

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

[00:00:02] **Monte Belmonte:** Welcome to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm summertime fun-time guest bailiff Monte Belmonte. This week, “No-Glow Contendere”. Michelle brings the case against her husband, Rob. Rob is restoring an old grandfather clock to make it usable as a display case. Michelle would like to display her uranium glass collection in the clock under a blacklight, but Rob thinks adding a blacklight will look tacky. Will Michelle's black lit uranium make Rob's grandfather clock come to life like Charlie Bucket's golden ticket made his derelict grandfather come back to life?! Or will the blacklight make the grandfather clock look tacky, like the 2022 film *Blacklight* made the grandfatherly aged actor, Liam Neeson, look tacky? Only one can decide.

Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and presents an obscure cultural reference.

(Chairs squeak, followed by heavy footsteps and a door closing.)

[00:01:04] **John Hodgman:** “Yeah, I made a paper mâché walrus. I made a scope-rion. And then I thought, ‘If I can make whatever I want, why not make a creature that doesn't exist?’ So, I made a uni-horn.”

Summertime fun-time guest bailiff Monte Belmonte, please swear the litigants in.

[00:01:21] **Monte Belmonte:** Michelle and Rob, please rise.

(Chairs squeak.)

Rob, raise your hour hand. Michelle, raise your minute hand. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you Cogsworth from *Beauty and the Beast* or that glow in the dark Doors poster I had in my teenage bedroom or whatever?

[00:01:41] **John Hodgman:** Wowie-zowie.

(They swear.)

[00:01:44] **Monte Belmonte:** Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that his honor brings a blacklight to every hotel he's booked in, but not to look for icky bodily fluids, simply to divine for potential uranium mines?

(They swear.)

[00:02:00] **Monte Belmonte:** Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

[00:02:03] **John Hodgman:** Wow. Monte Belmonte. Not merely making a meal out of it! It was a whole New England clam bake of puns and extra jokes. It's great to be back. I'm back in Maine, Monte. I'm back in New England. Good to be here back in WERU, 89.9FM.

Broadcasting from the solar powered studios here in Orland, Maine to the entire Blue Hill Peninsula and the world!

[00:02:33] **Joel Mann:** And the world.

[00:02:34] **John Hodgman:** At WERU.org. And Monte Belmonte, they're—you're out there in western Massachusetts. Of course, Monte, you are the host of *The Fabulous 413*, an afternoon talk and feature show, exploring everything that's great about the Pioneer Valley, Western Mass, and beyond! How's everything going there?

[00:02:52] **Monte Belmonte:** Amazing! Tomorrow we're going to Tanglewood, and we might get to interview John Williams, so I'm very excited!

[00:02:58] **John Hodgman:** Wowie-zowie. Yeah. A very famous musical composer. Oh, Michelle and Rob, you're here too.

(They confirm.)

Joining us from Seattle, I believe. And what is your public radio station?

[00:03:08] **Michelle:** We are here at KUOW.

[00:03:10] **John Hodgman:** Yeah, I love KUO, and I've been in those studios as well, and they're very gracious and very clean over there. KUOW. Alright, now I'm settled. I gotta settle back into Maine—the pace of Maine, Joel. What's the pace of Maine?

[00:03:26] **Joel Mann:** Pretty slow.

[00:03:27] **John Hodgman:** Pretty slow.

[00:03:28] **Michelle:** That's right. All I know about Maine is *Murder She Wrote*.

[00:03:31] **John Hodgman:** What was the name of the town where she—where all those murders took place? *(Chuckles.)*

(Michelle makes an “I don't know” sound.)

Abbott Cove.

[00:03:37] **Michelle:** Oh, there you go.

[00:03:38] **John Hodgman:** Not a real place in Maine. Not a real place in Maine, and actually not as many murders in Maine as you might think watching that show.

[00:03:45] **Michelle:** Oh, that's disappointing!

[00:03:47] **John Hodgman:** But now you may be seated for an immediate summary judgment in one of your favors.

(*Chairs squeak.*)

Can either of you remember the cultural reference that I quoted as I entered this courtroom?

[00:03:54] **Michelle:** I remember that the last word was uni-horn.

[00:03:57] **John Hodgman:** But that's not the word you should be listening for.

[00:03:59] **Michelle:** Hmm. Okay.

[00:04:00] **John Hodgman:** I'm giving you a big hint. Michelle, you got a guess where that comes from?

[00:04:05] **Michelle:** I really have no clue. So, I'm gonna go with an old favorite. *Batman: The Animated Series*.

[00:04:12] **John Hodgman:** *Batman: The Animated Series*. I don't think I've ever done a quote from *Batman: The Animated Series*. And I should.

[00:04:16] **Michelle:** You should!

[00:04:17] **John Hodgman:** Terrific cartoon. Terrific cartoon. Alright, Rob, your turn. What do you guess?

[00:04:23] **Rob:** I'm gonna go with *Labyrinth*. Pretty confident that's not it, but I don't know.

[00:04:27] **John Hodgman:** You know, these—normally, cultural references have some perhaps tenuous but always some connection to the case at hand. Was there a word that jumped out at you when I read that? Paper mâché, walrus?

[00:04:41] **Michelle:** I am assuming scope-rion?

[00:04:44] **John Hodgman:** Scope-rion! Exactly. Look, I'll reveal the answer to you. That is from the *Kasper Hauser Comedy Podcast*, a Maximum Fun podcast—one of their best episodes, episode 11. It was their parody of *This American Life*, and Rob Baedeker does an incredible Ira Glass. After interviewing Dan—Dan plays this guy who makes these paper mâché animals, including a paper mâché uni-horn. He plays this guy, Roger. And Dan Baedeker's Ira Glass, after that he goes, "Roger is one of a small group of fantasy animalists who believe it shouldn't be called a unicorn. It should be called a uni-horn. Because what does it have one of? A horn or a corn? Really, really, really funny. Really funny. And all still available over there at MaximumFun.org. The *Kasper Hauser Comedy Podcast*, Kasper Hauser—terrific sketch comedy group.

And the reason that I read this was 'cause I love them so much, and I wish they would make more podcasts. But also, because even though all of that is very funny and a uni-horn instead of unicorn is very funny, always think of scope-rion. For some reason, he says, "I made a scope-rion." And there's no reason whatsoever this guy can't pronounce scorpion.

(They laugh.)

And it just makes me laugh every time. Scope-rion. Now, what would a scorpion have to do with the case at hand? Your uranium glass collection and your grandfather clock? Any guesses?

[00:06:04] **Michelle:** I believe that scorpions fluoresce under UV light.

(Rob agrees.)

[00:06:10] **John Hodgman:** That is correct. Much like uranium glass and like those incredible blacklight posters they used to sell at Spencer's Gifts in the Chestnut Hill Mall and other malls around the world, scope-rions fluoresce. They light up under long ultraviolet ray lights, blacklights as we call them. So, yes, that was the connection. You made the connection. Good for you, Michelle. You are the one who collects the uranium glass, correct?

[00:06:39] **Michelle:** That's correct.

[00:06:40] **John Hodgman:** Yeah. So, you know about things lighting up in blacklight. But I can't give the case to you as a result, 'cause you didn't name the *Kasper Hauser Comedy Podcast*. That was the answer I was looking for.

So, Michelle, you are the one who collects the uranium glass. Are you the one who seeks justice in this court?

[00:06:55] **Michelle:** I am.

[00:06:56] **John Hodgman:** And what is the nature of your complaint?

[00:06:58] **Michelle:** So, I do have a small collection of uranium glass that I hope to enhance, and I feel the only correct way to display it is under a blacklight. And so, I feel like that is what it should be.

[00:07:12] **John Hodgman:** Who's standing in your way? Rob?

[00:07:13] **Michelle:** Yes, Rob, my husband.

[00:07:16] **John Hodgman:** So, what's your complaint against Rob?

[00:07:18] **Michelle:** That he is refusing to install a blacklight in this cabinet that he is putting together for the uranium glass.

[00:07:26] **John Hodgman:** Rob, how do you respond?

[00:07:29] **Rob:** It's not the installation of a blacklight in the cabinet. It is primarily the installation of the blacklight in the cabinet and keeping it in our dining room and having it on 365 days a year that is concerning to me.

[00:07:46] **John Hodgman:** And we're not just talking about any cabinet here, right? We're talking about—what, a grandfather clock?

[00:07:53] **Rob:** Correct. So, we found a grandfather clock on the side of the road that—you know, its innards were not in—

[00:08:00] **John Hodgman:** Happens all the time.

[00:08:01] **Rob:** (*Chuckles.*) Yes, its innards were not in good shape. We actually have another chiming clock in our dining room, like a wall clock. So, I wasn't—while I was enthusiastic about the grandfather clock, I didn't really feel like we needed another clock in the same room. Michelle eventually convinced me that it would be a good idea to transform the clock into a display cabinet, which—I do woodworking, so I'm—you know, I'm happy to make that happen. And then, she later, you know, gave the idea of we should, you know, turn it into a display cabinet specifically for the uranium glass, install blacklights. And then, I believe the theory is that we should have them on a timer that comes on, you know, evening every day at dusk to make sure that they glow. And I'm a bit concerned about having a—you know, the typical blacklight glow in our dining room every day.

[00:09:02] **John Hodgman:** 'Cause it looks like a crummy dorm room.

[00:09:03] **Rob:** Exactly.

[00:09:04] **Michelle:** (*Softly.*) No!

[00:09:04] **Rob:** That is not the vibe that I'd like for my dining room.

[00:09:08] **John Hodgman:** Monte.

[00:09:09] **Monte Belmonte:** Judge.

[00:09:09] **John Hodgman:** They're picking up grandfather clocks from the side of the road and collecting uranium glass.

[00:09:14] **Monte Belmonte:** (*Laughs.*) My kind of nerds.

[00:09:15] **John Hodgman:** They're living the dream in Seattle.

[00:09:18] **Monte Belmonte:** Absolutely.

[00:09:20] **John Hodgman:** Joel, what's the most interesting thing you ever found by the side of the road in Maine?

[00:09:24] **Joel Mann:** You can get so much good free stuff on the side of the road.

[00:09:27] **John Hodgman:** Like what? A grandfather clock?

[00:09:28] **Joel Mann:** One time I saw a sign that just said “free”.

[00:09:31] **John Hodgman:** And you took the sign?

[00:09:32] **Joel Mann:** Yeah.

[00:09:34] **Monte Belmonte:** In Abbott Cove, you can find a grandfather by the side of the road.

[00:09:38] **John Hodgman:** Yeah. You know what they have in Abbott Cove? Corpses. That's all they have by the side of the road in Abbott Cove. Corpses. You two are married to one another, is that correct?

(They confirm.)

Do you have kids?

[00:09:50] **Michelle:** We do. We have one 10-year-old.

[00:09:53] **John Hodgman:** An only child?!

[00:09:54] **Michelle:** An only child. Yes.

[00:09:56] **John Hodgman:** Wow! Yeah. Only child with the most interesting parents in Seattle. I love it. You guys are having a good time.

(They giggle.)

[00:10:05] **Michelle:** We do try.

[00:10:07] **John Hodgman:** Michelle, uranium glass. I'm gonna take a wild guess and figure that most of our listeners aren't intimately familiar with the craft of uranium glass. What is it? And what makes it special?

[00:10:20] **Michelle:** Right? Well, so it is kind of what it sounds like. I believe it was most popular in the 1920s, but sort of started being made in the late 1800s. And it's glass that was made and infused with small amounts of uranium. So, it's kind of—

[00:10:39] **John Hodgman:** And why would someone do this? Is it part of a murder scheme, a slow murder? Do I have to send in Angela Lansbury?

[00:10:45] **Michelle:** No, it was just—apparently, uranium and things glowing was very trendy right then around the turn of the century. There were maybe some things they didn't know about that. But it was really popular to have, and so it's sort of exactly what you would think. It's a bright green color. Sometimes, it's a little more translucent, and they call that Vaseline glass, because it sort of looks like Vaseline has been molded into something.

[00:11:15] **John Hodgman:** And isn't the uranium dangerous?

[00:11:19] **Michelle:** According to the internet, (*chuckles*) the amount in uranium glass is so low that it is not a danger.

[00:11:26] **John Hodgman:** But on the other hand, how many pieces of uranium glass would you say you have? Ballpark.

[00:11:32] **Michelle:** We have three right now.

[00:11:33] **Rob:** Ballpark three.

[00:11:34] **John Hodgman:** Three. Three pieces.

(*They laugh and Michelle confirms.*)

And did they all come from the same estate sale or whatever?

[00:11:40] **Michelle:** No, they've been gathered from various estate sales or antique stores.

[00:11:45] **John Hodgman:** Are you the original owner?

[00:11:47] **Michelle:** No. No, definitely not.

[00:11:49] **John Hodgman:** Would it be safe to guess that the original owners are all deceased?

[00:11:53] **Michelle:** Almost certainly. Yes. (*Laughs.*)

[00:11:58] **John Hodgman:** Because of the uranium glass serial killer, or because when you say the turn of the century, you mean 1899 to 1900, not 1999 to 2000?

[00:12:07] **Michelle:** Good point. Yes. I do mean 1899 to 1900.

[00:12:11] **John Hodgman:** They were an old timey, decorative glassware. What are the shapes of the three pieces that you've got? What, have you got like a candy bowl?

[00:12:18] **Michelle:** Yes, there are three actually candy bowls. Those are very common.

[00:12:23] **John Hodgman:** You sent in a photo of your uranium glass collection, your three candy bowls. These images are available obviously at the show page at MaximumFun.org, as well as our Instagram account, [@JudgeJohnHodgman](https://www.instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman). These don't look like Vaseline to me.

[00:12:38] **Michelle:** The one in front is a Vaseline glass, the shorter stubbier one.

[00:12:43] **John Hodgman:** That would be the Vaseline glass, 'cause the other ones are more opaque sort of yellow. What would you call those? Snot glass?

[00:12:51] **Michelle:** We could! (*Laughs.*)

[00:12:53] **John Hodgman:** Do they have a terminology or—?

[00:12:55] **Michelle:** Not that I'm aware of. I think it's just uranium glass.

[00:12:59] **John Hodgman:** 'Cause there's custard glass, jadeite glass, depression glass, and Burmese glass that I see here on the uranium glass Wikipedia page. I'm gonna take a guess and say semi opaque or opaque pale yellow would be custard glass and opaque or semi opaque pale green is jadeite. Which would you think it is?

[00:13:22] **Michelle:** I would say they're jadeite using those definitions.

[00:13:26] **Rob:** There's no mention of Vaseline Glass on the Wikipedia?

[00:13:30] **John Hodgman:** There is. Oh, yeah, yeah, there is. Don't worry, I just put it in. I'm editing the pages, we speak.

(*They laugh.*)

No, it's in there. They look like very nice pieces. How did you start collecting them?

[00:13:40] **Michelle:** I think we saw one of them—I don't remember which came first—but saw it either at an estate sale or an antique store. And I was always aware that Vaseline glass or uranium glass was a thing, thought it was really cool. And since it was a small piece that was affordable, decided to go for it.

[00:13:58] **John Hodgman:** I don't wanna be rude, but how much are we talking?

[00:14:01] **Michelle:** Oh, maybe like \$15.

[00:14:04] **John Hodgman:** You're not into uranium glass to strike it rich at the *Antiques Roadshow*. You're just in it for the Vaseline shaped candy bowl.

[00:14:12] **Michelle:** Exactly. And for things to glow.

[00:14:14] **John Hodgman:** You say you were aware that uranium glass was a thing. I was not. And I know about a lot of weird things. Where'd you first hear about this glow up glass?

[00:14:25] **Michelle:** Honestly, I don't know. I do—so, I have sort of a glass collection that goes beyond this at my home. I inherited a milk glass collection from my grandmother.

[00:14:39] **John Hodgman:** And milk glass—you mean, it's opaque glassware that's in a milky color, not this glass is for milk? Right?

[00:14:44] **Michelle:** Exactly. It's white. No, yes. It's a white, opaque glass.

[00:14:51] **John Hodgman:** Yeah. I'm looking at your collection here. It looks like you've got quite a few—it looks like coffee cups or teacups. Quite a few platters, a couple of goblets. A huge, incredible punch bowl. I gotta tell you right there.

[00:15:06] **Michelle:** That's right. Yes. Those were all purchased using S&H Green Stamps by my grandmother in the '50s and the '60s.

[00:15:13] **John Hodgman:** By your grandmother. I was like how retro is Michelle that she's actually buying things with S&H Green Stamps?!

[00:15:19] **Monte Belmonte:** Who takes those in this day and age?

[00:15:22] **John Hodgman:** You also have a baby cup, which is not milk glass, with two handles. It is a baby cup featuring scenes from *Peter Rabbit*.

[00:15:30] **Michelle:** I believe it is. That that belonged to Rob as a baby.

[00:15:35] **Rob:** Did it?!

[00:15:36] **Michelle:** It did. Your mother gave that to me.

[00:15:37] **John Hodgman:** Oh, interesting, Rob. Because it seems to me it belonged to me, John Hodgman. You think I know all about these *Peter Rabbit* double handled baby's cups because I'm an enthusiast? No, I had that cup. Where'd you get it? Did you take it from my home, Rob?

[00:15:56] **Rob:** Maybe my mom did. I mean, if Michelle got it from my mom, I can't speak to her whereabouts during your childhood.

[00:16:04] **John Hodgman:** That would be—I wish Angela Lansbury were around to solve this mystery. 'Cause that would be one cozy mystery. And then, you have another collection that I'm looking at here, these trays! What are these trays all about?

[00:16:15] **Michelle:** These are called—I hope I'm saying it correctly, couroc trays.

[00:16:20] **John Hodgman:** I've seen trays like this. In fact, Michelle, these are black trays. They're almost like—they're some kind of composite material, maybe like Bakelite or something. And inlaid into the trays are little figures. And there's one that has a little figure of a red cardinal, which I also have that one.

(They laugh.)

So, what is happening? When I'm in Maine, do you both fly to home in New York and steal from me?

[00:16:51] **Michelle:** I think we'd have to put Angela Lansbury on that case. I can't give any more information.

[00:16:59] **John Hodgman:** Rest in power, Jessica Fletcher.

[00:17:01] **Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

[00:17:05] **Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

[00:17:07] **John Hodgman:** So, Michelle, you have a lot of collections!

[00:17:10] **Michelle:** I do. Yes, I admit it.

[00:17:12] **John Hodgman:** And you know there's longstanding precedent that the difference between a hoard and a collection is a display case.

[00:17:17] **Michelle:** That is true. Yes.

[00:17:19] **John Hodgman:** And I see that your milk glass is tidily arranged in cabinetry, which is good. Your couroc tray collection is spread out all over the dining room table.

[00:17:34] **Michelle:** The tray collection is currently homeless.

[00:17:38] **John Hodgman:** So, you don't have a display case for your couroc collection.

[00:17:42] **Michelle:** No. No, not yet.

[00:17:44] **Monte Belmonte:** Mm-hm!

[00:17:45] **John Hodgman:** Oh, wait a minute. Now, spoons? Travel spoons too?

[00:17:49] **Rob:** Most of the spoons have a home. Correct. They're—maybe not displayed is the set of 10 or 15 that have—

[00:17:57] **Michelle:** There is some overflow; that is correct.

[00:17:59] **John Hodgman:** Rob, does Michelle have a problem with collecting?

[00:18:02] **Rob:** Uh, she has a problem with not stopping collecting. I'm supportive of starting the collections. But they do not have a stopping point, which is a concern for the small uranium glass collection today.

[00:18:20] **John Hodgman:** Are there any other collections that I need to know about, Michelle, besides the spoons, the milk glass, the trays, and the beginnings of a uranium glass collection?

[00:18:31] **Michelle:** I believe that you should know about Rob's weird collection, which is also pictured.

[00:18:36] **John Hodgman:** Here we go! Tell me—you gotta tell me that he collects lazy Susans, Michelle. You know why? Turnabout is fair play. Go get him.

(Michelle laughs.)

[00:18:49] **Rob:** We do have a pretty sizable hot sauce collection on a lazy Susan on the middle of our dining room table. Yep.

[00:18:56] **John Hodgman:** It's featured in several of these photos, and I appreciate that. What are Rob's collections?

[00:19:03] **Michelle:** So, I'll start with what I find the normal collection. He collects wooden boxes, sort of inlaid—you know—puzzle boxes, that kind of thing. So, he's—they're quite lovely. I fully support that. It goes with his woodworking hobby.

[00:19:21] **John Hodgman:** I see the photos of them here. They're very nice, Rob.

[00:19:23] **Michelle:** Mm-hm.

[00:19:24] **Rob:** Thank you. Thank you.

[00:19:25] **John Hodgman:** And they're arranged on a desk in a nice way. But also, Rob, I wanna ask you. There's a little—like, a little bust, a little sculpture. Maybe in wood? Who's that?

[00:19:36] **Rob:** That is a wooden bust of Batman that I—*(laughs)* that I made as a test carve on my CNC router, that I use for woodworking.

[00:19:49] **John Hodgman:** You know, normally—and I can say this from experience—in a household where there are two parents and one child, an only child, it's the only child who's the lovable weirdo. The two parents are normals.

(They laugh.)

But the two of you—I mean, I can't—either your child is the most lovable weirdist of all time, or the most square individual I will ever meet.

[00:20:18] **Rob:** I'd say he's pretty normal.

[00:20:19] **Michelle:** Yeah, he's actually—he's pretty normal, pretty straight edge. Definitely a rule follower. Yeah.

[00:20:25] **John Hodgman:** Yeah. Well, he's an only child. Of course, he's gonna follow the rules. I just mean to say eccentricity level—for him to rebel against his parents, he's gonna have to rid himself of every eccentricity of all kind and just be the most normcore human of all time. If he were to rebel. Of course, only children don't tend to rebel either. So.

[00:20:44] **Michelle:** He is at a Foley camp this week though, so I think we've got him on the road to weirdo pretty solidly.

[00:20:53] **John Hodgman:** *(Laughs.)* Wait, you mean he's at a camp for Foley artistry?!

[00:20:56] **Michelle:** That is correct.

(They laugh.)

[00:20:59] **John Hodgman:** Wow! Joel, you know what Foley artistry is?

[00:21:03] **Joel Mann:** No, I don't.

[00:21:04] **John Hodgman:** Monte, can you explain it to Joel? 'Cause I'm just taking this in.

[00:21:06] **Monte Belmonte:** It's the sound effects used in movies. So, you know, you might have a giant sheet of metal and rumble it to make a thunder sound. That could be considered old timey Foley technology. Are they learning about like how to make the sound of an underwater basket at this camp?

[00:21:24] **Michelle:** I hope so. I mean, what are we paying for if he doesn't?

[00:21:29] **John Hodgman:** Anyway, back on track. What other collections does Rob have, aside from his wooden boxes and his little Batman?

[00:21:36] **Michelle:** Right, so Rob has another small collection—but worrisome—of weird bottles.

(John chuckles.)

You'll see there's a picture of the four of them. For the most part, this is fine. However, the one that it started with is—I am pretty sure it's cursed. And he brought this into our home, and so I feel like he does not have a leg to stand on when he is talking about whether something is tacky or not.

[00:22:08] **John Hodgman:** So, I presume you're referring—I mean, all of these bottles look terrifying to me.

[00:22:12] **Michelle:** Yes, that's true.

[00:22:13] **John Hodgman:** One of them looks like an old timey jug that you would of blow over in a jug band. (*Mimics jug noises.*)

[00:22:20] **Michelle:** Right. And that one is covered in leather.

(*John shudders.*)

Exactly.

[00:22:25] **Rob:** There's actually two covered in leather in that picture.

[00:22:28] **John Hodgman:** Ah, that's a tactile clue that I didn't need.

(*They laugh.*)

Then, there's one that looks like a possessed Aztec owl, which is very scary.

[00:22:41] **Michelle:** That is the one.

[00:22:42] **John Hodgman:** That's the one that you find scary? You don't—oh, that's the one you find scary?

[00:22:45] **Michelle:** That's the one I find scary, yes!

[00:22:47] **John Hodgman:** You don't find the pitch-black beaker that is covered in leather with a chain on it and looks like something Edward Gorey would use to murder Dracula?!

[00:22:59] **Michelle:** I mean, I think if you're—if I'm having to pick out the cursed object in this one, it's definitely the one with the Aztec bird face on it.

[00:23:08] **Rob:** We'll have to note that the one covered in leather with the chain on it—well, you probably can't see, but it has what appear to be kind of depictions of a crusade etched into it. So, in my mind, it's definitely the creepiest. But to each their own.

[00:23:28] **John Hodgman:** Yeah. You ever open this bottle?

[00:23:31] **Rob:** They have all been opened and cleaned out. They're in—

[00:23:35] **John Hodgman:** Now we all have the curse, Rob!

(Michelle and Rob agree.)

[00:23:37] **John Hodgman:** Where are you finding these weird bottles, Rob?

[00:23:40] **Rob:** Well, I have to say that the creepy Aztec looking one was indeed also found on the side of the road in Seattle. The other three were found in antique stores.

[00:23:49] **John Hodgman:** Ugh. Oh no. What neighborhood are you traveling through that there are just like random grandfather clocks and creepy bottles around?!

[00:24:01] **Rob:** Not the creepiest of neighborhoods!

[00:24:02] **Michelle:** No, a very—as far as Seattle goes, a very normal neighborhood.

[00:24:07] **John Hodgman:** Yeah. Weird. Weird stuff in Seattle, I guess. Rob, you have four of these bottles. This is a relatively new collection for you?

[00:24:15] **Rob:** I've had the Aztec looking bottle for probably close to a decade, but the other three are relatively new.

[00:24:23] **John Hodgman:** So, this is one more than Michelle's uranium glass collection.

(They confirm.)

[00:24:28] **Michelle:** I'd also like to point out that the most normal looking bottle, the sort of yellow glass one that's a ship light actually also is a music box. Yep. It plays a sort of sea shanty tune.

[00:24:44] **Rob:** “How Dry I Am”, I believe is the name of the song. And it plays it only whenever you pick the bottle up, so you can—so, it starts, you know, playing the music box tune as you are pouring. It's pretty exciting.

[00:24:59] **John Hodgman:** Uuh, Monte, I think the podcast is over. I'm being completely out only-childed by these two lovable eccentrics.

(They giggle.)

I had enough—I was just—like, wowie-zowie. I think I just gotta go into the Maine woods and disappear at this point. Plus, probably, I got the curse of the black bottle on me.

[00:25:19] **Michelle:** Oh, for sure.

[00:25:20] **John Hodgman:** Okay, I gotta get it back together. You can do it. You can do it, John. You can do it, Judge John Hodgman. So, Rob's collecting cursed bottles—frankly, more alarming to me than the uranium glass. Plus, he has one more. Plus, he's picking up speed. So, Rob, what leg—dare I say peg leg—do you have to stand on while holding your sea shanty bottle to point a crooked, cursed finger at Michelle for collecting her stuff?

[00:25:52] **Rob:** Oh no, there's not a finger being pointed for collecting the uranium glass. It's primarily installing a permanent blacklight in a grandfather clock. And you know, in order to further enhance the uranium glass collection.

[00:26:05] **John Hodgman:** Monte, for a second, I forgot about the grandfather clock that Rob is turning into a display case!

(They laugh.)

[00:26:09] **Rob:** Yes. Yeah. Yeah. I'm not worried about the uranium glass at all.

[00:26:14] **John Hodgman:** I just need to tell everyone go and look at the photos, including the incredible photos of your incredible home. And there's other stuff to look at here, including a portrait of Alexander Hamilton drawn in a sharpie above a mantel piece. There's a lot. And not—and I will say, this mantel piece is above a fireplace that is bracketed on either side by more glass covered cupboards that are—to no one's surprise—full of board games. Right?

(They laugh.)

They're packed full of tabletop—esoteric tabletop board games. These kids are having so much fun in Seattle. Boy, oh boy.

[00:26:57] **Rob:** Did you remove some of the excess board games from the picture? The ones that can't fit in the cabinet right now?

[00:27:02] **Michelle:** I just cropped the picture so that they were not in it. Yeah.

[00:27:05] **John Hodgman:** Yeah, just cropped. Oh, that's interesting. So, you're saying that these cabinets that are shoved full of board games cannot hold your entire board game collection.

[00:27:14] **Michelle:** The collection should be whittled down a bit. That is true. Yeah.

[00:27:20] **John Hodgman:** Alright, Rob, what do you want to put in the grandfather clock?

[00:27:23] **Rob:** I'm okay with putting the uranium glass in the grandfather clock. I am concerned about expanding like—the act of adding a blacklight to the grandfather clock and putting the uranium glass in it, I believe, will turn it into a pure uranium glass clock display

cabinet, versus a display cabinet that could display the uranium glass and creepy bottles or other things. You know.

[00:27:56] **John Hodgman:** This is a real hair you're splitting, Rob.

[00:27:59] **Rob:** Well, I mean, it's the difference between—yeah, like making this specific uranium glass glowing thing a centerpiece of our home versus a thing to display our various weird collections.

[00:28:15] **John Hodgman:** What—you wanna put your bottles in there?

[00:28:18] **Rob:** I think there's bottles, I mean, there's couroc trays, there's extra overflow glass that Michelle has there. You know, there's plenty of things that we could use an extra display cabinet for.

[00:28:29] **John Hodgman:** You're okay with everything except uranium glass, and even then you're okay with uranium glass. You just don't want it to do what uranium glass does, which is light up under blacklight.

[00:28:39] **Rob:** Specifically, I'm worried about the blacklight—having a permanent blacklight in our house.

[00:28:45] **John Hodgman:** Okay. Because it looks like garbage.

[00:28:46] **Rob:** Because they look like garbage, (*laughs*) and I'm worried about it looking like garbage in our dining room 365 days a year.

[00:28:54] **John Hodgman:** Like you're okay with having creepy bottles all over the place, but you don't wanna turn your house into the Haunted Mansion.

[00:28:59] **Rob:** Exactly! Or only the haunted mansion during the month of October, but definitely not 12 months of the year. Yes.

[00:29:06] **John Hodgman:** Right, when it's rethemed to *Nightmare Before Christmas*, directed by Henry Sellick! Sorry, I have to say that from time to time. Michelle, you have to acknowledge that things glowing in blacklight—whether it be a scope-rion or a Vaseline glass candy dish or a poster of a yellow spitting cobra—you have to acknowledge this all looks pretty trashy.

[00:29:32] **Michelle:** Sure. I mean, that's—you also wouldn't find uranium glass at Spencer's Gifts. So, I did include in evidence some example pictures from the internet of people who have this displayed in their homes or in a—what looks like a very nice antique store. And I think if you look at these pictures that—with just the uranium glass being under the blacklight—I think it looks quite nice. I think it's classy.

Our home was built in 1916. So, I think, you know, this is of the age of the house.

[00:30:07] **John Hodgman:** The uranium glass era.

[00:30:09] **Michelle:** Exactly, yes. So, it would be very historically accurate to be showing this off in our home.

[00:30:15] **John Hodgman:** Yeah, but look, I am looking at the same evidence that you sent me, conveniently. 'Cause I'm a professional. And I have to tell you something. Like, so this is a display cabinet—non grandfather clock shaped—regular display cabinet with some nice uranium glass pieces in there. And they're blacklight illuminated, and they're glowing. They're glowing like a scope-riion in the desert. I gotta tell you, Michelle. This is me personally. This looks a little goofy.

(Michelle laughs.)

It looks spooky, but like spooky goof. You know what I mean? Spooky goofy, scary ghost glass. What do you—how would you describe it, Monte?

[00:30:51] **Monte Belmonte:** I would describe it as a beautiful display cabinet that's filled with things that you'd see in the entranceway to a roller rink/laser tag place at a mall.

[00:31:02] **John Hodgman:** I think that it looks like a beautiful display case that is full of all of the weird neon-wearing gang members in *Batman and Robin*, which was a weird blacklight scene in that movie.

(Rob and Michelle laugh.)

[00:31:13] **Monte Belmonte:** Or maybe a display case that was set up by Splinter to welcome his ninja turtle younglings back home to make them remember the glowing ooze that turned him into the mutants that they are.

[00:31:26] **John Hodgman:** Michelle, look, we're having fun. This stuff is really cool. I've never seen this before. I'd never heard of this stuff before. I absolutely see why you love it, but you have to admit it's a strong flavor.

[00:31:38] **Michelle:** It is. You know, I think if you look at the picture of the grandfather clock though, it's pretty enclosed. The display area is not huge, so I think using the clock as the display case is going to keep the collection contained. And I think unlike the example picture—which is, you know, sort of glass on all sides—I don't think you're gonna get that obnoxious Spencer's gifts glow coming out of it quite as strongly.

[00:32:10] **Rob:** I would say the display cabinet picture—I'd also like us all to note that this is a picture taken in what looks to be the daytime. And I am deeply concerned about having a blacklight on in the evening hours, and how much of a purple glow will be emanating from our dining room.

[00:32:31] **John Hodgman:** I have to say, though, I didn't even look at this grandfather clock! This grandfather clock also looks like something out of Edward Gorey's animated introduction for *Mystery!* on WGBH. This is a spooky looking clock!

[00:32:45] **Rob:** I'm intending to clean it up to make it look nice. So, it came, you know, painted black. I need to restore it—you know, repair the wood some. And I was planning on, you know, putting some kind of goldish embellishments on it to make it less pure, you know, Halloween spooky looking.

[00:33:05] **John Hodgman:** Were you going to strip off this black paint and refinish it, or are you gonna keep the black?

[00:33:09] **Rob:** I was planning on just adding some goldish embellishments on kind of the textured surfaces to make it kind of gold on black, as opposed to just, you know, pure black.

[00:33:22] **John Hodgman:** I gotta say, if you're keeping black in the mix at all, Rob, this truly looks like a grandfather clock that was made to display a glowing candy vase.

[00:33:33] **Michelle:** I agree.

[00:33:34] **John Hodgman:** Like, it is very much the haunted mansion vibe.

[00:33:38] **Michelle:** Mm-hm. Yes. And that is the vibe I'm going for.

[00:33:41] **John Hodgman:** Are you anti that vibe, Rob?

[00:33:44] **Rob:** Well, I mean, the rest of our house—like, I would not be opposed at all to this vibe during the Halloween season, but I don't think having the glowing—you know, bringing the Halloween vibe to our dining room 12 months out of the year is really—would really fit.

[00:34:03] **John Hodgman:** Michelle, did you consider getting a different display case for either a different room or not a project that Rob was working on, to glow your uranium glass in?

[00:34:12] **Michelle:** That's really why the collection has stayed small, is I really wasn't sure how to display it until we found this clock, and then it was like everything just clicked into place. So, you know, I'd been restraining myself, not buying a lot since we don't have a place for it. I just feel like if you're bringing uranium glass into your home, you're also bringing a blacklight into your home. I just—I feel like those are two great tastes that go great together.

[00:34:41] **John Hodgman:** Yeah, but the “your” in this case is not just your house, Michelle. It's your all's house, the two of—the three of you. And this is Rob's grandfather clock, is it not? I mean, who found it?

[00:34:52] **Rob:** Eh, I guess we both found it. We both brought it a few blocks over in pieces.

[00:34:57] **Michelle:** I had to, with the help of our 10-year-old son, campaign to retrace our steps and go back for this grandfather clock and bring it into our home.

[00:35:09] **John Hodgman:** Was Rob resistant to the grandfather clock?

[00:35:12] **Michelle:** He was. Mostly because he—as he stated earlier, he doesn't think we need a second clock. Which I agree with. So, it was when I threw out the idea of using it as a display case that he agreed. He thought that was a good idea.

[00:35:28] **John Hodgman:** Rob, what did you think would be displayed?

[00:35:31] **Rob:** I guess—

[00:35:32] **John Hodgman:** Any of the junk you have lying around?

[00:35:33] **Rob:** (*Laughs.*) Yeah, any of the junk we have lying around, not under blacklight. That was my expectation.

[00:35:40] **John Hodgman:** You thought this might be over overflow storage for your board games and spoons?

[00:35:45] **Rob:** Exactly. Exactly. I'll also say that I think I came up with a pretty good idea for where this uranium glass could be displayed under blacklight in the clock, just not quite in the way Michelle was hoping.

[00:36:03] **John Hodgman:** Let me hear your idea.

[00:36:05] **Rob:** Imagine a hinged clock face that you can pull open to reveal a kind of secret layer of glowing uranium glass.

[00:36:17] **John Hodgman:** You know, display usually means showing something, not hiding it.

[00:36:19] **Rob:** Yeah, you are correct.

[00:36:20] **Michelle:** Exactly. Yes.

(They laugh.)

[00:36:23] **Rob:** A secret display.

[00:36:25] **John Hodgman:** I mean, I like it. I like secret rooms a lot. And I presume you must have several of them. That's pretty cool. I do like that idea, but why is that not satisfactory to you, Michelle? Let me guess.

[00:36:38] **Michelle:** Well, I—again, I also like that idea, but I feel like it's hiding the really cool uranium glass that is in our house. I think we should use that for something else. I'm sure I can come up with another good option for what to put in there, but the glass is meant to be displayed.

[00:36:56] **Rob:** So, I'll also throw out there: consider how we we're all enthralled by the glowing uranium glass, because we don't see it very often. If you have it in the house 365 days a year, glowing, I do feel like it's gonna lose some of its luster.

[00:37:14] **John Hodgman:** It does feel, Michelle, like Rob is really working with you on this. But on the other side, it also feels a little bit like you're grasping at straws, Rob.

(They laugh.)

Like, you—this is fun. This is enjoyable/nauseating at first, but after a while it'll get boring, and you won't like it anymore. Do you have like a bad experience with a blacklight poster or a dorm room situation that this is bringing you back to?

[00:37:40] **Rob:** I did have a blacklight in my room, as a teenager growing up. And I feel like I'm very much done with that phase of my life.

[00:37:49] **John Hodgman:** You know, you're a hobbyist and an avid and skilled woodworker and restorer of grandfather clocks. You are a collector of creepy cursed bottles. It seems to me like you're very much on board with the vibe of your beautiful and eccentric home decor. So, what was it that you grew out of? Not eccentricity, obviously. What of those teenage years did you grow out of where you're like, “This is the childish thing I'm putting behind me. Bye-bye, blacklight.”

[00:38:23] **Rob:** It's a very different vibe having a blacklight, I think, in your dining room versus having it in in a teenage bedroom.

[00:38:33] **John Hodgman:** Does it—it feels juvenile to you.

[00:38:34] **Rob:** It feels—yes.

[00:38:37] **John Hodgman:** Michelle, why does the grandfather clock have to be in the dining room?

[00:38:40] **Michelle:** Mostly because that's just where it will fit the best in our house. You know, it is pretty large, and that was part of the debate, even just bringing it in the house, is Rob told me I had to find a place for it. And it seems just like the best place where it fits is that corner of the dining room.

[00:39:01] **John Hodgman:** Is there any other place in the house where this thing could be that would be acceptable to you, Michelle?

[00:39:09] **Michelle:** I mean, we could—I guess we could move it into our bedroom, (*chuckling*) but I feel like he would find that to be much worse.

[00:39:18] **Rob:** (*Laughs.*) There is more space in the bedroom, but, uh—

[00:39:21] **Michelle:** Exactly. It'd be a nice nightlight, you know, if you have to get up in the middle of the night to get a drink of water or something. It's—

[00:39:28] **John Hodgman:** Yeah, let's not even talk about that. Yeah, no, that's not gonna happen. What do you think about Rob's concerns that if you get that uranium glass in there with a blacklight on a timer that your collection of uranium glass is gonna expand?

[00:39:42] **Michelle:** I don't think it will, because I think it's the clock and that display case that will keep it contained.

[00:39:49] **Rob:** The collection definitely will expand over, you know, to fill the entire clock. Correct?

[00:39:55] **Michelle:** Oh, sure, sure. Yes.

[00:39:57] **John Hodgman:** Uranium glass loves a vacuum.

(*They chuckle.*)

That's just science. How many pieces of uranium glass do you think/fear, Rob, she could shove into that grandfather clock?

[00:40:10] **Rob:** I mean, if—she's got three now. I feel like that cabinet could easily fit 15/20.

[00:40:17] **John Hodgman:** Michelle, would you be content with just three uranium glass pieces or four?

[00:40:23] **Michelle:** I think whatever fits nicely in the clock would be enough. You know, I think between five and ten would be sufficient. I think that would look nice in there.

[00:40:33] **John Hodgman:** I gotta disagree with you there, because I'm looking again at this piece of evidence you sent—the display case with the uranium glass and it all lit up under blacklight. And that's too much uranium glass in there.

[00:40:46] **Michelle:** I would agree. And that—I think that is much bigger, much taller for sure, than the grandfather clock that we have.

[00:40:55] **John Hodgman:** Yeah, but for me, I'm looking at that, and I feel like there should be one piece on each level.

[00:41:00] **Michelle:** Right. Well, I mean, I think we stop the collection when it looks nice and finished.

[00:41:05] **Rob:** Does that mean that next time we go to an antique store that you're going to—is it like a give a uranium glass, take a uranium glass kind of situation whenever you find a better-looking piece?

[00:41:18] **Michelle:** Yeah. Yeah, sure. It could be.

[00:41:21] **John Hodgman:** You live in Seattle where grandfather clocks line the streets. Surely, there's a little free uranium glass library in your neighborhood.

[00:41:27] **Michelle:** If there isn't, we could start one!

[00:41:29] **Monte Belmonte:** It's always u-raining in Seattle.

[00:41:31] **John Hodgman:** Wow, Monte.

[00:41:32] **Monte Belmonte:** Sorry about that.

[00:41:33] **John Hodgman:** That's incredible. No, that's incredible. So, Michelle, once it has reached completion—mutually agreed completion—would you then consent to a one-out-one-in policy with uranium glass?

[00:41:46] **Michelle:** Yes.

[00:41:47] **John Hodgman:** Are you capable of that?

[00:41:48] **Michelle:** I am capable. I find that that seems like a very good solution.

[00:41:53] **John Hodgman:** If I were to rule in your favor, Michelle, it says here that you want me to order that there be a blacklight in the case that can be turned off and on easily, ideally with a timer so that it goes on in the evening when you come home from work and then turns off when you go to bed. Even you are afraid to sleep in a house with glowing uranium glass in it.

[00:42:12] **Michelle:** (*Giggles.*) Well, I mean, we're in Seattle. You know, we have to be environmentally conscious with our electricity use.

[00:42:18] **John Hodgman:** Oh, I see what you're saying. So, there'd be no illumination of any kind after bedtime.

(*Michelle confirms.*)

Rob, you would like there to be no blacklight in the display case except for a temporary blacklight during the month of October.

[00:42:31] **Rob:** I think glowing uranium glass during spooky season is totally fine with me, but the other 11 months of the year, no.

[00:42:39] **John Hodgman:** But how complicated would it be to install a regular display light and a blacklight display light? You could toggle between them.

[00:42:49] **Rob:** I honestly have to figure out the logistics. Assuming the ruling does not go in my favor, I feel like I have to figure out the logistics of how to install a permanent blacklight and try to make it not look tacky. So, I've got some engineering to do regardless.

[00:43:06] **John Hodgman:** Well, no, I mean blacklights themselves are not tacky. They're just bulbs. I don't know if you know this. There's been a lot of innovation in blacklight technology since you were a teenager. It's just a bulb.

[00:43:19] **Rob:** Yes, but I guess I have to figure out how to make it—make the bulb itself hidden and minimize the amount of purple glow that will be emanating throughout my dining room.

[00:43:34] **John Hodgman:** You really just don't like the glowing uranium glass. You don't like glowing stuff.

[00:43:39] **Rob:** The glowing stuff in the dining room 12 months out of the year is the worry for me.

[00:43:46] **John Hodgman:** I find this uranium glass to be pretty nauseating without glowing, no offense. I don't mean that in a taste way. I just mean like, it just looks—it's kind of snot green, you know? Like, are you truly okay with the uranium glass period, Rob? Like, if there was no—if they didn't glow, if there was no option, would you be okay with having these pieces in the grandfather clock?

[00:44:12] **Rob:** Yes. Yes, totally.

[00:44:15] **John Hodgman:** I think I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. I'm going to crawl into this niche in the basement to sip from a cask of amontillado and hope that Rob and Michelle don't brick me in while I'm figuring out my verdict. I'll be back in a moment with my decision.

[00:44:28] **Monte Belmonte:** Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

(Chairs squeak, followed by heavy footsteps and a door closing.)

This has been an interesting case. Rob, I need to know, did you send your child to Foley camp to make the special effects for the horror movie that you are obviously developing in your very creepy house?

[00:44:44] **Rob:** He also went to a stop motion animation camp a few weeks ago. So, yes, the combination of Foley and clay and horror doesn't sound too bad.

[00:44:55] **Monte Belmonte:** Michelle, are you okay with displaying these uranium glasses not inside an atomic clock, maybe in an already existing cabinet that you have somewhere with a tiny hidden blacklight that, on occasion, would illuminate them?

[00:45:10] **Michelle:** I mean, I think that would be nice. I think Rob would argue just as strongly against that, perhaps more strongly.

[00:45:19] **Monte Belmonte:** Well, we'll see what the judge has to say all about this when we come back in just a moment.

[00:45:24] **Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

[00:45:27] **Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

[00:45:29] **John Hodgman:** Monte, we are taking a break from the case. What do you have coming up on *The Fabulous 413*?

[00:45:36] **Monte Belmonte:** By the time you hear this, we'll have been at Tanglewood broadcasting with our Tanglewood correspondent, who happens to be the conductor of the Boston Pops, Keith Lockhart. And hopefully, if it all went well, we were able to convince former Boston Pops conductor—and potentially one of the most important musicians of the latter half of the 20th and early part of 21st century—John Williams, as part of the show.

(*John "wow"s.*)

But you'll have to listen to it wherever podcasts are available and see if we were actually able to achieve that or not. Even if we didn't, we have lots—we have a podcast every day pretty much. So.

[00:46:07] **John Hodgman:** Yeah, you buried the lede, by the way. Who needs John Williams when you got Keith Lockhart?

[00:46:11] **Monte Belmonte:** Well, that's true. Keith Lockhart's been on a bunch of times, and he's great.

[00:46:15] **John Hodgman:** I got to perform with him and the Boston Pops a couple of times. What a great bunch. If you're in Boston or anywhere the Boston Pops might be touring, go see them. And you can listen to—obviously, you can listen to *The Fabulous 413* anywhere

you get your podcasts. And Monte, you and your co-host, Kaliis Smith, are total delights, and it's a totally fun show. So, go check that out.

So, Joel Mann, I believe I heard some pledge driving here at WERU. You had the big pledge drive earlier this month.

[00:46:41] **Joel Mann:** Yes, it went really well. We thank everyone out there for their support. 35 years.

[00:46:46] **John Hodgman:** 35 years of community radio, here in Orland, Maine. But that doesn't mean that people can't offer their financial support to the station.

[00:46:58] **Joel Mann:** You can go to WERU.org anytime, and there's a little donation button. You hit that.

[00:47:02] **John Hodgman:** Alright. Even though it's not the pledge drive, I am lifting the ban on your pledging to WERU, because after all WERU stands for We Are You. I just remembered that the other day.

[00:47:14] **Joel Mann:** We are you.

(Monte laughs.)

[00:47:15] **John Hodgman:** Very, very clever. So, as far as me, your little old friend Judge John Hodgman, I got nothing really coming up—except for a massive tour! That's right. We are closer than ever to the Van Freaks Roadshow. That's where me and Jesse Thorn are gonna go out there and dispense justice throughout the UK and parts of Europe and much of the United States of America. And we're calling it Van Freaks Roadshow, because we both love *Antiques Roadshow*, and we are both—and Jesse, especially—fans of the Mitsubishi Delica, Japanese market only adventure van. Where can you drive your Delica? I don't know! Can you get to Dublin, Republic of Ireland, London, Lexington, Kentucky, Chicago, Illinois, Madison, Wisconsin, St. Paul, Minnesota, Austin, Texas, Atlanta, Georgia, Durham, North Carolina, Charlottesville, Virginia, Washington DC, Portland, Maine, Boston, Massachusetts, Brooklyn, New York? Get your delicate there! You can see us dispense justice in all of those cities. As well as surprise, special guests of all kinds.

It's gonna be a lot of fun, and remember, we need cases for these shows. Now, we're starting to get some in. If you have a dispute, if you're coming to the show and you're bringing someone, figure out what's wrong with them. Figure out what your dispute is with that person. No case is too small. Just write to me via MaximumFun.org/jjho, and make sure you let us know which town you're in, and we'll consider your dispute for hearing right there, live up on stage. It'll be a lot of fun. VanFreaksRoadshow.com is where you can get all the tickets, all the information. I'll say it again. VanFreaksRoadshow.com. All one word, except for the dot. Go there now. Get your tickets. Send in your cases, MaximumFun.org/jjho. VanFreaksRoadshow.com. Let's get back to the case.

[00:48:59] **Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

[00:49:01] **Monte Belmonte:** Please rise as Judge John Hodgman reenters the courtroom and presents his verdict.

(Chairs squeak, followed by heavy footsteps and a door closing.)

[00:49:08] **John Hodgman:** So, first of all, I feel I have perhaps misrepresented your home, Rob and Michelle, by referring to it as a place that I might be detained or murdered in. I have made reference to the Haunted Mansion. All of these things are not exactly right. Your house is beautiful and inviting and cool and interesting and pretty much in balance. Its decor offers glimpses of your interests and your eccentricity, but it is not putting it in your face. You've decorated it in a very, very loving and careful way to reflect the colors and tones of the arts and crafts movement, but while also putting in the corners obviously little elements of yourself and your haunted bottles, which are distinctly creepy. They look good in here. And your board games are contained, for the most part, well within those cases. It looks good. You're doing a great job.

I will say that you are nearing a point where you are going to have to do some purging. And you know, a collection—even one with a display case—can pretty much become a kind of hoard, when you don't have room for your extra spoons. Before I make my ruling, I just wanted to give you that that's my impression. I don't know if that tracks with the way you both are feeling in your home, but it's a good idea to check in with each other. 'Cause obviously, Rob is a little concerned that, Michelle, you're onto a new thing and you're running out of room to the point that you're having to scavenge grandfather clocks off of the streets in order to hold this new thing.

[00:50:53] **Michelle:** That is fair.

[00:50:56] **John Hodgman:** Now, as for this uranium glass—I had never heard of it before this case. I find it really fascinating. I think you can hear in my voice—I think, when I said the word “nauseating”, that it is not to my taste, but I think it's super cool and an interesting part of history, and I completely understand why it is to someone else's taste. Specifically, you. And Rob doesn't seem to mind it so long as it is not glowing. But Michelle, you do raise a really interesting point. Why? Why should there be radioactive glass in my home if it's not to glow? What is the point of uranium glass if not to glow?

[00:51:37] **Michelle:** Exactly.

[00:51:37] **John Hodgman:** And I have to say that there has never been a grandfather clock that so thoroughly calls out for a uranium glass collection than this creepy clock that you found. I have real reservations about how this clock is gonna fit in. Your house is in balance now. This clock—I don't care how much golden filigree Rob puts on it, and he is clearly a talented and skilled crafts person, but it's gonna look very goth. And that's not a vibe that you have in your house right now. I really have hesitations, and I understand where Rob is coming from. I think that he's been very, very agreeable insofar as he actually let the thing into the house that you share and is working to restore it, because you and your only child want it. And that's super cool of Rob. And I respect the line that Rob is trying to draw at the glowing. I mean, it is a real look.

(Beat.) But we have to see it. We gotta see what it looks like. We gotta—have to see—we have to see it. I need to see it. I need to see it in this world. I think that it would not be particularly difficult. If you're going to install lighting in the clock at all, I do not think it is going to be particularly difficult to install a backlight alternate in there. And I encourage you, Michelle, to do the work and the research to work with Rob to figure out how to do this if it's possible and to acknowledge if it's not possible. But if it is possible, my order is to install the backlight and complete the project. My further order is there will—shall be no timer, and there shall be no time when Rob is forced to endure the nauseating image of floating ghost glasses in the clock that he is working to restore on your behalf.

The only time that you may turn on the backlight and keep it on is October 31st, and maybe a couple days before. And then, the only other time when you may turn on the backlight is when Rob isn't home, or you are sitting in the dining room looking to enjoy it yourself or showing your collection off to a friend or you and your only child are enjoying it. But it can't be on during dinnertime. And the final order is that when you get this project done, that you really look at it with a hard eye. Obviously, send us a photo. But you need to look at it with a hard eye and see if it really fits in that corner. So, I'm technically ruling in—well, you know what, I'm gonna say that I'm ruling in Rob's favor, 'cause he deserves it. He deserves the win.

(Michelle laughs.)

[00:54:37] **Rob:** Thank you, judge.

[00:54:38] **John Hodgman:** Because as far as you're concerned, Rob, you only asked that you complete your project and only have a backlight on during October. And as far as you're concerned, that's the only time you will see this backlight. It's the only time you'll see it. This is the sound of a gavel. J

[00:54:54] **Sound Effect:** A grandfather clock chimes.

[00:54:57] **John Hodgman:** Judge John Hodgman rules. That is all.

[00:54:59] **Monte Belmonte:** Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

(Chairs squeak, followed by heavy footsteps and a door closing.)

With the wisdom of Solomon there, I think he's come up with a remarkable compromise. And I'm frankly slightly shocked that it's come out that way. But Rob, how are you feeling about having to alter this grandfather clock in a way that will both please your wife, Michelle, and please your eyes for every day other than Halloween?

[00:55:21] **Rob:** It feels like a very fair judgment to me. It's a nice compromise. I appreciate the words of wisdom on the decor in general and, you know, keeping the collections in check.

[00:55:32] **Monte Belmonte:** And Michelle, if you see this grandfather clock that is super goth and gonna glow in the dark like the clothes that Ken wears in the new Barbie movie and recognize that it might be too much, would you be willing to admit that eventually?

[00:55:45] **Michelle:** Yes, yes. I think the judge is correct, and once this project is completed, we can really look at it with a critical eye and see if it really is the right thing for that space.

[00:55:58] **Monte Belmonte:** Michelle and Rob, thank you so much.

(They thank him.)

[00:56:02] **Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

[00:56:04] **Monte Belmonte:** Another case in the books. Before we dispense some Swift Justice, we want to thank Redditor TheGrayBrewer for naming this week's episode, “No-Glow Contendere”. Join the conversation over at the Maximum Fun subreddit over at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/MaximumFun). We'll be asking for title suggestions there too. So, keep an eye out for those. Evidence and photos from the show are posted on our Instagram account at [Instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman). Make sure to follow us!

Judge John Hodgman was created by Jesse Thorn and John Hodgman. This episode was engineered by Robert Jacob Springer at KUOW in Seattle and by Joel Mann at WERU in Orland, Maine. Marie Bardi runs our social media. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor. Now, let's get to Swift Justice where we answer—

[00:56:52] **John Hodgman:** *(Interrupting.)* Now, wait one second. There seems to be someone missing from the credits! Monte Belmonte of New England Public Media is our—is your summertime fun-time guest bailiff, and it's so nice to be resuming my summer with you by my side. And I'm really glad to hear your voice. Thank you for joining us, Monte. But now shall we get to Swift Justice?

[00:57:13] **Monte Belmonte:** Yes, we shall! David says, “I did a comedy panel show, and my little brother heckled me. My parents said that he's just a kid, but he was 36 at the time.”

[00:57:24] **John Hodgman:** This is why there should only be only children, because those babies of the family get to be babies their whole lives! They get to be just kids their whole lives. And the older siblings have to be the responsible ones, and the babies get to just be babies. And the middle children just get lost. Stop babying that baby brother. 36 years old! And by the way, humans stop heckling people at comedy shows! It's not funny. It's not cool. You look dumb. It's terrible. Stop it.

So, this has been a very context specific episode of *Judge John Hodgman*. Because as you know—if you've been following along week by week, you know that I've been in Maine, hanging out here with Joel, sometimes talking with Monte. Then, I had to go back to Brooklyn, New York, to take care of some of my business there and march on the strike line. And now, I'm back in Maine. And if you're listening out of order or you—you know, it's years into the future or whatever it is, you might be like, “What is the context I'm missing here? What is Maine?” Does Maine still exist in the future? I don't know. So, I think that I want to record a couple of evergreen episodes in the future. Do you know what I mean? Like, just evergreen episodes of *Judge John Hodgman*.

So, I'm asking you your evergreen disputes. Do I mean disputes that are not context specific, that are sort of like time timeless disputes? Is a hotdog a sandwich? No, I mean, disputes about evergreen trees. If you live in the pine tree state of Maine, any dispute is allowable so long as it references pine trees. But of course, I'm looking for all of your disputes on any subject, particularly if you're gonna be coming to one of our shows on tour, which you've heard all about already. Send all your disputes, including your evergreen disputes, into MaximumFun.org/jjho.

Thanks again to Joel and Monte for keeping me company today. Thanks again to our litigants, and we will talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast!

[00:59:21] **Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

[00:59:23] **Sound Effect:** Cheerful ukulele chord.

[00:59:24] **Speaker 1:** Maximum Fun.

[00:59:25] **Speaker 2:** A worker-owned network.

[00:59:27] **Speaker 3:** Of artist owned shows.

[00:59:29] **Speaker 4:** Supported—

[00:59:30] **Speaker 5:** —directly—

[00:59:31] **Speaker 6:** —by you!