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Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Jesse Thorn: Welcome to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. This week, "Clapital Offense". Michele brings the case against her sister, Kristyn. Michele's husband introduced a new tradition to their family's Christmas morning. Michele loves it. Kristyn thinks it's silly. Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide.

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

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

John Hodgman: "Ronald D. Moore's reboot of *Battlestar Galactica* loves this trope to death. It's out in full force in the miniseries and used again and again completely unironically in the series itself. It's actually become a sort of an in-joke when not pulled off successfully, as when Gaius Baltar completely fails to start one in CIC when Commander Adama returns after recovering from his gunshot wounds and heart surgery."

End quote. Bailiff Jesse Thorn, please swear the litigants in.

Jesse Thorn: Michele and Kristyn, please rise and raise your right hands.

(Chairs squeak.)

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God or whatever?

(They swear.)

Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that he's a real Maynard G. Krebs and snaps instead of applauding?

(They laugh and agree.)

Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

John Hodgman: *(Chuckling.)* Maynard G. Krebs. You're talking about Bob Denver who went on—who stole the show from that Dobie Gillis character.

(Jesse confirms.)

The many loves of Dobie Gillis. Maynard G. Krebs was the beatnik friend played by Bob Denver who would later go on to become Gilligan in *Gilligan's Island*. I am old.

(They chuckle.)

But you, Kristyn and Michele, are young. Please sit down if you don't mind.

(Chairs squeak.)

For an immediate summary judgment on one of your favors, can either of you name the piece of culture that I referenced when I entered the courtroom? And I'm gonna—I'll give you a little context. Okay? I was quoting from—I'll just go ahead and tell you that I was quoting from the wonderful website TV Tropes, which lists every possible dramatic trope or convention that could ever show up in any television show, movie, play, book, novel, whatever. And this is referring to a trope that was overused, according to the writer—who is uncredited by the way; I couldn't find a credit for the particular contributor to this Wikipedia-like massive website TVTropes.org. But this particular trope that I did not name is overused according to this writer in Ronald D. Moore's reboot of *Battlestar Galactica*. I gotta get in there and correct that, because it's co-created by David Eick, but there we go. What is the trope that is overused in *Battlestar Galactica*, Michele? What's your guess?

Michele: I'm gonna say the only TV trope that I can think of, which is jumping the shark.

John Hodgman: Jumping the shark is probably the most famous TV trope on TVTropes.org. Okay. Jumping the shark, of course, for the one person of you who doesn't know or maybe the little baby who was just born yesterday who listens to this program—welcome, baby. That references the episode of *Happy Days*—boy, some real old timey references!—when Arthur “the Fonz” Fonzarelli water skis over a great white shark in the post-*Jaws* era of popular culture, when great white sharks were everywhere and they thought, “Let's get people to watch this.” And he jumped over a shark. And that was considered to be the moment in which *Happy Days* went from being a sublime, perfect cultural product, I suppose, into sort of a piece of trash. I'm not sure I agree, but there you go. That's what that means.

Alright, Kristyn, what's your guess?

Kristyn: Originally, I was going to say TV Tropes is my guess, because I was like, “Oh, that's on lock!” But I wish I knew more about *Battlestar Galactica*.

John Hodgman: I mean, you were going to guess TV Tropes before I said that it was from TV Tropes?

Kristyn: Don't count that! I was.

John Hodgman: No, I just want to know. Very cool! Alright.

Kristyn: Yes, I love TV Tropes. I could spend all day on that website, unfortunately.

John Hodgman: It's sort of like walking through the Strand bookstore, if you're a writer of any kind. It's a reminder that everyone has been where you are before 10,000 times, and most

of them have died without any success. Every book has been written, every trope has been made, and they're all for sale for cheap at The Strand and online at TVTropes.org. Alright, let's stop dancing around this. Kristyn, what's your guess?

Kristyn: I can't think of any. I've been on that website so many times, and I can't think of any tropes at the moment.

John Hodgman: Alright, boom. You're not going to guess then. Here's what I have to say in response to your guessing or would-have guessing, as the case may be, TVTropes.org. You wanna hear what I have to say about that?

Kristyn: Yes, please.

[00:05:00]

(John claps slowly, building into something faster and more enthusiastic.)

A slow clap!

John Hodgman: Slow clap was the trope I was looking for. Slow clap. The slow clap, a trope used in many, many TV shows and movies, both sincerely and now at this point, mostly ironically—including, according to TVTropes.org, an episode of the great *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* where in a slow clap moment, people started singing “slow clap, slow clap, slow clap.”

Kristyn: They sure did. Love that show.

John Hodgman: And we are talking about applause. We are talking about clapping at Christmas presents. Which of you seeks justice in my court?

Michele: I do, your honor.

John Hodgman: And Michele, what is the nature of the justice you seek?

Michele: We have a Christmas tradition where we open presents one at a time in our family. And when my now husband, Patrick, first joined and was participating in this Christmas tradition, he felt like he needed to add a little something to it and add to that tradition as now being part of the family. And so, he started to applaud each present that was opened, and everyone in the family loves this, except for one person.

John Hodgman: And that would be your sister, Kristyn.

(Michele confirms.)

Kristyn, do you hate joy?

Kristyn: I don't hate joy, no.

John Hodgman: Hmm. Hmm. But you hate applause.

Kristyn: I don't hate it. I wish it happened less, but I don't hate it.

John Hodgman: Uuuh, how long has this been going on, Kristyn? How many years would you say?

Kristyn: Since 2020. So, three years.

John Hodgman: Right. And it says here that you both are from and currently live in Las Vegas, Nevada.

(Kristyn confirms.)

So, wouldn't the applause distract people who are at the buffet during your Christmas?

Michele: *(Chuckles.)* We can't do buffets, so we're at home.

John Hodgman: The idea of celebrating a winter holiday in Nevada is hilarious to me, but I guess it gets cold there, right? What does it get like—how cold does it get at night, now?

Kristyn: I mean, it's—I'm cold today. My cold's probably different from your cold but—

Michele: About 30 degrees Fahrenheit.

John Hodgman: Yeah. You know what? It's a lot colder than it is today in New York City—than the past couple of days. I guess everything's upside down now, so there you go. So, I want to go back to you, Michele, for one second, because you mentioned that Patrick, your husband—who is now your husband, has joined your family. And you started by saying, “In our family, we open presents one by one.” Compared to... what? Patrick's family, where it would just be a mad dash, everyone would just scramble and open them all at the same time?

Michele: Compared to chaos is what it is! Because in other families, including extended family, people will pass out these presents. And you'll have a pile of presents that have your name on them, and it just is chaos where you're just opening presents. And parents are like, “What's happening? What's going on?” This is speaking from personal experience.

John Hodgman: Well, personal experience with Patrick's family of barbarians.

Michele: *(Laughs.)* No, no, no. Let's not throw them under the bus. It's been from like going to extended families houses, and I'm over exaggerating just a little bit, to be fair. But it is hard to see what each person is getting when everybody opens at the same time.

John Hodgman: How many kids—how many children? How many straight up children are in your family?

Michele: There's three of us.

John Hodgman: No, but I'm talking about kids, little kids. Currently.

Michele: Oh no. None.

John Hodgman: Zero now. Jesse Thorn, let me ask you a question. Which do you think is more typical—because I don't know—opening presents in a mad dash all at once, or taking time and each person opening them and everyone going ooh and ah?

Jesse Thorn: I think that with children present, a mad dash is probably more common.

John Hodgman: That's all you can do.

Jesse Thorn: Simply because it's so difficult to restrain children from opening gifts. But I do think that there are those who do, including my wife's family and now—for that reason—my family. But on the other hand, a central part of that in my family is that my children know what they're getting. (*Chuckles.*)

John Hodgman: Right, right. No, I understand. And obviously, circumstances are different. Did Patrick have a lot of brothers and sisters?

Michele: No, he has the same amount as me. We both have three in our family.

John Hodgman: So, you and Kristyn are sisters. And there's one sister who is not represented here.

Michele: We have a brother who lives in Canada.

John Hodgman: Oh, I see, the brother, who's also known as the Holy Ghost. It's the Trinity.

(*Michele laughs.*)

We don't really know where he is or what he's doing exactly.

Kristyn: Yeah. He's in Canada, East Coast Canada. So.

John Hodgman: East Coast Canada, alright. Where? Halifax?

Kristyn: Moncton.

John Hodgman: Moncton, New Brunswick?

(They confirm with surprise.)

I've been there.

Michele: He moved as far away as possible from us.

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John Hodgman: He could have kept going to Prince Edward Island. Tell him to cross that bridge. Nothing against New Brunswick. PEI though is pretty special. Alright. I can't think about the Maritime Provinces right now. So, Patrick grew up with two other siblings.

(Michele confirms.)

So, would you guess that the mad dash to open presents all at the same time kind of stems from his upbringing?

(Michele confirms.)

And do they still do that in their family now?

Michele: Yes, they do. I have five nieces and nephews from that side of the family. And when we go to hand out presents, it's, "Oh, you're opening—oh, you're opening." It's all happening at the same time. And now, as the gift giver, I can't see the reaction, which is what I want. I want to see their excitement as they open up these presents.

John Hodgman: The reaction is the transaction. You want to get that very special light in their eyes as they see what Auntie Michele gave them, just and suck their life force into you and sustain yourself that way.

Michele: For another year.

John Hodgman: Just one more year. And the nieces and nephews are little though, right? Littles?

(She confirms.)

What are we talking about?

Michele: The oldest is seven, and six, and then three, two, and a baby.

John Hodgman: Alright. Before we get into this whole issue of applause at Christmas. I'm going to bring out my big gavel. I'm going to do a preliminary ruling. This is very unusual, Kristyn, Michele. No one on the podcast can see this, but this is the big gavel that Matt

Howey gave me years and years ago at MaxFunCon. And here it comes. I'm going to drop this gavel. Ready? Here it comes. Big gavel drop.

(A clattering thump.)

You know what that indicates? Patrick's family's doing it wrong.

(They laugh.)

Tell your husband his family's doing it wrong. I understand with little kids, it's hard for them to not get excited and just freaking go in there and tear it apart. And that's okay if you're their mom and dad, but if you're their Auntie Michele, they have to open it, and they have to give you their life force. And certainly, in terms of adults—I mean, are Patrick's parents in the picture?

Michele: His mom, yes.

John Hodgman: So, his mom. As her grandchildren are ravaging their presents like ants upon a carcass, is she doing the same thing with her presents?

Michele: No, she usually waits 'til the end.

John Hodgman: Right. It's hard to get kids to slow down at Christmas, but you do have to find ways to do it, I think. Because ultimately, you want to make it last longer if you celebrate Christmas or any gift giving, I suppose.

Jesse Thorn: Let's take a quick recess and hear about this week's *Judge John Hodgman* sponsor. We'll be back in just a moment on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

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John Hodgman: Alright, let's get back to your messed up family, your messed up immediately, family. Kristyn, tell me what present opening was like, Christmas in Las Vegas style, before the applause started. Very quiet and reverent?

Kristyn: *(Giggles.)* No, we all usually sit around the living room where our big tree is. We call it the main tree. We usually have more than one. And we pick somebody to be the gift-giver outer, and we I think usually go like clockwise.

John Hodgman: I'm trying to listen, but I need to get back to how many trees you have.

Kristyn: *(Laughs.)* It depends on the year. We don't always put all of them up. But—and this is my parents. My mom started this tradition. In my mom's house we have anywhere from—depending, again, on how many we put out—anywhere from like three to seven.

John Hodgman: Three to seven. Las Vegas, Jesse, Show World USA, you know?

(Jesse agrees in shock.)

And are these artificial trees?

Kristyn: Yes, they are.

Jesse Thorn: This is what it's like at Siegfried and Roy's house. RIP Siegfried or Roy.

(They chuckle.)

John Hodgman: What different colors are they?

Kristyn: We have a lot of different ornaments, so they all get like split up into different boxes. We have the main tree, which has like ornaments from when we were kids, or just like general ornaments.

John Hodgman: A legacy tree.

Kristyn: And then we also have—yeah. And then we have what we call like the toy tree, which has ornaments that we made when we were kids. Or like *(chuckles)* frankly, stuff from like fast food restaurants.

John Hodgman: What's the size of the largest? What's the size of the smallest?

Kristyn: The largest is I think your usual seeeven foot?

John Hodgman: 35-footer? Mm-hm. Okay. Seven-foot. Seven-foot tree is a big tree.

Kristyn: Mm-hm. Yeah, 35. And it's like one of those full ones. We have some that are six-foot, but they're skinny. They're all different.

John Hodgman: Are any of them—are they all green? Or any of them silver or gold?

Kristyn: They're all green.

John Hodgman: Okay, they're all green.

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Kristyn: We're not a silver or gold family. We're not a multicolored lights family. We're just a bunch of different ornaments family.

John Hodgman: You just need extra trees. And where do they all go in the house?

Kristyn: Various places.

Jesse Thorn: Kitchen.

Kristyn: There is one in the kitchen.

(Jesse cackles.)

John Hodgman: Kitchen tree, living room tree, conversation pit tree.

Kristyn: Mm-hm! Well, there's one that goes in my parents' bedroom.

John Hodgman: Bedroom tree?! Woah! Oooh, Christmas in Las Vegas is sexy. And were you about to say a Disney tree?

Kristyn: We do have a Disney tree, yes.

John Hodgman: Yeah. I thought I heard that coming. Alright. That's so there's legacy tree. There's kids ornaments tree. There's bedroom tree. This is so much Christmassy overcompensation from people living in the desert. I love it.

Kristyn: *(Chuckles.)* Our mom is a big Christmas person. So, that's—

John Hodgman: *(Sarcastically.)* Oh, do you think so? Interesting.

Jesse Thorn: *(Even more sarcastically.)* Thank you for that explanation.

John Hodgman: *(More sarcastic still.)* Didn't realize, I thought maybe she wasn't into it. Now I understand. Now I get it.

Before you dropped this seven-tree bomb on me, you were telling me about how it was like pre-applause. Preplause, as we call it.

Kristyn: Yes. Yeah, we all sit around the main tree. We pick somebody to give out the gifts. We sit or we pass them out, and then we go clockwise around the family and open gifts one at a time.

John Hodgman: In complete silence like it's a Quaker meeting.

Kristyn: Usually, we have like music playing in the background. Now that we're all older, we don't feel like we have to jump out of bed at 6AM to get it all done, so we take our time, you know.

John Hodgman: Yes. No, but I'm just saying did people react to the presents as they were being unwrapped in any way, or was that forbidden, and that's why you like it?

Kristyn: We would talk about them. We would, you know, “Oh, thank you! This is cute. Where'd you get it?” Normal comments.

John Hodgman: Chitchat.

(Kristyn confirms.)

Standard chitchat. Michele, you sent in some evidence, some photos. Exhibit A, I'd like to draw Jesse's attention to it first. Are you looking at Exhibit A, Jesse?

(He confirms.)

So, Michele, this first Exhibit A, this is something wrapped in red wrapping paper. And did this present receive applause? Is that why I'm looking at this?

Michele: Yes, it will receive applause, because it's something that is given out every year.

John Hodgman: Oh, it's given out every year.

Michele: Yeah, this is one of our Christmas traditions that we had pre-applause.

John Hodgman: Ooh, this is a preplause tradition. Okay, Jesse, can you guess what this is?

Jesse Thorn: You know how television shows have Bibles, which is like the book that contains all the rules of the universe and all the backstory necessary?

(John confirms.)

I think they need a Christmas Bible. I mean, obviously there's a lot of Christmas content in the Bible-Bible.

John Hodgman: In the Bible-Bible, right. But they need a Kristyn and Michele family Christmas Bible.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, it just lists all the things that are, quote/unquote, “traditions”. Different types of Christmas tree. Recurring gift.

John Hodgman: Okay. This is a recurring gift. But Jesse, can you guess what it is? You can't shake it next to your ear, unfortunately.

Jesse Thorn: Looking at it, it's remarkably uniform and cylindrical.

John Hodgman: Kind of looks like a Christmas cracker.

Jesse Thorn: I would guess that it is perhaps a poster of some kind. An artwork.

John Hodgman: What's the answer, Michele?

Michele: These are Pringles.

(Jesse laughs.)

John Hodgman: *(Slow clapping to a crescendo.)* Now, that's a pre-applause tradition. Why didn't that get applause right away from the beginning? How did this tradition start? Can of Pringles every year?

Michele: Yeah, I don't know how it started exactly, but it's always a gift from our grandma. She would always send specifically Sour Cream and Onion Pringles and wrap them just as they're shown. And that was always our first present that we would open. And at one point we just knew that that was coming, and so it would be like, "I'm going to open my Pringles!" And then you'd have a little snack while you were opening your presents, because it's a long process. You need a little snack while you're doing it.

Jesse Thorn: When you say send, do you mean like via US mail?

Michele: *(Chuckles.)* Yeah, she lives in Northern Nevada.

Jesse Thorn: Well, considering you can't get Pringles in Southern Nevada or wherever Las Vegas is.

(They laugh.)

John Hodgman: It's a real treat. It's a real regional treat.

Jesse Thorn: It's like my mom gets her sister to send her sour pickles from Virginia. Sour Cream and Onion Pringles from Northern Nevada.

John Hodgman: You can see this beautifully wrapped can of Pringles on our show page at MaximumFun.org as well as on our Instagram account, [@JudgeJohnHodgman](https://www.instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman), as well as two other photos of what look like—I don't know, hook rugs or crocheted rugs? What am I looking at here, Michele?

Michele: So, the first one is like a yellow and gray and white blanket. That was the first present to ever receive applause in 2020. It was a crochet blanket that I made for Kristyn.

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It's supposed to kind of look like a beehive, 'cause Kristyn really likes bees. So, it took a long time to make. Those are called like granny squares—or in this case, they're hexagons. And you have to sew or crochet each one individually and then stitch them all together and then stitch the rows together and then make the border. So, it was a long process, and it was something that I really put a lot of thought into and a lot of effort. And Patrick saw that as I was making it. So, when Kristyn opened the present, I was kind of overwhelmed and just excited about her opening it. So, I started to cry, and Kristyn started to cry, and our mom started to cry. (*Chuckles.*) And Patrick, who is not a crier, his response was to applaud. He started clapping.

John Hodgman: And Kristyn was like, (*tearfully*) “Shut up! Shut up! Stop it! Stop applauding!”

(*They giggle.*)

Michele: I think in that moment it was really like a genuine like, “Oh my gosh, this is so cool!” And since that's his way of responding to his excitement, that was his natural reaction. And so, at that time it was like okay.

John Hodgman: It's a beautiful piece of handicraft.

Michele: Thank you.

John Hodgman: Wouldn't you agree, Kristyn?

Kristyn: I 100% agree, yes.

John Hodgman: Applause worthy, wouldn't you say?

Kristyn: In this case, I would say yes.

John Hodgman: What about this other piece of handicraft that I'm looking at here, the purple round one? Michele, what am I looking at there?

Michele: This is another crocheted blanket. This one took me six months to make. I just made it last year. And I submitted this one specifically because I think that this is a perfect example of a present that should receive applause. Because it—

John Hodgman: And you made this one for Kristyn as well?

Michele: I did, yeah. She gets a lot of handmade blankets apparently.

Jesse Thorn: You made this for Kristyn, or you made this for the applause?

Michele: (*Giggles.*) No, at the time I wasn't thinking about—

Jesse Thorn: You made this for—admit it! You made it for Christmas clout!

(Michele laughs.)

John Hodgman: So, what started the applause was this genuine emotional moment from Patrick. And then the applause continued. Kristyn, do you feel that the applause that is now being offered to every present cheapens the applause that you received for opening Michele's original gift?

Kristyn: You know, I don't know that I would have phrased it that way, but now that you've said it, I definitely would agree. Yes, the genuine moments of excitement are super applause worthy, but applauding everything does take away some of the impact of the bigger presents.

Jesse Thorn: Are the Pringles applauded? Or is that saved for more premium potato chips?

Kristyn: Oh no, the Pringles have been applauded. Yes.

John Hodgman: I mean, I would think a standing ovation at this point. Kristyn, has the applause grown? I mean, is there applause-creep going on? Are people feeling like they have to applaud louder and louder and even go to standing ovations or anything like that? Is it like the Cannes Film Festival?

(They laugh.)

The Pringles Cannes Film Festival?! Alright, that's it. I retire from the podcast. Goodbye forever. I'll wait for the answer to your question before I retire though.

Kristyn: Sure. There has been—no, there's no standing ovations, but there has been some creep where it's gotten a little bit more and more dramatic. It's gone into other aspects of our lives. It's not just contained at Christmas anymore.

John Hodgman: Like what?

Kristyn: We've applauded for—I think we applauded Thanksgiving dinner this year. It happens at birthdays sometimes. It'll happen on normal days.

John Hodgman: With the opening of presents?

Kristyn: Yes. Well, a lot of it is around food. I don't know why that's part of the joke now, but.

John Hodgman: But we're talking generally at family gatherings.

Kristyn: Yes, I would say so.

John Hodgman: It says here, bingo nights?

Kristyn: Bingo nights. Yes. Our mom really enjoys bingo. So, she has—I don't know what you call it. One of those bingo machines with the numbers inside.

John Hodgman: Bingo ball.

Kristyn: Yeah. And she puts together what she calls her fabulous prizes. So, if you win bingo, she gives you a fabulous prize. And we have applauded the fabulous prizes.

John Hodgman: Like, what are some of the fabulous prizes that you get for playing bingo or winning bingo? Michele, can you remember one?

Michele: Oh, absolutely. Because Patrick called it his fabulous prize every time he used it. One time he won hand lotion, and we kept it under our sink. And he was like, man, my hands are dry. I need some fabulous prize lotion!

John Hodgman: Woow. Will your mom adopt me?

Kristyn: (*Laughing.*) Probably.

John Hodgman: Sounds fun! Let me ask you this question. Your mom has a bingo ball?

(*Kristyn confirms.*)

Why only one?

Kristyn: That's a good question, and I'm afraid that you're going to put ideas into her head.

John Hodgman: I mean, I don't remember my *Emily Post* that well. But Jesse, you'll remember, right? Isn't the rule of thumb one bingo ball per Christmas tree?

(*They laugh.*)

Jesse Thorn: I'm trying to remember. I think it's different depending on who you consult.

[00:25:00]

But in England, I think they do two per Christmas tree, but they have a lot more household staff.

John Hodgman: Yeah. When do you do bingo?

Michele: We've done it on birthdays before. It'll come out at Christmas. Something else to do in the evening.

Kristyn: Just for fun sometimes.

John Hodgman: *(Softly to himself.)* What a good deal.

Fun and fabulous prizes. This all sounds like fun, Kristyn. Even you just used the word fun. What do you say when the applause happens, Kristyn? You know what? I'm going to ask Michele. Michele, what does Kristyn say?

Michele: I'll tell you, Judge, because she didn't even know when I brought this up to her. She was like, "Oh, I don't really do anything."

I said, "No, you do do something." Because she will like groan and moan and say like, "Oh, the clapping again! Oh, we really got to clap again?" She's like rolling her eyes across the couch. She is like visibly annoyed by the clapping, and she didn't realize that she was annoyed by it until I pointed it out to her!

John Hodgman: Did you not realize you were annoyed by it, or did you not realize, Kristyn, that you audibly said things to kill the mood?

Kristyn: I would say the latter, yes.

John Hodgman: You didn't know you were killing the mood.

Kristyn: I was not aware I was killing the mood.

John Hodgman: Do you resent the fact that some outsider, in the form of Patrick, has come into your family and introduced a contagion called applause that has taken over all of your family traditions?

Kristyn: I wouldn't say I resent it. I do recognize it as a new part of our family tradition. Actually, Michele and Patrick just got married in October.

John Hodgman: Congratulations.

Kristyn: I was Michele's maid of honor, and I brought it up in my—

John Hodgman: Congratulations to you as well.

Kristyn: Thank you! I appreciate the recognition.

(Clapping.)

John Hodgman: Hold for applause. *(Beat.)* Good job.

Kristyn: I brought it up in my maid of honor speech as part of some of the things that Patrick has brought into this family, including a lot of love for my sister—which I genuinely appreciate.

John Hodgman: Okay, but you want it to stop.

Kristyn: I don't want it to stop. I either think that I should be allowed to continue to politely make fun of it, or that it would happen less.

John Hodgman: Sooo, like every other present or never at bingo? Or—? Where would you start with the applause mitigation?

Kristyn: I would start with reserving the applause for big moments, big presents. Michele brought up the blankets as an example of something that she worked very hard on that is worthy of applause, and I would agree. I love those blankets very much. They are a tangible representation of how much my sister loves me, and that means a great deal to me.

John Hodgman: Can you give me a specific example? And you can take a moment to think about it, and I'm going to ask you to. I want you to think of a moment where a present was applauded that didn't deserve it. Think over that while I talk to Michele for a second. Hi, Michele. It's me, Judge John Hodgman. How do you feel when Kristyn rolls her eyes and goes, “Ugh, clapping again?”

Michele: I just don't think it's fair to everyone who's having a good time with the applause. And I don't think Patrick would ever admit it, but I feel like it would not be fair to him, who started the applause and who is usually the conductor, if you will, of the applause. And I feel like if it happened frequently enough—especially now that we've been on this podcast and he knows that this is a serious topic—I think that he would kind of get his feelings hurt about it.

John Hodgman: You say you're concerned that it might hurt his feelings.

Michele: Yeah. And he would never say it. Like, I would have to be the one who kind of tells everybody. *(Laughs.)*

John Hodgman: No, because he only communicates through hand claps, right? That's my understanding.

Michele: Absolutely! That's how he shows his excitement and his love.

John Hodgman: As a new person in the family, he might feel like a little bit like I'm not accepted, because Kristyn is— And is that true? Is Kristyn not accepting of Patrick?

Michele: No, that's not true at all. And I think she did a really good job in her speech of explaining how much she enjoys having Patrick. And she tells me all the time how much she enjoys having Patrick as a new brother.

John Hodgman: And do you know that this hurts Patrick's feelings, or are you just concerned that it might?

Michele: No, we've had a conversation about it.

John Hodgman: Oh! And what did he say in this conversation? Translate from his clap language if you have to.

Michele: Yeah. In preparation of coming here, he was genuinely concerned that he was not going to be able to applaud anymore. Because he was like, "This is what I do. This is how I show my excitement." And he was genuine. I texted Kristyn about it, because I was like, "Patrick is really worried that the judge is going to say he cannot applaud anymore." And he went to bed that night very upset!

John Hodgman: And you mentioned that he's the conductor of the applause. That's the term you use?

[00:30:00]

Michele: Yeah. He started it, obviously.

John Hodgman: But as it goes on, Kristyn, would you agree that he conducts the applause? Because that sounds a littleee annoying.

(Michele laughs.)

Kristyn: It's either him or it's our dad. Those are the two people who do the most.

John Hodgman: They're the two culprits?

Kristyn: Yeah, they certainly are.

John Hodgman: And by conduct you mean start the applause.

(She confirms.)

And do they bring in different members of the orchestra, as it were? Like, make eye contact and encourage like a little bit more over here, the left side of the room—you over there by the ninth tree, we need a little bit more? *(Claps enthusiastically.)*

Michele: They will, they will! They'll like put their hands out and point. If mom's not clapping enough, they'll reach their arms out and clap. And when my brother and his wife, Becca, came down to visit last Christmas, we had to tell them, "Hey, by the way, you guys, this is part of the tradition now." And so, he had to kind of teach them, hey, this is when you need to clap.

John Hodgman: What did your brother think of this new tradition?

Michele: They love it. And I want to make that clearly known, because he texted me privately before this to let me know that he and his wife both really enjoy the clapping. I think that's really important to know.

John Hodgman: It seems like in all of Kristyn's efforts to ostracize Patrick, it's now Kristyn who is ostracized—the one, lone non-clapper.

(They laugh.)

Kristyn, would you say that Patrick and your father are what they call thick as thieves when it comes to clapping?

(Kristyn confirms.)

Dad loves it.

Kristyn: My dad is a bits dad, where he will pick up a joke and then subsequently drive it into the ground as much as possible.

John Hodgman: You can just say dad.

Kristyn: He's a dad, yeah. You present him with the opportunity to take something and run with it, he'll do it. So, the clapping is—he looves it.

John Hodgman: And how does this make you feel?

Kristyn: A little annoyed, I'll admit. I love my dad very much. He has a great sense of humor. He gave us huge chunks of our sense of humor. But when I say drive it into the ground, I mean drive it into the ground. So, after a while, it starts to get a little frustrating.

John Hodgman: So, Michele, if I were to rule in your favor, what would you have me rule?

Michele: I would want that Kristyn is not allowed to audibly or visually groan or roll her eyes or show that she's annoyed in any way. She needs to embrace the clapping as part of the new tradition.

John Hodgman: Kristyn, I asked you some time ago if you could come up with a specific example of a specific gift that was applauded and did not deserve that applause. Were you able to come up with something?

Kristyn: There is, definitely. That's part of why we submitted the Pringles is because that is an example of something that I think is—

John Hodgman: (*Interrupting.*) Pringles always get applause.

Michele: Okay. Perfect.

John Hodgman: Do you have another example? That's for—that applause is for Grandma.

Kristyn: That's true. And it's richly deserved.

John Hodgman: Is there another gift that got applause that you think didn't deserve it?

Kristyn: The thing is that because we are at a point where all of the gifts are getting applause—it's not to say that certain gifts are worse than other gifts. All gifts are gifts, and that's something I appreciate, someone taking the time and you know, buying something, wrapping something, or making something. All of that is, you know, genuinely appreciated. It is all gifts. So, that includes things like socks. It includes things like—

(Someone claps.)

John Hodgman: What else?

Kristyn: I mean, all of it. DVDs. Blu-rays—DVDs and Blu-rays.

(Someone claps.)

John Hodgman: Woah! Come on! In 2023, DVDs? That's an incredible gift.

Kristyn: Listen. It really is just all of it, at this point. Every single present, so.

John Hodgman: Would it be your argument that the applause, ironically, has now come to cheapen the appreciation of the presents rather than enhance it?

Kristyn: I think it takes away from genuinely appreciating the gifts, because I'm no longer thinking about the nice present that I've opened from someone I love. Now I'm thinking about how silly the applause is.

John Hodgman: You're shaking your head no, Michele. Why?

Michele: I don't think it's fair! Where do you draw the line? If I go out and I really put some thought into buying you some leggings at the store that I know that you're gonna use, and you're gonna need them, then how is it fair that that present doesn't get applause, but the big one—quote/unquote—gets applause? I don't think that's very fair!

Jesse Thorn: The presents could feel bad, Judge Hodgman.

(They chuckle.)

John Hodgman: I mean, I do think that there is an issue here of how you would determine a deserving present, Kristyn. Is it money spent? Is it time spent in making it? Sometimes it's just feel, you know? Do you have an—do you have any metrics by which we could turn down the applause track?

Kristyn: I do think it is more of a feeling than it is something that could go in the Christmas Bible.

[00:35:00]

I feel like it's more emotional than it is—

Michele: But what if Patrick's feeling is that every present deserves applause? What if that's his feeling and he really, genuinely wants to applaud?

John Hodgman: Then I think maybe Patrick needs some therapy?

(They laugh.)

Or I don't know. Like, if Patrick feels so strongly about this that he's gonna hold this whole family hostage—to which he has just joined within less than a year—to his obsessive need for there be applause for every present, that seems to me like a Patrick problem, not a your family problem. But let me understand this, Patrick initially started applauding, because it was hard for him to tolerate the silence in between the opening of presents. Because he was used to a more chaotic experience in his family. Is that—do I understand that correctly?

Michele: I think so. I think it was kind of a little bit awkward that first year to like sit there. I think that year it took us about four hours to get through everything. And so, he's experiencing this for the first time and sitting there. And then we all are very emotional, and he is not quite as visual with his emotions. And so, when we started to cry, what do you do in that situation, as a then-boyfriend?

(Someone claps enthusiastically.)

John Hodgman: Every good partner knows, when your partner cries, you applaud.

Kristyn: Right. That's my thing, though, is I think that I appreciate the genuineness of feeling motivated to applaud. I do think it was born more out of awkwardness and the desire to kind of undercut what I've been calling our weepy Christmas with maybe something that lightened the mood a little bit. Rather than this is actually—not that he didn't appreciate your hard work; I'm sure he did. But I do think it was more of an awkwardness mitigator.

John Hodgman: Where is Patrick from?

Michele: He likes to say he's from Boston, but he only lived there for about five years. And then he moved here.

John Hodgman: So, he grew up in Las Vegas or—?

(Michele confirms.)

Right. Okay. So, you can't really pin the Northeastern emotional reticence badge on him, because he didn't grow up in it—where you would cover up all emotion with sarcastic applause and insults. He would try to claim that.

(Michele agrees.)

That would be stolen New England valor, though. Michele, I want to go back to something you said a minute ago. You said it took four hours to open presents. What—why was it taking so long?

Michele: We don't have a limit to what we buy each other. And as we've gotten older and have earned our own money, we just kind of go overboard with the amount of things that we give each other. And because—

John Hodgman: There are a lot of trees to put presents under in that house.

Michele: Yeah, so like as we're going through and going one by one by one, it can take a while to get through all of the presents.

John Hodgman: Kristyn, do you think that the clapping has made it go longer than it used to, or has it sped things up?

Kristyn: Oh no, it makes things go longer than it used to, for sure.

John Hodgman: Michele, do you agree?

(She doesn't.)

(Snorts.) Have you done any—have you timed it?

Kristyn: We haven't, no.

Michele: I think that the clapping takes just as long as the chit chat afterward.

John Hodgman: The clapping takes as long as the crying!

(They chuckle.)

Michele: I'd say clapping was shorter!

John Hodgman: So, Michele, one final question. At this point, you know that the clapping annoys Kristyn. Are you clapping to annoy her? Or simply to overpower her feelings?

Michele: No. I don't try to do anything to annoy my sister. She's one of my best friends. So, I think I would more say that I'm clapping to be part of the group that is clapping and kind of support that. But I also genuinely—this is why I brought this case, because I genuinely believe that every present, the tall and the small, like deserves to have applause! I think it's a great tradition that has been brought in, and I genuinely think that it's a part of our Christmas Bible!

John Hodgman: How many tall presents are we talking about here? Are you giving each other more Christmas trees?

(They laugh.)

Michele: That was me quoting the Grinch. That was my obscure cultural reference.
(Chuckles.)

John Hodgman: Well, you won. You won that round. To that, I must say, well done, well played. *(Claps.)* I think I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. I'm going to go into my chambers, and I'll be back in a moment with my verdict.

Jesse Thorn: Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

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

[00:40:00]

Michele, how are you feeling about your chances?

Michele: I feel great!

Jesse Thorn: Why is that?

Michele: As we have been talking about this case, as it's come up in our family conversations—every time we bring it up, Kristyn has said, “Eh, I think Michele's gonna win.” *(Laughs.)* Because I just feel like I genuinely have this care in my heart about this tradition, and I think it's super important! And I feel like the evidence that we brought, even Kristyn—the evidence that she brought shows that this is an important part of our family.

Jesse Thorn: How do you feel, Kristyn?

Kristyn: I mean, she's not wrong. I've been saying from the start that I think she has a really good case. *(Chuckles.)* She's funny. Every time we bring it up in the family, people are like, *(excitedly)* “Oh yeah, the clapping!” When I bring it up amongst my friends, they're like,

(exasperatedly) “Oh, the clapping.” So, I'm pretty divided. She's my younger sister. Whatever makes her happy makes me happy. I think she's going to win. *(Laughs.)*

Jesse Thorn: Have you two thought about asking all the Christmas trees what they think? There's seven of them, so if they vote, you'll have a winner.

Kristyn: That's a good point. No, we really haven't. We haven't thought about that at all. We've been excluding the Christmas trees, and that's pretty unfair of us.

Jesse Thorn: We'll see what Judge Hodgman has to say about all this when we come back in just a moment.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Jesse Thorn: Judge Hodgman, we're taking a quick break from our case. We're headed to San Francisco for SF SketchFest.

John Hodgman: Yeah, we're returning to the San Francisco SketchFest. That much is true. January 27th, 4PM. But this year, we are performing in a place where we have never performed as *Judge John Hodgman* before: the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco! Jesse Thorn, have you checked out this Palace of Fine Arts?! You're an SF native.

Jesse Thorn: John, I've been to the Palace of Fine Arts many times. Not only to see the wonderful New Year's Eve comedy shows that the folks at the Punchline in San Francisco often put together that are often like, you know, four or five of my favorites. But also, as a child many times to see the Spike and Mike Festival of Animation.

John Hodgman: I'm going to say, without qualification, that this is the first venue we have ever played that has an onsite lagoon.

(Jesse confirms.)

The Palace of Fine Arts was constructed in 1915 as part of the Panama Pacific Exhibition. It's the only structure from that grand exhibition left. It was devoted to the fine arts then; it is devoted to the fine arts now. And it's this beautiful temple at the shore of a person-made lagoon designed by Bernard Maybeck. And do you know what I learned about Bernard Maybeck?

Jesse Thorn: What's that?

John Hodgman: Not only did he design this palace, but there was a thing that he designed—a lumberman's lodge that he designed for the Panama Pacific Exhibition. It no longer exists, but do you know what it was called?

Jesse Thorn: What?

John Hodgman: It was a rustic lumberman's lodge that he called the House of Who-Who.

(Jesse laughs.)

Anyway, I want to know who-who is coming to our show! All of you, I trust. Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco. January 27th, 4PM. That's 2024. And you can get your tickets at bit.ly/JJHOSF24. That's all-capital letters. JJHOSF24 or just Google SFSketchfest.com. You know how to get it. Maybe you want to check out *The Flophouse* too on the Friday night before ours. We're on Saturday, *Flophouse* is Friday. What could be more fun? Also, we need your cases. Submit your Bay Area cases to MaximumFun.org/jjho. If you're going to join us in the House of Who-Who of our mind that we're going to reconstruct in the Palace of Fine Arts, we need your disputes! Go to MaximumFun.org/jjho and let us know that you're gonna be there who-whoing it up with us at Sketchfest in January.

And of course, if you wanna know any more about Bernard Maybeck, you wouldn't be wrong to go to Hodgman.Substack.com. But truly my call to action to you right now—aside from Hodgman.Substack.com—go to SFSketchfest.com. Go to Bing or Google or whatever search engine you use. Search “Judge John Hodgman SF Sketchfest”. Go to bit.ly/JJHOSF24. And join us, won't you, at our return to San Francisco SketchFest in January.

Jesse Thorn: Also, if you are in Los Angeles, we are having an in person Put This On sale on the 23rd at a place called Alter—new art space called Alter, on Figueroa Boulevard, 3404 North Figueroa in Cypress Park, just a couple blocks up from Cypress and Figueroa. Sort of just south of Highland Park on Figueroa. We're going to be there Saturday the 23rd, 10-4. Brynna, our shop master, is going to be there. I'm going to be there part of the time. We're going to have lots of cool stuff there, last minute stuff for you or your giftees or whomever. All the information on our Instagram, [@Put.This.On](https://www.instagram.com/put.this.on).

[00:45:00]

Put dot This dot On.

John Hodgman: Shall we get back to the case?

Jesse Thorn: Indeed!

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Jesse Thorn: Please rise as Judge John Hodgman reenters the courtroom and presents his verdict.

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

John Hodgman: So, Kristyn, I really feel for you. Because it's hard to be the Grinch. You know what I mean? While all the Whos of Whoville—‘cause I know what you—I know the Grinch. I know the Grinch pretty good, Michele.

(Michele laughs.)

While all the Whos of Whoville are down there in their little town, partying and clapping and having fun—including Jonathan Coulton's sister, who was in the movie, *The Grinch*. She played a Who. They're all having fun down there! And Kristyn, you're on top of the cold, frozen mountain, looking down, going, *(with disgust)* “They're doing it wrong. Again.” And not only that, but they used to do it right! It used to be everyone celebrated Christmas around the seven trees of cold, frozen mountain! And then all of a sudden, this Seussian gnome named Patrick showed up in your lives and changed the family dynamic forever.

And just when you thought—just when you thought you might have some relief from your own brother out there in New Brunswick coming down going, “Uuuh, no. We're not going to be clapping every gift, thanks very much. Sorry, Patrick.” He's like, “Uh, excusez-moi, je t'aime. I love it.” New Brunswick is a fairly bilingual province. I don't know if your brother speaks French, but you know what I'm saying.

Michele: No.

Kristyn: His wife does.

John Hodgman: Yeah, see? Ah. So, you know, now you're completely isolated. And not only that, Kristyn, I feel for you. Because you're absolutely correct that some presents are more deserving of applause than others. Some of them—like those wonderful blankets that your sister gave you—deserve everything! And in a different way, so does a can of Pringles wrapped up deserve applause. Because that's wonderful as a tradition. Our old friend, Amy Radford—her dad, Deacon Radford, talk about dads and bits. Every year, Deacon Radford would fill her and her brother's stockings with cans of tuna fish wrapped up, packs of gum wrapped up, nine packs of Bic pens wrapped up. I mean, just whatever was available at CVS was what he would put in there. And it was a joke, but it was a wonderful joke that expressed a kind of affection. And some presents deserve that.

But when all presents are getting applause, I can feel how it might start to feel a little bit awkward. Let me put it this way. When some presidents are getting applause and other presidents aren't getting applause, it starts to feel as awkward as an in-memoriam segment at the Oscars. You know? Like, if no one—if it's all getting applause, it feels a little cheap. And if some of it's getting applause, it's starting to feel like, “Well, now some people are going to be feeling bad.” And if no one gets applause, then Patrick feels bad. I feel for you, Kristyn, but I don't know how to roll this tradition back now that you've been steamrolled by this tradition.

(They chuckle.)

It's not for you. I get it. It's not fair. And I bristle when Michele says it's not fair to Patrick. Because Patrick—who the hell is Patrick?! He's not your sister!

(They laugh.)

This guy doesn't even know where he's from! Think he's from Boston and he lived there for five years. Patrick has no worries about not being adopted into this family, because Patrick's father-in-law loves this bit. And your mom has seven trees. By the way, I have to make a quick order. If you determine that they have seven trees in your home, you gotta get five more. Twelve trees, one for each day of Christmas. That's the way it goes. Five more. That's first; preliminary ruling.

Second ruling is this: I am in every way emotionally with you, Kristyn, but I don't know how to take this back. And it is almost impossible, really, to determine whether applause is deserved or not. Because who knows how a gift might hit someone and make them feel. And if there's not applause for it, they might feel bad or for the giver for that matter. You know, what if Michele gives something, and because you have put in a rule in effect that if it's larger than a bread box or it's the every third one or whatever, that there's no applause there, that feels bad.

[00:50:00]

I don't know how to do that. But there is one thing that is very clear to tell, I think. And that is when applause is insincere. There's real applause, and there's joke applause. And it's on a continuum. And there—and I think maybe what you're reacting to, to some degree, is your dad and Patrick ginning each other up into joke applause areas, where it's actually taking attention away from the gift, the giver, and the recipient in a way that is inappropriate. And of course, there is only one counter to any kind of applause. And that is tomatoes.

Kristyn: *(Laughing.)* Oh no.

John Hodgman: Kristyn, you need to get—I don't know where you're going to source these. I don't want you to get real rotten tomatoes. Oh, you know what? They have those tomatoes that they use in crafting, right? Michele, you know what I'm talking about. What you put your little pins in?

(Michele confirms.)

A pin cushion shaped like a tomato. Kristyn, you get a bag full of those. And any time you feel like the applause is clearly out of bounds or going on too long or taking attention away, you throw one each at your dad and at your brother-in-law. I know it might seem a little fun to you, Kristyn—and I know that's hard—but just remember: you're throwing a tomato at someone.

(They laugh.)

And maybe, maybe that will retrain them a little bit. Or maybe it'll just be a different kind of fun, a different kind of fun family tradition that only you get to enjoy for once. This is the big gavel again, and this is the sound of it.

Sound Effect: "Make It Clap" from the album *It Ain't Safe No More...* by Busta Rhymes.

We make it clap

We make it clap

(Music fades out.)

John Hodgman: *Judge John Hodgman* rules, that is all.

Jesse Thorn: Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom.

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

Michele, how do you feel?

Michele: I think that's a really fair judgment. I'm really happy with that. I'm happy that the tradition gets to stand. I'm happy that it's going to introduce a new tradition. And it also gave me an idea for a Christmas present! So, I'm excited.

Jesse Thorn: Kristyn, are you glad that your family finally has a new Christmas tradition?

Kristyn: Oh yeah, we were really low on those. We were lacking tradition for sure. But this is fun. Throwing things at people is always fun, and throwing things at people without causing any damage, delightful. So, I'm into it.

Jesse Thorn: Kristyn, Michele, thank you for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Jesse Thorn: Another *Judge John Hodgman* case is in the books. We'll have Swift Justice in just a second. First, our thanks to Redditor ElouiseInMaine for naming this week's episode "Clapital Offense". If you want to chat about this week's episode, you can do it at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.maximumfun.com). That's also where we ask for the goofy puns that make up the titles of episodes. Evidence—

John Hodgman: I don't think we need to be redundant. Just say puns.

Jesse Thorn: *(Laughs.)* Evidence and photos from the show are on the website, [MaximumFun.org](https://www.maximumfun.org) on the episode post. And of course, on Instagram [@JudgeJohnHodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman). Make sure to follow us. *Judge John Hodgman* was created by Jesse Thorn and John

Hodgman. This episode, engineered by Cesar Molina at Cave Rec Studio in Las Vegas. Marie Bardi-Salinas runs our social media. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor.

Now Swift Justice, where we answer small disputes with quick judgment. VodkaBarf on the Maximum Fun Subreddit says—

(John snorts and “wow”s.)

“When I order in, I get more chopsticks than I need. I want to have emergency chopsticks at all times. Is this stealing?”

John Hodgman: Well, thank you for writing in, VodkaBarf. Before we get to Vodka's question, Jesse, I just need to say: we don't need to do a show in Las Vegas. I'm telling you right now.

Jesse Thorn: Why is that?

John Hodgman: Because we need to do a residency in Las Vegas. You know what I'm talking about?

Jesse Thorn: Oh yeah. *(Inaudible)* style?

John Hodgman: Nine months. Nine months at the Sands. Every night.

Jesse Thorn: *(Inaudible.)* Let's do this.

John Hodgman: And night after night. I think I know just the rundown hotel. I think the El Cortez—I think we could do it at the El Cortez. Let's just put it that way. It'd be pretty grim, lot of fun. Now let's get back to—what is *(chuckles)*—what's the writer's name again? What's the Redditor's name on this one again?

Jesse Thorn: VodkaBarf.

John Hodgman: VodkaBarf. “When I order in, I get more chopsticks than I need.” Look, I feel your need for emergency chopsticks. We have run out of chopsticks in our chopstick drawer, and we need more of them. And I don't know why we can't just get more. Because we can. And so can you, VodkaBarf. You can go, as I did once—you can go to a website and order 120 pairs of chopsticks—those round ones that come in the individual red sleeves that I like so much. 120!

[00:55:00]

And these are good ones; these are Royal Polillo's, probably for Ron Polillo, Horshack of *Welcome Back, Kotter*—UV treated. UV treated, premium, disposable bamboo chopsticks. Ten bucks for 120 of them. Just go and do that. And then you'll have all the chopsticks you ever need for a long time.

But is it stealing to say, please send extra chopsticks to the place that's delivering to you? Or is it stealing to take extras when you're leaving? No, it's fine. Don't worry about it. But why not get 120 Ron Palillo style UV treated chopsticks for 10 bucks? Or anywhere you can get a deal, go and get them. You don't ever want to be chopstick poor. In this, we agree, VodkaBarf.

Hey, we are nearing the end of this calendar year, but winter is going strong—at least in Las Vegas, apparently! Not in New York City. But it's cold in Las Vegas. What are your wintertime disputes? Did you crochet a large, warm blanket for your sister? Did she refuse to clap for it? Do you and someone else in your home have an ongoing battle over the thermostat? Very, very common battle. Are you a Snuggie person or a Slankety? That's a Slanket person, a Slankety. Snuggie or Slankety?

(Jesse laughs.)

Or do you live in a place where wintertime is really warm, and you wish it weren't? And you're like, “How many fake trees do I fill up this house with in order to make it feel like winter?!” Give us those cozy wintertime disputes. Send them all in at MaximumFun.org/jjho.

Jesse Thorn: And of course, we love hearing about any dispute. So, whatever problem you have with someone else in your life, we'll fix it for you. Just go to MaximumFun.org/jjho. There's an easy little form there. Fill it out, send it in. We'll solve it. That's my promise to you. We'll fix everything. Doesn't matter what; we'll fix it. Send it in. MaximumFun.org/jjho.

John Hodgman: Not only will we solve it but check out the hook as our DJ revolves it!

Jesse Thorn: *(Chuckling.)* We'll talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Sound Effect: Cheerful ukulele chord.

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