

## Shmanners 4: Holiday Special: Valentine's Day

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[theme music plays]

**Travis:**

Hey Teresa, I got a present for you for Valentine's Day.

**Teresa:**

What is it?

**Travis:**

I did the research for this one. It's Shmanners!

[theme music plays]

**Travis:**

Hello internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

**Teresa:**

And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

**Travis:**

This is going to be the first of our holiday specials, um, you know, Valentine's Day is coming up this weekend. And we figured there's a lot of traditions. There's a lot of history behind it. There's a lot of etiquette around Valentine's Day.

So we wanted to jump in and do a quick special, um, and as a present to my wife, I handled the research for this one so that she could prepare for our regular episode which will be coming out tomorrow. Um...

**Teresa:**

It was one of the nicest surprises I've ever received and I hate surprise presents.

**Travis:**

She hates surprises in general.

**Teresa:**

I always want to know. I always want to know. So I can be prepared.

**Travis:**

I can say in general, our Valentine's Days have always been pretty laid back. I think last year was the first year we actually got to celebrate cause we weren't working.

**Teresa:**

Right. We use to work at Cincinnati Shakespeare Company and it was a fun time, but we often had to work on Valentine's Day.

**Travis:**

And last year was the first year that we didn't and we, like, went out to eat. We didn't— Also, because we're dumb, like, we went out to eat, didn't make a reservation, didn't think, like, "Oh, this might be a—" And we just, like, rolled up to a restaurant, like, "We'd like a table, please." And they're like, "Okay. It's going to be, like, two hours." And we're like, "Oh."

**Teresa:**

But the funny thing is, they handed us one of those— No, no wait. This was a different place. Okay, so they took my cell phone number and they were going to text us when our table was ready. So, we walk around the block. We're going to go, like, you know, pre-game for our dinner at a little, like, Irish bar, I think we found. And as soon as I had gotten my cider and Travis had gotten his Guinness, I get a text. It had been, like, 20 minutes.

**Travis:**

I guess somebody just didn't show up or something for the reservation and we got in and it was great. So, in honor of Valentine's Day, we wanted to talk a little bit about the history, a little bit about the customs and a little bit about the customs around the world.

So, to start off with, um, most people, I think, know that Valentine's Day is for Saint Valentine, but what you might not know is the Catholic Church actually acknowledges three different Valentines or Valentenes, um, all of whom were martyred. [Laughs]

**Teresa:**

[Laughing] Well, a lot of those saints are killed pretty brutally. That's, like, their MO.

**Travis:**

I think the number one most common legend that people know is that Valentine was a priest, um, in the third century and Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families so he outlawed marriage and Valentine was, like, "No deal. Um, I think marriage is super cool, you guys. We're going to keep doing it and then he would marry the young soldiers in secret. And—"

**Teresa:**

And in that way he's kind of painted as a romantic.

**Travis:**

Yeah. Very much like, not only a romantic, but a secret— This idea of, like, we're passing...

**Teresa:**

Well...

**Travis:**

...secret messages and we're doing it—

**Teresa:**

The best romances are secret at first.

**Travis:**

Excellent—

**Teresa:**

And that's what makes them so juicy and hot.

**Travis:**

Excellent point, dear. Um, so then when Valentine's actions were found out, he was martyred. There's...

**Teresa:**

Wait, wait a second. He was murdered, but he became a martyr.

**Travis:**

No, you get martyred.

**Teresa:**

But that— No, wait a second. I think that there's an important distinction. He was killed for doing the things that he thought was right.

**Travis:**

Uh-huh.

**Teresa:**

Which made him a martyr.

**Travis:**

But you get martyred... Anyways. Semantics.

**Teresa:**

I don't know. I don't know if you can get martyred.

**Travis:**

He was murdered. He became a martyr. He shopped at K-Mart.

**Teresa:**

Where's Google?

**Travis:**

Okay. So, there's a couple other ones, um, there was a story that Valentine helped Christians escape from Roman prisons. Um, and there's one legend that says Valentine was actually the one imprisoned and would pass notes, I

think in one version with, like, the jailer's daughter who he fell in love with. And, like, signed them, from Your Valentine.

**Teresa:**

No, wait a second. Wait a second. I thought that she was blind and he healed her and then she signed a note from Your Valentine because she fell in love with him because he had healed her eyes.

**Travis:**

It's... Listen. It's a legend, people.

**Teresa:**

[Laughs]

**Travis:**

It's, there was probably a dude, he did a thing, it had to do with marriage? Question mark? But, the important thing is the day itself. How the day came about. So, most sources agree that actually what it was, was Valentine's Day was an effort to Christianize the pagan holiday of, and I'm probably going to mispronounce this, but Lupercalia.

**Teresa:**

Sure.

**Travis:**

Um, Lupercalia was celebrated on the Ides of February or February 15th and it was a fertility festival dedicated to Faunas, the Roman god of agriculture as well as the Roman founder's, Romulus and Remus.

Now one of the most interesting, um, parts of it, according to legend was that all the young women in the city would place their names in a big urn and then the city's bachelors would each chose a name and become paired for the year with this chosen woman and the matches usually ended in marriage. Okay. Cool.

**Teresa:**

Sure.

**Travis:**

Seems impractical to me.

**Teresa:**

Right.

**Travis:**

But, if that was their steez, super cool. So then they were like, well, like a lot of Christian holidays, like Christmas and that kind of thing, where they were like, "Okay. We're not going to be able to stop them from celebrating it, so instead we're going to intertwine religious aspects into this pagan holiday."

**Teresa:**

Those are the best holidays.

**Travis:**

They are indeed. So, um, it started at the end of the fifth century when Pope Gelasius declared February 14th was Saint Valentine's Day. It was not until much later, however, that they became definitively associated with love.

During the Middle Ages it was commonly believed in France and England that February 14th was the beginning of birds' mating season which added to the idea that Valentine's Day was, like, a romantic thing cause all the birds were pairing off.

**Teresa:**

Do— Well, yeah. But, birds don't mate for life, do they? I mean, I guess some birds do.

**Travis:**

Well, no. They didn't know anything. Like, to assume that all birds on February 14th was like, "I guess it's time."

**Teresa:**

[Laughs]

**Travis:**

Like, they mate at different— They didn't know anything. It was the Middle Ages. Um, valentine's greetings were popular as far back as the Middle Ages, um, but written valentines didn't begin to appear until after 1400.

The oldest known valentine still in existence today was a poem written in 1415 by Charles Duke of Orleans to his wife while he was in prison in the Tower of London and I have that brief couplet here.

**Teresa:**

Oh, you do?

**Travis:**

I do. And this is from a much larger poem, but this is how we knew it was a valentine. The line was, "I am already sick of love, my gentle Valentine." I think he probably meant...

**Teresa:**

Because—

**Travis:**

... sick with love and not of love. I doubt he was like, "Uh, this love stuff. Am I right, my wife?" [Laughs]

**Teresa:**

Well, but I mean, so you can be lovesick, right?

**Travis:**

Yes.

**Teresa:**

You can feel kind of listless and wanting.

**Travis:**

So now let's talk about in America. You want to go over this part? You liked this part a lot.

**Teresa:**

I do like this part. This is my jam right here. So, Valentine's Day is not only celebrated in the United States, it's also celebrated in Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France, and Australia.

**Travis:**

As well as, like, a ton of other places but I don't think that they're called Valentine's Day.

**Teresa:**

Well, okay. Sure. And I would like to point out that these are mainly Christian places, so the whole association with the Catholic Church really does make a lot of sense right here. And, so let's start in Great Britain.

Valentine's Day was popularly celebrated around the 17th century, but by the middle of the 18th century, it was common for friends and lovers of all social classes to exchange tokens of affection like hand written notes, um, and by 1900 the printed card began to replace the written letters due to improvements in printing technology.

**Travis:**

Makes sense.

**Teresa:**

Um, readymade cards were a way for people to express their emotions in a time where direct expression, you know, Victorian era, uh, was not encouraged. Um, so and also, the addition of cheaper postage rates made to an increase in, uh, popularity of actually sending these cards instead of handing them.

**Travis:**

So a lot of what we talked about in, like, the thank you notes, you know, postage came along, postage system became better and people started sending more stuff.

**Teresa:**

Exactly. And Americans specifically, probably began exchanging handmade valentines around the 1700's. So, similar time, uh, timeframes for Great



Britain. In the 1840's, a woman named Esther A. Howland began selling the first mass produced valentines in America.

**Travis:**

I believe she is known as, The Mother of the Valentine.

**Teresa:**

Why, yes. We are sharing notes. [Laughs]

**Travis:**

This is correct. Um, you want to know something interesting I found in my reading?

**Teresa:**

Sure.

**Travis:**

That's because of the postage system and being able to, like, seal up letters and send them instead of, like, having a person hand deliver them, they— It became a lot more common for those valentines to contain much more racy stuff.

And so, even in this Victorian, very buttoned up, you know, straight laced society, valentines became a little bit of an excuse for people to get a little saucy because no one was going to read it. And because you could leave it blank. So instead of— Think, imagine if it's you and me, right? Before postage.

**Teresa:**

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

**Travis:**

My courier comes and brings it to you. You're like, "That's Travis' dude. Like, I know this is from Travis." But if I throw a letter in the mail with no return address and it comes to you and you open it and it's signed like, Your Secret Admirer, you're like, "Who is this from?"

**Teresa:**

Oh, so it's like the anonymity of it?

**Travis:**

Yeah.

**Teresa:**

Mm...

**Travis:**

Because you could send an anonymous letter, which you couldn't do if you had, like, your butler running it over.

**Teresa:**

Well, but wait a second. If you sent an anonymous... This is the thing with, like, secret admirers. If you send an anonymous letter, how are you going to know who the letter is from?

**Travis:**

Well, isn't it that idea of like, "Ooh!" But if they seem intrigued— It's part— This is my bet, let's play this out, folks. So you know the person. You run in the same society circles and maybe, like, your sister is friends with them, right?

So then you send this thing. And then they, at a party, are like, "Yes. I received this anonymous letter. I loved it." And you're like, "Okay." And it's all very middle school.

**Teresa:**

Well, but, I guess my biggest fear would— Not my biggest fear...

**Travis:**

This is her greatest fear.

**Teresa:**

[Laughs]

**Travis:**

I've never been more afraid.

**Teresa:**

The problem with that is if it's sent anonymously, what is— What keeps that person... What keeps, I suppose, another person from saying, "Yeah, dude. That was all me."

**Travis:**

Yeah.

**Teresa:**

"I did that."

**Travis:**

But that's why it's so sexy. As you've said, the secrecy.

**Teresa:**

Well then you've got like six people being like, "Yo. It was me."

"No, it was me." And you can't prove it and that really just complicates life a lot.

**Travis:**

I agree. That's probably why we don't do that so much anymore.

**Teresa:**

[Laughs]

**Travis:**

Um, today according to the Greeting Card Association an estimated, ahem, one billion with a B, billion Valentine's Day cards are sent each year, making Valentine's Day the second largest card sending holiday of the year after Christmas. Um, an estimated 2.6 billion cards are sent on Christmas and women purchase approximately 85% of all Valentines.

**Teresa:**

But you know, interesting fact also included in your research, is that although women account that much of the percentage of cards, men's purchasing of cards is steadily rising because they often purchase two. One that's funny and one that's kind of, like, obligatory romantic card.

**Travis:**

Um, and according to our research, half of all consumers prefer to receive a humorous Valentine than— Uh, a romantic greeting is preferred 31% of the time and a more risqué form of card, 8.2% of the time.

**Teresa:**

I think that I would prefer a humorous thing.

**Travis:**

I think everyone does.

**Teresa:**

Well, because—

**Travis:**

Funny is better.

**Teresa:**

This thing of the, like, the Hallmark holiday has really permeated my, uh, psyche and so when I find a card that's super romantic, it just feels kind of sacrilegious—

**Travis:**

Well, if you think about it, here's my theory on that. We have for a long time, like, if you think about in our lifetimes how the shift in emotional openness has happened.

If you think about, like, if this were the 1960s, we would not walk around— Or I mean the 50s. Let's stick with the 50s. If this were the 50s, I wouldn't be as effusive with my love and praise for you every day. That's just not the way people did things.

**Teresa:**

Well, not in public.

**Travis:**

Yeah. And so now every day, like, we tell each other we love each other and are like all ooey gooey over each other.

**Teresa:**

So ooey gooey.

**Travis:**

So the idea of, like, going and buying a card that says, like, I don't need a card to express that anymore, like, in a way that I think you used to a lot more. Like, I think Valentine's Day was much more needed as an excuse to force people to be romantic. Where now it's a much more prized commodity to have people who just are romantic all the time.

And so humor... And if you think about it, I would be willing to bet that if you asked most people our age in the 30-something range, like, what do you do on Valentine's Day? I bet you'll find, like, you know what, we take it as an excuse to, like, relax together. Or like, we just enjoy each other's company because that's the kind of thing we— people our age like to do now.

**Teresa:**

I absolutely have friends who say we, "Don't celebrate Valentine's Day." But interestingly, I would be more receptive to a sappy, like, romantic card on a day not Valentine's Day.

**Travis:**

Yeah.

**Teresa:**

Does that make sense?

**Travis:**

Yeah. Well, that's the thing is, like, it's— Once it's— I think when you hear people say, like, "I hate Valentine's Day." I think it— And I get it. I think

there's a little bit of, like, well, yeah cause it's prescribed. That someone said, "Hey. You have to, like, be romantic today." But how is that different from, like, Mother's Day and Father's Day...

**Teresa:**

Well, yeah.

**Travis:**

... and Christmas and Easter and Thanksgiving that are holidays that are, like, "Hey this is a day where you have to think about this thing and do this thing so that we don't forget about it." I'm not saying that I'm a huge defender of Valentine's Day.

Because yeah, I get it. I was just at the store and saw, like, all of the, like, little balloons and hearts and candy and all that stuff. I was like, "Really? I'm just going to take my wife out to dinner and stare at her across the table and tell her how great she is."

**Teresa:**

But the next day...

**Travis:**

Oh, it's so cheap.

**Teresa:**

... February 15th, we are going to buy so much candy.

**Travis:**

Ah, on Lupercalia?

**Teresa:**

Oh.

**Travis:**

We're just going to go down there and get all that Lupercalia chocolate. I really like this one. In Norfolk there's a caricature called Jack Valentine and he knocks on the rear door of houses leaving sweets and presents for

children, although he was leaving treats, many children were scared of this mythical person.

**Teresa:**

Ah, yeah that sounds scary. Knock on my door. Well, okay. Let's put it into perspective. Is he more scary than Santa?

**Travis:**

I— But I think it's all about how it's presented cause if you think about that there's, like, um, uh, you know, there's the Krampus, but then there's, oh, what's the name? Uh, Pete? Black Pete.

**Teresa:**

Yeah.

**Travis:**

Black Peter.

**Teresa:**

Yeah.

**Travis:**

The guy who's, like, if you're bad he throws you in a sack and takes you away.

**Teresa:**

Well, but at least this Jack doesn't seem to have any kind of, like, negative effects. Like the only thing that'll happen is he won't knock on your door and leave you presents.

**Travis:**

True.

**Teresa:**

Even Santa, like, breaks into your house to leave you gifts. This guy just kind of knocks on your door and leaves them there.

**Travis:**

Um, I really like this fact, um, so one of the things that kind of modernized the tradition of, like, sending notes and everything and sending Valentine's was in 1797, a British publisher issued The Young Man's Valentine Writer, which contained scores of suggested sentimental verses for a young lover unable to compose his own.

**Teresa:**

[Laughs]

**Travis:**

So it was basically like, "Listen, we get it. You can't do this. You could steal some stuff from this." I love that.

**Teresa:**

Well, it is better than opening any Shakespeare play.

**Travis:**

That is true.

**Teresa:**

Usually those are lovely, but oh, so tragic.

**Travis:**

This is the kind of thing that blew my mind. Listen to this number and tell me if you, if you can get behind this. It's estimated that in the United States alone, as of 2013, the average Valentine's Day spending, like, the spending on a Valentine, \$131.

**Teresa:**

Well...

**Travis:**

On average.

**Teresa:**

But if we're going out to dinner, that's expensive.

**Travis:**



I guess that's true.

**Teresa:**

I think that that's probably included. I don't think that they're talking about just flowers and cards. I think that they're talking about the Valentine's Day spending where if you added up, like, outfits and gas and food and wine and you know, all that kind of stuff, I think that makes a lot of sense. In fact, why is it not more? Don't you want to spend more money on me?

**Travis:**

I mean, yeah, if I had it.

**Teresa:**

[Laughing]

**Travis:**

Um, I also think that there's something to be said, um, I'm going to hop in here. Listen, we are a very happily married couple and I'm going to let you guys in on a real inside tip. The secret to a good Valentine's Day with your loved one is to say to them, "What do you want to do for Valentine's Day?" And then do that.

**Teresa:**

Oh.

**Travis:**

Because I think that if you were, so say we are in a situation where, like, you love Valentine's Day and you wanted to go all out and, like, have like an all day affair where we started it with like a breakfast and then brunch and then we went on a romantic carriage ride and all that stuff and I hated Valentine's Day and I was like, "I don't want to do any of that." I should do it. Like, you know what I mean? Or we compromise...

**Teresa:**

Well, but I—

**Travis:**

... and we find a balance.

**Teresa:**

I also think that your point of view of this comes from the fact that I hate surprises.

**Travis:**

Yeah.

**Teresa:**

If you have a person who loves surprises, don't ask them what they want to do...

**Travis:**

Yeah.

**Teresa:**

... and make them plan their own Valentine's Day.

**Travis:**

You'd probably know by this point.

**Teresa:**

Right. I would like to talk about Japan, specifically, and their Valentine's Day traditions.

**Travis:**

This is one of my favorites because it's... I was about to say insane. It's not insane. It's just so different from my perception of what Valentine's Day is, that I find it fascinating.

**Teresa:**

So it all started in 1936 when Morozoff Limited, and I hope I pronounced that correctly, introduced the holiday for the very first time to the Japanese public. It ran an advert aimed at foreigners, right? So, even though it wasn't going to the Japanese, it was talking to foreigners in Japan.

In 1953, that company began promoting the giving of heart shaped chocolates and other Japanese confectionary companies followed suit. So

they kind of started the trend. And it gained popularity throughout the 50s and 60s, but the custom that permeates today is that only women give chocolates to men and, uh, that may have started with a translation error.

**Travis:**

[Laughs] I love it. So yeah, basically, to clarify that and we'll go into all the detail, on February 14th, Valentine's Day, women give chocolate to men.

**Teresa:**

Right. Unlike Western countries, gifts like greeting cards, candies, flowers, dinner dates are uncommon. Most of the activity around gifts is about giving the right amount of chocolate to each person that you know.

**Travis:**

I found it interesting, Japanese chocolate companies make half their annual sales on Valentine's. Um, so, I'm going to break it down, right? Cause this is one of my favorite parts of this whole thing. So, as it— Women are required to, say you work in a, um...

**Teresa:**

No, they are obliged.

**Travis:**

Obliged, yes.

**Teresa:**

So it's not like a requirement but it is a social norm.

**Travis:**

So, say you work in an office with, like, 20 dudes, right? You have a couple different options. There is, giri choco, um, which is obligation chocolate for unpopular co-workers. Um, for ultra unpopular co-workers you can give, um, cho-giri choco which is super cheap chocolate. And then there's honmei choco which is true feeling chocolate which is something you give to a loved one. And then friends get tomo choco which is friend chocolate.

And I probably mispronounced all of that but I just find it so funny that you would go to a store and be like, "How much do I dislike Dave? Do I dislike Dave a little bit or, like, cheap chocolate. I think I hate Dave."

**Teresa:**

[Laughing] So this went on for, like, 40 years. And in the 1980s the Japanese National Confectionary Industry Association launched a very successful campaign to make March 14th, a month after, Reply Day where men are expected to return the favor to those who gave them chocolates on Valentine's Day. And they called it White Day for the color of the chocolates being offered.

**Travis:**

Now, before people here in America get too high on their high horse and talk about how Valentine's Day in America is a Hallmark holiday, all about selling things. Why don't we tell you something about Reply Day. Men are required to spend at least twice if not three times as much on their gifts that they give back to the women. Not— Okay.

So not returning the gift at all is perceived as the man placing himself in a position of superiority even if you give, even if you're like, "I'm sorry. I forgot." Doesn't matter.

And if you give an equal amount, which, I love this. So you give me a box of chocolates, I give you an equal amount of a box of chocolate. That's me sending you a sign that our relationship is done. [Laughs]

**Teresa:**

You keep talking about required. And what I meant to say is, yes, it is required. Give me more stuff than I gave you.

**Travis:**

Well, it's required in that, like, you should do it.

**Teresa:**

[Laughing]

**Travis:**

Come on.

**Teresa:**

Come on.

**Travis:**

But I just love that idea of like, they were like, "Uh, we'll invent a Reply Day. Yeah! That's the ticket. And uh, it's rude if you don't spend, uh, three times as much. Yeah."

**Teresa:**

Right. And so originally only chocolate was given. But now, gifts of jewelry and accessories and clothing and lingerie, the norm. And according to the official website of this day, called White Day, if we didn't mention that before, um, the color white was chosen because of it's purity. Invoking pure, sweet, teen love because...

**Travis:**

But—

**Teresa:**

... we all know that love in the teenage years is pure.

**Travis:**

So pure.

**Teresa:**

[Laughs]

**Travis:**

It also forces everyone to eat all the gross white chocolate that they didn't sell for the rest of the year.

**Teresa:**

Yeah, I really don't like white chocolate.

**Travis:**

Not crazy about it.

**Teresa:**

It doesn't taste very chocolatey.

**Travis:**

Um, the last place I want to hit on before we go through some more random, uh, Valentine's Day traditions is in Finland and Estonia. Oh, man. I'm going to try to pronounce this just so everyone can enjoy my pronunciation of what Valentine's Day is called in Finland, Ystävänäpäivä.

**Teresa:**

[Laughs] I think you left out a couple syllables.

**Travis:**

I so did. I don't know what to do with all those umlauts. There's like six umlauts in that word. Um, it translates to Friend Day. Um, so basically rather than it being all about love in a romantic sense, it's about just, "Hey, everybody that's my friend. I think you're great."

**Teresa:**

Let's all just love each other. Like, love all around.

**Travis:**

Yeah, I— What it reminded me of, I was listening to, once again, our new sister podcast, Still Buffering, um, and they were talking about Valentine's.

**Teresa:**

[Laughs] Sister wives podcast.

**Travis:**

Yeah, yeah. And then in, when, it reminded me of, like, being in elementary school when it was like, "Hey, you, you have to give a Valentine to everyone." And I'm not saying you should do that now. We're adults now. But if your single and you're like, "I hate Valentine's Day because it makes me think of how single I am." Go have a Galentine's Day. If you're a dude like go...

**Teresa:**

Uh, I love Galentine's Day.

**Travis:**

Everybody does.

**Teresa:**

Leslie Nope is my girl.

**Travis:**

But like go hang out with your dudes and like just show friendship love. So let's run through a couple fun Valentine's Day traditions.

**Teresa:**

Traditionally, the colors associated with Valentine's Day are pink, red and white. So, pink is kind of a delicate, almost innocent shade of red and is connected with Saint Valentine whose burial was said to have caused the pink almond tree to blossom. As you remember from earlier we discussed several Saint Valentine's, so take that with a grain of salt.

**Travis:**

It's a legend.

**Teresa:**

[Laughs]

**Travis:**

Legend foretells of the time that one tree blossomed.

**Teresa:**

Moving on, red is a symbol of warmth and feeling, the color of the heart and passion. While white represents purity and faith. The faith between two people one to another.

**Travis:**

Also I found it interesting that apparently, um, three percent of pet owners will give a Valentine's Day gift to their pet. I thought that would be way higher.

**Teresa:**

[Laughs]

**Travis:**

So here's a fun, weird, old custom. Go with me here. Try to follow along on this one. In Great Britain during the 1700s, one very popular custom on the eve of Valentine's Day was for ladies to pin five bay leaves sprinkled with rose water to their pillows. One leaf pinned to the center and one to each corner.

Eggs with salt replacing the removed yolk were then consumed before retiring for the evening. Before going to sleep, the lady would recite the following little prayer. "Good Valentine, be kind to me. In dreams, let me, my true love see." If this charm worked, then the lady would see her future husband in her dreams.

**Teresa:**

This seems kind of like turning your pajamas inside out and backwards and dancing around for a snow day.

**Travis:**

Is that a thing?

**Teresa:**

Yeah.

**Travis:**

I had no clue that—

**Teresa:**

Totally a thing. I think there's also something you're supposed to eat. I don't remember.



**Travis:**

Snow cones.

**Teresa:**

No.

**Travis:**

Snowballs.

**Teresa:**

But I do recall being a child and doing a snow dance by turning my pajamas backwards and inside out.

**Travis:**

You're a weirdo. Um, an old English custom was for people to call out, "Good morning! Tis Saint Valentine's Day." The individual who succeeded in being the first to say this, then expected to receive a present from the one to whom it was said. And I love that. The idea of running out of your house and going, "Ha! Good morning. Tis Saint Valentine's Day."

"Oh, you got me! Okay. Here's a present."

**Teresa:**

So, whoever said good morning to Saint Valentine's Day got a present from the person they said it to?

**Travis:**

Yeah. So basically it was like a race to see who could greet each other first. This is something that I wish would come back. In Wales, wooden love spoons would be carved and given as gifts.

Favored decorations for the spoon were hearts, keys and keyholes. The decoration meaning, you unlock my heart. I love that because like, I love when you have to take guesswork out of gifts and it's like, "What do I get them?" A wooden spoon.

**Teresa:**

Well, Travis, you best be getting to whittling.

**Travis:**

I could whittle up a spoon real quick. Oh, okay. Here's another fun one. And you can look out for this on your Valentine's Day.

**Teresa:**

Oh, boy.

**Travis:**

It was once believed that if a woman noticed a robin flying overhead on Valentine's Day, it meant she would marry a sailor. If the woman saw a sparrow then she would marry a poor man, but be very happy. If she spied a goldfinch it was said that her husband would be a man of great wealth. So I guess, like, those three options. You're either going to get a sailor, poor but happy, or a rich man. I think all men do fall into those three categories.

**Teresa:**

But do you think that sailors were poor or rich?

**Travis:**

I think back then, they were just freewheeling. They didn't even worry about money.

**Teresa:**

So the—

**Travis:**

They were just out on the sea.

**Teresa:**

So sailor was, like, the middle class?

**Travis:**

I think sailor was, like, you're going to have an adventurous life. Something to keep in mind as you wake up on Valentine's Day. To be awakened on Valentine's Day by a kiss is considered good luck.

**Teresa:**

To be awakened or to be greeted by a kiss? Because—

**Travis:**

To be awoken is what it says.

**Teresa:**

When I think about being awakened by a kiss, that's kind of, like, Sleeping Beauty style and I don't know if I agree with that lack of consent.

**Travis:**

It's always weird. Um, this is the last one and then we're going to wrap up. And I really like the ambiguity of this one. In Britain and Italy, some unmarried women would rise before sunrise on Valentine's Day and stand by the window watching for a man to pass. It was believed that the first man seen, or someone who looked very much like him, would be their husband with a year [laughing].

**Teresa:**

So, the people who wake up early to go to work or come home late from work, like bakers and grave diggers?

**Travis:**

But, don't worry, it could just be someone who kind of look like him. So...

**Teresa:**

Oh, okay.

**Travis:**

Yeah—

**Teresa:**

As long as they just kind of look like it.

**Travis:**

So that's going to do it for our Valentine's Day special. There were some interesting facts about Valentine's Day that you can use to wow your friends.

Maybe some stuff to think about as you plan your Valentine's Day events. We'll be back with a regular episode tomorrow. We're doing house guests.

If you haven't, please go to iTunes rate, review, subscribe. It really means a lot to us. You can follow us on Twitter @Shmannerscast. Uh, we're getting real close to 1,000. Really want to break that. I'm really looking forward to it. I'm very excited.

You can also join our Facebook group. You can just find it by searching Shmanners, S-H-M-A-N-N-E-R-S and go check out all the other amazing shows on maximumfun.org and we also want to say thank you to Brent Black for our theme music and Kayla Wasil for our logo.

**Teresa:**

And thank you, Travis, for doing all this research so I didn't have to.

**Travis:**

You're welcome. Thank you for being my amazing partner. So tune in for another special on the next holiday, I guess.

**Teresa:**

No RSVP required.

**Travis:**

Thank you for listening to Shmanners.

**Teresa:**

Manners, Shmanners. Get it?

[theme music plays]

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**Jonathan Van Ness:**

You guys, I'm so excited to introduce to you my new baby, Getting Curious With Jonathan Van Ness. This is going to be a really fun look at things that I find curious, whether it's a menstrual cup, it might be the Romanov family, it might be fracking. It could be Carly Fiorina, I don't even know. Who knows?

It's going to be whatever I think is interesting. I can't wait to bring it to you guys. We're going to be bringing in content experts. I'm going to be learning the things. It's only going to take about 30 minutes for you to expand your baby brains with me and have a super fun time. So I can't wait to see you on our first episode of Getting Curious.