

Trends Like These 231: Jeffrey Epstein's VERY Fishy Demise, Little Women Trailer, Ben Shapiro Hates the Peasants, Is 'Fredo' the Italian N-Word?, 'Kurbo' Child Weight Loss App, Trump's on a Roll, Facebook Admits to Eavesdropping on You, Good News About Sandwiches!

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[theme music plays]

Courtney: This week: Shapiro says some shit, Weight Watchers needs to quit, and Popeye's sandwich is legit.

Brent: I'm Brent Black.

Travis: I'm Travis McElroy.

Courtney: I'm Courtney Enlow.

Travis: And I'm Twavis McElwoy!

Courtney: No. No thank you.

Brent: Oof, no.

Travis: With Trends Like These.

[theme music plays]

Travis: Hello, Brent and Courtney.

Brent: Hello, Travis and Courtney.

Courtney: Hello, Brent. Hellooo, Travis.

Travis: [medieval accent] It is I. I have returned from far across the horizon. I have explored the new lands, and now I am back. And here's the thing about the new lands – they're pretty cool.

Courtney: [medieval accent] They're fine.

Travis: [medieval accent] Yeah. It's cool. It's fine. Y'know? I've been to San Diego.

Courtney: [gasps]

Travis: [medieval accent] I have been to... where else did I go? Holy shit. Portland?

Courtney: [medieval accent] I've been to the other places.

Travis: [medieval accent] I went to Indianapolis for a while. I was in South Carolina. Uhh, I went to Union, Kentucky.

Brent: [medieval accent] You didn't tell me you visited the new world. The new, faraway... land of wonders.

Travis: [medieval accent] If you count Indianapolis, yes. I count Indianapolis. I went to the GenCon. It was great. [normally] Listen, I can't keep doing this accent. Um...

Courtney: [medieval accent] But I can!

Travis: Oh god.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: [laughs]

Travis: Somehow, I was still scared by it.

Courtney: [laughing]

Travis: Hey, everybody. I'm back. I haven't been on the show in like three weeks.

Courtney: We missed you!

Travis: I know, I missed you too. So glad to be back. And believe it or not, news kept happening, even when I wasn't here.

Courtney: That's dumb.

Brent: We weren't sure if it would, but now, conclusively, we can say...

Travis: I know.

Brent: News does occur, even when Travis can't talk about it on a show.

Travis: I'm gonna have to talk to my therapist about this. It goes against everything I understand. Hi, everybody!

Courtney: This is Courtney's, uh, real specific reference corner, like I did last week with Sifl and Olly. Uh, but do you guys remember... there was a clip from... they used to show it on The Soup. But it was from like, The Hills, and it was like, this friend was trying to explain to Audrina the Large Hadron Collider, and Audrina was not understanding it. And she just said, "It's crazy all this is happening while Lauren is gone." And that's basically me when news just kept happening. I was like, "It's crazy all this is happening when Travis is gone."

Travis: That is so wonderfully specific and I love it. That happened today, too. Do you ever find yourself, like—you make a reference, and then you realize, like, you've just said it out loud to someone who does not understand the reference, and you like, have that horrible realization of, "I'm going to have to explain this inane reference that I barely care about, and I know they're definitely not going to."

Brent: Yep, when I moved to—

Courtney: That's called my whole entire fuckin' life is what it's called.

Brent: When I moved to Philadelphia, one of my first friend groups was this game developers meet up. And there were some my age folks, but a lot of like, mid-20s, y'know, ten-ish years younger than me. And man, it's weird the combination of references they'll get. It tells you something about their culture, 'cause you go like, "What, you've never seen Addams Family Values?" And you realize, they were born days after Addams Family Values came out. It's weird.

Travis: Alright. Hey. What's everybody drinking?

Courtney: I'm drinking a wine. It's a... it's a... it's a... it's a... shiraz. It's called something with a B. I even tried to pay attention this time. It's like... it's like, Batiste, or Bastard... it's one of those. We'll go with Bastard. That seems right.

Travis: But y'know, that kind of sounds like 'bastard.'

Brent: You want a Bastard, Shiraz?!

Courtney: Drinkin' that bastard juice.

Travis: There we go. What about you, Brentley?

Brent: Uh, I am drinking a store brand sparkling water. It is the Signature Select Soleil. That is the make, not the model. The flavor is pineapple coconut, and it's pretty yummy.

Travis: Ooh! I am having an ice cold water. That's it.

Courtney: All the travails.

Travis: We began this episode oh, so long ago, back at 8:15PM today, 8/15/2019. That's right, 8:15, 8/15... so you know you're in for something

special. And I was going to do this next thing as a headline of the week, but I decided I'm just gonna like, say it out loud, rather than read the headline.

Brent: Okay.

Travis: There's video footage of a dude... [laughs] Wearing a like, CRT TV as a helmet, leaving CRT TVs on people's porches, and it both seems innocuous and horrifying at the same time.

Courtney: It's deeply threatening. He is Prince Robot from Saga.

Brent: Thank you! Oh my god, I was gonna say that!

Courtney: It makes me scared, and happy, and sad, and...

Travis: See, I was gonna say Max Headroom.

Courtney: Horny? I don't know.

Travis: I was gonna say Max Headroom, but yours is better.

Courtney: Um, I need to do a... I need to do a gush.

Travis: Okay.

Courtney: I need to do a quick gush. Uh, Little Women released their trailer this week. It is directed by Greta Gerwig. It stars Saoirse Ronan. It stars Emma Watson. It stars Florence Pugh. It stars Laura Dern. It stars Meryl Streep. It stars Timothée Chalamet. It stars other people too whose names I don't know. And it looks... so good.

And for those of us who grew up so deeply entrenched in both the book and the 1994 film Little Women, this is an important, important film. We are very excited. And all of Twitter descended into, uh, Amy March Twitter, and it was the most seen and involved I've ever felt in Twitter. And just everyone on Twitter coming together.

And like, a smattering of people being like, "Amy March is great. To hate her is internalized misogyny." And the rest of us being like, "No, Amy March is a little piece of shit." And it was a really beautiful day, and I just... I was—it was just like, beautiful literature nonsense, and I'm glad that we had it.

Anyway, boys. Sorry you missed out on it.

Travis: That's okay. I'll just wait for the sequel, Giant Women.

Courtney: Just big, giant women. Isn't that a Steven Universe song? I feel like it is.

Brent: Honey, I Shrunk the Women.

Travis: Honey, I Blew Up the Babes.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: Big, Big, Big, Big, Big Women. I did it. The end.

[theme music plays]

Travis: I got a Sam Smith song stuck in my head. That's not my headli—that's not how I'm getting into Beyond the Headlines, it's just a fact. But let me see if I can make it into a Beyond the Headlines. I got a Sam Smith song that's stuck in my head, and it goes like this – [sings] "How can you sleep and Beyond the Headlines?" Nope. But hey, here we are. Listen.

Brent: [snorts]

Courtney: Was that your actual intro?

Travis: Sure.

Courtney: Okay. [laughs]

Travis: Listen...

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Listen. I don't know that this is so much a bey—it is. Alright. I got breaking news, folks. Breaking. News. Ben Shapiro is a piece of shit. Okay. Hello, friends. Welcome, welcome. Please, sit down. You're probably wondering why I called you here today. Well, I'd like to discuss a certain type of media personality with you. You see, there are people out there, really shitty people, who have made a career out of being divisive. They're often referred to as 'fire brands,' and they are most often found, but not always, on the political right.

Examples of this type of person include Milo Yiannopoulos, Milo Yiannopoulos, however the fuck you want to say his stupid name, Tomi Lahren, however you want to say her stupid name, and Alex Jones. Hard to mess that one up.

So, here's how the system works. They build a following by saying outlandish shit, and the people who agree with the outlandish shit like them. Inevitably, they say something so outlandish and offensive that everyone hears about it. Then, both people who agree with them and people who are angry at them are talking about them. This increases their overall media profile.

To keep the cycle going, they must constantly be trying to outdo the level of outlandish shittiness of the last thing they have said. So, let's talk about Ben Shapiro.

In case you don't know, Ben Shapiro is a major media personality in conservative politics. He's a podcast host, an author, a radio show host, and has 2.3 million Twitter followers. On Wednesday, during his radio show, he said this: "If you had to work more than one job to have a roof over your head or food on the table, you probably shouldn't have taken the job that's not paying you enough. That'd be a you problem."

And listen... I know that this happens sometimes, but that is not taken out of context. It is exactly what it sounds like. This comment was made in response to Democratic candidates saying that a large number of American citizens have to hold two or more jobs to make ends meet. Now, as you might imagine, many people took to Twitter and other social media outlets to criticize Shapiro in his obvious privilege. News outlets reported on the backlash, and how he was in trouble.

But here is the real question: is he in trouble? There is plenty of completely justified anger directed at him, but this dude has made his whole career off of making people angry. His pinned tweet is, "Facts don't care about your feelings." So like, that's a pretty good summary of his brand.

Brent: Which is funny, because if you pay a lot of attention to like, the reasons he believes certain things, he'll be like, "Well, well, religion... well, morality..." And I'm like, but, but, but, what about... anyway. Hypocrisy. Press on.

Travis: Um, now, you can make a strong case for the likelihood that many of his followers hold two or more jobs, and that may have been—and they may have been upset by someone... uh, may have been upset by someone they normally agree with. But the truth is, he is more famous now than he was before, and cancel culture just doesn't seem to have the same impact in the conservative ideology as it does in the liberal one.

Like, I'd be willing to bet that most of his supporters who would've been upset by the comment, because they agree with like, 95% of the other bullshit he has said, like, just ignored it. And so, here's the question I've been wondering – how do you respond to this shit? Because confronting the person makes them more famous, but not saying anything allows them to say whatever they want with no resistance.

Like, the New York Times, and y'know, Huffington Post, and everybody's talking about how shitty this dude is. Like, I found mostly what I would consider liberal to more neutral leaning outlets talking about him than conservative outlets over the last week. Talking about how shit he is, sure, but like, most of the people who support him would do the opposite of whatever the New York Times says anyways.

Brent: Well, right. I mean, you talk about cancel culture. It's like, there's certain people that are just cancelled by... not just the left, but like, anybody that doesn't agree with them. Like, Ann Coulter is perma-cancelled. I follow her on Twitter, 'cause I need to know what the talking points she's gonna come up with are, 'cause I'm gonna hear 'em trickle down.

Travis: Well, Ann Coulter's a great example, right? So my next question is, do you, instead of confronting them, wait until they eventually burn themselves out or down, like Milo Yiannopoulos and Alex Jones and Ann Coulter? Right? Where they become so buckwild that even the people who used to support them...

Brent: Oh, Ann Coulter's still selling books and uh, she's still getting speaking fees. Like, she's probably the master of—I mean, I don't think Ben Shapiro quite has the troll flavor of a Coulter or a Yiannopoulos. And like, let's be real – the left has its Bill Marr, which I think is about the closest the thing you get on the left. Um, but y'know, when you ask like, what do you—how should we respond to this shit? I think it's just a matter of trying to spread a little bit of like, correct information.

So, Ben Shapiro seems to be saying that a worker is to blame for a market that does not value their labor. And a market that doesn't value—

Travis: Which is just not true.

Brent: --40 hours a week of their labor, when in fact, markets can be—you're right, Travis. Markets can be changed through legislation. The notion of a free market is bullshit, 'cause the market always exists within a set of rules. And um, so—

Travis: It also—the statement completely ignores the idea of supply and demand of jobs, that there are jobs where the minimum wage that is offered doesn't match the level of, especially in bigger cities, doesn't match the level of cost of living. That like—

Brent: Right, to say nothing of automation. Or industry change. Like, y'know, I feel—I don't feel—

Travis: Education, the availability, experience, like...

Brent: Yeah. I don't feel bad for coal as a thing, but it does kind of suck that a coal miner could like, do their job well for 30 years, and then just because the market's changing, they're screwed. But that's a matter of the overall workforce, vis-à-vis the laws around it. And I look at this and go, y'know, a living wage... a living wage that just says—which is, in my opinion, not enough, but it's something. \$15 an hour, or prorated for cost of living in a particular area, just to make sure somebody's working 40 freaking hours, that they're not on the poverty line.

Travis: Yes. I agree. So basically, my short and very simplified answer is, maybe we need to start, as Brent has pointed out, responding to these things with like, statements, rather than questions. 'Cause y'know, just, I saw a lot of people responding to him and tweets about him and stuff like, saying, "Why would you say—what are you trying to say?!" Rather than just saying like, "This dude fuckin' sucks."

Courtney: People always respond to, y'know, this kind of thing with like, "Why are you giving this person attention?" And stuff like that. And they'll just go away if you... no, okay. There's a... [sighs] There's a difference between attention and value.

Travis: Yes. Well put.

Courtney: You can cast a light on the absolutely odious things that someone is saying. And it is different from, like, a couple years ago, if you guys remember Mark Duplass tweeted... and actually, I'm gonna pull up the tweet right now, because it was... white as fuck. Um, "Fellow liberals, if you are interested at all in crossing the aisle, you should consider following @BenShapiro. I don't agree with him on much, but he's a genuine person who once helped me for no other reason than to be nice. He doesn't bend the truth. His intentions are good."

Now, this is where we get into the whole, like, "Oh, well, y'know, you can have different opinions and still listen to what this person has to say!" And things like that.

Travis: You can also be a completely sincere person who's a piece of shit.

Courtney: Yeah. 'Cause this is a person... this is... we don't exist in a time anymore where it's like, "Oh, it's just a difference of opinions." No. This is a person who literally said that Trayvon Martin took a man's head and slammed it into the pavement, and that's why he's dead. That's just not accurate. And he is—he lives on spreading this bullshit, and igniting this white supremacist fire.

And he just... has this massive audience that either... [laughs] Neither is good. But either there are so many fuckin' Nazis in this country... and God, I just... I—I will crumble. Or—

Brent: Y'know what's funny about—sorry, go ahead.

Courtney: Or, there's millions and millions of people who... think that, y'know what? I'm not racist. I'm not—I don't—I'm fine with other people. But like, I just have a problem with like, this, this, this and this. And they don't... they don't know that they're—I'm not apologizing for them. They can fuck off into the fucking sea. But there are people in this country that don't know they're fucking racist sacks of shit.

Travis: Yep.

Courtney: And this fucking troll monger appeals to them.

Travis: Right. Because what he is saying, and the way he says it, makes it seem logical and factual, and not based off of hate or racism or whatever. But I mean, it is. Like, I think that, to Courtney's point, I think... 'cause listen, we've been doing this show for a while now. And stories come up where we talk about like, someone making headlines for being shitty, right?

And I think the fact of the matter is, here in 2019, we need to let go of the idea of just ignore them, and they'll go away. Because clearly, that... that doesn't work. I mean, even if—maybe it worked in the past, I don't know. I wasn't there. But right now, with so many varied platforms and outlets and megaphones for people to use, whether you're paying attention to them or not, somebody is.

Brent: Yeah. And there's the word 'radicalization', which gets thrown around when we talk about 4chan and 8chan and all of the numbers divisible by two. Whatever the fuck it is. But like, there's radicalization, and there's also just kind of acculturation to a certain kind of viewpoint. I watch a lot of, um, the intersection between philosophy YouTube and political YouTube. And so, you'll see all these videos where it's like, "Ben Shapiro destroys David Packman's argument!" And you watch it, and it's like, well, he didn't really destroy anything.

But the thing is, if you watch one video, right? Where Ben Shapiro makes a point that appeals to certain people, or seems to have a logical argument, and you watch the whole thing, YouTube goes, "Oh, this is what you like," and then shows you more.

And so, if people are just stumbling on things and suddenly getting acculturated to different ideas, and maybe that leads them to alt right stuff, maybe that leads them to Nazi stuff, y'know... then, if we—if you just say, "Oh, just ignore them," well, there's people that are just gonna find their way there. And it's almost like, ignoring it just helps other people get kind of led into that way of thinking. So I think it is about shining a light on it, trying to say, "Actually, no."

And what sucks about it is, it takes five seconds to tell a big lie, and it can sometimes take like, fuckin' 30 minutes to be like, "Here's why that is a lie." Y'know?

Travis: Yep.

Brent: But it's worth it.

Courtney: There was an incredible Twitter thread this week, and I'm actually trying to find it right now. But yeah, okay, so it's by Twitter user @IProposeThis, all one word, and it's—her name is Joanna Schroeder, and it basically, like—if you search her name, or uh, "Do you have white teenage sons?" I literally just searched like, 'white sons' and it came up.

But basically, she talked about like, how basically like, white boys get radicalized. And part of that is this idea that... and beyond, y'know, young boys, it's—I think it's the reason that probably like, people like Ben Shapiro have such an audience, where they speak to this idea where it's like, "Well, you're not racist for having these beliefs. You're not transphobic. You're not homophobic. You're a good person. It's the PC left, the social justice warriors, who just won't let you have any thoughts of your own!"

And that is what it does. It promotes this kind of like, cult behavior of like, "No, the left is this!" And like, it's this us versus them mentality, where being just like a good, open-minded person is the problem.

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: And that's... yeah.

Brent: One thing interesting about Ben Shapiro – not to belabor this story too long – is that he does this... and I'm gonna try to be delicate here... but he does... y'know how sometimes, people do like, the whole, "I can't be racist, I've got a black friend!" Well, like, Ben Shapiro courts a certain kind of alt right person, and certainly has a Venn diagram of people in his crowd and in his audience with alt righters who can sometimes be Nazis.

But he sort of does this thing with his Jewish heritage where he goes, "I can't be anything bad on the alt right, 'cause I'm Jewish!" And then he'll turn that around in like, the Israel thing. If you criticize Israel, you're anti-Semitic. It's this weird kind of cover for the fact that like, he's still, essentially, I would say, in league with Nazis. It's real fucked up.

The end.

Travis: The end.

Courtney: Well, also, he has that very strong, like... anti-Palestine to the point of like, possibly promoting ethnic cleansing, so like...

Brent: I mean, yeah. It's on—it's definitely in that neighborhood, for sure.

Courtney: Yeah.

Brent: He's, uh... I think he might be trouble, kids.

Courtney: Yeah, he's cool.

Brent: Shall we move on?

Travis: Yes please.

Courtney: God, please. Um, so I'm gonna give a quick content warning for this. This story contains triggers for disordered eating, both in terms of the story itself, but also I'll be discussing my own experience. Just so you know going forward.

This week, the program formerly known as Weight Watchers, and now simply WW, which is very hard to say. I'm gonna have to say that a couple times here. I'm not looking forward to it.

Travis: Especially weird when one of the most well-known acronyms that exist in the world is just one more W away from that.

Courtney: Exactly, yeah. 'Cause I think they like, thought, "Well, if it's like... it could be Wellness Watchers! It doesn't have to be weight!" But then they like... they did this thing, and it's like, I think we know what we're still watching here.

Uh, they announced Kurbo, an app for children, ages eight to 17. They're calling it a health coaching app. And yet, weirdly enough, all the success stories on the home page are weight loss related.

Brent: Hmm.

Courtney: There are four that you can look at on the homepage right now, as of recording this. There is Manny, 15, who lost 46 pounds. Micera, 14, reduced BMI percentile 17 points. Robbie, age 10, lost 42 pounds. Vanessa, aged *eight*, reduced BMI percentile 11 points.

These success stories are beneath a pull quote saying, "I feel more confident, healthier, and more comfortable in my skin." The implication, or rather, not so much implication as outright mission statement and purpose being that losing weight is the way for children to feel that way. The success stories each include a before and after image of these children.

Travis: Oof.

Courtney: I have included it in the doc, if you want to feel sad all the time.

Brent: Yeah, I'm lookin' at it. It's kind of creepy.

Courtney: I was reading, and—

Brent: This picture of Vanessa, it's just... I don't know.

Courtney: God. She's *eight*. She's *eight*!

Brent: That's what I'm saying. It's like, vaguely sexualized? I don't know.

Courtney: I'm just so sad.

Brent: It's very weird.

Courtney: I was reading an article at Eater. They actually did—they got a uh, like a trial membership. And they said, within the app, there are way more in-depth stories, and the stories talk about, uh, girls wanting to fit into their skinny jeans, and look good in bikinis. And my heart just shattered.

The app utilizes a traffic light system for kids to log and track their food choices, and “budget” red light foods like soda or candy. This is actually WW, their second effort to conquer the youth market after their announcement last year that they would be offering their program for free for 13 to 17 year olds.

I honestly, as I wrote this copy, got so angry and upset, I found myself dizzy. Like, I actually thought I might faint. In the interest of combatting obesity, fatness has been vilified to the point of being seen as a death sentence. People who are higher than whatever number society has dictated as perfect are treated worse, not only in general day to day life, but by doctors who attribute all medical issues to weight, rather than any other possible underlying cause.

Travis: Especially very frustrating, because just looking at two of these having to do with BMI, which is just complete and absolute bullshit.

Courtney: A made up fucking number? Yeah.

Travis: Like, my BMI says that I'm like, super—like, morbidly obese, I believe? Or at least, last time I checked.

Courtney: Oh, yeah.

Travis: Like, because it only takes into account, like, your height and weight and age. And like, that's the only—not like, your build, or like, anything else.

Courtney: Exactly.

Travis: So like, it's just... it's... and then they go to like an eight year old?! Uuugh! [laughs] And like, you have like, 16 growth spurts coming! You should be—listen! When you're eight? Go nuts! Like, if you're not enjoying that shit when you're eight, what are you doing?! Have some cake! It's okay!

Courtney: My BMI has always been like, overweight to obese, because I'm—I am a thicker lady. I am—I've danced my entire life, and that means I have like, big muscles in my legs. So like, I once got down to like, a hundred pounds, because I was like, not eating for an entire summer, and dancing every day. But because of my height, I was still overweight.

Travis: Mm.

Courtney: Or rather, the BMI was like, for the first time in your life, guess what? You're healthy. No, I wasn't healthy! I like, stopped having periods. I was dying.

Brent: Yeah. We can all agree, BMI is... it's just a terrible measure of anything other than like, the quotient or whatever the, y'know, two things which you already know. Your weight and your height. But I mean, I will say, like, the idea of encouraging kids to like, eat more fruits and vegetables? Fuckin' great!

Travis: Absolutely.

Brent: Awesome. But like, it's looking at this... specifically the picture that you included in the doc, success stories with the before and after... it just seems... so wrong for an eight year old, who probably didn't choose to like, download this app. Like, this is a thing a parent does. It feels like the 2019 version of what used to be called, y'know, not in a nice way, but used to be called like, 'fat camp.' Y'know what I'm saying? That's what it feels like.

Courtney: I mean, there's a world of difference between encouraging kids to eat, like, new and healthy foods—

Travis: And get out and play, and—yeah.

Courtney: And actually having your child pay attention to and track their food. Because that, in and of itself, makes your child start to think about food and develop an unhealthy relationship with the concept of food. Make them think like, "Oh, if I have to watch what I'm eating, food must be bad, and therefore, eating the wrong things must be bad."

Brent: Right. Or they get in their head, counting calories, and they realize, “Oh, if I just eat less calories, I’ll be skinnier.” And that, I think we all know, is just not a great road to get into, especially at that age where you aren’t really mature enough to know the difference, and to, y’know... it’s a bad... it’s a bad situation.

Travis: Even boiling it down simpler, looking at this before and after thing. The thing... it took me a second to put my finger on it. But what this is saying, right? Is both to Vanessa, but also to anybody who sees the word ‘success’ above it, and then this picture, is saying that the person on the left looks bad and is bad. And the person on the right, who is skinnier, is good and is better than the person on the left.

That has nothing to do with health. That has nothing to do with eating fruits and vegetables, or getting out there and playing with your friends. It is just saying, the person on the right is skinnier, and therefore more successful and better.

Courtney: She’s smaller now. She takes up less space. And therefore, she is better. And to do this to children. To make it easier than ever, and more technologically efficient, to literally pay \$69 a month to make children feel bad about themselves, is so—

Travis: That’s also—that’s really expensive!

Courtney: Really expensive, yeah. Uh, it’s so horrific. I was literally shaking while I was typing this. As a mother, yes, but also as someone who has struggled with self-esteem, self-image, and disordered eating my whole life. I remember being seven or eight years old, and having frozen pizza at a friend’s house, and saying, “Y’know, this is 420 calories per serving.” And I didn’t say it like it was a bad thing. It was just a fact. It was just a thing I knew.

And I don’t remember when I started associating calories with being fat, and being fat with being bad, but I know that I did. That was part of growing up. This idea that skinny was pretty, and not skinny wasn’t. And I remember

looking at pictures of myself, looking bigger than my friends, and feeling bad about that. Like, feeling embarrassed and guilty. Like I was doing something wrong. I was existing wrong. My body was wrong.

I would eat too much and feel like I had done something horribly wrong, like I'd failed. And then at 17, I developed bulimia. I was bingeing and purging and abusing laxatives. And we've joked—I joke all the time about being the 'I can't poo' girl, because that is very funny to me. I'm sorry that when you Google me, that's the first thing that comes up. Uh, but... 17 years later, that is one of the lingering effects of my laxative abuse. I literally destroyed my body's ability to function.

And I still struggle with bingeing and purging to this day. It's a very—that, in itself, is honestly embarrassing to say. I know that it's... because I want to—I want to be... I don't know how to put this. I want to be good for you guys listening. You all. I want to be... I want to be good for you all. I want to be strong for you all, but I'm not all the time.

I still struggle with all of that, and I hope that that is... me saying that isn't more triggering than talking about this, because the last thing I want is for anyone to think, like, well, if Courtney does it... 'cause please. Please, never think that. Otherwise, I really wish that I hadn't said it. But hopefully, by being honest, maybe it makes someone else feel better.

Brent: I think it's brave. And I think like, there's a lot of diseases, or addictions, or habits that... you can stop the habit, but it's like... you're always the person that did that. And so, even if the struggle is internal—

Travis: And that's the thing, it's not—

Brent: Y'know, it can still be a struggle.

Travis: It is one of those things, too, of having some kind of disordered eating, and these kinds of things. Isn't like... "Oh, I shouldn't!" Y'know, it's not like a biting your nails or something. Like, it reaches so—we're looking at this, right? And this is the thing. It's a thing I'm thinking about now, with my three year old, is being so careful about my language, and so careful about

descriptions, to not instill that this is better than this, and that this is somehow prettier or whatever. Like, because this shit reaches so deep. And to see someone trying to profit off of that...

Courtney: Yeah.

Travis: It's heartbreaking.

Courtney: I'm terrified. Like, I don't... I genuinely don't know how to talk about, um... my daughter. Because she is... whatever the statistics for what she is supposed to be weight-wise, BMI-wise, she's not that. She's a tall girl, and she is not the same size as the rest of the kids in her class. And I never want her to feel like that's bad or wrong. She's... she's amazing, and she's smart, and she's funny, and she's beautiful, and I want her to know that and feel that forever. And I know that at some point, someone is going to make her feel like she's not.

All I can do is make sure it's not me. And a big part of that is not talking about myself in any way that is remotely negative, and never associating food with... with size, or size with being good or bad, or anything like that. Because we, as a society, have this horrific relationship with eating and vilifying food and fatness. I mean, like, no offense, Brent, we do whole 30s, and juice cleanses, and all these diets.

Brent: No, you're right. You're right.

Courtney: That dieticians tell us are unhealthy. And we do things to cleanse toxins while doctors tell us, toxins aren't a fucking thing beyond that stuff our kidneys and livers make us shit out. And we do it because we tell ourselves we're trying to be healthy, but we don't. We're doing it to be thin, and we know it.

And it's one thing when we're adults, but it's a whole other nightmare to do this to children. Because living in this dumb world is already doing that. And to have their parents download an app and hand it to them, and to judge the food they're eating and weigh in every week, and make weight this benchmark of health and happiness... it's horrific.

So consider this. When we talk about the type two diabetes epidemic among children, that means that in 2012, 5,300 children were diagnosed with type two diabetes. And that is a lot for a condition that, in the past, had been previously unheard of in children.

But then consider this. According to NationalEatingDisorders.org, in a large study of 14 and 15 year olds, dieting was the most important predictor of developing an eating disorder. Those who dieted moderately were five times more likely to develop an eating disorder, and those who practiced extreme restriction were 18 times more likely to develop an eating disorder than those who did not.

By age six, girls especially start to express concern about their own weight or shape. 40 to 60% of elementary school girls are concerned about their weight, or about becoming too fat. This concern endures throughout life.

Kurbo says its coaches will look for signs of eating disorders, like rapid weight loss. But those aren't the real signs to watch for. The real signs include preoccupation with food, calorie counting, fear of becoming fat, food phobias, or avoidance. But if they watched out for those warning signs, they wouldn't have an app, or your \$70 a month.

[theme music plays]

Travis: This week, Trends Like These is supported in part by Dashlane. Managing passwords sucks. And as recently as last week, we reported on a big data leak. And when data leaks, and hackers find out your password to one website, they can try to break into other websites with your information, and steal everything from your home address to your credit card number.

But managing your passwords can be so much easier with Dashlane. Dashlane is a password management app that keeps all your online information safe, secure, encrypted, and easy for you to access. Dashlane remembers all your passwords so you don't have to. It seamlessly auto fills all of your login information, syncing automatically across your computer, phone, and tablet. It even stores payment details.

So go ahead, get weird with your passwords... or, let Dashlane generate a real stumper for you. They'll keep it safely stored in a password vault only you can unlock. So check out www.Dashlane.com/Trends to get Dashlane free on your first device. And as a special offer for Trends Like These fans, they're offering a 30 day free trial of Dashlane premium, including VPN, dark web monitoring, and more.

If you like it, use code 'Trends' at checkout to save 10% on your premium prescription. Once again, that's Dashlane.com/Trends to get Dashlane free on a device, and then when you get Dashlane premium, use code 'Trends' at checkout to save 10%.

Brent: On your premium subscription. Travis, you just said premium prescription. I liked it, but...

Travis: Sure. Yeah, alright. Listen, Dashlane will not deliver prescriptions to your door.

Brent: It's weird. I was really anxious about my passwords, and my doctor prescribed Dashlane! Okay, um, speaking of health. Uh, Trends Like These is brought to you in part by Care Of. Give yourself support this season with a boost, whether you're looking for energy, better sleep, to maintain stress, or something else to help you feel your healthiest.

Care Of's online quiz asks you about your diet, health goals, and lifestyle choices, and takes only five minutes to find out your personal recommendation for vitamins, protein powders, and more. Your personalized Care Of subscription box, or prescription box, whatever you like, gets sent right to your door every month with personalized daily packs. There's vegan, vegetarian options available to match your needs.

I did the Care Of quiz and received, uh, a regimen. It was really easy. Really fun. And it's very personalized to me. Y'know, the individual packets are very convenient, the protein powder is tasty, I think it's actually a pretty cool thing, and it's just really easy and fun to do the quiz.

So, for 25% off your first Care Of order, go to TakeCareOf.com and enter promo code 'Trends.' That's 25% off your first Care Of order by going to TakeCareOf.com, and enter the promo code 'Trends.'

[theme music plays]

Brent: Content warning for this segment – we'll be talking about the sexual assault of minors, as well as suicide. [sighs] Well, folks... I can't remember the last time I did quite this deep of a dive on a story, but sometimes, something happens, and the way it's covered in the mainstream media just compels me to do my own digging, and... here we are.

About a month ago, I reported about Jeffrey Epstein, the super-rich financier who raped and molested young girls, forced them into sex slavery, and happens to be connected to extremely rich and powerful people. You may also recall, he had a private plane nicknamed the Lolita Express, which Bill Clinton happened to fly on 26 times.

Donald Trump was definitely friends with Epstein, and you can see that in recently unearthed footage of the two of them hanging out back in the '90s, as well as the now infamous quote where Trump said, "I've known Jeff for 15 years. Terrific guy. He's a lot of fun to be with. It is even said that he likes beautiful women as much as I do, and many of them are on the younger side."

So, to recap before we get into the recent stuff, Epstein was indicted for the assault and sex trafficking of minors about ten years ago. At the time, police had found evidence that he had abused dozens of girls. Julie Brown of the Miami Herald found evidence of about 80 women with similar claims. But somehow, Epstein got off easy because of a sweetheart plea deal facilitated by Alex Acosta, who was later Trump's labor secretary.

Epstein's punishment for his crimes was about a year in a work release program in the county jail, coming and going, more or less, as he pleased. But recently, he was indicted and arrested again for the same kinds of crimes; but instead of Florida law enforcement, it was New York. He was

denied bail, so he'd have to remain behind bars until his trial, and he could've faced 45 years in prison.

And the reason I'm speaking in past and conditional tenses is because, as of this past week, Jeffrey Epstein is dead. It's been called an 'apparent' suicide, and for many reasons, it's just real fishy. First off, two weeks before his death, he was found in his cell at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan, injured with marks on his neck. He was then placed on suicide watch, which is exactly what should've happened.

Two weeks later, he's dead, apparently from hanging himself. How did that possibly happen? Why did it happen? Well, one possibility is that Epstein knew he was screwed, didn't want to get life in prison, and he killed himself. That's plausible.

But what's fishy about it is, A, how difficult it would be to pull that off, given the circumstances... and B, how many famous and powerful people would rather him be dead than able to implicate them as part of his indictment.

And I watched mainstream media coverage of this, and the headlines would make it sound juicy and mysterious, but they would call any suggestion of foul play a deranged conspiracy theory. And the word 'deranged' went around a lot. Like, I heard it on CNN, but I also heard it parroted by Seth Meyers. It's just... y'know, I don't... as I've said before on the show, I am not Alex Jones. But this is fishy.

Instead of pointing out Epstein's ties to Trump and Clinton, most of the anchors and reports I saw would only mention the word 'coconspirators.' As far as we know, neither Trump or Clinton have been listed as coconspirators in any documents regarding Epstein. But in recently unsealed documents, Virginia Roberts Giuffre said she was forced to be a child sex slave by Epstein with an accomplice named Ghislaine Maxwell.

And while she never saw Trump have sex with a minor, he was definitely a friend of Epstein's. She met him a few times. She also worked at Mar-a-Lago at the age of 17. Uh, remember that in 2016, a different woman accused Trump of raping her when she was 13, in connection with Epstein, but she

withdrew legal action after claiming her life was threatened, right around the time of Trump's election.

Ghislaine Maxwell, by the way, is widely said to be sort of an assistant and a madam for Epstein's sex trafficking, recruiting girls, working with Epstein in many ways. And she was one of the coconspirators who was entirely let off the hook by the 2008 sweetheart deal where Epstein got off easy.

Um, Giuffre's sealed claim documents against Maxwell also says that she was forced to have sex with England's Prince Andrew, as well as lawyer and professor Alan Dershowitz, who reached a settlement agreement with Giuffre in 2016, but still says none of this ever happened. He's also been recently quoted – going off my copy here – recently quoted as saying, yes he did get a massage on that plane, but he kept his underwear on the whole time. Like, interesting parsing there, Mr. Dershowitz.

Anyway. Now onto the reporting of James B. Stewart in the New York Times. Stewart wrote this week that he had met with Epstein to use him as an anonymous source about a year ago. Epstein said he had dirt on many famous and powerful people, both with illegal drug use and "sexual proclivities." Stewart claims that Epstein's home had a framed photo of Epstein with Mohammed bin Salman, the crowned prince of Saudi Arabia. Apparently Epstein says they spoken often.

And then there's the matter of Epstein's leaked book of contacts. When you hear Epstein was connected, it does not do justice to this list of contacts. I scoured the entire long lists early this morning, and found the following names: Tony Blair, Alec Baldwin, Richard Branson, the Duke and Duchess of York, Ralph Fiennes, the vice chairman of Forbes magazine, Dustin Hoffman, Mick Jagger, David Koch, Henry Kissinger, Fox News owner Rupert Murdoch, disgraced RNC finance chair Steve Wynn, John Carey, Itzhak Perlman, senator George Mitchell, multiple people that worked for Miramax, including Harvey Weinstein's brother, Warren Spector, Kevin Spacey, Ivana Trump, Ivanka Trump, Donald Trump, and his brother, Robert Trump, and two former governors of New Mexico, Barbara Walters, and the "main line" of the White House.

Now, I'm not saying all these people were involved with Epstein's sex trafficking, but there are definitely people that wanted this guy dead. Uh, when the news of his death came out, a lot of people in the #PizzaGate crowd were dredging up the age-old conspiracy about the supposed Clinton body count, going back to conspiracy theories about the Clintons. Like, all the way back to the '90s.

So Trump, in presidential fashion, retweeted a tweet about it that implicated Clinton, definitely fanning the flames of a wide range of conspiracy theories that, just by their nature, cannot all be true. Meanwhile, Trump lap dog, attorney general Bill Barr, said in a public appearance that there were "serious irregularities at the federal jail" where Epstein was found dead. Barr said, "We will get to the bottom of what happened," and that "any coconspirators should not rest easy, and the victims deserve justice, and they will get it."

Now, those are like... I don't hate those statements. I think that a good person could also say them, but it's convenient that Trump has been accused of assaulting a minor in connection with Epstein, and the investigation into Epstein will be overseen by an attorney general who is a Trump lackey.

Okay, now onto the death itself. This guy was taken off suicide watch after six days. A source familiar with the situation told CBS that there was shouting and shrieking coming from the cell the morning of his death. The Washington Post reported that a source claimed Epstein's autopsy showed there were broken bones in Epstein's neck.

To be clear, that does not solve the mystery, because the bones in question can be broken from strangulation or hanging, so I'm kind of debunking the idea that those headlines suggest that he couldn't have been hanged. But how would he have hanged himself? Prisoners in his situation are specifically prevented from getting anything they could kill themselves with, even if they're not on suicide watch. Like, if they get a pen, it's made of rubber. If they get paper, it's like, one sheet a week.

Two, I mean, like, they make sure that the blankets are made of stuff you can't do this with, or you don't get a blanket. Um, two prison staff members

who had been guarding his unit apparently failed to check on him the night before his death for about three hours, even though they're supposed to check every 30 minutes. Even if a prisoner hasn't recently been on suicide watch.

One of the officers wasn't even a detention guard, but was temporarily reassigned to that post, according to a person briefed on the matter. Both guards were working overtime shifts. The warden of the prison, by the way, in a disciplinary action, has been temporarily reassigned. I don't—I kind of don't understand how that works. Like, oh, you fucked up this one place. You ought to go fuck up another place. It's dumb. Anyway.

CBS has reported that guards wrote down that they had checked on Epstein at various points, but that those supposed checks had not been corroborated by video surveillance. Epstein was found by his cellmate, Nick Taglione, a former crooked cop who has been accused of multiple murders. Who, by the way, just has this... he looks like he's on steroids. He looks like he could just crush you with a bear hug. I don't know if that has anything to do with anything, but anyway.

Epstein's body has been claimed by an unnamed associate, whatever that means. So like, where does that leave us? First off, foul play, I would say, is just as likely, if not more, as Epstein actually willfully committing suicide. Why didn't the guards follow protocol? If Epstein was found by his cellmate, how big was the cell? How did the cellmate not realize what was going on? How did an implement capable of hanging him get into the cell?

Uh, I'm just saying, the facts are indistinguishable from a situation where his death was facilitated by some kind of powerful or otherwise outside forces. Perhaps powerful forces on which he had career ending dirt, possibly going up as high as multiple US presidents. Heads of state. Princes. CEOs.

So now, you've got political leaders calling for investigations into Epstein's death. But the sad truth is, we may never get to the bottom of it, and the real truth may be muddled by hundreds of mutually contradictory conspiracy theories, and this could just become like a mini version of JFK. But anyone who thinks foul play is unlikely is fooling themselves, or just ignorant.

Travis: Well, especially since—sorry to interrupt your very good run.

Brent: No, go ahead. Please, please.

Travis: But as you've just outlined, foul play doesn't necessarily mean—it's not an all or nothing thing, right? Like, if Epstein already had attempted suicide, you could just as easily say the foul play is making sure the guards left him alone, gave him imple—it doesn't mean, like, somebody like, assassin'd into his cell and like, took him out.

Brent: Yeah. I mean, not to dark, but it could be like, someone made sure a rope was in there. Y'know, that's a gross thought, but like, to your point, Travis, there are many ways this could've happened. Um, and it seems like you've got guards that... y'know, it's nobody's fault, right? Oh, it wasn't me! Oh, blah blah!

But like, it's just... It feels like the way that you hear about people getting disappeared in Russia. Like some journal—like, if we heard about this, and it happened in Russia, we would go, "Oh, well, Putin's guys got him." Why does CNN, MSNBC, certainly Fox... why did none of them want to talk about that? Fox is talking about it in terms of Clinton a little bit, which doesn't bother me. I carry no water for Bill Clinton. He was a better president than George W. Bush. Okay. But like, I still think he's very likely to be a rapist. Maybe worse.

I just want to get to the bottom of it, and I wish I had more answers and conclusions at this moment. But unfortunately, the details are really still a mystery. I hope they won't be forever.

Travis: Beep beebity beep beep biddy beep bee! We got ourselves a Trumpdate, folks. That's right. We haven't heard anything from this guy in a while now. Been laying pretty low for the last couple years. But now here we are.

Courtney: It's that thing no one wants. But we have to... we have to talk about it, 'cause it's your life.

Travis: I don't know what Twitter you're looking at, Courtney, but everybody's been tweeting at me, week after week. "When is Trends Like These gonna talk about Donald Trump again?"

Courtney: When you just gonna change it to Trumps Like These?

Travis: 'Cause we haven't mentioned that fool in for fuckin' ever. So, here we go. It's a Trumpdate, folks.

On Monday, the Trump administration revealed a sweeping new rule set to take effect October 15th, that would effectively cut legal immigration in half. The rule would set up a check to determine wealth and resources of immigrants applying for a green card. If it is determined that there is potential of the applicant needing to rely on benefit programs such as food stamps or subsidized housing, they would be denied.

There is no shortage of critics to this announcement. Many are pointing out that this is obviously racially motivated. Analysts have determined that this is least likely to impact applicants from Europe and Canada, and mostly likely to impact those from Mexico and the Caribbean.

A very telling fact is that the rule is derived from the immigration act of 1882. Ahh, the late 1800s, a time in our history well-known for being free of any racial bias whatsoever.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: So, what impact would this have on immigration numbers? This from Reuters: "A 2018 study by the Migration Policy Institute found 69% of already established immigrants had at least one negative factor against them under the administration's wealth test, while just 39% had one of the heavily weighed positive factors."

The long and short of that is, had this been in place in 2018, there's a very good chance that 69% of immigrants that were allowed to legally immigrate to our country would have been denied under this ruling.

When this was announced, Ken Cuccinelli was asked about the words inscribed on the Statue of Liberty. Y'know, give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. And Cuccinelli put his own words into the poem, saying, "Give me your tired and your poor, who can stand on their own two feet and will not become a public charge." Beautiful, Ken. Truly moving.

Brent: I will say, just so we're clear—

Travis: He's a representative from the Trump administration, by the way. I realized I hadn't said that.

Brent: This tiny, tiny uh, like, debunk. The headlines made it sound like he made sure the plaque on the Statue of Liberty was different. Now, he's an asshole and can go fuck himself, but just so we're clear, he just added some more words to it verbally in the moment.

Travis: Yes. He did this weird, really bad kind of tap dancing thing, of like, not literally, God knows, but that would've been a weird thing to watch. But more of just like, being as the question, saying like, "Well, here's what I think it means..." Um, he went on to say that the words on the Statue of Liberty were referring only to Europeans? And like, when they were written, they meant only...

Like, here's the thing, y'all. I'm not going to get too philosophical here, but whether they were meant to speak only about Europeans or not, it was over like, almost a hundre—I'm doing quick math. Get away. 140 years. Almost 140 years. Getting close to 140 years. Like, over time, it has begun... it has come to represent something else, right?

And no matter what it meant then, right now, give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free... it doesn't, in anyone's mind then say, brackets, as long as they're white, end brackets. Although, clearly it does for some people, and those people can fuck themselves. So!

Brent: Yeah. And Europeans is such a dog whistle for alt right Nazi fuckers anyway. Europeans.

Travis: Correct.

Brent: Kind of like when people say 'the west,' and it's like, what the fuck do you even mean by 'the west?'

Travis: Well, this is—we were talking about this before we went to air, because like, just like an hour ago, a bunch of news broke about Trump kind of floating the idea of looking into buying Greenland?

Brent: [laughs] Yeah.

Travis: And like, the fact of the matter is, if he wanted to add Greenland to the United States, but not make Puerto Rico a state, or like not give benefits to Puerto Rico, not like... the—the line there is obvious, right? Like, it's the difference between white people and not white people. [sighs] Okay.

So, the National Immigration Law Center has announced that it will file suit to stop the ruling from taking effect, and both the New York and California attorney generals have threatened to sue.

Also on Monday, the Trump administration rolled out changes to the Endangered Species Act. The ESA was signed into law in 1973, and saved such species as the grey wolf, the grizzly bear, and the bald eagle, just to name a few. These new changes are fairly drastic.

First, species that are listed as 'threatened,' which is just one step below, will not receive the same protection as endangered species. Instead, the protections will be determined on a case by case basis. The new rule will also make it easier to remove species from the endangered species list, and additions of language like 'foreseeable future' will allow them to ignore factors like climate change.

But arguably, the most significant change is that economic factors will now be in consideration in determining protections for species. So, if it is

determined that protecting a species would impact, say, oil drilling or mining or something along those lines, the species may be denied protection. And in case this isn't clear, that fuckin' sucks.

Uh, it's—this is, once again, another obvious ploy to try to open up lands that have been, uh, used to protect species for like, oil drilling and mining and shit. Um, once again, several groups have already announced their intentions to file suits opposing the new rule.

So, hey, do you all remember Anthony Scaramucci?

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: Oh, that fuckin' guy.

Travis: Yeah, he was White House communications director for like, negative five days.

Brent: It was 11, and that's why I still sometimes say, "Oh, it was barely even one Scaramucci!" `Cause like...

Travis: Well, actually, Brent, he... he... [laughs] He started 11 days before his actual swearing in, and he was fired—

Brent: Oh, okay.

Travis: And he was fired six days in. So he was fired five days before actually getting the job.

Brent: Damn, okay. You win.

Travis: Yes.

Brent: Alright. Good math.

Travis: And uh, he only technically did the job for six days, which makes him the record holder for shortest time as White House communications director in history.

Brent: And that'll be hard to beat. That'll be real hard to beat.

Travis: Yes, right? It would take somebody walking up, shaking their hand, and then slapping the president, like, as he shook the hand. [laughs]

Brent: [laughs] It's like, I've got a press release! And it's like, bye. That's what it says on the press release.

Travis: Okay. Well, so, uh, Scaramucci, uhh, hates Trump now. So he tweeted on Monday, "To those asking what took so long, you're right. I tried to see the best in @realDonaldTrump, based on private interactions and select policy alignment, but his increasingly divisive rhetoric and damage it's doing to the fabric of society outweighs any short term economic gain."

He also, on CNN's New Day said, "The racially charged comments, the divisive tweeting, the nonsense coming from the president, is not helping the country." He also told CNN that he is still Republican, but he is neutral on Trump; although, I would argue that his comments aren't really all that neutral.

Now, here's what's bonkers. Scaramucci went on Real Time with Bill Marr on Friday, and was referring to Donald Trump as his friend. So something happened over the weekend that made him do a drastic 180. What, you ask? Well, what else? A tweet.

Uh, president Trump tweeted, "Anthony Scaramucci, who was quickly terminated (11 days) from a position that he was totally incapable of handling—" Now here's the thing – he said 11 days, too. I might be wrong. But I'm gonna say it's more likely that Trump is wrong. Uh, "—from a position that he was totally incapable of handling, now seems to do nothing but television, as the all-time expert on "president Trump.""

Once again, weird choice of where to put quotes there. Okay. "Like many other so called—" That would've been the right place to do it. "—television experts." That's the place you want to put... listen, let me do some quick copy editing here.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Uh... you don't need to put president Trump in quotes unless you don't think you're a real president, which... m'kay. But you would want to put them, uh, around 'experts' or 'television'—y'know, I'll just rewrite it. Uh, anyways. "Like many so-called television experts, he knows very little about me..... other than the fact that administration has probably done more than any other administration in its first two and a half years of existence. Anthony, who would do anything to come back in, should remember the only reason he is on TV, and it's not for being the mooch." [laughs] That's my favorite part about it. What does that mean? Okay, anyways.

Uh, he then also tweeted two days later, "Scaramucci, who like so many others, had nothing to do with my election victory, is only upset that I didn't want him back in the administration where he desperately wanted to be. Also, I seldom had time to return his many calls to me. He just wanted to be on TV!"

And the feud went on. On America This Week, Scaramucci told host Eric Bolling, "He's mentally declining. He's losing his step here in terms of how he's thinking about human beings, and he's creating a corrosive, socially dividing cancer in the country that's not worth the economics."

Scaramucci has also called for Republicans to consider replacing Trump as the Republican candidate in 2020, but I would say that seems very unlikely at this point.

Brent: I... I feel like... is it... [sighs] Okay, what am I trying to say? Doesn't it just show how very transparently that Scaramucci was only acting one way because Trump was nice, and then acted a different way because he was mean? Like, I just—is this like a certain culture of businesspeople?

Like, I'm not trying to generalize, but it's like, doesn't that just show, like, oh, you must've never liked, and you must've never had loyalty. You must've just been waiting to talk about how he was an asshole until he was an asshole to you, and then completely reveal like, "I was lying the whole time!"

Travis: I have a different theory. Not that different, but we've actually seen this many, many times when it comes to Trump and his like, "inner circle," right? Where you'll get people who like, swear loyalty up and down, I'd take a bullet. Michael Cohen I believe said, "I'd take a bullet for him." Like, all these different things. But the thing is like, that is because Trump really rewarded that kind of – and still does – that kind of like, blatant yes manning, and like, sycophantic behavior, right?

Brent: Yeah, that's true...

Travis: But then, as soon as it becomes clear that Trump either can't or isn't going to help them, like, they have no reason—like, I would be... I would bet a bajillion doll hairs that Trump does not have a real, like, *real* friend in his entire life. Like, somebody that he is just like, that like, really likes him for him, that he can be himself around, or whatever the fuck. Like, because his behavior up to this point makes it seem like he is a very, uh... the only word I can think of is like, fragile. But like, explosive, uh, temperamental type of person.

Brent: Yeah.

Travis: It just doesn't seem like... it seems like the only people who ever, like, talk about how great he is are people that you don't believe know what a great person is like. Y'know? Like, it's never a cool person that you're like, "Aw, what a cool person that likes Donald Trump!"

Brent: Shall we bit some tids? Tid some bits?

Travis: Let's do it indeed.

Courtney: Let's do like... that.

Brent: Okay.

Courtney: In a video that went quite viral, CNN journalist Chris Cuomo got into an altercation, if you will, with a man who referred to him as “Fredo,” to which he responded... well, he said a lot of the profanes. And then he said, “Are any of you Italian? It’s an insult to your people. It’s like the N-word for us.”

Hi. Italian, here. No. No it isn’t. Uh, journalist Dichura Lee tweeted something akin to this, but the Oprah quote that comes to mind is, “I always think of the millions of people who heard that as their last word as they were hanging from a tree.” No one ever heard “fredo” in their last moments, so shut up. Nothing is the N-word for anyone. Stop it.

Travis: Except the N-word.

Courtney: Except for the N-word.

Travis: The N-word is the N-word. That’s it.

Courtney: That’s fuckin’ it. That’s the word. No one else gets a word that is anything like that. Stop trying to pretend like your word is that word, ‘cause it’s not that fuckin’ word.

Travis: It really feels like the kind of thing Cuomo should’ve said like, “It’s like the N-wo—no, y’know what? I just heard myself say it. It’s not. I’m so sorry. Everyone here, I’m gonna buy you all gelato. Come on.”

Courtney: Real talk, that was a Fredo fuckin’ move.

Travis: It really was.

Brent: For me, I mean, obviously, the N-word thing was absolutely the most egregious part of it. But having watched the video, it’s just weird to see a news anchor repeatedly call someone a punk-ass bitch. Now, I know that like, he was mad. I know he felt, y’know, that kind of like, threatened,

are we gonna fight kind of thing. And it's just like... can you imagine like, Brian Williams or like, I don't know, Walter Cronkite just like, bustin' into that kind of... I don't know. I'm not judging.

Travis: Oh, I would love to see Barbara Walters like, callin' someone a punk-ass bitch.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: That'd make me so happy.

Courtney: Journalist death match. I'm into it. But Cuomo has always seemed particularly roidy, so I was not exactly surprised here. Um, but yeah, like... no.

Brent: Both the steroids and the hemorrhoids.

Courtney: So many roids. Um, how dare you besmirch the fine work of John Cazale. Like, perfect performance. Fredo... deser—like, Fredo does not deserve to be like, dragged down with like, being compared to Chris Cuomo, and like, the Trump brothers and this shit. Like, Fredo was a weak piece of shit, but he was also fictional, and that makes him better than these other people.

Travis: Agreed.

Brent: Take the cannoli. Okay.

Courtney: Also, there's a big, strong chance that this was, like, a right wing, like... conspiracy thing. Like, whatever. That they—it was a plant, 'cause Donald Trump Jr. was all excited about, like—

Brent: Oh, absolutely. They talked about how they'd heard about him from talk radio. And it's like, well, then, how the fuck did you know what he looked like?

Courtney: Yeah.

Brent: Anyway, it's dumb.

Courtney: But at the end of the day, he said the—he said the dumb thing. It doesn't matter why he said the dumb thing, he said the dumb thing, so no. Fredo's not a fucking slur. It's the name of a character. No. Don't be stupid.

Brent: Alright.

Courtney: Shut up.

Brent: Speaking of another character, in this case, Mark Zuckerberg... um, so my question about this next tidbit is, whyyy do we let Facebook do anything? Why can't the internet go back to being just little niche corners and communities instead of huge megacorporations mining and selling our data, never respecting our privacy? And the answer is, because that's 4chan.

Anyway, Facebook admitted this past week that audio conversations carried out on the Facebook messenger app have been listened to by humans. The practice involved users who had opted into having their voice chats transcribed with messenger. I didn't know that was a thing, but apparently the contractors, the human contractors involved, were tasked with re-transcribing them to gauge the accuracy of the transcription tool. Even though people didn't know that was gonna happen with their personal conversation audio.

Apparently, similar things have been revealed in the past few months about Google, Microsoft, Amazon, and Apple. My question is, if you're a multi-billion dollar company, and you want to just see if your like, software that, y'know, if your speech to text software works. Um, can't you either let users knowingly opt into this on a per call basis, or like, just hire some human beings to use the services and run quality control from their participation?

Anyway. Facebook says, "Human review has been paused." I for one am going to buy a boat and live off fish and limes in the mid-Atlantic. Bye.

Courtney: I thought you said you were gonna live *on* a fish.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Brent: Did I?

Courtney: Like, just live on a fish. A big fish, and you're just gonna live on it.

Brent: Just gonna live on it. Did I actually say those words?

Courtney: I don't care.

Brent: Did I read it wrong?

Travis: Now you might as well have.

Courtney: It's my head canon now.

Brent: Well, alright. Living on—it's gonna have to be a pretty big fish. But then again, I lived in New York City, so I can make do.

Courtney: [laughs] [sings] Ohh, we're halfway there, whoaaa, livin' on a fiiish!

Travis: We're gonna start seeing that like, pop up in like—

Brent: Y'know, the inside of a whale is basically a one bed, so... I can make that work.

Courtney: Yeah.

Travis: We're gonna start seeing that like, pop up in like, beach houses. Like, those kitschy signs that say, "Off the grid and on the fish!"

Courtney: [laughs]

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: Oh, good times. But this is not about fish. This story's about chicken. I... so, okay. My timeline has been all about the Popeye's chicken sandwich. And so, I was like, y'know what? I'm a journalist. And I love food. So today, over my lunch, I went, and here's the thing – 'cause Popeye's has two chicken sandwiches. They have the regular, classic chicken sandwich, and they have the spicy chicken sandwich. And as a journalist, what I did was get both. [laughs]

Travis: I'm proud of you.

Courtney: And I ate them both. For journalism. And here's my review – they're both really fucking good. Like, they're perfect. They are so good. They are the best chicken sandwiches I have ever had in any kind of like, fast food, fast, casual, dining establishment in history. They are perfect. They are wonderful. Oh my god. Get them. Get one. Get two. Why not get two?

Brent: Get 10% off your next Popeye's chicken sandwich by going to Popeyes.com/Trends!

Courtney: If they could give us a deal, and then a lifetime supply of free chicken sandwiches. In which I would alternate classic and spicy, 'cause I liked both. Like, normally, I would think like, "Well, clearly, I'm gonna like the spicy." But it's like, I liked the spicy, but I liked the classic, too. They were both so. Good. And now it's like, all I want to eat ever for the rest of my life? Is that a problem?

Travis: Uh, it's not a problem. Um, so, let's uh, do a real quick recap of where we stand with the Democratic candidate field. It's smaller, now. Eric Swalwell we know is out. Mike Gravel, who I don't know if he ever—

Brent: Grah-vell, just so you know.

Travis: Well, I'm sticking with Gravel, because I like to picture him almost like a... like a Spiderman villain, made out of tiny rocks. Gravel man! Mike Gravel, who I don't know if he was ever really in, he's out. Uh, John Hickenlooper is out. Tim Ryan is out, which, uh, both of those, I think I would've called as them being the first out of that group.

Uh, Howard Schultz has all but said he won't be running. Uh, hey, y'know what's weird? I think Marianne Williamson is still running. That's weird to me.

Brent: Yeah, I think she's still tryin'. I mean, at this point, she writes books. This is publicity. I hate to be so cynical, but... she's probably running 'til she just like, can't.

Travis: Well, girlfriend...

Courtney: She posted a Photoshopped picture of herself as Melisandre from Game of Thrones, I don't think realizing that Melisandre murdered a child.

Travis: Mmm.

Courtney: But here's the thing, that's actually what she... that's actually what she's running on, is murdering our children, so...

Travis: Correct.

Courtney: It really is on brand.

Brent: She's still running, but her campaign is pregnant with dropping out.

Travis: Um, of the 20 candidates that qualified for the previous two debates, only nine have managed to reach September requirements thus far. This is from Vanity Fair, by the way. Uh, Joe Biden, Pete Buttigieg, Beto O'Rourke, Andrew Yang, Kamala Harris, Amy Klobuchar, Cory Booker, Bernie Sanders, and Elizabeth Warren. Castro, Steyer, and Gabbard have reached the fundraising threshold, but not the polling requirements.

Courtney: Do you know what this means?

Brent: Tell us.

Courtney: The white men are dropping like flies, just as I hath willed!
[laughs maniacally] Men.

Travis: I'm scawed.

Courtney: [whispers] You should be.

Travis: Okay.

Courtney: Of my powers.

Travis: I am!

Courtney: You don't have to be scared. You're fine. You can live.

Travis: Okay.

Courtney: You two. You two are it.

Brent: I don't like this Travis voice for more than one statement at a time.

Travis: You don't wike it, Bwent?

Courtney: I hate it. Stop.

Brent: Oh God.

Travis: What's wong? Why don't you wike my voice, Bwent?

Brent: It's like Mickey Mouse and Mario. Like, it's a terrible voice to be more than two or three words.

Travis: Bwent, why can't we be fwiends?

Brent: Oh man, this is way not my fetish. Yikes.

Travis: [sings] Why can't weee be fwiends...

Courtney: Travis. Trav. [snorts]

Travis: [singing] Why can't weee be fwieeends...

Courtney: [laughing] Okay, I take it back, you can actually—you can sing that song. But nothing else.

Travis: [singing] Why can't weee be fwiends? Why can't weee be fwiends?

Moujan: Hello! I'm Moujan Zolfaghari, and I play a bunch of characters on Mission to Zyxx, an improvised science-fiction podcast on Maximum Fun. And this is our incredible sound designer, Shane.

Shane: Hello!

Moujan: Now, Shane makes it possible for me to play a thousand billion characters in our galaxy. Such as the Bargarean Jade, ship of the stars!

Enforcer Droid: And the Enforcer Droid. Prepare to eat pancakes!

Wink: And Wink! Let's get dusted up, baby!

Turk: And Emissary Turk Mannaket. Hey, I just got another amp.

Horrible Wife: And the horrible wife! Ahhh!

Moujan: Oh, also, there are five other cast members, and we'll give them just all a second to say hi.

Speaker 1: Uh, hey.

Speaker 2: Hello.

Speaker 3: Hey.

Moujan: Yeah, that's enough. Okay, so the season finale of Mission to Zyxx is coming out next week, so it's the perfect time to dive in and catch up with our intrepid crew as they explore the Zyxx quadrant. So give us a listen. Mission to Zyxx on Maximum Fun.

[music plays]

Speaker 1: You wept as we crafted the tragic tale of Jar-Jar, a Star Wars story.

Matt: He forgives Darth Vader. Meesa still love you, Annie! Boom!

Speaker 1: You gasped out loud at the shocking twists of Faceoff 2: Faces Wild.

Matt: He takes his kid's face.

Will: What? [laughs]

Speaker 1: Now, hear the story boys write an entire screenplay week by week on Story Break, season two! Heaven Heist!

Freddie: Hey folks. Freddie Wong here with some exciting news about Story Break, the writer's room podcast where three Hollywood professionals have one hour to spin cinematic gold. We're shaking up our format by turning Heaven Heist, one of our favorite ideas that we've ever come up with on the show, into a full on screenplay, baby!

Matt: Heaven Heist is an action comedy about a crew of misfit gangsters robbing the celestial bank of heaven. Think of Coco meets Point Break.

Freddie: Join us as we write this crazy movie, scene by scene, and get an inside look at the screenwriting process on our podcast, Story Break, every Thursday on MaximumFun.org.

Brent: Now it's time for our Wi-Five of the week. Each week, we scour the internet for examples of folks doing good things and being good people, and

we choose one or more to whom we'd like to give an internet high five, or Wi-Five.

This week's Wi-Five goes out to a nonprofit partnership called TB Alliance that works to advance the treatment of tuberculosis. Now, for some context, tuberculosis has now surpassed AIDS as the world's leading infectious cause of death. And the most lethal strain is called the XDR strain, short for extremely drug resistant. For tens of thousands of people in over a hundred countries, XDR tuberculosis is a quick death sentence, often with patients dying even before they receive a diagnosis.

Historically, the treatment for those who are diagnosed with this has been very difficult. Typically, it involves up to 40 pills a day for up to two years. Side effects can include deafness and kidney failure. But, a new and much easier drug regimen, nicknamed Nix-TB, just has five pills a day for six months. Preliminary clinical trials have shown a 90% success rate against XDR tuberculosis, and on Wednesday, the FDA approved the three new drugs used in the regimen.

So, the treatment could soon come into use worldwide. Sometimes it feels like we live in a world where everyone is out for themselves, with no concern for others, particularly not people without money or power. It's nice to know that there are powerful and dedicated forces trying to help people and ease suffering all over the world.

So, to TB Alliance, and everyone involved in the development of Nix-TB, Wi-Five.

[theme music plays]

Travis: Alright, folks, that's gonna do it for us. Thank you so much for joining us. Uh, thank you for having me back. Thank you for letting me back into your hearts, your minds, and your homes. Look behind you! [laughing] It's me! I'm in your house!

Courtney: [yells and laughs]

Travis: Um, I'm not in your house. I'm in my house. But, if you would like to meet me, if you would like to be in the same corporeal space as I am, I am going to DragonCon at the end of this month in Atlanta. Um, you can check out TravisMcElroy.com. I'm going to put my whole schedule there. Uh, I'm also gonna be doing some photo ops with my dad. You can get a photo

with me and Dad. Like, with a professional photographer and everything. It's gonna be super cool.

Uh, and if you want to get tickets for that, listen, this is a lengthy bitly, but stick with me, here. Bit.ly/McElroyDragonConPhoto19. And you can get one of those spots on Friday or Saturday to get pics with me and Dad.

Uh, The Adventure Zone graphic novel book two, Murder on the Rockport Limited, is out now. You can go to uh, TheAdventureZoneComic.com to order it, or find it in any book store cool enough to have it. Uh, what about y'all?

Courtney: I'm sorry, I got—I got very distracted, because I was just looking at a thread about Andrew Yang that I am going to have to talk about next week, because oh buddy.

Travis: Okay.

Courtney: Oh buddy. Oh buddy. Buddy got jokes!

Travis: That might be the first time we have ever like, teased a next week story.

Courtney: Ooh, TBC. I hope I remember to do it, and I don't just leave everyone hanging, because Yang's got jokes, but they are bad jokes. Uh, you can find my stuff at SYFY Fangrrls. You can listen to my other podcast, Strong Female Characters. And uh, that's pretty much it. I just got nothing really going on until New York Comic Con. Just chillin'.

Brent: Well, as for me, I have recently launched a new podcast called Question Box. We just released our fourth episode. If you remember Kate Sloane who guested a few weeks ago on Trends Like These when Travis and Courtney were out of town, uh, she's my co-host, and it's really fun. It's the game show podcast of shockingly personal questions. And our most recent guest is one Travis McElroy on the show!

Travis: Hi, that's me!

Brent: And some of the deeply personal questions we asked Travis included, uh, what body part he would not want to show the internet. The worst advice he ever got from a family member. It was a fun time. So you can get more information about that at QuestionBoxShow.com. But also,

just look for Question Box on all your podcast platforms. We're on all the major ones, and if we're not on one you like, let me know.

Travis: Alright, folks. Make sure to check out all of the other amazing shows on MaximumFun.org. Uh, go... let's see, go on iTunes, rate, review, and subscribe. I don't know if we've mentioned that in a while. And y'know, if you like the show, tell a friend. Hey. Why not?

Uh, and y'know what folks? I think that's gonna do it for us. Join us again next week. Courtney, am I forgetting anything?

Courtney: Yes. We're doing it. Ladies, we're taking down the white man! [laughs maniacally]

Travis: Oh no.

Courtney: [whispers] You're next.

Travis: It's so scary!

Courtney: God, fuck that. I hate that. I'm never saying anything about white men again.

Travis: I did it!

Courtney: Just kidding.

Brent: See you next time.

Courtney: It's my whole entire fucking brain.

Brent: I said see you next time!

Courtney: I said good day!

[theme music plays]

Travis: We've done it again. Another slam dunk in the books.

Brent: Yes. Perfection.

Courtney: I did it. I did so good that segment.

Brent: Yeah, you nailed it, Courtney.

Travis: Yeah.

Courtney: Oh my god.

Brent: That was among the best silences I think we've had on—in our four years of show.

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