

Shmanners 244: Treasure Hunting/GeoCaching

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Teresa: The real treasure is the friends we make along the way.

Travis: Also, gold!

Teresa: It's *Shmanners*!

[theme music plays]

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

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

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

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette...

Travis: For ordinary occasions! Hello, my dove.

Teresa: Hello, dear.

Travis: How are you?

Teresa: I'm alright. Just had some—it's 11 AM, and I just ate breakfast. [laughs]

Travis: Okay! Can I tell you, I can't remember if I've had breakfast or not. I don't think I did?

Teresa: Well, I mean, our mornings—they—they've gotten a little complicated.

Travis: Yeah, and add to that ADD, and it's just like—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "Did I? Was that yesterday? No. Was it today? Huh. Was it? Where am I?" [laughs]

Teresa: Well, so just because I've been up since, like, 5, doesn't mean that I had time to eat breakfast, so.

Travis: No, absolutely not. Absolutely not.

Teresa: [sighs deeply]

Travis: You are—

Teresa: I brunched is what I did. I just brunched.

Travis: You're caring for another life, uh, as well as Bebe and Dot—

Teresa: Outside my body.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Not inside my body.

Travis: No, God, no. [laughs] Never again! [laughs] Oh boy.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Oh boy. Oh boy.

Teresa: Uh, in case you didn't know, pregnancy is hard.

Travis: It's hard!

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: It's a difficult thing.

Teresa: There is a... treasure at the end.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: The prize!

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: The prize is worth it. I love my two beautiful prizes.

Travis: What about me? Am I a beautiful prize?

Teresa: I—you are, but I didn't make you.

Travis: You made me into the man I am today.

Teresa: Ohh!

Travis: I mean, you didn't. I made myself... into the man I am today, inspired by you.

Teresa: Okay, I'll take that.

Travis: Yes, it's not your job to fix me.

Teresa: You're right.

Travis: I was a diamond in the rough, but only I... [hesitantly] could shave off—I don't know how diamonds work.

Teresa: I don't know. [laughs] Polish, you got to polish it.

Travis: Crackle—no, I think you have to cut stuff off of it. I'm pretty sure. Right? To get 'em in the shape.

Teresa: And then polish it.

Travis: 'Cause a diamond's not naturally that shape—none of this is important. We're talking about treasure hunting.

Teresa: We are!

Travis: Um, and I will say that this is a subject—I mean, listen. I think pretty much—I would guess the majority of children grow up fascinated by this idea, right?

Teresa: Absolutely.

Travis: That you would—especially how it often happens in, like, storybooks. I think the two main story lines are, kid gets a map, like in *Treasure Island*, right?

Teresa: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Travis: Or kid stumbles upon something, like, in a cave in the woods, like *Aladdin*. Right?

Teresa: Okay, okay.

Travis: I think that those are the two things that, like, every kid is like, "[dramatic voice] In a moment, everything changes, and now we're on an adventure!"

Teresa: Ooh, that's—that's a very good movie preview voice.

Travis: Hey, thank you. "[dramatic voice] In a world—"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "—where adventure lurks around every corner."

Teresa: Uh, side note, that is the same voice that they used for the *Pride and Prejudice* one. *Pride and Prejudice* movie trailer. I'm—

Travis: "[dramatic voice] In a world with pride and prejudice... "

Teresa: [laughs] And I was like, "What?" Because I was watching it on—what was it on? Peacock, I think. But, like—

Travis: That really isn't a trailer for—

Teresa: That—there is really a trailer for—

Travis: "[dramatic voice] Will these two every get along?" [laughs quietly]

Teresa: The 2009 Matthew McFadden and Keira Knightley *Pride and Prejudice*, which I love, but while [laughs] while it was loading, it comes in—" [dramatic voice] In a world where Jane Austen wrote—" and I'm like—

Travis: Ugh!

Teresa: —"What?!"

Travis: "[dramatic voice] Where status, above all... "

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "Marriage is the end goal."

Teresa: It was weird.

Travis: That is weird.

Teresa: It was very, very weird. Anyway.

Travis: So—but the thing is—and the reason I wanted to do this episode is, even though it fascinated me as a kid, and still to some degree—I mean, I still love shows like *Mysteries of the Museum* and, you know, *Destination Unknown* I think it's called? Like, I honestly have never done any research into the idea of, like, "Are there actual, like, pirate treasure maps?"

And, I mean, listen. I want to say up front, I recognize that there are things like archaeology and... grave robbing, and, you know, a lot of cultural theft. There's a lot of—I know that there is legitimate treasure hunting in the form of, like, archaeological finds and digs. I know that there's a lot of, like, bad treasure hunting where it's, like, stealing stuff from other cultures and from sacred sites and that kind of thing.

Teresa: Right. James Acaster has a really great clip on his stand up. It is not safe for work, not safe for children, but if you're interested, you can look it up.

Travis: Basically about charging money for, like, people who aren't English to come to English museums to see the stuff that England stole from their countries.

Teresa: [laughs] It's very good, uh, true, and funny. Okay. So, let's start with the pirate angle.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Okay?

Travis: Can I tell you something I've always thought about when it comes to, like, pirates burying treasure?

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: What do they do when they need to buy things?! They sailed to their island, dug it up, took out three gold coins, sailed back? Come on, man! That is not a practical solution.

Teresa: Um, in reality—

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: —when pirates took over another ship, commandeered a ship, they divided the goods amongst the crew. It was pretty democratic in that way.

Travis: We've talked before about pirates, right?

Teresa: A little bit.

Travis: Where they had, like, a pretty strong code. Not at all the way we think about it.

Teresa: Right. Um, but truth be told...

Travis: Hmm?

Teresa: ... they were more after merchant ships, um, and they weren't really after gold and doubloons. It was usually spices and food and cloth and, you know, things that you actually can use at sea, and if at any point they actually—they did get gold or money, pretty much spent it immediately at the next port. You know, on booze and women. But the thing that we have to really thank for the buried treasure myth is Captain Kidd!

Travis: Oh really? See, I was gonna guess Robert Louis Stevenson, but...

Teresa: Uh, I mean, he wrote about it, but Captain Kidd is the one who, like, started it off as, like, "This is what pirates do."

Shortly before he was going to be tried for piracy, he asked a friend named John Gardener if he could bury a treasure chest somewhere on John Gardener's island.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Kidd's hope was that the stash would be a bargaining chip to push along his release, right?

Travis: Oh, "I'll tell you where the treasure is if you let me out."

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: That didn't—that didn't work at all.

Travis: Aw, man.

Teresa: Um, because he was, uh—hmm... executed, and his body was humiliated—

Travis: Oh boy.

Teresa: —as a—

Travis: Oh, yeah. As, like, a "Don't be a pirate."

Teresa: Exactly, as a warning and deterrent.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: Um, and so... Gardener right afterwards was like, "Here's the treasure!"
[laughs]

Travis: Aw, man! Okay.

Teresa: And probably to avoid also being executed, right?

Travis: Yes, no, definitely, yeah, it makes sense.

Teresa: And it was declared property of the English Crown.

Travis: But that was, like, a buried treasure thing, but it wasn't, like, a common practice, right? So, and then you have to think that things like *Treasure Island* and such is why it's so—like, Bebe is obsessed with the idea of treasure maps, and making maps to things. I mean, it's all over kids' shows.

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: Like, "That's what pirates do!"

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, so the actual history of treasure hunting is more like you said, kind of like archaeological geniuses. Think Indiana Jones, but not... really, like, adventurous.

Travis: Okay. Indiana Jones, is cool, but I would say Indiana Jones is probably to archaeology as James Bond is to actual spying.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah, okay.

Teresa: Um, in reality, what would happen is after, um, a war, people would go in and kind of, like—you know, the spoils of war. After you've already defeated the enemy, you take their stuff.

Travis: And this is where a lot of, like, the cultural stealing stuff is, right?

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: Yeah. Aw, man. This is rampant. I mean, places like Egypt, of course, got hit by this very hard.

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: But, like, Asian countries, there was so much Japanese artwork and culture just straight up stolen. Just straight up taken back to, like, England and America and places like that.

Teresa: Um, exactly, right. So we—we cant—[laughs quietly] we can't really talk about treasure until we talk about, quote, how people "found... treasure." Um, they were basically the colonizers, right? As we talked about. Say you're a soldier in the British empire who's, you know, hanging out in Egypt, likely fighting with Napoleon, who was also really big into stealing stuff from all over the world.

You decide to explore a little bit. You could take a walk one night in the Valley of the Kings, see something shiny stickin' around and be like, "Yep, I'll take that!"

And you would, you know, give it to your family for their curio cabinet. You would never know that it was a comb, maybe used by Queen Nefertiti. Right?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So when this, quote, "treasure hunting" turns really into "finder's keepers... "

Travis: Not great.

Teresa: A lot of the history dies with it, which is sad.

Travis: This also happened a lot, not just for ancient cultures, but this also happened a lot whenever there was, like, a big uprising against royalty, where then they—people would then just, like, loot the houses, right? So then they're taking artwork and furniture and stuff, and... I'm trying to remember what it was, but there was, like, a set of furniture from some famous location, some palace, and then some of it ended up in, like, prop storage for, like, a theater. Right? It was just, like, all of these different things where you're going through—maybe it was the Iolani—it was, it was the Iolani Palace.

Teresa: Ohh, yeah!

Travis: Where it was just, like, all of this furniture that had been just taken by the people who took over Hawaii and were like, "Hey, honey! This is a nice chair. We'll put it in our parlor."

And it, like, got kinda passed around a bunch, and now they're finding all of this, like, royal furniture that was just, like, in somebody's U-Haul, you know, locker.

Teresa: Exactly, exactly. Um, there are a few famous people who turned finder's keepers into actual archaeology.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, William Stukely investigated the prehistoric monuments of Stonehenge, and Aiveberry—Avebury. Avebury, there it is. And he was one of the first people known to have attempted to date Stonehenge and, you know, try and explain where it came from.

Travis: But you know, you try to flirt with Stonehenge and you just get nothin' back—

Teresa: [blows raspberry]

Travis: —and you're like, "So, do you wanna see a movie?" And Stonehenge is like, "I can't move from this spot, my dude. I am giant stones, and it just is never gonna work."

Teresa: King Charles VI of Naples was also a big proponent of this new historical study. Um, thanks to his commands, Pompeii and the surrounding area were excavated, leading to the discovery of, you know, the preserved human forms, ancient frescoes, even, like, entire towns.

Travis: This is the thing, right? I don't want to make it sound—but I feel like now at this point—I think archaeology is great, to a point. You know what I mean? That kind of thing where it's just like, we're excavating Pompeii and discovering what happened? Yeah, great! But the idea of just, like, "Well, now to take it all back with me!"

Teresa: Right. Like I said, I mean, if you're really playing the finder's keepers model, that is the object itself and not the history, right?

Travis: Right, okay.

Teresa: Um, that is sometimes called—when a person does that, they become an antiquarian, right? So it's just the stuff. And the archaeology revolves around the story, right? So, we want to know why, what it is, what it was used for—

Travis: What it teaches us, basically.

Teresa: Exactly, exactly. Um, Johann Joachim Winkelmann...

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: ... um, is also someone who deserves to be mentioned in this modern archaeology. He is known to be the first person to start empirically categorizing art and architecture into specifically detailed artistic periods.

Travis: Nice.

Teresa: Um, it was based on his detailed empirical examinations of artifacts, and he was able to create several theories about ancient societies.

Travis: Okay, that's a good one. I like that one.

Teresa: Right. Um, so with all of these new artifacts, and with the emphasis on historical teaching, curio cabinets grew into more of museums, right? Where people would display their treasures.

Travis: Where people'd go to see 'ems.

Teresa: [holding back laughter] Exactly.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: [laughs] That really tickled me, okay.

Travis: Okay, great.

Teresa: More and more wealthy people began to pour serious funding into archaeological pursuits, and we have one person in particular we'd like to talk about for that. It's a man named Heinrich Schliemann.

Travis: Okay. It's hard for me not to say "Okay," I've now realized, two times in a row when you say a name that I couldn't possibly pronounce [crosstalk]—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —because I don't wanna be like, "Good job, babe!" But that's really what I'm doing. Like, "Okay!"

Teresa: I'm doing the best I can. Um, and for that, we have a couple of quotes from Lesley Fitton of the British Museum. She has a little Curator's Corner episode on YouTube that is very cool. Um, it paints a thorough and, frankly, honest portrait of the original treasure hunter idea. So, Heinrich Schliemann was an eccentric German businessman, who is credited today with being a pioneer in the field of archaeology. He came from a poor background, but according to his own biographical account, he was already in love from a very young age, with the idea of, like, Troy and the Homeric—Homer, and stuff like that, right? He says—he even had a children's book that illustrated some of the scenes, and he said to his father as a boy, "One day, I must find Troy."

Travis: "One day, I will time travel, Papa."

Teresa: [laughs] Uh, which is harder than you think, because for two centuries there was a massive controversy about whether or not Homer's fabled city of Troy had really existed or not. Um, was it just invented by Homer, or was it truly a real place to find? Um, scholars debated this, like, to death. Um, but finally, by 1868, the general consensus was that the city of Troy would've been located somewhere in the northwest corner of Turkey.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So...

Travis: Schliemann went there.

Teresa: He went there, dug around for a few days, and found... nothing.

Travis: Aw, man.

Teresa: [laughs quietly] Uh, it was then—

Travis: Well, get 'em next time, Schliemann!

Teresa: [laughs] uh, then he went to a mound, which is called Hisarlik—hmm. I didn't do a good job on that one.

Travis: Okay, do it again, take another run up to it.

Teresa: [slowly] Hisarlik. [normal speed] Hisarlik.

Travis: Okay, okay, yes.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Oh! Let me check with the judges? Yep, that's correct.

Teresa: [snorts] Okay. So, Fitton says here—she says that many of the people who are famous for these great discoveries are not acting solely by themselves, right? So Schliemann, for example, was already working off of other archaeological research, and the only reason he went to this mound was because of a local resident who owned the land there, right? So, he had connections, and he wasn't working alone.

There was an amateur archaeologist who believed to have found something very promising... but Schliemann had something this man didn't have.

Travis: Was it—

Teresa: Moneyyy!

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: He had money! Um—

Travis: I was gonna say a shovel.

Teresa: No—[laughs] he probably already had a shovel.

Travis: Okay, well, you don't—you said amateur, right? Maybe—

Teresa: I mean... alright.

Travis: —maybe he was just scootin' his foot around!

Teresa: And it turns out that this hill they were on was a mound built up of debris, and Homer's Troy was at, like, the bottom of the mound. And it, like...

Travis: So Schliemann found it?

Teresa: He did, but he basically obliterated the landscape.

Travis: Aw, man. Did he go back and rub it in his dad's face, though? Like, "Hey dad, remember when I told you I found Troy? I did! That's why I didn't clean my room when I was six years old, *dad*."

Teresa: Mm, yeah.

Travis: That probably happened, right?

Teresa: Probably.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So, he found a fortified citadel. Was this really Troy? I mean, he thought so. He definitely did. Um, but the real discovery was the treasure of Priam.

Travis: Okay. Hey, I wanna hear more about this, but first, how about the real treasure? Thank you notes for our sponsors.

Teresa: Nice.

[theme music plays]

Travis: We're sponsored in part this week by Function of Beauty. Listen, I love my hair.

Teresa: I love your hair, too.

Travis: Well, thank you very much! But I think anyone who knows me has known for a long time that I value its appearance, uh, that I care for it like a child—

Teresa: You keep it in good condition, for sure.

Travis: Thank you! And you know I'm always looking for new and better ways to do that. Uh, and one of the ways I found that I absolutely love is Function of Beauty.

Teresa: You love that custom stuff.

Travis: Oh, you know I do. You know I love personalized stuff. And Function of Beauty is the world leader in customizable beauty, offering precise formulations for your hair's specific needs. You take a quick but thorough quiz to tell them a little about your hair type, hair goals, and color and fragrance preferences, even. There are over 54 *trillion* possible formulations. Every ingredient Function of Beauty uses is vegan and cruelty-free, and they never use sulfates or parabens. You can go completely silicon free if you want to. With my hair, I wanted something that was, like, good for a dry scalp, something that kept my hair nice and soft but worked with dyed hair, cause my hair is purple, and you know I love that, like, minty smell, a little bit of tingle in there.

So, never buy off the shelf just to be disappointed ever again. Go to functionofbeauty.com/shmanners to take your quiz and save 20% off your first order. That applies to their full range of customized hair, skin, and body products. Go to functionofbeauty.com/shmanners to let them know you heard about it from our show, and to get 20% off your order. [Functionofbeauty.com/shmanners](https://functionofbeauty.com/shmanners).

Shmanners is also sponsored in part by Sun Basket! We may occasionally skip breakfast, but we never skip dinner. Um—

Travis: No, 'cause Bebe would let us know.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Bebe would be like, "Hey. Food." Bebe never skips breakfast. Let's be clear.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Teresa and I skip breakfast. Our kids don't. Okay.

Teresa: And nobody skips dinner. And with Sun Basket's fresh and ready meals, you can get them for just 8.99—those are the fresh and ready ones, but you can also do your subscription. Let's talk a little bit about the fresh and ready ones.

Travis: Yes, please.

Teresa: So, their chefs have won Michelin awards and James Beard awards, so you can take the night off and have them cook for you! Uh, you can try delicious meals that are already prepped and ready to heat up in as little as six minutes, like butter chicken with basmati rice pilaf, beef chili with cheddar and Greek yogurt, creamy mushroom penne with baby spinach and almonds—

Travis: Oh my goodness!

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: [British accent] My mouth is positively watering! How can I get these, my love?

Teresa: Sun Basket is offering 35 dollars off your order when you go right now to sunbasket.com/shmanners and enter the promo code "shmanners" at checkout. One more time, sunbasket.com/shmanners and enter the promo code "shmanners" at checkout for 35 dollars off your order. Not just a meal subscription service, but meals ready to eat in six minutes or less! [Sunbasket.com/shmanners](https://sunbasket.com/shmanners), and enter the promo code "shmanners."

[music plays]

Jo: Hi! I'm Jo Firestone.

Manolo: And I'm Manolo Moreno.

Jo: And we host *Dr. Gameshow*, a podcast where listeners submit games, and we play them, regardless of quality, with a dozen listeners from around the world.

Manolo: We've had folks call in from as far as Sweden, South Africa, and The Philippines.

Jo: Here's an example: this is a game we called Zoo-ey Deschanel, where you turn a celebrity's name into an animal pun. You have an example, Manolo?

Manolo: Brad Gorilla Pitt.

Jo: Oh, that's a pun on gorilla pit?

Manolo: Yep.

Jo: [hesitantly] I don't know if that's—

Manolo: It's Brad Pitt.

Jo: Oh, okay.

Manolo: That's a high quality game—

Jo: Yep!

Manolo: —that you can expect.

Jo: *Dr. Gameshow* has new episodes every other Wednesday on Maximum Fun.

Manolo: Check us out, please!

[music and advertisement end]

Travis: Okay. You were going to tell me about a treasure.

Teresa: The treasure!

Travis: The tray-sure! Tell me about a tray-sure!

Teresa: Um, it included gold, silver, bronze, elaborate—

Travis: All the good stuff.

Teresa: —elaborate jewelry—

Travis: Uh-huh, yeah yeah yeah?

Teresa: —um, which Schliemann wanted to refer to as The Jewels of Helen.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Of course. That's a great story, right?

Travis: Aw, man.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: That's not—you know the thing that comes after that isn't, "And it was!"

Teresa: [laughs] Well...

Travis: Well... okay?

Teresa: Uh, it was a little fuzzy.

Travis: Oh boy.

Teresa: Right? Because the city seemed too small, the pottery a little too basic, the length between the location and Greece was fuzzy, and Schliemann had a little bit of a... reputation for stretching the truth.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: His account is practically dripping with drama about how he hacked the artifacts out of the ground using a knife, and handed them to his wife standing beside him, ready to cradle the treasures in her shawl.

Uh... so...

Travis: I mean, he definitely found stuff, right?

Teresa: Sure. Yes. [pauses] But he probably didn't actually even, like, dig it up himself?

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: He... funded it, for sure. But... just remember, audience and Travis "discovered" is something that people say when they're lying. [laughs]

Travis: Okay, yeah, grain of salt. Okay, got it.

Teresa: Alright. So, there's another really, like, famous treasure hunt I'd love to talk about.

Travis: Okay!

Teresa: And we touched on Egypt—

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: —a little bit before. I want to tell you about the discovery of King Tut's tomb.

Travis: Of Tutankhamen! This is one when I was a kid that—any kind of, like, Egyptology, as I believe it was called—

Teresa: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Travis: —I was fascinated by, but in, uh, I would say classic Travis fashion, not quite fascinated enough by it to actually, like, learn the real stuff about it?

Teresa: Yeah...

Travis: Just fascinated enough to be like, "Aw, cool! [laughs] I like this."

"Hey, do you wanna read about and, like, study how they actually did it?"

"No, thank you."

Teresa: Right. Um, so 1922 is when the tomb was discovered. "Discovered" meaning, like, re-uncovered.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: Uh, because—

Travis: It's not like an element that someone is, like, discovering exists in the world. At some point, people knew the tomb was there, and then it was lost to history, and then it was found again, right?

Teresa: Sure. It wasn't quite lost to history. There was a little bit of, uh, "We shouldn't go in there because of the pharaoh's curse."

Travis: Well, yeah, of course.

Teresa: Right? So, the idea of the curse is that anyone who stole from these sacred burial sites of the pharaohs would be deeply punished, right?

Travis: Yes. Not just deeply punished, like, legally. Like, metaphysically.

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: So that kept a lot of people—you know, people who weren't, like, grave... robbers [laughs quietly] and probably didn't care, kept a lot of people away, for a long time. Um, but then enter Howard Carter. Similar backstory to Schliemann.

He loved the old tombs. He was known to, quote, "Sleep in them at night," which I think is weird.

Travis: Alright, dude.

Teresa: Um, because... why? Why do that? I don't know.

Travis: I mean, probably quiet. Quiet as a tomb? That's a thing, right?

Teresa: [hesitantly] Yeeeah?

Travis: I mean, listen. One time when I was working in a haunted house, I fell asleep in the coffin.

Teresa: That is true, you really enjoyed that.

Travis: I mean, I didn't enjoy waking up in it!

Teresa: Uh-huh.

Travis: But the sleep was great. [laughs quietly]

Teresa: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. They had already really been, like, looking in it, looking in the general area, um, for about five years, when it was fully discovered beneath the tomb of Ramses VI. Uh—

Travis: One of the best Ramses, if you ask me. A lot of people like Ramses V, but I think the series really came into its own with Ramses VI with the love story. I think Ramses IV is good, but really, it's not a standalone movie. You need to see Ramses III if you're gonna get Ramses IV. You know what I mean? You get it.

Teresa: I stopped listening.

Travis: I know. I know you did. I was just trying to reel ya back in.

Teresa: This tomb was packed. There were there rooms in all, with an annex, the burial chamber, and the treasury. So, this had lain—

Travis: Laid. Line?

Teresa: Laid.

Travis: Laid. Laid.

Teresa: Laid undisturbed for nearly 3000 years.

Travis: Oof.

Teresa: Yeah. Um—

Travis: That's a lot of years.

Teresa: So, there were probably in this first room 800 individual pieces of treasure, like statues and animal figures and tons of gold.

Travis: Yeah. The good stuff.

Teresa: So when the word of this discovery broke, like, the entire world lost their heads about it.

Travis: This is when everybody kind of went Egypt bonkers, right?

Teresa: Yes, exactly.

Travis: Is this when—'cause there's a *Sawbones* episode about mummies, and people who ate mummies to be healthy, right?

Teresa: Right. Uh, this is towards the tail end of that.

Travis: Okay. Hey, everybody, check out that episode. It's bonkers. Okay.

Teresa: Indeed.

Travis: There was—honey, it's a whole thing. Okay.

Teresa: [laughs] Um, so this is really where treasure hunting—where the rubber hits the road.

Travis: Yeah, 'cause this is around when archaeology becomes, like, pop culture, like, in mo—I think—what time is this? It was, like, 1920's, right?

Teresa: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Travis: So yeah. I mean, we talked about it a little bit in our, uh, Agatha Christie episode, right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Where she went over to Egypt and fell in love with it and started featuring that in a lot of the Poirot novels, and there was a lot of this, like, everybody'd be like, "Oh, let's check out Egypt. They got all that history there." And it became a whole thing.

Teresa: Right. Um, and this is where that finder's keepers model really—really—like I said, where the rubber hits the road. I can't think of another idiom.

Travis: Where the... nope, that's it.

Teresa: Nope, that's it. Um, and so the British Museum is probably where the most, I would say, iconic figures have placed all of their artifacts here, but...

Travis: Oh?

Teresa: There are a lot of—especially, like, newly coming-in-to-their-own countries that want their stuff back.

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: And the British Museum is a big target.

Travis: This is—once again, just to refer back to it, the James Acaster bit is great. I love it. Okay.

Teresa: Right. And not all of the artifacts at the British Museum are stolen... you know, finder's keepers style, and there's plenty that have been legally obtained with no ownership disputes, so don't @ them.

Travis: And I'm sure there's also—like, if you go to your local museum and there's a collection there, I mean, there's a possibility it was donated by the count—or it's on loan from the country as they're, like, you know—there's a cultural exchange kind of happening, here.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Um, so I'm not saying everything in a museum is stolen, but it definitely is an ongoing issue today.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: It's not like, "Yeah, and we sorted it out by the 60's. It's fine now!"

Teresa: Right. I mean, the problem is bigger than, you know, the British Museum, although it is kind of like the poster child. Um, several—

Travis: I'm sure there's also a problem with a lot of stuff in museums is, like, on loan from private collectors.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And if the private collectors have an artifact in their collection that they're loaning to them, the museum can't just, like, then give it back. I'm just saying, it's probably very complicated—

Teresa: It is.

Travis: —but at the end of the day, it would be better if these countries got their stuff back, if they want it back.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Like I said, we're not trying to ruin museums for you.

Travis: No, just contextualize.

Teresa: Yes, contextualize these discoveries of the colonizers, basically.

Travis: I have a lot of questions. Ya wanna do a couple questions?

Teresa: [simultaneously] Yeah, you do? Yes!

Travis: Because when we were talking about this episode, right? We always want to tie it into, like, a modern day actionable thing, right? And so when I thought of treasure hunting in both a modern and, like, universally applicable way, I immediately thought of geocaching.

Uh, for those who don't know, geocaching is a really fun hobby that I, uh, was turned on to by Justin, and at this point, like, our family has done in various forms. And basically what it is is somebody goes out and hides a capsule of varying size, they record the coordinates to it, then they upload it to a, you know, site that, like, collects 'em, or an app that collects 'em, uh, with some, like, clues or hints or riddles or whatever, and then you, using a GPS or the GPS on your phone or anything like that, can go hunt for it.

Teresa: Right, and this actually, um, started on May 2nd, 2000, because that is the exact date that the accuracy of GPS technology suddenly improved exponentially.

Travis: Yeah. Um, like, within feet, you know, at this point. So—and within each of them, at the very least—I mean, there are some that are, like, mega small, but usually you will find at least a little log in them that you can write, like, your name and date it was found, and a lot of, like, the apps and websites and stuff also have where you can input that digitally, that kind of track who has gone through and all that stuff. This is something Justin and Griffin and I used to do on tour, and we probably will again once we start touring. So, like, if we stop at, like, a rest area, there's almost always a geocache at a rest area. So, like, while everyone's stretching their legs, we'll go for, like, a five minute hunt to find a geocache and write our names in it.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Um, so, we got a lot of questions.

Teresa: And really, I would say that the only rule is take some stuff, leave some stuff.

Travis: Well, yeah. So, that's the other thing.

Teresa: Oh, and put it back where you found it.

Travis: Yes. I would say the number one rule is: return the geocache to where you found it. The number two rule is—they're in slightly larger capsules that are big enough to, like, hold items. There's kind of an item exchange where it's like, "Oh, I'm gonna take this, you know, uh, two-headed quarter, and I'm gonna leave this... you know, key chain," or something.

Teresa: Little green army man.

Travis: Right, something like that, right? And, um, what I did when I was doing this on a regular basis is I would keep the things I collected, and then turn—exchange those into others, so I was kind of swapping items between geocaches.

Teresa: Yeah, just kind of move 'em around the world.

Travis: So, now that you know all of that, let's do the questions.

Teresa: Okay!

Travis: This is from Sarah.

"A thing I like to use as a swap for geocaching is jewelry that I have bought for a couple of dollars online, including a few cubic zirconia rings. My sister is worried that someone will open a geocache with their partner and think it's a proposal, and that the resulting confusion could cause an issue in the relationship. I think it would be super cool to find actual treasure in a geocache. Who is right?"

I think that this is a very specific circumstance—

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: —that definitely could happen. [laughs quietly]

Teresa: Indeed. It doesn't—it's not that far-fetched, but... I think that any two people that are considering getting married or are in a relationship, there's gotta be the trust where, like, "No, I didn't—I didn't put that in there for you."
[wheezes]

Travis: Yeah, I would say the bigger issue is one of, like, if I opened a geocache and there is, inside, what appears to be a diamond ring, I would be really thrown off, right? I just think it's—it's a little nicer than what I expect to find in a geocache. It might create a feeling of, like, imbalance. Of, like, "There's a ring in here. What is going o—" right?

Not to say you can't, but, like it just isn't what I would expect to find? I don't know.

Teresa: What if, instead of something that looks like a real diamond ring, maybe you put in something that looks like you got it from a gumball machine?

Travis: Right, toy rings is much more fun. I don't know. I think it would just throw me off—throw me for a loop if I found any kind of anything nice-looking inside.

Teresa: Yeah, it—it might—it might stain that hunt for me. I'd be kinda like, "Uh, this is uncomfortable."

Travis: This is from @myeveningcoat.

"This is not an anti-geocaching take, but my moral quandary with it is, isn't it just strategic littering?"

Teresa: Ahh.

Travis: Um, so the thing about geocaching, when done right, um, is it should be a very durable container. Like, just putting a plain cardboard box isn't gonna do it, right? That's not gonna stand up to the elements. Uh, the smallest ones, the ones that I normally see as the smaller ones are, like, those film canisters.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Right? That have been, like, even further weatherproofed with, like, duct tape or something along those lines.

But then there are also, like, actual geocaching capsules you can get that are, like, weatherproof. So if that's the case, I would argue that it is not, because you want to put them somewhere unobtrusive, you want to put them somewhere that is also not obtrusive to the wildlife or to the local flora and fauna. So, like, I wouldn't hide a geocache in, like, a bird's nest, right? I wouldn't hide it in a warren.

And the third reason I would say that I would not consider it strategic littering is there is a record of where these things are. Right? So, like, unlike littering, where you're just throwing stuff higgledy-piggledy all about, this is, like, "Well, if wanted to go on a day's notice, clean up our geocaches, we could easily do so."

Teresa: Right, because they're all tagged.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: Um, that's one of the things that you have to do. You have to register the log. Um, of the actual site. And I think that if—like you said, if today the bulletin went out that we're not gonna do this anymore, you could—you could go and find every single one, is the idea.

Travis: Right, right. Um, this is from McKayla.

"Hi! If you come across a cache that is in really rough shape and appears that the original folks who placed it haven't been active for a while, is it appropriate to bring a replacement container, or is that overstepping?"

I mean, in my—in my opinion, I think it's great. Like, if it is in disrepair, you are not changing the location of it—

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: —you are leaving the log, the items in it or whatever, you're just replacing the container so it can last longer, I think that that is lovely. I think that that is a wonderful thing to do.

Teresa: I think that's a great idea. I mean, especially if, like, maybe the things in it have become too numerous or whatever. Uh, leave it better than you found it. That's great.

Travis: Uh, this is from Kirby Crackle.

"I love geocaching, but what stops me from doing it more is this. How do you, A, avoid looking shifty while searching for the cache, and B, let go of the anxiety of thinking you look shifty the whole time?"

It is amazing how connected those two are, Kirby.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Because here's the thing. If you weren't worried about it, I guarantee you look less shifty.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Sometimes it is in trying not to look shifty that you do. Um, I could tell you that the thing is is people go, you know, to parks and, you know, public locations looking for stuff all the time. You know, maybe they're looking for rocks for their rock collection, or they're looking for, I don't know—

Teresa: Wildflowers, or—

Travis: Right, or Civil War, you know, buckshot or something. Right?

Teresa: That would be very hard to find.

Travis: Yeah, not buckshot. You know what I mean. It was shot, you know, lead—

Teresa: Like casings?

Travis: —le—sure. But I would also think that as long as you know why you're there, and if someone was like, "Hey, what are you doing?" And you can be like, "Oh, I'm participating in geocaching. It's a real life treasure hunt where blah, blah, blah." Right?

But, like, I remember one time—that's it—

Teresa: The worst thing that they can do is tell you to leave.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: And then you do that.

Travis: And that's the thing, right? You're not doing—as long as you're on public, like, property, right? And you're not trespassing—

Teresa: That's right. Don't put these things in people's yards and stuff where you'd have to trespass.

Travis: No trespassing, you're doing fine. You know? Um, let's see. Okay, this is from Courtney. One last one, here.

"If you go geocaching, I know you're supposed to leave something if you take something and sign the log. But what if the thing you take is, like, exponentially better than anything you could leave? Do you not take it?"

Um, no. I think that you—the purpose is the exchange, right?

Teresa: Yeah, somebody put it there, so it's fair game to trade.

Travis: It's about the connection, right? It's about knowing, "I'm going to leave something that someone else will then take with them. So, in some small part, our paths our now connected." Right? It's not about a bartering system in which everything is fair. It is more about, "I had this, and now you have it, and you can feel connected to me."

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Right? Because geocaching can often be a solitary or even small group experience, and it's more about knowing, like, someone else was here where I am, and someone else will be where I am, and I am part of a bigger network. Right?

Teresa: Right. Um, so if you would like to enjoy some geocaching, here's what you do. You can go register online at geocaching.com. Then you have to download the geocaching app, or you can get yourself even a handheld GPS device. Um, and then people who hide caches post coordinates that you have to find to get the treasure, right?

So, once you have your tools, use the hide and seek a cache page on the website to put in your zip code, and that'll give you a big list of potential treasure sites that you can pick from.

Um, once you have a particular geocache that you'd like to look for, make sure you log the coordinates into your GPS device, right? 'Cause this is, like, the warmer, colder business, right?

Travis: Right. Or you can use your phone, if you have that. But you can't always assume if you're in the middle of the woods that you'll have service.

Teresa: Yeah. Uh, log the coordinates and, you know, go!

Travis: Take a pen or marker or something with you, and some, like, very small items.

Teresa: And some—wear sturdy shoes, because a lot of these geocaches are hidden in, you know, the bush.

Travis: Correct. Um, oh, one more thing. I didn't think about this until now, but you could also get a metal detector. They're fairly inexpensive these days. My grandfather trained me to use one when I was little. I've used one a couple times as an adult.

One time he found, like, a real diamond ring on the beach that was worth, like, thousands of dollars. It can be fun.

Teresa: Mm-hmm!

Travis: But I want to tell you about a real-life, current, ongoing treasure hunt that is not geocaching.

Teresa: Alright!

Travis: There is a book. It was published I believe in the 60's. Uh, maybe the 80's, but it's called *The Secret*, and it's not that one, it's a different one. And so Byron Preiss published a book of poems and illustrations, and within both are hidden clues to the locations of 12 treasure boxes hidden across the US and Canada, and in each box is a key, which can be exchanged for a jewel. Uh, this is from the book.

Quote, "The jewels collectively are worth over 10,000 dollars. The treasure casks themselves are of incalculable value, having never been owned by man or woman."

Uh, so as of 2019, only three of them have been found, leaving nine still out in America—in the US and Canada somewhere. Uh, it's a whole big online community, it's a whole thing, and it's really cool. I highly recommend you check it out.

Teresa: Uh, I would like to add a quick note about geocaching treasure hunting etiquette real quick.

Travis: Okay, please.

Teresa: There is a saying in the geocaching community. "Cache in, trash out."

Travis: Oh yeah.

Teresa: So one of the things that you can do while you are looking for your geocache is pick up trash.

Travis: Pick up litter, pick up trash, it's—you know. Leave it better than you found it!

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: Okay. So, that's gonna do it for us. Thank you so much for joining us. We want to say thank you, of course, to Alex, our researcher, without whom we would not be able to do this.

If you have ideas for topics for shows, you can email us, shmatterscast@gmail.com. Alex looks at all of those.

If we, you know, have a topic like this where we need questions, we'll tweet out the request for questions on our Twitter account, @shmatterscast. We want to say thank you to Maximumfun.org, our podcast home. You can go there and check out all the other amazing shows. If you want to see all the cool McElroy merch that exists, you can go to mcelroymerch.com. It's all there, including our pin of the month, which is a really cute Cerberus pin with the three brothers as Cerberus, and it benefits the NARAL, which—

Teresa: Also check out "This is sausage to me" pin.

Travis: Is that up now?

Teresa: The pin—is it? It should be soon!

Travis: Yeah, it should be soon. We're making a "This is sausage to me" pin—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —that I'm really excited about. Um, go check that out, all that, mcelroymerch.com. Uh, *The Sawbones Book* is available in paperback where good books are sold. Um, let's see. What else do we say, Teresa?

Teresa: We always say thank you to Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Also, thank

you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art. Again, that is @shmannerscast.

Thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for our cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, *Shmanners* Fanners. Uh, if you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, that's the place to go!

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

Teresa: No RSVP required.

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

Teresa: Manners, *Shmanners*. Get it?

[theme music plays]

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