- DEAN RAYMOND: For the first time the configuration of the Court you're on has changed. You have moved out of the junior seat and you have a new colleague. What does that feel like to sort of shift the sort of status quo of how things have been for a while and have them changed?

- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, can I first answer that question at the most, like, prosaic level? Because it means that I don't have certain responsibilities. Because there are certain jobs that are only the junior justice's. So what are they? The first is you have to take notes in conference so that you can then pass on all the decisions that we-- because nobody comes into the conference room other than the nine justices. Nobody from the clerk's office, none of the justices' personal clerks, nobody from any of the offices around the building. But they all have to know what we've done so that they can report it to the world, so that they can do all the various administrative things that need doing. So it's the job of the junior justice to kind of take good notes and to be able to report to everybody what it is that we've done, and literally at the end of conference everybody gets up and leaves except the junior justice. And the junior justice stays behind and all the justices 'chairs are then taken up by people in the clerk's office and around the building who needs to have this information, so that's the first thing. That's actually the most substantive thing that the junior justice has to do, believe it or not. The second thing the junior justice has to do is open the door. Now, you wouldn't think that this would be an assigned task. Right?

- DEAN RAYMOND: Life tenure required.

- JUSTICE KAGAN: Exactly. But, as I said, there are only the nine of us in there, and occasionally somebody has to give us something, like suppose an important phone call has come in or, more often, suppose somebody left their glasses in their chambers or left their coffee or just can't do without some particular file. And so they'll make a call from the conference room and somebody will come and knock the door, and the door is a very-- you would think it's just a door, but, no, it has to be two doors, it's like a double door with a few feet in between so that really nobody can enter the inner sanctum. And the person who is bringing the cup of coffee or whatever will knock on one door, you'll get up, you'll open the other door, take the cup of coffee, deliver it to your colleague. This is-- Can I tell you how seriously people feel as though this is the job of the junior justice? This is the best way I can describe it to you. Earlier this year I tore something in my foot and I was walking around with one of these boots, you know. A nd I was walking but I wasn't walking easily because I was, like, clumping along with one of these big plastic thingamajigs on your foot. And still, somebody would knock on the door, and everybody would just look at me, you know. So now it's not my job anymore. But still, after seven years now, so the last month, somebody would knock on the door and I'd go like this (flinches). It's some kind of conference joke, like how much Elena flinches. Right?

The third thing that the junior justice has to do is to be on the cafeteria committee. Now, this truly is a form of hazing. Right? This is like you are the person who one of your colleagues says there is too much salt in the soup and you're supposed to report that to the cafeteria. And then once a month or so you go to cafeteria meetings. And you think, you know, here you've just been confirmed to the United States Supreme Court and you think you're hot stuff. Right? And I think this is the reason why they do this. You think you're hot stuff, and they put you on this cafeteria committee and you are sitting there and you are having a conversation about what happened to the good recipe for chocolate chip cookies. So I don't have to do that anymore either.