

Shmanners 328: Victorian Photography

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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 *Shmanners*.

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette.

Travis: For ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove.

Teresa: Hello, dear!

Travis: How are you?

Teresa: Well, we're all on the mend around here.

Travis: Sure. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Teresa: Yeah? Yeah. You're getting back up to it. Um, you were ill, but now you're getting better.

Travis: I'm on the mend. I'm feeling better!

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Now, I've gotten to a place where I think Covid's gone. Now, it's just seasonal allergies.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Yeah. All right.

Teresa: Yeah, I'm also feeling that Fall drainage. Um—

Travis: Speaking of Fall. [silly voice] Spooky Season.

Teresa: So spooky. We have decorated our house. Um, and it seems like all the YouTube videos the kids are watching are all about witches, and zombies, and ghosts, and goblins, and... [chuckles]

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: ... all of that stuff.

Travis: It's that time of year where you take, uh, like, daddy finger—daddy, well, mommy finger. You know? Sister finger, brother finger songs. But now it's like, "Daddy mummy, mommy mummy, sister mummy, or like"—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: "Goblin sister got"— It's just, like, the *same* song, but now we've put, like, "skeleton" into it.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: I love them.

Teresa: Oh! I'm— I mean, I don't really feel strongly one way or the other. The kids seem to enjoy them. The kids seem to enjoy them.

Travis: The kids have seemed to enjoy them. There's a period of time in the calendar year betwixt, like, April to September, where there's some stuff happens, and it's summer and everything. But all the holidays are fairly, like, single-day event holidays.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Travis: But then you get into October, and it's, like, now we're in, like—

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: ... the season.

Teresa: Until, uh, November, and then you start getting that Christmas creep.

Travis: This is what I'm saying, right? You get Spooky season, and then you're into, like, the Thanksgiving season, and then you're into the—

Teresa: I don't think Thanksgiving season really exists. It's all Christmas now.

Travis: Now, hold on.

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: The Thanksgiving season is just for if you're like me, and you, like, are planning, like, your dishes and meals and stuff weeks in advance.

Teresa: Oh, speaking of which, we have not ordered a turkey.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: [apprehensively] Ohh! [laughs]

Travis: Hey, let's focus on— what are we talking about this week?

Teresa: [through laughter] Hey, listen. [normally] I'm just— I'm just playing with the banter here. Going with ya.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Accompanying you on this journey... We are talking about today, Victorian death photography.

Travis: Oh, boy.

Teresa: You know, we have— I think that it's very interesting our, kind of, cultural obsession with the Victorian era. It was a very long time. A lot of change took place. Um, but it's far enough away that their culture seems completely different from ours. And if you are interested in more Victorian business, Victorian Funerals is a great one to listen to. That would be episode 284, by the way. But here's the thing, death was an everyday part of their lives in the Victorian era.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Disease was rampant. Infant and childhood mortality rates were pretty high.

Travis: Is this sort of the time where we're dealing with, like, the miasma from the Thames at this point? Or was that earlier?

Teresa: So, the germ theory of disease is right on the cusp. Um, but we still don't quite understand how it works. The Victorian era saw, like, a lot of Cholera outbreaks, right?

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And we finally had figured out that it had to do with the— uh, the sewage water, right? But the issues that would be relatively minor today had not been— uh, medical science had not caught up to it at all, right?

Travis: Okay. Yes, so this is in the Victorian era. The Great Stink, as it was called—

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: ... was in 1853. I just looked it up.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: So, death is— not just death, but stink.

Teresa: [softly chuckles] Yes. Yes. Penicillin, in particular, would not be developed until 1928, so—

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: It is— even if we do understand what’s happening at this point, we have no way to fight it. It’s just trying to keep people, like, comfortable, I guess, as they die.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: But not just like that. Also, I mean, we understood that people needed to be warm if they were cold. And there was a— there was a, like, thing about the fever, but we didn’t know exactly if we should encourage the fever or discourage it. I mean, all this kind of stuff. Anyway—

Travis: In retrospect, it is one of the most magical things about *Christmas Carol*. That it’s just like at the end, they’re like, “And they got really good doctors for Tiny Tim, and he was fine.” Like, was he? Hold on. How good of doctors are we talking here? ‘Cause, it was like [chuckles] the mid-1800s.

Teresa: I mean, we’ve talked about this. Probably some sort of nutritional deficiency—

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: ... exasperated all of his ailments. So, when you get a good doctor that says, “Hey, you have rickets.” [laughs]

Travis: Yeah. Maybe scurvy. Thanks, Doc. Okay.

Teresa: So, “Memento mori” was a common saying at this point.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Because it’s an artistic, like, symbolic trope that is a reminder of the inevitability of death.

Travis: Well, it's also important— and Memento mori is "Remember you will die." It's important to note too, as we talk about this, that, like, European, like, especially WASPish and I think, like, Catholic too. I don't know. I wasn't raised Catholic. But, um, other cultures are *much* more comfortable with, like, death is just a part of the experience—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: ... than we are. 'Cause if you think about things like even just, like, Dia de Los Muertos, where it's just, like, it's a celebration of, like, our— the ghosts of our ancestors, and we talk about it. Whereas we now, especially in, like, the US culture, *really* like to pretend, like, "Yes, it's death, but let's not focus on *that* part so much. They went to the afterlife, and we're just gonna keep plugging along down here. Don't worry about it. Don't think about it. Death is very scary and bad."

Teresa: Also, we're so removed from it because people don't die at home anymore.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: We have nursing homes. We have hospice care. We have hospitals. It's just not— it's not next to us the way that it used to be. Um, and so, like, what the Victorians liked to do is they would have a memento. So, like, an object—

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: ... that would help them remember the person, right? Um, and their artwork, in general, included a lot of iconography of skulls, and coffins, and bones, and hourglasses, and wilting flowers, and all this other kinds of stuff, um, so that it was not just a reminder of the person that you've lost, but also, like, death, in general, is the thing.

Travis: Yeah. I mean, the gothic *feel* is this whole deal, right?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Like, if you look, it's— I love, uh— a great example of this is, like, if you look at, I think it's the Munster's house. Yeah, *The Munsters*, right? Have that very, like, Gothic Victorian house, right?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And that thing that *now* we see, and we associate with, like, "It's like a spooky haunted witch house." But it's just, like, everybody was, like, "Yeah, give me that kinda, uh, fairy-like. It looks like it's made out of— the roof is cobwebs, and we've got, like, just like raw iron everywhere." Uh, yeah, just kind of spooky house. Everybody lives in spooky houses. We can all agree on this.

Teresa: [giggling]

Travis: This is the aesthetic we're *all* going for. Spooky houses. Okay, great, thank you.

Teresa: So, one common way was, sometimes, people made, like, hair jewelry, right?

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: Even, like, hair pictures. Um, you would even, as much as just, like, keeping someone's hair in, like, a bottle that you would wear as a necklace or something. But in another way—

Travis: This is also— Victorian era is also the time when, like, taxidermy becomes a big thing.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: I don't think they taxidermied people, mind you. But—

Teresa: No.

Travis: ... the idea of, like, preserving bones, and skulls and, like, taxidermied animals. So, like, they were pretty fascinated with, like, preserving things after death in general.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Not just people.

Teresa: And one of the common ways that they did that was with postmortem photography. It was so common, in fact, that it actually— they called the photographs themselves Memento Mori.

Travis: Now, but this is entirely new, right? Because if you go to, like, an art gallery with, like, paintings from, like, the 1500s, 1600s, or whatever— it's, like, if you wanted a painting of someone, they would most often, especially— uh, mm, the trigger warning for things about kids— especially if you wanted a kid to sit still for a thing, was almost impossible.

So, if a child died early, especially, like, a rich, you know, king or queen or prince or whatever, they would paint them. And that's why the eyes were often when you see those old paintings was, like, "Huh. There is something off about that." Well, it's 'cause the eyes were closed when they painted them 'cause they were [softly] dead. But this is new, photos.

Teresa: And, well, because photographs were relatively new. So, the first camera was invented in 1816 by a Frenchman named [enunciates haltingly] Joseph Nicephore Niepce.

Travis: Okay. Better than I would have done.

Teresa: Now I— I try. I try. Um, but he didn't really produce a proper photograph for almost ten years after that. He took a picture out his window, and that shot [chuckles] actually took ten hours to make.

Travis: Mm.

Teresa: Um, but it got better and better. It was still expensive, but not as expensive as, like, a portrait, like you said. Right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And so, the upper classes flocked to this because it offered them a permanent image of their deceased loved ones, you know, who had never been photographed, right? Because it was pretty new.

Travis: And you also had to sit so long.

Teresa: You did. The exposure time was very long. Which is why a lot of these photos that we see of the first photographs of people aren't smiling.

Travis: Oh, no.

Teresa: 'Cause it's so hard to hold a smile still, right? But if you try and keep, like, a relaxed face, that's a lot easier for these long exposure times. That's also why we see, uh, oftentimes one person is sitting or people, kind of, even were often, like, held in place— like, kind of like, propped up almost. And that was—

Travis: Oh, you know about the kid photos, right? We talked about this, right?

Teresa: Right. Yeah. Where the mom is sometimes, like, disguised with a rug. [laughs] Or, like, with curtains.

Travis: Yeah. They would cover with fabric, and she would, like, sit on the chair— like, on top of the chair and try to pose like a chair, and then the child would, like, sit on her lap so the child would stay still.

Teresa: [laughs softly] Right. Yeah.

Travis: This is also— photograph, uh, and photography in general, is also during this period is fun, uh, in this same kind of spooky feeling, because photography was so, like, "Well, it's in a photo." Right? Like, it's proof. It's right there. It's in a photo.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: And so, because of these long exposure times, it was really easy to do a lot of, like, film trickery.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Of like, you start the thing, and then you, like, bring a ghost or whatever into it. And so, like, cheesecloth. And then spiritualism was *huge* during this era. And so, they would be like, "See, a ghost is in the photo." And people would be like, "Well, if there's a photo of it. I mean, I don't know what to tell you guys. It's clearly real. It's in a photo. What are you going to do? Like, change a photo in some way? Come on."

Teresa: Come on. But of course, they changed it.

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Teresa: And so, it was actually pretty common to see the living descendants around the person who was dead, and that's why often you see a little, kind of like, the blurriness of the alive people, but the deceased is often very sharp, right?

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: Because they are very still.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And so, there were lots of tricks that people used. Like, um, they often would photograph children posed as if they were sleeping.

Travis: Mm.

Teresa: Which, I think, is very peaceful, right?

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Some would edit their picture on polished silver, so you could give them, kind of like, a bit of a glow, right?

Travis: Oh. How nice.

Teresa: Make them look a little lively that way. And you could also alter them slightly with, like, colored pencils just a little bit.

Travis: Hmm.

Teresa: Like, the colorizing photographs is something that would come along definitely a lot later, but there were little tips and tricks that you could give to make them look a little bit more, uh, lively. If you look on YouTube, there's a "Ask a Mortician."

Travis: Hmm.

Teresa: She has some very interesting videos. And a lot of the myths, right? That we hear about, like, those stands, right? That I talked about. They were pretty flimsy. You really couldn't stand up a deceased person, so those stands were usually used for live people, like I said.

Travis: Oh, to help support you 'cause you have to stand for so long.

Teresa: Right. Yes. To help support you still. It's more like, just kind of like, bracing you.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: And not— but you have to support your own weight. Those stands are really flimsy. They're not really for other people— other dead people. So, usually, these people were photographed sitting or laying down. Because, like, the phenomenon of rigor mortis only lasts so long.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: You know, think about *Weekend at Bernie's*. [chuckles] Right?

Travis: Yeah. I do all the time, babe.

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: I think about it all the time.

Teresa: Yes, you do.

Travis: I talk about it. I probably, I would say, at the upper end of people who talk about— I'm not going to say the most out of anyone on earth because there are probably people who talk about *Weekend at Mort*— uh, *Weekend at Morty's*, *Weekend at Bernie's* more than me. But— but it's just the movie has such troubling connotations to it.

Teresa: Yes, it does.

Travis: Throughout it's... oh, boy.

Teresa: It was still kind of a— we're trying to demystify it, right? But there was still kind of a— an eeriness around it.

Travis: Yeah, dude.

Teresa: Some of these photographs were taken in studios, but most often, they were taken in the subject's home. So, that allowed the Victorians to carry out their, like, preparation of the bodies. We talked about this in the funeral episode. There were certain things that you would wear, and you would wash them, and, you know, do things like that. Um, and so, like, you could— it was part of the grieving process.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: You take care of the body at home. You get this picture, and it's like— kind of like, a bookend of their life, right?

Travis: And I think once again, it's so important to— to reiterate because I just had this click into *my* brain, when we think about, "And I'm going to take this picture with a dead person." It feels disrespectful now. It feels—

because I think, especially since we think about how commonplace, like, "I'm gonna take a selfie" is.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And, like, taking a selfie with a dead person is what I picture it as, like, "Yeah, that's horrible." This is not that. It was, like, completely different—

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: ... cultural phenomenon that was part of, as you said, the, like, saying goodbye process.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. And so, it *can* be difficult to look at an old picture and try and figure out are the people pictured, were they deceased at the time of the photograph?

Travis: 'Cause they're definitely deceased now.

Teresa: Yes. [through laughter] They definitely are now. [normally] Um, but if you look at a photograph, you can get that, kind of, it's almost a feeling, where you— if there's something not quite right. They are probably deceased, but most of the time, you know, like we talked about moms, like, being covered in a rug to hold their kids still.

Or, like, a lot of times, they took pictures of people who were sleeping anyway, especially children, babies, and things, because that was when they were the most still. And that's when you would get a good photograph. So, if you have that inkling that they might be alive, they probably are.

Travis: Not anymore, though.

Teresa: Not anymore.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Just to clarify.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Uh, I want to learn so much more about this, Teresa, but first, how about a word from another Max Fun show?

Teresa: All right.

[theme music plays]

[soft guitar music plays]

Evelyn: [in Southern accent] Hello, dreamers. This is Evelyn Diddin, CEO of the only world-class fully-immersive theme resort, *Steeplechase*. You know, I've been seeing more and more reports on the blogs, that our beloved park simply isn't safe anymore.

Justin: "M— murder them?"

Travis: "I'm gonna wreck it."

Evelyn: They say they got mugged by brigands in the fantasy Kingdom of Ephemera or hijacked by space pirates in Infinitum.

Griffin: "I mean, I could have a knife."

Justin: "My papa said that I needed to do a crime."

Evelyn: Friends, I am here to reassure you that it's all part of the show. These criminals were really just overzealous staff trying to make things a little more magical for our guests. We're just as safe as we've always been. This isn't a county fair, dreamers. This is *Steeplechase*.

Justin: *The Adventure Zone* every Thursday at Maximumfun.org.

[soft music ends]

[new music begins]

Speaker one: Since the dawn of time, man has dreamed of bringing life back from the dead. From Orpheus and Eurydice to Frankenstein's monster, resurrection has long been merely the stuff of myth, fiction, and fairytale... until now. [sound of record scratching]

Speaker two: Actually, we still can't bring people back from the dead. That would be crazy. But the *Dead Pilots Society* podcast has found a way to resurrect great dead comedy pilots from Hollywood's finest writers. Every month *Dead Pilots Society* brings you a reading of a comedy pilot that was sold and developed but never produced, performed by the funniest actors from film and television. How does *Dead Pilots Society* achieve this miracle? The answer can only be found at Maximumfun.org.

[music and ads end]

Travis: Here's a question. It might be jumping ahead. I don't know. When you would take these photos, right? You get these photos back. Was this like a, "And we display them proudly?" Or was it like a "Yeah, we'll look at 'em if we miss the person, but, like, it would be weird to put it up in the— like on the mantle?"

Teresa: Well, these— these things were, um, I mean, I suppose you certainly could if it appeared very, very lifelike. I mean, these pictures were often taken, like I said, in the home with their favorite things around. Either in their favorite chair or, if they happen to, unfortunately, be children with dolls or, you know, cradles and things like that. You could display them, but more often, they were kept, kind of like, as a personal thing.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So, like, in lockets and stuff. In, like, lids of pocket watches and things like that. It was supposed to be for the people who knew them, right? It's not like when you think about, like, a portrait of, like, the Countess, or whatever, that looms over the dinner table, like, over— what is that? The

mantle or whatever. Like, that's supposed to convey some kind of, like, power over you, right? So, portraiture is of the people who are living, right?

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: And that's supposed to help with their status or whatever.

Travis: I got it. Okay.

Teresa: But people who are not, it was more, kind of, a personal thing. And there's a lot of really great of— uh, people who have written about their experiences with postmortem photography. So, English author Mary Russell Mitford, uh— so, noted that her father's 1842 postmortem photograph had a "heavenly calm about it"—

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: ... that gave her peace when it came to his passing. Again, deeply personal, right? Victorian poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, said, "It is not merely the likeness which is precious, but the association and the sense of nearness involved in the thing. The very shadow of the person lying there fixed forever."

Travis: Now, I will say. Not to get too maudlin for a moment, but as someone who, like, lost a parent, young, right? I can see where so much of what we do in, like, the grieving process— in fact, I would say, *all* of what we do in the grieving process is for the grieving, not the grieved. The grieved has moved on. Right?

Teresa: Yes. Yes.

Travis: And they are dead. And the person grieving, I can see where having this thing that's like this is— there's a finality to. We took this photo. This is done. Instead of it just being, like, a slow, "Is that the last memory? Is this the last memory? Is that the last thing?" Right? Of, like, if you think about in this day and age, where we have phones, and we have, uh, you know, we have computers. We have all these things. There's so many

chances to have all these, like, “Is this the last recording of this person’s voice I have? This is the last photo.”

“Well, I had a photo from later.”

“And I had a photo from later.” Right? Like—

Teresa: I feel like this happens a lot with Facebook.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: We see preserved people’s Facebook pages long after they’re gone and, like, you can’t always— you don’t know my Facebook password or whatever.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: So, like, even your family—

Travis: I could hack it. I know you pretty well at this point.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I think I could figure it out.

Teresa: Even their family sometimes have a hard time. Like, I have— I have a friend who passed away unexpectedly, and people from our school that we went to often post on their wall on their birthday. Which is interesting to me. A quick look you can see that obviously this person is gone, right? Because, like, they’re not liking [giggles] the well wishes or whatever.

Um, but it can be a little jarring to go through my feed and see, “Oh, well, yeah. They posted on— someone posted on their wall again. And then you get that reminder of that grief. You’re right. It doesn’t feel finite, but I think that the picture is a really great way to make— to, like I said, give it a bookend.

Travis: Right? And this very much feels like, “And this is our last memory, last interaction.” This is— it has, well, as you said, it is final. This is— and it’s done. And then everything after that is, like, moving forward, I guess? I don’t know.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Travis: It’s interesting because on some level, we talk about when— when we talk about, like, Victorians and death, of like, it feels very much like on some level, it was a much healthier, like, approach to it, of everyone will die. Death is a part of life. You know, we experienced the death in a full way. But then also, all of these rules regarding, like, when you go into mourning, how long do you have to wear black for? Or, like, how close were you to this person? And in what way did they die? All this stuff, right? Where it’s just like—

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Yeah, but it was also very scripted. And so, then it’s like, so, on the one hand, it was, like, a very upfront we are dealing with this, uh, in a, you know, very, like, tangible— we’re acknowledging this happened. We are not in denial about death. But at the same time, we’re not really dealing with it on a purely emotional level. We’re going through steps, and assuming that when we finish those steps, we’ll be fine.

Teresa: Uh, which may or may not be true, obviously.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Um, but I also think that some— in some ways, that’s a really great thing to have. Like, your— have your little to-do list and your process. And a lot of times, people are concerned about, “Well, after my spouse has died, how long do I have to wait before I seek the company of someone new?” Or—

Travis: Half the time that you were together. We’ve known— wait, no, wait! That’s for break-ups. Sorry. Sorry. Sorry. Never mind.

Teresa: That's— [laughing] And, "What do I talk to my children about?" You know? All this kind of stuff. Like, they had answers. They had a script for that that was, quote, "Socially Acceptable." Right?

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: And so, in a way, that would be really great for me. [laughs softly] Um, I don't personally— I don't—

Travis: [loudly] Are you planning on killing me?

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: This is how I find out?

Teresa: I don't have any— any personal interest in exactly how long I have to wait.

Travis: You didn't say "No!"

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Why didn't you say, "No?"

Teresa: Of course not, sweetheart.

Travis: Well, now you say, "No."

Teresa: [giggling]

Travis: Huh. Okay. All right. If something happens to me, everybody, just remember this.

Teresa: [continues laughing] That I waited— that—

Travis: Memento mori, by Teresa.

Teresa: That I waited the appropriate amount of time. [laughs]

Travis: To say, "No, I won't kill you?" Or to get remarried?

Teresa: [giggles] Oh no, I'm never getting remarried. That is way too much work.

Travis: What?!

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: Oh, boy! Oh, boy.

Teresa: You're allowed to get remarried, by the way. If you really must.

Travis: I don't know. I don't know. Who has the time? [laughs]

Teresa: [laughing] See? See?

Travis: But listen! I know. But for you, you're saying [bursts out laughing] the act of being married to me is a lot of work.

Teresa: [giggling]

Travis: I'm saying, the act of going out and being like, "Do I want to be even— like, are you it?" That's— I don't even know how I was so lucky to be able to marry *you*, let alone— I'm a poor judge of character [bursts out laughing] in general. The chance that I get a second chance, and I'm just like, "Yeah, she's another good 'un", out of the question. Out of the question. If you die unexpectedly, I'm going out on top 100% at that range. I'm done. And I'm done.

Teresa: [sucks in air through teeth] All right.

Travis: Also, 'cause I love you or whatever, I guess.

Teresa: [holding back laughter] Or whatever, I guess. [chuckles]

Travis: Yeah. And plus, I'd probably have to get rid of a lot of stuff that I like now if I got remarried. Because I've slowly added dumb shit to, like, my areas in the house as we've been married, and you're like, "What are you gonna do with Travis, right?" And if I brought someone new in, she'd be like, "This is a lot of Spiderman stuff." And I'd be like, "Yeah..."

Teresa: [giggling] Anyway...

Travis: Thank you. Uh, memento end of podcast. Remember podcasts will end. Thank you so much for joining us, everyone. Um, let's see. Let's see. I want to say "thank you" to our editor, Rachel, without whom we would not be able to make this show. I want to say "thank you" to our researcher and writer, Alex, without whom we would not be able to make this show. And I want to say "thank you" to you for listening. We could make the show without you, but why?

Go check out, we got new merch over at the merch store Mcelroymerch.com. Uh, including we got a brand-new Garyl blanket. Now, Garyl is the spectral—

Teresa: I want one! I want one. It's beautiful.

Travis: I've already ordered one of this.

Teresa: Okay. [giggles]

Travis: Garyl is a spectral binicorn from *The Adventure Zone*, and this blanket, it's like a beautiful tapestry-looking blanket. You're going to love it. Designed by Lin Doyle. Um, go get that. We got Candlelights wrapping paper. Um, and 10% of all merch proceeds this month go to the Fair Elections Center, which uses litigation and advocacy to remove barriers to registration and voting, particularly those disenfranchised in underrepresented, and marginalized community, and to improve election administration. So, go to Mcelroymerch.com.

This week, yes, on October 6th, so by the time you listen to this, *Steeplechase Episode 1* is going to come out. Uh, *Steeplechase*, the Setup Episode is already out. So, you can go listen to the first two episodes of the

new *Adventure Zone: Steeplechase* DM'd by Justin. And 20 Rendezvous Fancy Takes Flight Tour tickets are on sale. Sorry again to everybody that we had to cancel our San Jose and Denver shows. I had the Covid. I am better now.

Teresa: So, thank you, everyone, for your continued patience and support.

Travis: Thank you.

Teresa: And we hope to see you at the next shows.

Travis: Yes. We will be announcing new dates for those San Jose and Denver shows. And tickets for the November shows are on sale now at bit.ly/mcelroytours. Those shows will be at Washington, DC, Detroit, Michigan, and Cincinnati, Ohio. Mask and proof of full vaccination or negative Covid test within 72 hours of event start is required. And don't forget to pre-order your *TAZ: Eleventh Hour* graphic novels at theadventurezonecomic.com. 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. Thank you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art. That's @shmannerscast, and sometimes we get some excellent questions from you listeners, and that's where you can ask those questions.

Thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, *Shmanners Fanners*. If you love to get and give excellent advice from other fans, join that group today. If you have topic suggestions or idioms that you would like to submit, please email us at shmannerscast@gmail.com, and say "Hi" to Alex because she reads every one.

Travis: And *that's* gonna do it for us.

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: So, join us 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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