

[00:00:00]

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Welcome to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. This week, "Submerger and Acquisitions". Thaddeus brings the case against his wife Kelsey. Thaddeus loves cold plunging. He tried cold plunging at home, but doesn't have what he needs to keep it icy enough. He wants to invest in some new equipment, but Kelsey says it isn't practical. Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide. Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and presents an obscure cultural reference.

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

**John Hodgman:** My little boy is four years old. You know what he was doing? I caught him twice. In the garden, we have chickens. And he was just eating everything. It's strengthening the immune system. He was eating—he was eating chicken poop. *(Gasps.)* That was me at the moment, *(gasps)*. But that's only our concept. Nature knows. Nature knows how to make him strong and good. And then we become adults, and we don't know what to eat. No need. Follow nature.

Bailiff Jesse Thorn, swear them in.

**Jesse Thorn:** Thaddeus and Kelsey, 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 already cooler than cool?

*(They swear.)*

That's ice cold, Judge Hodgman. You may proceed.

**John Hodgman:** Brrr! Thaddeus and Kelsey, you may be seated.

*(Chairs squeak.)*

For an immediate summary judgment in one of your favors, can either of you name the piece of culture that I referenced as I entered this courtroom? Thaddeus, let's start with you.

**Thaddeus:** I'm not sure, so I'm gonna go with my prepared guess, which is Adam Sandler's classic, *The Waterboy*—especially the scene where he drinks from a glacier in Alaska.

**John Hodgman:** Adam Sandler's classic, *The Water Boy*, ice cold glacier water drinking scene. I've written all of that down. You can see for yourself.

**Thaddeus:** Bobby Boucher. Yep.

**John Hodgman:** Bad handwriting, but it's for real. That's terrific. Now, that's a good guess. I'm gonna ask Kelsey—what's your guess?

**Kelsey:** I really have no idea.

**John Hodgman:** No, of course you don't.

**Kelsey:** Of course, I don't.

**John Hodgman:** It's on purpose. Don't feel bad about it.

**Kelsey:** I'll say *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote. (*Laughs.*)

**John Hodgman:** *In Cold Blood*. You know, I was giving Thaddeus some credit for a thematically appropriate guess, even though it's wrong, but yours is even more impressively thematically appropriate. And gruesome, to boot! Look, between the—I'm writing it down by—*In Cold Blood*, a nonfiction novel by Truman Capote that revolutionized nonfiction writing for several generations. I wrote it all down; you can see right there on the YouTube.

I'll say that that guess is better than—better and more interesting to me personally than Thaddeus's. Sorry, Thaddeus. But all guesses are wrong, so we have to hear the case. Who seeks justice in this fake court? Is it Thaddeus or Kelsey?

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

**John Hodgman:** What is the nature of the justice you seek, please?

**Thaddeus:** I recently got into working out. I've had the help of a trainer.

**John Hodgman:** How recently?

**Thaddeus:** Probably a year and a half ago, two years ago. We were athletes in college, but I kind of fell off of it. And then—

**John Hodgman:** What kind of athletes were you?

**Thaddeus:** Kelsey played softball for four years, and I threw the javelin.

**John Hodgman:** Wha—?!

**Jesse Thorn:** Hooray!

*(They chuckle.)*

**Kelsey:** With a name like Thaddeus, he had to throw the javelin.

**John Hodgman:** With a name like—and Thaddeus, I know your last name too. And you might be cool in your cold plunge, but your last name is hot as hell.

**Thaddeus:** Thanks. You've already said my name once on the podcast, actually.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I'm gonna say it again. Thaddeus Diamond. Javelin, if you please. One javelin, please! It's throwing time. That's what you say, right?

**Thaddeus:** That's right.

**John Hodgman:** How far did you get? Did you make varsity javelin?

**Thaddeus:** *(Chuckles.)* I did. we actually attended your alma mater, Judge. We were both at Yale and—

**John Hodgman:** Really?!

**Thaddeus:** Yeah. Yeah, we were. And I—

**John Hodgman:** I didn't know that we had a good javelin squad.

**Thaddeus:** We did!

**Jesse Thorn:** We didn't. That's why Thaddeus was on it.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** Oh, cruel. What residential college were you in? I gotta ask.

**Thaddeus:** I was Branford and I switched to Morse.

**Kelsey:** Yeah, it was an interesting choice, right? Yeah. A terrible choice.

**John Hodgman:** What the—? Excuse me. Excuse me, Jesse. This is a little bit inside Yale baseball. And also, this is a family friendly podcast, but I'm still gonna say: what the *(censor beep)?!*

*(They laugh.)*

Look, I don't wanna bore the audience with all of this inside Yale stuff, but I'm just gonna say—

**Jesse Thorn:** Wait, Judge Hodgman, you don't want to bore the audience with inside Yale stuff? Are we taking a whole new direction with the podcast?

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** I do want to, but we have a very special friend of the court to bring in soon. And don't want to be judged by him. And I don't want to waste time. Needless to say, Thaddeus not only throws hot jav, but weird jav.

[00:05:00]

Made some strange choices. That's cool. And now you're getting back into shape, and you want to go cold plunging is what it says here.

**Thaddeus:** That's right. Yeah. So, Kelsey and I have been married for several years.

**John Hodgman:** Do you know how many? Or—?

*(Laughter.)*

**Thaddeus:** Eight, almost nine.

**John Hodgman:** Nice work.

**Thaddeus:** Thank you, fast math. Essentially, what happened is I was working with my trainer, and I decided to buy a small inflatable plunge tub type thing. It was about \$80 on Amazon. And Kelsey found out and immediately canceled my Amazon order. At which point I was a little frustrated. And so, I reordered it.

**John Hodgman:** Did you ever get to plunge?

**Kelsey:** Yes, he did. Yes.

**Thaddeus:** I did. Because I—

**Kelsey:** I did it more as a joke, to be clear. But.

**John Hodgman:** You canceled his order as a joke.

**Kelsey:** Yeah! Because it—we're getting into it, but we were having this disagreement. He kept insisting he was getting it, so I used it as like a next move. That was my next move. And then seeing if he would notice, which he actually did,

**John Hodgman:** He noticed that his cold plunge—his inflatable cold plunge tub didn't arrive. And then you reordered it, and did you get it?

**Thaddeus:** I did.

**John Hodgman:** And did you plunge?

**Thaddeus:** I did.

**John Hodgman:** And how did it feel?

**Thaddeus:** Amazing.

**John Hodgman:** And why do you do it?

**Thaddeus:** For me, it's a bit psychological. I don't know if—I don't always do it immediately after a workout, but it just sort of—

**John Hodgman:** 'Cause you know when you're in that cold—like, you get in ice water, right?

**Thaddeus:** Yeah, yeah, that's right. So, you fill it up with a garden hose.

**John Hodgman:** You know, when you're in that inflatable ice-water bath, that you won.

*(They laugh.)*

That you got something that Kelsey didn't want. Psychologically, that's got to energize you.

**Thaddeus:** And the feeling—the sensation of a little bit of pain maybe brings you a little bit of joy when you're done with it.

**John Hodgman:** I mean, I'm going to ask you one more time, sincerely. I've been in cold water. I know what it does to you. Tell me why you like it. For the listeners who don't know why you would do such a thing.

**Thaddeus:** No, that is really why. I think you get a little bit of pain; you get a bit of a rush. It's almost like being on a roller coaster to me. It's that first drop that's sort of taking your breath away. You're only in there for—I don't know—two, three, four minutes. And then when you emerge, there's sort of this feeling of almost like a dopamine rush afterwards. Like, oh, I just did something that was a little bit intense but felt great, and now I'm past it.

**John Hodgman:** I just want to say for the record and for the listeners, it's nothing like going on a rollercoaster.

*(They laugh.)*

Hitting the top of a rollercoaster and then going down is a very, very specific feeling of nausea and excitement that is different from cold plunging, having done both.

**Thaddeus:** Fair enough. Fair enough.

**Jesse Thorn:** Cold plunging is like a thing with some evidence behind it, especially around like pain, right?

**John Hodgman:** Athletes do it a lot, because they sit in cold tubs. I know this from watching sports movies. And apparently it reduces inflammation and increases recovery time. Is that your understanding?

**Thaddeus:** That is—so, that is stuff I've read as well. I just would like to say as a fact of the case, I think Kelsey disagrees on that fact. She's a physician. And so, she has a different—I think part of her—well, I won't speak for her, but we did get in a bit of a debate over whether there are actual benefits to the practice.

**John Hodgman:** We'll get deeper into that, but on at a baseline, Kelsey—aside from being a physician, being smarter than your husband—

*(They laugh.)*

**Thaddeus:** Fair.

**John Hodgman:** Why don't you want him sitting in an ice-cold bathtub—in an ice-cold inflatable bathtub?

**Kelsey:** *(Chuckles.)* Well, initially I didn't want it because I was picturing how totally ridiculous he would look doing this. But I think when the initial argument started, it was more him coming from the, you know, “it reduces inflammation”, and me thinking these studies do not have sufficient evidence. You're just saying this because you want to do it. If you want to do it, then make that argument. But don't come to me with fake facts. It was kind of making me a little feisty. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** To boil it down, he was arguing in bad faith, and he would look ridiculous.

**Kelsey:** Yeah, pretty much. And I think both were true.

**John Hodgman:** And right now, do you have the cold plunge bath?

*(They confirm.)*

You have the inflatable, right?

*(Thaddeus confirms.)*

And so, apparently you've won. What are you suing for? What is it that you want out of this?

**Thaddeus:** So, this lawsuit is to provide an injunction for Kelsey on canceling my Amazon orders, because I intend to buy an industrial ice maker to—

*(Laughter.)*

**John Hodgman:** *(Exhaustedly.)* Sure. Okay.

**Jesse Thorn:** Wait, can you describe the inflatable? 'Cause like right now, all I'm picturing is what my children sit in during the summer in my backyard.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. A kiddie pool.

**Kelsey:** It's not too different.

**Thaddeus:** So, if you take a kitty pool, and you—

**Kelsey:** Just raise the sides up.

**Thaddeus:** Exactly. You raise the sides to about three or four feet, and that's what it is.

**John Hodgman:** Bailiff Jesse, Thaddeus and Kelsey both submitted some evidence.

[00:10:00]

If I can direct your attention to the evidence marked Exhibit B. This is a picture of Thaddeus in his cold plunge pool. This photo will obviously be available on the show page at [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) and on our Instagram account and wherever you get your pictures online. Exhibit B, "Me using the cold plunge" is the caption.

*(They laugh.)*

"Look how happy I am." Can you—

**Jesse Thorn:** *(Cackling.)* Look at this doofus! Look at this ridiculous—you know what it looks like? I'll tell you what it looks like. I have like a folding beer cooler with a San Francisco Giants logo on it that I bought for a dollar at a garage sale that I occasional use to keep drinks cold in the car on long drives. That's truly what it looks like. It is hexagonal. And—

**John Hodgman:** A soft hexagon.

**Jesse Thorn:** It's a soft hexagon. It has a little plastic spigot on it. I guess that's why it costs \$80. And then Thaddeus is fully folded within this.

**Thaddeus:** That's right. Well, have sometimes been referred to as a tall glass of water. So.

**John Hodgman:** But I mean, it is like a soaking tub—a tall sided but small soaking tub, inflatable. And you're into it up to your shoulders. And let the record show—or let me remind the court that it is not the bailiff's job to be impartial, but I have to pretend to be. So, I'm not going to laugh at you in your face about this.

*(They laugh.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, we'll do that later together, John.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**John Hodgman:** Alright. So, Thaddeus, you're suing Kelsey, because you would like to buy an industrial ice machine. I presume because you feel like you don't have enough ice for your ice bath. Well, let's pause on that, because we do have a friend of the court here who has some experience with cold plunging, among many, many other fields. We're very excited to have him here. Jesse Thorn, could you tell us a little bit about this expert witness?

**Jesse Thorn:** That's right, John. Our guest has a cold plunge in his very own home. He knows exactly what to do to make it work. He's also a comedian, an actor, legendary improviser, cohost of the podcast *How Did This Get Made*, and the author of the upcoming book, *Joyful Recollections of Trauma*. Our expert witness this week, the great Paul Scheer. Hi, Paul.

**John Hodgman:** Hi, Paul Scheer!

**Paul Scheer:** Hello, everybody. And let me just tell you, fuming in the courtroom right now—fuming hearing all these misjudgments and wild speculation about cold plunge. I need to get in here and set the record straight. I will not have it be bad mouthed and compared to a children's cooler!

**Jesse Thorn:** Paul, you need to cool down!

**Paul Scheer:** I can't! Not after that introduction. I can't; I'm in.

**John Hodgman:** He's in the cold plunge right now, and he just steamed all the water away, he's so mad!



**Paul Scheer:** I need to get in that cold plunge to caaaln myself down.

**John Hodgman:** Tell us, Paul. You have a cold plunge in your home. How did you get into it? And how do you get into it?

**Paul Scheer:** I like these questions. First of all, I've been doing it almost every day for the last two years.

*(John “wow”s.)*

I was kind of flirting with the cold plunge. I understood from a handful of people that I am friends with how much they loved it. It felt to me like it made sense. I feel like there are certain exercise fads or trends that feel like they work. A sauna, a cold plunge. These are things that people many, many hundreds of years ago could do. I think about Russian men in hot saunas. I'm like, yes, this is not about them doing keto, right? You know like—you know, so, this is what we had. We had hot—

**John Hodgman:** It stood the test of time.

**Paul Scheer:** Exactly. We have hot. We have cold.

**John Hodgman:** Kelsey, you're a physician. You went to medical school.

*(Kelsey confirms.)*

You went to Yale for undergraduate. What was that degree in?

**Kelsey:** Psychology.

**John Hodgman:** Psychology. Okay. Where did you get your medical degree?

**Paul Scheer:** *(Stammering.)* My medical—? My—

**Kelsey:** *(Laughing.)* Yours, Paul, yes. Where's your medical degree?

**Paul Scheer:** I have a Bachelor of Science from New York University.

**John Hodgman:** Fantastic. In what field, please?

**Paul Scheer:** Education.

**John Hodgman:** I mean, you're about to school a doctor, but I just need to know. Kelsey, where did you get your medical degree?

**Kelsey:** University of Kansas. I'm in internal medicine, an internist.

**John Hodgman:** Internal medicine. That means pills. That's why she doesn't want to believe in the cold plunge!

**Kelsey:** I don't do external medicine.

**John Hodgman:** Wants to push the pills.

**Paul Scheer:** No topical solutions.

**Jesse Thorn:** No creams, no unguents, no liniments!

**Kelsey:** No cold water!

**Paul Scheer:** There's so many things I want to say. I do want to ask, you know, for the cultural significance of your opening there—is that from a poem called *A Foul Tale*?

[00:15:00]

**John Hodgman:** Look, I'm so happy you made a guess, because I'm so embarrassed that I forgot to reveal the answer to the cultural reference. And so, now I can say that with Thaddeus guess and Kelsey's and your guess—which is terrific—but they're all wrong. I was actually quoting an online cold plunge practitioner named Wim Hoff.

**Paul Scheer:** Oh, I am very familiar, and I actually use his techniques.

**John Hodgman:** Wim Hoff is also known as the Iceman, because—

*(Jesse cackles.)*

**Paul Scheer:** You got to watch these videos, man. He teaches you how to breathe. It's amazing.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, and I got turned on to this, because when we requested titles for this episode on the subreddit—so, we got this incredible title from, internet user u/BanjoSolo—Reddit user u/BanjoSolo, “Submerger and Acquisitions”. But someone else on the reddit said, “You gotta check out the episode of *Oh No, Ross and Carrie!* about Wim Hoff.” And I did. And Wim Hof is someone who advocates for the plunging. He loves to stand in a giant column full of ice for an hour at a time. Scientists apparently are befuddled. But according to him, there are three pillars to his method. One are these deep breathing exercises, where you almost hyperventilate. Then you get into this cold plunge, and this activates all kinds of chemistry in your mind and body. And then you come out of it, recommitted to living a more present life. And he also lives a completely natural life where his kid is allowed to eat chicken poop. So, I mean, you decide.

**Paul Scheer:** There you go.

**John Hodgman:** You decide whose advice to take. But I liked watching his video; it was fine.

**Paul Scheer:** I've been doing it for two years, and there's always this moment of hesitation before I step into it. But then I do, and then I get through it. And what I think that does mentally for me every day is like it teaches my brain I can do hard things. I can tackle something. It's like you're putting an obstacle in your way, and then you're moving forward.

**John Hodgman:** And you do this, you said, because getting in makes you—reminds you that your body can tolerate a lot of distress and breathe through it and then become comfortable and do hard things—both the literal hard thing that you're doing right then, and then you can adapt that to other parts of your life. How do you feel getting out of it?

**Paul Scheer:** Getting out of it is really interesting, because you are not supposed to dry—well, you dry off, but you're not supposed to warm up, right? You're supposed to let that cold kind of reverberate through you. So, there's all these studies about how it affects your muscles. I will say this. I have an inflatable one. There are many different types of ones. Jesse, I know you're looking at—I believe that best ones are the ones that you can lay down in. I don't understand the pickle barrel ones. You know, I think that you need to have a chiller on there. I'm not going to go get ice every day. I'm not driving out to the supermarket to buy a bunch of ice. A chiller, you just kind of connect to the side.

I think that if you have the room for it, why not? What does it hurt you? That's like—it's like saying, well, don't get weights. Like, whatever. If you have a little bit of a home gym—I just know as a parent of two that to have this moment—and this is what I really kind of bring it down to as well. It's a moment of Zen and meditation. I used to meditate a lot before I had kids. And now when I'm in that tub, I can't think about anything else. I'm just in there, and I'm breathing. And it actually brings me a mental sense of calm for those five to six minutes that I am there. I'm like there's nothing else to do. I can't check my phone. I can't do anything, but I can just focus and breathe. And mentally, I feel clearer and cleaner. So, that's a very long answer to your question of what I do when I get out. I'm cold for the rest of the day. A lot of times I'm cold for the rest of the day, but it feels good.

**Jesse Thorn:** Paul, can I you this? You mentioned that you'd started doing this after you had two kids. Was part of the goal to prevent yourself from ever having children again?

**Paul Scheer:** I mean, look, I read a story about a man who put that thing down to 34 degrees, and one of his testicles went inside of his body. So, think that that is—that could be—

*(Jesse cackles.)*

**John Hodgman:** So, Paul, I would like to draw your attention to the evidence that was submitted by Thaddeus. Exhibit A. This is the ice machine that he would like to purchase.

**Paul Scheer:** I'm against this.

**John Hodgman:** At the cost of \$330 with the coupon. It's a commercial ice machine that freezes—it looks like either it weighs 100 pounds, or it freezes 100 pounds. Thaddeus, what's the answer there?

**Thaddeus:** It freezes 100 pounds every 24 hours, but it comes with 35 pounds of storage as part of the unit.

**John Hodgman:** Okay, gotcha. So, that's what he would like to buy to add to his inflatable, what you called a pickle barrel type cold plunge tub.

**Paul Scheer:** Yeah, I'm not into these Amazon ones that just pop up like this.

[00:20:00]

I mean, gosh, I guess you could be good in there. I don't know. I mean, sure. Okay. I guess I can't judge his want of the machine. I don't like these Amazon ones.

**John Hodgman:** What kind of rig do you have, and what kind of rig would you recommend if I were to rule in Thaddeus favor?

**Paul Scheer:** Okay, well there's one that is truly the Cadillac of all cold plunges. It's called like Renew Therapy. It's very expensive. I would not—I can't—I'm not buying that. What I have is I have one called—I believe it is called the Cryo—

**John Hodgman:** It's called Scheer Perfection.

**Paul Scheer:** Scheer Perfection.

**Jesse Thorn:** Here's the phone number to call!

**Paul Scheer:** I have an inflatable cold plunge. It is the material that you might have on like a boat, like that kind of like heavy—that kind of material.

**John Hodgman:** Like an inflatable zodiac little motorboat. Yeah, I got you.

**Paul Scheer:** Exactly. Yes, and it comes with a chiller, which is a small little unit that attaches right to it that filters the water. Unlike that pickle barrel in evidence, this actually cycles the water through. You never need to put ice into it. You have that; you attach it to it, and you filter out the water. You do this entire thing. It's very easy, no muss, no fuss. And it also keeps it clean, so you don't have to redo it every single day. Because what you're talking about here with this ice machine, which is giant, is that it is a giant pain in the ass.

And now if you do break your hobby, like the other evidence I see here—I don't want to get ahead of it, but I understand that Kelsey is worried that you're not going to commit to this. And that was my fear too. I didn't want to spend thousands of dollars on something I wasn't going to commit to, but I did spend... \$3,000. Well, I guess that is thousands of dollars.

(They laugh.)

I did spend three. Yeah. Yes. But I did spend \$3,000, because I was like—that was to me an appropriate amount of money, like comparatively to other ones. I didn't want to go all in until I knew I was going to do it. And now I'm very happy with what I have, because it wasn't the most expensive. It's inflatable, which means you can carry it wherever you want to do it. It comes with a giant backpack, if you'd like. You can put it outdoor; you can put it indoor; and you don't have to worry about going to get ice. And if you give it up, you can always resell it. This ice machine—that in your house, that to me just seems like—like, who wants that?

**Jesse Thorn:** We should explain, Paul, that Thaddeus is also thinking about opening an Arby's.

**Paul Scheer:** Oh, okay, well then that—now look, now, then we have to talk about the ice texture. What kind of ice is this thing making?

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, that's a concern. I'm not gonna lie, that's a major concern for me with this ice machine! If you told me you were buying a 100 pound a day, 30-pound storage pebble ice machine, I'd be all in! 100%. I don't care what else you use it for other than your beverages. Whatever it costs, it's worth it.

**John Hodgman:** The record will show that the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast is very pro certain kinds of ice machines. Pebble ice machines, yes.

**Paul Scheer:** Oh, you have to get the pebble ice machine. I mean, that's the only way to go. Yeah, so I mean, that's what I do. There's many different ones. There's—the Plunge is the one that most people have seen on *Shark Tank*. And the *Shark Tank*—the Plunge people, they've just come out with an inflatable as well. And I do believe that there are a lot of different options, but I think the way that I've understood it to work the most effectively is to fully submerge your full body. And if you can get it in that lying down position, it's better for you. But that—leave that up to the doctors to determine. That may—that's hearsay.

**John Hodgman:** That's the one thing you'll leave to the doctors.

**Jesse Thorn:** The rest we leave to *Shark Tank*!

(They laugh.)

**John Hodgman:** I just want to verify though, Paul. You mentioned that you can take this one outside, so Thaddeus could take this outside so he can do it in front of the neighbors, correct?

**Paul Scheer:** Well, yes. I mean, that's—you know, look. And here's the thing too. Is cold plunging—does it look stupid? Yes. But does every exercise look stupid? Absolutely. I mean, come on. Like, a treadmill? Think about that. We've just accepted it as part of our exercise routine. But if you just saw somebody like—

**John Hodgman:** Humiliating.

**Paul Scheer:** “Oh, so you're running on this thing?” You know, it's silly looking. We're always going to look silly exercising. I don't take any embarrassment in my cold plunging.

**Jesse Thorn:** I just had Tig Notaro on *Bullseye*, and she has an extended bit that we discussed in her special about how completely ridiculous it is to do that physical therapy exercise where you put a giant rubber band around your knees and then you do a crawl-walk down the hallway. And I've done that. I just bought one of those giant rubber bands after my—

**Paul Scheer:** Oh, I've done it too.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, after my number of, you know, insurance-provided physical therapy appointments ended. And it's just been sitting in a box where I stare at it and think, “Can I bring myself to put this on in front of my family?”

**John Hodgman:** That's part of the therapy!

**Paul Scheer:** I will say this, too. I play a lot of tennis. And the amount of—I used to get—I used to feel like I need massages a bunch, or like I get stiff. And I will say that I definitely have seen a giant effect there. That recovery time for that has been—

**John Hodgman:** Anecdotally, at least, it has increased your quality of life athletically, personally.

[00:25:00]

*(Paul confirms.)*

How would you say, in a sentence or two, having the cold plunge in your life daily for two years has changed your life?

**Paul Scheer:** I believe that it has mentally made me ready for my day better than anything else that I could possibly do. And especially, as a parent, there are these days where I'm exhausted. And getting into that and coming out, I really, truly feel refreshed. And I think part of that is the mental—you know, the meditation of it. And then also just a shock to my system

**John Hodgman:** Dr. Kelsey, do you have any questions or rebuttals that you'd like to offer to our friend of the court, Paul Scheer? Two years of personal research.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, and Kelsey, bear in mind: he has taught improv at the Upright Citizens Brigade.

*(John and Kelsey confirm.)*

**Paul Scheer:** And other improv places that are not as well respected.

*(They laugh.)*

**Kelsey:** Not too much rebuttal, I'll say. From what I hear from him, a lot of the evidence that's being quoted is about doing it consistently, something I'm not quite sure... is gonna happen.

**John Hodgman:** Mm! Let the record show that she's wagging her finger at Thaddeus.

**Paul Scheer:** And I will say that is true. Like, it's not like just have it there once a week. Like, I think you do need—yeah. It's like anything.

**Kelsey:** And the psychological benefits I'm not just disputing, it just sounds like you're like, “A little bit of torture puts things in perspective,” I guess, is kind of what I'm gathering from it. Which is okay. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** Well, but I mean, isn't that what exercise is? I mean, of all kinds?

**Kelsey:** I feel uncomfortable. This is—yeah, I feel uncomfortable. This is, you know, unpleasant.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I mean, you played softball in college, Kelsey. So, you may not be familiar with aerobic exercise.

*(Kelsey laughs.)*

But people who do cardio—

**Jesse Thorn:** Like javelin throwers, for example.

**Kelsey:** Like, longer than 60 feet. Yeah. Like a javelin thrower. Yeah. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** You know, you put yourself into a—you push yourself to a pain threshold and then get past it in almost every form of physical exertion. And then it has a psychological and, so long as you don't injure yourself, a physical benefit, I suppose. Hm. Well, Paul Scheer, thank you for your testimony.

**Paul Scheer:** No problem. I mean, can I say one thing too? ‘Cause I know I came on pretty strong. I didn't want to come at Kelsey.

**John Hodgman:** You were fuming! You were fuming.

**Paul Scheer:** I was fuming, because I—look, I get it. I get there's all these things, misnomers out there. But I will say this. To your point, regularity is important, but that's why you should not buy—

**John Hodgman:** You're telling me. That's why I take my supplements.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, that's why I eat a bran muffin every day. It's also a psychological reset, but.

*(They laugh.)*

**Paul Scheer:** Metamucil is what I put in my tub. I do put a Metamucil in that cold punch. I feel great.

*(They laugh.)*

But I will say this, that if you're afraid of it—of not taking it and it just being one of those things that are on a shelf, try to spend the least amount of money and, at the same time, not get a giant ass ice machine. Like, that's my—like, then if you really are committed to doing it, drive to that supermarket every day and go get that ice. Find a beverage-mart and go get that ice. Don't buy that ice machine. Like, I'm worried about that ice machine really more than anything. The ice machine.

*(They agree.)*

**John Hodgman:** Paul, before we let you go, tell us about what's going on. You've got this book coming out, *Joyful Recollections of Trauma*.

**Paul Scheer:** Yes, I wrote a book. It's called *Joyful Recollections of Trauma*. You can order it now. I mean, I don't even know when you're listening to this, but it's okay. Because if you preorder it, you get a nice surprise. And if it's out, you get it. So, either way. And it's a book—kind of a memoir of—you know, over the course of the 14 years of doing *How Did This Get Made*, I have told many stories of my childhood. And I thought I lived a very normal childhood until I would tell these stories, and I would watch the shocked look on Jason and June's faces, my cohosts, as I told them that my grandmother once told me to make sure I locked the door, because in town there's a butcher who would steal children and then put them in a chopped meat machine and then serve the children to their mothers. So—and they were like, “Wait, what happened?”

And I'm like, “Oh yeah, my grandmother—you didn't have the story about the butcher who killed children and served them as hamburger meat?”

**John Hodgman:** Very common. Very common child raising technique.

**Jesse Thorn:** To their mothers, specifically! *(Stammering.)* They don't see—the butcher doesn't serve it willy nilly!



**Paul Scheer:** Well, the funniest part of that story was the way that the mom finds out that she served her own son was, as she's cooking the burgers, the burger looks up and goes, *(in a baby voice)* “Mommy? Mommy?”

*(They laugh.)*

Now look, that's not technically—I don't know how that could possibly happen, but it scared the living crap out of me!

**John Hodgman:** So, they had never heard that story before? Where the surgeon goes—

**Paul Scheer:** *(Laughs.)* Yeah, I thought that was a story that everyone knew.

**Jesse Thorn:** Paul was raised primarily by his grandmother, the Brothers Grimm.

**Paul Scheer:** *(Cackles.)* But yeah, so, you know, I think what it also does though too, is kind of uncovers a part of my life that I haven't really talked about that much and kind of overcoming this, this trauma of having a crazy—

[00:30:00]

You know, I had this very abusive stepdad, and like were in this—trapped in this relationship. And it kind of chronicles my mom and I escaping that and the benefits—or the ramifications of that throughout my life. And then there's funny stories about, you know, an ode to a minivan and bumping into Christopher Walken and him taking me away from my parents to give me special advice about life.

**John Hodgman:** *Joyful Recollections of Trauma* is the name of the book. Obviously, *How Did This Get Made* is the name of the incredible podcast. You should be listening and buying and getting all of these things. You can preorder it now wherever you get your books, I presume. Paul Scheer, what a pleasure to have you here. Thank you.

**Paul Scheer:** Yes, you can. And if you preorder it, you can sign up on my website and you get like DVD special features—or I should say book special features. I made a whole part of my website that is like addendum material that may not make sense before you read the book, but after you'll see some fun videos and things and clips and pictures.

**Jesse Thorn:** Not many people funnier than Paul and Jason and June. Three of the absolute funniest, most delightful and bright and insightful as well!

**Paul Scheer:** I feel the same about you all. And yeah, so it's a pleasure to be here, to be an expert witness. And let me tell you this, I respect you all so much that if you agree with me, or if you disagree with me, it does nothing to lose your position in my mind as great people.

**Jesse Thorn:** I strongly recommend—by the way, John, if people are looking for an episode of *How Did This Get Made* to start with, I think this is very common in the *How Did This Get*

*Made* community that people will recommend the barbed wire episode from roughly 2011, featuring Jesse Thorn.

**Paul Scheer:** It's a great episode.

**Jesse Thorn:** About Pamela Anderson's action movie, *Barbed Wire*.

**John Hodgman:** Can't wait to listen to it. Paul Scheer, thank you for keeping us high on your estimation, no matter what we rule today. And I was going to say, with regard to you, as far as I'm concerned, the jury's still out. But that's not true.

*(They laugh.)*

They just came back in, and they vote unanimously you're the best. Thanks so much for being here.

**Paul Scheer:** Oh, wow. My pleasure. Thank you so much. Good luck on your cold plunge quest!

*(They thank him.)*

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**John Hodgman:** So, we heard from Paul Scheer—obviously a proponent. Any first reactions to what Paul had to say, Kelsey or Thaddeus?

**Kelsey:** So, it seems like a lot of the benefits he was talking about are more psychological. We didn't get into the weeds of the studies, which is—that's okay. We didn't have to do that, but it seems like the benefits are psychological and also being consistent. And the consistency is the part that I have concerns about and respectfully just want, you know, Thaddeus to prove to me that he can be consistent in something before we go out and buy a huge industrial ice maker that will never leave our home.

**John Hodgman:** And you have submitted evidence and are prepared to give testimony that Thaddeus has not been particularly consistent in his hobbies before, is that correct?

**Kelsey:** Yes, that is correct.

**John Hodgman:** Let's take a look at this evidence. I'll explain what I'm seeing as I see it. Submitted by Kelsey, Exhibit D, "Hobbies that Thaddeus has started and not kept up". I see a tajine, which is a traditional, I believe Moroccan earthenware cooking vessel.

**Jesse Thorn:** A dish. Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Vessel. Yup. And that is on a shelf where I presume it has lived for most of its life. Is that right, Kelsey?

**Kelsey:** Yes, it has been used once. He did a good job with it, but then afterwards also didn't technically clean it correct and shattered the top part, but he replaced it. And then he has since never used it again.

**John Hodgman:** So, he's got a new tajine cap that's never been used.

*(Kelsey confirms.)*

That's an incredible Ernest Hemingway story, by the way.

**Thaddeus:** I believe I used it three times before it cracked.

**Kelsey:** Mm. No. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** Alright. I'll enter that into the record, that you dispute that three times, and then you—and then what'd you do? Did you wash it in your cold plunge, so the ceramic cracked?

**Thaddeus:** I did accidentally wash it in water that was too cold while it was hot. So, the—yeah, the clay cracked. Yes.

**John Hodgman:** You cracked your tajine cap right there. Then I see some rice, and it looks like a package of red mole—a mixture of some kind.

**Kelsey:** This is another vessel for cooking a different dish, to try to make mole. As you can see, this is actually totally untouched. He purchased this and has not—has yet to make any mole.

**John Hodgman:** Thaddeus, is it true that these packages of rice and mole have never been opened?

**Thaddeus:** Yes, your honor. But in my defense, I think mole is a one-day preparation time. There's a lot of work that goes into a mole. So, I would argue I just haven't found the time, but I will do it.

**John Hodgman:** How long ago did you purchase these things?

**Thaddeus:** I think I bought this about a year ago.

*(Kelsey laughs and agrees.)*

**John Hodgman:** It's amazing what these people get up to in Kansas city. This is where they are, Jesse. If you didn't know. They're in Kansas city. And I—

**Jesse Thorn:** Everything's up to date there, as I understand it.

**John Hodgman:** Everything's up to date there. You'd think they'd gone about as far as they can go, but there's now they're also getting pasta drying racks and pasta machines that they're putting on a shelf.

[00:35:00]

And as well, looks like bottles for a home brewing situation that are on a shelf. Like, these people have shelves is what I'm saying.

**Jesse Thorn:** What I imagine, John—whenever we have anyone from the central 60% of our great nation on our program describing their domestic life, I just imagine these homes that go on for miles and miles with craft rooms and guest rooms and second kitchens and freezers, whole extra refrigerators in the basement!

**John Hodgman:** That couple that had the whole room devoted to model railroad shunting.

**Jesse Thorn:** Exactly.

**John Hodgman:** So, obviously pasta making and homebrewing are also hobbies that you've taken up Thaddeus, that Kelsey says you have not fulfilled or done often.

**Thaddeus:** Well, these I have done. And I would say in my defense, the pasta maker I did quite a few times, but I was not very skilled at it. So, I believe that one was just a lack of confidence on my part is why I stopped, but I enjoyed the practice. And then the beer maker I did make, but it spilled all over our pantry. And so, I haven't found the time to—

**Kelsey:** He didn't do the fermenting process correctly, so then everything just bubbled out into the—

**John Hodgman:** Bubble up and out, of course.

**Thaddeus:** Yeah, I put the hose too far down in the—what are they called? The flask or jug there.

**Kelsey:** (*Chuckling.*) Sometimes with these hobbies, there's a little bit of a lack of attention to detail about how to do the process that—

**Jesse Thorn:** Kelsey, you didn't marry a scientist! You married a meathead jock!

**Thaddeus:** That's right.

**Jesse Thorn:** You chose this javelin chucker.

**Kelsey:** Yeah, that's true. I should have known when he said he didn't become a doctor because he stubbed his toe in chemistry class that that was probably what I was getting into.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** I mean, you keep saying, Thaddeus, over and over again, “in my own defense, I enjoyed doing it once or twice, but then I don't have the time anymore. Or I got discouraged, or I put it away onto one of my many very specific shelves here in Kansas City.” I'm not sure that is in your own defense, because that's exactly what Kelsey is concerned is going to happen with this plunge tub.

**Thaddeus:** That's fair, your honor. I guess for me, I sort of view these as like little trinket hobbies or little tchotchkes. To me, the exercise kind of falls in a different category. Because as—

**John Hodgman:** How dare you? To you, a pasta drying rack is a tchotchke. To me, in New York City, that's a piece of furniture! Okay?

*(They laugh.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** In New York City, if you have a pasta maker, you have to also use it as a washer/dryer.

**John Hodgman:** That's exactly right. You can really press out those clothes.

But this time is—what you're saying to Kelsey is, this time it's different.

**Thaddeus:** This time is different.

**John Hodgman:** Right. Go on. Complete that sentence. Why?

**Thaddeus:** So, what I would say about the cold plunge is, as the expert witness Paul Scheer was saying, is we—so, we have three young children. And they're very—they're all boys, and they're very physical with me. One of them's only two weeks old, but I assume he'll be the same.

**John Hodgman:** Still pushing you around.

**Thaddeus:** A little bit.

**Kelsey:** *(Laughs.)* Yeah. Still controlling our life, but yes.

**John Hodgman:** Throwing those little javelins at dad. Pew! Pew!

**Thaddeus:** That's right. So, to me, I feel like at the end of a long day—and I do regularly exercise every day—at the end of the long day, maybe after putting the kids down for bed or after having done my exercise, I would like the option to have a cold plunge as kind of a way to restore myself, and even if the medical science is not clear, just clearing my head and psychologically feeling that rush and that adrenaline would be helpful.

**John Hodgman:** Kelsey, why not a hot tub?

**Kelsey:** I'm against hot tubs, sorry.

**John Hodgman:** You are!

**Kelsey:** Do not like them.

**John Hodgman:** I don't even know why I intuited that. I was like—

**Kelsey:** Yeah, no, I don't—

**Thaddeus:** Folliculitis.

**Kelsey:** Yes, you can get the hot tub folliculitis. I find them to be—

**John Hodgman:** Gross.

**Kelsey:** Gross, frankly. And kind of tacky, for a better word.

**Thaddeus:** We also don't want water around the kids, yeah.

**Kelsey:** I also just don't—like, I don't want a pool in my house either for the same reason. I'm like—I think there's a drowning risk, so I'm not really a fan of any of those.

**John Hodgman:** On some telepathic level, I just knew you didn't want a hot tub either. I think what I was trying to ask is would you have the same objection to a hot tub, which is a fairly normal thing that people tend to aspire to have in their home, but you don't want that. That's even worse. Which is worse, hot tub or cold tub?

**Kelsey:** Probably the hot tub, because I can't fold it up and put it away and not see it anymore. (*Laughs.*) It's just going to be there all the time, filled with water.

**John Hodgman:** Whereas you have a couple of—you have 15 or 20 extra-large shelves where that fold up cold plunge thing could go.

**Kelsey:** I will give you credit that you—exercises different. You've been very dedicated, and you have consistently done that for a year and a half. But the cold plunge, I still feel like I can count on one hand how many times you've done it. And so I'm, your honor, just looking for some kind of show of seriousness—

[00:40:00]

—like Paul referred to—of going to the store and getting ice.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, 'cause Paul Scheer was not into you getting that commercial ice maker.

**Thaddeus:** Well, your honor, that's—I would say that's—I think it's two hands, for what it's worth, that you could count on. But I—

**John Hodgman:** Does Kelsey have a normal number of fingers?

**Thaddeus:** As far as I can see, yeah.

**Kelsey:** I think so.

**John Hodgman:** Under ten times.

**Thaddeus:** Under ten times, yes.

**John Hodgman:** In how many—? If that were in ten days, that would be something. But—

**Thaddeus:** Well, this is—yeah, there's a little more color to this. Which is—so, I think I got it in the summer. And then I did use it fairly regularly for the first couple of months. I would say at least once a week.

**John Hodgman:** In my defense, I used it a few times and then got tired of it. Not a very good defense.

*(They laugh.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Paul mentioned that what research there is has to do with water that's at temperatures below 60ish, temperatures in the 50s or 40s. You don't have to go down to the 20s or 30s or something.

**John Hodgman:** In fact, you probably shouldn't.

**Jesse Thorn:** That's the temperature, generally speaking, of water that comes out of the cold spigot in your kitchen. So, what's wrong with that?

**Thaddeus:** That's a great question. And I defer to Kelsey on the science. I will admit that I'm not contesting that she is smarter than me. So, I don't want to, you know, fight her on that evidence about what temperature. But the big thing for me is in the Kansas summers, it can get to be 100, 105, 110. And so, the outdoor spigot that we have is actually linked to a non-insulated crawl space. So, the water that comes out of our hose is actually fairly hot. I think when I did it late last summer, it was coming out at about 70 or 80 degrees.

**John Hodgman:** I would murder a human for a non-insulated crawlspace. That's all I'm saying!

I would never murder a human.

**Jesse Thorn:** He would murder a human and use the human for insulation for his crawlspace.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** I wouldn't do that. I wouldn't do that. I'm not a figure from Paul Scheer's growing up.

*(Jesse laughs.)*

Or local neighborhood monster of any kind. Just a simple neighborhood judge.

It says here that if I were to rule in your favor, Thaddeus, that you would want to put the tub in the basement and get an ice machine big enough for him not to have to worry about having enough ice. Which would also, I suppose, be in the basement. You really wanna cold plunge in the basement?!

**Thaddeus:** Yeah, I'm location agnostic. I don't particularly care what I do. I sort of come by it naturally. I love my father, but he's probably the least self-conscious person on the planet. And so, I'm kind of that way as well. I'm weird. And I just think for me, it's not about where it is. It's just what I'm doing. So, whether it's outside or in the basement, like the location or who's watching doesn't really bother me.

**John Hodgman:** You mentioned your dad, you mentioned weirdness. You say that weirdness runs in your family, according to this affidavit I have here. And you submitted some evidence throwing your own child under the bus about how your son eats a hot dog. Explain the photo that I'm seeing here.

**Thaddeus:** So, I think—like, genuinely, I think Kelsey thinks I'm just putting on a show, which is why she canceled the order initially. But to me, this is actually just hobbies I enjoy, things I— So, this is a photo of how my son eats a hot dog, which he believes it's a sandwich and eats it from the top.

**John Hodgman:** If you haven't yet gone over to the Instagram account or the show page to see this photo, no child is pictured. Just one child's hand who has momentarily relinquished what looks like a very delicious hot dog that this middle son has been eating by holding it—you know, a hot dog is not a sandwich, but he's eating it sandwich style. So, he's not a bite from one end, but instead holding the hot dog like a piece of corn on the cob and taking a bite out of the middle with the hot dog facing him and the bread on the top and the bottom. Is that—? I think that gets it across.

**Thaddeus:** This is a \$1.25 hot dog from a big box store you might be familiar with.

**John Hodgman:** So, you're saying that you're not specifically doing these hobbies and cultivating these eccentricities in order to get Kelsey's goat or attention. You're doing it



because it's innate, it's in your genetics, it came down from your dad and has been passed on to at least one of your offspring. Is that right?

**Thaddeus:** That's right.

**John Hodgman:** And what did your dad do that was weird? Because you mentioned your dad for zero reason, and I'd like to know why.

**Thaddeus:** Yeah, my father's an amazing man. He's very interesting. But I think one story that comes to mind is he didn't quite know how to dress himself. So, when he was going down to a family gathering, he came down with a purple turtleneck under an American flag sweater. And my mom had to tell him to go change, because that wasn't acceptable attire. So, he's always doing stuff like that. He's very interesting.

**John Hodgman:** I think I just figured out my Halloween costume, and it's not even May. Thaddeus, when Kelsey says that you don't follow through on your hobbies—

[00:45:00]

—and she doesn't trust you enough to ice yourself consistently to justify the purchase of a commercial ice machine, how does that make you feel?

**Thaddeus:** I think it's understandable. I love my wife dearly, so I tend to agree with her on most things. But I think this, like I said—it's a different category. So, to me, it feels like I would treat this differently. Plus \$300 for a sort of hobby is a fair amount of investment for me, just mentally. So, I think it would compel me to use it more.

**John Hodgman:** Well, but spending money on hobbies, even though they were smaller ticket hobbies, never compelled you to follow through on them before. I mean, you said that each was like maybe a 40—look, that pasta machine is not a \$40 pasta machine.

**Kelsey:** It's not, no. For sure.

**John Hodgman:** How much was that?

**Thaddeus:** I think there was a kit. In fairness, I also subscribed to a kit that shipped some of these. One of those—it was called Culture Kit, I think.

**John Hodgman:** (*Laughs.*) Was it one of those subscription boxes that sends you a useless hobby every month?

**Kelsey:** Yes, it was!

**Thaddeus:** It was, your honor. Yes.

**John Hodgman:** Alright, you know what? You can get a pasta machine that looks like that for 30 to 40 to 80 bucks. Okay. Not—but I mean, probably not a very good one, but yes. But I mean, between the brew kit and the thing, the pasta machine, and the bourbon nosing kit—yeah. Like, you've spent \$300 on hobbies before that you haven't finished. Why is it different this time?

**Thaddeus:** I guess for me, I would use this in a way that's part of my daily routine.

**John Hodgman:** How are you going to change the water if your inflatable cold plunge is in the basement?

**Thaddeus:** I have a drain basement, like we have an unfinished area of the basement where we'll have sort of a floor drain. And then I'll use a spigot.

**John Hodgman:** Guy came prepared with answered, Kelsey. I gotta give him that. He did have that.

**Kelsey:** Yeah, I guess so, yeah. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** Kelsey, what would it take for Thaddeus to prove that it's different this time? Is there anything he can do?

**Kelsey:** Basically, to do the little solution—I know he doesn't like it—but to go do the quick trip and get some ice if he feels his water is not cold enough, and to do that for like—I don't know—a month of five days—whatever, five days a week, three to five days a week—and do that consistently, then I would be open to having this—you know, more of a discussion.

**John Hodgman:** Alright, I think I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. I'm going to go down into my basement and have a nice glass of pebble ice, 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.)*

Dr. Kelsey, how are you feeling about your chances right now?

**Kelsey:** I don't know. I feel okay. I feel like I've left myself open to a lot of other options. So, I think hopefully there are other solutions besides the gigantic ice maker.

**Jesse Thorn:** You're basically in support of anything that can be packed into a giant backpack, as Paul Scheer put it?

**Kelsey:** Yes, exactly! That sounds great! A giant backpack, for sure.

**Jesse Thorn:** Thaddeus, how are you feeling?

**Thaddeus:** Uh, not great. Not as confident as when I came in. I think the expert testimony was on my side, which I appreciated. But in eight years of marriage, Kelsey tends to win all the arguments. So, I'm a little nervous that the judge is taking her side.

*(Kelsey laughs.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Thaddeus, what's the most important thing to remember when you're throwing a javelin?

**Thaddeus:** Always release early, so that you don't accidentally hit yourself in the foot—which I did once.

**Jesse Thorn:** *(Cackles.)* That's a much more sort of baseline piece of information than I expected. Well, 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 the case. Let's talk about what we have going on. What's going on with you, John?

**John Hodgman:** Jesse Thorn, I've mentioned it before, and now I can say it officially: the comedy stage at Wilco's Solid Sound Festival is booked and ready to announce! It's June 28th in Western Massachusetts. And you're going to go there and see Wilco and the large-scale installation art and everything else. I'm also here to tell you—on that afternoon, Saturday the 29th, the comedy stage is going to feature me and Jean Grae, plus Dave Hill, Sydnee Washington, the great Todd Barry, the great Brittany Carney, and special add-on that we haven't mentioned yet, the great Eugene Mirman. They're all the great! Come and see your favorite comedy friends. You'll probably run into a guest bailiff Monte Belmonte, and he'll love to talk to you, and I will too!

So, come please see us up there in North Adams, Massachusetts. The whole festival is June 28th through the 30th at Mass MoCA. That's the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art. It's Wilco Solid Sound Festival. On the Friday night, Wilco is gonna be playing deep cuts! On Saturday night, Wilco's gonna be playing an incredible Wilco set with all kinds of music, arts, entertainment—and good food, by the way!—in between. It's a lot of fun. I hope you can make it. Go to [SolidSoundFestival.com](http://SolidSoundFestival.com). Jesse Thorn, what do you have going on?

**Jesse Thorn:** Well, I actually have a new Instagram account, so I hope people will follow me there. For years and years—when I signed up for Instagram, you couldn't switch between accounts in the Instagram app.

[00:50:00]

And so, I was using Instagram for my menswear blog, Put This On, which is still online at [PutThisOn.com](http://PutThisOn.com). And of course, our shop at [PutThisOnShop.com](http://PutThisOnShop.com). So, if you follow [@Put.This.On](https://www.instagram.com/PutThisOn), you will continue to get outfit pics and our PTO man pics, which are compilations of some of our favorite outfits from social media that week. And all kinds of other, you know, neat shop related stuff, all kinds of stuff like that. But if you want stuff about podcasting and comedy and such, follow [@JesseThornVeryFamous](https://www.instagram.com/JesseThornVeryFamous). [@JesseThornVeryFamous](https://www.instagram.com/JesseThornVeryFamous).

By the way, if you happen to work at Instagram, drop us a line. Because the person who has [@JesseThorn](https://www.instagram.com/JesseThorn) has never used it. (*Laughs.*) So, I would love to have that. Also, there's someone impersonating me and has been for years that many people I know follow. So, yeah, drop us a line if you're that person. But in the meantime, follow me at [@JesseThornVeryFamous](https://www.instagram.com/JesseThornVeryFamous). And that really is me.

**John Hodgman:** You may have heard my clicky keyboard in the background as I searched that up, and I hit follow back.

**Jesse Thorn:** Now we're talking.

**John Hodgman:** So, thanks for the follow, and I'm so happy to be following you there too. [@JesseThornVeryFamous](https://www.instagram.com/JesseThornVeryFamous).

**Jesse Thorn:** That's where you're going to find pictures of my dumb dog, Junior.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, come on. And your good friend John Malkovich, it looks like!

**Jesse Thorn:** Yep. Me and John Malkovich are up there.

**John Hodgman:** That's incredible. Go and follow—

**Jesse Thorn:** Me and Alison Brie.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, you're right. Oh, all these fun people. And there's Tig Notaro, and there's Junior, just staring lovingly at a ball, like a dog should do. Does your Instagram account feature pictures of Jesse Thorn smiling while holding up a bag of pitted prunes? Probably not. Go follow [@JesseThornVeryFamous](https://www.instagram.com/JesseThornVeryFamous).

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, shout out to California prune ambassador and comedy genius, Guy Branum, who inspired me to buy those California prunes at a local grocery store. I've been eating them. They're very fancy. They're not just for old people who have internal problems, they're also a very fancy treat. On behalf of Guy Branum, on behalf of California prunes, I'm Jesse Thorn. Let's get back to the case!

**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:** Let me start by thanking our expert witness, Paul Scheer. And it's true that a lot of what he said resonated quite deeply with me, insofar as—I am not a cold plunger; I don't have a thing in my house. But I have gone swimming in Maine. And at its warmest—I asked a friend of mine, who lives there year-round, what her estimate would be of the ocean in Maine in August at its warmest. At its warmest, 64 degrees, and very, very frequently much lower. And I know this because she, our friend Molly—Jesse, you've met her.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, Molly's cool.

**John Hodgman:** —is a frequent winter swimmer, going out when the water is 50, 40, 30 degrees, oftentimes when the water is warmer than the air in the middle of winter. And I've never done it. I've watched her do it. She takes a lot of precautions. She always goes with a friend. Unlike Paul Scheer, she definitely dries herself off as soon as she gets out. It's an immediate warm up situation, because it could be catastrophically hypothermic if you don't. And she only goes in slowly and then comes out and doesn't take any risk of getting hypothermia or staying in there too long. Very, very careful about it. But! She has reported experiencing—and I dare say, though I am not a winter swimmer, as a like early summer swimmer in Maine—what Paul Shear reports is very true. There is a huge psychological impact in convincing your brain to go into that water, a massive sort of physical shock as you're in it and dealing with it, and an enormous sense of euphoric release as your body acclimates itself to the water. And then you feel comfortable in the water. And when you come out, it's an enormously wonderful feeling.

And I think that in—I make no claims as to the physical benefits, and I offer incredible warnings as to the possible downsides. Which include, not for nothing, drowning, and hypothermia, and cardio shock. I mean, consult your physician. Whether or not you're married to her, you should consult your physician and make sure that cold plunging is right for you. And by the way, it is plunging. It is not sitting around forever. It is in a short period of time. It is a shorter experience than swimming would be, right? And while I will not—I am not a doctor of internal or any kind of medicine. So, I'm not going to make any claims to actual physical health benefits. But the psychological benefits are—I mean, it is a very meditative experience.

[00:55:00]

It really does focus you entirely on the present. And the psychological benefit of breathing through and reminding your body that you are going to survive this I think has huge psychological benefits to me that carry over into lots of areas of my life. So, unfortunately for you, Dr. Kelsey, I am pro cold plunge. The question here is whether this is the best way for Thaddeus to do it and whether he will continue enough to do it in order to invest in a commercial ice maker that is kept in the basement. Now, you know that Paul Scheer said that he was not in favor of that commercial ice maker. And I will be very honest with you, nor

was I. Nor was I, until learned they made a pebble ice version. Now I'm thinking about getting one! Because I love ice, and I love pebble ice. And you do too, Dr. Kelsey!

So, what's the losing proposition here? 350 bucks. Maybe you get a coupon. Maybe you wait until there's a coupon, and you have this thing in the basement. It gets Thaddeus off your lawn. And he'll just be chilling in the basement, chilling and draining in the basement. It seems like a self-contained thing. Why would I not order in his favor now that I know that there's a pebble ice machine? And here's the reason. As great as the pebble ice machine might be, it hums. Ice machines make noise. One of my—and you know, I'm very lucky in this life that I found a career that afforded me enough financial security that I no longer need to sleep in the same room as a refrigerator. And the fact of the matter is—though I'm sure your basement is fairly soundproof; although your crawl space is uninsulated, I'll remind you—knowing that you have a commercial ice machine running in your basement all the time, it's going to remind you of it. It's going to be chugging along there. I don't think it will be ecologically more sound than buying ice, honestly. And it's going to hum, and it's going to make a noise. And every time you have to go down into the basement, you're going to hear that hum.

And if Thaddeus isn't down there with that hum, cold plunging in that moment, you're going to think to yourself, “Why do we have this thing?” I don't necessarily believe Thaddeus will be down there plunging! Because you gave me the evidence of all the hobbies that have been cast aside! And it's okay that he's cast them aside, because he had fun with them for a while. But they're not plugged into your wall, humming, reminding you all the time. “Brubububub. Didn't do it. Didn't do it. Didn't do it. Didn't do it. Didn't do it.” So, I can't in good conscience rule in favor of getting that ice machine, unless and until Thaddeus has proven that cold plunging is now a part of his life.

Kelsey, you set a benchmark. If he cold plunges for a month, three to five times a week, then you would consider an upgrade. Then you would consider possibly buying some new equipment. And I think that is eminently fair. And I think this is true about, frankly, any hobby that Thaddeus might want to take on and spend money on in the future. Whatever hobby it might be, including cold plunging, before he can spend money on it, 100 cold baths within a timeframe that Kelsey feels is okay. ‘Cause I don't want to do the math. That is a commitment to a regular routine that proves that you're going to keep it up with that Quick Stop ice. And then would recommend that you get something like the Scheer Perfection that Paul Scheer has. Something that can fit in a backpack, can go outside, that has an air chiller, that isn't relying on ice, that you can set up and use in good weather outside and bad weather inside. To me, that's—I mean, I know that it's a high price, but I think that's a much nicer way to take your cold bath.

Alternately, if you really feel at that point, after 100 baths, that you need to get that ice machine, make it a pebble ice. This is the sound of a gavel.

**Clip:**

**Music:** Ominous orchestral sting.

**Speaker:** The iceman cometh!

**John Hodgman:** Judge John Hodgman rules. That is all.

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

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

Kelsey do the math for me on how you're feeling right now.

**Kelsey:** I'm feeling pretty good. I think we—the judge came up with a great solution, and I feel comfortable with it.

**Jesse Thorn:** Thaddeus, how are you feeling?

**Thaddeus:** I feel okay. Usually when I get in a fight with Kelsey, this is the expected outcome.

[01:00:00]

But I think the judge is fair and is ruling. I'm hoping Kelsey will give me time served for the existing 10 plunges I've done. I'm excited to get in the tub and prove my mettle.

**Jesse Thorn:** Well, I'm excited to hear how everything goes. Thanks for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

**Thaddeus:** Thank you.

**Kelsey:** Thank you.

**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 u/BanjoSolo for naming this week's episode, "Submerger and Acquisitions". Join the conversation over on the Maximum fun subreddit, [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/MaximumFun). We'll be asking for title suggestions there. So, keep an eye out for those. Evidence and photos from our show are posted on our Instagram account, at [Instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman). We're also on TikTok and YouTube at [@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod](https://www.youtube.com/@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod). Follow and subscribe to see our episodes and our video-only content. Yes! There is content there that does not appear on the podcast, so make sure you go subscribe there as well.

**John Hodgman:** Hey! I'm smiling because I want to say thank you to BWRP2016 over there on Apple Podcasts! They left us a rating, and that rating was five stars! BWRP2016 says, "There's not much that has been a consistent presence in my life for over a decade, but this podcast is one of those things. I came for the silly squabbles and dad jokes and stayed for the camaraderie." Which is true. Thank you, comrade Jesse. Thank you, comrade BWRP2016 for that wonderful review. If you're listening to us on Apple Podcasts, why don't you go over

there and give us a rating and a review? It really does help new listeners find the show, as does just talking about the podcast to your friends, or telling them about it wherever you get it, right Jesse?

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, no matter what podcast app you use, telling a friend about *Judge John Hodgman* makes a really huge difference for us. And look, point somebody to the video if they like watching video. Send somebody a clip from the video if that's what you're into. Share it on social media.

*Judge John Hodgman* was created by Jesse Thorn and John Hodgman. This episode, engineered by Brad Burrow and Carly Farmer at Real Media KC in Kansas City, Kansas. Nattie Lopez runs our social media. Our video editor is Daniel Speer. Our audio editor, AJ McKeon. Our producer, the ever-capable Jennifer Marmor.

Now, Swift Justice, where we answer your small disputes with quick judgment, Snumaps3172 on the Maximum Fun subreddit says, “My partner hangs each individual measuring cup on its own hook inside a cabinet door. The cups tessellate for a reason!”

**John Hodgman:** Congratulations, Snumaps3172, on knowing a terrific word.

**Jesse Thorn:** Snumaps just goes—Snumaps is like at the butcher and just says like, “Yeah, could you tessellate those steaks for me?” (*Chuckles.*)

**John Hodgman:** Yeah! That's a great word, and I'm inclined to rule in your favor just because of your vocab, but it doesn't matter if you're not the one cooking. Whoever is the one using those cups gets to hang them or store them however they want, however works for them. It's their *mise en place*. If that's your gig in the house, Snumaps, tessellate those cups! Otherwise, keep your nose out of those cups.

Hey, we had a wonderful expert witness today, Paul Scheer. Paul, as you know, cohosts the wonderful and hilarious movie podcast, *How Did This Get Made*. And speaking of movies, we decided on this podcast that age 11 is the perfect time to watch William Friedkin's *The French Connection*. But why not hear some more movie disputes? Is your household split on the next movie night decision? Are you absolutely sure that Rose had enough room for Jack at the end of *Titanic* on that door or whatever it was, but your friend is equally sure that Jack had to drown? Hey, if you're a fan of *How Did This Get Made*, when it comes to the movie *Drop Dead Fred*, are you Team Fred or Team Sanity? Submit your movie cases to me at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho). Indeed, submit all your cases.

**Jesse Thorn:** It doesn't matter what it's about! We got all kinds of places we need questions. We're putting them on YouTube. We're putting them in the podcast and in Quick Judgments. We're using them for the main meat of the podcast, all over the place. Just send it in, you dingus!

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. And you know what? In the past, I've said this isn't about etiquette. This is about a dispute between one—have you got an etiquette question? Let me know. You got a grammar question? Let me know.



**Jesse Thorn:** [Maximumfun.org/jjho](http://Maximumfun.org/jjho).

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, that's what it is. What else do we have to say, Jesse?

**Jesse Thorn:** Just that we'll talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast!

[01:05:00]

**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!