

Shmanners 138: Juliette Gordon Low

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Travis: Hey, Teresa! Are you ready to record?

Teresa: Yeah! I'm trying to earn my podcasting merit badge!

Travis: It's *Shmanners*!

[theme music plays]

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

Teresa: [holding back laughter] And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis: [dramatically] And you're listening to *Shmanners*!

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette.

Travis: For ordinary occasions! Hello, my dove!

Teresa: What is wrong with you? [laughs]

Travis: What do you mean?

Teresa: What are you—what are you doing?

Travis: I'm trying to be a little more professional. I'm trying to bring... uh, I don't know. I just was talking weird.

You didn't say "my dear," and it's really bothering me!

Teresa: Oh, sorry, dear.

Travis: Oh. Okay.

Teresa: How's that?

Travis: Thank you. Now we can start. Hi! How are you?

Teresa: I'm good! How are you?

Travis: I'm doing well! Tomorrow's my birthday.

Teresa: Yeahhh...

Travis: I'm turning, um... 26.

Teresa: Hmm!

Travis: That's—that's my press age.

Teresa: Mm-hm?

Travis: Um, very excited. I love my birthday. Very excited. But that's not what we're talking about. But I'm just excited, because it's also my older brother Justin's birthday tomorrow. Probably when people hear this.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: It's the 8th. The 8th is both mine and Justin's birthday, as well as...

Teresa: My older sister.

Travis: Yes. We're all born on November 8th. In fact, Teresa's older sister and I were born on the exact same day, same year. I think, like, six hours apart or something.

Teresa: Something like that, but in different states.

Travis: Yes. The—yes. We weren't, like, twins or whate—like, weren't... that was clear, right everybody?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Like, okay.

Teresa: I think it was.

Travis: Um, and I, um... I'm just so excited to be recording with you. It feels like the first time.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, and we're talking about somebody who, up until about 45 seconds ago, I did not know the name, did not know anything about. So, who is this person, and what did they do?

Teresa: We—we are going to discuss... Juliette Gordon Low.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Who... is not someone that you would think of as far as etiquette or manners goes, but I think that her contribution, which was basically, um, founding the Girl Scouts of America, um, based on the Girl Guides, which is something the English do—anyway.

Anyway, founding that in America. I think—in the USA, excuse me—is something that really bettered the lives of people everywhere. Um, it went international, and it's—it's kind of like... she's one of those bridge builders between the Victorian era sensibilities and the turn of the century sensibilities. You know what I mean?

Travis: Yes. Probably mostly in that I'm pretty sure Victorian women didn't, like, go outside and do stuff?

Teresa: Uh, yeah!

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: And—and it seems like the Girl Scouts go outside and do stuff.

Teresa: Sure. Well, so, the thing is, like... it—it started to really chip away at the gender norms that are associated with the Victorian era. Now, I'm not—I'm definitely not saying that it didn't... at the turn of the century, also include gender norms that we, uh, know today are arbitrary.

Um, but it... it was that first kind of delicate toe in the water towards the—the kind of freedom for people to express themselves differently.

Travis: I also have to imagine that it was a new kind of turn towards self-reliance?

Teresa: Certainly.

Travis: Of, like, you should be able to, like, build a fire and do these things and, like, be able to take care of things. I'm guessing here, based on my minimal knowledge of—of Victorian era, uh, norms.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Um, now, were you a Girl Scout?

Teresa: I was!

Travis: And you were also a Boy Scout, right?

Teresa: Um, there—when I was in high school, there was a, um... I—I guess I want to say a kind of girl-allowed... um...

Travis: Branch?

Teresa: Branch? Yeah, branch of the Boy Scouts called Explorers.

Travis: I wonder how many people thought that when I asked you that question that I was making some kind of weird joke, but that actually is a thing. 'Cause—

Teresa: It actually is a thing, yes.

Travis: 'Cause I remember you telling me once about, like, going sailing or something as part of it?

Teresa: Yeah. There's—there's a Boy Scout camp in Florida called Sea Base.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Teresa: Um, and you—

Travis: Not to be confused with Sea Bass.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: The fish. Or Lance Bass.

Teresa: We—we really wanted to go! We wanted the opportunity to do the same thing that the Boy Scouts were doing, so we became Explorer Scouts. Our whole Girl Scout troop applied and received a—I guess a troopage in the Explorer Scouts, and so we went down to Sea Base and we sailed an 80-foot schooner all around the Keys!

Travis: Oh, 80-foot? That's good! [through laughter] I don't know anything about—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I was, uh... I was a Cub Scout, and very, very briefly... a Boy Scout. Uh, I did not care for it. A little... uh, this is a thing about me. Any time something is expected of me and I'm not choosing to do it, I—I find it very, uh, boring.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: And so as soon as I was like, "Oh, I have to come to stuff. No, thank you. I just wanted, uh, the popcorn, and the race cars, please. Thank you very much."

Teresa: [laughs] It really helped that my mom was the troop leader.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: That really helps.

Travis: I did do—like I said, I did do some Scout stuff but, like, never enough that it stuck, you know?

Teresa: I, um, was in it... all throughout my school years. Um, I finished—

Travis: Is there, like, a version of Eagle Scout in the Girl Scouts?

Teresa: There is! Um, so, uh... it's—it's kind of more you get awards. So there's, like, the gold award. Um, which is like achieving the Eagle Scout rank. It's the same deal.

Travis: Did you get it?

Teresa: I did not.

Travis: Ah, did you—

Teresa: I got the silver award.

Travis: So you came... second, in Girl Scouts.

Teresa: I came second in Girl Scouts. Um, because—

Travis: Still better than me! I didn't get any awards!

Teresa: —because I had to—I had to bow out of my troop. Um—

Travis: Can I guess? Because of theater?

Teresa: Well, I was just doing too many extracurricular activities. Junior year of... no, it was sophomore year. Sophomore year of high school, um, I was taking dance classes, I was taking voice lessons, I was in show choir... um, I was in speech and debate, I was in theater—

Travis: Have we talked about this before? What'd you do in speech and debate?

Teresa: Uh, prose poetry?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: It's in—in Ohio, it's combined. Anyway, anyway, anyway—

Travis: I did H-I-D-I and—and duo perfor—it's not important.

Teresa: It's not important, okay.

Travis: We'll do a whole episode about speech—oh, we should do speech and debate competition, uh, etiquette!

Teresa: [laughs] You mean—

Travis: Everyone would be fascinated.

Teresa: —we should.

Travis: Debate etiquette might be good to do. Maybe we'll, like, hold on to that until, like, the next big election.

Teresa: Darling, we digress.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Okay. So, Juliette Gordon Low was born in Savannah, Georgia—

[can opening]

Travis: That was—that was a canned water, not a beer.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I'm having a fizzy water.

Teresa: Sav—Savanna, Georgia in 1860. Um, and she was actually born to a fairly wealthy and, um, high-status family. Um... and throughout her life, she was kind of known as a little bit eccentric, a little bit clumsy, very imaginative, very artistic. She loved painting and pottery and music and—and things like that.

Travis: Fun stuff.

Teresa: But she was very sickly, as well. Um, she suffered from what was called at the time "brain fever" at one point.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: She got malaria several times.

Travis: Now, brain fever is one of those things that people gave a catch-all name—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: —to a bunch of different stuff that we know now was, like—okay.

Teresa: Right. Um, like I said, malaria; she had, um, recurrent ear infections, um, but that didn't stop her from really being kind of.. I don't know. A tour de force, basically.

Um, and it was... reading about her... she was such a free spirit! It's—it was pretty awesome. I recommend that you—you read about her—her younger days.

Um, but she got married to, um, [posh voice] a millionaire husband.

Travis: And this was what year? I mean, around what time?

Teresa: Oh, when she got married?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Well, it—she was raised in the Victorian era. So, um, she got married, um... [pauses]

Travis: I mean, it doesn't have to be exact. We're talking 18... 60's? 70's?

Teresa: Yeah. Yeah.

Travis: So, like, a million dollars was still a big deal. [sarcastically] Not like now where, like, everyone has a million dollars.

Teresa: Oh, yeah.

Travis: Okay. You know how, like, ev—like, you can work at McDonald's and make a million dollars now because money is worthless, and mostly people just use it... like, they throw it in big barrels to burn for heat, and to cook, you know, shanks over? You know.

Teresa: Ye—

Travis: Their various shanks?

Teresa: —eahh.

Travis: That they—I don't know, found? I don't know where shanks—it's not important. But a million dollars—

Teresa: 18–1886, excuse me.

Travis: Okay, so let me look. In 1886... 8... okay, you keep talking.

Teresa: Okay. Um, so one of the nicknames that she earned as a young child was Daisy. Uh, and because of, like I said, all of her, you know, eccentricities, they called her Crazy Daisy, which I think is really cool because the first level of Girl Scouts are called Daisies!

Travis: Ohh! Okay. That makes a lot of sense.

Teresa: Um—

Travis: Okay, well, here—okay.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: To give you all an idea, 'cause I looked it up... a million dollars in 1885 would be equal to the buying power of 25 million dollars in 2017.

Teresa: Alright!

Travis: So, like... [through laughter] an—an increase of almost 2500 percent.

Teresa: Great.

Travis: So, just to give you all an idea of, like, what we're talking about. I'm always interested in looking that up because, like, you know, you don't always jump to, like, making the conversion. You're like, "Oh, a million dollars. Pretty cool." And it's like, "Well, a million dollars was probably... very rich in the Victorian age."

Teresa: Yeah. Um, so they... being rich, purchased several homes, both in the United States and abroad. Um, one of which was in England.

Travis: I've heard of it, yes.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: That's, uh—where, uh, I think the tea and the queen is?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, and so... in England is where she became acquainted with the Girl Guides. Which, uh, I would say that Girl Scouts began as kind of formulated on. And there is a Girl Scouts and Girl Guide alliance.

Travis: Oh, really? Like, they fight crime together?

Teresa: [wheezes]

Travis: Or is it more like if one gets attacked—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —the other one... is committed to, like...

Teresa: It's more like they share similar ideals.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: And they have formally aligned each other.

Travis: So it's about how they vote when it comes to, like, the elimination council? Like, who has to get off the island?

Teresa: [sarcastically] Mm-hm.

Travis: I'm just—okay, listen. You can roll your eyes at me all you want to, but the—the word "alliance" just conjures to it so many amazing images to my head.

I love that idea of, like, "[dramatically] Girl Guides, we must call upon you now in our hour of need."

Teresa: [laughs] Of course you do. Um, so... I want to talk a little bit about... th—those are the—the kind of, like, biography business. So I wanna talk about how I relate this to etiquette.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, like I said... in—in the turn of the century, we were starting to move away from this idea that there were "boy" activities and "girl" activities. You know, with quotes around, right? And... uh, Juliette Gordon Low was kind of a person who was like, "These are things that every person should know." Things like how to communicate with each other, um, how to behave in society—as long—you know, along with... how to cook, and how to build a fire—

Travis: Splint a wound.

Teresa: —and how—

Travis: Is that a thing?

Teresa: —sure, yeah! First aid, absolutely. Um, so this is—this was kind of regarded as, like, radical thinking at the time of the inception. But as the turn of the century rolled over, obviously, this is something that really permeated the rest of society. So I think—I think that is really where this idea of her as how I feel etiquette and manners, you know, interact in life—

Travis: Well, yeah! I mean, 'cause that's the thing. What we really mean when we say, like, "etiquette" and "manners," a big part of that is, for better or for worse, social norms. You know what I mean?

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: Like, when you consider, like, "Ooh, that's not polite." A lot of that stuff that you see in movies, especially, like, about Victorian age and, like, watch five seconds of *Downton Abbey*, is, like—"[gruff and indistinct voice] That—that's not a woman's place! Hoo! [grumbling] Oh, my. Girls don't get money! Pfuhr—"

And it's like, that—that kind of thing—it wasn't that there was anything inherently bad about it. But—so it was just the social norms being that it was considered rude or impolite, or just not done. "[grumbling] Hem, haw, hem, hem, hem, haw."

Teresa: Exactly. And so I'd like to go over—now, these are the modern, um, kind of merit badges—

Travis: [gasps]

Teresa: —that one can... [laughs quietly] what?

Travis: I'm excited to hear about 'em!

Teresa: Oh, okay.

Travis: But! Before I let you do that... we're gonna write a thank you note to our sponsor.

Teresa: Awesome.

[theme music plays]

Teresa: *Shmanners* is sponsored in part this week by Bombas!

Travis: Bombas!

Teresa: Feature—that feature... socks that feature—excuse me. [laughs]

Travis: Listen. We're so excited to tell you about Bombas—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —we can't even get our words straight.

Teresa: Can't even get it out.

Travis: Listen, you know when you're a kid...

Teresa: [laughs quietly]

Travis: ... and it's gettin' near Christmas, gettin' the holidays, and what's the one thing no kid wants to get? You know, socks.

Teresa: Socks.

Travis: But here's the thing, y'all. When you're an adult—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —socks get you very twitterpated. You get very excited about socks.

Teresa: Because these feature an arch support system, a cushioned foot bed, stay-up technology, seamless toes, and are super soft cotton.

They are designed to be the most comfortable socks in the history of feet, [excitedly] and guess what I am wearing right now?!

Travis: I mean, a t-shirt and—oh! Bombas socks!

Teresa: I put it up on your desk so you could see it.

Travis: No, I could see it, the Bombas socks. And listen, here's what I love about 'em. What—when we talk about, like, that arch support thing, there's, like, a definite pattern where you could see what it—so, like, it's very clearly—[through laughter] they're not lying to you—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —about it. It's right there.

Teresa: It's in there! I can touch it. I'm feelin' it, right now.

Travis: The socks are truly amazing. And here's the thing. Here's one of the things I've learned as I've gotten older. Like, it's fun to do, like, big, flashy things for yourself. But sometimes some of the best things you can do for yourself are just, like, little—like, "You know what? I'm gonna make the decision today to, like, put on my good socks that I really like."

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: "Or, like, my favorite pair of underwear." That kind of thing? And so, like, listen. If you're looking for a chance to treat yourself and do something nice for yourself, why not start with new socks?

Teresa: And you know what? You can do something nice for others at the same time!

Travis: What?!

Teresa: Because Bombas donates one brand new pair of socks for every pair they sell. So that means, to date, they've sold and donated over seven million pairs of socks. You get a good day, they get a good day.

Travis: That's amazing.

Teresa: You get a good day, they get a good day.

Travis: So what should people do?

Teresa: So, uh, you should go to bombas.com/shmanners. That's B-O-M-B-A-S bombas.com, and you will get 20% off your first order with your odor—odor—odor? [laughs quietly]

Travis: Yes? So excited.

Teresa: [through laughter] O—order code "shmanners."

Travis: You did it.

Teresa: [through laughter] [Bombas.com/shmanners](https://bombas.com/shmanners), code "shmanners." You take the next one.

Travis: You got it. Uh, listen. If you've listened to me speak for longer than 15 seconds, you've probably heard me talk about Squarespace, how much I love them. I built the mcelroyshows.com site there. I built, um, buttercupisaverygoodgirl.com there. Um, I used it for just, like, random projects that I got excited about. Um, I used it for—there was a puzzle crawl here in

Cincinnati, and I used it to, like, build puzzles and puzzle answers for people. And you know why I did that? Because it's so easy and quick to use that it—it didn't make sense *not* to!

That's the thing. When I had the idea to make a website dedicated to our dog, Buttercup, it didn't make sense *not* to do it, because Buttercup is a very good girl, dot com.

And here's the thing. I've said that a lot, but there's a lot of things you need to know. At Squarespace, you can turn your cool idea into a new website. You can sell products and services of all kinds. You can announce an upcoming event or special project, and more. And here's some of the coolest stuff that Squarespace does.

They have beautiful, customizable templates, created by world-class designers that are optimized for mobile right out of the box, which is *so huge* these days!

Teresa: [imitating a choir of angels]

Travis: Like, it's so important—

Teresa: That was me, hittin' my hallelujah.

Travis: There are so many—like, if I stumble upon a website that doesn't have it, I just leave that website.

Teresa: Oh, yeah.

Travis: Like, I can't—

Teresa: I can find what I need someplace else.

Travis: Um, analytics that will help you grow in real time, which is so important to know, to know where your people are coming from, what they're looking at, all that stuff; and 24/7, award-winning service... and—and customer support.

And let me tell you. You don't need to know anything about website building to build a website on Squarespace.

Teresa: Do you know code?

Travis: I don't!

Teresa: Do you code?

Travis: Noo.

Teresa: No, bro.

Travis: I don't even code, bro! No!

Teresa: No, bro. Don't code.

Travis: I don't code! But you can make an amazing website yourself without having to know any of those things!

So, head to [squarespace.com/shmanners](https://www.squarespace.com/shmanners) for a free trial, and when you're ready to launch, use the offer code "shmanners" to save 10% off your first purchase of a website or domain.

Teresa: We also have a Jumbotron this week! And I'm gonna try and redeem myself by... reading goodly.

Travis: Hey, you have nothing to redeem yourself from, baby!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: You're perfect.

Teresa: This message—

Travis: Because you're you.

Teresa: —oh, thank you, dear. This message is for Lauren, from Jen. Jen writes:

"To my baby sister Herman, or Lauren, if you prefer, I'm buying this message on your birthday to say I'm so glad you are my sister. Thanks for joining me in my obsession with the entire extended McElroy family. I love you, as always. Don't get hurt at CrossFit."

Travis: Yes! Thank you, Jen! Thank you for finally being the one to step up and say, "CrossFit! Maybe it's dangerous!"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Travis doesn't literally know anything about it, but maybe it's dangerous. So thank you, Jen. Lauren? Thank you for having a birthday. But mostly Jen, thank you for being a whistle-blower on CrossFit.

Teresa: I don't think that's what this was really about.

Travis: You don't that's what th—this was a secret message that Jen is smuggling out of CrossFit? Like—

Teresa: No.

Travis: "—Hey, it's da—" okay. *Is* it dangerous? [laughs quietly] I don't know anything about CrossFit!

Teresa: I mean... living is dangerous these days, so—

Travis: Oh my God, Teresa, it's so true. And dark.

Teresa: So... dark.

[music plays]

Raleigh: I'm Raleigh Smirl.

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl.

Sydnee: And together, we host a podcast called *Still Buffering*, where we answer questions like...

Raleigh: Why should I not fall asleep first at a slumber party?

Taylor: How do I be fleek?

Sydnee: Is it okay to break up with someone using emojis?

Taylor: And sometimes we talk about butts!

Raleigh: No, we don't! Nope.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Find out the answers to these important questions, and many more, on *Still Buffering: a sisters' guide to teens through the ages*.

Raleigh: I am a teenager...

Sydnee and Taylor: And I... was... too.

Taylor: Butts. Butts, butts, butts, butts!

Raleigh: [quietly] Noo! [laughs quietly]

[music plays]

Freddie: Hey, everyone! Freddie Wong—

Matt: Matt Arnold—

Will: And Will Campos—

Freddie: —here to tell you about *Story Break*: a writer's room podcast where every week we, the Hollywood geniuses behind *Video Game High School*, have one hour to turn a humble idea into an awesome movie.

Matt: Thrill as we weave the tragic tale of *Jar Jar: A Star Wars Story*.

Will: We're gonna double down on everything that made the prequels great. Jar Jar, Trade Federation—

Freddie: [simultaneously] Trade Federation!

Matt: [laughs]

Will: —politics!

Gasp as we assemble a pantheon of heroes for the Kellogg's cinematic universe.

Matt: We could get rid of Snap, Crackle, Pop. I wouldn't even miss them.

Freddie: You're crazy.

Matt: They die in the second act.

Will: [laughs loudly]

Freddie: Oh, come on!

And join us as we make fun of Matt as he struggles to name a single Beyonce song.

Matt: Well yeah, "Put a Finger On It," sure. She wants to be Beyonce.

Freddie: "Put a Finger On It," Beyonce's famous song—

Will: [laughs]

Matt: Will we break the story?

Will: Or will the story break us?

Freddie: Find out by joining us in the writer's room, every Thursday on Maximumfun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

Teresa: Okay. Uh, hey. Do you wanna know some of the cool merit badges that you can get in the modern Girl Scouts?

Travis: Yes?

Teresa: Um, so... I think that this is very important. Like I explained to you, the very first tier, the young'uns of the Girl Scouts, are called Daisies. These are some of the things that Daisies get merit badges in.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: They, um—what their—what they do is they make a little daisy on their uniform, and they earn petals, and all of these petals are—are named. Um, and they represent certain life skills, right?

Travis: Aw, that's so cute!

Teresa: So the names of the petals are Lupe, which stands for honest and fair; Sunny, which stands for being friendly and helpful; Zinni, which stands for being considerate and caring; Tula, which stands for being courageous and strong. Mari stands for being responsible for what I say and do. Gloria stands for respecting myself and others. [clears throat] Gerri stands for respecting authority. And I looked this up as defined as, like... police officers and things like that.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Teresa: Um, Clover stands for using resources wisely. Rosie stands for making the world a better place; and Vi, being a sister to every Girl Scout. These are things that Daisies learn! This is, like—Daisies are, like, kindergarten and first grade.

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: Like, it's... it's amazing. These are life skills that they're building. Um, and I think that—that this—these kind of ideals are the perfect building blocks for creating good human beings.

Travis: Yeah, that's amazing. Like, I actually looked it up while you were talking to see what age you were talking about, and to see if we could just go ahead and get Bebe in there.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Not yet!

Teresa: She's a *little* too young. Um, and then it—it really just expounds from there. When you become a Brownie, which is the next step up, you start really learning about STEM.

Um, some of the patches you can earn are, uh, Fling Flyer Design Challenge, Programming Robots, Home Scientists—

Travis: What—

Teresa: —Space Science Adventurer—

Travis: Whoa!

Teresa: —Cyber—

Travis: I want that! Wait, hold on, jump back. Space Science Adventurer?

Teresa: I know, right? It sounds great.

Travis: I would like to do that, please!

Teresa: Cyber Security Investigator.

Travis: What?!

Teresa: Yeah! Really great stuff. And then—I mean, it's still—the life skills are still there. Fair play. Celebrating community.

Travis: Selling delicious cookies.

Teresa: My best self. Making friends. All that—like... it's—it's... it's wonderful, and I can really see—these are not, like, the original merit badges, obviously.

Travis: No. I—I should hope that in 1860, they didn't have a merit badge for, like, robot programming.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "But how do I earn that?"

"I don't know! [holding back laughter] It's up to you! We just come up with the merit badges. You make the robot. Probably something steampunk-y, I bet, 'cause it's the Victorian era."

Teresa: But it's—it's really about the sentiment, right? The way that the whole thing is designed. Um, and really contributes to the way that we think about manners and etiquette, because you are learning these interpersonal skills, learning, you know, being responsible. Um, and that translates to getting along better in the world.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And that is why I chose Juliette Gordon Low.

Travis: Um, can I ask you two very important questions?

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: First, did you enjoy your time as a Girl Scout? Is it a thing that you look back on, like, fondly and formatively?

Teresa: Absolutely. Um, and although I don't remember a lot of the youngest parts of it, I do remember spending some really great time [holding back laughter] in camping-like situations. You know, 'cause you're very young.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Teresa: Um... with my friends, making crafts... um, you know, doing the whole campfire thing. Um, sleeping outside? Which... you know, exciting!

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: [through laughter] At the time.

Travis: Well, see, that's the thing. I didn't do so much Boy Scout—I did—but I did Awanas, and RA's, which is, like, at least—I don't know if other denominations—but a very Southern Baptist form of, like, kind of Boy Scouts, just a lot more... than you would expect, more than normal, bible-based.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: Uh, but yeah. A lot of those, like, going on camping trips and, like, learning how to, like, make a... stove out of a coffee can and some cardboard and stuff.

Teresa: Yeah. And the—the emphasis, I think, that especially my mom as a troop leader really took was, like, "This is supposed to be fun *and* formative."

Um, so it never really felt—it didn't ever feel like school to me. It felt kind of like... it felt like achievements and awards and, you know, friend times, and stuff like that. And I don't think I really... thought about the learning that I was doing until I became what they call a Junior, which is, um... like, level three-ish, I think?

Travis: Mm-hm.

Teresa: If I remember correctly. Um, and that—that was when you start thinking about, like—you—you can, um... at—at certain Girl Scouts camps, you become kind of like a junior counselor, almost.

Travis: Gotcha.

Teresa: Right?

Travis: Now, the second very important question.

Teresa: Oh. Wait—you didn't let me finish!

Travis: Oh, sorry, go on. I was just so excited to ask you the second question.

Teresa: As a Junior, that's when I really discovered this idea of, like, shaping young people. At—at—so that was when it became more of, like, a—like duty to self that I felt, and less like just, like, "We're going on fun trips and stuff."

But then it came back around, [through laughter] and... when I—when I became a Cadet and a Senior, that's when we did stuff like join the Explorer Scouts to go—

Travis: And go on that schooner.

Teresa: —to go schoon—sailing!

Travis: To go schooning.

Teresa: Schooning. To go sailing. And, like, I—I mean, other stuff. We, like—I remember we went to Maine and we went on a lobster boat and we caught lobster and ate it, and, like—

Travis: And you bit right into it right there.

Teresa: [laughs] No. Like, did actual—

Travis: You wrestled that lobster to the ground.

Teresa: —real camping, instead of, like, camping-like activities, where we dug our own fire pits and, like, all this kind of stuff. So, like... it—like I said, it came back around. [laughs] Went back to the super fun.

Travis: So, second very important question. What's the best Girl Scout cookie?

Teresa: [inhales loudly] Samoas, which are also called Caramel deLites, depending upon which, um, baker you get it from, and there are different regional bakers. So—

Travis: Huh. You're very wrong!

Teresa: No. I am not.

Travis: But the problem is that you're very wrong, because the Peanut Butter Patties...

Teresa: Or the Tagalongs.

Travis: ...are the best.

Teresa: No.

Travis: Followed by Thin Mints—

Teresa: Mm...

Travis: —especially if they've been in the freezer.

Teresa: I do enjoy a Thin Mint, but you're wrong, because the Samoas are the best.

Travis: Followed by—now, in my wise old age, the Shortbread/Trefoils, which I didn't used to enjoy as much—you know, 'cause they were a little simpler. But now I can just sit down and eat a whole sleeve of 'em.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Whereas I used to be able to eat a whole sleeve of Thin Mints, but now that's a little too much. *Then* the Caramel deLites... *then* the S'mores, 'cause they're a little bit too much sometimes for me. *Then...* [clicks tongue] this is where it starts to get tough. I like the Toffee-tastic a lot, which I think is a newer one, right?

Teresa: Well, they—like I said, depending upon the bakers, they release different and new ones every—every so often. There's, like, a chocolate-y, like, dipped shortbread-y one, and there's, like—

Travis: The Thanks-A-Lot.

Teresa: —a lemon... dipped shortbread-y one.

Travis: Well, there's the Lemonade, yes.

Teresa: The Lemon—and, like, for a while there was a strawberry sandwich cookie—

Travis: [gasps]

Teresa: —that had, like, a strawberry jam dot in the middle.

Travis: Ooh, yeah, I remember that. I'm also—you know what? This is maybe a left fielder, but I'm a big fan of the Savannah Smiles. You know the ones that had, like, the powdered sugar on 'em that are very lemon-y?

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: Not a fan of the Do-Si-Do's/Peanut Butter Sandwich. You know?

Teresa: Those are Bebe's favorite.

Travis: Well, yes. But she's a child. [holding back laughter] She doesn't know better.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I am an adult. I know.

Teresa: That Samoas are the best ones.

Travis: No! Honey!

Teresa: Especially frozen! Mmm, so good.

Travis: But—Peanut Butter Patties have... chocolate.

Teresa: I think that this is gonna become, like, one of the contentions of our marriage.

Travis: Listen. I like cookies, and if we're honest with people, we buy, like, two boxes a week. [laughs quietly]

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And then we freeze 'em, we put 'em in the freezer, and we, like, snack on 'em all year long.

Teresa: Well—

Travis: Not the shortbread ones.

Teresa: You can't put those in the freezer. The ones you can put in the freezer are the ones with the chocolate on the outside—

Travis: Yes. The Peanut Butter Patties, the Thin Mints, the Samoas, the S'mores, which—

Teresa: Also very good.

Travis: Ugh.

Teresa: Um, but the—the other ones, if you put them in the freezer they get... gummy. So you need to eat—

Travis: Yeah, 'cause they absorb, like, the liquid in the air.

Teresa: Yeah, the moisture. So you need to eat those first. Or keep them in a sealed, airtight container.

Travis: But it's just that the Shortbread/Trefoils are perfect for, like, a teatime, or, like, a morning coffee. Or just crunch 'em up and sprinkle 'em over ice cream? Oh. Most of 'em are good sprinkled up and crushed over ice cream.

Hey, you know what? That's enough about cookies.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Thank you so much for joining us for another episode. Um, I've got another CUSS show coming up, which if you don't know about is the Cincinnati Underground Society, where basically you buy tickets, and I bring cool guests into town, but I'm not gonna tell you who they are! You have to come and find out.

Join the secret society. Uh, tickets are, I believe, 15 bucks? And you can go to bit.ly/cussnovember2018. It's on November 16th. Um, and it is, in case it wasn't obvious from the name, in Cincinnati. Um, so it's gonna help you just a ton if you're in the Cincinnati area.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Also the, um, *Adventure Zone* graphic novel Book Two is available for preorder now. You can go to theadventurezonecomic.com. And the New York Times best-selling book, *The Sawbones Book*, is available for purchase now.

Teresa: Woot woot!

Travis: You can get it at bit.ly/thesawbonesbook. Um... I'm trying to think of other important things that you must know.

Oh, join up for the McElroy newsletter if you haven't yet. That's bit.ly/mcelroymail.

Teresa: And that's where you're gonna start announcing a lot more stuff, right?

Travis: Correct. Um, also we've got a Candlesnights show coming up. That's, like, the McElroy family nondenominational holiday—coming up. Uh, it's December... ooh, I said it too soon. Hold on. It's December 22nd, in Huntington, West Virginia. Tickets go on sale this Friday. If you go to... I'm gonna say bit.ly/candlesnights2018, you'll be able to get your tickets there.

Um, let's see. What else, Teresa? What do we—what do we always say?

Teresa: Well, we always thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for the—for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Um, also we thank Kayla M. Wasil for our beautiful Twitter thumbnail art. Um, go check out their portfolio.

We also like to thank Keely Weis Photography for our cover banner for the fan-run Facebook group, *Shmammers* Fanners, which you should join, because it's a really great little community group, and they give and get great advice.

Travis: Um, so, that's gonna do it for us. So, join us again next week!

Teresa: No RSVP required.

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

Teresa: Manners, *Shmammers*! Get it?

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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