

Shmanners 252: Shamrocks

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Travis: Did you hear the really good lie about clovers?

Teresa: No.

Travis: The sham rocks.

Teresa: [laughing] It's *Shmanners*!

[intro music plays]

Teresa: It took me a second because I wasn't sure if that was the rest of the joke or not.

Travis: The sham—'cause a sham is a lie.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: And it's a really good lie about the clovers! So, the sham rocks.

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: Okay. Hey, you know what?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I'm doing my best over here! [dramatic sigh] 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: I'm doing my best over here—

Teresa: I know! I—it was—I wasn't sure! It's a very short punch line.

Travis: I know, I know, but listen. I know, but here we are. Hi, everybody. We're—so, this will be out not on St. Patrick's Day.

Teresa: Because we're recording it on St. Patrick's Day.

Travis: On St. Patrick's Day, correct, correct, correct.

Teresa: But it could still be about St. Patrick's Day.

Travis: Yes, we've done a couple of St. Patrick's Day episodes now.

Teresa: We have.

Travis: It is, uh... I like it for, I don't know, very personal reasons. It feels like, uh, I'm sure I've talked about this before, but it feels very much like one of those holidays much like Halloween, where it evolves over time, for me at least.

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: As a young man, out there, eating Lucky Charms and wearing green and pinching at school. And then you get—

Teresa: [giggles] Don't pinch people.

Travis: No, don't pinch people. And then you get to, uh, you know, young adulthood. 21, uh, let's say, 30?

Teresa: Where you're drinking half and halves?

Travis: Well, I'm doing that now, too. But this is my first one of the day.

Teresa: Right, yes.

Travis: As opposed to, perhaps, beginning at 10:00 A.M.

Teresa: Oh, is that something you did?

Travis: You know, I don't think it needs to be discussed, but yes. Um—

Teresa: I'm not, I mean—

Travis: You are not as much of a consumer of alcohol.

Teresa: I— I am not. And day drinking is fun in moderation, just that 10:00 A.M. is quite a, uh, an early time for your first 8 slices of bread a la Guinness.

Travis: Well, I'm talking about when I was like, 22.

Teresa: Oh, okay.

Travis: You know what I mean? And like, calories were a joke and meant nothing, you know? Calories were as, uh, humors are to me, you know?

Teresa: Ah, yes.

Travis: "Ah, calories, that old rumor," I used to think. Um, and so, you know, you day drink for a while, and then you day nap, and then— [laughs]

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Uh, you know, you hang out with your friends and, you know, waste the day away.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: But now, as an adult, I see it as a chance to cook some really yummy food for my family, and also I just like special occasions, you know?

Teresa: You sure do.

Travis: And now even more so. I would say now, more so, as a parent, I see Bebe getting excited about, you know, making shamrocks, and I made her some green milk, and that was enough.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: You know, that's something. She keeps talking about the St. Patrick's Day party we're having, which we're not.

Teresa: We're not! [laughing]

Travis: But she just kept saying, like, "We're gonna be late for the St. Patrick's Day party! Everyone's going to be here!" And I don't know what she's talking about, but here we are. But speaking of shamrocks—

Teresa: Uh, wait a second, I do want to ask you. You—do you have Irish heritage?

Travis: Well, you know, here's the thing. The problem is, and this is true of a lot of people who came through, you know, the passage over to America in like, you know, late-late 1800s, early 1900s, a lot of name changes happen.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: So, one of two things is possible. Either I am of the McElroy lineage, where McElroy is Irish, what, ancestrally, I guess? Or it is a changing of like, MacGillivray or something like that, that is a Scottish name that was changed, you know what I mean? But if I do, it's far back enough that it's not like, I know the names of the people, you know what I mean?

Teresa: Right, yeah. Well, uh, in my family, the folklore was that yes, we had a quarter Irish in our ancestry, but upon further digging, that doesn't seem to be real. [laughs]

Travis: Well, I mean, that's the thing is like, my dad has done the cheek swabby thing, and it was like, it came back something like 70% Scotch-Irish.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Right, so, it's like, okay, well, that didn't clear anything up.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Those are two different places.

Teresa: Right. I mean, as far as our family tree goes, for my family, uh, mostly German. German ancestry.

Travis: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Ours is that, you know, that U.K. area base. There's not a lot of deviation. You probably could have guessed that from looking at us.

Teresa: Yeah, that we have, uh, European ancestry.

Travis: Yeah, there's not gonna be a lot of surprises in there, but you know, it's the kind of thing I think of. We are Irish on about three days out of the year, you know what I mean? That's what I feel, you know what I mean?

Teresa: Okay. I'm ready to talk about shamrocks now.

Travis: Okay. The shamrock. The clover? Same thing, question mark? No one knows.

Teresa: Well, I was gonna play my favorite game...

Travis: Oh, boy.

Teresa: ... which is, What Do You Know About Shamrocks?

Travis: [sighs]

Teresa: And you would say, "It's a clover, right?"

Travis: Okay, no, you know what? No, you know what?

Teresa: And I would say—

Travis: No, I'm in it to win it this time. Hey, back off. [laughing] Get off—get off me.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I've remembered at the last second that this is a clean podcast.

Teresa: [laughs harder]

Travis: Um, I know a couple things. One, yes, I would have said, "It's like a clover, right?" But I also know that one of those things, much in the way of we've talked about the Christianization of many things, Christian rebrands...

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: ... that they like the three leaves of the clover to be the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And that's, like, a thing, right? Am I anywhere close?

Teresa: Okay. So—

Travis: And I've said that I know many things, and it seems that I know one wrong thing, and I am unsure of one thing.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: So, almost two things.

Teresa: The shamrock is not actually a clover, or it doesn't actually have to be a clover.

Travis: It's a design, right? A lot like a Celtic knot, right?

Teresa: Okay, so...

Travis: I have no idea what I'm talking about, folks.

Teresa: It comes from the Irish word, 'seamróg.'

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: Which translates to "little clover," but again, that's pretty vague, because there are dozens of varieties of clovers and plants that look like clovers...

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: ... and even the Irish don't have a specific consensus on what an actual shamrock is. And we know this because in a 1988 survey conducted by the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin, it was revealed that most of the time—

Travis: Sometimes, I agree with stuff very emphatically and I don't really know why I'm agreeing, like, "Yep, that's what I was expecting."

Teresa: I mean it sounds very legit.

Travis: I know, but it's not like, "I knew she was gonna say the National Botanical Society of Dublin. That's—ah, yeah, the old NBSOD. My favorite."

Teresa: What Irish refer to as shamrocks are normally one of four different plants.

Travis: Oh, boy.

Teresa: The hop clover, the white clover, the red clover, or the black medic.

Travis: What?

Teresa: The black medic is the only one that isn't technically in the clover family, but you'd never know by looking at it. I mean, it's a small green plant with three clover leaves, and even sprouts a little yellow flower in the early spring. And they're all—

Travis: Why does it have such a cool name?

Teresa: Well, it's all part of the pea family, and I'm not sure why.

Travis: What? Sometimes I think people are just having a lot of fun with that, you know what I mean? Like, "This is the sword of God," and like, it's a blade of grass! What are you talking about? "Hey, can you just call it Grass 2 or something? What are you doing?"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Having a lot of fun with it. If I ever discover something, you know I'm calling it a Travis.

Teresa: I know.

Travis: And not just like, "Travis." It's going to be called "A Travis." You have to say, "A Travis. Oh, that's a Travis."

Teresa: That's the—the thing I can't wait, uh. Bebe is very into dinosaurs at the moment and I can't wait for her to start finding out, that like, there's like a Philadelphia-saur or whatever. Smithson-aralius or whatever it is.

Travis: Well, that's a Robertsaur!

Teresa: Exactly! People pretty much just dug up bones and named it after stuff.

Travis: Yep.

Teresa: Um, so basically, if you're looking for a shamrock, any small green 3-leafed plant will do.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And, I mean, that's the other thing. I supposed I always thought that it was like, a four-leaf—I mean, okay. I know what a shamrock looks like; it has three leaves.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: But somehow I thought it was related to the four-leaf clover?

Travis: No, I— a four-leaf clover is a mutation of a—right? Like, it's not a normal clover, or else you'd be able to plant four-leaf clovers and plant them everywhere and be the luckiest S.O.B. on the planet.

Teresa: Right. You are correct, they are a mutation. Uh, but the most common legend about the importance of the plant is that, like you said, St. Patrick used a shamrock to explain Christianity to the ancient Celts.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: Um, he told them that each leaf represented a particular part of the Trinity.

Travis: Nailed it. Yeah.

Teresa: Father, Son, Holy Ghost. And when you wear a shamrock, it's a tribute to St. Patrick and his missionary work, which is like his whole thing.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: We talked about that, he, quote, "saved" Ireland.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Meaning he, uh, was a missionary and brought Christianity and tried to turn all the Pagans into Christians.

Travis: Yep.

Teresa: There may or may not have been snakes.

Travis: Probably not.

Teresa: Probably not.

Travis: Listen to that episode, we did a whole thing about it.

Teresa: We don't have any proof that he used a shamrock, to elucidate.

Travis: No, that would be a weird thing to know for sure. Like, the only way you would know for sure is if someone was like, "Yes, I saw it, and I told my child, who told their child. Like, I'll never forget the time that St. Patrick, you know, treated us all like idiots."

Teresa: [giggles] But the shamrock was a very important thing to the Celts. The goddess, Danu, was the Irish mother goddess, and the three leaves weren't the Holy Trinity, they were a symbol of the life cycle of Danu as the Maiden, the Mother, and the Crone.

Travis: Yeah. See, like, once again, I feel like, it's a rebrand thing, right? Like, "Oh, an important symbol you say? Ah, you know, strange you should mention that, it also happens to be important to us, now that you mention it."

Teresa: [laughs] Uh, and the three was very important as well.

Travis: It's a magic number.

Teresa: It is, it is a magic number. And there are several different kinds of, like, triads in the culture. So like, the divisions of the soul into the mind, body, and spirit.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: The land, the sea, the sky. The underworld, middle world, and upper world.

Travis: You have courage, strength, and wisdom in the Triforce.

Teresa: Yep. And, uh, nature, truth, and knowledge.

Travis: You just went with it. Hey, thanks. That was a Zelda thing and you rolled with it and I appreciate you.

Teresa: I mean, it makes sense.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, and so, Celtic society was actually organized around the number three, with three classes, colors, and by some accounts, three, like, main gods.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: Um, and so the shamrock was totally in line with all that great stuff.

Travis: I mean, it makes a lot of sense, right? Because, I mean, it's the reason we have three branches of government, right? The idea being that, with only two, it's not a good support system, right? You can't really balance on two. Three is the smallest number that you can balance something on, uh, consistently. Not that you can't balance on one, don't at me. But more of like, if you have three, right? One can check two, two can check three, and three can check one, instead of one and two checking each other, you know what I mean? So that's why as an organizational tactic, three is better than two in my opinion.

Teresa: Okay. And then the other—

Travis: [laughs]

Teresa: Sorry!

Travis: [laughing, as Teresa] "Okay!"

Teresa: Okay, I meant, "Yes, that sounds great!"

Travis: No, it's okay, 'cause I'm—

Teresa: Continuing.

Travis: I'm used to responding to Bebe like that after she rambles for a while. "Okay!"

Teresa: [laughs] Four leaf clovers fit into this in the way of, they're actually quite rare in Ireland. One every 10,000 clovers might be four-leafed.

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: Um, and so, these were precious symbols to the ancient Celts. Today, the four leaves of the clover stand for love, luck, faith, and hope.

Travis: Mm. The greatest among these is luck.

Teresa: What?

Travis: No, sorry. Hope—I'm trying—

Teresa: Love, I think.

Travis: Mm. Okay.

Teresa: I would say love. Because if you love, you can have faith; if you love, you can have hope; and if you love, you make your own luck.

Travis: But isn't that, like, a Bible verse or something?

Teresa: Oh, sure.

Travis: Like, faith, love, and hope, and the greatest among these is—I don't know.

Teresa: So, here is where St. Patrick actually coincides with the shamrock.

Travis: I cannot wait to find out about it. But first, I would like to write a thank you note to our sponsors.

Teresa: Let's go!

[theme music plays]

Travis: We want to write a thank you note to Function of Beauty this week. We're sponsored in part by Function of Beauty. We've all got goals; be healthy, find work/life balance, improve our relationships. But have you thought about your hair goals? Man, oh the heavens above know I have.

This is something I've been working on since I was a kid. You know, when I was a kid, I used to slick my hair down with gel because I didn't like the way that it kind of stuck up, the way that it poked out. I had no idea that two things were wrong. First of all, volume is great. Second of all, I just wasn't using the right products for my hair. That's why I love using Function of Beauty, because not only do they love the volume of my hair, I bet, but they are specially designed for my needs.

Function of Beauty is the world leader in customizable beauty, offering precise formulations for your hair's specific needs. First, take a quick, but thorough quiz to tell them a little bit about your hair type and your hair goals, such as lengthen, volumize, oil control, whatever. And every ingredient Function of Beauty uses is vegan and cruelty-free, and they never use sulfates or parabens. You can also go completely silicon free.

So never buy off the shelf just to be disappointed ever again. Go to FunctionofBeauty.com/Shmanners to take your quiz and save 20% on 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 we sent you and to get 20% of your order. FunctionofBeauty.com/Shmanners.

We also want to write a thank you note to Sunbasket because, listen. Teresa and I know. Some days, dinner really gets away from you. There are days when, all of the sudden, it's like 5:45, we got two kids, we got two of us, and we're like, "Oh, no! We need to feed these children before they, you know, turn on us and attempt to devour us!"

And so, that's why it's great to have the Sunbasket fresh and ready meals. Because the Sunbasket fresh and ready meals are just \$8.99, so they're good for your body and your budget, and they can be ready in minutes.

Their chefs have won Michelin awards and James Beard awards, so why not take the night off and let them cook for you? They're ready in as little as six minutes and they're delicious. Meals like butter chicken with basmati rice pilaf, beef chili with cheddar and Greek yogurt, creamy mushroom penne with baby spinach and almonds.

So, right now, Sunbasket is offering \$35 off your order when you go to sunbasket.com/shmanners and enter promo code "Shmanners" at check-out. That's sunbasket.com/shmanners and enter promo code "Shmanners" at check-out for \$35 off your order. One more time, sunbasket.com/shmanners and enter promo code "Shmanners."

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[music plays]

James: Hey, folks! It's me! James Arthur M., host of Minority Korner, your home through these bewild times for weekly doses of pop culture, history, news, nerdy stuff, and more through a BIPOC queer and allied lens.

I already took you back in time through one time machine. We're going back even further! [time machine noises]

Speaker 1: Oh, here we go! I'm holding on.

James: I know it seems scary, because now we're in the 1830s. It's fine! Continuing along on the white people's apology tour, Justin Timberlake.

Speaker 2: That is Minority Korner! [laughter]

James: Having those difficult conversations, those necessary conversations.

Speaker 3: This is now the moment for white people to be rising up and going, "This is our problem."

James: So join me and some of your new BFFs every Friday here on Maximum Fun to stay informed, empowered, and have some fun. Minority Korner, because together, we're the majority.

[music ends]

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Travis: Okay, so, how do we crossbreed St. Patrick's Day and clovers?

Teresa: In 1675, there was imagery printed of St. Patrick preaching to a crowd while holding a three-leaf clover.

Travis: You know, here's the thing, especially if you listened to our, uh, art model episode last week, I can perfectly picture the, like, middle ages style painting, where the fingers are always held kind of like this, right? Where you have the middle finger and the thumb together, holding the thing.

Teresa: [in agreement] Mm.

Travis: And like, the fingers are all a little bit elongated, and they're standing in a very saintly way, you know what I'm talking about?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And there's certain like, gilded accents to it, and I can see that. In fact, I'm betting, because I've walked around it a bunch, in St. Patrick's Cathedral, almost guarantee there's a painting like that, right?

Teresa: Oh, yeah! Mm-hmm. And I should have said, instead of printed, I should have said "imprinted" or "embossed," I guess? Because it was on the St. Patrick coppers or like, the half-penny.

Travis: Right. [unsure] It would be pressed in?

Teresa: Pressed?

Travis: Yeah?

Teresa: Maybe.

Travis: Yeah, like one of those things at an aquarium where you crank the penny through and then there's an otter.

Teresa: Yeah! So by the 1700s, the shamrock was accepted widely as one of Ireland's national symbols and historians think it became so popular because they were obviously so abundant in Ireland, especially at this time of year, right?

Travis: Much like how we, uh, our symbol is the eagle. Those things are everywhere!

Teresa: [laughs] Um, okay. So, the shamrock made its way to America in the first wave of Irish immigrants in the 18th century. But you know what the U.S. doesn't have a lot of in, like, New York and Boston and San Francisco?

Travis: Would that be like, grassy plains?

Teresa: Clover.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Um, to celebrate, an Irish person couldn't pick their beloved plant, but they substituted things like, you know, the color green.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: And images of shamrocks. Um, and the first U.S. St. Patrick's Day parade was celebrated in Boston in the 1760s, and reportedly, there were shamrocks a-plenty on drawings and banners,

Travis: Yes, yes, yes.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: The only place I know for sure to find clovers and stuff now is on, uh, the baseball field that I played on when I was ten years old and didn't pay attention to the game because I was looking for four-leaf clovers. That's the only place I know for sure.

Teresa: Aww.

Travis: Okay, wait, hold on. Are you sad for me?

Teresa: I mean...

Travis: Were you—until this very moment, did you think I was maybe good at baseball when I was ten?

Teresa: No, it's just a very evocative image, isn't it?

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: I mean I've seen it in TV shows and movies, where like, there's just the lone little kid watching butterflies and looking at clover.

Travis: This was me.

Teresa: And then the ball comes toward them and they, you know, freak out a little bit or whatever.

Travis: Yeah, hey, were you there at this game?

Teresa: [laughs] No?

Travis: Did you time travel and see this happen to me?

Teresa: Did the ball come towards you?

Travis: Oh, a bunch of times.

Teresa: Ohh.

Travis: I was one of those kids that was sure, like, if the ball hits me, I die.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And I remember my dad having multiple conversations with me, where like, "Here, just let me bonk you on the head with it and you'll see." And I'm like, "No! I'll die! Did you not hear me, Clint?" Uh, I didn't call my dad Clint, I was ten years old.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: You get it.

Teresa: Um, so, even during the most tumultuous times in parts of Irish history, and there are a lot of them, the shamrock has remained a strong representation of the people who are, you know, who feel kicked around and left out a lot.

Travis: I mean, I get that, right? Because it is—uh, as a, like—it's hard to get rid of clovers, you know what I mean?

Teresa: I mean, it sure is.

Travis: I mean, like, they're everywhere in Ireland and now they're everywhere here. And it's just like, they're very, what's the word? Resilient. A resilient plant.

Teresa: Indeed. And you know, let's give clover a chance as a ground cover. I like it.

Travis: Me too.

Teresa: It used to be all over my, uh, my grandmother's yard, and I feel like, for a while, when my dad was mowing her lawn, he would be like, "Grr, clover."

Travis: Yeah, your dad is a real grumbly guy, you're right.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "Oh, clover! I'll get you next time!"

Teresa: And, I don't know, grass is a monoculture, and let the clover live.

Travis: Yeah, you tell them, baby.

Teresa: Anyway. Here's one of the very interesting things about shamrocks in today's modern world. Holiday cards. Apparently, the shamrock remains one of Hallmark's most popular symbols. It appears on products and cards for the entire month of March and the Greeting Card Association cites St. Patrick's Day as one of the top 10 largest card-sending holidays in the U.S.!

Travis: Really? Okay, number one is definitely Valentine's Day, right?

Teresa: No, Christmas!

Travis: Do you think Christmas is above Val—okay. Let me rephrase why I assumed it was Valentine's Day, because Valentine's Day is one day and Christmas is like, a whole season.

I was thinking in terms of like, the day, but now that you mention it, yes. I bet Christmas, and then Valentine's Day, then...

Teresa: Mother's Day.

Travis: Mother's Day, then Father's Day.

Teresa: Birthdays? No. That wouldn't be—

Travis: That wouldn't count—but Easter, maybe?

Teresa: I've never gotten an Easter card.

Travis: But you think St. Patrick's Day is over Easter?

Teresa: [mumbling] I don't know.

Travis: And then Arbor Day, President's Day.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: No, you know, I bet, uh—

Teresa: Definitely not Arbor Day, because it's trees.

Travis: I bet Veteran's Day's in there, where you would give that to like, relatives that served or, like, people you knew that served.

Teresa: Aw, okay.

Travis: I bet that that is in there. Uh, Thanksgiving?

Teresa: No.

Travis: No.

Teresa: No!

Travis: I don't know!

Teresa: Oh, it's so much fun to wildly speculate.

Travis: But the reason I did this is, while you said it, like a really impressive stat, now that I've said it out loud, being in the top 10 of card-giving holidays when I can't think of eight other ones...

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: ... might not be that impressive, all things considered.

Teresa: Anyway!

Travis: I'm just saying.

Teresa: Approximately—

Travis: Halloween!? I'm sorry, go on.

Teresa: Approximately 7 million cards were exchanged in 2020 and it's a very popular holiday, mostly in part because of the U.S.'s celebration of it, right? So it's like an Irish and United States thing.

Travis: Well, and we've talked about this on previous episodes, too, it's like the way we do it here in the United States...

Teresa: Oh, of course.

Travis: ... is wildly different. Um, but it's kind of like, uh, to put it fairly simply, it reminds me of like, when we think of Hanukkah? Where people think of Hanukkah as being this, like, mega-holiday in the Jewish religion because it's like, it rivals Christmas. And if you're actually in the Jewish religion, you're like, "It's not actually that big a deal."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And so, like, we think of St. Patrick's Day, like, "The Irish just love it!" And Irish are like, "I mean..."

Teresa and Travis: "It's fine?"

Travis: "It's fine. Uh, you do what on the day? Oh, boy!"

Teresa: [giggling]

Travis: "Hey, America? Are you okay?"

Teresa: Okay, let's get into some etiquette regarding shamrocks!

Travis: Oh, yeah! Please! Please, please, please.

Teresa: Literally anyone is allowed to wear the shamrock. 'Cause it's awesome. There are festivals where you shouldn't dress in, like, traditional garb of the festival. You know, things like that? But this is not one of those times. So—

Travis: Yeah, I would stress that there is a large difference between, uh, the cultural appropriation...

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: ... versus, like, this is a symbol of the holiday, you know what I mean? Like, if you wore a sweater with a Christmas tree on it, right? It wouldn't be like, "Oh, you're stealing Germanic traditions," right?

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: It has become part of the holiday. Uh, though I will say, on that note, is something I think we talk about every St. Patrick's Day, uh, but I will reiterate it throughout the rest of time when we talk about it, which is to equate St. Patrick's Day—

Here's the thing. Yes, St. Patrick's Day here in the United States is a drinking holiday, right? It is so much of mainstream culture around St. Patrick's Day here revolves around alcohol consumption.

The problem is, is that people will often thoughtlessly, and carelessly, and sometimes cruelly, equate drinking to Irishness, and alcoholism to Irishness, and those are very harmful stereotypes.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Uh, and there are so many, like, really harmful and offensive, like, joke t-shirts and joke things.

Teresa: Right, the whole "kiss me, I'm Irish" thing is—

Travis: Or "kiss me, I'm drunk" and like, with the shamrocks around it or like, it just being about, like, "Isn't it funny how much the Irish love their alcohol?"

Teresa: Right. So, let's not disrespect a national symbol in the same way we wouldn't disrespect one of our national symbols like the American flag, right?

Travis: Not that some people wouldn't.

Teresa: I mean, you're right.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Um—

Travis: And let me just be clear there, because I said it carelessly, and I wanna say, uh, I don't mean the people who like, kneel and stuff. That's totally cool, I mean the people who use it to incite violence.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Go on.

Teresa: Um, but you know. Wear green. Drink some beer.

Travis: Yeah! Yeah.

Teresa: Beer's great, but don't dress up like a leprechaun.

Travis: No. Mostly 'cause it looks silly. [laughs]

Teresa: It, well... Yes, but I mean, it's kind of—it's insulting.

Travis: Yeah. This is the question that I think people should ask themselves more, which is, "Is the thing I'm about to do perpetuating a stereotype?"

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: And if the answer is yes, don't do it.

Teresa: There are wonderful ways to feel connected to the holiday without being xenophobic or racist.

Travis: Yep. And that goes across the board.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Don't be xenophobic and racist and thoughtless and careless and cruel ever.

Teresa: Um, also, like we said at the beginning, don't pinch people.

Travis: No.

Teresa: Keep your hands to yourself, please.

Travis: And you know what? I'll go along those lines. Uh, you know, it's fun. I know I'm 37. Oh, God.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Uh, and it is fun sometimes to be inebriated, and it's fun sometimes to, you know, to really let go and let loose and have an excuse to indulge. But if for you, indulging results in violating other people's personal space, making other people uncomfortable, putting yourself in danger, putting others in danger, putting other—

Basically, infringing on someone else's right to exist or enjoy their good time, then you probably do still need to exhibit—oh, no. I'll say you do need to exhibit self-control, uh, and not do that. Because there is no excuse for

violating someone else's personal space, putting someone else in danger, putting yourself in danger, or in any way kind of ruining someone else's experience just because you're, quote unquote, "having fun."

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: That's not a thing, so don't do that. Be respectful.

Teresa: Here's a great way to celebrate – go on a shamrock hunt! Try and see— I mean, don't go in anybody's yard or trespass on private property, but go see if you can find some three-leaf clover looking things!

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: That would be fun. I mean, there wouldn't be any candy in it, because that's the Easter egg hunt that Bebe's only interested in.

Travis: It's the only thing Bebe wants. Sometimes we just take candy we were gonna give her anyway, and just put it in eggs.

Teresa: [laughing] And then hide it in the living room!

Travis: And hide it in the living room.

Teresa: She loves it!

Travis: But then she's like, "Can you help me find it?" And it's like, "I know where they are. I hid them. This is defeating the whole purpose."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I will also say, this is one of those holidays that I wish this would catch on more, which is, man, there's some really good food, uh, like dishes out of Ireland.

Teresa: Sure!

Travis: Like, this could easily become a cooking holiday along the same lines of like, a Thanksgiving of like, you have your friends over for a St. Patrick's Day feast. That's what it should be.

Teresa: That would be yummy. You're gonna make one.

Travis: I mean, that's what I do now. Uh, cabbage is great when you make it right, folks. And like, colcannon is great, and corned beef is great, or like bacon, which is what it would be if you were in Ireland, because—listen to our episode.

Teresa: Listen to our episode.

Travis: But, easily. It could be a cooking holiday, for sure.

Teresa: I have to mention this, because I was gob smacked.

Travis: Oh! Someone smacked your gob?

Teresa: The Guinness World Record for largest clover is a 54-leaf clover found in Japan in 2019!

Travis: Get out of the town!

Teresa: 54!

Travis: There is an episode of *Futurama* in which he finds a septuple-leaf clover, with seven leaves.

Teresa: Septuple, yeah.

Travis: And I always thought that was just a joke. I didn't know that it went beyond four.

Teresa: Totally.

Travis: I didn't know they made them that big. That's, uh, ridiculous. So you have to think that whoever was counting got to like, five, and went, "I should get some more eyes on this."

Teresa: [laughing] Maybe! And I'm not quite sure if it was intentionally cultivated, or if it was happened upon.

Travis: I hope not! We shouldn't have that power.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: That should not be a power human beings possess, that's too much. Only God should be able to create a 54-leaf clover. What was the record before that? Because if it was 4, that's a huge jump and we should all be worried.

Teresa: Um, I'd have to do some further research on that.

Travis: I hope it was 53, because otherwise, what's happening over there?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Oh, boy. Alright, so that's gonna do it for us. Thank you so much for joining us, thank you so much Alex, for helping with research. And I said it before and I'll say it again, um. We love you very much here at *Shmanners* HQ, and what we want is for you to be safe, we want you to make safe choices.

Listen, your mom and dad love you very much, and we want you to make safe choices. We want you to have fun, of course we do. We had fun when we were your age! But we want you to be responsible and make good choices. Do not drink and drive. Do not get in a car with someone else if they've been drinking.

We have so many options these days of ways to drive safely, even if you're inebriated. You can call a friend, you can call a Lyft, you can call a taxi, whatever is the case. Do not, do not, do not drive drunk. And you can always just call me. I'll come pick you up wherever you are.

Teresa: Uh, it's a—it's a pandemic still, so.

Travis: Oh, you're right, you're right. Okay. Don't do that. Uh, we want to say thank you to MaximumFun.org. Speaking of which, the MaxFunDrive is gonna be coming up before you know it and let me tell you, folks, we've got some pretty good stuff in the chamber. You're gonna love it. Uh, keep sending in your idiom ideas to us.

Teresa: Mm-hmm!

Travis: We've got some pretty good ones that we're very excited about. Uh, we wanna say, go check out all the other McElroy family podcasts, you can find all those projects at McElroy.family.

I've been streaming over on Twitch and I'm having a wonderful, lovely time, using all of the manners I've learned from my wife. I've been doing cocktail parties and stuff and trying to be a good host. You can find that at Twitch.tv/thetravismcelroy. Uh, what else?

Teresa: We always thank Brent "Brental Floss" 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. @shmannerscast is where we get all of our listener questions when we have topics for questions.

Thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover banner of our fan-run Facebook group, *Shmanners Fanners*. Go ahead and join that group if you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans. And, uh, once again, shmannerscast@gmail.com is where we get all of our topics!

Travis: And, uh, don't forget to go over to mcelroymerch.com and check out all the fun merch there, including the pin of the month for the McElroy family, which is "it's sausage to me," based on our idioms episodes and that goes to benefit Feeding Texas, the largest hunger relief organization in Texas, so go check that out.

Uh, 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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