

## Shmanners 293: New Year Trees

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**Travis:** [singing] Oh New Year's tree, oh New Year's tree, I didn't know you were a thing.

**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:** Happy New Year.

**Teresa:** Thank you. And welcome back.

**Travis:** I can't believe we haven't spoken yet this year.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Oh.

**Teresa:** Well, we don't— we don't interact outside of this booth.

**Travis:** That is true. I don't talk with my family unless it's recorded, and that extends to my wife, and sadly my children, who I don't do a podcast with, and I've never spoken with. Speaking of, just for the record, happy birthday, Dot. When you listen to this, it'll— well, you're hopefully way older. But everyone else listening to this...

**Teresa:** When this comes out, tomorrow...

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** ... it will be her birthday.

**Travis:** It will be her second birthday. So I wanna get right to it, because I know that the topic is New Year's trees.

**Teresa:** Right, because you read that on the copy.

**Travis:** Correct. And that is all I know.

**Teresa:** Well, I would like to start with our own families. Talk to me about the Christmas Tree in your house growing up. When did it go up? When did it go down? All that kind of stuff.

**Travis:** I wanna say the general vibe that I feel about that is, like, shortly after Thanksgiving... so, like, either the last few days of November or the first few days of December it would go up. And then... uh, usually within, I would say, two weeks of Christmas, so within, like, the first week of January it would go down. Now, once again, I am remembering this... one, I have a bad memory. But two, I probably am at least ten years old when I at all remember any of this.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** So who knows how long my parents left it up when they had, like, a six-year-old, a three-year-old, and a baby.

**Teresa:** Right, yeah.

**Travis:** They were probably just like, "I don't care."

**Teresa:** [laughs] You had real trees then though, right?

**Travis:** Yeah. Let it compost here in the living room.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** A new tree will grow from its leavings.

**Teresa:** Um, so for me, my family, we grew up practicing Catholics. And one of the things—

**Travis:** But you never got good enough at it to go pro.

**Teresa:** Wah, wah, wah. Um, one of the things that my mother was very insistent about is that Christmas isn't over until the three wise men get there. So the— it's called, in the Catholic Church at least, it's called Epiphany, right?

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** So, you have your little nativity scene, right? And you don't add those three wise men until January... is it 6th? Yeah, January 6th, so today.

**Travis:** So today, when we're recording this. Okay. 'Cause they were late.

**Teresa:** You can— you can move them around the room, getting closer and closer, if you're really into it. And I feel— I feel like a couple of years she did that.

**Travis:** So like a low-stakes elf on the shelf.

**Teresa:** Uh, I suppose.

**Travis:** Yeah. Move 'em around and look for 'em. What do they do? I don't know.

**Teresa:** Well, because— because, you know, the— if you remember the song, "We Three Kings," right?

**Travis:** I— I know of the Chri—

**Teresa:** They have to travel.

**Travis:** And I know!

**Teresa:** Okay, well you're looking at me!

**Travis:** I also grew up in a church!

**Teresa:** Well, did you guys celebrate epiphany?

**Travis:** No, but I know the wise men's deal. Frankincense, myrrh, gold, for a kid. Ugh.

**Teresa:** Yeah, okay. They bring him that because he's a king.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** Anyway, anyway, whatever.

**Travis:** But he probably would've liked the garbage that it came in—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** —if my experience is anything. Just give 'em a box.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** They'll love that.

**Teresa:** So, my mom always maintained that it had to stay up, it had to be up... by Christmas Eve, and stay up until the 6th.

**Travis:** I saw a really great TikTok the other day of, like, on Jesus's first birthday Mary, like, waiting for the wise men to show up again with more stuff.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And Joseph going, like, "I think it was just the first one, Mary."

**Teresa:** [laughs] So... this tradition that I was saying about my mom and Epiphany is actually a very longstanding European tradition.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** And some of our non-Catholic listeners might know it as the 12 days of Christmas.

**Travis:** Oh, sure, sure, sure. With the, uh... with the bird and the tree and the rings.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** And the maids, and the geese.

**Teresa:** Sure. That's—

**Travis:** Swans?

**Teresa:** I mean, that's the song. But there— you know, there used to be a whole big, like, celebration of the 12 days of Christmas.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** And that's the reasoning, is that the 12 days in between Christmas and the 6th are when, you know, the celebration continued.

**Travis:** Okay!

**Teresa:** Party all night.

**Travis:** Why did we stop doing that? That sounds fun. Uh, exhausting.

**Teresa:** Well, I mean, it depends on who— which 'we' you're talking about.

**Travis:** I mean specifically me, Travis McElroy. Why don't I do that?

**Teresa:** Well, because, uh, the United States is a very Puritanical nation.

**Travis:** Oh, sure, sure, sure.

**Teresa:** And so even, like, the whole— I mean, we've talked about this. Even, like, the whole thing about Christmas has a lot of pagan incorporation, right? Coming down from the date, right?

**Travis:** The solstice.

**Teresa:** The solstice. And, like, all of the trees and the holly and the— you know, all that kind of stuff is also pagan incorporation.

So, uh, that's— that's why.

**Travis:** They were like, "That's too much partying. No more of this. It's about Jesus, and Coca-Cola now."

**Teresa:** [hesitantly] Yes.

**Travis:** Probably— the Puritans probably didn't do the Coca-Cola part. Okay, so that's why we don't do that here.

**Teresa:** That's why we don't do it here, although it has been celebrated for— since the beginning for Germanic and Celtic nations.

**Travis:** Is that why? 'Cause your family's got a lot of German in it, right? Is that—

**Teresa:** Oh yeah.

**Travis:** —like, why your mom does it?

**Teresa:** No, my mom does it because it's Catholic.

**Travis:** Oh, okay, great. So... what does that have to do with New Year's trees? How is that different from a Christmas tree, right? It sounds like the same thing.

**Teresa:** It— I mean, it is kind of the same thing. But if we're— if we're talking about pagan roots, there was the Christmas tree—

**Travis:** The trees got 'em.

**Teresa:** Ehh.

**Travis:** Ehh.

**Teresa:** Which was for the winter solstice.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Right? And then there's the New Year's part, which is kind of like the Gregorian Calendar New Year.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** Um, so it— it kind of is a little muddy in that area. But as far as the history of it, we can trace it back pretty specifically, the New Year's tree specifically, to the moving of imperialist Russia to the Gregorian Calendar.

**Travis:** Okay. Got it.

**Teresa:** [laughs] So, Russia didn't really have Christmas Trees, like I said, because that was kind of a pagan, Celtic, and Germanic thing. But the name of the New Year tree is Yolka.

**Travis:** Okay?

**Teresa:** And what happened was, if you were... okay. Listen to this.

**Travis:** I'm— I— yes, I'm listening!

**Teresa:** You are an unassuming German nobleperson.

**Travis:** Okay. Let me get— let me get—[mumbles unintelligibly]— okay, go on.

**Teresa:** Who loves their Christmas tree—

**Travis:** I love it!

**Teresa:** —and you put it up in your house, in the 17th century.

**Travis:** Oh, my house in the 17th [mumbles unintelligibly].

**Teresa:** If you displayed it in maybe a window...

**Travis:** Oh, put it in the window.

**Teresa:** ... it might have been spied by someone quite famous and powerful in old-timey Europe.

**Travis:** Oh, no. Somebody— it was Shakespeare?

**Teresa:** Nope.

**Travis:** No.

**Teresa:** Peter the Great.

**Travis:** Peter the Great saw me tree!

**Teresa:** Uh, Czar Peter—

**Travis:** Oh, I'm so flattered!

**Teresa:** [laughs] Czar Peter—

**Travis:** What? He's coming inside!

**Teresa:** What?

**Travis:** Oh, he's taking my shoes!

**Teresa:** [through laughter] Okay, wait a minute.

**Travis:** Aww, Peter! Give me my shoes back, man! I can't— ugh, fine.

**Teresa:** Wake up.

[snaps fingers]

**Travis:** Oh, sorry. I got— yeah, I got lost in it. Sorry, sorry, sorry.

**Teresa:** He traveled through Europe with one goal.

**Travis:** Find my shoes.

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Okay.



**Teresa:** To make Russia more European.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Teresa:** Um, he wanted to establish a more traditionally Western tradition in his homeland, believing that this would put them, as Russians, on kind of more of an even playing field with the rest of Europe.

**Travis:** It would make him feel, like, more like, "Oh, Russia and us, we're not that different, you and I."

**Teresa:** Exactly, exactly.

**Travis:** Russia: they're just like us.

**Teresa:** Um, so kicking and screaming, he dragged Russia into the modern era. Um, and—

**Travis:** By listening to *My Brother, My Brother and Me*.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** A podcast for the modern era.

**Teresa:** Uh, and one of those things is changing time itself, because...

**Travis:** The power!

**Teresa:** They were going through the Russian Orthodox Calendar, which actually starts with the birth of Adam.

**Travis:** Oh, that— that's— okay.

**Teresa:** So, like—

**Travis:** That's specific, and also, what?

**Teresa:** What?

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, so for example, in 1699, the year according to the Russian calendar was 7207.

**Travis:** Okay. Big swing there.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Um, Adam? Well, he's been around— the world has been around 7200 years. [pause] Right?

**Teresa:** That's what they're saying.

**Travis:** Okay. Mmkay.

**Teresa:** So, um, he said, "Nope. We're hoppin' in the rest of the time zone with everybody else. Gregorian Calendar starts now." We start New Years, instead of September 1st, which was the old new year, Russian Orthodox from Adam new year, it is now January 1st, like the rest of Europe.

**Travis:** Okay. Got it.

**Teresa:** And so, one of the things that again was part of the European tradition, the Roman tradition specifically, was the fir trees and the, you know, fir branches and all that kind of stuff, right? So, you know, bringing a tree into your house seemed fine.

**Travis:** Sure!

**Teresa:** And people really, you know—

**Travis:** I mean, it's messy, but... sure.

**Teresa:** They jumped on it. Um, and it was, you know, modified over a few hundred years where at first it was like, let's decorate a tree outside, kind of, like, in the village square. And then it was like no, let's, like, line the streets, or maybe we'll bring 'em inside the village hall, or, you know, all that kind of stuff.

And eventually, until about— up until the about, uh, 19th century, when Empress Alexandra, Czar Nicholas I's wife, um, moved the tree into the living room, just like her native country, Prussia.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** And so it was right there, just like my— my German ancestors. [laughs quietly]

**Travis:** I, by the way—

**Teresa:** Right there in the house.

**Travis:** As someone who just loves portmanteaus, I always liked the word Prussia because it sounds like a portmanteau of something and Russia. Like, pretty and Russia, or precious and Russia. "Oh, that's precious Russia. Oh, we'll just say Prussia."

Right? I just like it. I like it. I know that's not the case. It's its own thing. That's what I think about all the time. Just like— well, it's not pronounced this way, but like Arkansas and Kansas. It looks like it's like Ar-Kansas.

**Teresa:** [simultaneously] Ar-Kansas, yeah. [sighs] So, they had a great time for about 50 years, until the Bolshevik Revolution.

**Travis:** And then you know what happened?

**Teresa:** Uh, what—

**Travis:** We wrote some thank you notes to our sponsors!

**Both:** Ahh!

[theme music plays]

**Travis:** Hey there. Hi there. Ho there. How about a three for one New Year's resolution. Reduce food waste, save time on grocery shopping, and eat more fresh and delicious food. Try Imperfect Foods. Imperfect Foods is a grocery delivery service offering an entire line of sustainable groceries that embrace the natural imperfections in food. Visit [imperfectfoods.com](https://imperfectfoods.com) to see if they deliver in

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Join the movement at [imperfectfoods.com](https://imperfectfoods.com), and use the code "shmanners."

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**Laura:** And I'm Laura House.

**Annabelle:** And we're the hosts of *Tiny Victories*.

**Caller 1:** My tiny victory is that I... sewed that button back on, the day after it broke.

**Laura:** We talk about that little thing that you did that's a big deal to you, but nobody else cares.

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**Caller 3:** My victory is that I'm one year cancer free. But my tiny victory is that I took all the cushions off the couch, pounded them out, put them back, and it looks so great.

**Laura:** So if you're like us, and you want to celebrate the tiny achievements of ordinary people, listen to *Tiny Victories!*

**Annabelle:** It's on every Monday on Maximum Fun.

[music and ad end]

[cheerful music plays]

**Dave:** Are you feeling elevated levels of anxiety?

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Do you have disturbing nightmares, only to realize it's two in the afternoon and you're up?

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[music and ad end]

**Travis:** Okay, so there was a revolution.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** And it was revolutionary.

**Teresa:** Indeed. Because along with communism...

**Travis:** It revoluted everything.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm. Came state-sanctioned atheism.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Uh, so their Santa Claus analog, Father Frost, was kaput.

**Travis:** Hmm.

**Teresa:** And, um, then it came for the tree, and then it came— I mean, it basically came for all of these winter celebrations, because when you have official atheism as your—[laughs] as your state's... what do I wanna say, religion?

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** I mean, atheism is the antithesis of religion.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** But it makes sense, if you think about it.

**Travis:** It's a belief system.

**Teresa:** It's a belief system. There we go, that's right. You get rid of Christmas trees. You get rid of Santa. You get rid of New Year's trees. You get rid of any solstice celebration, Jesus birth celebration, 12 days of birthday celebration. You get rid of all of that stuff.

But here's the problem. [laughs quietly]

**Travis:** Uh-huh?

**Teresa:** People love to celebrate!

**Travis:** Yeah!

**Teresa:** They love doing it.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Um, and so they— the Soviet Union took away Christmas, but they couldn't take away people's partying.

**Travis:** Well yeah, yeah!

**Teresa:** So then in 1935, a group of high-ranking officials went to Joseph Stalin and convinced him that the Yolka would be a perfect way to celebrate New Year. So we're not talking about Epiphany anymore.

**Travis:** Yeah! Not it's just a New Year tree.

**Teresa:** Just New Year's. And it had been, you know, thrown out with all of the imperial trash before that. Um, they brought it back—

**Travis:** Left on the side of the road, tinsel still hanging off of it.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Thinking like, "Oh, they'll pick this up, right? Do we need to call somebody to come pick this up, or is this— should we— what do we do with this thing?"

**Teresa:** And it was now a state-sanctioned okey dokey to celebrate—

**Travis:** Well, do you think that that was the terminology—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** —they used, babe?

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** You think Joseph Stalin was like, "I hereby declare this to be... okey dokey."

**Teresa:** [laughs] Yes.

**Travis:** Yeah. You could picture that?

**Teresa:** Yes I— yes I can.

**Travis:** You can picture that happening? "Let it be written! Give me my okey dokey stamp. No, no, no. Not the one that says 'Okay, cool, dude!' The one that says 'Okey dokey.'"

**Teresa:** Anyway.

**Travis:** "It's— yes, it's next to the Bart Simpson stickers that say 'Radical.'"

**Teresa:** Now it was a symbol of happiness and prosperity for the Soviet children.

**Travis:** Oh, good.

**Teresa:** It's— it's for the children.

**Travis:** It's for the children.

**Teresa:** So now they would be made public, there was, um, mandatory adornment. [laughs quietly] By all Soviet peoples. Uh, and would be even topped with the red star for the USSR.

**Travis:** Okay. Got it. I'll bet they had pictures of Stalin on there, right? I bet that that was part of it.

**Teresa:** I mean, I am— I am certain. I'm certain they did.

**Travis:** I just accidentally brushed Teresa's arm—

**Teresa:** [wheeze-laughs]

**Travis:** —and she looked at me like, "What?"



**Teresa:** I thought you—[laughs]

**Travis:** "What?!"

**Teresa:** I thought you were trying to give me some kind of signal.

**Travis:** No! We're in a, like, small box together and my knuckle brushed your arm, might I even say, lovingly? [laughs] Gently? Accidentally?

**Teresa:** Um, and this is actually pretty fun for people who love to party, because the Yolka has now been completely detached from any sort of religion, and it's about good luck and prosperity— well, not good luck. They don't believe in luck, either. But, you know. About the celebration of how great the health of the Soviet Union was.

**Travis:** About it being totally radical.

**Teresa:** Totally radical.

**Travis:** Tubular.

**Teresa:** There's nothing contradictory anymore about lighting the menorah for Hanukkah and then also decorating a tree.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** So this became very popular with Jewish Russians.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And it remains a beloved tradition to this day. On December 26th, the Kremlin unveiled its New Year tree for 2021, which was rumored to have been over 27 feet tall and close to a century old.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** So this tree...

**Travis:** That they cut down.

**Teresa:** ... that they cut down, would've been a sapling in a time where the Christmas trees were banned in Soviet Russia.

**Travis:** But it's dead now.

**Teresa:** Slowly dying, yes.

**Travis:** No, it's dead. Hey, babe? Bad news. Once you cut that bottom piece...

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** ... it's dead!

**Teresa:** Um, so the Western world continues to have its influence in Russia these days. Um, and now there's even a shopping and gift-giving kind of vibe to it, um, the tradition of eating caviar and toasting with vodka for New Year's prosperity. Um, you know, and it's decorated with baubles and candies and a, you know—

**Travis:** Bauble is one of my favorite words.

**Teresa:** —bright red star.

**Travis:** It's such a fun word. Say it again?

**Teresa:** Bauble.

**Travis:** Bauble. Oh, it's fun. You kind of make a fun, weird fishy face when you say it. You can't help. Bauble.

**Teresa:** [laughs] So then this is obviously a big example of European influences.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** But it's not... it's not specific to Russia. Russia kind of welcomed it in. Um, but the Turkish New Year also is now held on January 1st, and it was when the Islamic Calendar was replaced with the Gregorian Calendar. Very similar story.

**Travis:** I tell you what, man. It's hard enough to change your clocks during Daylight Savings time. I can't imagine how hard it is to change a calendar. Gotta

go through with a lot of whiteout and a pencil and just mark everything down.  
[sighs] It was a bad joke. That was so dumb.

**Teresa:** [clears throat]

**Travis:** That was a really dumb thing to say, and I'm so— oh.

**Teresa:** Completely ignoring it. Um, and this— the story is slightly different in the way that in the Turkish tradition, the tree goes up December 1st and comes down February 1st.

**Travis:** Whoa, that's a lot of maintenance!

**Teresa:** I mean, it is, yeah.

**Travis:** I bet when they, like— like, when they were like, "Hey, let's move over to, uh— to, like, fake trees." I bet they saved so much time!

**Teresa:** Oh, totally.

**Travis:** Not just in, like, watering the trees, but just the cleanup. Oh, man. Oh boy.

**Teresa:** Vietnam and China also have a New Year tree tradition, and planting a New Year tree. So this is not the cutting down of, it is the planting and cultivating of. A New Year's tree is custom in the Vietnamese New Year, which also falls on the same day as the Lunar New Year in China, and it's usually late January, early February.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** And this festivity marks the arrival of Spring, and so with it, lucky plants, flowers and other trees that have different symbolic meanings.

**Travis:** I like that.

**Teresa:** Um, one of the celebration trees of choice? The kumquat tree.

**Travis:** Ahh, okay.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Um, so it has beautiful flowers, but also it has deeply colored fruits and, you know, the citrus trees represent good health and good luck, especially—

**Travis:** And no scurvy.

**Teresa:** Yeah, definitely. I would say that scurvy is at the top of the list of being unlucky.

**Travis:** Yeah. That's very true.

**Teresa:** And the one thing that will save you from that? Citrus fruits.

**Travis:** Citrus fruits.

**Teresa:** Um, so—

**Travis:** Here's to no scurvy in 2022!

**Teresa:** Cheers.

**Travis:** A good goal.

**Teresa:** [laughs] So if you were to walk through the streets of Hanoi, you would see—

**Travis:** Wait, let me get in my...

**Teresa:** Oh, uh—

**Travis:** I am walking the streets.

**Teresa:** I mean, that— it's definitely a lot less than the o— than the other one.

**Travis:** Hmm, okay, go on. I'm—[makes ooh and ahh noises]

**Teresa:** You would see kumquat trees.

**Travis:** Oh, look at all the kumquat trees!

**Teresa:** And shrubs at the entrances of bustling businesses.

**Travis:** Oh, the shrubs [unintelligible].

**Teresa:** [laughs] To bring in customers and good fortune.

**Travis:** Ah, there's too many shrubs. Oh, god, the shrubs are falling! [claps hands] Oh, the shrubs are— ah!

**Teresa:** Wake up!

**Travis:** Ah! Sorry. Oh, there were shrubs everywhere. The shrubs came to life.

**Teresa:** Um, so you should have a very particular set of criteria for your tree. Um, it should be abundantly fruited and healthy, with big, shiny leaves and, you know, fruits on it that are both ripe and green, because you want the luck to grow and continue and things like that. You don't wanna pick all the luck off of your tree.

**Travis:** Oh, yeah, no.

**Teresa:** Um, and so the more fruit you have, the more prosperity it gives to your family, and so the trees are very carefully selected and displayed in a place of prominence. There are lots of kumquat tree cultivists. [clears throat] I'm very proud of myself.

**Travis:** That's very good.

**Teresa:** And, uh, the work of maturing the lush trees is very complicated. And, you know, it takes a lot of care, and there are so many gardeners across Vietnam and China and other parts of Asia, um, that take great care to creatively prune and water and trim and take care of these kumquat trees, and orange and peach trees are included in this.

And, uh, a couple of things. People, in order to set themselves apart and say this is the tree for you, you must buy from me, um, they can be very intricately detailed. For example, uh, one year an orchard in Vietnam specially crafted pots for their smaller trees that were shaped like intricately detailed golden bulls to celebrate the 2021 being The Year of the Bull.

Before that, in 2020, The Year of the Rat, an orchard in southern Vietnam trimmed their kumquat trees into topiaries of the beloved rodents.

**Travis:** Oh, cool!

**Teresa:** They completed their art with tinsel tails and cardboard ears and [holding back laughter] googly eyes.

**Travis:** [gasps loudly] I love it!

**Teresa:** Um, some of the topiaries were even trimmed so it looked like the rats were holding baskets. Uh, you know, holiday gift-giving. You put it in the baskets or whatever.

**Travis:** I just wish it was basketballs. That was a thing they used to have at COSI. I don't know if they still do in Columbus where the rats played basketball, and it was one of my favorite things when I was a kid to watch them.

**Teresa:** Oh.

**Travis:** 'Cause I liked the— the rats were, like, trained, you know what I mean? Put the ball in the basket, you get a treat. So the rats would play basketball. It was really great.

**Teresa:** I do not recall that.

**Travis:** Fondly.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Uh, in addition, dragons have also been incorporated into the tree-trimming. And, you know, it's— there's a really great little rabbit hole you can go down on Google to find these tiny trees. It's really great. I recommend it.

Anyway, every tree that people celebrating the Lunar New Year, that they bring into their home, is very special for another purpose. Oranges and kumquats aid digestion, soothe sore throats—

**Travis:** Protect against scurvy.

**Teresa:** —and act as anti-inflammatories when eaten or added to teas. Peach trees, which are also popular, promote heart health, healthy skin, and might even contain vitamins that combat certain kinds of cancers.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Uh, so, you know, you can't control your luck, but you can feel lucky with this citrus tree helping you out, helping you stay healthy.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** That's— that's pretty cool.

**Travis:** I like how that was like— uh, became a, um, ad for citrus.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Hey, friend. You might not be able to control your luck, but you know what you can control? Your citrus intake. Hi, I'm Teresa McElroy, for citrus!

**Teresa:** [laughs] I am going to say that while eating food is healthy, all food is good food, and you can't cure disease by eating food. So—[laughs quietly]

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** So talk to your doctor about citrus. [laughs]

**Travis:** Consult your doctor today to find out if citrus is right for you.

**Teresa:** Personally, I can't handle citrus. I have GERD and acid reflux, uh, so I was reflecting on my life [sighs] the other day. I haven't eaten a grapefruit in 15 years.

**Travis:** "[old guy voice] I haven't a grapefruit in over 83 years!"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I don't know if I've ever had grapefruit, or if I have it was, like, one time. Anyhoo, that's enough of that.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Hey, everybody. Thank you so much for listening to *Shmanners*. It is a new year, uh, [holding back laughter] and a new you. [wheezes]

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Uh, we just want to say thank you to Alex, our researcher, without whom we would not be able to make the show, and thank you to Rachel, our editor, without whom we would not be able to make the show.

Thank you to you, our listeners. We could make the show without you, but why?

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Go check out all the other amazing shows on Maximum Fun at [Maximumfun.org](http://Maximumfun.org). You can check out all the other McElroy projects at [mcelroy.family](http://mcelroy.family). We got a lot of new merch up over at [mcelroymerch.com](http://mcelroymerch.com), uh, including the pin of the month, which is "Everybody has a knife" from *The Adventure Zone: Ethersea*. It's one of the rules in *Adventure Zone: Ethersea* is that everybody has a knife at basically all times. It's... fun.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** It— it's a good show where we say funny things sometimes? Every pin sold benefits the Center for Reproductive Rights, which uses the power of law to advance reproductive rights as fundamental human rights around the world.

Uh, we also have a sticker over there that's "Guppies want me, blinksharks fear me." That's another *Adventure Zone* thing. Just go check 'em out.

And, let's see. What else, Teresa?

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

We often take queries and questions from our audience, and that's where you can give us a follow and submit your questions.



We also would like to 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.

Also, you can submit your topic suggestions and idioms. Putting together another idioms show! It's gonna be great. And you can just say hello to Alex. She reads every single submission that you send to [shmannerstcast@gmail.com](mailto:shmannerstcast@gmail.com).

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

**Teresa:** No RSVP required.

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

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

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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