

Shmanners 309: Victorian Maids

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[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 *Shma-nanners*.

Teresa: What? It's extraordinary etiquette.

Travis: For ordinary occasions. Hello, my love.

Teresa: Hello, dear. That's not how—

Travis: I guess I wanted to shake up the energy!

Teresa: But that's not what we call our show.

Travis: *Shm-nann-nana-ners*.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: I pose that, that's it.

Teresa: *Shma-nanas*.

Travis: *Shmananas*.

Teresa: [giggles] I don't think that's it.

Travis: [singing] It's *Shmananose* in pajamas. [normally] It is the last official day! [speaking softly] I mean, we'll usually— we'll accept it on Saturday and Sunday.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: But it's the last *official* day—

Teresa: Humm-ana, humm-ana, humm-ana.

Travis: Humm-ana, humm-ana, humm-ana. Of MaxFunDrive! By this point, I assume, we're in, uh, what? Sextuple digits?

Teresa: Of course.

Travis: Um, but, as we're recording this, we're at just about 11,000, so we have some ways to go. So, I'm assuming while you're listening to this, we still need your support by going to MaximumFun.org/join. There you can find the support level that is right for you, starting as low as five dollars a month.

You can support the podcasts and podcasters you love. Maybe that includes *Shmanners*. Man, I hope so. I hope you're listening to this because you like it.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Not 'cause someone's either making you, or you forgot how to turn it off. I don't know.

Teresa: And hey! When you support us for just five dollars a month, that BoCo content—

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Teresa: ... is available *all* year, not just now.

Travis: That's true. So, you can enjoy it for... days to come. 'Cause, it's 350 hours, but, uh, we are not going to spend the entire episode talking about MaxFunDrive though. We'll check back on that. What are we talking about today?

Teresa: Today, we are talking about a day in the life of a Victorian maid.
[sighs]

Travis: Now, this isn't, like, a maiden?

Teresa: No. No. No. Staff. Service-staff.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: Um, and you know, it's not strictly Victorian, but when I think about a maid, I think about the—

Travis: The Jennifer Lopez movie, *Maid in Manhattan*?

Teresa: No.

Travis: No.

Teresa: I think about the, uh, original *Mary Poppins*.

Travis: Oh!

Teresa: Of Disney. So, you remember in—

Travis: It was a movie, though. I wasn't that far off. I mean its—

Teresa: Of course. Of course, yes.

Travis: Two wildly different movies. I don't think anyone would be like, "You know, I like movies that are exactly like *Maid in Manhattan* or *Mary Poppins*."

Teresa: [laughs] No, but if you'll recall, they, uh— they have two staff members at that house. They have a cook and a maid. Now, that's Edwardian time period.

Travis: Obviously. Yeah, we all knew that.

Teresa: Well, because in the song, "King Edward's on the throne, it's the age"—

Travis: Yeah. Yeah, definitely. We remember that. Yeah.

Teresa: Anyway, um, there are two staff members plus, obviously, a nanny that works in that home. But it was actually less common, at that point in time, to have two staff members.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: You usually only had the one.

Travis: Yeah. Before we were recording it, you were referring to it as all-maid?

Teresa: Yes, all-maid.

Travis: Which makes me think of the All-Father, Odin.

Teresa: [laughs] Um, the middle class of the Victorian time period—

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: ... was brand new.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: They called them "new money."

Travis: This is thanks to the industrial revolution, right?

Teresa: Correct.

Travis: The industrial revolution gave rise to the middle class.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Okay. 'Cause, it allowed for things, like, you know, managers. Right? So, not just workers, then owners.

Teresa: Right, yes.

Travis: But people who manage and—

Teresa: Those people in between. Um, and it used to be that, if you were wealthy, you usually had some sort of estate. Right? A large home. Think, "Downton Abbey," right?

Travis: Sure, I always do, yeah.

Teresa: With a—

Travis: I'm thinking about it constantly. Yeah.

Teresa: [laughs softly] With a scullery maid, cook, a lady's maid, butlers, valets, all those peoples, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Um, but if you were middle-class— if you were new money, in this time period, um, you probably could only afford one staff member.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And that was your all-maid.

Travis: Okay. 'Cause, they did everything?

Teresa: They did everything.

Travis: They did all of it.

Teresa: They did all of it. They probably did not do child rearing. There— there was—

Travis: Well, that would take up a lot of your time, right?

Teresa: Of course, right.

Travis: Like, they wouldn't be able to— I think you could— I mean, we'll talk more about it, but I could see someone be like, "I do all of the housekeeping, be it cooking, cleaning, whatever." But then, if it's, like, and also, "I keep the children not only out of trouble, but alive."

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Or, "Alive, but out of— whatever." That seems like that's— you're doing one or the other.

Teresa: Exactly. And so, a lot of these households had a governess, or it was *very* fashionable to send your children away to school at this time period. But anyway—

Travis: You mean, like, boarding school?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Not just like, "Get out of the house..."

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: "... see you at the end of the day?"

Teresa: Yes, boarding school. Um, but this all-maid was not only responsible for all of the household duties, they were also responsible for cooking. They were responsible for shopping, planning the meals, um—

Travis: Oh, a real *Amelia Bedelia* situation!

Teresa: Ah, yeah, a little bit. I tried—

Travis: Can I just say, it's *wild* that she kept her job, right?

Teresa: [giggles] I've tried so hard to get Bebe into those, but she just has too many questions.

Travis: Yes!

Teresa: I can't even get through them.

Travis: So do I!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Listen! *Amelia Bedelia*. Can I tell you— listen, everybody constantly asks me, "Travis, please tell me your feelings about *Amelia Bedelia*."

Teresa: [continues laughing]

Travis: And I'm finally gonna do it. Max Fun Drive special. Here is my feeling. Almost always, it's, like, at the end of it, there's some redeeming thing that happens, right? The one I'm thinking of now is the one where, like, a moth— like, it's an aunt or somebody, that's coming to visit.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And they're, like, "She never comes to visit. We have to make a good impression." And *Amelia Bedelia* does *everything* wrong.

Teresa: She even, like, cuts the polka dots out of somebody's dress or something. [giggles softly]

Travis: Yes! Because she's doing, like, "Get the spot out." She's like, "There's a lot of spots." She cuts all the polka dots out. Oh, my goodness! But she, like, makes a pie that's good.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: And it's like, "Ah, you've totally redeemed yourself over here with that." And it's like, "Hey. I'm glad that that aunt or whatever likes that pie, but everything else is— there's *jelly* everywhere."

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: She cut the holes out of your dress. She did, like, I— I think she set something on fire. And it's just, like, "But this is a good pie, though!" And it's like, "Hey. There are *lots* of people that know how to make pies, guys. Come on."

Teresa: Now, I don't know how Amelia Bedelia had all that time to fiddly-fart around because if we are going to go through this schedule, this is, like, a 20-hour schedule.

Travis: Well, I'll tell you how she had time to do it. She's *not* good at her job!

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: Categorically, at least it's whimsical things she's getting wrong, but she's doing *everything* wrong! Okay.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: I'm sorry I'm so mad about Amelia Bedelia.

Teresa: Um, so, I do want to clarify that at this time period, uh, for the class— the middle class— the *new money*, middle class—

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: ... that we're talking about. These service members were primarily female. Okay?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, it was considered a— almost a— I guess I want to say, like, a charity, kind of thing? To pluck a young female out of obscurity so—

Travis: Out of poverty.

Teresa: Out of *poverty*.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: So, that she could make an honest living and, I mean, the upward advancement is not really there.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: But at least you weren't at the workhouse.

Travis: So, there's plenty of classism, is what you're saying?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Definitely.

Travis: I don't know what I expected from Victorian service work.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: That is would be, like, "No, everyone has opportunities." No, of course... of course.

Teresa: No. Really, not. Um, and so—

Travis: But that's also— I mean, you mentioned, like, uh, *Downton Abbey*.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: And there's also the thing there, with, like, when you're the gentleman's gentleman, or whatever— the valet and all those things, that there is a certain air of, like, "Ah, but you see, I'm upper crust of the lower class."

Teresa: Right. Yes.

Travis: Whereas, what you're talking about here is just, like, work. A working person.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Gotcha.

Teresa: A working person. Um, so then— you know, there are people out there that— that own their own home. They have a lot of things to do, right? But I don't know if you can really imagine just the amount of work, 'cause we have mod cons.

Travis: What?

Teresa: Mod cons.

Travis: What?

Teresa: Modern conveniences.

Travis: Oh! Okay. I had *no* idea what you meant!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Because, like, we work at conventions sometimes?

Teresa: No, no, no.

Travis: You said, "mod cons," and I was like—

Teresa: No. Modern conveniences. Things like toilet— like indoor plumbing.

Travis: I know what a modern convenience is. I've never heard it referred to as mod con.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Is that a thing?

Teresa: It is a thing!

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: I promise. Even the vacuum cleaner—

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: ... in the 50s was considered, you know, like the housewife's savior.

Travis: Yeah, dishwasher.

Teresa: Or whatever, right? Dishwasher, microwave, um—

Travis: Those can crushers for recycling.

Teresa: [giggles] Um, even central heating.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Right? Um, things like that.

Travis: 'Cause that helps— because when, uh, when you were using either stoves or, like, gas, or you know, the burning thing, it would create a lot of soot.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Right? And you would have to clean that a lot more or it'd make for a very dirty house.

Teresa: Exactly. Exactly. And practically the only thing that an all-maid would not be responsible for—

Travis: Windows?

Teresa: No.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: They were definitely responsible for windows. [soft chuckle] Uh, they were not usually responsible for the chimneys, okay? 'Cause, you had a chimney sweep.

Travis: Yeah, you got to get a chimney sweep for that. Could be a bird in there.

Teresa: And then, also for things like, if they had a plumbed faucet. They would expect a plumber or a journeyman to come and repair those things.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And if anything in the home, like, completely fell apart, you would have a carpenter, or someone take care of that for you.

Travis: Okay. Now, did they still do— and I think maybe— I was going to say this is the start of the day, but a 20-hour day, there is no way this is the start of the day.

Teresa: Oh.

Travis: But did they, like, help with the dressing of the person and stuff as well?

Teresa: They could, possibly.

Travis: 'Cause ladies' fashion at this time is, like, still, like— was it still corseting and boning in the Victorian era?

Teresa: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Travis: So, a lot of lacing and a lot of that stuff as well?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Okay. So, let's start at the beginning. A very good place to start.

Teresa: So, they— they may not have helped with that. Um, there were times— at this time in history, there was a way for a woman to accomplish dressing herself.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Certainly.

Travis: You just get above it, and you gotta drop into it?

Teresa: [giggles] No.

Travis: [imitates dropping sound] Whoop!

Teresa: Just the way that you lace from the middle, and all things like that.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: Anyway. Anyway... Also, before I go through the hourly, um, chores.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: It's an interesting phenomenon... that—

Travis: Aliens?

Teresa: No. I mean, yes, but not here.

Travis: Not here.

Teresa: [laughs briefly] That, if an all-maid was closer in status to the lady of the house, they might be treated even worse.

Travis: That doesn't surprise me at all.

Teresa: They may be treated *very* poorly.

Travis: Doesn't surprise me at all. Because you want to create *more* of a distance there, right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Oh, you see it now. There's a Tik-toc thing now that people do a lot of fun of, but it's, like, "How the rich is treated versus the *very* rich."

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And when you're *very* rich, it's easier to be like, "Hey, man. I'm a lot more casual. I've got nothing to prove."

Teresa: Right.

Travis: And the, uh— the nouveau riche will go out of their way to be, kind of— according to this. I don't know.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: It's not something I— there's no, like, "How the rich talk to podcasters" versus, "How the *very* rich talk to podcasters."

Teresa: [laughing] No. But it is— it is the classism, kind of, microcosm, right? So, these new— the nouveau riche, the new money people really *wanted* to be accepted into larger, wealthy society.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And so, the best way to do that is to put down people closest to ya.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Right?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And also, I mentioned that there was a kind of, um, like, a moral triumph to plucking a girl out of poverty, right?

Travis: Sure. And also, man, this is that bootstrap thing of, like, if you rise to being middle class, it must mean that you're a better person—

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: ... than the poor. And that's why you got to do it, and they didn't, and whatever.

Teresa: Yeah. Okay, so, for these purposes—

Travis: Which is a gross thing. In case I wasn't clear.

Teresa: In case.

Travis: That's a gross way of looking at it.

Teresa: You are an all-maid—

Travis: I am?

Teresa: ... to Mrs. Parkington, who lives in Mount Bedford, New York, with her granddaughter, Samantha.

Travis: What? Why? Who's that?

Teresa: Why am I smiling at you?

Travis: Yeah. Why are you smiling at me?

Teresa: Because... we're going to model Mrs. Parkington after Grand Mary, the fictional Samantha American Girl Doll series.

Travis: Okay. I don't know what that is.

Teresa: You don't know anything about American Girl dolls, but our listeners will know!

Travis: I mean, Bebe has *one*, I think? That looks like her. Is that American Girl? That's different, isn't it?

Teresa: She— I mean, yes. That *is* an American Girl Doll, but the ones that they're available nowadays, to made to look like you, are not the first generation. The first generation all are based— they have their own, like, time within, usually, North American history.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And Samantha was the Victorian American Girl.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And she had a lot of really great books.

Travis: Okay. Great! Awesome.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Yeah. If it makes you happy, baby, I support it.

Teresa: [laughs softly] Thanks. So, you would rise at 5:00 AM.

Travis: Okay. Not— actually, not as bad as I thought it was going to be. Bad, don't get me wrong. But I have to wake up at 6:30 a lot now, so not *that* much worse.

Teresa: [giggles] Um, so, at 5:00 AM, that was when *you* would get up.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: You'd be expected to be washed and dressed.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And, um, have things started— like, done by 6:00 AM. So, by 6:00 AM, you would make sure that the kitchen was opened up and the fires were clean and lit for the kitchen.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, you would— that means going to refill all the coal buckets.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And preparing spits and dripping pans in the fire for cooking. And then you would have to clean the kitchen, and the larder, the tables, and the cutting boards. Um, and if it happened to be scrubbing day, you would come back to the kitchen later to do the kitchen floor. And we'll— we'll talk about that later.

Travis: I know that this is all hypothetical, and I'm not really the all-maid for Lady Parkington or whatever, Mrs. Parkington, but you said all that to me right now, and I just thought, "I don't want to do that."

Teresa: Uh-huh.

Travis: Hey, I'm not— I quit!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Actually.

Teresa: 6:30 rolls around, and you have opened up all the shutters in the main rooms. You're taking all the coal you've gathered and making sure that

all the buckets in the house and sitting rooms are full, in case anyone wants to have a fire.

Travis: But I just now cleaned, and now I'm dealing with coal?

Teresa: I know. And then now, you also have to trim and clean and fill the household oil lamps.

Travis: Oh, boy.

Teresa: By 7:00 AM, you are doing the rest of the fireplaces and the curtains in the drawing-room, and you have to—

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Which includes raking *out* the ashes from the fireplace.

Travis: I'm filthy by this point!

Teresa: I know. Lighting a *new* fire, washing the hearthstone, because you've got ashes all over it from cleaning it out.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And then, you'll have to take any floor coverings that might be in front of the fireplace area out to shake off, because you've gotten them all dirty by emptying the fireplace.

Travis: And now it's naptime?

Teresa: Nope.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: And today is a special day.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: Because later you'll have to hand brush all the carpets, because—

Travis: Excuse me?

Teresa: ... no vacuum cleaner!

Travis: Oh, boy. Okay.

Teresa: Okay. So, at this point, you can change out of your heavy work apron that is keeping you, eh, kind of, clean, and wash up and start to prepare breakfast. Breakfast should be on the table by 8:00 AM. Um, and that means that, not only are you preparing the breakfast, you are also preparing everyone else to have breakfast.

So, you have to boil water to put in their washstands, um, for them to wash up before breakfast. Um, you have to eat your own breakfast, which is probably just, like, a bowl of porridge, or whatever, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And then, you have to make—

Travis: Maybe some Rice Krispies?

Teresa: ... whatever— Rice Krispies?

Travis: Maybe, some Cocoa Pebbles?

Teresa: You know, cereal wasn't really invented at this point.

Travis: I know. Yes, I do know that.

Teresa: Oh. Okay.

Travis: Because we haven't had the Battle Creek Sanitorium. Is that it?

Teresa: Correct.

Travis: The Kellogg's people.

Teresa: Um, and today you're making sausage with preserves, ham, eggs, and bread rolls.

Travis: Oh, boy. A heavy breakfast, I'm going to say. There's no way Mrs. Parkinson and Sam are going to eat all that!

Teresa: It's true, but she doesn't— Mrs. Parkington doesn't have a chef, so you're the one in charge of daily menu planning. And while you are making breakfast, you are also checking your larder to make sure you have everything needed for dinner.

Travis: Oh, boy.

Teresa: And, luckily today, you don't have to go to market to get anything.

Travis: Ah, thank you! But you know what everyone should do? Go to MaximumFun.org/join. There, you can choose a support level that's right for you, starting at just five dollars a month. You can go there. You're gonna pick the shows that you listen to, like *Shmanners*. And I don't know, anything else.

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Not only that, you're also going to get reward levels. So, at five dollars a month you get access to, like we said, over 350 hours of Bonus Content. Both audio and video from every show on the network from every MaxFunDrive we've ever done. It's a *huge* value. What are you waiting for?

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: Then, for ten dollars a month you're going to get access to all that Bonus Content, plus a letter pressed Max Fun Membership card as well as a

show-specific patch of your choice. There are 35 patches, one from each show.

Teresa: Ours is *very* cute.

Travis: It's so cute, you guys. You're going to love it. They're all great, though. And you didn't hear it from me, but at the end of the Drive, you'll also be able to get other ones. But let's start with the *Shmanners* one. It's great!

At 20 dollars a month, you're going to get the Bonus Content, the membership card, and the patch, plus your choice of either the Max Fun Creativity Pack, which has a whole bunch of stuff to jumpstart your creativity, or an embroidered Rocketship Logo hat, that is *very* stylish and cool. There's other levels that we'll talk about later on in the episode, but those are, kind of, the starter episodes.

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So, breakfast has been made. We don't need to go to the store. Now, what?

Teresa: Well, by 9:30, it's, uh, your—

Travis: Party time.

Teresa: [laughs softly] By 9:30, the family and their guests, if they have any, um, are at breakfast.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And so, you—

Travis: Me.

Teresa: Go to each of the bedrooms to tidy up. And tidying up means that you open the windows, throw the bedclothes over the end of each bed to air out, and then empty any [clears throat] slops.

Travis: Sure. Oh, you mean, their leavings?

Teresa: Their leavings. So, any hot water bottles, washstands, and, uh, chamber pots.

Travis: Chamber pots. Yeah. Dump those right on the street, right?

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: Sometimes. I mean, you probably—

Travis: Or dig a pit.

Teresa: ... emptied them into a bucket first, and then took it to the outhouse.

Travis: I mean, sometimes they go right out the window. Maybe, that was in earlier times. Maybe, we weren't doing that stuff in Victorian— I don't know.

Teresa: Not really. Not really, at this point.

Travis: Okay. Earlier times. Elizabethan, I think. They were just dumping it right out the window.

Teresa: Yes. For sure.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And then, you are to replace the towels, tidy the rooms, clean the fires, and fluff the pillows, and redo the bed linens. Saturday is probably, uh, bed linen changing day.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: So, not today.

Travis: And Sunday is for exorcizing all the ghosts.

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: Gotta get the ghosts out of there!

Teresa: So, after you have cleaned up from the breakfast.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Let's say it's about 11:30. So, you've—

Travis: Okay, it's about 11:30.

Teresa: You've done... [laughs softly] You've done all of the bedroom tidying and the kitchen cleaning. So, now, this is where you would do more general maid stuff. You have to sweep the floors and rugs, dust the furniture, um, and twice a week, like today, you have to hand brush the carpet. Where you use—

Travis: Oh, no!

Teresa: ... the brush to, kind of like, you know, it's like vigorous sweeping.

Travis: I don't want to do that.

Teresa: And you'll have to turn over the edges of the carpet.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And brush the hard floor underneath as well.

Travis: Oh, boy.

Teresa: Um, and it's, you know, not only is this important to get rid of dust and dirt, and ashes from the fire, but also, um, Ms. Parkington mentioned that she lost an earring a few days ago, so—

Travis: If I find it, I'm selling it, and I'm getting out of this life.

Teresa: Are you really?

Travis: No.

Teresa: So, after you hand sweep in the room, what you have to do is, you have to shut the doors for, like, 15 minutes to allow the dust to settle. And then you return to the room to clean up anything that's already settled on, like, the furniture and such.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Okay. By one o'clock you are still—

Travis: Tired.

Teresa: ... cleaning everything.

Travis: Oh, sorry.

Teresa: But you've forgotten to have lunch, so you rush to the kitchen to eat your own lunch. Probably from scraps from breakfast.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: If you're lucky. And then, you have to check on the roast and the vegetables that you had been preparing since this morning, when you put the spits on and stuff.

Travis: Got it. Yeah. Yeah.

Teresa: For the lunch meal.

Travis: Can I tell you? We're about— I don't know, maybe not even halfway through the day. Well, it's been seven hours at this point. But the thing that's occurring to me, is this must have been all very carefully, um, planned, right?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: So, that there was no waiting downtime, right? 'Cause the—especially that, like, 6:00 to, kind of, 7:30 area. 6:00 to 8:00. Sounds like, it's like, you are doing at *least*, like, four to five things at once.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: And it's, like, while this is starting to doing this thing, and you're moving from here, and you know you're bouncing from this thing to this thing, it can't just be like, "What do I need to do next?"

Teresa: Because *literally*, everything took so long—

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: ... to do. Lighting fires, cooking things, making food, to even be cooked, cleaning things, you have to go and come back, and you have to do it all by hand. And it just took so, so long, that you had to be organized.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: You had to know everything you needed to do, or you would never sleep, because you would just be cleaning 24 hours a day. Um, and for lunch today, you are having some boiled meat and a small beer, which is fine for this time period because it's probably, like, three-two.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: More or less.

Travis: Yeah. If that. Yeah. That means "weak beer". In case anyone didn't know.

Teresa: Weak beer.

Travis: Small beer. Not, like, the size. Not, like, a child-size beer is out there.

Teresa: [laughs] And then, you have one of the apple tarts that you made for Mrs. Parkington, because she didn't thank you for finding her earring.

Travis: Okay. See, I should have sold it!

Teresa: [giggles] Okay.. By 1:20, you have already cooked up all the food. And you've checked the fires again and do general tidying up. Um, and then you can— while they eat, you will sort through linens that need mending. And this is the time that we scrub the kitchen floor. Now, very interestingly, there were two ways— common ways, to scrub a kitchen floor.

Travis: Counter-clockwise... and clockwise.

Teresa: Ha-ha-ha. No! Sand.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: Or lye.

Travis: Lye is *very* corrosive, isn't it?

Teresa: It is *very* corrosive. And it is hard— like, think about, you're scrubbing the kitchen floor on your hands and knees probably.

Travis: Sure. Yeah.

Teresa: So, your face is all up in that lye.

Travis: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Teresa: So, um, most books of the time, cleaning books, recommend sand. Um, sure, it's not as, like... I'm going to say, effective. It might take a little more elbow grease, but it is better for your health.

Travis: Absolutely.

Teresa: And basically, you're just using that on your brush as an abrasive, right? Because this is the kitchen floor. Probably has, like, cooking grease—

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: ... and dirt, and all that kind of stuff.

Travis: Sticky stuff.

Teresa: From the fire. Sticky stuff. So, you're using the sand to, kind of like, just scrub it off the floor, and then you'll sweep it out the door.

Travis: Sure. You could also just put the scrubbing brushes on your feet and skate around in there.

Teresa: [burst out laughing]

Travis: That's what Amelia Bedelia would do!

Teresa: This probably takes hours. So, probably from about 1:30 to 4:00. That's what you were doing. Just the one. Just the one thing.

Travis: Oh, boy.

Teresa: And so, you will, um, have— in the middle of this, when lunch is finished, you will have cleaned those dishes. Cleared those dishes and cleaned them as well. Um, and then at four o'clock, you got to start making afternoon tea.

Travis: Oh, boy. Okay.

Teresa: Um, and so, this would be... we're just going to do afternoon tea, which is, like, tea, and cakes, and things.

Travis: Sure. Yeah.

Teresa: Okay. And then, while they're enjoying their tea, this is when you would have to draw the curtains in the sitting room, close the shutters, and light the lamps again. By five o'clock you're returning to prepare dinner in the kitchen, after you wash the dishes from teatime, of course.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: This is a multicourse meal, so—

Travis: Oh, man.

Teresa: As well as serving the dishes, like, the food, um, you'll have time in between while people are eating, to do more chores!

Travis: Oh, boy.

Teresa: You have prepared, uh, maybe some mutton, some vegetables, with assorted sides, as well as pudding and pastries. Um, and you were instructed, earlier, to set an extra table for Mrs. Parkington's son coming to visit for dinner.

Travis: That rascal! I don't trust him.

Teresa: Indeed.

Travis: That's where— that's where the earring went!

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: He probably stole it! To gamble some more! Oh, he loves the gambling! I've warned Mrs. Parkington about him. But she won't listen, because I'm but the all-maid. But we know. We see things!

Teresa: He—

Travis: We talk, us all-maids!

Teresa: You don't talk—

Travis: Because we share a hive mind.

Teresa: You don't talk to anyone.

Travis: We are all-maid!

Teresa: 'Cause you're the only person there.

Travis: We are all-maid!

Teresa: And Mrs. Parkington discourages anyone from speaking to the help, by the way.

Travis: The help speaks to each other, okay?

Teresa: There is no one else. It's just you.

Travis: I have to have time to go to church on Sundays!

Teresa: Mmn?

Travis: I go to early church. Servant's church, I believe it's called. I don't know.

Teresa: Okay. [laughs]

Travis: It's at 3:00 AM.

Teresa: So, at 7:00 PM, is when he would arrive, and you would show him into the parlor.

Travis: But I'm keeping my eye on him, so he doesn't have sticky fingers around the silverware.

Teresa: And then, at 8:00 PM, dinner would be served. So, this is when—you know, you would be finishing up everything and setting the table for everyone to sit down at 8:00.

Travis: I'm going to take his coat too, so I can check the pockets for the napkin rings that he *definitely* stole.

Teresa: Ah. And then, while everyone is eating dinner, this is when—

Travis: I poison the wine!

Teresa: You go up to the bedrooms—

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: ... to get the bedrooms ready for bed.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So, you would turn down the sheets, check the fires, check the washstands. You know, you'll have to empty any more slop that there is. Um, and let's hope that you, um, are part of the people who believe in the germ theory of disease, because you're serving dinner at the same time [soft chuckle] you're emptying chamber pots.

Travis: Oh, I definitely believe in that. In fact, what's that? It turns out I'm a science genius—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: ... working here. I've invented the vacuum cleaner.

Teresa: The discovery will have been in the paper. So, if you could read, you would know.

Travis: I definitely— I just told you! I'm a science genius!

Teresa: Oh, okay.

Travis: But see, no one sees it coming, because I come from such humble beginnings, right?

Teresa: Hmm.

Travis: And my name, Gertrude Science. They named it after me. That's how good I was at it.

Teresa: Great.

Travis: Now, I've read a lot of books that take place in the Victorian era. So, how much time in the day, do I need to set aside for being interviewed by quirky detectives?

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: Who will want to know if I saw something, or if I was friends with the victim, or anything like that.

Teresa: Well, Mrs. Parkington doesn't have a lot of visitors, mostly just her son. So, unless he really is that, uh— the rascal you believe him to be—

Travis: He definitely is. Listen, no one else sees it, but I do. I don't trust him.

Teresa: You're probably more annoyed at being interviewed because you have lots of chores to do. [chuckles softly]

Travis: That's fair.

Teresa: So then, at nine o'clock, dinner is pretty much over. And so, you would bring Mr. Parkington his coat.

Travis: And say, "Get out of here."

Teresa: And—

Travis: "We don't want to s— don't darken this doorstep." That's what I'm thinking. I wouldn't say that, of course. 'Cause I don't want to be reprimanded but—

Teresa: And serve any after-dinner teas or brandies or anything in the, um— in the parlor. Samantha is pretty young, so no brandy for her, but maybe hot cocoa.

Travis: Oh, definitely. She's an angel.

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: Don't get me wrong! Her father? Oh, he's— oh, the devil. But the child, ahh, she's an angel.

Teresa: But Mrs. Parkington, she's a fan of the brandy.

Travis: Oh, yes. Of course. But I *know* that. And as—

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: But I always check it, to make sure her son didn't poison her. I smell it for arsenic and cyanide.

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: 'Cause I'm a science *genius*.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Yes. And I know he's after her money.

Teresa: [laughs] Okay.

Travis: And I don't trust him.

Teresa: Okay. The day is nearly at an end, 10:00 PM. Mrs. Parkington and Samantha go to bed after you have delivered them fresh water bottles. And now, you can tend to the dishes from dinner, put out any remaining fires, and lock up the kitchen. That probably takes you another two hours.

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: So, after a long day, you will retire to your modest chamber, where you'll fall flat on your face [chuckles] into bed.

Travis: And no time for experiments? For my—

Teresa: *Five* hours of sleep before you get up and do it all again.

Travis: Oh, boy. Ah! Speaking of doing it all again, let's talk about Max Fun Drive.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: So, this is the last you'll hear about it from us, during this Max Fun Drive. And let me say this, we only do this once a year. It's only two weeks. That's two episodes from us. And it's *very* important. We would not be doing this show if it wasn't for Max Fun and people supporting us.

We wouldn't be able to bring on people like Alex, to help with the research. We wouldn't be able to bring in Rachel Jacobs to help with the editing. We—

or *do* the editing. We wouldn't be able— we literally would not be able to make this show if it wasn't for your support.

But, beyond that, and I talk about this every year, but we wouldn't be able to be doing this at all. Um, when I started doing podcasting at the exact same time, I started working my other longest-running job, at the Shakespeare Company.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And there reached a point, after about five years, where they were conflicting way too much. And we had to make the decision whether, like, do this full-time or stop doing this and, you know, focus more on the time I needed to spend as the theatre was growing. And because of the support that people gave through Max Fun Drive and stuff like that, the choice was simple. And we were able to do this full-time.

Not worry about, uh, you know, if I would have to find other work once we had kids, or anything like that, because your support allowed us to focus on making these shows. Shows like *My Brother, My Brother, and Me* and *Adventure Zone*. And for Justin and Griffin and Sydnee and Rachel, *Sawbones* and *Wonderful*. We've been able to make this our primary, uh, career focus because of your support. Um, and I am very, very grateful for that. We are all very grateful for that.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: And it means a lot to us. Um, and so, I just wanted to say that in all sincerity and I—

Teresa: And thank you so much for sticking with us so far.

Travis: And whether you're able to become a Max Fun supporter or not. Maybe you're just someone who listens every week and tells their friends about it and shares the show wherever they can. We appreciate support in all its forms. So, thank you so much.

Uh, but if you *are* able to become a supporter, please think about going to Maximumfun.org/join. Choose a support level that's right for you. I would also encourage you to do it while you're thinking about it. There are many, many times where there's something I need to do, and then I wait, and it's gone. It's out of my brain.

Teresa: And you're distracted by something shiny.

Travis: Yes. Man, I wish that wasn't true, but it is.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Sometimes it's just walking through a door frame.

Teresa: Oh!

Travis: And it's like, "What? What? Eh, all this new input"... and it's gone. So, go now—

Teresa: I find myself reflexively walking into the playroom.

Travis: Yeah?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: You know what I've found? This is just a side note. If you needed to do something and you walk through a door, go back into the room you were in, and it will help you remember what you were going to do.

Teresa: Ohh!

Travis: Anywho.

Teresa: That would help me end up in the garage instead of the playroom.

Travis: Yeah, that'll happen.

Teresa: Where I wanted to go. [chuckles]

Travis: Go to Maximumfun.org/join now. Like I said, this is the last day. [quietly] Last official day. [normally] And you can still become a Max Fun member anytime, but this is, one, the time when you'll be part of the excitement of that growing number of new upgrading and boosting members, but it's also the time when you're going to get the rewards. I mean, I think the BoCo is available all year round. But—

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: ... the other rewards. Join now, be part of the excitement why— why don't ya? Anything you'd like to say, Teresa?

Teresa: Well, um, I know that we have a wide swath of supporters. And they support us on Twitter, by linking our show for their followers.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: And they support us on Facebook by, um, asking their friends to join the fan-run Facebook group. And they support us by sending in topics and idioms to our Gmail. Um, and so, we're just so grateful for that support all year round. And we're really happy to bring you these great— uh, bring you the BoCo. We're great— happy to bring you all of the reward levels. Um, but it's the support that means the most to us!

Travis: That's right. And if you did— one last time, if you did, uh, were able to join or upgrade or boost, please let us know. Tweet at us. Tweet at @shmannerscast, so we can say thank you. Um, thank you to Alex. Thank you to Rachel. Thank you to MaximumFun for having us on the network.

If you want to check out all the other McElroy shows, and why aren't you at this point? Go to Mcelroy.family and you know what? While we're at it, I mean this sincerely, when I say Max Fun is home to a *lot* of really wonderful shows. And we've added some new ones in the last couple years. So, if you haven't checked out the other shows there to see if something is, uh, up your alley—

Teresa: Strikes your fancy.

Travis: There you go. That's two, "Strikes your fancy", and "Up your alley." Want to see where those came from, idioms, go check it out now, MaximumFun.org. And Teresa mentioned our email, and our Twitter, and the fan art Facebook group. What else, Teresa?

Teresa: We always thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing out theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. We thank Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art @shmannerscast. We thank Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group *Shmanners* fanners. And, you know, thank you.

Travis: Thank you. 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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