

Shmanners 196: Friendship (PART 1)

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Travis: A friend in need... is a friend in podcast.

Teresa: That doesn't make any sense.

Travis: It's *Shmanners*!

[theme music plays]

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: How are you?

Teresa: Uh, you know? What was—this is a new phase.

Travis: Oh yeah, we should say, we're joined—

Teresa: In our lives.

Travis: —in the studio this week by a very special guest, may become a recurring guest, uh, Baby Dot.

Teresa: Dorothy Madeline McElroy.

Travis: Dorothy Madeline McElroy is here. Four weeks old—

Dot: [babbling]

Travis: —bringing her podcast debut—there she is! We've been trying to find—she's a little more unpredictable than her older sister—

Dot: [babbles]

Travis: —so it's not always clear, like, when she's gonna be quiet and when she's gonna hang out.

Dot: [makes a sound like she might start crying]

Travis: Oh!

Teresa: Oh!

Travis: There we go. Okay. So, Teresa Marie.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: We've been gone... a couple weeks now.

Teresa: May I—may I say that you had a little bit of a DJ moment just then?

Travis: [excited] Oh, did I?

Teresa: Yeah! You, uh—you adjusted some levels while we were talking, and I was quite impressed.

Travis: Oh, thank you! You thought you meant, like, me straightening the papers and saying "Okay."

Teresa: Oh, no. [laughs]

Travis: Now, to brass tacks. So, this week, one, I am taking lead on this one. Very excited to talk about it. And we may find, I think, that the back and forth trading off may become more of a thing, now that we have two spawn.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: So, uh, this week, I am—I am taking lead. I'm very excited to talk about this, 'cause this is a thing anybody who knows me, even just through listening to podcasts, know that I talk about this a lot. Uh, and it's about friendship!

Teresa: Sure is!

Travis: Which is a huge, uh, topic.

Teresa: Hey, can we—can we do the thing that we did when you suggested this topic?

Travis: Oh, do you mean when I said "Oh, we should do friendship!" And then you said:

Teresa: "[to the tune of "Friendship" by Judy Garland] Friendship! Friendship! It's a perfect blend-ship! When other friendships have been forgot..."

Travis: "[singing] Ours will still be hot."

Teresa: "[singing] A-la-la-lal... guh guh guh." I don't remember. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, I don't remember that part. Okay. So, here's the thing. I—friendship is very interesting to me, right? Because I—I consider myself, uh, a—no, I *am* a person who—my friendships had maybe not *literally* saved my life, but, like, made me not a complete asshole. You know what I mean? Like, there is—

Teresa: Can we say that on this? Can we say—

Travis: I think we can say that. Yeah.

Teresa: Alright...

Travis: Asshole. Um...

Teresa: Doesn't—don't say it *again*!

Travis: B-hole? Is that better? Has not made me a jerk.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: A meanie.

Teresa: A meanie.

Travis: Right?

Teresa: Meanie-head.

Travis: Having friends who were able to say, like, "Hey. You may not realize it, but you're kinda actin' like a meanie-head right now," has been very impactful for me. I take my relationships, my friendships, very, very seriously.

Teresa: I think that that's a—that's a good thing. I think that—you know, we're always talking about, you need to think about the relationship you have with a person, the relationship you're trying to cultivate. And what it means to you is how you respond.

So when someone comes to you and says, "You think that you're funny, but the things you say are mean." That is someone who is work—who is trying to invest in your friendship.

Travis: That's a real friend. That's a real friend. Well—okay, I was just—

Teresa: 'Cause if they didn't care about you, they wouldn't say that kind of stuff. They would just let it go and never contact you again.

Travis: Right. I was gonna save this for later, but I'll go ahead and drop it now, 'cause I'm sure I'll reference it a lot throughout the episode. And maybe—I think this might end up being two episodes, 'cause it's a lot to talk about.

But my metaphor of the friendship bank, which I use all the time, which is that friendship is a bank, right? And you can make deposits and you can make withdrawals, but at a certain point, if you become overdrawn, your account might be closed, right?

Teresa: Yep.

Travis: And so, like, I think having someone in your life, or multiple people in your life who say "Hey, that's not funny. That's mean." Or "Hey, I feel like you are

avoiding the issue." Or "Hey, I think you have convinced yourself that you're fine, but you're not." Or whatever.

Teresa: All of Travis's friends say "Hey" a lot.

Travis: Yeah, they do. Or else I don't listen. 'Cause I'm a horse! Um, and so, like, this is very important to me.

Now, let's get down to the nitty gritty. Humans, uh, it will surprise no one who has YouTube, are not the only animals that make friends. Uh, and in fact, animals were making friends long before humans were.

You know, you've seen the ones of, like, "The dog and the horse, playing together on the—" just search "animal friendships," folks! What are you doing listening to this podcast?

Teresa: So you're not even just talking about, like, symbiotic relationships. You're talking about actual, like, almost... relationships?

Travis: Well, it is symbiotic. It's interesting that you would use that word, right? Because this is—when we get into the science of it, it... [sighs] and this is something we'll touch on again and again and again. Philosophers have been fascinated by the idea of friendship for as long as there's been philosophy.

Um, because—you talk about "symbiotic," right? So animals, for example. Um, studies have found that bonding in male animals leads to superior competitive ability and better reproductive success. I imagine a lot of that has to do with being able to compete makes you strong—you know, sports. You know?

Teresa: Sports!

Travis: "We're gonna work out together, and so we'll get stronger together." Right? Having... I don't know, someone to hang out with makes you better. And in—

Teresa: Well, almost, like, in a—in a—like, you can kind of spar or play fight and build up your strength?

Travis: Right.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: That's the thing, is we watch a lot of them nature documentaries and, you know, you see, like, the deer play fighting each other, right?

Teresa: Bebe *loves* animal shows.

Travis: Oh, she does. Well, it's because we watch them.

Teresa: Yeah, that is true.

Travis: Um, and in female animal relationships, the strongest friendships experience—they have less stress, higher infant survival, and overall longer lives.

Teresa: That makes sense to me, because it takes a village. [laughs]

Travis: Right. I mean, that's the thing, right? Literally—think about it this way. Imagine a caveman, caveperson, uh, out there. You know, walks outside of their cave to go hunting. Oh, what's that behind them? It's a saber tooth tiger. Right? Now imagine *two* cavepeople together. One's keeping an eye back. One's keeping an eye forward. They're that much more likely to survive, right?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: And so at that point, it—

Teresa: Did—did humans and saber tooth tigers coexist?

Travis: I'm *pretty* sure? They did on *The Flintstones*!

Teresa: They did on *The Flintstones*. That's good enough.

Travis: Okay. Listen, that's not where my research was fo—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —um, and so then it goes even further, where our relationships as humans, as they evolved, was much more, like... uh, trade, almost? Of, like, "Hey, you're gonna help me out 'cause I'm good at this and you're good at that. You could farm and I'll build and—" right? So in—

Teresa: That makes complete sense. Um, because when you have more people in a group, you can each specialize.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: And you don't have to do everything yourself. You can—you can delegate.

Travis: Right. And that—what we're talking about there is kind of, um, relying on each other, having that kind of relationship of necessity.

Now we're gonna kind of start getting into the philosophy more of it, right?

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: So, philosopher Alain de Botton—or maybe 'Alan Dee Botton'—um, pointed out that friends are how we—are now here to, quote, "support us in our commitments, guide us gently away from risks, and help us to develop our thoughts and insights. The job of friendship has turned from physical to psychological," end quote.

Now, this, once again, makes sense, right? Because having someone to watch your back, to keep you from being attacked by a wild animal—right, okay. Totally makes sense. But then partnering with the same person over and over again because you trust them, because you—like, that to me is like, "Oh, okay, that's where it moves beyond."

And then it's also like, "Okay, even when we're done watching each others' backs out in the wild, let's have—let's eat what we hunted together," right?

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: So I can see where it develops into—it goes from just about survival to making your—you a better person.

Dr. Sheri Jacobson points out that human beings are social and tribal creatures by nature. Friendships help us develop important skills like communication and commitment.

Obviously, right? We have seen Bebe, just in her three years, the more she gets to hang out with other people—adults or kids—the more she communicates, the more she understands, like, "Oh, if I do this, it hurts them. But if I do this, it makes them happy." Right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: You tend—I think that morals are something that are really hard to develop in a vacuum, right? Because if you don't see the impact your actions have on others, you don't see the impact your actions have.

Teresa: That's one of the—the big things about developing empathy in children. Like, they really need to interact with each other in order to figure out the consequences of their actions.

Travis: And not only that, is, uh, numerous studies have found that having close personal friendships actually will lengthen your life.

Teresa: Oh, cool!

Travis: That it tends to, on average, give you a longer lifespan. So call your friends. Say thank you.

Um, now—

Teresa: Or write a note.

Travis: Or write a note. Yeah!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: So that's the thing, is... okay. So, let's go even deeper into the history, right? How the concept of friendship has developed, right?

So it's, as I mentioned, an incredibly popular topic for philosophers. Uh, classic Greek and Roman philosophers like Aristotle and Cicero influenced how friendships were viewed well into the 18th century.

Um, and it—it was... friendship was, like, this, like... topic... it's interesting, 'cause it's not surprising to me at all that, like, philosophers surely talked about love.

But if you remove passion, right? And you remove attraction, and you're talking about friendship, right? I think you can see where that would glean itself a little bit more to a logical conversation.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Now, Aristotle actually separated the idea into three different types of friendship. Friendship for the sake of a benefit, friendship for mutual pleasure, and friendship founded on shared values.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Um, now, according to Aristotle, the last type of friendship was the rarest, and therefore most sacred. Now, there were individual subcategories in there, uh, like, hospitality, family ties, and even, like, specific friendships in regards to political leanings.

Dot: [babbles]

Travis: But this makes a lot of sense to me as you think about it, right? Because we talked about for the mutual benefit, right?

Dot: [babbles]

Travis: Of, like, "Okay, I don't know how to farm, and if I try to farm I'm gonna starve. *You* know how to farm, but you don't know how to build, so you don't know how to build, you're gonna die from exposure. So the two of us together, we can work together."

It's kind of—think about it this way. It's what I—I think of it like a buddy cop, you know, kind of comedy?

Teresa: Oh, yeah!

Travis: Where it's like, "You're a loose cannon, and you're by the book! But when we work together, we get things done."

But then the other side of it, right, for mutual pleasure, is, like, "Oh, uh, let's say we... both really like, uh, racquetball, right?"

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Dot: [babbles]

Travis: "We can go play racquetball together! We can go hang out, uh, you know, and see movies together! Um, we enjoy each others' company."

And then there's the people where it's like, "Together, you make me a better person. I make you a better person. We share the same values, and we can kind of hold each other accountable for those values."

Dot: [babbles]

Teresa: And I definitely think that these Venn diagrams overlap.

Travis: Oh, definitely. I mean, this is... remember, Aristotle. Ancient, you know, Roman and Greek of, like, "We're hardcore—we're solvin' this thing!" Right?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And a good indications of that is that these, uh, you know, classical Roman and Greek philosophers—they... kind of all agreed that friendships could only exist between men.

Teresa: Hmm.

Travis: Um, they thought that was because... [groans] uh, that males were the only gender capable of having virtues.

Teresa: [through laughter] Oh ho ho ho, oh boy!

Travis: So... so there's *that*. That's something to—if you're like, "Hmm! This is an interesting take on friendship." Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. They weren't... nailing it on the head every time.

Um... now, like I said, that was one of the few things that these classical philosophers agreed on. Um, they all differed. Uh, Socrates, for example, thought that only people of virtue were capable of being a friend to someone, and that friends should be united in sacred search of truth of wisdom; where Plato viewed

it as more of a political action than an emotional one, and believed that people from different social classes could never be friends.

Teresa: So, uh... [pauses] on—so you couldn't be friends if you guys—if you were thugs?

Travis: Well, it—it was more of, like... some people saw friendship as, like, "You are going to improve my morals and my spiritual growth." And other people were like, "Ah. By being friends with you, maybe socially you raise me up, but I also raise you up, and we're mutually beneficial together."

It's basically the calcu—I remember once, um—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —when I was in college, and I was taking a directing course, right? And we had to cast, like, our classmates in the shows we were doing.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And another classmate of mine got mad at me and said, "You took all the best actors for yourself."

And I responded, "Well, I happen to be friends with all the best actors!"

And then she got mad at me and said I was only friends with them 'cause they were good actors. That's not true.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: But, like, this is, I think, where you could have a very long argument about... do you become friends with someone because you see that they could improve your life in some way, or do you become friends with someone because you love them? And is that mutually exclusive, right?

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Because I've had plenty of friends that I love very much, but maybe weren't a good influence on me, and didn't make my life better, and vice versa,

right? I had people who were a good influence on me who, when it came down to it, wasn't always the person I chose to hang out with, right? So this is basically—

Teresa: What if *you* were the person? What if—uh—

Travis: That's impossible. I was always the perfect person. [laughs quietly]

Teresa: No, I mean, if you were the person that they thought could lift them up, right?

Travis: Right.

Teresa: Or the person that they really felt like it was great to hang out with you. I guess I feel like—I feel like this philosophy really only makes it so that you help each other in the same way.

Travis: Well—

Teresa: But you can be different things to different people, and it doesn't always reciprocate equally.

Travis: Absolutely. This is where I think—and listen, who am I to say that Socrates and Plato and Aristotle were wrong—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —*but...* I think they were wrong.

Teresa: Okay. [laughs]

Travis: Um, because I think that they were looking at it—like I said, they were trying to find the answer to it. Of, like—

Teresa: And there is no one answer.

Travis: —well, because I think that when it comes down to it, one, every relationship is different; and two, I don't think the two are mutually exclusive, right? Like, I have friends that when I met them, we both offered opportunities to each other, which sounds like a very cold and calculating way of looking at it. But they took different forms.

But then I—like, for example, I remember when I met Bradbury, who is now one of my, like, top five best friends, and initially I was like, "This is a cool dude who knows a lot of cool people, and I like all of them." Like, I like hanging out with him and I like hanging out with his friends. I would like to hang out with him more.

And then as I got to hang out with him more I was like, "Oh, I truly love this person... down to my deepest heart." You know what I mean? So it's like, I didn't meet him and initially think, "Oh, I love this person down in my deepest heart." Right? You look at him and you think, "I wanna get to know him more, because he's—" yes.

Teresa: It changes and develops, is what you're saying.

Travis: Correct, yes. So the concept of friendship started to morph during the Middle Ages, um, because they needed to make room for someone who has been on the scene for a while, but was really makin' a name for himself. And I'm talkin' about Jesus.

Teresa: Oh boy!

Travis: Yeah. So it started to be a lot more about, like, the role of—of friendship in Christianity. Um, you know, love thy neighbor. Um, the fellowship of, like, Christ and the apostles. Um, and not only that, it was also a lot of, like, keeping each other, you know, on the straight and narrow, the morality of friendship.

But the problem was... is that while all that was great, there was also in this hyper-religious kind of time—they didn't want anyone to be *too* close, because you shouldn't be closer to anyone than God. Like, your best friend is Jesus.

Teresa: It's a fine line.

Travis: Right. And it was very strict of, like, love and intimacy of any kind was pretty frowned upon, because it would take away from, you know, your time to spend with God, uh, and Jesus.

Um, so... that, luckily, started to change in the 12th century. Things got a little bit looser, because they realized if God's love for us is endless, then surely our love for God can be endless, which means there's plenty of love to go around.

Basically, they had the same realization that any parents who have had a second kid—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —have had to explain to their first kid. Of, like, "Hey, I don't love you any less just because I love them, because love is not a finite resource."

Now, it continued to evolve through the Renaissance as well, and lo and behold, people started to think, "Huh. Maybe... men *and* women—uh, they can *all* be friends with people."

Teresa: "Are capable of—" [laughs]

Travis: "Yes, what if everyone can be friends! This is amazing!" It's very possible that the reason we saw this big surge in, like, the idea of friendship and the concept of friendship from 1300's to 1600's is there was a *lot* of, like, war and upheaval and plagues, and, and, and—

Teresa: So people were looking for comfort.

Travis: Riiight. Of, like, "Hey, we're back to that survival." But not just physical survival of, like, when you're down—when you're like, "I don't know if I'm gonna make it through this. I don't know if *we're* gonna make it through this. Is this the end times?" All of that. It was—it was—friendship became more and more important.

And then that kind of got screwed up by the Age of Enlightenment a little bit, because it started to revert back to, like—you wanna be friends with people who are as intelligent as you are. You wanna be friends in the same class as you are. You wanna be frie—like—

Teresa: That kind of... yes, of course it makes sense. But—

Travis: It's bad.

Teresa: —it feels almost backwards to me, for something called the Enlightenment.

Travis: Well, yeah... yeah, yeah, yeah.

Teresa: But I guess classicism is kind of, you know... the—the—the... what do you—the bedrock of the Enlightenment, so if we're going back to the classics, you can get—

Travis: I also think it's a misunderstanding. It's something that I think today we still try to deal with in popular culture, which is a misunderstanding of, like, what constitutes a good influence. And you know what? I'm gonna talk more about that idea here in a second. But first, a thank you note for our sponsors.

[theme music plays]

Travis: Hi, folks! Travis here with some thank you notes for our sponsors! First, uh, this is a big thank you, both for being our sponsor and as, uh, new parents yet again. Thank you to DoorDash. Uh, because listen. You know, you're sittin' there, you're hungry, and you look in the fridge and you say, "Oh, I hate all of this. What am I gonna do?"

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Okay, back to the show!

[theme music plays]

Travis: Okay. So, my—my point is that I think during this time period, as is true with a lot of misguided parents in teen comedies—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —think that a good influence is somebody on the same—like, "You—you're gonna get bad grades if you hang out with that bad kid." Right? That's it's like a one and one thing.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: As opposed to, you know what? Someone doesn't have to be as smart as you or as rich as you or come from the same background or any of that stuff, to improve your life. To bring something to the party. And it doesn't—just because—you know, once again, teen comedies. Just because they teach you to relax a little bit... doesn't make 'em a bad person.

Teresa: [laughs] Well, and also, if we're talking about teen comedy kind of tropes, um, you could have more in common than at first meets the eye, right?

Travis: Right, exactly.

Teresa: So that's where friendship can develop.

Travis: That's my favorite thing, by the way. Just to—in—in movies or TV shows, I am a su—or books or any kind of media—I am a sucker for two unlikely friends. Like, a great example of this is in *Parks and Recreation*, between Ben and Andy. The two of them, like, becoming basically like brothers makes me so happy. That kind of stuff makes me—seeing Ben—basically Ben and everyone makes me so happy.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: But, like, that kind of thing is like... oh, I—I will—I will eat that up. Any time you're like, "These two shouldn't be friends, but aren't they great together?"

I'm like, "Yes they are!"

Teresa: Yes they are.

Travis: "They are terrific together. Thank you so much."

So, um, in the Enlightenment there was also a rise in skepticism about friendship. Uh, La—oh... La Rochefoucauld—uh—L-A R-O-C-H-E-F-O-U-C-A-U-L-D. Rochefoucauld. Sure.

Teresa: Sure!

Travis: Um, wrote, quote, "What people call friendship is nothing more than a trade in which personal interests always prevail and people manage to secure additional benefits for themselves," end quote.

Teresa: [sighs] What—what a dreary outlook.

Travis: Right? Because here's the way I look at that. Is, like, that phrasing it that way makes it sound bad. But if you said "Friendship is a partnership in which both people get something positive out of it," that's a much nice way to say it. Right?

Teresa: It sure is. It sure is!

Travis: Right? Yeah, okay! I—I think it's a good thing if two people in a friendship end up benefiting each other, right? Because the opposite of that is toxic, right? Like, people should come out of a friendship saying, "Being friends with you made me better." Yes, that's great.

And that was pretty much how friendships stayed through, like, the 18th and the 19th centuries, and, you know, a friend was someone with similar interests who would help you out if you were having a hard time.

Then, urbanization upped people's social lives, because now you could go to cafes! You could go to restaurants! You could go to pubs together! There was this now developing middle class that was like, "Hey, we have downtime!"

Teresa: Right.

Travis: "Do you wanna go see a play with me? Do you wanna go have a meal out on the city? Do you want to, like, stroll through a park? Like, we have time to do these things, right?"

And this is also where we see more of, like, parlors and teas and this kind of thing as being these social events, where it wasn't necessarily about, like, "Oh, great. You're gonna help me get a better job or learn to read and write." But just, like, "I like passing time with you."

Teresa: Now, I—I definitely agree with this assertion, but I also want to remind our listeners that there was still a lot of classism. There was still a lot of, like, segregation of genders—

Travis: Very true.

Teresa: —and things like that. So it's not like everybody was, like, hangin' out all the time with everybody. There was—

Travis: Well, this was—

Teresa: —there was still a kind of, like, levels... clique thing.

Travis: The thing is, though—the other thing about urbanization and this time in kind of the Industrial—being able to, like, see... lives outside of your immediately sphere, was friendship also started to develop in, like, "I am passionate about this cause, too."

Right? So we started to see things developing like the actual concrete idea of feminism, because people who have downtime, people who are social, can talk about things beyond immediate, like, "Do we have enough food for the winter? Will the roof hold?" Right? And you started to be like, "Hey! It's pretty frustrating that, like, we don't vote, right? That's kind of bad, right?"

Once you have downtime and time to actually explore issues, you start to find people who—stuff like the equal rights for, you know, people of color and for women and for... everybody, right? That's where we see it start to develop; in, like, the late 19th century and the 20th century, because people started to band together through relationships, not just over shared interests, but shared causes.

Teresa: Shared ideals.

Travis: Right. So when the 20th century began, uh, some pretty bad stuff happened there in the first, like, 40 years.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: That led to people realizing, like, "I need to choose my own community," right? That my—my group doesn't have to be... the—you know, the 20 people on the street, you know, that I live on, right? Because maybe those people are bad.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: And maybe, like, I want to find people, um—like... it—it started to be... getting through things like World Wars, right? You have to build community on that.

Um, and... so... this was also the time, unfortunately, where the idea—well, positive and negative. This is where the idea of, like, "Friendship is for men" flipped... and here in about, like, the really early 1900's, we started to see, like, "Oh, women are emotional. Men are not emotional. So women can be friends with each other, 'cause that's an emotional commitment. They can talk to each other about their feelings and stuff. [deep voice] *Men* don't do that."

So men—which, listen. There is a laundry list of reasons why men were considered to—why it was no longer considered manly to be emotional.

Teresa: Air quotes "manly."

Travis: Yeah. Most of them are horribly homophobic. Um, but—and a lot of it has to do with advertising, but that's another show.

So this then became, like, for a long time... like, female friendships were much more... understandable, and more much more like—people were like, "Ah. I see why those two ladies would get together and talk about their emotions. *We* don't do that, eh, Bill? [manly noises???"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: You know.

Teresa: "Sports."

Travis: "Sports. [manly noises...?]" So, um, the new century also threw out the rules of the only being friends with someone in your social class again, right?

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: We started to see much more social mobility, a lot more of, like, "Oh, you know, the wrong side of the tracks—" kind of—we don't hold to that as much. And a big part of that was the automobile.

Teresa: Ahhh.

Travis: Right? Because you could go from your estate into town—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —and hang out. Right? As opposed to—for a long time it was like—I mean, if you really think about it, only people with money and means could travel to each others', like, houses, you know? Take a carriage or whatever, right? And so there wasn't a lot of, like, "What if we just, like, went into town... and hung out." That didn't happen as much.

So with the automobile, and trains, and buses, right? It became a lot easier for everyone to travel and kind of intermingle and say, like, "Oh, you're cool! Oh, I like this music. What do you call this? Ah... picture shows!" Or whatever.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: You know how—

Teresa: The talkies!

Travis: Yes. Yeah, you know! And then, I mean, add on to that airplanes, and then the internet?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Right? Like, that—it—friendship just, I think, really from, like, the beginning of the 19th century to now—or, sorry, hmm, 1900's—exploded.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Right? Because we started to be able to—if you think about it, there were people for a long time whose full idea of the world was whatever they read in the newspaper, right? If that. And the, like... ten mile radius of their house.

And so for a long time, people didn't even understand, "This is what this person's life is like, and you share a lot more than you think you do." Where it was just, like, whatever they had formulated in their heads dictated to them whether or not they should be friends with that person.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Then as people got to travel and understand and share information faster and faster, they were able to say, like, "Oh, you like that? I like that! Oh, this is cool. Great."

So... we have a lot more to talk about with friendship, and so we're going to turn this into a two-parter. Uh, next week I'm going to talk about famous friendships in history.

Teresa: Oh boy!

Travis: [holding back laughter] Um, one of 'em involves Andre the Giant. It's really good.

Teresa: [laughs] Spoilers!

Travis: Yes. And we're gonna talk about, uh, if you can define the feeling of friendship, and we're also gonna take your audience questions! Um, let's so. So, before we wrap up the episode though—[sighs] so rusty. We need to talk about some, uh—well, first and foremost, let me say thank you to our assistant Alex, who we—

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: —helped me research this. Couldn't—literally could not have done it without her. Couldn't have done the last four weeks without her.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: She has been indispensable. Um, we also want to say—oh, we've got, uh, a *My Brother, My Brother, and Me* live show and an *Adventure Zone* live show coming up in Cincinnati, February 19th and 20th. Uh, *Shmanners* will not be performing there, but *Sawbones* is going to open, uh, for *My Brother, My Brother, and Me*. You can get those tickets at mcelroy.family.

Uh, thank you to Maximum Fun for being our podcast home. Let's see. Teresa, what else?

Teresa: Let's see if I can do this. [laughs] Thank you to Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Also, thank you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art. You

can reach us @shmannerscast, and that's where we take all of our audience questions.

Thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover photo of our fan-run Facebook group, *Shmanners Fanners*. Go ahead and join that on Facebook if you love to get—get and give excellent advice from other fans of the show.

Um... wait, there's one more, right?

Travis: Brent! Did we say that one?

Teresa: I said Brent. We said Alex.

Travis: [simultaneously] Uh... Did you email us?

Teresa: Yes, email! So, if you would like to suggest a topic for our show, please email us at shmannerscast@gmail.com.

Travis: Very good.

Teresa: Um, because it is far easier to search through the inbox than it is to search through tweets. Um, but you can tweet at me. I am @teresamcelroy.

Travis: I'm @travismcelroy.

Teresa: Um, and then... oh, gosh. I think that's it.

Travis: I think that's it, too.

Teresa: I think we did it.

Travis: Yes. Thank you all so much. Listen, um, I know we were gone for a couple weeks and I appreciate everyone's understanding. By the way, Baby Dot is doing great. Uh, Bebe *loves* her, uh, to the point of... we just have to stop her from, like, laying on top of her and—

Teresa: [through laughter] Just smushing her constantly!

Travis: —hugging her all the time. Baby Dot is her—Baby Dot is her new favorite toy.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, so thank you! Uh, and we're excited to be back, and get back in the swing of things. So thank you all so much. Uh, that's gonna do it for us. Join us again next week.

Teresa: No RSVP required.

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

Teresa: Manners, *Shmanners*. Get it?

[theme music plays]

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