

Shmanners 346: Retirement Parties

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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: [inhales heavily] I think I'm fine. [laughing]

Travis: Yeah, getting by. Getting by. Getting by.

Teresa: Yeah. I mean, the biggest thing for me is that it's that time of year again.

Travis: Mmm.

Teresa: Allergy season. [laughing]

Travis: Oh, okay. I thought you were gonna say, like, "You know, the days... we're just counting the days until it's warm," or whatever. I don't know. With our jobs, I was thinking about this because, like, seasons mean nothing to me other than the weather changing. I work from home.

Teresa: Yeah. Yeah.

Travis: Um, I don't get summer breaks. I don't get Spring Break. Teachers are so lucky. They have it *so* easy.

Teresa: Oh, my God, don't you even.

Travis: No, of course not.

Teresa: Don't even—

Travis: Of course, I'm kidding!

Teresa: ... start this.

Travis: Of course, I'm kidding! But it would be nice. No. [chuckles]

Teresa: [giggling]

Travis: No, but there is that thing of just, like, the one thing is, like, I know what day it is based on what we're recording.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: But— uh— there are often days where someone's like, "What are you doing this weekend?" And I'm like, "Well, what is today?"

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: And then I can tell you. And we were just— this week, we were talking about retirement parties.

Teresa: Yes, we are.

Travis: And before we started, we were talking about for your dad's second retirement—

Teresa: Yes, because he retired when I was in middle school from the Air Force.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: And then he got a civilian job because he had to continue to make money to feed your children.

Travis: Well, we'll talk about that too in a second—

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: ... but—

Teresa: And, so, he retired *again* from his civilian job.

Travis: And we gave him a very nice clock. Like one of those— it's a mantle thing, which is a very traditional—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: That and, like, watches and stuff, is like a very traditional thing. Which you pointed out, and I never really thought about it— it's weird to be like, "Hey, now that you don't have anywhere to be or anything to do—

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: "... make sure you know what time it is."

Teresa: Yeah. Here's this very fancy timepiece to tell you about what you used to do. Is that it?

Travis: Now, see, I thought you were going to say, "It's kind of cruel," because you're like, "Think of all the time you lost working."

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: Won't get that back. Here's a clock.

Teresa: I don't know if I've seen that clock. What did he do with it?

Travis: He probably burned it.

Teresa: [chuckles] It was one of those ones that has, like, a glass case on it that—

Travis: I think it was called, like, a retirement clock or an anniversary clock, and it has, like, the three balls—

Teresa: Like, the spinny things.

Travis: ... on the bottom, and it's like— yeah, I think it's called, like, an anniversary clock.

Teresa: My mom also retired recently. Um, just, like, last year, right? Yeah.

Travis: And once again, I think it was more of, like, a second— so she—

Teresa: It was a second retirement *because* her first career was as a nurse. Um, where she was, uh, what did they— a neo-natal—

Travis: She was, like, a NICU—

Teresa: A NICU nurse, yeah. So, she retired-ish from that. Although I do believe for a while, she was keeping her RN, which you can do by continuing education and taking the tests and stuff like that.

Travis: Yeah. Well, just once again, nurses have it so easy.

Teresa: Oh, my God. Don't even start. And then she was a substitute teacher for a while and then retired from that because teaching is hard.

Travis: Well, I think the thing about retirement parties that's interesting now is I think they're probably a lot fewer and far—far-er between-er because it used to be so easy to retire. And I think that we see more and more these days of, like, "Yeah, you retired from, like, your main job that you did, you know, 9:00 to 5:00 for, like, 45 years," or whatever. But you do need to get another job as, like, a cashier at, like, a supermarket or whatever 'cause you still have to, like, pay bills, and it still costs money to do things and stuff.

Teresa: Can I tell you? It has *never* been easy to retire.

Travis: What?!

Teresa: So, uh, let's define it first.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: It's the practice of leaving one's job or ceasing to work after reaching a certain age.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Uh, you know, people have always done this because, eventually, you cannot move your body enough to work.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, whether it's from old age or disease or sickness or whatever it is, right? Eventually, you cannot physically work anymore.

Travis: And it's time to get uploaded to the Matrix.

Teresa: Um, but starting back in the Roman Empire, the nation-states would provide pensions to those who had served in the military, right? Which makes sense because military service, especially back then, was very physical, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And at some point, [chuckles] you are not capable of continuing your military career. And the idea was they had served their country, and so they received a pension.

Travis: Wow! Can you imagine? If we just, like, took care of the people who did the job we don't want to do, and, like, served their country. And after they were done working for the country, the country was, like, "Now let us work for you."

Teresa: Hmm.

Travis: Can you imagine?

Teresa: Can you imagine? Um, but other than that, like, retiring wasn't really something that people did, right? Especially the working class. Now, there in the upper crusts, right? Of society, there was a time where you transferred your assets, maybe before you died. But other than that, like, if you asked a medieval peasant about retirement, they'd be like, "What?"

Travis: Yeah. Yeah, they'd burn you at the stake for witchcraft.

Teresa: Exactly. 'Cause you work on the farm every day until you don't 'cause you're dead.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: So, until the eighteenth-century, people didn't really start talking about retirement as an idea, and it wasn't even government policy anywhere until the nineteenth century. And so, there was someone in government who introduced the idea, Otto von Bismarck.

Travis: Oh, wait! I've heard about him.

Teresa: He was a conservative minister President of Prussia, and he presented this as kind of a radical idea at the time.

Travis: Like *radical!*

Teresa: I mean, kind of.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: He proposed that the government should run a financial support program for older members of society. Which is a little bit like Social Security these days, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: But Social Security, first of all, don't get me started because that is your money, right? You— in Social Security, you contribute from your paycheck.

Travis: Yeah, you're investing in your retirement.

Teresa: [chuckles softly] And then you get that money back when you can't work anymore.

Travis: Hypothetically, yes.

Teresa: Hypothetically. [chuckles] So, his claim was, "Those who are disabled from work by age and invalidity have a well-grounded claim to care from the state," which was radical at the time. [laughs lightly] Especially considering that, uh, he was a conservative leader, right?

Travis: Hmm.

Teresa: Which isn't— you know, which isn't renowned for social programs. His nickname was "The Iron Chancellor."

Travis: Man, I wish I could have a nickname that talked about how, like, cool and hard-assed I was.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: It's like, "*The Iron Podcaster.*"

Teresa: Can we say that?

Travis: I don't know.

Teresa: Can we say that on this show?

Travis: But, like, The Iron Podcaster, I would take. Or even just, like, The Thick Cardboard Podcaster. Like, Thick Cardboard with Rough Edges Podcaster.

Teresa: So, he seems like an unlikely candidate, right? But—

Travis: Play in the space with me. Hey, play in the— what would you want— what kind— would you wanna be—

Teresa: [through laughter] Play in the space with me.

Travis: ... heavy duty—

Teresa: What do you think this is? *My Brother, My Brother, and Me?*

Travis: You could be The Heavy-Duty Aluminum Foil Podcaster.

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: You could be, like, The Four-Ply Toilet Paper Podcaster. Real tough stuff over here.

Teresa: Real tough stuff. Tough and soft.

Travis: Yeah! That's you!

Teresa: A soft and strong.

Travis: You're a 10-ply toilet paper, babe.

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: You got ripples and patterns. Hey, why did you tell our kids that I don't like patterned toilet paper?

Teresa: Because you told me that at some point.

Travis: [loudly] Did I?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: I don't remember this. Okay, when you're—

Teresa: We've been having this fight for weeks, you guys.

Travis: It's not even a fight for me now. It's more of a philosophical rumination.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Because when you have kids, you try and teach them things, and it always goes in one ear and out the other. But there will be things that your kids are like, "I've decided to latch onto this so very tightly." Like when you see vines crawling up a wall, and you're like, "How are you hanging onto that wall?" That's my children with, like, "Daddy, why don't you like patterns on toilet paper?" And I'm like, "I don't know, man! I don't remember saying that."

Teresa: You told me at some point that you didn't like the *embossed* toilet paper. That you didn't mind if it was, like, completely flat or if it had, like, ripples or whatever.

Travis: Sure. I mean, I guess.

Teresa: But you didn't like the embossed kind.

Travis: Oh, sometimes I say things like they're rock-hard opinions that I have—

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: ... but it's really just a fleeting thought in that moment that I have no commitment to whatsoever.

Teresa: Well, when I have two children in the cart with me at Kroger.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And I say, "Which toilet paper should we get?" And they say, "The one with flowers." And I go, "Uhm, I don't think that's the one that your dad likes." And they go, "Ooh ah!"

Travis: Yeah. Meanwhile, they're like, "I'm gonna eat these toys."

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: And you're like, "What? How come you can remember the thing about toilet paper?"

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: [voice lowered] They don't eat toys anymore.

Teresa: Well.

Travis: They're not good. Well...

Teresa: [laughing] Okay, So Bismarck, in fact, suggested this social program because he was under immense pressure from his Socialist opponents at the time, right?

Travis: I mean, it's Prussia.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: 'Cause he's from Prussia. And it's like—

Teresa: Oh! I got it!

Travis: [singing to tune of Under Pressure] "Under Prussia."

Teresa: And so, he would do this to kind of like bolster the working class.

Travis: Yeah, man.

Teresa: And make himself look good like that, right?

Travis: Yeah. Hey, you know who you really need on board if you want to win elections and stuff? The working class.

Teresa: Yeah. So, it would take eight years, but by the end of the 1880s, the German government would create a retirement system that provided benefits to citizens over the age of 70.

Travis: Oh, man, 1880s. I would not have guessed that early, but—

Teresa: But.

Travis: But.

Teresa: The retirement age just so happened to align with the average life expectancy at the time.

Travis: Sure. Sure, sure.

Teresa: So even with these benefits, people usually continued to work until they died if they were able, right?

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: And it's also worth noting that the participation in the retirement system was mandatory, and contributions towards these retirement and disability benefits came from the employee, the employer, and the government, right? So, just like our Social Security programs today, it's not free money.

Travis: No. It's just another thing America shares with 1880s Russia.

Teresa: I suppose. Uh, Germany.

Travis: Prussia. Ger—yeah, that one.

Teresa: Yeah. Um, then the idea of a retirement started spreading. And the United States had already test-run this idea starting in the mid-1800s. Certain municipal employees, like firefighters and cops, and teachers, began receiving public pensions, but really only if you lived in a big city, right?

It was a start, and so by 1875, the American Express Company began offering private pensions to their workers. And by the 1920s, a variety of other industries, like railroads and banking and other things were promising their workers something of the sort of retirement benefits once they aged out of their own workforce.

Travis: Okay. I can't wait to learn more about this 'cause I feel like we're on the cusp of some exciting developments. But first, how about a word and a thank you for our sponsors?

[theme music plays]

Travis: This week, we want to say “thank you” to Zola. Thank you for sponsoring the show, but also, thank you for making the entire wedding experience from, uh, nose to tail better. [chuckles]

Teresa: [laughs softly] Toe to tip, that’s a wedding.

Travis: From toe to tip, you make it easier.

Teresa: Toe to tip, that’s a wedding.

Travis: That’s a wedding.

Teresa: That’s a wedding.

Travis: That’s a wedding right there. Because you know what? When you attend a wedding— I was about to say, “Sometimes you think it just happens.” But I— maybe if you’ve been living under a rock or you’re a child—

Teresa: I don’t think that anybody these days thinks that any— even like a courthouse wedding, it *just* happens.

Travis: No. There’s so much, uh, stress, anxiety, and that’s just in finding a partner, let alone—

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Um, so, Zola is—

Teresa: Let alone trapping them for eternity.

Travis: Think— what?

Teresa: What?

Travis: Okay. Zola's free planning tools are there for you on all of the important days, showing you where to start and help you plan *every step* of the way. Zola also has venues, and vendors, save the dates and invites, free wedding websites, and an amazing registry, all designed by wedding experts for couples like you. I assume, listener.

If you're worried about throwing a wedding, then there's at least more than one of you. Unless I don't know. I heard this Pablo Neruda poem recently about someone who threw a wedding for themselves; I believe it was. And they married a mirror, and everybody in attendance was, like, totally on board with it.

Teresa: Huh.

Travis: Yeah. Anywho, that's off-topic. The Zola community [through laughter] is your place to share, celebrate, [normally] and vent with other engaged couples who know exactly what you're going through. And if you need expert help, there's Team-Z, Zola's wedding advisors, ready to answer any questions. So, from just engaged to the only thing left to do is say "I do," Zola is here for all the days along the way. Just go to Zola.com/Shmanners. That's Z-O-L-A dot com slash *Shmanners*.

[music plays]

Speaker One: Since the dawn of time, man's 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 skipping]

Speaker Two: Actually, we still can't bring people back from the dead.

[upbeat music plays]

Speaker Two: 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 ad ends]

[soft background 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 Infitum.

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.

[music and ad ends]

Teresa: So, the thing about this, right? And I mentioned that at the time of its inception, 70 was considered the retirement age.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: But— but why? Again, why? One would hope that the age would be— of an age where one could actually enjoy the benefits in one's retirement—

Travis: Well, you would hope that.

Teresa: ... without staring im—mortality in the face, right?

Travis: Immortality or mortality?

Teresa: No, mortality. Sorry.

Travis: Okay. Either one of those is a bummer, though.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: `Cause immortality seems like a good thing, but we can just agree to any story where someone becomes immortal, and they're always just like, "Sigh. This is now incredibly boring."

Teresa: So, um, most pension programs said age 65, which had less to do with health and medical information and more to do with economics. There was a little bit of research at the time documenting a mental decline around age 60. And conventional wisdom at the time held that by 60, a man had done his work and should step aside to let the younger generation take hold.

Travis: Unless they're a podcaster, which it's 40, uh, max.

Teresa: [laughing] Max.

Travis: After that, there's—

Teresa: Well, because the mental decline.

Travis: The mental decline. You're just not as good, and especially in E-sports, it's 25. At 25, you're over the hill. YouTube, I believe it's 31; you're over the hill. It's rough. Rough stuff out here for content creators.

Teresa: Eventually, the United States agreed on 65. Um, and the Social Security Act was passed in 1935, listing 65 as the official retirement age. Which, again, is interesting because, at the time, 58 years old was considered the American man's life expectancy.

Travis: Yeah, but they've talked about it on *Sawbones*, and I think we've talked about it here too. Where when you're talking about average life expectancy—

Teresa: Right, infant mortality—

Travis: Right.

Teresa: ... definitely factors in. Um, but again, retirement kind of implies that you have a little while to enjoy the fruits of your labor, right? Instead of continuing to toil.

Travis: But I— I mean, as a person who likes their job, I would also see where someone who'd be like, "I don't want— I would rather not retire. Thank you very much. I enjoy my job." I don't know. I see it both ways. I don't think anyone should have to work longer than they, uh, need to to make enough money to live.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: But I also think that no one should be forced out of their job due to age because that's also not cool.

Teresa: Okay. All right. I mean, I can see that.

Travis: I'm just saying, "Please don't fire me because I'm about to turn 40."

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: I'm really worried.

Teresa: I am not in charge of hiring, so you're safe with me.

Travis: That wasn't a no!

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: That was like, "Hey, it's not my— I don't know what to tell you, man. Not my job."

Teresa: I wouldn't want to replace you, so...

Travis: Thank you. I think.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Once again, not as emphatic as I would have liked.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: I would never ab— I don't want to currently replace you.

Teresa: [continues laughing] I don't— I don't know where to go from here.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, but— so, the idea, I think, of throwing a party, um, is any excuse to throw a party.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: And so, now, it is commonplace that when people retire, even if they move on to a second career, another job, grocery bagging at the

grocery store, or any of that, right? Whether or not they continue to earn money is irrelevant. Once you leave a job, it is customary these days to have a retirement party.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Like we said, we've been to both my parent's retirement parties.

Travis: My dad retired, but it was not like a fun retirement.

Teresa: Yeah. It was a very quiet thing.

Travis: He got pushed out of his job by a, uh, some higher-ups.

Teresa: Computers, basically.

Travis: Well, yeah, just a slow conglomerate buying up radio stations and everything. And bad contracts offered and everything. And then he was, like, "You know what? I get supported so well by Max Fun listeners doing, uh, Max Fun drive and *The Adventure Zone*. I don't *need* to work a job where I'm not appreciated anymore; that doesn't make me happy; that is stressful. And he was able to retire/quit, I guess, would be the way to look at it.

Teresa: Yeah. Yeah.

Travis: And just come work on *Adventure Zone* full time. Which is one of the reasons that graphic novels exist. So, thank you, Max Fun listeners.

Teresa: And then, at my mom's retirement, it was a bunch of teachers that retired at the same time. Her, uh, let's see, it was herself and a couple of other substitute teachers, but also, one of *my* teachers that I had when I was younger, who was still working, also retired at her retirement party. It was wild, um, because I didn't— I've talked about this before. I didn't know what to call her. Do you call them by their last name 'cause they were your teacher?

Travis: You bow deeply.

Teresa: [giggles] Or do you— or do you call them by their first name because you're— am I a peer like my teacher now? I don't know.

Travis: I would have to think if you have reached retirement age as a teacher, you're probably more used to answering to your last name with some kind of like suffix or thing before it than you are answering to your first name. Right? You would spend eight hours a day, five days a week, being called, like, Mrs. McElroy.

Teresa: She doesn't listen to this, so my—

Travis: How do you know?

Teresa: I mean, because. My teacher, Mrs. Burnette. I was like, "I don't know— Mrs. Burnette?" And her—

Travis: You could say, "Hey, teach!" and high-five her.

Teresa: Her name— her name is Celine.

Travis: [gasps]

Teresa: And I was like, "There is no way I can call someone Celine." I don't deserve it. [giggles]

Travis: Wow! I think that's— there's a lot to dive into there, babe.

Teresa: There's a lot to dive into. Anyway, uh, what did we give my mom for her retirement?

Travis: Uh, grandkids.

Teresa: Oh, that what—

Travis: [through laughter] No, I don't— I don't know.

Teresa: No, I think that we gave her a very heartfelt card, um—

Travis: We gave her something.

Teresa: ... and—

Travis: It was like a gift certificate or something.

Teresa: And a gift certificate! No, it was!

Travis: It was?

Teresa: It was! It was.

Travis: Like, a spa day gift certificate?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Yes. Okay.

Teresa: And a spa day gift certificate.

Travis: Which, in many ways, better than a clock.

Teresa: I think so too.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: I think we really did a better job with her. [giggles]

Travis: Clock feels more appropriate, but only on the surface.

Teresa: Only on the surface. Okay. So, if you are—

Travis: Give me a wacky clock that spins backwards and says it's 5 o'clock somewhere on it. That's a fitting retirement party.

Teresa: I mean, there is— there is a place for that, I think. If you are throwing or attending a retirement party, do try and figure out the dress code, right? Because a lot of these parties are often thrown at work, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And if you work in an office space, um, normally, you would just wear clothes that you would normally wear to an office. But if it's a more casual thing, like my mom's took place at a— at a—

Travis: Brewery.

Teresa: A brewery.

Travis: But your dad's was like at a fancy restaurant.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: It's just— it's the vibe. Yeah.

Teresa: Right. So, figure that out. Um, and because, you know, it'll probably be pretty obvious on the invitation. Where it takes place and what you should wear. But it still goes to show that you should *not* show up at the party ready to talk smack about your work or the retiring co-worker, right? Because it is— it's not within the culture of leaving work to, like, razz the person leaving, right? "Thank gosh, you're leaving." That kind of stuff, right?

Travis: I mean, unless, once again, it's specifically, like, "We're doing a roast of old Tom," or whatever.

Teresa: Right, but that's a specific thing.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Don't assume that just because Tom is retiring, that you get to roast him.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Or that you get to roast your boss.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: And that is something that you can ask the person retiring if that is something that they would like.

Travis: "Hey, when we get there, can I make fun of you?"

Teresa: [laughing] Maybe they have an idea in their mind of what they would prefer. If they want it at a fancy restaurant. If they want it in somebody's backyard. If they want it at the office, you know?

Travis: If they want to be belittled. [chuckles]

Teresa: [laughs softly] At 4 o'clock on a Friday, and they'd rather just walk out into the sunset and never talk to anybody ever again. Um, and try not to use it as a time to network because it's not the time, right? We are celebrating a person and their contributions. And so, you know, find another time to rub elbows and hobnob with the boss. And a retirement gift is, uh...

Travis: Appropriate? Encouraged? Is...

Travis and Teresa: [simultaneously] Customary!

Travis: We got that.

Teresa: [through laughter] Oh, no. [normally] Maybe it's me.

Travis: It's me? Hi.

Teresa: [laughs] Okay. Um, so, if you, like we said, you could tailor it to the person leaving or if you want to do, like, a group gift. Getting together with the rest of your co-workers for that. We gave my mom the spa day gift card, but you could easily distribute that expense amongst the co-workers.

Travis: I would say that the thing, if it is a professional gift, like the office got together and got you this, or the business got together and got you this, right?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: I think if that's the case, it needs to be reflective of that level, uh, where it is, like, a *really* nice watch with engraved backing or something, right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: I don't think it should be, like, "Hey, you've been working here, you know? You worked here for 45 years. It's a 200-person company. We *all* chipped in and got you this 25-dollar gas card for like—" That's not—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: That's not quite up to the level of, like, what that moment feels like. You know what I mean?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: So, I think that you want to think of it in terms of, like, "Does this reflect how much we appreciate, you know, sometimes decades of work that this person put into this company."

Teresa: Which means that, also, if it's a very small office, like maybe there's four or five of you, sometimes just a really heartfelt card signed by everyone would be enough.

Travis: Right. Or like a group photo, if you have one of those. Something— because I think that the two ways you can go is like, “Oh, my God. This is so nice in terms—”

Teresa: Or sentimental.

Travis: Or, “This is so thoughtful.” Right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Exactly. So also, make sure that everyone from the workplace is invited. Obviously, they don’t have to show up, even if it’s, like— if it’s, like, after hours, if it’s from somewhere else, but—

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: ... you don’t want to single out someone by leaving them out because that only makes the rest of the office time together awkward, right?

Travis: Here’s a good— okay. Thinking of gifts, right? You could get them, like, a \$1,000 watch, right? Okay, great. Cool, maybe they love that. I don’t know, but if it’s like, “Oh, this guy loves fishing. We know during his retirement, he’s gonna go fishing.”

Teresa: Great idea.

Travis: You got him, like, a really nice, like \$75 tackle box or something. It’s like, “Yeah, that’s going to probably mean more to him than a \$1,000 watch.”

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Whatever, right? So, I think that that is more the goal than just, like, we spent a ton of money on this. And whenever you think about gifts, the more it can be specific to the person, the better.

Teresa: Right. It is also customary for a speech to be given.

Travis: That said, I would *love* a \$1,000 watch when I retire from podcasting.

Teresa: I know you. [chuckles]

Travis: I'm just saying, "I'm a material girl."

Teresa: [bursts out laughing] It is customary for a speech to be given either by the retiree or by someone who is very— who worked very closely with them. Kind of like a toast, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: But if you are retiring—

Travis: Not a roast.

Teresa: Not a roast. If you are retiring and you would like to give that speech, you're more than welcome to let the people who you've worked with, let them know how special your time has been there.

Travis: And if you want to use that time to tell everybody off, wait 'til after you get the watch. Get the watch first, and *then* go on a tirade, and then say "Peace out," and throw the microphone on the ground, walk into the sunset, and never talk to anybody again.

Teresa: [laughing] It's— That's your prerogative, but it's not friendly.

Travis: Do it *after* you get the watch. I can't stress this enough.

Teresa: It's not *Shmannerly* to, uh—

Travis: Sure. Okay.

Teresa: ... to brag about how happy you'll be walking off.

Travis: I didn't say brag. It's not about bragging about happy; it's just, like, "I never say— in 45 years, I never said this. You all can take a hike." And then you say, "Now I'm gonna go take a hike, but really 'cause I'm retired. Bye!"

Teresa: And this is an event that one would want to send thank you notes for.

Travis: [inhales sharply] Hard to do that after the speech I just gave.

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: But yeah. Okay.

Teresa: Exactly. If it is a group gift, a group thank you addressed to the office is perfectly acceptable.

Travis: Yeah. With a picture of you sipping mai tais on the beach—

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: ... while they're working.

Teresa: I suppose.

Travis: So, let's retire from this episode.

Teresa: Okay!

Travis: But not the show. Please, not the show.

Teresa: No, we're not retiring.

Travis: We're still doing the show, please. Please, don't.

Teresa: We have to feed our children. [chuckles]

Travis: Please! Um, *but* we don't have to feed you. I don't know what that means.

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: I'm so sorry, everyone. I'm looking for the copy that I'm supposed to read. And I panicked, and I said that we don't have to feed you, and I'm sorry. But our graphic novel, *The Adventure Zone* Graphic Novel Book 5: *The Eleventh Hour*, came out on Tuesday. It's available now. It's called *The Eleventh Hour*.

You can go get it wherever fine books are sold, and please, please get it. Please. It's *very* good. I think you'll really like it. It's our best one yet. And if you don't have the other four, buy those too.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Buy a lot of copies of them. They're *really* good.

Teresa: Give them out as gifts to people retiring.

Travis: Oh!

Teresa: Now they have time to read graphic novels.

Travis: I love it. Hey, you know how you've always been a nerd, but you haven't had time? Enjoy, dad!

Teresa: [laughing loudly]

Travis: Also, go check out all the merch at Mcelroymerch.com. We got our *Twenty Sun & Seas* stickers designed by Lucas Hesperheide. We've got the

"That's Space, Baby!" sticker designed by Cedric Woolf. And 10% of all merch proceeds this month go to The Foundation for Black Women's Wellness. So, go check all that out at Mcelroymerch.com.

Of course, we always say "thank you" to our researcher Alex, without whom we would not be able to make this show. Thank you to our editor, Rachel, without whom we would not be able to make this show. And thank you to you for listening. You know what? We really appreciate it. Thank you so much.

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: What else, Teresa?

Teresa: Well, we want to 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 get and give excellent advice from other fans, go ahead and join that group today. As always, we are taking topic submissions. We are taking questions. We are taking idioms even, please!

Travis: We haven't done one of those in a while.

Teresa: Not a while, you're right. Send those to Shmannerstcast@gmail.com. And say hi to Alex because she reads every one.

Travis: And that's going to do it for us, so join us again next week!

Teresa: No RSVP required.

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

Teresa: Manners, *Shmanners*. Get it.

[theme music plays]

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