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| 00:00:01 | Sound Effect | Transition | <i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i> |
| 00:00:03 | Josh Gondelman | Guest | Welcome to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm Guest Bailiff Josh Gondelman, filling in for Jesse Thorn. We are in the chambers this week to clear the docket. Please welcome the one-man judicial branch here to settle disagree-mants with his official stance... John Hodgman. |
| 00:00:18 | John Hodgman | Host | Well, it rhymes, Josh! |
| 00:00:19 | Josh | Guest | <i>[Chuckling]</i> I kinda <i>Hamilton</i> -rhymed it in the middle! |
| 00:00:22 | John | Host | Ohhh! You know—uh, Lin will be very happy to hear that. He's a listener to this show. |
| 00:00:25 | Josh | Guest | Mm-hm. |
| 00:00:26 | John | Host | Hi, Lin, if you're listening. |
| 00:00:27 | Josh | Guest | Hi, Lin! |
| 00:00:28 | John | Host | If you're not, I don't blame you. There are a lot of podcasts. This is one of them. |
| | | | <i>[Josh laughs.]</i> |
| | | | Uh, Josh Gondelman, you have a podcast, right? |
| 00:00:34 | Josh | Guest | I sure do! It's called <i>Make My Day</i> — |
| 00:00:35 | John | Host | <i>Make My Day</i> . |
| 00:00:36 | Josh | Guest | —and it's a game show with one contestant each week. So the contestant always wins. Uh, very— |
| 00:00:42 | John | Host | The contestant always wins. And I've been— |
| 00:00:44 | Josh | Guest | Very low-stress. |
| 00:00:45 | John | Host | I've been a guest on that podcast. Josh, you've been a guest on this podcast. |
| 00:00:49 | Josh | Guest | Yes! <u>Both</u> things are true. |
| 00:00:50 | John | Host | Just, uh, some episodes ago, you were on as a friend of the court to help clear the docket. Back when I was rollicking along up there in Maine. |
| 00:00:59 | Josh | Guest | Mm-hm! |
| 00:01:01 | John | Host | And you were in New York, where you live. I'm now back in New York. We're joined in Los Angeles by producer Jennifer Marmor. Hi, Jennifer. |
| 00:01:06 | Jennifer Marmor | Producer | <i>[Someone shouts in the background.]</i> <i>[Laughing]</i> Hi. |
| 00:01:09 | John | Host | There we are! |
| | | | <i>[Josh laughs.]</i> |
| | | | You know, we were chatting before we started the record, and it's always the worst thing to do. Because that's when the best, most exciting podcast material comes out, before you hit record. As Josh pointed out, it was pure—it was pure— |

[Josh laughs.]

It was not even podcast gold. It was pod—podcast doge? What's doge?

00:01:26 Josh Guest Yeah. Well, you brought up that it was crypto.
00:01:28 John Host Right.
00:01:29 Josh Guest More valuable than gold, just by—by volume. I don't know how you measure mass or volume of cryptocurrency.
00:01:34 John Host No, no. It's all—it's all currency of the mind.
00:01:37 Josh Guest Mm-hm. *[Laughs.]*
00:01:38 John Host Is doge a cryptocurrency? I don't know that one.
00:01:40 Josh Guest It is. It's the one with, like, a do—a little corgi on it, I think.
00:01:43 John Host We are into ethereum here at *JJHo*. Ethereum.
00:01:46 Josh Guest Oh, okay.
00:01:47 John Host We have somebody—we have a recovered ethereum miner among the listenership. Anyway—

[Josh laughs.]

—Josh Gondelman, you were a guest. A friend of the court, uh, as I mentioned earlier.

00:01:58 Josh Guest Mm-hm.
00:01:59 John Host And I don't know that you know this, but we do a lot of research in the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.
00:02:04 Josh Guest Yeah!
00:02:05 John Host So every episode we do, after it comes out, we ask people to do surveys. Uh, you know, when they're downloading it. "Will you stick around for a 25-to-35-minute survey after listening to the podcast?"
00:02:15 Josh Guest Mm-hm.
00:02:16 John Host And I would say we have about 99% compliance. Listeners definitely wanna let us know how they feel.
00:02:21 Josh Guest Yeah.
00:02:22 John Host And then they can fill out—you know, "What did you think? Describe in words..." Especially when we have a guest bailiff. "Describe in words the guest bailiff."

I'm gonna tell—I've got the results right here.

00:02:31 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm?
00:02:32 John Host And you scored off the charts, Josh.
00:02:33 Josh Guest Wow!
00:02:34 John Host Very, very popular friend of the court.
00:02:35 Josh Guest I feel great about that!
00:02:36 John Host Yeah, well—
00:02:37 Josh Guest Wait. Off—okay. Off the charts in the good direction. *[Stifles*

laughter.]

00:02:40 John Host In the good direc—in the great direction!

00:02:41 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* Oh, good! Good, good, good.

00:02:44 John Host With Josh Gondelman the only direction is up, up, up!

[Josh laughs.]

Interestingly. That was something that someone said, actually. "Up, up, up. Is he okay? Very energetic. Weird."

00:02:52 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* Very energetic.

00:02:54 John Host Yeah.

00:02:55 Josh Guest Uh, almost unpleasantly so.

00:02:56 John Host "Full of energy."

[Josh laughs.]

"Almost mysteriously so." Interesting.

00:03:00 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Okay.

00:03:01 John Host "Seemed to grind his teeth a lot!" I don't know what that's about.

00:03:03 Josh Guest That's not true!

[Both laugh.]

00:03:06 John Host No, that's just referring to a little private joke that Josh Gondelman and I have.

[Josh laughs.]

He is not—he is not addicted to caffeine.

00:03:13 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm.

00:03:14 John Host He's a straight—he's a very—he's a straight—no, everyone said... "Extremely nice. Very warm and engaging. Made me feel great. Nicer than the regular guy."

[Josh laughs.]

"Should replace Judge John H—" Wow.

[Josh laughs harder.]

So—oh, this one says, "'Judge Josh Gondelman' is easier to say." That's not true!

00:03:30 Josh Guest Not true!

00:03:31 John Host But they obv—no. It's hard enough to say "Judge John Hodgman." To add J—Josh... Gondelman...

00:03:35 Josh Guest Josh Gondel—no. Unfamiliar—

00:03:37 John Host So...

00:03:38 Josh Guest Unfamiliar name to most people. More syllables.

00:03:39 John Host That's not true. That's not true. That's not true.

00:03:40 Josh Guest That's—this is just rude.

00:03:42 John Host How dare you, Josh Gondelman?

00:03:43 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Just rude of them to say that.

00:03:44 John Host One of the greatest persons in comedy or any field. Nice pep talker on Twitter. Writer and co-executive producer of the amazing *Desus & Mero*. Talk about names. Talk about—those are big names. Desus and Mero.

00:03:59 Josh Guest Big name—great names!

00:04:00 John Host Big, big names. If you're not watching that show, you should watch the show. These—I mean... Hm! Most—I mean, incredible chemistry, those two have.

00:04:08 Josh Guest If you are watching the show, you're not off the hook. Keep watching it. You don't—we're—

00:04:11 John Host Right!

00:04:13 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* This isn't a shift change. Stay watching it.

00:04:14 John Host Right. The show is off the hook. You're on the hook to watch it.

[Josh cracks up.]

Do they need someone to write taglines? *Desus & Mero*? I think that sounded pretty cool.

00:04:25 Josh Guest That's—*[stifles laughter]*—for the next season, it's gonna be a poster of you—your face, Judge John Hodgman. Your face.

00:04:31 John Host Okay. Yeah?

00:04:32 Josh Guest It says, "*Desus & Mero*."

00:04:33 John Host That's right.

00:04:34 Josh Guest And then it's, like, a quote in—implied in your voice. That says, uh, "The show is off the hook. But you're on the hook. Dot dot dot... to watch it." *[Laughs.]*

00:04:43 John Host To watch it. That's right! With my face, especially. 'Cause it is definitely... a face that sells podcasts for free. Um, Josh, thank you for joining us again.

00:04:52 Josh Guest Thank you for having me again!

00:04:53 John Host To be our guest bailiff! Jesse—Jesse's fine, everyone, but he's taking a week away. Josh very nicely accepted our invitation to come in and guest bailiff, and, um... we have a fair amount of chat! We have a fair amount of—not chat, justice to dispense! Do we not?

00:05:06 Josh Guest Oh, yeah. Lots of justice!

00:05:07 John Host Well, let's get into it!

00:05:08 Josh Guest Here's a case from Kurston:

"Hello from Worcester."

00:05:12 John Host Ohhh! Josh, you are a fellow commonwealthian of Massachusetts, correct?

00:05:17 Josh Guest I certainly am, by birth. I'm wearing, currently, a Ben Affleck Dunkin' Donuts—

[John snorts.]

—uh, painted shirt? I mean, not—the shirt is not painted.

00:05:25 John Host Right.

00:05:26 Josh Guest But it's based on a painting. Yeah. And, uh—and so, yeah. A—a tremendous allegiance to Massachusetts. *[Laughs.]*

00:05:31 John Host Where, again, are you from in Massachusetts? Will you remind me?

00:05:34 Josh Guest I'm from Stoneham, Massachusetts.

00:05:35 John Host Stoneham, Massachusetts.

00:05:36 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:05:37 John Host So you will agree with me: Worcester is terrible.

00:05:39 Josh Guest Well, look. I said that once on my podcast, and immediately backtracked, because the people of Worcester—I feel like—I feel like they'll hold a grudge. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:05:49 John Host Uh... Yeah. That's probably true.

[Josh laughs, John stifles laughter.]

That's probably true. That's probably when you take the—that's when you take the, uh, shortcut from I-90 to 495 via 295 through Worcester when you're driving north to Maine.

00:05:59 Josh Guest Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

00:06:00 John Host Everyone—everyone speeds really fast, and it's very scary, 'cause they don't wanna—

[Josh laughs.]

No, Worcester's lovely!

00:06:06 Josh Guest You wanna get—you wanna see someone mad, you tell someone from Worcester you refer to Worcester as Western Massachusetts.

00:06:10 John Host Oogh. Look, you wanna see—you wanna see someone mad, just go to Worcester. I think that that's pretty much...

[Josh cracks up.]

It's Massachusetts talk! Here on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, with Judge Josh Gondelman.

00:06:21 Josh Guest We're just kidding. Worcester? (*Wuhster.*) You're the best-er.

00:06:24 John Host Uh, look. Come on—oh!

[Both laugh.]

One of the great cities to know how to pronounce.

[Josh laughs.]

00:06:32 Josh Guest Because... it does not spell correctly. Uh—
Yeah, the name holds secrets. Which is how it's pronounced.

[Both laugh.]

City of secrets.

00:06:39 John Host Uh, famous for its, uh, Polar soda, its shire sauce—

00:06:42 Josh Guest Mm-hm. *[Laughing]* Mm-hm!

00:06:43 John Host —and, uh... Everyone knows it as Mike Birbiglia City! Worcester, Massachusetts.

00:06:48 Josh Guest Mm-hm! *[Laughs.]* That's what it says on the sign on the way in! Mike Birbiglia City.

[Both laugh.]

00:06:53 John Host Would not surprise me in the least!

00:06:55 Josh Guest Mm-hm. *[Laughs.]*

00:06:57 John Host Uh, in any case, *[stifles laughter]* Kurston lives there with her husband, and she sent this in. Go ahead, I apologize.

00:07:01 Josh Guest Yes.

"Hello from Worcester," says Kurston. "I originally submitted this to you in 2019 for a live show at the Wilbur Theatre."

00:07:09 John Host Oh!

00:07:10 Josh Guest "Having heard your desperate pleas for cases recently, I thought I'd dig this one out. There is a very busy intersection near our house, and two possible shortcuts to avoid it. Shortcut A is shorter, but more heavily traveled. So the odds of getting stuck behind other drivers is higher.

My husband Chris will always take shortcut B, which is slightly longer. He argues that getting stuck behind drivers is a risk he's unwilling to take. This has been a running argument for 20 years. Please rule on which shortcut is the shortest."

00:07:39 John Host Wow. Okay, so, um... I needed to evaluate these two routes. So I asked Kurston to describe them to me. She sent me a map, and labeled them. Shortcut A is blue on the map. This will be available on the *Judge John Hodgman* show page at MaximumFun.org and our Instagram account at [@judgejohnhodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman).

And she said, "Shortcut A is blue on the map. It is 0.2 miles and took 51 seconds. Shortcut B is yellow. It is 0.4 miles, and took 70—" Ugh. Feel like this is an SAT question.

[Josh laughs.]

You know what I—? *[Laughs.]*

00:08:16 Josh Guest I will point out you did this to yourself. *[Laughs.]*

00:08:18 John Host I do everything to myself!

[Both laugh.]

I was like—

00:08:21 Josh Guest We could've just ruled on this on kinda the skeleton of the case. But you, a rigorous judge, requested, uh, an evidentiary exhibit.

00:08:30 John Host Well, I love maps. But I didn't expect that I was gonna have to settle a—a logic puzzle with a Worcester theme.

00:08:36 Josh Guest And what we're doing now is the hard part, is we're turning a map into out-loud words, which is not how they're meant to be. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:08:41 John Host Right. So then I—then, after she punished me with exactly what I asked for...

00:08:46 Josh Guest *[Chuckling]* Mm-hm. Yep.

00:08:47 John Host I decided to punish her, and re-punish myself. By—

00:08:50 Josh Guest Mm-hm. By describing the map out loud.

00:08:53 John Host Well, by—I asked them, would they be willing to get in their car, and drive both shortcuts. So that you and I, Josh, could evaluate them. So Jennifer Marmor—uh, able producer Jennifer Marmor, would you please share your screen, so that we can watch shortcut A?

00:09:08 Jennifer Producer *[A dog barks.]*

Absolutely.

00:09:10 John Host Oh, and hi, George the dog!

00:09:12 Jennifer Producer *[Chuckles.]* It's a real noisy day in my house right now.

00:09:16 John Host Life—life goes on, I'm glad to say.

00:09:18 Jennifer Producer Yeah! So, okay. Here's shortcut A.

00:09:21 John Host Shortcut A!

00:09:24 Clip Clip **Kurston:** Okay. This is—this is the first shortcut. This is shortcut A. This is the shorter shortcut. And so this is—ah! This is a very steep road. There is cars parked on either side. I don't know if you can tell. This is New England, so of course the road is covered in potholes and patches.

[Nervous exclamation.]

It's a very steep hill! *[Laughs.]* Oh, good, and this is a good example, too! 'Cause there are two cars in front of us.

[Pause.]

[Someone laughs quietly.]

00:10:01 John Host Whoa. Jennifer Marmor, could you pause it for a second?

[Clip audio stops. There's a click.]

First of all, I just—you know. I want this to last as long as possible. It's incredible for a—an audio medium.

[Josh and Jennifer laugh, John stifles laughter.]

Second of—second of all, I just wanted to acknowledge a knowing nod from Josh Gondelman, when Kurston pointed out that the roads are garbage in New England.

00:10:19 Josh Guest Mm-hm. Lot of potholes.

00:10:22 John Host Third of all, I got a little—as a natural-born rule follower, I got a little freaked out. 'Cause I was pretty sure—I really hope it's not Kurston driving this car and videoing at the same time.

00:10:31 Jennifer Producer I also wondered that!

00:10:32 John Host I'm a little concerned that it is. Yeah. Josh, what do you think is—do you think she's videoing and...?

00:10:36 Josh Guest I—I don't know. I, uh—

00:10:39 John Host I hope—let's say not.

00:10:41 Josh Guest I—I bet she found a place to, uh—to station the camera that's safe.

00:10:48 John Host Yeah. Which would be worse, her driving and videoing at the same time? Or the fact that she videoed in portrait mode?

00:10:53 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* I know, you gotta put it in landscape, Kurston!

00:10:57 John Host Kurston? I'm just joshing you. Oh, that could be a name of a podcast for you, Josh!

00:11:01 Josh Guest *[Cracks up.]* That's, like, my *BoJack Horseman* sitcom name.

00:11:06 John Host That's right.

00:11:07 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Like he had *Horsin' Around*.

00:11:09 John Host In this case, Josh is joshing, and I'm judging.

[Josh laughs.]

But I judge you well, because I was—as a natural-born rule follower, I was terrified just now! I thought you were gonna roll through that stop sign. And you can—

00:11:20 Josh Guest I also did! I was very worried!

00:11:22 John Host Didn't you? Yeah, right?! It was very—I mean, I didn't—I didn't think this would be a suspenseful video! *[Laughs.]*

00:11:25 Josh Guest Hm-mm. And then Kurston came to what my driver's ed instructor would have called an S-T-O-P stop.

00:11:30 John Host What's an S-T-O-P stop? Does that stand for something, or is that just emphasized?

00:11:33 Josh Guest It is you're supposed to be stopped long enough that you can go, "S-T-O-P" and then keep going.

00:11:39 John Host Oh. A Sudden Terminus Of Progress?

[Josh cracks up, John stifles laughter.]

[Inaudible] stop.

00:11:45 Josh Guest It could be a Gradual Terminus Of Progress. A GTOPI (*guh-top*).

[Josh and John laugh.]

00:11:49 John Host No, you wanna S-T-O-P stop at a stop sign, everybody. Trust me.

00:11:53 Josh Guest It does sound, when I said it, like an S-T-O-P stop is, like, a cheer that cheerleaders would do for the opposing team.

[John and Josh laugh.]

Like, "Oh no! You're beating us too badly! *[Clapping on the letters]* S-T-O-P! Stop, stop, stop!"

00:12:05 John Host Is that—now, look. You are the master of the pep talk on Twitter.

00:12:07 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:12:09 John Host Is—and cheerleading is full of pep.

00:12:10 Josh Guest Mm-hm!

00:12:12 John Host I—it's been a long time since I've been to a sporting event. Is there cheer—is there anti-cheerleading?

00:12:16 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* I don't think—

00:12:17 John Host Is there gloomleading? Like if you are rooting against the other team?

00:12:21 Josh Guest I feel like they usually take the tack of, like—instead of going like, "Hey, other team. Stop kicking our butts so hard!" they would be like, "Hey, our team... Maybe give it a little extra oomph." *[Laughs.]*

00:12:31 John Host Alright. I think we invented another new thing, gloomleading.

00:12:34 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* That's what the—you can't hear it—you can't hear it, but that is what the cheerleaders in the "Smells Like Teen Spirit" music video are chanting.

[All three laugh.]

00:12:47 John Host Okay! Jennifer Marmor, play!

[Clip audio resumes.]

Keep going; I can't wait to see what happens next.

[The audio is rumbling.]

Mm. Sound quality's terrific.

[Someone laughs.]

Okay. Here comes another stop sign! *[Gasps.]*

00:13:02 Josh Guest And just nails it!

00:13:04 John Host Fantastic.

00:13:05 Clip Clip **Kurston:** Oh, see? And they're gone!

00:13:08 John Host Oh, those cars in front of her disappeared!

00:13:11 Clip Clip **Kurston:** And then—and so then occasionally here there'll be some cars backed up. And that's the end of shortcut 1.

[Someone laughs.]

00:13:19 John Host That's the end of shortcut 1!

[Clip audio cuts.]

And... exactly per Kurston's, uh, reckoning, that took 51 seconds. Now Josh, I leave it up to you. You've seen shortcut—it's shortcut A, actually. She called it shortcut A and shortcut 1.

00:13:34 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:13:36 John Host That is the shortcut she prefers.

00:13:37 Josh Guest Yes.

00:13:38 John Host Are you ready to watch shortcut B?

00:13:40 Josh Guest I am.

00:13:41 John Host Or have you already come to a decision?

00:13:43 Josh Guest No, not yet. I don't—

00:13:44 John Host Alright.

00:13:45 Josh Guest I think it would be, uh—uh—

00:13:46 John Host Prejudicial?

00:13:47 Josh Guest Dereliction of duty. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:13:49 John Host Right. Okay!

00:13:50 Josh Guest To rule after just seeing a single shortcut.

00:13:51 John Host Right. Okay. So let's roll, uh—this is shortcut B. Shortcut B. And oh, I have—I have a note here that says, uh, the maniacal laughing is their teenage daughter in the backseat, thinking that Kurston and her husband are weird for doing this, and that—I'm very happy to be a part of that.

00:14:08 Jennifer Producer I think that answers the question of whether Kurston is recording herself.

00:14:11 Josh Guest I think that's true.

00:14:12 John Host Could've been different times. I don't know.

00:14:14 Josh Guest That's true.

00:14:15 John Host It made me nervous. Let's roll on B and see what happens.

00:14:16 Jennifer Producer Alright.

00:14:17 Clip Clip *[Someone is laughing.]*

00:14:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Kurston:** *[Chuckles.]* Okay. We're approaching the signal from the same location. So this is the starting point. You'd go right there at the light for shortcut A.

John: *[Imitates three short tones and then a longer one, as if at the start of a race.]*

Kurston: And now we're continuing on through shortcut B.

John: In pole position language, she's started.

[Josh laughs.]

Kurston: This is shortcut B. Turning up this road. *[Nervous exclamation.]*

00:14:33 John Host Okay. Look at those great—look at those nice houses. Those nice-sized houses on reasonable-sized plots of land.

00:14:37 Clip Clip **Kurston:** Still—yeah. Still pretty steep. Not quite as steep.

00:14:41 Josh Guest The Worcester charm!

00:14:42 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* It is the Worcester charm.

00:14:43 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Kurston:** And still... *[stifling laughter]* cars parked on the side *[inaudible]*.

John: Pothole-ridden. Leafless trees. Pretty nice houses!

[Someone laughs.]

Chris: Nowhere near as busy.

John: I'm sure they get leaves on their trees at a more seasonably appropriate time.

Kurston: *[Chuckles.]* Nowhere near as busy, right. You are unlikely to find cars coming.

Josh: Yeah. That would be so sad if the, just—trees never had leaves on them. *[Laughs.]*

John: This is definitely a much more scenic tour of Worcester, in that you are seeing a lot more of it.

Chris: *[Inaudible.]*

Kurston: *[Inaudible.]*

00:15:03 John Host Ooh, look at that gabled beauty! Mm.

00:15:05 Josh Guest A lovely home. And a Mike Birbiglia in every pot.

[John laughs.]

00:15:13 Clip Clip **Kurston:** I think there's—the sun is right in your eyes.

00:15:15 John Host Lot of curb appeal here in Worcester! Alright.

00:15:16 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Kurston:** Okay. So now, this is the road—this is Salisbury Street, the same road that we turned onto. And so that—

John: Okay. But that's not the end.

Kurston: We're approaching the endpoint of shortcut A. And so where this car is coming out of right now, that's the end of shortcut A. So now this is the end—

John: And... checkered flag!

Kurston: —point of the two—two, uh, shortcuts converged. Thanks very much.

00:15:37 John Host Alright.

[Clip audio stops.]

For those of you listening who couldn't see, um, how would you describe the experience of shortcut B? Josh?

00:15:45 Josh Guest It obviously—so the listeners could tell it takes longer.

00:15:47 John Host Yes.

00:15:48 Josh Guest It's windier [*as in twistier, not gustier*], would be the key—the key word.

00:15:49 John Host It's windier. I was starting to feel like I was in a little bit of an amusement park situation.

00:15:56 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:15:57 John Host There were a lot of twists and turns. And I don't get carsick...

00:15:59 Josh Guest Lot of twists and—

00:16:00 John Host ...but that made me a little nervous. However, as I mentioned, there was a lot of—you got to see a lot more homes of Worcester.

00:16:05 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:16:06 John Host Got a lot of curb appeal going on in that one.

00:16:07 Josh Guest And the street did seem smoother.

00:16:10 John Host It seemed smoother? Less—yeah? Interesting.

00:16:11 Josh Guest Fewer—yeah. Fewer bumps.

00:16:13 John Host Yeah. Well, I can tell you which one works better for podcast purposes, Kurston, pretty clearly. The 51-second one.

[Josh cracks up, John chuckles.]

00:16:23 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Which... video works better for showing on the podcast? The one that takes less time for the listeners!

00:16:31 John Host I mean, it is—it is literally the shortest cut.

00:16:33 Josh Guest Yeah.

00:16:34 John Host Right?

00:16:35 Josh Guest Yep.

00:16:36 John Host But I guess Kurston's husband's—Chris's argument for shortcut B is that sometimes shortcut A, you'll get stuck behind some, uh—some pokey neighbors in their cars.

00:16:45 Josh Guest Yeah. It does seem like you're gonna end up making a left turn from the stop sign into—you know, across a lane of traffic. So I can see that being tricky.

00:16:55 John Host Which one would you take, Josh Gondelman? Personally.

00:16:58 Josh Guest *[Sighs.]* I—you know? I think personally I'd be a shortcut B guy. Because I like—

00:17:04 John Host Whoa!

00:17:05 Josh Guest I like the consistency. However—

00:17:09 John Host Tell me more! What do you mean, you like the consistency?

00:17:11 Josh Guest Because I like knowing that it's gonna be that smooth, windy, 71-second journey every time. Right?

00:17:19 John Host Mm-hm.

00:17:20 Josh Guest I think—me, I'm not the—I'm not a rambling, gambling type. So if you are kind of the—a wild... gambler, uh, knowing when to hold them, knowing when to fold them, I would suggest shortcut A. Because the upside is you save those 23 seconds.

00:17:37 John Host Right. Unless you get stuck behind a couple of slowpokes.

00:17:40 Josh Guest Exactly. Yep.

00:17:41 John Host And then it's all over. You just blew it.

00:17:44 Josh Guest Yeah.

00:17:45 John Host Right. Okay. Well... Sorry. This is—this is very hard, Josh! This is a very hard one for me. I'm sorry. I gotta say. It's—'cause I don't wanna go against—I'm looking at the map now, is the thing.

00:17:58 Josh Guest Yeah.

00:18:00 John Host And there is no question that shortcut A—blue route—is much, much more direct. Now, I don't—

00:18:06 Josh Guest It's about 50% the length.

00:18:07 John Host Right. I mean, I don't wanna, uh—I don't wanna triangulate exactly where these people live in Worcester.

00:18:13 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:18:14 John Host But shortcut A is just basically a straight shot along Sagamore Road.

00:18:18 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:18:19 John Host And I like to say "Sagamore" because that was the—that was the name of our high school newspaper. In Brookline, Massachusetts.

00:18:23 Josh Guest Oh, nice!

00:18:24 John Host Yeah. Whereas you—you're going—you're whipping down Waconah Road, taking a hard left on Whitman Road, and then a right on Salisbury Street. These are all some pretty cool New England-named streets.

00:18:37 Josh Guest Yeah. Very New England-y. I do love to hear the street names.

00:18:41 John Host There is something counterintuitive about saying that the shortest cut is not actually the shortest cut!

00:18:46 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:18:47 John Host And it went—it went shorter this time around, Kurston!

00:18:50 Josh Guest Yep.

00:18:51 John Host I mean, that speaks to your argument! But I guess I—I personally—I probably would take that Waconah Road, Whitman Road... ramble as well. 'Cause I'm a rambling kind of guy. Not a gambler.

00:19:05 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Just a rambler!

00:19:06 John Host Are you a gambler, or a rambler? I guess is what it comes down to.

00:19:09 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* I don't buy into the rambler/gambler binary.

[Josh laughs, John stifles laughter.]

00:19:15 John Host I don't like to split a decision.

00:19:17 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:19:18 John Host So I have to say the shortest—I mean, unless we have a lot of data. And you know *Judge John Hodgman* is famous for its data.

00:19:24 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Mm-hm!

00:19:27 John Host It's really just impossible to say! Because the—the shortest cut was the shortest cut! It was shorter than the other one!

00:19:33 Josh Guest Yeah. It's tough to—for us to rule otherwise on what might happen. Right?

00:19:41 John Host Right. Right. So—and we have no predict—we have no statistical analysis. So this is what I would say. Kurston? Uh, run this experiment... a hundred and fifty more times.

[Josh cackles.]

Uh, get me the data.

[Both laugh.]

You're under no—it's no rush. Just do it 150 more times. Video it 150 more times.

00:20:01 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* This is a 20-year-long argument! There's no rush!

00:20:04 John Host *[Laughs.]* But until then, even though Josh and I—and understand why Christ prefers shortcut B, the longer cut, I have to rule just with—on the side of science. And the evidence it has given to me. Shortcut A is the shorter cut. If that is what you're trying to look for! A shortcut!

00:20:23 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:20:25 John Host Shortcut B, it seems a more—it's a more leisurely drive.

00:20:27 Josh Guest Mm-hm. But both—

00:20:28 John Host Shortcut A is the fast—fast one.

00:20:29 Josh Guest Both shorter than the long way around.

00:20:32 John Host Oh, forget the long one! You're gonna go all the way around the Harry Goddard house, whatever that is?! No way!

[Josh laughs quietly.]

I don't wanna get anywhere near that American Antiquarian Society that I see on this map. Ugh!

00:20:42 Josh Guest I have places to go! I have a life to live!

[Both stifle laughter.]

You think I'm gonna spend, as Mary Oliver would put it—the poet, the late poet—uh, my one wild and precious life driving around the Harry Goddard House? I shan't!

00:20:53 John Host No. Josh shan't, nor shan't I.

[Josh laughs quietly.]

Shortcut A, until I see that data from 150 trial runs—

[Josh laughs harder.]

—of both! Of both run—of both routes! Don't split it up! It's not 75/75. Three hundred total.

[Josh bursts out laughing.]

I want all video, and I want—*[laughs]*—and I want that to be a special podcast by the end of the year. There is a rush, actually. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:21:13 Josh Guest

End of the year.

00:21:14 John Host

End of 20—yeah. End of 2021. I just wanna run audio of—

[Josh laughs.]

That's a hundred and fi—so they're both—roughly, they're about a minute, each one. So that would be 300 minutes. Of driving in Worcester.

00:21:28 Josh Guest

There is kind of also a lovely—with 300 trips, a lovely ASMR quality, if listeners are interested in that.

00:21:35 John Host

I think it would be incred—I—I would—I would listen to that in the car! Isn't that weird?

[John laughs quietly, Josh cracks up.]

00:21:41 Josh Guest

You would layer it on top of—

00:21:43 John Host

Yeah!

00:21:44 Josh Guest

—your own car sounds.

00:21:45 John Host

That's right! Next time I—

00:21:46 Josh Guest

Kind of a Phil Spector production style.

[Both laugh.]

A Wall of Ground, they call it.

00:21:51 John Host

A Wall—*[cracks up]*. Doesn't get better than Josh.

[Josh cracks up.]

Doesn't get better than Josh Gondelman when it comes to a Phil Spector pun. Doesn't get better. *Just Josting!* With Josh! Let's move on.

00:22:05 Josh Guest

Here's something from Derek, from Willimantic, Connecticut.

00:22:08 John Host

Mm.

00:22:09 Josh Guest

"My partner, three friends, and I stopped at Voodoo Doughnuts in Denver, Colorado, while road-tripping across the US in college. The shop is known for its unique flavors—Cap'n Crunch, Oreo, Bubblegum, etc.—and we bought a dozen assorted, each a unique flavor. No doubles. This instigated a fight that lasts to this day.

My partner thought that each donut should be split evenly, so everyone can have a taste of each kind. I appreciate the sentiment,

but I think the best way to eat a donut is to eat the whole donut. If I wanted to eat bites of donuts, I'd buy Timbits."

00:22:42 John Host Timbits, I believe, are Canadian... Munchkins, right?

00:22:46 Josh Guest Yeah. They're the Tim Hortons of the American—

00:22:48 John Host Of the—the donut hole. Generically speaking.

00:22:51 Josh Guest Right.

00:22:52 John Host Dunkin' Donuts owns the copyright to Munchkins, is that correct?

00:22:57 Josh Guest I believe so.

00:22:58 John Host So you're a Dunkin' Donut partisan. Correct?

00:23:00 Josh Guest I am. I love a—

00:23:02 John Host So what do you think about these Voodoo Doughnuts?

00:23:05 Josh Guest I like a fancy donut, but it's a different thing. Right? Like, I wouldn't—I wouldn't go there and just be like, "Well, uh, I guess I'll just grab one of these decadent Oreo cookie donuts as, like, a companion for my morning coffee."

00:23:19 John Host Right.

00:23:20 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Because then for lunch, I would have a three-hour nap.

00:23:23 John Host *[Laughs.]* And also some of those fla—like... Hm. I don't think anyone wants to eat a whole bubblegum donut.

00:23:30 Josh Guest No! It seems more like a—like you taste it, and then you go, "Oh, yeah! It does taste like a bubblegum!" *[Laughs.]*

00:23:36 John Host Yeah. Novelty! Novelty donuts! Whereas a Dunkin' Donut is a workaday pastry.

00:23:42 Josh Guest Mm-hm. A blue-collar donut.

00:23:44 John Host When—

00:23:45 Josh Guest And occasionally a blueberry donut!

[Both laugh.]

00:23:48 John Host You eat a donut from time to time, right, Josh?

00:23:49 Josh Guest I'll eat a donut from time to time!

00:23:51 John Host You ev—you go on a road trip, back when such a thing was possible—

00:23:53 Josh Guest Sure.

00:23:54 John Host —and you'll go on one again when it's possible again?

00:23:56 Josh Guest Definitely.

00:23:57 John Host You're in a bar—you're in a car with some friends, you stop and get some novelty donuts. You got 12 different wackadoo flavors. What's—what—

00:24:05 Josh Guest Such as mohair. And—

[Both laugh.]

00:24:09 John Host Mohair and—

00:24:10 Josh Guest Birch!

00:24:11 John Host Mohair—there's a mohair one and a cardigan one, weirdly.

00:24:12 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Mm-hm!

00:24:13 John Host They split 'em up! *[Laughs.]* And double—double mohair. What are some of the other flavors? I can't think of anything.

00:24:19 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* Oh, you get your mohair, you get your double mohair, you get your cardigan.

00:24:22 John Host Yeah.

00:24:23 Josh Guest Uh, you get your sycamore. Uh—

00:24:24 John Host I only got cardigan 'cause you're wearing one, of course.

00:24:26 Josh Guest *[Chuckling]* Mm-hm.

00:24:27 John Host I was about to say Post-It Note flavor, 'cause I'm looking at stuff on my desk.

00:24:28 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* Just like how, uh—how a character comes up with an alias in a 90s thriller.

00:24:35 John Host Oh! It's like how, like, eight or nine-year-old John Hodgman, hanging around in my house with, uh, my oldest friend Damon Graff, and Damon Graff was telling me all about his imaginary friend Fred. And I said, "Well, I have an imaginary friend."

And Damon said, "Yeah? What's his name?"

And I said, "Uhhh... Windowsill."

[Josh cracks up, John chuckles.]

True story.

00:24:56 Josh Guest Ooh! Oh! From the, uh—from the Connecticut Windowsill family!

[Both laugh.]

00:25:03 John Host Oh, Josh. Too many tangents, Josh! TMTs!

00:25:07 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* TMT!

00:25:09 John Host You're in a road trip. You get some novelty-flavored donuts. You're in the car. Your instinct, Josh. Your preference. Not what's right or what's wrong. Do you want a whole bubblegum donut? You know, I won't even throw you the bubblegum.

00:25:26 Josh Guest Yeah, give me one that you—that—that a person might eat a whole donut of. *[Laughs.]*

00:25:30 John Host You want a whole maple-glazed?

00:25:32 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:25:33 John Host Or a little taste of maple-glazed, Oreo, and Cap'n Crunch, and... whatever?

00:25:37 Josh Guest I'm a little taste guy.

00:25:39 John Host You're a little bites! Little bites, right?

00:25:41 Josh Guest Little bites! Yeah. Especially when it's an assortment of novelty donuts. If it was like, "Everyone make an order," right?

00:25:47 John Host Right.

00:25:48 Josh Guest And I was like, "Oh, I'd like a blueberry-glazed donut, please."

00:25:49 John Host Right.

00:25:50 Josh Guest And then everyone—someone goes, "Let's do little bites," it's like, "That was not the deal."

00:25:54 John Host Right. Right! Yeah, no. Well, the problem was they had not made a deal. They went in—they went in recklessly.

00:26:00 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:26:01 John Host They ordered it—an assorted dozen. And then they just started driving.

00:26:03 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:26:04 John Host I guess they were—you know. They didn't think about it. They didn't stop and think. This might—

00:26:06 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Like Thelma and Louise themselves!

00:26:09 John Host *[Laughs.]* Exactly. Exactly so! Oh, "Sad PS, we drove over a cliff." Weird. I didn't see that part.

[Josh cracks up.]

I guess they're okay, though. I did ask Derek how—'cause this did happen. And I was curious how they decided to resolve the situation in the moment. And he wrote back:

"After negotiating which donuts we could eat and which we wouldn't mind missing out on, two of us were able to have one whole donut each."

The two who wanted a whole one each got their own. He had the Oreo donut. And it was delicious. Of course it is.

00:26:43 Josh Guest Yeah.

00:26:44 John Host But he also wrote:

"Interestingly, the women in the car wanted to split, and the men all wanted to eat a whole donut. And since then we've seen similar trends when polling our friends."

See, it's all about the data, Josh. It's all about the data.

00:26:55 Josh Guest This is a data-driven—you're one of the leading podcasts in data-driven podcast... metrics.

00:27:00 John Host Oh, we drill down the numbers. And—

00:27:02 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* Your—this podcast is the—the subject of the famous Michael Lewis book *Money*pod. *[Laughs.]*

00:27:10 John Host Yeah. Ex—*[laughs]*. So let's take—get some more data! Jennifer Marmor! According to Derek, there is a... gender role breakdown! Uh, between who wants to split a donut and who wants a whole donut. Uh, I guess bec—due to male whole donut anxiety.

[Josh laughs quietly.]

They're afraid they can't have the whole thing, it'll make them less... lesser, somehow.

00:27:34 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:27:35 John Host But. Without—Jennifer Marmor. What is your gut instinct? You want a whole donut, in this situation? One whole novelty donut? Or parts of multiple novelty donuts?

[Pause.]

00:27:46 Jennifer Producer This is a tough one.

00:27:47 John Host Oh!

00:27:48 Jennifer Producer 'Cause if—[laughs]—we, uh—when we were working in the office during... normal working-in-the-office time, uh, not often, but a lot of times, somebody would bring in donuts from a novelty donut place.

00:28:04 John Host Mm-hm.

00:28:05 Jennifer Producer They also have normal donuts that aren't novel.

00:28:06 John Host Mm-hm.

00:28:07 Jennifer Producer California Donuts in Koreatown.

00:28:11 John Host Oh!

00:28:12 Jennifer Producer And they have just really great, fun donuts. They have, like, an Oreo donut that looks like a little panda. Love it.

00:28:18 John Host Sounds good!

00:28:19 Jennifer Producer It is good. And... in that situation, I would probably do... do a split. You know, I—I'd like a little piece.

00:28:30 John Host Do a split.

00:28:31 Jennifer Producer Just because it's... a lot. I'm also—it's just a lot of donut! And I don't know if I wanna—it's not even about the anxiety of, uh, splitting it or whatever. It's just too much donut for me. But, you know, if it was just a regular... maple glaze. Whole donut.

And also, if they're in the car, I wouldn't wanna deal with splitting, like—

00:28:53 Josh Guest Sure.

00:28:54 Jennifer Producer Because it's—feels like a hassle.

00:28:55 John Host Oh, so wait a minute. Now you're saying—you—now you're leaning—if it's in the office... of Maximum Fun...

00:29:01 Jennifer Producer Yeah.

00:29:02 John Host ...you want—you want little donuts.

00:29:04 Jennifer Producer Yeah.

00:29:05 John Host If it was in the car, you want a whole donut.

00:29:06 Jennifer Producer Yeah. 'Cause I don't wanna deal with, uh—

00:29:09 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Josh:** For ease of—ease of sharing.

John: Ugh. Our numbers are all over the place.

00:29:11 Jennifer Producer I know. It's—it's not help—I'm not giving a helpful answer, but that's how I feel.

00:29:16 John Host Well, look. We just blew the stats, 'cause I'm a—I'm a little bit of donut guy.

00:29:19 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jennifer & Josh:** Mm-hm.

00:29:20 John Host And I'm—and I am, arguably, a guy. Th—arguments have been made that I'm male.

[Josh laughs.]

So we've just reversed all of your data, Derek.

00:29:29 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:29:30 John Host I think that, uh, the obvious answer here, is split 'em up!

00:29:33 Josh Guest Yeah!

00:29:34 John Host In this context, you should've split 'em up, Derek.

00:29:38 Josh Guest Or if you wanted a donut of your own—*[laughing]* a donut of one's own to enjoy—

00:29:42 John Host Yeah!

00:29:43 Josh Guest —you order that separately. You can't order family-style, and then stake a claim to a—a whole donut.

00:29:51 John Host *[Laughs.]* "I want all of that big, big platter of spaghetti and meatballs."

00:29:54 Josh Guest Yeah!

00:29:55 John Host "You can have the salad."

00:29:57 Josh Guest You can't do that! Right! Yeah.

00:29:58 John Host 'Cause what your friends won't tell you, Derek, is you got that Oreo donut... and you left a bubblegum sitting out there. Everyone—of course the Oreo donut was delicious! That's a delicious, time-tested flavor! In any sort of sweet—sweet-treat capacity. But a bubblegum pastry?! Bleugh. Like, that's just—that's novelty for the sake of novelty, and it's gross. And, yeah. I understand why you wanted to eat a whole Oreo donut.

Here's what your friends weren't telling you: They all did! But you—but you—I—they all just sort of went along with it. "Derek wants the Oreo. Fine, let's just keep going. We—we have another—*[stifles laughter]*—we have another 900 miles to drive with this guy."

[Josh laughs.]

I'm sure you're very sweet, Derek. No, don't—don't get me wrong. But in this context... You're in a—you're on a road trip. You're out to experience the world! You're not ordering in from the—the donut place in Koreatown at Maximum Fun Headquarters that you can order in from any day you like. You're not going to your regular donut place.

00:30:56 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:30:57 John Host You're going to a place that—you know. I think there are other Voodoo Doughnuts in the world, but it's like, you're zooming through Denver, the Mile High City. "Let's get these wackadoo donuts. Let's just be wild! Let's get a—an assorted dozen." And then you're driving

on, and who knows when you're ever gonna go back there again?
Don't just eat the Oreo! Sample life!

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

00:31:16 Josh Guest And... let the Oreo into other people's hearts and mouths.

00:31:21 John Host Yeah. Josh, when we get to go on a road trip again, uh, where are we going? And by "we" I mean... "we as humans." ...No! You and me! You pick a road trip for you and me.

00:31:31 Josh Guest *[Chuckling]* Alright! Um—

00:31:32 John Host I just—it was—and genuinely, it was a personal question that I turned into a weird—a weird personal request.

[Both stifle laughter.]

00:31:39 Josh Guest Well, my first—my first road trip is, um, just before I'm, like—my vaccines are, um, fully... engaged?

00:31:48 John Host Yeah.

00:31:49 Josh Guest Before thrusters engage on the full vaccines. I'm gonna rent a car and go visit my parents in Massachusetts.

00:31:55 John Host Nice.

00:31:56 Josh Guest I haven't seen them since, um, Christmas 2019.

00:31:58 John Host That's nice.

00:31:59 Josh Guest So I'm very excited to see them. Um, you and I—

00:32:01 John Host But that's a destination.

00:32:03 Josh Guest Yes.

00:32:04 John Host And the correct choice!

00:32:05 Josh Guest Thank you.

00:32:06 John Host And I will go with you, obviously.

00:32:07 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* Yeah! That's what I was gonna say.

00:32:09 John Host Yeah.

00:32:10 Josh Guest You will join me and my wife Maris—*[laughs]*—

00:32:11 John Host Yeah!

00:32:12 Josh Guest —to visit my parents. Big—they're big fans.

00:32:14 John Host Love Maris. Love her podcast, *The Maris Review*. Best name in podcasts.

[Josh laughs, John stifles laughter.]

00:32:19 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* My parents would be very excited and surprised to see you.

00:32:22 John Host I would be—I'd be thrilled to meet them! What are their names?

00:32:25 Josh Guest Uh, David and Ellion.

00:32:27 John Host Would—do they like to be called by their first names? Or is it, uh, a Mr. and Mrs. Gondelman situation?

00:32:32 Josh Guest I—I think at the age that we're at now as adults, I think that they're okay with that. With first names.

00:32:37 John Host I'm gonna Mr. and Mrs. Gondelman them. I think that's what I'm gonna do.

00:32:38 Josh Guest I think they would appreciate that extra mile! I call—I still go "Mom and Dad."

00:32:45 John Host ...Yeahhh, I—I wouldn't feel comfortable with that myself, but, uh, Mr. and Mrs. Gondelman's good.

00:32:48 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, that was not a suggestion!

00:32:50 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Oh, I'm sorry, I misunderstood.

[Josh is cracking up.]

I thought maybe we were gonna trick them into thinking we were brothers.

00:32:54 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* If you want to—they are used to answering to "Mom and Dad," so it'd put them at ease if you would call them that.

00:33:00 John Host No. I'm gonna call them Mr. and Mrs. Gondelman. And guess what's gonna happen, Josh?

00:33:04 Josh Guest They'll be charmed!

00:33:05 John Host Before I leave town!

00:33:07 Josh Guest Mm-hm?

00:33:08 John Host I'll be dropping into a local Stoneham, Massachusetts mailbox, a handwritten thank-you note.

[Josh exhales sharply.]

And they will love me more than you.

[Josh sighs.]

Let's move on. Let's go to a break.

00:33:20 Josh Guest Wait—okay—*[cracks up]*.

00:33:24 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* No? Not ready for a break?

00:33:26 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* I was just gonna ask—they'll love you more than I love you, or more than they love me? *[Laughs.]*

00:33:31 John Host They're gonna be like, "John Hodgman is a sweet guy. He's not as mean as everyone said he was. He deserves to keep his podcast."

[Josh laughs, John stifles laughter.]

"Josh has his own podcast. Don't take over the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, Josh."

00:33:44 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:33:45 John Host "Please. He wrote us a handwritten thank-you note. It's a true—"

[Josh laughs quietly.]

"It's a truly wonderful gesture that not enough people do." Thanks for the inspiration, Jon Kimball.

Now let's go to a break! We'll be back with more cases to clear from the docket... on the *Judge Josh Gondelman* podcast. What?! How come you wrote that?!

| | | | |
|----------|--------------|------------|---|
| 00:33:59 | Josh | Guest | <i>[Chuckles.]</i> Well... |
| 00:34:01 | John | Host | Jennifer Marmor's already updating the text—the template! |
| 00:34:04 | Josh | Guest | <i>[Laughing]</i> We gotta give the people what they want! |
| | | | <i>[John sighs.]</i> |
| 00:34:07 | Sound Effect | Transition | <i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i> |
| 00:34:09 | Jesse Thorn | Promo | As always, the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast, brought to you <u>by</u> you, our members. All the good folks who've gone to MaximumFun.org/join . |
| | | | Also supported this week by Ruby Coffee Roasters. |
| 00:34:21 | John | Promo | Ruby Coffee Roasters is a small coffee-roasting company based in Nelsonville, Wisconsin, population 191. Could it get more charming?! A lot of people would just say, "Alright, send me the coffee. You got me, Nelsonville, Wisconsin." They might not even know or care that the coffee they're getting... <i>[stifling laughter]</i> is incredible coffee! |
| 00:34:38 | Jesse | Promo | <i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Yeah. |
| 00:34:39 | John | Promo | Sourced from a variety of direct relationships with farmers, and small coffee import/export companies who work directly with small farmers. And the main thing is it tastes and smells fantastic! |
| 00:34:48 | Jesse | Promo | We connected with Ruby Coffee because I basically typed into the Internet one Christmas, "Best coffee," or something like that. |
| 00:34:54 | John | Promo | Sure. |
| 00:34:55 | Jesse | Promo | My wife is a coffee nut. And I wanted to get her something that she would like for the holiday. And I found Ruby Coffee. It sounded amazing. I ordered it, and it came... with a little gift, and a little note that said, "Hey, guess what? I'm a MaxFun member. I'm one of the small group of employees <i>[stifles laughter]</i> at this small coffee roaster, and I can't believe that you ordered from us. Thank you very much!" |
| | | | And so we talked to them, and said, "Hey. Listen. How about we trade? You guys provide the coffee for our homes and our office," when our office was open, "and, uh, we'll give you some spots on MaxFun shows?" and they said yes, and it was such a success that this company that literally didn't have a marketing budget before has actually <u>paid</u> us for some ads, because MaxFunsters have responded so strongly to this great coffee! |
| 00:35:43 | John | Promo | It's all roasted to order; it's <u>always</u> fresh when it arrives on your doorstep; it comes <u>in</u> the mail. You're never <u>wanting</u> for coffee. You mentioned, Jesse, that the Maximum Fun offices... for understandable reasons, have been closed. I can only imagine that it—that <u>all</u> of the office is now just filled with Ruby Coffee packages. Like, floor to ceiling. |
| 00:36:03 | Jesse | Promo | <i>[Laughs quietly.]</i> There's also—one of the things that they make is, uh—this is the first I've ever heard of it, but basically, artisanal instant coffee. |

| | | | |
|----------|--------------|------------|--|
| 00:36:11 | John | Promo | Yeah. |
| 00:36:12 | Jesse | Promo | You can have it in your purse, have it in your dopp kit when you're traveling. |
| 00:36:15 | John | Promo | Right. |
| 00:36:16 | Jesse | Promo | Have it so that whenever you need some decent coffee, you always have great coffee on hand. |
| 00:36:21 | John | Promo | Yeah! Say you're on the road. Say you're nowhere <u>near</u> Los Angeles. Say you don't have <u>time</u> to... break <u>into</u> the empty MaxFun offices and grab some sample Ruby Coffee in a—in a coffee heist! |
| | | | <i>[Jesse laughs quietly.]</i> |
| | | | Look. It's good coffee, and they're nice people! Go to RubyCoffeeRoasters.com , and use discount code "JJHO" to get 20% off your first shipment of any subscription. |
| 00:36:43 | Jesse | Promo | Or 15% off a one-time coffee purchase! That's RubyCoffeeRoasters.com . |
| 00:36:50 | John | Promo | Go to RubyCoffeeRoasters.com . Don't break into the empty MaxFun offices to try to steal coffee in a coffee heist. |
| | | | <i>[Jesse laughs quietly.]</i> |
| | | | It sounds like fun, but it's not nice for anybody! |
| 00:37:00 | Sound Effect | Transition | <i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i> |
| 00:37:02 | Josh | Guest | Welcome back to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. This week, we're clearing the docket. I'm your guest bailiff, Josh Gondelman. Here's a case from Lance in Twinsburg, Ohio: |
| | | | "My partner Amy and I often have disputes about whether fantasy worlds in books and games take place on other planets. I contend they <u>do</u> take place on other planets, especially if a map is included, or the creators describe geographic features that do not exist on Earth. |
| | | | For example, the Yatil (<i>yuh-TEEL</i>) Mountains in Greyhawk from <i>Dungeons & Dragons</i> ." |
| | | | Uh, I almost said " <u>Yattle</u> Mountains," but that sounds very Yiddish. |
| | | | <i>[John laughs, Josh stifles laughter.]</i> |
| | | | More Yiddish than I imagine <i>Dungeons & Dragons</i> is— |
| 00:37:35 | John | Host | You gave—you gave it some good fantasy world sauce on it. The <u>Yah-TIL</u> ... |
| 00:37:38 | Josh | Guest | Thank you! |
| 00:37:39 | John | Host | Yeah. |
| 00:37:40 | Josh | Guest | "Amy says it's just a fantasy world, and it exists without any other needed context. I ask the court to rule that I may call fantasy worlds 'planets', and that Amy does not roll her eyes when I do." |
| 00:37:50 | John | Host | Mm! Mm! A case that tests the tension. Between fantasy and science |

fiction.

00:37:59 Josh Guest
00:38:00 John Host
00:38:03 Josh Guest
00:38:04 John Host

[Laughing] Mm-hm.

[Laughs.] Two—two genres often lumped together.

Mm-hm!

By their own choice!

[Josh laughs.]

For protection against the world.

00:38:08 Josh Guest
00:38:14 John Host
00:38:24 Josh Guest
00:38:27 John Host

[Laughing] They stand back to back, and... gently cower against one another.

Did I ever tell you that I was the—the host of the Nebula Awards? Which is one of the top-tier awards for fantasy and science fiction writing in the United States?

I don't think we've spoken about it, but wasn't it in your book *Medallion Status*?

It was. And in *Medallion Status*, I wrote about how we were all in this hotel in Chicago together. And there was this huge, like, signing. All of the science fiction and fantasy writers, and me, were signing books in one big ballroom. And then down a short hallway, in another big ballroom, a local—I think Catholic school was having its prom.

[Josh chuckles, John stifles laughter.]

And during the signing, I kinda had to take a break, and I left this room full of older science fiction and fantasy writers, just—and just—and just felt drawn towards the pumping bass of this high school prom.

[Josh laughs.]

And all these beautiful—you know, young people, in their rented tuxedos and gowns. Some of them had come out to take a breather from all the dancing, and all the incipient hugging and kissing that was gonna happen, and they were just, like, full of—of life, and energy! And just in their—in their exhalation, in their moment of rest, they had more energy than I'll ever have in the rest of my life.

[Josh chuckles.]

And every now and then, a couple of them—one of them would catch my eye. And they would see this... withered, weird, half-bearded old man.

[Josh laughs, John stifles laughter.]

Sharing their universe for a moment. And I felt like, "Oh, this is—this is a science fiction book." *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:39:43 Josh Guest
00:39:44 John Host

Mm-hm! *[Laughs.]*

They're, like, view—they're—they're looking through a portal to another dimension. And it's like, "Don't stare at the abyss too long, or

you will become that." *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:39:51 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* "I'm from the future!"

00:39:56 John Host So... I mean, look! Obviously science fiction deals more in planets. But Josh, in your opinion... You ever—you read a lot of fantasy?

00:40:05 Josh Guest I used to when I was a kid. I haven't so much anymore.

00:40:06 John Host What'd you—what'd you rock?

00:40:08 Josh Guest I was doing... just the real basics.

00:40:10 John Host Hit me!

00:40:11 Josh Guest I—I did some Narnia.

00:40:12 John Host Right.

00:40:13 Josh Guest I did... Uh... Gosh. The—I found a book outside my home yesterday, that I Tweeted a picture of. And—because I thought it was funny. And I think I may have read it as a kid. It's called *Dealing with Dragons*. And—

00:40:25 John Host Oh!

00:40:27 Josh Guest Beloved! I Tweeted it—

00:40:28 John Host That rings a bell!

00:40:29 Josh Guest Yeah! It is—let me find the name. Because it is—I Tweeted it, and then, like, immediately, 30 people were like, "Um, that's my favorite book from when I was a kid. I read the whole series. My nephew is reading it right now, and it's like—it makes me cry."

It is by...

00:40:43 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Josh:** Patricia C. Wrede.

John: Patricia... C... Wrede.

00:40:46 John Host W-R-E-D-E.

00:40:47 Josh Guest Yes.

00:40:48 John Host I think we have accessed the same database here. It's a data-based podcast!

00:40:53 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Yeah!

00:40:54 John Host *Enchanted Forest Chronicles*. It's the first in the *Enchanted Forest Chronicles*. Where does it take place? "Princess Cimorene is frustrated by her life, and persuades the castle staff to teach her magic—magic, cooking, Latin."

That's—that's on Earth, I guess. Doesn't say what the name—doesn't say what the name, uh, of the fantasy kingdom that she is—

00:41:12 Josh Guest Realm?

00:41:13 John Host Yeah, the realm. Doesn't say here. Do you remember if it was on Earth or not?

00:41:18 Josh Guest I don't.

00:41:19 John Host Oh, okay. Well, it's—you—those are some good touchstones, right? Because... Narnia. Is that another planet?

[Josh sighs.]

What's your gut feeling?

00:41:28 Josh Guest Well, so they start on Earth. Right?

00:41:30 John Host Yeah, of course they do.

00:41:31 Josh Guest They start on—and then they go through the wardrobe.

00:41:33 John Host Go through the wardrobe. To the—to the realm of Narnia.

00:41:37 Josh Guest Yeah.

00:41:38 John Host There's no part of Narnia that maps to the map of any part of Earth.

00:41:43 Josh Guest Right. But also, we don't know that it's somewhere else.

00:41:46 John Host Yeah. Does that feel like another planet to you, or another realm?

00:41:51 Josh Guest Much more realm-like to me.

00:41:53 John Host And—then let's not even define what "realm" is.

00:41:55 Josh Guest Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:41:56 John Host Does not feel like travel to another planet. Now—

00:41:58 Josh Guest It does not feel like travel to another planet.

00:41:59 John Host Now, uh, Middle-earth. In *Lord of the Rings*. Is that another planet? Or another realm?

00:42:08 Josh Guest I always assumed it was an inaccessible realm that was part of the planet Earth. *[Words slurring slightly]* Our Earth.

[Beat.]

00:42:15 John Host *[Laughs.]* Why are you saying that?

00:42:19 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Why do you say "Aherth"?

Josh: Just because it's—

[Both laugh quietly.]

Josh: No!

Josh & John: "Our Earth."

[Josh cracks up.]

John: I thought you were—thought you were pronouncing "Earth" in a special way.

Josh: *[Laughing]* I wasn't just—trying to put some—just put a little—

John: Like, "Oh, I didn't—that's how you say it—that's how you say it in Sindarin, I guess."

00:42:30 Josh Guest Mm-hm. *[Laughs.]* Yeah, I didn't all of a sudden be like, "What—uh, how would Ludacris say it? Like, at the end of a lyric?"

[John cracks up.]

Just, like... "Uh, yeah. Uh... The Hobbits went around, and they

walked through ARTH!"

[Both laugh.]

00:42:45 John Host Well... close, but no pipe-weed pipe—

[Josh laughs.]

—uh, out of Hobbiton there, Josh. Because... it's Earth! That's why it's called Middle-earth!

00:42:52 Josh Guest Yeah!

00:42:53 John Host It's supposed to be Earth a long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long time ago.

00:42:56 Josh Guest Oh, is "Middle" the time?

00:42:57 John Host Something like that.

00:42:58 Josh Guest Okay.

00:42:59 John Host It's hard—like, you know. You look at the maps of Middle-earth, the world—the global maps of Middle-earth, and they don't track to Earth. But this is supposedly in some prehistoric Pangea moment. It's—I—I could be getting this wrong. But I—

00:43:14 Josh Guest No, that makes sense.

00:43:15 John Host Fairly sure I got this right, 'cause I studied that *Maps of Middle-earth* book for a long time.

00:43:19 Josh Guest I always pictured it as, like, you'd take an elevator down to the middle of the Earth's crust, and it was hollow, and that's where the Hobbits were.

00:43:26 John Host *[Exhales sharply.]* You're talking about Hollow Earth.

00:43:28 Josh Guest Yeah.

00:43:29 John Host You're talking about the Hollow Earth theory.

[Josh laughs, John starts to speak but stops.]

00:43:31 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* The Hobbit Earth theory is what I'm talking about!

00:43:34 John Host I don't have time for Hollow Earth right now, but that would be a plan—*[stifles laughter]* that would be planet Earth.

So here's what I have to say about this, Lance. This—I understand where your partner Amy is coming from. This—fantasy is fantasy. It is fantastic; it is sort of... beyond the mundane, the literal worldly? And instead it is a flight of... fancy!

And I find myself—I think the Narnia thing was a real gut test for me. Because, you know, you tried, Lance, to load the dice. *[Chuckles.]* You tried to load the 20-sided dice on this one.

00:44:06 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* Which is very noticeable on a 20-sided dice. There's so many ways it could land—

00:44:12 John Host *[Laughing]* Yeah.

00:44:13 Josh Guest —and for it to be the same one every time? Just the—

00:44:14 John Host "Sixteen, sixteen, sixteen!"

[Josh laughs.]

Over and over and over again. Alright, you know—

00:44:18 Josh Guest Sure. You didn't go as high as loading it to be a critical hit, but sure.
[Laughs.]

00:44:22 John Host Right.

00:44:23 Josh Guest Sixteen every time is—that's a—you're putting your thumb on the scale.

00:44:24 John Host Hey. Hey, it's all about data! If you know what the data's gonna be every time, you have an advantage.

00:44:29 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:44:30 John Host But you name-dropped those Yatil Mountains in—in Greyhawk. Which is the original setting of *Dungeons & Dragons*. Initially the castle of Greyhawk, then the city of Greyhawk, and then... the World of Greyhawk is how it's defined! On the same database we were looking at together earlier, Josh, but a different page.

00:44:47 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:44:48 John Host The one—*[stifles laughter]*—the one about Greyhawk. The—the Greyhawk Wikipedia entry has some pretty amazing subheadings. Including, uh, "The *Greyhawk Wars*."

00:44:58 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:44:59 John Host Uh, "Gygax Departs."

[Josh laughs.]

"Greyhawk novels continue without Gord the Rogue." I mean, this is what I'm gonna be reading when I wake up at two o'clock in the morning tonight!

00:45:09 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* "Gygax Departs" sounds so much like the title of, like, a Phish song that they've never put on an album, *[laughing]* and when they play it live, it's 50 to 90 minutes, and everyone's like, "You've gotta hear 'Gygax Departs.'"

00:45:24 John Host Uh, yeah. No. Phish, you get that—I—we have a lot of Phish listeners. Get word—hey, Phish listeners. Get word to my friend, my personal friend Mike Gordon, bassist from Phish.

00:45:35 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:45:36 John Host We got a name of a song for him, and it's "Gygax Departs." He'll know what it means.

00:45:38 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Tell Mike Gordon—

[Recovers.]

They've gotta call—and Gary Gygax was the creator of...

00:45:45 John Host Gary Gygax was the creator, who—much like Steve Jobs—left his most well-known creation. But unlike Steve Jobs, never came back.

00:45:55 Josh Guest Mm-hm. He—*[laughing]* he departed. Never came back!

00:45:57 John Host He depart—he departed. He departed on the—uh, on the gray boats

to Elven... Heaven, or whatever it is.

00:46:03 Josh Guest It's all—it's all covered in the song lyrics.

00:46:04 John Host Yeah, it's—*[laughs]*—

00:46:05 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Let's not bore the listeners.

00:46:07 John Host *[Laughs.]* It's gonna be a hot song! You know what? Hang on! Mike Gordon, my friend the bassist from Phish? Give me a minute. If there is a *Judge John Hodgman* listener who wants to write and perform "Gygax Departs"...

[Josh laughs.]

...in—I'm not—in the style of Phish?

00:46:27 Josh Guest Yeah.

00:46:28 John Host In your own style. In your own style.

00:46:30 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Ooh!

00:46:31 John Host You can freestyle it. I would love to hear that song. There is also a subheading in here called "Setting." Setting. In which the name of the planet on which the world of Greyhawk is located is named. And d'you know what the name of that planet is?

00:46:47 Josh Guest I'm gonna guess "Greyhawk."

00:46:50 John Host Oerth!

[Josh cracks up.]

O-E-R-T-H!

00:46:54 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Wait! The thing I said by accident earlier?!

00:46:56 John Host Yes, that's why I was so... struck by what you said! I couldn't—I thought you were getting ahead of me; you were in my mind!

00:47:02 Josh Guest No! I was way behind! *[Laughs.]* Wow.

00:47:06 John Host So, yeah! Absolutely, you know, Lance, you're right, that Greyhawk is on a planet. But I—but—and, you know, other fantasy novels take place in worlds that have clear planetary features. Like, I'm gonna—I'm going to say that, uh, Westeros, is on a planet that is not Earth. Because it doesn't share any of the geographical features of Earth. Does not track to any of the history of Earth. *[Stifles laughter.]* It's a completely separate planet, probably in a different dimension, that happens to share most of the language and culture of medieval England.

[Josh laughs, John stifles laughter.]

For reasons unknown. It's a faaantasy! It defies logic!

00:47:47 Josh Guest Ooogh. You know my—have we been over this? That I hate when stuff has British accents just 'cause it's old?

[Laughing] That is pet peeve of mine. Give 'em Greek accents for once! Anything!

00:48:01 John Host *[Stifles laughter.]* Are you trying to come in here and poop on my favorite show, *I, Claudius*?

00:48:04 Josh Guest No!

00:48:05 John Host Ancient Rome, some of the best British actors of all time?

00:48:07 Josh Guest Not—it's not that they can never be British. It's just that sometimes, they should be German.

[Both laugh.]

Or... you know!

00:48:16 John Host Yeah.

00:48:17 Josh Guest I just think it—a variety of accents. *[Laughs.]*

00:48:18 John Host In any case! Fantasy worlds can be set on planets. And identified as such, for sure. But that does not mean that a fantasy world is necessarily a planet. Because it exists outside of rational description. That's the point of the fantasy. It is a world! It is a realm. It is a—it is a dimension. It is a—and who knows? Maybe in this fantasy world, there aren't planets. You're just—you—maybe the planets are flat. Maybe the—maybe it's like Asgard, floating out in space, flat.

00:48:50 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:48:51 John Host Like a—like a—like the cover of a Yes record album.

[Josh laughs.]

A big feature—big floating island. In the—in the cosmic slop, or whatever. It can be whatever it wants to be.

Now, Lance's partner Amy, don't roll your eyes. Lance isn't wrong. Greyhawk's on a planet! It's called Oerth!

[Josh laughs.]

There's all kinds of precedent for this. There's all kinds of science fiction and fantasy crossover. All kinds of fantasy stories that are actually taking place on other planets.

00:49:19 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:49:20 John Host That are not Earth. And are defined as planets. But it's okay for the Narnia to be in a symbolic realm. Of myth. Um, which is not—not bound to a planetary scale.

00:49:33 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:49:34 John Host That's what I would say. Josh? Do you disagree?

00:49:36 Josh Guest No, I think this is a great ruling!

00:49:38 John Host Thank you.

00:49:39 Josh Guest I think, like... it is helpful to have—

00:49:41 John Host Nice to hear that from the new host of the podcast, that I still got it.

00:49:44 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Yeah, your last ruling was a terrific one. Your final ruling, I should say.

00:49:50 John Host *[Laughs.]* Oh—whoa! Not even gonna let me finish this one out?!

00:49:53 Josh Guest We're flipping this—we're passing the baton mid-podcast. *[Laughs.]*

00:49:57 John Host Alright, here we go! Next one! Josh, here's something from Faith.
[Josh laughs harder.]
From unknown location.

00:50:04 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Josh:** No, I'm uncomfortable with this! No! *[Laughs.]*
John: Faith writes—no, no! You—no, no, no! No, look! I—look! Take it. This is a good one.
Josh: *[Laughing]* Augh, you're gonna make me smoke the whole podcast!
[John laughs quietly.]

00:50:12 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* "Oh, you wanna host the podcast? Host the whole thing!"

00:50:15 John Host *[Laughs quietly.]* No, not the—we're almost done!

00:50:17 Josh Guest That's true.

00:50:18 John Host Faith says:
"I am an engineer for a medical device design consulting company. As such, a lot of what the details—"
Excuse me. See? This is hard to do. I don't—I'm not—I—this is hard work, to read the letters.

00:50:28 Josh Guest Do you wanna switch back?

00:50:30 John Host ...Yeah, let's do it.

00:50:31 Josh Guest Okay.
"I am an engineer for a medical devi—" This is still Faith, from an unknown location.

00:50:36 John Host Right.

00:50:37 Josh Guest "I'm an engineer for a medical device design consulting company. As such, a lot of the details of my work are confidential due to client NDAs. When I talk evasively about what I'm working on, it leads to some weird statements, like, 'Customs wouldn't let me through with our... prototype.'
And, 'Our device isn't making the building shake anymore, so that's nice.'"
[John laughs.]
"And, 'Ugh. I got stuck in the blood room again!'"

00:50:59 John Host Whooooa!

00:51:01 Josh Guest "My friends Lo and Marian have taken to accusing me of being a spy due to these statements. I don't mind being given a more sinister job title, and naturally, I play up the weirdness of my workplace for fun. However, I object to being labeled a spy, when titles like 'mad scientist' or 'henchperson to a supervillain' fit so much better.

I feel like I told them objects moved on their own in my house, and they concluded I had a Bigfoot infestation. Please tell Lo and Marian to make the accusations fit the evidence."

00:51:30 John Host Now... sometimes, Josh, Jennifer Marmor and I... do a little polish on the letters.

00:51:35 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

00:51:36 John Host To tighten them up. Because, um... you know, we're a professional podcast.

00:51:40 Josh Guest Yeah!

00:51:41 John Host You know. If—if we're gonna play... an audio-only of someone driving and not talking?

[Josh chuckles.]

We're gonna keep it to... 75 seconds.

00:51:50 Josh Guest Yeah.

00:51:51 John Host Just out of courtesy to the listeners.

00:51:53 Josh Guest Fifty-one to seventy-five seconds is the sweet spot, *[laughing]* I think we all know.

00:51:55 John Host *[Laughing]* Right.

[Stops laughing.]

And as I was looking through this this morning, Jennifer Marmor, I saw this line. "I feel like I told them objects moved on their own in my house, and they concluded I had a Bigfoot infestation."

And I was—and I was like, "I don't understand what that means. I'm gonna cut it out, 'cause it's not clear."

But then I read it again, and I'm like, "It's not—it's still not clear. But it's beautiful."

"I feel like I—"

00:52:21 Josh Guest I—I think I understand what it means!

00:52:22 John Host Okay! What's your interpretation? 'Cause this feels like... I would like to hear this lyric in "Gygax Departs," 'cause it feels... lyrical and poetic to me.

00:52:28 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* Yeah. If you're writing "Gygax Departs," you gotta put this in there.

00:52:32 John Host Right.

00:52:33 Josh Guest It is a beautiful turn of phrase. I thought a beautifully written letter. But I think specifically, what, uh—what Faith is saying—

00:52:40 John Host Yeah.

00:52:41 Josh Guest —is that she gave a probl—she—she provided a set of evidence that leads to a specific kind of conclusion. And her friends have reached a different conclus—like, the wrong conclusion that is in a similar grouping. Right?

00:52:57 John Host Right.

00:52:58 Josh Guest She gave them, "Hey, there's a—a magical thing happening." Clearly... ghost.

00:53:02 John Host Right.

00:53:03 Josh Guest And they've inferred, instead... Bigfoot.

00:53:05 John Host She gave them a poltergeist clue—

00:53:07 Josh Guest Yes.

00:53:08 John Host —and they came back with a cryptozoology, uh, conclusion.

00:53:10 Josh Guest Right. And so what she's saying is parallel. She's giving them all—

00:53:14 John Host Alright.

00:53:15 Josh Guest "Mr.—Mr. Police, I've given you all the clues."

[Both laugh.]

As the poster for that movie *The Snowman* said.

[John laughs, Josh stifles laughter.]

"Mr. Police, you could've saved her. I gave her all the clues." Um—

00:53:22 John Host Wow.

00:53:24 Josh Guest And she's saying—all the clues for... henchperson, or mad scientist.

00:53:27 John Host Or mad scientist.

00:53:29 Josh Guest And they have instead, incorrectly, uh—

00:53:31 John Host Called her a spy.

00:53:32 Josh Guest —drawn a direct line to spy.

00:53:35 John Host Merely because she's being coy about where she works.

00:53:37 Josh Guest Mm-hm. Yes.

00:53:39 John Host As opposed to what she is choosing to reveal about where she works.

00:53:42 Josh Guest Yes.

00:53:43 John Host Which would definitely point to—absolutely, Faith. I'm not even gonna make you a hench—a henchperson to a supervillain. Forget it. Mad scientist all the way. Look. You got stuck in the blood room. Happens all the time.

[Josh chuckles.]

But you're not getting ordered into the blood room. You're taking charge. You are the mad scientist here. You know what I mean?

00:54:01 Josh Guest Right. You—you buzzed your assistant. And you were like, "Hey, can you reserve me the blood room from two to three?"

[Both laugh.]

00:54:09 John Host You know, you can do that online now. You don't have to—you can reserve the blood room online. They have a whole—a whole reservation system.

00:54:15 Josh Guest Yeah, I know, but it's like—I—I'm putting my finger down like I'm still talking on the intercom. "Yeah, I know. Uh, it's just like—agh, I don't wanna learn the whole new thing, and it didn't work last time. Can you just do it?"

00:54:23 John Host "Uh..."

00:54:24 Josh Guest "Can you just put in for the blood room, two to three?"

00:54:26 John Host *[Dismayed]* "Okay. You're the boss..."

Good roleplay, by the way.

[Josh cracks up.]

But Faith, you are the boss! You're the mad scientist! You are the supervillain! Own it! Own—well, you do own it! Don't undermine yourself with, uh—with "henchperson."

And, yeah! Mo and... Laurian? No, sorry. Lo and Marian?

[Josh laughs.]

Cool na—both—all of those. All four of those are cool names. But Lo and Marian are the two that you have.

00:54:56 Josh Guest If you'd like to acquire two more friends...

[John laughs quietly.]

[Laughing] I've got suggestions for their names.

00:55:01 John Host *[Laughs.]* In any case, don't undersell Faith! Faith is a mad scientist, not a—not a spy.

00:55:09 Josh Guest I have a thought on this.

00:55:11 John Host Please! Share.

00:55:12 Josh Guest May—? So... Faith. You're right. Obviously you're a person of science, a person of logic, both. And I think you're right, on the grounds of being factually correct. However... this is their bit. You can't dictate the rules of their bit. If it was hurtful to you, you could say, "Please don't do this bit at me."

But for you to be like, "You guys have a joke about me. I'm fine with you making the joke. But I wish it were correct"? Not the rules of bits, *[stifles laughter]* in my opinion.

00:55:41 John Host Whoa! Judge Josh Gondelman comes in and reverses the decision!

00:55:45 Josh Guest I'm—this is just—we're—we're—this is a dialogue! I feel like I could come around to your side, but I do feel like... what she's doing—she's, um—she's applying logic to the bit world. And I feel like there's no faster way to take the air out of a bit.

00:55:59 John Host Right. This isn't a planet, this is a realm.

[Josh laughs.]

You don't apply logic to—

00:56:03 Josh Guest This is a realm!

00:56:04 John Host You don't apply logic to Bit World. It's not a pl—

[Josh laughs, John stifles laughter.]

Fair enough! Alright. Guess what? You can't interfere with their bit, but Judge John Hodgman's gonna come back and say... turnabout is fair play. Your new bit is: Their names are Mo and Larien.

00:56:19 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:56:20 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* I would even go as far as to say your new bit can be being mad that they say "spy" and not "supervillain." But you can't actually try to convince them, *[laughing]* because then it's not a bit anymore.

00:56:34 John Host Fair enough! Judge Jo—Judge—it's not easy to say yours—name either.

00:56:38 Josh Guest No, it's bad.

00:56:39 John Host Judge Josh Gondelman—no, it's all the Judge Jah. All the Judge Juhs.

[Josh laughs.]

They're all hard to say. But Judge Josh Gondelman has spoken.

Let's take another quick break. When we come back... an ice cream dispute, and an ice cream recommendation! On the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:56:58 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:57:00 Promo Clip *[Sound of thunder and rain plays in background.]*

Mallory O'Meara: Are you riddled with guilt over your TBR pile?

Brea Grant: Are you filled with shame about a book that you just can't seem to finish?

Mallory: Are you having regrets because grad school killed your love of reading?

[Angelic choir. Rain and thunder stop.]

Brea: We're *Reading Glasses*, and we're here to help!

Mallory: I'm Mallory.

Brea: And I'm Brea.

Music: Rhythmic percussion.

Mallory: Let us absolve you of all your reading guilt.

00:57:21 Promo Clip **Brea:** Stuck on a book you don't like?

Mallory: We'll help you dump it!

Brea: Can't figure out what to read next?

Mallory: We'll recommend something in your wheelhouse.

Brea: Can't decide where to buy your books from?

Mallory: We'll point you in the right direction!

Brea: No matter what you read or how you read it...

Mallory: ...We'll help you do it better.

Brea: *Reading Glasses!* Every Thursday on Maximum Fun.

[Music stops.]

00:57:41 Promo Clip

Music: Cheerful guitar.

John Moe: Hey, it's John Moe. And look, these are challenging times for our mental and emotional health. I get it! That's why I'm so excited for my new podcast, *Depresh Mode*. We're tackling depression, anxiety, trauma, stress, the kinds of things that are just super common but don't get talked about nearly enough. Conversations that are illuminating, honest, and sometimes pretty funny, with folks like Patton Oswalt, Kelsey Darragh, and Open Mike Eagle.

Open Mike Eagle: I have this public-facing self, and then I have my emotional self that tends to stay hidden. It was about finding a way to communicate to somebody that, like, there's terrible sh—*[cut]* going on back here!

John: Plus psychiatrists, psychologist, and all kinds of folks! On *Depresh Mode*, we're working together. Learning, helping each other out. We're a team! Join our team! *Depresh Mode*, from Maximum Fun. Wherever you get your podcasts.

[Music fades out.]

00:58:33 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:58:34 John Promo

Josh, we're taking a break from clearing this docket. So let's talk about what you have going on in your life. Is there anything coming up, in the—in the Gondelverse?

00:58:44 Josh Promo

The big excitement is visiting my parents, which I can't invite all the listeners in on. *[Laughs.]* But—

00:58:49 John Promo

Understood! We'll run a contest! Fifteen lucky listeners—!

[Both laugh.]

00:58:54 Josh Promo

Will get to hang out with the Lyons Gondelman family!

[Both laugh.]

Um, I am ongoingly making episodes of *Make My Day*, my comedy game show podcast, which you've been a great guest on. And—

00:59:06 John Promo

Thank you. It is such a fun podcast.

| | | | |
|----------|------|-------|--|
| 00:59:07 | Josh | Promo | Thank you! |
| 00:59:08 | John | Promo | <i>Make My Day</i> podcast. It is truly—look. You've all heard the voice of Josh Gondelman for a—a while now. On this episode, other episodes. You know what he does? He makes people's day. |
| | | | <i>[Josh chuckles.]</i> |
| | | | And on this podcast, just invites people to return the favor. One good friend comes on, and they play some games, and everybody's days get made! It's a <u>real</u> fun podcast! |
| 00:59:28 | Josh | Promo | Thank you! |
| 00:59:29 | John | Promo | Where and when? Where and when? |
| 00:59:31 | Josh | Promo | Every Tuesday, wherever you want. Wherever you get your podcasts. |
| 00:59:35 | John | Promo | Every Tuesday, wherever you get your podcasts, the <i>Make My Day</i> podcast. And of course, Josh, you're also the author of a <u>book</u> which is still available. |
| 00:59:46 | Josh | Promo | Still available! They didn't pull it off the shelves. |
| 00:59:49 | John | Promo | Called <i>Nice Try</i> . |
| 00:59:50 | Josh | Promo | <i>Stories of Best Intentions and Mixed Results</i> . |
| 00:59:53 | John | Promo | It's such a funny and wonderful book. |
| 00:59:54 | Josh | Promo | Thank you! That means so much. I—I'm really proud of it still, and it's—it's been out for about a year and a half, but I am like—every time someone, like, posts a picture that they're reading it and enjoyed it, I'm like, "Yeah! People can still do that!" <i>[Chuckling]</i> It feels so nice! |
| 01:00:07 | John | Promo | Look. We just passed the <u>third</u> -year anniversary of the publication of <i>Vacationland</i> , and the one-year anniversary of the publication of <i>Medallion Status</i> . And I'm telling you what. They're still in print. You can go get them at any places books are sold or loaned. If you would like a personalized copy of either of those—or any of my other books, the <i>Complete World Knowledge</i> trilogy—you can just call Books Are Magic! Or go to BooksAreMagic.com, and let them know that you'd like me to sign it to a friend of yours! |
| | | | You can even give me a simple, basic message! But don't—please don't write a hundred words that you want me to copy out. Uh, BooksAreMagic.com. Also you can get Josh's book there, as well as other books! Uh, wherever you get your books, please try to support your local book shop. |
| | | | As well—I always say this, and I'm gonna say it again— Bit.ly/dicktown . B-I-T dot L-Y slash D-I-C-K-T-O-W-N. That brings you to the Hulu page for the short-form animated comedy that David Rees and I made called <i>Dicktown</i> . And I hope to have some news from Richardsville for you soon. But, uh, not yet! |
| | | | In the mean time! Uh, you can go and catch up on all ten episodes of <i>Dicktown</i> over there. And please take a listen to David Rees's podcast <i>Election Profit Makers</i> "on another network," as they used to say on network television. |

01:01:31 John Promo That's what's going on with me! Also and finally, but not leastly, MaxFunDrive is coming up. Please remember. As always and every year, I will be shouting out thanks to those who upgrade or join at the Leadership Squad level or above. If you upgrade your existing membership to Leadership Squad or join at Leadership Squad—or above—just send me an email with proof of your upgrade or your new membership, and I will go on Instagram and say thank you! It's the only version of Cameo I will ever do.

[Josh laughs.]

And I only do it once a year. *[Stifles laughter.]* And it's a lot of fun. And I promise to be more timely about it this time! So keep an ear out for the MaxFunDrive. You'll be hearing all about it, of course. In the mean time, podcasts go on!

Let's get back to the docket, shall we, Josh?

01:02:21 Josh Promo

Let's!

01:02:22 John Promo

Okay.

01:02:23 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

01:02:25 Josh Guest

Welcome back to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast!

01:02:27 John Host

Whoa! More role-switching! Wow, okay!

[Josh laughs.]

You're the bailiff again!

01:02:32 Josh Guest

I feel like we're—this is like a—we're—we've been doing this Beastie Boys-style.

[Both laugh.]

01:02:37 John Host

We're just passing the mic.

01:02:38 Josh Guest

Yeah!

01:02:39 John Host

I gotcha. Okay, very good! I like it.

01:02:40 Josh Guest

Here's a case from Eric, from the state of...

01:02:43 John Host

...Maryland!

01:02:45 Josh Guest

[Laughs.] Eric says:

"My wife is a monster. She will eat the center of an ice cream carton, hogging all the mixings, as that's where they always settle. I'm not looking for an injunction to stop her. If she doesn't stop on her own, she won't grow as a person and understand she's being selfish. What I'm looking for is a ruling that I am not violating our marriage vows—to honor and cherish—by calling her a monster for doing it."

01:03:10 John Host

So first of all, calling people monsters, that's a—that's been a thing on *Judge John Hodgman* for a long time. Let me get a ruling from Josh... Judge Gondelman.

[Both laugh.]

Uh, because you are—you are a person of compassion, and of

empathy.

01:03:25 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

01:03:27 John Host Is it ever okay for a spouse to call their other spouse, in a—in a joshing manner, a monster? Or no?

01:03:33 Josh Guest *[Sighs.]* I don't wanna say never.

01:03:35 John Host Right.

01:03:36 Josh Guest But I don't think it's—it's a good habit.

01:03:39 John Host Alright. Fair enough. So be careful, Eric. Again, it's contextual. But that said, is there a crime here?

So, Josh. I had no idea what Eric was talking about.

01:03:52 Josh Guest Me, either!

01:03:53 John Host Eating the core of an ice cream carton, because all the mixings always settle in the middle of the ice cream carton.

01:04:02 Josh Guest I thought maybe they had some kind of neighbor who haphazardly, uh, threw together an ice cream with some mixings and didn't stir it well. Because unless—outside of those occasional cart—pints you get, with like a core of chocolate in the middle?

01:04:19 John Host With a core.

01:04:20 Josh Guest Yeah.

01:04:21 John Host Right. A literal, like, core of caramel or something like that.

01:04:22 Josh Guest Yeah! Um, I've never noticed that the—the mixings settle in the middle.

01:04:27 John Host Yeah. Ice cream is not a colloid.

[Josh laughs.]

It's not—*[stifles laughter]*—there's nothing settling in there, and think that the ice—these are commercially—I believe they get these from the Wegmans family of stores, their ice creams.

01:04:39 Josh Guest Mm.

01:04:41 John Host And I think that—I think that high-quality ice cream companies want to have an even dispersal of stuff inside. Jennifer Marmor, you ever—you ever notice that the... the ingredients, the chunky ingredients of a—of an ice cream settle in the middle of the carton?

01:04:57 Jennifer Producer I've never experienced that.

01:04:59 John Host That's very interesting. So I asked Eric to provide some evidence that this was actually happening. And he sent me two photos, which you—well... Yeah, I guess we're gonna put these on the show page at MaximumFun.org, as well as the Instagram. At [@judgejohnhodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman) on Instagram. Because, I mean, just—you know, maybe a content warning. 'Cause this first one kinda...

[Josh cracks up.]

This fir—*[stifles laughter]*—this first one is... I guess white chocolate raspberry from Wegmans? And the way his wife has scooped in the middle is—looks a little bit like a wound. It's a little bit—

01:05:29 Josh Guest *[Laughs.]* It's a little graphic!

01:05:31 John Host It's a little—*[stifles laughter]*—it's a little bit... scary-looking.

01:05:34 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

01:05:36 John Host And he's—and he wrote, uh, "We purchase the Wegmans store brand. This is white chocolate raspberry. I've also included one—a maple walnut—showing how I scoop the ice cream."

And that's the second photo. Uh, which, you can see that the scooping is much e—more even. You're seeing a clean, like—

01:05:54 Josh Guest Almost—almost too even.

01:05:56 John Host Well—

01:05:57 Josh Guest It's unsettling in a different way.

[Both laugh.]

01:05:58 John Host It looks—it looks like the topography of a fantasy land.

[Josh laughs.]

It has peaks and valleys.

[Laughs quietly.]

You could probably find a settlement of Elves and Halflings in there.

01:06:07 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm. Weg—Wegmarnia.

01:06:08 John Host But—*[bursts out laughing]*. Alright! That's it! I'm going home.

[Josh cracks up.]

Enjoy your new job, Josh. Jennifer Marmor, you don't mind working for Josh, right? He's a wonderful guy.

01:06:20 Jennifer Producer Not at all; he's the best!

[Josh laughs.]

01:06:21 John Host Yeah. Hm. *[Distastefully]* Wegmarnia...

[Josh laughs.]

It doe—whether it's a planet, or a plane floating in an alternate dimension in space, there is definitely a... a fairly flat topography here.

01:06:35 Josh Guest Yeah.

01:06:37 John Host That suggests that he's taking it off fairly evenly. But neither of these photos, I have to say, Eric... proves your initial claim that the—that the mixings, as you call them, settle in the middle! I mean, what you would need to do—

01:06:50 Josh Guest Yeah.

01:06:51 Jennifer Producer Really?

01:06:52 John Host Well, no—I mean... Because if you look at the white chocolate raspberry, this is—his wife is digging into... the—the ice cream right

in the center. She's creating a hole. A mine, as it were. You know, a traditional coal mine. You dig into the earth. As opposed to just taking off the top of a mountain.

01:07:09 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

01:07:10 John Host Like they do in West Virginia to get coal, and/or... *[stifles laughter]* build airports.

01:07:14 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm.

01:07:15 John Host One of the most ter—have you ever flown into Charleston, West Virginia, or out, Josh?

01:07:18 Josh Guest No!

01:07:19 John Host It's—the—the—you know, it's—the terrain is so mountainous and rocky that they had to cut off the top of a—of a mountain, to put the airport on top! You drive up and around a mou—it looks like an evil villain's lair.

01:07:32 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

01:07:33 John Host 'Cause you drive around the mountain, slowly inclining, to get up to this top of the mountain that's been cut off. And then you just have an airport up there, and the runway doesn't have to be very long.

[Josh laughs, John stifles laughter.]

Because you're already—you—you zip right off into the air!

01:07:49 Josh Guest Yeah, there's already air underneath you!

01:07:50 John Host Yeah. It's ter—it's scary stuff!

01:07:53 Josh Guest I like that.

01:07:54 John Host I—I performed in Charleston with, uh, Justin and Sydnee McElroy, and that was a lot of fun.

01:07:59 Josh Guest Uh-huh.

01:08:00 John Host But in any case, she is—she's digging deep into the core. Leaving the rest—the rest of the surface untouched. We don't know—we don't see what's underneath... the untouched surface there. This—

01:08:12 Josh Guest Agreed.

01:08:13 Jennifer Producer That's true.

01:08:14 John Host Yeah.

01:08:15 Josh Guest We're gonna need more data.

[Josh and/or Jennifer laughs.]

01:08:16 John Host I—we're gonna need more data! I need—alright, Eric? And I need you guys to each—

[Someone stifles laughter.]

—eat 150—

[Josh and John laugh.]

—containers.

01:08:26 Jennifer Producer Most delicious ruling. *[Chuckles.]*

01:08:27 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

01:08:28 John Host Hundred and fifty containers, and take a—a—maybe not 150 containers. I want you to live. But I would like you to—

01:08:34 Josh Guest Seventy-five. Fift—seventy-five and seventy-five. *[Laughs quietly.]*

01:08:36 John Host Yeah. Seventy-five containers each...

01:08:39 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm.

01:08:40 John Host ...of white chocolate raspberry. Seventy-five containers of... maple walnut.

01:08:44 Josh Guest This is all a red herring.

01:08:45 John Host Oh.

01:08:46 Josh Guest Which is one of my favorite flavors of Voodoo Doughnut.

[John and Josh laugh.]

This, I think, is all a red herring! Because really, he doesn't want remediation of this, or amelioration of this scooping problem. What he wants is the permission to call his wife a monster for her scooping style. Which I feel we should not grant, regardless! *[Chuckles.]*

01:09:08 John Host Yeah. I mean, even if you were just coming to the podcast, Eric, saying that... "I don't like that my wife scoops in the middle of the ice cream, 'cause it bothers me aesthetically. And I would prefer that she do a strip-mining operation, the way I do on my maple walnut."

That still would not be evidence of monstrosity.

01:09:27 Josh Guest *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm.

01:09:28 John Host You need to go a little bit farther. A little bit farther.

01:09:29 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* Even if she was doing it out of spite!

[Stops laughing.]

Unless you have some kind of—perhaps an obsessive-compulsive disorder. Not to be glib! Where that would be, uh... off-putting to you. If it's just a—a neurotypical issue of ice cream preference... *[chuckling]* no thank you.

01:09:46 John Host Yeah. That said, Eric, I can appreciate why you would like your wife to be... literally more even-handed?

01:09:52 Josh Guest Mm-hm. *[Chuckles.]*

01:09:53 John Host In her ice cream—scooping. Um, because if you dig down into that core deeper, without widening it? It—it's gonna get dangerous. You're gonna be definitely scuffing your knuckles on that ice cream as you dig in there. There's no reason for that. It doesn't look good. I'm almost thinking about not posting the photo, because it looks so unnerving. But—

01:10:15 Josh Guest Unsettling, for sure.

01:10:16 John Host Yeah. So, you know, I—I'm willing to order that Eric's wife scoop a little bit more evenly.

01:10:24 Josh Guest Mm-hm!

01:10:25 John Host But I don't think she—I don't think she deserves "monster" for this one.

01:10:26 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

01:10:27 Josh Guest Agreed.

01:10:28 John Host Alright, Josh, we got a letter. Uh, from Maya! Who had a related ice cream—y recommendation! A few weeks ago, uh, Jesse Thorn and I were talking about putting salt on vanilla ice cream. Which I had never thought of. Which is great.

01:10:43 Josh Guest Mm.

01:10:44 John Host Because ice cream is the only—I love—I don't care for sweets, but I do love salty and fatty things.

01:10:49 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

01:10:50 John Host And I had never thought—ice cream is right on the tolerable edge of the—of sweetness for me, because it is so creamy and rich. I like that.

01:10:58 Josh Guest Mm-hm.

01:10:59 John Host But if I could add salt to it, forget it. I'm just gonna eat that for the rest of my life. So Maya says:

"My husband's and my favorite ice cream combination is vanilla ice cream with flaky salt, fresh figs, and fruity olive oil. We got the idea years ago from *Saveur* magazine, and it has become a mainstay. If figs are out of season, we sometimes use fig jam. And a flaky, smoked salt is even better."

That is their—Maya's recommendation! And... I do not care for smoked salt. But it seems like a fun thing to try, otherwise! And I bet—if you like smoked salt, I bet it'd be delicious! Josh, you do any—

01:11:42 Josh Guest Yeah.

01:11:43 John Host You do any weird modifications with your ice cream?

01:11:46 Josh Guest No, I'm pretty, uh...

01:11:47 John Host Pretty vanilla?

01:11:48 Josh Guest Pretty meat and pota—*[laughing]* meat and potatoes with my ice cream.

01:11:51 John Host That's—meat and potatoes is my other favorite flavor of Voodoo, uh, Doughnut.

[Josh laughs.]

Go on.

01:11:58 Josh Guest I love it. Um... I—but I—I'll get the, like, fancy, boutique pints of ice cream, and eat them slowly over the week. That's what I do.

01:12:07 John Host Eat them slowly over the week?

01:12:09 Josh Guest Mm-hm! They're pretty good.

01:12:10 John Host Slowly taking off top layer after top layer.

01:12:14 Josh Guest I do—*[sighs]*.

01:12:15 John Host Never mining the core.

01:12:15 Josh Guest I—because it is mine and mine alone—my wife and I do not share ice cream often—then I'm—I take a few liberties. If I see a big chunk of something I want, I take it out and put it in my bowl with no compunction.

01:12:29 John Host You know what, Josh?

01:12:30 Josh Guest Mm-hm?

01:12:31 John Host And listeners of the world? However you enjoy ice cream is the way you enjoy ice cream. And you should revel in it. Just get what you want! You deserve to get what you want in life! Obviously, there are times when... we have to share; there are times when we should share; there's times we have no choice but to share.

But there are also certain gifts that we have to give ourselves from time to time, too. Your own ice cream, the way you want it? That's a good thing. I think you deserve it.

Josh? You did a good job; you deserve ice cream.

01:13:00 Josh Guest Thank you!

01:13:01 John Host Jennifer Marmor? ...You did a good job; you deserve ice cream.

01:13:05 Jennifer Producer Thank you!

01:13:06 John Host Don't give any to your baby.

01:13:08 Jennifer Producer No problem. I won't.

01:13:09 John Host *[Laughing]* Okay.

[Josh laughs.]

That's a mean thing to say.

01:13:11 Jennifer Producer He doesn't know it's good yet.

01:13:13 John Host Yes!

01:13:14 Josh Guest I have a friend whose parents told—told her that yogurt was ice cream until she was, like... seven, and figured it out.

01:13:22 John Host Parents, don't lie to your children.

[Josh laughs, John stifles laughter.]

Don't—*[stifles laughter]*—don't tell—don't tell them that yogurt is ice cream, and you know how I feel about... Santa Claus.

The docket is clear! That's the end of episode one of *Judge Josh Gondelman*.

[Josh cracks up.]

Our producer is Jennifer Marmor. Thank you, Josh, for joining me today! Josh, uh, where can people find you on social media?

01:13:44 Josh Guest I am on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) at @joshgondelman. G-O-N-D-E-L... "man."

01:13:51 John Host You got joshgondelman for both your Instagram and Twitter handle?

01:13:53 Josh Guest Yeah.

01:13:54 John Host *[Exhales sharply.]* Pretty cool.

01:13:55 Josh Guest I—I had to—*[exhales sharply, stifling laughter]* I spent tens of thousands of dollars buying off another Josh Gondelman.

01:13:59 John Host *[Laughs.]* It would make me so sad if you did that. Follow us on Twitter!

01:14:02 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* That would be horrible!

01:14:04 John Host I'm at [@hodgman](#). But on Instagram, I'm [johnhodgman](#). 'Cause "hodgman" was taken, and that person has not updated it in ten years! Whoever that is.

As a show, we are on Instagram at [@judgejohnhodgman](#). Please follow us, like us, bookmark us, send your stories, comment more than four words, get us into that algorithm. Make sure to hashtag your *Judge John Hodgman* social media #JJHo, and check out the Maximum Fun subreddit if you'd like to discuss this episode. I'll be jumping into the subreddit a little bit more these days.

Submit your cases at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](#), or email me, hodgman@maximumfun.org. We'll talk to you next time on the *Judge... Josh-on... Hodgegelman* podcast.

01:14:50 Josh Guest *[Laughing]* The perfect name for a podcast.

01:14:54 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

01:14:57 John Host Surprise post-credits sequence! That's right. The *Judge John Hodgman* Expanded Universe is back on! With... the extra content that no one requested! Until I started doing it, and now it's expected!

The other week I asked you to write in to tell me, when was the age that you never et a tomato until? Or if you had never et a tomato at all!

I don't know why I did this; I get enough mail. But it was very nice to hear from you all, and I am very glad to share with you, now... the roll call of the tomato never-ettors! These are the people who wrote in to say that they have never et a tomato until later of life, or even until this very day; they've never et one even now! So... let's go!

01:15:39 Music Music Music plays.

01:15:41 John Host Padric B., age 36, never et. Quote, "not even a piece."

Bethany P. of Edinboro never et any tomato 'til age 19, when Bethany P. had their first slice of pizza. They waited so long because of childhood dairy aversion, and maybe because of Edinboro. I don't know... if there's pizza there. Or they—if it's even pizza!

Greg C., age unknown, whose dislike of tomatoes betrays his own family legacy; his grandfather was a tomato farmer!

Benjamin K, age 51, never et. Repulsed when family members in Georgia make a tomato and mayonnaise sandwich, one of my favorites, but guess what? Benjamin K. holds his tongue, 'cause

people like what they like.

Chuck Bryant, famous podcaster of Georgia, never et a slice of tomato.

Adam M., age 42, never et one! Also never et pickles, cucumbers, cherries, plums, mangos, strawberries, watermelon, and bananas! Fresh or un-fresh. Keeping it picky, Adam M.!

01:16:37 John

Host

Alan C., age 53! Never et! And says he is at the age when he can be stubborn.

Ty B., age 41, has never... swallowed a tomato. Quote, he's never "swallowed a tomato." Weird loophole, Ty, I don't know what you're doing.

Kim G., age 35, never et one. In part because Kim G. lives with autism, and finds many tastes and textures overwhelming. Kim asked Judge John Hodgman—that's me—to stop sneering at people with texture issues on the podcast. I didn't realize I did that, Kim. I apologize. I won't do it again.

Robin F., age 39, never et one! Reports that even, quote, "tomato sludge on a sandwich where a tomato has been removed," is disgusting, and Robin N. gives it to their wife to eat.

Kayla O., age unknown, never et one. Kayla has also never et a sandwich or a burrito! In their life! Never et a sandwich! They're working on it.

01:17:31 John

Host

Tom Hale never ate a hamburger 'til age 26, and then never again 'til age 37. Doesn't like hamburgers. In both cases, no tomato.

Andrew C. You are not the unicorn you claimed to be in your email. Lots of people apparently have never et tomatoes! You're one of them, at age 39. Never et one.

James E., age 54, never et a tomato. Nor never et an onion!

Lex F., age 40, never et one! And also, never drunk coffee 'til this year!

Robert E., age 44, never et a tomato. But he said if I read his letter out loud, he will et one! Okay, do it, Robert E., go et one!

01:18:09 John

Host

Andrew G., age 29, never et one. Always thought they were alone in the world; obviously not true.

J.M.'s son, age ten, never et a tomato. But that's perfectly reasonable. He's a—he's a—he's a child. That's perfectly fine. There's still time to et a tomato.

Lucas O., age 34, never et a tomato. Allergic to all nightshades! Including tomato, eggplant, pepper—potatoes! And tobacco. I didn't know a potato was a nightshade.

Lory T., age late 30s, never et a tomato. Lory T.'s dad used to say that eating tomatoes and all veggies would, quote, "put hair on their

chest." This made Lory feel that they would never become, quote, "a proper woman," and was especially distressing to Lory because they never felt sufficiently girly when they were young! And only in the last few years has Lory realized that they are nonbinary. So there you go! Dads! Go easy on jokes! Jokes... Jokes are not always great.

01:19:04 John Host

Karen J., age 36, never et one, and is sickened by all fruits. Though they have tried a fresh banana.

Thomas R., age 54, never et one. Also loves beans, but hates lentils, and once in the army ate only plain bread for three days straight.

And finally, J. Michael S., age 39, never et a tomato. J. Michael also reports, quote, "I grew up in Quincy, Massachusetts, where I did children's theatre with the *Doughboys*' Mike Mitchell. If you and Jesse ever want to see a video of Mitch playing LeFou in *Beauty and the Beast* at age 12, I'm your guy."

Yes, J. Michael S., you are my guy. Get me that tape! So that we can play it someday in another secret post-credits sequence.

Meanwhile, if you have never et a tomato, now you know you are not alone. Therefore, you do not need to write me any more about it. But... I love you. Talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

[Music ends.]

01:19:59 Music Transition

A cheerful ukulele chord.

01:20:00 Speaker 1 Guest

MaximumFun.org.

01:20:02 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

01:20:04 Speaker 3 Guest

Artist owned—

01:20:05 Speaker 4 Guest

—audience supported.