

[00:00:00]

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Jesse Thorn: It is the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. With me is my friend and yours, Judge John Hodgman. And this week's episode, recorded live in St. Paul, Minnesota, where we had a monumentally good time, John.

John Hodgman: Before we even got to the stage, Jesse Thorn lived out a lifelong dream of petting a capybara on the head. Not even one capybara, multiple capybaras.

Jesse Thorn: John, forget—(*stammering*) forget the capybaras! I hate to say it, but forget the capybaras.

(*John “whoa”s.*)

Because while we were sound checking for this show on the stage of the Fitzgerald Theater in St. Paul, Minnesota, I got a telephone call—which I stepped away from the microphone to answer. We had gone to a place called Sustainable Safari to pet these capybaras. And I thought we had so much fun petting these capybaras—and of course, meeting the sloth, Jennifer Slowpez—

(*John snorts into a laugh.*)

—that I thought, “I’ll leave my phone number if anybody who works there wants free tickets to the show. We had such a great time. We’re glad to put them on the list. You can come to the show.” I get this phone call. I think maybe it’s somebody— It’s a Minnesota number. I’m thinking maybe somebody is wanting to come to the show. So, I step away from the microphone while we’re sound checking. I answer it.

This woman says, “Hi! I am the healthcare coordinator for Sustainable Safari.”

I said, “Oh, great. We were just there. We had such a nice time. Would you like to come to the show?”

And she said, “Sure.” And she said, “It just so happens that I have a couple of baby kangaroos living in my house right now. Would you like me to bring them by?”

(*They laugh.*)

To which I said, “(*Incoherent excited blubbling*)?! ”

John Hodgman: Yeah. You can see these photos of the baby kangaroos and us backstage at the Fitzgerald Theater on our social media. But the magic wasn't just backstage. The magic, as always, is onstage at the beautiful Fitzgerald Theater, a place that we love to go and perform in. In this show, we talk about TV volume, when it's appropriate to wear shorts and

when it is inappropriate to wear shorts, whether to wash your floor mats of your car in a dishwasher. And we get deep into the etiquette of Minnesota neighborhood potlucks. It's a great show and we had a great time.

Jesse Thorn: Let's go to the stage of the Fitzgerald Theater in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Jesse Thorn: People of St. Paul, Minnesota! You asked us for live justice, and we stand ready to deliver it. The court of Judge John Hodgman is now in session.

(Cheers and applause.)

Let's start our first case. Please welcome to the stage Michael and Katie. Michael brings the case against his wife, Katie. Ever since she was a child, Katie has watched TV in a very specific way. She's a weird mom with a system, and Michael can't stand it.

(Laughter.)

Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide. Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom.

(Cheers and applause.)

John Hodgman: Michael and Katie, thank you for joining us. Katie, this is about a dispute about watching television. What are you—what are y'all watching on TV these days?

Katie: *(Chuckles.)* Not much. We have a 10-month-old and a 2-year-old.

(John congratulates them.)

So, it's taking us a minute to get through anything.

John Hodgman: Are these human babies or baby kangaroos?

Katie: These are human babies.

John Hodgman: Oh, what a shame! I'm so sorry.

(Laughter.)

Katie: I know. I mean, those kangaroos seemed like really calm by comparison.

Michael: They seem like it, but they had some stories. You know, it was a tough weekend.

John Hodgman: So, Katie, tell me the specific way you like to watch tv, the specific setting. What is it and why?

Katie: Well, the why is a very long answer.

John Hodgman: Okay, let's do the short one first.

Katie: “What” is I like the volume settings to be on even numbers or multiples of five.

(Cheers and applause from the audience.)

Thank you, thank you.

John Hodgman: Okay. Surprise reaction from the crowd, I must say.

Katie: I’m not alone!

John Hodgman: This did not occur to me that this would be something that other people cared about.

Katie: Yeah.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: What about the why?

Jesse Thorn: There's like a classic applause line, like, “Who here loves teachers?”

(Laughter.)

“Fives and twos, am I right?”

Katie: *(Laughs.)* Yeah. The—well—I mean—*(stammering)*.

John Hodgman: Well, let me put it this way. Maybe this will help. When the TV volume is not an even number or a multiple of five, how do you feel?

Katie: Um, it just sort of like eats my brain.

John Hodgman: It eats. Your brain.

Katie: Like, I just can't focus on the show, 'cause I'm like, “I wish it was a 12.”

John Hodgman: Can you even tell the difference between 12 and 13?

Katie: I mean, if I don't see the number, whatever.

John Hodgman: Okay.

[00:05:00]

Michael. *(Laughs.)* Evens and multiples of five.

Michael: It's a lot of—it's 60%.

John Hodgman: You've done the math.

(Michael confirms.)

(Laughter.)

Katie: He always does the math.

John Hodgman: I mean, it gives you a lot of options though.

Michael: It's a lot of options. I think it—you know.

John Hodgman: So, what's your issue here?

Michael: Longtime listener of the podcast.

John Hodgman: Alright. I'll accept your suck up.

(Laughter.)

Katie: I cheered when you came on.

John Hodgman: It's too late.

(Michael cackles.)

Katie: He didn't cheer!

John Hodgman: Michael already got there. He was first to pander. Wins the day. *(Four gavel bangs.)*

Michael: That's right. Long time listener. You're always asking— No dispute is too small. So, it's been in my head for a long time, but it's not so much of a thing that I've ever done anything about it. I've probably thought of it 100 times.

Jesse Thorn: Well, what would you have done about it? Divorce?

(Laughter.)

Michael: No, no, no! Write in my dispute!

Jesse Thorn: Tear the television off the screen.

Michael: Send an email!

Jesse Thorn: Okay, I see.

Michael: Usually, I'm in my car. I don't think of it once I get to the email.

Katie: 'Cause it's not that big a deal.

Michael: It's not a big deal. But you know, coming to St. Paul, I thought this is a perfect Swift Justice.

John Hodgman: I agree with you!

Michael: And sometimes I want it to be nine, you know?

John Hodgman: Sssure? That's pretty soft.

(Laughter.)

Michael: 19!

John Hodgman: Alright, 19. I like that. It does—I mean, *(chuckling)* you have to admit, Katie, it does eliminate all the prime numbers.

(Laughter.)

Katie: Exactly!

John Hodgman: Ohhh! Is that it?

Michael: That's part of the point, yeah.

John Hodgman: Are you anti-prime?

Katie: No comment.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: I see. Michael, have you ever considered just setting it to 17 and not telling your beloved? What she doesn't know can't hurt her.

Michael: I have. I've done it. But it feels wrong.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: To deceive your bride feels wrong?

(Michael agrees.)

You know, that's a—look, that's a high bar that many a *Judge John Hodgman* husband does not pass.

(Laughter.)

(Stammering.) So, Katie says that when she is watching at, say, 11 or 19 or 21 or 23 or 27—I mean, I can tell that these numbers are bothering you just as I say them!

Katie: *(Laughs.)* My mouth just like—

John Hodgman: But says it hurts her brain in some irrational way.

(Katie confirms.)

Has this been a whole, all-your-life kind of thing?

Katie: *(Uncertainly.)* Yeah? Yeah. And this is—I would say like this is like the only lingering. I would say there were like little like—

John Hodgman: What were some of the others?

Katie: So, when I was in the shower, I would—when I would turn off the shower, it was one of those that—like, it was a bathtub/shower combo situation.

John Hodgman: I've heard of them.

Katie: So, when you turn it off, it like throws water out the bottom. So, I would like tap my toes under the water a certain number of times.

John Hodgman: Nice!

Katie: *(Holding back laughter.)* And if I didn't, I thought my parents were going to die.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: Can I tell you—?

Jesse Thorn: Really took a turn there!

(Laughter.)

Katie: Right!?

John Hodgman: Can I tell you something, Katie?

Katie: Yeah.

John Hodgman: For a long time, I believed that if I flushed the toilet with the lid open, the devil would possess me.

(Laughter.)

Katie: Right?! I mean, legit!

John Hodgman: True story. True story.

Audience Member: *(Shouting distantly.)* HE DID!

John Hodgman: And yeah, maybe he did.

(Michael “wow”s.)

By the way, I stopped believing that about... five years ago.

(Laughter.)

Katie: I mean, you've got like the dementor thing...

John Hodgman: Also, you want to close the lid too, because you don't want aerosolized feces all over the place.

Katie: Yeah, gross.

John Hodgman: Right? You're with me.

(Michael agrees emphatically.)

Yeah, this guy gets it.

Michael: I'm an engineer. Don't do it.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: Michael, when Katie says you don't deserve to listen at 17, how do you feel?

(Laughter.)

Michael: You know, I feel like—like, we have young kids, and sometimes the sound mastering—we're watching a movie. Maybe—maybe—sometimes, I need to crank it up a little bit. But then the loud part comes on; I need to turn it back down.

John Hodgman: Alright. Well this is Swift Justice, and so we have to keep it moving. I will say this. You make some good points. You flattered me very nicely.

Michael: Thank you.

John Hodgman: I don't think there's anything wrong with listening at a prime number, necessarily.

Michael: Agreed.

John Hodgman: However, I don't think you care enough. I think you just wanted to be on the podcast.

(Laughter and scattered cheers.)

Michael: Fair.

John Hodgman: Whereas Katie actually does care. So, I'm gonna say this at a volume of 22: I rule Katie's favor. *(Three gavel bangs.)*

(Katie “woo”s.)

This is the sound of a gavel.

(Cheers and applause.)

Jesse Thorn: Thank you Michael and Katie!

John Hodgman: Keep it 22, my very luckiest number. Thank you very much.

Jesse Thorn: Please welcome Ava and Tanya.

(Cheers and applause.)

Ava, age 15, has a dispute with her mother, whose age shall never be revealed. Ava wants to wear shorts to school, but her mom says, “Cover up!” Judge Hodgman, the court is yours.

John Hodgman: Ava and Tanya. Am I pronouncing your names correctly? Ava and Tanya. Ava wants to wear shorts to school. Tanya, why not let Ava wear what she wants to school?

Tanya: Well, okay, let me tell you this. She can wear shorts, as long as it is above 40 degrees.

John Hodgman: Ohh! So, you're not anti-shorts, you're just anti frostbite.

Tanya: Exactly! Exactly.

[00:10:00]

Jesse Thorn: 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Tanya: We live in Minnesota. You can get below zero very quickly.

John Hodgman: Okay. Well. I mean, Ava, why do you wanna wear shorts during the wintertime? Are you secretly a dude from New England walking to Dunkin' Donuts in December or what?

Ava: Nnno, but I don't go outside.

John Hodgman: Okay!

Ava: *(Laughs.)* I'm at school!

John Hodgman: But you have to—do you have to get there?

Ava: Well, yes.

Jesse Thorn: They have a pneumatic system here.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: How do you get to school?

Ava: My parents drop me off in the morning, and I take the bus home.

John Hodgman: And what is the appeal of shorts? Just freedom of movement? Joyous—you wanna keep springtime forever in your heart? What's going on?

Ava: Yeeees!

Tanya: Yes. And it's—

Ava: It's a—don't interrupt me!

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: That's right!

Tanya: Excuse me! *(Unclear.)*

John Hodgman: Ohhh. I don't—*(stammering)* Ava, I don't think you need me.

(Laughter.)

I think you've got this under control, I'm glad to say.

Ava: Well, the school gets hot.

John Hodgman: Yeah, school gets hot, Mom.

Ava: There's a lot of people in there.

John Hodgman: Do your friends wear shorts to school?

Ava: Yes.

John Hodgman: That's right. Even in the wintertime?

Ava: Yes.

Tanya: Her friends jump off the Brooklyn Bridge too.

(Laughter.)

Ava: Well, it's into water, so I'd be fine.

John Hodgman: Don't jump off the Brooklyn Bridge.

Ava: Got it.

John Hodgman: Thank you. Tanya, tell me about winters in Minnesota. Do they still have them?

Tanya: Yes, actually!

John Hodgman: Or are they disappearing like the winters of Maine that don't exist anymore?

Tanya: Well, they're still disappearing. But.

John Hodgman: Yeah, exactly. Maybe Ava's just, uh, forward thinking

Tanya: Maybe that, huh? I would like it noted that we did compromise on this. I let her go outside with shorts, as long as it's gonna be a high of 40. My original rule was even if it wasn't 40 when you left the house, you couldn't wear shorts. But I did compromise. So, it can get down to 25, and she can freeze her tuchus off.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: What are you afraid is gonna happen if it's too cold out?

Tanya: Well, I'm a pediatrician. So, I know very well what's gonna happen. She's gonna *(laughs)* lose some appendages! Yes.

John Hodgman: Ho-ho-holy feces, Jesse, some actual expertise onstage for once!

(Laughter.)

Jesse Thorn: Yeah. Jennifer, how did you let that slip through?

(Laughter.)

Tanya: I'd like it noted that my daughter does have blue hair. She has a nose ring. I'm a very permissive parent and let her do some independence here. But there's no survival of the fittest.

John Hodgman: But short shorts are too far? Or too short!

Tanya: That's too far. Too far.

John Hodgman: Yeah. Okay. Have you tried it out, Ava? The shorts in winter plan?

Ava: Yeah!

John Hodgman: How'd it go?

Ava: Fine! I haven't lost any limbs yet.

(Laughter.)

I've got 10 toes.

John Hodgman: What was the—

Jesse Thorn: I mean, can I just recommend: make sure to tap under the faucet. Because if you don't...!

(laughter.)

John Hodgman: What was the temperature that you tested this out?

Ava: What was it? Was it—? It was like 12 degrees.

(Jesse cackles.)

Tanya: Yeah.

John Hodgman: 12 degrees!

Tanya: And let it be noted that I dropped her off at school, and she walked in, and then I picked her up after school, and she walked out. However, had there been a fire drill... or, gosh knows, somebody set something—you know, some reason you had to go outside, you would be outside in 12-degree weather.

Jesse Thorn: Okay, I have a question I need the audience's help on. So, if I go to Seattle, Washington—right?—and it's raining, which it always is in Seattle, Washington; and I take out an umbrella, someone punches me.

(Scattered laughter.)

And everyone is always wearing shorts no matter what. Right? That's just the culture of Seattle, Washington. No umbrellas, always shorts. My question to you is, by round of applause, is it normal for teens in Minnesota to want to wear shorts when it's freezing outside?

(Significant applause.)

Tanya: Maybe I'm just a weird mom, but... I don't think that's normal. Or normal isn't right.

John Hodgman: What is your current—what is your current temperature cutoff for shorts?

Tanya: If it's a high of 40 or above, you can wear shorts. I don't make it be 40 anymore when you leave the house.

John Hodgman: Wait a minute, if it's a high of 40—?

Jesse Thorn: The high has to be 40 or more.

Tanya: If the high is 40 or above, you can have shorts, no matter what temperature it is when you leave for school. AKA, 19 degrees.

John Hodgman: I'll tell you what. I was primed to rule against you, Mom, because I need the youth vote.

(Laughter.)

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, we're also forgiving college loans.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: But then I learned you're an actual pediatrician, so I'm a little afraid to put my expertise above yours. Ava, I think that you should be able to express and dress yourself in the way that makes you feel happiest, but I also would like you to live.

(Scattered laughter.)

So, I'm going to—I hate to say it; I'm gonna split the baby and drop your 40 down to 30.

(Tanya “ugh”s.)

30 or above for shorts.

Ava: I'll take it.

John Hodgman: Below 30, you're going too far. There's the sound of a gavel. *(Three gavel bangs.)*

(Cheers and applause.)

Jesse Thorn: Thank you, Ava and Tanya.

Please welcome Sarah and Bill. Sarah brings the case against her boyfriend, Bill. Sarah hates the way Bill washes the floor mats of his car.

(Laughter.)

Guess what? Bill says he has a system?!

[00:15:00]

He's figured out the very best way to wash those mats. And it's none of Sarah's business.

John Hodgman: Alright! Sarah and Bill, welcome.

Bill: Thank you.

John Hodgman: Sarah, you seek justice in this case. What is Bill's floor mat system?

Sarah: So, we cook a lot on weekends, and I do the cooking and cleaning. And I empty the dishwasher, fill the dishwasher. And he puts his floor mats in the dishwasher with the dishes in it.

(Chaos from the audience.)

John Hodgman: Wow!

(Continued shouts and boos.)

Jesse Thorn: Okay, so there was—

John Hodgman: Whoa, whoa!

Jesse Thorn: Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa!

John Hodgman: Whoa, whoa! *(Banging his gavel.)*

(The crowd noise barely dampens.)

Order! Order!

Jesse Thorn: SHUT YOUR PIE HOLES!

(The audience quiets slowly.)

John Hodgman: Wow.

Jesse Thorn: The audience was making such an extraordinary ruckus that I'm worried they missed one of the details. Obviously, we all heard that he puts the floor mats in the dishwasher.

Bill: This is true. This is very true. Yes.

Jesse Thorn: When you put the floor mats in the dishwasher, Bill... is the dishwasher empty?

Bill: Well.

(Renewed frenzy in the audience.)

Let—let—let me explain—

John Hodgman: Bob, justice comes early to the *Judge John Hodgman* show!

Bill: If I may explain, your honor.

(Jesse agrees.)

John Hodgman: You certainly can try.

(Laughter.)

Bill: Under normal circumstances, it's just the floor mats. This most recent time that I did it, there were like three dishes still in there that were dirty.

Sarah: More than that. More than that. More than that!

John Hodgman: More than three.

Bill: This is a very hostile, uh...

(Laughter.)

Sarah: There was silverware! The silverware was filled; all the glasses on top.

Bill: Excuse me. I'm testifying now.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: Yeah, but I remind you, you're under fake oath. You're trying to minimize the number of dishes in the dishwasher.

Bill: So, I was being lazy, because there was like three dishes in there, and I thought, “Well, they're gonna stay in there when I pull the floor mats out, and then I'll run them through another cycle.” But if I may call an expert witness, I'd like to call to the stand one Martha Stewart. The paragon of good taste!

John Hodgman: It would be incredible if Martha Stewart came out right now.

(Laughter.)

Dressed as a baby kangaroo.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, she just happened to text me while we were sound checking.

(Laughter.)

Bill: Unfortunately, Martha couldn't make it tonight. But she informs me on her website that, among other things you can put in the dishwasher—including golf balls and gardening tools, of all things—floor mats are highly recommended by Martha.

John Hodgman: Okay. But Bill, you know Martha's not talking to you, right?

Bill: No. *(Laughs.)* I don't like the way this is going, *(unclear)*.

John Hodgman: I just wanna make sure you understand that when Martha posts things on a website, it's for all of us. It's not just for you. It's not a message for you.

Bill: *(Playfully.)* Oh! Oh, I see. I thought she was speaking to me. I took it very personally.

John Hodgman: No, no. Your beloved partner, Sarah, is. Now, do you cohabitate?

Sarah: No. Weekends, I'm over there. So.

Bill: Weekends, she's at my place.

John Hodgman: So, this is your dishwasher.

Bill: You're darn right it is!

John Hodgman: Okay! Easy does it.

(Laughter.)

Bill: And if I may say: I'm a guy, and that's the kind of thing guys do! You know?

(Boos from the audience.)

Sarah: No. No.

John Hodgman: I would agree that single guys probably do do that.

(Laughter.)

Bill: I don't see a ring.

John Hodgman: Whoa!

(Scandalized sounds.)

And you probably never will!

(Laughter.)

I just gotta ask you: are these floor mats rubber or carpet?

Bill: They are rubber most recently. And they came out beautifully, I might add.

John Hodgman: I don't doubt it.

Bill: They look pristine. They look like the day they were first put in the car.

John Hodgman: I haven't washed my floor mats... ever.

(Laughter.)

It never occurred to me. And I'm in Maine half the year! And here's my concern. The floor mats that I got in Maine, they're encrusted with painful gravel from the beaches.

Bill: Oh, I'm so sorry.

John Hodgman: If I were to throw that into my dishwasher, it would ruin it!

Bill: My floor mats are next to pristine when they go in.

John Hodgman: *(Despairingly.)* Then why do this?!

(Laughter.)

Because remember when I was talking about flushing with the toilet up? Talking about aerosolized feces? You're walking around in a lot of stuff! And then you're putting your feet on those floor mats, and then it's going aerosolized in your washing machine!

Sarah: Exactly.

John Hodgman: Thank you, Sarah.

(Laughter.)

But on the other hand, Sarah, it's not your place. I mean, it's not your apartment.

(Sarah agrees begrudgingly.)

It may be your place to say something, but it's not your actual apartment. Do you own, or do you rent, Bill?

Sarah: Rent.

Bill: I lease a very nice apartment.

John Hodgman: You lease an apartment?!

Bill: I lease an apartment.

John Hodgman: Are you living in a car?

(Laughter.)

This property—*(stammering)* the dishwasher is an included appliance—

(Bill confirms.)

[00:20:00]

—in your long-term rental?

Bill: Yeah. It's a rental.

John Hodgman: Yeah. You don't own it.

Bill: I do not own it. But—

John Hodgman: Okay. Does your lease allow you to destroy your dishwasher?

(Laughter.)

Bill: Well, I didn't read the fine print.

John Hodgman: Okay. Here's what I have to say. You know, we have a longstanding settled law with regard to the correct way to load the dishwasher. And the correct way to load the dishwasher is: whoever is loading the dishwasher is doing it the correct way.

(Laughter and scattered applause.)

Whatever way they think is correct if they're doing it. Now, Bill, I was gonna say, "It's your dishwasher. You're loading it. It's none of Sarah's business." But it sounds like when she comes by, she's loading the dishwasher.

Sarah: And emptying it, yes.

Bill: Well, there's mutual loading. Uh—

John Hodgman: I'm sure you all split chores perfectly evenly.

(Laughter.)

That's not my point. All I'm saying is that when Sarah is over, you are effective cohabitants. And it is upon you to not gross her out.

Sarah: Exactly! I agree.

John Hodgman: But what you do during the weekday, in your bachelor Wednesdays...

(Laughter.)

When Sarah's not around, you throw those car mats in there—by themselves!

(Bill agrees.)

And don't tell anyone. Just have some fun by yourself. This is the sound of a gavel. *(Three gavel bangs.)*

(Cheers and applause.)

Jesse Thorn: Thank you so much, Sarah and Bill.

John Hodgman: Sarah and Bill, thank you so much.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

(ADVERTISEMENT)

[00:25:00]

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Jesse Thorn: St. Paul, Minnesota, are you ready for mega justice?

(Raucous cheers and applause.)

Let's bring out our litigants. Please welcome to the stage Marin and Mike! Tonight's case: "Cruel and Two Casserole Punishment". Marin brings the case against her husband, Mike. Their annual neighborhood potluck never has enough food! Marin wants to bring two dishes next time. Mike says it's not their problem if people go hungry; one hot dish is enough. Who's right? Who's wrong? Only one can decide. Please rise as Judge John Hodgman enters the courtroom and delivers an obscure cultural reference.

(Cheers and applause.)

John Hodgman: "Preheat oven into 400 degrees. Dice the onion and bell pepper into one inch dice. Sauté in olive oil. Brown the turkey. In small bowl, mix two teaspoons each: paprika, chili powder, onion powder, garlic powder. Add half of mixture to turkey while browning. Reserve other half of mixture to sprinkle over the tater tots prior to baking."

(Laughter.)

"Add the Turkey to the sauteed onion and bell pepper. Add black olives. Add sweet corn. Add chilies. Add taco sauce. Add two cups of cheese. Add sour cream. Pour into a baking dish and sprinkle the remaining two cups of cheese on top."

(Shock from the crowd.)

"Arrange tater tots on top of the mixture. Sprinkle cheese. Sprinkle spice mixture. Bake in 400-degree oven for 45 minutes or until tots are crispy. After removing from oven, sprinkle shredded lettuce."

(Laughter.)

"Sprinkle green onions. Sprinkle diced tomato."

(A cheer.)

Bailiff Jesse Thorn, please swear the litigants in.

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

(They swear.)

Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that he's never short of hot dish?

(Laughter.)

(They swear.)

Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

John Hodgman: Marin and Mike, *(stammering)* you may be seated for—

Jesse Thorn: *(Stage whispering.)* And we'll talk later in the van.

John Hodgman: *(Laughs.)* Marin and Mike, you may be seated for an immediate summary judgment in one of yours favors. Can either of you name the piece of culture that I obscurely referenced as I entered this courtroom? I see Marin, you're nodding your head. So, why don't you guess first?

Marin: Tater tot hot dish?

John Hodgman: Tater tot hot dish! A little vague! That's less of a dish than a category of hot dish. Wouldn't you agree, Mike?

(Mike confirms.)

What is your guess?

Mike: *(Dramatically.)* Taco! Tater tot! Hot dishhh.

John Hodgman: Interesting. Taco tater tot hot dish. Two good guesses. Neither of them exactly wrong, but neither of them—indeed—exactly right!

[00:30:00]

For indeed, the dish—the recipe that I read was for a dish called Turkey Taco Tot Hot Dish.

(Laughter.)

Jesse Thorn: I feel like you're all just naming songs from Jerome Kern musicals. *(Laughs.)*

John Hodgman: And what's more, neither of you named the creator of that recipe.

(Cheers and applause.)

Mike, you're—Mike?

Mike: Tim Walz.

John Hodgman: It is Governor Tim Walz.

(Cheers.)

And specifically, Tim Walz's Turkey Taco Tot Hot Dish, which he developed in 2016 for Al Franken's annual Minnesota Congressional Delegation Hot Dish Cookoff. It was his third time winning in six years.

(Laughter and cheers.)

Besting even his entry, the Turkey Trot Tater Tot Hot Dish, which also was turkey but not taco themed—and beat out in 2016 Senator Amy Klobuchar's Babe the Brew Ox Steak and Ale Hot Dish, and Al Franken's own Land of 10,000 Calories Hot Dish.

(Laughter.)

Jesse Thorn: Which of these is a former professional comedy writer?

John Hodgman: In any case, it sounds God-or-Whatever damn delicious to me. I'm gonna be making it. In the meantime, we have to hear this case. Now, who seeks justice in this situation?

Marin: I do.

John Hodgman: Marin, what is the justice that you seek?

Marin: That he can't eat my dishes that I bring to a potluck if he's gonna disagree with me about my strategy.

John Hodgman: Okay. Tell me about this neighborhood potluck. It says here in my notes that your neighborhood potluck at your block party, it's a real mess. The whole thing is a real mess. I ask you to explain, and don't be Minnesota nice about it, please.

Marin: Well...

John Hodgman: Take down the block.

Marin: National Night Out. Everyone here knows that's when you have your block party.

(Scattered cheers and applause.)

John Hodgman: Alright. What is that? I don't know what that is.

Marin: *(Stammering.)* It is a night out, nationally. In which—

Jesse Thorn: Yeah.

(Laughter.)

It's definitely something that everyone knows, nationally, like the two of us.

John Hodgman: Yeah. *(Giggles.)* Are you sure it's not Regional Night Out? Because I've missed the National Night Out 53 years in a row, it would seem.

Marin: So, you have a block party; you close down your block. And I was raised in a historically strong block party culture on my old block. And now I'm—

John Hodgman: In Minnesota. In the Twin Cities?

Marin: Yes. About a mile from where I live now. And now—

Jesse Thorn: I went to a historically strong block party university. So.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: Marin, *(giggling)* you came up though—you had a strong block party where you grew up?

Marin: I did! I mean, there was like—you know, there was the bounce house; someone called the firetruck, and the firetruck would come, so you could climb on that. And there would be games, and there'd be prizes, and everyone had— You know, usually there was an organized system for who brings what. And there was a lot. And everyone brought all their nice chairs and the beer and wine, and it was lovely!

John Hodgman: It was— Right. But compared to now?

Marin: It's a disaster.

Jesse Thorn: Everybody's bringing their backup chairs.

John Hodgman: Yeah. You call the fire department; they don't even come.

Marin: No. They come to the block down the... So, you look at the other block, one block away, and see what you could have.

John Hodgman: Ohhh! The other block is killing it. What's wrong with your block?!

Marin: All the other blocks are better. Yeah! Ours...

Jesse Thorn: I mean, it's obvious. The other block, when they're calling, is just saying it's a bigger emergency.

(Laughter.)

You have to escalate the number of houses you're claiming are on fire.

John Hodgman: Mike, who's responsible for this terrible block party?

Mike: I don't know. Our block is kind of blah.

John Hodgman: You have a blah block.

Mike: Our block captain, who gives out all the— The only time we talk to her all year long is when she comes to your house, knocks on the door, and awkwardly gives you the invitation to come to the block party a week later.

John Hodgman: Who elects the block Captain?

Mike: That is a good question! *(Unclear.)*

Marin: We don't know. It's been the same person the whole time.

John Hodgman: It sounds like it's a no-show job, given out by a political block machine.

(Laughter.)

Marin: In her defense, she does text us when we forget to move our car if there's like snow. And that's very nice of her.

John Hodgman: Oh, okay. I thought she was scolding you.

Marin: No.

Mike: No, she's just warning you, so you don't get towed.

(Marin confirms.)

John Hodgman: Oh, okay. I got you. Alright. And she's your neighbor, and you love her, and blah, blah, blah. Okay. Got it.

Mike: Wouldn't go that far.

John Hodgman: And there isn't enough food, is the thing.

Marin: No. There are occasional—like, multiple people will order Domino's that's either been ordered too early or too late. And I'm never gonna eat Domino's—

John Hodgman: Whoa, whoa, whoa! What?!

(Marin agrees.)

What the hell is wrong with your block!?

Marin: Thank you!

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: I mean, shouldn't people be making things for the potluck?

Mike: They should.

Marin: They should.

Jesse Thorn: Wait, hold on. Let's not even get there. Don't they have other pizzerias in Minnesota?

(Laughter and applause.)

[00:35:00]

Marin: We have three of the best, some that have won like the James Beard Award, within three blocks of our house. Pizzeria Lola. Very good.

John Hodgman: Yeah, name 'em all. I don't care. Buzz market it. Maybe your block will get better. And so, people are bringing Domino's, and it's cold Domino's, and it's not good or whatever. What do you normally bring to the block party? Like, old McDonald's hash browns?

(Laughter.)

Marin: I—there's only so many meals in one lifetime, so you have to bring it in each game. And so, I like to bring two to three dishes that I will have a full meal with. Like, a protein, a

vegetable, a dessert that I've always wanted to make. And so, I'm taking care of me and everyone else—

John Hodgman: By take by taking care of others!

Marin: Yes! Everyone is welcome to my food! But it's also what I'm eating.

Jesse Thorn: What's important is—

John Hodgman: Sorry, I just presumed that when you brought it to the potluck, you were sharing it.

(Marin confirms.)

Maybe I don't know how the National Night Out works.

(Laughter.)

Everyone shows up to the block party and eats their own hot dish. Staring at each other. That's how you would have it, Mike. You wanna hoard all the food to yourself.

(Mike disagrees.)

You don't wanna be giving away two/three full meals to all these people that you live with and see every day! What's the problem with the multiple dishes, Mike? Why are we here?

Mike: So, my take is that she basically brought our dinner to the block party. She is risk averse. She's like covering herself and—

John Hodgman: In tater tots?!

(Laughter.)

Jesse Thorn: Now that's a hot dish.

(Cheers.)

Hi, I'm Jesse Thorn from the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

John Hodgman: At heart, Jesse, you're a storyteller.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, it's true.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: So, what is the risk aversion have to do with this?

Mike: So, I view potluck as a bit of an adventure. If everybody brings dessert, awesome. Everybody gets dessert! Everybody brings salad? Great. You're gonna have a good poop in the morning.

(Laughter.)

So, I—

John Hodgman: Keeping it regular in the Twin Cities.

Mike: —(*inaudible*) that she bring a dish that feeds enough people for our family, not multiple dishes—or bring enough food that feeds everybody. Because if everybody brings enough food to feed everybody, then that's way too much food, and you end up with food waste.

John Hodgman: You're a potluck libertarian. You're tired of the potluck welfare state!

(Laughter.)

If people go hungry at the potluck, that's not your problem. Right? How would you propose—if someone comes, and all the old dominoes is gone, and you've only brought enough for your own family, and you've—num, num, num—eaten it all up. Someone's hungry when they go home; how do they solve that problem?

Mike: No, if everybody brings enough for their family, and they share, then everybody will have enough (*unclear*)—

Jesse Thorn: That's not the scenario.

Mike: —the right amount!

Jesse Thorn: Mike. You know that's not the scenario we're talking about. There's not enough food—

Marin: So, his argument—

Jesse Thorn: Hold on. Not enough food—

(John “whoa”s.)

This is on Mike. Mike, there's not enough food at the block party. What happens when you go home?

Mike: No one said there's not enough food. There's plenty of food. Is it awesome? No, it is not. Is there enough? There is.

John Hodgman: Are you saying that everyone should bring enough food for their own family and not share?!

Mike: No, I think you should share! You get a little bit of this, little bit of that, and everybody has enough.

John Hodgman: But that's not what's happening. There isn't enough. I mean, I understand in theory what you are saying. Right? In theory. But in practice, it's not working out that way. You understand? This is why libertarians all suck.

(Laughter and cheering.)

Sorry.

Mike: There is enough! It's just not awesome.

John Hodgman: I mean, I believe in freedom and self-determination. You know.

Marin: I will say his argument is there's enough food. It is just, I don't want eat it, 'cause it's not good.

John Hodgman: You wanna make sure you're covered in delicious hot food.

Marin: I wanna eat good food! Yes!

John Hodgman: *(Giggling.)* In delicious tater tots or whatever it is.

Marin: That is correct.

John Hodgman: What do you—you brought some sample dishes here for us to...

Marin: I brought something that I would bring. He brought something that I would never touch.

John Hodgman: Okay. Let's—can we have both of them come out? We're gonna have a National Night Out right here, at the Fitzgerald Theater.

(Scattered applause.)

So, there seems to be a tossed salad.

Marin: It's a chicken shawarma, *New York Times* recipe salad. So, you're gonna get your protein, your vegetables, a little cheese.

John Hodgman: Yeeeah! Very coastal elitist of you. *New York Times* cooking.

(Marin thanks him playfully.)

I've got a subscription too.

(Laughter.)

Jesse Thorn: We didn't get that recipe out in the provinces of Los Angeles.

John Hodgman: Who made the salad?

Marin: I did.

John Hodgman: Marin. Okay, so this—

Mike: I cooked the chicken!

[00:40:00]

John Hodgman: Oh-okay. Easy does it.

(Laughter.)

Easy does it, over there, Cosplay Christopher Kimball!

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: That's a deep cut for my *Cook's Illustrated* people.

Jesse Thorn: Mike is on his way to talk to the dean about those pesky nerds.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: Marin, you made this quite red and delicious looking—

Marin: *(Interrupting.)* I did not make that.

John Hodgman: Oh, this is also—?

Marin: That's Mike.

John Hodgman: Okay. Mike, what is this?

Mike: That is pretzel Jell-O salad.

(Loud, excited cheering from the crowd.)

John Hodgman: I think I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. Pretzel Jell-O salad!

Marin: With Cool Whip and cream cheese.

Mike: The definition of salad in Minnesota is quite wide.

John Hodgman: Yeah, no, I understand! I've had some ambrosia salads in my time.

Jesse Thorn: Tell me about these layers, Mike.

John Hodgman: Yeah! I thought you were pretty one dimensional, but you've got layers, dude! Let's hear it.

Jesse Thorn: Where are the dinosaurs? Where are the prehistoric mammals?

Mike: So, the base is a pretzel crust, with crushed pretzels with a little butter. And I added an egg white to try and keep the pretzels crisp. There is cream cheese and Cool Whip with a half a squeeze of lemon. And then raspberry Jell-o with about 14 ounces of frozen raspberries.

(Scattered cheering.)

And then six ounces of fresh raspberries to keep it tart. Keep it tart/

(Cheers and applause.)

John Hodgman: Totally. That's our brand-new T-shirt. Keep it tart.

Mike: But I've never had this before.

John Hodgman: Oh, you just made it—?

(Mike agrees, laughing.)

You just made it for podcast glory?!

Mike: Exactly.

Jesse Thorn: Did you make it from a recipe, or were you just going ape?

John Hodgman: Yeah. You're one of those “legalize it” libertarians. 2AM in the morning after a little gummy, “Let's see what kind of salad I can make out of pretzels and everything I've got in the fridge.”

(Laughter.)

Mike: I did taste the components. All the components tasted good separately, but I haven't had it together.

John Hodgman: Now. This isn't a—

Jesse Thorn: Yeah! That's how recipes work!

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: Jesse, I'll let you serve yourself.

Jesse Thorn: Okay, thank you.

John Hodgman: If you wanna have a little. And I'm gonna go over to your microphone for a second, so I can taste test this.

Marin: So, our cousin goes to a lot of church potlucks, and she says that this is the, um—this is what everyone—this is what gets finished at a potluck. And she brings really fancy stuff, and no one eats it. But everyone apparently—

John Hodgman: You're talking about the pretzel cream cheese salad?

Marin: Yes. We both like the chicken shawarma salad, and that's what a normal human would eat for dinner.

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: So, this isn't, um...

Marin: I'm from Minnesota!

Jesse Thorn: Ma'am, I believe you're in Minnesota.

John Hodgman: You're really burning down your own... *(John tries to finish his sentence, but Marin is incensed.)*

Marin: I know! I'm from here! He's not! He's just trying to win these folks over! But I'm Minnesotan!

John Hodgman: Yeah. You better cultivate a better relationship with the fire department, 'cause you're burning your own house down right now, Marin from the block.

(Laughter.)

Alright. I didn't think that this was gonna be a cookoff! I thought we were gonna have two dishes that you would want to bring, and then I would ask Mike, "Which could you possibly eliminate? Why not both?"

Marin: Oh, sorry.

John Hodgman: But—no! But this is more exciting! I'm going to—I think that I will try the chicken first, because I'm from New York. And also, I have the feeling that if I eat the raspberry pretzel salad, that's all I'll taste for the next year.

Jesse Thorn: So, I have downed my portion of the chicken shawarma salad. And honestly, it is really tasty.

John Hodgman: It's delicious.

Jesse Thorn: It does not present particularly impressively...

Marin: It did before it had to get shaken offstage. Normally it would be plated nicer.

Jesse Thorn: Sure, sure. But it is really tasty. The chicken is succulent. My compliments to whoever cooked the chicken.

(Laughter.)

Marin: *(Playfully snooty.)* Some of us work a nine to five.

John Hodgman: Yeah, there we go. Yeah, because Mike's just spending all day trading crypto.

(Laughter.)

Mike: I'm actually a wedding photographer, so I don't work during the middle of the week. So—

John Hodgman: Okay! Okay, Bobby Buzz Market! Stand out in the lobby with your business cards later. I'm sure you do a good job. This salad is delicious, I must say. And I

mean, I'm sure the recipe is great, because it comes from the *New York Times*. But it's perfectly executed, and I think it would be a wonderful thing to bring to a block party.

[00:45:00]

Marin: Thank you.

John Hodgman: I need to have a drink of water first. *(Beat.)*

Jesse Thorn: *(Mouth full.)* I'm eating this weird Minnesota thing.

John Hodgman: Yeah. I can't wait to get into this now.

Jesse Thorn: I don't want no spoilers. Okay? But I'm gonna just go—I'm—I'm taking more bites...

(Laughter.)

John Hodgman: Wowie-zowie!

(Laughter.)

Jesse Thorn: This thing rules!

(John agrees.)

(Enthusiastic cheers and applause.)

It just absolutely rips. *(Laughing.)* Should I be putting—? Should I just be looking in my kitchen, tasting things individually, then combining them in a dish? Is that Midwestern cuisine?!

(Laughter and applause.)

John Hodgman: Could be. I think I've eaten everything I need to in order to make my decision. I'm going back to my chambers with this casserole, and I'll be back in a moment with my verdict.

(Laughter, cheers and applause.)

Jesse Thorn: Please rise as Judge John Hodgman exits the courtroom. Mike, how are you feeling about your chances right now?

Marin: How are you feeling?

Jesse Thorn: Wow. John came back for the salad too!

Mike: I'm feeling spectacular. Whatever the ruling, I will abide by. I feel like I presented my case. I feel like I presented the most Minnesotan of potluck dishes. So, I'm looking forward to a ruling, whatever he decides.

Jesse Thorn: Marin, how are you feeling about your chances?

Marin: *(Beat.)* I mean, not great.

(Laughter.)

But I just— I grew up eating that kind of food, and so I have a solid, you know, 12 to 15 years before I had a voice eating— And I totally get that people love it! It's just now that I can choose my own food, I'd like to.

Jesse Thorn: Are there—are—? So, are your neighbor's foods not good enough?

Marin: *(Long, weighted pause.)*

(Howling from the audience.)

It's Domino's pizza, so it's not personal.

Jesse Thorn: That's true. Well, it depends what size the pan is!

(Laughter.)

I want to eat the rest of this salad here, so we'll see what Judge Hodgman has to say about all this.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Promo:

Music: “Medicines” from the album *Exhilarating News* by The Taxpayers.

Justin McElroy: Hey, Sydnee. You're a physician and the co-host of *Sawbones: A Marital Tour of Misguided Medicine*, right?

Sydnee McElroy: That's true, Justin.

Justin: Is it true that our medical history podcast is just as good as a visit to your primary care physician?

Sydnee: No, Justin. That is absolutely not true. Uh, however, our podcast is funny and interesting and a great way to learn about the medical misdeeds of the past, as well as some current, not-so-legit healthcare fads.

Justin: So, you're saying that by listening to our podcast, people will feel better?

Sydnee: Sure.

Justin: And isn't that the same reason that you go to the doctor?

Sydnee: Well, uh, you could say that, but—

Justin: And our podcast is free?

Sydnee: Yes, it is free.

Justin: You heard it here first, folks. *Sawbones: A Marital Tour of Misguided Medicine*, right here on Maximum Fun: just as good as going to the doctor.

Sydnee: No, no, no. Still not just as good as going to the doctor, but pretty good.

Justin: *(Softly.)* It's up there.

(Music ends.)

Promo:

Music: Funky, upbeat banjo music.

Dan McCoy: *The Flop House* is a podcast where we watch a bad movie, and then we talk about it.

Elliott Kalan: Robert Shaw in *Jaws*, and they're trying to figure out how to get rid of the ghoulies. And he scratches his nails and goes, "I'll get you, ghoulie."

Dan: He's just standing above the toilet with a harpoon. No, I was just looking forward to you going through the other ways in which *Wild Wild West* is historically inaccurate.

Stuart Wellington: You know how much movies cost nowadays?! When you add in your popped corn, and your bagel bites, and your cheese curders.

Elliott: Sure. You can't go wrong with a Henry Cavill mustache. Here at Henry Cavill Mustaches, the only supplier!

(They laugh.)

Narrator: *The Flop House*. New episodes every Saturday. Find it at MaximumFun.org.

(Music fades out.)

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Jesse Thorn: It's the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. We're taking a quick break from the stage at the Fitzgerald Theater. John, I wanna mention something.

John Hodgman: Great.

Jesse Thorn: You know, a lot of people hear me on this program not swearing. And being friendly and sweet. I would encourage you, if you like swears, to check out my comedy show, *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*, with my friend Jordan Morris—a legendary professional comic and television comedy writer. We have a great time every week on *Jordan, Jesse, Go!* with famous and less famous comedy voices, joined for just 75 or so minutes of real, pure silliness. Just no content at all. Just pure nonsense. John has been on many times. Recent guests have included—oh, just the other day we had Margaret Cho on the program, for example. An alumna of San Francisco School of the Arts, where my wife and I went to high school.

John Hodgman: Oh! I did not know that.

[00:50:00]

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, one of multiple School of the Arts alumni who've been on the program, because we've also been joined by Aisha Tyler several times.

John Hodgman: Oh! Wow! That's an incredible school. And incredible talents.

Jesse Thorn: When we have been on the road lately, I have heard from more and more *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*/*Judge John Hodgman* crossover fans. So, I thought I would mention it, 'cause there are a lot of *Judge John Hodgman* fans who don't know about or listen to *Jordan, Jesse, Go!* yet. So, go check that show out. Give it a listen. It is just pure silliness and

nonsense. It's a very different show from *Judge John Hodgman*, but infused with the same positive vibes, only a lot more swear words.

John Hodgman: You know, Jesse, speaking about other podcasts, when I think about podcasts that I love and podcasters that I love—including you and Jordan Morris—I think about the time we spent in the Fitzgerald Theater and all the fun times I had performing with John Moe out there. John Moe, being a Twin Cities resident and the host of not one, but two wonderful podcasts here on the Maximum Fun Network. Including *Depresh Mode*, an incredibly funny and thoughtful and insightful interview podcast about mental health. And *Sleeping With Celebrities*, which is exactly as it sounds: famous people boring you to sleep with murmuring dumb talk.

John Moe is such an incredible talent, and we're so happy and lucky to have him as a friend and as a member of the network. And I can't wait to get on stage with him at the Fitzgerald Theater one of these days again in the future. But until then, you can always find him on those two wonderful podcasts at Maximum Fun.

And shoutout also to our Minnesota friends Kevin Murphy and Bill Corbett, as well as Mike Nelson of *RiffTrax*—the great Minnesota-based comedy conclave that's been riffing and making fun of movies now for, low, these many years. RiffTrax.com is where you go to hear that good, old-fashioned *MST 3000* style riffing on movies. They've never been funnier, and it's a great time to check them out, if you haven't. RiffTrax.com.

Jesse Thorn: Let's get back to the stage at the Fitzgerald Theater in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

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

(Applause.)

John Hodgman: It depends on what size the pan is.

(Laughter.)

I don't think that got enough appreciation, frankly.

(Laughter and cheers.)

Let's hear it for “it depends on what size the pan is,” Bailiff Jesse Thorn! This guy plucks brilliance out of the air and then manifests baby kangaroos!

(Laughter.)

M'kay.

Marin and Mike, this did not go the way that I expected. You know, I expected you both to be adorable. And it's true; you both are, in your respective ways. But I expected to have to like tease out of you a little bit about what's going on, on the block and everything else. I didn't appreciate that you would both be ferocious.

(Laughter.)

Ferocious contenders at the National Night Out, both vis-a-vis burning down your own block and taking each other to task and to court. It's great! You're from Minnesota, right, Marin?

(Marin confirms.)

Mike, where are you from originally?

Mike: Washington State is home.

John Hodgman: Okay. What's more, I didn't expect this to turn into a debate over different food ways and food cultures. You know, I truly expected this would just be about like, “Marin wants to bring more food, and I wanna starve my neighbors, because resources are limited and the water wars are coming.”

(Laughter.)

And I didn't know what was going on, because obviously you've got no case there. Right? I mean, the reason— What's going on, what's the problem with this block party, is that—at least, on your block—people have forgotten how to be generous. You know? Like, there is no generosity in ordering a bunch of Domino's to a block party. There is—or to a potluck! I mean, the point of the potluck is everyone brings something from their own home! Food, that is. Not tchotchkes. Maybe that too!

You know, you're sharing time and food graciously with your neighbors. And frankly, it's not been long since we were unable to do that at all. It's not been long since the idea of everyone dipping a spoon into a glop of ambrosia salad and eating from the same plate. Now look, it's probably—y-you know, let's be careful out there, still. Practice good hygiene, obviously. But I mean, this is what we had been craving. And this social connection, this one-on-one, face-to-face social connection that is so much more healthy for a neighborhood and a nation than everybody ranting on Twitter about how crypto's gonna save the world, Mike.

(Laughter.)

In any case! But it turned into something else, because you both provided these two dishes—

[00:55:00]

—one of which comes from the coast. And yet, you're the Minnesotan who presented this fancy-pants Mark Bittman, whatever.

Marin: I did go to NYU.

John Hodgman: Ohhh, okay! There you go. You went to NYU, and you came back with a chip on your shoulder. And that chip was not chipped beef! No. Okay. And yeah, you're struggling with your roots, to a degree. And at the same time, Mike, you bring forth this ambrosia salad, openly mocking the state that you've adopted.

(Laughter.)

Your contempt, at least, is naked. Do you know what I mean? And yet, both of these things are God-or-Whatever damn delicious. And I commend you both. You both did a good job. And it's fascinating, the cultural clash that was happening in my mouth backstage as I went back for seconds.

(Laughter.)

And I mean, the truth is—first of all, yeah, bring as much as you can to that potluck. Because the more that you share, the more people— I mean, generosity is a gift to the giver as much as to the receiver. It feels good, Mike.

(Laughter.)

I mean, I know it goes against your worldview—

(Marin cackles.)

—of utter self-sufficiency, you hot dish Scrooge! But I think that you had fun making this weird salad for us and sharing it with us, right? I mean, if you just made it for yourself and ate it all before four o'clock in the morning, that would be maybe typical for you, but not fun.

(Laughter.)

And Marin, I mean, I feel like that's a salad that really stands up to sitting outside for a while. I mean, it's like—it's a hearty salad that I think anyone would be very happy to eat, and it would be great at any potluck. And so, the fact of the matter is, yeah, bring two dishes. And specifically, when's National Night Out next?

(Shouts from the audience.)

Marin: It's in August.

John Hodgman: It's in August.

Marin: Yes.

(Inaudible response from an audience member.)

First Tuesday of August. Thank you so much!

John Hodgman: Oh, right. Everyone knows this. Obviously.

Jesse Thorn: Well, certainly not people abroad. But nationally, yes.

John Hodgman: I told you, Jesse, don't let me get away with sleeping in my hyperbaric chamber between shows and never seeing anyone or talking to anyone. It's a mistake, honestly. When I think back, I really should engage with other people and eat these foods and learn these traditions. Alright, next National Night Out, next potluck, next block party, I want you to serve both of these dishes. Absolutely ruling two dishes, and specifically these or comparable substitutes. Maybe go for a third. This is the sound of a gavel, 'cause. I love thirds! *(Three gavel bangs.)*

Judge John Hodgman rules. That is all.

(Cheers and applause.)

Jesse Thorn: Marin and Mike, thank you for joining us on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

Sound Effect: Three gavel bangs.

Jesse Thorn: That's it for this episode of the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. Thank you to Reddit user u/EddieRayDesign for naming the case in this episode. Make sure to follow us on Instagram, @JudgeJohnHodgman. We're also on YouTube and TikTok, @JudgeJohnHodgmanPod.

John, I have a question.

John Hodgman: Yeah?

Jesse Thorn: If folks went to those addresses and subscribed to us, would it help us, the makers of this podcast?

(John confirms.)

Okay, great. So, maybe they should do that.

The *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, created by John Hodgman and Jesse Thorn. This episode, recorded by Matthew Barnhart. Dan Telfer is our social media manager. AJ McKeon is our podcast editor. Daniel Speer, our video editor. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor.

Special thanks to our friends at Sustainable Safari and their baby kangaroos, capybaras, sloths, et cetera.

John Hodgman: (*Chuckling.*) Jennifer Slowpez.

Jesse Thorn: Jennifer Slowpez.

Jesse Thorn: That was a good one. It's a great spot.

Jesse Thorn: Got attacked by like an emu or something at one point.

John Hodgman: Yeah, they'll come for you.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, absolutely. Man, it was a great time. 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!