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Jesse Thorn: It's the Judge John Hodgman podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn—Judge John Hodgman joining me as well. Hi, John.

John Hodgman: Hello. Hello, I'm here as well.

Jesse Thorn: It's the hashtag #MaxFunDrive, John. You know that. Probably our audience—well, they might know. They might not know yet.

John Hodgman: Hey, don't presume what I know. What is it?

Jesse Thorn: Okay. Okay. It's the very special time when your support allows us to continue making this show—you going to MaximumFun.org/join and becoming a member of Maximum Fun makes *Judge John Hodgman* possible. And it's also the time when we make very special stuff just for our members.

John Hodgman: We're talking about BoCo bonus content just for members. And remember, membership begins at only \$5 a month, and you have access to all of the bonus episodes that we've ever recorded in *Judge John Hodgman* history, as well as all of the bonus episodes that have been recorded in Max Fun history!

But when we talk about bonus content episodes, one of our favorites has to be the one that we recorded last year with the incredible character actor, legend, singer, theatrical—

Jesse Thorn: Hooper. He's a hooper.

John Hodgman: Hooper. Yeah, just one of the most remarkable voices in all of acting, Richard Kind. We spoke to him for our bonus episode, which we called “Kinding Them with Kindness”, where Richard Kind answered your questions and offered you advice. And we decided let's do it again!

Jesse Thorn: I mean, if you have Richard Kind's phone number, you should call it. That's the principle by which we live our lives. Richard Kind was so—I mean, you're gonna hear a little bit of this. Richard Kind is the most delightful person who has ever lived, and he has a genuine deep well of lived experience and wisdom. He also is just as hilarious in real life as he is in films and television, as he stumbles and bumbles his way through brilliant sentences. Just the greatest guy in history. Just could not be more delightful, insightful, and amazing.

John Hodgman: “Kinding Them with Kindness 2” is available ONLY to Maximum Fun members. If you're not one already, please consider going over to MaximumFun.org/join to become a monthly member at the \$5 level or higher. You'll get this episode, all of our bonus episodes, and as well I hope the satisfaction of knowing that you're contributing to a creator-owned network of podcasts that you love and an employee-owned cooperative that runs it.

Jesse Thorn: MaximumFun.org/join is where you go to become a member. But hey! We're standing between you and a little taste of Richard Kind. We're basically—this is like what Curtis Mayfield warned people about in *Super Fly*. Like, we're giving you a taste, 'cause you're gonna want the whole thing. Here's Richard Kind and a little taste of “Kinding Them with Kindness 2”!

John Hodgman: Look who's kinding them now.

(Jesse cackles.)

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

John Hodgman: So, this is “Kinding Them with Kindness Part 2”. You've been in some sequels before, not just this one. You've been in *Cars 2*. You've been in *Toy Story 3*. You've been in *History of the World Part 2*.

Richard Kind: I have. I have. I have—the reboot! And *Mad About You* the reboot.

John Hodgman: Yeah! So, of the many projects—you've had quite a long career. And according to this, it's over now.

(They laugh.)

Jesse Thorn: Seems weird. Jennifer, why would you put that on the script?

John Hodgman: I got this letter.

Richard Kind: It's on the IMDb page.

John Hodgman: I got this letter from your agent. “Please tell—”

Richard Kind: Yeah, IMDb page says, “It's over.”

John Hodgman: Yeah, as of this day. No, of course not.

But many, many things on your filmography and your stageography and your -ographies. Of them all, is there a sequel to one of your many projects that you wish they would make?

Richard Kind: Wow, Okay, not a sequel—

John Hodgman: Or a reboot or a reimagination or a reunion.

Richard Kind: There is a play I'd like to do again. Two plays.

John Hodgman: What are they?

Richard Kind: One is called *Travesties* by Tom Stoppard. Now, it is the most dense play you'd ever read. Do you know the play?

John Hodgman: I'm going to tell you something. Young, pretentious, only-child John Hodgman could get enough of that *Real Inspector Hound*. You know what I'm talking about?

Richard Kind: Oh, Tom Stoppard is the greatest.

John Hodgman: The greatest. And particularly that early meta stuff, those shorter plays. And it's like there's a playwright watching a playwright—that was really up my wheelhouse. (*Realizing what he said.*) Up my wheelhouse is a phrase.

Richard Kind: But this is not *Real Inspector Hound* stuff.

John Hodgman: No, that's what I'm saying. Then he took a turn to much more denser stuff and more complicated stuff. And I got lost there. He lost me there. It's my fault. I came back around. Oh yeah, I know.

Richard Kind: It is your fault! Because you're the Yale-y! Yeah!

John Hodgman: I know. It's a shame. It's a shameful omission. I love him so much.

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But I came back around for *Leopoldstadt*. Which—anyway, so *Travesties* by Tom Stoppard.

Richard Kind: Okay, his masterpiece is *Arcadia*. So, *Travesties* is a play about characters—the main characters are James Joyce, Tristan Tzara, and Vladimir Lenin, who all happen to live—

John Hodgman: This is like Tom Stoppard's *The Avengers*.

Richard Kind: (Laughs.) It's the Marvel. Yes, that's right. It's the Marvel. (Laughs.)

John Hodgman: It's like this incredible crossover even.

Jesse Thorn: They're all looking for a crystal that will give them the power to destroy the world.

Richard Kind: (Laughs.) So, plot of the thing, the supposition is they all had—those three people were living in this town in—ugh, is it—? Not Austria—I can't—I want to say in

Stockholm. In some town. I can't remember. But they happened to be living in the same town at the same time, post-World War I.

John Hodgman: In real life.

Richard Kind: In real life! In history!

John Hodgman: It really happened. Yeah.

Richard Kind: The truth is they never met each other. But the main character is a guy who claims to have known all three and imagines all three of them getting together and having conversations. They might have been at the library, which was the common meeting ground. But they never knew each other. And this one guy happens to have lived in the same town. It starts off with a 35-minute monologue of this guy describing what went on in the town and the brilliance and look at all these great minds coming together post-World War I.

John Hodgman: Which you'll perform for us right now.

Richard Kind: I'll do it right now. *(Adopting an Irish lilt.)* He was Irish, of course. *(Dropping it immediately.)* Okay. in any case.

John Hodgman: *(In his own Irish accent.)* Oh, was he now?

Richard Kind: It's a very thick and dense play. We had two and a half weeks rehearsal. They did it at the Roundabout, and they had eight weeks rehearsal. We did it in two and a half.

John Hodgman: Where did you do it?

Richard Kind: At Bay Street Theater, out in the Hamptons. It was so under rehearsed that the last scene—which is also a monologue—about five days into performing, all of a sudden it hit me what that last scene was all about, and I started crying on stage in front of the audience. It hit me!

John Hodgman: Wow.

Richard Kind: It was such a revelation! I really want to do it with the proper rehearsal and really delve into it.

John Hodgman: Let me—hang on. The Roundabout. They had eight weeks to perform it?

Richard Kind: Eight weeks to perform it, and they had done it in London as well.

John Hodgman: And you had—?

Richard Kind: Two and a half weeks!

John Hodgman: You know what that is? A travesty.

Richard Kind: It is! (*Laughs.*) It's also summer stock or summer theatre, but it's a travesty! It was a travesty. Here's the horrible thing. Somebody who I truly, truly, truly admire and love so much, first night of the show where I'm hardly off book—just getting off book was an accomplishment!

John Hodgman: Yeah. What was your role?

Richard Kind: I was the lead. I was the guy.

John Hodgman: Oh, you were the guy!

Richard Kind: I am the guy who claimed to have known all these people.

John Hodgman: 35-minute monologue. Hardly off book!

Richard Kind: A 35-minute monologue to start the play! Tom Wolfe is sitting in the front row with his hat on and a cane and the white suit.

John Hodgman: *Bonfires of the Vanities* himself?

Richard Kind: And I sucked.

John Hodgman: No, you didn't.

Richard Kind: John, I sucked! It was like four performances before I knew what I was doing with the show! It's a wonderful show. Very funny. There was a pie fight. There's nudity. It was—it's a hilarious, hilarious show. It's wonderful.

John Hodgman: (*Cackles.*) Wow.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Transition: Cheerful ukulele chord.

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