

Shmanners 357: Colonial Courting (LIVE!)

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[theme music plays]

Travis: Hi, everybody!

Teresa: Hello!

[audience cheering]

Travis: Hello, internet and Boston! I'm—

[audience cheering loudly]

Travis: There was just enough of a delay there that I didn't think it was coming.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

[audience cheers and whoops]

Teresa: And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

[audience cheers and whoops]

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

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette.

Travis: For ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove.

Teresa: Hello, dear.

Travis: How are you?

Teresa: [sighs dramatically]

[scattered audience laughter]

Travis: Yeah? Happy to be here?

Teresa: I am happy to be here. These have become quite few and far between and so, I'm nervous all over again.

Travis: Oh, you mean, like, doing live shows?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Okay. Yeah, I get that. Not coming to Boston.

Teresa: No, no.

Travis: Which is, aside from Huntington, the place we have done the most live shows.

[audience applause and cheers]

Teresa: We love being in Boston!

Travis: I think of it as kind of my town.

Teresa: [laughs lightly] You know what we love? We love that Boston Aquarium.

Travis: That is true.

[audience cheers]

Travis: But, and this is not a joke, I also love the Old North Church. I know that this sounds like patter. I know how it sounds, but just the idea— and I said to Bebe— the look on her face resonates within me. Where I said to Bebe, “That building is 300 years old.” And she has no concept of time, but that’s a big number, and she went, “Whoa!”

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: And then right next door to the Old North Church is a very old cemetery. And I said, “And there’s the cemetery.” And she said—

[audience member whoops]

Travis: Wow! Yeah! Let’s hear it for cemeteries! Big cemetery fans in the audience!

[audience applause and cheers]

Travis: Ah, and she said, “What’s a cemetery?” And I said, “It’s where you bury dead people.” And it’s an old cemetery mind you. And she said, “Well, why are they dead?”

[audience laughter]

Travis: And my only answer was, “Cause they were born 300 years ago.”

Teresa: [chuckles] We don’t have time to talk about this.

Travis: Uh, I don’t know, but, oh, it’s a big question. Yeah, uh, population control? I don’t know, man. I don’t know what to tell you!

Teresa: It was a lot easier to explain the fish at the aquarium.

[scattered audience laughter]

Travis: Yeah, she gets that.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Hey, so that's what we're talking about?

Teresa: No.

Travis: No, okay.

Teresa: No, we're not.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Okay, great.

Teresa: [chuckles] I mean, aquarium etiquette is a fine idea.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: But not today. Um—

Travis: The hardest thing at the aquarium is one, don't laugh at the dumb names people give fish.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Okay. Okay. Wait a minute.

Travis: Two, don't point at fish and go, "That's the stupidest looking fish I've ever seen."

[audience laughter grows]

Travis: It's really hard not to do over and over again. 'Cause it's like each fish looks stupider than the last.

Teresa: Remember how I said we—

Travis: Look, that one's shaped like a triangle! What?

Teresa: We're not doing aquarium etiquette today.

Travis: Oh, you're right. Oh, yeah, yeah.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: We are going to be talking about colonial courtship and weddings.

[audience cheers]

Travis: Is it as cringy as I assume?

Teresa: No, actually!

Travis: Oh, thank God!

Teresa: Actually not.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Actually, not very cringy.

Travis: And you guys might not know this. Teresa and I are married to each other.

[audience laughter and cheers]

Teresa: We are.

Travis: That's true. So, that qualifies us to both talk about and judge any marriage we see.

Teresa: No, it doesn't.

Travis: No? Okay.

Teresa: But— so, let's start in. Let's start in.

Travis: Shall we?

Teresa: We shall.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: The thing about colonial United States— uh, well, it wasn't [chuckles] United States back then.

Travis: No. It was the divided states.

Teresa: It was quite large. So, there were differing customs according to where you were, but in general—

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: There was— there was this thing called the Revolution and so—

Travis: Huh! Speak on that.

Teresa: Yeah. Yeah. Anything—

Travis: I tried to explain that to Bebe too.

Teresa: Oh, no.

Travis: And I was like, "I don't know, man."

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: Check in with me again when you're in 6th grade and I'll try.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I know a dude rode a horse, but he didn't really and other people did. And there was this woman who actually rode the horse, but they don't talk about her, 'cause women. [sniffs]

[audience laughter and cheers]

Teresa: So, during the Revolution, there was a lot of anti-monarchy, right? So, anything that was—

Travis: That was kind of the whole point of it.

Teresa: Right?

Travis: Uh, yeah.

Teresa: Anything that was from the old world—

Travis: Yeah! Boo! [laughing] Boo!

[audience cheering]

Teresa: Anything that was from the old world was bad. So, we wanted to make things new. And so, marriage and courtship that had largely in, you know, England been about—

[scattered audience booing]

Teresa: [chuckles] Yeah, boo!

Travis: Boo! Real stinkers! Not now, maybe. I don't know. I haven't read a paper in a few days.

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughing]

Teresa: Um, where marriage was a partnership almost like a business transaction.

Travis: Yeah. We talked about that before.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: We talked about that a lot. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Teresa: Right. In the new world, we had— the youths had new ideas.

Travis: Well, and that also makes sense because one of the things we talk about whenever we're talking about English courtships is you had a lot of, like, new money old name marriages.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And in America, because it was so young and so new, you didn't really have that, like, "Well, he's the son of the Prime Minister," or whatever, right? So, this was, like, "I don't know, man. Will you move out of the house and leave me alone? Sounds great."

Teresa: [giggling]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: There was definitely money at play.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Don't get me wrong. But the idea was that people who wanted to build a Republic were supposed to be, you know, equal.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And they were supposed to be able to both contribute to a marriage, as opposed to the idea of, like, the husband being the oppressive force and the wife being the submissive force, right?

Travis: I also think it's important now just to, uh, just put the tiger on the table and yell at it. As long as they were white and straight, right?

[audience laughing and cheering]

Travis: Like, yeah? Okay.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: 'Cause we're talking about, like, colonial marriages, and as progressive as it gets, it ain't gonna be progressive.

[audience laughing]

Teresa: There is something to be said, though, about the idea of the common law marriage, which took place in a lot of *rural* communities. Which, basically, was, like, we are married because we say we are married.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Not because of any, like, magistrate or law or anything like that.

Travis: 'Cause we didn't have to pay someone to do it.

Teresa: Exactly. So, it was enough to just kind of hold hands and say, "We're married now. Everybody agrees. Great!"

Travis: Yeah.

[scattered audience whoops]

Teresa: Yeah. So, that's pretty cool.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: But, anyways, so, there was this thing called the companionate marriage. Which is a very long word that seems like it shouldn't be a word, but [chuckles]—

Travis: Companionent?

Teresa: Companionent.

Travis: No, it doesn't.

Teresa: And so—

Travis: In fact, I think you made it up. Accuse!

Teresa: No. Not true.

[audience laughing]

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Not true.

Travis: I tried to think of the word challenge, and it didn't come.

Teresa: [through laughter] J'accuse.

Travis: So, I said, "Accuse!"

[audience laughing]

Travis: That's not it. You don't do that in Scrabble. You're not, like, "What's that word? [through laughter] Accuse!"

[audience laughter grows]

Teresa: So, the idea was that it would be a loving partnership governed by affection rather than fear.

Travis: Gross.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Jokes. These are the jokes, you guys. [chuckles]

Travis: Yeah. I love my wife very much!

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience applause and cheering]

Travis: [through laughter] That doesn't deserve applause! It just— what a bold statement!

Teresa: This— the thing about it that was not, you know, all, like, super awesome was that the woman was still considered the center of the, like, virtue, right? In the marriage and was—is very gender-ified as more kind of like the person who would bring the moral center together, right?

Travis: Mm.

Teresa: Which is another thing we see a lot. If you've listened to our show before we see a lot in the Victorian era as well.

Travis: They're going to fix the man!

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: Get in there and fix him!

Teresa: Right.

Travis: This wastrel...

[scattered audience laughter]

Travis: That's a word, right?

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter grows]

Travis: Ah, no. I hope this whole episode doesn't turn into "Is that a word, or not?"

Teresa: I think it is already.

Travis: Oh, no.

Teresa: And so, the idea was if you built a marriage together—

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: ... you could better each other. You could better the Republic.

Travis: Sure, that makes sense. Please, stop saying Republic, though, 'cause it feels like *Star Wars*.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughs lightly] But this is how the colonial—

Travis: I know, but you have to see it from my point of view, babe.

[audience laughter]

Travis: I've only got three reference points.

Teresa: [giggling] Sorry, it's gonna keep happening. [chuckles]

Travis: Oh, no. But what will Yoda think of our marriage?

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I would like to read an excerpt from a correspondence between two cousins. One who is recently married and one who is against the institution.

[audience member whoops and scattered laughter]

Teresa: "Dear Cousin, I have now changed my name and instead of liberty must subscribe wife. I have been married to my dear Charles these three months, and I can freely acknowledge that I never knew happiness 'till now. To have a real friend to whom I can communicate my secrets and who on all occasions is ready to sympathize with me is what I never before experienced. All these—"

Travis: Bummer!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Well, and they have clearly found it through marriage.

Travis: Hey, I'm glad now, but what about before?

Teresa: "His principal care seems to be to do everything possible to please me."

Travis: All right.

Teresa: That's very sweet.

Travis: And wink, wink. [chuckles] Eh?

[audience laughter]

Travis: All right.

Teresa: “You have often spoke contemptuously of the married state, and I believe your reasons were that most of those whom you knew were unhappy, but that is an erroneous way of judging. I was designed by the Almighty—” There was still a very puritanical—

Travis: Hmm.

Teresa: There were lots of very Puritanical churches still around.

Travis: Not like now.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: “... that man and woman should live together in a state of society that they should become mutual helps to each other.”

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So, I think that this was a— this is a very good, like, rounding of this ideal, okay?

Travis: Okay, but there’s also a cynical part of me that pictures the husband standing over her shoulder like, “Now put that I’m great.” Right?

[audience laughter]

Travis: “Write that I’m great and that you’ve never been happier. I like that, yeah.”

Teresa: [chuckles] You know what this actually reminded me of? And I know that you love the musical *1776*.

Travis: I do. Yes.

[audience whoops and cheers]

Teresa: This actually reminded me of the different songs that John and Abigail sing to each other, right?

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Teresa: I thought that—

Travis: Best part of that show.

Teresa: It's *wonderful*.

Travis: Except for the part where the young kid sings about his friend dying on the battlefield. Other than that—

Teresa: Well, okay. But that's not part of what John and Abi—

Travis: Now, that would be wild if you were bringing that up now.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: ... Abigail [chuckles] sing to each other.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: But they talk about how they are equals and how— and they have this kind of, like, sparring relationship. And I think that that is very indicative of courtship and marriage at the time among, you know, upper-class people. Because—

Travis: Upper-class, white straight people.

Teresa: Upper-class, white straight people.

[audience member whoops]

Travis: Thank you.

Teresa: Yes. And that is what they were.

Travis: Yes, they were.

Teresa: And so, this did put a little bit of pressure on those youths who were very idealistic, right?

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: But it would be, uh— it's not exactly the kind of pressure that you think about as, like, speaking of premarital sex.

Travis: Were we?

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: I don't remember that. I think I would remember that. Go on.

Teresa: It was no secret that premarital sex was occurring.

Travis: Yeah. [bursts out laughing]

[audience laughter grows]

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: Yeah. Um, but at this point in history—

Travis: It would be wild if it was a secret, right?

Teresa: [giggling]

Travis: To anyone. If there was one person who was like, "Wait. It's still happening? But we said not to."

[audience laughter]

Travis: "So— but they're still doing it? No!"

Teresa: At this point in history, you were allowed to pursue, um, let's say, like, unchaperoned events, right?

Travis: Mm.

Teresa: There were people mixing all the time—

Travis: Ooh.

Teresa: ... so you could go, like, sledding or boating on the river.

Travis: Oh, yeah, you could. Uh-huh.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Or you could—

Travis: I'm so done. I'm heating up over here.

Teresa: You could go riding together. These activities were permitted as part of courtship, right? And—

Travis: Did you hear about John? He goes sledding with everyone.

[audience laughter]

Travis: Stay away from him. That guy uses a real sled.

Teresa: Another thing in courting is one could exchange flower bouquets. Because the language of flowers was still very big at this time, right?

Travis: Oh, right. Yeah.

Teresa: And we have a whole episode on that. But one that was very common were pansies because they symbolized—

Travis: I feel like halfway through the show you should switch to this side because I feel like this part of the audience hasn't been getting any of the goods.

[audience laughter and whoops]

Travis: I'll just do this for the rest of the show.

Teresa: That's not my fault.

[audience applause and cheering]

Teresa: Pansies symbolized tender thoughts. Isn't that sweet?

[audience laughter]

Travis: They got enough. You're right. I got enough. Go on.

Teresa: Isn't that sweet? Tender thoughts.

Travis: Which one meant like "Yeah, um, it's fine"? [laughing] I got you a bunch of grass.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Well, so, one of the other courtship, I would say, rituals was something called bundling.

Travis: No, wait! I know this, I think.

Teresa: Okay. Okay.

Travis: 'Cause it's in the movie, *The Patriot*, and Heath Ledger goes to visit his beloved so they sewed him into a bag—

Teresa: Uh-huh.

Travis: ... so that he couldn't sneak out and have relations with their daughter. But then they put some, like, ink in her teeth so they could tell if they were smooching, and then in the morning, oh, yeah, he had some ink on his too.

Teresa: Uh-oh.

Travis: Oh, yeah. And the mom says to the dad— Why do I remember so much of this?

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Travis: The mom says to the dad— or one of them says, “Let’s hope you’re a better sewer than your mother.” And it’s like, “Oh, okay.” Ooh, wink, wink. But she wasn’t.

[audience laughter grows]

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Or, alternatively, she snuck into the room and made out with a man in a bag. [chuckles]

Teresa: Weird.

[audience laughter]

Travis: [through laughter] I mean, if it’s your thing.

Teresa: [laughing] Okay, so, if you haven’t seen *The Patriot*, [chuckles] basically what happens is—

Travis: How was your date?

“He never got out of the bag. It was awesome.” [laughing]

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

[audience laughter grows]

Teresa: What happens is—

Travis: I could walk away at any time. [laughing] What was he gonna do?

Teresa: ... they, uh, the two people are bound from their feet to their waist in a heavy sack. And they are placed in, usually, the parent’s bed because that is the bed that has the most width to it for two people. And then, a thick wooden board is placed between the two of them.

Travis: If you played different music under this, this would not be okay to discuss on this show.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I don't know what you're talking about.

Travis: Okay. I'll do the music. You keep talking.

Teresa: Um, so—

Travis: [imitating suggestive beat] Bow, bump, a-bow, bump, bow.

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Travis: Place the boards.

Teresa: After dinner, everyone was— uh, the two teens usually were placed in their bundling bags.

Travis: Yeah, it'd be weird if they were, like, 36.

[audience laughter swells]

Teresa: And, I mean, separate bundling bags, right?

Travis: Obviously. Obviously! It'd be weird if it was, like, "Listen, we don't want you guys to have premarital sex, so we sewed you into a bag together."

[audience laughter]

Teresa: It was a very constrictive sleepover, but you did have—

Travis: The most!

Teresa: [laughing breathlessly]

Travis: Hey, you know that kids when they sleep over don't get sewn into their sleeping bags, right?

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [chuckles] But everybody got that board.

Travis: Although, I mean, as a parent I get it.

Teresa: Now— now, let me tell you. So, this was kind of on the outside. It was supposed to be a test of virtue. Could these two young lovers stand one night apart where they could not physically be together?

Audience Member: Nope!

Travis: [bursts out laughing]

[audience cheering]

Travis: Also, not that great of a test, though.

Teresa: But it was also kind of a loophole. Because, like I said, everybody pretty much knows that premarital sex happens, so one way to kind of, like, make yourself respectable in the community—

Travis: Oh, you do the bundling.

Teresa: ... is you do the bundling after you guys are actually, like, together, right? You do the bundling, and you're like, "Oh, well. I mean, now they *have* to get married, right? We've done the whole thing."

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: And so, this— all of this was just kind of, "Oh, they just couldn't help themselves. They love each other too much."

Travis: This is the cute show.

Teresa: Exactly! Exactly.

Travis: Okay, I get it.

Teresa: The bundling was the show. Exactly.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: There are some statistics that as many as—

Travis: Go on. Oh, I love a statistic. Yes.

Teresa: ... as many as one in three young colonial women were pregnant during their nuptials.

Travis: Yeah!

[audience applause and cheering]

Travis: That's the other thing. Isn't it wild to think, like, we have this new country and we're, like, going to fight the British? And, like, we're trying to form this new country.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: But we need to be careful that, like, about getting pregnant and having babies. You think that it would be like, "Yeah, man. Be fruitful and multiply. We gotta, like— we got to have people to work the farms."

Teresa: Yeah, sure.

Travis: Go ahead, my dude. Yeah, man!

Teresa: So, bundling was kind of more of an insurance policy that it was—

Travis: It was a show. No, it's not an insurance policy. It's because we're puritanical but also... got needs.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: And weird side note.

Travis: What? It hasn't already been weird?

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughs lightly] These bundling beds were actually quite popular even among people who were not considered married age because if they were—

Travis: They were into it.

Teresa: No.

Travis: Oh, okay.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I mean, maybe. [laughing]

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: But, also, if you were going to take in a traveler perhaps.

Travis: You would sew `em into a bag?

Teresa: Exactly.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: You would—[laughing] You would use the bundling bed—

Travis: “Hey, listen, I know how this is going to sound, and it’s not you. But I am going to need to sew you into a bag.”

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

Travis: “Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Of course.”

Teresa: So that you could feel safe.

Travis: “I’ve been sewn into bags all over this country. Yeah.”

Teresa: With a lodger in your home—

Travis: “I get it. Look at me!”

Teresa: ... amongst your children.

Travis: Yeah. No, listen, I'd get sewn in a bag. Look at how I'm dressed and my whole thing. [chuckles] My everything.

Teresa: [bursts out laughing]

[audience laughter]

Travis: You could sew me in a bag from the moment I got there to the moment I left. I'd hop out. It's fine. I get it.

Teresa: Well, but you still had a warm place to sleep and—

Travis: A bag!

Teresa: [laughing breathlessly]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: And a roof over your head.

Travis: Oh, this is a comfy bag. Can I just say and I'm not just blowing smoke? Best bag I've ever been sewn into.

[audience laughter grows]

Travis: Is this velvet?

Teresa: [laughing]

[theme music plays]

Travis: Hey, sorry Travis and Teresa of the past. I hate to interrupt, but it's me, Travis of the future or I guess the present. Actually, the past, right? 'Cause I'm recording this and then it won't come out for a couple of days. Man, time sure is quirky. Anyways, I have a question for you. Do you have what it takes to hunt killer?

Now, wait, before you panic, I don't mean, like, in real life, right? Because there's two types of people that just responded to that question. People who are, like, "Yeah, man. Yeah, just point 'em at me. I'm a hound dog. I got

'em." And then the people who are, like, "No. No, thank you." Well, either way, right? You can have the tenacity to hunt a killer, but not have to actually worry about your physical form in any way thanks to the sponsor of this week's episode, Hunt A Killer.

It's a mystery entertainment company that creates immersive murder mystery games. You can examine the evidence, eliminate suspects, catch the killer with immersive engaging storylines. They *really* are immersive. When we talk about immersive, this is not just, like, you know, in your mind. You're immersed in it. You get lots of physical objects. There's letters. There's, uh, guidebooks. You get pamphlets.

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It scratches this itch I have of I love, like, murder mysteries. And I love listening to them. I love watching them. I've always had this feeling of, like, "I'll be good at this! I could do this." And, you know, up to a certain point that's true. And then I hit a point where I'm, like, "Ah, I need help on this." And I get to, like, rope in my friends and call people and talk to people who are also doing these events. They're super fun. And [sighs] listen, I know whatever you have in your mind as you're, like, thinking about the stuff that comes with this box, it's amazingly, like, high quality and cool. And if it feels or sounds cool to you to do this, trust me, you won't be disappointed.

So, head over to Hunt A Killer at bit.ly/Huntakiller_shmanners, right? And use *Shmanners* for 10% off your order of immersive murder mystery games today. One more time, thank you, Hunt A Killer, for sponsoring this episode. We love it. bit.ly/Huntakiller_shmanners and use offer code *Shmanners* for 10% off your order.

And before we let you go, ugh, I'm so excited. This week, right? This week. Wait. No, well, so, you're listening to this on Friday at the earliest, right? So, in seven days, we're going to be in Columbus doing *My Brother, My Brother, and Me*. On May 19th, *My Brother, My Brother, and Me* in Columbus. May 20th, *TAZ* in Columbus. And then, May 21st, *My Brother, My Brother, and Me* in Milwaukee. Some of my favorite places.

Can I tell you what I'm really excited about? At least two out of the three of the McElroy brothers can drive to Columbus. It's going to be a good energy

show! 'Cause we won't have been traveling. We won't have been doing that. Not to say the other places aren't great! But we get to drive in and do it and I'm really excited about it. So, if you want to come see those shows in Columbus. If you want to come see the show in Milwaukee go to bit.ly/mcelroytours. Get your tickets now. And we'll see you there! Back to the show.

[guitar music plays]

John: Hey, it's John Moe inviting you to listen to *Depresh Mode with John Moe*. Where I talk about mental health and the lives we live with all kinds of people. Famous writers. "Davis Sedaris, welcome to *Depresh Mode*."

David: Thanks so much for having me.

John: Movie Stars. "Jamie Lee Curtis, welcome to *Depresh Mode*."

Jamie: I am happy to be here.

John: Musicians. "I am in St. Paul, Minnesota. I'm talking to Amy May."

Amy: Great to talk to you.

John: And song exploders. "Hrishikesh Hirway, welcome to *Depresh Mode*."

Hrishikesh: Thanks so much for having me.

John: Everyone's opening up on *Depresh Mode* on Maximum Fun.

[music fades]

Teresa: Okay. Let's talk about some of the marriage customs now.

Travis: Please, yes!

Teresa: Sometimes, like I said, it was just the two people and usually someone in the community that was like, "Yep. I was there. I saw them do that." No, not the bundling. The marriage.

Travis: Oh.

[audience laughter]

Travis: But if you're into it... I'm more bundle adjacent.

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter continues]

Travis: [chuckles] Oh, Lord!

Teresa: So, they could be very intimate affairs, but they could also be, like, a party, right?

Travis: Marriages?

Teresa: [through laughter] Marriages.

[audience laughter]

Travis: We're not letting it go.

Teresa: Of course not.

Travis: Me and my fellow baggos. [chuckles]

Teresa: [breathless laughing]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Some of the, um, the marriage wedding foods that you might be served at a wedding could include—

Travis: Could— now, they didn't have gelatin at this point, right?

Teresa: No. Not— I mean, I suppose you could, but that was a very, like, labor-intensive thing you would use. Calf's foot and aspic and all this kind of stuff.

Travis: I'm just trying to see if I can guess. I mean, there's definitely a punch. We've established that.

Teresa: Yes. Punch.

Travis: We did a whole episode on punches. For those who don't know, a Long Island iced tea— that is, like, the equivalent of what punches were in, like, Colonial America. Where it was, like— no joke, it was, like, five different kinds of alcohol and a *little* bit of juice.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: But you would also expect to see, especially in this area, oysters.

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Teresa: Fish.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: Potatoes, pumpkin casserole, and then the wedding cake or the different *cookies*, which is very interesting.

Travis: Oh. Is it?

Teresa: Indeed.

Travis: I'm intrigued!

Teresa: So, this is where we see the bride's cake and the groom's cake. The groom's cake would be a simple spiced cake covered in white icing that would be eaten at the celebration. Whereas the bride's cake was usually kind of, like, a fruit cake, and you would save that for your anniversary.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Right?

Travis: We tried— we tried to save a top layer.

Teresa: We do— we really tried.

Travis: And it got so, like, freezer burned.

Teresa: [through laughter] It was really bad.

[audience laughter]

Travis: That there was simply no consuming it.

Teresa: We just couldn't eat it.

Travis: We tried, I think, one bite each, and were going "blech" [through laughter] the whole time. It was not romantic.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Here is a very interesting tradition. So, nutmeg is a spice that I actually—

Travis: Is it?

[audience laughter]

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: That is actually a ground nut, right? So, you have the nut, and you kind of— you can use.

Travis: You can, like, buy the nut and then you use a little— it looks like a little cheese grater but it's very tiny.

Teresa: A microplane.

Travis: Yeah, yeah.

Teresa: Right. Yeah. You can use a microplane. So, this was hidden in the wedding cake. A lot like you see, like, the King cake, right?

Travis: Get out.

Teresa: So, this was hidden—

Travis: It was a game?

Teresa: It was a game. And whoever—

Travis: [gasps] A deadly game if you don't know. If you're not ready and you're like, "Ack!"

"Oh! Grandpa got the nutmeg!"

"Ugh!"

[audience laughter]

Teresa: [laughing] Uh, whoever got it was said to be the next to marry. So—

Travis: Or the next to bury!

[audience applause and cheers]

Teresa: Oh! [giggling] For our listeners at home. He just did the chan— celebratory—

Travis and Teresa: [simultaneously] Celebratory two-hand shake.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Which is a weird thing to do out of context.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Here is something that I thought was very interesting. So, today when we think of wedding cakes, we think of a tiered event.

Travis: Sure, we do.

Teresa: Right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: That is the picture that everybody has. And this is something that probably started in this era, but not with cake. It's sugar cookies.

Travis: Yeah. Because the tiered cake didn't happen until Queen Victoria.

Teresa: A little bit after.

Travis: We'll argue about this off-stage.

Teresa: Anyway.

[audience laughter]

Travis: These are the only things Teresa and I argue about.

Teresa: So, you would have the— the small cookies all kind of iced in the white icing.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: The royal-ish icing. I'm not quite sure what the ingredients were. But you would have these small cookies—

Travis: I doubt it was royal icing. We were *very* anti-monarchy.

Teresa: Oh, you know? You're right.

[audience laughter]

Travis: They were just called, like, everyman's icing or something.

Teresa: Republican icing.

[audience laughter grows]

Travis: I know what you mean, but "Ew!"

Teresa: No. Republic— a Republic is a type of—

Travis: No. I know what a Republic is, but I also know what a Republican is. [chuckles]

[audience applause and cheering]

Teresa: [through laughter] Oh, okay. All right.

Travis: I feel like there are, like, three people spread out there throughout the crowd who are like, “Well, I’m leaving.”

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Um, so, these were stacked in tiers. And, oh, my gosh. If you wanted everyone to take one— people usually took two or three. So, you— [chuckles] you often would stack them up quite abundantly.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: A lot of these little cakes. And then, let’s talk about how you would dress for a wedding. Obviously, it depended on your socioeconomic status—

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: ... what kind of clothing you would wear. But very interestingly—

Travis: I would do the same thing I do to every wedding. A white dress.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I mean, that would be fine at this time.

Travis: What?!

Teresa: Because the wedding colors—

Travis: Hey! Hey! You know the color would be fine, but if I rolled up in 1776 in a white dress, everyone wouldn’t be like, “Nice!”

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I don’t know. Maybe they would. [chuckles]

Travis: They wouldn’t! You *do* know they wouldn’t!

[audience laughter grows]

Teresa: Anyway—

Travis: We've referenced numerous times that [chuckles] they wouldn't be cool! And they wouldn't be like, "Actually, he's *really* pulling it off."

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Maybe you look really good.

Travis: I would! Hey, that's not in doubt. It's the— okay...

[audience laughter grows]

Teresa: Anyway. So, at this point in history, the popular wedding dress colors were yellow and blue.

Travis: Huh.

Teresa: Yeah. And so, it would be the kind of— when you think about a wedding dress or you think about a dress at this time, it would have large side bundles, right? It would be a little bit— I mean, it would definitely be wider than deeper. And then you would have the overdress. Which is usually, like, a kind of coat-looking dress. And at the front, you would have the front plate of the dress kind of where the corset look would come in.

Travis: It's interesting— I'm trying to figure out, why yellow and blue? 'Cause I know that blue for a *long* time until, like, 1940 was, like, seen as a very feminine color, and red was a masculine color. That's why it used to be light blue for girls and pink for boys.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: 'Cause it was the subdued red. I wonder why yellow, though?

Teresa: Well, they symbolized loyalty and constancy.

Travis: So, people made that up is what you mean?

Teresa: Well—

[audience laughter]

Travis: I mean, just saying. Yeah.

Teresa: People make everything up.

Travis: It didn't symbolize— they didn't symbolize anything. [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: People make everything up.

Travis: Sure.

[audience member whoops]

Travis: Whoa! That's deep, babe!

[audience applauds and cheers]

Teresa: Let's talk about party games.

Travis: Let's do the Minister's Cat. You know, the Minister's Cat?

Teresa: No. No. Wedding party games.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: So, today we have things like the garter toss if you're into that. There's the bouquet toss if you're into that.

Travis: There's the baby toss and that's gone out of fashion a lot.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: No. I don't think anybody's into that. But these— the games of the day were called the Bride's Ransom, which is not what you think it is—

[audience laughter]

Teresa: ... and the stocking toss.

Travis: And kill the groom. [laughing]

[audience laughter continues]

Travis: It's not like that you guys!

Teresa: Basically, the groomsmen were trying to steal the bride's shoe.

Travis: Oh, so it's worse!

[audience laughter]

Teresa: No. Just her shoe.

Travis: Yeah. That's not weird at all. Not going after a young woman's foot.

[scattered audience cheers]

Teresa: Well, I mean—

Travis: Not that there's anything [through laughter] wrong with that.

[audience laughter]

Travis: As long as consent is in play.

[scattered audience cheers]

Travis: I don't care if it's foot, or bags, or whatever, as long as consents in play.

Teresa: When you—

Travis: Don't sew anyone into a bag against their will!

[scattered audience laughter and cheers]

Travis: If there is one thing you take away from this *Shmanners* show—
consensual bundling.

[audience laughter and applause]

Travis: Which is also what you do with Allstate.

Teresa: [giggling] Anyway.

[audience applause and cheers loudly]

Teresa: [sighs] Really? Really?

Travis: I earned it.

Teresa: And so, the groomsmen would try and steal the bride's shoe and then they would hold it for ransom. And the groom—

Travis: And the groom would be like, "Guys, not cool."

Teresa: The groom had to pay to give it back to his new wife.

Travis: Pay actual money?

Teresa: I mean, yeah, it's not easy—

Travis: At a time in your life when need the most money. There's like two times when everyone agrees— there's three, right? Graduation, marriage, and baby. And everyone's, like, "We should help them."

[audience laughter]

Teresa: It's not easy to steal a shoe. I can see how if—

Travis: [loudly] Are you defending it?

[audience laughter continues]

Teresa: You would want some compensation. Anyway. So, there was also the stocking toss, which is kind of like the bouquet toss only a little backwards. So, the—

Travis: Everyone would toss their stocking at the bride. Bury her alive.

Teresa: Sort of.

Travis: What?

Teresa: Actually, yes. [chuckles]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: So, um, the bridesmaids or any eligible ladies of the day who were hoping to participate, they would form a circle around the bride who was blindfolded.

[scattered audience laughter]

Teresa: They would form a circle with their backs to the bride. And they would take their stocking off and kind of roll it so that you have, like, a little ball at the top.

Travis: And they'd put quarters in it.

Teresa: No.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: And they would toss it over their shoulder and whoever hit the bride was the next to marry.

Travis: Get out.

Teresa: No. [laughs lightly] That's it. That's it. It's kind of like—

Travis: Whoo! Okay.

Teresa: ... backwards bouquet toss. Sort of.

Travis: I notice no one's messing with the groom in either of these games.

[scattered audience laughter]

Travis: If anything, it's the groom going, "Come on, guys. Give her her shoe back you pervs." [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: I mean, it sounds like they are messing with the groom.

Travis: Nope.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: So—

Travis: Yes? [pause]

Teresa: [laughing lightly]

Travis: [singing to the tune of "Do Re Mi"] "Sew a man into a bag!"

[audience laughter and cheers and applause]

Teresa: Okay. All right. So, what do you think? Do you like the idea of colonial marriage?

Audience Member: [shouts distantly] Yeah!

Teresa: What's your rating as far as scale of one to ten?

Travis: Oh, this is interesting. Okay, scale of one to ten?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: I actually put it up there with some of the marriage styles we've discussed.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: It loses points for the, like, "Well, you gotta come in and be, like, the moral, you know, compass. And yeah, listen, every husband wants to gamble his money away or drink all night. And you gotta whip them into shape." That loses points.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: But the, like, marrying for love—

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: ... and fun, and it being that, raises points. I'm gonna say... uh, like, an eight out of ten.

Teresa: Oh, that's nice!

Travis: Yeah, it's up there.

Teresa: That's pretty high.

Travis: I like the idea of everyone acknowledging, like, there's a lot of theater here of like, "Yeah, man, there being very conservative and they're definitely not, mm, you know."

Teresa: [giggling]

Travis: And everyone's like, "Okay." And, like, that's fine. I can get that.

Teresa: Uh-huh. Mm-hmm.

Travis: I would love it if people didn't throw their socks at [chuckles] at the bride.

Teresa: [laughing]

[audience laughter]

Teresa: Or try and steal her shoe.

Travis: I've been dancing all day, let me throw my sock. [bursts out laughing] at the bride. It's so weird. Why isn't it ever like, "Yeah, and then we can compete to see who can give the bride the most comfortable pillow?" [wheeze laughing]

[audience laughter grows]

Teresa: It's never like that.

Travis: It's never that. Who could give her the best gift certificate to a massage? [through laughter] Like, why isn't that— [normally] but, yeah, I'm gonna say eight out of ten.

Teresa: I think that my reasoning— I would probably give it a seven because, uh—

Travis: That's what I meant to say. I meant seven.

[audience laughter]

Teresa: It does— it does definitely depend on your, um, locale and your socio-economic status.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Whether or not you felt like this was something that you could willingly participate in or not.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: But I think that just the kind of, like, youthful idealism of marrying for love and relationship. And, you know, this is something that we see. The pendulum that we talk about in culture moves so slow on this fact because marriage has been throughout history so much of a business transaction.

Travis: Sure. A woman is property. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Teresa: Exactly. And that this is a really great move in the right direction toward mutual respect.

Travis: And it lasted forever.

Teresa: No.

[scattered audience laughter]

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: It didn't. But—

Travis: What a great note to end the episode on!

Teresa: [laughing lightly] But it's a— it's a good start toward that progressing.

Travis: And you know America has just been so progressive ever since, and just— hey! That's going to do it for us tonight.

Teresa: I am not the one bringing this down right now. It's you. [chuckles]

[scattered audience laughter]

Travis: Oh, sorry. I forgot which timeline I was in. Sorry, everyone. Hey!

Teresa: [giggling]

Travis: That's going to do it for us tonight. Thank you for being here.

[audience cheers and applause]

Travis: I will be back out after intermission, but let's hear it for Teresa.

[audience cheers and applauds loudly]

Teresa: Thank you.

Travis: If you enjoyed this, you can find *Shmanners*—S-H-M-A-N-N-E-R-S on Max Fun or wherever podcasts are found. And I think 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!

[audience cheers]

[theme music plays]

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