

Shmanners 352: Van Life

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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: I'm alright. It's a, you know, it's a rainy day. Feeling a little cozy, a little sleepy. [laughs]

Travis: See, I'm just bothered because the plants are letting their evil out. All the flowers are spreading their evil around and it makes, uh, my sinuses angry. It makes my throat sad.

Teresa: Well, the rain should help with that, actually. Should kind of tamp down the pollen a little bit.

Travis: Hey. Your lips to Gaia's ears. You know what I mean? Take that, Mother Earth! You're wet now! Deal with it!

Teresa: [laughs] She likes it.

Travis: Okay! Now, Marie, we are this week talking about van life.

Teresa: We are!

Travis: Which I assume is like when you travel around living in a van and not, like, "I love vans."

Teresa: [laughs] Correct.

Travis: Not just like, "Yeah, now we have kids. We've bought a van. Van life." Right? This is different.

Teresa: Right, right. No, no, no. Living in a motorized vehicle is what we are talking about specifically. Obviously cultures all around the world live nomadic lifestyles, have for centuries.

Travis: Sometimes millennia.

Teresa: Indeed. And there have been different covered vehicles, right? I mean—

Travis: Your Conestogas. Your... that's all I could think of off the top of my head.

Teresa: [laughs] That's a covered wagon, right?

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: Yeah. But specifically today we are talking about the more modern phenomenon of van life, which includes motorized vehicles.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: This includes, you know, plenty of people in the United States and in the UK who have chosen to take their lives on the road, and you've probably seen it on Instagram the least, right? Hash tag #vanlife.

Travis: Yeah. It's always an interesting—not to sidestep into a world I'm not—into, like, a topic that I'm not fully versed on, but what is always interesting is I think there's the side of it people who are like, "This is a choice that I've made for my own," and then there's the side where I'm like,

"This feels like an influencer choice, doesn't it? This feels like a thing you've done—" like when you see tiny homes and you're like, "It looks you wanted to live—and you look like you're doing this for blog purposes." And when that blog's done you're gonna move into an apartment somewhere.

Teresa: It's possible. It's possible. And there's a whole range of reasons why people do the things they do, especially when it comes to van life. But first of all, it is a little more than "Get a van and live in that van."

Travis: Sure. You gotta put stuff in the van.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: And you gotta take some stuff out of the van, like seats, so you can put a bed in there.

Teresa: Sure, maybe.

Travis: Or maybe get a school bus instead? Plenty of room.

Teresa: There are definitely people who do that, yep. The idea is that it's supposed to be a simplification of modern life. And, you know, you could also do—maybe you want to, I don't know, homeschool your children in a variety of national parks, or maybe your job, it takes you to different locations and you don't want to be constantly, you know, apartment hunting.

Travis: I met some folks when I did D&D in a Castle, and their job was digital nomads where it was that kind of deal. So I'm gonna get out ahead of this and say, I think aspects of this are wonderful. I could not do it.

Teresa: Oh no. I couldn't either.

Travis: [simultaneously] Could you? No.

Teresa: No, no. I couldn't.

Travis: Mostly because—and I love you very much. I love our kids very much. But the idea of like, "Hey, we're all gonna be in this small space

forever together," I can't. I simply can't. The number of times—I'm a very social person, but that comes with a certain amount of recharging that has to happen. Sitting quietly in a room by myself staring at a wall six inches away from my face.

Teresa: [laughs] I think that at some point you have to expand your indoors into the outdoors, right?

Travis: Mmm, I also don't like that.

Teresa: So, like, the park becomes your living space, right?

Travis: I don't know if you know this, but outdoors is where both bugs and bears are.

Teresa: Mmm.

Travis: Two of the worst B words... not the worst, but they're up there. Listen, I mean, where they belong—I don't want anyone writing me with like, "Bugs are great and bears are great."

I agree. When bugs and bears and I are in different places—heck, even the bugs and bears can be together. But as long as I'm not in the same place as a bug and bear, I think they're great. Now, don't get me started on bugbears.

Teresa: Oh boy. Okay, let's start at the birth of the concept. When do you think that it first got on the road, so to speak?

Travis: Well, I'm thinking it when hash was a different thing. The 60's.

Teresa: [laughs] Earlier, actually!

Travis: What?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: That seems like a very hippie, like, "We're gonna follow a band," or, like—

Teresa: It definitely does.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: There was definitely part of that to that lifestyle. Okay, so we're gonna start with the first van-type vehicle, even though it was technically horse-drawn. 1855.

Travis: Oh. People—

Teresa: Which is—

Travis: Wait. Were people living van life in 1855?

Teresa: This guy was.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Dr. William Stables.

Travis: Dr. Vans.

Teresa: [laughs] 11 years before the invention of the automobile, by the way.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So Dr. William Stables was a Scottish medic and a prolific novelist who wrote over 130 books over the course of his lifetime.

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: Most of which was adventure fiction. He was a massive fan of Jules Verne. So, you know, his wanderlust and also love of adventure makes a whole lot of sense. And so his love of Jules Verne, especially the kooky modes of travel, seemed to be a great inspiration for his traveling home.

So, in 1855 he commissioned a "gentleman's caravan," quote—

Travis: Oooh!

Teresa: —from the Bristol Wagon Carriage Works. So at this point, like I said, there were people who definitely lived in wagons, right? And had been—

Travis: [simultaneously] Yeah, but this is a gentleman's carriage.

Teresa: This was what he called a gentleman's caravan. And so he drew out this kind of mobile home that looked a lot like a train car. It had side windows like that, and kind of a small front door and, like, lanterns, right? Are you picturing it?

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Are you thinking of it? Um, and he affectionately referred to it as The Wanderer.

Travis: I would hope that that was affectionate. It would be weird if he referred to it derisively as The Wonderer. "Oh, that? That's The Wonderer. Ugh!"

Teresa: Wan—Wanderer.

Travis: I say it wrong, don't I?

Teresa: You do.

Travis: 'Cause it's a West Virginia thing. Wanderer.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: That feels so pretentious. The Wanderer. No, Wonderer!

Teresa: [simultaneously] But Won—

Travis: Wanderer.

Teresa: Wonderer is a different thing! That's someone who thinks about—

Travis: [simultaneously] The One Direction.

Teresa: —wondering things.

Travis: Okay. The Wanderer.

Teresa: The Wanderer.

Travis: Ugh. Ugh, I hate it!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Got a bad mouth feel.

Teresa: Okay. I mean, it could've been derogatory, because he seemed to spend a lot of time pulling it out of ditches.

Travis: Oh. So maybe derogatorily he called it The Flounderer.

Teresa: Oh, maybe, maybe. He managed, with the help of his friends constantly pulling him out of ditches—

Travis: Was he a bad driver or were there just ditches everywhere?

Teresa: There was ditches everywhere, but also it was a—

Travis: It was a ditchier time.

Teresa: It was unruly. It was an unruly vehicle.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: So he traveled the length of Great Britain—even wrote a book about it—but—

Travis: My Time in the Ditch.

Teresa: [laughs] Could've been. Could've been called that. Um—

Travis: Ditches Get Stitches by Dr. Stables.

Teresa: Finally—oh, staples? Stitches?

Travis: Was that his last name? Staples or Stables or—

Teresa: Stables.

Travis: Stables with a B?

Teresa: Sta—with a B.

Travis: So like horses. That's what I was—okay.

Teresa: Yeah. Oh, okay. I thought you said staples. 'Cause that's like stitches.

Travis: Yeah, but that wasn't his name! [wheezes]

Teresa: [laughs] Oopsie!

Travis: It'd be weird if he made a pun out of his own name!

Teresa: But it wasn't.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: That wasn't his name. Anyway, anyway. A few decades later, we have an upgrade. In 1919, the Eccles motorized caravan came about.

Travis: Hmm, classic.

Teresa: And this was actually the way that you got, like, the motorized part into it, right? So it didn't have to be pulled by horses.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And it was a huge hit. People loved the new level of privacy, they loved the idea of spending quality time without having to stay at, like, a bed and breakfast with a bunch of strangers.

Travis: I want to see it. I w—I'm looking at a picture of it right now. Ohhh! Okay. So this is like hitched to the back of a car. Okay.

Teresa: Yes, yeah.

Travis: Got it, got it.

Teresa: It didn't have an on board motor is what you mean.

Travis: Got it. It is cute.

Teresa: It is cute. Isn't it?

Travis: It is cute, and it looks exactly like a train car.

Teresa: It does.

Travis: It looks like a tiny train car.

Teresa: But this was the upgrade, right? So it started kind of like that. Then, after the Eccles motorized caravan came the on board motor. It needed kind of the military intervention, right? Of the idea of a self-driving recreational vehicle. So it was really just starting to be developed around World War I.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: And when you think about it, it kind of has a lot in common with the tank, don't you think?

Travis: Sure? Yeah!

Teresa: Yeah! Um, 1935.

Travis: I will say, if I was gonna get into a car accident, I'd rather get into a car accident in a van than in, like, a two-seater lil sports car, right?

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: I'm just saying. There's a lot more—[wheezes] a lot more to crumple in a van, you know what I mean?

Teresa: I suppose, yeah. There's a lot more to take the impact, isn't there? So, 1935 is our next benchmark. There was a naval aristocrat who went by the name of Captain Dunn who arranged to have the empty chassis of a Pontiac 6 shipped to him from the United States back to Great Britain.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Once it arrived, he and a team of—

Travis: Built it into a fighting robot.

Teresa: [laughs quietly] Not quite.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Uh, a team of local builders put it into a one-of-a-kind home on wheels. It was well ahead of its time, and many people cite this as, like, the motor home that started the camper van industry.

Travis: Is this Captain Dunn D-U-N-N?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Are you Googling it?

Travis: I want to see if I can find it, yeah.

Teresa: Want to see a picture?

Travis: What year was this?

Teresa: 1935.

Travis: This?

Teresa: Mm-hmm, looks like it.

Travis: Okay, this is interesting because it looks like what we think of, like, a mobile home caravan thing that you would hitch on the back of a car, except it looks like the car's been pushed backwards into it?

Teresa: Hmm.

Travis: So now you can only see, like, you know, the front of the car.

Teresa: Like you put the camper on the flatbed of a truck.

Travis: Sort of, but it's more just like the—it's—it's like you were taking a photo and somehow the middle of the photo got cut out, and so you could just see, like, the front of the car where, like, the headlights and, you know, the hood and the engine are. And then suddenly, camper van. Right behind it. It's wild.

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: Stylish, though. Especially in 1935. I like this.

Teresa: He still got to enjoy it for a few joyrides, from trips before he died in 1940, but his wife kept up the beloved car and passed away in the 90's, so...

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: Yeah! So it's still in great shape to this day.

Travis: Okay. Okay. Yeah, I mean, here's—this—this picture of it I believe is from like, 2015.

Teresa: Yep.

Travis: That's wild. Okay.

Teresa: So, what does this have to do with van life?

Travis: Well, I can't wait to talk about it. But first, how about a thank you note for our sponsors?

[theme music plays]

Travis: Get out there. Get in your van and hunt a killer.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: No, I—don't. I don't know if I can advocate for that. But—

Teresa: Hunt a killer is something that you do in your living room.
[crosstalk]

Travis: Maybe your living room's in a van!

Teresa: Maybe... maybe it is. But—

Travis: Whether you're living in a van or an apartment or a home or on the moon, you can pl—actually not on the moon. I don't think they can ship it to you there. But you can play Hunt a Killer. It's an amazingly immersive at-home mystery adventure puzzle game. You're gonna love it, man.

I have been doing it for years now. It's fun to do by yourself. It's fun to do with friends. You see an do it remotely. Have one shipped to your friend in

New York. You do it in your home in Cincinnati. I have done this. It is fun. They're gonna send you all kinds of stuff. But it's just like pieces of paper. You get, like, props! You get, like, notebooks and necklaces and all kinds of amazing things you're gonna get.

Teresa: Didn't one of 'em come with red string for one of those, like, pin things?

Travis: I did get that one, yes.

Teresa: Yeah. Pinboards with red string.

Travis: I might have just done that on my own, because I'm me, and I'm extra.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: So you can examine the evidence, eliminate suspects, catch the killer with immersive, engaging storylines filled with plot twists. It's all kinds of stuff. You're gonna love it. We love it. It's a great game night, a lot of experiencing. You are gonna absolutely love it.

So, head over to Hunt a Killer at bit.ly/huntakiller_shmanners, and use "shmanners" for 10% off your order of immersive murder mystery games today! Thank you Hunt a Killer for sponsoring this episode. One more time: bit.ly/huntakiller_shmanners, and use the code "shmanners" at checkout.

[music plays]

Speaker 1: With Max Fun Drive in the books, we'd like to welcome our new members and say thanks to everyone who's supported us over the years. Welcome! Thanks! And now, on to the sticker sale. A lot of this year's drive gifts and live streams focused on food. We love how food can bring communities together, but not everyone has access to the food they need. So we'll split the proceeds from our sticker sale among five US food banks in areas disproportionately affected by poverty. The sale ends Friday, April 14th. Members at the \$10 monthly level and above can purchase any stickers they'd like. There's also a special Max Fun sticker featuring Nutsy the

squirrel that all members can purchase. For more info, head to Maximumfun.org/stickersale. And thanks again for your support.

[music and ad end]

[music plays]

Speaker 2: A man was walking along a beach, which represented his life. At his feet were two sets of footprints: his and God's but looking back down the beach, the man could see that in the hardest parts of his life, there was only one set of footprints. So the man said to God, "Why is there only one set of footprints when times were hard? Where were you?"

And God replied, "My precious child, I was in my car, listening to The Beef and Dairy Network podcast."

[air horn]

The Beef and Dairy Network Podcast is a multi-award-winning comedy podcast, and you can find it at Maximumfun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

[music and ad end]

Travis: Okay. So, what does it have to do with van life? Aside from being, I guess, proto—proto-van.

Teresa: Indeed. Um, well, the thing that finally kicked off van life was leis—

Travis: Hippies.

Teresa: No, leisure time.

Travis: Aww, man.

Teresa: So, right after World War II, we had people wanting to go out on the open road across the US. This was the time for family vacations—[clears throat], episode 171 of Shmanners focuses on family vacations.

Travis: Was supposed to be able to hear that? Was that for me? Was it people at home?

Teresa: It was for them.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: That was for them.

Travis: Speaking of, our kids—we needed to teach them about stage whispering.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: 'Cause I keep whispering and Bebe's like, "I heard that!" And I'm like, "I know, man! I said it quite loudly."

Teresa: So, this is when people were looking for convenient travel choices with families, and larger car companies made the move to mass-manufacture camper vans and other, you know, recreational vehicles.

Travis: Sure, sure.

Teresa: And this is during the time when a German company by the name of Westfalia began creating custom kits to convert their small buses into more travel-friendly vehicles, so this is the first VW Transporter Campers!

Travis: [gasps] That would eventually become those big VW buses.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: That's what I picture when I think of hippies, right?

Teresa: Yep. That's it.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: That's what you think of. And then also the Dormobile.

Travis: The what now?

Teresa: The Dormobile.

Travis: The dorm... mobile.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Google it.

Travis: I will.

Teresa: Uh, also entered the chat—

Travis: [simultaneously] You don't have to tell me twice.

Teresa: —during this time. It was marketed as a sleep-only camper van. So, everything that you needed for getting away from the house and sleeping comfortably. And then, you know, as competition increased, they added extra luxuries like a kitchen setup and a popup room for extra room.

Travis: That is cute!

Teresa: Isn't it?

Travis: You know what we don't do anymore? Those little, like, white stripe thing [unintelligible] white wall tires, which we also [crosstalk].

Teresa: [simultaneously] Oh, that's what you're talking about.

Travis: I mean, I like it too, but I'm just saying, we don't do, like, fun little things anymore, you know? Now it's just like, "Look at the sleek lines." I'm like, "Yeah, that's cool. Where's the flames on the side?"

Teresa: The Dormobile reminds of a happier hearse.

Travis: Okay! Um... sure!

Teresa: [laughs] Okay. Doesn't it?

Travis: Don't—like, you could say that about a Station Wagon. A Station Wagon more reminds of a happier—slightly happier hearse.

Teresa: [laughs] Okay. Sure. Um, and demand kept growing, so cars began to evolve into larger vans, and then had all space—

Travis: Oh, this is interesting. The popup room only popped up on one side to make kind of a tent, like a triangular tent shape?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: That is interesting. And look! The, uh, the—I guess it would be driver's side on this one. Could, like, slide out?

Teresa: That's pretty cool.

Travis: This is wild.

Teresa: Lots of cool stuff happened. And so on March 8th, 1950—

Travis: It looks like an accordion.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: With the popup thing open, it looks like someone was like, "I'm gonna make this whole car look like an accordion." It's wild.

Teresa: March 8th, 1950, the iconic VW Microbus entered the ring, which became, like you said, synonymous with counterculture, right? And that—

Travis: People who just love counters. They're like, "Look at this. That Formica? I love this."

Teresa: People who were living in their vans full-time, right? So it wasn't just a recreational vehicle anymore. This was more of a lifestyle, which is the hash tag #vanlife that we're talking about, right? There's also the Ford

Transit, which is a van that come from the 1960's, and then went on to produce some of the best Ford campers on the road today.

Travis: I want to, um—I don't want to go the whole episode without recognizing the fact that there are people who live in their vehicles not by choice, and not, like—

Teresa: Yes, I'm definitely gonna cover that.

Travis: Okay. I just wanted to make sure, because when we talk about this, like, every time we say, like, "Hash tag #vanlife," or we're talking about people doing it, it makes me want to say, like, "Yeah, but also... " [wheezes]

Teresa: It's a little tongue-in-cheek, right? Because we were talking about, like, the bloggers, right? And that Instagram-perfect kind of comparison of the van. But yes, I am gonna get to that.

Travis: 100 per—great. Perfect.

Teresa: So—and then Fiat and Toyota release their own lines of livable vehicles. The Caravan Club, which is a club of RV enthusiasts, added motor homes to their repertoire, and the camper van was now becoming more of a convenient alternative to a traditional camping trailer.

Travis: Every time you say "caravan" it makes me think of, like—there was a minivan that we had when I was growing up.

Teresa: Oh yeah.

Travis: I want to say it was, like, Chrysler, maybe?

Teresa: Yep.

Travis: But it was like the model was like, Caravan.

Teresa: Yep.

Travis: And now every time you say "caravan" I'm like, "It wasn't that big. Well, I mean, maybe you could get a twin mattress in there."

Teresa: Uh, so the '70s and '80s were a little bit of a tougher time for the idea of van life, but it come back in a way that no one could have predicted in the 2000s because of the financial crisis. There were mass layoffs in 2008. An ongoing housing crisis in the United States and Europe mean that many people have turned to their vans as more of a cost-effective alternative to traditional renting or home buying. And, you know, plenty of people began it as a economic necessity, and then realized they loved living on the road.

So, like I said, there are lots of reasons why people choose to live in their vehicles. Some it makes financial sense, some they enjoy the sense of freedom, others because they thrive in nomadic communities, others so that, like I said, you can homeschool your children across the national parks.

Travis: Yeah, but what I was saying is I think it's also important to acknowledge there are people who don't do it by choice.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Right? They have no other option.

Teresa: The housing crisis is a big, big thing.

Travis: And I think that it is important in our listeners minds when you're thinking about—when we're talking about, like, van life, and this van—it's two different things, right? The idea of being like, "Oh, look at that person living in their car. So trendy!" Right? It's not always that circumstance.

Teresa: Sure, sure, sure. Exactly. If you go out and purchase one of these vehicles, then you are choosing the van life.

Travis: Correct.

Teresa: Right? But there are plenty of people who find it is their only alternative.

Travis: Exactly.

Teresa: I know exactly what you mean. So, here are some etiquette...

Travis: Oh, please, yes.

Teresa: ... rules that would love to talk about. I mean, overall, respect the place. Respect the signage, and stay safe. There are lots of groups online. Every social media app there is has a, like, a group out there that will talk about different advice. Lots of people have, like, forums that you can go to. And there are even meet-ups that you can attend, if you're ever worried about being lonely on the road. And one of the things that they will tout is to know the rules of where you're going, because different places have different parking and camping rules.

Travis: 100%.

Teresa: Also, there are differences between campsites or RV parks or even just parking lots, right? And some of them have quiet hours. Some of them have noise ordinances. Um, and so pay attention to the signage where you are stopping. And there might even be someone to ask if it's okay to even park there, right?

And, like I said, there are lots of apps and forums that can give you a heads up on a safe place to park, no matter where you're going or staying.

So, one of the rules of the road here is, if you go to a coffee shop or some other place, right, to use WiFi or use running water or things like that, it is polite to at least patronize the small business, right?

Travis: Which means, like, buy something from it. Not be like, "[condescending tone] Oh, it's nice. Oh, you have a business? Oh!"

Teresa: [laughs] Of course, yes.

Travis: "How great for you, huh? Look at you, business owner!"

Teresa: Right. So if you're brushing your teeth at the coffee shop, maybe buy a pastry or a coffee, right? Um, and then be considerate of your campsite. Lots of these posts that you see on Instagram show these, like, gorgeous sunsets or, like, wildlife opportunities or whatever. But you are bound to run into tourists every now and again, right?

Travis: Then it's time to slip on that Sasquatch suit. "Get outta here, tourists!"

Teresa: [laughs] When you're in crowded situations, be sure to leave your vehicle lots of space to maneuver around and go slowly so as not to endanger other people. Um, and you know, park in the right direction in the parking lot.

Especially at a campsite, make sure that you've left the proper amount of distance between vehicles, because it's, you know, it's not nice to not be able to open your door, right? Or if you have one of those popup things, if you pop it up or out right next to your neighbor, you don't want to pop it up against the side of their vehicle, right?

Abide by the speed limits. I am reminded of when we drove cross-country to California.

Travis: In our Toyota Matrix.

Teresa: With a camper on the back.

Travis: Well, we had a—

Teresa: It was a trailer.

Travis: It was a trailer, and our Toyota Matrix could do it...

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: ... as long as it was a zero degree incline. And so it was like, yeah, we're going 60. This is great. Oh, what? We gotta go up a little bit? 52,

maxin' out. Okay, love it. And people were honking behind us and I'm like, "Yeah, man! I also wish I was going faster."

Teresa: Be kind. [laughs] So be kind out there, even if you are not living the van life. Be kind to those people. Um, you know, not everybody has, I don't know, did we have a V—

Travis: And I was the right lane!

Teresa: —6? [laughs]

Travis: I was in the right lane! They could've passed me. I'm clearly pulling—I've got, like, a car pulling a trailer! Leave me alone!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I got the smallest trailer I could.

Teresa: Okay. Um, and travel sustainably when possible. If you're in a new place, visit local shops, go to local restaurants. You know, it'll be cooler than hanging out in a McDonald's, and it also supports the economy of your temporary home, right? Um, leave no trace wherever you are. Even if you're parked—

Travis: No fingerprints.

Teresa: [laughs] Not one.

Travis: Don't get caught on camera. In, out, you're a ghost.

Teresa: [through laughter] I'm talking more about trash.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: Uh, don't leave trash, and make sure where you park, if you have hookups needed for your vehicle, that you hook them up properly, not just to, like, storm drains or whatever, right?

Um, and don't assume people's situations or be judgmental. Everyone's on the road for a different reason, right? It's not all fairy lights and Instagram, right?

Travis: Perfect.

Teresa: And don't give van lifers a bad name. There are a variety of ways to do this. If you park recklessly, or if you are in an overcrowded space, or you disobey the noise ordinances, or if you're rowdy and rude and keep people up in the RV park, like, the bad behavior—

Travis: Be cool.

Teresa: —the bad behavior isn't just rude. Like, you're ruining it for everyone else who wants to be there and has to be there, right? You're giving people a bad name. Maybe one night you park your car at a local church and you're obnoxious all night long. That church, who previously welcomed people, might put up a sign that says "No long-term parking." So then everybody else has to suffer. So, you know, be cool.

Travis: So! Speaking of giving people a bad name, Richard Stink has a new scent out.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: If you listen to My Brother, My Brother, and Me, you will know Richard Stink. [stage whisper] It's Justin. Justin's playing Richard stink. [normal volume] Who is a, I would say, cologne and perfume enthusiast. Well, Richard has now released a room spray, and this is the tagline: "It smells good, just a lot." It smells of marine, pineapple, lavender, bamboo, dark musk, amber, vetiver, and cedar.

We've also got I think a really adorable, fun, "Keep Your Grades Up" enamel pin, and a airbrush-style shirt which reads "Omner to be Narminated."

Teresa: [excited] Yes!

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: I want that.

Travis: Yeah, we'll get that for you, babe. Don't worry. 10% of all merch proceeds this month go the Transgender Law Center, which employs a variety of community-driven strategies to keep transgender and gender non-conforming people alive, thriving, and fighting for liberation. You can go check out all that merch at mcelroymerch.com. That merch and more at mcelroymerch.com.

Also, next week in Austin, Texas we're going to be performing at the Moontower Comedy Festival. Well, My Brother, My Brother, and Me is.

Teresa: Yeah. I won't be there. But he will.

Travis: Okay, sure.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, April 13th, 7 PM. Tickets are on sale now. In Austin, Texas, My Brother, My Brother, and Me. Go to bit.ly/mcelroytours for more info and ticket link. While you're there, also check out all the other shows we've got. We've got some live shows coming up in San Jose and Denver. That's three weeks away. April 27th, we're in San Jose, California with Adventure Zone with special guest Aabria Iyengar. Um, 28th we're in San Jose with My Brother, My Brother, and Me. And April 29th, we're in Denver with My Brother, My Brother, and Me.

So all the existing tickets from when we had to reschedule will be honored, but we also have a few tickets available if you want to get new tickets. Also we got the 20 Sun and Sea Surf the Vibe tour coming up. Um, those are on sale now. We're gonna be in Columbus, Milwaukee, Raleigh, Richmond, and San Diego. All of those available at bit.ly/mcelroytours.

Also, 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! We could

make this show without you, but why? Why would we do that? Huh?! It would be silly!

Teresa: [laughs] Also, thank you to 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 join that group today.

Speaking of Alex, please say hi to her when you email us! Shmannerscast@gmail.com. We are always taking suggestions, and topics, and idioms. You know, just send her an emoji. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah. I mean, with some kind of—some kind of explanation of, like—at least say hi.

Teresa: If you want.

Travis: We'll see.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, 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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