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**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Welcome to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. This week: "The Right to a Speedy Denial". Liz brings the case against her husband, Aram. Aram enlisted a friend to help him hide a speeding ticket from Liz. He's since confessed to receiving the ticket, but he refuses to tell Liz which of the couple's friends aided and abetted. Liz says it's cruel to keep this information hidden. 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:** Oh, this thing is running great! It's just running great! It's so smooth into the curves. What did you do, Claudio?

*(In a non-specific European accent.)* "I adjust the caster and camber and correct the tire pressure."

Ohhhh, what a difference!

Bailiff Jesse Thorn, please swear them in.

**Jesse Thorn:** Liz and Aram, 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 we've been friends for 20 years and have never told the other one about anything in that entire time?

*(They swear.)*

Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

**John Hodgman:** We keep our secrets. But today I reveal them, because we're recording. It's a rare Friday afternoon recording. We don't do this—normally we record on a Monday. But here we are at the end of the week. Spring has sprung to the point of summer here in Brooklyn. It's a Friday evening where I am, evening of a long weekend. And I'm going to tell you right now, I'm wearing shorts under my robe, and I am not wearing shoes or socks.

**Jesse Thorn:** Wow.

**John Hodgman:** And if you want to go see my feet over on the YouTube, here they come.

**Jesse Thorn:** Feet on main! Woow! Incredible.

**John Hodgman:** And my incredible calves you get to see too.

**Jesse Thorn:** Judge Hodgman, ordinarily when we're recording—I'm not afraid to say it out loud—I only wear the top half of my uniform. But today our litigants are in our studio here in Los Angeles. For that reason, our new shots here in the studio capture me head to toe.

**John Hodgman:** That's right.

**Jesse Thorn:** I'm wearing my bailiff pants and my bailiff shoes.

**John Hodgman:** I know, and it's gonna get hot.

**Jesse Thorn:** I usually wear pants! Just not the—

*(They giggle.)*

**John Hodgman:** Not just boxers?

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, no, I don't just wear boxers. I would say—it would be inappropriate. Hostile workplace environment.

**John Hodgman:** Yes, we're very, very excited to have these litigants here in the studio, or over there in studio with you, at Maximum Fun headquarters in Los Angeles. Liz and Aram, you may be seated. 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 the courtroom? Let's start with you, Liz.

**Liz:** *Talladega Nights?*

**John Hodgman:** *Talladega Nights!* That's about fast cars, right?

*(Liz confirms.)*

Fast cars. That's a good guess. That's a really good guess. I'm even going to write it down. *Talladega Nights*. And I'm really writing it down. You can check it on the YouTube. It's written down.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah. He wrote it down, folks.

**John Hodgman:** Aram?

**Aram:** *2 Fast 2 Furious?*

**John Hodgman:** That's also about fast cars. (*Laughs.*) Why was I having—? And I could have sung Tracy Chapman's "Fast Car".

**Jesse Thorn:** Yep.

**John Hodgman:** I'm going to go ahead, Aram, and put you down for all of the *Fast and Furious* movies.

(*Aram thanks him.*)

**Jesse Thorn:** Even *Tokyo Drift*?

**John Hodgman:** Even *Tokyo Drift*. And Liz, your guess is superlative. But I'm also going to put down "Fast Car" by Tracy Chapman. All the things that I could have done. But all of them, these guesses, are wrong. I had a real hard time for some reason. Because this is about a speeding ticket. So, I initially thought, well, we got to do that same scene from *Fargo* with Steve Buscemi at the traffic stop when he says, "Why don't we take care of it right here in Brainerd?" He tries to bribe the traffic cop, which was our very first obscure cultural reference. But I couldn't do that one. I've already done it too many times.

So, then I freaked out, and I couldn't think of anything. And then I thought of a song. I thought of a song, and I'm like, "I don't want to quote this song, because it's too easy." Certainly for someone my age. So, then I watched the video of the song. What I performed for you—impeccably I may add—was the dialogue between the musical artist whose song this is and his personal mechanic, Claudio Zampolli, that is recorded as this musical artist drives into the scene in his classic 1984 Ferrari 512 BB and compliments Claudio for adjusting the tire pressure. And then he starts singing the song. And the song, if you haven't guessed, is "I Can't Drive 55" by Sammy Hagar. And his personal mechanic, Claudio Zampolli—

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—passed away just a few years ago in 2021 at the age of 82 or 83. And Claudio Zampolli is not only—was not only Sammy Hagar's personal mechanic in the video, this was his real-life personal mechanic. And in fact, I later learned through reading this obituary, Claudio Zampolli is the guy who gave Eddie VanHalen Sammy Hagar's telephone number and got him into Van Halen. Learn that from VanHalenintheNews.com or something. Anyway, RIP Claudio Zampolli. You really adjusted that tire pressure. I hope that your wheels are really taking those curves in the afterlife or whatever. But in the meantime, we're right here settling justice on earth. Who brings this case before me seeking justice? Liz or Aram?

**Liz:** I do.

**John Hodgman:** Liz, what is the nature of the justice you seek? What's the problem? What is Aram doing wrong?

**Liz:** I'm just a very curious person. And I just don't know if I can live with this curiosity of not knowing who helped with this scheme.

**John Hodgman:** Let's take a step back in time to this scheme. Aram, tell me about your speeding ticket.

**Aram:** I got a speeding ticket in December. And Liz is—she sees all of the—okay, I'm skipping some steps. I didn't want Liz to know about it for a few reasons. So, I had a friend pay. Because she would see the, you know, credit card charge. I had him pay and then paid him via Venmo.

And the idea was just to—you know, I thought that would kind of be the end of it. But then I wanted to do traffic school to, you know, not get the point. And so, it became a bigger scheme than I intended it to be.

**Jesse Thorn:** You had to tell her that you were doing it for the comedy.

*(They chuckle.)*

**Aram:** Yeah, so I didn't want to try to sneak around and, you know, do traffic school behind her back. That seemed like too much work.

**John Hodgman:** That seems like a bad comedy movie, I think. *Secret Traffic School*.

**Aram:** So, that's when I decided to tell her about it.

**John Hodgman:** So, let me just understand here. Can you drive 55, or can you not drive 55?

**Jesse Thorn:** Actually, the ticket was for driving 55. So, I guess I can drive 55.

**John Hodgman:** You definitely can. In a what mile per hour zone?

**Aram:** In a 45. Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Okay. Ten miles over the limit. Where were you driving?

**Aram:** I was driving on Wentworth in Sunland.

**John Hodgman:** What is that? Is that a neighborhood of Los Angeles, Jesse? What is Sunland?

**Jesse Thorn:** That's a northeastern suburb of Los Angeles. It is a weird town that is not very far from Los Angeles, but where you can have like a farm. Where you're like in Los Angeles, it's like a 15-minute drive to Burbank or whatever, and then also you could have—as my friend Julia did when she lived in Sunland; she had multiple miniature horses.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** How many miniature horses do you have, Liz and Aram?

**Liz:** One.

**John Hodgman:** Do you really?

**Liz:** We have a greyhound dog.

**John Hodgman:** That does count as a miniature horse. You're right.

**Liz:** *(Laughing.)* Yes, it does.

**Jesse Thorn:** For betting purposes.

**Aram:** We always call her a horse though.

**John Hodgman:** Alright. So, you're going 55 in a 45 mile per hour zone. Jesse, you recited the old adage: “Nine, you're fine. Ten, you're mine.” Meaning the rule of thumb is if you're under 10 miles an hour over the speed limit, you're probably not going to get in trubs.

**Jesse Thorn:** That's from my days in the California highway patrol with Erik Estrada.

**John Hodgman:** *(Laughs.)* I would just say that the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast endorses driving safely at all times without any impairments, obviously, without any devices in your hand, at the speed limit, or following traffic so that you're not impeding traffic by going too slow, but not going over ten miles over the speed limit. But you did it. You did it Aram, and you paid the price. But you didn't pay the price. Your friend paid the price, because you wanted to keep it a secret from your wife, right? You're married? Is that right? Married-married?

*(They confirm.)*

Legally married in the state of California? Right. The last person in the world you're supposed to lie to, you lied to her. Through omission.

**Jesse Thorn:** Why?!

**John Hodgman:** Oh, good question, Jesse. Why?

**Aram:** Well...

**John Hodgman:** Your silence is now lying to me through omission.

*(They laugh.)*

**Aram:** I just thought that save her the stress. I didn't think there was any need for her to know about it. You know, we worry about money sometimes. And you know, I got the ticket. There was nothing we could do about it.

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I just thought I'll save her the heartache.

**John Hodgman:** What was the—what was the penalty, if I may ask? The financial fine?

**Aram:** I think, including traffic school, it was like...

**John Hodgman:** \$25,000?

**Jesse Thorn:** It was like \$320 or so.

**John Hodgman:** Ooh, that's a bite.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, that's pretty solid.

**John Hodgman:** That's a bad bite.

**Jesse Thorn:** That explains why you have packing tape on your finger where there should be a band-aid.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** Wait a minute. Aram, you got a \$300+ speeding ticket for doing 10 over in a 45 mile an hour zone?

**Aram:** Okay, so I didn't want to interrupt you earlier, but it was actually 60.

**John Hodgman:** Okay.

**Aram:** But on my—but when the cop gave me the ticket, he said, "I'm gonna write you a ticket for going 55." And when I looked at the ticket, I saw both numbers. I saw a 55 somewhere and a 60 somewhere. So, I don't know if the amount I paid was for going 55 or 60, or if those are the same. So, yeah. But I was driving 60.

**John Hodgman:** You were going too fast.

**Jesse Thorn:** That's too fast even for Sunland.

**John Hodgman:** That's too fast for Sunland.

**Jesse Thorn:** Even up there in miniature horse and warehouse country.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Even though there aren't a lot of people around there, there are definitely a lot of miniature horses around. How would you have felt if you had taken that corner fast and hit a miniature horse?

**Aram:** I would have felt really bad.

**John Hodgman:** Was it a speed trap situation?

*(Aram confirms.)*

Were you polite?

**Aram:** I was very polite.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, he was letting you off easy with 55 when you were doing 60 in a 45. 300, okay. That's a bite. 320/340 bucks.

**Jesse Thorn:** Judge Hodgman, you got to lay down a speed trap there in Sunland. People are racing to the Hughes Estate Sales Warehouse, Sunland, California.

*(They chuckle.)*

**John Hodgman:** Liz, Aram said that he didn't want to, quote, “stress you out”, unquote. If he had come home and said, “I got a speeding ticket. And it costs—it's going to cost us 340 bucks or whatever”, would you—how would you describe your feelings about that? Stressed out or other?

**Liz:** Probably a little stressed out.

**John Hodgman:** A little stressed out because of the money.

**Liz:** Yeah, I definitely would have given him a hard time about it too. That's probably part of the avoidance too. But yeah, a little bit. ‘Cause we're trying to save up for a house, so it's—every penny counts right now.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. It's an unnecessary expense. Aram, your theory was, “Well, if I pay this ticket, I'm going to have to come clean that I got the speeding ticket for \$340. So, instead

I'll get a friend to pay it. And then I'll Venmo that friend. Because a mysterious Venmo to a friend for \$340 is going to be less stressful.”

**Aram:** Well, she wouldn't know about the Venmo at all. Yeah, that was the goal.

**John Hodgman:** What a villain you are, sir.

*(They laugh.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** This guy has a Venmo account just for sneaky stuff.

**John Hodgman:** You got a sneaky Venmo?

*(Aram confirms.)*

How does it make you feel, Liz, to know that Aram's got a sneaky Venmo?

**Liz:** I feel like, to a degree, I'm okay with him having some privacy with finances. You know? Like, I'm the primary like finance manager for us. So, almost all of our money, I see where it goes, and I do the budgeting. So.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, that's why he wanted to hide it from you. That's why he—

**Liz:** It's kind of his last holdout for privacy. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** How do you fund your sneaky Venmo? How does that money get in there?

**Aram:** I do like small side gig work, and sometimes I'm paid via Venmo.

**John Hodgman:** Liz, what do you do all day?

**Liz:** I'm an R&D scientist. I do research.

**John Hodgman:** And development?

**Liz:** And development, yes.

**John Hodgman:** In what areas of science?

**Liz:** Human behavior, focused on travel and how people move around.

**John Hodgman:** How would you describe Aram's human behavior with regard to travel?

**Liz:** Typical. Except for the secrets.



**John Hodgman:** Well, I should hope so! First of all, does he routinely speed in Sunland?

**Liz:** Yeah, I would say—I mean, kind of everyone does, though. It's like—it's not that abnormal to go 10 to 15 over in that area.

**Jesse Thorn:** Sunland is the kind of sort of ex-urban place where it would be easy to go too fast on a street, because you feel like you are on a freeway.

**John Hodgman:** Sure. Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, I understand. No, I—look.

**Jesse Thorn:** Do you wanna know anything else about Sunland?!

**John Hodgman:** Sure.

**Jesse Thorn:** That's all I got, really. I did Hughes Estate Sales warehouse. I did—that's all I got on Sunland.

**John Hodgman:** Do I remember correctly that it's a neighborhood within the Crescenta Valley and the Verdugo Mountains?

*(Liz confirms.)*

**Aram:** It's not within, but it's right next door.

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**John Hodgman:** Lies between the Verdugo Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains, would you say? Is it contiguous on the east with La Crescenta-Montrose?

*(Liz confirms.)*

Ah, gotcha, right. And it says here that by 1927, half the streets had been paved, and a state highway ran through town. People have been driving fast and Sunland for a long time!

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**John Hodgman:** Would you say that the lying took you by surprise, Liz?

**Liz:** Yeah! Yeah, I would say so.

**John Hodgman:** How did you find out about this speeding ticket?

**Liz:** He came into my little office space one day, and was like, “I have a confession to make.” (*Chuckles.*)

**John Hodgman:** Okay. Go on, keep saying—

**Jesse Thorn:** How did you—? Wait, how did you feel when he—when you heard that first part?

**Liz:** I was not even that nervous. It seemed like it was not going to be a big deal.

**John Hodgman:** When your husband comes in and says, “I have a confession to make,” that—I’m already terrified, and I know what it is.

**Liz:** I don’t know. I guess like maybe it was his tone or something, but it just didn’t seem like it was going to be something really serious.

**Aram:** I think what I said was, “I need to tell you something.”

**Liz:** “I can’t keep it from you anymore.”

**John Hodgman:** Oh, god, Aram! Oh, just get it over with! Just tell me! Don’t—you’re leaving me, right? You’re leaving the podcast? Go on, get out of here! We don’t need you! Liz and Jesse and I will get along fine!

**Jesse Thorn:** For people who are listening at home and not watching the YouTube, an important piece of context here is that Aram’s beard and eyes lend any sentence he utters just an extraordinary portent. Just at any moment—like, he could come in and say, “Happy birthday to you,” and it would sound like, “I fear this storm may destroy the village.”

(*They chuckle.*)

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I had to enlarge the screen to get a really good look at Aram here, and he’s got—guy’s got some Rasputin look to him. He’s got a little bit of a Rasputin beard.

**Jesse Thorn:** Hey, take a look at those sparkling peepers too.

**John Hodgman:** I know. Yeah. Glittering eyes, I dare say. Liz, you look great too.

**Liz:** Thank you.

**John Hodgman:** So, how long was it before you finally confessed to Liz?

**Aram:** It was the day before I had to do traffic school. So, about three weeks ago

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, but so you got the speeding ticket—

**Aram:** In December.

**John Hodgman:** In December, and so you kept this secret for months is what you're saying.

**Aram:** Five months, yeah.

**John Hodgman:** And so, take me back to the night of the speeding. You got the ticket; you make a decision. You gotta get a friend of yours to pay the ticket so that Liz doesn't see it. Who do you call?

**Aram:** A friend.

**John Hodgman:** Right, what's the name of the guy?

**Aram:** I can't say. That's why we're here.

*(They chuckle.)*

**John Hodgman:** Aha! Jesse Thorn, let the record show I tried to trick him.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, the record so reflects.

**John Hodgman:** I tried to trick him. I almost—I feel like maybe I almost got—I don't think I got very close though. Aram keeps his own counsel.

**Jesse Thorn:** No. There was a moment where he looked around like, “This storm may be unpredictable.” *(Chuckles.)*

**John Hodgman:** This friend, did they agree immediately?

*(Aram confirms.)*

This friend was immediately like, “Oh yeah, no, I'll pay that ticket. You just Venmo me back out of your secret Venmo.” Liz, do you have any idea who this friend might be?

**Liz:** I have theories.

**John Hodgman:** How many candidates do you have in mind?

**Liz:** I've narrowed it down to like two or three people.

**John Hodgman:** Two or three potentials. And why is it important to you for you to know the name of this friend?

**Liz:** I feel, as his wife, that I come first over the privacy of a friend. Especially because I'm a cool person, and I don't think it's gonna affect my view of said friend.

**John Hodgman:** Let the record show that Liz has claimed to be a cool person, and the court agrees. I'm just going to enter that into the record now. Liz is cool. (*Bangs his gavel.*) Bang a gavel on that. Aram, you're pretty cool too. Well, I don't know. Secrets aren't cool. So, the gavel remains suspended above the clapper maybe for the rest of this recording. I have to put it down. But when I put this down, I'm not gaveling on your coolness, Aram. Okay? It's still tentative. That wasn't a gavel. That was just me putting the thing down. Aram, why won't you reveal—has the person asked you not to reveal their name to Liz?

**Aram:** No, but I feel if I were that person, I wouldn't want my name revealed.

**John Hodgman:** Why?

**Aram:** Because I took part in this, you know, secret and lie.

**John Hodgman:** Right. But you're coming clean. Overall.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, there—as you would put it, “There shall be a cleansing.”

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** I mean, it seems to me that if I were in your shoes, and I had lied to my wife through omission, and I had engaged a friend in this scheme—

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—and the friend is a good enough friend to say like, “Yeah, sure, I'll pay that ticket. Just pay me back.” It would seem that I could go to that friend and go, “Hey, you know what? I felt bad about this, and I finally told Liz about it, and she wants to know who paid it. Do you mind if I give her your name?” Have you discussed it with the friend?

**Aram:** No, I haven't. And I wouldn't have a problem having that discussion and then telling her, potentially. I mean, if I had my way entirely, that wouldn't even happen. Because I just don't want this to get between them.

**John Hodgman:** Do you think that Liz's opinion of this friend would change if Liz learned the identity of the friend?

**Aram:** I think it wouldn't in any meaningful or important ways, but I think it would be impossible for it to not in some way.

**John Hodgman:** What are you concerned is going to happen?

**Aram:** I'm not really that concerned about anything happening specifically.

**John Hodgman:** Then just give me the name! You're obviously concerned that something is going to happen. What?

**Aram:** Until I ask them, I don't think it's fair to them. I think I've already done enough damage. I don't see why I need to add to it. And also, you know, break their trust.

**Jesse Thorn:** I mean, John, imagine this. Imagine a situation where I'm robbing a bank.

**John Hodgman:** Alright.

**Jesse Thorn:** I'm thinking, I'm planning—

**John Hodgman:** Hang on! Hang on. I'm imagining it. First, I have to imagine your outfit.

**Jesse Thorn:** (*Chuckling.*) Okay, great. Aw, man—I'd have a great outfit.

**John Hodgman:** I know.

**Jesse Thorn:** I have just the turtleneck.

**John Hodgman:** I know. I was thinking the same thing. I was thinking the same thing.

**Jesse Thorn:** I'm planning on robbing a bank, but as part of my scheme, I need a little bit of help from a celebrity brand spokesperson. So, I ask you for help.

You say, "I don't know, Jesse, but I'll do it. We're friends. Do I have to like go to the bank robbery?"

And I say, "No, no, no, I just need you to do a little spokesperson-ing on the side, and then I'll take care of the rest." And then I go, and I rob that bank successfully.

**John Hodgman:** Good job.

**Jesse Thorn:** Everything is great. Our friendship is reinforced. I got to rob that small town bank I wanted to rob.

**John Hodgman:** You're a charming bank robber like George Clooney in *Out of Sight*. You just charm it out of 'em.

**Jesse Thorn:** Exactly. I got to get in that trunk with JLo, the whole nine yards. And then I have a crisis of conscience. I think, oh gosh, I feel terrible for that small town banker I robbed. He's going to have to pay back the FDIC out of his own pocket, I think to myself.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, it turns out there's no such thing as a gentleman bandit. That's just a bad person.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yep. So, I say, “I’m going to go cop to it. I’m going to turn myself into the cops.”

And they say, “Oh, thank you. But you probably needed a celebrity spokesperson to pull off a heist like this.”

And I say, “Yeah, it was John Hodgman. It was my friend, John.”

*(John chuckles.)*

How would you feel then?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Well, I mean, I would feel a little frustrated, because you had implicated me as an accomplice in an actual crime. There might be severe penalties visited upon me as a result. But this is not that situation. Aram did not rob a bank. He quietly embezzled money from his marriage and laundered it through a friend to pay to the state. But money that might have otherwise gone to a shared purchase or into the house savings to pay for something that he felt—I’m presuming he felt ashamed of. Although, it’s hard for me to understand, because Aram isn’t very forthcoming with his feelings about this. Did you feel ashamed? Is that why you wanted to hide this from Liz?

**Aram:** Yeah. A little bit. She does give me a very hard time about the way I drive. And I felt, you know, this was more fuel for her. So, that was definitely part of it.

**John Hodgman:** Do you give him a hard time? I thought you were cool, Liz, by the way. But you’re not cool with the way Aram drives all the time. Is that right?

**Liz:** I would say that’s correct.

**John Hodgman:** I don’t even want to know the details, but you feel that Aram drives a little too fast?

**Liz:** Yeah, sometimes.

**John Hodgman:** Sometimes.

**Jesse Thorn:** Who drives when the two of you are in the car?

**Liz:** He does.

**Jesse Thorn:** Is it his car?

**Liz:** It’s our shared car.

**John Hodgman:** What is the car?

**Aram:** It's a Honda Fit.

**John Hodgman:** Oh!

*(Aram laughs.)*

You're telling me that a Honda Fit can go 60? Aram drives a little too fast.

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A little not to your liking, right, Liz?

**Liz:** Yes.

**Jesse Thorn:** What other mistakes does he make when he's driving? What else is wrong with his driving?

**Liz:** Sometimes a little, you know, aggressive. He's an LA boy, born and raised. You know. He drives like an LA boy.

**John Hodgman:** So, let's go back to that day in December when you got that ticket. You got the ticket. When did you decide to call or contact your friend?

**Aram:** Yeah, I got the ticket, and I entirely forgot about it for a few months.

*(John "oof"s.)*

And then I think around—in March—

**Jesse Thorn:** They took your car away.

**Aram:** That's when I had to pay. So, yeah, a few months later is when I got my friend involved.

**John Hodgman:** And so, you saw that the due date was coming up, and you called your friend. Did you call or text?

**Aram:** I text.

**John Hodgman:** And what's their name?

*(They laugh.)*

What was the name you texted? You said, “Hey, friend named—” Alright, well, I tried. And what happened after that? They immediately said yes?

**Aram:** Yep, I sent them the link to the, you know, website where you pay. They paid, and I Venmo'd them the same day.

**John Hodgman:** Now, by their paying, they did not implicate themselves. It's not going to affect their insurance or anything. It's just money.

**Aram:** Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Just money changing hands. Why do you think you forgot about the ticket after you received it? Why did you forget about it?

**Aram:** That's just kind of normal for me. I probably—I think I set an alarm in my phone to remind me, you know, a few days before it was due, so that I could forget about it.

**John Hodgman:** Was there anything else going on in your life in December that may have distracted you?

**Aram:** Yeah, I think it was a few days before our honeymoon that I got the ticket. *(Laughs.)* I was shocked when I looked back to see when I got the ticket, because I do not remember having this on my mind at all during the honeymoon. I really did forget about it.

**Jesse Thorn:** How many more crimes do you think you might have committed and forgotten about? *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** Well, there's that string of missing horses, the miniature horses up there in Sunland. No one knows what happened to them. Do you think you maybe unconsciously filed it away?

*(Aram confirms.)*

Uh-huh. ‘Cause you didn't want to talk about it on the honeymoon that you just got a \$340 ticket.

**Aram:** Yeah, I didn't want to think about it. I knew I had a lot of time to deal with it. I definitely didn't, you know, come up with this plan as soon as I got the ticket. That came later.

**John Hodgman:** No, you simply hid it from—I mean, where did you literally hide the ticket?

**Aram:** In a drawer.



**John Hodgman:** In a drawer. *Telltale Heart* style, hidden in plain sight. You got to check those drawers, Liz, from now on. I mean, doesn't it feel that way, Liz? I mean, it's a betrayal of trust, isn't it? Is Aram known for his lying to you by omission or otherwise?

**Liz:** No, that—yeah, it definitely surprised me. I haven't—I'm not aware of any lies or secrets (*chuckles*), besides this one. I think part of the suspicion is because I've seen all of his friends that would be, you know, potential candidates since this happened. And any discomfort that I might have sensed in that, you know—

**John Hodgman:** You're watching them. You're talking to them. You're watching their eyes. You're wondering, “Is this the one? Is this the one?”

**Jesse Thorn:** And you're a professional behaviorist; you know what to look for! You took a class on that in college!

**John Hodgman:** Have you ever confronted any of your suspects?

**Liz:** No, no, no.

**John Hodgman:** Directly or indirectly?

**Liz:** Well, I haven't seen any of them since learning about this. But I saw them maybe a few days before learning about it. So, then I'm thinking about that day with a little bit of a different perspective.

**Aram:** I'd like to just add something. I knew going into this whole thing that if she ever did find out about this, that it wouldn't be a big deal. I knew that she would find it funny. And you know, I wouldn't hide something that I knew would actually be a big deal if she found out about it.

**John Hodgman:** And yet here we are. She has taken you to fake court about it. And I don't think, Liz, if I'm—I don't want to speak for you, but I'm guessing that it's not—as they say, it's not the crime; it's the cover up.

**Liz:** Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** It's not merely that Aram did—you know, did a dumb thing, got a ticket. Unfortunate, no one got hurt, sucks to have to pay it.

[00:30:00]

But also that Aram enlisted someone to keep it from you and continues to refuse to tell you who that person was, right? That's the problem.

**Liz:** Yes.

**John Hodgman:** How does it make you feel that he won't reveal the name of the person?

**Liz:** A little frustrated. It just makes me even more curious too.

**John Hodgman:** You had mentioned that you feel that you should come first. Tell me what you mean.

**Liz:** I guess this discomfort of my curiosity. Since it's not a big deal, you know, I don't feel like I should have to tolerate this feeling for the rest of my life of never knowing what it was. Like, I want to have the image in my mind of the—it feels like it would make it funnier too, to imagine them scheming. (*Laughs.*)

**John Hodgman:** Does it surprise you that Aram doesn't want to tell you the name of the friend? Is he a protective person who has a code of honor that way? Or—?

**Liz:** No—yeah, I guess he does have a code of honor, so it's not that surprising when you put it that way.

**Jesse Thorn:** Aram, how did you decide which friend to ask? Did you know right away which was your most readily deceitful friend?

**Aram:** I'm a little worried, if I answer that, that I might help narrow it down.

**Jesse Thorn:** I could help. Which friend was it?

**John Hodgman:** I think that this is the first time someone has actually plead the 5<sup>th</sup> in this court. You're going to incriminate a friend you don't want to. Okay. Who were the—what are the name of the three people that you considered first?

**Aram:** I think you probably already know who the top three would be, so I guess I'm comfortable.

**John Hodgman:** Aram, I hate to interrupt you, because I'm very excited that you're going to reveal these three names. I really—I mean, let the record show, I've been trying to trick this guy into saying a name two times now. Here it is. Third time's the charm, and it's three names. We're not—but you're not revealing which one of these three people is the culprit. But before you say those names—Liz, we're providing you now with a piece of paper and a pen. Would you please write down your three guesses, *Newlywed* style? And I'll do some *Newlywed* music while you're writing. (*Sings with nonsense syllables.*) Do you need more time?

**Liz:** No, I'm ready.

**John Hodgman:** Okay, cool. Alright Aram, I hope you haven't had time to reconsider. First names only please. Wait, wait, wait. Aram, I'm going to write down my guesses.

(*They laugh.*)

Okay, here we go.

**Jesse Thorn:** Okay, so who were the three people that you considered to engage in this deceit with you, Aram?

**Aram:** In no particular order: Josh, Soraya, and Cameron.

**John Hodgman:** Okay, I didn't get any of those right.

**Aram:** And Kat.

**John Hodgman:** Well, that's four now?

**Jesse Thorn:** That's four.

**Aram:** And Randy.

**John Hodgman:** Five?!

**Jesse Thorn:** Five!

**John Hodgman:** Oh, this is what happens when people crack under interrogation. All of a sudden it all starts spilling out!

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah. This stopped being *Out of Sight* and became *Oceans 11*.

**John Hodgman:** I had guessed Dane the Hambone, Willie Steve, or Gwen Sweet. And I knew it wasn't Gwen Sweet, because that's my mother in law's maiden name.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah. Okay, Aram, take us through those candidates. What made each of them a possible choice?

**Aram:** I think the answer is the same for all of them. I just think they would not really ask that many questions, be kind of pretty uninterested in the whole thing.

(*Jesse cackles.*)

And just—

**Jesse Thorn:** It's not that they love you or even that they're fundamentally deceitful. They're just incurious?!

**John Hodgman:** And an easy touch.

**Aram:** I think all five of those people would just say, you know, “Okay, sure.”

**John Hodgman:** Liz, you wrote down three names.

**Liz:** I’m pretty happy with my overlap.

**John Hodgman:** What were the three names that you wrote down?

**Liz:** I wrote down Soraya, Josh, and Wiha.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, that's one that he didn't name!

**Liz:** Yeah, I'm kinda surprised.

**John Hodgman:** Interesting.

**Jesse Thorn:** Do you think Wiha asks too many questions?

**Aram:** No, actually, I think Wiha would be a great candidate.

**John Hodgman:** Can we rule Wiha out, or are they all still candidates?

**Liz:** *(Softly.)* Wiha's not on the list.

**Aram:** Not ruled out.

**Jesse Thorn:** Not ruled out?!

**John Hodgman:** Not ruled out. And I'll remind you're under fake oath. You've now—there are now six names that have been mentioned. Is one of these culprits—?

**Jesse Thorn:** Remember they're Cameron, Soraya, Wootang, Frielbot.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** No, you're doing the Quincy boys from *Doughboys!*

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah. I'm just listing Mike Mitchell's friends from high school.

*(They laugh.)*

**Aram:** One of the people that I named is the person.

[00:35:00]

**John Hodgman:** Is the culprit! This is very exciting now. Liz of all these now six names, is there one that seems most likely to you?

**Liz:** Yes. Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Okay. And let me ask you, Aram—you mentioned that Liz has an opinion of you as a driver that you did not necessarily want to confirm by revealing that you had gotten a speeding ticket on the eve of your honeymoon. That might maybe make your honeymoon not go so good, right?

*(Aram agrees.)*

If Liz finds out the name of this person, is this going to confirm some ideas that Liz has about this person?

**Aram:** No, I don't think so.

**John Hodgman:** You feel like you wanna protect their privacy, and yet you know Liz wants to know. And it hasn't occurred to you, or you haven't gotten around to asking the person if it was okay to give their name to Liz. And yet you included their name in a list of six suspects here on a public podcast. Where is the consistency here? What is the welder's code?

**Aram:** Well, I don't think I've revealed who they are at all. In fact, you asked for three names, and I watered it down with two more.

**John Hodgman:** And you could start giving out even more names. Do you want to add Dane the Hambone?

**Aram:** Sure.

**Jesse Thorn:** Wanna put Frielbot on there?

**John Hodgman:** Sure. Absolutely. Liz, besides your curiosity, do you have any other reason for wanting the secret to be revealed?

**Liz:** *(Laughing.)* No.

**John Hodgman:** Liz, let me ask you this question, and this might make you uncomfortable. Do you have any secrets?

**Liz:** I don't think so. Not on purpose.

**John Hodgman:** Do you have any secrets that you are keeping from Aram?

**Liz:** No. No.

**John Hodgman:** Do you believe that it is okay for a spouse to keep a secret?

**Liz:** Depends on the secret, yeah.

**John Hodgman:** (*Disdainfully.*) Depends on the secret. Ugh! Got me again, Liz! Too cool! Of course it depends on the secret! Why didn't I see that coming?

(*They laugh.*)

Aram, is it hard for you to keep secrets?

(*Aram confirms.*)

It is.

**Aram:** I really wish I wasn't in this situation.

**John Hodgman:** Mm. That's a good point! What have you learned? Before I cast judgment, you've already gone through a journey where you realized that you had to confess to a crime, and you did it. What would you do differently next time?

**Aram:** I would tell her about the ticket right away.

**John Hodgman:** And not involve one of these friends?

**Aram:** And not involved—yeah.

**Jesse Thorn:** Which friend was it?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, which friend in particular was it?

**Jesse Thorn:** How did you decide which of that list of friends was the one you were going to call? Or is there a group chat that's all those friends but not Liz?

(*They laugh.*)

**Aram:** There's no secret group chat. I think I just kind of randomly picked one. Yeah, I think they're all good candidates.

**John Hodgman:** Aram, if I rule in Liz's favor, you're going to have to reveal the name of the person. What are you worried about happening once Liz finds out?

**Aram:** At this point, my biggest concern is just her winning. I'm not really that worried about the repercussions. Aside from the like very minor, just like this being a thing. And this person knowing that she knows.

**John Hodgman:** Let me make sure that I understand. If, for example, I were to order you to gain the consent of your friend to reveal their identity to Liz, and you were to follow that order, you would still be unhappy—even if they happily gave consent and said, “Of course.” Because it would be a “thing”. What is a thing? I mean, what do you mean by that? How would it be a thing?

**Aram:** A thing. A thing is where you walk into the room, and you see that person, and you go, “Oh hey, that's the guy who did that thing.” You know. Even though I'm not mad, I don't hate them, but that's the guy—or girl.

**Jesse Thorn:** In Aram's community, the most important thing—in Aram's community, ultimately the most important thing is to not really care about anything. That way anyone can ask anyone to do anything as long as they Venmo afterwards.

**John Hodgman:** Right. It's no thing.

Liz, is there a name on your list that you've written down where if you find out that it was them, it will change your opinion of them, or will it confirm your opinion of them?

**Liz:** It wouldn't change my opinion of them.

**John Hodgman:** I guess I'm asking, the next time you see this person in a room, if you knew that it was them, is it going to be a thing?

**Liz:** No. No. (*Laughs.*)

**John Hodgman:** Do you believe her, Aram?

**Aram:** No, I think it's inevitable.

**John Hodgman:** The thing is inevitable. Well, you had said earlier, Aram, that you're most concerned about Liz winning.

[00:40:00]

**Aram:** Yes. (*Chuckles.*)

**John Hodgman:** Not about the truth coming out, but Liz winning. And I'm gonna give you a little spoiler: she's going to win.

(*Liz laughs.*)

But that doesn't mean that I know what my sentence is going to be. So, I have to go into my chambers now and consider it. 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.)*

Liz, this must give you some confidence about how you're gonna come out in this case.

*(They laugh.)*

**Liz:** Yes. I'm feeling pretty confident.

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

**Aram:** I knew coming in that my chances were very low. So, I'm alright.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, I mean you don't seem too bent out of shape about anything that's happening here.

*(They laugh.)*

Well, we'll see what Judge John Hodgman decides 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. What's going on with you?

**John Hodgman:** Well, Jesse Thorn, I finished *Middlemarch*. I was reading it and also listening to Juliet Stevenson read it to me on the audiobook. And boy, I cannot recommend that novel enough. I finished reading it in the park, and I just had to stand there for a while and think about it. Thanks again to Christopher Frizzell and the book club for getting me through that. I don't know what I'm going to read next. So, if you've got suggestions for me, why don't you bop on over to my Instagram account, which is John Hodgman—[@JohnHodgman](#)—and give me your classic novel recommendations. And! Your novel recommendations for novels of today, a new—maybe something that's been published within the past 18 months? I gotta read books!

**Jesse Thorn:** I loved Miranda July's new book, *All Fours*.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, go over—hey, go over to my Instagram account, [@JohnHodgman](#), I'm gonna post something right now, and you can leave the recommendation there, Jesse. Okay? Try to help my algorithm here, okay? Thanks.



**Jesse Thorn:** I understand. I understand. Can I—John, can I recommend—? Speaking of recommending things, we have a new MaxFun podcast that I want to make mention of.

**John Hodgman:** I love it.

**Jesse Thorn:** It's called *Primer*. It's something that my colleagues Kevin and Richard from *Bullseye* have been working on for actually like two years now, along with one of my favorite MaxFun colleagues Christian Dueñas, who is also serving as one of the hosts of the show. *Primer* is basically—the idea is each season of the show takes you on a tour of a musical genre you might not know about, and a musical genre where the music is not in English. And this first season of *Primer* that just got underway is about city pop, which is a Japanese music genre from I guess sort of the '70s into the '90s that is a kind of light jazz and R&B inflected pop music that is very much having a moment. And I don't know anything about it. I'm really excited to be listening to *Primer* and learning about it. They've also got a bunch of like really cool American musicians like DāM FunK and Devendra Banhart and stuff on the show to talk about city pop.

**John Hodgman:** Wow.

**Jesse Thorn:** But it is a very special tour of that genre. And yeah, a new kind of show for MaxFun. One of our first seasonal shows we've ever made. One of our first music shows we've ever made. Christian produced one of my favorite MaxFun shows ever, *Heat Rocks*, which was a music show. But it's a really great show, whether you are a city pop lover—the people over in the city pop subreddit really were into it—or you really know nothing about it. In fact, it's really designed for you if you know nothing about it. So, yeah, check it out. It's called *Primer*. It just launched. You listening and recommending it to people and sharing it and reviewing it in Apple podcasts and all that kind of stuff really will make a big difference to the show. So, it's years of my colleagues' work. And they're really proud of it. I'm very proud of them. So, go check out *Primer*!

**John Hodgman:** I'm going to go check it out right now.

**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:** So, I'm sustaining my ruling that Liz is cool. And I'm giving a preliminary ruling with regard to Aram, which is that Aram is not cool. Dude is cold.

**Jesse Thorn:** Ice cold. What's cooler than cool?

**John Hodgman:** I tried—look, I tried to bring the heat to this guy, but he would not bend. I mean, I don't think I've ever encountered a more unflappable litigant in this courtroom. This guy won't flap, Jesse!

**Jesse Thorn:** Nope!

**John Hodgman:** I'm about ready to confess to this crime, that's how he judo-ed it on me.

[00:45:00]

You're a cool guy, Aram, but you're cold. I love it. But here's the thing. There's no such thing as a gentleman bandit. That's what I was saying, talking about Jesse with before. And I can tell you how I know. I was at a dinner and a new friend of ours who we're getting to know—it's the parent of a friend of one of our kids—she was told an incredible story that when she was in second grade, her second grade teacher got engaged to a young man in town, a real estate agent, I believe in town. And as young teachers would sometimes do, she invited the whole class to the wedding. And our friend, she went to the wedding as a second grader and had a great time with all of her little friends. And it was less than a year later that this new bride, the second grade teacher, discovered in the car of her new husband stacks of cash and multiple fake beards and mustaches.

*(Jesse cackles.)*

Which led the new bride to wonder if perhaps the young, respectable real estate agent she married might not be the person who had been robbing banks throughout the Southeast for the past year and a half, the person who had been dubbed by the newspapers—you guessed it—the Gentleman Bandit, because he dressed up nicely and was always polite. Oh, and by the way, she was absolutely right! She dropped a dime on the guy, and the police raided—stopped him in his car the next day, found a whole bunch of other stuff, and found a storage—and he led them to a storage locker full of even more money and other kinds of mischief. I mean, bank robber stuff, not anything beyond what you would use to rob a bank. A gun is what I'm talking about. And he confessed to everything.

**Jesse Thorn:** Not like live polar bears or something. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** And he confessed everything. He confessed that he had gotten the idea to become a bank robber from a TV show, and did it, and it made him feel good. And he said, “I not a—” Even he said, “There's no such thing as a gentleman bandit.” And indeed there isn't. Right? Because, for example, his method of robbing the bank would be to go to the bank manager's house the night before the bank opened and keep the bank manager and the bank manager's wife hostage overnight. Didn't harm them, right? Was polite. But he terrified them, terrorized them the whole night through so that he and the bank manager could go into the bank first thing in the morning and get all the money and go away. That's not gentlemanly. Nor was it gentlemanly for him to inform them that if they tried to do anything, if they tried to call the police or they got him out of the way, he had an accomplice outside who would finish the job. And that person was dressed as a ninja. This guy was going through a lot, but he wasn't a gentleman.

Point is, it's not cool to rob banks. People get hurt. It's not cool to drive recklessly. Miniature horses get hurt. It's not cool to steal someone's story, like I just stole my new friend's story for entertainment purposes here. That's not gentlemanly of me. I just took that story and took it for my own to entertain you. But also to illustrate a point, which is it's not cool to lie. And the thing is that if you had just—you know, if you'd gotten this ticket, it was right before the honeymoon, you unconsciously put it out of your mind, and then when it came time to pay, you did pay, but first you confessed that you had gotten this ticket—that would be cool. That'd be fine. I get it. But you compounded the issue by enlisting an accomplice to your crime, which was lying by omission. That I think would be unsettling to any spouse. And an erosion of trust that you are willing to protect that person's privacy over the bond of truth that you are supposed to be holding between each other in marriage.

Like that's—Liz is cool, right? Liz is like, “Yeah, I'm just curious. I just want to know who it is.” I was trying to get Liz to say, “Yeah, it feels a little weird that my husband, the person that I love most in life—we've pledged to trust each other ‘til death do us part or whatever—is protecting this friend rather than just owning up to the whole thing.” But Liz, I mean, you should be—I mean, unless Liz is a liar too, just like you, Aram. She's like, “No, I just kind of want to know.” And I think that's fair. I think that if you are confessing, which is the correct impulse and I think a noble one, ‘cause we all make mistakes. We all make errors.

[00:50:00]

And we all have a right to—should have an opportunity to make amends. You did the right thing. You confessed that you withheld this information, and you went out of your way, actively, to conceal this expenditure. Which is—concealing expenditures within a marriage is not a good look, you know? Like, it's not—no one is hiding money they're spending for good reasons. You know, that's—and that's the sort of thing that can really erode the trust in a marriage. So, you made the right call to appreciate that even if she were never going to find out, it was a bad—it would be bad for you to compound the lie further by sneaking out to traffic school. It was time to come clean. But you didn't come clean all the way. And I think you make a reasonable argument, like I don't want to come clean because—and violate the privacy of my accomplice. But that's what coming clean means. You gotta come clean all the way.

Now, I don't have anything to come clean about in this regard. I don't want to out your friend for helping you out. And I don't think that—I don't think that I have to. In the sense that I don't think I can or should order you to say the name right here on the podcast. But I do think that Liz should read the names on her card and observe your face as she's reading them. And then maybe Liz will feel satisfied. Or maybe not. And Liz can define satisfaction in whatever way she wants. But I'm going to go ahead and make my screen bigger. This would be a good time to go to the YouTube, everybody, to watch Aram's face as Liz reads the names. And Liz, you know the names. You can memorize them, right? I want you to look into his eyes while you're saying the names. Don't look at the cards.

**Liz:** Alright.

**John Hodgman:** Whenever you're ready.

**Liz:** Soraya.

*(They giggle.)*

Josh.

*(More giggles.)*

I don't know. I'm not getting much from this.

**John Hodgman:** Well, there's one more name.

**Jesse Thorn:** No, because one of the names is crossed out on this card.

**Liz:** Yeah, I crossed it out.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, right.

**Liz:** Yeah, 'cause it wasn't on his original list.

**John Hodgman:** He's cold, right? We took the heat to him, and he didn't bend. Yeah. Boy, he's tough.

**Liz:** He's tough.

**Jesse Thorn:** What was the name you were waiting to hear?

**Aram:** I was waiting to hear the three names on her card.

**Jesse Thorn:** Oh, okay.

**John Hodgman:** Can't get him. Can't get this kid. Can't get this kid, Jesse Thorn! So, do I take it that you are not satisfied, Liz?

**Liz:** I'm not satisfied.

**John Hodgman:** Alright. I demand satisfaction for Liz. Aram, you've got to go talk to that friend. Tell them that you're going to tell Liz, and then you're going to tell Liz.

**Aram:** Okay. I'll do that.

**John Hodgman:** And since it doesn't matter to us one way or the other, you both can keep that secret from this court for the rest of your lives.

*(They chuckle.)*

Let me just say, Aram, that when you say to the person that you want to reveal their name to Liz, I want you to carry this message to them as well. In my opinion and the opinion of this court, there is no nobility in helping a person keep a secret from their spouse or keeping their own name secret from that spouse in order to protect their own reputation. If you are genuinely willing to come clean, they should support you in that and give their name. Because I'm a little concerned you're going to give them a wink when you say, "It's really up to you, wink." You might even say wink.

**Aram:** I'm actually gonna have them watch this episode before. So.

**John Hodgman:** That sounds fair.

**Aram:** They'll hear it straight from you.

**John Hodgman:** Well, I'm satisfied. But it's one thing to lie. It's another thing to engage an accomplice. If you want to come clear, you come clear all the way. I am ruling once again, Liz is cool. *(Bangs his gavel.)* Aram is cold and cool. *(Bang, bang.)* This is the sound of a gavel. Judge John Hodgman rules. That is all.

**Clip:**

**Speaker 1:** *(Whispering.)* What does a yellow light mean?

**Speaker 2:** *(Whispering.)* Slow down!

**Speaker 1:** Okay. What. Does. A. Yellow. Light. Mean?

*(Audience laughter.)*

**Speaker 2:** Slow down!

**Speaker 1:** Okay!

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

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

Liz, are you ready for satisfaction?

**Liz:** I'm ready.

**Jesse Thorn:** Who do you—which one do you think it is?

**Liz:** I think it's probably Josh. That's kind of where my mind goes first for the person he would reach out to. But the first person that person actually just popped into my mind was Soraya. I feel like it's a bit of a tossup.

[00:55:00]

**Jesse Thorn:** Aram, how are you feeling, knowing that you're going to have to go through with this?

**Aram:** I'm okay with it. I'm fine with it. It's nice to know that if they don't agree to it, then I won't have to. I think that's fair.

**Jesse Thorn:** So, which of the following was it? Angelica, Big Jim, Breslin, Brian Holt, Campanelli, Chankton, Dano, Frielbot, Glenn, Mike Green, Greg, Joey-O, Keefa, Lindork, Mikeus, Justin Kiley, Neil Kiley, Sarah Kiley, The Nader, Chuck, John, Ramondi, Scoop—AKA Shawnsy, AKA Arthur—that's Mikeus's brother. Spike, The Sterns, Steve-O, Stocky, Susston, Joe Tormey, Anthony, Dan “Danba”, Chris, WAM or The Wammer, Kev, Todd, Ryan, Ed Woo, or Wootang—AKA Adam Wu?

**Aram:** Mm. I can't say.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** What is that? The *Doughboys* Wikipedia page?

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, I went on the *Doughboys* wiki. The *Doughboys* have a wiki that lists all Mike Mitchell's friends from Quincy, Massachusetts. *(Chuckles.)* Liz and Aram, thank you for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

*(They thank him.)*

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Another *Judge John Hodgman* case is in the books, and in just a minute we'll have Swift Justice. First, our thanks to Redditor *(taking a couple passes at the pronunciation)* u/REEGT for naming this week's episode “The Right to a Speedy Denial”. Join the conversation at the Maximum Fun subreddit. That's at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/MaximumFun). We'll be asking for title suggestions there too. You can also check out other people's title suggestions. It's always a fun thread. Evidence and photos from the show are posted on our Instagram account, [Instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman](https://www.instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman). You can still—look, still send me your favorite scruffy dogs on Instagram, [@JesseThornVeryFamous](https://www.instagram.com/JesseThornVeryFamous). Or just follow me on Instagram. That's fine too.

**John Hodgman:** Just follow him.

**Jesse Thorn:** But you know what? Send me your favorite scruffy dogs. Remember, I want mutts, and I don't want dogs where you're like, "Oh my god, he's so ugly, he's cute!" I want actual cute dogs. They should look like Benji or something. We're also on TikTok and YouTube, [@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod](#). You can watch whole episodes of our program. on YouTube. It is a ton of fun to watch there. Make sure you smash the like and subscribe buttons there. You can also find special exclusive video only content on those platforms. So, go check those out as well. And by the way, speaking of special exclusive content, we've been having a great time recording Membo Mailbag episodes.

Once a month, we are making a special episode just for members of Maximum Fun. So, if you're a MaxFun member, get your bonus feed in order. If you're not, you can become a member at [MaximumFun.org/join](#). Thank you to JP Devine on Apple podcasts for our five-star rating. You want to read that, John?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. JP says, "I don't know how they do it, but every episode—no matter how goofy the dispute—it's touching. John"—that's me—"finds a ton of funny but also a lot of warmth in the relationship between the litigants." And guess what? Thank you, JP. But guess what? So does Jesse Thorn. Couldn't do it without you, Jesse.

**Jesse Thorn:** Oh, thank you, friend.

**John Hodgman:** And of course we couldn't do it without our wonderful listeners and listener members like you, JP Devine. If you're listening to us on Apple Podcasts, why don't you please go over there and give us a rating and review? It really does help people discover the show, as does pressing that like button. I don't want you to smash anything. You know, we're too tired to smash. But pressing those like buttons, the subscribe button, those notification buttons over on YouTube, sharing our social media stories, saving them, commenting, all of that stuff really does help people discover the show. And we're really grateful to you for doing those things.

**Jesse Thorn:** *Judge John Hodgman* was created by Jesse Thorn and John Hodgman. This episode, recorded at MaxFun HQ by Jennifer Marmor! KT Wiegman was helping out a lot there, too. Our thanks to her for her video help. Our social media manager is Nattie Lopez. Our podcast, edited by AJ McKeon. Our video editor is Daniel Speer. And of course, Jennifer is our ever-capable producer. Now, Swift Justice, where we answer your small disputes with quick judgment. Here's something from u/MayorPoopenmayer on the Maximum Fun subreddit.

**John Hodgman:** There we go. That's a good name. u/MayorPoopenmayer. What is it? What do they got to say?

**Jesse Thorn:** "I request an injunction against the entire country of England insisting that I need to own an electric tea kettle. I already have an appliance that heats up everything. Why do I need another one that just heats up a thing?"

[01:00:00]

**John Hodgman:** I'm not going to insist, u/MayorPoopenmayer, that you get an electric tea kettle. But you need to know I live in a place called New York City where my counter space is extremely minimal. If I had extra real estate, if I had extra counters, would I have an electric tea kettle? Absolutely. They're incredible. I'd be drinking a lot more tea to boot. I think they're wonderful. And I think people who love tea and love pour over coffee or whatever—they're terrific. They're terrific. But if they're not for you, they're not for you. And guess what? I hate to break it to you, u/MayorPoopenmayer, I don't think the country of England cares what you buy. Go do your own thing.

Hey, we're now past Memorial Day. As noted, I am wearing my shorts under my robe. It's getting warm. It's getting to be summertime. It's getting to be a funner time. And that means I want your summertime disputes. We're probably going to have Monte Belmonte coming through pretty soon. We want to hear all your summertime fun time disputes. You have a case about the beach. What's this year's song of the summer? Is it “Espresso” by Sabrina Carpenter? I don't know what that is. Jennifer Marmor put that in there. Is that a good song? You tell me. Good or bad? I don't know. Pick a fight with Jennifer. Where's the best place to cool off? Go swimming at the beach? Go swimming in a lake? Go to the mountains? We all love summer camp disputes. Do you have a beef with someone in the cabin across the camp that you want to finally air out? They don't have to be here to defend themselves.

**Jesse Thorn:** We'll settle your color wars.

**John Hodgman:** That's right. Give us all your summertime beefs, rivalries, disputes, fights, whatever they may be. Send them to us at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://MaximumFun.org/jjho).

**Jesse Thorn:** And of course, we want to hear all of your disputes, no matter what they're about. Of course, we want to hear those summer disputes about melon ballers, but we also want to hear your miscellaneous disputes. Go to [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://MaximumFun.org/jjho). And remember this, if you are a MaxFun member, let us know that you're a MaxFun member. Because we are currently running a promo, which is we will answer any MaxFun member submission on the Membo Mailbag except for weird or offensive stuff. Literally, you can ask us, “Should we name our fish this or that?” We'll decide it on the Membo Mailbag, because we appreciate your membership so much. [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://MaximumFun.org/jjho).

**John Hodgman:** Here's my advice. Get two fish, name one This, the other That.

**Jesse Thorn:** Oh, a good idea.

**John Hodgman:** Or then three, the other one's called The Other.

**Jesse Thorn:** 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!