

Shmanners 324: Mother Goose

Published September 9, 2022
[Listen here at themcelroy.family](https://themcelroy.family)

[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: And welcome to another *Shmanners*.

Travis and Teresa: [simultaneously] After dark!

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: You know what that means, folks. It's 9pm.

Teresa: [gasps]

Travis: The kids are in bed.

Teresa: Finally asleep.

Travis: It took an hour and a half before Dot fell asleep. Whew, hoo, hoo, phew!

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Bebe was asleep in 30 seconds. I wish they could at least split the difference. Whew, ba, phew, phew! So, yeah, it's 9pm. Which is late for us. [laughs]

Teresa: [bursts out laughing loudly]

Travis: I was thinking about that 'cause we're going— well, we're recording this before we're leaving for Dragon Con, but, uh, it'll be like the first time we've traveled without kids for a long time. And the first time, like, we've eaten dinner without kids for a long time. Um, and our events go pretty late on the two days we go together, so I was, like, "Do you want to have a late dinner at 8pm?"

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: And I was like, "For us, that's two hours later than we normally eat." But for, like, *normal* people, restaurants are still open then, so I guess somebody's eating.

Teresa: I know, right?

Travis: Anyways, speaking of... bedtime.

Teresa: Oh, yeah.

Travis: What are we talking about this evening?

Teresa: Well, we are talking about Mother Goose.

Travis: Now, here's this thing. I— you told me that. I knew that, right?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Because I pay attention.

Teresa: Sometimes.

Travis: And— hmm. Fair enough.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And what I realized was, I have [sighs] *no* concept of if Mother Goose existed, right?

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Is it? And you don't have to tell me yet.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Right?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Because I know that, like, I would associate it with, like, Grimm—
The Grimm Brothers.

Teresa: Okay. Yeah.

Travis: And, like, Aesop, right?

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: And that same level of, like, things repeated, but I also, if you had told me, it's like a Betty Crocker thing.

Teresa: Mmm.

Travis: Or, like, you know? That was the name that they put on these things. Well, I guess— oh, my God, I don't know anything about this. 'Cause I guess at some point it had to be, like, published, right? And not just rhymes passed down. Oh, my God, okay. Where to start?

Teresa: Okay. So, um, she's the author of pretty much every single classic that *isn't* attributed either to Aesop or the Brothers Grimm, right? So, we're talking about "Baa Baa Black Sheep", "Three Blind Mice", "Jack and Jill",

“Humpty Dumpty”, other— dozens of, kind of like, very short-form rhyming, some to music, some to not.

Travis: But to— okay. Even though you just said that, I really have a hard time believing someone sat down and wrote them.

Teresa: Somebody had to.

Travis: Well, okay, but even the Brothers Grimm collected the stories, right?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And then wrote them down.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: They didn’t sit down and make the stories up themselves.

Teresa: Yeah, same thing.

Travis: Oh. Okay.

Teresa: So, first, when you think of Mother Goose, what pops in your brain?

Travis: I think it was a Shelley DuVall show on HBO when I was a kid. Or maybe Showtime when I was a kid— doesn’t matter. Uh, but what pops in my head?

Teresa: Like, the visual of Mother Goose.

Travis: A goose. A goose.

Teresa: So, the actual goose?

Travis: A goose, maybe wearing a bonnet.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Carrying a basket, maybe.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: With a book.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. That's very common. Yes, that's very common.

Travis: Was it true? Was she a goose?

Teresa: Some— well, we'll get to that.

Travis: [gasps]

Teresa: Some people think of— like myself, I think of a very, um, granny-esque from, like, Tweety Bird shows, right?

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Where she's got glasses, and gray hair in a bun, and kind of like, um, you know, very old-style frumpier clothing. You know? Like that.

Travis: Yeah. Yeah.

Teresa: Um, and, you know, there are *lots* of different things that people think of when you think of Mother Goose. Um, but it's easy to say that the idea of Mother Goose is synonymous with, like, joy, and childhood, storytelling.

Travis: Sure. Well, sure.

Teresa: And safety, right?

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Cautionary tales, for sure.

Travis: That's, I mean, that's a lot of what I think of when I think of Aesop, Brothers Grimm, Mother Goose, is stories that usually existed to, uh, deliver some sort of message in a very child-friendly— sometimes, when you think about Brothers Grimm—

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Uh, wrapping. You know?

Teresa: Well, even Aesop's Fables are pretty graphic sometimes.

Travis: Well, yeah.

Teresa: Because the animals tend to, you know, behave like animals. Anyway, so, the origins in print go back to the 16th century, and that's actually a long time before what we consider the birth of the classic fairytale.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Which, again, we usually associate with The Brothers Grimm.

Travis: I had to search because I was so wrong. I was confusing two things. So, what I was thinking of is, I believe, maybe the Mother Goose treasury... show?

Teresa: Hmm. But, like, you said they just, like, kind of reshaped and, like, indexed, right? A bunch of old Germanic folktales.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Greek and Roman mythology and even some Bible stories are, kind of like, mixed around— peppered through there.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Um, the original fairy tales, right? Um, were actually written by French writers, Charles Perrault and Madame d'Aulnoy.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Madame d'Aulnoy was writing about fairies and magic, hmm, some 135 years before The Brothers Grimm. And Perrault is the inventor of Puss in Boots.

Travis: Sure. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Teresa: And several other stories.

Travis: I loved him in *Shrek*. Uh, so good. Great.

Teresa: [chuckles] Yeah. Um, but these writers were all crafting these tall tales well before The Brothers Grimm, and they still had the concept of Mother Goose in their writings.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: Um, so she—

Travis: Well, even then, I also think it's important to note a lot of fairytales, even then, were based off of far older, like, you know, myths and—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: ... legends about these creatures and everything. So, it wasn't, like, they created the idea of fairies, they were just writing the stories.

Teresa: So, the fairytales and the fairytale collectors knew about this Mother Goose character—

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: ... and the first recorded mention of her is in 1650. Jean Leray, wrote in his collection *le Muse Historie*—

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: ...that a particular piece was (quote), "Like a Mother Goose story."

Travis: Wow. Okay. That's way farther back than I would have guessed.

Teresa: I know. And it's very casual. Don't you think? And it lends to think that Mother Goose was a household name.

Travis: Yeah, it would have to be to compare to that.

Teresa: Even at the 1600s.

Travis: Yeah, absolutely. There would be like now if you said it like, "Oh, it reminds me of, like, a Shakespeare play." Right?

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: It's like the assumption is either the person knows who Shakespeare is, or it's weird that they don't.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Um, there's a fun quote from a site called *Books Tell You Why*. Jennifer Michelle wrote for the site, and she says, "In other words, by the time we even started talking about fairytales, we somehow already knew who told them."

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: Perrault used that phrase in 1697 in his Collection of Fairytales. Not the one on the site, um, but, like, the Mother Goose, right?

Travis: Mother Goose, yeah.

Teresa: But he only used it in the title. So, when this was translated to English in 1792, its title turned out to be *Histories or Tales of Past Times, Told by Mother Goose*.

Travis: So, wait, is Mother Goose real?

Teresa: Mmm... There's a theory.

Travis: [sing song voice] You've got a theory. [normally] I want to know— I would like to know what it is, please.

Teresa: So, there is— [sighs] the theory that she was a real person.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: Might stretch all the way back to the 700s.

Travis: Get outta the town. Get out of the town!

Teresa: Well, the people—

Travis: The town is here. I want you out of it.

Teresa: Many people believe that Mother Goose was actually the mother of Charlemagne.

Travis: What?!

Teresa: The first Holy Roman Emperor.

Travis: What?! What?! Okay. There's— hey, let's time travel back 10 minutes ago. Bet me a million dollars.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Give me a hundred guesses.

Teresa: Well, there's— there's only a little bit of evidence for this theory.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Because her nickname was Goose-foot Bertha.

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: Because her name was Bertrada of Laon.

Travis: Okay. Goose-foot? Bertha.

Teresa: Goose-foot Bertha. Because sources say that she was born with a clubfoot. Which is when a baby is born with a foot that turns inward, making it difficult for them to walk. It's very easily treatable today, but in the past, not so much.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: You know? Especially in the *700s*.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: Probably, not so much. That's okay. Born to privilege, didn't have to work a day in her life, so she was fine, right? Um, she had the clubfoot for the rest of her life, but it did, you know, earn her the bird nickname.

Travis: Sure. Okay.

Teresa: And it may really not have been as meanspirited as we would have assumed today, right?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: At that time, there were people who believed that people with clubbed feet were vessels between the living world and the spirit world.

Travis: Ohh.

Teresa: Maybe the land of the fairies, where the fairytales come from?

Travis: [hesitantly] Sure.

Teresa: Maybe?

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: There's really no evidence supporting this. This is just kind of the theory.

Travis: Aw man, okay.

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: All right.

Teresa: Reel 'em in just to let 'em back go.

Travis: That's what you do when you got a fish. You got 'em, then you pull the rod, and then, [mimics pulling in fishing line] "Eh-uhh-uhh-zuu-ehh!"

Teresa: [giggling] Give it a little slack?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: You reel it in. She wasn't particularly known for her storytelling, okay?

Travis: So, is it just the goose thing? Just the fact that goose is in her name?

Teresa: Yeah. I mean, that's the thing.

Travis: [incredulously] All right. All right.

Teresa: That's really the only thing. Goose is in her name. There's not a lot of evidence to support that she, like, wrote anything down or was a charming motherly, even grandmotherly figure.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: All right.

Teresa: There's another one.

Travis: Okay. Whoo!

Teresa: [laughing] Reeling 'em back in.

Travis: Oh, yeah? Keep going.

Teresa: This one is from Colonial America.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Much, much later, right?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So, not the 700s. We are into the late—

Travis: What? 16?

Teresa: ... late 16ths. Well? Okay, wait.

Travis: 'Cause it depends on how colonial. 'Cause if we're talking about, like, before Revolutionary War.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Now, we're like mid-1700s.

Teresa: Maybe even a little bit before that, because 1600s is when it appears in print.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: So, if we're thinking—

Travis: So, colonial way, way back.

Teresa: Way, way back. Early colonials.

Travis: So, this is, like, *early* colonials. Oh, okay.

Teresa: Um, 1692... Maybe, Mother Goose was a Bostonian woman—

Travis: Maybe.

Teresa: ... named Elizabeth Goose. She married a man named Isaac Goose in 1962 when she was 27, and the two had a kind of, um, a *Brady Bunch* situation, right?

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: So, she brought six children with her, which is a lot.

Travis: Yes, mathematically speaking, quite a bit.

Teresa: [chuckles softly] And then Isaac already had ten of his own—

Travis: Oh, boy!

Teresa: ...with his former wife. A woman named Mary. Um, so that means that 27-year-old Elizabeth had 16 children to care for.

Travis: 16 children. So, she started a baseball team.

Teresa: It does seem that she, yes, was vastly outnumbered.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: But she had a lot of nursery rhymes. She was very good at telling stories.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Uh, singing rhymes and making up lullabies. Her son-in-law would recall how she always seemed to be singing to anyone who would listen. So, around 1860, one of her relatives was working as a publisher and started to connect the dots that Elizabeth's incredible stories *must* have been the inspiration for this beloved folk character.

Travis: Now, we can see— now, hold on. Hold on.

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: You can see where there's maybe a benefit to being a publisher, who's like, "I happen to be related to Mother Goose."

Teresa: Ah, yeah.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: I like nepotism that creates itself. [chuckles] Like, "Well, uh, maybe my grandfather was a famous producer, and I'm rich. Let me in this movie, please."

Teresa: So, there was a little bit— he made up a kind of story.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: That there was a ghost volume of stories written by, or for Elizabeth cataloging all of her stories and songs.

Travis: You mean ghost-written like somebody would ghostwrite something, not like, a spectral book?

Teresa: No, not a spectral book.

Travis: Okay. Not like my great-great-grandmother appeared to me and gave me a ghost book?

Teresa: [laughs softly] No, no, no. In the way of somebody, uh— she didn't maybe write them down, but it was, kind of like, gathered from her children and friends and things like that.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: But there isn't any really evidence of that either.

Travis: No.

Teresa: People searched for a long time. Like a really long time, and came up with nothing.

Travis: That also kind of sounds like something someone would tell someone in a bar to try and get them to smooch `em.

Teresa: [gigging]

Travis: Like, "You know, I'm related to Mother Goose."

Teresa: And remember how we said that, um, Mother Goose was first mentioned in print in 1650?

Travis: Was that a trick? Oh, well, Elizabeth Goose wasn't alive till 1690.

Teresa: No, [disappointedly] she wasn't alive.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So, maybe not that.

Travis: Hey, so far, can I just tell you when I know they're not yours?

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: But these theories are not great.

Teresa: Um—

Travis: In fact, I'm going to go ahead and say, so far, "Hoo-wee." They are, uh, goose turds. [chuckles]

Teresa: There's a tourist attraction in Boston.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Dedicated to Mother Goose, which is probably not Elizabeth's grave. Probably, it's the grave of a woman named Mary Goose, Isaac's first wife. [chuckles lightly]

Travis: Oh, I see. Yes.

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: Does that make sense?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Okay, I want to hear more.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: About Mother Goose, but first, how about a word from some other Max Fun shows?

[theme music plays]

[new upbeat music plays]

Ellen: Hey, there! I'm Ellen Weatherford.

Christian: And I'm Cristian Weatherford.

Ellen: And we've got big feelings about animals that we just got to share.

Christian: On *Just the Zoo of Us*, your new favorite animal review podcast, we're here to critically evaluate how each animal excels, and how it doesn't. Rating them out of 10 on their effectiveness, ingenuity, and aesthetics.

Ellen: Guest experts give you their takes informed by actual real-life experiences studying and working with very cool animals like sharks, cheetahs, and sea turtles.

Christian: It's a field trip to the zoo for your ears.

Ellen: So, if you or your kids have ever wondered if a pigeon can count, why sloths move so slow, or how a spider sees the world, find out with us every Wednesday on *Just the Zoo of Us* in its natural habitat on Maximumfun.org.

Christian: Listen and subscribe wherever you get your podcasts.

[music ends, lion roars]

[new jazz music plays]

Ross: Carrie, is it?

Carrie: Oh, yes. Hi, I'm Carrie.

Ross: I am psychic Ross, and I will be reading you this [dramatically] evening.

Carrie: Oh, interesting! Well, okay. I co-host a podcast. It's called *Oh no, Ross and Carrie!*

Ross: Yes, I'm sensing that!

Carrie: Oh.

Ross: The spirits are telling me it is a show about poodles.

Carrie: Well, it's about, like, fringe science—

Ross: Yes!

Carrie: ... and spirituality—

Ross: That's correct!

Carrie: ... and things of the paranormal.

Ross: And—

Carrie: Oh! You knew that!

Ross: You do research online, you—

Carrie: But more importantly, like, we do in-person investigations.

Ross: In-person investigate as well.

Carrie: Yeah. Oh, my God! That's amazing!

Ross: See?

Carrie: Me and my friend— this is so weird. My friend Ross. Same name as you.

Ross: Weird.

Carrie: He and I just go and try them all out and actually we've gone to a number of psychics. And to be honest with you, it's a lot like this. It's called *Oh no, Ross and Carrie!* You can find it at Maximumfun.org.

Ross: I could have told you that.

[jazz music/ad ends]

Travis: Okay. Do you want to hear my theory so far? I've developed a theory.

Teresa: Yes. Yes. Please, tell me your theory.

Travis: And I think that this— more than my example of, like, Betty Crocker or whatever, right? I think it's, like, Boogeyman, right?

Teresa: Hmm.

Travis: Where, like, we have kids.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: They ask questions all the time. I was singing tonight. Uh, I was singing the, you know, [singing] "Daisy, daisy, give." [normally] But we sing it either, depending on which kid you're singing to, [singing] "Bebe, Bebe." Or "Dottie, Dottie, give..." [normally] Although sometimes Dottie demands Bebe.

Teresa: I know. Well, it rhymes better in the song.

Travis: Sure. But I got to the [singing] "I'm half crazy." [normally] And she was, like, "Why are you half crazy?"

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: And I was, like, "It's— I don't know, man." But kids ask a lot of questions, right? And at some point, somebody— some, like, farmer looked out the window, saw a goose, and was, like, "Mother Goose told me," and just kept going, right? And then it just kept hooking on, and was like, "Yeah, Mother Goose told me these stories, right?" And they catch on like that. Eventually, it's got to start somewhere. That's *my* theory.

Teresa: I think that you're right. I think that Mother Goose is a feeling. She's—

Travis: But that's not what I said!

Teresa: She's the whisper in the wind.

Travis: Now, hold on! That is not at all what I said.

Teresa: [laughing] It isn't?

Travis: That is, she's the dream of a child— [English accent] the twinkle in a child's eye on the first snow.

Teresa: She isn't the wind whispering on a dewy Spring morning?

Travis: No! I think it's just easier— an easier way of going, "I don't know, man."

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: They're like, "Who made up that rhyme? How old is that rhyme? Where did the rhyme come from? What does it mean?" You're like, "I don't know, man. Mother Goose told me. Now got to sleep."

Teresa: Uh, I mean, honestly, maybe Jean Leray was the real Mother Goose.

Travis: You think they just made it up?

Teresa: Maybe. He was the first one to say— to say that and, like, the quote "woman" took on a life of her own, became a moniker for every woman or, you know, a mother archetype, right?

Travis: And this also makes a lot of sense, uh, in the context of how much we've talked about in, like, our idioms episode.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Is the number of times of, like, somebody attempts to coin a phrase, right? And it becomes this whole other meaning.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: So, maybe he was saying, like, "It's a Mother Goose thing." Right? Like, think about how many weird, like, sayings you and your friends and family come up with, right? That you assume, like, everybody uses this. My dad said it all the time. And then you say it in front of someone, and they're, like, "What?"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And, so, maybe for him—

Teresa: But you McElroy's are very familiar with that phenomenon.

Travis: Yeah, everyone would— a lot of people would talk about how we've ruined their vocabulary.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: But maybe it's a thing of, like, his mom would say, like, "It's like a Mother Goose— you know, that's a very Mother Goose kind of story, isn't it?" Right? And it meant something to them.

Teresa: Um, yes. I think— here's *my* theory. There are certain species of waterfowl...

Travis: That can tell stories?

Teresa: No.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: That, if they find abandoned ducklings, or whatever, will take them into their brood. So, you end up with these— this, you know, duck pair, right? That has, you know, 25, 30 little ducklings all following it around. Not because they had then hatched that many eggs.

Travis: Mm.

Teresa: But because they, kind of, collected them.

Travis: Adopted them.

Teresa: Adopted them. And it's the same thing with the Mother Goose—

Travis: Adopted sounds better when you're talking about children, by the way.

Teresa: [laughs softly]

Travis: Because you're— if anyone's like, "Yes, they collect children."

Teresa: [laughs loudly]

Travis: That's not a good image.

Teresa: But when you translate that to stories.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Right? All of these stories that attributed to, quote, "Mother Goose." Things like "Humpty Dumpty", and "London Bridge", and "Itsy-Bitsy Spider." They can't have all possibly been written by the same person.

Travis: Well, that's what I was saying. When I was talking about in the beginning of, like, imagining someone sitting down and writing them, right? Aesop's Fables all have a similar thing. You know? It's animal— talking animals—

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And some kind of, like, morality lesson. Or you get to The Brothers Grimm, right? And they— even though they collected all of them, they still have a very, like, Germanic fairytale kind of feeling, right?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: They all have— they're all pretty dark. Usually, like, there's themes of, like, witches in the woods. Or like, a wolf, right? Which appears in a lot of them. They're very thematically similar. But as you've said, just compare, like, "Humpty Dumpty" and "London Bridge."

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: That's two different things. Especially since I know of "Humpty Dumpty" was originally a riddle. 'Cause they don't say "egg" anywhere in "Humpty Dumpty," so you're supposed to repeat the whole thing and then say, "What was Humpty Dumpty?" Right?

Teresa: Mm.

Travis: Then you guess, "An egg?"

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: It was a riddle, and now just everyone knows it's an egg. [chuckles softly]

Teresa: Yeah, everyone knows it's an egg.

Travis: But, like, "London Bridge" is another great example.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: "London Bridge" it's just completely different from "Itsy-Bitsy Spider." It's two wildly different things.

Teresa: Wildly different and wildly different time periods.

Travis: This is what I'm saying.

Teresa: Things like that, right? And so, Mother Goose probably just evolved in the oral tradition, right? And so, they were passed from generation to generation, traveled over the mountains and oceans, and then got recorded one day. And somebody said, "Oh, we don't know who this is actually by. Let's just put Mother Goose."

Travis: I mean, it's a good— listen, brand name wise, it's great branding. Right? Like, if you said, "Who invented sports?" And you're like, "Uh, King Football." I'd be like, "Yeah, yeah, King Football definitely invented those sports or whatever. It sounds great."

Teresa: And so, the— there are lots of writers— famous writers that we know who have continued to perpetuate this love of Mother Goose, this kind of, you know, this grandmotherly figure or even the Goose. Right? Um, for example, John Newbery, who many refer as the Father of children's literature.

Travis: That's where the Newbery Award comes from.

Teresa: Exactly. You know, he's added a lot of that to the Children's Media Lexicon. Also, L. Frank Baum—

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: ... was another person, who even wrote Mother Goose in prose in 17— sorry, in 1897.

Travis: When you were a kid in, like, elementary school kid, do you ever remember, like, getting a book and on the, like, top right corner was that, like, silver, like, Newbery?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And you're like, "Oh, what!? This is gonna be good!" [chuckles]

Teresa: This is gonna be good. This one has an award. [laughs softly]

Travis: I wish that that wasn't true, but I remember distinctly. I'd be like, "It did what? It won a thing. Well, yeah, look it's right there." And now sometimes, listen, I don't know your feelings about the man, but sometimes now I pick up a book for Bebe, and I'm like, "Oh, it got a Newbery. [disappointedly] Ah, what? A Dr. Seuss award or whatever. Ah!"

Teresa: Well.

Travis: Give me— where's the Newbery award winners? You know what I mean?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: I'll take a Caldecott award. I'll take a Caldecott award, but where's the Newberys? You know what I mean?

Teresa: We gotta search for that treasure.

Travis: Absolutely.

Teresa: So, we've been carrying on the legacy of Mother Goose. Julie Andrews, Jim Henson—

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: So, there's even a Mother Goose character that appears regularly on *Sesame Street*, right?

Travis: Well, now— I mean, now, if you've got kids and you watch YouTube for any amount of time, you will find, like, animated Hickory Dickory Dock. You will find Jack and Jill and everything. Like, it helps that they are public domain.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: And you can just use that music and that thing. Uh, but, I mean, it's still, I think, Bebe knows all of this stuff. Dottie knows all of this stuff.

Teresa: Um, so, to sum up, I think that we can do just as good as L. Frank Baum. He wrote, "While I have taken some pains to record the various claims to the origin of Mother Goose, it does not matter in the least whether she was, in reality, a myth or a living Eliza Goose, Martha Gooch, or the 'Mere Eye'—

Travis: Martha Goose?

Teresa: No.

Travis: Who's Martha Gooch?

Teresa: I don't know.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: It's what he said.

Travis: Okay. Go on.

Teresa: Well, now we have to look it up.

Travis: Okay. I *had* to know. Martha Gooch is talked about in *Mother Goose in Prose*. Right? Which is the thing he wrote.

Teresa: Uh-huh.

Travis: Um, just another theory of, like, a woman who was in 1704, or whatever, tasked with taking care of babies in this town. She would sing songs to them. And Martha Gooch became Mother Gooch, became Mother Goose. But once again if it's 1704, that's past the time of the first mention of Mother Goose.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: It's just another one of these retroactive, kind of, "It was me all along!"

Travis: Right. Okay. Or "I knew— oh, she used to be my babysitter."

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: "Mother Goose is my babysitter."

"Like, what? Really?"

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: Okay, sorry.

Teresa: He continues.

Travis: Continue.

Teresa: "The songs that cluster around her name are what we love, and each individual verse appeals more to the childish mind than does Mother Goose herself."

Travis: That's true because I don't want a huge goose coming in my house. I know that now. I think I would have felt that same way as a child.

Teresa: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Human-sized goose? Is that what you think of? Not, like, a small goose?

Travis: Are you asking me in the context of, if I'm a child thinking about Mother Goose and knowing someone's coming? Yeah. I think I was picturing a human-sized goose.

Teresa: Wow. I would've never pictured human-sized goose. Regular-sized goose.

Travis: Well, a child is bigger than a regular-sized goose. You would need somebody taller than to command any kind of respect.

Teresa: I don't— I don't— that's not the way my brain works.

Travis: And you were picturing a small goose?

Teresa: Regular-sized goose.

Travis: Huh. Okay. Listen, we don't normally do this—

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: ... but I do need everyone to tweet @shmannerscast and tell us if when you picture Mother Goose as a goose, are you picturing a human-sized goose or a goose-sized goose? Okay. As I— all right. There's a lot going on there. Whew! Okay. Well, thank you very much to you, Teresa. Uh, you are a great host, and I'm so happy to be your husband.

Thank you to Alex, our researcher, without whom we could not do this show. Thank you to Rachel, our editor, without whom we couldn't do this show.

Teresa: And she does a lot more work on these after-dark eps. [giggles]

Travis: Oh, yeah. We're real tired at that point. And thank you to our listeners. We could do the show without you, but why? Hey! Hey! It's September, and that means a whole mess of new merch over at the merch store. There's a Munch Squad hoodie, which Munch Squad is a thing from *My Brother, My Brother and Me* if you haven't listened.

There's a *Besties* T. *Besties* is the video game podcast that Griffin and Justin host along with Chris and Russ. And that is available in a t-shirt or raglan. And 10% of all merch proceeds this month will go to Earthjustice, which uses the law to preserve a rich, sustainable, and diverse natural heritage for current and future generations. All of that available at mcelroymerch.com. Go get your 20 Rendezvous Fancy Takes Flight Tour tickets. Uh, they're all on sale at bit.ly/mcelroytours.

We got shows— let's see, *Adventure Zone* in San Jose on September 29th. *My Brother, My Brother and Me* in San Jose on September 30th. And on October 1st in Denver *My Brother, My Brother and Me*. And then we have the November shows, Washington, DC, Detroit, and Cincinnati.

Teresa: I'll be there!

Travis: The Cincinnati.

Teresa: The Cincinnati one.

Travis: Yeah, the Cincinnati one for sure. Masks and proof of full vaccination or negative Covid test within 72 hours of event start is required. Plus, don't forget to pre-order *TAZ Eleventh Hour* over at theadventurezonecomic.com. What else, Teresa?

Teresa: Well, we always thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Thank

you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art. That's @shmannerscast. Tell us about your goose stuff.

Travis: Please do.

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: Tell us about your goose image.

Teresa: And thank you to 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, join that today. Also, thank you, Alex, um, again. Thanks again.

Travis: You can never say "thank you" enough to Alex.

Teresa: She reads all of the emails sent to our Gmail, which is shmannerscast@gmail.com. That is where you will send your, um, topics, ideas, and please, send us your idioms.

Travis: Please.

Teresa: We love those. And say "Hi" to Alex 'cause she reads every one.

Travis: And 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]

Maximumfun.org.
Comedy and Culture.
Artist Owned.
Audience Supported.

