

Shmanners 149: Leftovers

Published February 1st, 2019

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Travis: Hey Teresa, do you wanna hear my joke about leftovers?

Teresa: Sure!

Travis: Eh, I'll save it for later. It's *Shmanners*!

[theme music plays]

Travis: I'm... *so* proud of that joke.

Teresa: [laughs] It was really good. Really good.

Travis: Thank you. Thank you very much. That was a Travis original. Hello! You're listening—hello, internet!

Teresa: There it is.

Travis: You're listening to *Shmanners*. I'm husband host, Tra—nope! [groans]

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Hello, internet. I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

Teresa: And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis: And you're listening to *Shmanners*!

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette...

Travis: For ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove.

Teresa: Hello, dear.

Travis: I was *so* proud—

Teresa: Do you think we should chuck that one in the bin?

Travis: No—oh—

Teresa: Ah? Eh?

Travis: Eh? I was so proud of my joke that I forgot how our intro went.

Teresa: [laughs] I saw that.

Travis: And also recovering from dental work this morning, and so—

Teresa: Yeah, you've had a lot of dental surgery recently. Like, in the last week, recently.

Travis: Like, in the last month, but yes. Um—

Teresa: Well, you were at the dentist last week, too, right?

Travis: I—who knows? It all runs together.

Teresa: I believe so.

Travis: Yeah, I—I'm getting a bunch of, like, old fillings from when I was, like, you know, 15, 16 replaced. Um, now with, like, composite—anyway, this is not important. None of this matters. But yeah, I was at the dentist this morning. Anyways, um—so we are talking about a subject that—oh, also it's super cold here.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, we're talking about a subject this week that is near and dear to my heart.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Leftovers.

Teresa: Right. Now, when you and I started living together—our adventure, living together—you were not so keen on leftovers.

Travis: No, no, no, no, no.

Teresa: No-no-no-no-no-no-no?

Travis: No-no-no-no.

Teresa: No-no, no-no, no-no, no-no. You were not keen on leftovers, and I always was trying to serve you leftovers that I had re-kind of-imagined, and you were not into it!

Travis: Okay. But we're talking about two different things.

Teresa: Alright. Alright. Fine.

Travis: I *love* leftovers, *Madam*.

Teresa: Hmm...

Travis: But I love leftovers as, like, snack food. I love it as, like, it's there and it's done and it's ready to eat. Like—also, you can't deny this. Also when we started dating, I used to do this thing where I would go to a restaurant and order two meals.

Teresa: That is true. You did used to do that.

Travis: Specifically saying "I'm gonna eat this for lunch tomorrow." Like, that kind of—the take home from a restaurant. That was, like, my thing. Now, you are not wrong in that food that was in the fridge that we'd, like, made from another meal, I would often overlook as, like, "That's *old* food, and I'm lookin' for *new* food!"

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: So yes, we're talking about two different things.

Teresa: Also, you had this weird thing about food safety?

Travis: That is also true. And I had worked a couple restaurant jobs where I had to watch those, like, "Danger Zone" videos where it's like, "Food need to be kept at this temperature—"

Teresa: That's what it was called. You called it the Danger Zone.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: I get it. I remember now.

Travis: And so, food that had sat out for too long or that I thought was too old, like, I was terrified of.

Teresa: When you say "too long," what you mean is "the process of making, serving, and then boxing the meal—"

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: —was too long?

Travis: No, no, no, nooo... uh... you know, more just, like... well, yes.

Teresa: I would never serve you food that I had left out longer than it took to make it and eat it.

Travis: I know.

Teresa: Like—like, for real.

Travis: I know, I know. And I know that that was just, like, a hangup I had, of just, like, for so long—and I'll still do it now where, like, if I'm done eating dinner before you, I'll immediately start putting food into, like, Tupperware and putting it away in the refrigerator.

Teresa: [quietly] Yeah. Yeah.

Travis: Yeah—okay, I was gonna talk about how much I *love*—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —leftovers, and this has turned into—

Teresa: Wait, I have one more—

Travis: Ugh.

Teresa: —leftover story. This is actually a Smirl story.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: Um, apparently when Justin and Sydnee started gettin' together, when—

Travis: That sounded d—"When they first started dating for serious." Not, like, "[dudebro voice] Hookin' up!"

Teresa: Hey. Hey. Family show.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So, when they first started, uh, their adventure together.. when there would be leftover pizza, Sydnee, not yet a doctor, would say "Let's just put it in the oven overnight. That'll keep it fine."

And Justin T. McElroy would *freak out*.

Travis: I agree.

Teresa: Freak out about it. Now, here's the thing. [pauses] If you had the oven on "low," like, at 200, and you kept it in there all night, you would have some seriously dried out pizza, but it would still be safe.

Travis: Yeah...

Teresa: Um, but what she was talking about is that her family had developed a tradition of just leaving leftover pizza in the oven overnight, instead of the refrigerator.

Travis: Yeah, I don't feel so good about that. That is definitely Danger Zone *material*... but you know what? Here's the thing. This is where I've come to now, in my old age.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: If you eat the food, and it d—if you can eat the food without getting sick, it's fine. Whatever.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Because this is the thing, of, like—I—this is how I feel in general, whenever somebody talks about, like, a cuisine that maybe is served somewhere else, like in another culture, another country or whatever. And they're like, "What? Eww!" And it's like, "Okay, well, hold on. First of all, if people are repeatedly eating it, then it has to at least be palatable to them, and two, it's not making them sick. So, like—"

Teresa: Right.

Travis: That's just—anyways, I think we have a lot of hangups about food just 'cause we're not used to it, but then if you eat and it's like, "This is good. This is fine."

Teresa: And now you're used to leftovers!

Travis: This is true. Now I—

Teresa: I also have to say that when you first took your first business trip after Bebe was born and I was at home by myself, you can bet that I made a lasagna and ate that same lasagna all five days you were gone. [laughs quietly]

Travis: Okay. Cool.

Teresa: I'm into leftovers! I wanna say this! I love 'em! I love 'em.

Travis: Okay, I'm not judging you! Okay! Alright!

Teresa: I love 'em.

Travis: Okay. Let's talk a little bit about history.

Teresa: Okay. So—

Travis: I don't do the two meals thing anymore. That's—

Teresa: No, he doesn't.

Travis: —I don't do that. That was a level of extravagance that even *I*, Travis McElroy—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —grew out of. It was too bougie.

Teresa: I think at first it started with you were—you felt that you were so hungry you needed two meals. And then you were like, "Well, no, I can't *actually* eat two meals right now, so I'll take this one and eat it for lunch tomorrow."

And then the next step was, "Well, I really like it when I have leftover food, so I'm gonna order two meals."

Travis: Yes. I—and this is still a thing that I will do, uh, seemingly on purpose now, is plan for leftovers. And say, like, "Yeah, I know I'm ordering too much, but the foods not gonna go to waste. I'll just keep eating it." Okay.

Teresa: [laughs] Okay. Um, so way back in ancient Rome, there was actually an etiquette around leftovers. So, when the Romans did as they do, lounging when they ate, there was a cloth that they kind of laid next to them on the couch. You know what I mean?

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Um, and the couch was called a triclinium. [pauses] You're welcome, for that. Um, they had this cloth that they were supposed to bring with them called the... mappa [maw-pah]? Mappa [mah-pah]?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: One of those. You know. And so this cloth that they brought with them was used to take some of the leftover food as kind of a, you know, an honoring of the host, because if there was enough food for this banquet that there was even some left over, it really made the host feel awesome and special, like they had done something, you know, over the top.

Travis: Because they had provided not just enough food, but enough food plus then some. How generous of them. That kind of deal?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Got it.

Teresa: That's it! Um, and this was also kind of the first—well, really the second iteration of the napkum—nap—sorry. [chuckles] Napkin. I was trying to read and speak at the same time. It wasn't working.

Um, which also has a relative in the sudarium, which is Latin for handkerchief.

Travis: Gotcha.

Teresa: So this mappa is kind of like—

Travis: Mappa? Napkin? Huh, huh?

Teresa: Hmm...

Travis: They kind of sound a little similar, I guess?

Teresa: Perhaps. Perhaps. Um, but the real napkin... uh, probably started out as the [sounding out] apomagdalie? I—I—who knows. Which was basically bread, right? So it was—

Travis: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah. You mop up stuff with it.

Teresa: Yeah, it was—right. Um, it was a lump of dough that was cut into small pieces and rolled and kneaded at the table, so you kind of—it wasn't really cooked bread. It was dough that you kind of flattened out to protect the table from the food.

Travis: Okay. I like this! Edible plates!

Teresa: Yeah, kinda!

Travis: Well, I say that like I just invented that. But, like, there's a lot of dishes—

Teresa: Like truncheons.

Travis: Yeah. And, like—I think a lot of, like—is naan used that way? Or is that just how I use it? It's not important.

Teresa: Well, naan is used a lot to pick up the food.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: From communal plates. So—

Travis: That's more like edible, like, utensils, I guess. Naan is like edible utensils. It's not important. I'm just trying to build my "everything's edible" restaurant.

Teresa: Ohh, yeah.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Um, even though this kind of bundling of leftovers—

Travis: It's called "Eat It!" Exclamation point. And then when someone's like, "But what about the glass?" I'm just like, "Eat it!" But the glass isn't edible, and that was a horrible mistake and I shouldn't have said that and—you know—so that's why Eat It! V.1 is gonna get heavily sued. 'Cause, like, everyone'll think everything—like that scene in Willy Wonka.

Everyone's gonna be like, "Everything's eatable!" But it's not. Like, only about half the stuff is? And it's not labeled, and I don't tell people when they come in, and I'm so sorry, please don't sue.

Teresa: What a fantastic fantasy life you lead.

Travis: It's pretty good!

Teresa: Anyway. [laughs quietly] So, the wrapping of food in napkins survives the time—basically through all of, like, Eastern Europe, and is reiterated in the Regency period when... wealthy landowners would [holding back laughter] "bless" the tenants of their lands... with scraps from their table, bound in cloth, like, cheesecloth, sometimes. Or, in actually, like, bits of rags.

Travis: Okay. [gasps] Oh, they did this on *Supersizers Go...!* Right?

Teresa: That's right, they did.

Travis: Of they go through and say, like, "Here's a lot of bread."

Teresa: Right. Well, because this is a time when the separation of wealth between people is really expanding a lot. Um, so it was considered charity work.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And, I mean... pretty much necessary, because these people who were living on your land were being taxed heavily for—

Travis: And weren't allowed to hunt on the lands, and—

Teresa: —and weren't allowed to hunt, exactly.

Travis: —yeah. Or probably—this is guessing, but I'm guessing cultivate the land that you own for their own benefit, so they couldn't, like, grow enough food to feed themselves.

Teresa: They were allowed to keep a certain percentage, but most of it went to the landowner. So, the food from the landowner's table was often given to kind of, like, placate the masses.

Travis: Yeah...

Teresa: Anyway, uh, leftovers continued being that sort of thing for the rich, but it was really a necessity for people, like you said, like, working the fields. That's where the whole thing of "Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot, nine days old—"

Travis: 'Cause you would make peas porridge, and then eat on it for days and days and days.

Teresa: Right. So you would make one large meal and it stayed on the fire, just cookin' and cookin' and cookin'. Um, bread was also made batchly like this, because there were usually communal ovens. Um, and so—

Travis: And there's lots of foods like that. Like—like beans are something that you can make and then eat on for a while. Like, rice is something you can make and then eat on for a while.

Teresa: Exactly. Exactly. Um—

Travis: Salted food. Like, you know what—I mean, like, cured, not just, like, salty food.

Teresa: Right, right-right-right.

Travis: Not just, like, "We have potato chips!" [laughs quietly]

Teresa: And, uh, the pie is actually an incarnation of leftovers, starting way back in the medieval period, where you would make a large meat pie in what was called a coffin, but it was basically a very sturdy crust of this pie. And the pies were usually filled with meat and, you know, dried fruit, and spices if you could afford them, and this is something that you would just eat on until it was gone, for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Uh, it survived through the Elizabethan period all the way up to Edwardian, where these leftover pies were often served three times a day.

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: Yeah. But—

Travis: But then, I guess I say that—I've made some really tasty leftovers that I've eaten, like, breakfast, lunch, and dinner for three days.

Teresa: Yeah. I am known to do that with, uh, spaghetti.

Travis: I've done that with Thanksgiving many times.

Teresa: Many times! Um... but as far as, like, leftovers takeaway, which is really where the bulk of our questions center around, the doggy bag, at least the name, really wasn't coined until after World War II.

Travis: Is it to take food home to your dog?

Teresa: Exactly! Where diners were encouraged to take the leftovers, including bones—

Travis: Don't do that, by the way.

Teresa: —right.

Travis: Don't—

Teresa: Don't do that.

Travis: —don't give your animals bones from the table, especially not chicken bones. But, like—because they're not really designed—they'll most likely just splinter and get shards stuck in the animal's mouth or esophagus or tummy, so don't do that.

Teresa: Don't do that.

Travis: Just go to the store—

Teresa: But it very quickly—

Travis: —get 'em some, like, store bought—okay.

Teresa: Okay. It very quickly became clear that diners were not saving food for their pets. They were saving it for themselves to eat later. The doggy bag has kind of, you know, evolved, between the leaner years of post-World War II, and then back again during recessions as being thrifty, right?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: But also, now, the doggy bag is kind of reincarnated as protecting against food waste, because a lot of our sanitary rules, especially regarding restaurants, like you talked about earlier, anything that has been eaten off of even a little bit has to go in the trash.

Um, I know that there are other rules, like if something gets sent back for not being the right thing, if it hasn't been touched the kitchen staff can sometimes have it, but I digress.

If it's off of your plate and you haven't finished it, it needs to go in the trash, *or* you prevent that food waste by taking it home. Now, sometimes when I take home leftovers, they go in the trash anyway, because I forget about them. But—

Travis: But, you've given it a *chance*.

Teresa: Given 'em a second chance.

Travis: This is—I'm of two minds in general about the take home doggy bag, right? Because—so one of the things Teresa and I have been making an effort to eat more mindfully and, like, think about—and this is something I've realized, that when I used to eat way faster and, like, order with my eyes instead of my stomach, right?

Is, like, I would always put too much on my plate, and then have stuff left over, because, like, instead of having—eat some, see if I'm still hungry, eat some, see if I'm still hungry that kind of deal. And so, I feel like that's—I've reduced a lot of take home leftovers from just, like, not ordering three appetizers?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: You know? And just, like, picking one or just getting mains or whatever. Um, but—so, on the one hand, I think leftover take home is a good thing to not waste food, but also I do think that we could reduce the amount of food waste by just not ordering more than we need and having multiple courses if you're still—I know, that said, mul—sounded like multiple horses, but I meant multiple *courses* if you're still hungry, you know?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: And so, that is something I've seen of, like... you know, I wouldn't claim that I've spent enough time in other countries or whatever to make this statement, but maybe in other countries it's just that portion sizes are smaller, and then we're—

Teresa: That is definitely a thing that is prevalent in the US, is that the plates are just so large, the plate of food. And really, if you finish it, that could be your entire day caloric intake. So, taking some home is something that's very American, as are extra large portion sizes.

Travis: I mean, we just went to Cheesecake Factory the other day, and they list, like, the calorie count on the meals on the—

Teresa: Thank you, though. I like that.

Travis: —I—listen. I appreciate it. But... like, a lot of those calorie counts are, like, "Well, but—hold on. That would literally be my whole day of cal—[through laughter] like, one slice of cheesecake is, like, my whole day!" And sometimes that's worth it.

But yeah, so I will say that I think that what—when I would jump to, like, "Yeah, but if you don't do leftovers, it's just such a waste of food." That's me assuming that the plate is as full as I would normally see it at places I go to now.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: You know what I mean?

Teresa: Um, it is still very much a, you know, a thing for the US culture, and as recently as 2016, France actually had to pass a law to require restaurants to have doggy bags available. Because, you know, culturally it was seen that if you wanted to take food home, you didn't enjoy it there? Or—or something where it was not as honorable, right? To take it home.

Travis: I j—okay. Listen. I try to be open to other customs. I try to be open to other beliefs. But if you don't do take home leftovers, then you don't know the joy—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —of, like, driving home from somewhere and then thinking, like, "[gasps loudly] I've got a half a sandwich in the fri—!" Like—[through laughter] You don't—

Like, that—it's gone from—maybe it's been 48 hours since you brought it home, and boom, you've just remembered that you have that, like chicken carbonara, or whatever. You know what I mean? Like—

Teresa: I think it has more to do with the language of "doggy bag—"

Travis: Yeah, that's unappetizing.

Teresa: —than it does for, like, the feeling. It is. It's kind of—you know, is has that origin of "This is the food I'm gonna give my dogs," so I can assume that someone who is unfamiliar with the history, especially if they are a highly trained chef, might feel like, "So, you didn't wanna eat this food because it's bad enough for you to take home for your pets? That's terrible!"

So, in kind of a rebranding of the doggy bag, in France it's called "le gourmet bag."

Travis: Ohh! See, I like that. That's nice. Because that's the thing: let's switch our minds over from "I'm gonna give this to my dog" to "This is so good, I'm gonna save some for later so I can experience it all over again."

'Cause that's how *this* guy thinks about it. And I'm pointing at myself, but you can't see.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Hey! Let's answer some questions, but before we do, how about a thank you note to our sponsors?

Teresa: Sounds great!

[theme music plays]

Travis: Teresa, can I tell you about Quip?

Teresa: Please do.

Travis: And I know what you're wondering. "Travis, what's Quip?" This is a world in which you haven't heard about Quip before?

Teresa: Oh, okay. Travis, what's Quip?

Travis: Ah, thank you so much, Teresa, for asking. You know teeth brushing?

Teresa: I do it!

Travis: But you know how that's the *old* stu—everyone's like, "Why even tooth brush anymore?" Right? Well, good news: Quip is changin' the game, revolutionizing the the toothbrushes experiences. Yep.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Basically—no, not basically, awesomely—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —it is an electric toothbrush, but I would say, like, 1% bigger than the size of a standard toothbrush. So, out are all those, like, bulky electric toothbrushes that are, like, three feet tall and, like, the size of a baseball bat.

Teresa: I've never seen those.

Travis: They're big. They're big and clunky.

Teresa: Uh-huh.

Travis: I'm speaking hyperbolically, but I understand what I mean.

Teresa: Yes, I do.

Travis: They're a large—okay, they're clunky, is what I'm saying. But not Quip!

Teresa: And they take up a lot of counter space, too, 'cause you have that, like, charging station, and the cord, and all that business.

Travis: But not Quip!

Teresa: Not Quip!

Travis: Because Quip comes with a mirror mount that doubles as a travel case. They've thought of everything! It's got a gentle pulse, so it's also not, like, you know, gonna vibrate your whole head off. [pauses] That's terrifying, this image I've just created.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: And, it has timed pulses so you know when to switch to a different area of your mouth. And then, like, when it's done, it's done! You know you've brushed your teeth long enough.

Teresa: For two whole minutes, which... you know, before Quip I would've said, "Yeah! I brush my teeth for two minutes!" The first time you put that Quip in your mouth, you realize, you have *never* brushed your teeth for two minutes—

Travis: Yep!

Teresa: —[through laughter] before you started a timer for it!

Travis: And, you can get on a dentist-recommended schedule for every three months for just \$5 to get new brush heads delivered to you. It's a great deal! And it's one of the first electric toothbrushes accepted by the American Dental Association, so you know it's good quality.

So, they have over one million happy mouths that love Quip, and we wanna make that one million and one. Quip starts at just \$25—

Teresa: *More* than one million and one.

Travis: Yeah—well—I mean, but the one is *you*, is what I was saying.

Teresa: Oh, okay.

Travis: Okay. So, Quip starts at just \$25, and go to getquip.com/shmanners and you'll get your first refill pack free. That's your first refill pack free at getquip.com/shmanners.

[music plays]

Amy: Hello, this is Amy Mann.

Ted: And I'm Ted Leo.

Amy: And we have a podcast called *The Art of Process*. We're talking about how the creative process is, in itself, an art form, in our opinion. There are underlying forms and structures that serve as a scaffolding for any creative endeavor.

Ted: We've been lucky enough over the past year to talk to some of our friends and acquaintances from across the creative spectrum, to find out how they actually work.

Amy: We weirdly don't know as many musicians as you would expect.

Ted: New episodes will be coming every other Monday—

Amy: —starting January 28th.

Ted: So please listen and subscribe at Maximumfun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

[music plays]

Speaker 1: [singing] Is there a dog in a car? At a bar? On the street? Yay! Then that's—

[singing continues in the background]

Allegra: I'm Allegra Ringo, a small dog owner. My dog Pistachio howls when she's excited!

Renee: And I'm Renee Colvert, a big dog owner. My dog Tugboat tips over when he's sleepy.

Allegra: And we cohost a podcast called *Can I Pet Your Dog?* that airs every Tuesday. We bring you... all things dog.

Renee: Yes! Dog news, dog tech, dogs we met this week. We also have pretty famous guests on, but Legs, we're not gonna let 'em talk about their projects!

Allegra: No.

Renee: Just wanna hear about those dogs!

Allegra: We don't wanna hear about your stuff. Only your dogs. So join us every Tuesday on Max Fun!

[music plays]

Travis: Okay. We've got some questions here. This question is from Mia.

"Any suggestions for how to handle someone throwing out your leftovers? Coming home to find that thing I was looking forward to eating all day is now gone completely shorts circuits all my Daniel Tiger-esque coping mechanisms."

Teresa: So, here's what I'd recommend. I don't know if there is a way to keep people from pitching things, if the zone that they are in is shared space. I think what you need to do it divide your refrigerator, or wherever you keep the leftovers, maybe it's in the freezer or the pantry, too—divide those areas into specific person's zones, and, you know, make the rule that if it's in my zone, don't touch it. It's mine.

Travis: I would also recommend that, especially—this is a little bit of a pet peeve of mine in general. If you are a restaurant owner, or a restaurant—I don't know, person—switch to paper containers, not Styrofoam. Not—just—just don't use Styrofoam take home containers. But! Sometimes you get this big, like, square ones, that are, like, they just give you no matter how much food you're taking home—

Teresa: Oh, okay. So it's about size?

Travis: Yeah. It takes up a lot of room in the fridge, and most of the time if I'm thinking about throwing away leftovers, it's because I'm making room in the fridge for stuff. And I'm like, "Well, this has been in here too long," throw it away.

So, transfer it to, like, some kind of smaller storage container that you have that then you could also—be it a roommate or partner you're living with, or whatever—that you can say to them, like, "Hey, don't throw away stuff that, like, in storage containers without asking me first," right? Or just, like—the other thing is, like, text the person and be like, "Hey. Just in case you start cleaning out, please don't throw away that half of a cheesecake. I can't wait to eat it."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, this is from Carrie.

"Can you serve your guests leftovers? How casual does the gathering have to be for this to be acceptable?"

Teresa: Um, I think that I would—I would not feel qualms about serving leftovers to my family or to my close friends. Um, especially if it's a—if it's a friendly get together that has a lot of different options. So, like, I don't feel bad about serving nubs—like, little nubs of cheese that might be left or, like, different types of crackers, kind of throwing 'em all in the same bowl—

Travis: I agree with that.

Teresa: —or things like that. Uh, you know, maybe I have a whole—I have two or three jars of olives, and I throw it all in the same bowl.

Travis: I agree with that too.

Teresa: You know, that kind of stuff. That, I think, is A-OK. If you are attempting to impress with a meal, say, a date or maybe your—

Travis: A dinner party.

Teresa: A dinner party, or your in-laws are coming over or something.

Travis: If you're doin' a dinner party in general, you shouldn't offer, like, leftovers as your mains or side dishes or whatever.

Teresa: Or you—*or* need to be *super* covert about it, because if you're gonna serve leftovers, it seems kind of, you know, casual.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And it really depends on, like, the feeling you're trying to convey at this dinner. So... if you're gonna be—if you're real sneaky about it, I could—I bet you could serve something batch-bake-y like casserole or lasagna or something like that, um, [through laughter] which are usually better the second day anyway. [laughs]

Travis: Well, here's what it really is, is I don't necessarily think it's that leftovers—I've learned, from my old ways—that they're bad or in any way, like, you're offering second-rate something. I think it's more a matter of not wanting to convey that you didn't think about your guests. So, like—

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: —what—what you want to avoid is the, um—sending the message of, like, "Oh, I guess I better feed them... uh, I don't know. This?" Right? Whereas if you said, "Come over, I've got tons of Thanksgiving leftovers that we could just eat on." Like, that kind of thing of, like, "We are doing—this is the plan," and not that you're an afterthought.

Teresa: It also helps to dress 'em up! Um, we've talked about this, I think, right? When you made those leftover, like, Thanksgiving balls, it was almost like? He, like, chopped up leftovers and rolled 'em all together with some egg and bread crumbs, and sauteed 'em, fried 'em real good. Man! They were amazing!

I think that is a really great way to dress up your leftovers, and nobody has to know that it's Thanksgiving leftovers, and I would even serve that for a very special dinner. That was good.

Travis: Thank you! Um, I would also say, just if you're looking for, like, party themes, invite everyone to come over in comfy clothes and bring *their* leftovers. Do, like, a leftover potluck?

Teresa: A leftover potluck sounds great!

Travis: Doesn't that sound like a great idea? Ugh. Because you know—

Teresa: Especially after a big holiday.

Travis: Right? Because it's like, maybe you're getting bored with your leftovers, but I'd be very excited to eat some of *your* leftovers—right? So we can all swap around. That's a great idea. I just came up with that.

Teresa: Yeah, and I've had lunch already but I'm hungry again.

Travis: I know!

Teresa: [laughs quietly]

Travis: Uh, this is from Squiggs.

"When you brought food to a party, is it more appropriate to take leftovers home, or leave them for the host and possibly come collect the container later?"

Teresa: Okay. So... it's a little bit of a cultural difference, these two things. The first one being, as the host, maybe in your culture you are expected to send people home with a plate of food.

If that is the case, you should also return that plate or Tupperware or whatever. Um, and it might also be in your culture that the host is, like—takes the leftovers as kind of, like, the thank you for hosting. Um, and then there's even the third option of, if you don't know which one this is, just ask! Say, "I—I brought this pie. If you don't want the rest of it, I can take it back with me."

Travis: Perfect.

Teresa: Or something like that. Um, it never really hurts to ask, but I think that it's always about offering than it is about assuming.

Travis: I think this also falls into a thing that we talk about many, many, many times, which is taking people at their word when you ask questions like this. Because this is another thing of, like, I know that when I host, there's always so much food left over that if it was all left at our house, we are—even if we ate on it at every meal, gonna have to throw some away. Right?

And so it always is a little frustrating to me when I'm like, "Oh, no, take it." And they're like, "Oh, no—no, it's fine. Just leave it here." I'm like, "N—no! I'm telling you—please, take it ho—I don't want it." Right? And I think that there is a fear of, like, seeming 'ingrateful' or, like—

Teresa: Ungrateful.

Travis: —ungra—whatever.

Teresa: There it is.

Travis: You don't have gratefulness.

Teresa: Ingracious. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah. But I think that, like, just talk about it. I also know that I as a host, especially if it's, like, a big meal, like if we're talking about, you know, coming up, like, the Superbowl, and there's gonna be a ton of food, or Thanksgiving, or a big Christmas party, I will go to the store and buy some cheap Tupperware stuff and have it there to, like, hand to people and say, "Take this. Don't worry about givin' it back to me."

Teresa: I really love the idea—

Travis: As, like, a party favor!

Teresa: —of making the plates, right? So if everyone gets a plate to take home, even if that plate is in a container, then they have a little bit of everything, you know? So that you don't—I—if I made a lasagna, and I wanna take home some of the pie instead, that way we can kind of share the love around.

Travis: Yeah. This one is from Brenna.

"If everyone has finished their food at a restaurant but I'm still working on my plate, is it more polite to ask for a to go box, even if I'm not full yet, or can I finish eating?"

Teresa: Um... this, again, depends on the situation. Is this a business lunch? Is this a gathering of friends? Is this you and your mom out for lunch? Like—

Travis: There's a—there's also a more important factor, too, to that, I would say. Do you have somewhere to be?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Right?

Teresa: Or do *they* have somewhere to be.

Travis: Right. So, like, if y'all are going to a movie after dinner, right? Or if it's, like, gettin' late and they have a babysitter or something that they have to get back to, that's a factor I would consider pretty heavily.

Teresa: Right. Um, if it is a situation with that kind of urgency or a more formal situation, I would say "Yes." If everyone else is finished, ask for a box so you can

finish yours—I don't know. Maybe you don't have to be back at work. [through laughter] You can finish it in the car.

Um... but it's about the urgency of the situation, but if I'm out with my friends for an evening or a lunch, maybe, and we don't have anywhere to go, I'll keep eating. Maybe they just were, you know, too fast. [through laughter] I don't know.

Travis: Yeah. This is—especially if you're in a circumstance where, like, there was something in the kitchen where your food was delayed. Like, that happens all the time. That's fine! Whatever. You know, because here's the thing. This is *another* another one of those scenarios we talk about all the time.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: But, like, don't let yourself project anxiety onto your other companions of, like, "They want me to rush," when probably they don't care, and you're completely making yourself feel that way, right? So, if you are worried about it, once again, say, like, "Hey, do you—I know I'm not done yet, do we all wanna take off? 'Cause I can finish this later."

Right? And if they're like, "No, finish it!" Then take them at their word, and enjoy your food. Right? Because everybody eats at different speeds, and you're probably—this is another thing that I wonder if it's cultural of, like, if you look at the restaurant experience that I'm used to here in the US, is, like, the meal is done when the food is completed, and then you get your check. And so instead of, like—yeah, no, you get your food, and then once you're done, *now* begins the conversation portion of the—you know what I mean? Like—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: —it's interesting that you think about how much of the time leading up to food coming is talking about what food you're gonna get. [laughs] And then the food comes and you eat it, and then you leave and you're like, "Oh, I forgot to talk to them! Oh, no." So I think it's totally fine.

Uh, this question is from Little Sandwich.

"In your opinions, how long is too long for leftovers in the fridge?"

Teresa: Hmm... too—

Travis: 24 hours—no.

Teresa: —too long for me is a week. If it hasn't—if it's still within the week time frame, if I, you know, reheat the crap out of it, I think it'll be fine.

Travis: As long as it doesn't look funny or smell funny—

Teresa: Yeah. No fuzz and no smells.

Travis: —then it's probably fine.

Teresa: Right. A week is my limit.

Travis: I'm trying to think if there's any, like, specific food that would give me pause. Uhh... no. I think—but once again, this is another thing. Is this is a concern you have, which it is for me, transfer from, like, a loose box that is kind of closed that you take home to, like, a container that seals. You know what I mean?

Teresa: That's a great idea.

Travis: That way your food will last longer. And, also, not share smells or absorb smells with other things in the fridge.

Uh, this is from Ang.

"What's the protocol on work dinner leftovers, specifically appetizers or shared plates? Is it appropriate to ask for them to be boxed, as long as you offer them to your coworkers first?"

Teresa: Um, I think that—it depends on the type of work dinner. Is this a business dinner between a client and a business? Is this a business dinner between you and your boss? Is this a business dinner with just the coworkers, everyone on an even playing field?

I think that the only time you can ask for anyone else's leftovers, besides what has been on *your* specific plate is at the third scenario, with your coworkers, on a level playing field.

The other two scenarios... I don't wanna talk about, like, power moves. It's just not done. It's—it's not considered polite to ask about the other things, because it's not the topic of conversation, usually. It just muddies the waters.

Travis: I will say—there's always exceptions to every rule.

Teresa: Of course.

Travis: Right? Where, like, if you're super close with your boss or whatever, and you feel comfortable saying it, or if it's been a really relaxed conversa—like, yeah, go for it. But in general, I agree that I think it's a weird look to be like—especially, like, if you're not paying for anything?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: I think it feels weird to voluntarily say, like, "I would like to take all of it." Now, if they offer—

Teresa: Certainly.

Travis: —if they say, like, "Yeah, no, take it home!" "I don't—oh, I don't—does anybody else want this?" That kind of thing. Now it's fair game.

Teresa: I think that if you want to broach the situation, though, you can say "I would like to take some of the calamari home. Would anyone else like some?"

Travis: Yeah. I think so, too.

Uh, one last question here. Um... let's see. This is from Jeeves.

"How much food is acceptable to doggy bag at a restaurant? For example, if there's a three course set menu and you are full after two courses, is it acceptable to ask for the entire dessert to go, or should I make an effort to eat at least a few bites before bagging the rest?"

Teresa: Um, I think that in that specific situation, it is completely acceptable. The three courses that you've paid for, or are planning on paying for, are yours. If you choose to, I don't know, eat the dessert first and box the other two courses up, that's your prerogative. In a situation—you know, Travis and I, we usually take dessert to go, because we have... a child.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Who needs to be home to go to bed at a certain time. But I wanna enjoy dessert with my meal, so we sometimes even order dessert to go.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Um, I think—

Travis: I—I would say that, in general, is a good tip. Like, if you know, like, "I'm not going to be able to finish this here," go ahead and ask for it to go, so it cuts down on, like, their cleaning time, and so cuts down on trips they have to make back and forth, and that kind of thing.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Yeah. I think the idea of, like, if you know you're not going to eat it there and you're gonna take it home with you, I don't think that there's any benefit to waiting for it to come, taking a bite off of it, and then sending it back to be—I actually think that that makes it look more like you didn't like it than if you just preemptively say, like, "Could I get that boxed up to go?" You know what I mean? Before it comes out to you.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Um... and, you know, also, because—like I mentioned, mindful eating is a thing I've been workin' on. If you don't wanna take a bite of something—[through laughter] if you're not hungry, don't force yourself to do it. You know what I mean?

Maybe, maybe if you're in a scenario where, like, you have a host who's, like, "More?" And you know they'll be kind of upset if you're like, "No!" Right? But other than that, like, don't—don't hurt yourself with food. I've been down that road too many times where you're like, "I gotta go lay down for 12 hours now!"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "Why did I eat three sandwiches?" Don't do that. Come on.

Teresa: Take it from someone who knows.

Travis: [loudly] Unless you *really* want to!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Alright, folks. That's gonna do it for us. Thank you so much for listening. Big, exciting announcement. We've got that tour coming up here on February 7th.

We're gonna be in Birmingham, Alabama, and then on February 9th and 10th we're gonna be in New Orleans. *My Brother, My Brother, and Me* and *Adventure Zone* are the headliners, but at both of the *My Brother, My Brother, and Me* shows, which is the 7th in Birmingham and the 10th in New Orleans, both *Shmanners* and *Sawbones* are going to be opening, and we are *very* excited about that.

So, if you are a fan of *Sawbones*, if you're a fan of *Shmanners*, if you're a fan of *My Brother, My Brother, and Me* or *The Adventure Zone*, or just havin' a good time—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Go to mcelroy.family, and then at the top there click on "tours," and get your tickets now! And we're so excited to see you there!

Teresa: Also, if you have a topic suggestion for us for either of those shows, please submit it to our email, shmannerscast@gmail.com. Um, and make sure you title it with "For the Alabama show," or something like that.

Travis: Especially—oh, can I say, especially if you, like, have an idea for a biography specific to, like, an etiquette, manners person from either Birmingham or New Orleans, that would be *very* exciting. I think that'd be super fun. So if you're like, "Here's a person that you probably don't know about, but they're famous here in Birmingham for being great," let us know.

Um, and go check out all the other Maximumfun.org shows. They're great. I think we've just added, like, two new ones? It seems like every week we're adding new, amazing shows, so go check those out.

You can follow us on Twitter @shmannerscast. Also at mcelroy.family, you can find our merch, where we have a really super cute t-shirt with "Hello, my deer"

and "Hello, my dove" on it, as well as a pin set with the same designs by Kate Leth. Those are incredible. Uh, what else, Teresa?

Teresa: Thank you to Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Thank you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art, and to Keely Weis Photography for our cover banner for the fan-run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners!

I've been checkin' out a lot of really great questions, some really good advice, so if you enjoy what we do here on *Shmanners*, join that group and you'll find some like-minded individuals.

Travis: And I think that's gonna do it for us, so join us again next week!

Teresa: No RSVP required.

Travis: You've been listening to *Shmanners*...

Teresa: Manners, *Shmanners*! Get it?

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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