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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, "Aiding in a Bed-in". Anne brings the case against her husband, Pete. They both love dressing up in costumes for their annual holiday card. This year, Pete wants to recreate an iconic photograph of two famous musicians. This would require Pete to pose in the nude. Anne says no thank you! For some reason, she doesn't want to send her mom a picture of her naked husband! 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:** "All the really good ideas I ever had came to me while I was milking a cow."

Bailiff Jesse Thorn, please swear them in.

**Jesse Thorn:** Anne and Pete, 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 nude right now?

*(They swear.)*

You can only disprove that if you're watching the video, so you should check out the video.

**John Hodgman:** I'm definitely nude under my robes.

**Jesse Thorn:** Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

**John Hodgman:** Anne and Pete, you may be seated for an immediate summary judgment in one of your favors.

*(Chairs squeak.)*

Can either of you name the person who said the words that I quoted? Word for word; no changes were made in this particular case. I guess I'm going to ask Anne first. Go ahead, Anne.

**Anne:** I'm going to say noted famous former farmer E.B. White.

**John Hodgman:** Noted famous former farmer—former only because he's dead—E.B. White. Elwyn Brooks White of New York and Maine.

Alright, Pete, now's your big chance. Do you want to hear the quote again?

**Pete:** Oh, no. That's fine. I was going to say Albert Einstein.

**John Hodgman:** Albert Einstein! “All the really good ideas I ever had came to me while I was milking a cow.”

Those are good guesses. I like both of them a lot. They're, all of them, wrong.

I was quoting the American painter, Grant Wood, who created a little painting called “American Gothic”—which, if you don't know from your history class or your art history class, that's the lady and the guy and the pitchfork in front of the house. Eeeeveryone knows this picture. And you do too, Anne and Pete, because you recreated it for one of your holiday cards—if I am reading my evidence correctly. We'll get to that in a minute. “American Gothic” is the name of that painting.

Grant Wood, of course, was the founder and pioneer of the American school of painting called regionalism, which took a lot of inspiration from the 15th century Dutch masters. And I'm not talking about the little cigars. I'm talking about the painters. And they stood in front of that house.

You've been to this house, right Anne and Pete?

*(They confirm.)*

What they call the—they now call it the American Gothic House, previously known as the Dibble House in Eldon, Iowa. You made the pilgrimage, eh?

*(They confirm.)*

And it's called “American Gothic”—well, there are a number of reasons that it's called “American Gothic”. One of them is it's got that big, fancy gothic window that's pointed at the top. You can see me making the shape on the YouTube if you go over there. I'm not making a symbol of Illuminati. Don't come at me, but I'm trying to make the shape.

You know the shape of that window, Jesse?

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah. Isn't that a gothic arch?

**John Hodgman:** Gothic-style. Yeah. Gothic arch.

Grant Wood thought that was pretty funny that there was such a fancy window in such a plain house—such a plain-seeming aisle of farmhouse—and decided to paint the two people that he thought might live in there. And he chose as his models his own sister, Nan Wood Graham, and his dentist, Dr. McKeeby. And they became imprinted on the minds of Americans everywhere.

Now, I have to hear the case, unless one of you knows the answer to this important Grant Wood trivia question. I'm gonna give you another chance, Anne and Pete—and Jesse, you can guess too if you want.

Can you name either of the two plants that are visible in the background of “American Gothic” on the porch of the house? There are two potted plants on the porch. Anne or Pete, either of you have green thumbs?

**Anne:** No! No, no, no. Very black thumb. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** Jesse, you want to jump in?

**Jesse Thorn:** Marijuana and psilocybin.

*(Anne chuckles.)*

**John Hodgman:** That would be pretty amazing. And better than what I'm going to tell you, which is: one of the plants is called Mother-in-Law Tongue.

*(Jesse wheezes a laugh.)*

It's a kind of—it has a lot of different names. I'm not gonna—you can look it up; Mother-in-Law Tongue. And the other one is Beefsteak Begonia, which may be my nickname going forward. But in the meantime, we've got to hear this case.

Who seeks justice in this court?

[00:05:00]

**Anne:** I do, Your Honor.

**John Hodgman:** And I understand that you and your husband, Pete, have been making funny holiday cards for a long time—including taking photos of yourselves in Eldon, Iowa, in front of the American Gothic House, recreating that famous photo—among others. Tell me about some of the previous holiday cards you've put together.

**Anne:** There is a—in the evidence, there is the year we really went all out and were a Kiss album. Merry Kissmas that year. We remodeled our kitchen one year and posed kind of Ward and June Cleaver style with a beautiful, fake—very expensive fake—turkey coming out of our fridge. We still have that turkey.

Should you need a fake turkey?

**John Hodgman:** I—look, I mean, I want your investment to pay off. Are you renting it out now?

*(Pete chuckles.)*

**Anne:** Oh yeah, we sure can!

**Jesse Thorn:** You should start a poultry prop warehouse.

**John Hodgman:** Great idea.

**Jesse Thorn:** What does a fake turkey cost, compared to a standard turkey? Because what does a standard turkey cost? Like, a small one, maybe \$40?

**John Hodgman:** About four pounds.

**Pete:** I think it was about 40 bucks for the turkey. So, yeah.

**Anne:** Yeah. Big foam turkey.

**John Hodgman:** Big. Foam. Turkey. And all of these photos, of course, are available on our Instagram account, [@JudgeJohnHodgman](#), also on our show page at [Maximumfun.org](#). And you're probably—if you're watching us on YouTube, you can see them right now. This is a very funny photo of you, Anne, and you, Pete, dressed up Norman Rockwell style, just marveling at this beautiful, fake, foam turkey in your oven.

**Jesse Thorn:** And Judge Hodgman, just for our litigants' future reference, should you come on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, and you have an enormous foam fake turkey, do bring it to the studio. We're gonna want to see it in the studio. This is not a mistake I want repeated by future litigants. I understand, Pete and Anne, how you made that mistake. I'm not blaming you. I'm just saying, in future.

**John Hodgman:** Anne and Pete, you have riled the bailiff, I'm afraid. And I'm holding you in provisional contempt of court until we see a photo of you with that foam turkey that maybe we can post later.

Merry Kissmas. Of course, you replicate the makeup of the band Kiss, the rock band Kiss. Who's who in this photo? There are four people here.

**Anne:** They're—diagonally, two of them are me, and two of them are Pete.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, they're—! Okay, I got you. So, you are—so, Anne, you are Paul Stanley and, um—I forget who the was the cat in that.

**Anne:** Cat guy.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, cat guy. Yeah. I'll take your letters on that one.

And then you, Pete, are Ace Frehley and the Bane of Terry Gross, Gene Simmons.

*(Pete confirms.)*

Right, okay. Very clever. Very fun. Very demure. Very mindful. There's another photo of you two here about to fall off a cliff. What is this photo? In the Stratobowl, South Dakota. I've never heard of such a thing.

**Pete:** Yes. So, the Stratobowl is kind of where the space program would have got its start. They were launching people in balloons to the stratosphere back in—what?—the '30s or something like that. So, I remember the famous *National Geographic* cover of the balloon going down, and they're trying to get out of the capsule underneath. So, that was launched from there.

**John Hodgman:** Very cool! And how did this tradition get started? How long have you been married?

**Anne:** Uh, 13 years?

**Pete:** Something like that. Yeah. So, yeah, most years we do it. Some years are better than others, but yeah.

**John Hodgman:** What was one of the bad years?

**Pete:** Oh gosh. Probably down by the lake. It was just kind of—

*(Anne agrees.)*

Yeah, we're running outta time. We gotta do something. So, there's—we have a pond near the house, and there's just a chair down there. So, we decided to just go down and sit by the lake. So, yeah, it was kind of...

**John Hodgman:** So, no funny outfits, no concept, no nothing.

*(Pete confirms.)*

Just a portrait of two people in love, sending their images to the people they care about. Bleh. Stupid.

*(Pete agrees and laughs.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Plus at a lake. There was a lake too. More of a pond.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, well I'm getting—pond. Yeah, more pond vibes, you know.

That's there in Georgia. You are in—you folks are in Georgia?

*(They confirm.)*

So, who normally comes up with the concepts? Like, who's responsible for this pond debacle (*deb-uh-kul*)? Debacle (*d'baw-kle*), I guess, is what I'm supposed to say.

**Anne:** It depends a lot of years where we go on vacation, and is there something there like a great ball of twine.

**John Hodgman:** Right. Anne, it's you coming up with the ideas, right? Normally?

**Anne:** Eh?

**Pete:** I think—

**John Hodgman:** I'm catching this vibe. I don't know why.

**Anne:** It's a 50/50.

*(Pete confirms.)*

**John Hodgman:** 50/50? You might be visiting a great ball of twine or whatever.

**Anne:** It's easy for us to do it, because of Pete's employer.

[00:10:00]

That you refer to as “beloved airline”.

*(John “ohhh”s knowingly.)*

And so, if there's an empty seat, we're on it.

**Pete:** Yep. And away we go. That's—yep.

**John Hodgman:** Pete, you're an airline employee.

*(Pete confirms.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** We should explain that in John's book, *Medallion Status*—which is available now in bookstores everywhere—

**John Hodgman:** *(Muttering under his breath.)* Well, not everywhere. But.

**Jesse Thorn:** *(Chuckling.)* He refers to a certain airline as beloved airline. And I think it's okay for us to say on the show that's Aeroflot, Spirit.

*(They all giggle.)*

**John Hodgman:** No, you work for a major airline that is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. Everyone else can do their homework and figure it out, because they're not giving us any money. I'm not going to buzz market that airline. I devoted a whole book to them, basically. And what did I get out of it? Platinum medallion status? No, thanks. *(Blows a raspberry.)* Might as well throw me in the garbage.

Meanwhile, you, however, are an employee. So, you get to hop on empty seats and travel all over the world.

*(Pete confirms.)*

Are you a pilot? Or what do you—?

**Pete:** No, I'm in technical operations. So—

**John Hodgman:** Tech ops!

**Pete:** Yes, tech ops, as a—in the QC department.

**John Hodgman:** Quality control. Alright.

**Jesse Thorn:** Controlling the quality of the tech ops.

**Pete:** To ensure that the aircraft are correctly maintained.

**John Hodgman:** Well, you know what? I can't fault you there. They seem to take off and land pretty good. Good job.

**Jesse Thorn:** You're a wing-counter. One, two; one, two; one, two; one, two.

*(They laugh and Pete agrees.)*

**John Hodgman:** You got to count all the wings before you can let any of them fly. If you get an odd number, there's a problem. And then you got to go back and figure out where it is. Yeah.

**Pete:** Yep. And if takeoffs don't equal landings, we're in trouble.

**Jesse Thorn:** And if you get four, watch out! There's a Red Baron in your midst.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, probably you got—if a plane takes off and doesn't land, you probably have a Bermuda triangle situation. You ever have one of those?

**Pete:** Nope.

**John Hodgman:** Not under your watch, Pete. No. And Anne, you work for a university, correct?

**Anne:** I do. A large private university with an academic medical center, which you can also study up and find out which one that might be in Atlanta.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Look, we're not inviting anyone to stalk your adorable lives in Atlanta.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

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**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**John Hodgman:** Okay. So, let's get down to the meat of it here—specifically, Pete's meat.

**Pete:** *(Startles into a laugh.)* Nice.

**John Hodgman:** Pete, this coming holiday season—we are in the thick of it as we record this—or some holiday season down the road, you would like to send out a holiday card recreating a famous image in popular culture, a famous photo. What is the photo you would like to recreate?

**Pete:** It's the cover of *Rolling Stone* with John Lennon and Yoko Ono, where she's laid out on the carpet with her hair all out and all that kind of stuff, and then John is cuddled up next to her with nothing on.



**John Hodgman:** John is wearing—John Lennon is wearing nothing and kissing her on the cheek, and she is clothed and kind of dealing with it.

*(Jesse laughs.)*

And—that's kind of the look that Yoko Ono has on her face in this case. And this, photo was taken by Annie Leibovitz, famously. And you would like to recreate this photo. And you would like to be in the nude. Is that right, Pete?

**Pete:** *(Casually.)* Oh yeah, no, sure. I'll be—I'm down with that. So, yeah. Let's rock.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah! Anne, you've been putting up with Pete for a long time.

*(Jesse and Pete laugh.)*

Why?

**Jesse Thorn:** “Let's rock,” says Pete! Pete, you're out of control! Slow down! You're rocking too hard!

**John Hodgman:** Why don't you want to lie down on the carpet fully clothed and let Pete snuggle you while he is nude and have a photo taken from the top down? Maybe you're going to get Annie Leibovitz to come and take it—I don't know!—and then send that out to all your family.

What was your reaction when Pete first suggested this?

**Anne:** Absolutely not. Absolutely not!

*(Pete chuckles.)*

His parents are living. My mother is living. Yoko Ono is living—and is my mother's age, interestingly. He's got a child. He has grandchildren. And our friends and—you know, my boss is going to get this card. Your boss is going to get this card. I don't want any part of that. I don't want any part of that.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. How do you think—? I mean, okay, there's—famously, in the photo, you're getting some side-nude Lennon haunch, but you're not— You're seeing side-butt, but nothing serious here. Jesse, you looking at this photo?

**Jesse Thorn:** I can see it here. So, what we see in this photo is a pretty good illustration of John's receding hairline, because he's seen in profile. We see—

**John Hodgman:** John Lennon's, by the way. Not mine. I'm not in this photo.

**Jesse Thorn:** No, and your hairline is vibrant.

**John Hodgman:** It's doing the best it can.

**Jesse Thorn:** And we see a little bit of underarm, a lot of sideburn, and a little bit of thigh divot. But we don't see any butt crack, nipple, or intimate part.

**John Hodgman:** It's a tasteful nude, as Dave Hill would title his book of comedic essays, *Tasteful Nudes*.

Anne, have you ever seen Pete in the nude before?

**Anne:** I have.

**John Hodgman:** Don't you think he has a beautiful body?

**Anne:** Absolutely! But that's for my eyeballs, not everyone's eyeballs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Pete, if I said you had a beautiful body, (*chuckling*) would you hold it against Anne's for a holiday card?

(*They laugh.*)

**Pete:** Absolutely.

**John Hodgman:** I was going to say, Pete, if I asked you to take off your shirt for the video, would you do so?

**Pete:** Yeah. Why not?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, don't do it.

(*Pete agrees chipperly.*)

Suddenly this is turning into something a little darker than I meant it to be.

**Jesse Thorn:** Modeling just sucks! They made me take off my top.

**John Hodgman:** So, you mentioned that Pete has children and grandchildren. This is a blended family situation, right? Anne, these are not your children and grandchildren, biologically speaking?

**Anne:** Correct. He has a daughter, and we have together three grandchildren. Well.

**John Hodgman:** Of course. Yeah, right. What do they call—what do the grandchildren call you two? Grandma and Nudie?

*(Paul giggles.)*

**Anne:** For a long time—the oldest is five, so for a long time I've been “that girl”.

**John Hodgman:** Batgirl?!

**Anne:** I'm trying—that girl. “Who are you?” That girl.

[00:20:00]

And I've been trying to get them to call me Granne, so that they will one day learn the joy of the silent E. G-R-A-N-N-E.

**John Hodgman:** Granne instead of Anne.

*(Anne confirms.)*

Right. Add a G-R in front of— Okay, I like that. That's cute.

**Pete:** And I'm HopPete. I'm HopPete. So.

**John Hodgman:** Hot Pete?! I would say so!

**Pete:** H-O-P. *(Flattered chuckling.)* Well.

**Jesse Thorn:** HopPete is some sort of Dutch holiday character.

*(They laugh.)*

**Pete:** Exactly. So, my daughter named my dad Hoppy, H-O-P-P-Y. And then when I came along, I became HopPete.

**John Hodgman:** HopPete. HopPete and Batgirl.

**Anne:** No, sorry, not Batgirl. That girl, like Marlo Thomas.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, thaaaat girl. Oh, that girl! Like, Marlo Thomas, the famous sitcom. I gotta tell you, Granne, I wish it were Batgirl.

*(Anne agrees with a laugh.)*

But HopPete and that girl, even though it's not Batgirl. That's pretty much the greatest grandma/grandpa names I've heard since I learned that Jonathan Coulton's paternal grandparents were called Tuffy and BJ.

**Jesse Thorn:** (*Singing.*) La-la-la-la-la-la-la-la. Right? Who's that girl?

**John Hodgman:** Oh, you're—Jesse Thorn, what an old soul! You actually remember the theme of *That Girl*. Incredible.

**Jesse Thorn:** That's Eve and Gwen Stefani.

**John Hodgman:** Do you—this is an iconic image, and do you think that people won't recognize the homage that you and Pete would be making? HopPete?

**Anne:** Oh, absolutely they're going to recognize it. I mean, the five-year-old won't. But everybody's going to know. You know, my mom will know, his parents will know. But yet, that's a naked Pete.

**John Hodgman:** It is. It's Pete in the nude. So.

**Pete:** I was gonna say, it's just the side of me. It's not like we're going full-on here.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Yeah. Everyone's seeing a new side of Hot Pete for sure. The hottest Pete of all.

**Jesse Thorn:** Find out how hot Pete's flank is.

**John Hodgman:** Anne mentioned that your parents are still alive. Anne's mom is still alive. Do I remember that correctly?

(*They confirm.*)

You don't feel any self-consciousness about showing your bare flank to your whole family?

**Pete:** My mom's seen my butt before!

**John Hodgman:** Well, that's true. But how recently?

**Pete:** Well, okay, it's been a minute.

(*They chuckle.*)

**Anne:** To my knowledge, my mother's never seen his butt.

**John Hodgman:** Uhh, it would be funny if you found out she's seen it plenty of times.

**Pete:** (*Laughs.*) Not that I know of.

**John Hodgman:** No, but I'm just saying, maybe she put a camera in your house. I don't know. Look, I don't know your lives. That's why I'm trying to figure this out.

When you think about your mom, Anne, opening this card and seeing you two together, what do you think her reaction would be?

**Anne:** Oh, she would absolutely hate it. The Kiss card was bad enough.

**John Hodgman:** So, Anne, let's talk about this Kiss card. First of all—I mean, there's a lot of distance between the two of you on top of the cliff at the Stratobowl, versus the wild theatricality of putting on full-face makeup in two different configurations and compositing the photo together. How did it evolve to get to be so complex?

**Anne:** Pete joined a local studio? Photography studio.

(*Pete confirms.*)

He's a photographer, amateur photographer, and a good one, and happened to join the studio. And so, the studio was available, and we did a family Christmas card for his parents there and had all the family there. And I thought, oh, we got this studio. We've got a sink, we've got—you know, let's just do this thing. So, we took it inside that year.

Yes, the Kiss card reaction was bad enough that—you know, I think she hesitates to open our card every year. But I think she would find a half-naked Pete, or mostly-naked Pete, or a side-Pete pornography, you know.

**John Hodgman:** Whoaaa! How—how did your mom express her dissatisfaction? When was the Kiss card, first of all?

**Anne:** Oh, I don't know, seven/eight years ago, maybe?

**Pete:** Yeah; it's been a minute.

**John Hodgman:** And so, how did she express her dissatisfaction upon opening it?

**Anne:** Well, first of all, what is Kiss? That was lost on her entirely. And then, you know, describing it's this band, and they play this rock. You know, if it's not classical music, it's not music to her. So, there was just a lot of—you know, it was just a big thumbs-down from her that year.

**John Hodgman:** What are your ages, roughly speaking?

**Anne:** 54.

**Pete:** Yep. Yep. I'm a little older. (*Chuckles.*)

**John Hodgman:** Doesn't your mom understand that you want to rock and roll all night and party every day?

**Anne:** She does not. When you go visit her at her house—still—if dinner is over and she's off to watch *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy*, and we want to go somewhere? You know, “What are you doing? It's—what?! It's 6:30 at night. It's almost bedtime. You don't want to go out.”

(*John “aw”s.*)

So, you know, she's set in her ways.

[00:25:00]

Bless her.

**John Hodgman:** Bless her.

**Jesse Thorn:** How did she feel about the two of you going to sock hops?

(*They laugh.*)

Like, rock and roll is in music! Wowie-zowie!

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, you ever tell her you're going out to the point to watch the submarine races?

(*Pete laughs.*)

Does she know you're married?

**Pete:** Yes, yes.

**John Hodgman:** Okay, that's good. Anne, how do you think HopPete's mom and dad are going to react?

**Anne:** Well, HopPete's dad, just to triangulate us more, is a retired Methodist minister.

(*Pete chuckles.*)

**John Hodgman:** Here we go.

**Anne:** So, I don't think they're going to like it either.

**Pete:** Oh, I think they're probably a little more liberal about that sort of stuff than you think.

**John Hodgman:** But by now, Anne, surely—I mean, you know. You are mature adults. By now, they must know what you two are all about. They've gotten your goofy cards in the past. You've laid the groundwork for nudity, wouldn't you say?

*(Pete agrees.)*

**Anne:** Absolutely. I mean, you know, I'm not—you know, it's the Roman Catholic guilt. It's the I don't know what, but I just don't—

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Just don't feel comfortable with it.

**Anne:** I don't want it.

**John Hodgman:** Pete, have you run this by your daughter or anyone else? Has anyone else opposed to this?

**Pete:** I've mentioned it several times, and my sisters are all, “Go for it,” especially my middle sister. She's a little wilder than the rest. But yeah, I don't—you know, my daughter hasn't said anything negative about it, just, you know— She may think that we won't go through with it just because. But we'll see.

**Jesse Thorn:** What is an example of your middle sister being wilder than the rest?

**Pete:** Well, you're aware of the sort of—the preacher's daughter, you know. The kind of reputation that they tend to have. Well, she was out to prove it. That was kind of her thing.

*(They chuckle.)*

**John Hodgman:** Do any of your siblings or other family members make funny novelty cards like this?

**Pete:** No, just me.

**John Hodgman:** Are you the wacky one?

**Pete:** I don't know. I'm the oldest, so it's—I don't know.

**John Hodgman:** It's interesting! You're the oldest. Usually the oldest is the one who's trying to lockdown family norms, and it's usually the middle child or the baby who tries to get away with attention-getting stunts like this. But in this case, you want to let it all hang out. Or at least—

*(Pete agrees very enthusiastically.)*

Okay, easy does it, Pete!

*(Pete laughs.)*

If you're not going to get too excited, explain to me how you're going to do this photo shoot, because you don't have Annie Leibovitz there.

**Pete:** Exactly. And I understand it's a Polaroid that she took. I think she was standing on the sofa, over them, to take pictures. So, I've got a C stand and a few things to mount the camera and run remotely. So, there's not going to be anybody else there with us. And so, we can do the overhead of as many shots as it takes to not show anything important. *(Chuckles.)*

**John Hodgman:** How long do you think you're going to be down on the floor? Hours and hours?

**Pete:** Oh no, not hours and hours. If it doesn't work fairly quickly—within, you know, 30 or 40 minutes—then it's probably—we probably should try something else for that year.

**John Hodgman:** Jesse Thorn, do you know what the difference is between hiring a talented photographer—a legendarily talented photographer like Annie Leibovitz—and setting up a C stand is?

**Jesse Thorn:** What's that?

**John Hodgman:** Nothing, they're the same.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, same thing.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Basically, a photographer is just a tripod.

*(Pete laughs.)*

You need someone to hold the camera up, basically. Anne, do you have anyone in your circle that's as horrified as you are by the prospect of getting more Pete than they bargained for?

**Anne:** I am an only child, so there's no judging there. And—

**John Hodgman:** Mmmm! I think that's heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. Thank you very much! Sorry, Pete.

*(They chuckle.)*

You're used to it, right?



**Anne:** And my coworkers love Pete, so they're all just gonna get a kick out of it. And I still don't want any part of it. (*Chuckles.*)

**John Hodgman:** Is there anything else stopping you from participating in the scheme, or is it just the nudity?

**Anne:** I just think there's so many other things we could do besides—I mean, you name it. You know, we could do a Hall and Oates album cover. You know, we go back to album covers. We could do—

**John Hodgman:** Excuse me. Excuse me, Anne, I have to hold you in contempt. Not only did you fail to bring a foam turkey to the courtroom, it's Daryl Hall and John Oates.

**Anne:** Pardon me, you are absolutely correct, Your Honor. I apologize.

**Jesse Thorn:** They've never been billed otherwise, Daryl Hall once emphatically said to me. (*Laughs.*)

**Anne:** Right. So, then if I were to say I were to say Eurythmics, is it the Eurythmics? No, it's just Eurythmics.

**John Hodgman:** It's just Eurythmics. It's just Talking Heads. It's just Pixies. I mean—

**Anne:** We could go to Easter Island. We could go anywhere and do anything, including the biggest ball of twine. So.

**John Hodgman:** You really want to do the biggest ball of twine. Is that something that Pete nixed?

**Anne:** I actually do. It's Weird Al. It's a whole bunch of things. I just think it's so dumb.

**John Hodgman:** Where is the biggest ball of twine these days? And by the way, if it's been there for a long time, why hasn't someone made one bigger?

**Anne:** It's in Minnesota. I honestly don't know where in Minnesota.

**John Hodgman:** I'm looking it up. Largest ball of twine, world's largest ball of twine, tourist attraction in—what looks to me, Cawker City, Kansas.

[00:30:00]

**Pete:** I was going for the Weird Al reference, “The Biggest Ball of Twine in Minnesota”. But, uh—

**John Hodgman:** Excuse me, the largest ball of sizzle twine built by a single person is in Darwin, Minnesota. Okay!

**Anne:** 2025 card, here it comes!

**Jesse Thorn:** In Kansas, they work together on their twine balls.

**John Hodgman:** Weird Al Yankovic indeed wrote a song in 1989—released it anyway—“The Biggest Ball of Twine in Minnesota”, based on Francis A Johnson's folly.

Anne, if I were to find in your favor today, and I was to nix the John and Yoko photo, would this be the runner up? Would Pete have to get you some seats on a beloved airlines flight to MSP and, right before the holidays, get it out there? Is this what you want to do?

**Anne:** Yeah, biggest ball of twine. But really just no partial or full nudity of Pete—or me!—in any holiday card, thank you.

**John Hodgman:** Pete, why this photo? Does it have a particular meaning to you?

**Pete:** It doesn't have a particular meaning. It's one that everybody knows. And that's kind of what I've gone for in some of the other cards, is it's an instantly recognizable image.

**John Hodgman:** Well, I mean, there are other iconic photos—even of John Lennon and Yoko Ono!

*(Pete agrees.)*

Some of which are even more nude, frankly, but some of which are less nude!

*(Pete laughs.)*

I mean, there's the *Double Happiness* album cover, which also features a kiss between them. Which was, in part—based on my research—the inspiration for Annie Leibovitz taking this photo. Why not do something that's less nudie for your beloved spouse?

**Pete:** Maybe someday, when we're old and wrinkly. *(Laughs.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Judge Hodgman, did you see that Pete is a ham radio enthusiast?

**John Hodgman:** Okay. Let's put whatever question I was about to ask into the garbage forever. 'Cause I need to hear a little bit more about this.

Ham radio, amateur radio. An old-timey hobby, insofar as we have cell phones now. And anyway, we can connect with people all over the world in any way. Tell us a little bit about ham radio, how you get into it and what it is.

**Pete:** So, I started ham radio back in '93, so I've been at it for a while. I put it down for a little while and then picked it back up. And I went and—actually this last summer—upgraded my license. So, there's three levels of license, and I'm in the middle. And what that allows you to do is have more frequencies you can use. So, I—

**John Hodgman:** What are the levels of license? Silver medallion, platinum medallion, and diamond medallion?

**Pete:** Technician—*(laughs)* yeah, technician, general, and extra. So, I'm general.

What I enjoy most about the hobby is the hardware. Talking to people? Okay, that's okay. But taking the equipment and making it work and actually making contacts all over the world from my little office, here in Atlanta, that's the cool part about it. And in digital modes, there's a slow-scan TV. There's just the—you know, the spectrum is huge. Of which—

**John Hodgman:** Why did you say slow-scan TV like that's a sentence I've ever heard before in my life?

*(Pete laughs.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Oh, there's a slow-scan TV. There's microwave transmits.

**John Hodgman:** Let me just ask you some basic questions for the few people in our audience who are not ham radio enthusiasts. What is your rig? And what does it look like?

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, we should explain: obviously, most of our audience are also dads from 1963.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, of course. It's actually not too far from the truth.

**Jesse Thorn:** Planning on building their own projection booths for stag films. *(Laughs.)*

**Pete:** So, I've got a small mobile rig at the house, and a couple of them—one for all the high frequency stuff, or the lower bands, and one for the VHF and UHF, which are more local and then don't go quite as far.

**John Hodgman:** What does it look like? You're—what does your broadcast machine look like?

**Pete:** It looks like a CBI suite. So, it's quite small. And there's a power supply under the desk and all that kind of stuff. So—and the antenna is the hardest part to figure out. We are fairly restricted in what I can do outdoors. So, I'll put something up and play with it for a little while and then take it back down and put it away to keep the neighbors from yelling at me. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** So, for those of you who don't know, ham Radio—amateur Radio, also known as ham radio—it's a radio where you are able to talk to people all over the world, right?

*(Pete confirms.)*

Because—

**Jesse Thorn:** Sort of like a terrible telephone.

**Pete:** Exactly. But I don't have to rely on *(inaudible)* to use it.

**John Hodgman:** And also, you don't know who you're calling, right? You just go out there and go, “This is HopPete broadcasting on blah, blah, blah. Come back if you hear me.”

[00:35:00]

And then all of a sudden, ham radio enthusiast Marlon Brando is talking to you from Tahiti.

**Anne:** Judge, this summer we visited Bletchley Park, outside of London, where the code breakers were.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, sure!

**Anne:** Beautiful place, beautiful grounds.

**John Hodgman:** Alan Turing's stomping grounds.

**Anne:** It turned out most of our visit was talking to the guy who runs the Bletchley Park ham operator station. It was—it was a day.

*(Pete laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** I presume you're telling this story, Anne, because you just had the grrreatest time.

**Pete:** Anne is very, very kind to put up with my hobbies.

**John Hodgman:** What other hobbies are we talking about?

**Anne:** Call it considerate.

**Jesse Thorn:** Slot cars, balsa wood gliders.

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** Polishing roller skate keys.

**Anne:** Photography, ham radio, trumpet, banjo. What else goes on? Oh, cycling. Bicycling.

*(Pete confirms.)*

**John Hodgman:** Trumpet and banjo. Huh, Pete.

**Pete:** Yeah. Well, not at the same time, usually.

**John Hodgman:** Get back to me when you can do them both at the same time. Anne, do you have any hobbies that Pete has to put up with?

**Anne:** My hobby was outside of the home and left with the pandemic, and that is I was a stage manager. My talents are best served behind the curtain, here in Atlanta. For many, many years, it was wake up, go to work, go to the theatre, go to the bar, come home, go to sleep. Rinse and repeat.

**John Hodgman:** That is the show-person lifestyle I love.

**Anne:** Yeah, it's a young person's game. I loved it. I loved every second of it. I loved all my casts. I just—you know, when pandemic came around, I was not in it for telling people after, you know, an hour 50, it was time to take a break from staring at the screen. So.

**John Hodgman:** Surely, you're not a—you're not an old person though. You're young! I mean, we're the same age. You could go out and manage some stages now. They're out there. You could get back into the game if you wanted.

**Anne:** I could. I did it at the university where I work. I enjoyed working with the students the most. I could, but here's Pete to spend time with. So, why don't I do that? Watching him do all of his hobbies.

**John Hodgman:** Alright, let's get back to this case. I apologize. That was a very, very fun diversion. But Anne, your justice is not being served here. Have you considered taking this photo and sending it to a select group of people who will get it, while sending a more traditional holiday card to your mom and the other sticks in mud who don't appreciate Pete's nudity?

**Anne:** I mean, that is doable, clearly. But you know, for the amount of time, why make two cards?

**John Hodgman:** Right, and would the work fall to you? I mean, who prints out these cards and mails them? Is that what you're doing or are you emailing them?

**Pete:** No, I print them. I enjoy the whole process of taking the image and editing and printing and folding and all that kind of fun stuff. So, yeah.

**John Hodgman:** Does this fold into your photography hobby, or are you also a silk screen printer, and—?

**Pete:** No, it's photography. It's an inkjet printer. So, yeah. But nice papers and all that kind of stuff.

**John Hodgman:** So, you are the one who mails this stuff out, right? So, it wouldn't be any extra work for you, Anne, if there were two different images. You know? You could even do the same image, but Pete is wearing clothes in one.

**Anne:** Yeah, or just where Yoko Ono is, there's just nothing. It's just a side of Pete. The end.

**John Hodgman:** Or he could wear what they call in Hollywood terms a privacy garment when shooting a nude scene. He could be wearing a full-body nude suit. Would that work? What if he were wearing a skin tone bodysuit that matched his skin tone?

**Anne:** I mean, why bother? No. No, not—no.

**John Hodgman:** I guess what I'm asking is it just the idea of your mom and other folks seeing Pete in the nude that makes you uncomfortable? Or is it even posing for the image itself? That there's something about lying down on the floor with him you don't like?

**Anne:** No, no, I wouldn't mind the posing at all. I mean, you know, we could do that later this afternoon if you wanted to. It's the idea of—well, after the Kiss card, for example, we've not gotten to that level of great. And I feel like if we were to do this card, there's no going back. I mean, it would just be like, “What are we going to do next? What are we going to do next?”

**John Hodgman:** What are you afraid will happen next?

**Anne:** Well, I feel like the years that we have kind of like lame, it's just us looking at the ocean like a Cialis commercial—sorry, didn't mean to buzz market.

*(John snorts a laugh.)*

It's just like, it would thud in comparison to this amazing thing.

**John Hodgman:** You're afraid that this would—there would be escalation after this. To what? More nudity?

**Anne:** Not necessarily more nudity, but, you know, then we don't actually start getting—

[00:40:00]

—instead of getting other people's holiday cards back, they just send us a note saying, “Next year, do this!” (*Chuckles.*) Great. Now we gotta satisfy the masses.

**John Hodgman:** Pete, what is your connection to John Lennon Yoko Ono?

**Pete:** Other than being very influential early in my high school career—I mean, 1980 when he was assassinated; I was a freshman.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, oh. I thought you were saying “other than my influencing him.”

**Pete:** No, no, no. His influence.

**John Hodgman:** Do you have a particular connection—?

**Jesse Thorn:** We should explain. Pete is Chuck Berry.

**Pete:** (*Laughs.*) I have no connection other than that. Other than being—

**John Hodgman:** You just like this photo.

**Pete:** I like that—I do like the photo, yes.

**John Hodgman:** And do you have a particular emotional connection to John Lennon, Yoko Ono, this photo? Or is this sort of arbitrary for you?

**Anne:** I do not. We weren't even Kiss fans. It just happened to be, hey, that's a cool album cover.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, there are other album covers out there. You mentioned that this is an iconic image. There are many iconic images. Why don't you go as the silver scarab busting out of a sphere in the cover of a Journey album?

**Anne:** We could do it!

**Pete:** Yeah, we've also talked about *Pretty in Pink*.

**Anne:** Oh, that's right. *Pretty in pink* on the glass tabletop.

**Pete:** *Sixteen Candles*.

**Anne:** *Sixteen Candles*, sorry, sorry. With the glass tabletop. Or Gustav Klimt's “The Kiss”.

**John Hodgman:** Gustav Klimt's “The Kiss” is a famous image that I'm looking up that is often cited as an influence upon this particular image of John Lennon and Yoko Ono.

There's two people; it's a man and a woman embracing and kissing. It's not the passion that bothers you, right Anne?

**Anne:** Oh no, no. Not at all, not at all. Where am I going to find that fabric, really, is the problem there.

**John Hodgman:** Well, you do it all in CGI. That's going to be another one of his hobbies.

**Pete:** Yeah, Photoshop is my friend!

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, that's right. Photoshop is his friend. Maybe his only friend, if I rule in your favor, Anne.

Do you have any ideas beyond this one, Pete, that you feel like if you get to do this nude shot, then all bets are off, and you've got some more ambitious things in mind?

**Pete:** Oh, there's always—you know, like you said, there's tons of album covers. I mean, we've mentioned, uh... let's see, that was the—gotta make sure I get it right! Daryl Hall and John Oates's album covers. I've got a mustache. Just oodles of stuff. I mean, we sit down and try to think up something every year. And some years it's like, "Oh!" And then the time gets away from us, and it's like, "Yeah, too late now."

**John Hodgman:** Which Daryl Hall and John Oates album are you—?

**Pete:** It's the—in the white t-shirts. So, it's just—yeah, I forget the name of the album.

**John Hodgman:** Well, the essential Daryl Hall and John Oates has them wearing white t-shirts here.

**Anne:** I feel like there's a leather jacket one. Maybe one of them has a leather jacket.

**John Hodgman:** There are a lot of them. What about *H2O*, where they're both really sweaty, and they're like forehead to forehead?

*(Anne laughs.)*

**Pete:** Okay, yeah, we can do that.

**Jesse Thorn:** I do think that the—I think that the Daryl Hall and John Oates cover—the self-titled album, where they're like almost completely white except for their really intense rouge.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, there's a glam rock element to the album Daryl Hall and John Oates, for sure.



**Jesse Thorn:** Let's just say the glam rock does not necessarily favor John Oates's look.

*(They chuckle.)*

Not necessarily the most suitable for his aesthetic.

**John Hodgman:** Pete, how will you feel if I rule in Anne's favor and say you can't do it?

**Pete:** A little disappointed, 'cause I think it'd be a fun album to recreate or fun image to recreate. You know, it doesn't necessarily—like you say—have to go out to everybody. But yeah, a little disappointed, I think.

**John Hodgman:** Anne, if I were to rule in Pete's favor, but he could only send it to the people that you approve—the more tolerant folks—and instead you were to send a more... I don't know, traditional holiday card to your mom or whatever, how would you feel about that?

**Anne:** I'm still not liking it.

**John Hodgman:** Why? Tell me why.

**Anne:** You know, it's not me being a prude. It's just I don't want any picture of my husband's butt—part of it or another part of it—out in the world.

**John Hodgman:** It could be used against him? For blackmail purposes?

**Anne:** No, it's not a retaliatory thing. It's just why do you want to—? Why do you want to do that? *(Giggles.)*

**John Hodgman:** Alright. You know what? I want Pete to answer that question. Look him in the eyes again, Anne, and ask him.

**Anne:** Pete, why do you want to do that?

**Pete:** It's an iconic image I would love to recreate that, yeah, everyone would know. Everyone would know what I'm parodying.

**Anne:** And you just don't care that it's your butt?

**Pete:** No, not at all.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, Pete, I don't buy this. I'm sorry. There are a lot of iconic images in the world that are worth creating.

*(Pete agrees.)*

And you're like, "Well, I like John Lennon. It's fine. And this is a well-known image." So is the image of the service guy dipping and kissing his best girl in Times Square!

[00:45:00]

So is the image of the Phantom of the Opera or whatever! Like, there are lots of them. Why do you want be nude?!

**Pete:** It's the shock value of the card, I think, is what really kind of attracts me to it. It's the open it up and go, "Oh, I can't believe they did that!"

**John Hodgman:** I forgot that Pete places so much value on shock value, Jesse Thorn. I forgot that Pete is basically the GG Allin of beloved airline's tech ops.

*(They laugh.)*

**Pete:** No bananas, please.

**John Hodgman:** I can't believe—I mean, why shouldn't I? Two guys in their 50s know who GG Allin is? But this sweet ham radio operator is dropping GG Allin obscure cultural references right back at me!

Hey, if you're a young person listening to this, don't look this guy up at all.

**Pete:** No, don't!

**Anne:** At all.

**John Hodgman:** No. Holy moly. Alright. Well, I think I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision, where I go get nude and lie on the floor of my chambers here and think this over for. Alright, one minute, I'll be backing him up on my verdict.

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

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

Anne, how are you feeling about your chances?

**Anne:** Ugh, I feel like—ah, I feel like, back with the idea of two cards, it's like, oh, I'm losing now! So.

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

**Pete:** I'm feeling pretty good. It'll be a lot of—I'm looking forward to getting everything set up and getting it going. *(Laughs.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** 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.

**Promo:**

**Music:** Playful rock music.

**Dave Holmes:** Oh my gosh, hi! It's me, Dave Holmes, host of *Troubled Waters*—the pop culture battle to the ego death. Okay, everybody. Word association with *Troubled Waters*. First one to fumble loses. Go.

**Riley:** Comedy.

**John-Luke:** Panel show.

**Christian:** Guests.

**Riley:** Celebrities.

**John-Luke:** Games.

**Dave:** Oh, sound rounds!

**Riley:** Improvised speeches.

**John-Luke:** Puns disguised as trivia.

**Christian:** A very niche *Flash Gordon* clip.

**Riley:** Umm, Chappel Rowan!

**Dave:** Oh no, Riley, I'm sorry; she will not return our phone calls. I am afraid you're out.

*(Failure buzzer.)*

**Riley:** A girl can dream.

**Dave Holmes:** Oh, but dreaming will not earn a girl any points.

*Troubled Waters!* Listen on Maximum Fun or wherever you get your podcasts.

**Promo:**

**Music:** Fast-paced synth.

**Yucky Jessica:** (*Rachel McElroy doing a rasping, whiny voice.*) I am Yucky Jessica.

**Chuck Crudsworth:** (*Griffin McElroy doing a gravely, nasal voice.*) I'm Chuck Crudsworth.

**Yucky Jessica:** And this is—

**Jessica & Chuck:** *Terrible!*

**Chuck Crudsworth:** A podcast where we talk about things we hate that are awful!

**Yucky Jessica:** Today, we're discussing *Wonderful!*, a podcast on the Maximum Fun network?

**Chuck Crudsworth:** Hosts Rachel and Griffin McElroy, a real-life married couple—

**Yucky Jessica:** Yuuuck!

**Chuck Crudsworth:** —discuss a wide range of topics: music, video games, poetry, snacks!

**Yucky Jessica:** But I hate all that stuff!

**Chuck Crudsworth:** I know you do, Yucky Jessica!

**Yucky Jessica:** It comes out every Wednesday, the worst day of the week, wherever you download your podcasts.

**Chuck Crudsworth:** For our next topic, we're talking Fiona, the baby hippo from the Cincinnati Zoo.

*(Music ends.)*

**Yucky Jessica:** I hate this little hippo!

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Judge Hodgman?

**John Hodgman:** Yes, sir.

**Jesse Thorn:** We've hit the deadline for Christmas shipping in the MaxFun store, but! Hanukkah doesn't end until January! So, go get those Canadian House of Pizza and Garbage t-shirts.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, that's the gelt you need!

**Jesse Thorn:** Eight of them. Get eight! Get eight t-shirts!

**John Hodgman:** For every night!

**Jesse Thorn:** Each night that the oil lasted!

**John Hodgman:** Whether it's Hanukkah or Saturnalia or Yule or New Year's Eve or anything that you honor and celebrate during this—the holiday season—it's still a good time to give a present, even if it's a little late. And we've got lots of them over there at the Maximum Fun Store, at [MaxFunStore.com](http://MaxFunStore.com). Our Canadian House of Pizza and Garbage t-shirts are out of the vault, first time available in many years—as well as beer and—other beverage koozies, nonalcoholic beer or other canned beverages. We have Canadian House of Pizza and Garbage beverage koozies available as well in both regular size cans and for the slim cans that are so popular these days, as well as Weird Mom t-shirts to go along with our famous Weird Dad t-shirts.

And what's more, we've got shows coming up. Right, Jesse?

**Jesse Thorn:** We're headed up and down the west coast: Vancouver, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco Sketchfest, and—of course—LA. Although the LA tickets are already sold out. So, go to [MaximumFun.org/events](http://MaximumFun.org/events) for links to all of those shows, and get those tickets now before your preferred destination sells out.

**John Hodgman:** That's right! And you know, if you're looking for a last-minute Hanukkah gift, get some tickets to the big show, and put them in a little card, and hand it to them, and say, “Happy Hanukkah from Judge John Hodgman and Jesse Thorn.”

Should we get back to the case?

**Jesse Thorn:** Let's do it.

**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.)*

[00:50:00]

**John Hodgman:** Pete and—let me say, first of all, that you're—both of you—the most adorable GG Allin fans I've ever met. And intrinsically very adorable. And I would be really remiss—you know, people who are watching on the YouTube channel, [@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod](#) over there on YouTube, are probably mad at me because I haven't brought this up yet. Because they have seen what I have only just now seen now that I've focused—I've enlarged the image of you, so that I can really take a good look at both of you before I pronounce sentence.

And only now do I realize that you're both wearing shirts with bananas on the shirts. Can you tell me why you have dressed up alike in such a cutesy manner with bananas on your shirts?

**Anne:** We wanted to be cutesy for you. And also, there was a taping last year of a podcast on a different comedy network that we bought these shirts specifically for.

**John Hodgman:** I see. Weeeell, you just lost your case, Anne, because you mentioned another podcast.

**Anne:** I know. I figured it was going down south anyway.

**John Hodgman:** Good luck to all bands.

Did you think it was going to go down south? Did you think I was going to endorse Pete's down south project here, and that your case would go down south?

*(Pete giggles.)*

**Anne:** Yeah, I think you appreciate the shock value. I do.

**John Hodgman:** Weeeell, why don't you listen to my whole verdict then?

My favorite part of your adorableness today was when I asked, “Do you feel, Anne, uncomfortable taking this photo for any reason?”, and you were like, “No! We could do it this afternoon! I don't care.”

*(Scheming.)* I was like, that's right. They can do it this afternoon...

For anybody who wants to know, that's what marriage is. Marriage is the comfort of knowing that if you wanted to later this afternoon, you could lie down on the floor with your loved one, and one of you can be nude, and you could recreate iconic image just for funs.

And indeed, do you know what? My preliminary ruling is you're going to do that this afternoon. You made your promise. You're going to do it. You're going to lie down on the floor with your husband and let him kiss you on the cheek and humiliate you by cuddling next to you in the nude.

*(Anne laughs.)*

**Pete:** The question now is: will a photo be taken?

**John Hodgman:** I think that the photo should be taken, because obviously it's something that Pete is really thinking a lot about for reasons that he has difficulty explaining on a podcast. Maybe in the dead of night, he's able to unburden himself and reveal his deepest, uninhibited feelings. But here, right now, all he can say is this is "this is an iconic image I'd like to recreate."

And I'm like, well, why not? If you're comfortable enough with it, Anne, why not go ahead and take the photo?

And here's the reason for my ruling, which is, "Uh, no, you shouldn't." And the reason being that, yes, this is an iconic photo. Yes, there is nothing wrong with the nude human body, and there is nothing wrong with Pete's nude human body. And I think that if your mom could handle Hot Pete, and you, Granne, as Kiss, she probably could handle this next thing.

But one thing I didn't understand about this iconic photo that has not come up in our conversation is not only was it shot by Annie Leibovitz, but it was shot hours before John Lennon was assassinated.

That afternoon, she took that photo at the Dakota and left, and then he was assassinated. And that's why that photo is so famous. It's the last photo of them together, literally the day that he was killed. And for that reason, I think that that's a bad vibe to send out in the world as a holiday card. Makes it a little easier for me to make my ruling.

But I do think that's not something that everyone would know, because most people are gonna be like, "Holy moly!" They're going to be distracted by the beauty of Pete's alabaster flank and all of its glory.

But I think that's the wrong thing to send out, I'm sorry to say. Like, you know, the holiday time is about trying to share not only your nude self, but your hopes and dreams and thanks and gratitude for this year as we pass into the next year. And I just don't think that that's a good vibe to send out. If you wanted to do *Double Fantasy*, that image from the cover—it's not quite as famous, but that is a wonderful celebration of love between John Lennon and Yoko Ono, two people who really loved each other. But I think that this is not the one to send out as a holiday card.

You can take the photo. Indeed, you could do it this afternoon—and it is challenged you to it, frankly, Pete. Go home, and take this photo, and then have it for yourself. And maybe share it with some people that you care about down the road or whatever.

[00:55:00]

It would be an alarming thing to leave to your daughter as part of your legacy. But it definitely is a reflection of you and your anything-goes-ness as a couple, which is terrific. But I don't think you should send it out as a holiday card. I do think that you should either—or at some point—definitely go to the largest ball of twine created by one man in Minnesota. And maybe we can even send that card to Weird Al Yankovic. I've got his address. To honor the song that he wrote about that very ball of twine.

Anne, my sympathies go to you from one only child to another. I never intended to share my life and my decisions with anyone. And then I accidentally fell in love with a person to whom I am married. She's a whole human being in her own right, and it has been a now 25-year period of intense discomfort and growth as I realize I have to take other people's thoughts and feelings into account.

I'm sorry to have to remind you of the fact that is the choice you made too. We both sold out our birthright as only children by sharing our lives with other people. It is sometimes uncomfortable, it is sometimes complicated; compromise is for other people, with siblings. But I think that you have benefited greatly from knowing each other and complimenting each other so well. I'm sorry that this is not quite a match.

Why don't I take a screenshot of you both in your banana shirts? And when I say three, two, one, both of you say, "Let's rock." Three, two, one.

**Pete & Anne:** *(In perfect unison.)* Let's rock!

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, there you go. There's your Christmas card right there. How about that? This is the sound of a gavel.

**Clip:**

**John Lennon:** ... to show everything. People always looking at people like me, trying to see some secret or "What do they do? What do they do?" You know, "Do they go to the bathroom?"

**John Hodgman:** Judge John Hodgman rules, that is all.

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

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

Anne, how do you feel right now?



**Anne:** I am shocked, actually, but looking forward to finding something else for the rest of our lives together each year for a card.

**Jesse Thorn:** What's shocked you?

**Anne:** Shocked that I won. (*Laughs.*)

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

**Pete:** I'm a little bit disappointed, but not that bad in that we—you know, we'll do the image. But I agree with the judge that it may not be the best idea for a holiday card.

**Jesse Thorn:** Well, Anne, Pete, thanks for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

**Anne:** Thank you.

**Pete:** Thank you.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Another *Judge John Hodgman* case is in the books. We'll have Swift Justice in just a moment. But first, our thanks to Redditor FortinbrasTheThird for naming this week's episode "Aiding in a Bed-in". You can join the conversation on Reddit. By the way, John, I just found out from a user on the Maximum Fun subreddit that going to [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/maximumfun) no longer takes you to the Maximum Fun subreddit!

**John Hodgman:** Oh, okay.

**Jesse Thorn:** In fact, it doesn't work for—it's not something special about Maximum Fun. Just Reddit, I guess, decommissioned that referral thingy. So, now you got to go to [Reddit.com/r/maximumfun](https://www.reddit.com/r/maximumfun) or search for Maximum Fun in your Reddit app or on Reddit or whatever. Anyway, that's where we chat about every week's episode and ask for suggestions for titles. It's great time over there in the Maximum Fun sub.

**John Hodgman:** And by the way, I failed to mention it earlier. FortinbrasTheThird was one of a couple of smarty pants is over there who came up with some version of aiding in a bed-in, and the bed-in is one of John Lennon and Yoko Ono's famous forms of protest. They would lie in bed all day. That's what that's a reference to.

But thanks to everybody who came up with that fun joke, and you can go give them thanks right over there at the Maximum Fun subreddit, [Reddit.com/r/maximumfun](https://www.reddit.com/r/maximumfun). It's a lot of fun over there.

**Jesse Thorn:** You can find evidence from this week's show on the Maximum Fun website, on the episode page for this episode, as well as on our Instagram account, [@JudgeJohnHodgman](https://www.instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman). You can also find video from this show on YouTube, clips on

Instagram; you can find clips on Facebook; you can search for Judge John Hodgman on TikTok. Now follow us on TikTok! We're putting fun stuff on the TikTok there.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. And also, I want to send a thanks out to Jonathan Arbogast over on Apple Podcast for leaving us a really nice review and five stars. Jonathan Arbogast says, “The *Judge John Hodgman* podcast is essential.” Wow! “Jimmy V once said that if you laugh, cry, and think, you've had a heck of a day. With *Judge John Hodgman*, I've had a heck of a Wednesday for many years now.” Thank you so much, Mr. Arbogast.

[01:00:00]

If you're listening on Apple Podcasts, won't you consider leaving us a few words and maybe a number of stars? Perhaps that number of stars would be five? You can also rate and review us over on Pocket Cast; you can leave a comment on Spotify; you can leave a comment on YouTube. Or you can just tell a friend about the show. All of these methods of watching us on social media, interacting with our content, spreading it around, really helps new listeners find the show. And we really do appreciate it.

**Jesse Thorn:** *Judge John Hodgman* was created by Jesse Thorn and John Hodgman. This episode, engineered by Brooky Coon at Bravo Ocean Studios in Atlanta, Georgia. Our social media manager is Nattie Lopez. The podcast is edited by AJ McKeon. Our video producer is Daniel Speer. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor.

Now, Swift Justice, where we answer small disputes with quick judgment.

BaltaNerdist on the Maximum Fun subreddit—that's a classic *Judge John Hodgman* listener on the reddit, BaltaNerdist.

**John Hodgman:** BaltaNerdist.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, BaltaNerdist, always chiming in.

“My friend, Robbie, gets annoyed when PhDs prefer to be called Dr. So-and-So. I think it's a matter of the social contract to call someone the thing they ask you to call them, even if you find it pretentious.”

What do you say, Judge Hodgman?

**John Hodgman:** I'm sorry, were you talking to me?

Jesse Thorn: Uh, yes, sir?

**John Hodgman:** Oh, I'm sorry. I think you called me Judge Hodgman, but I've changed my name. I'm now Beefsteak Begonia. Sooo, that's how I would like to be addressed from now on.

**Jesse Thorn:** (*Chuckling.*) Apologies, Double B.

**John Hodgman:** Dr. Beefsteak Begonia, to you.

Look, is it a little pretentious? Yes. Is it decent to call people what they ask to be called? Absolutely. And by the way, even though it is convention to refer to medical doctors as doctor and less conventional to refer to, say, a doctor of musicology and call them doctor—just to name an area where you can get a PhD. That doesn't mean that Dr. Music did not do a lot of work to get that doctorate and deserves to be called doctor!

So, Robbie, why don't you just worry about your own stuff over there and call people what they want to be called? Signed, Beefsteak Begonia.

Hey, we're getting ready to ring in a new year, and I want to hear disputes about new things! Are you a New Yorker feeling conflicted about a move to New Jersey? Did you get a new jumpsuit that you love, but your husband just does not understand it? It's called fashion, and he's clearly never heard of it. Did you follow through on your New Year's resolution, and no one cares?

Let me know all of your new disputes, anything involving the word new, over at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho). That's [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho). It's a simple form where you send us your disputes, whether it's new things or old things. Do we want to hear all of them, or just some of them, Jesse?

**Jesse Thorn:** All of them, indeed, at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho). 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!