

## Sawbones 212: Lost and Found

Published May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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**Travis:** Uh, yes, excuse me. I seem to have lost my podcast?

**Teresa:** Oh, can you describe it?

**Travis:** Oh! Yes, of course. Uh, 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:** And hello my tiny dove.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** You may hear, uh, the occasional rustling.

**Teresa:** [laughs] A quiet rustling or squeaking.

**Travis:** It's, uh, either Baby Dot eating or Baby Dot grabbing the microphone table.

[mic thumps]

**Travis:** 'Cause she'll—ooh!

**Teresa:** There—[laughs]

**Travis:** There she goes! She's got it now! Baby Dot, we are professionals. Please, madam!

**Teresa:** Okay, oh—

**Travis:** Oh—oh, her tiny grip is so strong!

[sucking noises]

**Travis:** [moving around the room] Hello, here. Let me see if I can... assist you.

**Teresa:** Okay. There we go.

**Travis:** So, what are we—what are we talking about?

**Teresa:** We—

**Travis:** What is there—what i—what—[sighs] what is this show? What are we *doing*? Where *are* we? Who... am I? What day is it?

**Teresa:** Oh—oh, oh boy! I can—

**Travis:** Answer all those in order.

**Teresa:** —[holding back laughter] I can't answer all of those. Um, I can answer just a few.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, we are talking about lost and found etiquette!

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, and we want to thank Colton M. for emailing us this great topic idea. You can email all your suggestions to [shmannerscast@gmail.com](mailto:shmannerscast@gmail.com)!

**Travis:** Now, I... in confe—this is a great topic, Colton, so what I'm about to say is not at all to, uh—uh, to... insult you. I am confused as to why we are doing this as a topic. Is that something that has history? Is this something that has...

**Teresa:** It does!

**Travis:** Yeah?

**Teresa:** It does have a little history. And, I mean, obviously there's etiquette surrounding it as well.

**Travis:** Well, yes. That makes sense. But usually when we talk about something, unless it's, like, a—a just—like, we did the video conferencing for example, and I know that that didn't have history. But something like—what's the history of lost and found?

**Teresa:** Well, okay. So, there are—there are a couple of historical precedences that we're going to talk about.

**Travis:** I just realized, too, how stilted I sound, like this is some script I'm doing—"What's the history—" but I meant that sincerely!

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [through laughter] That was a sincere question!

**Teresa:** Um, so the first modern day lost and found office, right? Was probably in Paris around 1805. Um, and it was started by Napoleon.

**Travis:** Really?

**Teresa:** Yeah! Um, so he was all about, like, cleanliness and order. Um, and so he ordered his prefect of police to establish a sort of, like, lost and found office. Um, it really wasn't until 1893, uh, that Louis Lépine—that's probably French, right?

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** Uh—

**Travis:** Either that or it's [exaggerated American accent] Lewis Lapine.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Uh, is when he became the prefect of police. Um, he began to organize efforts to actively track down the owners of the lost items. So, before—

**Travis:** That seems like a lot of work to me.

**Teresa:** Well, I mean—

**Travis:** Unless the person's address is in it.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Just going around going, "Are these your glasses? Hey! You miss—hey! Are you missin' any glasses?"

**Teresa:** [laughs] Well, before that it's just kind of like, you know, a storage unit, right? I mean, if you know where to go if you've lost something, you could go get it back, but—

**Travis:** I'm gonna guess, yeah.

**Teresa:** —other than that, it's just a room with junk in it.

**Travis:** And you have to assume that for, like, the first kind of, like, established lost and found before that—if you lost your glasses you were like, "Those are gone."

And they're like, "No, no, no! There's a room we're keepin' all that stuff in!"

"[laughs sarcastically] Yeah, sure. I know that when my glasses are lost, they're gone, okay, pal?"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Like, "No, no, no! We've—we've probably got 'em."

"Yeah, whatever."

**Teresa:** Well, so it wasn't a perfect system. Um, about 25% of objects found their way back home. But that's a lot better than 0%, right?

**Travis:** This is true.

**Teresa:** I mean, if it's just a room of stuff collecting dust, if you actively try and find someone who has, you know, who's lost something, then 25% is a pretty good deal.

**Travis:** And the thing is—uh, so... as is often the case, I do have some experience with this, 'cause I worked many, many jobs. Namely, I worked in a movie theater as, like, an usher. I was the person who, like, cleaned up, you know, the—the theater afterwards.

But the thing is is, like... listen. I'm sorry, folks. I'm about to blow the lid off this whole thing. When it comes to cleaning up a movie theater between performances—maybe it'll be different now. Hopefully it'll be different now, in this, you know, post, uh, isolation, COVID-19 world. But we were not, like, scrubbin' everything down, gettin' it—you know what I mean? Like—

**Teresa:** Yeah. It was more of a pickup.

**Travis:** We were goin' through, throwing away trash... uh, you know, grabbing the soda containers, all that stuff—*soda containers*. Cups!

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Uh, and popcorn and stuff. And so yeah. Hopefully as we were going through we'd see if somebody dropped their phone or their keys or whatever. But most of the time, that stuff was being turned in by other audience members.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** I remember once, uh—I can't remember what movie we'd seen, but you and I had gone to see a movie—or a group of people had gone to see—or something. And I left my keys, like, in the cup holder of the movie theater. And we had, like, gone out to eat afterwards and grabbed drinks. And then I realized, like, "I don't have my keys."

And thankfully, the movie theater people were very nice, because they had not been turned in. I was like, "I remember what seat I was sitting in. Can I go back to my seat?"

And it was in the middle of another movie. There was another human being sitting in the seat that I had been in. So I had to lean down and whisper, "[stage whisper] I think my keys... may have fallen beside your seat. [through laughter] Could you stand up and let me crawl under your—"

And there they were! I found them.

**Teresa:** You found 'em! Well, how—

**Travis:** That's just a weird story. That's not a helpful story—

**Teresa:** —how fortuitous.

**Travis:** —but...

**Teresa:** One time somebody threw away my, uh, retainer, thinking that they were wrestling mouth guards, and I had to comb through the trash. Is that similar?

**Travis:** Uh, sure! These are lost things, and then we found them!

**Teresa:** Yes. Um, okay. So, this office is on the Île de la Cité—Cité? Île de la Cité, probably.

**Travis:** The isle of the city?

**Teresa:** Uh, no. The—the Île is for road.

**Travis:** The road of the city.

**Teresa:** Yes. Uh, and it's the first office of its kind in the western world, and it still stands today!

**Travis:** I wonder if they still have some lost stuff. I bet they have a really cool tiny museum in there of like, "Here's some stuff that was, like, lost in 1860 and never recovered, and now you can look at it."

**Teresa:** Um, some of those things still exist. It's cleaned out pretty much every three months. Um, so... you know. Your umbrellas, keys, wallets, handbags,

things like that. Um, it... [laughs quietly] This is crazy. This Bureau of Found Objects receives almost a truckload of—of things every day.

**Travis:** Whoaaa!

**Teresa:** Phew. Just from the subways!

**Travis:** Wow! Hey, you know what? Speaking of, by the way, because you touched on this, we're gonna keep returning to this. That three month time limit is a great idea, I think.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** We'll keep returning to that. Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, so if the owner cannot be identified after three months, they're either sold at auction or destroyed. You know, given their condition, right?

**Travis:** Right. If you have, like, one glove, right? Do they talk about in there, like, what the barrier of lost thing... has to be before it is held onto? Like... I—like, okay. For example, cell phone, car keys? These things are important and hard to replace, right?

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** But what about, like, a single glove, right? Or, like, a—as you said, like, a novelty umbrella that might say, "I heart Paris!" Right? Are you—like, is that, like—no. That cost somebody five... francs. [laughs]

**Teresa:** [laughs loudly]

**Travis:** What is it? Euros? Maybe.

**Teresa:** I'm—in France, now it's euros.

**Travis:** Okay. Then I know, like—

**Teresa:** But I think they also accept francs.

**Travis:** But it's like, "We're not gonna hold on to... this thing." You know? Like, somebody dropped... a euro. Like... that's nothing.

**Teresa:** Right. Well, I mean, like, there are—there are obviously... a different amount of time for things like—you know, like rings or cell phones or things like that. And I think that, uh, what I read is some places keep them up to 18 months, which is, uh, a pretty long time to be missing your cell phone and not go to one of these places.

**Travis:** This is—okay. This is what I'm saying. This is why three months feels like such a reasonable amount of time to me. Is, like, how much time do you think—I think that that's the calculation, right? How much time would need to pass before you think, "Oh, where is that thing?" Right? Like—

**Teresa:** Exactly.

**Travis:** A wedding ring? My cell phone? I could see—perhaps a credit card falls out of my wallet while I'm getting out another card, and maybe I don't notice that that is gone for, like, a month, right? 'Cause I'm not using that credit card. I get that. But my car keys? My phone? I don't know what this voice is?

**Teresa:** I think it's more about—yeah, I don't know what that voice is, either.

**Travis:** I—I was starting to sound like a 90's comedian. "But car keys?! Come on!"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "Could I *be* using my wallet—"

**Teresa:** Aww, you beat me to it! You beat me to it.

**Travis:** Yep, okay.

**Teresa:** Um, and I think it's more about—people don't realize where they should go to look for these things.

**Travis:** Oh, that's true.



**Teresa:** I think that's really it. Like, uh—so often, when I lose something, I either insist that, you know, I—this is the last place I put it. It's not here. Somebody's taken it.

**Travis:** That's true.

**Teresa:** Right?

**Travis:** I mean—

**Teresa:** Or—or, like, you lost something and you're like, "Well, this is my life now. It's gone. I better replace it."

**Travis:** That's true. I—I have lost my wallet and phone... somehow always found them. Maybe I am living through *The Truman Show*, 'cause I've never lost them permanently, thank goodness. Knock on wood.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** But when the—when they were gone I never once thought, "I should check the police station to see if they're there." Like, that never occurred to me.

**Teresa:** Exactly.

**Travis:** Have you ever had your car towed?

**Teresa:** Uh...

**Travis:** Probably not. You're a good kid.

[pauses]

**Teresa:** No, I haven't.

**Travis:** Okay. I have at least twice that I can remember—

**Teresa:** [through laughter] Oh no.

**Travis:** —maybe more. And every time my car has been towed my first thought is—

**Teresa:** That's a lot of times! What is wrong?

**Travis:** Twice?

**Teresa:** Is it, like, parking violations? Or, like—

**Travis:** Ehh, it's something. It differs. [wheeze-laughs] One—okay. One time, it was, uh, a parking violation. So, I was parked, like, in a lot that I wasn't supposed to be. But no one ever does that, and then they actually checked it.

And another one was—it was actually the company car for The Shakespeare Company, it was the company van. And it had had a parking ticket on it that I was not aware of, and it had passed a certain amount of time, and the car got towed. And, like, I think both times I walked out to where I knew I had parked the car, and it was just gone. And my first thought is, "It's stolen."

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** And then my second thought is, "Well, maybe instead of being stolen, it was just towed."

[mic thumps]

**Travis:** "Now what?" [laughs]

**Teresa:** [through laughter], Yeah.

**Travis:** Like, I then had to, like, think. Like, "Who do I contact about this? Is there—certainly there's someone I should call! But I could not for the life of me tell you who."

Uh, luckily I got... every time, at least as far as I know, I've gotten my car back.

**Teresa:** Yes. Um—

**Travis:** I don't know why I said "As far as I know." Like, I got my car back.

**Teresa:** [simultaneously] You would know. You would know.

**Travis:** I would know. I'd know. Unless I accidentally got a different car back that looked exactly the same. My friend Bob—this is just such a weird story. My friend Bob had this car and it broke down while he was, like, away for the weekend. I think he was, like, back home in Parkersville where he was from. Oh, no! Parkersburg. Please don't me mad at me Bob.

And, uh, while there, the car broke down, so he found another car to buy while he was there over the weekend. And it was—

**Teresa:** He just bought another car?

**Travis:** Well, it was not an expensive car.

**Teresa:** Well—okay.

**Travis:** It was not, uh... a new car. And... so—

**Teresa:** The one that he lost, or the one that he bought?

**Travis:** Well, here's the thing. They were identical.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** It was the exact same make and model.

**Teresa:** [gasps]

**Travis:** Except... this one [crosstalk]—

**Teresa:** Was it the same car?

**Travis:** No. Well, okay. This is where it comes down to some debate. Because the only difference between these two cars—they were both the, like—white, same make, same model. Uh, but—[laughs] but the one he returned with across the top of the windshield said, "The Gambler." And so... [laughs]

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Some believe, myself included, that while away for the weekend, Bob just had a decal attached to the windshield of his car. He claims that his old car

broke down, and this one happened to be the same make, model, and color, except with "The Gambler" [through laughter] across the top. The jury is still out on this one.

**Teresa:** Uh, speaking of... the weird and unexplained, I guess?

**Travis:** Okay, yeah. I was wondering where you were going.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Uh, in 2005, the, um—the prefect of the new, um, place in Paris, lost and found of Paris, had what he called the Cabinet of Curiosities, which contained several human skulls, a Napoleonic era saber, a Victorian telescope, a wooden leg, and two chunks of material from the World Trade Center site.

**Travis:** Ooh! Okay.

**Teresa:** Uh, yeah. That's some of the—some of the crazy things that have been both lost... and found.

**Travis:** Now... I don't wanna, uh, cast dis—aspersions? Disper—whatever. Few—I guess there are circumstances where this would be explainable. But if you lost a wooden leg, don't you think you'd notice right away?

**Teresa:** I mean, you certainly would notice. But here's the thing, again—

**Travis:** I guess if you were—that's assuming you're using it. Might've just fallen off a cart.

**Teresa:** Maybe you're not using it.

**Travis:** Might've been an extra one. That's fair.

**Teresa:** And maybe you don't know where to go to get it back.

**Travis:** Yes, but I'm saying not—not like you would notice it later. I mean *in the moment*.

**Teresa:** Yes, I think—

**Travis:** Would you not, in the moment...

**Teresa:** If you lost it off of your person.

**Travis:** This is what I'm saying.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Yes, okay.

**Teresa:** Okay. [laughs] Alright. So, enough about Paris. Let's talk about the OG, uh, lost and found, okay?

**Travis:** Okay. Is it, like, from the Bible?

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** But probably, you know, not too much longer after that. In 7—

**Travis:** In The Bible 2.

**Teresa:** The Bible 2. In 781—that's not 1781.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** 7-8-1.

**Travis:** Now... you know that that's a long time after the Bible, right?

**Teresa:** Yes. Well, I mean, 700 years after is a lot closer than now.

**Travis:** Than now, that's true! Okay. You got me there! You arg—argued rings around me.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Uh, in Japan, this—uh, this was a property system—a lost and found property system that was actually written into code, right?

**Travis:** "[holding back laughter] Finders keepers, losers weepers."

**Teresa:** Written into the city code.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Teresa:** Um, and so it probably existed before that. Like, the idea of the lost and found box. Um, but they—they're probably the best place in the world to actually lose something, is in Japan. Because, of Japan's 126 million residents, they have a whopping 83% return rate.

**Travis:** Whoaa!

**Teresa:** And that's something, uh—that's the category of, like, cell phones that are returned.

**Travis:** Oh, wow.

**Teresa:** Right?

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** That's amazing! Um—

**Travis:** That's a great statistic.

**Teresa:** Yeah. That's a tasti—a statistic that is, um, specific to Tokyo, right?

**Travis:** Yes, okay.

**Teresa:** That doesn't span the whole—

**Travis:** But still, Tokyo's a huge city!

**Teresa:** It is.

**Travis:** And the idea of, like, an over 80% return rate of lost cell phones?

**Teresa:** Yeah, that's amazing.

**Travis:** That's incredible! That's more than I have in this house! [pauses] That's not true.

**Teresa:** Cell phones?

**Travis:** I was trying to make, like, a... kind of "Take me wife please" kind of joke? But I wasn't sure what it was.

**Teresa:** Yeah, that's not a thing.

**Travis:** Yeah, yeah. No, listen! I didn't get there, Teresa. I know that, okay? I know that the joke... I lost the joke! [laughs quietly]

**Teresa:** Okay. Um, so, here's—here's a couple of reasons why the system is so awesome.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, so they have police boxes. There are, like, over 6000 police boxes across the country, and they are a part of a, like, community-based system for law enforcement. So, an officer fills out a report on a lost item, and the, um—the reports go to some of these facilities that can store up to, like, 900,000 items.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** Um, and the items are carefully logged and checked for identifying information. Um, and they are cataloged on a website, and after three months, if the object—if the owner of the object hasn't been found, it goes back to the person that found them, or sold in popup shops throughout Tokyo.

**Travis:** Okay. Th—okay! This is so organized!

**Teresa:** Yeah! Um, for an example, a—a woman shared on Twitter how her young son got her involved with the Tokyo lost and found. Um, apparently he found a 50 yen coin on a train ride, and insisted that they bring it to the officers on duty at the police box. Um, and, uh, she explained that she was worried the officers would be like, "Yeah, well... so what?" Right?

Um, but she was so surprised when several officers came out, asked where and when the coin was picked up, and filled out the official documents. And I—

**Travis:** In case anyone was wondering, that's 50—like, less than 50 cents US, uh, currency.

**Teresa:** Right. Um, and she was—was so happy about it. Uh, apparently the son's school had been teaching them to return the found items to the police box. And he was only six years old, but she was really happy that the police officers treated him like an adult, like this was—

**Travis:** They took it seriously

**Teresa:** —and took it seriously.

**Travis:** That's nice. I like that. Do you... maybe you remember. I don't know how to prompt this so that you'll remember, but do you know the most important thing I've lost while I was in your presence? Do you remember?

**Teresa:** Your wedding ring.

**Travis:** That's right! Yeah! Still gone!

**Teresa:** Still gone.

**Travis:** Uh, so, when—

**Teresa:** But we do know exactly where it is.

**Travis:** We know *exactly* where it is.

**Teresa:** We just don't have it.

**Travis:** Yep. So, uh, when Teresa and I got married, I actually had two wedding rings. I had one that I wore to work, 'cause I worked as a carpenter and technician at the theater company, and I had, like, a nice one.

And one night we were out to dinner in LA, and at this point I wasn't working as a carpenter so I was just wearing the nice one. It was, like, the one that we had, like, done during the ceremony. And I was talking to our friend, Hal Lublin, and I was gesticulating wildly, as I do.

And it flew off my finger. Uh, like—I'm gonna say across the restaurant, but—

**Teresa:** Ugh...



**Travis:** —then it, like, rolled down the back of, like, the booths that were against the wall. And there was a gap between the booths and the wall, like, *the* width of the wedding ring. And it went between them.

And the thing is is the booths were attached to the wall. Immovable.

**Teresa:** Immovable!

**Travis:** And so the problem was that instantly everybody was like, "What was that?" And this, like—

**Teresa:** Oh, man...

**Travis:** —probably by the time I was able to get them to stop looking, eight to ten people were all, like, crowded around this gap trying to shine lights down in it and, like, hook—and I'm like, "It's fine. Don't worry about."

**Teresa:** And, like, trying to pull it away from the wall and look underneath. And, like, I... I was...

**Travis:** Mortified!

**Teresa:** I—not because of what you had done.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** But because of the commotion that had occurred afterwards.

**Travis:** Well, and the thing was is my wedding ring had not been expensive. Like, I—I—I knew I lost things. [laughs quietly] So I say "nice" in that it looked nice, but it wasn't like a spent a ton of money on it or whatever. So, like, I knew I was just gonna get a replacement one. I am also not sentimental when it comes to, like, items. And so we were like, "It's fine, it's fine."

But, like, people were like, "[gruff voice] No! We're gonna figure thi—" and I was like, "Please stop! We're—" and God bless it—

**Baby Dot:** [laughing]

**Travis:** —the host of the restaurant took my name and phone number and said, "If we ever remodel the restaurant [holding back laughter] and find it, we'll call you."

**Teresa:** How sweet, right?

**Travis:** And now it's been about, mmm, five years. So I don't think it's making it back.

**Teresa:** Uh, probably not.

**Travis:** But if you work at a pizza restaurant in Marina Del Rey—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** —and you remember something like that, and you have found a wedding ring, please contact me.

Uh, you know what? We'll talk more about this. But first, how about a word from some other Max Fun shows?

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[gavel banging]

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[gavel banging]

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**Janet:** Hey. I'm Janet Varney, host of *The JV Club* podcast.

[bell ringing]

Ah, high school. Was it a time of adventure, romance, and discovery?

**Speaker Two:** Class of '95! We did it!

[rain sounds play in the background]

**Janet:** Or... a time of angst, disappointment, and confusion.

**Speaker Two:** We're all tied together by four years of trauma at this place, but enjoy adulthood, I guess!

[booing]

**Janet:** The truth is, it was both! So, join me on *The JV Club* podcast where I invite some great friends like Kristen Bell, Angela Kinsey, Oscar Nunez, Neil Patrick Harris, and Keegan Michael Key, to talk about high school. The good, the bad, and everything in between.

**Speaker Two:** My teenage mood swings [voice suddenly deepens] are gettin' harder to manage!

**Janet:** *The JV Club*. Find it on Maximum Fun.

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**Travis:** Okay. So, what once was lost has now been found, Teresa.

**Teresa:** So, let's move on to some etiquette.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Alright? Um, first, I think that...

**Travis:** Finders keepers, losers weepers.

**Teresa:** Nooo.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Let's go over what to do if you've lost something.

**Travis:** Stay where you are.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And then the item will find you.

**Teresa:** [simultaneously] And hope someone will find—[laughs]

**Travis:** Or you can throw an identical one of it, like, uh, Tom Sawyer does. And say, like, "Marble, find your brother." And then the marble will roll towards the marble you've lost!

**Teresa:** [inhales] No.

**Travis:** No.

**Teresa:** Um, so what you should probably do—and I hate to say this, but this is—this is what's gonna help your mental faculties stay sharp. Take a breath.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** And imagine your life without it.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Teresa:** Yeah. Because probably—I mean, not everything can have a 25% chance return rate, especially if you've lost it in a—you know., in a larger metropolitan area, any kind of, like, public transit. Give yourself a minute to just accept that it's probably gone forever.

**Travis:** Can I—okay. Listen. Listen, fam. It's me, Travis. As someone who has lost many things, over and over and over again, here are some good rules of thumb. No matter how convenient it is, I am strongly opposed to, like, keeping your phone and wallet in the same thing, right? Like, I know that there are phone cases that have wallet stuff in 'em. And hey, listen. If you wanna carry that, that's fine. I'm terrified of those. Because losing one or the other would be bad enough. But I remember once I was traveling with Dad, and he, like, took a cab from the airport to the hotel, and got out of the cab, and left his phone, which was also his wallet in there.

**Teresa:** Yeah, yikes.

**Travis:** And, like—and so—and didn't, like, have a receipt for the cab or anything. And luckily, the cab driver found it, remembered that he had just dropped Dad off at that hotel, and called the hotel and said, like, "I have this. I will drop it off."

**Teresa:** That's amazing.

**Travis:** Yes, because otherwise, like... okay. So, that's one. Two: if you are traveling, it is good to keep a, like, uh... uh, a credit card or passport or something in addition to the thing you have in your wallet. Keep that in your bag. 'Cause if you lose your wallet, which I have done before, and you have no other ID, it's a whole process. You can still get through it, but it's... pretty hairy.

**Teresa:** All of this sounds like really great advice until I think about how, um, I and—and a large percentage of the population carry a purse.

**Travis:** Yeah, that's true.

**Teresa:** Where all of this is located.

**Travis:** That's true. I—

**Teresa:** And I have never thought to subdivide my belongings into pockets and purse, because normally my clothing doesn't have pockets.

**Travis:** Well, I will say, most of the times that I have lost something has been when I didn't put it back in my pocket, right?

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** So, like, it's falling out of my pocket, or I get something else out of my pocket and it falls out, right?

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** I don't really lose things as often in a bag or a backpack or, you know, satchel, or purse. Um, and I—I think that... I'm more talking—this is, like, you know, chickens and—eggs in one basket? Is that it? Right? Also, back up your phone.

**Teresa:** Which is what a purse is. [laughs]

**Travis:** Listen.

**Teresa:** It's a—it's a basket you carry all your eggs in.

**Travis:** Yes. But I'm mostly talking about traveling, right?

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Like, if you are traveling, have some kind of backup ID, and back up your phone.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** 'Cause that's the thing. Right now, if I lost my phone, I can replace the apps on it, I can cancel service to it, all of that stuff. But there are photos on there, and videos of my children and of my adventures that are irreplaceable if I don't back them up.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, that's true.

**Travis:** And that's really what it comes down for me, is when I've lost something I really think about what in there is irreplaceable. 'Cause it's a hassle to get—you know, to cancel your credit cards and get new ones. It's a hassle to get a new ID. All that stuff. But all of that is replaceable.

**Teresa:** Yes, agreed. So, the next thing that you need to do if you've lost something is locate where it would probably be returned to. Um, and, you know... make friends with that place. [laughs quietly] Because you're probably—if it's a—if it's a number that you call, you're gonna have to call several times. If it's a place that you go, you wanna check—you wanna check right away, and then later, and then maybe another week later. Because a lot of these things won't be turned in right after they're found, you know? You might not know where to take something if you found it right away. Or, um, you know, say in the case of that taxi driver, um, maybe that's something that you would find at the end of your shift, which could be long.

**Travis:** Do you remember... uh, what I would consider to be... one of the best kind of lost and found experiences we ever had? Um, Teresa and I—we were doing a *My Brother, My Brother, and Me* live show in Vancouver. And we were leaving.

**Teresa:** Ooh, yeah.

**Travis:** And we were dropping off our rental car at the—in Vancouver airport.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Uh, and we were already—like, we had already dropped the car off. We were already through security, everything. And then Teresa realized she didn't have her wallet.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** And, like, she—you had your ID, right? So we were able to go through everything.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** You just didn't have your wallet. And so, like, I'm calling the rental car place and telling them, but I can't get to—I'm more, like, trying to figure it out. And the person who, like, was talking—and—oh, and it also was the kind of thing where I couldn't get directly to them.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** I kept on calling a phone number and it would take me to, like, the, you know, customer service line. And eventually I was able to speak to someone down there, and they brought the wallet to us.

**Teresa:** It was amazing, and I—

**Travis:** And it was—oh, it was your wallet and phone!

**Teresa:** It was my wallet *and* phone. Um, and I cried a lot and was very grateful, for both you and the agent who brought it to us. Um, that's the next piece of advice, is be kind.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** I know it's stressful when you've lost something. I know. *I know*. Um, but the—the cooler and calmer and kinder that you can be to the people who will help you find it, uh, the better off you'll be.

Um, it was so kind of them to bring that back to us, especially so that you—I mean, I was... [pauses] I hate to say petrified, but I was—I was having enough anxiety that you basically told me to just sit and stay.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** And that you would take care of it. And it was so great that you were able to do that for me. Um, so great that the agent was able to meet you halfway so you didn't have to, like, I don't know, go out of security and come back in, and—

**Travis:** They met me at security, handed it through a security officer to me. This is—

**Teresa:** Wow.



**Travis:** —okay. So, next rule. If you're going to lose something, do it in either Canada or Japan, is what it sounds like.

**Teresa:** [laughs] That's a—that's a great idea. That's a great idea. Um, and then one of the other things is, if you've lost something, consider offering some sort of reward, okay? Not, like, postering about lost—we found this, and, you know, getting the reward or whatever like that.

But, like, if it was something important or expensive, it's—it's a nice idea to give them something. Um, and if you—if you can't give them a small token, maybe you can also offer to donate a charity of their choice in their name.

Um, and although it's never expected, I read about how Lizzie Post of the Emily Post Institute said that it doesn't have to be much. If you have, like, a "Sixth sandwich is free," like... punch card, you can offer that. If you have, um—you know, if you have any singles in your wallet.

If you met them at—say, like, at that movie that you lost your keys. If you happened to lose it in mine—in line, you could offer to buy their movie ticket.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Or something like that. It doesn't have to be, "Here's all the cash in my wallet," right? Just the thought, the gesture, is what's—is what's nice about that. And you could even—I mean, if that happened to me, and someone offered a reward for me finding their wallet, I would not accept it. But just the offer—

**Travis:** Would be nice.

**Teresa:** —is really what makes it nice.

**Travis:** Now, we basically got, in our questions for this, like, three different ones.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Okay. First—

**Bebe:** [distant noises?]

**Travis:** —[laughs] you might've heard that our not.

**Bebe:** [distant noises]

**Travis:** It's our daughter going, "Blehhh!"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Uh, and by which I mean our eldest daughter. Um, so, if you have lost—or if someone has lost something and you have found it.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Is it rude to have them describe it before you return to them?

**Teresa:** Um, I think that if it's something of—of value, um... and certainly if it's something where you have broadcast that you've found it, that's a good way to make sure it's going to the right person.

**Travis:** Yes. I think so too. Okay, next question.

When it comes to lost money—and I know you're just talking about, like, fifty cents and it being nice that he returned it, right? But say you find a dollar on the street. Do you keep that? Do you take that to the police? Here in America, here in the US, I would say you keep it. Right?

**Teresa:** Um, that does seem to be the consensus.

**Travis:** Up to what point, though?

**Teresa:** All—everything that I looked at says 20 dollars. Up to 20 dollars, because that's usually a single bill, right? Um, usually a five or a ten or a one that you would find. If you find a 20 dollar bill, you need to find some place to turn that in.

**Travis:** Here's—here's the context that I would give for that if it was me. Uh, if you are, like, in front of a store or a building or something, right? Where this, uh, as I said, context to it—like, you could walk into a storefront and say, "Hey, somebody dropped some money outside. Um, you know, do you—is anybody in here missing anything? Any money?" Whatever, right? Someplace—but I was, like,

in the middle of a park, for example, or, like, [holding back laughter] an empty field and I found a 20 dollar bill... like, I don't know that I would go, like, take it to a police station and say, "Someone in this city has lost 20 dollars."

**Teresa:** Yes. I—I do agree with this context. But, um, I think that it's... [sighs] if we're talking about morality instead of about a situation, 20 dollars seems to be the—the expert consensus of, "This is something that should be at least reported."

**Travis:** Yes. Yes, that's fair. I am saying that if I lost 20 dollars in the middle of a field, I'd consider it gone.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughs] Uh—

**Teresa:** That's the number one rule, right? If you lose something, just try to accept your life without it.

**Travis:** So, the last question—this is probably the one we got the most, was some form of: how long does something sit in a lost and found before you can claim it?

**Teresa:** Um, well, if the lost and found is like the ones that we spoke about where they pretty much empty it out every three months, I would say, three months is about—is about the amount of time. Um, 'cause sometimes those things end up going to charity, they end up going to auction. They, um... Alex mentioned in here, her research, that there's a lost and found in Arizona that a friend of hers purchased a painting from.

**Travis:** Oh, okay!

**Teresa:** Yeah! That's pretty cool. Um, but...

**Baby Dot:** [sneezes]

**Teresa:** Ooh! If it's, like, a lost and found at, say, your school, or, um, your rec center or something like that, there's usually an empty out day. So, after that, don't just go, like... like, visit something that you saw in the lost and found and decide, "Well, it's been there long enough." And just take it. That's not—

**Travis:** That's why I think three months. Three months is a good—

**Teresa:** Three months?

**Travis:** —at that point, it's just cluttering the thing. You know what I mean? Like... I remember when I worked at the Shakespeare Company, and I—I'm not saying they do this anymore, so if you listen to this and you're like, "I'm mad that they did—" but, like, lost and found, there ended up being a ton of umbrellas in there. Like, because people would bring umbrellas, leave them, right? Because it would stop raining or whatever. And so, like, if there was a patron who was leaving and didn't have an umbrella because it was raining, the box office would, like, offer them one that had been sitting in the lost and found forever.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Right? Because then it's like, "No one's using this, it's an umbrella, and you need it. Take it." Right? That kind of thing makes sense .

**Teresa:** Also, umbrellas are relatively inexpensive and easily replaceable. I mean, I know that, um, basically once it starts raining, if you're in—in New York City, it seems like an umbrella turns into a, uh, a special commodity that go from, like, a dollar up to five dollars up to ten dollars. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yes. Uh, one more. This is a specific question, but I do think it is important, and it's from @jackagain. Um, and the question is basically, if you find something... like, at what point do you take it to the lost and found? Should you try and find the person? Should you—like, in Jack's question, the person was trying to find the thing, and then they felt bad that they had taken it to the lost and found.

I think always take the thing to the lost and found.

**Teresa:** Yes. Because you have no way of knowing if it was just a second that they lost it ago—just a second ago that they lost it. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Or—

**Travis:** It actually made sense to me until you clarified it.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Or if it's been hours, days, months. Who knows? Um, so it's a good rule of thumb to always go and—and return it to a lost and found in, you know, the nearest vicinity, right? Because that's where a person who lost something would go to look for it.

**Travis:** Uh, so I think that's gonna do it for us. Thank you so much for joining us for this episode. If you enjoyed it, please make sure you tell a friend. Uh, go check out all the other amazing shows on [Maximumfun.org](http://Maximumfun.org).

**Teresa:** You can also rate, review, and subscribe to us on iTunes.

**Travis:** We wanna say thank you to you for listening, for telling a friend. We wanna say thank you to Alex, our researcher, without whom we could not make this show at this point, 'cause we have two tiny people in our house who refuse to let us, like, read the internet as much as we used to.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** What else? Who else do we thank?

**Teresa:** We always thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. We also like to thank Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art.

When we ask for questions for episodes, that's always where we ask it. So you can, uh, follow us and reply to those tweets @shmannerscast.

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

**Travis:** And that's gonna do it for us, so join us again next week.

**Teresa:** No RSVP required!

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

**Teresa:** Manners, *Shmanners*. Get it?

[theme music plays]

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