

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	Three gavel bangs.
00:00:02	Jesse Thorn	Host	Welcome to <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> . This week's episode was recorded live at the Wheeler Theater in Port Townsend, Washington.
00:00:11	John Hodgman	Host	It was our first stop on our frontier justice tour of the west. It was full of surprises. And boy, oh boy, was it a treat to finally meet Mayor David, the person responsible for getting us to Port Townsend, Washington. We had a great time. So, without further ado, let's go to the stage at the—what do you call it again, Jesse? The <i>[pronouncing the H]</i> Wheeler Theater?
00:00:35	Jesse	Host	<i>[Pronouncing the H.]</i> The Wheeler Theater. Wheeler Theater, in Port Townsend Wh-ashington.
00:00:40	John	Host	Let's go! <u>Why</u> not!
00:00:42	Jesse	Host	<i>[Audience cheering.]</i>

Port Townsend, Washington, you've come to us desperate for justice! And here we are at the Wheeler Theater to deliver it! Let's bring out our first set of litigants. Please welcome to the stage Amy and Toby!

[Audience cheering.]

Tonight's case: "Burden of Hoof". Amy brings the case against her husband, Toby. Amy and Toby became accidental farmers when they moved back to the island where Toby grew up and bought a home that came with a tractor.

[Scattered laughter.]

Now that their kids are nearly grown, they wanna spend more time sailing. But the farm is too much work. Amy wants to build lodging to hire help. Toby says it's not that simple. Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide. Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and delivers an obscure cultural reference.

[The crowd goes wild.]

00:01:43	John	Host	Hello, there! I am surrounded by hundreds, probably thousands of killer bees. If I weren't wearing this suit, I would be dead in an instant.
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00:01:56	Jesse	Host	Bailiff Jesse Thorn, please swear them in. Amy and Toby, please rise and raise your right hands. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God or whatever?
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[They agree.]

Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that—*[fumbling into a chuckle]* something about the controversial raccoon lodge? I'm so excited! I don't even know anything about it!

[They agree.]

Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

00:02:24	John	Host	Amy and Toby, you may now be seated for an immediate summary judgment in one of yours favors. Can either of you name the piece of culture that I apparently direct quoted as I entered this courtroom, here in Port Townsend, Washington? Amy, why don't you go first?
00:02:39	Amy	Guest	—this is not what I expected. Um.
00:02:43	John	Host	What did you expect, Amy?!
			<i>[They laugh.]</i>
00:02:44	Jesse	Host	You didn't expect to be—you didn't expect to be part of a live podcast recording?
00:02:50	Amy	Guest	I was expecting maybe a little Lyle Lovett, "if I had a boat".
00:02:55	John	Host	A little Lyle Lovett! You mean like a short quote from Lyle Lovett or a tiny version of Lyle Lovett?
00:03:01	Amy	Guest	Oh, I'd take either!
00:03:02	John	Host	Because I don't know how—I didn't think you could make Lyle Lovett more adorable.
			<i>[They laugh and Amy agrees.]</i>
			So, it seems like him being kind of tall and wiry is the key to his appeal. But a little tiny one? That would be terrific.
00:03:12	Amy	Guest	You know the song he sings about if I had a boat?
00:03:15	John	Host	If I had a boat?
			<i>[Amy confirms.]</i>
			'Cause that figures into your pitch.
00:03:17	Amy	Guest	Well, 'cause it has a pony too. On the boat.
00:03:20	John	Host	He has a pony on the boat.
			<i>[Amy confirms.]</i>
			Okay, no, I see why that would be good—knowing what I know about your case. But—
			<i>[Amy agrees.]</i>
			Well, let's just put it down and we'll just—I'll just write it down here.
			<i>[A singular audience member guffaws in the background.]</i>
			As a possibility. I'm not saying whether you're right or wrong, but I'm writing it down for you, now.
00:03:34	Amy	Guest	Yeah, no, no, that's not my choice.
00:03:35	John	Host	Toby, what is your guess?
00:03:37	Toby	Guest	It's a stretch, but I'm midway through the memoir written by Madeleine Albright, called <i>Madam Secretary</i> , and there's a—
00:03:44	John	Host	<i>[Interrupting emphatically.]</i> Toby, you're <u>absolutely</u> right!
			<i>[Jesse cackles.]</i>
			That's incredible!
00:03:47	Toby	Guest	She does have a chapter—
00:03:48	John	Host	<i>[Playfully.]</i> That's <u>incredible</u> !
00:03:49	Jesse	Host	It's from Boutros Boutros-Ghali's memoir!
00:03:52	John	Host	Let's go back to the—let's go back to the quote.

00:03:53 Toby Guest It was called “The Raccoon Follies”.
00:03:55 John Host “I am surrounded by hundreds, probably thousands of killers bees. If I wasn’t wearing this suit, I would be dead in an instant. My name is Madeleine Albright. Enjoy my memoir.”

[The audience laughs and claps.]

00:04:08 Toby Guest It’s the introduction!
00:04:11 Jesse Host It was plausible!
00:04:13 John Host You gotta grab them right up top. Madeleine knows that. I wanna know how Madeleine Albright got into this situation! What a record scratch!

00:04:20 Toby Guest She’s an extraordinary person.
00:04:22 Amy Guest So is Lyle Lovett.
00:04:24 Jesse Host This is not a referendum on whether Madeleine Albright is an extraordinary person!

[They laugh.]

Irrespective of how we feel about her policies, we can agree that she is extraordinary.

[Mumbling from the crowd.]

00:04:36 John Host I don’t—does she do some—does she do some beekeeping in the—? In the—?

00:04:40 Toby Guest No, it was a reference to the raccoon follies, which was a little-known dispute in the Yugoslavia border, between—you know.

00:04:50 Amy Guest This is—this is why nothing gets done.

[The audience laughs.]

00:04:51 John Host Amy, what’s Toby doing? What—what the—I know there’s some children in the audience, so I apologize. What the hellfire is Toby doing right now? Trying to—are you spinning a gag?

00:05:03 Toby Guest It’s a delay tactic so I don’t have to get to the court!

[They laugh.]

00:05:07 John Host To the case!
All guesses are wrong! I’m afraid. So, we will have to hear this case. Who seeks justice in this court?

00:05:13 Amy Guest I do.
00:05:14 John Host Amy. What is the justice that you seek?
00:05:16 Amy Guest We need help. And we need help, so we—
00:05:20 John Host That’s not what I’m here for.

[Laughter.]

I’m here to tell one of you you’re wrong. That might be helpful. Was it you two, first of all, that I ran into while walking through the compound today?

[Amy confirms.]

00:05:37 Toby Guest I should recuse myself.
00:05:39 Amy Guest Did she try to pass you a \$100 bill or something?
Nope. Just a jar of jam.

00:05:41	Toby	Guest	Fair enough.
00:05:42	John	Host	We did receive a case of jam.
00:05:45	Jesse	Host	The perfect thing to get on the first show of your tour.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:05:51	Toby	Guest	Just think of what you're gonna get in Portland or, uh—
00:05:52	John	Host	I'm gonna drink one of those jars of jam every day, on the way.
00:05:56	Jesse	Host	I brought my extra jam carryon. So.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:06:01	John	Host	The best thing—the best thing to give people who are on a tour is large jars of liquids.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:06:10	Jesse	Host	Can we have something delicate, bulky, and illegal to take on a plane? <i>[Chuckles.]</i> Anyway! At the merch booth after the show, we'll be giving out jam.
00:06:22	Amy	Guest	We sell them for \$8 a jar.
00:06:24	Jesse	Host	Wow!
00:06:26	John	Host	I'll sell them for 3. I'll put them at the foot of the stage. I'm sure they're delicious! I want to hear all about the jam. What is the help that you need?
00:06:38	Amy	Guest	We—so, we're accidental farmers. We did not mean to do this.
00:06:41	John	Host	Sure. You say that as though—oh, by the way! I forgot to say what the piece of culture was. Here we go!
			All guesses are wrong! That actually is a direct quote, apparently, from the movie <i>We Bought a Zoo</i> . I hope that's true! I looked it up on the internet. It's not a movie that I've seen. But according to my brief here—much in the same way that some people just buy zoos, you accidentally became a farmer. Or farmers, as the case may be. Tell me about the help that you need.
00:07:14	Amy	Guest	We need some person/people to start helping us on the farm on a regular basis so that we can start to transition away from farming all the time, eeevery day, and spend a little bit more time on our forever boat that we just acquired.
00:07:40	John	Host	Oh, you just acquired a boat. That's why you wanted the cultural reference to be about a boat with a pony on it.
			<i>[Amy confirms.]</i>
			You wanna combine your two worlds of land and sea. <i>[Chuckles.]</i>
00:07:49	Amy	Guest	Kinda!
00:07:50	John	Host	Do you have livestock on the farm?
			<i>[Amy confirms.]</i>
			What kind of livestock? A pony?
00:07:54	Amy	Guest	No.
00:07:55	John	Host	What?
00:07:56	Amy	Guest	We have sheep.
00:07:57	John	Host	Okay. How many sheep do you have?
00:07:59	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<i>[Both mumbling to one another.]</i>

Amy: I knew he was gonna ask.

Toby: 30?

Amy: 30-ish?

00:08:00 John Host
00:08:01 Amy Guest

You're not good farmers.
[More confidently.] 30-ish. Too many.

[Laughter.]

00:08:03 John Host

You gotta count them! You gotta count them. You can't just fall asleep. You gotta finish counting them.

00:08:08 Toby Guest
00:08:13 John Host

They used to all have names. But, uh. *[Chuckles.]*
I mean, I know—I know this is Port Townsend. You can't just go to sleep!

You—there is a question that I have that we have to answer first.
How did you become accidental farmers?

00:08:29 Amy Guest
00:08:30 John Host

His fault.
Toby? It's your fault.

[Toby laughs.]

00:08:33 Toby Guest

What happened?
I grew up on Vashon Island, and my folks still live there. And we were interested in moving back.

00:08:37 John Host
00:08:41 Toby Guest

That's an island here in the Puget Sound of Washington state. And we'd been looking at property or houses to purchase and move our family. And so, my fifth-grade teacher and middle school librarian—who are married, couples—were at the point of their life where they needed to—where they elected to move into assisted living. And their little farm—and it was a small farm, at the time—was offered to us.

00:09:02 John Host
00:09:03 Toby Host

On Vashon Island.
On Vashon, and it was just a perfect spot. And so, we bought it and fired up the tractor, and the next thing we knew, we were surrounded with sheep and chickens and ducks and berries and orchards and a lot of work.

00:09:15 John Host
00:09:16 Toby Host
00:09:19 John Host

Like you—did you have the tractor already?
It was like a magic tractor. We just *[makes an explosion noise]*.
Yeah, you just—you just turned on the tractor and all these animals rushed out of the woods and said, "You have to care for us now."

00:09:24 Toby Guest

It kind of feels that way, honestly. *[Laughs.]* I mean, we do enjoy farming. It's been super fulfilling. And we've actually made some of these decisions coherently along the way. But now, we find ourselves—you know—underwater in terms of responsibilities.

00:09:37 John Host
00:09:39 Toby Guest
00:09:40 John Host

How long have you had this farm?
13 years?
13 years of farming. And you said sheep and what else did you say rushed out of the woods to you?

00:09:48 Amy Guest

Chickens. We actually did have a rooster that rushed out of the woods and adopted us.

00:09:51 John Host
00:09:52 Amy Guest
00:09:54 John Host

Really?
His name's Sparky.
Is this a real island?

[Amy confirms with a laugh.]

Okay. *[Chuckles.]* And it's not a fantasy island? 'Cause those exist! Those exist. They're real. I believe in them. What else? What do you do on the farm? What do you do with the sheep? What do you do with the chickens? Obviously, you gave us a whole bunch of jam that we can't use, so you make that. You must have an orchard.

[Amy confirms.]

00:10:20 Amy Guest Tell me about—what do you got? Tell me about your crops.
00:10:30 Toby Guest Okay. We have a little over 100 trees in the orchard. And then, we raise berries. We have raspberries, longan berries, cascade berries. We've dabbled in black raspberries.
00:10:39 Amy Guest In our effort to scale things down, we built a greenhouse and started growing tomatoes and cucumbers. And we thought it was a great idea to grow loofah sponges last year.
It almost worked!

[Laughter.]

00:10:42 Jesse Host Those don't live under the ocean?
00:10:44 Amy Guest No!
00:10:45 John Host What—yeah, maybe we should clarify this. What the—? How do you—how do you grow a loof?
00:10:47 Toby Guest They're like a zucchini that dries out.
00:10:50 John Host How do you grow a loofah?
00:10:51 Amy Guest It's a Chinese vegetable that actually looks like a zucchini, but—in theory—you let it grow until it's fully mature, and then all that's left is the cytoskeleton sort of thing.
00:11:03 Jesse Host Can I ask you a question? How many other household products are actually Chinese vegetables?

[Laughter.]

00:11:13 John Host I just feel like I'm learning a lot about farming right now! You'd be—you'd be very surprised. *[Laughs.]* Safety razors.

[Jesse laughs.]

00:11:24 Jesse Host Lint rollers.
00:11:26 John Host Vitamixes.
Vitamixes actually are kind of a gourd, actually! Did you know that?
You almost grew a loofah, which sounds like a great title for your book. With an introduction by Madeleine Albright in there.

[They agree.]

00:11:49 Amy Guest Maybe you can give up this farm. It's a lot of work! And how do you make money on the farm? Is this—? I mean, is this a livelihood or is this all hobby farming?
00:11:50 John Host So, we have day jobs.
00:11:51 Amy Guest Okay, what are your day jobs?
00:11:53 John Host I'm a middle school science teacher.
Terrific! Oh, okay!

[The audience applauds.]

00:12:04 Toby Guest Ooooh! Mmm! Alright! Interesting. Congratulations. Wonderful. And what do you do for a living, sir?

00:12:13 John Host I'm an—besides being an accidental farmer, a technology—I am in technology for public transit systems and also on the schoolboard.

00:12:17 Toby Guest You make the little thing you pull to go “ding! I wanna get off”? That's—

00:12:25 John Host I help support the technology to allow people to pay with Apple Pay for example, when they get on a train or a bus.

00:12:26 Toby Guest Oh! Fantastic.

00:12:28 John Host And all the systems that happen. Right, most of them originally Chinese vegetables, I believe.

[Laughter.]

00:12:32 Jesse Host Are you both also graphic designers and librarians? Because it's a little on the nose for *Judge John Hodgman* listeners, here.

[They laugh.]

00:12:41 Amy Guest We live next door to a graphic designer, and we bought our house from a librarian.

00:12:45 John Host Well, there you go! That all sounds—I mean, those are both real jobs. I mean, particularly teaching middle school is all-consuming—emotionally and, well, it takes up a lot of time. Farming is also, I thought, a full-time job. Is it or is it not?

00:13:02 Amy Guest Well, you can squeeze it in.

00:13:04 Toby Guest People ask us, “How do you have all this time to farm?” And, uh, we don't watch a lot of sports! I guess that's really the answer.

[Chuckles.]

00:13:10 John Host That is the answer to everything.

00:13:11 Toby Guest It seems to clear up about like 10 to 15 hours a week.

00:13:15 Jesse Host I happen to watch a lot of sports, and my farm is dope!

[Laughter.]

I know exactly how many sheep I have. Yeah. It's a grow-op. Technically, it's a grow-op.

00:13:25 John Host So, what do you—what do you sell and how do you sell it?

00:13:27 Amy Guest We—*[chuckling]* in an effort to work less, we started a farmstand.

00:13:33 John Host Sure. In an effort to work less. How so?

00:13:37 Amy Guest We put the things in the farmstand, and people come and help themselves.

00:13:40 John Host But what were you doing with all these boysenberries and Washington state berries and goo-goo berries and—

00:13:49 Jesse Host Durdleberries.

00:13:50 John Host What was happening before the farmstand?

00:13:52 Toby Guest At one time, we tried a CSA, where we literally drove boxes of beautifully prepared vegetables and—

00:13:57 Amy Guest Curated.

00:13:59 Toby Guest —fruit to people's houses. And then, set it on their porch, 'cause they were out playing on their sailboats. And they'd come home late at night, and it would all be wilted and sad. That was not great.

00:14:10 John Host Gotcha. So, you were making people come to you. That was how you were saving time and effort at that point.

[Amy confirms.]

Okay. And is the farmstand successful?

00:14:17 Amy Guest Yeah. I'd say it is.
 00:14:18 Toby Guest Well, it became successful monetarily—which, you know, the scale of things, we made like \$5000 in the farmstand. Amy's bread that she makes and the jam are big sellers and decent margin. And eggs and berries sell well. Everything else is a huge money-loser.
 00:14:39 Amy Guest Well—but we were—I mean, we have been raising lamb for a number of years, and we raise it for meat. And we were really, really lucky that from the time we started keeping sheep, we had a local abattoir on the island who would come and harvest for us. But they moved to Oklahoma, I think. Yeah.
 00:15:01 Toby Guest East of the Rockies.
 00:15:02 Amy Guest Yeah. So, we don't have anyone to harvest. But that was another—so, we sell lamb too.
 00:15:07 John Host You told that story with admirable use of euphemism.

[Laughter.]

As an omnivore, I appreciate that. In any case, is—do you wanna sell the farm because you're having trouble making ends meet or you wanna go to sea? You have a boat. Tell me about buying this boat.
 00:15:27 Amy Guest Oh, well, when we met and fell in love, we—he was living on a sailboat.
 00:15:35 Jesse Host Let the record reflect—

[The audience winds into laughter and slow applause.]

—that Amy made a *[noncommittal sound]* gesture. A sort of “I mean, eh—?”
 00:15:49 John Host Yeah, a shrug your shoulders like, “Eh, I guess—you know. You know. Fell in love. Ugh.”
 00:15:53 Toby Guest Uuugh, what would be the word here.
 00:15:57 John Host Yeah, I mean, you have to understand that in agrarian societies, love does not necessarily factor into marriages. If you've accidentally bought a farm off your former fifth grade teacher, you're not looking for someone to have romance with. You're looking for someone who can haul in the goo-goo berries.

[Toby agrees with a laugh.]

But then, she finds a boat to buy. And this is a boating community, Port Townsend. Is it not?

[They confirm.]

That's—it is on the ocean. There are a lot of wooden boats made here. I mean, they really do call it the Maine of the Pacific Northwest.

[Cheers from the audience.]

00:16:30 Toby Guest In fact, when we were driving here this morning, we thought, “When was the last time we were here in a car?” It's been 20 years that we've come frequently on the boat.
 00:16:38 John Host Oh, right. From Vashon Island. Right. On a ferry boat, not on your—
 00:16:41 Toby Guest No, on the sailboat.
 00:16:43 John Host You sailed over here?

00:16:44	Amy	Guest	Not <u>today</u> .
00:16:45	John	Host	Well, why not?! I would—I wouldn't mind a cruise tomorrow morning!
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
			Enjoying some sensitively harvested lamb.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
			Merguez sausage. We could eat all that jam. We could have a great time. You could sail us down to Seattle! That's where we're going tomorrow. How long would that take?
00:17:09	Toby	Guest	Depending on the currents and the wind, it could take—
00:17:11	John	Host	Oh, well, now you're gonna get technical.
00:17:13	Toby	Guest	8 to 12 hours.
00:17:14	John	Host	8 to 12 hours! It's perfect. Let's leave now.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
			You have a sailboat, not a powerboat.
			<i>[Amy confirms.]</i>
			Tell me about this boat and how did it come into your life? Because in my experience, you don't go out looking to buy a boat, because you don't want disaster in your life. It happens to you. A boat shows up at your door or you— <i>[laughing]</i> you accidentally drop something in the yard, and all of the sudden it rushes out to you from the woods. And then, it says, "Give me all your money." And it's like you're only a 14-foot rowboat! And it's like, "Sorry!"
00:17:49	Toby	Guest	It sounds like you're describing raccoons.
00:17:50	John	Host	"Sorry, you moved to Maine. It happens. You have to rebuild it every year." Stupid, wooden boat. And it might not have even been made by Jimmy Steele. Yeah, that's what we found out. If you read <i>Vacationland</i> , you'd know this boat was supposedly made by a local craftsman. And now, I'm being told it was made by some other guy. Anyway.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
			Boats are fun. How did this one come into your life? Is there a reason you don't want to answer this question? Because I've asked it four times, and it's followed by a deep sigh every time. And I understand it, because answering the question means you have to acknowledge to strangers that not only do you harvest lambs, but you bought a boat. Two things that's hard to brag about.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
			But stipulated, it's part of this case. So, where is the boat from? When did you get it? And how did it happen? Amy. Stop avoiding the question. Don't wait for the translation! Answer the question!
00:18:46	Amy	Guest	In my defense, I'm from Chicago.
00:18:48	John	Host	Alright! They have fake oceans there! You're not gonna tell me it's landlocked! <i>[Pounding on the table.]</i> Answer the question, Amy!

00:18:57	Amy	Guest	We bought the boat because we thought that we would live on it. Okay! You think you're the first person to think about that?! That's what everyone who ever looks at a boat thinks about. Why do you think there are house boats? You think I haven't slept in my rowboat?
00:19:01	John	Host	
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:19:16	Amy	Guest	What are you ashamed of?! Or self-conscious. I'm not ashamed of it. I love it. I would say it's more—it's more your love. I mean, you're the captain.
00:19:25	Toby	Guest	<i>[Chuckling.]</i> What are you taking me to court for?
			<i>[Amy giggles.]</i>
00:19:30	John	Host	Well, I mean, look. When we—I mean, I think—you know, people who—spouses who own boats together have real trouble. And it has a lot to do with the fact that there can only be a captain in the boat. And it's really hard to acknowledge that you're the captain.
00:19:43	Toby	Guest	We've sailed all over the Pacific—well, west coast of the Pacific and Puget Sound and up into Canada. And we're excellent teammates on the crew. The sailboat—I was living on a sailboat when we first met. And we continued to race boats for years, and when we had kids we decided to live on land and accidentally got the farm. Which was super fulfilling, in terms of expressing our family values and what was important to us and what we wanted our kids to learn as they got older. And now, they're—one's in college and one's almost in college. And we wanna get back to sailing.
00:20:20	John	Host	You want to sail away and never see them again.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:20:23	Toby	Guest	Some days.
00:20:24	John	Host	I understand. You're going through a big life transition.
00:20:27	Jesse	Host	Judge Hodgman, I had a friend when I was in middle school whose dad lived on a boat. And my friend didn't have to brush his teeth as long as he used a toothpick.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
			It's true! It's a little something called boat values!
			<i>[The laughter continues.]</i>
00:20:53	John	Host	I'm gonna ask you one—
00:20:54	Jesse	Host	<i>[Shouting.]</i> Suck your lime, boy!
00:20:56	John	Host	I'm going to ask you one more time. How—just this is a simple question. What is—alright, what is the name of the boat?
00:21:04	Amy	Guest	Odonata.
00:21:05	John	Host	No, I really wanna know the answer.
00:21:07	Amy	Guest	It's Iain for dragonfly.
00:21:09	John	Host	For dragonfly. Oh, that's lovely. And how long have you had it? Why are you looking at each other like this a—you murdered someone?!
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:21:20	Jesse	Host	100% a murder is in here somewhere. Our podcast just got <u>so</u> much more popular.

00:21:33 Toby Guest *[Laughter.]*
 You didn't know this was gonna be a true crime story. *[Chuckles.]*

00:21:37 John Host How—how long—? Look. We have a lot of show!

00:21:41 Toby Guest Two and a half years.

00:21:42 John Host Two and a half years! Why was that so hard?

00:21:44 Amy Guest You know, I don't know. Well, okay, so—

00:21:46 John Host Do you feel ambivalent about Dragonfly? That's what I'm gonna call it.

00:21:49 Amy Guest No! No, no, no, no, no, no. Not at all. No, if anything we had hoped to take our kids sailing when they were a lot younger, but the farm happened. And so, we've been—

00:22:00 John Host These things just keep happening to you.

00:22:01 Amy Guest So, we've been landlocked for a long time. And now, you know, our son is at college. Our daughter commutes off-island every day for school. She's gonna be going to college soon. We just are at that point where I'm a little afraid that by the time we get everything dialed in, we're gonna be too old to use our boat! And we're kind of—

00:22:22 John Host Are you done with the farm? Is that what you're trying to tell me? You're done with the farm. You're done with land. You wanna go to sea. I know—let the record show, Toby is crossing his fingers.

00:22:31 Amy Guest We can't be done yet.

00:22:33 John Host Why? *[Beat.]* A curse?!

00:22:40 Jesse Host *[Laughter.]*
 The curse of the harvested lamb!

00:22:45 John Host *[Laughter.]*
 You're like, "Will you hear the silence of the lambs?!"

00:22:51 Amy Guest What is it? What's the timeframe?
 Okay. So, we're legally obligated to farm. We, um—

00:22:56 John Host What is happening in Washington state?!

00:23:00 Amy Guest We love our rules. So, we—

00:23:03 Jesse Host 20 years ago, we met a tiny man named Rumpelstiltskin.

00:23:09 John Host *[Laughter.]*
 You are legally obligated to farm. Explain.

00:23:12 Amy Guest Unless we sell it. So, we—so, we've sold farm preservation easements to our local government, in the county where we reside. And the stipulation is that it is a farm, and it really should be farmed. And so, we're expected to produce and sell some things from the farm.

00:23:37 John Host In order to live there.

00:23:39 Amy Guest Well, in order to get a discount on our property taxes.

00:23:43 John Host Okay. These are real things.

00:23:45 Amy Guest Have you seen the property taxes around here?

00:23:46 John Host I know we—what's that?

00:23:47 Amy Guest The property taxes around here are—

00:23:49 John Host I understand! I understand. So, in other words, the farm has to be productive or else you're gonna—it's just not gonna be feasible for you to continue, because of the tax burden.

00:23:59 Amy Guest But the other thing is, we want—like the farm is really dope.

[Laughter.]

00:24:07	John	Host	And we want it to keep going. But you can't— Yeah. I mean, that might be your answer right there.
			<i>[Raucous laughter and cheers.]</i>
00:24:21	Jesse	Host	Problem is, it's not dope enough.
00:24:25	John	Host	You need to drop these oochie-wallie berries. Yeah. 'Cause there's a <u>kinder</u> way to harvest certain things, if you know what I mean. Drugs.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:24:40	Jesse	Host	Sorry, kids. Let's take a quick recess and hear about this week's <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> sponsor. We'll be back in just a moment on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast.
00:24:48	Sound Effect	Transition	Three gavel bangs.
00:24:50	Sound Effect	Transition	Three gavel bangs.
00:24:53	John	Host	So, what do you wanna do with the farm? You wanna continue to make it productive, but also get out on the boat and leave your children behind.
00:24:59	Amy	Guest	And really want to sort of help kind of I guess have people apprentice on our farm, which is common in other places. So, it's called WWOOFing.
00:25:12	John	Host	Of course, it is. WWOOFing is apprenticing on a farm.
00:25:17	Amy	Guest	Yeah. Willing Workers on Organic Farms.
00:25:19	John	Host	Willing Workers on Organic Farms.
			<i>[Amy says the acronym along with him.]</i>
00:25:23	Jesse	Host	Okay. It's a hippie thing for hippies.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:25:26	Amy	Guest	But the problem is, we live on this little island. And you have to house these WWOOFers. And we don't have a place to house the WWOOFers. So, we need to place to house the WWOOFers.
00:25:37	John	Host	And what do you propose? A WWOOF house?
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:25:42	Amy	Guest	Yeah. So, okay. Here come—this is—this is the crack. So, we need to spend some money to build—
00:25:50	John	Host	A WWOOF house.
00:25:51	Amy	Guest	A WWOOFing house.
00:25:52	John	Host	A WWOOFery.
00:25:53	Amy	Guest	A WWOOFery. Uh-huh. Yeah.
00:25:55	John	Host	Okay. And you don't wanna do that, Toby?
00:25:58	Toby	Guest	I don't dispute that we need help. And I think that in a world of magic money, that having a tiny home or a place to house farmworkers would be fabulous and useful. I don't necessarily think it's the top priority. So, with limited time and money, I don't think a tiny—

00:26:17 John Host You don't wanna build the WWOOFery. That's all I'm asking. You don't wanna spend the money to do it. You don't wanna have WWOOFies in your—WWOOFs on your—

00:26:25 Toby Guest It sounds—it sounds great. I'm not sure we can stretch enough to do that.

00:26:29 John Host You crossed your fingers when I asked Amy if she just wanted to give up the farm. You wanna just give up the farm.

00:26:34 Toby Guest I've loved the farm, and it is precious to us. It's a ton of work, and I'd like—

00:26:40 John Host I think that you are under the impression that the farm has feelings.

00:26:45 Toby Guest *[Laughter.]*
Many days, I am!

00:26:46 John Host And I understand why you feel that way. In fact—

00:26:50 Toby Guest I think that—I mean, I know that Amy and I both have mutual objectives to find a way to reduce the amount of work and time and energy that we're spending on the farm so that we can do other things that we love to do together. I think the core—

00:27:04 Jesse Host Sorry, kids.

00:27:08 Amy Guest *[Laughter.]*
Like come to this show.

00:27:11 Toby Guest But the core dispute is how do—you know, what do we do next? It's very overwhelming thinking about all the things that you could do that might be helpful.

00:27:20 John Host What is the alternative that you suggest?

00:27:23 Toby Guest I think that in an ideal state, we would—we'd pare down the flock of sheep. We would reduce the size of the garden. And by doing that, we would—

00:27:32 John Host How would you pare down the flock of sheep?

00:27:39 Toby Guest *[Laughter.]*
Oh! I know. Send them on vacation in France?
Exactly. *[Laughs.]* Send them to auction?

00:27:43 Jesse Host Load 'em onto the boat and take them to Oklahoma!

00:27:48 John Host You would reduce your flock of sheep.

00:27:51 Toby Guest Yeah, and pare down the amount of garden that we manage, because that's very summer-intensive.

00:27:56 John Host How would you pare it down?

00:27:58 Toby Guest That's a great question. I don't know. And then, moving the sheep and chickens—

00:28:02 Amy Guest No answer! Do you see that? No answer!

00:28:05 Toby Guest *[Laughter.]*
That's a great question! But I don't think building a tiny house solves that problem.

00:28:09 John Host You wanna build—Amy, you wanna build a tiny house. And you're gonna stack these WWOOFies inside this tiny little shed as an opportunity so that they can continue to produce on the farm.

00:28:19 Amy Guest So, we basically have everything that needs to go into this WWOOFery in the garage taking up space.

00:28:28 John Host You're talking about the materials to make a house.

00:28:31 Amy Guest The couch. The stove. The mini-septic tank.

00:28:34 Toby Guest Old refrigerator.

00:28:35	John	Host	You're talking about furniture! I was talking about two-by-fours. You're talking about furniture.
00:28:38	Amy	Guest	Oh! But like, all of that—we have an extra refrigerator—
00:28:41	John	Host	Look, none of us enjoy talking about money or boats. How much is this house gonna cost?
00:28:46	Amy	Guest	Here, I have—wait! So, it's a cascade of purchases. And I'd like to amend it a little bit.
00:28:53	John	Host	Look, local references—
			<i>[Laughter and scattered applause.]</i>
			—are how I pander to the audience. A cascade. I got it. Tell me more.
00:29:07	Amy	Guest	Okay. So, being a teacher and being a scientist, I like to look at the end—like, what we're going for—and plan backwards. So, in preparation for tonight, which was fantastic, it got me thinking.
00:29:20	John	Host	We're glad you're here.
00:29:21	Amy	Guest	This is exciting. So—
00:29:23	John	Host	For me, too. We're going on a boat tomorrow!
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:29:30	Amy	Guest	It's gonna be so fun! So, I actually did some research, and we could build a barn first. Wait! Wait!
00:29:36	John	Host	You're telling me your farm doesn't have a barn already?!
			<i>[Amy confirms.]</i>
00:29:42	Jesse	Host	Gonna build a barn. Can I recommend, start with a manger.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:29:48	Amy	Guest	If—if there's no room at the inn, start with a manger. We have two mangers!
00:29:49	John	Host	Who knows, maybe someone will come around and bring you some gold and myrrh, and then you can trade that.
00:29:52	Amy	Guest	We have <u>two</u> mangers, and where the sheep and the chickens cohabit, that's where the WWOOFery needs to be. So, first we'd need to build a barn. And the big thing is, I've been asking for this barn for many years. I mean, you have to admit that. But it's like we, like—
00:30:15	Jesse	Host	Asking who? Santa?
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
00:30:21	Amy	Guest	So, Toby's the friendly connector on the island. He knows everybody. He grew up on the island, and he's always helping everybody else. Which is wonderful. Like, I love that, and I really appreciate that. And it's time for him to start calling in some favors to get things. To, you know, to pour some concrete and—
00:30:43	John	Host	Have a barn raising, Harrison Ford in <i>Witness</i> style.
00:30:46	Amy	Guest	Literally, we helped somebody else with a barn raising.
00:30:50	Toby	Guest	And now they're sailing on their boat across the Atlantic Ocean! Today!
00:30:51	Amy	Guest	And now they're sailing on their boat! Right now! Right now!

[Laughter.]

00:31:00 John Host They are in the middle of the Atlantic right now, and he helped to build their barn.
00:31:08 Toby Guest So, your contention is that Toby could make a few phone calls and you would have a WWOOFery in a day or whatever. But Toby, you refuse to do it. Why?
00:31:19 John Host This is a—I don't refuse to do it, but we started a few minutes ago talking about how important a tiny home was, and now we're talking about building a barn. And what I really need help with—
00:31:20 Toby Guest It's all—it's a cascade. You understand?
00:31:23 John Host It's a—it is a—it is absolutely a serious cascade of events.
00:31:26 Jesse Host It's not one thing; it's a cascade of events!
Toby, you have to build a barn to reduce your workload.

[Laughter.]

00:31:34 Toby Guest See how—right. Bingo. And then we can build a tiny home.
00:31:41 Jesse Host The cost is—the cost is—Toby, the cost is irrelevant. Everything is cheaper on an island.

[Laughter.]

00:31:49 Amy Guest Right? Totally.
00:31:52 Toby Guest You've put your finger on it though. Right? So, in this cascade of events, all of the sudden we're investing time and money to get us to the point where it actually is an easier job that allows us to spend more time elsewhere.
00:32:04 John Host What is your timeframe? Let's just say that Toby was into your scheme, Amy. What's your timeframe for the cascade of events? When would you see the benefit of the farm and the WWOOFery and the WWOOFies and the reduced—like, is this a five-year plan? A four-year plan? A two-year plan? A one-year plan?
00:32:26 Amy Guest Two years at max.
00:32:28 John Host Is that—? Okay, two years at the max, putting off your dream. Your mutual dream.
00:32:33 Amy Guest Well, I think also it—I totally understand that it's antithetical to spend more money on something that we both agree eventually we would like to sell. But I think that we're to this point where—
00:32:47 John Host People do that all the time. *[Chuckles.]*
00:32:50 Toby Guest And we do need to get to a point where there's kind of a turnkey operation that someone could continue this work. And right now, it's sort of, you know, in the middle of things.
00:32:57 Jesse Host Look, right now the business model is you make the stuff. You put it out for people to enjoy it. You only ask them afterward for money if they want to. This business model's insane!

[Laughter.]

00:33:12 John Host You brought some evidence. Some photographic evidence.
00:33:14 Jesse Host You guys and I have both made \$5000 since then.

[Laughter.]

00:33:19 John Host You brought some evidence, some photographic evidence. Let's take a look at that now. Can we see the first slide, please? Oh, look at this. Oooh! Well, this is beautiful! This isn't the nightmare that you portray it to be.
00:33:30 Jesse Host So, this is this beautiful even without a local abattoir?

00:33:36 Toby Guest *[Laughter.]*
 00:33:40 John Host We'd have fewer sheep if the abattoir was still around.
 00:33:46 Amy Guest So, these are two photos side-by-side, one of which is our rustic
 00:33:47 John Host crates of beautiful orchard fruits.
 00:33:46 Amy Guest That's our farmstand.
 00:33:47 John Host That's—I imagined that was your farmstand. I didn't think that this
 photo of a bunch of sheep next to a tree was your farmstand,
 madam.

00:33:54 Amy Guest *[Laughter.]*
 They're right next to the farmstand. That is like—people love it.
 They come up. They visit the farmstand. They—you know—take
 some fruit or some bread, and they just sit and like hang out and
 visit with the sheep. Yeah.

00:34:07 John Host Do you enjoy farming? Is this fun for you?
 00:34:10 Toby Guest There's aspects of it that are fun.

[Laughter.]

00:34:17 John Host And occasionally, I resent it. *[Laughs.]*
 Well, I don't think most farmers think that farming is a whole bunch
 of fun.

00:34:21 Toby Guest We don't mind—I mean, I don't—
 00:34:22 John Host Well, it's hard work!
 00:34:23 Toby Guest It's really hard work. And I don't mind working hard, but it's tiresome
 after a while.

00:34:27 John Host What's the next photograph that you sent us? Oooh! There you are
 in your sailboat!

00:34:32 Amy Guest That's Odonata. Yeah.
 00:34:33 John Host Look, you got gasps even from a Port Townsend audience, and
 they know their boats!

00:34:37 Amy Guest Ain't she pretty? Yeah.
 00:34:38 Jesse Host Let the record reflect that Toby is wearing his ancestral garb, which
 is seven layers of Patagonia.

[Laughter.]

00:34:47 Amy Guest No, that's me! That's me! *[Laughs.]*
 00:34:49 Jesse Host Oh, wow!
 00:34:51 John Host That's the beautiful boat, Dragonfly in Latin. How many can sleep
 on that boat?

00:34:55 Toby Guest Six, comfortably.
 00:34:57 John Host Oh, okay. So, you have room for your children, too.
 00:34:59 Jesse Host Why don't you sell the farm and live on the boat?
 00:35:01 Toby Guest That was the—well, I mean, the original plan was to—
 00:35:03 Jesse Host Yeah, we heard that. The question is—
 00:35:05 Toby Guest Why don't we do that? *[Laughs.]* Honestly, we would like to maybe
 not live on the boat permanently, but we'd like to get the farm to a
 state where it really could be sold and continue to be farmed. And
 then, we can spend more time in the boat and maybe have a
 smaller place that doesn't require as much work on land also.

00:35:26 Amy Guest We have teenagers.
 00:35:28 John Host So?
 00:35:29 Amy Guest They don't wanna live on a boat.
 00:35:31 Jesse Host Yeah, they do! They don't have to brush their teeth!

00:35:37 John Host *[Laughter.]*
I mean, I'm not suggesting that you, realistically, would live the rest of your lives exclusively on the boat. But what Toby suggests is that you sell the farm, downsize to a property that you don't have to have livestock on or worrying about abattoir access. But presumably, then you would get to spend a lot of time in your boat and not have to find podcasts to offload jam to all the time. Why is that not a good plan? Why make all this investment and just—now, instead of just doing that?

00:36:15 Amy Guest We have aging parents, and we have—you know—our youngest is about to start college, so it just feels like we're not quite there. So, it's really—and I don't sit still. So, this is the time that we should be building the barn and then making the WWOOFery. And then, when they're launched, then we can also go sailing.

00:36:34 John Host And then—but would you sell the farm at that point? Let the record show that Amy is staring at Toby.

00:36:41 Amy Guest I know.

00:36:42 Jesse Host And Toby's giving the universal gesture for "go ahead and tell 'em".

00:36:48 John Host *[Laughter.]*
I mean, the answer isn't "yes" obviously. If it's not yes, it's a no.

00:36:51 Amy Guest I mean, we—we're caring for aging parents.

00:36:53 John Host Do you wanna hold onto the farm?

00:36:54 Amy Guest No.

00:36:56 John Host *[Confused.]* Yooooou—?

[Laughter.]

You have impulses that are against each other. What's the—? It's a dialectic inside of you.

[Amy agrees.]

00:37:13 Amy Guest You want to hold onto it at all costs, but you don't want to keep it.
No, I want somebody else to take care of it.

00:37:14 John Host You want to sell it, but never.

[Laughter.]

00:37:20 Amy Guest I mean, I understand. I'm not—
This isn't going well.

00:37:23 John Host *[Laughter.]*
Well, it may be going extremely well, Amy, 'cause I don't know what you want. You might get it! If I were to find in your favor, what would you like me to rule?

00:37:35 Amy Guest I get a barn.

00:37:38 John Host And that would then cascade?

00:37:40 Amy Guest Yeah. That's the cascade.

00:37:41 John Host You want it all. A barn, a WWOOFery, and some WWOOFs.

[Amy confirms.]

And then, decide about selling the farm later, indeterminate period of time later.

00:37:51	Amy	Guest	Well, ideally we would find—you know—WWOOFers that would wanna stay. Which happens. And then, you know, they would eventually wanna take over the farm. It's hard! I mean, it's really hard work, but you love it. And it—like you—I just can't walk away from it. I mean, we've put a lot—we've put so much into it.
00:38:08	John	Host	Toby, if I were to rule in your favor, how would you want me to rule?
00:38:11	Toby	Guest	Uh, like I said before, Amy and I have mutual end goals. And we're in this lockstep together. No problem. And I don't dispute that we need help. For me, what would be great assistance is for us to have a clearer plan on priorities and what we can tackle first. And as evidenced tonight, we've talked about—we've talked about—
00:38:33	Jesse	Host	Let the record—let the record reflect that Amy made the universal face for “oh, come on”.
00:38:42	Toby	Guest	<i>[Laughter.]</i> However, preparing for tonight and thinking more deeply about this in the last few days, even that process has helped me identify what I like about the farm, what do I not like about the farm, what takes the most work, what are some ways that we could implement <i>[chuckles]</i> —you know—some help without having to spend tons of money. I haven't quite cracked the code, but—
00:39:08	John	Host	But it's not a barn and a WWOOFery and WWOOFers.
00:39:11	Toby	Guest	If we had enough money, a barn would be darn helpful.
00:39:16	John	Host	You could sell a boat. Get a barn.
			<i>[Laughter. Toby agrees.]</i>
00:39:22	Jesse	Host	It's a cascade. You know what? Sell the—sell the boat and the farm, get yourself a zoo!
00:39:29	John	Host	I mean, they have a whole balloon hanger on this compound. You could start making zeppelins! You already are doing two of the wildest possible things.
00:39:40	Toby	Guest	You know you're crazy when you see a zeppelin house like that and think, “Wow, that would be a great barn!” It's large enough, we could have WWOOFers stay there, too!
00:39:49	John	Host	But you don't want the barn and the WWOOFery—I mean, what am I gonna rule here? If I rule that she gets the cascade of outbuildings, then that's it.
00:39:58	Toby	Guest	My request—
00:39:59	John	Host	Do you want me to rule against her?
00:40:00	Toby	Guest	My request is simple. Which is a—
00:40:03	John	Host	I don't think it is!
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
			If it were—if it were, we'd be done 15 minutes ago.
			<i>[Beat. Toby starts to speak but John talks over him.]</i>
00:40:18	Jesse	Host	I think I heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.
			<i>[Cheers and applause.]</i>
			Amy, how do you feel about your chances here tonight?

00:40:26 Amy Guest I don't know. I think it's a tossup.
[Laughter.]

00:40:35 Jesse Host I really want it—*[chuckles]*
Toby, I'm not even—I'm not gonna follow up.
[Laughter.]

00:40:42 Toby Guest Toby, how are you feeling?
Uh, I'm thinking that we could've used this time wisely and recruited more help from the audience. *[Laughs.]* No, I'm actually—I'm feeling optimistic, simply because thinking more deeply about this as a couple, we've already started to line up ideas that may help us get to a priority list. And then, I can make a lot of phone calls.

00:41:05 Jesse Host Let me ask you guys this. You got the farm. You got the boat. You got the teenagers. Have you thought about getting two full-time jobs?
[Laughter.]

Please rise as Judge John Hodgman reenters the courtroom and delivers his verdict.

00:41:26 John Host *[Applause.]*
You may be seated. You may be seated. Please. While I was in my chambers, I took the opportunity of collecting one of the many jars of jam that were donated to the podcast by your farm Holmestead. That's H-O-L-M-E-S-T-E-A-D Farms, which is your farm on Vashon Island. I'm trying to help you out here, give you the big *Judge John Hodgman* bump.
[Laughter.]

[Chuckling.] The one that put Brooklinen on the map! It looks lovely. Would you open this for me, please? Thank you. Thank you very much. And I'm just gonna—it smells delicious. It smells delicious. I'm just gonna try some of this jam right now with my fingers. Mmm! There we go. Really—

[Cheering and hooting from the audience and a singular "yeehaw".]

Mmm! That's really good! That's really good. Jesse, you should try some.
[Laughter.]

00:42:46 Toby Guest Let the record show, Jesse's—he's got a nice—thank you, this is the lid. Got a nice picture of a lamb on it here, Jesse. And it says "2022 Harvest". Woah, wait a minute!
Raspberry harvest.

00:42:48 John Host I understand.
[Laughter.]

It's not lamb jam!? Get that, sell it in Portland. You know what I mean? It's delicious. You're doing good work on the farm. I understand why it is hard to decide. You are doing three of the most rational things people can do in the 21st century especially. One, own a farm—a working farm—and work that farm. Two, somehow obtain a boat sometime in the past. Who knows? A beautiful sailing boat with berthing for six. And three, you're a middle school teacher.

[Cheers.]

00:43:34	Jesse	Host	And that's right! You should applaud her! That's incredible!
00:43:38	John	Host	Teachers are the real heroes, in my opinion!
			Now, the solution—to me—is very clear. You're a middle school teacher. You're in a perfect position to sell a farm, just like Toby's fifth grade teacher scammed him into buying this albatross.
			<i>[Chuckles.]</i> So, you—how long have you been a teacher?
00:44:01	Amy	Guest	I started teaching in 1999.
00:44:03	John	Host	Right. So, surely you have an adult former student that you can con into buying this land.
00:44:08	Amy	Guest	Who—I have a former student who is one of my paraprofessionals in class. It's great.
00:44:15	John	Host	Yeah! Get them to buy it off of you! But you're not doing it—and I understand why all of this is hard and has been met—my questions have often been met with uncomfortable silence, which we have to edit out of the podcast.

[Laughter.]

But you know. You're at a point in your life that I and my partner—we're at too, where our children are disappearing before our eyes. They're becoming their own adults. One of them already is. And it's hard! And what comes next? And dreams of—dreams of floating away on your dragonfly boat to the land of Honalee or whatever you're gonna do are very attractive, and yet you wanna hold onto that land that you've given so much to even though your kids are probably like, "Let's get out of here! I'm so glad not to be harvesting sheep anymore and living a life!"

[Laughter.]

00:45:16	Amy	Guest	We say it's character-building.
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[Laughter.]

00:45:18	John	Host	Sure! You also seem to be—and I understand why it is that you act as though this farm has feelings, Toby. You know, it's like people personify their houses. People personify their boats, obviously. You talked about your boat with—you know—the pronouns "she". You know? That's a thing. It's a thing that can go away like that. It doesn't have feelings. It can sink at any moment. In fact, someone could be sinking it right now.
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[Laughter.]

I hate to tell you. And it might solve your problem. Wink to the audience. You guys can't make a decision, 'cause it's so challenging to make a decision. Maybe the decision could be made

for you. Wink to the audience. This is a picture of the boat. I don't think the solution is for someone in the audience to go and find your boat and set it on fire.

00:46:18 Amy Guest
00:46:19 John Host

Good!

Okay, please don't do that. Wink to the audience.

[Laughter.]

No! No, sorry! Bad wink! That wasn't a wink for that. That's their dream! That's their dream. And the challenging thing that you have to do is get to that dream. Amy, you mentioned that this is not a good time. It's actually a great time for you to make these changes. 'Cause all the changes are happening right now. Like, you're young. You're healthy. You're able-bodied. You said you have parents who need care, but you don't have to be at sea all the time. Your kids are moving on. Everything's changing. This is actually as good a time as any, let's put it that way, for you to take a deep breath and realize that farming is not part of our lives anymore. It's time to make a significant change and trick someone that I taught when they were young into taking this and all these sheep off our hands. It's called life-long learning.

00:47:13 Jesse Host
00:47:16 John Host

Tell them it builds character!

And so, you're coming up with all these schemes to hang onto the thing by building a barn and a WWOOF house and get WWOOFers in—all of which—it's a really good plan for maintaining the continuity of this farm and sending it into the world with the same preparation and care that you sent your children out into the world. If Toby were out here saying to me, "I really believe that the time has come to sell this farm and get on that boat and downsize. And I think it should happen this year," then I would probably find in his favor. Because I think that that's an emotionally healthy thing to do, as hard as it might be. But guess what, Amy? Toby isn't saying that!

[Laughter.]

I asked Toby do you wanna sell the farm and he's crossing his fingers! Get her to say sell the farm! Toby doesn't wanna come out and say yeah, I wanna sell the farm. So, Toby, you're out of luck. *[Chuckles.]* You gotta hang onto this farm. I mean, honestly, I feel like it's been hard to figure out. Because you guys—because you both have real difficulty deciding what it is you wanna do. And so, it's obviously very hard for me. So, I can only go—if I have to rule, ugh—come to make this ruling, I can only go with the most cohesive plan there is. And I think that's improve the property such that—well, wait a minute! *[Amused.]* Yeah, you can celebrate. You got it. You got it.

Improve the property such that it can be passed on and will be more attractive to someone who might buy it from you. And also, you'll know you gave it your best shot and it was ready to pass along. And then, get out of there within a two to—I mean, honestly, 2-to-25-year period.

[Laughter.]

But it's—and that means—and you know, your punishment for your ambivalence is that this is gonna happen. *[Chuckles.]* You know. If you had said to me, "I just don't feel like this is right for us. I think it's time. Buh-buh-buh-buh." But you know, you gotta—you gotta get out there and you gotta call in those favors. You gotta—you know, you gotta go all around the island and say, "We're getting this farm ready to sell and it's gonna take a little while." Because people—that's what people do. You know? They do improve their properties and get them to sell. As long as there's private property—which is a sin, by the way!

[Laughter.]

00:49:40 John Host Let's just put it there. As is taxation! I'm working both sides of the aisle. I know. I know you have a libertarian newspaper or something that's published here. As long as—as long as we live in this reality *[chuckles]* right now, I have to rule in Amy's favor. You gotta build that WWOOF house. This is the sound of gavel.

[Three gavel bangs.]

Judge John Hodgman rules. That is all.

[The crowd cheers.]

00:50:05 Jesse Host Amy and Toby, thanks for being on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:50:14 Sound Effect Transition Three gavel bangs.

00:50:16 Sound Effect Transition Three gavel bangs.

00:50:18 Jesse Host Judge Hodgman, we're taking a break from the Wheeler Theater. Let's talk about what we've got going on. What's going on with you?

00:50:24 John Host Well, Jesse, it is early February. It's not too soon to mark your calendar for next month, March 24th, which is the premier of all eight episodes of *Up Here*. That's the musical comedy romantic comedy that is created by our friends, Bobby Lopez and Kristen Anderson-Lopez, along with Thomas Kail and Steven Levenson. Tommy, of course, director of *Hamilton* and the brand-new *Sweeney Todd* production on Broadway. Steven Levenson, of course, wrote the book for *Dear Evan Hansen* and also wrote the screenplay for *Tick, Tick... Boom!*. I mean, this is like a Broadway Voltron! They've created one of the fun-est, liveliest, heartfelt, true romcoms of the '90s. 'Cause it is set in 1999. Brought it forward to now.

It stars Mae Whitman and Carlos Valdes, and they're so wonderful in it. And Katie Finneran plays Mae's mom. And guess who plays her dad? *[Singing.]* Meee.

00:51:22 Jesse Host Oh, I was gonna say Richard Kind, but you're good too.

00:51:25 John Host Ooh, I think he wasn't available. Instead, it's me! And I sing some songs—parts of songs—and I do exactly one twirl on the sidewalks of New York. And if you're a fan of *Judge John Hodgman*, I think you will enjoy *Up Here*. I really, really encourage you to check it out and tell your friends about it. *Up Here* premieres March 24th on your Hulu, where you get all of your other best and favorite-est shows, like *Dick Town*, for example.

Also, speaking of *Dick Town*—co-creator of *Dick Town*, that cartoon that we put on Hulu that everyone enjoys, is named David Rees. And he co-hosts a podcast called *Election Profit Makers* with his old friend from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, John Kimble. It's a really wonderful podcast. Check it out! If you happen to be in Gainesville on March 7th, you should go to Satchel's Pizza and check out their first in many years live event. *Election Profit Makers* are coming live to Satchel's Pizza in Gainesville, Florida, February 7th. If you've never listened to the show before, you're gonna have a great time figuring it all out. If you have listened to the show before, you know what a big deal this is. EPM meets Satchel March the 7th. Get there as soon as you can. Well, at least by March the 7th.

00:52:37	Jesse	Host	What have you got going on, Jesse? Well, you know that I host the arts and culture interview show <i>Bullseye</i> for National Public Radio. Well, for MaximumFun.org , as distributed by National Public Radio.
00:52:45	John	Host	I do know! I know very well!
00:52:46	Jesse	Host	We have just had some really cool episodes lately that I have not mentioned here that I think our listeners might wanna go check out. We had a great conversation with Kate Beaton about her just breathtaking graphic novel or graphic memoir <i>Ducks</i> . We had a great conversation with Kumail Nanjiani recently. A great convo with John Larroquette, who's—you know, talk about—talk about courtroom heroes!

[John agrees with a laugh.]

00:53:26	John	Host	And I just—I did not mention this when it happened. I should've mentioned it when—immediately upon it happening. But yes, I did have an hour-long interview with Tom Hanks in there. The best of the best of the best. Kate Beaton, Kumail, John Larroquette, Tom Hanks. Boom, boom, boom. It's hit after hit after hit on <i>Bullseye</i> . If you're not listening to <i>Bullseye</i> , I don't know what to tell you. Why do you think I exist here on this podcast? It's because I met Jesse Thorn 'cause I listened to him interview people on the show that became <i>Bullseye</i> , and I realized this guy has got the best conversation game in the game. Go over there and listen to all these good ones on <i>Bullseye</i> , and just tune in every week. For heaven's sake. MaximumFun.org , <i>Bullseye</i> .
00:53:58	Jesse	Host	Take a chance on somebody you haven't heard of. Mavi is incredible. That's recent, too.
00:54:02	John	Host	Yeah! Oh, I mean, I can't tell you the names of the people that I discovered because I listened to <i>Bullseye</i> and you interviewing them. And I can't tell you that, because I'm friends with them now, and it would be weird. The point is, <i>Bullseye</i> is great, and you should go listen to it. <i>Bullseye</i> at MaximumFun.org .
00:54:19	Jesse	Host	Let's get back to the stage in Port Townsend, Washington.
00:54:21	Sound Effect	Transition	Three gavel bangs.
00:54:24	Jesse	Host	Please welcome Brittany and Chris to the stage!

[Applause.]

00:54:34	John	Host	Welcome Brittany and Chris. Please be seated. You can consider yourselves pre-sworn in. Brittany and Chris, who comes seeking justice before me in this fake court of law?
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00:54:44 Brittany Guest I do.
00:54:45 John Host And that would be Brittany.

[She confirms.]

00:54:49 Brittany Guest And what is the justice you seek?
So, the justice I seek. Chris and I disagree on who came up with the name for our corgi.

00:54:59 John Host *[John chuckles in low, fiendish delight.]*
I love corgi cases!

[Brittany laughs.]

00:55:06 Brittany Guest What is the name of this cool dog?
00:55:07 John Host Her name is Frodo.
00:55:10 Brittany Guest Frodo! That's pretty good.
00:55:11 John Host Yeah, I'm glad I came up with it.
00:55:12 Brittany Guest Who came up with the name, Brittany?
00:55:13 John Host I did! Thanks for asking. *[Laughs.]*
What?! I hear around Port Townsend that Chris came up with the name. Chris, what is your side of this?

00:55:22 Chris Guest I believe that I came up with the name six months before we even drove out to Idaho to pick her up. And I am so—I'm so into the idea that I picked her name. I usually fold on most arguments. But this is the one thing. And it's—

00:55:42 John Host But here you take your stand?
00:55:43 Chris Guest I stand! For four years!
00:55:45 Jesse Host To be fair. If you're both *Judge John Hodgman* listeners, you both fold on most arguments.

[Laughter.]

00:55:56 John Host There's a cultural type.
Why—what evidence do you have to suggest that you came up with the name and not Brittany?

00:56:01 Chris Guest She would always try to come up with names. She wanted—she wanted, specifically, a corgi. Her heart was corgi shaped.

00:56:11 John Host Sure. I understand.
00:56:12 Jesse Host That's why you drove to Idaho or whatever!

[Brittany laughs.]

00:56:15 Chris Guest In one day.
00:56:16 Jesse Host And of course, you know, we on the podcast always encourage people to adopt rescue pets without concern for their particular breed, but I also appreciate—as a life partner of someone who is obsessed with a particular kind of dog, corgis—sometimes the heart likes what it likes.

00:56:34 Jesse Host Yep. And at the end of the day, *[chuckling]* if you're gonna get a potato dog, you gotta do it in Idaho.

[Laughter.]

00:56:46 John Host Sometimes, the heart wants a chonk.

[Brittany laughs.]

So, where were we? Yeah, she wanted the dog. You said, “Only if I can name it. And I name it Frodo. And I wrote this down, and I mailed it to myself.”

[Laughter.]

“Here is the evidence, sir.” Courtroom gasps. I’m sorry, Brittany, this seems pretty cut and dry.

00:57:12 Chris Guest

So, she really wanted to name the corgi food items. Like, Biscuit. Nugget.

00:57:18 Jesse Host

From Hambone to Hambone. Hambone came up. Hambone is the best name for all dogs.

00:57:26 John Host

So, Brittany, Biscuit was one of the names. What were some of the other names that you were thinking of?

00:57:30 Brittany Guest

So, some of the other names that had come up for a female dog, at the time, were Whiskey, Bourbon, Cider.

[John agrees with a laugh.]

00:57:42 Jesse Host

A whiskey drink, a cider drink.

00:57:46 Chris Guest

It’s food.

00:57:47 John Host

Slow Gin. Grain Alcohooooool, how dry I am.

00:57:57 Brittany Guest

So, these were the names I had come up with for female dogs, ‘cause I had already decided on the name I wanted for a male dog, which was Frodo.

00:58:06 John Host

Oh-kaaay?

00:58:07 Brittany Guest

Yes. So, I already knew male dog, it’s going to be Frodo. So, that’s why Chris remembers, correctly, that I came up with all these other names, but it was for a female dog if the time came when we drove to get our little potato and our potato turned out to be female.

00:58:24 John Host

So, Frodo is a boy dog, obviously, ‘cause you named it Frodo.

00:58:28 Brittany Guest

No, Frodo is a female dog.

00:58:29 John Host

[Gasps.] Courtroom gasps.

[Laughter.]

Things aren’t so cut and dry after all!

00:58:35 Brittany Guest

So, when the time came—about a week or so before we went to go pick up our little spud, they sent us photos of either a male or a female. I wanted to get the male, because I wanted to name the corgi Frodo. But Chris always grew up with female dogs, so we decided to go with the female dog. But because we really hadn’t decided on another female dog name, decided what the heck, it’s a fantasy name. Why can’t we name our female dog Frodo?

00:59:07 John Host

And did you say that, or did Chris say that?

00:59:10 Brittany Guest

Probably me.

[Laughter.]

00:59:12 John Host

Chris! When did you even ever suggest Frodo for the name of this dog?! Ever.

00:59:18 Chris Guest

Six months before we went to go pick her up. It came up in conversation when we were spit balling names. And I defended the name for Frodo, regardless of if it was for female or a male dog.

00:59:32 John Host

But who came up with the name? I’ll tell you who! J.R.R. Tolkien.

[Applause.]

Trying to rip off the estate?! Real quick, who came up with the name first? Real answer. Don't wait for the translation. Who came up with the name? Who first said Frodo? Who first said it?

00:59:48 Brittany Guest Me.
00:59:49 John Host Do you disagree?
00:59:50 Chris Guest Yes.

[Brittany laughs.]

00:59:53 John Host This is a matter of what they call fact. Who suggested the name Frodo for either gender of the dog?

01:00:01 Brittany Guest This is where we—this is the fundamental disagreement.
01:00:04 John Host Great! We are out of time! So, let's hear it. What's the fundamental disagreement?

01:00:10 Brittany Guest I believe I came up and introduced the name Frodo for a corgi first.
01:00:14 John Host What argument do you have, Chris, that this is false? Why is Brittany lying?

01:00:21 Chris Guest Because I—I feel like I came up with the name.

[Laughter.]

It's a feeling.

[Slow applause.]

01:00:28 Jesse Host The heart wants what it wants, John!
01:00:32 John Host *[Chuckles.]* I believe you sent in some evidence, which I presume is just an adorable photo of Frodo, the dog?

01:00:38 Brittany Guest Probably.
01:00:39 John Host In the style of *Family Feud*, show me Frodooo!

[Laughter.]

01:00:49 Jesse Host *[Giggling.]* Look at this dumb dog! I love it! I love her. Give me the dog. I'll take the dog.

[Laughter.]

[Through laughter.] My dog's dead, give me the dog.

01:01:03 John Host Obviously, these photos will be available on our show page at Maximumfun.org as well as on our Instagram, [@JudgeJohnHodgman](https://www.instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman). They're wonderful Frodos (photos) of Frodo.

[Laughter and groans.]

You're right. Jesse, pack up. We're going to Seattle. Right now. Sorry. Sorry. And in one of the—in one of them, Frodo seems to be turning to the camera and saying, "Uhh, Chris named me Frodo?! I don't think so! J.R.R. Tolkien named me Frodo." Sorry, Chris. You didn't present any evidence. Why is it important to you that you have named this dog? Do you gotta control everything in the relationship or what?

[Laughter.]

01:01:42 Chris Guest So I can reserve naming rights for the next corgi.
01:01:46 John Host If you wanted to reserve naming rights for the next corgi—and by the way, I approve of getting two—then you would be giving this up

01:01:58	Chris	Guest	to Brittany now, saying, "Well, you named Frodo Frodo, so I get to name this one—" What? Samwise.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
01:02:04	Jesse	Host	A blonde corgi.
01:02:11	John	Host	Chris, it's pronounced Hambone. I find in Brittany's favor. Although, Brittany, he does have naming rights on the next corgi. And I think you see what's coming down the road for you now. And I feel very sorry for you.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
			But the road goes ever, ever on. I find in Brittany's favor.
			<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
			<i>[The audience cheers and applauds.]</i>
01:02:27	Jesse	Host	Please welcome to the stage Lindsey! Lindsey!
01:02:32	John	Host	Lindsey. Lin—Lin—and whom, Jesse? Lindsey and who?
01:02:36	Jesse	Host	It just says here Lindsey!
01:02:38	John	Host	It just says Lindsey. Alright, let's find out what's going on here, Lindsey.
01:02:42	Jesse	Host	We'll get Lindsey up to the stage here.
			<i>[Applause.]</i>
01:02:46	John	Host	Lindsey, I guess you may be seated wherever you like.
			<i>[Lindsey thanks him.]</i>
			Normally, we have people come up with a disputant—someone that they have a dispute with, but who is that in your case?
01:02:58	Lindsey	Guest	The Mayor.
			<i>[Gasps and hollers followed by a small clatter and laughter.]</i>
01:03:03	John	Host	Let the record show, I dropped my gavel. Port Townsend, 2PM on Tuesdays. <i>[Chuckles.]</i> No, actually, it would be every day. Port Townsend, every day, 3PM on CBS.
01:03:16	Mayor David Faber	Guest	This is highly offensive. No one should sue me.
01:03:20	John	Host	What is going on? What is your dispute with the mayor?
01:03:21	Jesses	Host	His mother was murdered by a soap opera!
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
01:03:30	Lindsey	Guest	To be fair, I would've sued you even if you weren't the mayor. So. <i>[Chuckles.]</i> No.
01:03:33	John	Host	Whoooo! What is your dispute with Mayor Faber?
01:03:38	Lindsey	Guest	My request is simple. I am seeking an injunction that Mayor Faber be prevented from seeking anyone outside of a licensed aesthetician to shave his back.
01:03:51	John	Host	WOW!
			<i>[Laughter. Someone in the audience yells, "No, <u>what?!"</u>"]</i>

We are learning a looot about old cold-handed, cold-feet, hairy-backed Mayor Faber!

[Laughter.]

Swiftly turning from the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast to the *David Cronenberg Body Horror Hour*. Wh-wh—? Okay. Aaaaah. Who is this person, Mayor, and what's going on?

01:04:23 Mayor Faber Guest

Uh, this is my friend Lindsey. We went to law school together.

[John affirms.]

And we traveled internationally to study abroad in Croatia in 2010. And before we left—well, first of all, I'm a very hairy man. I don't necessarily look like it, but—

01:04:39 John Host
01:04:40 Mayor Faber Guest

No, you—I wouldn't have—yeah. Okay.

I'm wearing like one of those medieval hairshirts, but just it's permanently attached to my body. Um. *[Chuckles self-consciously.]* And—uh, before we left, um.

[Laughter.]

My long-suffering wife shaved my back. But the problem with shaving is it started to grow back out. And we were there for like a month.

01:05:01 Lindsey Guest

Really fast!

[Laughter.]

01:05:04 John Host

Were you asked to shave this man's back?

[Lindsey confirms and the crowd loses it.]

[Disappointedly.] Mayor Faber.

Where were you traveling again, Lindsey?

01:05:21 Lindsey Guest
01:05:23 John Host

We went to Croatia.

Are you telling me that there are no men's back salons in all of Croatia?

01:05:28 Mayor Faber Guest

They're a hairy people, so there should be.

01:05:30 John Host

There probably was. Uh, yes. I find in your favor, Lindsey.

[Laughter.]

01:05:36 Lindsey Guest

Thank you.

[Applause.]

01:05:37 Jesse Host

Please welcome to the stage Sam! Now, I can't help but notice, Judge Hodgman, I also—I only listed one name again!

01:05:46 John Host

Sam was what you said? Alright, what's going on here?

01:05:47 Jesse Host

Sam. Let's get Sam up here, so we can do this case.

[Applause and cheers.]

01:05:51 John Host

Here comes Sam. Sam, you may be seated wherever you like.

01:05:56 Sam Guest

Alright, thank you.

01:05:57 John Host

Sam, you also have appeared without a disputant to either your left or your right. Who is your dispute with?

01:06:04	Sam	Guest	I am also suing my mayor.
01:06:06	John	Host	Wooooah!
			<i>[The crowd "ooh"s.]</i>
			Well, no, I mean, at this point it's not even a gasp of surprise. It's more of a sigh of resignation. I'm not suggesting you resign, Mayor. That's not what I'm saying at all!
01:06:19	Jesse	Host	At this point, we should be charging \$20 for charity, like a dunk booth at a carnival.
01:06:26	John	Host	I'm sorry you're being put through the wringer. You were so nice to bring us here and keep us captive in this state park.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
			That's not true. It's not true. Uh, Sam, what is the nature of your beef with the mayor?
01:06:39	Sam	Guest	I would like a declaratory judgement that he—
01:06:42	John	Host	Does it have to do anything with his body? <i>[Chuckles.]</i>
01:06:45	Sam	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> No.
			<i>[John affirms.]</i>
			No, he has to refrain. I would like a declaratory judgement that the song "Last Christmas" by Wham! is not a good song. And enjoining him from playing it at any future holiday time social engagements.
			<i>[Laughter and building applause as well as booing.]</i>
01:07:06	John	Host	Wow! A community—order! Order!
			<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
01:07:16	Jesse	Host	<i>[Yelling.]</i> Audience, shut your pie holes!
01:07:19	John	Host	Obviously, this is a community divided.
01:07:23	Jesse	Host	This is the raccoon lodge of 1980s Christmas hits.
			<i>[Laughter.]</i>
01:07:30	John	Host	If I may ask the audience: by sound of applause, who likes the song "Last Christmas" by Wham!?
			<i>[Boisterous applause and cheering.]</i>
			That's enough. If I may ask, by sound of applause, who dislikes it?
			<i>[Equally boisterous applause and cheering.]</i>
			Huh.
01:07:52	Jesse	Host	Okay. Hold on. Hold on.
01:07:56	John	Host	Thank you very much.
01:07:57	Jesse	Host	Hold on. By round of applause, who saw Paul Feig's movie, <i>Last Christmas</i> , and was really impressed by Emilia Clarke from <i>Game of Thrones</i> —who was super funny and charming in it, like real lighthearted and not at all like dragon queen type thing?
			<i>[Moderate cheering.]</i>
			She was great in that movie!

01:08:16 John Host I was hoping the audience would decide, but I have—I have incredibly sensitive ears, and that was an exact 50/50 breakdown. Sam, you—tell me why I should ban this song? You don't like it.

01:08:27 Sam Guest So, a number of reasons. Number one, it's not a good Christmas song, because it only mentions—

01:08:33 John Host How do you mean? It says last Christmas.

01:08:35 Sam Guest And that's all it says.

01:08:36 John Host "I gave you my heart. And the very next day—" Boxing Day, in England, "You gave it away."

01:08:43 Sam Guest So, that's the only reference to anything—

01:08:44 John Host Then it goes [*singing the tune with meows*]. I don't remember the rest.

01:08:50 Sam Guest Well, none of the other lyrics contain any reference to Christmas or wintertime holiday cheer or anything. You could replace the word—

01:08:57 John Host Okay, so it's not a suitable Christmas song.

01:08:59 Sam Guest Not a suitable Christmas song.

01:09:00 John Host Alright. What's another reason?

01:09:01 Sam Guest The music is insipid and boring, which is not in character for a Wham! jam.

01:09:07 John Host You're saying—[*snorts into a laugh*] last-minute save to besmirch the—you were gonna besmirch the name of George Michael, but you saved it at the last second.

01:09:18 Sam Guest [*Laughing.*] That was not an intended—

01:09:19 Jesse Host We'll be selling Wham! Jam after the show.

01:09:23 John Host [*Laughter.*] Holmestead Farms, Wham! Jam! Guess what? I solved your problem. I just bought half a zoo! Farm, I mean.

01:09:34 Sam Guest That was unintended and I didn't mean to point at the jam when I said it.

01:09:36 John Host No, it was great. These things happen.

01:09:38 Sam Guest There are no hooks. It's not catchy.

01:09:41 John Host Is there a bridge? I don't even remember if there's a bridge.

01:09:43 Sam Guest [*Uncertainly.*] I think there's a bridge, but it's just more of the synth music that sounds like it's playing in a mall in the 1980s.

01:09:50 John Host I see. And the third reason?

01:09:52 Sam Guest And the third reason—

01:09:53 John Host You're saying it's not—it's not Christmasy enough. It's not a good song.

01:09:57 Sam Guest The lyrics are not Christmasy enough. Musically, it's not a good song. And I guess, lyrically, as a Christmas song, it's not a good song. It's two reasons. It's a double entendre.

01:10:07 John Host Does he play it a lot?!

01:10:17 Sam Guest [*Boisterous laughter.*] I know that's not a double entendre. It's a [*inaudible*].

01:10:20 John Host No! No. Now—I realize now, everything is.

01:10:26 Sam Guest [*Laughter.*] You should talk to David about sandwiches sometime.

01:10:29 John Host Hmmmm. No.

[*Laughter.*]

Maybe later.

It says here you are David's law partner?

[Sam confirms.]

01:10:43	Sam	Guest	Does he play this at holiday parties at the office?
01:10:45	John	Host	Not at the—not at the office. No, at his house.
01:10:48	Sam	Guest	What is—what is—why do you care what song he likes?
			So, it's not that—I don't want him to not like it. I don't mind it. But we have—there's—it's very common if there's a song that I'm hearing frequently—maybe it'll be at his house, maybe it won't be at his house—and I don't particularly care for it and I express that, if he likes it he will immediately jump on it. And say, "Oh, this is great. No, I really like it." Like, Wham! is one of those—not all of their catalogue. They're really good—
01:11:13	John	Host	<i>[Interrupting.]</i> You know what? I'll allow him to defend the song. Why do you like "Last Christmas" by Wham! so much? Is that a Wham! song or a George Michael song?
01:11:20	Mayor Faber	Guest	It's Wham!.
01:11:21	John	Host	Is it?

[Murmuring.]

Alright, thank you audience. One very confident audience member. Appreciated that.

01:11:28	Mayor Faber	Guest	<i>[Laughter.]</i> So, why do I like it? Um. I think it is a—
01:11:30	John	Host	Do you like it because he hates it?
01:11:32	Mayor Faber	Guest	Yes. No. No, no, no— <i>[laughs]</i> .

[John playfully "oh!"s.]

I think it—I completely disagree with Sam's points. I think it's a structurally very good song. It has multiple hooks—both the main keyboard melody and with the bass moving around that melody, I think it works really well. It's very complex in its structure.

[Laughter.]

01:12:02	Jesse	Host	Alright! And— <i>[laughs]</i> . It's a rich text, Judge Hodgman. That's how they manage to make an entire feature film out of it. The movie was adapted from the song! Literally! Pretty good movie.
01:12:13	John	Host	Well, you know, I did go to Yale University, an accredited four-year college in southern Connecticut, where I did study literary theory. And while that mostly trained me for textual analysis, in many ways all songs are texts. So, maybe I need to decide whether or not this is a good song or not. Why don't we listen to it?
01:12:36	Music	Music	"Last Christmas" from the album <i>Music from the Edge of Heaven</i> by Wham!.

John: (Over the track.) I'll be taking some notes.

Last Christmas

John: Oh! It's Christmas!

*I gave you my heart
But the very next day, you gave it away*

[John begins to sing along with meows.]

*This year to save me from tears,
I'll give it to someone special
Last Christmas, I gave you my heart
But the very next day...*

[Song fades out.]

01:13:18 Jesse Host He's got a point about how complicated the bassline is.

[Laughter.]

01:13:27 Mayor Faber Guest It goes—it goes dum-dum-dum-dum-dum-dum-dum-dum.
I said the bassline plays around with the melody and makes it complicated together.

01:13:32 John Host Maybe you have very, very good headphones.

[Laughter.]

01:13:39 Jesse Host Here's what I wanted to happen—
Let's just say he has very kind headphones.

[Laughter.]

01:13:44 John Host Here's what I wanted to happen, David. Mr. Mayor, if I may.
01:13:48 Mayor Faber Guest Please.

01:13:49 John Host We are your guests. We would not be here without your encouragement—frequent.

[Laughter.]

01:13:56 Mayor Faber Guest Insistent.

01:13:58 John Host Perhaps constant! It has been such a delight to be here in the town that you serve as mayor, to meet many of your colleagues and family members.

[Laughter.]

As well as the citizens of this town onstage and in the audience. And to be here at the Wheeler Theater at the lovely Fort Worden State Park, which is not a cult compound but a beautiful resource for the entire community with a balloon hangar that I hope we can come back to and play again sometime when it's warmer out. It's been wonderful to meet the folks here at Centrum, who put on all the programming here. And if you're listening to this at home, please check out what they're doing here in Port Townsend at the Wheeler Theater and all throughout the compound. It's an incredible arts resource for the entire community. I think it's great.

I have long—and I'm on the record—hated this song.

[Laughter.]

I don't hate Wham!. I love their jams. People in my life that I live with and have known for many years love this song. I don't. I was hoping that if I listened to it again, especially with your analysis, so that I knew what to listen for—the clever interplay of the bass with the—

[Laughter.]

—repetitive, synth-y meow-meows. You know, maybe I would hear it again somehow. Do you know like—you know when the big documentary about the Beatles came out, and all those songs that you'd heard so many times, suddenly they broke them down and you heard them in a different way. That didn't happen tonight, I'm sorry to say. I don't know what you want me to rule. That it's a bad song?

01:15:48 Sam Guest
01:15:52 John Host

Yes, and enjoin him from playing it at social events.
Oh, I'll never do that! He's the mayor. Sorry.

[Laughter and applause.]

Get lost. I find in the mayor's favor.

[Cheers.]

01:16:01 Jesse Host

Thank you to Sam. Thank you to Mayor David Faber. Thank you for having us here.

01:16:04 Mayor Faber Guest

Thank you.

01:16:10 Jesse Host

That's it for this week's episode. Thanks to all the litigants who joined us onstage at the Wheeler Theater in Port Townsend. Our special thanks to Mayor David Faber for bringing us to Port Townsend and all the good folks in Port Townsend who welcomed us so graciously and made our trip possible.

01:16:27 John Host

And packed the house. I mean packed the house with the swiftness!

01:16:31 Jesse Host

It sold out instantly! We had superfans emailing us saying, "I live in Port Townsend! I didn't get tickets in time!" Who knew?!

01:16:40 John Host

Who knew, indeed. Well, we'll be back to Port Townsend, of course, and hope to meet you out there on the road many a time.

01:16:46 Jesse Host

Do you think next time we'll play that zeppelin hangar that they have?

01:16:49 John Host

Yeah. I think we've got a big enough audience in Port Townsend now to play that zeppelin hangar. You're absolutely right.

01:16:54 Jesse Host

Evidence and photos from the show are on our Instagram account at [Instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman). Make sure to follow us there. That could be our Burning Man is just us doing our gentle podcast in a zeppelin hangar in Port Townsend, Washington.

01:17:08 John Host

Yeah, but I wanna get that guy who used to write for *The Simpsons* who plays the fiery sousaphone who goes to Burning Man every year too. I want him too.

01:17:15 Jesse Host

Oh, wow! Maybe we should just try and get Bill Oakley, who does the fast food reviews on Instagram. *[Chuckling.]* That seems more realistic.

Join the conversation about this week's episode on the Maximum Fun subreddit at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/MaximumFun). *Judge John Hodgman*, created by Jesse Thorn and John Hodgman. This episode was recorded by Matthew Barnhart. Thank you, Matthew. And produced by Valerie Moffatt, Richard Robey, and Jennifer Marmor. Thank you, Val, Richard, and Jen. We'll talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

01:17:47	Sound Effect	Transition	Three gavel bangs.
01:17:49	Sound Effect	Transition	Cheerful ukulele chord.
01:17:50	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
01:17:52	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:17:54	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:17:55	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.