

Shmanners 435: Thanksgiving Myths

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[theme music plays]

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

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

Travis: And you're listening to Shmanners.

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette.

Travis: For ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove!

Teresa: Hello, dear.

Travis: [sings] Pass the cranberry sauce. We're having mashed potatoes.

Travis and Teresa: [sings] Ooh, the turkey looks great. Thank you for loving me. Thank you for being there.

Teresa: I don't think we can sing much more because—

Travis: You think it's too accurate?

Teresa: Copyrighted. [chuckles]

Travis: I don't think that's how it works?

Teresa: Really?

Travis: Well, one, we're just singing it.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: And I don't think that you can copyright someone singing the song. And we don't charge per episode, so it's not like we're making money off of

it. This would be like if you were walking through the shopping mall singing this song and suddenly a lawyer showed up and said, "Boom, sued." And I don't think that's how that works.

Teresa: You're right, Travis.

Travis: That's a myth.

Teresa: Thank you for being there.

Travis: Thank you for loving me.

Travis and Teresa: [sings] The whole world's thankin'. Thanking you, thanking us.

Travis: Kill the turkey.

Teresa: [laughs] I think there's one more thing in there, but that's all right. [sings] Hah!

Travis: But I was saying like we busted the myth about—

Teresa: It's a myth, yeah.

Travis: Because it was a myth about copyrighting and we busted it.

Teresa: You're right, we did it.

Travis: And that's what we're doing today!

Teresa: Bustin' some myths.

Travis: Killing turkeys and bustin' myths.

Teresa: [chuckles] I'm not killing any turkeys.

Travis: Yeah, give it time.

Teresa: No, I—

Travis: If one busted in here right now and went to attack me, you're telling me you wouldn't defend your husband with lethal force?

Teresa: [chuckles] I'd sick Lily on him?

Travis: Oh, that's probably true. That's actually probably worse in many ways.

Teresa: That would work.

Travis: I've never seen you wrap your jaws around a Turkey's neck.

Teresa: Never.

Travis: I can picture it with Lily. Okay, enough about that. What kind of myths are we busting?

Teresa: So, first of all, we have to acknowledge that some Thanksgiving myths have erased the contributions of indigenous people for centuries. And we urge everyone to please consider decolonizing your celebration by buying native goods, supporting indigenous businesses, and learning about the history of specific tribal nations in your area.

Travis: Yes, agreed.

Teresa: Also, we have one... is it a retraction? If we've talked about it before and we said it was—

Travis: Correct? Correction.

Teresa: Correction. Let's first talk about a correction that we need to talk about. Benjamin Franklin.

Travis: Was it about the state—he wanted the country bird to be the turkey?

Teresa: Yeah, yeah. A while ago, we did a—I mean, it was really great.

Travis: If we say so ourselves.

Teresa: If we say so ourselves. A live show about Thanksgiving, where we talked a lot about Benjamin Franklin and the turkey, right? And the myth is that he wanted the turkey to be our national bird instead of the eagle.

Travis: That's not true?

Teresa: Well, it is true, but it's not official in the way of—so...

Travis: It was Franklin Benjamin, a different guy.

Teresa: [chuckles] No, no, no. Okay, so he didn't really do any kind of like effectual grandstanding about how the eagle is bad, right? And the turkey is good—

Travis: He was kind of gossiping to John Adams one day like, "The eagle, stupid."

Teresa: A little bit.

Travis: "Oh, okay."

Teresa: So, Congress assigned Jefferson Adams and Franklin to design an official seal for the nation.

Travis: Well, then it should have been a seal!

Teresa: [spoofs ironic trumpet sound] Wa-waaa.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: But they could not agree on it. And then made two more committees that still could not—

Travis: A committee to figure out the committee?

Teresa: Agree about it.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: So June 1782, Congress was fed up with the lack of a symbol, right? And so they, instead of a committee, they give one person the job.

Travis: It was an eagle.

Teresa: Charles Thompson. So what he did was he took all of the previous designs that anyone from the prior three committees had submitted, right? And he took little bits from almost everyone. Right?

Travis: Are you kidding—hey, baby? This is the mural from Parks and Recreation.

Teresa: He made a camel.

Travis: He made a camel!

Teresa: And so, he was particularly drawn to the illustration of an eagle done by William Barton, who was a Pennsylvania lawyer. And so, he made that the bird without like anybody's kind of like vote or anything. He just decided, "This is the one that I like best, this bird here." And then took like the little bits from a bunch of other things, right? And so Franklin, rightfully annoyed, hated the design and wrote a letter to his daughter criticizing these sketches, right? Telling her that it looked more like a turkey than an eagle. But even a turkey would have been preferable to an eagle, because—

Travis: Okay, well, that's just gossip stuff. Okay.

Teresa: Because he said in this letter, "The bald eagle is a bird of bad moral character. He does not get his living honestly. He's too lazy to fish for himself. Whereas a turkey is a much more respectable bird, and with all, a true original native of America. He is, besides although a little vain and silly, a bird of courage." So, this was complaints. It was complaints from Benjamin to his daughter. Not any kind of like official bluster. Nothing said in

committee. It just happened that he was real bitter about the thing that he liked not getting picked.

Travis: You know what I'm realizing now? Is that when I really plumb the depths of my feelings vis-à-vis the bald eagle. I cannot separate all of the like propaganda feelings about eagles as like America's symbol, versus, "Yeah, but like, Travis, what do you actually think about an eagle? What feelings do you have?" And I'm like, "Well, they're proud and majestic."

Teresa: But are they?

Travis: "And so patriotic." And it's like, "Okay, but what do you actually know about an eagle?"
"Well, they're so proud and majestic?"

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Like, I can't... Whereas if tomorrow they were like—if everybody went, "You know what? Actually, a turkey works better." I'd be like, "Yeah, it does!" [titters] That makes complete sense. Yeah, it fits. I just don't know anything about an eagle outside of everything I've been told vis-à-vis America.

Teresa: They're scavengers and they often in that way harbor disease. You really shouldn't—if you meet an eagle, not that it will let it touch you, you shouldn't touch it.

Travis: I mean, you shouldn't touch an eagle to begin with. You shouldn't touch...

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: If you're in the wild and you find a bird, don't touch it.

Teresa: Don't touch that bird.

Travis: Don't touch that bird! And maybe not even in the wild, if you're sitting on a porch and a bird lands next to you, admire it from afar. Hey, what's the next thing? What are we talking about?

Teresa: This is not the only myth that is going to be pretty hot. So, I suggest before you make these your Thanksgiving talking points that you read the room, okay, guys?

Travis: The turkey one seems safe. A little bit, maybe.

Teresa: The myth is the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock.

Travis: They didn't land at Plymouth Rock?

Teresa: No! They didn't. There's no historical evidence that exists to confirm Plymouth Rock was the Pilgrims great and fantastical stepping stone into the new world.

Travis: Can I tell you, for a long time, way longer into my life than I should have pictured this, whenever I heard that they landed at Plymouth Rock, I pictured the ship on the shore crashed into a big rock that's broken into the hall. And then a bunch of Pilgrims standing around like scratching their heads like, "Oh, man..."

Teresa: "I guess this is where we get off!"

Travis: "What are we gonna do? It came out of nowhere! You didn't see it when we parked either, Deborah." And like kind of like when you park in a parking space and you're gonna like pull through the parking space and oh, no, there was the curb there in the middle and you didn't know it. Right? That kind of picture.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Is what I pictured. I, in fact, is Plymouth Rock like an outcropping of stone? Is it—

Teresa: Not really.

Travis: Because I just picture a big rock that they ran into and broke their boat. And they were like, "Well..."

Teresa: No, not really. So, it is an extremely underwhelming rock that they've put in a cage on the beach in Massachusetts. They're like, "This one." And they—it was a publicity stunt. According to historian George Willison, the idea of the Plymouth Rock as the stepping stone is malarkey.

Travis: Whoa.

Teresa: It's a PR stunt that the town threw together to attract attention. The legend rests on a very shaky testimony of a man named Thomas Faunce, who was in his mid-nineties at the time, and told the story of the Pilgrims' arrival more than a century after they emerged from the Mayflower. This might be the first time you're hearing of this. And the reason of that is because George Willison's book called *Saints and Strangers*, which detailed an accurate account of these early settlers, came out right toward the end of World War II, when everyone had a lot more on their minds than the historical accuracy of the 1600s.

Travis: Now, hear me out. Wouldn't it be a way better publicity stunt if they put this big rocket in cage and then put a sign that said, "This rock is being punished for robbing a bank."

Teresa: [laughs] That would be great.

Travis: And made the sign really old and patina'd. And when people are like, "What? What's the story behind this?" You're like, "We don't know—it was here when we got here. Right? And that was just—yeah, man, we don't know. We don't know what the rock did. But there are explicit instructions that that rock must be in prison for 300 years."

Teresa: So, the actual factual is that the Pilgrims made—

Travis: The satisfactual?

Teresa: [titters] Yup. That they made landfall at the top of Cape Cod in November of 1620, before deciding it was safer to sail down to Plymouth the next month.

Travis: Okay. That's not as fun, though, than they crashed into a big rock and said, "Whoops."

Teresa: It's not.

Travis: "Whoop-ti-doo."

Teresa: Speaking of Pilgrims, here's another one about Pilgrims. The myth is that they held the first Thanksgiving.

Travis: What?

Teresa: The myth is that the Pilgrims held the first American Thanksgiving.

Travis: Did somebody else have a Thanksgiving?

Teresa: Yup, it's not even close.

Travis: What?

Teresa: Not even *close*.

Travis: What?

Teresa: Countless Native American tribal nations held their own gratitude ceremonies years before the Pilgrims—the pasty white selves ever came ashore.

Travis: What?

Teresa: So, not only did indigenous people do this long before the actual Pilgrims did, so did other European settlers. They were already doing this. Spanish settlers in particular held two documented Thanksgiving

ceremonies. One in St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565. And another in 1598, on the banks of the Rio Grande. And if that's—

Travis: It's all hogwash?

Teresa: In 1619, a year before the Pilgrims set foot in America, a bunch of European settlers held a Thanksgiving hundreds of miles away in the colony of Jamestown.

Travis: I...

Teresa: Yeah, I know.

Travis: Teresa, I don't know how to think or feel anymore. Everything is just, it's all red, and I'm blacking out. And I thought that this was gonna be like, "People think the best way to cook a turkey is this."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And it's like no, actually that's a myth. And here's—I didn't know it was like, yeah, this whole thing? It's all built on lies. It's a shifting bed of sand upon which everything I was taught by Charlie Brown and other Thanksgiving propaganda—

Teresa: I know.

Travis: I see now is all a lie.

Teresa: Here, let me kick you while you're down.

Travis: Oh, please!

Teresa: And you know how all of the... like the pictures that we see of the first Thanksgiving is everybody kind of like hanging out at a long table, or whatever?

Travis: Yeah, with goggles on their hats.

Teresa: It was probably more like a fall festival, because like they probably had like picnic style kind of dinner. And they were playing games and holding like mark shooting and like holding races. And like it was—

Travis: That actually bothers me less than the whole thing's a lie.

Teresa: It was more like a festival—

Travis: That actually is fine—

Teresa: Than a dinner.

Travis: They didn't sit at tables; they sat on like blankets and have fun. That's fine. They didn't invent it and it's all a lie is actually harder... And I'm not saying, oh, no, I loved Thanksgiving because I thought white people invented it. I'm just saying that's so thoroughly a lie—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: That it's—I'm 41 years old. And never once have I heard before like, it wasn't the first Thanksgiving. It wasn't even the first European Thanksgiving. All of this is a lie. Enjoy the muffins. Right? Like, have fun with your sweet potato casserole. Like, why do we do this?

Teresa: I don't know.

Travis: [laughs]

Teresa: I don't know why we do this. Here's another casserole full of lies.

Travis: I think I talked about this when we did the Macy's Thanksgiving Day episode.

Teresa: Uh-huh, yeah.

Travis: I wish that they just were like, "Thanksgiving is done. We're doing—this is now like the celebration of the beginning of the Christmas season, right? We're gonna cap it on either end. And you have Thanksgiving and you

have New Year's. And this is—we're gonna wall off the Christmas season so the spread cannot—the spread can be contained." And it peaks on the 25th, right? Or whatever holiday you celebrate.

Teresa: With a sharp descent right after.

Travis: Right. But if you want to put up Christmas decorations, or like non-secular—

Teresa: Winter decorations.

Travis: Secular? Yeah, secular winter decorations. It is betwixt Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Outside of that—that's fine, you can do whatever you want. But we're telling you, that's what these holidays now are. These are the three points in the Big Dipper tail of Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's. And yes, that is a very Christmas-centric way to look at it. What can I say?

Teresa: Here's another one, that American history started when the Pilgrims settled here.

Travis: Now, I knew that wasn't true.

Teresa: Yeah, that's not—I mean, for anybody—

Travis: Because in the year of 1492, some guy got here and did some really—

Teresa: Really bad stuff.

Travis: Wicked bad stuff.

Teresa: So, obviously, indigenous people have been in the Americas at least since the Paleolithic era. Which was roughly 30,000 years ago. So, no dice.

Travis: That's too many years. Can you even think of—can you even imagine?!

Teresa: I know, man. I can't. I can't imagine.

Travis: Think of all the TV shows you could watch.

Teresa: And so, even if we're talking about it from simply European settlers, right? Pilgrims weren't even like at all the first. Not at all.

Travis: No, the Spanish were here, the Vikings were here.

Teresa: Spanish, right, mm-hm.

Travis: And probably the French.

Teresa: And, you know, the Vikings up in Newfoundland. And like, if you think about it for less—for more than five seconds, the Pilgrims knew where they were going. They came here—

Travis: Yeah, man.

Teresa: On purpose, right? How would they know that there was something there unless someone was sending word to them, right? So someone was already here. They had already heard about it. They didn't just like board the boat and sail in a general direction.

Travis: Yeah, "Here's hopin'."

Teresa: All right—

Travis: Although they do like to make it sound that way, because the whole bigger myth behind it of like being religiously persecuted. And so they sailed for the new world, guided by God. This will be, you know, manifest destiny. This is the world that God wanted us to discover and tame and settle and all that stuff. It does kind of fit that myth of like, "That's why we found this place. We landed here, guided by God to Plymouth Rock. The holiest rock in America." Or whatever.

Teresa: And speaking of religious persecution, people often associate Pilgrims leaving Europe because they felt they were being persecuted.

Travis: I know this one!

Teresa: Yes, this is our next myth. Why did they leave?

Travis: Because actually, everybody else wasn't religious enough for them.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: They were like, "You guys are having too much fun. You're having... you know, you're maybe drinking some alcohol. You're staying out late. You're working on..." Whatever. "You're being wicked. And so, we want to persecute you. And you won't let us. So now we're gonna go somewhere where we can persecute people all we want." And that's how the United States of America was formed.

Teresa: Well, first they stopped in Holland.

Travis: And said, "Can we persecute you and judge you guys?" And they were like, "No."

Teresa: No... But there was—there was like the tradition of basically Holland letting people be as much of a zealot as they want. Unlike in Britain, where the Pilgrims were, to begin with—and Britain's kind of like looked at them sideways like, what are you doing?

Travis: Hey, be cool, guys.

Teresa: In Holland, there wasn't any of that. Everybody was allowed to be as religious as they wanted. And because of that, the Pilgrims went there and they decided, "Nope, still too free. Everyone here is not as good as we are." And—

Travis: Can you imagine?

Teresa: And it was very difficult to make a life in Holland.

Travis: Too many tulips! Sneezing everywhere.

Teresa: Well, because—so then they had to try—

Travis: The windmill are blowing everybody away. [titters]

Teresa: Come on, now. They had to try and work into the manufacturing that was part of the place that they settled in Holland. And so like, they weren't really able to like do the kind of like textile work that was there at the time. And so they were like, "Let's just start over. We're gonna go to America so that we can do whatever we want and make our own money—"

Travis: And nobody else can.

Teresa: "From their resources, steal all their stuff, and we don't have to assimilate"

Travis: Cool, dude! Hey, let's take a quick break from all of this fun stuff, and hear a word from another Max Fun show!

[theme music plays]

Narrator: Somewhere in an alternate universe, where Hollywood is smarter...

Presenter 1: And the Emmy nominees for Outstanding Comedy Series are...

Presenter 2: Jetpackula.

Presenter 1: Airport Marriott.

Presenter 2: Thrapple.

Presenter 1: Dear America, We've Seen You Naked.

Presenter 2: And Allah in the Family.

Narrator: In our stupid universe, you can't see any of these shows. But you can listen to them on Dead Pilots Society. The podcast that brings you hilarious comedy pilots that the networks and streamers bought, but never

made. Journey to the ultimate television universe of Dead Pilots Society on maximumfun.org.

[break]

Mallory: Oh, darling, why don't you accept my love?

Brea: My dear, even though you are a Duke, I could never love you. You... You... borrowed a book for me and never returned it!

Mallory: [gasps] Hah! Save yourself from this terrible fate by listening to Reading Glasses.

Brea: We'll help you get those borrowed books back and solve all your other reader problems.

Mallory: Reading Glasses, every Thursday on Maximum Fun.

[break]

Travis: Okay, what else? What other things have I been taught as a child—

Teresa: Let's talk about food. Let's talk about food, okay? Now, I'm not sure how much of our audience has seen A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving. But something that features very prominently in that show is popcorn.

Travis: Oh, okay. Yeah.

Teresa: Did you ever think that popcorn was a Thanksgiving food?

Travis: No...

Teresa: No?

Travis: No. I mean, corn, yeah.

Teresa: Sure. But popcorn specifically is depicted very heavily in that publication.

Travis: Is it because it's easy to draw?

Teresa: I don't know. It is easy for children to make, right? I guess if you're making it in the microwave. They didn't make it in the microwave, they made it on the stove—

Travis: I guess it's just weird for Charlie Brown to like just be there, like sweating over a turkey for 13 hours or whatever.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Now, let's be honest, who would make the—Snoopy would make the turkey. Snoopy—because I think that that's like an alpha—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Real Alpha thing to do. And listen, I know, I'm—I don't hate Snoopy. I just don't get all the fuss.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: But Snoopy is clearly the alpha of the Peanuts universe.

Teresa: We can't open this can of worms right now. I'm too busy with all my other cans. [titters] So—

Travis: That's true. What are you doing with all those cans?

Teresa: [laughs] You may have thought, thanks to your childhood, that popcorn was present, and it was not. The corn at the time was not modified in the way to have the hard shell needed to hold steam inside.

Travis: Also a lot smaller kernels, right?

Teresa: Yeah, I forget what the—like the actual names are. There's like endocarp and like all the—I don't know.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: But they weren't hard enough in order to hold the steam inside, to make the pressure to actually pop the corn. And so like, this was made as a kind of like historical fiction, right?

Travis: Not a very interesting historical—if you're gonna do it, make it like they ate dragon eggs. Come on, Charles Schulz. If you're gonna make historical fiction, make it fun.

Teresa: No, no, no, he didn't start this historical fiction. It was started in 1889 in a novel called Standish of Standish, which is a historical fiction novel based on the life of Myles Standish.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And so—

Travis: Now, is he in a place called Standish, or is it written in a language he invented called Standish?

Teresa: I don't know, man.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: I don't know. But it was historical fiction that has permeated our society. Here's another food related one. Have you ever heard of a turducken?

Travis: Mm-hm. A turducken is what you exclaim as you drop your turkey. "Ah, turducken!"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: No, it's where it's a turkey stuffed with a duck, stuffed with a chicken?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: But I've never actually seen it, even in pictures or video. I've never seen it employed.

Teresa: One might think that the turducken is a 21st century invention. It is not. It, in fact, goes all the way back to medieval periods.

Travis: I'm not surprised by that at all. That was the thing we—so, we've talked about it on the show a lot, Supersizers Go. And there was a lot of like... they didn't have a ton of like molecular gastronomy, right? Or like weird—to them, I mean. Like they didn't have a lot of unique spices and stuff that they could like do flavor combinations. So there was a lot of like, "Hey, I'm bored with this. Let's do something new." And it's like, "Okay, here's a pie with live frogs in it. Is that anything?"

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Right? Where they would do that like, "We sewed antlers onto this rabbit head and served it to you that way. What do you think?" Right? It was a lot of like show stuff, right? Where it would like, "Here is—we roasted the peacock, but we left like the head and feathers and tail feathers on. What do you think?" So, I am not at all surprised that they were like, "What if we just put a bunch of animals like kind of like stacked inside each other. What do you guys think about that? Is that anything?"

Teresa: Here's an actual recipe from 1807. And the instructions call for 17 birds.

Travis: No...

Teresa: A skylark, a thrush, a quail, an ortolan, a lapwing, a golden plover, a partridge, a woodcock, a teal, a guinea hen, a guinea fowl, a wild duck, a fowl, a red pheasant, a wild goose, a bustard and a fig pecker, which I don't know what that is. And the smallest bird—

Travis: Wait, that was in reverse?

Teresa: I don't think it was in reverse. I think that it was not in size, because you have to like organize these different... carcasses.
[shudders] Eh...

Travis: It's like those stacking up games for kids and you're like—

Teresa: Into the sizes that you have.

Travis: "The pink one doesn't fit in. Ah, man, it was supposed to go in the middle. Pull out half the birds, let's do this again."

Teresa: The smallest one was stuffed with an olive, that was stuffed with anchovies. [titters]

Travis: I love this.

Teresa: Oh my gosh.

Travis: I guess my question has always been with the turducken concept, the bird in bird in bird in bird in bird all the way down.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: What about the bones? At a certain point, you are building an impenetrable fortress.

Teresa: [chuckles] No, I think you have to de bone them all.

Travis: The work...

Teresa: I know.

Travis: No, thank you.

Teresa: I know, right.

Travis: What about, get this, it's a tomato wrapped in lettuce, wrapped up—

Teresa: [guffaws] Let's talk about another bird. We're going back. We're circling back to the turkey now, okay? And that the myth is we know exactly who started the White House turkey pardoning tradition.

Travis: We don't—

Teresa: We don't know. We're not sure.

Travis: Can I tell you, if you had asked, "Do you know who started the turkey pardoning tradition?" I would have said no. So actually, I was on the right side of this.

Teresa: Oh?

Travis: I assume it was the turkey council. The turkey lobbying?

Teresa: I don't know.

Travis: The turkey lobbyist?

Teresa: But it has been attributed to lots of different people; Truman, Kennedy Nixon, Carter, we know that as far as like paper trail goes... on paper—

Travis: It was area 51.

Teresa: [titters] No, no, no. On paper, it is George H. W. Bush.

Travis: There's no way he started it!

Teresa: I know.

Travis: There's *no way* he started it!

Teresa: But that's the official kind of thing. But... the tradition probably goes all the way back to Lincoln.

Travis: Do you think at that point, it wasn't for show, it was necessary? Where they were like, "These two turkeys both like perpetrated heinous crimes. And they will be murdered." And Abraham Lincoln was like, "Well, but they're brothers, and they're the only children of their mother. So we're gonna pardon one of 'em." And then they're like, "Wait a minute, we should do this every year."

Teresa: Is that a movie?

Travis: No?

Teresa: No?

Travis: I don't think so?

Teresa: It sounds—

Travis: Do you think there's a movie where Abraham Lincoln has to pardon two turkeys who have committed heinous crimes because they're the only children of their mother? Do you think that's a movie?

Teresa: Maybe? [titters]

Travis: Because it is now?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Hey, Pixar, if you're listening, I see big potential here. We call it Gobble-Gobble, right? It's about two brothers Gobble and Gobble.

Teresa: [laughs] Okay. So, it wasn't a Thanksgiving bird that was pardoned.

Travis: It was just some birds?

Teresa: Here's the story. 1863, the Lincoln family received a very fine turkey to be cooked for their Christmas dinner at the White House. But Tad Lincoln, Abraham's 10 year old son, fell in love with the bird.

Travis: Isn't it wild to know that he had a son named Tad? It seems like such an '80s villain kind of like from a teen comedy. Like, "Yeah, I'm Tad Lincoln."

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: "My dad's the president."

Teresa: Anyway, he loved this bird and named him Jack. And when someone revealed to him that Jack the turkey's fate would be in the oven—would lead to the oven, the saying is that Tad ran crying into one of his father's cabinet meetings, begging and pleading to his papa that the family not feast on his friend. And so Lincoln relented and, quote, "Pardoned Jack," who continued to live at the White House with Lincoln family.

Travis: Tad and Jack, best friends forever!

Teresa: [titters] The next year in 1864—

Travis: They did eat Jack. [chuckles]

Teresa: [titters] No.

Travis: And Tad.

Teresa: No, they had a special election like polling place at the White House, where soldiers could cast their ballots. And Jack the turkey made an appearance, and everybody loved it so much that Lincoln supposedly asked if Jack was going to cast his own vote that day. To which tad replied that he couldn't because the turkey was underage.

Travis: Good point, Tad. An excellent point, Tad.

Teresa: Yeah... Lastly, here's the last myth, that Thanksgiving is strictly an American holiday. Now, I think that we know now that there's also a Thanksgiving in Canadaah.

Travis: Mm-hm. Hey, excellent pronunciation.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Really nailed the accent.

Teresa: But there are cultures all over the world that celebrate a Thanksgiving-type holiday, right?

Travis: You know how I know this?

Teresa: How?

Travis: Because every year when we talk about 'Til Death Do Us Blart, we have to specify American Thanksgiving.

Teresa: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

Travis: So that people don't get confused.

Teresa: South—

Travis: I guess we should even say United States Thanksgiving.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Because Canada is in North America.

Teresa: That's true.

Travis: And I'm sure there are Thanksgivings probably somewhere in South America, and people give thanks at some point.

Teresa: So, here, let me enumerate some. South Korea celebrates, and I'm trying very hard, Chuseok, to honor their ancestors and celebrate the rice harvest. Tamil people and practicing Hindu people worldwide celebrate Pongal, which is a solstice holiday that involves decorating and gift-giving and prayers and getting together with family. There's a festival in Ghana

where crops are blessed, followed by a feast and a dance. And, you know, we even said in Canada they celebrate a Thanksgiving.

Travis: Even in Canada.

Teresa: But it's in October instead of November.

Travis: Because they wanted to get in before us. Do you think that's why?

Teresa: Probably, probably.

Travis: Hm. I got my eye on you, Canada.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: I'm watching you.

Teresa: So, we hope here at Shmanners that you don't upset too many people the way that I've upset Travis on Thanksgiving. [chuckles]

Travis: Not upset, baby. Not upset. Undone.

Teresa: Undone.

Travis: I'm undone. And I'm gonna need you, when this episode is done, to rebuild me. Bigger, better, stronger, faster... all that stuff.

Teresa: So, enjoy fun times and foods with friends and family, if that's your deal. And if it's not, you could always watch the parade.

Travis: That's true. Maybe you'll see a shot of us waving for the 50 minutes we're there before we get bored.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Hey, everybody! Thank you so much for listening. Thank you to our editor, Rachel, without whom we could not make the show. Thank you to

you—no, thank you—well, I'll get to you in a second. Wait a second. Okay? We'll get back to you.

Thank you to Alexx, our researcher, without whom we could not make the show. Thank you to you for listening. I'm giving you thanks. You must give me something in return. That's how this works. A shiny pebble, maybe some sea glass you found, anything like that. Let's see, go check out mcelroymerch.com for all the stuff there, including a new 'Til Death Do Us Blart 10th anniversary poster there. You're gonna love it. That comes out on American Thanksgiving, by the way. It's an absolute hoot this year, you're gonna love it.

This week, I'm going to be in... not this week, maybe next week. You get it. Starting on Wednesday, I'm going to be in Twenty-Sided Tavern making my off-Broadway debut.

Teresa: You can say a week from today, Wednesday, when we record.

Travis: Well, a week from the day of recording.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: But this will come out Friday. And then... five days from now? Something like that. On Wednesday the 27th—

Teresa: [laughs] There it is.

Travis: I will make my off-Broadway debut in Twenty-Sided Tavern, in New York City. You can come see that. I'm doing seven performances. Get your tickets at thetwentsidedtavern.com. Teresa and the girls will be in New York too, but they're not going to be in the show. But you might see them walking around and you can wave at Teresa! What else, 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. We also thank Bruja Betty Pin Up 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. And as always, we are taking your topic submissions, your questions, your suggestions, your idioms. And send those to shmannerstcast@gmail.com, and say hi to Alex, because she reads everyone.

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?

["Shmanners Intro Theme" by Brental Floss plays]

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