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:02:14 John Host It's a Paul Bunyan reference, Jesse!

00:02:15 Jesse Host Uh-huh.

00:02:16 John Host Well, you made a reference—an obscure cultural reference to *[stifles laughter]* my Halloween costume, which was—my son and I, we decided our costumes this year would just be to get creepy contact lenses.

00:02:25 Jesse Host Uh-huh?

00:02:27 John Host And—'cause that's just creepy! And that's all you need to do.

00:02:29 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:02:30 John Host You need to put in the contact lenses.

00:02:31 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:02:32 John Host And—and then I realized that, uh, I had this new hat from this dead team, the Ottawa Nationals. And I had this, uh, Hartford Whalers jersey, that I had never worn. Someone sent it to me, and I had no need to walk around Park Slope wearing a Hartford Whalers jersey, looking like, um, Kevin Smith's, uh, analyst, or accountant or whatever.

00:02:52 Jesse Host It's called a sweater, John, but keep going.

00:02:54 John Host Right. Sorry, I—I should have known that.

And I had ghost make-up! Pale ghost make-up. And I had ruled that, uh, on—or co-ruled, uh, with our friends Mark and Hal of the *We Got This* podcast (*podkissed*) here on Maximum Fun. "Podkissed," I call it.

00:03:09 Jesse Host Mm-hm.

00:03:10 John Host Well, it's a—it's—it's, uh—it's a chef's kiss of a podcast.

00:03:12 Jesse Host *[Stifling laughter]* Right.

00:03:13 John Host That the best Halloween costume is ghost. 'Cause it's just—you can do any kind of ghost! And I was like, "What if I am the ghost of extinct hockey?"

00:03:19 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:03:20 John Host So I spent about an hour on Halloween getting these contacts in, 'cause I don't wear contacts normally. And I'll tell you something. You know, I don't like to use our son's name on the podcast to protect his privacy, so I'll refer to him as Hodgmanilo.

00:03:33 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah. Uh-huh?

00:03:34 John Host Yeah. Our daughter is known as Hodgmina, and this is Hodgmanilo. The—the younger child.

If it were not for Hodgmanilo... just, you know, coaching me and encouraging me to put in these creepy contact lenses, I would've given up! My son forced me to achievement. And then I put on the make-up, and I put on the sweater, and I put on the hat. Took a picture for Instagram. Started blowing up the charts. Got ready to hand out this candy... We had two trick-or-treaters.

00:04:02 Jesse Host Yeah?

00:04:03 John Host And they were little kids, *[stifles laughter]* and they were genuinely scared of me. And I felt really bad.

*[Jesse cracks up.]*

Two trick-or-treaters. Sunday night, it's a school night! They're not gonna go out late at night.

00:04:17 Jesse Host Yeah. Let's get into the docket. *[Stifles laughter.]*

Here's a case from Byron in Massachusetts:

"I am a suburban dad who works from home. Since I'm not digging ditches or regularly sweating during my job, I feel that I don't need to change my jeans very often. Just once every three weeks."

00:04:36 John Host Wow.

00:04:37 Jesse Host "I am not a slob."

00:04:40 John Host Okay, Byron...

00:04:41 Jesse Host "I just don't like how jeans feel fresh out of the wash. Plus, it's a nice way to mark off the weeks until spring."

00:04:48 John Host *[Laughing]* Okay. What does that mean?!

00:04:51 Jesse Host It serves as a sort of harvest calendar.

"I have six pairs of the same brand of jeans. So if the jeans-wearing season in New England is roughly 32 weeks—"

00:05:01 John Host And I can confirm it is. That is the jeans-wearing season.

00:05:04 Jesse Host "—I can buoy my spirits by thinking, 'I only have to wear this pair two

more rounds before it's warm out again.'

Anyway, my entire family hates my process."

[John laughs.]

"My w—"

[Laughs.]

This is—[laughs]—he learned this jeans technique from reading *The Artist's Way*.

00:05:22 John Host

[Laughing] Yeah.

00:05:24 Jesse Host

Uh, "My wife thinks it's not sanitary."

00:05:26 John Host

Mm-hm.

00:05:27 Jesse Host

"My kids think I'm weird."

Should I have said *Bird by Bird* instead? [Laughs.]

00:05:31 John Host

Uh—

00:05:32 Jesse Host

[Laughing] Of *The Artist's Way*.

00:05:34 John Host

Uhhh, I think *Bird by Bird* is funnier. Yeah.

00:05:37 Jesse Host

Okay.

"I swear, my jeans don't stink! And if I do mess them up, like if I spill a plate of pasta on them—"

[John snorts, Jesse laughs quietly.]

"—I don't wait three weeks to change my pants; I wash them!

Please, Judge. Allow me to wear my jeans for three weeks."

00:05:53 John Host

I can confirm, Jesse, that the jeans-wearing season in New England is 32 weeks. The exception is the months of, um, January and February, which is, uh, shorts season. That's when you wear shorts outside.

00:06:04 Jesse Host

So—sorry. You said the jeans—the jeans season is how long?

00:06:10 John Host

Thirty-two weeks.

00:06:11 Jesse Host

Do you mean ten and two thirds rounds?

00:06:12 John Host

[Laughs.] I'm sorry. You're right, I forgot—I apologize—that we're working on Byron Time.

So Jesse, how—[sighs]. I'm gonna—I'm gonna say something to you, and I'm gonna submit myself to your judgment.

00:06:24 Jesse Host

Mm-hm.

00:06:25 John Host

Since you are a menswear enthusiast and fashion... icon and arbiter.

I... will wear a pair of pants—I don't wear jeans. Just never—never worked with my look. But I'll wear a pair of pants probably... five or six days in a row. One pair of pants.

*[Pause.]*

And I'm—I'm guessing from your silence that that's not good.

00:06:50	Jesse	Host	What—what kind of pants are we talking about?
00:06:52	John	Host	We're talking about, uh, a utili-kilt.
00:06:54	Jesse	Host	Chinos?
00:06:55	John	Host	What?
00:06:56	Jesse	Host	We talking about chinos?
00:06:58	John	Host	Yeah, like... twill. Cotton twill pants. Chinos. I'm a chinos guy, I guess is what it is. Yeah. And I get 'em on the—on the sorta... more workwear side of the—of the spectrum. You know? Um—
00:07:13	Jesse	Host	Yeah. You wear your khakis with a cuff and a crease.
00:07:16	John	Host	Yeah, yeah. Like a selvedge. You can see the selvedge.
00:07:19	Jesse	Host	You wear—you wear only a Ben Davis gorilla cut.
00:07:22	John	Host	I don't know what you're talking about at this point. But that's too much, right? Five or six—
00:07:23	Jesse	Host	I'm just listing—listing pants.
00:07:25	John	Host	Five or six days? I got some pants—
00:07:28	Jesse	Host	Uh, that's—
00:07:29	John	Host	I got some pants from Raleigh Denim Company in Raleigh, North Carolina. They're very—really, really nice. Not the de—I don't get their jeans; I get their other pants.
00:07:37	Jesse	Host	I have to say, John. There is a whole subculture built around sick fades. Uh, sick fades is an aesthetic of indigo-dyed, particularly denim.
00:07:51	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:07:52	Jesse	Host	That fetishizes the patterns of wear that bluejeans develop.
00:07:59	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:08:00	Jesse	Host	As they are worn.
00:08:01	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:08:02	Jesse	Host	Part of that process, of getting the highest contrast fades—getting the most... the most difference between the dark parts of your jeans and the light parts of your jeans, so you can see the wear the most distinctly and vividly—
00:08:17	John	Host	Yeah.
00:08:18	Jesse	Host	—is to wash the jeans relatively rarely.
00:08:21	John	Host	Uh-huh.
00:08:23	Jesse	Host	And to wash them very gently.
00:08:24	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:08:26	Jesse	Host	So typically, your average jeans enthusiast, uh, who loves sick fades, will buy a pair of jeans, and—and they may wear them as much as... six months at a time without washing them.

00:08:42 John Host Okay.

00:08:44 Jesse Host I don't support that practice. *[Laughs.]*

00:08:47 John Host Yeah. I don't think that's what either Byron nor I have going on here.

00:08:50 Jesse Host No.

00:08:51 John Host We're not looking for an aesthetic, uh, affect.

00:08:53 Jesse Host Right.

00:08:54 John Host Hey, Jesse, I got a chat message from, uh, producer Jennifer Marmor, asking a question about these sick faders. Jennifer Marmor, what—what's your question?

00:09:03 Jennifer Marmor Producer My question was, are these the same folks that, um, put their jeans in the freezer to de-stink-ify them?

00:09:08 Jesse Host Yeah. That's the same folks. Sometimes they will, uh—*[stifles laughter]*—they will soak their jeans, which you typically need to do, uh, when you have new jeans. Um, especially if they're unsanforized. Uh, they will soak their jeans sometimes by running into the ocean. That's a popular thing.

00:09:27 John Host Mm-hm.

00:09:28 Jesse Host Uh, and then wearing them until they dry. Uh, or wearing them into the bathtub, and then wearing them around the house until they're dry.

Um, all these things are a little bit, um... They're a little bit of kind of goofy charming rituals, rather than things that actually make a difference.

00:09:43 John Host You know what I say about these people who run into the ocean? These Californians, I presume, who run into the ocean? To get their jeans all wet? And then get into the bath, and walk around their house? I say they're a bunch of drips.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

That's what I say. Drip, drip, drip! Bet they don't even wear shirts. When they're dripping around their house...

00:10:02 Jesse Host So there are a few reasons to wash your pants. One is because they have stains that you can see, and you don't want people to see stains on your pants.

00:10:11 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Visual. That's a visual reason, yeah.

**Jesse:** Or dirt that you can see. Visual. Yeah.

00:10:14 Jesse Host One is... stanktual. It's because they have become stank.

00:10:18 John Host Right.

00:10:19 Jesse Host Uh, that is through the—through the various actions of the body? *[Laughs.]*

00:10:23 John Host Yes.

00:10:24 Jesse Host Uh, that is through—you know. It could be cooking in them, and the—the cooking odors get in them.

00:10:30 John Host Sure.

00:10:31 Jesse Host It could be that you're in a smoky club in 1920s Paris.

00:10:36 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** And whether you're—whether you're co—

**Jesse:** Um, there are many ways to get stank into clothes.

00:10:38 John Host Hey. And whether you're cooking or whether you're at—at the club... you're also farting. It's just happening.

00:10:43 Jesse Host Exactly.

00:10:44 John Host All the time. If you're me.

00:10:45 Jesse Host Yeah. That's called "tootual" issues.

00:10:46 John Host Farter of—farter of the year.

00:10:49 Jesse Host Um—and then the third is wear. So, your clothing—you're balancing the relationship between... the wear that comes from washing your clothing, and the wear that comes from not washing your clothing. So washing your clothing, especially in a machine, wears it out.

00:11:10 John Host Right.

00:11:11 Jesse Host Um, the tumbling process, putting it in the dryer, the—

00:11:14 John Host Yeah.

00:11:15 Jesse Host The dryer sheets, if you use dryer sheets, that lift the little hairs on the fabric. All of these things cause wear in your clothing.

00:11:21 John Host Sure.

00:11:22 Jesse Host Um, but so does the stuff that comes from your body into the clothes. This is why those guys that wear jeans for a year at a time, they have blowouts of seams in the upper... between-the-legs area.

00:11:35 John Host Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

00:11:39 Jesse Host You know, it's the combination of friction and soil.

00:11:42 John Host Yeah. If you fart real hard, you'll blow out the seat. I've heard about it. Sick fades.

00:11:45 Jesse Host Yeah. Sick fades.

And, um—*[laughs]*—and so those are the three reason, and you kinda have to balance those things, right? So a shirt gets stank, and often visually soiled, right away. One time—when you wear it one time.

00:12:01 John Host I don't wear shirts for four days in a row!

00:12:04 Jesse Host I'm—right.

00:12:05 John Host I change my shirt and my underwears and my socks every day! I just wear the sa—okay, go on. Just thought you were accusing me.

00:12:11 Jesse Host Lightweight cotton pants...

00:12:14 John Host Yeah. Here we go.

00:12:15 Jesse Host ...I think often are getting stained. They're often getting soiled by sweat, 'cause they're worn in warmer weather. And they're lightweight, so they're gonna wear faster.

00:12:27 John Host Yeah.

00:12:28 Jesse Host For me, lightweight cotton pants are something that I wash pretty much every time I wear them.

00:12:33 John Host Every time. I knew—you walked—

00:12:34 Jesse Host Because I'm getting them dirty.

00:12:36 John Host You walked us all through this whole thing. I knew that this was gonna be bad for me. Alright.

00:12:42 Jesse Host But I think that if they're not visibly soiled, and if they're not smelly, lightweight cotton pants, to wear them a few times is totally fine.

00:12:50 John Host Also, no one ever sees me. I don't go anywhere. I'm not leaving this—

00:12:52 Jesse Host *[Chuckling]* Yeah.

00:12:53 John Host Not leaving this office. Walk across the street!

00:12:56 Jesse Host For me, I probably wouldn't wear them more than... twice, maybe. But, your choice.

00:13:00 John Host Okay. Alright. Alright.

00:13:02 Jesse Host With bluejeans—I mean, bluejeans were built to be left in a mine. The reason that they find old bluejeans in mines—

00:13:12 John Host Yeah.

00:13:13 Jesse Host —when these guys that are, like, bluejean prospectors that find 19th century bluejeans. The reason they look in mines is not just because mines preserve the jeans. It's because miners would leave their jeans in the mine, put them on over their clothes when they got there, and then leave them when they left!

00:13:29 John Host And then dump them. And they would dump 'em.

00:13:30 Jesse Host Yeah!

00:13:31 John Host Yeah.

00:13:32 Jesse Host They're designed to be worn without washing.

Now, does that mean that they won't get stinky? No. Does that mean that they won't get stains on them? No. Does that mean that they won't wear? ...No. Although they're very tough.

00:13:50 John Host They're tough.

00:13:51 Jesse Host Relative to other types of pants.

00:13:52 John Host They're—uh, they're Toughskins. That was a brand of jeans.

00:13:56 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:13:57 John Host That they tried to make me wear when I was a child, and I'm like, "This is not tweedy enough for me."

00:14:01 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:14:02 John Host "Take these Toughskins away."

00:14:03 Jesse Host So that's all a—a long way of saying that... this is not a unreasonable number of times to wear jeans, by any means.

00:14:12 John Host Whoa.

00:14:13 Jesse Host It is totally—reasonable number of times to wear jeans. The only thing I would suggest is he might consider alternating between pairs of jeans. Because letting your jeans have more time off of your body, uh, will help reduce the amount of stank.



00:14:30 John Host Okay. So you're saying that this is okay, what Byron is up to here.

00:14:35 Jesse Host Now...

00:14:36 John Host I mean, I don't know if Byron will be able to handle switching out the jeans from the different... lunar cycles. Do you know what I mean? Because—

00:14:44 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:14:45 John Host If he wears one pair of jeans in the fall for three days, then switches them out for a springtime, maybe all the sudden it'll be night outside. Do you know? The world won't know what's going on. Suddenly it'll start snowing in the middle of—in the middle of July.

00:14:58 Jesse Host Here's the thing, John. I believe him when he says that they don't stink, and he does wash them if they get stained. I don't think that, uh, them wearing excessively is going to be an issue, because they're bluejeans, and he's washing them reasonably frequently for bluejeans.

His wife's objection is that it's not sanitary. Which... is true. But pants are generally not sanitary. *[Laughs.]*

00:15:25 John Host Right.

00:15:26 Jesse Host We sit on things, and... sweat from our special parts all day long into pants. That's just the nature of pants.

His kids think he's weird. That's great! That's the whole point of being a parent. Um, is to do things that make your children uncomfortable because they're weird, in ways that are gentle and friendly like this.

00:15:45 John Host Mm-hm.

00:15:46 Jesse Host Um, so I believe—I believe him. I believe that he would've said—that if his pants were stinky, he would have either admitted that he thought his pants were stinky, or his wife thought his pants were stinky.

00:15:56 John Host Okay.

00:15:58 Jesse Host And so I'm—I'm giving him the benefit of the doubt.

00:16:01 John Host Alright. Thank you for that expert testimony. Uh, taking all of that into consideration, Byron, I do not believe you. Sorry, Jesse Thorn.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

Byron, I think you stink. *[Laughs.]*

I believe—I believe you wash your pants after you spill pasta on them now! After the obvious pasta incident that happened! And people looked at you and said, "Go wash your pants, Byron!"

But as someone who wears my pants too much—a different kind of pant, obviously. Four to five days in a row. I can feel—I can—I sense the stink. On my pants. Just because jeans won't get—are tougher, and won't get as—as worn out, and indeed are often, by sick faders, worn out on purpose...

00:16:48 John Host I think—I would say after three weeks—mean, I—you are working from home. But just because they can do something doesn't mean

they should do something.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

And I cannot believe that after three weeks of wearing one single pair of jeans, that those jeans don't... not only smell bad, but probably look bad. And I would say, honestly, knowing from experience, when I've worn a pair of pants too long? Feel bad. You feel bad! You feel a little... bad. Like, just, "What am I doing?"

I'd cut it down to two weeks. Re-do the rounds. Two weeks. What do you think about that, Jennifer Marmor? I see you nodding.

00:17:27 Jennifer Producer I think that sounds reasonable.

00:17:29 John Host Yeah. You're not living in a mine, Byron. You're living in a home in Massachusetts. Two weeks. That's my sentence for you.

00:17:34 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:17:37 John Host Mess up your whole system. *[Chuckles.]*

00:17:39 Jesse Host Here's something from Christopher in Dallas:

"My wife insists on mixing her spaghetti and meat sauce together in one pot, rather than serving the sauce on top of the pasta. Please tell her the sauce should be served atop the spaghetti!

Please note: I do not seek a blanket prescription against combining pasta and sauce before serving. But specifically in the case of spaghetti and meat sauce, the sauce goes on top! Not mixed in!"

Guess what I'm having for dinner tonight, John?

00:18:08 John Host Tacos.

00:18:09 Jesse Host No, it's... spaghetti and meat sauce.

00:18:12 John Host Wha—!

00:18:11 Jesse Host Well, it's actually probably gonna be penne and meat sauce, because my wife hates spaghetti. *[Laughs.]*

00:18:15 John Host Yeah. Spaghetti's... junk. Little worms.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

Don't care for it. Don't care for it. Spaghetti... It's a really down-the-middle noodle. I don't like it. I don't care for it.

00:18:27 Jesse Host You want a radiatori or something?

00:18:30 John Host No—no. No. I don't mind a long noodle.

00:18:33 Jesse Host That's the fancy duck of pasta.

00:18:34 John Host Radiatori looks like little radiators!

00:18:36 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:18:38 John Host And it does—you get a lot of sauce in those nooks and crannies. I'll give it that. I'll give it that, radiatori. Give you that.

But like everyone in the world over the, um, pandemic, I went pasta crazy. Couldn't eat enough pasta. And I was a part of the big bucatini

run of 2020. I got into that—

*[Jesse laughs.]*

—that big, thick noodle.

*[Pause.]*

Big, thick noodle with a starchy exterior, with a almost—extruded through a machine that gives it some little micro-crevices to pick up sauce! I like that. Spaghetti's too—too slippery. You know what I mean? You don't know whether it's coming or going. Slippery. Don't care for it.

00:19:13 Jesse Host

A little—bunch of little worms.

00:19:15 John Host

Bunch of little worms. Trying to dodge that sauce!

Let me tell you something about—I don't know—I don't know—I don't know what's going on in Dallas, Christopher, but you're wrong.

I thought for a second, "Uhhh, is he wrong?"

00:19:29 Jesse Host

Yeah.

00:19:30 John Host

And all I had to do was go see what our friend Kenji López-Alt has to say over at Serious Eats! Just—just—it's "The Right Way to Sauce Pasta," updated March 7th this year, 2021!

00:19:41 Jesse Host

He's on top of it.

00:19:42 John Host

Yeah! You he—

00:19:43 Jesse Host

New developments in the field.

00:19:44 John Host

You heat—you—you make your pasta a little bit—a little bit pre-al dente. Like, a little bit undercooked. Shave off a minute or two from your favorite, uh, pasta cooking time, for that particular pasta.

Meanwhile, you heat up your sauce in—guess what?—a saucepan. A saucier. And then when you're ready to serve, toss that pasta in the sauce with a—with a little bit of pasta water, and a little bit of, uh, butter or oil to create an emulsion, and cover that pasta right up!

Everyone knows this! I didn't know it.

I—you know, I grew up—I grew up the way you did. Dallas-style, Christopher.

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

You know. And I grew up in an Italian American—partly Italian American home. My paternal grandmother was the daughter of immigrants from Udine, Italy, which is Northern Italy. But you know, she grew up cooking a lot of traditional Italian American spaghetti and red gravy type of stuff.

00:20:37 John Host

And yeah, we would plop that sauce on top. I gotcha. But it's wr—it's wro—it's wrong! It's wrong. It's just not how it's—how you're supposed to do it. Specifically for meat sauce, right?

Marcella Hazan, whose *New York Times*, uh, cooking recipe for pasta bolognese—which is considered pretty much definitive—it's right there in the recipe. You toss the tagliatelle in the sauce. You give it a coating.

Uh, you go on the Internet, you say, "How do we do this with a bolognese? How's it traditionally served at the Chateau Marmont?"

You toss—you toss the noodles in the sauce! Of course you do. The only place that doesn't recommend this is *The Guardian*, the London newspaper. In their recent article that I found, uh, in their "How to Eat" section from, uh, January of this year, they're talking about spaghetti bolognese. Which is known as spag bol. In England.

*[Jesse snorts, John stifles laughter.]*

00:21:28 John Host It's how they—it's how they refer to it! It's, like, a very common thing. And there's a lot of controversy about it, because spag bol is an English food. You know, the—you would never serve spaghetti with bolognese sauce traditionally in Italy, is the big—is the issue. 'Cause it would be a thicker—a wider noodle, like a tagliatelle, or something like that.

And in *The Guardian*, they're like, "Well, in England in spag bol, you put the noodles down, then you put the bol on top of it." Not the bowl, but the bolognese sauce, on top of it.

Which is like—okay. We'll give you that—they also say that you can put bolognese sauce on—on french fries. So... I don't—I'm closing this tab, *The Guardian*. You're wrong. You and Christopher in Dallas are wrong.

00:22:04 Jesse Host I think—it says here that guacamole is... made out of... apples and ramps?

00:22:10 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Yeah. Is that what it says in the *Guardian* "How to Eat" section?

00:22:13 Jesse Host And a lorry!

00:22:15 John Host Yeah.

00:22:16 Jesse Host It says apples, ramps, and a lorry is how you make guacamole.

00:22:17 John Host Yeah. Make—yeah. Make your ice cream with lard; put corn on your pizza.

00:22:20 Jesse Host Mm-hm. Sure.

00:22:21 John Host Thank you very much. This is English cuisine. Or it used to be, in the 1980s.

*[Pause.]*

Anywayyy, everybody go search "The Right Way to Sauce Pasta" by J. Kenji López-Alt on Serious Eats. And I'm gonna make this Marcella Hazan, uh, bolognese sauce, 'cause I haven't done it in years, and it's spectacular. I'm gonna make it this weekend, I think. And I'm gonna toss that pasta with the sauce!

Sorry, Christopher. You're wrong.

00:22:49	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:22:51	Jesse	Host	We're gonna take a quick break to hear from this week's partner. We'll be back with more cases to clear from the docket on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast.
00:22:58	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:23:00	Jesse	Promo	It's the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. Our thanks to the members of Maximum Fun, who make... <u>all</u> of Maximum Fun's shows possible, but certainly this one. Thank you, Maximum Fun members—
00:23:12	John	Promo	Thank you, members.
00:23:13	Jesse	Promo	—for going to <a href="https://MaximumFun.org/join">MaximumFun.org/join</a> and supporting us.
			This week, we've also got some support from our friends over there at Babbel!
00:23:22	John	Promo	Jesse, here's a foreign phrase that I recently learned. 'Cause you know, I've been brushing up on my Spanish for a trip to Mexico City.
00:23:27	Jesse	Promo	Mm-hm.
00:23:28	John	Promo	"En Massachusetts, es costumbre mezclar la pasta <u>con</u> los pantalones <u>antes</u> de servir."
00:23:36	Jesse	Promo	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Uh-huh.
00:23:37	John	Promo	You know what that translates to?
00:23:38	Jesse	Promo	What's that, John?
00:23:39	John	Promo	"In Massachusetts, it's customary to <u>mix</u> the pasta <u>with</u> the pants before service."
			<i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>
			You've probably already heard us talk a lot about learning new languages through Babbel. Some people just love learning off an app or a phone! They love learning with a robot, because it's—you know, it's not embarrassing. You can mess up, and it's just an AI. They're—they're not gonna take over the Earth, <u>yet</u> .
			But some people prefer the feedback of a live human teacher. Well, good news! Now there is Babbel Live.
00:24:11	Jesse	Promo	It's a subscription-based live online class with top certified language teachers. No more than six students. You feel comfortable, nobody's gonna judge you. Uh, it's a great place to talk live with both your peers and a teacher who really knows what they're doing.
00:24:29	John	Promo	There are hundreds of classes offered every week. You select the ones that work best for <u>your</u> schedule. You can interact with other students at your level. And they'll be able to interact with you! You learn from each other! That's what learning languages is all about!
00:24:42	Jesse	Promo	Yeah, the—Babbel is all about learning the language that is most useful in actual life. I mean, things like <u>describing</u> putting sauce on pants.
			<i>[Both laugh.]</i>

Uh, they're—

00:24:54 John Promo "What are the pants sauce customs in New England?" Get the sauce on there before you sit down!

00:24:58 Jesse Promo There are already classes in Spanish, French, German, and Italian, with more coming soon. And of course, there are many more languages that you can learn through the app.

So! Why not check out Babbel?

00:25:09 John Promo Start your new language-learning journey today with Babbel. Right now, you can get up to 65% off unlimited Babbel Live classes when you go to [Babbel.com/hodgman](https://www.babbel.com/hodgman).

00:25:20 Jesse Promo That's [Babbel.com/hodgman](https://www.babbel.com/hodgman) for up to 65% off your unlimited Babbel Live plan.

We're also supported this week by the folks at BetterHelp.

00:25:30 John Promo Jesse, I may have told you that, uh, we had a—we had a big, uh, cyclobomb come through, a big rainstorm. We had a little flooding in this area.

00:25:36 Jesse Promo Yeah!

00:25:38 John Promo And it knocked out the pilot light of the hot water heater in my building.

00:25:41 Jesse Promo Oh!

00:25:42 John Promo Each unit has its own hot water heater. So... you know what I did, of course.

00:25:46 Jesse Promo Called the gas company?

00:25:47 John Promo Nope. I threw it away.

00:25:50 Jesse Promo *[Laughing]* Uh-huh?

00:25:51 John Promo I threw an expensive piece of equipment away, because I was too scared to re-light the pilot light. That's not true!

00:25:58 Jesse Promo No.

00:25:59 John Promo In fact, what I did do was I went onto YouTube, and I learned how to safely re-start the pilot light. I felt empowered. I re-started the pilot light, and I had hot water!

This is what we do! We maintain big things in our lives. We get our cars tuned up, to prevent bigger issues down the road. We get annual check-ups for our body, and go to the gym. Well, some of us do. I ought to. To maintain... physical wellness. Or personal physical perfection, in my case.

00:26:26 Jesse Promo Mm-hm. I've seen you play baseball.

00:26:27 John Promo Oh, sure.

We do these things, you know, to prevent things from getting catastrophic down the road!

00:26:34 Jesse Promo That doesn't just apply to major appliances, or to your body, or whatever. It also applies to taking care of your mind and your emotional health. Therapy is basically routine maintenance for... the old thinker.

00:26:50	John	Promo	Yep.
00:26:51	Jesse	Promo	Up top.
00:26:52	John	Promo	Yep.
00:26:53	Jesse	Promo	I'm <u>all</u> about therapy. I've gotten <u>so</u> much out of therapy. And I've gotten so much out of therapy <u>both</u> when I was in crisis, or having major mental health problems, <u>and</u> when I was simply trying to build my own skills, uh, so that when there were problems, I could deal with them, uh, in a way that was healthy and productive.
			And I think one of the greatest benefits of therapy comes when you are <u>not</u> in crisis, uh, but rather when you are just simply trying to figure out the ways that your brain and heart work, so you can manage them effectively in your life. And sometimes that's best done when you're feeling pretty good!
00:27:38	John	Promo	BetterHelp is customized online therapy that offers video, phone, even live chat sessions with your therapist. And if you don't want to, you don't have to see anyone on camera. Like, you can just turn—turn off the camera, just do live chat. Or on—over the phone.
00:27:52	Jesse	Promo	It can be more affordable for some people than in-person therapy. You can start communicating with your therapist in under 48 hours.
			It's a good idea, whether it's through BetterHelp or another form of therapy, to invest in yourself. Invest in—in taking care of your own mental health and emotional health.
00:28:12	John	Promo	This podcast is <u>sponsored</u> by BetterHelp, and <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> listeners get 10% off their first month at <a href="https://www.betterhelp.com/jiho">BetterHelp.com/jiho</a> .
00:28:21	Jesse	Promo	That's <a href="https://www.betterhelp.com/jiho">B-E-T-T-E-R-H-E-L-P.com/J-J-H-O</a> .
00:28:27	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:28:30	Jesse	Host	Welcome back to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. We're clearing the docket this week. I'm Bailiff Jesse. With me, Judge Hodgman. Here's a case from Nick in Seattle:
			"Regarding your recent ruling on Friendsgiving!"
00:28:43	John	Host	Mm.
00:28:44	Jesse	Host	"My friends and I have come up with two other Thanksgiving alternatives. The first is a gathering-of-friends-and-family holiday the day <u>after</u> Thanksgiving, and it has three simple rules:
			Bring your leftovers and pie, bring something to drink, and wear pajamas or otherwise comfy clothes.
			We call it... Black Pie Day!"
00:29:06	John	Host	Oh, that's clever. I like that.
00:29:07	Jesse	Host	Instead of Black Friday.
00:29:08	John	Host	Instead of Black Friday.
00:29:10	Jesse	Host	Yeah.
00:29:11	John	Host	A consumer-invented semi-holiday. A whole thing about Thanksgiving that I forgot last time I was mad about Thanksgiving, and just adds to the fact that Thanksgiving is a <u>dumb</u> holiday that

should be canceled.

00:29:20 Jesse Host Yeah. I disagree completely, but—

00:29:22 John Host That's fine.

00:29:23 Jesse Host —I'm gonna read some more Thanksgiving alternatives.

"Second, a group of us will regularly celebrate Danksgiving—"

00:29:30 John Host Hm...

00:29:31 Jesse Host "—sporadically throughout the year, *[stifles laughter]* when we enjoy a roasted turkey and a homemade herbed butter that is currently legal in 19 states, Guam, and Washington DC."

00:29:43 John Host Interesting.

00:29:44 Jesse Host "Now to the dispute:

At a recent meal, it was observed that I rarely consume a drink during a meal. I argued then that the perfect meal should be able to stand alone, and require no beverage. Despite the fact that there were no counter-examples provided, no one at the table agreed with me."

00:30:03 John Host *[Stifles laughter.]*

Alright, Nick in Seattle. Hang on for a second. Everybody. Jesse. I'm sorry. If you love Thanksgiving, you love your family tradition, you love getting together with the people in your life who are meaningful to you, you love taking a day out of the year to reflect upon why it's lucky that you can be together—of course. I heard—I heard you all. I heard you all when you wrote me letters, defending Thanksgiving. As a concept.

So many of them were like... "It's a day to be thankful! And to—and to be aware of what's going well in your life."

I'm like—that should be every day! It doesn't have to be—*[stifles laughter]*—doesn't have to be a day where I have to do a lot of work! Right after Halloween, and right before Christmas and New Year's!

*[Sighs/laughs.]*

Doesn't have to be a day when I have to worry about whether I'm gonna just drive in a traffic jam to get to eat a meal with extended—*[a sigh]* ugh, no.

00:30:57 John Host It's just a—it's a pain in the neck. It's historically... complicated to say the least. And yeah, I'm gonna do it anyway. Boy, oh boy. I do—I do not feel any better about Thanksgiving now that I have—we have made our Thanksgiving plans than I did time; if anything I feel worse about it, but of course I'm gonna do it. See my family, and make a turkey, and everything else.

Be thankful every day.

But one thing that gives me comfort as this Thanksgiving comes up is that one listener recommended that I reflect upon... the—the establishment of Thanksgiving as a Federal holiday. You know, it



was—it was sort of celebrated catch-as-catch-can on the calendar. Different states would set different times for different—you know, the Thanksgiving festivities and so forth, all until 1863, when Abraham Lincoln, influenced by Sarah Josepha Hale, an editor of a magazine who had been advocating for a national Thanksgiving day for years and years, and all other presidents had ignored her—Abraham Lincoln said yes.

00:31:55 John Host

He had his Secretary of State William Seward draw up a proclamation in 1863 establishing a national day of Thanksgiving, a Federal holiday. And it was est—it was—in the proclamation, it was stated that this was a time to reflect not merely upon the things we are thankful in this life for... but also specifically to do penitence!

As the proclamation said:

"To sit in humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience."

Now, if we were to re-frame this holiday as one explicitly about humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, I might get into it a bit more!

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

But until then, you all enjoy your traditions, and let me hate what I hate.

00:32:39 John Host

Now, Nick? Have a—have a drink with your meal. Have a glass of water, dude. You say that there are no counter-examples provided for your theory that the best meal should be served without a beverage, or could stand up without a beverage? Uh, there are several counter-examples.

Look at every—all of human history.

*[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]*

Look at every depiction of a dinner table in all of history, in any painting or photograph, illustration—look at the—look at The Last Supper! You think Jesus Christ was handing out his body without some of his blood? No! It's due!

"Take this; this is my body. Uh, the—take this wine; it is my blood."

You gotta—it's a—it's a pairing! It's a w—it's a wine pairing! From the—from—from the beginning of the... Christian tradition! There was a wine pairing involved!

00:33:29 John Host

Now, I don't drink wine. And sometimes the idea of pairing wine with food—what's a—how would you describe it, Jesse? It's a little...?

00:33:35 Jesse Host

Maybe it can be a little fussy.

00:33:37 John Host

A little fussy. Not for me. But I believe that it exists. I believe that there are... flavor notes in certain wines and foods that complement each other, that enhance each other.

*[Stifles laughter.]*

And people have been drinking water at the table forever to cleanse their palate—especially sparkling water; that actually scrubs your tongue—to move on to the next course.

And of course you need water there! What if you—what if you choke on a thing? You gotta get—you gotta get a little piece of food down! Something stuck in your throat, or your throat gets dry?

Everything in history is against you, Nick.

You don't have to drink! Water or whatever at the table. But you're wrong. You're wrong. Another one is wrong.

00:34:12 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:34:14 Jesse Host Let's take a quick break. When we come back: The answer to a mystery involving Fitchburg, Wisconsin.

*[Stifles laughter.]*

That's our most tantalizing tease ever!

*[John laughs quietly.]*

How could anyone change the channel?! *[Laughs.]*

00:34:25 John Host There's no channel to change!

00:34:26 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:34:29 Promo Clip **Music:** Upbeat, cheerful music.

**Dave Hill:** Hi, it's me, Dave Hill—from before—here to tell you about my brand-new show on Maximum Fun, The Dave Hill Goodtime Hour, which combines my old Maximum Fun show—Dave Hill's Podcasting Incident—with my old radio show—The *[Censored]* Damn Hill Show—into one new futuristic program from the future. If you like delightful conversation with incredible guests, technical difficulties, and actual phone calls from real life listeners, you've just hit a street called Easy. I'm also joined by my incredible cohost, the boy criminal Chris Gersbeck. Say hi, Chris.

**Chris Gersbeck:** Hey, Dave. It's really great to—

**Dave:** That's enough, Chris. And New Jersey chicken rancher, Dez. Say hi, Dez.

**Dez:** Hey, Dave!

*[A chicken bawks.]*

**Dave:** The Dave Hill Goodtime Hour—brand new episodes every Friday on Maximum Fun.

**Chris:** Plus, the show's not even an hour. It's 90 minutes.

**Dez:** Take that, stupid rules.

**Dave:** We nailed it!

*[Music ends in a drumroll.]*

00:35:18 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:35:20 Jesse Promo

Judge Hodgman, we're taking a quick break from clearing the docket. What have you got incoming?

00:35:25 John Promo

Well, Jesse Thorn, of course David Rees and I continue to work on our secret project. I hope that we will be able to announce some good news about that soon. And, uh, I hope that when you hear it, uh, that you will be as excited as we are, and that you might share the news with people you know! In person or on social media.

But in the meantime...

I just the other day was over there are Books Are Magic, on Smith Street in Brooklyn. Signing copies of *Medallion Status* and *Vacationland*. They are there, ready for you to order if you so wish it. They are already signed. If you just want a signature, it'll be in the mail to you tomorrow, wherever you are in the United States. I don't know about Canada or the rest of the world, but the USA, you're good.

If you want one personalized—! Um, as a—as a holiday gift, or a New Year's Eve, um, token of affection. That's a thing. Uh, just go to [BooksAreMagic.com](http://BooksAreMagic.com), or call them up. You can buy it online, and you can type in a little memo saying, "I would like this personalized," and leave a little note. Don't ask me to write 500 words or anything like that, but I will go by and sign 'em up for you, and we're trying to get this done as early as possible this year because there's a lot of burden on the, uh, postal system and the global supply chain.

Jesse Thorn, what do you have coming up?

00:36:34 Jesse Promo

Well, of course I have the Put This On Shop, which is definitely where you should go to buy your holiday gifts. It's at [PutThisOnShop.com](http://PutThisOnShop.com). It's my antiques and vintage store.

We have some really wonderful new stuff in there. Um, lots of "fall drops," as they say. You know about fall drops! Right?

00:36:55 John Promo

Yeah. I'm the guy who wears the same pair of pants for a week. Of course I know what "fall drops" are.

00:36:59 Jesse Promo

Yeah. I particularly like—there's this... [faux Abercrombie & Fitch safari jacket](#) in the store right now, that is from the sixties. And it is—it has a brand on it that looks like the old Abercrombie & Fitch, from when it was an adventure store?

00:37:14 John Promo

Yeah.

00:37:16 Jesse Promo

Uh, but is actually different letters. Made in Kenya. And it's a fantastic—it's a fantastic coat. It's there in the Put This On Shop. It's among a lot of, uh, vintage clothing that we've added to the store recently. Along with, of course, you know, literally hundreds of beautiful gift items that you can find in our store.

I encourage you to just... go to the [Notions & Miscellanea](#) page, or

go to the [Vintage Jewelry](#) page, and you will find all kinds of wonderful and remarkable things.

It's all at [PutThisOnShop.com](#). And you can use the code "vintage justice" for free shipping on almost all of it.

00:37:57	John	Promo	Shall we get back to the docket?
00:37:59	Jesse	Promo	Let's do it.
00:38:00	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:38:03	Jesse	Host	Judge Hodgman, we have a letter here!
00:38:05	John	Host	Jesse, I'm sorry. I'm sorry to interrupt you, but, uh, I was wrong. Uh, apparently you can change the channel. I just received word.
00:38:11	Jesse	Host	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Oh no!
00:38:12	John	Host	Everyone changed the channel.  <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i>  During the break. They're all watching <i>Archie Bunker</i> now. So...
00:38:17	Jesse	Host	Yeah.
00:38:18	John	Host	Weird.
00:38:19	Jesse	Host	Can I give you some important news?
00:38:20	John	Host	Yeah, please.
00:38:22	Jesse	Host	My daughter wants a knob TV for Christmas.
00:38:23	John	Host	Yeah, I know!
00:38:26	Jesse	Host	And a laserdisc player that she can connect to it.
00:38:27	John	Host	Sure. Well, wait a minute. You mean like a DVD player? Or like a <u>big</u> —those big platter—
00:38:32	Jesse	Host	No, a laserdisc player. She wants a <u>laserdisc</u> player.
00:38:34	John	Host	<i>[Sharp exhale.]</i>  Woweeee.
00:38:37	Jesse	Host	Yeah.
00:38:38	John	Host	You gotta turn those over, you know, in the middle of the movie.
00:38:41	Jesse	Host	I know. Well, it depends on the quality that they put it on the laserdisc. Sometimes apparently you don't. She was telling me about this.
00:38:46	John	Host	This is the greatest.
00:38:49	Jesse	Host	Anyway. Here's something from Olivia in Bellingham, Washington:  "My boyfriend Jesse's go-to karaoke song is 'Surfin' Bird' by The Ventures, which he performs in the style of death metal."
00:39:01	John	Host	Oh, boy.
00:39:02	Jesse	Host	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> "He thinks it's awesome."
00:39:03	John	Host	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Wow. The defeat in your voice just there, Jesse Thorn!

00:39:09 Jesse Host "He recently sang this at a work event, in front of his bosses, and over 100 colleagues. I was mortified. I'm asking you to demand he never sing this awful song again, and that he pick a new karaoke song.

I really love and admire his weirdness, confidence, and creativity, but this is too much."

00:39:32 John Host Is it too much? Jesse Thorn... Karaoke. The empty orchestra. You got a go-to song? You ever do one?

00:39:40 Jesse Host No! No. I don't think I've ever sung at karaoke.

00:39:43 John Host Really!

00:39:45 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:39:46 John Host You've got a wonderful voice!

00:39:47 Jesse Host Thank you. That's very nice of you.

I think if I—if I were called upon to sing karaoke...

00:39:53 John Host Yeah. What would you pick?

00:39:54 Jesse Host Uh, I would pick "Chantilly Lace" by The Big Bopper.

00:39:58 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Now—

00:39:59 Jesse Host "Hellllo, baaaby!"

00:40:01 Crosstalk Crosstalk *[Both singing.]*

**John:** Chantilly lace, Chantilly lace, Chantilly lace, Chantilly lace—

**Jesse:** Had a pretty face, had a ponytail hanging down—

00:40:08 John Host *[Speaking.]*

Oh, it has more words than "Chantilly lace"? Oh, I didn't—

00:40:10 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* Yeah.

00:40:11 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* That's interesting. I always thought it was...

00:40:12 Jesse Host *[Singing]*

Wiggle in the walk and a giggle in the talk... maaakes—

*[Speaking]*

Yeah.

00:40:17 John Host Whoa!

00:40:18 Jesse Host Don't know why I'm singing it like Elvis, but... there it is.

00:40:19 John Host It doesn't matter! You've got—this—I'm excited! This is karaoke; we're doing it now! Jennifer Marmor, what's your karaoke song? You got one?

00:40:27 Jennifer Producer I have a few. I have a friend—a group of friends who, during regular, uh, non-pandemic times, we go to private room karaoke pretty often. And we all have our own—

00:40:35 John Host Yeah. It's not very COVID-compliant these days, I suppose.

00:40:38 Jennifer Producer No, but we all have our own little... *[laughing]* lists of our go-tos that we keep on our phones!

00:40:45 John Host Yeah.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

00:40:46 Jennifer Producer Um, so—*[laughs]*—um, so yeah! I—I mean, it depends on my mood. Sometimes it's "Flagpole Sitta."

00:40:54 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** *[Sharp exhale.]* You got—you and me! You and me!

**Jennifer:** Sometimes "Sloop John B." *[Laughs.]*

00:40:59 Jennifer Producer Sometimes—I'm trying to remember. Um... Yeah. Some Cranberries songs. It really depends. It's all over the map.

00:41:07 John Host "Flagpole Sitta" is my go-to, by Harvey Danger. I love that song, and it's a great karaoke song, and the only reason that I—I try it—I don't think I ever achieve it. 'Cause that Sean Nelson—Harvey Danger himself—guy's got a incredible voice. That guy can fly. That voice can go so high.

Sean Nelson. Is a—is a friend of mine. And I love him so much. You should go check out all of his work. Including some of the later Harvey Danger albums, which no one ever listened to, which are brilliant.

00:41:37 Jesse Host Nice man.

00:41:38 John Host I saw—and he's a really nice guy.

I saw someone perform "Flagpole Sitta" at the Old Carriage Inn in Park Slope when David Rees would sometimes go there to sing karaoke. It was such an incredible vibe there. This young woman killed it. We had so many great nights at the Old Carriage Inn, and you know—*[sighs]*. People had been part of that karaoke night for years, and they were so welcoming. And they were such an interesting group of people. The person who hosted the karaoke night, uh, transitioned. Incredible thing to be a part of, and community to be a part of.

David would always sing, uh, "These Things I've Done" by The Killers, and he would kill it, and—and a young woman sang Harvey Danger, and I was like, "Oh, I can do it, I can do it!" But I could never hit those high notes.

And I am caught with twin sadnesses. I'm—I—one problem is that the song I really always wanna sing at karaoke was never available at any karaoke bar ever. And that was "No Children" by The Mountain Goats. I have a feeling that's gonna change now. I have a feeling that when they—

00:42:38 Jesse Host Yeah, now that it's a smash hit.

00:42:40 John Host *[Laughing]* Yeah.

00:42:41 Jesse Host You wanted to—you wanted to bring the joy of divorce to all of the people in the karaoke bar?

00:42:45 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* It's just one of the greatest songs in the world to sing with other people!

00:42:50 Jesse Host It's viral on TikTok, is why it might become available.  
00:42:52 John Host It's viral on TikTok. Congratulations, The Mountain Goats. I can't wait to sing karaoke.

But the other sadness is that the Old Carriage Inn shut down. Like a lot of places in Park Slope. Lot of locally owned places got priced out, even before the pandemic, 'cause their landlords wanted more and more and more money, and they get a tax break if a place is empty. So... they just kicked 'em out. And just re-opened as a cafe. Which is... Good luck to them, but we do not need more coffee in Park Slope.

Anyway, karaoke. It's fun, Jesse! We should do it! Sometime when it's safe to do it.

00:43:25 Jesse Host Yeah. I'll do that. Me and—we're—I—as I sit, I am a quarter mile from Koreatown, where over 70% of the businesses are karaoke lounges. So... I'm—I'm ready to go.

00:43:38 John Host You would do so great as The Big Bopper! Let me tell you.

But! The issue of the day is "Surfin' Bird." Olivia's boyfriend Jesse in Bellingham, Washington, sings "Surfin' Bird." You know the song.

*[Singing]*

Bird, bird, bird  
Bird is the word  
Buh-buh-buh  
Buh, buh, buh—

*[Speaking]*

By The Ventures. 1962, I think.

00:43:55 Jesse Host Yeah. How would you characterize a death metal singer's singing?

00:43:58 John Host Well, I don't have to do it, because Olivia sent us video of him doing it.

00:44:02 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* Oh. Okay, wow.

00:44:04 John Host So we actually can hear it for ourselves and judge. Judge Jesse live.

00:44:08 Jesse Host This does look like it's taking place in a conference room.

00:44:11 John Host It's a conference room, and I don't think you ever hear the song.

*[Stifles laughter.]*

Uh, the au—the acoustics in this, um—in this multi-function room at this corporate retreat are not the greatest. But... you'll get a flavor of what Jesse's up to here.

00:44:24 Clip Clip *[People are laughing and cheering.]*

*[Music gets slowly louder in the background.]*

*[Non-Bailiff Jesse is scream-singing. "Bird" is the most prominently audible word.]*

*[The cheering and laughing intensifies, along with some whistling.]*

*[Things start to level out as the audio fades.]*

00:44:54 Jesse Host I've seen enough, John.

00:44:55 John Host Yes, I've seen enough as well. What do you—what do you see? How do you describe what you see and what you hear?

00:45:00 Jesse Host I wouldn't say it's in the style of death metal.

00:45:02 John Host No, because the style of death metal would be more like what, Jesse? Can you do a—a *verj*?

00:45:07 Jesse Host I mean, it depends on the sub-genre of death metal, and—and we're gonna get an angry letter from our friend John Darnielle of The Mountain Goats no matter how I do this. Both Stuart Wellington of *The Flop House* and John Darnielle of The Mountain Goats are going to write me letters about sub-genres of metal. Uh—

00:45:23 John Host Right. But this is specifically Norwegian surfing death metal.

00:45:26 Jesse Host Yeah. The classic is a—is a sort of... uh, nightmarish growl.

00:45:32 Crosstalk Crosstalk *[They both start gutturally growl-singing the chorus of "Surfin' Bird".]*

00:45:39 John Host ...That hurt my voice.

00:45:40 Jesse Host We are doing it—we're not doing it justice.

00:45:41 John Host No.

00:45:42 Jesse Host Uh, it is a truly extraordinary sound.

00:45:44 John Host It's an incred—it's like—it's like, uh—it's like throat singing. It's a com—it's a hugely impressive human sound that not everyone can do. Obviously.

00:45:52 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jesse:** Yeah. Like this guy. Like this Jesse.

**John:** *[Stifling laughter]* Nor—nor—yeah. Nor can Jesse, either.

00:45:58 Jesse Host This guy is doing kind of like a—you know, if it's anything, maybe it's punk rock. But he's a little too cute! He's being a little too cute, and he's not... selling it!

00:46:09 John Host One of the things that I see is he's jumping around—if you're doing death metal, or punk, you stand still.

00:46:15 Jesse Host Yeah. Hold that microphone in both hands.

00:46:17 John Host You hold that microphone with both hands, and you stand still like a—like an icon. Like a whatchamacallit—a monolith. Of hard truth.

So I'm gonna agree with you on this one, Jesse. His performance is not on point.

But—and—and karaoke, you need to be a performer. You can't just—you can't just, uh... half-butt it. You gotta—you gotta lean in. I think that Jesse—his performance is not on point. His presentation is not on point. But I do hear the sound of people having fun.

00:46:49 Jesse Host There's one guy who just goes "WHAAAAT?!"

*[One or both stifle laughter.]*



00:46:54 John Host They are all having fun. Except obviously—  
00:46:56 Jesse Host "WHAAAT?!"  
00:46:58 John Host —for Jesse's girlfriend Olivia, who's taking this video. And aside from Olivia, all the other people in this room seem to be... guys. Uh, and I—and they seem to be having a good time. So I asked Olivia what—who his work pals are. Where—where does he work?

And it turns out Jesse works at a—at a aeronautics firm. They make electric airplanes. And specifically, Olivia said, quote, "I know he works with a robotic arm..."

*[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]*

"...which lays carbon fiber, to create the airplanes."

Jesse—

00:47:30 Jesse Host "I know he works with a robotic arm. I've met it at the Christmas party. Besides that..." *[Laughs.]*

00:47:35 John Host It reminds me—

*[Stifles laughter.]*

You know, I met Jonathan Coulton in college. He was—he lived in a suite two floors below me, and his suite was... full of truly, incredibly intelligent engineers. Uh, mathematicians. And they—all of them were really interesting oddballs. Uh, and they all got together, and—*[stifles laughter]*—and they had a project that they were gonna build a robot.

And I just remember walking upstairs to my room late at night on a Friday night, or whatever. And the door to Jonathan's suite was open. And Aaron and Andrew and I think one other guy were in there. And Aaron was saying, "Alright, you guys. I want a working arm by Friday. A working arm by Friday!"

*[Both laugh.]*

00:48:26 Jesse Host "On my desk!"

*[Quiet thud.]*

00:48:28 John Host Anyone who works with a robotic arm is a friend of this podcast. And anyone who loves a person who works with a robotic arm, like you Olivia, is a friend of this podcast as well. You are our friends.

00:48:39 Jesse Host And any robot who listens to this podcast, we look upon skeptically. You have to demonstrate your loyalty to the human race. Don't wanna get overturned.

00:48:48 John Host Exactly. Exactly. I don't need an AI revolution today. No thank you, Satan. ...Satanbot.

*[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]*

But I'm gonna say this! Jesse did not do any—

00:49:01 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* Not today, Satanbot! Not today!

00:49:06 John Host *[Laughs.]*

Jesse did not put his career in jeopardy at this corporate retreat at Lake Tahoe. Which is where it happened. His friends making electric airplanes loved this bit. And that's—and, uh—that's fine. But you were right to be mortified, Olivia, because Jesse can do better.

Jesse, if you wanna continue to do this, it's not a bad bit. But you have to commit to the bit. Go listen to some death metal. Go check out some sub-genres. See if you can make your voice do the thing that that's do—that they are doing. Plant your feet! Become a... nightmare god. Of—of abysmal truth. And sing "Surfin' Bird" the way it was meant to be sung. In the Norwegian surfing death metal style.

00:49:54 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:49:58 John Host We did receive a letter, Jesse Thorn.

So, the other week, in episode 540 of the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, titled "Spooky Day, Spooky Night," our Hallo—one of our Halloween-themed ones.

We ruled that listener Rob could no longer wear his Minion-themed pajama shorts outside his home.

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

Uh, because they're inappropriate and they were making Nick Wiger too excited.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

Now, Jesse, I learned through Twitter—a social media platform that serves us only good in this life, including this fun thing that I learned—Rob, turns out, is the Features Editor at the *Capital Times* newspaper in Madison, Wisconsin. That's the big newspaper in Madison, Wisconsin, capital of... Wisconsin!

So, Rob. Uh... Let me pitch a feature to you. Put us in the newspaper.

00:50:45 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:50:46 John Host Put us in the newspaper, Rob. We'll come out there, we'll do a show. Do a show in—in Madison. Uh—

00:50:51 Jesse Host Would love to.

00:50:52 John Host Yeah! They—I've done shows at great theaters there, and then go to the Tornado Room after.

But Rob does not live in Madison. He lives in Fitchburg, Wisconsin, wherein we discovered on Google Maps a mystery. In the part of Knollwood Park that is in Fitchburg, across the border—I looked it up—*[stifles laughter]*—there is one weird... mysterious review of the park on Google Maps, pointing out that a mysterious electric fence had appeared across the pass, and no one knew why.

Well, turns out lots of people knew why!

Listeners Natasha and Megan wrote in to tell us that the fence was brought in to Knollwood Park, Jesse... to contain the goats.

00:51:32 Jesse Host

How wonderful.

00:51:34 John Host

Another listener, a park ranger in the Madison/Fitchburg area explained, quote:

"Currently, the city of Madison has a herd of goats... to help manage the many invasive brush and forbs."

You know what a forb is, Jesse?

00:51:45 Jesse Host

I couldn't tell you what a forb is, John. I presume it's 1920s drug slang?

00:51:49 John Host

*[Stifles laughter.]* No, it's a plant!

It's a plants—it's a plants—forbs are plants that are not grasslike, but do not become woody. It's like, milkweed. Sunflowers are forbs.

Anyway. I quote on:

"Since these conservation parks are an attempt to restore a natural and more native habitat, the goats allow for large-scale clearing without the use of pesticides or fossil fuels. Unfortunately, goats have a reputation of being escape artists, and need reminding of where their place is. Hence the fence.

Signed—"

00:52:17 Jesse Host

A goat's place is in the home!

00:52:19 John Host

*[Stifles laughter.]*

A goat's place is inside the fence, not outside the fence!

"Signed, Ranger Name Redacted." Didn't want us to use their name.

Megan sent photos of the goats, which we will post on the show page at [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) and [on our Instagram account](#). Which is at [@judgejohnhodgman](#).

But, Jesse... We also received a letter from John Alan regarding another mystery from episode 540: The Bridgewater Triangle area of Massachusetts. But you will hear about that after the credits.

00:52:45 Jesse Host

Very exciting.

00:52:48 John Host

Bridgewater Triangle comes back.

00:52:50 Jesse Host

On the way to preschool, my four-year-old let me know something.

00:52:53 John Host

What's that?

00:52:55 Jesse Host

She asked me, "When you were a kid, did you ever go... underground?"

00:52:59 John Host

Mm.

00:53:02 Jesse Host

And then as I was about to reply, she said, "Children... used to be sent underground. But they're not now. Because it's not safe. Only

grown-ups go underground."

00:53:16 John Host Yeah.

00:53:17 Jesse Host "They go there to get rocks. But it's dangerous, because they could go to the center of the Earth."

00:53:24 John Host *[Stifles laughter.]* That's where the best jeans are found!

00:53:27 Jesse Host Mm-hm!

00:53:29 John Host The center of the Earth! Those are the jeans you wanna get. What are they called? Fade—fade... freaks?

00:53:33 Jesse Host Sick fades.

00:53:34 John Host Sick faders?

00:53:35 Jesse Host Gotta get those sick fades.

00:53:36 John Host I call 'em fade f—

00:53:37 Jesse Host Well, you said "sick"—you invented "sick faders," but I support it.

00:53:39 John Host Sick faders. Fade freaks. Drips.

00:53:43 Jesse Host *[Laughs quietly.]*

That's all. Just don't send children to the center of the Earth—

00:53:49 John Host Don't send children to the center of the Earth! We resolved this. The hollow Earth is no place for kids! They got molemen down there!

00:53:56 Jesse Host Do watch the 1987 film *Journey to the Center of the Earth* starring Kathy Ireland and Emo Philips.

*[John laughs, Jesse stifles laughter.]*

00:54:03 John Host I will. Do not watch *The Descent*. The... 2005-ish horror movie, which is one of the scariest things I've ever seen. I have not been able to watch it since.

00:54:12 Jesse Host The docket is clear. That's it for another episode of *Judge John Hodgman*. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor. Our editor is Valerie Moffat. I'm... checking the time; I gotta get to the center of the Earth!

*[John laughs.]*

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 check out the Maximum Fun subreddit to [discuss this episode](#). Submit your cases at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](#), or email [hodgman@maximumfun.org](mailto:hodgman@maximumfun.org). We'll talk to you next time—

00:54:44 John Host Yeahhh! Please do it! We need—we need cases to have the show! Please send in your disputes!

00:54:48 Jesse Host Yeah. We love your cases. No case too small.

We'll talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:54:55 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:54:59 John Host *[For the rest of the episode, John is doing his Edgar Oliver impression. A slightly deeper, slightly quavering voice, with a somewhat wandering European accent, and occasionally rrolled*

*Rs.]*

OoOOooh!

Welcome! To the bottom of the... mysterious, impossible community swimming pool here in Brrridgton, Maine. I am your ghost host, John Hodgman, imitating the voice of famed New York storyteller Edgar Oliver; look him up.

Speaking of ghost hosts, yes! I know the other day I got it wrong when I said the ghost host at the Haunted Mansion in Disneyland was voiced by Thurl Ravenscroft! I know, I know, I know! I made a mistake! It was Paul Frees! I'm sorry! Please stop sending me letters! Cursed spirits, leave me alone!

Although... Thurl Ravenscroft does voice one of the Grim Grinning Ghosts in the Haunted Mansion, and he was the voice of Tony the Tiger, so... I did get that right. Pedants.

00:56:12 John Host

Meanwhile, some news from here in Bridgton, Maine! I read in the *Portland Press Herald* of Portland, Maine, that the Shawnee Peak Ski Resort—which, as you know, is located here in Bridgton near my impossible swimming pool, and as you know, the Shawnee Peak Ski Resort was founded in 1938 and is therefore Maine's oldest ski area!—was recently sold.

Just last month, Chet Homer—Shawnee Peak's owner and a native New Englander—sold Shawnee Peak to... oUt oF sTaTeRs!

*[Cackles/shudders.]*

Specifically, Boyne Resorts. Which, as you know, is headquartered in Boyne Falls, a village in Charlevoix (*Shar-la-vwah*) County, Michigan. Oh, did I not pronounce that correctly, Michiganders? I'm sorry I didn't say Shar-la-VWAHX, or whatever I'm supposed to say. You got so mad at me for saying Mackinac (*Mak-in-ak*) instead of Mackinac (*Mak-in-aw*); it's spelled that way. Get it together on your maps.

In any case, Boynes Falls is located on the Boyne River, near the shore of Lake Michigan. Which brings us now to your special haunted Great Lakes Beach Report!

00:57:29 Music Music

Cheerful, laidback music.

00:57:31 John Host

*[Cackles, ending on a deep and sinister laugh.]*

*[The music continues uninterrupted for a few seconds, and then record-scratches to a halt.]*

Did I scare you? Did you think that I was going to crrross the streams? Between this weird segment and that weird segment? Did you think I was going to fold them into one completely self-indulgent monologue?! Creating a time-space rip of self-regard in which we would all perish?!

No. It was merely my little joke. I am actually here, in the secret post-crrredits sequence, to read you the promised letter frrrom one John Alan. A former resident of, and pastor in, the Bridgewater Triangle!

That most haunted region of Massachusetts encompassing the towns of Taunton, Massachusetts. And Wampa, Massachusetts. And Bib Fortunaborough, Massachusetts. That we learned about just weeks ago.

Here with the text of his missive:

00:58:47 John Host

"Dear Judge John Hodgman at the bottom of an impossible community swimming pool in Bridgton, Maine:

My name is John Alan, and my ears perked up at your recent mention of the Bridgewater Triangle. I served until recently as a member of the clergy at a church that fell within its boundaries.

About a year ago, I received a voicemail from the leader of a group called the, quote, 'Bridgewater Triangle Paranormal Investigators.' It was from a man with a phenomenal Boston accent, who had called to tell me that a Sasquatch was torrrmenting a family of ghosts in a small patch of forrrest across the street from our church.

He asked if I might be willing to appear as a guest on their YouTube channel while performing some sort of rrritual to bring the paranormal kerfuffle to an end.

This was not something I felt able to do in good faith. It had gone out of my mind until your mention brought it back. Although I have recently moved to serve a church in Maine—"

Oh, welcome!

01:00:14 John Host

"—I believe I still have access to the audio of this voicemail."

Well. Dear listeners, you can only imagine I... hurried him to please, please send me the voicemail! From the Bridgewater Triangle Paranormal Investigators! And here you are about to hear it! They are a really lovely duo who sneak through the woods at night, looking for the Bigfoots, and the things that go bump in the swamp.

They have a YouTube channel, which I encourage you to check out. So far, I've watched a couple of them, and they haven't said anything racist yet! But if you find something in there, just let me know, and I'll revoke my recommendation!

Until then, hear... this, the sound of a call from the darkness within the Brrridgewater Triangle.

01:01:10 Clip Clip

**Speaker:** Hi! This is [*censored*] here. I'm from the Bridgewater Triangle Paranormal Investigators. Um, the other night, I'm—well, first of all, we run a YouTube page. Uh, we investigate the—the paranormal. The other night we were on Holland Street in Milton, which is a hot spot for paranormal activity for all kinds of paranormal investigators.

It was said that there's a family, apparitions of a family that wander the street. However, we were doing an investigation down there. We got a lot of clear responses on our spirit box, which we use for white noise. And there's been a lot of, um... voices coming through that would say, "Help us. Help us now. Please help us."

So we believe maybe that these apparitions, that these spirits, haven't really passed on yet to the other side. Maybe they were stuck in some kind of purgatory? However, um, the bigger thing is there—we feel that there is something evil in the—the swamp that surrounds the street. Um, we have an EMF meter, and last night there was a high temperature on my EMF meter. Something huge and paranormal was making it, giving the—um, giving the meter a high temperature reading.

And we believe that since it is swampland, it—it's Bigfoot territory—but there is something evil in those woods, and we think that the family—the spirits of this family might be... in danger from this. So we were wondering if that's something that you guys could check out, if maybe you could bless the street, um, help these spirits move on to the other side? If that's something you're interested in doing with us. Um, if you'd prefer to be on camera, off camera doing this, I—I don't know.

Um, you can call me back. My number is *[censored]*. Thank you.

01:02:59	Music	Transition	A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:03:01	Speaker 1	Guest	<a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> .
01:03:03	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:03:04	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:03:05	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.