

[00:00:00]

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**John Hodgman:** Welcome to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm not Bailiff Jesse Thorn! It's me, your Judge John Hodgman, letting you know that this week's episode was recorded live on stage at Park West in Chicago, Illinois. This was the first time on our Van Freaks Roadshow that we actually had a guest from GBH's *Antiques Roadshow*. Specifically, Deborah Miller, a great textile and clothing appraiser. And she was amazing. We had a blast. You'll hear all about it when you get there to the stage at the Park West Chicago. So, why am I still talking? Let's go!

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Chicago, you came to us seeking justice, and we came to you to deliver it—right here at the world-famous Park West.

*(Cheers and applause.)*

The court of Judge John Hodgman is now in session. Let's bring out our first set of litigants. Please welcome to the stage, Susan and Doug! Tonight's case, "Drool of Law". Susan brings the case against her boyfriend Doug. Doug licks his fingers when he's eating. Susan can't stand it. Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide. Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and delivers an obscure cultural reference.

*(Cheers and applause which turns rhythmic to underscore John's upcoming singing.)*

**John Hodgman:** *(Singing in a Tom Waits impression.)* Broke a bottle on Morgan's head, and I've been stepping on the devil's tail! Crossed the stripe of full moon's head, through the bars of a Cuban jail. Licky fingers on a purple knife. Flamingo drinking from my cocktail glass. I'm on the law with someone else's wife. Admire the view from up atop of the mast. Hey, little bird, fly away home! Swear them on in, Bailiff Jesse Thorn. Hey little bird, fly away home. Swear them on in, Bailiff Jesse Thorn. Ah!

*(Cheers and applause.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Is it going to be every stop on the tour?

**John Hodgman:** Every stop.

**Jesse Thorn:** *(Exhaustedly.)* Okay.

**John Hodgman:** Every stop. One bit, every stop. Little bit different.

**Jesse Thorn:** Susan and Doug, please rise and raise your right hands. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God-or-Whatever?

*(They swear.)*

Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that tonight he's extra saucy?

*(They swear.)*

Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

**John Hodgman:** Susan and Doug, you may be seated for an immediate summary judgement in one of your favors. Can either of you name the piece of culture that I referenced as I entered this courtroom? Doug, you look too eager. I think Doug's got it. Standby, Doug. I can tell by your glasses that you got it. You know—people who know, know. Susan, what's your guess?

**Susan:** I am speechless.

**John Hodgman:** You wanna hear it again?

*(She confirms and the audience starts in with scattered rhythmic clapping.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Boo. Stop. No, don't encourage it. I have to do like 20 more shows on this tour.

**Susan:** Is it a rap?

**John Hodgman:** What is your guess, if I may?

**Susan:** Is it a rap?

**John Hodgman:** *(Shocked.)* Is it a—?

**Jesse Thorn:** I mean, it wasn't as melodic as it could have been, but—

**John Hodgman:** *(Laughs.)* No. Do you want to take another guess?

*(She does not.)*

It's a song.

*(Susan affirms noncommittally.)*

I'll just put down "song". Non-rap song. Doug?

**Doug:** Well, that screws me up, because I was going to guess “Finger Lickin’” by the Beastie Boys.

**John Hodgman:** “Finger Lickin’” by the Beastie Boys! It would have been a really good guess if I were not using the cultural references on all of these stops of our tour to torture Jesse Thorn.

*(Laughter.)*

With my imitation of a particular performing artist. All guesses are wrong. The recording artist I’m speaking of, of course, is the great Tom Waits. And that was my rather poor—but you were wonderful, by the way. Everyone here were very good at clapping. I mean, for a podcast crowd? That was amazing.

*(Laughter.)*

That was the first Tom Waits song I ever heard, which is “Jockey Full of Bourbon” from *Rain Dog*, 1984. Tom Waits forever, Jesse. As he said it himself, Tom waits for no man. All right, now—

Susan, do you come to seek justice in this fake court, is that correct?

*(Susan confirms.)*

What is the nature of your complaint?

**Susan:** The nature of my complaint is finger licking on behalf of Doug.

**John Hodgman:** You're finger licking—you make her finger lick on your behalf, sir?!

*(Laughter.)*

**Doug:** That's an idea.

**John Hodgman:** Uh-huh! What is that, personal care? Personal care, right?

*(Doug confirms.)*

Personal care.

**Jesse Thorn:** Commitment to lifelong learning.

**John Hodgman:** Doug licks his fingers. Is that correct?

**Susan:** Doug does lick his fingers.

**John Hodgman:** When eating food, saucy food?

*(Susan confirms.)*

And any other times?

*(Susan confirms.)*

Like when?

[00:05:00]

**Susan:** Popcorn, tortilla chips, cupcakes. Any time he has something left on his fingers that's food—

**John Hodgman:** It gets licked off.

*(Susan confirms.)*

Doug, is this an accurate description, you finger licker?

*(Doug confirms.)*

It is. You're proud of this?

**Doug:** I am proud of this.

**John Hodgman:** Right. Why are you proud of it?

**Doug:** Because we live in Chicago, and—

**John Hodgman:** A finger licking town?

**Doug:** Yeah, a finger licking town. Finger licking good. You know, god forbid you try and eat a stuffed pizza by hand.

**John Hodgman:** Are you from Chicago?

**Doug:** No, I'm actually from Mississippi, another finger licking—

**John Hodgman:** Another finger licking culture. Sure.

**Doug:** Fried chicken.

**John Hodgman:** Susan, are you from Chicago?

**Susan:** I'm from Toledo, Ohio.

**John Hodgman:** From Toledo, Ohio. Is there anything to be said for this contention that Chicago is a finger licker city?

**Susan:** I mean, the food here is so good, there is an argument. But we also have other things to think about.

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** Such as?

**Susan:** Such as how beautiful the city is and how much we want—

**John Hodgman:** Oh, I thought you were going to say germs, hygiene, not grossing out your loved one. *(Laughs.)*

**Susan:** Well, I was getting to that. We want to be healthy enough to enjoy the city that we live in.

**John Hodgman:** Right. Sure enough. Sure enough. Okay, I understand. How long have you been together?

**Susan:** Almost five years.

**John Hodgman:** Almost five years? And when did you first notice Doug licking his fingers?

**Susan:** About 18 months ago.

**John Hodgman:** Wow!

*(Laughter.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** You had a good run, Doug.

**John Hodgman:** Doug, were you biding your time?

*(Laughter.)*

**Doug:** Just waiting.

**Jesse Thorn:** Judge Hodgman, you haven't dated online, but from what I hear, you add one inch to your height and don't mention finger licking.

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** You waited quite a while to reveal your finger licking tendencies, didn't you, Doug?

**Doug:** I think I was doing it all along and maybe she was just too blinded by beauty.  
*(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** By beauty!

**Doug:** I'm gonna go with that.

**John Hodgman:** Susan, when do you first remember him licking his fingers? Do you remember what he was eating?

**Susan:** I think he was eating tortilla chips.

**John Hodgman:** Tortilla chips! Not something that you would necessarily lick your fingers after.

**Susan:** No. I mean, they tend to get salty.

**John Hodgman:** Yes, of course, the fingers get salty, yeah, but I mean—

**Susan:** But that's about it.

**John Hodgman:** Right, okay. And ribs, you say. You enjoy ribs?

**Doug:** I love ribs.

**John Hodgman:** And do you lick your fingers when you eat ribs?

**Doug:** Definitely.

**John Hodgman:** Alright, I'm going to need to see this in action. We have some ribs from Twin Anchors down the street.

*(Laughter and applause.)*

And Exhibit A is a half slab. We asked for extra sauce.

*(Doug thanks him.)*

And you know, Susan, you can hold that platter for him so that he can really get in there.

*(She agrees.)*

I noticed that you're wearing khakis, which was a bad decision for today. But I'd like to see you get in on some of those ribs right now. Let me see what it—

And you know, if you don't mind, eat it right on mic, if you don't mind. That would be terrific, thank you. These are our own mics, so we can get a little...

*(Laughter.)*

**Doug:** These are good!

**John Hodgman:** That was very, very brave of you. Very, very brave of you to do on stage.

*(Jesse guffaws.)*

Hang on a second. Wait. Let me just—

*(The audience roars with laughter.)*

Jesse Thorn: The Judge has licked Doug's hand.

John Hodgman: Alright, now keep eating and keep licking your fingers, now that I've touched your hands. I want to see if there's any difference in your attitude.

*(Susan "ahh"s in understanding.)*

You don't know where these have been. I've been holding this microphone. You don't know what my pre-show ritual is. Alright, very—! I just wanted to see! Let the record show that he is licking his fingers with as much gusto after I touched and licked his thumb as before. And I would say—

*(Cheering.)*

Wow, now he's asking the audience for applause with his saucy hands. Let's get these ribs out of here. I'm afraid they're stealing the show. Live producer Laura Valk will take these away. Thank you, Laura. Alright.

*(Applause.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Doug was there trying to use the rib-eating like a costumed mascot would use a t-shirt gun.

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Very, very—very dramatic, Doug.

**Jesse Thorn:** Y'all ready for this?

**John Hodgman:** How are your fingers? All clean?

**Doug:** All good.

**John Hodgman:** You wanna give them a little bit more? Just to make sure? Yeah.

*(Doug agrees.)*

Now you hear that expression of disgust. None of these are people that you need to go home with. What happened when—Susan, when you first noticed him licking his fingers after those tortilla chips, did you express your disgust then, or did you wait 18 months?

**Susan:** I didn't. I did not. I wish I had, maybe, but I kind of put it into my brain file on Doug and kept it there.

**Jesse Thorn:** *(Cackles.)* Wait, is this like Nixon's enemy list? You had the CIA compile a—

**Susan:** Maybe.

**John Hodgman:** When did you first express your disgust? Do you remember?

**Susan:** Actually, I think it was—

**John Hodgman:** Today? *(Laughs.)*

**Susan:** No, so it was over the summer, when we were in the city.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. The city of Chicago.

**Susan:** The city of Chicago.

[00:10:00]



I had received from my kids a very generous Mother's Day present of a gift certificate to Gina Giorgetti and The Second City. And so, we decided to use that sometime in the summer. And we decided to actually make a staycation out of it in the city.

**John Hodgman:** Nice! 'Cause you live—well, you live outside of the city.

**Susan:** We live outside the city. We love the city. We just thought that made the most sense.

**John Hodgman:** Well, it's the pearl of Lake Michigan.

**Susan:** Correct.

**John Hodgman:** And so, what happened?

**Susan:** And so, we spent a few days in the city. We went to several different restaurants. We went to hear some live music. One night, we went to Andy's, which is a jazz club. It's one of my favorites.

*(Cheers.)*

And—

**John Hodgman:** You're a living Chicago Chamber of Commerce here! You've buzz marketed so many different things so far!

**Susan:** Afterward, I was hungry, so I suggested we go to Eataly, which is a restaurant in the neighborhood.

**John Hodgman:** Here we go. Okay, keep going. Sure.

**Susan:** And we ordered some Bolognese.

**John Hodgman:** I feel like I'm just getting pop up ads at this point.

*(Laughter.)*

So, you went to Eataly.

**Susan:** So, we went to Eataly. We split a dish of Bolognese. And somehow, we started talking about limoncello as a really great after-dinner liqueur.

**John Hodgman:** Sure. So, you decide to get some limoncello.

**Susan:** We decided to buy some limoncello at Eataly.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, okay. We know where you were.

*(Laughter.)*

**Susan:** We decided to bring a bottle home with us.

**John Hodgman:** Sure. How were you getting home?

**Susan:** We were getting home on the train.

**John Hodgman:** On the train.

**Susan:** So, we had some shopping bags, our luggage. We—

**John Hodgman:** Right. What was the brand of luggage? Tumi?

*(Laughter.)*

Away?

**Susan:** No, Target, actually.

**John Hodgman:** Target. Okay. A Chicago favorite.

**Susan:** The Target luggage. We had some shopping bags, as I mentioned, and Doug had the bottle of Limoncello. The train was so crowded that we had to stand on the train, which meant that we had to hold one of the bars on the train.

John Hodgman: Sure. Endlessly spotlessly clean. Yeah.

**Susan:** Emphasis on very crowded train. Middle of July. It was hot out.

**John Hodgman:** Middle of July. A lot of sweating.

**Susan:** So, we got off the train. And as soon as we stepped onto the platform outside of the train doors, Doug put the shopping bag down that had the limoncello in it. And he had seen apparently when he was on the train that some of the drops of the limoncello had been leaking out of the side of the top.

**John Hodgman:** The bottle had been leaking in the bag?

**Susan:** Yes. So, he promptly wiped his fingers on the liqueur that was dripping down.

**John Hodgman:** He wiped the side of the bottle to clean it with his hand.

*(Susan confirms.)*

And then what did he do with his hand?

**Susan:** Well, let me tell you.

**John Hodgman:** What did he do with his hand, Susan?!

**Susan:** First, he licked the fingers of one hand.

*(The crowd boos.)*

And I reacted.

**John Hodgman:** Uh-huh. With disgust.

**Susan:** I was kind of stunned, and then he looked at me—

**John Hodgman:** Was this the hand he was using to hold the bar?

*(Susan confirms.)*

And was there worse after that?

**Susan:** There was. After I reacted—actually, Doug, I think you reacted too. You kind of opened your eyes really wide and thought, “Did I just do that?” And then you looked at your other hand, which also had Limoncello on it, and you licked it!

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** Right! Because there was a chance, probably Doug wasn't sure—which hand had I been using to hold the rail in the subway? Maybe I licked the wrong hand! Maybe I didn't get any of that sweet rail juice into my mouth! I better do them both.

Is that not right, Doug? Is that not right, Doug?! Don't wait for the translation! Answer me!

**Doug:** I did not reach down and wiiiipe the bottle. I—

**John Hodgman:** Then why were you licking your hands?

**Doug:** I reached down to put the top back on, because I was afraid—

**John Hodgman:** What does that have to do with anything?!

**Doug:** I was afraid it would spill all over her new clothes that were purchased—and then—and then—

**John Hodgman:** Did you have—I understand. Look, cleaning up the bottle is no sin.

**Doug:** And in my defense, alcohol kills germs.

*(Mixed cheers and boos with scattered applause.)*

**John Hodgman:** Apparently, this is a story everyone in Chicago has been telling themselves for a long time.

**Jesse Thorn:** I don't mean to give Chicago notes on how to be a city, but you guys should think about opening some bars here!

*(Laughter.)*

Have you thought of—

**John Hodgman:** I mean, you'd probably wipe out the germs if you did! No, I know the argument that alcohol kills germs. I've had my share of Malört. It kills more than germs. *(Chuckles.)* Yeah, it's pretty deadly.

**Jesse Thorn:** It kills hopes for the future.

**John Hodgman:** So, when Susan expressed her disgust, how did you feel, Doug?

**Doug:** Um, I didn't feel any particular way, just knew that my other hand was sticky, and we had a—

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, but if your loved one is disgusted with you, what is your reaction?

**Doug:** Oh, I—ooh, this is a tough one. *(Giggles.)* I know what I should say, but in that moment—alright, that was—that was not one of my finest moments.

**John Hodgman:** *(Interrupting.)* Why don't you say what you think you should—okay, not one of your finest moments?

*(Doug confirms.)*

But you've kept licking your fingers.

**Doug:** Can I plead the filth?

[00:15:00]

*(Laughter.)*

She came up with that.

**John Hodgman:** I hold you both in contempt of court.

*(Laughter.)*

How much money do you have in your pocket right now? Do you have any cash?

**Doug:** 40 bucks.

**John Hodgman:** What's that? That's your fine. *(Bangs his gavel three times.)* Give me 40 right now. 40 on—give it to me. Plead the filth. Here you go, Jesse. That's 20 for you.

*(Laughter.)*

Alright, Doug. Let me ask you this question. Do you believe that Susan is a germaphobe?

**Doug:** I would saaaay yes.

**John Hodgman:** Do you believe that there is anything wrong with licking your fingers in the Limoncello incident or any other incident? Because alcohol can—

**Doug:** No, not in that incident. I was off-base on that one, but other food—

**John Hodgman:** But even though she has told you that it is disgusting, you want to continue licking your fingers in front of her.

**Doug:** Food, I can't make any promises. *(Chuckles.)* I just—I just—

**John Hodgman:** That's what we're talking about is food. I don't know what other categories you're getting into at this point.

**Doug:** I knew this was not going to go well.

**John Hodgman:** Ah! You feel that it's not—you're not capable of Being lickless while eating food.

**Doug:** I am capable.

**John Hodgman:** You are capable of that self...

Is there any other hygiene issues that you want to bring up while you're here, Susan, about Doug?

**Susan:** No, he's actually a pretty neat guy. And I mean that on several different levels.

*(The audience “aw”s.)*

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, he seems—you know what? This is a case where your wordplay has paid off for you. He is a neat guy, figuratively and literally. He's got a nice, dapper little jacket on. I like his glasses. He's got some cool tassel moccasins, everything's good. He kind of looks like Griffin Dunn a little bit.

*(Jesse agrees.)*

Doesn't he look like little Griffin Dunn? Very handsome man.

*(Jesse echoes him.)*

Exactly. The only thing he's got is stuff on his fingers. He's got saucy fingers, but you don't want to live with that anymore. If I were to rule in your favor, what would you have me rule? Prohibit him from ever licking his fingers again?

**Susan:** I would prefer that he doesn't ever lick them again, unless he's eating Twin Anchor ribs.

**John Hodgman:** Carve out for ribs then.

*(Susan confirms.)*

That was pretty gross, I have to say, when he was eating them before.

**Doug:** *(Hopefully.)* Fried chicken?

**Susan:** *(Beat.)* I think it's a matter of calculated risks.

**John Hodgman:** What grosses you out about it so much? The germy-ness, the perceived germy-ness, or the sound and sight of your man licking his thumb?

**Susan:** It's not the sound or the sight, really. It's the perceived “where have your—what have your hands—where have they been? And—”

**John Hodgman:** And where are they going?

**Susan:** *(Chuckling.)* Where are they going?

**John Hodgman:** Okay, I think I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. I'm going to retire to my limoncello hot tub, courtesy of Danny DeVito, in my chambers. I'll be back in a moment with my verdict.

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

*(Applause and cheers.)*

Susan, how are you feeling about your chances here?

**Susan:** My chances? I think they're really good.

**Jesse Thorn:** Just because Judge Hodgman is a germophobe?

**Susan:** Yes!

**Jesse Thorn:** How are you feeling, Doug?

**Doug:** Not good. Not good at all.

**Jesse Thorn:** Did you know that before, when Susan was telling that story about the limoncello, you were shaking your head with an expression on your face that could only be described as, "No peas, Mommy, no peas."

**Doug:** I was unaware of that.

**Jesse Thorn:** Okay. That's just an FYI.

**Doug:** Noted.

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

*(Cheers and applause.)*

**John Hodgman:** So, Doug, first of all, I must rebuke you with extreme prejudice. Look at—you're running your fingers through your hair. You got rib juice in your hair now, sir! Is that how you get that wonderful Griffin Dunn waviness in your hair? It's all barbecue sauce.

**Doug:** It's special sauce.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, exactly. I hold you in a certain rebuke, because—you know, I'm inclined to worry about you, Doug.

*(Laughter.)*

At the very beginning of this, you said that you didn't reveal your licking tendencies for 18 months into your relationship with Susan, which to me suggests that you know what you're doing is gross, and you needed to hide it from her until she was emotionally entrapped by you. And the sunk cost fallacy would keep her in the relationship with you!

**Doug:** I thought I said she didn't notice for 18 months.

**John Hodgman:** You thought she didn't notice for 18 months. But it took her 18 months to clue into this. So, whether she didn't notice, or you were hiding it from her, I'll let that be ambiguous. But the truth is, she really likes you a lot if her brain was unconsciously filtering out (*lip smacking noises*) on tortilla chips, of all things, sir! That's just salt. Do you ever just salt your fingers and eat it that way? Give it a try. I've done it. It's good.

*(Laughter.)*

[00:20:00]

Because I am, in circumstances, absolutely a number one finger licker. And not just number one—two, three, four, five, all the way up to ten. I'll lick them all, Doug. If I'm eating certain foods, you gotta do it. Don't you have to do it, Jesse?

**Jesse Thorn:** You've gotta do it, John.

**John Hodgman:** You gotta do it. There are certain foods that you gotta do it. And I will say this also. You know, obviously we're coming out of a time—and still living in a time—of wariness around contaminants. And we're heightened—our senses are heightened, and appropriately so. We should be more careful around each other in all kinds of ways, not just in terms of the stuff that we're sneezing and coughing on one another, or licking off the subway turnstile, or whatever it is you're up to, Doug.

*(Laughter.)*

You do have to absolutely be hygienic if you're gonna undertake finger licking. And I'll say this, Doug. I'm a finger licker, and I know a finger licker when I see one, and you're a good finger licker. Like, when I came over there—after you had initially dug into those ribs—and I shook your hand, I felt mostly dry, smooth skin. I didn't feel like I was, you know, shaking hands with your saliva or anything like that. You did a good job. But then you went ahead afterward and licked your fingers again. You don't know where my hands have been, Doug.

Now, I'm going to tell you, they were washed. They were clean. I'm not going to put you in danger, as best as I can. And you were probably amped up, because you're on stage and you figured Hodgman probably wants me to suck his thumb.

*(Laughter.)*

By proxy.



**Jesse Thorn:** That's what you probably figured.

**John Hodgman:** So, I'm going to let that pass.

**Jesse Thorn:** Even though that's what you probably figured.

**John Hodgman:** (*Chuckling.*) Susan, this is one rare time when I'm going to find in favor of the guy in a relationship like this. I apologize to you. Yeah.

**Susan:** Woow. Really?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Well, I mean, you know, if you had said, “It just sounds gross to me and looks gross to me, and when I see the man of my life licking his fingers, it makes me want to vomit,” then I would be like, no, you got to stop it, Doug. You can't be making your partner want to vomit in front of you. She's just worried about the germs! And I think you should be worried about the germs. ‘Cause Doug obviously likes to act up, and he likes to lick his fingers after other people touch his hands just for fun. You got to calm down on that. You understand?

**Doug:** Not interested.

**John Hodgman:** If you're in a situation—and if you're in a situation where finger licking is appropriate, we're talking about fried chicken. We're talking about ribs. We're talking about messy stuff. You know, like you gotta make sure you wash your hands thoroughly, and Susan's gotta see you do it before you do it. And then, you can go ahead and lick your fingers. Lay off the tortilla chips. Just leave that alone. You don't have to do that. Just wash your hands. Your sodium's probably too high anyway. This is the sound of a gavel.

(*Bangs his gavel three times.*)

Judge John Hodgman rules, that as all.

(*Cheers and applause.*)

**Jesse Thorn:** Susan, Doug, thanks for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

(*They thank him.*)

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Now, Chicago, we do have more justice to dispense. But first, we have some news.

**John Hodgman:** Right, so the name of our tour is the Van Freaks Roadshow. You can see it right up there. That's because of Jesse and my's mutual love of the television program on GBH, *Antiques Roadshow*.

*(Jesse agrees.)*

And also, our mutual love of the Mitsubishi Delica Japanese market only adventure van, because we have a very special guest. Isn't that right, Jesse?

**Jesse Thorn:** That is absolutely true. We are so glad to have her with us tonight. She's the *Roadshow's* specialist in textiles, the only appraiser in the American Society of Appraisers to hold a designation in costumes and couture—which means clothes. We're so lucky to have her here. Please welcome, from GBH's *Antiques Roadshow*, Deborah Miller.

**John Hodgman:** Deborah Miller to the stage, please. Holy moly.

*(Cheers and applause.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Deborah Miller really knows how to accessorize a Dickies jumpsuit.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Probably our most fashionable guest on the show ever, I would say. And let me explain why you're here. When we announced that our tour was called Van Freaks Roadshow, and I explained why, I got an email from someone named Mark. And, who's Mark? I don't care. All he said was, "I'm married to an appraiser on *Antiques Roadshow*." And he volunteered for you to be here. I'm not sure if he checked with you first.

**Deborah Miller:** He did not.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, good! Okay.

*(Laughter.)*

Well, I'm very grateful that you are here. And we're thrilled to have you.

**Deborah Miller:** I should say that it's a big deal. I was not quite sure I was ready for this. Because for the past two years, my New Year's resolution is to be less judgmental.

**John Hodgman:** Sometimes you just can't meet those resolutions though.

[00:25:00]

So, you're an expert in textiles, clothing, et cetera. How did this come to be in your life, and how did you get on the *Roadshow*?

**Deborah Miller:** Yeah, you know, it's a circuitous route sometimes, when you end up with your final career.

**John Hodgman:** Not for me!

**Deborah Miller:** Not for you, no. It was—

**John Hodgman:** This is what I majored in. Class of 1993, podcasting. They're like, "What? What is it?" It's like mail order LPs.

**Jesse Thorn:** I went to Santa Cruz, because Berkeley didn't have a Second Banana major.

**John Hodgman:** *(Laughs.)* Yeah, they only had the Cool Guy major, and that was your major!

**Deborah Miller:** Well, I was a classic art history major, except I didn't care. I wanted to know like what they were wearing. What are they sitting on? What's the rug in the back of the—you know, what's the stuff in it? So, I was going to be a dec arts part. When I graduated from college, I followed another part of my life, and I went to West Africa, and I was a Peace Corps volunteer for two and a half years.

**John Hodgman:** Oh! Wonderful.

**Deborah Miller:** Well, I went to London first and managed an art gallery, and then I came back. And—

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I did a little of that too.

**Deborah Miller:** And then actually, I was kind of tired of art.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, before I joined the Peace Corps, I also managed an art gallery in London. Not that unusual or impressive.

**Deborah Miller:** The art gallery was first. That was my trajectory. And then after a while, I was like, "I'm sick of art." And just, you know—and so, I joined—I was in the Peace Corps. And within about six months, I realized I really did miss art. So, I finished out my two and a half years. And—

**Jesse Thorn:** I thought you were going to say within six months, you realized you were more into war.

*(Laughter.)*

**Deborah Miller:** No, I applied to graduate school from my hut. Really. You know, my village. And then went—finished my 27 months, and went from like—well, I wasn't in a jungle. It was sort of Sahel, so it was sort of very desert-y. And then went straight to

Manhattan. So, that was—yeah, so I decided I was going to eat great food, know about the world, you know, love languages, worry about people in other countries all the time, but probably art was going to be my main course.

**John Hodgman:** Excellent. And what's the oldest textile you've ever appraised or worked with or held in your hand? Like, some mummy stuff or what?

**Deborah Miller:** Mummy stuff. Exactly. Basically, arid—in fact, arid cultures. So, Coptic textiles, Egypt, anything that's found in tombs, in the sand. There are things from the Nazca culture and on the coast in Peru, where there are deserts. So, things like that just preserve. There's no moisture, it just preserves that stuff. So.

**John Hodgman:** Right, so an arid environment preserves.

*(Deborah confirms.)*

And what does it feel—like, what was the oldest thing you held, would you say? How many—?

**Deborah Miller:** 500 BCE. Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** What does it feel like to hold something that old? Terrifying, because you're gonna tear it apart in your hands?

**Deborah Miller:** *(Chuckles.)* I washed my hands first.

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** Right. And lick your fingers after, I presume. Yeah.

**Deborah Miller:** Exactly. No, you wash your hands, and then you just kind of—you know, you're looking with your eyes mostly. But you know, we feel—it was very supple. It was linen, so it was very supple.

**John Hodgman:** This may not be appropriate, but I have some clothing that I hope that you can help me evaluate the value of, which are these socks that I'm wearing. These are my *Antiques Roadshow* socks.

**Deborah Miller:** Oh, that's great! I wondered who bought them.

**Jesse Thorn:** Goddammit.

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** Well, I actually didn't buy them. Because I was on *Antiques Roadshow*. I don't know if you know that, Jesse.

**Jesse Thorn:** John!

**John Hodgman:** But they did a season when they were talking to celebrities and also me about old junk we had, and I was on it. And I know it's your favorite show.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, no, it's my favorite show.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, but I was on it.

**Jesse Thorn:** For years, I've talked publicly. I'm the only person under 60 who talks all the time about how much they love the *Antiques Roadshow*.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. When they call me, I'm like—

**Jesse Thorn:** What other celebrity influencers are pushing the *Roadshow* on the American public? I've never been on the *Roadshow*. It's my whole thing!

**John Hodgman:** I've never mentioned it before in my life. So, imagine my surprise. And they came to me.

**Jesse Thorn:** Do you have *Babe: Pig in the City* socks too? What other things that are my thing do you have socks of? It's-Its?

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** Anyway, Deborah Miller, back to you for a moment please. Lemme just put these up here so you can see. Maybe it would be easier if I just took it off. But so, these are socks that they gave me when I was on *Antiques Roadshow*. This is one of them. The other one's very much like it. And I don't know if you've seen those before. They told me you couldn't buy them. You could only get them if you were on *Antiques Roadshow*.

**Deborah Miller:** I don't own these, either. Yeah, you're nervous.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, you don't own any of them, either. What's that?

**Deborah Miller:** You're a little sweaty down here.

*(Laughter and applause.)*

There's a little—*(giggles)*.

**Jesse Thorn:** It's not an arid climate.

**Deborah Miller:** They're not going to last.

**John Hodgman:** No, no, no. Not down there in my shoes, no. And you can see a little wear and tear if you—I want to be straightforward with you; there's a little hole near the ankle of that one, which—I mean, maybe that is patina, you could say? I don't know.

**Deborah Miller:** It's the absence. But patina, patina is—(*inaudible*). This is the lack of.

**John Hodgman:** Patina is—okay, so inside is probably—I've left some patina for sure.

[00:30:00]

But that's a—right, that's just a little wear and tear, maybe it's some renovation.

**Jesse Thorn:** I think it speaks to provenance, given his famously pointy ankles.

**Deborah Miller:** It does! (*laughs.*) Sharp elbows, pointy ankles, yeah. You know, one of the issues with things with Lycra in them is they just kind of—they don't have a very good shelf life, so the longevity of these is a concern for me.

**John Hodgman:** How would one preserve these for future ages and scholars? Lucite?

**Deborah Miller:** Not a shadow box, please. We're trying to do away with shadow boxes and clothing. I would launder them. I would put them in a—

**John Hodgman:** Oh, wait a minute. What?

(*Laughter.*)

Hang on a second.

**Deborah Miller:** Yeah, so sometimes sweats and stains don't show up for decades, you know.

**John Hodgman:** That's not been my experience at all.

(*Laughter.*)

**Deborah Miller:** I put that dress away in the closet and it was clean. Right. And you're like, no, it was white wine. It wasn't clean. And the sugars come out, you know, 40 years later.

**John Hodgman:** Well, let's say I didn't want to preserve them, but I wanted to pass them on to someone who would appreciate them and give me money for them. Because the provenance is pretty clear. You all saw me take it off my foot. The chain of custody is obvious. Do you think that someone would be interested in—?

**Deborah Miller:** You know what I do? I'm very ruthless, because I rank celebrity stature. When I'm—

**John Hodgman:** I think we need to move on.

*(Laughter.)*

I do think we're almost out of time with Deborah Miller. No.

**Deborah Miller:** No, but I think you have to think where they are in their career, the career trajectory.

**John Hodgman:** So, where's my ranking then, Deborah Miller? Would you put a dollar on that or no?

**Deborah Miller:** I'd put a dollar on it!

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** Deborah Miller, everybody!

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Are you ready for Swift Justice, John?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, Deborah Miller, we have a segment coming up now called Swift Justice, where we hear as many cases as possible within 15 minutes. We're gonna start the timer, and I'm gonna add a little incentive. At the end of Swift Justice, the person I think who makes the best case for themselves gets my socks. So—and whatever value, and you know the provenance is established, so. Will you stick around and offer some insight?

*(Deborah agrees.)*

Very good. Thank you. Deborah Miller, everybody.

*(Applause.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Please welcome to the stage Danny and Diego. Danny is an artist and professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His husband, Diego, is studying to become a sommelier. They met ten days after Diego moved here from Mexico and have been together for four years.

**John Hodgman:** Welcome, Danny and Diego!

*(Applause. They thank him.)*

Who seeks justice in this fake court of law?

**Danny:** I do. I seek justice.

**John Hodgman:** Danny seeks justice. Yes. Danny, what is the nature of the justice you seek? What's your complaint?

**Danny:** So, when I'm a passenger in Diego's car and we approach either a large bump or a pothole in the road, Diego will do one of two things. He'll stop very suddenly. Or he'll veer very suddenly, sometimes crossing the double yellow line. And it'll give me—yeah, it'll give me heart palpitations.

**John Hodgman:** Oh! Very dangerous! Give you heart palpitations. Diego, how do you respond?

**Diego:** Well, yes, I do. I do that. But in my defense, I always look at the mirrors.

**John Hodgman:** Okay.

**Jesse:** Your hands are always at ten and two.

**John Hodgman:** In my defense, I'm practicing the basic safety requirements of driving a car. In my defense, I'm not wearing a blindfold, and I'm sober.

*(Laughter.)*

**Diego:** No, and also it's always when it's like empty streets. And it's like no cars involved and no people involved. So, it's like not dangerous.

**John Hodgman:** Have you ever gotten into an accident?

**Diego:** Never, ever.

**John Hodgman:** Never. And why are you—? You say that he comes to a sudden stop at the pothole?

*(Danny confirms.)*

And then never moves again, or what?

**Danny:** *(Chuckling.)* No, well, he'll go over the pothole quite slowly. But it's a small margin. You know, he'll slam on the brakes. And then go over, as if he hadn't anticipated it.



**Diego:** I always put the tic-tac lights. You know, the tick-tock lights?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, the hazards. Yeah. I like tick-tock lights a lot better! That's incredible!

**Diego:** I always put it, and then I just like—I survive.

**Jesse Thorn:** I'm literally reevaluating every choice I've ever made in my entire life, because it all led up to me not calling them tic-tac lights until now.

*(Laughter.)*

[00:35:00]

**Danny:** I can stipulate that it's a horrible experience when he does go over one, because he has a subcompact car.

**John Hodgman:** I was going to ask, what kind of car do you drive, Diego?

**Diego:** Yeah, it's a small one. It's a Nissan Versa. Yeah, very, very small.

**John Hodgman:** And how big are the wheels? About the size of Lifesavers, since we're in the mint realm?

**Diego:** *(Laughs.)* Well, I am very careful about my car, because it's old. And sometimes Chicago, it's—you know, the tough streets. And then it's like bu-bu-bu-bu-bum-bump-bump-bump. And then it's like very carefully just look at the mirrors and then slightly... and then bump it, and then go back to the line, and—

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, but look at Danny. Danny's terrified right now, even as you describe it in what I have to say are the most soothing tones I've ever heard.

*(Laughter.)*

Like, I almost took a little nap there, because it felt like a little lullaby, describing how you get around the potholes, but Danny's terrified. You appreciate that.

Jesse Thorn: Danny's over here going, “No peas, Mom! No peas! No peas!”

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** So, Danny, is what he's saying true or false?

**Danny:** I've never seen him put on the tick-tock lights when he does this. I've seen him put on the tick-tock lights at other times that I wouldn't.

*(Laughter. Jesse chortles.)*

But *(laughs)* I've never seen the like slam on the brakes, tick-tock lights, pothole. I've never seen that order of events.

**John Hodgman:** No, because you're too busy having a panic attack.

**Danny:** True, yeah, that's possible, yeah.

**John Hodgman:** How does it make you feel, Diego, when Danny says that he's having heart palpitations because of your driving?

**Diego:** Well, very bad.

**John Hodgman:** Makes you feel bad.

*(The audience "aw"s.)*

**Diego:** Yeah, I love him. And yeah. I mean, yeah.

*(The audience "aw"s.)*

**John Hodgman:** What would you recommend to—?

**Diego:** He's very careful. I just like—

**Danny:** So, what I would recommend—I think that going over the pothole is less dangerous than his maneuvers. And I also feel like it's probably possible to anticipate them a little earlier if he does have to go over them instead of around them.

**John Hodgman:** Do you drive, Danny?

*(Danny confirms.)*

Have you ever gone over a pothole and gotten a flat tire? Dented a rim or anything? I mean, Diego is nodding yes. But you haven't been through that catastrophe?

**Danny:** Oh no, I never have. No, not in my car. No, I have on my bike, but not in my car.

**John Hodgman:** Right. And how do you approach potholes on your bike now? Or do you just have Diego drive you around instead, because you're afraid?

*(Laughter.)*

**Danny:** I go around them on my bike. *(Laughs.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Deborah, you've been a Chicagoan for seven years or so.

*(Deborah confirms.)*

Are Chicago streets more or less dangerous than average? Are the holes bigger for any reason?

**Deborah Miller:** I mean, sometimes. Depends on the time of the year, it depends on the street. Sometimes the drivers do not stay on the right lane.

**Jesse Thorn:** And if people at home couldn't hear, the audience was like, "Yeah, our potholes are bigger than New York's!"

**Deborah Miller:** They have shoulders.

**John Hodgman:** And they're more affordable!

*(Laughter and applause.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** And our potholes have pretty good Mexican food now!

**Deborah Miller:** I have a question, is this the family car?

**Danny:** No, we each have our own car, and mine is a little more pothole-ready than Diego's. And I would say I do a little bit more of the driving.

**John Hodgman:** What are you driving, a Ford 150?

**Danny:** No, I have a Nissan Rogue.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, alright. Why do you ask, Deborah Miller?

**Deborah Miller:** Because I didn't know if the only way they were in a car was when Diego drove. But I thought if they're going someplace, if you would swap the driving responsibilities when two of you are in the car—

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, what happens when you drive, and you're driving over potholes willy-nilly? How does Diego feel?

**Danny:** Yeah, how do you feel about it?

**John Hodgman:** Oh, you never asked him? Interesting.

*(Laughter.)*

**Diego:** It's because when you're driving and then you just go through the hole, it's just like bing-boom. And that's it. Because it's his car. And then my car is like boom-boom-boom-boom-boom-boom-boom.

**Danny:** It's a very different experience.

*(John and Diego both agree.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Wait, when he goes over a pothole, it's like “The Girl From Ipanema”?!

*(Laughter.)*

It's a Jobim like bing-boom-bing-boom.

**Diego:** I don't know. I—yeah.

**John Hodgman:** It's a musical experience.

*(Diego confirms.)*

Whereas yours—it's a percussive experience. Alright. Here's how I'm going to rule. Diego, I'm with you. I don't like potholes. I've been through them. I've busted up tires, I've busted up wheels, because I drove too fast in my younger days. Don't do what I did, kids. And once you've done that, you get very, very nervous around potholes. Plus, your car, it's too small. It wants to go into the pothole and live there forever.

[00:40:00]

*(Laughter.)*

I understand exactly why you're doing what you're doing. You're trying to keep your car safe, and you're trying to keep Danny safe, but you've got to recognize that Danny might have a heart attack before your car ever gets wrecked. So, all I'm asking is: do exactly what you claim that you do do. Notice the pothole ahead of time, slow down gradually, hit that tick-tock, and then proceed with caution. Don't give your partner a heart attack. *(Bangs his gavel three times.)*

*(They thank him.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Thank you, Danny and Diego. Let's welcome to the stage Sam and Brian. Sam has a degree in music, but they're now studying to become a surgeon specializing in gender affirming care.

*(Cheers and applause.)*

Brian has a culinary arts degree, which is also important work!

*(Laughter.)*

And works for an unnamed airline, in their lounge at O'Hare.

**John Hodgman:** Wow. well, welcome to the court. Who seeks justice in my courtroom?

**Sam:** That would be me, your honor.

**John Hodgman:** And you are Sam?

*(Sam confirms.)*

And what is the complaint?

**Sam:** So, my husband has a habit of drinking a lot of soda.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, interesting! Didn't see that coming.

**Sam:** Yeah, it's really—you know, it's funny. So, he will drink them at any time of day, indiscriminate of, you know—

**John Hodgman:** Any time of day only?

**Sam:** No, also at night after the sun goes down. I'll often find a can of soda on his bedside table. Ah, interesting! Yeah, always—you know, we drink zero sugar soda. We keep it in the house, and I just—

**John Hodgman:** The healthy kind is what you mean, right? Yeah, zero sugar. Sure.

**Sam:** Yeah, absolutely. I prefer to eat my sugar rather than drink it, that's what I say. Anyway, so I don't believe that it's appropriate to consume soda where you sleep. For many reasons, most of which, just the concept of drinking a caffeinated beverage right by where you're about to go lay down and go to sleep—that's... not so good for you.

**Jesse Thorn:** I feel like “don't drink soda where you sleep” sounds like a lesser part of the bro code.

*(Laughter.)*

**Sam:** Those are bros I would like to have; I think.

**Jesse Thorn:** *(In a frat boy voice.)* Dude, he's out of the frat! Ha-ha! No drinking soda where you sleep, man.

**John Hodgman:** Brian, what's the best bedtime soda in your opinion?

**Brian:** Probably gonna have to go with a Mountain Dew.

*(John "wow"s.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** That was the most sensual expression of Mountain Dew enthusiasm I've ever heard.

**Sam:** And that's why he's mine.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah! You're in the running with Diego for most mellifluous of the night! But Mountain Dew—that's very highly caffeinated soda pop.

*(Brian agrees.)*

What do you call it in Chicago? Soda pop? Just pop? Well, you're wrong. Doesn't it keep you up at night?

**Brian:** Not generally, no.

**John Hodgman:** No? Do you feel you've built up a tolerance to it?

**Brian:** It's somewhere between that and just, If you want to go to sleep, you're gonna go to sleep.

*(John "wow"s.)*

**Sam:** Mm. I don't know about that.

**John Hodgman:** Have you ever tried sleeping without being jacked up on Mountain Dew?

*(Brian confirms.)*

And how does that work for you?

**Brian:** About the same as when I am jacked up on Mountain Dew.

**John Hodgman:** How much Mountain Dew do you drink a day?

**Brian:** We've gotten a lot better at that. I'm down to about two 20 ounce bottles a day at most.

**Jesse Thorn:** When you say we, you're using the royal we here?

**Brian:** It's me and the mouse in my pocket.

**Jesse Thorn:** (*In a snooty British RP.*) When we're drinking, when we're doing the Dew!

**Sam:** I'll say that there have been alternative caffeination methods pursued, while sodas have been cut back a bit.

**John Hodgman:** What are the alternative—?

**Brian:** Like, just a straight caffeine pill.

**John Hodgman:** A straight caffeine pill on your bedside? Alright.

**Deborah Miller:** And a straight caffeine pill and then straight to sleep.

**Brian:** No, those are usually more in the morning instead of like coffee or something like that.

**John Hodgman:** So, this is the way—do you drink coffee as well?

**Brian:** I do not drink coffee normally, but teas and other things like that, yes.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, okay. And are you a primarily a Mountain Dew person?

**Brian:** Whatever will be the cheapest option after I've done the math.

**John Hodgman:** Wow.

*(Laughter.)*

This is a guy with a system over here.

**Jesse Thorn:** What an incredible system!

**Sam:** Again, that's why I got him.

**John Hodgman:** Please, Deborah Miller.

**Deborah Miller:** I have a question. Do you have a general—are you generally known for having a sweet tooth?

**Brian:** Not a sweet tooth particularly. I do enjoy any foods. The side effect of being a cook is you wind up having so many flavor profiles built up that you sit there and say, sugar—it's like, okay, add butter, make it rich, and then even it out or add something tart and then it evens out again. So, balance, yes. And since most of it's fake sugar anyway, is it really a sweet tooth?

**Deborah Miller:** The balance of the Mountain Dew.

**Sam:** It's being processed by the same receptors.

**John Hodgman:** Are you suggesting that your palate is so accustomed to being overstimulated that just drinking water at night won't do it for you?

[00:45:00]

**Brian:** Overstimulated is probably a correct definition, since I would put salt on salt.

**Sam:** You don't want to know what this man does to his oatmeal.

**John Hodgman:** Would you feel better, Sam, if Brian were drinking—I mean, how quickly these things become normalized! You're drinking soda at night on the bedside table! That's where the water should be! Not a big like Mugg root beer or whatever!

**Jesse Thorn:** Brian so efficiently moved the Overton window on—

**John Hodgman:** I'm already saying like, well, what if it's a caffeine-free diet Mountain Dew? How about that? What about a Red Alert? Does that have—?

**Sam:** We haven't even brought up the cat, and I feel that the cat needs to be addressed.

**John Hodgman:** Alright. Let's address the cat. I literally thought you were going to bring a cat out, which would be amazing.

**Sam:** Just quickly. We have an evil—gosh, I wish! His name is Clover, and he's my beautiful angel son, but he gets very grumpy around food time. Which is at 6:30 in the morning and 6:30 in the evening promptly. And if he doesn't get what he wants, he has a tendency to do that cat thing, where they just, you know, nudge whatever's on your bedside table off of your bedside table. He does this with no prejudice. He will throw anything off. Last night, he threw an impact driver off of the dresser.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, why was an impact driver on the dresser?

**Sam:** Because we've been moving, and we've been putting together our new house.



**John Hodgman:** I think that there's a lot of—you should really go back to your bedroom and take a real objective view of the sleep hygiene profile.

**Sam:** We're working on it.

**John Hodgman:** You know, because maybe power tools shouldn't be in there either. And the thing is—

**Sam:** But what if I need to hang a shelf?

**John Hodgman:** Well, no, I understand. And I don't know what your—if you don't have a closet to put these things—I don't know what your situation is. But I do think that you do need to create a space for yourself, particularly if you're going to—do you share a bed, I presume?

*(Sam confirms.)*

Yeah, if you don't have two separate villas separated by a reflecting pool to retire to, you do have to do your best to create a peaceful realm in which you can sleep. And what I would say is that, you know, having the cat threatening to knock off your Mountain Dew onto the comforter—you know what I've learned is that sometimes those Mountain Dew stains don't show up for 10 years.

*(Laughter.)*

Isn't that right, Deborah Miller? Absolutely right.

**Deborah Miller:** Absolutely. No, actually, I think Mountain Dew shows up a little bit quicker than that. But yeah.

**John Hodgman:** A little bit quicker. So, even then it's a little bit more dire.

**Deborah Miller:** There seems to be three parts to this, I'm finding. I'm thinking—

**Jesse Thorn:** Oh, it looks like there's a new crux finder in town!

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** I never thought about parts. I'd love to hear it.

**Deborah Miller:** I'm thinking we've got a stain issue. A worrisome stain issue, a potential stain. We've got—worried about his sleep. Just can you sleep? And then there may be like a tooth decay trajectory. So, we've got three different things that are worrying you.

**Sam:** Thank you, I hadn't even thought about that. Incredible.

**Deborah Miller:** Yes. You haven't?

**John Hodgman:** Deborah Miller comes through with the parts.

**Deborah Miller:** But I just didn't know which one, you know, is the kind of the strong (*inaudible*) of it all. The strongest thing.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, what's the strongest concern that you have?

**Sam:** For me, the strongest concern is the sleep quality. I notice a lot of the time—Brian's always told me he's always been a bad sleeper, and I can ask his parents, and—

**John Hodgman:** So, you're hoping that removing caffeine is going to help his sleep.

**Sam:** I hope. It can't hurt. It's a stimulant. It's been shown to have negative effects on sleep.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. And I would say that the diet soda, which I enjoy very much—often in an airport lounge, I'll drink about a hundred gallons of a particular diet soda. It's not the greatest for you. I mean, there's a lot of chemicals in there and water is really good, you know? And I would say that if you are having difficulty sleeping in the way that Sam describes, I hate—you know, you might want to get a sleep study done to see if there's anything else going on, but in the meantime, I would—first of all, like don't have a caffeinated beverage on your bedside table. Like—I don't believe that I'm going to enable you in this way, but maybe a ginger ale?

(*Laughter.*)

A non-caffeinated ginger ale to sort of work your way towards the beautiful bounty of, you know, water. And keep it in a container so the cat can't knock it off. And get rid of the impact drill. This is the sound of a gavel. (*Bangs his gavel three times.*)

**Jesse Thorn:** Thank you, Sam and Brian. Let's welcome to the stage Suni and Tamina. Suni says she's a recovering lawyer who now works for a nonprofit. Her best friend Tamina is a pediatric dentist. She says she's always accepted Suni's word as law, until now.

**John Hodgman:** Suni and Tamina, welcome. Who comes seeking justice in this fake court of law?

**Suni:** I do, your honor.

**John Hodgman:** And that is Suni. What is the justice you seek?

**Suni:** So, Tamina and I have been very good friends for a number of years, since college. Almost 30 years now. It was maybe a year ago or so; we were out having drinks with a couple of other friends of ours, enjoying martinis, just talking, having a good time.

[00:50:00]

Delicious.

**John Hodgman:** Delicious! Not for your bedside table. No.

**Suni:** Not at all. I would not recommend it. But anyway, so we're talking, having a good time, and then all of a sudden I see Tamina go into the martini, take the skewer with the olives out.

**John Hodgman:** The toothpick.

*(Suni confirms.)*

And it has olives on it.

**Suni:** It has olives on it. She takes it out of her own martini. Takes a bite of one of the olives at the end. And puts the rest back.

**John Hodgman:** Puts the rest back in. Into her drink.

**Suni:** So, there's like two olives plus a half an olive in her martini.

**John Hodgman:** Now, I think that you were expecting gasps. Like she was—

*(Laughter.)*

**Suni:** I definitely expecting gasps. You all disappointed me.

**John Hodgman:** Like she was licking fingers or something. Like she was dipping her fingers into the martini and mm, mm, mm, mm-mm!

**Suni:** No, but she—! Who bites an olive?! Who bites an olive?

**John Hodgman:** Who bites an olive, indeed? Your best friend does. Tamina, how do you defend yourself?

**Tamina:** I mean, I don't. It was my drink.

*(John "wow"s and the audience cheers.)*

**Suni:** But I had to see it, your honor. I had to see it. I had to see a half an olive floating around.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. This is a situation where it's not germophobia, like Susan was talking about, it's just visceral repulsion at your friend. I understand. What kind of olive was it, Tamina? Was it a stuffed olive?

**Tamina:** It was a really big olive.

*(Suni disagrees.)*

That's what I remember!

**John Hodgman:** Did it have like—was it a regular—?

**Tamina:** I remember it being a really big olive. I remember it being several olives. Right. And I remember wanting to make my drink last, and it was a dirty martini. And so, I—you know when you bite—

**John Hodgman:** Now you've gotten me with repulsion, but that's fine.

**Tamina:** I'm sorry! But I'm not really an everyday martini drinker. I'm more of a scotch girl. Uh-huh. But I was drinking martinis this night in solidarity.

**John Hodgman:** And that is a drink that doesn't come with any snacks.

**Tamina:** Right, yeah, no. And, when you bite into the olive, it increases the surface area, right? And then you—when you—

**Suni:** An olive has a hole that alcohol can get into and soak in.

**Tamina:** When it's sitting there in the drink, it's just soaking up more of the alcohol, and it's extra delicious. You kind of want to make it last, you know?

**John Hodgman:** Do you—was it just a hole, or was it stuffed with a pimento or blue cheese or anything?

**Tamina:** That I don't remember.

**John Hodgman:** Do you ever like an olive that's stuffed with like garlic and jalapeno? Because I really like that a lot.

**Tamina:** I'm not opposed to an olive stuffed with all those things. Yeah, I'm in.

**Suni:** Oh no! What is happening?!

**Jesse Thorn:** There's a jar.

**Suni:** I mean, can it still be shown that the judge is barefoot?

*(Laughter.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** You've heard of the barefoot Contessa.

**John Hodgman:** Hi folks, it's Judge John Hodgman. When I'm barefoot on stage in Chicago, calculating my celebrity rank and whether it's going up or down, sometimes I like to take out a big jar of good old Trader Joe's Chicago style olives stuffed with garlic and jalapeno. And when I eat one of these babies, you know I'm only eating half!

*(Suni groans "nooo".)*

And then I'm putting it right back in the jar!

*(Suni "nooo"s again.)*

There's your gasp, Suni! I got it for you.

**Suni:** That's disgusting. It's disgusting.

**John Hodgman:** Mm. So delicious. Each one a delicious half unto itself. Mm. Right back in the jar.

*(Laughter.)*

**Suni:** I can't watch this! Half an olive and barefoot. This is my nightmare.

**John Hodgman:** Do you want some?

**Suni:** Are you offering me a half of an olive?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I ate the other half already.

*(Suni "oh no"s.)*

No, don't. No! Don't fall into the trap that Doug fell into! I'm not—you don't need to—

**Tamina:** It is a celebrity olive, after all.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Oh, you're taking this jar home with you.

*(Laughter.)*

As a thank you gift just for playing. Thank you.

**Jesse Thorn:** Deborah, how would you rank the celebrity status of this half olive?

**Deborah Miller:** Again, it's got a short shelf life.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, it's a good point. Even if you wrap it in archival, acid free paper.

**Deborah Miller:** And in the sand.

**John Hodgman:** You're not saying this can be preserved? I mean, it's primed.

*(Deborah stammers.)*

You want an olive?

**Deborah Miller:** Sure! But full one. Not one of those.

**John Hodgman:** You don't want one of these. I've had my fingers all up in these olives. These are for Tamina. Yeah.

**Deborah Miller:** Can I ask a question about the olive? When you bit into it, the other part just dropped into your—

*(Suni corrects her.)*

No, it was still on the stick. Oh, it wasn't swirling around in your martini? Okay. And were you the only one of the friend group that had the issue with it, or did y'all sort of take a step back?

**Suni:** Well, actually—actually—

**Tamina:** The other two friends we were with are on her side.

**Suni:** Right. And there was one missing who's on her side to be fair.

**Tamina:** And I will say that they have since taken to taunting me anytime we go out for drinks, whatever the garnish is.

**Suni:** That's not me.

**Tamina:** Even like the tiny little Luxardo cherries, they'll like take bites out of them and then put them back in just to drive me crazy.

**John Hodgman:** Just to taunt you, right? You know why? Because this is fun.

**Tamina:** I was gonna say, basically what you're doing.

[00:55:00]

**John Hodgman:** Now, look, Suni. This is my jar of olives. I bought it with my own money.

**Suni:** And yet I have to see it.

**John Hodgman:** I bought it with my own money. This is really bothering you, right?

**Suni:** Yes, I don't care for it.

**John Hodgman:** What is it that is really bothering you about this? Maybe if you explain to me why this is so disgusting to you, Tamina will be able to hear it. You want me to go deeper into the jar of olives?

**Suni:** No, thank you.

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** It's hard for me to find one that isn't halved yet already. Once I eat a half, I can't eat the rest. It's just me.

**Suni:** *(Sighs.)* It's the gross factor, but it's also like an olive is—it's a one bite food. There's no need to eat it half at a time.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, you're violating the sanctity of the whole olive. And also—

**Suni:** Right! And you get three in the drink, two or three. You don't need to like, you know, save it.

**Jesse Thorn:** To be fair, Tamina has already claimed that these three olives were on a stick, and when she said they were a big olive, she basically indicated the size of a Polish sausage.

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** Well, this case was decided the moment that Tamina said it's my own damn drink.

*(Laughter.)*

**Suni:** *(Laughing.)* I figured.

(Applause.)

**John Hodgman:** I'm really sorry. And as much as I enjoyed the mellifluous tones of our previous litigants and their wonderful presentations, Tamina, you win the prize. Not only these wonderful olives, but also these incredibly valuable socks!

(Applause.)

Hang on. Hang on one second, Tamina.

(Howls of laughter.)

These are for you. Now, I don't care what Deborah Miller says. I think these can be preserved for a long time.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, you're gonna want to keep those somewhere arid.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, take them somewhere arid, and I recommend an insurance value of \$1,000,000. I rule in Tamina's favor. (Bangs his gavel three times.) That's Swift Justice.

**Jesse Thorn:** Thank you, Suni and Tamina!

(Applause.)

And our thanks to Deborah Miller. Now, Deborah Miller, you work with collectors and museums all around the world. How can people find you?

**Deborah Miller:** Well, I'm based here in Chicago. I do work around the country, at museums everywhere and with donors and private people everywhere. But I have a website, [www.DMillerAppraisals.com](http://www.DMillerAppraisals.com). I'm also on the beloved *Antiques Roadshow* website, which is fantastic and has all of our old appraisals and what's coming up. Yeah, we're in the middle of our season 27 right now, and we taped this summer. That will be coming out—season 28 will be coming out in January.

**Jesse Thorn:** If there are any Emmy voters listening, do you think this is the year that we could push *Antiques Roadshow* over the top?

**Deborah Miller:** I do think this is the year. 21 years it's been nominated. I think this is the year.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, I think this is the year too.

**John Hodgman:** The Susan Lucci of antiques shows, GBH's *Antiques Roadshow*, Deborah Miller, everyone!



**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**John Hodgman:** That's all for this episode of the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. Thank you to Reddit user u/Dinosaur1972 for naming the case in this episode. The *Judge John Hodgman* podcast was created by John Hodgman and Jesse Thorn. Our touring producer was Laura Valk. This episode was recorded by Stephen Colon. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor.

Make sure you follow us on Instagram, [@JudgeJohnHodgman](#). And guess what? We're on TikTok and YouTube, [@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod](#). We'll talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Transition:** Cheerful ukulele chord.

**Speaker 1:** Maximum Fun.

**Speaker 2:** A worker-owned network.

**Speaker 3:** Of artist owned shows.

**Speaker 4:** Supported—

**Speaker 5:** —directly—

**Speaker 6:** —by you!