

[00:00:00]

**Jesse Thorn:** Welcome to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. This week: "Breeches of Contract". Gabby brings the case against her husband, Mike. Mike wears the same cargo pants every day. He says one pair is all he needs. Gabby disagrees. She believes a person needs at least two pairs of pants; it's science! But Mike says he's too tired in the morning to think about what to wear. One pair of pants is easy. 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:** "Hey, David! Instead of living with your parents, why don't you just try sleeping in one of your cargo shorts' pockets?"

Bailiff Jesse Thorn, please swear the litigants in.

**Jesse Thorn:** Mike, Gabby, 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 wearing two pairs of pants right now?

*(They swear.)*

Judge Hodgman, I no longer know what the premise of those little jokes is. You may proceed. *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** It's only to speak the truth! I am very careful. I do wear two pairs of pants. I wear my regular pants, and then I wear underpants.

*(Jesse "aha"s.)*

Mike and Gabby, 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 referenced as I entered—well, this new courtroom? We are here at the studios of Headgum in New York City. Our friends have allowed us to invade their home for reasons that are boring. But here I am. And there you are. And do you have a guess for me?

Let's start with you, Gabby.

**Gabby:** Is it a quote from the film *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*?

**John Hodgman:** Is it a quote from the film *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*? I like that guess. I'm gonna write it down. I did it. Alright. I'll remember your guess now, Gabby. Mike, it is now your turn to guess.

**Mike:** I guess... is it a quote from the show *Dicktown*?

**John Hodgman:** The show *Dicktown*?

**Mike:** Yes.

**John Hodgman:** What streaming platform would that be on?

**Mike:** Hulu, I believe? We've watched it.

**John Hodgman:** Mm. Hm, hm. And what episode do you think it might be from?

**Mike:** The one with the hot air balloon, I'll say. I don't remember the name of that one.

**John Hodgman:** You're talking about season two, episode two.

**Mike:** Sure. Sounds good.

**John Hodgman:** Okay. I'll write that down. Phew! That one's wrong!

*(They chuckle.)*

All guesses were wrong, except one was very close to correct. Mike, you almost walked away with it.

**Jesse Thorn:** *(Playfully.)* But it was a quote from *Dicktown* on Quibi! *Dicktown* on Quibi was the correct answer. Quick bites!

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, our secret third season. It was from *Dicktown* on Hulu, now available via your Disney+ bundle. It amuses me to no end that Disney+ is now responsible for distributing *Dicktown*, the show that I created with our friend, David Rees. And that was indeed a quote from *Dicktown*, but wrong season. Wrong episode, Mike! How embarrassing for you and embarrassing for me, because I can't remember which one it was from now. It was from season one, episode—I wanna say nine. The penultimate episode, “The Mystery of the Impossible Car”, in which my character—a former child detective who still works for children—John Hunchman, roasts his colleague, driver, and hired muscle, David Purefoy—played by David Rees—for always— Well, for living with his parents and always wearing cargo pants. Specifically, cargo shorts.

But Mike, this is about—not cargo shorts, but—cargo pants. Specifically, your cargo pants. And in this case we were talking not pants, plural, but pants, singular. Correct, Mike?

*(Mike confirms.)*

Alright. Before we get into it, who seeks justice in my courtroom?

**Gabby:** I do.

**John Hodgman:** Gabby. And what is your relationship to Mike, if that is indeed his name?

**Gabby:** Mike is my husband and a whole human being in his own right.

**John Hodgman:** Very nice. And how did you two meet? Where are you in the world, and how did you two meet?

**Gabby:** So, we dwell in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**John Hodgman:** The Land of Enchantment!

**Gabby:** The Land of Enchantment, and the kind of sub-nickname is The Land of Entrapment. And because Mike went to graduate school here, he was doomed by the entrapment to come back. And so, we were both living in Western Pennsylvania and met on Bumble and have, during the pandemic, relocated back to the west. He's originally from Anchorage. I'm originally from Portland. And so, we wanted to be back in the west.

**John Hodgman:** Anchorage, Alaska?

[00:05:00]

**Mike:** Yes. Yeah. Right next door to Alaska, at least.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Gabby, you should feel lucky that he wears any pants at all.

*(They chuckle.)*

**Gabby:** That's a fair point.

**John Hodgman:** He's a wild man from the frontier.

**Jesse Thorn:** I would've expected him to be clad in whale blubber.

*(Make laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** For sure.

**Mike:** Well, seal skin breeches was normal.

**John Hodgman:** But now you're there in ABX *Breaking Bad* territory. It's called the Land of Entrapment, because people love it there? Or because people get entrapped by undercover police officers a lot?

**Mike:** Sometimes both. No, generally it's people who try to leave always find themselves coming back for one reason or another.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, it's a wonderful state, and you can learn a whole lot about it on an upcoming episode of *E Pluribus Motto*—starring Janet Varney and me. But that's a different podcast. Now, here we are. Now, Mike, the issue here is pants. Right now, I am looking at you. I guess I'm finding you through the camera in The Land of Enchantment itself, Albuquerque. Are you wearing any pants at the moment?

*(Mike confirms.)*

For our YouTube viewers, would you prove it, please?

*(Mike agrees.)*

Thank you. Okay. Please spin around, 'cause those could be butt-less chaps.

*(Gabby laughs.)*

Okay. Alright. Jesse, you verify that those are pants too?

**Jesse Thorn:** I can verify those are pants.

**John Hodgman:** Alright. We're concurred on pants then. Mike, now that we know that you're wearing pants, we also know that you are employable. What is your employment, if I may ask?

**Mike:** I am an economist for the state of New Mexico.

**John Hodgman:** I should say there are probably lots of people who are working from home right now listening to this podcast who are very employable and are definitely not wearing pants. So, please keep your cards and letters to yourselves.

You're an economist!

*(Mike confirms.)*

And what does that entail?

**Mike:** Largely forecasting tax revenue for the state.

**John Hodgman:** That must be a lot of fun. Is it a fun time to be an economist? Everything seems great!

**Mike:** Yeah. It's fun for me, in the same way that it's fun for a doctor discovering a new disease.

**John Hodgman:** *(Laughs.)* Okay! And Gabby, how do you spend your time?

**Gabby:** So, I am—by training—a musician; and I conduct the first ever trauma-informed chorus here in Albuquerque for young people.

**John Hodgman:** What is a trauma-informed chorus, if I may ask?

**Gabby:** So, a trauma-informed chorus is a chorus that seeks to be an environment where anybody can come with whatever history they have and feel safe there. If they come with neurodiversity, that's great. If they come with a great history of like a nurturing childhood and fabulous human beings raising them, that's great. It's a good place for them. And if that is less the case, it's also a good place for them. So, it's trauma-informed rather than trauma-specific. I'm not in the business of asking children when they come through the door, “So, what's the worst thing that ever happened to you?”

**John Hodgman:** I think you might get in trouble if you did. What kind of songs do you sing in the chorus?

**Gabby:** So, we sing stuff from every musical tradition you can possibly imagine. I'm trained as a classical musician. So, that is—

**John Hodgman:** What was your instrument that you were trained on, primarily?

**Gabby:** Voice.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, okay. Great. Carry it with you.

**Gabby:** Yep, that's true. It's very portable. You do have to sort of eat your breakfast on it every morning, which is problematic. That's not the case with, say, a viola. But you know, we do what we can.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, you know, I used to play the viola.

**Gabby:** Did you really?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I played—I was a violist, and I was much better at eating breakfast off of it than playing it, to be honest with you.

*(They laugh.)*

**Gabby:** I mean, that's C clef; it's a problem.

**John Hodgman:** You've never heard of viola played properly until you've heard it stuffed with muesli.

*(They laugh.)*

**Gabby:** True. True enough.

**John Hodgman:** I also played the clarinet, and I mostly use that as a boba straw.

*(They laugh.)*

**Gabby:** That reed must have gotten in the way, though, ey?

**John Hodgman:** At least it's a single reed. Gabby, I interrupted you, though. You were gonna tell me about some of the songs that you sing in your chorus.

**Gabby:** So, we sing a lot of tunes from the African American spiritual tradition.

**John Hodgman:** Wonderful.

**Gabby:** We sing New Mexican folk tunes. We sing classical compositions. We sing original compositions. Just kind of everything under the sun. Our most recent concert was a concert of protest songs.

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

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** You're listening to *Judge John Hodgman*. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn, of course, the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, always brought to you by you: the members of [MaximumFun.org](https://MaximumFun.org). Thanks to everybody who's gone to [MaximumFun.org/join](https://MaximumFun.org/join). And you can join them by going to [MaximumFun.org/join](https://MaximumFun.org/join).

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**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**John Hodgman:** You are an economist, and you economize when it comes to pants. You only have a pair.

**Mike:** I do have a backup pair, but I don't like wearing that one.

**John Hodgman:** Oh! Oh, Gabby, he's got a backup pair. Alright, wrap it up, Giacomo. We're outta here!

*(They chuckle.)*

Alright, well. Setting aside your backup pair, tell me about—well, you know what? I'm gonna ask Gabby. Why don't you tell me about your husband's pants? How would you describe them? Dirty, stained, threadbare?

**Gabby:** Mm, I refrain from making judgements about the cleanliness of the pants. I feel that is not my station, necessarily.

**John Hodgman:** Gabby, dirty is not an opinion.

*(They laugh.)*

We need to begin living in an objective shared reality again. And I trust you to trust your eyes, nose, and other senses. Is this single—when was the last time this single pair of primary pants was washed, and who did it?

**Gabby:** So, we kind of share laundry duties. And I believe the last time the pair that he is currently wearing was laundered was sometime last week.

**John Hodgman:** Sometime last week. And we are recording on a Monday. Would you say more than four days ago?

**Gabby:** I would be guessing, but I think the answer to that question is yes.

**John Hodgman:** Mike, I'm gonna ask you in a moment. Just answer yes or no. Do you know when the last time these pants were washed?

*(Mike confirms.)*

Alright. For the benefit of our viewers on the YouTube channel, [@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod](#), we are now showing a slow-motion recap of Mike's pants display, so that you can guess in the comments how long ago it was these pants were washed. At the end of the episode, we'll reveal the answer. And if you got it right, good for you. Meanwhile, we're at somewhere between four and seven days, I think. So, pick a number between four and seven, and put it in the comments, and maybe you'll be the lucky winner. I don't know.

In any case, it's a while. Gabby, what is your complaint about the pants?

**Gabby:** I believe that he wears the same pair of pants over and over, not only for reasons of utility and ease in the morning, but I believe that this is just a way to not make an intentional choice.

**John Hodgman:** Hm. Say more about that for me.

**Gabby:** So, Mike uses his pants kind of as his purse, I guess I would say. So, there's a lot of belongings that he does not wish to transfer from one pair to the other.

**John Hodgman:** By belongings you meeeean... cargo?

**Gabby:** Yes. That's what I would be referring to, your honor.

**John Hodgman:** He has a lot of cargo.

[00:15:00]

**Jesse Thorn:** Seems like he might be in a cargo cult!

**John Hodgman:** *(Chuckling.)* He might be. What kind of cargo do you got in your pants, Mike?

**Mike:** Keys, wallet.

**John Hodgman:** You know what? I'm gonna—I'm gonna do it. Empty your pockets right now.

*(Mike agrees.)*

Everything on the table. No more secrets.

**Jesse Thorn:** And Mike, as each thing comes out, tell us what it is.

**Mike:** So, this is my work phone.

**John Hodgman:** Uh-oh. He has two phones. Red flag.

**Mike:** Yeah. My wallet.

**Jesse Thorn:** He's probably got a phone just for drug dealing.

**John Hodgman:** That's right! Got some keys.

*(Gabby wheezes a laugh.)*



**Mike:** That's right. Got some keys. A handkerchief. So—

**Jesse Thorn:** That's for brow mopping.

**John Hodgman:** Brow mopping.

**Mike:** And earbuds.

**John Hodgman:** Okay. Nice cargo! And by the way? Nicely arranged on the table.

**Mike:** Yeah. And my personal phone.

**John Hodgman:** Whoa, more things are coming. This is like Mary Poppins's carpet bag, here.

**Jesse Thorn:** More clowns?! How'd they fit in there?

*(They laugh.)*

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. Fair enough. Fair enough, Gabby, he's using his pants as a purse. That seems reasonable. Why are you against pockets?

**Gabby:** I am actually very pro-pocket. I have—one of my main beefs with clothing typically made for women is that the pockets are super non-capacious. And it fills me with woe. So, I totally relate to the idea that one would want to carry cargo in one's pockets.

**John Hodgman:** You're just jealous of his pockets.

**Gabby:** I will admit that I do feel a sense of envy about pockets in clothing made for men, generally speaking.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I would—I mean, I don't blame you. Traditionally, women-gendered clothing is really pocket deficient. And there's a lot of cargo that we carry around with us.

*(Gabby agrees.)*

But that's no reason to punish your beloved husband on a podcast just because you hate his pockets and resent them!

**Gabby:** I feel that there are ways of moving these items from one pair of pants to another. So, my quarrel is not with the existence of the pockets or the use of the pockets, it's the refusal to change from one set of pockets to a new, perhaps cleaner, set of pockets.

**Jesse Thorn:** Now, hold on. Gabby, you've asserted to us that Mike doesn't change his pants, because he doesn't want to move things between his pockets. I haven't heard Mike tell us

why—(*chuckling*) I can't believe this is real—why he only wears one pair of pants. Mike, why—in your words—do you only wear one pair of pants? With, we will grant you, an emergency backup pair.

**Mike:** Ease. I don't have to really think about it too much in the morning. I tend to be— I think the term Gabby uses is neuro-spicy, and I— Routines are very important for me in the morning. So, it's—well, I can have the pants that are right there, pull a polo from my dresser, and then I'm done, and there's no more planning. If I have to do much more planning, then I kind of lose other steps in my routine in the morning.

**John Hodgman:** And do I understand correctly, Mike, that you leave the cargo in the cargo bays of your pants overnight?

(*Mike confirms.*)

Okay. So, and do you sleep in your pants?

**Mike:** No, no.

**John Hodgman:** Just trying to see how far this goes. So, your bedtime routine is you drop your— You're standing by your bed; you drop your pants; they fall to the ground very easily, because they're full of ballast. They thunk right down, and then you hop into bed. And then in the morning, you just stand up into those pants. And then I presume you have some kind of machine that raises them onto your body again, like in a Rube Goldberg fashion, or what? Or you just pull them on again?

**Mike:** No, I wish. So— I really wish. I'm still trying to train the dogs to do that for me, actually.

**John Hodgman:** How many dogs are we talking about?

**Mike:** We have three.

**John Hodgman:** Do we have any photos of these dogs that we need to be looking at right now?

**Mike:** I think two are in one of the exhibits—Exhibit A.

**John Hodgman:** So, I'm looking at the evidence now. If you're on YouTube, you're seeing it as well. If you want to check it out on our socials or on our show page at [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org), all of our evidence will be posted there as always. And Exhibit A is, indeed, a photo of your dog's butt, Mike.

(*Gabby laughs.*)

**Mike:** Yes. That's Grover.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah. What's great about the dog's butt is that it looks a little bit like the logo for a YMCA.

**John Hodgman:** In any case, we have here a photo, not just of a very cute dog named—Grover, did you say?

*(Mike confirms.)*

Right. But also a very cute man, named you. With your thumbs up. What is the thumbs up indicating in this photo, Mike?

[00:20:00]

**Mike:** So, I believe a secondary part of Gabby's complaint is about just the choices and that I prefer that if I wear clothing that's—or the clothing I wear, it needs to contrast. So, if I'm wearing lighter color pants—like khaki, as in this case—then I need to wear a darker polo.

*(John affirms.)*

Like, in this case black. So, I proved—Exhibit B has got the combination that I do not like and refuse to wear.

**John Hodgman:** You have that— Well, let's see Exhibit B then please. Boo!

*(Jesse laughs.)*

This is you with your thumbs down. I'm not booing you; I'm channeling your energy, Mike. You've got your thumbs down, because you're wearing your dark black polo again, but this time with some charcoal-colored cargo pants, would you say?

**Mike:** Yes, these are also—

**Jesse Thorn:** I mean, these are well short of charcoal. These are mid-gray at darkest.

**John Hodgman:** Mid-gray at darkest. Not enough contrast for you or Gabby, Mike?

*(Mike confirms.)*

Okay.

**Jesse Thorn:** I gotta say, while I do not accept the premise that there isn't enough contrast here—'cause there's a lot of contrast; also, I don't accept the premise that you need contrast—*(laughing)* I do accept it based on the great faces that Mike is making in these pictures. I'm completely compelled by that element to his argument.

**John Hodgman:** You are giving some great faces in these photos, for sure.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah. You're basically Rosie Perez on *Soul Train* with the face that you're giving. It's fantastic.

**John Hodgman:** So, alright. You have one— You have two pairs of shorts and two pairs of pants, total.

*(Mike confirms.)*

Your regular khakis, which you like. Those are the thumbs up ones.

*(Mike confirms.)*

And those gray pocket baddies that we just saw, that's your backup? Those are your backup booties?

*(Mike confirms.)*

Okay.

**Gabby:** The gray pants we refer to in our house as “the bad pants”.

*(Jesse cackles.)*

The khaki pants are the good pants, and the gray ones are the bad ones.

**John Hodgman:** What makes them—who calls them bad?

**Mike:** I do.

**John Hodgman:** Mike raised his hand. Mike, why are the gray pants bad?

**Mike:** Because they are—they don't have enough contrast with the majority of the polo shirts that I have or shirts that I wear.

**John Hodgman:** That raises a question that I wanted to ask. In the two photos that we saw, you were wearing a black polo shirt. But in our meeting here today, you're wearing like a nice blue polo shirt or something like that, right?

*(Mike confirms.)*

It's a collared pullover. So, is that all the shirts you own?

**Mike:** No. I have many more shirts. I wear a new shirt every day—a clean shirt every day.

*(Jesse laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** But why? That doesn't seem very economical compared to your pant conservation system.

**Mike:** Generally, if you wear the same pants every day, people won't notice too much, 'cause they're—say—just khakis, and everyone has lots of khakis generally. But if you wear the same shirt every day, people will notice.

**John Hodgman:** You're—it's easier to fool people into thinking you're wearing clean pants if they're khakis.

*(Mike confirms.)*

Got it. Why do you feel the contrast is important?

**Mike:** I've been thinking about it. General vibe or aesthetics, I think.

**John Hodgman:** It just feels better to you to have a contrast.

*(Mike confirms.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** I'll say this, John: in my capacity as a men's wear expert, I don't generally love black shirts for a variety of reasons. And I don't generally love the combination of khaki and black. It's a little harsh. And black shirts can be a little bit harsh. They also can look ratty really quickly. But taking a look at the pictures that Mike has sent, Mike is a pretty high contrast guy. He has very dark hair and pretty pale skin that's relatively well suited to this kind of high-contrast color palette. And he looks alright, as far as I'm concerned. He looks pretty solid.

**Mike:** Thank you.

**Jesse Thorn:** I trust his projections.

**John Hodgman:** Gabby, is there anything else, while you're here, that Mike wears that you annoys you or that you think should change?

**Gabby:** So, the fixation on a single pair of something is not only for pants; it is also for shoes. And I've tried to convince him that if you wear only one pair of shoes every single day, they wear out really fast. Whereas if you have a couple of pairs that you rotate, then you can get a lot more wear out of them. And also, they feel better on your feet, because you're not wear wearing the same pair every single day.

[00:25:00]

And shoes have been a point of uniqueness for my beloved husband. And I believe you were told before we started dating that you would like never find a woman who would put up with your five-finger toe shoes.

*(Mike confirms with a chuckle.)*

And I would like to state for the record that the five-finger toe shoes were never a point of contention for me, that I am not opposed to uniqueness. I am only opposed to a lack of intentionality.

**John Hodgman:** Now, I would like to note that Jesse Thorn did a little dance when he heard the term five-finger toe shoes. And if you're watching on YouTube, you're seeing a slow-motion recap of that right now. Let's enjoy this for a moment. Thank you. And now, Jesse, why were you dancing?

**Jesse Thorn:** *(chuckles.)* I didn't know that the ante could be upped from one pair of pants!

**Joh Hodgman:** One pair of cargo pants, no less.

**Jesse Thorn:** One pair of cargo pants! That seems—oh, man. This is amazing. I'm surprised that he doesn't only wear a utility kilt to the office.

*(They laugh.)*

**Mike:** I can't get away with that. I would wear it.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, look, he put his shoes up there. Are those five-fingered shoes right now?

**Mike:** They are.

*(John “wow”s.)*

Yes. I wore them for the occasion.

**Jesse Thorn:** Did you—? Okay, hold on. Hold on, Mike. Did you just take off—? Are you—are you—are your little tootsies flapping in the wind there in the studio in New Mexico?

*(Mike confirms.)*

*(Chanting.)* Feet on main! Feet on main! *(Laughs.)*

**John Hodgman:** Are you wearing toe socks too, or just regular socks?

**Mike:** I am wearing toe socks.

**John Hodgman:** I've been so amazed and astonished by this five-toe toe sock, five-toe toe shoe revelation that I've forgotten the whole point of this story. You were talking about—When did you discover during your dating process that Mike was wearing these toe shoes and the single pair of pants?

**Gabby:** The single pair of pants revelation came later, and I'm not actually sure that was still happening then, because we were both employed at universities at the time. And so, I think there was a little bit more variety, because he was seeing more people. Is that not true?

**Mike:** No, that's not true. I was—this has been consistent since high school, basically.

**Gabby:** Wow. Well, color me oblivious.

**John Hodgman:** Tell me about the day you woke up and said, “I'm throwing all those extra pants away. I'm sticking with this pair from now on.”

**Mike:** I think it came from—I'd been doing my laundry for quite a few years then. And at one point my dad kind of complained, “Why are you doing so much laundry?”

And I said, “Well, I gotta wash all my pants.”

And he said, “Well, you can wear the same pants more than just one day.”

And that was a revelation to me, and I realized, oh, well if that's the case, then things just became much, much easier for me.

**John Hodgman:** Right. You ran with it, and you sweated in those pants, and then you just wore 'em again!

**Mike:** Well, in general, if I do anything that causes me to sweat quite a bit, I will wash the pants right away.

**John Hodgman:** So, Gabby, you just learned that this has been going on since Mike was in high school. You didn't notice. How do you feel?

**Gabby:** I do feel a little bad about that, because—I mean, I guess I can give myself a pass with the whole, you know, blush of new love situation. I don't know. I—

**John Hodgman:** Also, you were distracted by those hot toe shoes.

**Gabby:** That is also a possibility. His friends gave him a looot of crap for the toe shoe situation.

**John Hodgman:** Would you prefer to wear no clothes at all?

**Mike:** Mm. No. I'd prefer to wear clothes, but no shoes, if I could get away with it.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, you can get away with a lot more than you think.

**Jesse Thorn:** Is this an ideological issue? A sensory issue?

**Mike:** I'd say sensory or comfort. Comfort is my primary choice for clothing. And then utility.

**John Hodgman:** Gabby, what do you think's going on?

**Gabby:** So, for me, the story under the story is that Mike doesn't wanna have to do anything nice for himself. And so, he is choosing a thing that is easy and functional without thinking about what might be easy enough, functional enough, but also—you know—spark some joy. When we got married, we had our reception at our home in our backyard, and we bought special outfits for that occasion.

**John Hodgman:** Cargo tux?

**Gabby:** And one of those outfits was (*chuckles*) linen pants and a nice linen shirt.

**John Hodgman:** Nice.

**Gabby:** And the whole time we were shopping for this, the whole conversation was about how nice linen is and how nice it is to wear linen and how good it feels, how good it looks. And I think there's something in there. We live in a state where you can wear linen like nine/ten months out of the year. And I would love to see that get incorporated.

[00:30:00]

Because not only does it feel comfortable both physically and emotionally, it also celebrates an aspect of who you are.

**John Hodgman:** You're suggesting that Mike has difficulty doing nice things for himself or privileging his comfort?

**Gabby:** I would say so. And there's many examples of this, but the pants are just maybe one of the more extreme ones. (*Chuckles.*)

**John Hodgman:** I mean, he does wear toe shoes. That's pretty much an offense against society in favor of his own comfort.

**Jesse Thorn:** (*Dramatically.*) Toe shoes are... the ultimate indulgence.

(*They laugh.*)



**John Hodgman:** It does seem to me like he's not shy about indulging himself when it counts, down in his tootsies.

**Gabby:** True. And the toe shoe thing I think of as a separate phenomenon. 'Cause he doesn't wear the toe shoes every day. He just busted those out to be cool here, I think. Most of the shoes that he wears—like, he'll wear one pair of shoes until they have holes in the bottom of the soles, right? And then he comes home one day, and he is like, “I've got a hole in my shoe. I guess I'm gonna have to go buy new shoes.”

And I'm like, “Yeah, guess you are!” (*Chuckles.*)

**Jesse Thorn:** That's a little something called Yankee thrift. He learned that from Adlai Stevenson.

(*They chuckle.*)

**John Hodgman:** But it's the case, Mike, that you could have a pair of toe shoes for everyday wear, and then a pair of formal toe shoes, and then maybe some beach toe shoes. I mean, I don't know. Why don't you feel you deserve extra pairs of shoes and pants?

**Mike:** The larger answer would be cost.

**John Hodgman:** Oh, and the economist comes out.

**Mike:** But I did wear these shoes every day while teaching at the university. And I did have a pair for the gym and a pair for work and for just teaching.

**Jesse Thorn:** Mike, when you say cost, I'm a little confused. Because if you had two pairs of pants, would those pants wear out faster? Because you were wearing them half the time? Or is the capital investment (*suppressing a chuckle*) of two pairs of \$50 pants too great for the return of each of those pairs of pants lasting a little longer?

**Mike:** I'd have to say the second one, with the capital investment being not high enough—or the return not being high enough on that investment.

**Jesse Thorn:** I think Gabby's making an assertion that's worth drawing out here, which is that when you have one pair of pants—and certainly one pair of shoes—that you wear every day and—in the case of the pants—wash or clean relatively infrequently, you will get fewer wears out of that garment than if you had alternated or washed regularly. So, you know, in the case of a textile—you know, in the case of pants, there is also a cost to washing them in terms of their wear, right? Tumbling them in the washer and dryer also wears them out. But washing them regularly—you know, every few wears—is an important part of maintaining their lifespan, improving their lifespan. Because the gunk that gets into them wears them out.

**John Hodgman:** Jesse, if you were trying to make your cargo pants last longer and to be economical in your practice of wearing pants, how often would you wash them? And would you ever machine dry them?

**Jesse Thorn:** I certainly wouldn't machine dry them if I was trying to make them last as long as possible.

**John Hodgman:** 'Cause that breaks them down, right? I think I've learned that from you in the past.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, it does. I mean, you know, it's not catastrophic. I use the dryer sometimes too, and it's possible that Mike's sensory needs preclude drying them on the line. 'Cause they could get a little crispy. Some people like that.

**John Hodgman:** I looove some crispy pants.

**Jesse Thorn:** Okay, well there you go. Mike is shaking his head no.

**John Hodgman:** I love them when they're air dried crispy. Do you know what I mean? I don't like crispy pants when they're dirt crispy, when they start to maintain their shape through sheer secretions, dirt, and oils. But you know.

**Jesse Thorn:** But yeah, I think—you know, New Mexico is a dry but warm place. And Mike's a big dude. If it was me, I'd be inclined to say every few wears? Three, maybe? I mean, it depends on the swampiness of his pants area, which is an individual thing that I can't judge. I would think Gabby would be able to judge that to some extent.

*(They laugh.)*

**Gabby:** I would like to not judge that, thank you.

[00:35:00]

**Jesse Thorn:** *(Unclear)* to their marital relationship. But I would guess three. Three would be about where I would put it. I think—

**John Hodgman:** After three days of wear, run 'em through the wash, and then dry them. Tumble dry if you want them to be soft, which I think you do, Mike. Right?

*(Mike confirms.)*

Or line dry if you like them to be fresh and crispy, Hodgman style. Is that what would be your recommendation?

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah. And even more than that, I think that—you know, this is particularly true with shoes, but giving clothes time to rest and dry from the swampiness of being worn is

pretty useful. So, if you really wanted to maximize, for utility purposes, the health of his pants and the lifespan of his pants, I'd be inclined to suggest that he hang them in between and alternate, so they get time to rest and get some air. And you know, basically dry out.

**John Hodgman:** Look, Mike likes his pants the way they are. How do you feel about them, Gabby? If he had more than— If he had five identical pairs of these pants—let's just say that it happened somehow; they fell off a truck, or a podcast accidentally bought him five pairs of his pants—would you be comfortable with him as he is dressed in this photo, just with cleaner pants more often?

**Gabby:** Truly, it's not about the cleanliness of the pants, as bizarre as that sounds. It's not—

**John Hodgman:** *(Interrupting.)* Well, why isn't it?! That's what I wanna know! *(Laughs.)* Look, I wear pants. I wear my pants a lot, day after day. Like, I am not a guy who wears a fresh pair of pants every day. Anyone who's toured with me knows it. Right, Jesse?

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

**John Hodgman:** And I— There comes a point where the pants feel dirty to my legs, and I know they must be washed. It is not—it is more than once a week, but it is— I will let them go several days. But if they are dirty, they're dirty, and they feel bad to me, and I can't imagine they look sharp to you, Gabby. Why doesn't anyone care about the cleanliness of these pants?!

**Gabby:** Again, I am— I really want to be a supportive person who doesn't control what their spouse chooses to wear. That was one of my concerns with presenting this case in the first place was that I'd be like nasty, mean wife lady who wanted to dress her husband differently just because I want him to adhere to some arbitrary aesthetic that I have chosen. And that's not where we're at here. Like, that's not the perspective that I'm taking. I'm taking the perspective of: we choose to wear things that we enjoy, because we like many things about them. Not just that they are convenient, but also perhaps that they represent us in the world in a way that we like, or that they make us feel a certain way about ourselves. And the comment about, you know, “They feel dirty to my legs,” I don't think he thinks about that.

**John Hodgman:** Mike, you have a very wonderful spouse. I think you probably agree.

**Mike:** Yes, I am very lucky.

**John Hodgman:** For most people, cargo pants alone—never mind one single pair—would be a deal breaker. It would be an article of pre-divorce; you wouldn't even get to married! And Gabby, I really appreciate what you say there. I do not want Mike to feel ashamed of his pants. I think I share with you a desire for Mike to feel very comfortable and to prioritize his comfort and sense of wellbeing. But you say that he has difficulty doing nice things for himself. Why do you think that is, Gabby?

**Gabby:** So, last night we got a knock on the door at four o'clock in the morning, and it was our neighbor across the street. And she'd had some—

**Mike:** Elderly neighbor.

**Gabby:** And she'd had some kind of plumbing emergency in the night. And her bedroom was flooding, because something under her like main bedroom sink had like popped loose. And Mike grabbed his flip flops and like ran across the street at four o'clock in the morning to help this woman, and then came back and got all of our old towels and brought them back again to like help clean up and like support this woman who we—you know—interact with on a very casual basis once in a while. This is not like our best friend or anything. But this is just who he is. Like, he thinks first about the other people in the world. And I think that is a beautiful, beautiful quality. And I also think that he deserves that kind of love and regard as well.

**John Hodgman:** Have you thought about just buying him some pants as a present?

[00:40:00]

**Gabby:** I have. And the reason I don't is because if he doesn't like it, he just won't wear it, and I don't wanna be mad about it.

**John Hodgman:** I guess that also could come across as being a little passive aggressive too.

*(Gabby agrees.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Mike, if you had a premium pair of pants in a similarly utilitarian style—indeed, if you had pants that had premium levels of utility—would you feel better or be happier than you are now, in your pants from the website where you buy Chinese ceiling anchor hooks when your pot rack falls off the ceiling?

*(They chuckle.)*

That's the last thing I bought there. I don't know.

**Mike:** Got it. I'm sorry about your pot rack.

**Jesse Thorn:** Thank you. I did—I found the studs, so I'm all set.

**John Hodgman:** Mike, stop thinking about other people—AKA Jesse! Don't worry about his pot rack. He's gonna be fine!

**Jesse Thorn:** Next time it falls down, I'm gonna knock on Mike's door at four o'clock in the morning. *(Chuckles.)* “Bring your towels! My pot rack fell!”

**Gabby:** Honestly, you totally could.

**Jesse Thorn:** But if you had, instead of the \$34 generic option—which I don't think is a horrible option; they look perfectly fine; they're unbranded; they're reasonably tasteful. But if

you had the great version of that—including potentially, for example, more durable textile stretch for comfort, things like that—how would you feel?

**Mike:** I would feel better, I think.

**John Hodgman:** Gabby says that you have some difficulty prioritizing your own comfort, whereas you're more than happy to throw all of your beautiful towels into your neighbor's spilling-over poo water or whatever. How do you feel when she says that you have difficulty prioritizing your self-comfort?

**Mike:** I agree. That's something I've been working on with the help of a therapist.

**John Hodgman:** Mike, do you feel that it might be a little bit easier to transition if there were an elf who lived in your house who moved your cargo from one set of pants to the other, and put the fresh pants on the floor beside your bed, and you didn't even know that it was happening?

**Mike:** Absolutely.

**John Hodgman:** Gabby, are you willing to be a cargo pants elf for your husband?

**Gabby:** I am going to say that feels a little codependent to me.

**John Hodgman:** Gabby, you're too smart! You're too emotionally intelligent.

*(Gabby cackles.)*

**Mike:** She is much more intelligent than I am in almost all dimensions.

**John Hodgman:** Every time I've come up with a wacky scheme, you bat it away with a simple plea that I honor your own agency and intelligence.

*(They laugh.)*

Good for you for being a good advocate for yourself and for your husband Mike, whom you love.

What would you have me rule if I were to rule in your favor, Gabby?

**Gabby:** My ideal ruling would be that my lovely husband—who absolutely can afford more than one pair of pants, in my estimation; as a person who makes less money than him, he can totally afford more than one pair of pants. And I would like for him to have some clothes that were for every day for the sake of purely ease, but then some clothes that are really a celebration of who he is and how he feels that he puts on days where maybe he doesn't feel so good inside. Like, having something that could give him a little bit of a lift, like a favorite pair of linen pants or a favorite shirt that just makes you feel really spiffy. It's that kind of

thing that I would like to see him embrace—not because of how others perceive him, but because of how he perceives himself.

**John Hodgman:** Mike, how do you feel when you hear Gabby's hope for you?

**Mike:** That sounds like a, um—a wonderful ideal. To reach in the future.

**John Hodgman:** That's a very diplomatic answer.

**Mike:** I am an economist.

**John Hodgman:** It sounds like you're saying that that sounds like a wonderful ideal for someone else.

**Mike:** No, I could—this could be something nice to reach for myself. I think I am made uncomfortable by the amount of effort I see on moving from where I am now to that.

*(John “hm”s.)*

**Jesse Thorn:** Mike, have you had clothing in the past that gave you a special fizzy feeling?

[00:45:00]

*(Mike confirms.)*

What clothing is that?

**Mike:** I really had actually a very nice pair of linen pants, and an exceptionally ugly pair of pajama pants that—but they both kind of wore out completely. The linen pants wore out too quickly, and the pajama pants actually somehow disappeared in a move. I don't know what happened. I think someone stole them.

**John Hodgman:** Were these linen pants your wedding pants?

**Mike:** No, I still have those pants. I don't wear them as much just because they tend to wear out pretty quickly.

**John Hodgman:** Because you've been betrayed by linen before, it sounds like.

**Mike:** I have. Yes.

**John Hodgman:** But the linen pants, I believe we have a photo of you in the linen pants at your and Gabby's nuptials, correct?

*(Mike confirms.)*

Let's take a look at that exhibit. Mike, is this you over there on the left?!

*(Mike confirms.)*

Looking so sharp and relaxed?! This is a nice outfit. Not very high contrast, I must say! Nice, pale blue shirt that looks really comfortable. Nice, white linen pants. You've got a sporty cap on. Gabby, you look terrific as well. I don't mean to be superficial, but you both look so handsome and lovely in this photo.

Mike, if I were to rule in your favor, I presume that you would like things to stay just the way they are, right?

**Mike:** Yes. The status quo is good for me.

**John Hodgman:** You are— However, you mentioned that you've been working with a therapist to address some things in your life, and you have some somewhat cautiously acknowledged that some discomfort in the service of personal growth is not completely off the table for you.

*(Mike confirms.)*

So, is there something between Gabby's request that you buy some, you know, more fancy linen pants—for example—and some different kinds of pants that make you feel good, versus just staying with this one pair of khaki cargo pants—is there a middle ground between there that you might request that I rule?

**Mike:** I would say maybe a staged transition over a significant period of time, maybe with—and some research to make sure that the linen does not wear out as quickly or betray me again.

**John Hodgman:** I understand. We've all been hurt by linen before. Trust me. I'll be taking that into real consideration.

**Jesse Thorn:** Mike, that's a quixotic quest. We know that linen is the great betrayer.

**John Hodgman:** Well, I think I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. Okay, I'm gonna go into my chambers, here at Headgum Studios in New York City, and I'll be back in a moment with my verdict.

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

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

Mike, how are you feeling about your chances right now?

**Mike:** Not horrible; not great either. But I think there's a good compromise along the way, I think.

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

**Gabby:** I feel okay. I just want what's best. You know? I don't wanna be strong-arming anybody.

**Jesse Thorn:** Hey guys, can I show you something?

*(They affirm.)*

I'm gonna have to stand on my chair. Hold on.

*(A gasp.)*

**Mike:** Oh, nice.

**Gabby:** See? See?

**Jesse Thorn:** People don't ordinarily get to see my lower half on the video stream unless there are multiple cameras in the studio—in which case I'm usually wearing my bailiff pants. But today I'm wearing the casual pants in which I entered the office, and they are indeed cargo pants.

And we'll see what Judge Hodgman has to say about all this when we come back in just a second.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Promo:**

**Music:** Playful, exciting synth.

**Ellen Weatherford:** Hi, everybody. It's Ellen Weatherford.

**Christian Weatherford:** And Christian Weatherford.

**Ellen:** People say not to judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree.

**Christian:** But we can judge a snake by its ability to fly or a spider by its ability to dive.



**Ellen:** Or a dung beetle by its ability to navigate with the starlight of the Milky Way galaxy.

**Christian:** On *Just the Zoo of Us*, we rate our favorite animals out of ten in the categories of physical effectiveness, behavioral ingenuity, and—of course—aesthetics.

**Ellen:** Guest experts like biologists, ecologists, musicians, comedians and more join us to share their unique insights into the animal kingdom.

**Christian:** Listen with the whole family on [MaximumFun.org](https://MaximumFun.org). Or wherever you get your podcasts.

*(Music ends.)*

**Promo:**

**Music:** Fantastical, medieval style synth.

**Griffin McElroy:** *(With a wise, aged affect.)* The wizards answer eight by eight.

The conclaves call to demonstrate—

Their arcane gift; their single spell.

They number 64—until!

[00:50:00]

A conflagration! 63.

And 62, they soon shall be,

As one by one, the wizards die,

‘Til one remains to reign on high!

*(The music picks up tempo.)*

*(Returning to his normal speaking voice.)* Join us for *TAZ Royale*, an Oops, All Wizards battle royale season of *The Adventure Zone*, every other Thursday on [MaximumFun.org](https://MaximumFun.org) or wherever you get your podcasts.

(*Music ends.*)

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Judge John Hodgman, we're taking a quick break from the case. You've got the second season of *E Pluribus Motto* right around the corner, season one available now.

**John Hodgman:** That's right, Jesse. *E Pluribus Motto* is the new podcast that your friend and mine, Janet Varney, and I co-host. We cover the state mottos of the states and commonwealths and districts. Season two drops July 8th; season one is available now if you'd like to catch up. Upcoming in season two, we've got: Kentucky, Minnesota, New Mexico, and many others. It's gonna be a lot of fun. And it's not just state mottos; it's also state animals, state birds, state drinks, state snacks, state whatever. It's trivia. It's dumb. It's fun. Listen.

**Jesse Thorn:** John, what's the best weird official state something-or-other that you've learned about so far? Or maybe that's coming up in season two?

**John Hodgman:** Well, Jesse, there are a lot of good ones. But I'll go ahead and tell you the worst state beverage: milk. In, I think, 28 states.

**Jesse Thorn:** Holy cow!

**John Hodgman:** Big dairy is huge. But I'll tell you what goes really well with that milk: the state snack of Maine, the Whoopie Pie.

**Jesse Thorn:** Oh! That's like a marshmallow thing?

**John Hodgman:** It's like two chocolate sponge cakes about the size of a bear paw smooshed around a big hunk of whipped cream. It's delicious. I'll tell you what it's better than: the Needham.

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

**John Hodgman:** Needhams are a Maine regional delicacy, chocolate dessert delicacy. It's chocolate enrobing coconut and mashed potato. The Needham.

**Jesse Thorn:** Oh, right. You gave me one of those in an airport once.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, yeah. I like to trick you.

(*Jesse groans.*)

What do you got coming up, Jesse Thorn? Something happening on *Bullseye*?

**Jesse Thorn:** Well, I don't know if any freaking nerds listen to this podcast, but—obviously I'm artsy—but if you're interested, just recently on *Bullseye* we've had George Takei and Mark Hamill.

(John “whoa”s.)

Both totally amazing human beings. Fascinating interviews, right there on *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn*. Go watch them on YouTube, or listen in your favorite podcast app. Make sure and smash those subscribe and like buttons.

**John Hodgman:** (In a George Takei impersonation.) Oh my!

**Jesse Thorn:** (Also impersonating George Takei.) San Francisco, I was born here.

(Returning to his normal voice.) We'll be back in just a second on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

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

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

**John Hodgman:** I really hate pants. I really hate putting them on, and I really hate taking them off. Shorts I'm fine with. But pants? I've always been challenging to fit. My body is not shaped like a normal human person body in the pants department. The proportions that are used to size pants for most people don't really work for my waist-leg ratio. And it's always very humiliating to go into a store and to try on pants, because I can't—I have to try them on, because so few pants fit me very well at all. And really, once I've found a pair of pants that works for me, I really have to lock in.

But that experience of going in and taking off pants and trying on pants, it makes me very self-conscious. And it makes me want to sign up for an Albuquerque-based chorus where I can work through my bad feelings on this subject. It's like—I hate pants! I hate everything about them. And I totally respect and aim to honor Mike's comfort—not only in his own pants, but in his own skin. Especially since—you know—it is clear, Mike, that the change in routine is not comfortable for you. And I wanna respect that.

[00:55:00]

At the same time, as much as I appreciate—as I'm sure you do too, Mike—Gabby's hopes and wishes for you, I think we gotta take linen off the table for now. I think that that's too much of a change, insofar as we're just trying to figure out a day-to-day life that might be of

increased comfort for you over time, Mike. And also, I hate linen as much as I hate pants. Forget about linen pants. Yeah. I'm sorry, Jesse. I don't care for it. Linen is scratchy. It scratches, and it makes me feel uncomfortable. There's something I don't like, and that's when I can feel my clothes touching my body. *(Chuckles.)* And linen reminds me that—Linen is—as they are saying on the internet, it insists upon itself. I'm feeling that linen aaall the time. Don't care for it, and I sweat easily. I actually—it's supposedly one of the most breathable fabrics, and yet anytime I wear linen, I am really hot under the collar.

*(Jesse gives a baffled “huh”.)*

All of which is to say: we all move around in our own horrible meat bodies. And there are things that we love, and there are things that we don't love, and fitting them into clothes is a matter of intense personal preference. And as I say, Mike, I wanna honor that for you. So, I'm gonna take linen away from the conversation for the moment. As I'm taking those toe shoes off the table. And you may now take them off the table, because that's another topic of conversation. What I wanna talk about are these pants. You have found pants that you feel comfortable in. And I must say I appreciate that, but I do not—it is hard for me to understand, because I do not live in your brain, how it is preferable to wear increasingly dirty pants day after day after day and then wash them one time per week. And then, while you're washing them, to be either bare bottomed or—worse—putting on the bad pants.

You don't deserve to have bad pants in your life, Mike. Throw them away. I don't think those pants seem particularly bad or malicious to me. But to you, they're bad, and I think they should go away. And you should only always ever have good pants in your life by your own definition. Luckily, you live in New Mexico, where cargo pants in the office constitute good pants. I think that you can do a little bit better—not just in terms of your style. Your style is your style, and what I love about you and Gabby is Gabby absolutely respects and loves your style. She's not trying to push a different style on you or try to dress you up like some kind of husband doll. She wants you to prioritize your comfort as much as you—as anyone—needs to. You know?

And I do think, quite honestly, that you will feel better if you have more than one pair of khaki cargo pants that you love. One reason that might speak to you a little bit directly is that, as Jesse Thorn has enumerated: believing that having one pair of cargo pants is economical is actually a false economy—particularly if you're buying relatively cheaply-made pants through an online retailer. These are not pants that are necessarily built to last, as it were. And you are wearing them out faster than you would if they were in a rotation with other pants. You would be showing the pants you love more love by having more of them and giving them a chance to rest and relax in The Land of Enchantment themselves, and to air out, and et cetera. They would last longer.

Similarly, I do not think that it would be beyond your pay grade—literally—to purchase another pair or two—or maybe even three!—of not-too-very-expensive pants of the kind that you like. And I would even say that it might be worth exploring—and I say this sounds like I'm being very facetious here, but I'm not—exploring in consultation with Gabby, other people you trust in your life, and your own therapist as to whether or not you might try getting a pair of those pants hemmed to the proper length of a tailor and see how you feel about it.

[01:00:00]

You say that you'll feel uncomfortable, and you might! But I think that it is part of growth and process, to try things that are uncomfortable and see if you can become comfortable in different areas of life. It is part of being out in the world, and I think that you might find yourself feeling a little bit more comfortable in pants that are the right length for you.

Just give it a try is what I'm saying. It's not an order. But I would say that the main reason that I am ruling in a limited way in Gabby's favor today is that I want—is that something you said earlier on—which is that you have to change your shirt every day, because people in the office will notice if you wear the same shirt every day, whereas they're less likely to see that you're wearing the same pants every day. And I don't think you deserve to live enclothed in a lie. If you are actively thinking about deceiving your coworkers, (*chuckles*) then I think that's a place of discomfort. If you're thinking, and you're worrying, and you're wondering if your coworkers are noticing that you're wearing the same clothes every day, that's not a fun place to be, necessarily. Even though the reality is most people don't notice what you're wearing ever. Pretty much. Like, very few people ever notice.

So, I think you deserve to not live in a lie, and I think that you deserve to try out—to get rid of the bad pants, get more of the good pants, experiment with making one pair of those pants potentially a little gooder by having them hemmed. Give it a try. And give a try to rotating them a little bit more often. It may not work for you! If this were a true hygiene issue, I'm sure Gabby would be able to say, “These pants stink.” But that's not at issue here. What's an issue here is your own comfort. You've reached a certain point of comfort. I think that you can go a little bit further to become uncomfortable and to grow a little bit into have more than one pair of pants that you like. Get three or four identical pairs of pants that you like, and see how it goes. This is the sound of a gavel.

**Clip:**

**Speaker:** Okay. It has a lot of pockets, but I use them all the time, and I made some of my own modifications.

**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.)*

Gabby, how are you feeling right now?

**Gabby:** I feel good. I am looking forward to helping support this routine and this change in a way that makes it more comfortable. And yeah, just continuing to support this journey.

**Jesse Thorn:** Mike, how about you?

**Mike:** I very feel very happy that everyone's been so well and is looking out for me, especially my wife. And yeah, I'm willing to try out this new path and see what happens.

**Jesse Thorn:** Everybody except your elderly across-the-street neighbor; she's only looking out for herself.

**Mike:** Oh, she looks out for us. She's not in our debt. I'll put it that way.

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

**Gabby:** Thank you so much.

**Mike:** Thank you.

**Sound Effect:** Three gavel bangs.

**Jesse Thorn:** Another *Judge John Hodgman* case now in the books. We've got Swift Justice coming up in just a second. Our thanks Redditor u/TheRhubarbarian for naming this week's episode, "Breeches of Contract".

*(John reacts with delight.)*

Have you noticed how many of the people who come up with the puns that become the titles of our episodes, their Reddit names are puns?

**John Hodgman:** Yeah. It makes perfect sense. Punnery like punning.

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah. [Reddit.com/r/MaximumFun](https://www.reddit.com/r/MaximumFun) is where you can chat about this show and all Maximum Fun shows on Reddit. That's also where we ask for title suggestions. You can find the evidence from this show on our Instagram account, [@JudgeJohnHodgman](https://www.instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman). Of course, on our website, at [MaximumFun.org](https://MaximumFun.org). You can also find video from this episode on TikTok and YouTube at [@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod](https://www.youtube.com/@JudgeJohnHodgmanPod).

John, they say the proof is in the pudding, and the cargo pants pudding is there on YouTube, if you wanna see that I'm wearing cargo pants.

**John Hodgman:** Oh yeah. And may I presume you have pudding in your pockets?

**Jesse Thorn:** I do. I've got—I mean, that's what the cargo pants are for.

[01:05:00]

I mean, you can't put the pudding in the same pocket as your keys and wallet!

*(John agrees.)*

So, they give you leg pockets for the pudding.

**John Hodgman:** Speaking of YouTube, our YouTube comment of the week is right here on this device! I'm going to read it to you. It comes from user NessV739. If that's a pun, I don't know what it's for.

We recently cleared the docket of shopping-related disputes, you might remember, here on the podcast. And NessV739 regrets— I asked people is there something that they wish they had bought in a store, and then they came back to buy it later and it was gone, and they regretted it for the rest of their life? Like I regret not buying that painting of a UFO over the Deer Isle Bridge in Maine. NessV739 regrets not buying a life-sized fiberglass hammerhead shark, writing:

*(Jesse "wow"s.)*

"I walked by the antique store every day desperately trying to think of somewhere I could put that shark. Sadly, I had no room for it, and someone else must have admired it too. After a few weeks, the life-sized fiberglass hammerhead shark was gone, and I've never stopped thinking about it. I really feel bad about that."

You got—look, you gotta get the life-sized hammerhead shark, even if you got nowhere to store it, if you're thinking about it that much. I'm not trying to Bill Nye bully you into it. I'm just saying if you're thinking about it, get it.

I love to read your comments on our YouTube videos. Please leave them. Leaving a comment on the YouTube video or on our Instagram or other social media posts. It really helps people discover the show—as does sharing those episodes that you love. And it couldn't be easier to do. If you're watching on YouTube right now, there's probably a little button with an arrow on it. Press share. Share it with someone you love. Share it with someone you just like! I don't care. Share. That's my motto! I don't care; share.

**Jesse Thorn:** Butterscotch pudding in the pockets? Right there in the pockets?

Right there in the pockets.

Oh my. You don't say?!

I say! I say!

**John Hodgman:** Wow. That's just off the dome?

**Jesse Thorn:** Yeah, that's off the dome. Take that, Lin Manuel-Miranda, listening right now. Hi, Lin.

**John Hodgman:** Hi, Lin!

**Jesse Thorn:** Hope you're well.

*Judge John Hodgman*, created by Jesse Thorn and John Hodgman. This episode, engineered by Lester Watts at Albuquerque Podcast Studio and by Giacomo Jake Allegro at Headgum in New York City. Thanks to all of them. Our Social media manager, Dan Telfer. The podcast is edited by AJ McKeon. Our video editor is Daniel Speer. Our producer, Jennifer Marmor.

You ready for Swift Justice, John?

**John Hodgman:** You gotta know the territory! I'm ready.

**Jesse Thorn:** Versus the World Again on the MaxFun subreddit says, "I like to eat leftovers for lunch, but I don't heat them up. I'll eat anything cold. Enchiladas, pasta, soup, whatever. My partner thinks I'm what's wrong with this world."

I can't think of anything else wrong with this world right now.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, I know. The real problem is that this person's eating cold soup at the office. Yeah, look—I mean, you choose your battles. And cold soup is—well, that's a loser for me, but it's a winner for you. People like what they like, I guess. And you know, frankly, I wouldn't want to put my soup into a shared microwave in an office break room either. So, enjoy eating your bowl of snot, but keep it away from me.

**Jesse Thorn:** At some point, all office microwaves become fish-only microwaves.

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, exactly. And by the way, it wouldn't—even snot is warmer than your cold soup!

**Jesse Thorn:** (*Giggles.*) John, I think we need more disputes!

**John Hodgman:** We absolutely do need disputes, Jesse Thorn. Our show runs on them. And since we're on the topic of cargo pants, why not more clothing disputes? Certainly they're contentious. Are barrel jeans a thing to enjoy or a thing to stop? What's the best form of sweater vest or cardigan? Those are your options. Is your family making fun of your caftan? Won't you let me know that, and all of your clothing disputes, by simply writing to me at [Hodgman@MaximumFun.org](mailto:Hodgman@MaximumFun.org). Or you can go to [MaximumFun.org/jjho](http://MaximumFun.org/jjho).

But you know what? I'm mentioning the email address again, 'cause I want to hear from you. [Hodgman@MaximumFun.org](mailto:Hodgman@MaximumFun.org). Yes, it goes directly to me. I'm gonna read your dispute, and I will send it along to Jennifer Marmor, and maybe she'll call you up. Maybe we'll have you



here on the podcast, just like we had Gabby and Mike. Or maybe I'll do something in the *New York Times Magazine* or save it for a docket.

If you think you have a dispute, then you do. Send it in. [Hodgman@MaximumFun.org](mailto:Hodgman@MaximumFun.org).

**Jesse Thorn:** John, just for the less fashion-savvy listeners, barrel jeans is when you lost all your money in the stock market crash, and so you nail two canvas straps to the top of a barrel, and wear that as clothes?

**John Hodgman:** Yes, that's what barrel jeans are. And that's why I'm wearing them.

**Jesse Thorn:** We're eager to hear about all your disputes, no matter what the subject. Send them to us. [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://MaximumFun.org/jjho).

[01:10:00]

That is good! You know, John, I like how you put that. If you think you've got a dispute, you've got a dispute. Send it to us. [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://MaximumFun.org/jjho).

**John Hodgman:** Yeah, we'll be— We don't need you to judge whether or not your dispute is good enough. We'll be the judge!

**Jesse Thorn:** [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://MaximumFun.org/jjho). And we will 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!