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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, "(I Can't Get No) Legal Action". Aaron brings the case against his friend, Marcus. Aaron and Marcus are part of a Rolling Stones tribute band. Aaron wants to add the Rolling Stones hit "Start Me Up" to their set list. But it's a nonstarter for Marcus. Marcus says the song is overplayed. 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:** I missed my trash pickup at my home in North Haven. I just didn't get it out to the curb in time. But then I realized I could bring my trash to Maury's, so I drove down there. And I see Mike in front of Toad's, and he's unloading equipment from a truck. And I'm thinking, "Why is Mike doing this? What about the roadies?" I walk over and I say, "Hey, Mike."

And he says, "Hi, Wayne." And he had a strange look on his face, like he was hiding something. And then he said, "Wayne. I'm going to tell you something I've only told my wife and my priest. I've got *Judge John Hodgman Road Court Live* coming to the club tonight."

And I said, *(doubtfully)* "Sure, Mike, tell me another one." But then I saw he was serious.

Bailiff Jesse Thorn, please swear them in.

**Jesse Thorn:** Aaron, Marcus, 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 probably never even used the official operating system of "Start Me Up", Windows 95?

*(They laugh and swear.)*

Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, when I first moved to New York City. In 1994, that was—a year passed, and then 1995 came out—the year, and then the operating system. And I remember going to rent a videocassette. And one of the videocassettes you could rent was Jennifer

Aniston teaching you how to use Windows 95. You could rent a videocassette of Jennifer Aniston and Matthew Perry, rest in peace, teaching you how to use Windows 95. I don't—I've never seen that on YouTube. Maybe it's out there. Maybe everyone's watched this. But I remember it.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, this is a famous video. This is definitely on YouTube.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, okay. Okay. Then never mind. I'm not revealing anything. This is an un-obscure cultural reference. However, as a special Easter egg to our viewers on YouTube—[@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod](#)—I am in an undisclosed location this time, one that has never been seen before in my background. Neither my office in Brooklyn, New York, nor the studios of WERU FM in Orland, Maine. I'm in a third place—an important part of social life, a third place. And it is in Maine, and if you wanted to—

**Jesse Thorn:** (*Laughing.*) Are you at the bowling alley or the cafe?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, that's right. I'm at the I'm at the Corner Pub. No, I'm in an apartment above a garage in Maine, for reasons of my own. And you can take a look at it if you want, over at the YouTube, because it's the only time you're ever going to see this spot. I guarantee you. This is the closest view into my private life that you'll ever see.

Alright, that's probably not true either. But meanwhile, Aaron and Marcus, you may be seated for an immediate summary judgment in one of your favors. Can either be named the piece of culture that I referenced as I entered this courtroom?! (*Gasps for air.*) Oh, Marcus, why don't you guess first?

**Marcus:** Oh gosh, I don't—I could not pull that reference up.

**John Hodgman:** Could not pull the—now listen, you two are in a Rolling Stones tribute band. Is that fair to say?

(*They confirm.*)

Tribute band? I'm not insulting you in any way, correct?

**Marcus:** Okay, *Dirty Work*. How about that?

**John Hodgman:** Okay. That's an album?

**Jesse Thorn:** That's a Norm Macdonald movie.

**Marcus:** It's a Norm Macdonald movie, and it's also a Rolling Stones album.

**John Hodgman:** Okay. Did you think my quote came from an extended lyric? Was it a spoken word album?

**Marcus:** No, it was—I mean, no, it had lyrics. I mean—I have to confess; I didn't recognize the lyrics if that's what it was.

**John Hodgman:** Marcus, are you the lead singer of this band?

*(Marcus confirms.)*

Okay. So, show, showboat. Everyone carries him. I gotcha. Yeah, that's right. Minimum effort. I understand.

**Jesse Thorn:** There's a Rolling Stones joke in the Norm Macdonald movie, *Dirty Work*, where they're about to have a big bar fight and then, Chris Farley says—puts a quarter in the jukebox and says, *(enthusiastically)* “Rolling Stones, “Street Fighting Man, L7!”

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And he accidentally presses L8, and the “Piña Colada Song” plays while they have a big bar fight.

**John Hodgman:** That's wonderful. But Jesse, it's not *Dirty Work* by Norm Macdonald. That guess is wrong. I'm sorry, it should have been.

**Marcus:** Alright.

**John Hodgman:** Aaron, what's your guess?

**Aaron:** Yes, I—

**John Hodgman:** Oh, I love this energy, Aaron. Okay, what's your guess?

**Aaron:** I'm gonna say *The Fan*, Robert De Niro movie.

**John Hodgman:** Wait, *The Fan*? What?

**Aaron:** Yeah, a lot of Rolling Stones songs in there. That's the best I could do.

**Jesse Thorn:** Classic Giants movie, San Francisco Giants movie.

**John Hodgman:** Are people—it's not the It's not a San Francisco Giants movie! It's not *Dirty Work*. All guesses are wrong. Do people even listen to the obscure cultural references anymore, or do they just come in with their own guesses?

**Jesse Thorn:** These guesses are pandering to me! I'm glad someone's finally pandering to me. They always guess Mountain Goats or Tom Waits or something. They're guessing this Giants movie with Wesley Snipes. And they're guessing a Norm Macdonald movie.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, you're right. You know what? My bailiff deserves a pander. You both get A- for effort and pandering. But you both fail, because all guesses are wrong. Listen, I gave you—hey, Mr. Policeman, I gave you all the clues. North Haven. Maury's. Toad's Place. Did you hear these references that I was dropping? Where am I—what city am I talking about? Aaron, Marcus!

*(They laugh.)*

Let me take you back in time to a magical time called August 12th, 1989—when the Rolling Stones performed for the first time in eight years to 700 people at an unannounced appearance at the legendary rock club of New Haven, Connecticut, Toad's Place.

And that—what I quoted from that was a bit of the oral history of Toad's Place, called *The Legendary Toad's Place*. Which, as far as I'm concerned—I mean, look, they had some incredible bands play there. I've seen tickets stubs from Toad's Place with like Talking Heads, Tom Tom Club. Sinéad O'Connor played Toad's. I saw Public Enemy with Fishbone opening at Toad's Place.

**Marcus:** That's cool.

**John Hodgman:** It was pretty cool for a Yale freshman. I thought I was the coolest on earth and I remembered, oh yeah. Freshman at Yale. Nerd. (Inaudible) was like, “Any rocket scientists in the house?”

It was fun. Toad's Place, legendary. Great place that belongs to a toad. Anyway, here we are. You both lose. Now one of you is going to have to win this actual dispute. Who seeks justice in this court?

**Aaron:** I do your honor.

**John Hodgman:** By the way, that's all I know about the Rolling Stones.

*(They laugh.)*

They played Toad's Place in 1989, right before I got to college. You're going to have to educate me a little bit here. Now, Aaron, it was you who seeks justice in this court, correct?

*(Aaron confirms.)*

And you want to play the song “Start Me Up” in your Rolling Stones tribute band, correct?

**Aaron:** Exactly. I feel like it's essential. We need it.

**John Hodgman:** And your band is called—?

**Aaron:** We're the Tumbling Dice.

**John Hodgman:** The Tumbling Dice, which is a Rolling Stones song.

**Marcus:** Yes.

**John Hodgman:** And you and Marcus are in the band together. And Aaron, what's your role in the band? Tambourine?

**Aaron:** I'm the Keith Richards. I play guitar.

**John Hodgman:** Okay. Okay. Okay. You're the Keith Richards, and you're the immortal drug addict?

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah.

*(They laugh.)*

**Aaron:** I wish I had his habits sometimes. It looks like a fun life, but I just play the parts.

**John Hodgman:** Wonderful musician. Terrible role model.

*(They laugh.)*

And Marcus, that would make you the what?

**Marcus:** The Mick Jagger.

**John Hodgman:** The Mick Jagger, the lead singer, the showboat!

**Marcus:** This is correct.

**John Hodgman:** Of the Tumbling Dice. And you don't want to play "Start Me Up", correct?

**Marcus:** I do not want to play "Start Me Up". For the simple fact that when I started the band, I wanted the band to be in the Mick Taylor era. Which is '69 through '74. That, I think, is their best string of albums. And I didn't really want to play '80s Stones. But they have such a catalog that, you know, their whole catalog has leaked into our set list.

**John Hodgman:** It's a pretty iconic song, Marcus, wouldn't you agree?

**Marcus:** Yes, it is. And I do like the song. You know, I'm a second-generation Stones fan. My dad really had me listening to The Stones from the day I was born.

**John Hodgman:** This isn't a birthright citizenship situation.

*(They laugh.)*

It's not like you get extra credit.

**Marcus:** But I do remember, you know, kind of discovering them on my own on TV. They played "Start Me Up". I think it was on like *Solid Gold* or one of those, you know, music shows.

**John Hodgman:** Right, because you're not—I mean '69 to '74, you weren't—

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—probably weren't even born then during the Mick Taylor era.

**Marcus:** Well, actually, I was born in '71, so I was.

**John Hodgman:** Oh.

**Marcus:** Yeah, but I wasn't going to Madison Square Garden, you know, as a one-year-old. So.

**John Hodgman:** Well then what kind of Rolling Stones fan was your dad if he wasn't taking you to the Stones? *(Laughs.)*

**Marcus:** I know, seriously. Come on, Dad! You know.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. I guess he is what you would call a responsible parent who doesn't bring a child to a rock concert in order to flex his incredible taste.

**Jesse Thorn:** And here you are, a Rolling Stones anchor baby.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** Let me ask you this question before I forget this joke. You don't like "Start Me Up". Would you consider playing "Stop Me Up", the Weird Al Yankovic parody of the song about constipation that doesn't exist but should?

**Marcus:** *(Laughs.)* That's it. Perfect.

**Jesse Thorn:** That's a little blue for Weird Al.

**John Hodgman:** Alright, but maybe it's just right for Tumbling Dice!

*(They chuckle.)*

And Aaron, how did this band get together? How long have you guys been playing together? How did it start?

**Aaron:** It's been about five years, I think. You know, I had been playing guitar on my own. And I had learned about open tunings. And I started playing a lot of open tuning songs, a lot of Rolling Stones that way. And at some point I—

**John Hodgman:** Alright. You got to explain this to me, 'cause I don't understand what it means.

**Aaron:** So, an Open Tuning is when you can strum the strings, and it will just do a chord for you. It's like an open G tuning, you strum it and get a G chord. A lot of the best Rolling Stones songs are in open tuning. So, I learned a lot of them that way. And I mean, I grew up a Beatles baby. I'll be totally clear on that. So, you know, for me, I hadn't really listened to a lot of Stones. But I really started to love the music, and I started to feel like, "I want to be in a band for this. This is amazing." You know?

**John Hodgman:** You're saying you have dual citizenship?

**Aaron:** I guess so. (*Laughs.*)

**John Hodgman:** You have a passport for both bands?

**Aaron:** Yeah. Yeah, so it was just Craigslist. I mean, a lot of bands—this is pretty common now, Craigslist. So, I found his ad. And he was looking for a Keith Richards. I think you even were explicit about that, needing a Keith Richards—you know, not just a guitar player.

(*Marcus confirms.*)

**John Hodgman:** Who said, "You're in the band"?

**Marcus:** I did.

**John Hodgman:** Marcus. Marcus, you started the band.

**Marcus:** I started the band. So, I have another band that's an original band, called The Rinds, and we got invited to play a Halloween show in San Francisco at the Elbow Room. And they asked a lot of local bands that they liked to pick a band that was influential to them and do a cover set of that band. So, the previous year we did the Ramones. And then that next year, we did the Stones, and we had a lot of fun doing it. The Stones are my favorite band.

**John Hodgman:** Yes, I hear that your father was into them as well.

**Marcus:** Yeah, exactly. (*Laughs.*) So, you know. And we just had so much fun doing it that we just kept doing it, you know. The band has gone through a lot of lineup changes.

**John Hodgman:** Why? You're kicking a lot of people out, because they're trying to get you to play "Start Me Up"? Is Aaron hanging by a thread here because he's pushing for "Start Me Up"?

**Marcus:** No, Aaron is an incredible musician, and he actually does an incredible job of being Keith Richards in the band.

**Jesse Thorn:** Judge Hodgman, my best friend, Pete Fields of the Slow Motion Cowboys, has played that Halloween show at the Elbow Room, which is like blocks from where I grew up. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** Wow!

**Marcus:** That is very cool. That is very cool.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

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**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**John Hodgman:** So, just a little bit more background about this case. When did the two of you get together to come up with this obviously fake dispute in order to buzz market your band on my podcast?

**Aaron:** No, no, no. I'm going to insist on this. This is not fake, because we've been talking about this for years. And at some point—I think it was maybe six months ago—we were coming home from a show. We'd seen the Black Crows. And you know, I'd been telling him about this. And I was like—

**John Hodgman:** More like The Black on the Nose.

*(They laugh.)*

**Aaron:** Yeah, it's—yeah. So, I said, "Listen—" You know, I have been thinking about watching the show for—or listening to the show for many years. So, it's always been in the back of my mind, like maybe something will come up. So, it did come up about six months ago, when I said to him, you know, "I might bring you to court if we don't play 'Start Me Up'. Like, I'm serious about this." And we have played it I think once, maybe twice.

**Marcus:** We played it at rehearsal a couple times, and I think we may have played it at a show.

**Aaron:** The Chicken Pie Shop, yeah.

**Marcus:** Chicken Pie Shop. Okay.



**Aaron:** So, we—

**John Hodgman:** Whoa, what's the Chicken Pie Shop?! Now you got my attention. Jesse, can you fill me in on that one?

[00:15:00]

**Jesse Thorn:** I don't have any background on that, but I'm interested to hear about it.

**Marcus:** That's in Walnut Creek. It's a restaurant that has a bar.

**Aaron:** And I think we played for three hours or something.

**Jesse Thorn:** Wait a minute! I say I have no background on this. 100% I've heard commercials for this restaurant during the Giants game on the radio! (*Laughs.*)

**Marcus:** Oh yeah? Okay. Okay.

**Jesse Thorn:** Definitely the kind of restaurant that advertises on local radio during baseball games.

**Marcus:** It's a big space. They have a big stage.

**Aaron:** And we had to play for three hours. So, when you have that much time to fill, you sort of throw everything in there. But in general—right?—we do hour/hour-and-a-half shows, maybe a couple sets. So, we haven't played it in a long time.

**John Hodgman:** So, you only played it at the Chicken Pie Shop because you needed to, because you had to stretch for time.

**Aaron:** I was able to squeeze that. We played “Winter”, another Rolling Stones. I love that song. We've never played that one again.

**Jesse Thorn:** You played “By Her Majesty's Satanic Request” in its entirety.

**Aaron:** The whole thing. That would be awesome.

**John Hodgman:** Marcus, what is your opposition to playing “Start Me Up”? It is a crowd pleaser. Is that your opposition?

**Marcus:** It is a crowd pleaser, and there's nothing wrong with that.

**Jesse Thorn:** Marcus, is your—Marcus didn't get into the cover band business to please crowds!

*(They laugh.)*

**Marcus:** You know, I really wanted the band to play deep cuts. I wanted the band to be for people that are really Big Stones fans. That, you know—

**John Hodgman:** Sure. Generational Stones fans.

**Marcus:** Yeah, you know. And I mean, some of the band members are more like, you know, “Why are we not only playing their number one hits?” You know, so I think—you know, because it's a democracy, we try to appease everybody's opinion in the band. You know?

**John Hodgman:** Is it a—are bands democracies? Is the Rolling Stones a democracy?! I'm just curious.

**Marcus:** I don't think so. No. No, no.

**John Hodgman:** Who's in charge of the Rolling Stones?

**Marcus:** Mick Jagger.

*(They laugh.)*

He actually does their business. He is their CEO. Like, he does the majority of the business handlings of the band.

**John Hodgman:** Okay, so Mick Jagger is the boss of the band. And guess what? He plays “Start Me Up”. *(Beat.)* Right, Marcus? You think he's wrong?

**Marcus:** No! I don't think he's wrong.

**John Hodgman:** Do you think he's pandering?

**Marcus:** He wrote the song, you know? Him and Keith, you know.

**John Hodgman:** Right. Oh, you think he's a bad songwriter, because he wrote a bad song that you don't want to play.

**Marcus:** *(Giggles.)* I wouldn't say that at all. I love the Rolling Stones; they're my favorite band.

**John Hodgman:** If you saw Mick Jagger, would you tell him, “There's one thing I'll never do is play ‘Start Me Up’, because it's pandering”?

**Marcus:** Well, I definitely wouldn't say that to Keith or Mick. But you know—and like I said, I have played it, but there are—I think we have about 50 Stones songs that we choose from that we reduce down to an hour or two-hour set.

**John Hodgman:** Aaron, do you feel—aside from “Start Me Up”, do you feel that the other band members actually do get a chance to express themselves in the setlist?

**Aaron:** I think so. I mean, there's a lot of us in the band, as you heard. You know, there's—

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I heard all the names.

**Aaron:** Yeah, there's a lot of us.

**John Hodgman:** There's Ranzo and Christy and Jumping Jack and Dante.

**Aaron:** Christian, and—

**Jesse Thorn:** Frilbot.

**Aaron:** That's right! (*Laughs.*) Yeah! And I think we do try in general.

**John Hodgman:** Poggett and—

**Jesse Thorn:** Wu Tang.

(*They laugh.*)

**John Hodgman:** And Star Lord and Gamora. Right. Okay. You were saying. They all get a chance?

**Aaron:** I do feel like in general we try—I mean, Marcus and I usually do the set lists. And we do like to listen. You know, it's kind of like... I don't know, things become popular. Like, we want to play this. We have fun with this. We sort of rediscover that, and we sort of cycle through things. And we do try to keep it interesting. You know, we've been doing it for a while. So, it is fun to kind of mix things up. And there are times when, you know, we're playing—maybe we've played in that town, you know, within the last couple months; so, maybe we're going to mix it up. Stuff like that.

So, we do try to, you know, go out and ask band members what they want to play, what they want to do. But in the end—I mean, we have to put together the set. And that's usually the two of us.

**John Hodgman:** Is there—? Right, because—well, who's, who? I mean, in the Rolling Stones, is there a power-sharing arrangement between Keith and Mick? Or is that a contentious relationship?

**Aaron:** I think it's changed a lot over the years too.

**Marcus:** Yeah, I think that—you know, they've called each other best friends, but then also there was a big time in the '80s when they wouldn't even talk to each other. But I think—yeah, I think that they consider themselves brothers. You know.

**John Hodgman:** Right. Family. Sometimes family is tough.

**Marcus:** Yeah, they've known each other since they were like three and four years old.

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Like—

**John Hodgman:** Right.

**Marcus:** Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I believe that they—my understanding is that they had just started speaking again when they got together to play this incredible, legendary concert at Toad's. In New Haven, by the way.

**Marcus:** Oh, that is very cool.

**John Hodgman:** Aaron, you submitted some evidence here, including some statistics. These are the top six songs that the Rolling Stones have played live. Number one, “Jumpin’ Jack Flash”. That's about a guy who jumps, and it's Whoopi Goldberg. It's about Whoopi Goldberg and Bobcat Goldthwait—played 1,216 times, as of August 2024 when we're recording this. Then “Honky Tonk Women”. 1,157 times. Then “Tumbling Dice”—that's the Rolling Stones ode to your band.

*(They chuckle.)*

1,142 times. “Brown Sugar”, that's a song about nothing except a good natural sweetener. 1,137 times. “Satisfaction”, also known as “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction”. That's a song about the creative process. 999 times. And then—oh, coming in number six, “Start Me Up”. 938 times. It's the sixth most-played song in the Rolling Stones live oeuvre. What are you trying to prove here with this, Aaron? That the people have spoken, and you should listen to them? Or what?

**Aaron:** Yeah, I think so! I think it's the kind of song people expect. I would also add that on the last tour, we saw that show down in Santa Clara; they started with “Start Me Up”, and they started aall their shows on this last tour with “Start Me Up”.

**John Hodgman:** Why do you think that’s wrong to do, Marcus?

**Marcus:** There's so many other songs that I like a little bit more. That's probably why it has not been in the set.

**John Hodgman:** When they started the Santa Clara show with "Start Me Up", did you hold your nose and roll your eyes or what? Or did you enjoy it?

**Marcus:** No, I totally enjoyed it. I was dancing and—yeah, it was a great show. It was really good.

**John Hodgman:** Marcus, remember all those band members that we mentioned?

**Marcus:** Yes.

**John Hodgman:** Apparently, apparently Aaron polled them all with this question.

**Marcus:** Okay.

**John Hodgman:** Do you think the Dice—that is the Tumbling Dice, your Rolling Stones tribute band—should add "Start Me Up" into our regular setlist rotation?

Are you aware of what the band said?

**Marcus:** I think there was probably more bandmates on his side. (*Chuckles.*)

**John Hodgman:** Mm. Let's go. Let's do it, go run it down. T-Dice roll call. Ranzo on keys says, "Yes, because it's a well-known Stones hit."

Christian on lead guitar—your quote/unquote "Ronnie Wood"—says, "No. Because it's boring to play."

**Marcus:** Oh! Oh, oh!

**John Hodgman:** By the way, that's an argument that I haven't heard yet, Marcus. So, think on that one.

**Marcus:** Okay.

**John Hodgman:** Dante on bass says, "Yes, because it is a well-known hit, and we should play mainly the hits." Dante, boy oh boy. Panderer.

Dre on backup vocals says, "Yes, it's a well-known catchy tune that Aaron can really rock." I can't believe that you polled the backup vocal guy, Aaron. Come on.

(*They laugh.*)

That guy gets a quarter-vote at best. Jan, the sound person—okay, that's fair—says, “Yes, I believe—” Oh, listen, Jan wrote a whole paragraph. “I believe “Start Me Up” should be a regular addition to the Tumbling Dice’s set list. The Rolling Stones use this song to kick off every one of their shows, and it's something that the fan base expects.”

Mm! And finally, here comes Christy on saxophone. “Yes, but only in certain settings. If anything—” Okay, Marcus, this is going to you now. “If anything, it's too popular. And what distinguishes us from our rival Stones tribute band, the Unauthorized Rolling Stones, is we don't just do the hits.”

Wait a minute, what?! You have a rival Rolling Stones tribute band?

**Marcus:** You know, there—I'm sure there's a ton of Rolling Stones tribute bands all over the world. And like actually, after I named the band the Tumbling Dice, I discovered that there's a bunch of other tribute bands called the Tumbling Dice. But like in our area, you know, the Unauthorized Rolling Stones.

**John Hodgman:** But the Unauthorized Rolling Stones, the URSs, they're your arch enemies?

**Marcus:** I didn't say that. (*Laughs.*)

**Aaron:** That was Christy.

**John Hodgman:** Well, Christy says they just play the hits. Is that true?

**Marcus:** I saw the Unauthorized Rolling Stones one time. It was a long time ago, like probably 20 years ago at the Alameda County Fair. And I only caught like two songs, and I couldn't even tell you what two songs they were. But—

**John Hodgman:** I thought you were going out of your way to not shade them, but you're just like, “Yeah, I saw them play something. I didn't even know what they're—”

**Marcus:** (*Laughs.*) No! But I mean, you know, they are good!

**John Hodgman:** Made a big point of like saying, “I saw them at the County Fair too.” I get you. You're playing the Elbow Room, and the URSs are playing the County Fair.

[00:25:00]

**Marcus:** Yeah, we would be stoked to play the County Fair! You know? I'm not trying to throw them shade.

(*Aaron laughs.*)

**John Hodgman:** What would you say is the mission of the Tumbling Dice?

**Marcus:** The mission of the Tumbling Dice is to play Rolling Stones songs to the best of our ability and try to at least bring the energy and the authenticity of the Rolling Stones songs and our own interpretation of them.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, but if you wanted to be authentic to the Rolling Stones live experience, it would seem that you would play “Start Me Up” first! Because that is something the Rolling Stones do! So, how is that not consistent with the mission of the band?

**Marcus:** Well, I'm sure that they don't always play “Start Me Up” as their opener, you know?

**John Hodgman:** Well, maybe you should talk to your own sound person, Jan! Who, quote, “Rolling Stones use this song to kick off every one of their shows and it is something the fan base expects.” They played it—they opened with “Start Me Up” in Santa Clara, sir. And every show on that tour—and guess what they opened up with at Toad's Place in New Haven, the most important rock concert of all time?! Guess what they opened with?

**Marcus:** I would argue that—

**John Hodgman:** Guess what they opened with?

**Marcus:** Which one did they open with?

**John Hodgman:** That's not a guess?! You turned the question around on me? “Start Me Up”!

**Marcus:** Okay, alright.

**John Hodgman:** You're starting me up right now, Marcus.

**Marcus:** I would say that their best concert was Madison Square Garden in 1972. And at that particular time, “Start Me Up” did not exist, so they did not—

**John Hodgman:** Whoa! It would be pretty amazing if they had played it when it didn't exist.

**Marcus:** Yeah, so they did not open the show at Madison Square Garden with “Start Me Up”. And as a matter of fact, they didn't even play that song, because it wasn't available yet.

**John Hodgman:** You're so focused on this Madison Square Garden gig that you missed when you were one year's old, because your dad wasn't cool enough to bring you. Was the set list—?

**Marcus:** Maybe that's why I'm so mad that—*(laughs)*.

**John Hodgman:** You're so mad that you missed that show that you want to erase “Start Me Up” out of existence. You want to go back. You want to make the Mick Taylor era great again!

**Marcus:** I mean, that, that was the era for me.

**John Hodgman:** So, give me a little history here, right? So, the Rolling Stones start in 1960-blah-blah-blah, what's that?

**Marcus:** I think it's '64.

**John Hodgman:** Okay, let's say that. Brian Jones is the guitarist who passes away.

**Marcus:** Yes. First member of the band that had passed away. Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Right. And his place is taken.

**Marcus:** By Mick Taylor.

**John Hodgman:** By Mick Taylor. Michael Kevin Taylor, born January 17th, 1949. And he's a member of the Rolling Stones for these critical years, 1969 to 1974. Appearing on the albums *Let It Bleed*, *Get Yer Ya-Yas Out!*, *Sticky Fingers*, *Exile on Main Street*. These are some—Aaron, you have to admit these are some iconic albums.

**Aaron:** Absolutely.

**John Hodgman:** Even I know this one. *Goat's Head Soup*. Woo! *Goat's Head Soup*, scariest album cover I've ever seen in my life.

*(They chuckle.)*

So, why did he leave the band and ruin your life before it had even started, practically?

**Marcus:** I think Mick Taylor left the band, because he was dealing with drug problems. And I think maybe the amount of fame that the Rolling Stones had—and probably still do have—maybe wasn't just what he was... I could—you'd have to ask Mick Taylor that. That's just—I mean—

**John Hodgman:** Ohhh, hang on one second. Hey, Mick, are you here?

*(They laugh.)*

Weirdly, he's not in a guest apartment of a garage in Maine for some reason, but you never know! He's still—

**Marcus:** At least from what I've read. You know.



**Aaron:** I don't think he was getting a lot of credit, too. I think his contributions were immense, but he wasn't getting writing credits on things. And I think he felt underappreciated too.

**John Hodgman:** Gotcha. Well, he had come—he had already been in the Bluesbreakers, right? So, he was an established guitarist. Maybe he felt like—I don't know. We'd have to ask him one of these days. Hey, Mick Taylor, if you're a *Judge John Hodgman* listener, let me know. [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho). Send me an email.

**Jesse Thorn:** Judge Hodgman, I have a quick update flying in here.

**John Hodgman:** Yes, please.

**Jesse Thorn:** Headlining at the Blue Hill Fair, you've got 21 Gun Salute, that's an ACDC cover band.

**John Hodgman:** (*Chuckles.*) That's going to be hot.

**Jesse Thorn:** Besides that, however—I think more importantly, you've got your live play of *Charlotte's Web*. You've got the Llama and Alpaca demo. Women's Skillet Toss.

**John Hodgman:** That's my favorite event!

**Jesse Thorn:** You have the Dangerous Feats of Comedy: Juggling, Strength, and Fire. That's on the center midway.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. I've seen them.

**Jesse Thorn:** And then I think you've got—probably most importantly, you've got All About Dairy.

[00:30:00]

That's a milk educational panel. And then actually going on after the ACDC—the ACDC cover band technically opening for Dynamo Dogs and Pool Party Pooches.

(*They laugh.*)

**John Hodgman:** I don't think they're on the same stage. Because I've seen the Dynamo dogs before, and they're great. They're just dogs that are jumping over pools. It's like Evel Knievel, but dogs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Love it.

**Marcus:** That's cool.

**Jesse Thorn:** Marcus, how many bands have a song thematically so perfectly suited to a particular part in a cover band set?

**Marcus:** (*Stammering.*) That is a good—that is a good point.

**John Hodgman:** It's almost too perfect. I actually sympathize with you, Marcus. Because it's almost too perfect. Like, there's almost no challenge to it.

**Marcus:** So, one little argument I might say—like, if you listen to classic rock radio—right?—and you're a big fan of a band. And you know, you've been waiting for two hours or maybe all day to hear a song by your favorite band—whether it's Led Zeppelin, Jimi Hendrix, The Rolling Stones, you know, whoever it is. You know, the Talking Heads, or Blondie, or whoever it is—and then your song comes into rotation, and it's “Start Me Up”.

It's not—it's a great song. It's a great song, but maybe you were hoping for something a little bit more, you know, “Loving Cup”, or just a song that's still a popular song, but maybe just off the beaten path a little bit.

**Jesse Thorn:** Do you think that's what people are looking for at the Chicken Pie Shop?

**Marcus:** That's a very good question. I don't know.

**Jesse Thorn:** Because I'm buying it at the—personally, I'm buying it at the Elbow Room. I know—look, when Pete Fields and Slow Motion Cowboys play—I think they maybe they play Neil Young, something like that, at the Elbow Room—I'm sure there's people there who are heavy duty Neil Young nuts, and they're like, “Yeah, play the weird stuff.” I don't know enough about Neil Young to name what the weird stuff is, but they're like, “Yeah, play the weird stuff where he's making that weird nasally whine sound.”

**John Hodgman:** Aaron, we've heard from the band and also the sound guy. And all but one would love to incorporate “Start Me Up” into the lineup, based on your poll.

**Marcus:** Two.

**Jesse Thorn:** Are you counting yourself, Marcus?

**Marcus:** Yes. I am. Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, okay!

(*They laugh.*)

Alright. So, in any case, Aaron, have you done—have you ever sensed that the audience is sad not to hear “Start Me Up”? I mean like *Judge John Hodgman*, they didn't play “Back in Black” sad?

**Aaron:** I have to admit, no. I don't think I've ever had anyone come up to me and say, where was, "Start Me Up"? Yeah, no.

**Marcus:** "Why didn't you guys play 'Start Me Up'." I've never heard that, but maybe that's because—you know, I'm the one that's saying I don't want to play it.

**Aaron:** We do play all of the other (*inaudible*).

**John Hodgman:** Maybe because you're closed off to all feedback?

**Marcus:** Yeah. (*Laughs.*)

**John Hodgman:** What? I'm sorry. Go ahead, Aaron.

**Aaron:** All the other top six songs that we were talking about earlier. We do play those.

**John Hodgman:** But that's the—"Start Me Up" is the—and are all of these top six songs, "Jumpin' Jack Flash", "Honky Tonk Women", "Tumbling Dice", "Brown Sugar"—which is about a sweetener—and "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction", are they all from the Mick Taylor era? Yes or no?

**Marcus:** "Honky Tonk Women", yes. "Tumbling Dice", yes. "Brown Sugar", yes. No, "Jumpin' Jack Flash".

**John Hodgman:** That's a gas, gas, gas.

**Marcus:** I think B, maybe?

**John Hodgman:** Uh?

**Marcus:** "I Get No Satisfaction", no. That's not. That's not. That's not.

**John Hodgman:** So, just so that I understand, the difference between the best era for you—the Mick Taylor era—and then the later era is what? How would you describe them? Can you give me some adjectives besides "best"? Like, descriptive adjectives that explain what the qualitative difference is between the songs? Sorry to be aggressive, but I just need to—as a non-Stones person, I kind of want to understand.

**Marcus:** The songs were able to be in a blues, rock and roll, country atmosphere, but also be avantgarde and be like maybe a touch psychedelic. The lyrical content, just the overall songs, all of the horn arrangements, the piano, the lead guitar, the backing vocals, the vocals—everything. I mean, it's just—

**John Hodgman:** Because the Rolling Stones really started as essentially a blues cover band. And so, you're saying that they still have a lot of the DNA of the blues.

**Marcus:** Yes, but they started doing a lot less covers and writing their own songs. And those songs, I think, were the best ones. You know.

**John Hodgman:** So, how would you say their sound had changed by the time “Start Me Up” had come along?

[00:35:00]

**Marcus:** Maybe they went back to a format of shorter songs, more condensed songs. And I'm sure there's a couple longer songs on there too. But maybe they were trying to write songs that, you know, would play on the radio well.

**John Hodgman:** A little bit more radio fan friendly. A little bit less weird and funky and *Goat's Head Soup*-y.

**Marcus:** Right. (*Laughs.*)

**John Hodgman:** Alright. Aaron, you submitted some evidence, including a clip from *The Tonight Show*, where Keith Richards plays guitar for Jimmy Fallon. I watched the video. It's very charming. I'm not going to play it now for two reasons. One, I've seen Jimmy Fallon do his Mick Jagger impersonation once today because of this video. And two, because you have your own guitar to play there in studio, right? In the Bay Area?

**Aaron:** Yes. I do.

**John Hodgman:** So, in the video that you sent, Jimmy makes this poor old man play legendary songs for him, so that Jimmy Fallon can do His imitation of Mick Jagger. Which seems like a—I think even Jimmy Fallon would say—a wildly selfish thing to do. And yet everyone has a lot of fun, right? It's a fun moment. Wouldn't you say, Aaron?

**Aaron:** Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** What did you want me to understand about the song “Start Me Up” that you thought was illustrated in this video clip? He seems to be having a good time, even at his advanced—uh, I don't want to say advanced age. I mean, he's a remarkably well-preserved human for someone who's punished his body that much.

**Aaron:** And you know, even if it's sloppy, I think that's sort of part of the style that—you know, having an open G guitar means you can just more focus on having fun and just sort of vibing with the music. And what I think is important about that clip is because when he does—there's two things, actually. So, he starts “Start Me Up”, and you can immediately hear an audience reaction. You hear people go, “Woo!”

**John Hodgman:** Boo! Boo! Stop pandering to us! Play the deep cuts!

**Aaron:** But it goes, da-na-na, and then there's that little break. That's the perfect time where people—and they immediately recognize it, right? It's iconic in that sense. And they immediately jump in, and they start right in that little break.

**John Hodgman:** I don't want to get in trouble with ASCAP, so don't play “Start Me Up”.

**Aaron:** I won't; I won't do much.

**John Hodgman:** And instead play “Stop Me Up” by Weird Al Yankovic, which is very similar.

**Aaron:** Yeah, “Stop Me Up” goes—(*plays a couple chords*).

**John Hodgman:** But it has the thickest string, so that's how it's different. Let's hear it.

**Aaron:** (*Plays a few bars of “Start Me Up”.*) Woo!

**John Hodgman:** Fun song, isn't it?

**Aaron:** It's a fun riff. It's easy to play. For me, it's very fun. I will say: for me, it's very fun.

**John Hodgman:** Well, let me ask you this question. Do you want to play “Start Me Up” because selfishly it just gives you this opportunity to rock, much like your bandmate suggested?

**Aaron:** I mean, that's a big part of it! Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Dre on backup vocals says, “It's a well-known and catchy tune that Aaron can really rock.”

**Aaron:** Yes. It's very easy to play. It's a very iconic riff. It's the kind of thing that if your guitar is tuned to standard, it can actually feel hard. And a lot of people don't want to mess with this tuning. And you know. So, it's impressive, I guess, in that way. Even if it's very easy to play.

**John Hodgman:** Do you feel like you don't have opportunities to rock enough in the band?

**Aaron:** Oh, no, no. I got plenty of those. I have plenty. It's not a big deal.

**Marcus:** Yeah, he's got a lot of opportunities.

**Jesse Thorn:** But Aaron, don't you—? Tell me the truth. You like the idea that kicking off the show with those woos is you as Keith Richards instead of Marcus as Mick Jagger.

**Aaron:** I mean, I don't think of it as an oppositional thing, but I do love starting—I start probably three quarters of the songs, anyways. So, it's not that different.

**John Hodgman:** When you think of the most iconic opening riffs of Rolling Stones songs, what are the top three?

**Aaron:** I think maybe “Jumpin’ Jack Flash”, “Brown Sugar”, “Tumbling Dice”.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, the one about the sweetener, yep.

**Aaron:** Yep.

**Jesse Thorn:** “Brown Sugar, the Sweetener Song” does sound like a Weird Al song.

**Marcus:** Can't you hear me knocking?

**John Hodgman:** Are there any other songs that Marcus has blacklisted that you would like to play?

**Aaron:** This is the last one. I mean, over the years we've added more and more from different members of the band. But I can't think of any other song. I'd love to play “Winter” again. But we kinda decided that's like a December, seasonal kind of Christmas shows.

*(Marcus agrees.)*

**John Hodgman:** Marcus, do you feel like you've already made enough accommodation? Like, what are some of the songs that you've agreed to that, if you really had your way, you wouldn't be bothering with?

**Marcus:** If I had my way, I probably would just be playing the songs from ‘69 to ‘74. So, we play “Miss You”. We play “Beast of Burden”.

**John Hodgman:** Those are all songs outside of your chosen era that you have compromised on.

[00:40:00]

**Marcus:** Yeah, yeah. I mean, but then other people that are purists might say, “Why don't you guys play more of the Brian Jones era stuff?” You know.

**John Hodgman:** No one's saying that. No one's saying that. You sent in a nice photo that we'll share on the *Judge John Hodgman* Instagram page and all of our social media of what's called the “Extended Tumbling Dice Family”. Who am I looking at here?

**Aaron:** This is everybody. So, we took this outside of the Ivy Room.

**Marcus:** Yeah, we have a show coming up at the Ivy Room on Saturday, September 21st.

**Aaron:** Yeah. I mean, I guess part of the point here was just to show you that we're kind of trying to balance a lot of different interests in the band. And we really do try to treat it as much of a democracy as we can. I think in the end—you know, somebody has to make the decisions, and Marcus is the leader of the band. So.

**Marcus:** So, I get to say no!

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, well. I mean, that's what Marcus is trying to tell you. No. I've accommodated all these other junk, non-Mick-Taylor-era songs. This is the one—here is—you know, here is where I take my stand.

**Aaron:** I just—I can't get it outta my head! You know, it's "Start Me Up"!

**John Hodgman:** It's a catchy song.

**Aaron:** "Start Me Up". It's a catchy song. You know, nobody's requested it ever, but I do think that people, when they leave, they probably go, "Huh. You know, didn't hear 'Start Me Up'." I don't know; it would strike me as weird.

**John Hodgman:** Marcus, what do you open with typically? Don't tell me, sing it.

**Marcus:** Uh, (*singing enthusiastically*) "I was born in a crossfire hurricane."

**John Hodgman:** That's a good song. What's that called? "Crossfire Hurricane"?

**Marcus:** No, that's "Jumpin' Jack Flash".

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. I knew that, I guess. Sort of.

(*They laugh.*)

**Marcus:** That's old "Jumpin' Jack".

**John Hodgman:** "Jumpin' Jack Flash" is a pretty hot song to open with too. I mean, that's a very upbeat song.

**Jesse Thorn:** And a pretty good Whoopi Goldberg action comedy!

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

**Marcus:** Yeah, that is a good—that is a great movie.

**John Hodgman:** Can you offer any evidence, Aaron, that not playing “Start Me Up” is hurting the band's show? I mean, no one's complaining.

**Aaron:** No. (*Laughs.*) I mean, I'm just being honest. I can't.

**John Hodgman:** It says here, Marcus, that you want me to rule that you never play “Start Me Up”. And also to print shirts that say, “Don't ask me about ‘Start Me Up’.”

**Marcus:** (*Laughs.*) Whose idea was that? I think that would be so great. Even if I had to play it, but I'm just wearing a shirt that says, “Don't ask me about ‘Start Me Up’.” That's really cool.

**John Hodgman:** Is it just the case that people have been—the band has been bugging you about this so much? You want me to shut this down now and forever?

**Marcus:** You know what? I told Aaron, I said, “If you get the win, then I will never complain about playing ‘Start Me Up’.” And I felt like I didn't really complain about playing “Start Me Up” that much. This kind of came out of nowhere. Like, I didn't realize that it was that important to Aaron to play “Start Me Up”.

**John Hodgman:** Aaron, why is this so important to you?

**Aaron:** It's a fun song. It's fun to play, as I said. I really like the innuendo that, you know, we were hinting at earlier. I like that about the Stones. I like that they're sort of dirty, and they got that most dangerous band in the world kind of thing.

**Marcus:** They are bad boys.

**Aaron:** It's one of—you know, I mean, it's a very poppy song, yes. But it has those connotations. And I love songs that do that.

**John Hodgman:** Do you defend “Start Me Up” from Marcus's accusation that it's simply pop radio pablum?

**Aaron:** (*Chuckles.*) I do! I think there's an undercurrent there that makes it more than meets the eye. And I think, you know, the fact that it works so well as an opener is a plus.

**John Hodgman:** Marcus, now that you know that it's so important to Aaron, how does—has your opinion changed? How does that make you feel?

**Marcus:** Yeah, I consider myself to be a team player, and I do love Aaron a lot. He brings so much to the table, you know. And him saying like, “It's really important to me,” makes me kind of like say like, you know, we should probably play “Start Me Up”.

**John Hodgman:** Aaron—before you make my decision for me, Marcus—



*(Marcus cackles.)*

Aaron, do you have a show coming up in particular that you would like to start it up with “Start Me Up”?

**Aaron:** I think the next show at the Ivy Room, we got to do “Start Me Up”. That's what I want. And then I want it to be on the list, you know, so we can add it as needed. Maybe half the time.

**John Hodgman:** Marcus, has the band ever played “Start Me Up”?

**Marcus:** Yes. Yes, I believe we have played it at a show or two.

**John Hodgman:** And you sang it.

**Marcus:** Yes.

**John Hodgman:** And how did you feel it went? How did you feel as you were singing it? How did you feel after you sang it?

**Marcus:** I think I sang it okay.

**John Hodgman:** How did you feel about the fact that you played it?

**Marcus:** I had fun.

**John Hodgman:** Alright! You didn't feel like you sold out your soul?

**Marcus:** No, *(laughing)* I didn't feel like I sold out my soul.

**John Hodgman:** Alright! Will you or will you not be hearing “Start Me Up” when you go to the Ivy Room to hear Tumbling Dice on September 21st?

[00:45:00]

You'll find out in a moment! Because I'm going to go into my chambers. I'll consider my decision. I'll be back in a moment with my verdict.

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

**Jesse Thorn:** Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom. Marcus, how do you feel about your chances right now?

**Marcus:** Oof. It's kind of feeling like it's leaning Aaron's way.

**Jesse Thorn:** Do you think your strategic retreat is going to work?

**Marcus:** No. (*Laughs.*) But I felt that rather than just be the curmudgeon that, you know, doesn't want to play "Start Me Up", like maybe that doesn't look great either. So.

**Jesse Thorn:** Aaron, how do you feel?

**Aaron:** I feel good. Though, you know, I've been around. I've listened to enough of the shows to know that the judge likes to throw curve balls. So, I don't know.

**Jesse Thorn:** He probably wouldn't describe it as throwing curveballs.

(*They laugh.*)

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.

(*ADVERTISEMENT*)

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** It's the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, and we are preparing for the Road Court Tour. I know I'm preparing, anyway. John, I just had a music lesson with my music teacher, Nico.

**John Hodgman:** I'm still thinking about which of the many songs I'm considering to sing on the show. But Jesse, you know earlier in this episode, you mentioned the Blue Hill Fair and all the fun things that are happening there. I noticed that you didn't mention that on Saturday at 9AM, 4H and Open Beef Show.

**Jesse Thorn:** (*Cackles.*) Open Beef Show! First of all, any show we do is an open beef show, if you know what I'm talking about.

**John Hodgman:** That is just what I was gonna say! It basically describes our live *Judge John Hodgman* show.

**Jesse Thorn:** Oh, you're talking about the disputes. (*Laughs.*) I was just talking about the beef on display.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, the only beefcake that is displayed occasionally is my calves if I lift my robe up.

Yeah, no, I mean, we have an open beef show about to hit the road, and we're really excited about it. Obviously it's better when you're there. Tickets are going really, really fast. So, please get over to [MaximumFun.org/events](https://MaximumFun.org/events) to get your tickets for New York, Philadelphia, DC. Ann Arbor is sold out. Pittsburgh is sold out. Gosh, but there's still plenty of tickets available at Madison, Wisconsin, St. Paul, Burlington, Vermont. That's happening the day after the election!

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, we'll see how that goes.

**John Hodgman:** Get your tickets now, because you'll want to be with friends one way or the other that day.

Portland, Maine, Turner's Falls, Brookline, Vancouver, Seattle, Portland, Oregon, Los Angeles. You know where we're going. And if you don't know, go to [MaximumFun.org/events](https://MaximumFun.org/events) to find out right now.

**Jesse Thorn:** That's [MaximumFun.org/events](https://MaximumFun.org/events). And look, the first leg of this tour is right around the corner. So, do not delay. And if you have a dispute for us—for the open beef show—go to [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://MaximumFun.org/jjho). Even for those sold-out shows, we'll get you in if you've got a good dispute that we can use on stage. So, no matter what your dispute is, no dispute too big or too small. Jennifer will sort through them. Don't worry. Go to [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://MaximumFun.org/jjho). 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.

**John Hodgman:** Before I rule in Aaron's favor—because this is obvious where we're going. You made the decision for us, Marcus. I just do want to say, I appreciate where you're coming from. You know, like you want to curate a particular era of the Rolling Stones. And you're not doing this, you know, for money any more than the Rolling Stones at this point are doing it for money. You're doing it for I can't get no satisfaction, some inner desire. Because—I mean, I presume you're not making a fortune off of this, right?

**Marcus:** Doing it out of the love of the Rolling Stones music and songs and also the love of my fellow bandmates.

**John Hodgman:** Well, not all of the songs though, is the thing! Not even the lion's share of the Rolling Stones career! A very specific period of time. And to your credit, like—you know, you don't want to be captured by the hits. You know what I mean? And yet, to your credit, even though this is on the pathway to insufferable gatekeeper-ism, you appreciate that Aaron is a really talented guitarist. The other members of your band are very talented. That you have to be open to them in a creative collaboration, and you can't just have it be the Mick Taylor era only, and that's it. And I have to credit you for that. That's really good. That's a really good place for you to be in. And you know, honestly, if you were a little bit more

truculent, if you were a little bit more snobby, if you wanted to hold the line and actually turn this into a fight of some kind—

[00:50:00]

—it would have been a more exciting podcast. But.

*(They laugh.)*

I'm happier that you are who you are, and the whole human being that you are, being open to the fact that—you know, you're in this with other human beings, and they also have feelings, and you're not just the lead singer. You're not the star; you're part of a band. A lot of bands don't understand that. So, obviously when you open the show on September 21st—right? The Ivy whatever?

**Marcus:** Yep.

**John Hodgman:** You're going to open with, *(singing to the tune of "Start Me Up" and banging the mic rhythmically)*, "Meow, meow, meow. Meow, meow, meow-meow-meow-meow. Meow, meow, meow."

But you're going to sing the actual words. Actually, it would be pretty hot if you sang "Stop Me Up". But maybe we'll save that—maybe we'll save that for when you play at Toad's Place. I'll see if I can get you guys booked there. See if that can happen.

**Marcus:** That would be really cool.

**John Hodgman:** But I will—but in honor of your reticence and your openness and your good idea, Marcus, I am going to suggest that you have a t-shirt made saying, "Don't ask me about 'Start Me Up'." Actually, I might have the t shirt just say, "Stop Me Up", that you have to wear when you sing that song. And you know what? It's on you now, Aaron. If it doesn't go great, guess what? It's not on the list anymore.

**Marcus:** Ooh!

**Aaron:** Fair.

**John Hodgman:** I think you have to really kill it. And I want video that we can share on the YouTube channel. And you have a YouTube channel, I'm sure. Of course. Right?

**Aaron:** We do.

**Marcus:** Yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Go ahead. Say it.

**Aaron:** Oh gosh, Tumbling Dice on YouTube? Bay Area? Sorry, guys.

*(They talk over each other trying to figure out the name.)*

**Marcus:** I think it might be—

**John Hodgman:** *(Chuckling.)* Okay. You're as good at promoting your YouTube channel as we are as good as promoting our YouTube channel.

**Marcus:** The Tumbling Dice Bay Area, maybe.

**John Hodgman:** The Tumbling Dice Bay Area, maybe.

**Marcus:** Ooh. Ooh.

**John Hodgman:** I'll tell you what. Make sure to film it, we'll share it from our YouTube as well as a link.

**Aaron:** That'd be great.

**John Hodgman:** And I hope that you kill it, because otherwise you've just wasted all of our time, Aaron.

**Marcus:** Ooh!

**Aaron:** We will.

**John Hodgman:** You'd make a grown man cry. If you don't kill it, you'll make a grown man cry. This is the sound of a gavel.

**Clip:**

**John Mulaney:** *(Impersonating Mick Jagger.)* NOT FUNNY!

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

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

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

Aaron, how are you feeling?

**Aaron:** Great. Great. I feel really good about the ruling, and we will kill it. No doubt.

**Jesse Thorn:** How about you, Marcus?

**Marcus:** I'm feeling good.

**Jesse Thorn:** Don't expand on that, Marcus.

**Marcus:** (*Cackles.*) I mean, yeah, I'm feeling good. I mean, you know, obviously we're going to play "Start Me Up", and we're going to kill it.

**Jesse Thorn:** Aaron, Marcus, thanks for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. It's been a joy to have you.

**Marcus:** Thank you so much for having us.

**Aaron:** Thank you for having us. It was really fun.

**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/SJHamilton43 for naming this week's episode, "(I Can't Get No) Legal Action". I think this is one of our best, just like right on target names in a long time.

**John Hodgman:** Absolutely.

**Jesse Thorn:** You can join the conversation over on the Maximum Fun subreddit. That's at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/MaximumFun). That's where we ask for those suggestions and where we chat about each week's program. Keep an eye out for those posts. Evidence and photos from the show, posted on our Instagram at [Instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman](https://www.instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman). If you're not on Instagram, you can always look at them on the website at [MaximumFun.org](https://www.MaximumFun.org).

We're also on TikTok and YouTube, [@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod](https://www.youtube.com/@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod). You want to see Hodgman's secret location? Hit up YouTube. That's the place to see it. Come on, folks. Smash that like and subscribe button. And why not this week—choose this week to pick an episode, a recent episode that you've particularly loved; copy that URL on YouTube and send it to a pal who might enjoy the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, you know, hitting that share button as well as the like and subscribe and the ding-ding-ding notification buttons and all the buttons— You know, sharing the stuff that we put on social media—whether it's on TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, or whatever—really, really, really helps people discover the show. As does your very kind reviews, say, for example, on Apple Podcasts.

Thank you this week to Beth Wood Hamilton, who wrote, "I've been listening to *Judge John Hodgman* for almost a decade." This is from Monday, by the way. "And it never fails to make me laugh and lift my spirits. It is a staple of family road trips with my 14- and 16-year-

old sons who also enjoy it. We often refer back to things that we have heard on the show that have made us laugh, like giving cookies at a fast casual restaurant counter a firm hold, or ordering the Kung Pao chicken. The warmth and humor of JJHo has truly brought a little bit more joy to our lives. Wholesome content. Five stars.”

[00:55:00]

Thank you. I give you five stars, Beth Wood Hamilton. And if you're listening to us on Apple Podcasts, why don't you go and drop us a review there or wherever you listen to podcasts. It really does help people find the show. Thank you.

**Jesse Thorn:** *Judge John Hodgman* was created by Jesse Thorn and John Hodgman. This episode, engineered by Aaron Figueroa at Bay Area Podcast Studio in Fremont, California. Special shout out—by the way, John—to The Shane Company, open Monday through Friday ‘til six, Saturday and Sunday ‘til five.

*(They chuckle.)*

Our social—this is my new thing; is I just want us to be sponsored by Amici's East Coast Pizzeria.

**John Hodgman:** Sure!

**Jesse Thorn:** Our social media manager is Nattie Lopez. Our podcast, edited by AJ McKeon. Our video editor is Daniel Speer. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor. Now, Swift Justice, where we answer small disputes with quick judgment.

u/Cuttmannish on the Maximum Fun subreddit asks, “How do you spell cuttlefish?” No.

*(John laughs.)*

“How much is too much to keep in stock? I keep extra containers of commonly used items in my—” I was gonna say, it depends on where you are in your retirement planning. “I keep extra containers of commonly used items in my home in case I run out before my weekly grocery shopping. My husband says stop it.”

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, well. You know, I am someone who loves and takes great pleasure in a well-stocked pantry. But the reality is I found a can of beans the other day that expired this year. And I have to imagine that I bought that can of beans ten years ago.

**Jesse Thorn:** Right?

**John Hodgman:** When you find a can of soup or beans that has expired, you're like this is—it's existentially devastating, because you're looking at this thing going like, “You were supposed to last forever. You were supposed to be here forever for me. And now you're an expired can of beans.”

So, there is such a thing as overdoing it. And I've been working through the old stock here in Maine and getting down to the bare cupboard shelves. And I gotta tell you that I kind of like it.

So, anyway, obviously everything in moderation or whatever. But as soon as you've got beans expiring, you're hoarding too much. And don't get Jesse started on beans, please.

**Jesse Thorn:** Big, fat, juicy beans. (*Chuckles.*)

**John Hodgman:** Hey, we're now in September, and it's time to go back to school. What are your back-to-school disputes? Do you have a case about the Rodney Dangerfield movie, *Back to School*? Did someone shove you in a locker, and now you want revenge? Are you—I'm looking at you, Jon Lovett. Are you still bitter that your theatre classmates decided to perform *The Lion King* instead of your pick, *Bye, Bye Birdie*? Whew. That was wrong. Send us your school disputes at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho).

**Jesse Thorn:** And of course, we want every dispute at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho), especially if we are coming to you on the road court tour. That means New York City, Washington, DC. That means Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. That means Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Let's see you out there, and if you have a dispute, [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho).

I'm just going to mention, John; we're gonna have a very special guest in Washington, DC. Our friend Linda Holmes from NPR's *Pop Culture Happy Hour*, the Queen of Little Weirdsies. If you've got a Little Weirdsies dispute, no matter where you are, send it in at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho). And if you're in Washington, DC—holy cow, please let us know that you're in Washington, DC. Because you never know what might go down on that stage.

**John Hodgman:** You never, ever know.

**Jesse Thorn:** When a wild card like Linda Holmes is on hand!

**John Hodgman:** That's gonna be so much fun. [MaximumFun.org/events](http://MaximumFun.org/events) for tickets. [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho) to submit your cases.

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

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.