

Shmanners 361: Poetry Readings

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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, my dove—

Teresa: Hel—

Travis: —the joy of my life, my beautiful wife.

Teresa: Hello, dear. [laughs quietly]

Travis: I wrote you a poem.

Teresa: I heard that! I love it!

Travis: Okay. And you—I assume—

Teresa: [laughs loudly]

Travis: Now it's your turn to do a poem on me?

Teresa: [through laughter] I just—I didn't—[wheezes] I didn't know I was gonna need to do a poem, honey.

Travis: You didn't know? You don't always have one ready to go?

Teresa: [through laughter] No?

Travis: I always have a poem in my heart, ready to go! Whenever the moment calls for it. But only one at a time. Don't ask me for another one.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I've used my poem for today. Everybody gets one a day. And I used it on you. Okay. Now—she's thinking so hard.

Teresa: [through laughter] No, I can't! Don't put me on the spot like that.

Travis: Okay. Alright. Not everybody is an improv poet like me, and I wrote that poem while watering the flowers about 20 minutes ago.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: It took me a long time to come up with those four lines. I went with an A, A, B, B kind of—

Teresa: Hey, wait a second.

Travis: What?

Teresa: I thought that you came—you came up with that just this second.

Travis: It's in my heart. It was in my heart? It was in my heart. It was in my heart?

Teresa: I feel like this is—this was a false advertising.

Travis: Listen! I knew the episode was gonna be about poetry. I think. Well, now hold on. I went into that so confidently.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: That is what the episode's about, right?

Teresa: Sort of, yeah.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: Poetry readings. Here's one that Alex wrote for you, listeners.

"Hello, Fanners! We're glad you're here.
It's always better when you're near.
We know this is a silly way of proceeding,
But our topic today is poetry readings!"

Travis: Very good! Can I tell you... can I tell you? There, in my mind, I only have a couple touch points for poetry readings.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: And right now reaching in my head as deep as I can, I can pull out two. One... is the, uh—like, the, uh, Puppetland Band from *Pee-Wee's Playhouse*.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Where they were, like, beboppin' cool cats, and they were always kind of speaking in rhyme and, like, playing bongos and stuff.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: And the other one is Mike Myers in *So I Married An Axe Murderer* where I believe... it's been a while since I've seen the movie... his job is professional beat poet.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Mike Myers, professional beat poet.

Teresa: For some reason I always go to... what is... I don't know what the movie—

Travis: Oh, and Judy Funny, Doug Funny's older sister. Sorry, go on.

Teresa: Doug Funny's older sister. Uh, I always go to that Audrey Hepburn scene where there are the beatniks, right? And she's dressed in all black and they're... [snaps fingers]

Travis: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Teresa: Doing kind of, like, jazz improv. But that's not even poetry, right?

Travis: I guarantee, like, if you took a poll of a thousand people and asked them to picture a poetry reading, a guarantee something close to 90% would talking about snapping. Right?

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

Travis: They'd be like, "Well, you know, it's, like, people in, like, black turtlenecks, and snapping."

Teresa: Yep, with berets.

Travis: Yeah. And then you'd be like, "Have you ever been to a poetry reading?"

They'd be like, "No." [wheezes]

Teresa: No. [laughs] We're gonna talk about snapping in just a minute. Um, but first let's talk a little, little, little 'bout poetry history.

Travis: So... the first time someone realized that words rhymed was 1728.

Teresa: No.

Travis: Oh... how do you—how do you go back poetry history? Like... you can't actually know when it started, right? Like...

Teresa: So... lots of different cultures throughout the world, right? Have oral tradition, right? So that's what we're gonna talk about. Like, so it's like

the idea of, um, telling, whether it's history, or lineage, or ancient myth, right? Uh, religious, all that kind of stuff, right?

Travis: Like bread and dragons, every culture has their own version of poetry. It all—we were taking with Bebe—what—we were talking about pasta? Was that it? Like, noodles? Where we were like, "Nobody—" or maybe spoons. That's what we were talking about.

Teresa: It was spoons.

Travis: Is that the history of spoons didn't really originate in any one place, because it was something that, like, kind of spontaneously people all kind of came up with before we were able to share information. And it's true of poetry too, right? It wasn't like one guy created poetry and spread it around the world.

Teresa: Exactly. Um, so the earliest poem—

Travis: "My name is John Poetry. I go around planting poetry seeds in the ground."

Teresa: Something like that. It's believed to have been recited or sung, and it wasn't, like, flowery language, right? It was probably for, um, to remember, like I said, genealogies or law. The earliest poetry exists in the form of hymns, right? Such as the work of Sumerian priestess Enheduanna.

And other chants that covered everything from, you know, like family trees to religious rites, and things like that, right?

Travis: If you've ever heard the Begats, right? That was that.

Teresa: [simultaneously] Yep, mm-hmm.

Travis: This person begat that person, this person begat that person. It was like, uh... a very structured way of, like, memorizing things, right?

Teresa: Absolutely.

Travis: Oh, and what are they called? What's the—the s—uh, I think psalms. I mean, the psalms are...

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: ... poems. But what's the—Beatitudes, right? Isn't that one?

Teresa: Sure. I mean, all of that stuff, right? Whatever it is, it has kind of, um... a rhythm. It might rhyme, it might not. But it's a way of passing information that is easier to remember, right? That's the idea of, like, an oral tradition.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Um, but what we see now, right? Is it's more of a public oral recitation, right? Or a performance of a poetic piece. And, you know, it can happen anywhere, right? But when we picture a poetry reading we think about cafes and bookstores and libraries, right?

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: That's what I think to. And these are often modern day called poetry slams.

Travis: Ooh! I like that. It makes it sound so much more violent than it is.

Teresa: [laughs] I think it's a way of making it less, like, hoity toity literary sounding?

Travis: Yeah. If you—hey, listen. I've never been to one. But if you frequent rap battles, please start referring to them as poetry slams. [wheezes]

Teresa: I mean, kind of!

Travis: "Hey, guys. What time's the poetry slam tonight?"

"What?"

"The poetry—where we rhyme at each other but in a, like, violent way?"

"Well, I mean, I guess when you put like that, yeah, it's at 8 PM. Don't forget the Doritos?"

I've never been to a rap battle before. I don't know if that's clear. I've watched 8 Mile.

Teresa: I have too. But okay. So, the idea is that the person performing the poem uses the pitch and stress of their voice to communicate the work where they utilize pauses and rhythm in a way that's meant to bring the poem kind of the life in front of an audience.

Travis: Can I tell you once again, this is just showing what an incredible dork I am, and maybe uncultured. But what I immediately pictured was me reading the Twas the Night Before Christmas to the girls, right? That poem?

Teresa: Sure, yeah.

Travis: That's poetry reading. A lot of inflection in there. A lot of acting. Or I pictured a bunch of 15-year-olds doing prose poetry at speech debate competitions.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Travis: Oh, so cool.

Teresa: I really like to do a little bit of, um... I like to do—what's the book? Oh, Room on the Broom.

Travis: Oh, that's a good one.

Teresa: That's a good one to do it to.

Travis: Bebe has this book, this, like, dinosaur—like, valentine dinosaur thing. And some of them are very clearly, like, "Well, we've taken Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star but we've changed the words—" it's the rhythm of

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star but with, like, words about valentines and dinosaurs.

But some of them it's like, this feels like it's supposed to be something. But there's no, like—there's no, like, rhythm notes or whatever, and I'm trying to figure out what the song is, what the rhyme is. And sometimes it just—

Teresa: Oh, sometimes you just have to say it out loud until you hear it.

Travis: I don't like it.

Teresa: I know. I'm sorry, honey.

Travis: I need—I need clear direction.

Teresa: Here are a couple of the poems that may have been a part of your life. Listen to this.

"I before E except after C, or sounding like A, as in neighbor or weigh."

Travis: [snapping]

Teresa: Right? The snaps—we'll—again, we'll get back to the snaps.

Travis: I know. I'm just very good at snapping and I kind of wanted to show that off.

Teresa: Okay. "Over, under—"

Travis: [simultaneously] That and whistling.

Teresa: "—around and through. Meet Mr. Bunny Rabbit, pull and through."

Travis: [snapping] Righty tighty, lefty loosey. I don't know. Don't you be a silly goosey.

Teresa: Okay. Um, so obviously the rhythmic nature of it and the repetition that you hear makes it easier to remember and retell, because that's part of

the way that our brains work. Um, and so poetry and nursery rhymes specifically have been so effective that these poems and other rhyming devices are recommended as tools to teach, like, for example English as second language courses, right?

Travis: Oh, yeah, that makes a lot of sense.

Teresa: And it's also why so many ancient works, whether it's The Iliad or The Epic of Gilgamesh or Beowulf or whatever it is, right? Um, are composed in poetic forms. Because if a story rhymed, it had a higher chance of living on through the next generation.

Travis: Well, and also, like, um, I remember learning about when I took some, like, psychology classes in college, and it's easier to memorize things, like, in chunks, right? So even when I remember if I had to, like, memorize a monologue for, like, a show or something I was in, I would break it down, like, sentence by sentence, you know, on note cards and stuff.

'Cause, like, you can't take, like, a page and a half and memorize it all in one go, right? You want to memorize this line, and then remember that it goes into this line. So if it's structured that way of like, just remember these seven words, then these seven words, then these seven words, like, there's something about short term memory and, like, the maximum number of things you can hold in your short term memory is, like, seven. Right? And if you—

Teresa: I don't know if that's right, but...

Travis: I remember learning that in—when I was studying that psychology course. Of like, that's why it's really easy to remember a phone number. 'Cause it's, like, se—but as soon as, like, if you start adding more numbers and say, like, "Remember these ten numbers," chances are you'll forget some of them.

Teresa: Hmm.

Travis: Um, and now I've said that and I have so much confidence, and I'm picturing it in my memory. I have confidence. And then I'm like, "But memory is fallible," and that's what we're talking about.

Teresa: [laughs] Um, so the way that maybe poems have been performed throughout history is still up for debate. Um, they're not exactly clear—historians, that is—of how maybe the story of the Trojan War would've been, like, performed or shown to an audience, and what that might've been like.

Travis: Like, how would they do it? Like, they didn't even have black turtlenecks. So, like, how would they even go about—that's wild.

Teresa: But in modern times, um, we know that poetry readings didn't really start to become a thing in the US until about the last half of the 20th century.

Travis: Yeah. 1950s on, right? Like, that's...

Teresa: Not quite '50s. But, um, so Robert Frost, right? Was a big kind of touchstone for this. Um, he... kind of, like... became the focal point of this history of the modern poetry reading.

Travis: The poster boy.

Teresa: And Dylan Thomas, which is another poet. He wrote Do not go gentle into that good night.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: So they began reading on literary tours, right? So the same way that a raconteur like Mark Twain or a humorist would go on tour for people who didn't have televisions. [laughs]

Travis: You just, by the way, inadvertently by putting those words so close together, really good name. If you are someone who, like, tells stories for a living and you travel around, the rac-on-tour, T-O-U-R at the end, so it's like, you're going on tour as a raconteur, and it's the Rac-on-tour, would be really great.

Teresa: Oh, that'd be great.

Travis: If you want to use that, everybody, that's free. That's free to a good home.

Teresa: Um, and so these people used that idea of, like, performance, and also the invention of the radio also helped with this. Used it and launched poetry reading into a new, like... a new space that had never been there before. And then...

Travis: [gasps]

Teresa: Once we want to talk about getting poetry reading into coffee shops and libraries, we have American poet Mark Smith. He's the one who was credited with holding the first poetry slam at the Get Me High Lounge and Chicago, November of 1984.

Travis: It is unfortunate that those two names together are very common names.

Teresa: Mark Smith?

Travis: 'Cause when I was growing up doing children's theater, like, the guy who was, like, the piano player and musical director for every show was named Mark Smith. And you said Mark Smith and I was like, "Couldn't be. Couldn't be the same guy, right?"

Teresa: [laughs] Um, and then from there it spread around the US, here. In 1987, the Ann Arbor Poetry Slam was founded. In 1988, the first New York City Poetry Slam was hosted.

Travis: Can I just say... if you had asked me, "Travis. Here are two cities. Ann Arbor, Michigan, and New York City, New York. Which one of them do you think hosted a poetry slam first?" Never in a million years would I have put Ann Arbor first. Ann Arbor? Good on you. Trendy, cool, chic, Ann Arbor. Everybody, it's time to get on board with Ann Arbor is what I'm saying.

Teresa: [laughs] The first ever National Poetry Slam took place at Fort Mason in San Francisco in 1990, and there was a final event, uh, held by the NPS, the National Poetry Slam... Society, I guess.

Travis: So NPS... S.

Teresa: NPS. It's just NPS.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: In 2018, there were 72 competing teams together to show off their poetry.

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: It's amazing, right?

Travis: Yeah. A lot of poems!

Teresa: And—

Travis: Like, if you're gonna go to that, I hope you like poems. 'Cause that's a lot of poems.

Teresa: Yeah. These are just the ones that have, like, I mean, obviously media coverage, right? And I'm not saying that the first ever one was held in the '80s in the United States. I'm saying that these are the ones that gained the coverage, so we can, like, pinpoint them. But, I mean, people have been standing and reciting in their living rooms forever. Right? So we think about one of the ways that, um, in the Regency, right? You think about one of the things that they would've done at their balls before the dancing happened. People would read poetry and stories. Um, if you think about some of the things that, like, a court jester might have done, stand in front of the king and recite dirty poems, right?

Travis: Sure. Classic.

Teresa: So I'm not saying that this is, like, nothing existed before these poetry slams. What I'm saying is...

Travis: This is when it became cool.

Teresa: This is when it became mainstream.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: And there was media coverage to pinpoint these dots of time.

Travis: Okay. I have a question for you. I'm gonna... I'm gonna ask you if you enjoy poetry readings. But first, how about a word from some other Max Fun shows?

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Travis: Okay, Teresa. Do you like poetry? Like, are you—we've been together 13 years now. And if someone was like, "Does Teresa like poetry?"

I'm like, "She doesn't dislike it?"

Teresa: I think that's it. I don't think that I have ever, like, sought out a poetry slam or reading to go to. Um, I do like listening to stories and poems and such. Um, if you were gonna point to one McElroy that loves—

Travis: It's Rachel.

Teresa: It's Rachel.

Travis: Yeah, yeah.

Teresa: Right? Um, but maybe just because she's had that opportunity. Um, if at our local coffee shop if I happened to be there and someone was doing poetry...

Travis: You wouldn't leave.

Teresa: I would not leave.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: I would stay and listen.

Travis: I remember... I want to say it was, like, middle school. Um, being introduced to E. E. Cummings' poetry.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: And I have this very clear memory of, uh, in the class we had to, like, pick a poem that we really liked and then, like, write a poem, and they got compiled in this book. And I picked some poem about a court jester, and then I wrote a poem, and it had all the, like, "And the words are sliding down, and this word is shaped like this, and I changed the font of this one, just like E. E. Cumming!"

Teresa: Ohh.

Travis: And it's so clear. Like, "Oh, that's cute."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "He's trying very hard to be E. E. Cumming." [laughs] I just like that idea of like, "Oh. It's like messy all over the page. That's great."

Teresa: That's great. Um, so if you were going to go to a poetry slam, here are some etiquette guidelines. Arrive on time if possible, right? It is difficult to perform when someone is, like, walking through a crowd or trying to find a seat or, I mean, if it's a coffee shop, ordering coffee while you're performing is not cool.

Travis: Yeah, it's not like a concert, you know what I mean? It's not like a band's playing. It's one person, maybe a couple, but they're just talking. There's not, like, music.

Teresa: So please do, if you're at a coffee shop, get a drink, but in between poems or poets, right? So don't interrupt anybody.

Um, and treat the slam like you would at a theater. So turn off your cell phone, don't talk, don't bother people around you. And specifically at, like, one of these smaller gatherings, try not to, like, stand up in the middle. Right? 'Cause that's gonna draw focus and pull people out of paying attention.

Travis: Now, does it say in your notes—is it BYOB? Like, bring your own beret? Or they, like, provide it for you there.

Teresa: Wah, wah.

Travis: Wah, wah. Who said that? Who said—get outta that booth! Get outta here!

Teresa: But, that said, you can be a little looser with your affirmations at a poetry slam than you would at a theater, right? You don't really hear of people humming and nodding in agreement and things like that at, say, like, a Shakespeare soliloquy, right?

Travis: You should, though. You should, though! It's written that way! To have a very rambunctious audience. Everybody should be more into it. I'm just saying. Theater crowds? Get drunk! Wait. I mean, if you want to.

Teresa: [laughs] So this is where the snapping comes in, right? Snapping is a form of affirmation from the audience that they understand where you're going, they like what you've done, like, that kind of stuff. That's what the snapping is for.

Travis: [snapping]

Teresa: A very unobtrusive kind of nod of agreement, right? And affirmative sounds in general are usually welcome. You know, things like—different interjections that you might do are humming, and nodding, and things like that. Um, but there are people who get really into it. They clap, or stomp, or yell, or, you know, all that kind of stuff. And if you are used to that as a performer, I would say that it would feel really great to know that somebody in the audience was enjoying it so much that they were moved to speak to you.

Travis: Here's the thing. This is key. Whenever you see any performance, right? It is perfectly fine to be in it. It is perfectly fine to be caught up in it, to be reacting to it. I would say a good rule to think about is, are you making it about you?

Teresa: Okay. Yeah, you don't want to steal focus.

Travis: I've been in shows before where, like, sitting in the audience, where somebody was making those, uh—and, you know, sometimes you can't help it. There are people who, you know, don't necessarily have as much control over their interjections as other people. And I understand that. So with that in mind, I say that if you're, like, interjecting so much and affirming so much that it starts to feel like a duet...

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: ... then maybe that's... too much.

Teresa: This is a read the room kind of situation. But clapping, though, is usually at the end, right? So you would give applause for someone's poem. You wouldn't snap for someone's poem at the end.

Travis: There's a great bit in *Spaced*, the Simon Pegg, Jessica Stephen show, where they go to, like, this avant-garde, like, performance, and it's one of the funniest, dumbest jokes, where the two people finish the performance, they bow, people all start clapping, and while still bowing, the main person goes, "It's not finished!"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And then, like, three seconds pass, and then they go, "It's finished." And then everyone starts clapping again. It is such a dumb joke, and I love it so much.

Teresa: Um, if you go to a poetry slam, you might find that people are so into the poem that they might boo or hiss at a villain's mention.

Travis: Oh, sure.

Teresa: Right? Um—

Travis: Especially if you're doing, like, poetry about social, you know, issues and justice and stuff. There's plenty to boo and hiss.

Teresa: I don't know if I would—I would not be comfortable doing that if I didn't know the person performing, because it do feel like that could be kind of jarring. It could be more of, like, a, um, a comment on the person's performance and less a comment on the subject, right? If the villain is mentioned.

Travis: Well, I'll say this, right? This is a thing. Anybody who's, like, performed on stage enough and had training and does it professionally. There are cues that you can give an audience, right? Of like—so this goes back to Commedia dell'arte, right?

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: Dell'arte. Where they would ask the audience directly, like, "Have you seen the lion anywhere?" Right? And then people would be like, "He's over there!"

But if you think about—if you're doing a poem and there's something you want to connect with the audience, looking at them, and "I'm gonna give you a face that says I'm angry about this." And you're like, "[angry noises]." Right? It's like, yeah. You just cued me with the way you were performing that that was the reaction you wanted, right?

Teresa: Absolutely.

Travis: "Instead of saying like, "Now you laugh. Now you snap. Now you clap."

Like, if they're in it and you're in it and there's that connection, there are cues that you can be given, right? But I think to your point, when in doubt, an "Mmm, uh, yeah, nod. Oh, yeah."

Teresa: So if—here are some rules, uh, guidelines, generalities. If you are thinking of performing, maybe at a poetry slam, don't feel pressured to be completely memorized. It's 100% okay for you to walk up there and read your poem from a notebook or even your phone. Lots of people do that. Um, and it's better to be confident in what you're doing than to try and leap to memorization when you're not ready, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Next is if you're new to the room, try and keep your piece about three minutes. That's usually—that's a good way to kind of feel it out. Um, something that is much longer is usually reserved for a kind of, like...

Travis: Headliner.

Teresa: Headliner, exactly. That's what I was talking about. You got me.

Travis: I would also say if you're new—uh, and I think this goes for any kind of, like, open mic, be it poetry, music, comedy, whatever, support the rest of the people too.

Teresa: Absolutely.

Travis: Like, do just do your bit and leave. Right? Don't stand in the back of the room pacing around practicing your thing while other people are performing or whatever. Like, you want them to sit and support you. Because sometimes, I don't know if you've ever had this experience, but I've been at open mic night, like, comedy things, working—I remember working one when I did tech at UCB, and the only people in the room were comics waiting to get up, right? There was no aud—like, the audience was made up entirely of people waiting their turn to go. So that's, like, you have to support each other.

Teresa: Right, you gotta stay. You can't just walk out.

Travis: 'Cause there's nobody else here to watch, aside from these, like, 20 other comics hoping to go up. And if you don't support each other—and plus, man, this is—if you're serious about any creative thing like this, be it music, be it comedy, whatever, that room, that experience is where connections begin, right? Like, that idea of, like, "Well, I'm just here to do my thing and leave." You don't know which of these people you're gonna end up becoming friends with, wanting to work with, they want to work with you. Like, end up sharing a bill with later, right? Like, "Oh, yeah, cool. Let's do a poetry night toge—" be in the room. Make connections. Be supportive.

Teresa: Um, for your first couple times, don't worry about any of the extra stuff like props, or costumes, or musical accompaniment. And all that stuff is great, right? But the first couple times, just do the bare—like, the bare stage, you and the mic and the spotlight, right? Because if you try and add too many things too quickly, it can get too overcomplicated and you can be too overwhelmed.

Travis: And once again, this is just another performer thing. People, uh, artifice stuff where it's just like, "I added this to be—" like, I'll never forget—once again, to back to open mic nights—watching this comic who clearly was, I don't know, nervous, overconfident, whatever. But they came it with, like, bubble guns and, like, shooting bubbles in the air. And it was a room full of other comics who were like, "What is this? What are you do—this has to—this—no—you don't reference the bubble guns. There was no reason for this. Why are—why are you doing this?"

Teresa: Yeah. Um, and we talked a little bit about affirmations earlier, but don't worry about holding for laughs or anything like that. Just do the poem as you feel it should be done, right? With the pauses and the sounds or whatever it is you've planned to do, just do that. And if you end up needing to hold for laughs or applause—

Travis: Awesome.

Teresa: —then you can. But don't plan on that, right? And here's the last thing. Poetry slams are your own poems. Okay? If you are reciting a poem that somebody else has written, that better be part of the bill, right? That better be part of what you say that you are doing. Because these events are your own work.

Travis: That's a performance. That's a thing over here. I'm gesturing. You can't see, people at home, because this is an audio medium. I gestured over there in a very kind of metaphorical way.

Teresa: I would say that the only exception would be if you have some sort of reason why you can't, like, get up on the stage. Maybe you're in a wheelchair and it's not accessible. Or you, um, maybe you've lost your voice,

or maybe you have speech difficulties or something like that. You can nominate a friend to read for you, right? That's not what I'm saying. What I'm saying is you are not to recite someone else's work and pass it off as your own.

Travis: Yeah, ever.

Teresa: Ever.

Travis: Don't do that.

Teresa: Yeah. So, you know, hopefully you can get out there and enjoy sharing your poems with your audience.

Travis: Just have fun! Get out there and have fun! You know what I mean? Hey.

Teresa: Good hustle.

Travis: Yeah, thank you. [snapping] Oh no. He's—clap at the end. [clapping]

Teresa: [clapping] Clap at the end. We're clapping at the end.

Travis: Uh, one last anecdote from my life. Growing up, and going to a Southern Baptist Church, there was never any indication when something finished if it was time to say "Amen" or clap.

Teresa: Oh.

Travis: And the number of times I remember being, like, 12 and going to clap and I hear an "Amen" and I'm like, "Oh! Ah! Agh, missed it!"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, [laughs] thank you, everybody. Uh, 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 the show without you, but why? Why would we do that? That would be silly.

Uh, let's see. Oh! It's—you're gonna be listening to this... yes! It is new month! That means new merch over at mcelroymerch.com. There is a lot of really great stuff over there.

Listen, if you don't know what I'm talking about, it's silly, but there's a Shlabethany pin that's from Adventure Zone: Steeplechase. We've got a Thanks for Vibing and Keeping it Tight tank top. There's a s—

Teresa: Ooh, I love those!

Travis: I know. There's a Sawbones 10 year anniversary coin. Uh, and 10% of all merch proceeds this month go to Equality Florida, which is dedicated to securing full equality for Florida's LGBTQ community.

Also, this month me and Griffin are going to be at Awesome Con in Washington, DC. That's June 16th through the 18th. You can get your passes at bit.ly/awesomeconmcelroys.

Also, I'm going to be at Gen Con August 3rd through 6th, and details on badges, tickets, and appearances are available at bit.ly/mcelroytours. You can also find the listing of all of our upcoming live shows there, bit.ly/mcelroytours!

Who else do we thank, Teresa? What am I forgetting?

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

Always we are taking your submissions for topics, and questions, and all sorts of things. You can email us at shmannerscast@gmail.com, and say hi to Alex, because she reads every one.

Travis: And that's gonna do it for us, 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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