

## Shmanners 335: Christmas Villages

Published December 9, 2022

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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:** Oh, man. Okay—

**Teresa:** Well, and—

**Travis:** And you're listening— and you're listening to *Shmanners*.

**Teresa:** It's extraordinary etiquette...

**Travis:** For ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove.

**Teresa:** Hello, dear. [laughs]

**Travis:** I almost said "And I'm your host—"

**Teresa:** Maybe our intro's too long.

**Travis:** I almost said, "And I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy" again.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Again.

**Travis:** [unintelligible] A lot of... this is, like, my ninth podcast of the week.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Yeah, a lot. And I'm—

**Teresa:** It's a lot. It's okay.

**Travis:** Yeah. Woo, boy. Holiday season, full swing. Well, not really. Our interior in our house, Christmas decorations. We're recording this on what, the 1st? December 1st.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Interior: Christmas. Exterior: Uhh...

**Teresa:** Still fall.

**Travis:** Dregs of fall, I would say. Remains of the day.

**Teresa:** Well, a lot of— well, the— I finally scooped up the rotten pumpkins from our porch and put those in the trash can. [laughs]

**Travis:** For context, they were rotten before Halloween.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** It was our first time— 'cause Teresa can't stand pumpkin guts.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** Is grossed out by 'em. So we have almost— we have exclusively, uh, in our time together, done fake pumpkins. Get the, like, carveable fake pumpkins.

**Teresa:** Right. The foam core where we can do that.

**Travis:** And the best part about those? Reuse 'em, right? Every year, just keep increasing your thing. But... both Bebe and Dot were old enough this year. I was like, "I would like them to experience this." And they had asked experience it. This wasn't me, like, "Deal with my preclusions!" This was them being like, "We wanna carve pumpkins." I was like, "Okay, great."

So we got 'em. Almost instantly they were like, "Well, I don't wanna scoop that. That's gross. Ew!"

**Teresa:** [laughs] "It's gross!" [laughs]

**Travis:** So I was left doing it by hand, myself, both pumpkins, as they watched on going "Ew."

And then, uh, Teresa helped Dottie carve her pumpkin. I helped Bebe carve her pumpkin. And I think I'm out of practice enough that I forgot... like, the span of time you really have of just, like, you should carve a pumpkin, like, the 25th.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** But we were gonna be out of town, 'cause I went and did D&D in a Castle. So, like, we carved 'em on, like, the 12th or something. Oh, not a long shelf life.

**Teresa:** Anyway, that's a holiday that we're not talking about right now.  
[laughs]

**Travis:** We're not talking about that holiday. We're talking about Christmas. Or this holiday, the winter holiday season.

**Teresa:** Um, what we are talking about specifically as far as decorations goes is the miniature village decoration.

**Travis:** Okay. So, as we were talking about this episode leading up to that second—

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** The "miniature" had not been included. And I assumed you were gonna talk about, like, you know, a Christmas village in, like, Norway.

**Teresa:** Ohh.

**Travis:** That's like, go visit Santa.

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Which, by the way, I'm dying to do.

**Teresa:** Go to Lapland?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** That'd be great.

**Travis:** One of those. I mean, there are some that are, like, year round, and they also have rides. Um, but something like that, I think.

**Teresa:** There's a Christmas train you can take in, uh... it's in Ohio. I remember doing it as a Girl Scout. And you end up at this... I mean, it's basically a barn that they've decorated for Christmas, and then there's a Santa there.

**Travis:** But it's not year round, I assume.

**Teresa:** No, no, no.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** It's a Christmas train.

**Travis:** Okay. I mean, don't get me wrong. I like Christmas. I like trains. I love the idea. Uh—

**Teresa:** Anyway.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** We're talking about miniature Christmas villages.

**Travis:** Miniature.

**Teresa:** Which are actually often called putz. Christmas putz.

**Travis:** Okay. 'Cause you puts it on the mantle?

**Teresa:** [laughs] Sure! That's a great way to remember.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, and I'll tell you about the etymology of that. Um, but—

**Travis:** The edamame... logy.

**Teresa:** [laughs quietly] People go bananas for these mini villages. A quick search on eBay alone for vintage Christmas village will net you about 36,000 results.

**Travis:** Okay. That's a lot.

**Teresa:** It is a lot. It is a lot. So, during holiday season, these massive model villages, complete with trains these days, most of the time, show up in convention centers, and museums, and zoos. Actually, the one that we have at the museum center here in Cincinnati—

**Travis:** Beautiful.

**Teresa:** —is not technically a Christmas village, 'cause it's all year round. They always have the Cincinnati model with the train. But they do, I believe, decorate it for Christmas.

**Travis:** Now, they have also done a, like, Christmas room where there's, like, Santa. And there's— and I think that they did a Christmas village specifically in there one year.

**Teresa:** Yes. They did a child-sized Christmas village.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** I think. Anyway.

**Travis:** Now, here's the thing. So, growing up, as I discussed on the last episode about my mom's aesthetic, our Christmas village was wooden, painted, two-dimensional.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Like... you know, house-shaped, building-shaped things. And in Huntington, where I did my growing up, there was a company that made— I think they were called, like, Black Cat or something. But they made them of the buildings in Huntington. So we had, like, little buildings of Huntington. Each one had, like, a little black cat painted on it in places. Cute. Um, but I— as far as I

remember, the two things my mom collected as far as, like, a Christmas collection goes, Santas—

**Teresa:** Yeah, my mom, too.

**Travis:** —of all shapes and sizes. Carved, wooden, stuffed, tall, short, whatever.

**Teresa:** Pictures of Santa? Nutcrackers of Santa.

**Travis:** No, we didn't have pictures or nutcrackers. They were always, like, Santa action figures.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Yeah, my mom, too.

**Travis:** And these little wooden things. Now, your mom has, like, the full blown, like, 3-dimensional, lights inside the building, there's a, like, mirrored skating rink thing.

**Teresa:** Yes. She does the Dickens village from Department 56, which are small ceramic houses that have a hole in the back for light bulbs. And then she does, like, the whole— there are some, like, little trees, and she does, like, a little skating pond. She does a lot of those things. I remember... it almost always being in our front room, which was the receiving for company room.

**Travis:** The sitting— the fancy room.

**Teresa:** The sitting fancy room.

**Travis:** We had one of those.

**Teresa:** Uh, in the bookshelf that during the rest of the year held a couple of, like, wooden ship replicas...

**Travis:** Some knickknacks, some tchotchkes.

**Teresa:** Some knickknacks and such. Um, and it got to the point where we would not leave it alone. So [laughs] my dad screwed in—

**Travis:** In a, I'm gonna say, classic dad maneuver.

**Teresa:** —plastic, like, plexiglass over the front, right?

**Travis:** Uh-huh. Now, would you say that this was museum quality display?

**Teresa:** No! [laughs]

**Travis:** No.

**Teresa:** No. So, during most of the year the plexiglass was not on, and then my mom would set up the village, and then they would put the plexiglass on so that us children couldn't go and play with it.

**Travis:** Yes. And if I remember correctly, it looked like he said "Oh, fine!" and went and did it in about ten minutes.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** No offense, Michael.

**Teresa:** It is safely adhered.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** It's a little rough and ready, but it's only up for, like, a month, so it's fine.

**Travis:** Can I tell you my favorite version of these Christmas putz, as you say?

**Teresa:** What?

**Travis:** It is the incredibly, like, branded commer— where it's just like a little ceramic Walmart, a little ceramic Home Depot.

**Teresa:** Ohh, yeah.

**Travis:** I would build a whole village out of that. Just out of—

**Teresa:** The only way that I would build one of these Christmas villages is if it was *Muppet Christmas Carol* themed.

**Travis:** That's fair.

**Teresa:** And I have been looking, since we did this topic, I have been looking for an officially licensed one, and I— not to buy, but just even, like, a picture of it.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** And I need the internet's help, so.

**Travis:** Here's the thing. Here's the thing. To speak to your dad's plexiglass solution, it is interesting to be like, "Here is a set of things that is basically toys."

**Teresa:** It's adult— it's adult dollhouses.

**Travis:** "It's little dollhouses with little doll people on little doll skating rinks. Don't touch it!"

**Teresa:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Travis:** And, like, there is absolutely no way we could keep— we had a little box of little foam gourds, and after one month with our two-year-old they all had bite marks in 'em.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** There's no way that our ceramic little village would survive.

**Teresa:** It's true.

**Travis:** It would look like there should be a Sarah McLachlan song playing underneath it as we tell people "For pennies a day, you could save these houses."

**Teresa:** Did you ever have a toy train around your tree?

**Travis:** No. Too breakable.

**Teresa:** Those are often part of this sort of display as well. People have, like, little train stations and little trains.



**Travis:** No. I remember for a long time in my household, be it from cats, dog, or us, that there was just no decorations on the bottom two feet of the tree.

**Teresa:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Travis:** That was a thing I remember.

**Teresa:** I think that our first— the Christmases with the girls when they were super young, I think we had a tree in the basement for Bebe that had all plastic ornaments.

**Travis:** Yes, so that she could touch.

**Teresa:** So she could touch and go do whatever she wanted, right?

**Travis:** Go ham.

**Teresa:** And then when the tree moved up to the living room, I put a fence around it. [laughs]

**Travis:** Well, what we did— and it's absolutely brilliant— save some boxes over time, gift wrap them, and then ran... I think it was, like, a luggage strap, you know, like a ratchet strap through it to make it into a circle so it looked like presents, but was impenetrable.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** And that's 'cause we have two dogs, a cat, two children, and I'm clumsy.

**Teresa:** [laughs] But this year we don't. We don't have any impediment to the tree. So...

**Travis:** And I don't understand the mentality of this, but both our children, as soon as the tree went up, both our kids were— like, said out loud, "I'd like to climb underneath it."

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** And it's like, there's nothing happening down there. There's nothing to see. There's nothing to do. The other thing is you're gonna get scraped by these fake branches and stuff. And yet—

**Teresa:** And knock things off.

**Travis:** But both of them were like, "You know what? Now that I see it up, you know what needs to happen? I gotta slide underneath it."

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I don't know why.

**Teresa:** We did wire it to the wall, so even if a child did get underneath the tree, it would not fall, because it's wired to the wall.

**Travis:** Okay, enough about how great and funny our lives are. Like a— like an episode of *Family Circus*. Tell me about Christmas putzes.

**Teresa:** Okay. So... they actually go back to a much, uh— a much larger Christmas practice. 'Cause not everybody does it.

**Travis:** In ancient Egypt.

**Teresa:** No...

**Travis:** Oh.

**Teresa:** Christmas practice.

**Travis:** They didn't do Christmas in ancient Egypt?

**Teresa:** No, honey.

**Travis:** I bet they didn't call it that.

**Teresa:** Nativity scenes.

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

**Teresa:** Yeah. So—

**Travis:** There's a Catholic name for them. What do they call it?

**Teresa:** Creche.

**Travis:** Creche. Yeah.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** That's also my favorite Dave Matthews Band song.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Uh, that Christian tradition goes all the way back to the 13th century when St. Francis of Assisi held the first living nativity scene in Italy. Um, I mean, of course you don't always want live animals, right? You can't put live animals in your home. I mean, I suppose in the 13th century maybe you did. I don't know.

**Travis:** I mean, we have live animals in our home. I just don't think we could get the dogs and cats to sit still.

**Teresa:** [laughs] To sit still.

**Travis:** "You're donkey! Act like a donkey." Well, Lilly already does.

**Teresa:** Sometimes. Um, and so right after that, um, displays appeared in Prague and, like, it spread— it spread across the world. People loved it. Live animals. Big nativity.

**Travis:** This is another thing. My mom had a beautiful ceramic nativity. Um, that was quite large as far as nativities go. But in classic, I would say, Justin and Griffin fashion, over the course of every Christmas season we would slowly swap it out with different toys that we had. There was another one my mom had, carved wooden blocks that read Noel in, like, very scripty language. And so we would remove the N and, like, take the L and turn it upside down and it looked like Joe. And we would do that and see how long before she noticed, and then she would be like, "Guys!" And then she'd swap it back. And would be like, "Ah ha ha, that went a little longer this time." That happened a lot. We did a lot of Joe stuff.

**Teresa:** Oh man. You guys. [laughs]

**Travis:** My mom had the blocks that spelled out stuff in that receiving room living room window. She would write out stuff, and then we would see how many different, like, anagrams we could make out of it that spelled different things.

**Teresa:** Always— you were born pranksters. You were born doing the goof-'em-ups.

**Travis:** Yeah, but we never advanced to any kind of, like, threatening bad boy behavior. I think we just kept rearranging letter blocks well into our adulthood.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Even now I— if I could combine two words, I'd do it. Don't— don't get me started.

**Teresa:** Um, so... uh, by the 1700's, if you had money to spend on little things, you had a nativity scene with little figurines, right? It was everywhere.

**Travis:** And I bet that was especially a time where we're talking people who were, like, really— like, hand carving was still the thing.

**Teresa:** Certainly.

**Travis:** And, like, hand casting of metal, and glass. All that was still done pretty by hand and laboriously, so it had to be, like, collector's item. Like, if you had one, right? It's not like you drove down to the Walmart and bought a nativity scene. Like, you commissioned someone to make it, or you bought it from somebody who had, like, hand created it.

**Teresa:** Right. Or they were passed down, right?

**Travis:** Oh yeah, like silver or a tea set or something, yeah.

**Teresa:** Exactly. And nowhere was this more, like, entrenched in tradition than Germany.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** Um, and—

**Travis:** They love Christmas there.

**Teresa:** They love Christmas there. And, in fact, the word putz is derived from the German word putzen, which means to clean or to decorate.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Yeah!

**Travis:** I can't wait to find out what you're gonna say. I'm on pins and needles. But first! A word from another Max Fun show.

[theme music plays]

[music plays]

**Ellen:** You probably already have a favorite animal. Maybe it's a powerful apex predator like the tiger, or a cute and cuddly panda. And those are great! But have you considered something a little more unconventional?

**Christian:** Could I perhaps interest you in the Greenland Shark, which can live for nearly 400 years? Or maybe the Jewel Wasp, who performs brain surgery on cockroaches to control their minds.

**Ellen:** On *Just the Zoo of Us*, we review animals by giving them ratings out of 10 in the categories of effectiveness, ingenuity, and aesthetics. Listen with friends and family of all ages to find your new favorite animal with *Just the Zoo of Us* on Maximumfun.org, or wherever you get podcasts.

[music and ad end]

**Travis:** Okay. What were you about to say, babe? Drop that knowledge bomb on me!

**Teresa:** Well, so by the 18th century, many Germans of a very particular Protestant denomination had moved and brought this— brought the putz with them. There were settlements in Salem, in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

**Travis:** Well, right. I mean... it's right there in the name, right? It's Bethlehem, Pennsylvania! You know they're big on creches.

**Teresa:** And so normally these were nativity scenes or Noah's arc sets or things like that, but very quickly they began to incorporate, like, the village that they lived in, just like they did in Huntington, right?

**Travis:** Yeah. Everybody loves recognizing things. Everybody loves being able to, like, "I know that building!" It feels good. And anyone who pretends like it doesn't is lying to themselves and to everyone around them. They're hurting the people they love.

**Teresa:** They were so popular that families would throw putz parties where they'd compete for best in show against their neighbors' displays, right? Which seems adorable to me. [laughs quietly]

**Travis:** Well, it depends on what the prize was and what the punishment for losing it. Maybe it wasn't adorable.

**Teresa:** Oh, probably for pride, not prize.

**Travis:** Oh. Gross. No money? No, like, Moon Shoes or something?

**Teresa:** No! Just bragging rights, baby!

**Travis:** I want a trip to Space Camp!

**Teresa:** In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, train sets began to be incorporated.

**Travis:** Oh yeah.

**Teresa:** Especially as the railroad made its way across the west in the US.

**Travis:** We were wild for that thing, yeah.

**Teresa:** Um, and so of course they started working their way into Christmas miniatures. And by the time we get to the 20th century, American department stores had hopped on the trend. So there were window displays downtown, right?

**Travis:** I think that's the second time— we talked about it with, like, the electric lights and stuff last time.

**Teresa:** Yeah, mm-hmm.

**Travis:** That I think one of the things that I do, uh, miss from my wayward youth... if I— so, here's the thing. I'm about to say a thing. I don't remember if this was even a thing in my youth or if it's a thing that was in movies that I watched in my youth that was before me— anyways. But, like, big displays in store windows and stuff and being like, "We're gonna go downtown," and it's, like, part of the experience of just like, "Oh, look at the shop." Once again, that might just be from *Christmas Story*.

**Teresa:** We might be too old, like, too late for that.

**Travis:** Too young.

**Teresa:** We might not have been born yet.

**Travis:** Well, time is a flat circle, and I don't remember...

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** ... what year I was born, let alone what year they stopped doing displays.

**Teresa:** Uh, FW Woolworth, the father of the dime store, is also a large reason why Christmas miniatures are so popular. He traveled extensively throughout Victorian Europe and brought German cardboard putz houses back with him to sell to the American marketplace, right? Um, and after all, at this time period, Americans were already in love with imported German toys and glass ornaments. So, like, of course they were gonna love these things. And then World War I happened.

**Travis:** Yeah, I was gonna say. Early— early 1900s: loved Germany.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Then...

**Teresa:** Then...

**Travis:** Uh!

**Teresa:** The wars. Um, so then Woolworth course corrected and worked with Japanese manufacturers during the time to produce new Christmas scenes, and soon these Japanese-made cardboard houses could be found at every five and dime, and mail-order catalog. And they were extra cool, because these were the first ones designed with the holes in the back for the Christmas lights.

**Travis:** Now, I have to imagine that the Japanese manufacturers, there was a hiccup with that right about World War II.

**Teresa:** World War II!

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I'm not an expert in history, but I do know some things.

**Teresa:** Um, and so it kind of died off, right? At least purchasing new ones, right? Um, until the 1970's, where it was revived again by a florist. In 1976, Bachman's, which is a retail florist in Minneapolis, launched Department 56, which is where my mom's Dickens village comes from. And so instead of the more delicate cardboard houses, these were now made of ceramic.

**Travis:** Well, still delicate, but more robust. Yeah.

**Teresa:** I mean, yeah. I mean, at least they were robust enough that they were something that could be passed down through multiple generations, and probably not need as many repairs or replacements or things like that, right? Um, and it's not a publicly traded company anymore, so we can't find their exact sales figures, but from 1996 they raked in at least \$156 million in profit.

**Travis:** That's a lot of houses! Well, tiny houses.

**Teresa:** Tiny houses. And in 2017 they were ranked as the number two Christmas gift for the past 100 years.

**Travis:** What was number one? Chocolate?



**Teresa:** Probably. Socks?

**Travis:** Hmm. I don't know. I guess it depends on how you're ranking it.

**Teresa:** Foods? Well, I don't know.

**Travis:** You can't just say foods. That's a huge— that's a huge, like, category! It's gotta be something specific! Number one... is Tinker Toys.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Okay. Okay. I wasn't looking for number one. I was looking for Christmas village.

**Travis:** You always gotta have your eyes on number one, babe. If you don't have your eyes on number one, you're last. What?

**Teresa:** What? And then it had a resurgence during the panini the last couple years, because if you couldn't go to grandma's house, at least you could—

**Travis:** You could look a tiny version of grandma's house.

**Teresa:** Look at a tiny version of grandma's house. [laughs]

**Travis:** With a tiny grandma inside that you kept captive.

**Teresa:** [laughs] So if you're interested in getting into this hobby, there are dozens of clubs and groups and gatherings online, in person, in your— in your city.

**Travis:** My city?!

**Teresa:** In everybody's city. Uh, for Christmas village enthusiasts to give advice and swap ideas and show off their newest stuff. People make their own, now. There are kits that you can buy to make your own little houses. You can make 'em out of gingerbread, of course. That won't last as long. Just like there's a model train community, there's a Christmas village community.

**Travis:** I'm trying to think now, 'cause you said *Muppet Christmas Carol*.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** I'm trying to think now, if I could have, like, my dream version of it, what would it be? Um...

**Teresa:** Well, while you're thinking of that, how about I go over some etiquette?

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** If you are to visit a Christmas village. Um, obviously there are personal ones that, you know, maybe your neighbors would invite you to come over to see. But like we said at the beginning, a lot of museums and community centers and craft fairs and things like that will put on their own display. So, obviously, look with your eyes, not with your hands, right? Um, and a lot of places in, like, commercial venues, they actually have a hands-on area for children, which I think is chef's kiss. Because the whole time, "Don't touch, don't touch, don't touch," gets really hard on me as Mom. And so having, like, a specific little, like, wooden train section or something that children can play with is amazing.

Um, if there are barriers, like glass barriers, don't put your nose up to it, obviously. That is—

**Travis:** Don't do that to the plexiglass in Teresa's parents' house, either.

**Teresa:** [laughs] In Teresa's parents' house. Uh, it is—

**Travis:** They gotta get the Windex out, and nobody's—

**Teresa:** Unhygienic, and then it ruins the display for everyone else, right? Because they can't see through your nose goop.

**Travis:** Okay. I think I'd like a Disney World?

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** I'd like to be able to, like, recreate, you know, like, Epcot or something with it.

**Teresa:** Hmm.

**Travis:** Or one of my own house, but then look in the window. What's that in there? It's a tinier version of my house inside my house where that one is. What's that in that tiny one?

**Teresa:** [laughs] Oh boy.

**Travis:** Yeah. It keeps going.

**Teresa:** How— how tiny are we talking?

**Travis:** Down to the quantum verse.

**Teresa:** Oh, okay.

**Travis:** This episode sponsored by *Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania*.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm. Uh, don't take pictures unless, you know, specifically told, right? Because these are artwork displays, most likely. And some of them are very old, so it may not be good for their paint. Or, I mean, and it may not be what the artist intended, right? To take pictures of that. No shouting, pushing, or roughhousing. I mean, that's more—

**Travis:** Those are basic.

**Teresa:** That's for the kids, right?

**Travis:** That's 101.

**Teresa:** Uh, we want to make sure that these Christmas villages make it to next year. In that same way, make sure children are supervised, because if you have to pay for one of these Department 56 models, could cost you up to 200 bucks.

**Travis:** Really?

**Teresa:** Yeah, single house, up to 200 bucks.

**Travis:** That's almost as much as a real house!

**Teresa:** No, it's not.

**Travis:** No? Okay.

**Teresa:** No, it's not. Don't lean on the tables, right? 'Cause they could come crashing down.

**Travis:** Don't flip the table over.

**Teresa:** Don't flip the table over.

**Travis:** Don't try to crawl inside one of the tiny houses and say "This is my house now. Squatters' rights."

**Teresa:** [laughs] And here's something that you may not have thought of: coats. You need to either keep your coat on, or coat check. Because something that often happens is people wear bulky coats during the winter, they take them off, and they hold them over their arm, which is a great way to not really now how you are brushing up against things, right? Um, so take great care with your coat. Either keep it on or coat check it somewhere else. And if you really like something that you see, make sure to tell everyone about it! Get everybody in on this. This is gonna be great.

**Travis:** You mean people outsi— like—

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** "Hey, everybody. Come look." Not like—

**Teresa:** "Everybody—"

**Travis:** "Everybody around me!"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "Look at this house!"

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** "Strangers! Strangers, gather round!"

**Teresa:** Blow it up on your soc' mede's. These are great things to share with other people. And, you know, always credit the artist.

**Travis:** Okay. Well, that's gonna do it for us. Thank you so much for joining us. Thank you to Rachel, our editor, without whom we would not be able to make this show. Thank you to Alex, our researcher, without whom we would not be able to make this show. Thank you to you for listening. We could make this show without you, but why?

**Teresa:** You didn't do that last week, and I...

**Travis:** I know!

**Teresa:** I missed it, and I'm glad it's back.

**Travis:** That's why I brought it back. Um, make sure you check out... uh, let's see. Mcelroymerch.com for all the great merch we've got.

**Teresa:** Candlenights merch!

**Travis:** There's so much Candlenights merch, and 10% of all proceeds this month go to benefit Harmony House in our hometown. Speaking of which, Candlenights special is December 17th. Get your tickets now. I'm trying to think, what day— yeah. This will go out before then.

**Teresa:** Certainly, certainly will.

**Travis:** Tickets are on sale now. There's a lot of great stuff in there. I think this is gonna be our best one yet.

**Teresa:** We did some great goof-'em-ups.

**Travis:** Some great goof-'em-ups in there, folks. Get those tickets. [Bit.ly/candlenights2022](https://bit.ly/candlenights2022), that's Candlenights 2022. All proceeds from that also go to Harmony House in our hometown of Huntington, West Virginia. Plus it's gonna be fun. Video on demand is available through January 2nd. Uh, let's see. What else, honey?

**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 Bruja Betty

Pinup Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, *Shmanners* Fanners. If you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, go ahead and follow that group today. Also, we are always taking submissions for topics and idioms. Um, and you can submit those to... [shmannercast@gmail.com](mailto:shmannercast@gmail.com).

**Travis:** There it is.

**Teresa:** And say hi to Alex, because 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]

[chord]

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