

Shmanners 134: Gin (LIVE at London Podcast Festival)

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Travis: Teresa, I can't think of a good opening joke!

Teresa: Well, if at first you don't succeed, try, try a gin!

Travis: It's *Shmanners*!

[theme music plays]

[audience cheers]

Travis: Hello internet! I am your husband host, Travis McElroy!

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

Travis: And you're listening to and watching—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: *Shmanners*!

[audience cheers]

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette...

Travis: For ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove.

Teresa: Hello, dear.

Travis: How are you?

Teresa: Fine, uh, you know... this trip to London has been amazing.

Audience Member: Woo!

Teresa: And, you know—[laughs along] Thank you!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Oh, is there someone here from London?

[audience laughs and cheers]

Teresa: Uh, but you know what I can't get enough of? [sighs] Drinking.

[audience laughs and cheers]

Travis: Oh, okay! I'm going to be so super rude here for a second, because we got this topic suggestion from somebody... and I can't find it.

Teresa: And everyone knows it's not rude if you announce how rude it is!
[laughs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: No! That really saves you from it.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: [rude voice] "Hi everybody, uh, this is me Travis, uh... blah blah blah, fum fum fum."

Teresa: Well, so... we're going to be talking about a British staple, gin, this evening!

[audience cheers]

Teresa: And we will give credit where credit is due, as soon as Travis finds who suggested it.

Travis: [yells] I'm working on it!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughs] But we have done other things in London, besides drink.

Travis: Oh, here it is! It's Laura!

[audience cheers]

Teresa: [laughs] Thank you, Laura!

Travis: Thank you, Laura. Is that you, Laura? [pauses] Okay.

Teresa: Nice.

[audience laughter]

Travis: [At Laura, in the audience] Aren't you glad I looked it up?

Laura: [distantly] Yup!

Travis: Yeahhh!

Teresa: [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Uh, we did the London Eye, this—this morning, which was nice.

[scattered audience cheering]

Travis: So here's a super fun thing about London Eye: it starts, and you're like, "Whoaaa!"

[audience laughter]

Travis: And then 15 minutes goes by, and you're like, "... Okay."

[audience laughter]

Travis: And then you're at the top, and you're like, "Whoaaa!"

[audience laughter]

Travis: And then 15 minutes goes by, and you get off. [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: That said, I highly recommend it.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: But it is the kind of thing that's like, "It's moving! [pauses] Okay..."

[audience laughter]

Travis: "Alright..." And luckily, there were—it was not—we were not in a super crowded car, and there were other, uh, children around Bebe's age on it, and like, we're like, "Aw—"

Teresa: Because we brought her with us.

Travis: Yeah. And we were like "Aw, Bebe's gonna love this!"

Teresa: [laughs] Not just random children Bebe's age.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Yeah. Bebe was there for it.

Teresa: [laughs] Bebe was there!

Travis: And mostly, she's—she spent the whole time just like running around in a circle with them, as we're like, "Um, there's Buckingham Palace!" And she's like, "Aaahh!!"

[audience laughter]

Travis: "Okay, cool." Um, let's see, what else have we done? Uh, we rode on The Underground.

[audience cheers]

Travis: Yeah! [sighs] We figured it out on our own!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Because I—I really—I cannot stomach being in a taxi! It's so hard for me. I get motion sickness, very easy. And the—the London streets were not built for me. It seems.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I will say, we have now spent, uh, three days in taxis, and I have been trying to figure out... how any road stuff works here, in London?

[audience laughter]

Travis: I think everybody's guessing all the time, because I was in a cab and I was by myself, going to get a stroller... It's not important why, but that's what was up.

[audience laughter]

Travis: And the whole time, it just seemed like my driver was like, "Well, that's a one-way street, but eh!" And then like—

[audience laughter]

Travis: And people would like, honk at him, and I was in the back, honking at him too, and—

[audience laughter]

Travis: Just everything seemed fine, and everyone was just like, “I get it.” And like at one point, like, I feel like my driver tried to like drive *onto* a bus? And like—

[audience laughter]

Travis: And yet—

Teresa: To occupy the exact same space, as the bus!

Travis: Yeah! It seems like every taxi driver is like, “I know what this code means! I’m allowed to do this here!” And everyone goes, “They’re right!”

Teresa: [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: “They are allowed to do that, here!” Uh, but today, we went to a place, uh, called Mr. Fogg’s Tavern?

[scattered audience cheers]

Travis: Um, yes, it’s—it’s—

Teresa: Someone is familiar!

Travis: Inspired by *Around the World in 80 Days*. Um, and I had a lot of fun annoying Teresa by saying, “I hear this Mr. Fogg has made a wager!”

[audience laughter]

Teresa: While I drank cup upon cup of punch.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Yes! And that—that punch, uh, was gin-based, um, which is the drink that we will be talking about. Do you know gin?

[audience cheers]

Teresa: I think that they do, because gin is big business here in—in Britain.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Uh, I—

Teresa: It is a 1.9 billion pound industry in the U.K!

Travis: Whoa. Pound, too. That's...

Teresa: More than dollars!

Travis: That's like 80 billion dollar—wait.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I don't know math.

Travis: It's six dollars? No.

Teresa: No.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Mm-mm.

Travis: Somewhere between those. I should also say, uh, we're gonna talk

about gin for a while, and then in the second half of the show, we are going to get questions.

Teresa: That's right, yes.

Travis: From you, on just—in general. Um, so if you uh—so be thinking about general etiquette questions now. Now I'm worried, as I'm saying this out loud, that like, all of you British people are going, "I have no questions."

[audience laughter]

Travis: "I know?"

[audience laughter]

Travis: So try to think of some, please.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Or there will just be a half-hour silence at the end of this episode.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughing] I'm sure we'll find some way.

Travis: I'll just sing "Itsy Bitsy Spider" over and over again—

Teresa: Which is what we do, all day long!

Travis: Bebe will love it! Yes.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, so... gin has gone in and out, and in and out of favor, in this area.

Travis: "Gin" and out!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [pauses] Yeah.

[audience cheers]

Teresa: Aaall day.

[audience cheers]

Travis: Oh! I'm being deported.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I have just gotten word...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Yeah. Um, so, the origins of gin really go back to the Netherlands, with the drink "Jenei-ver"? Jen-ever? Jen-eve-er. There it is!

Travis: It's one of those three!

Teresa: I got it! Jenever. Yes.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [sighs]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: What's in here?

Travis: Now, a drink of this water!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Wink!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, and it—it... Historians put it in that category; although, Jenever and gin are different, at this point. Um—

Travis: A lot more letters.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Yes...

Travis: Oh, stop!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Is this the new drinking game?

Travis: [laughs] Yeah!

Teresa: Every time?

Travis: Every time I embarrass Teresa, drink...

[audience laughter]

Travis: ... water.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Alright! Um, but uh, Jenever is made by distilling malt wine unto about 50% alcohol.

Travis: Okay, but that's not...

Teresa: No, it's—

Travis: That's not how I'd describe gin at all! Gin is like, vodka—

Teresa: Well, I said—I said that they're *related*, but they're not the same thing. Which is why... Jenever still exists today, and it doesn't taste like gin.

Travis: No. 'Cause gin, if I'm not mistaken, is vodka with juniper berries.

Teresa: Weeell... okay.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Vodka can be made from different grains, also potatoes, um, where gin is made from barley.

Travis: How hard do you have to squeeze the potato?

[audience laughter]

Travis: Ah...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: This is my new favorite game! [laughing]

Travis: Mine, too!

[audience laughter]

Travis: I'll be scooping my wife up later, at the end of the show! [laughing]

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: It's water!

Travis: Wink!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um... but see, uh, Jenever wasn't particularly... [laughs] Drinkable. It's pretty gross. So, and—

Travis: Take that, Netherlands!

Teresa: [laughs] I've never tasted it!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Shots fired!

Teresa: I've never tasted it, but uh... the—the rumor on the internet is, it's unpalatable.

Travis: Much like Malört!

Teresa: Yes!

Travis: Which you may not get, but people in Chicago right now are very mad me.

[audience laughter]

Travis: If you've never—

Audience Member: [indistinct shout]

Travis: What?

Audience Member: I'm mad at you, I'm from Chicago!

Travis: Oh, yay!

Teresa: Ah!

Travis: I did it! I like to alienate the crowd one by one!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, if—if you've never heard of or had Malört, it is—it is a botanical, uh, much like gin, where you take an alcohol, and then you infuse it, uh, with different flavors. And with Malört, they infused it with the devil's sweat.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Um, it—

Teresa: It—it feels like you're take—you're drinking perfume, really.

Travis: Yes. And you know what? If you like it...

Teresa: You can have all of it! [laughs]

Travis: You're lying! [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: That's fine!

Teresa: Just take it.

Travis: I only know of it because, uh, John Hodgman, who will be here later

this week with *Judge John Hodgman*. If there are tickets still available, you should get those. Um, at the beginning of every uh, MaxFunCon, he forces everyone there to drink it together. Much like, um, you know, if you've ever heard the term "drinking the Kool-Aid"?

[audience laughter]

Travis: It's like that!! And it's... accurate! It's very accurate!

[audience laughter]

Travis: 'Cause it tastes like poison!

Teresa: Very few survive.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, so to—to this drink, juniper berries were added for the medicinal qualities. Like a lot of booze, it's "medicine"...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Right? Um, and so, they were uh, usually sold in pharmacies, and—and by doctors... Well, because of at—you know, in early history—

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Doctor's—

Travis: You were a doctor, if you'd read *a* book.

Teresa: A book.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [sighs and laughs]

Travis: “I know where the toes are!”

Teresa: Everybody listen to *Sawbones*, another McElroy product. [laughs]

[audience laughter and brief cheers]

Teresa: Thank you.

[audience laughter]

Travis: We don’t make it!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: It’s McElroy, it counts!

Travis: I know, I mean I guess, but—

Teresa: You—

Travis: Already enough people think I’m on it. [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: Like, you’re lucky enough—like, I get tweets like once a week, like to me and Sydnee, like “I love *Sawbones*!” I’m like, “Me too!” [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: If you can plug John—Judge John Hodgman—

Travis: Another McElroy.

Teresa: I can plug—no!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [sighs]

Travis: [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: I'll stop.

Teresa: Um, and so this—this relationship between gin and Jenever, for the Dutch, really made this into kind of the—the... I don't wanna say "the drink of the Dutch," but it was certainly popular, and this is where you get the name—

Travis: So—so, sorry. The connection is, they would take Jenever and then put juniper berries in it, or?

Teresa: N—no.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: The connection is, they had Jenever—

Travis: Uh-huh?

Teresa: And then they made gin, and they were like, "This is kind of like Jenever!"

[audience laughter]

Travis: Oh, really? So, they're related in like, if you saw two people and you were like, "You kind of look of look like them! You're brothers, now!"

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: Okay. Alright. There we go.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: And this is why sometimes the—the product is called “Dutch Courage,” which is one of the nicknames for it.

Travis: But there are many other nicknames, and I’m very much looking forward, ‘cause there’s one that’s “Mother’s Ruin,” and you were gonna tell me about it, but you said it was sad.

Teresa: Well... it is sad.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I mean, to be fair, it is *Mother’s Ruin*. [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: You’re skipping ahead.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: But because we’re talking about nicknames, I will tell you the story.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So um, when—when gin was all the rage, because it was *super* cheap, um, because you could make it with the barley that wasn’t good enough for beer.

Travis: Mm-hmm?

Teresa: And for a very long time, the water in this area of the world was

undrinkable, so you had to drink alcohol, because in the distilling process, it had been, um, sanitized, basically.

Travis: Yup.

Teresa: Um, so... people would make this gin, and it was, like I said, super cheap, so it was usually drunk by the poor. Um, and especially as urban city centers started to develop and more and more people flocked to them, there were a lot of poor people.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: Uh-huh.

Travis: Unlike now.

Teresa: [sighs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: Where we're all doing great.

Teresa: Yeah...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: We're aaall doing great. [sarcasm]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, so what happened was... um, a woman and her friend, supposedly, took their toddler, Mary, out of town to a ditch, took all of her clothes off and left her there. Where they sold her clothing for gin.

Travis: It *is* sad! You *are* right!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Listen, I told you it was sad!

Travis: I know, you did tell me it was sad, and I didn't listen!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: And well, a naked toddler in a ditch, she died eventually...

Travis: Aw, no!

Teresa: But the mother was hung, so...

Travis: Oh, okay!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Cool, cool cool! It got better. [sarcasm]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Did it? Did it get better? [sighs]

Travis: Uh, well I'll make—uh, I'll... transition away from *that*—

[audience laughter]

Travis: —to a different nickname. Who here has heard the term “bathtub gin”?

[audience cheers]

Travis: So, there was a time, a dark, dark time in the U.S....

[audience laughter]

Travis: ... where booze wasn't allowed. But everyone still drank it all the time.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Uh, and it was called Prohibition, and it lasted like, six seconds.

[audience laughter]

Travis: And so, most people think that bathtub gin, the term comes from making booze in a bathtub, because even though it has gin in the name, it actually, uh, was used to describe all manner of liquor and booze and whatnot. Um, but actually, most people agree now that the idea of making... Okay. So when you distill, you have to boil and then capture the like, steam, the—

Teresa: The vapor.

Travis: The vapor that rises off of it, and you can't do that in an open bathtub. So a lot of people now, will tell you like, it's just probably a rumor and a falsehood, that they made it in the bathtub.

The reason it was called bathtub gin is, the vessel that they served gin in, was a very tall jug and it didn't fit under the tap of a sink, so they would water it down using the tap of the bathtub. So that's actually why it became known as bathtub gin. Not because it was like, mixed and made in the bathtub.

That said, if you thought about bathtub gin as like, poisonous, they dump whatever into the bathtub and that's—that's still true!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Uh, it was just in a jug. It was mostly, uh... there's a lot more—

Teresa: Things like turpentine.

Travis: Yes!

Teresa: And varnish.

Travis: So the difference is, is with um...

[audience laughter]

Travis: With... whiskey, right? If you're going to make whiskey, um, bathtub gin—

Teresa: I just want to say uh, he's doing a great job. I'm just thirsty.

Travis: Yeah.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Um, so if you make bathtub gin whiskey, right? It's a lot easier to get like the coloration and everything. So bathtub gin has to stay clear, so that's where those botanicals come in, where they would just take really, really, really gross, cheap... Like, we were talking about like kind of, the runoff booze that you couldn't use for other things, and just like throw flowers into it, or throw—which is, I'm willing to bet even though I haven't looked it up, where Malört came from.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I'm gonna have to do a whole episode on Malört to apologize to Chicago!

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Will we apologize, though?

Travis: No, we will not.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, so because of this widespread drunkenness, the—the government finally took hold and passed the Gin Act of 1736. So, it took a while. But they did it.

Um, so then at that point, the gin was taxed heavily, as governments do, and then they required special licenses to sell gin. Uh, whereas before, unlike a pub, who had to provide food and lodging, pretty much anybody with a stall could sell gin. At this point, though, from the Gin Act, they uh, put the license fee at 50 pounds a year.

[audience exhales]

Teresa: Yeah. I heard that.

[audience laughter]

Travis: That's like...

Teresa: At today's—

Travis: 8,000 dollars.

Teresa: At today's equivalent, that's 6,000 pounds. That's a lot!

Travis: Of course.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, and so... eeeh, it worked okay because they only sold two licenses.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [sighs] But it did—

Travis: So it really cut back on...

Teresa: [laughs] Uh, no.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: Because it didn't stop people from making and selling gin. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, because I imagine, if you're a person who likes to consume gin, and you're walking down the street and you're like, "I would like some of that gin! Ooh, no license! [laughs] Thank you very much! I'll stay sober."

[audience laughter]

Teresa: So, much like the uh, the U.S. Prohibition, in 1743, that act was repealed and then in, um... Sorry, in 1736 it was repealed, and in 1743, uh... no. God. At home, we can edit this stuff that I mess up the dates...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: One more time. It was repealed in 1743. I was right the first time, but there was a new one, with the same name! You guys... make a new name!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [sighs] In 1751.

Travis: Okay?

Teresa: Um, so this lowered the taxes. It made it illegal to sell gin from any premises whose rent was less than 10 pounds a year, which is uh, 1,200 pounds in 2017. That's—that's pretty close from today. Um, and so, that was

an effort made by the government to find, you know, kind of reputable purveyors of gin.

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[music plays]

Travis: Hi everybody, it's Travis. Um, now at this point, if you are expecting to hear an episode about grocery stores, you're probably pretty confused. Um, I—I don't know if you could tell, but uh from my voice, I am sick, uh Teresa is sick, even Bebe is sick.

So we—this is our episode that we recorded live at the London podcast Festival, all about gin. Obviously and we just had, ah! Just a heck of a time, a real blast.

So, we hope you're enjoying it. It's actually going to be split up in two parts, hopefully. I think our plan right now is to do the grocery store episode next week, and then part two of this, the week after. Um, but we will see. It will all depend on if we all feel better.

Uh, but I'll tell you what makes me feel better – thank you notes to our sponsor! Because this week, we're stoked to tell you all about TriNova. Um, TriNova, it's a cleaning line, but—[sighs] More than that. It's a revolution, I would say, and a revelation. TriNova offers a full line of highly specified cleaners, with specific products for most home and automotive services, and listen... when you focus on one specific thing, man, they really work!

The glass cleaner is probably the best glass cleaner I've ever used. The all-purpose cleaner smells terrific, and we have these lights, these like glass bowl lights that hang right above our stovetop, and this TriNova product is the best at like, removing the grease from those, that I've ever used. Their cleaners are designed to be effective, with premium ingredients and not watered down. It's a family owned company, and it's dedicated to great customer service.

So, TriNova is offering listeners an exclusive 20% discount on their first order. And if you're an Amazon person, just search "TriNova", that's T-R-I-N-O-V-A, and use code "Shmanners", S-H-M-A-N-N-E-R-S. If you're terrified of their global domination, go straight to the source, atgotrinova.com, that's A-T-G-O-T-R-I-N-O-V-A.com/shmanners.

I also wanna tell you this week about Audible. Introducing Audible Originals, a new member benefit. Audible members now get two Audible Originals and one audiobook each month. That's so amazing! I love audiobooks, I love Audible, oh! This is great news.

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Fill your fall with more stories that—well, uh, let's see. Um, I have listened to a lot of Sarah Vowell, recently. Um, I've been re-listening to the Agatha Christie novels, the Poirot novels, read by Hugh Frasier. Oh, those are real good, like, stay inside by a warm fire on a cool day kind of novels. Um, but listen, you'll find something you love on Audible. They're all, like—I love it. Love Audible!

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[applause]

Speaker 1: Welcome, everyone, to the live wrestling spectacular in Los Angeles.

[sounds of wrestlers wrestling in a ring]

Speaker 2: So far, the world's most boring wrestling podcast has been destroying the competition!

Speaker 1: [tearfully] Isn't there *anyone* who can save us from this travesty?

[music plays]

Speaker 1: Wait... Could it be?

Speaker 2: It's *Tights and Fights*, the perfect wrestling podcast!

[audience chanting and cheering in the background]

Speaker 1: *Tights and Fights* is here to save us, from the monotony of boring wrestling podcasts, with hilarious conversations!

[slap sound effect]

Speaker 2: Woke trips through the history of wrestling!

[punch sound effect]

Speaker 1: And joke about the finer points of people wearing spandex!

[three punch noises in succession, and an audience gasping, then cheering as a referee hits the mat three times]

Speaker 1: What a match!

Speaker 2: And the *Tights and Fights* podcast will be back every week!

Speaker 3: Thursdays, on MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get podcasts. Please! These folks have families!

[music plays and ends]

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[funky 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! Politics!

[Matt and Freddie laugh]

Freddie: 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'd die in the second act.

Will: [laughs]

Freddie: Oh, come on! And join us as we make fun of Matt, as he struggles to name a single Beyoncé song.

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

Will: Put a Finger On It, Beyoncé's famous song!

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.

[music ends]

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Travis: Um, so another fun fact that I know... Well, I guess it's not a fun fact, so much as just "gin fact."

[audience laughter]

Travis: Teresa and I were talking beforehand, and we were talking about the fact that like, while we have, you know, we just had the punch today, and we've had martinis, and we've had lots and lots and lots... and lots and lots and lots of different mixed drinks in our lives, um—

[audience laughter]

Travis: We couldn't think of a time when we'd ever just drank gin?

Teresa: Because, if you—if you've listened to our show, we've done about wine tastings, and we've talked about whiskey tastings, and I just couldn't—I couldn't remember ever walking into establishments being offered a gin tasting. Uh, apparently— [laughs]

Travis: Uh, it's because... they don't. Um—

[audience laughter]

Teresa: They don't really do it!

Travis: Has anyone here ever had a shot of gin?

Teresa: [laughs]

[audience cheers]

Travis: Really?! You monsters!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Remember who you're speaking to!

Travis: I know.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Yes. Um, that's—to be fair, I've had so many different foods soaked in booze at parties, it's—[sighs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: Um, but yeah. The thing is, is most uh, most people will agree, uh experts... I guess.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, that the thing about gin, is because of the botanicals that they—ugh, I keep saying "Bo-tanicals"?

[audience laughter]

Travis: Like it's a guy named Bo Tanicals?

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughs, then coughs]

Travis: The botanicals, um, are—are made to be—they kind of pair very well with mixers, and so most people will say like yeah, you can drink gin straight, but it tastes better. You get more out of it with a mixer. At least, that's in my experience, 'cause I have yet to drink straight gin.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Yet...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: You know, I—I have to make a confession...

Travis: You lied? You've had gin?!

Teresa: No.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, because it's the smell, for me. The juniper smell—I didn't—do you remember—[laughs] Maybe some of you aren't old enough to remember this.

Travis: We're 85.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: In British years.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: What?!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: In—in the '90s, the late '90s, early 2000s, there was a body splash from Bath and Body Works called Juniper Breeze? [pauses] Maybe you didn't have it here, but it—

[audience laughter]

Teresa: It was *everywhere!* And it smells terrible.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: And so I just can—I can't get over it. Um, you've mentioned—I mean, we—we're talking backstage, so, uh... You say that I *have* had gin.

Travis: Yeah, in drink. Today!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I—I mean, not on purpose.

[audience laughter]

Travis: What?

Teresa: It was in a punch!

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: I couldn't taste it!

Travis: But it was—but you drank it!

[audience laughter]

Travis: You can't say you haven't had it 'cause you couldn't taste it! It was there, it was in the drink!

[audience laughter]

Travis: [laughs] I sound like Jerry Seinfeld.

Teresa: [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: "It was there!"

Teresa: Anyway, it wasn't something that I was able to pick out of the drink.

Travis: Well that's—if you think about it—

Teresa: Because it was mixed.

Travis: Okay, here's the thing, here's why this makes sense. 'Cause if you think about it as being botanical, right? Being very floral... it works like a bunch of flowers, right? So you would mix that botanical with other botanicals, and when you would smell a bunch of flowers, you wouldn't be like, "I smell the rose, out of this." Right? But you would notice if it wasn't there?

That is how the mixed drink, when you add a botanical like gin, to other things, where you have like a lavender or anything like that, where what you're doing is you're basically creating a bouquet, which is why that is also how they describe like the smell of wine and that kind of thing. Because you are getting all of these different smells together, and it's not an individual taste that you taste, so much as you notice when it's not there.

I've never been a bartender before, I just love booze! Uh—

[audience laughter]

Teresa: It's almost like you said, "Back to you, Teresa!"

[audience laughter]

Travis: And now, more facts.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: So, like a lot of things, um, when it was cheap, poor people drank it. When it was expensive, rich people drank it. So, here we come to the Victorian period, which we talk—

Travis: That's when Queen Victoria was in charge.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I don't know if you all know that.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I think they do. She was in charge a long time.

Travis: Like, five years.

[audience laughter]

Travis: [laughs] American years.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I still—I don't get that joke.

Travis: I don't either, but they laughed twice!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [sighs]

Travis: I got `em!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Palm of my hand. That's you all, dancing.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Okay! So in the Victorian era, which we talk a lot about, because a lot of the kind of social interactions that we have are—are very similar to the Victorian era. Um, the—there was the creation of the gin palace.

Travis: What?!

[audience laughter and "ooh"s]

Teresa: Ooh! I got an "Ooh!" [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: How exciting!

Travis: Man! In the U.S., we have the Corn Palace, and the gin palace sounds way cooler!

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Well, the gin palace was a type of um, café-saloon-thing.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: Uh, where unlike pubs, which are, uh, typically dimly lit and loud, a Victorian gin palace was lit by the newfangled gas and electric lighting. Um, and so it was—

Travis: Mmm! Have you heard of it?

[audience laughter]

Teresa: So it was very fashionable—

Travis: Ooh! Electric, you say? Mr. Edison's invention!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: It was very fashionable to see and be seen in the gin palace, and I mean, that's really because you could actually see.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: It was very well lit. Um, and so... this is the point in history where gin goes back on the up, and then we switch here, where gin is something that—that, you know, sophisticated people drink, and beer goes down to the lower classes. Whereas before, it was the other way around.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: Um... And one of the other reasons for this was because gin was being transported around the world, with the British colonies. It was something that um, was kept much, much easier in the bowels of ships, because unlike beer, it didn't spoil as fast. Um—

Travis: Skunk, is the word we would use.

Teresa: Skunk.

Travis: Do you guys say that here? When a beer goes bad, it's skunked?

[scattered audience response]

Travis: You're welcome!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Are you gonna make “fetch” a thing, too?

Travis: I am gonna make “fetch” a thing, thank you for asking!

[audience laughter]

Audience Member: Fetch is never gonna happen!

[audience laughs and cheers]

Teresa: I’ll drink to that!

[audience laughter]

[drinking noises]

Travis: We can’t both drink at the same time! Then there’s just silence!
[laughs]

Teresa: Sure we can!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I thought they would fill it with laughter. [laughs]

[audience laughs and cheers]

Travis: So it’s on *you*!

Teresa: That’s right. Blame the audience! [laughs] That makes—

[audience laughter]

Teresa: That makes things go really well!

Travis: No, I wanted—I want to make them mad at us, one by one!
[laughs] Not all at once!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Oh, no!

Travis: I also imagine that a lot of the reason it became, like, sophisticated, is like we had today, we had the punch... was much more, of like—when I picture a beer, I picture somebody getting it, going back to their place, and sitting there, as opposed to a much more communal, like, “We’re going to talk to each other!” This is a much more social event.

I think of punch as much more like, we’re gonna gather around, and get from a bowl, and all look at each other and talk, as opposed to just like, “I’m gonna have a beer, please leave me alone.” [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Well, punch, uh—we actually have a, have a... an episode about punch, as well.

Travis: We do? God, we have so many episodes!

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Punch has origins with, um, drinking rum. Which again, was done in the British colonies a lot, because of that trade. Um, but what really happened in the British colonies was, they were using gin to mask the bitter taste of the quinine that they drank in order to combat malaria.

Travis: So it’s kind of like, uh, a *tonic* to cure...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: See what he did there? You guys... yeah. And—

Travis: And they could've just drank the tonic. I think that's why they were, they—

Teresa: No, no no no.

Travis: What? No, what? What?

Teresa: Quinine was *added* to the tonic water.

Travis: So, wait...

Teresa: It was, because you have to—

Travis: Why didn't they just put the quinine in the gin?

Teresa: We—well, because everybody needed quinine for the malaria. You just can't hand people gin... I mean, I guess you can...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: But maybe there are those that don't—

Travis: I mean yeah, and kids.

Teresa: That don't—yeah, children.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: That don't want the gin. You dissolve the quinine in the carbonated tonic water, and then you add the gin to cover up the quinine, and sometimes you add in a lime, because you're on a ship and you need protection against scurvy!

[audience laughter]

Travis: When Teresa was pregnant and she could not, uh, have booze, like, I would get her tonic, and different flavor tonic waters? Just to make us feel like we were having booze. And I say “us” – I was still drinking booze!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Not only that—

Travis: But I did it in the closet, where she couldn’t see!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Exactly!

Travis: It was fine—no.

Teresa: That is not true.

Travis: That is not true.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, uh not only that, but um, tonic water with the quinine has been rumored to help with restless leg syndrome, which a lot of pregnant ladies experience. Um... I don’t know if it did. You know what really helped? Getting up and walking around.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: That—

Travis: Wearin’ out those legs!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: That’s what really worked. Um and so, gin was kind of, you know,

the sophisticated, popular drink, all the way up through the 1950s and '60s. And—

Travis: Because what happened then... was the martini was so classy. Here's my fun thing that I know—

Teresa: The vodka train arrived.

Travis: Okay, so here's what happened, 'cause I just found this out. The reason that vodka—

Teresa: You don't have to tell people that you were researching backstage.

Travis: I was, though. Because—

[audience laughter]

Travis: You *know* stuff, I pretend to know stuff! And I'm not pretending very well.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Um, so the reason that vodka started uh, displacing gin as the martini mixer was because, one, James Bond. Um, and James Bond—have you heard of James Bond?

[audience laughter]

Travis: He's, uh...

[audience laughter]

Travis: A bit of a jerk. Uh, yeah.

Teresa: This is my new shtick, I'm gonna be drunk all the time. [laughing] It's amazing!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Um, but—so that was helping. But also, so... it was during a period where like, the three martini lunch was very popular. And I don't know if you've ever had a martini, but like one martini? Martini's just straight gin, that like, vermouth has winked at.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Um—

Teresa: Unless you like it dirty.

Travis: Which I do.

Teresa: And then it's been swilled in a bottle of olives.

Travis: Ugh! I love it.

Teresa: Blech...

Travis: Sometimes, I have it with just pickle juice. I'm a monster!

[audience laughter]

Travis: But the thing is, it's just like a glass of straight liquor! Uh, but three of them, at lunch...

[audience laughter]

Travis: And so—

Teresa: And you're expected to go back to work?!

Travis: Right, but no one was doing anything, at that point.

Teresa: Eh, of course not.

Travis: Nothing got done. Um... And so, Smirnoff started this campaign and their slogan was, "Vodka leaves you breathless!" Because you could drink the martinis at lunch, and they wouldn't smell it on your breath if you used vodka instead of gin.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I know!

[audience laughter]

Travis: And so, vodka became a very popular mixer for martinis. Do you know why James Bond orders his, it's like vodka, uh, and shaken not stirred? Because if you shake, uh, it—it chips the ice and waters down your drink. That way, you could drink more of them, and be aware, and stay a little more sober. Not like—

Teresa: But if you want it—

Travis: "Give me a drink that looks like, but is water." No no no!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Just a little more sober.

Teresa: But if you wanna get super drunk, you have it stirred.

Travis: Yeah! Because then, you don't chip the ice and you don't get the little flakes of ice melting, to water it down. I like martinis, yeah.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I had it—I had my first martini when I was 18. Which isn't a big deal to you.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I realize, now that I've said it out loud.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: But in the U.S., the drinking age is 21.

Travis: Yeah! And I remember, I was like super excited to try it, 'cause I was like, "Ah, so classy!" [laughs] And I took a sip, and was like, "Blegh!"

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Travis: [laughing] And it was just straight—I don't know what I thought it was going to taste like? Much like I thought wine would taste like tomato juice?

[audience laughter]

Travis: I don't know why! And that lasted until I was like, 19! And I was like, "Ah, wine! [fakes a spit-take] Gross!"

[audience laughter]

Travis: I think with—I think with the martini, I was like, "This is gonna taste like Sprite!" I don't know.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I thought it was gross.

Teresa: So, vodka did reign supreme until... 1999-2001, when Hendricks came out with their gin, their cucumber infused gin. Um, and things

started—that really started the train of things going, “Well, we don’t have to just use juniper. We can use things like uh, anise, we can use things like—”

Travis: Anise. [an-iss]

Teresa: No, anise [an-eeese] is how they say it here.

Travis: What? Like, a niece and nephew? Like, an-eeese?

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: [pauses] Wow.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Now say “aluminum”!

Teresa: I’ve watched Great British Bake Off, you guys!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I know how to say anise. Oh no, now *he’s* drinking! [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: I was just thirsty. I’m *always* proud of my wife!

[collective audience “aww!” and applause]

Teresa: Aww! Thank you!

Travis: Shut up!

[audience laughter]

Travis: That was between us! That wasn't for you!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: And so, the craft gin craze—

Travis: I just keep watching the sound guy like, turn my mic down more and more. [laughing]

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Travis: "He just keeps yelling!"

[audience laughter]

Teresa: So the craft gin craze, a lot like the craft beer craze, are—do you have that here? It's in the U.S., the craft beer—

[audience agreement]

Teresa: It's like there—

Travis: [laughing] Do you have beer here?

[audience laughter]

Teresa: No! You know what I mean! There's a distillery on every street, in the U.S.

Travis: Yup! When we—When we moved to Cincinnati like eight years ago, first time... there was not. And now, within eight years, there's like ten different, thriving, like, breweries. It's amazing.

Teresa: In Cincinnati, like *the* city, that's a—

Travis: It's about like London, it's about even.

Teresa: It's amazing.

[audience laughter]

Travis: But for the podcast, I'm gonna *say* it is, but it—but it's *not*.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: You're too loud, you don't need to cover your mic.

Travis: I know...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: So by 2017, gin... their popularity outstripped vodka's.

Travis: I have to add—

Teresa: So we're back on the up!

Travis: Yay!

[audience cheers]

Travis: I have to imagine though, that also comes from like, the resurgence of the cocktail, too, of like, the mixologist-bartender.

Teresa: Certainly, mm-hmm.

Travis: Um, and—and—because that's the thing, is like, also, when I was...
[sighs] I was about to say "a kid." Oh god.

[audience laughter]

Travis: My life has just flashed before my eyes.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Because we're 85 in American years.

Travis: Yeah, now we're very old. Um, but I—when I first started drinking, uh, at six...

[audience laughter]

Travis: Uh, no. When I first started drinking at, legally, at 21, when you could like, go into a bar and order a drink, it was very much like you would order a Jack and Coke, or like, a whiskey sour, and like—

Teresa: Or if you're a lady, an amaretto sour.

Travis: Yeah. And like, you just don't—we didn't have an education about like, the different versions of it, now. And like, nowadays if you say like "a gimlet," a lot more people understand. Here's the thing that I've learned, as I've like tried to educate myself. What?

Teresa: I've stuck out my tongue, do I have lipstick on my chin?

Travis: Oh, no.

Teresa: Okay, thanks.

Travis: For some reason, I thought you were telling me I had lipstick on my chin!

Teresa: No!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Um, when I started educating myself about like, cocktails and stuff,

what you come to find out is, a lot of the reasons that we know about stuff like Jack and Coke and whiskey sour, is because those were very *strong* mixers, to cover the like, cheapness of well... uh, well drinks. Of well whiskey, well, uh, well vodka. That kind of thing.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And so what you come to find out is, a lot of—so like, the punch we had today was much more subtly flavored with flavors like lavender, or like rosewater, and that kind of thing? So that way, it's not just like, "Oh, I can drink this and not have to taste the booze!"

It's more like "Oh, I can drink this and enjoy the drink that I'm drinking, and savor it, and it's not just to like, slam and get drunk." And now, even as I'm saying that, there's probably another reason that me at 21 wasn't having those, and was just having Jack and Cokes? Ugh...

[audience laughter]

Travis: I wish I could go back in time and change so much!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Not this! This is fine!

Teresa: This is good!

[audience laughter]

Travis: But a lot of other stuff. Like the time I had a Jack and Coke drinking contest with a friend...

[sympathetic audience response]

Travis: Everyone loses that one!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Ugh... oh! Another thing, uh, do you know—who here has heard of like, sloe gin? Like a Sloe Gin Fizz?

[audience cheers]

Travis: Right? So, um, sloe gin is made with the sloe berry, S-L-O-E. Yeah! And like, it's—it—when I was a kid, I used to think it was just slow gin!
[laughs]

[audience laughter]

Travis: Whenever I'd hear sloe gin, I was like, "What's fast gin?"

Teresa: They made it extra slow!

Travis: It's just slow gin! It's very good. Just a very good drink. It's not an interesting drink—

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: I'm just letting you *know*, that it's not just like, a lazy gin...

[audience laughter]

Travis: It's not important, leave me alone!

[audience laughter]

Travis: Let me live in my shame!

Teresa: He doesn't do the research, *usually* ever, so...

Travis: I only know four interesting things in my life, and I've used up three of them already, tonight.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, so something that—that you mentioned to me, was you said, “What are gin blossoms?”

Travis: It’s a band! [singing] “Hey, jealousy!”

[audience cheers and laughs]

Travis: [normal voice] I wanna keep singing. [back to singing] “Baby we can drive around this town!”

Teresa: Don’t.

Travis: “And let the cops chase us around—”

Teresa: Please stop.

[audience laughter]

Travis: [vocalizing the melody of his song]

Teresa: You don’t know the words!

[audience laughter]

Travis: “Hey, jealousy!” [stops singing] Okay.

Teresa: That’s the only words you know.

[audience laughter]

[pause]

Travis: [continues singing] “If I could just ask you tonight!”

Teresa: [sighs]

[audience cheers and laughs]

Travis: Thank you!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: You guys don't know... But he's like this all the time!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Which is why I drink.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, so gin blossoms, is a—it's a very interesting thing, um, because it's not *just* from gin. Um, any sort of alcohol...

[audience laughter]

Travis: This is water.

Teresa: [pauses] Yes...

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Any sort of alcohol can cause this phenomenon. Uh, what happens is, um, the skin, the tiny blood vessels just at the top of the skin called capillaries dilate, which is why some people turn red when they drink. Ah... me.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I have enough makeup on tonight, I think I'm okay.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, but these capillaries—

Travis: Me too.

Teresa: —can become so accustomed to being dilated, that they often burst. Um, and then you—there's nothing that you can do to make them go back down again. So these are called "gin blossoms," because they burst, and look a little bit kind of like flowery, or almost like spider veins, often on your face!

And—but like I said, it doesn't take gin, so... whatever your—

Travis: But gin helps!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Gin helps! Whatever your poison, you can get gin blossoms.

Travis: And that's like W.C. Fields, is a good example. W.C. Fields had that, I believe? It's not important.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Uh, it can also—

Travis: [sighs dramatically] Swing and a miss! [laughs]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Uh, maybe you're more familiar with the—the red, kind of bulbous nose that's often illustrated—

Travis: That's one I have seen, yeah. Yes.

Teresa: Yeah. Yeah. So, in illustrations and cartoons, and caricatures, you can often see a red, bulbous nose, which is because of the alcohol, um, dilating those capillaries over and over and over again. It can often lead to that—that kind of... I don't know. It's almost like a, like a squishiness to the skin.

Travis: Eww!

Teresa: Yeah, it takes a lot of alcohol abuse for that.

Travis: Aw... Well on that note, we're gonna take some audience questions!

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Cheers. [laughs]

Travis: Cheers—hey! Cheers. Cheers?

[The sound of glasses clinking]

Travis: Water.

[audience laughter]

[theme music plays]

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