

## Shmanners 255: Pranks

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[*Sawbones* theme music plays]

**Travis:** Hello, welcome to *Sawbones*, a marital tour of misguided medicine. I'm your cohost Justin McElroy.

**Teresa:** And I'm Sydnee McElroy.

[pause]

**Travis:** Gotcha!

**Teresa:** [laughs] No, it's not. It's *Shmanners*.

[*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:** Happy April the Fools Today.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Today, when you are listening to this, it will be April 2nd.

**Teresa:** That's right, double fools.

**Travis:** Oh, whoa!

**Teresa:** Yeah, it's a super— It's a multi-layered prank.

**Travis:** That's why I like to do my pranks on May 16th.

**Teresa:** [giggles]

**Travis:** No one sees 'em coming! Can I tell you something? Until about 20 minutes ago, I forgot it was April Fool's Day.

**Teresa:** Aw, well. I think that, um, we have a lot of things that we do during the day, so setting up a prank while you have young children is, I would say, difficult.

**Travis:** You know, having a baby is kind of the ultimate prank on oneself.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** You know what I mean?

**Teresa:** The prank that keeps on giving.

**Travis:** Yeah, surprise! There's a tiny person yelling at you all the time!

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** What is that bodily fluid? No one knows! Gotcha!

**Teresa:** At this point in time, it's drool.

**Travis:** So much drool. Teething! Woo boy, woo boy!

**Teresa:** Do you want to share any classic pranks you have pulled or been pulled on?

**Travis:** Uh, what?

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Oh, okay! Um, there's a couple that spring to mind. Uh, there was one where I was fairly young and I can't remember if it was me or one of my brothers, but we thought it was really funny to like, reset clocks in the house. And then we ended up being late for school. My parents did not find it funny.

**Teresa:** Oh, yeah.

**Travis:** There was one; it was not on April Fool's Day. It was actually on, um, it was on New Year's Eve/New Year's Day. And this is when everybody was very worried about Y2K.

**Teresa:** Uh-huh.

**Travis:** Which, only people 22 years or older, maybe even older than that, maybe 25 years or older will even know what I'm talking about. But on New Year's Eve my dad snuck away and when it clicked over to midnight, he flipped the main breaker of the house.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And he killed all the lights and power and everything. And it was pretty good! It was a pretty solid bit.

**Teresa:** That's pretty good! The only one I can recall is I remember, at one point, spending the night at my friend's house and in the morning, her mom served us Rice Krispies and, you know, if you've had plain Rice Krispies, you know what makes it better. Sugar!

**Travis:** Sugar!

**Teresa:** Right? But instead of the sugar bowl, she had filled it with salt. So she put the sugar bowl on the table with the salt in it and we salted our Rice Krispies and then took a bite and went, "blegh!" Right? But she didn't mind wasting the food, so.

**Travis:** Yeah! Listen, that's not bad. I think the problem is I am, in general— Well, here's the thing. I was about to say I'm not wild about pranks, but that's not true. The problem is that I think many people are just not good at them, right?

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** I like a good prank. I like a prank that gets you and, you know, that kind of thing. Oh, man. I love those. I love doing them and I love having them done to me.

**Teresa:** Silly pranks is what we like.

**Travis:** Well, yeah. Not even that. Just like, effective, well-executed...

**Teresa:** ... but not mean.

**Travis:** No, correct. That's the thing is, and I think we'll talk more about this, there are some things that are just cruel and not funny that are not really pranks. It's just like a mean thing to do. Like, "I slashed your tires! Ha ha!"

**Teresa:** That's not a prank.

**Travis:** That's not a prank! What are you doing?

**Teresa:** Okay, so, this topic was suggested by fanner Jen O. Thank you, Jen!

**Travis:** [simultaneously] Thanks, Jen!

**Teresa:** Okay, let's start off with some history. Pranks are one of those things that until, like, a prank was published, we don't know exactly when the first prank was and they probably weren't published every time there was a prank, right?

**Travis:** Oh, no. Absolutely not. Can you imagine a cave person being like, "Don't look now, there's a wooly mammoth outside!" And like, "What? Wait a minute, there's not a wooly mammoth outside. Why did you do that?" "I don't know!"

**Teresa:** [laughing] "Could have been!"

**Travis:** "I had the impulse to tell you something that I guess wasn't and then you looked and I'm laughing now. Huh."

**Teresa:** Um, some historians believe that April Fool's Day, the actual day, dates back to France in the middle ages. So the Council of Trent in 1563, which was a Catholic gathering meant to counteract the Protestant Reformation.

**Travis:** [groans] Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** Um, what does this have to do with April Fool's Day?

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

**Teresa:** One of the things that they decided to do, was they decided to switch from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** The Gregorian one is the one we use today.

**Travis:** Correct.

**Teresa:** Um, but you know, it took a little bit of time to complete the shift.

**Travis:** Yeah, at this point you couldn't just, like, post on your Facebook like, "Hey, we're shifting to Gregorian!" Like, you've got to spread the news.

**Teresa:** Exactly. Um, and so, like today, the Gregorian calendar starts the year on January 1st, but the Julian calendar began the New Year around the spring equinox.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** Which is around the time of April 1st, so people who continued to celebrate the New Year during the last week of March and through April became the butt of jokes and hoaxes and they were dubbed April Fools.

**Travis:** Okay. That's not very nice.

**Teresa:** Well, here's another thing about France. They still call the day Poisson d'avril.

**Travis:** Fish of evil.

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** No?

**Teresa:** D'avril.

**Travis:** Devil Fish.

**Teresa:** No, April. Fish of April.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Teresa:** April fish! Uh, because during this period in history, a gullible person was referred to as a fish, meaning they were easily, quote, "caught" in the deception, right?

**Travis:** [enthusiastic] Ohh!

**Teresa:** Right? So it's tradition that people place paper fish on the backs of their friends, um...

**Travis:** Way better than "kick me" signs, if you ask me.

**Teresa:** Yeah. And whenever people discover it, they are dubbed the Poisson d'avril.

**Travis:** Oh— See? That's a funny. That's a funny prank. Nobody gets hurt and you get a paper fish on your back. Now, this is— I think the reason I said it feels a little mean is it feels like, "Hey, we've all decided to switch calendars. We didn't tell you, but now I guess we're picking on you."

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** You know what I mean? Feels a little mean.

**Teresa:** Well, I think it's just one of the things that people in power decide is fine.

**Travis:** Sure. Also seems a little bit, maybe I'm reading into it, but a little bit of that Christian rebranding.

**Teresa:** A little bit.

**Travis:** Of like, "Oh, the vernal equinox, huh? Uh, no, that's not a thing anymore. Now, New Year's Eve is soon after Christmas."

**Teresa:** Mm. Could even go back even older than the middle ages, all the way back to ancient Roman festivals.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** So there was a popular festival at the end of March which involved dressing up in disguises and mocking your other fellow citizens. This sounds a lot like the Feast of Fools that is depicted in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, the Disney movie.

**Travis:** Oh, yes, yes, yes. Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** Yeah, it does.

**Travis:** And it feels— This feels like a very Roman thing as you're describing it to me.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** A chance to let go of the little bit of morals that the Romans had at the time sounds great.

**Teresa:** Um, another theory is that April Fool's Day is still to do with the Spring equinox and that the "fool" part of the day is connected to Mother Nature fooling people with changing and unpredictable Spring weather. I believe that, because today it snowed.

**Travis:** That is true. That is true, here in Cincinnati it snowed today. You know, here's the thing, I wish it was the opposite. This is Travis's alternate history corner.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Where I wish that the April Fool was more like the jester, right? That is, he is the April Fool kind of thing where that person is the one going around being a trickster, rather than having tricks played upon them.

**Teresa:** Ah.

**Travis:** In fact, we're gonna start rebranding it now. This is the great Travis rebrand now. From now on, if you play the trick, you are an April Fool. Rather than making fun of someone else, you're just making fun.

**Teresa:** So, regardless of the origin, it really started to spread around during the 18th century.

**Travis:** Can I tell you— I thought that, having not done any research because that's not my part of the show, I thought that the origin was gonna be a lot more along the lines of, like, trick or treat and Halloween where it was gonna be like, "Listen, everybody's playing jokes all the time,



everybody's big on pranks. We're gonna give them one day where it's just, like, this is the day to be silly. Get it out of your system and get back to work."

**Teresa:** What's that day called in, like, movies and TV when you can commit any crime on that one day?

**Travis:** *The Purge?*

**Teresa:** *The Purge!* [laughs]

**Travis:** You think— Oh! You know, I— Yeah, April Fool's Day is like *The Purge* for pranks. Prank purge. You're right, you nailed it.

**Teresa:** Okay, so in Scotland, the tradition became a two-day event. The first day was Hunting the Gowk.

**Travis:** What?

**Teresa:** Well, the Gowk is a cuckoo bird and it's also Scottish slang for someone who is foolish.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** So on this day, people would send their friends or employees on phony errands as a joke.

**Travis:** Oh! So this is like a snipe hunt or a wild goose chase.

**Teresa:** Yeah! Or a fool's errand.

**Travis:** A fool's errand, as they say in French.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm. Second day of the Scottish April Fool's is called Taily Day which is about—

**Travis:** Then the Gowk hunts you!

**Teresa:** ... butts.

**Travis:** Oh, it's about butts?

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** In what way?

**Teresa:** Well, you might pin a fake tail on somebody's pants, um, and—

**Travis:** So it's literally just about drawing attention to butts?

**Teresa:** Well, this is probably, I mean, according to the History Channel, this is where "kick me" signs started.

**Travis:** Oh! Okay. Not a good prank, by the way. Kick me— No, no, no.

**Teresa:** Yeah, I'm not a fan.

**Travis:** I just don't like having my butt kicked. Who does? Well, I mean, there's probably some people out there who like having their butt kicked.

**Teresa:** Let's agree that there are plenty of terrible pranks.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Here are a few from a newspaper in the 1800s.

**Travis:** Terrible ones?

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Are these, like, "Hey, don't do these anymore?"

**Teresa:** Yeah, don't do these.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, so, these were compiled by a writer named Matt Novak and it was published on Gizmodo.com in 2015. One man convinced his sleeping wife there was a fire.

**Travis:** Oh, boy.

**Teresa:** Another placed a dummy over train tracks nearly causing an accident.

**Travis:** Yeah, that's not great.

**Teresa:** One ginormous jerk blinded his cook.

**Travis:** [gasps]

**Teresa:** By replacing the pepper with gunpowder.

**Travis:** Oh, man. No!

**Teresa:** This is, like... all of those things are bad. Don't cause people bodily harm, okay? Um, the one incident that was strangely controversial and I think it's just because of the way that media works today, but in 1957, the BBC broadcasted a story showing a family in southern Switzerland harvesting bushels of pasta from the family's spaghetti tree. [laughs]

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** And I think if we saw this today, we'd be like what is this news anchor doing? This is a dumb, dumb story, it's not real, obviously.

**Travis:** Wait, it was controversial because people bought it?

**Teresa:** Yeah!

**Travis:** Oh, what? Come on!

**Teresa:** I think it's fairly comedic, but think about the time, right? In the 1950s, the TV had just really reached mainstream media households and stuff.

**Travis:** [simultaneously] I guess, yeah.

**Teresa:** So, they also didn't actually have a lot of spaghetti at this point. It was right after World War II, they had just come out of rationing.

**Travis:** People just didn't know where spaghetti came from.

**Teresa:** People didn't know and there were— Several people called in to the BBC for advice on obtaining and cultivating their own spaghetti trees and when it was revealed that the trusted news source had lied to them, people were very upset.

**Travis:** Okay. Well, you were probably upset because you were a little embarrassed.

**Teresa:** Probably.

**Travis:** This is— Okay. Listen. [pause] That's not a mean prank, though. That to me, is like, if you get upset about this then it's probably because you're embarrassed and you don't like that you fell for it.

It didn't hurt anybody, it didn't cost anybody any money, and it wasn't like, scientific misinformation that led to, say, a pandemic, right?

**Teresa:** Sure.

**Travis:** It was just like, for a little bit, there were some people who believed that spaghetti grew on trees.

**Teresa:** Well, let's swing it the other way. At this point, people advised that you not, like, drop any very important news on April Fool's Day.

**Travis:** Oh, yeah.

**Teresa:** Because people might consider it false, just because it came out on April 1st.

**Travis:** Yeah, this is— So, Griffin and Rachel, uh, had their baby. Gus is doing great. But there's a reason I bring this up. Originally, the date was supposed to be April 1st, was the due date.

**Teresa:** Oh, okay.

**Travis:** And it was like, "Oh, no." But he came on Tuesday, so everything's fine. It's true! It's all true!

**Teresa:** In 1946, there were warnings that went out to Hawaii and Alaska about a tsunami and many disregarded the warning as an April Fool's Day joke and it—

**Travis:** Oh, it was real.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Oh, boy.

**Teresa:** It was real and it was fatal for a lot of people.

**Travis:** Once again, that would be about where I'd go to break but, no, no, no.

**Teresa:** Okay. Here's one that we can break after.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** National Geographic in 2016 issued a sincere apology for its treatment of animals. And they shocked Twitter when they announced it saying, "This media group says that it will no longer degrade animals by showing photos of them without clothes."

**Travis:** [snorts]

**Teresa:** And any readers who clicked on the link were sent an April Fool's Day message, complete with a gallery of adorably dressed puppies and kittens.

**Travis:** That's pretty great. Okay, that's pretty great. Okay. Now, a thank you note for our sponsors.

[theme music plays]

**Teresa:** *Shmanners* is sponsored in part this week by She's Birdie. Before you leave the house and you do your checklist for your phone, your keys, your wallet, it's time to add one more thing before you walk out the door.

Birdie is the newest essential addition to your routine. It is a personal safety alarm that is easy to carry and simple to use. When it's activated, the alarm will emit a loud siren and a flashing light to help deter an attack by people or animals or just let people know where you are.

Birdie is no danger to you, so you can feel confident using it and it comes in fun colors so it can kind of match what you're wearing, what you're doing. Hang it on your purse, it comes in a very pretty pink to go with my pink purse.

**Travis:** Or hang it on your bill. Hang it on— I don't know.

**Teresa:** Your keychain.

**Travis:** Get a cool necklace, wear it on a cool necklace.

**Teresa:** Sure! And She's Birdie is offering our listeners 15% off their first purchase when you go to [ShesBirdie.com/Shmanners](https://ShesBirdie.com/Shmanners). That's ShesBirdie, spelled S-H-E-S-B-I-R-D-I-E, .com/Shmanners, to support our show and get 15% off.

**Travis:** Now, every day, you must ask yourself a very difficult question. "What do I want for dinner?"

**Teresa:** [groans] The other day I was like, "Man, I wish my mom would make me dinner, but I'm an adult."

**Travis:** We've been adults for a while now.

**Teresa:** [crosstalk]

**Travis:** Oh, boy. Well, you know, in many ways DoorDash is kind of like your mom.

**Teresa:** Okay!

**Travis:** DoorDash— Well, DoorDash won't make the food for you, but DoorDash will go to the restaurant that you want to order the food from and bring it to you.

**Teresa:** Somebody's mom might have...

**Travis:** Somebody's mom! It was made by somebody.

**Teresa:** Okay. [laughs]

**Travis:** Okay. We can start there. But here's the thing; you already know about DoorDash for, like, dinner and lunch and breakfast and brunch and linner and all those things. But what about, like, deodorant?

**Teresa:** Oh!

**Travis:** What about, like, some candy? Yeah, they've got it all. You can find places, not just restaurants, but some shops on there too, on DoorDash. And they'll connect you, get you the food you love, including now, grocery essentials. You can get drinks and snacks, other household items delivered in about under an hour.

Ordering is easy, you just open the DoorDash app, choose what you want from where you want it and your items will be left safely outside your door with the contactless delivery drop off setting. So for a limited time, our listeners can get 25% off and zero delivery fees in their first order of \$15 or

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[music plays]

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**Speaker 1:** Humphrey Bogart was never in therapy. And then my dad said, "Yeah, but he smoked a carton of cigarettes a day, so he *was* in therapy."

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[music stops]

**Travis:** Teresa, can I tell you, just right off the bat—

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** ... two pranks, kinds of pranks, that I think people should not do?

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** The one is, like, the fake pregnancy or the fake divorce. I think we've talked about that before.



**Teresa:** Fake engagement. All that stuff.

**Travis:** Not wild about that. The other one is any prank that involves, like, pulling off people's clothing.

**Teresa:** Ah.

**Travis:** Yeah. That's a thing. Pantsing, sharking is a horrible thing. It's anything like that. That's bad. Do not do that for so, so many reasons. There's lots of other pranks you can't do, but those two just kind of jumped out and stuck in my brain.

**Teresa:** Alex wanted to put a little spotlight on her mom who is a—

**Travis:** Alex wants us to prank her mom?

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Oh.

**Teresa:** She wants to show that her mother, Linda, is a pranking genius.

**Travis:** Oh, boy. Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, and I love all these pranks. These are great ideas. She expertly crafted ice cream and cake to look like eggs and toast.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Uh, she—

**Travis:** The fake cake that doesn't look like cake is very big right now.

**Teresa:** Very big. I think that's a great idea. Uh, rigged the door to Alex's bedroom to completely avalanche her and the hallway in packing peanuts.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Made a life-size dummy of herself reading the newspaper so when Alex's brother and Alex would come to talk, they would just be talking to nobody. [laughs]

**Travis:** Pretty good. This is pretty good.

**Teresa:** In that same vein, here are some good tips for pranking. Go for confusion, not cruelty. I think that's a great idea.

**Travis:** Well, that makes me think, if I may, we have a question here from Sam.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** "Are weird pranks that just center around being weird, i.e. filling someone's room with Sharpie markers, funny/good?" In my opinion? Yes, for two reasons. I like weird. I like Sharpies.

**Teresa:** [laughs] That's a lot of Sharpies.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Maybe something bigger. Balloons is a great choice.

**Travis:** Balloons is great. You could— I mean, somewhere between Sharpies and balloons. Like ball pit balls?

**Teresa:** Oh, yeah.

**Travis:** Here's the thing. Uh, and I think we'll kind of come back to this a lot as we answer questions talking about tips. It's much like any form of comedy. It's about knowing your audience, right?

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** Like, I have many friends— Like, my brothers for example, right? I think a weird prank would land better on Justin than it would on Griffin,

right? Griffin— When Griffin gets confused, it's not— I mean, it's funny to me.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But it's not funny to him, right? And if you're aiming for something that is, like, everybody's getting a laugh out of this, even if they are the butt of the joke, then I think it's about reading your audience.

**Teresa:** I agree. I think that along that same line, so, you think about why you're pranking before you prank. Are you genuinely trying to make someone laugh? Or you don't like that person and maybe you hope that they'll suffer a little bit?

**Travis:** Mm-hmm. That's not really a prank.

**Teresa:** That's it. That's not a prank, don't do that, okay?

**Travis:** Listen, if you want to exact your vengeance against your rivals, that's your business. But don't label it a prank. Don't besmirch the good name of prank.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm. And similarly, don't target anyone that you don't know really well. We talked about pranking your brothers.

**Travis:** [simultaneously] Yeah, that was a question from Gustavo. "Is it ever acceptable to prank someone you don't even know?"

**Teresa:** No, it is not. That is— That's mean, is what that is.

**Travis:** Here's what I will say. When we were talking about the BBC, though, right? Doing the spaghetti thing which I don't have a problem with, that's pranking people they don't know. But I think—

**Teresa:** But it's not targeted at one specific person they don't know.

**Travis:** Yeah. I think that there is— Okay, here's what I'll say. I'm gonna take a bold stance here.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** I think there is a form of this where it could be like the, you know, an on-the-street thing, where it's, like, a sign you have posted that is confusing or makes people do a double take, or something like that.

I think you could, like, play a joke on a stranger that they might get surprised and just laugh it off, right? But I think it is an expert-level maneuver to do that and not to be attempted by the amateur.

**Teresa:** I agree.

**Travis:** Like to the point where— [laughs] When we were workshopping the *My Brother, My Brother & Me* TV show, when we were developing it, uh, a couple times the studio said, "What about a prank segment?" And we're like, "We should not do that."

**Teresa:** Nope.

**Travis:** That is not something the McElroy brothers should do, trust me.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Um, and along that, if something goes wrong or it doesn't land, it's important that you take responsibility for yourself and what you've done, okay? You did the thing, so you have to claim the thing.

You know, like, even if you— Even if it's funny, be ready to help clean up if you Post-it Note somebody or if you, like, Christmas wrap all of their office supplies or whatever. Be available to help clean up, okay? Don't just, like, run away.

**Travis:** Um, we have some other questions here. Uh, let's see. This one is from Elliot. "How do you let someone know that pranks aren't fun for you without them taking that as an invitation to prank you more?"

**Teresa:** Hmm. I think that this is about a cultivated relationship.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Right? Um, if you say that to someone on April 1st, "Pranks aren't funny to me, I don't like it. Don't do it to me." Mm. That's not the right time. Maybe as you get to know someone, like, Travis knows I don't like surprises.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** I don't want to be surprised with trips, I don't want to be surprised with parties, none of that stuff. Travis knows. I don't like surprises. So, pranks are probably— They're along there, really.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Um, so it's about the relationship you've cultivated.

**Travis:** It's also I think about the delivery. We've talked about this a lot, like, asking for what you want and, like, for example, if someone tries to make you play sports and you don't want to play and you do the, "Oh, I don't know..."

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** Then that seems like you want— So if you're like, "Oh, pranks. Uh, I don't know..." That seems like an invitation.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Where if you said like, "Hey, I want you to know, April Fool's Day is coming up and we just started hanging out or whatever. I want you to know pranks make me really uncomfortable and, like, doing them—" You know, however you want to phrase it.

**Teresa:** Yeah, yeah.

**Travis:** That you can clearly set the expectation instead of trying to couch it. But you don't have to be severe about it. You don't have to be like, [aggressively] "Hey, I know you love doing jokes. You do that on me? Out the door buddy."

I think you can just say, like, "Hey, please don't. It makes me really uncomfortable." And that kind of thing, you know what I mean?

**Teresa:** I agree.

**Travis:** Let's see. This is from Honeybee. "What do you find are the best pranks to make everyone involved laugh?"

**Teresa:** Here are some great ideas for pranks! Hiding something ridiculous or silly in very specific places to be discovered later.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** Like, little figurines or, like, a place you wouldn't naturally find it. Like a shoe in the refrigerator or whatever, right? Things like that. Um, also, [laughs] a good one is freezing cereal and milk in the bowl the night before and serving it to someone who then can't get their spoon through. I think that would be fun. That's again, another waste of food, which is toeing the line.

**Travis:** The unexpected, right? This is the thing of like— I think that the cleverly unexpected, that's the difference, right? Because I think that a lot of people will be like, "Oh, it's just the unexpected, so you can just jump out and yell at someone." Which, don't get me wrong. I've nailed that one once or twice.

**Teresa:** The jump scare!

**Travis:** I used to work in a haunted house, folks. But I mean, just like, slapping someone in the face or whatever. It's unexpected, but it's not clever.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** Right? But if you, instead, like swapped all of the stuff out of kitchen drawers for someone's clothes drawers and you put, like, their socks where the spoons go and the spoons where their socks go.

That kind of thing, well done enough that you kind of shuffled all the drawers one room to the right? That could really land. And then be willing to help them move everything back.

**Teresa:** Right. Alex suggested several times, gluing googly eyes to everything in the refrigerator.

**Travis:** That's pretty good, too.

**Teresa:** That is good because you'd be very surprised and it would be fun to see all the little things, but it doesn't spoil any food if you glue the googly eyes to it.

**Travis:** There was one prank that I did in college that I'm now remembering. There was this guy on our dorm floor named Zack and he left for the weekend to go home, I think.

And so we took the doors off his dorm closet and attached them around the bed to make, like, an opening and decorated it to look like a castle. And we took, like, Tupperware containers and laid it in front of it to make a moat and we took the red carpets that were in the entryway of the, like, dorm building and we stole them.

Temporarily, we returned them. And then we laid them down the hallway as a red carpet, leading up to his room and so when he got back, he went into his room and saw the castle and turned around and we were all wearing t-shirts that had his face on it and a bunch of different sayings on it.

And mine said, "Zack is for lovers." And there was just a bunch of different stuff. One guy had, like, ironed on his face onto a pair of boxers and was just wearing boxers. And so, that was just a thing. We made little flags with his face on them. And he just turned around—

**Teresa:** But you were there to help clean it up, right?

**Travis:** Like, yeah. I mean, eventually.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I mean, for a while, he just slept in his castle bed.

**Teresa:** Uh, this is a classic, great one. Go and buy a leek from the grocery store and put it under the sink and then ask someone they love if they could check the leak under the sink.

**Travis:** This is so silly.

**Teresa:** [giggling]

**Travis:** This is so silly. You know what? I'm gonna say another— Well, I guess you shouldn't prank call strangers, but I think a well-executed prank call can be very funny.

Not just a mean prank call, but like a good, solid is-your-refrigerator-running-then-you-better-go-catch-it, those kind of things I think are solid jokes. Solid jokes.

**Teresa:** I like it.

**Travis:** Okay, I think that's gonna do it for us. Thank you so much, folks. Thank you for joining us. Go check out all the new merch at the McElroy merch store. Go to [McElroyMerch.com](https://McElroyMerch.com). We've got a new pin of the month over there for April, it's a really cute, like, farm wisdom cow thing pin.

Farm wisdom is a bit from *My Brother, My Brother & Me*, but that's not important because what is important is the purchase of that pin benefits the AAPI Civic Engagement fund which supports efforts by local community-based organizations to combat violence and hate.

There's also a new *Adventure Zone* shirt over there, uh, that has the logo and it's available on black or tie-dye.

**Teresa:** [gasps]

**Travis:** Yeah.



**Teresa:** I love tye-dye!

**Travis:** I'll get one of those for you. And we've got *The Adventure Zone: Crystal Kingdom* graphic novel is available for preorder now over at [TheAdventureZoneComic.com](http://TheAdventureZoneComic.com). It comes out July 13th, 2021. Uh, let's see. Thank you, [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org), our podcast home.

**Teresa:** And keep a look out for MaxFunDrive info!

**Travis:** That's right, coming soon! Let's see, what else? Who else do we thank, Teresa?

**Teresa:** We always thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Also, we thank Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art. That's where we got all those excellent questions, uh, @ShmannersCast.

Um, and then we thank Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, *Shmanners Fanners*. If you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, go ahead and join that group today. We are continually taking topic suggestions. We are continually taking idioms to discuss. You can submit those at our email, which is [ShmannersCast@gmail.com](mailto:ShmannersCast@gmail.com).

**Travis:** And don't forget to follow us on Twitter, @ShmannersCast. Thank you to everybody who submitted questions for this episode. We'll have more of those questions and prompts for questions soon. So that's gonna do it for us. 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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