

Shmanners 441: Hot Chocolate

Published February 7th, 2025

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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: Your voice is a little different.

Teresa: My voice is a little different from all of the post-nasal drip.

Travis: You should try pre-nasal drip.

Teresa: [chuckles] Oh, okay.

Travis: That's where it comes out the front of your face.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: So listen, it's that time of year, folks.

Teresa: Did you know that Punxsutawney Phil gave us six more weeks of winter?

Travis: He didn't give us.

Teresa: I mean... [chuckles] Didn't he?

Travis: He didn't come out and say, "Do you know what you all deserve?"

Teresa: [chuckles] It does feel that way.

Travis: No, it does feel that way, but I think he more— Punxsutawney Phil, with his doctorate in meteorology.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: I was talkin' about this on— with my brothers. Don't you feel like there should be more like in *Groundhogs Day* like that is like—

Teresa: In life? Yes. [laughs]

Travis: In life, yes. No, but I mean like I— When I was a kid.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Right, and I remember like Valentine's Day, St Patrick's Day, like these kind of I would say secondary holidays to like Christmas, Easter, Halloween when you're a kid, right?

Teresa: Right, right, right

Travis: Like those are the ones where you get candy and presents. And I was like these other ones, I get the feeling will be more impactful to me as a grown up, right?

Teresa: Hmm.

Travis: And I remember thinking the same thing about Groundhogs Day, to be like, "As a kid, all I know, groundhog comes out, does he see his shadow, does he not. But certainly—"

Teresa: I wanna know—

Travis: "— there must be more to it than that."

Teresa: How do they know he saw his shadow? How do they know? I mean it could be—

Travis: He looks at 'em and goes "Saw it."

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: "Like I don't know."

Teresa: It could be right in front of him, and yet he may not see it. I wanna know, how do they know?

Travis: Well my only assumption baby is that they hold him, and if there's a shadow, they're like, "There you go," which just means the sun's out. [chuckles] So is it cloudy?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Or not. I don't think it's about his— Punxsutawney Phil's power of perception.

Teresa: [chuckles] I think—

Travis: I don't think they're sittin' there goin' "Look. Look down."

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: "Look down."

Teresa: "And report back to me."

Travis: Yeah. "Now press the button."

Teresa: "Tell me what you see."

Travis: But there doesn't seem to be anything more to it than that

Teresa: Yeah, I know.

Travis: But the weather outside—

Teresa & Travis: [simultaneously] – is frightful.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: And is rapidly changing. You know, there's snow. At least here in Ohio, right, we'll have like two weeks of snow, then like four days of like 65-degree weather.

Teresa: That was wild.

Travis: And now it's like 32 degrees and raining. And it's during times like that when you just need a little comfort. You need—

Teresa: [intrigued] Mmm...

Travis: — to warm your insides a little bit.

Teresa: How about some hot chocolate?

Travis: Oh okay, great. I was gonna say burning hot coals, but that—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Yours is better. Yours is better.

Teresa: Oh, that was great. We did it. Here it is.

Travis: Yours is bet— Let me ask you a question, before we get started.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Hot chocolate.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Two questions, actually.

Teresa: [chuckles] Okay.

Travis: Is it anytime drink, or is it a cold weather drink?

Teresa: For me?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Hot chocolate for me.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Anytime drink.

Travis: Okay. Second question, milk or water?

Teresa: For me?

Travis: For me, for my friends.

Teresa: I don't— [chuckles] I actually like half and half, I like half water, half milk.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And I don't drink regular milk anymore because my insides can't take it, so if I had my drithers it would be—

Travis: Druthers?

Teresa: Druthers?

Travis: Droothers.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Drathers, Dan Rathers. If I had my Dan Rathers.

Teresa: It would be oat milk. But because my children refuse to drink oat milk, we only buy almond milk.

Travis: More on principle. Sometimes, especially our eldest, just makes a decision like, "I don't like *Bob's Burgers*," and then you're like, "Why not?" and she's like, "I just don't," and it's like, "Okay, cool man."

Teresa: Ugh. Yeah, so if I had— if it was up to me it would be—

Travis: She's wrong, by the way.

Teresa: — half water—

Travis: I love her so much, but if you're listening at home like, "What?" Teresa and I did li— Teresa is wearing a *Bob's Burgers* T-shirt right now, and I wrote Bebe out of the will, so.

Teresa: [laughs] Half water, because I want the water to be very hot.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: And then I cool it with the preferably oat milk.

Travis: But we are also so now used to the packets mix, it's all in there.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: But there's no way that's the way that hot chocolate started.

Teresa: No. It isn't. And although you can buy artisanal hot chocolates that do not include, for example, powdered milk, most of the grocery stores would carry like Swiss Miss, right? Which is... alkalized... chocolate powder, and sugar, and powdered milk.

Travis: Okay, so that's why the hot water.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Okay. But that's not the origin. Surely.

Teresa: No.

Travis: If only someone here knew what the origin was!

Teresa: And yet.

Travis: [gasps]

Teresa: I do.

Travis: Okay great.

Teresa: Archeologists have evidence that citizens of the Mayan Empire were drinking hot chocolate as early as 500 BCE. Where cocoa trees, obviously where you get the ingredients, thrived in the Meso-America and the Mayans used their seeds to make an early version of the drink, okay. It's not— It is not— It wouldn't look like the same as we'd have it now.

Travis: No, I know this one. It was not sweet, it was very thick, right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Very dark, it was much more like dark chocolate, but not in a sweet way.

Teresa: Well, so it was more like a cornmeal drink, okay.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So we've talked about posset before, right?

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: It was very much like that, where it is a cooked and smoothed... cornmeal drink made out of— I don't have the word in front of me, but it is alkalized in a way with lime, to treat the cornmeal to make it easily digestible.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Nixtolized, I think.

Travis: Sure. I don't— Hey babe, that doesn't even ring the smallest bell for me.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: So sure, great. Nesquik-ized, I believe is you're looking for.

Teresa: No no no. So you would start with the milk or water, it could've been made with water as well, and it would be with... ground up cocoa seeds, cornmeal, and chili peppers as well, right?

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: And then it was tossed back and forth, or frothed in a way. You may have seen these very special-looking two-handed whisks that kind of spin in your hands to throth— to froth the drink.

Travis: They kinda look like large, you know, like the honey scoop things, right?

Teresa: Oh sure, yeah.

Travis: But it's more knobblier than it is like concentric cir— Or you know what I— stacked circles.

Teresa: Right. And once the beverage was cooked, it would probably be let to cool and thicken, and drunk cool instead of hot in the, you know, Central American jungle.

Travis: Was it like a meal more than it was a beve— I mean we've— If you're putting cornmeal and stuff?

Teresa: I mean, if you'd let it cool enough, you could certainly eat it with a spoon.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Like you would with pudding.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: It was very popular throughout the empire and all classes of people made it and drank it. However, the wealthiest in the Mayan society would drink it from large vessels with spouts. And some people loved it so much that they commanded that their vessels be buried alongside them when they died.

Travis: Can I say, every time I hear about— And listen, I don't wanna put don burial rituals of anyone. Every time I hear about any burial rituals that involve like, "Bury me with my favorite stuff," there's obviously an aspect of it that's like, "In the next life," right.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: "I wanna have these things with me." But there's also, what it makes me think of is like being like, "And I don't want Todd to have it."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "'Cause I know that when I die, Todd's been eyeballing my hot chocolate vessel."

Teresa: Yup.

Travis: "That's mine."

Teresa: "This game is over, and I'm takin' my ball with me."

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: It seems like something Dot and Bebe would do, you know what I mean?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Where they're like, "Ey, and I'm— Hey, make sure Dot doesn't get that after I'm dead."

Teresa: Oh my gosh, I have had to explain to my children the difference between equality and fairness so many times, because they demand equality, but that's not what they want.

Travis: No.

Teresa: It's not what they want.

Travis: No. We also have to constantly explain to them that hugs—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: — whether they're the first person to hug the person or the second person to hug the person, don't go bad. There's not a good— That first hug's not all [chuckles] charged up and good, and then the second hug is like, "You get what's left."

Teresa: Well 'cause Dotty don't do group hugs.

Travis: No, Dotty does not do group hugs.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Dotty demands full attention or nothing.

Teresa: Anyway, Mayans were enjoying their chocolate concoction for centuries until Spain rolled up to colonize.

Travis: Oh nooooo.

Teresa: They saw the cocoa beans and the drink and the tools, and they were like, "This is great. It's mine now."

Travis: "I bet we could well this."

Teresa: [chuckles] And so— Well, sort of, because chocolate made its way to Spain in the early 1500s, and it was very popular in the court, obviously, and the Spanish upper class.

Travis: But it was still very bitter, is its— Not bitter, but you know what I mean, like baking chocolate, right?

Teresa: Not quite. They were able to change it to suit European tastes, and so they made it kind of sweeter, right? And they took out the hot peppers. And they made it a little bit thinner, right? Without having the cornmeal the same way that the Mayans did, I think that they probably even omitted that step pretty early on.

Travis: To make it more of like a beverage, right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Yeah, smoother.

Teresa: And they decided they weren't gonna share. The Spanish tried to keep their drinking chocolate a secret. And I mean they actually were pretty good at keeping that secret. It's very interesting that for almost 100 years, chocolate, drinking chocolate, was kind of like relegated only to Spain in Europe.

Travis: It is— That is the most... clear example of... when someone says like, "I discovered this little coffee shop," and it's like, "You didn't discover it."

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: "It wasn't in the middle of the woods."

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: And then they're like, "I just— It's my place, you know," so they don't tell people about it, and it's like, "It's gonna close." [chuckles]

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "You need to tell people about it."

Teresa: So when chocolate finally made its way to London in the 1700s, it wasn't just that it was an exciting thing, it was that it was the most exciting thing to come out, right? Chocolate houses, in the same way as coffee houses, right?

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: Began to pop up all over the city, and it was so ten— trendy and popular, even though chocolate was quite expensive, right? Not only chocolate, but also the sugar that was required to make this drink.

Travis: This is the thing, 'cause we— the two of us are nerds, and we really love period anything. Right, period movies, dramas, books, comedies, anything, right? And even into like the 1800s, right, you get this like drinking chocolate being like a very upper class—

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: — very like... “Oh, would you care for a drinking choc—?” Like it being almost like you would offer somebody, you know, the 40 year aged bourbon or whatever, you know. It’s like this thing of like, “And we have drinking chocolate.”

Teresa: Yes, it’s an exclusivity, right?

Travis: Right.

Teresa: Because it wasn’t just about going to... the chocolate house, it was about mingling with other people—

Travis: Right.

Teresa: — who could afford to go to the chocolate house, right?

Travis: You keep saying that, I keep picturing like a gingerbread house kinda thing.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: “The problem in the summer man, you just can’t go there.”

Teresa: “It just melts.” And so as chocolate, drinking chocolate specifically, got more decadent, so did the clubs. In the late 1700s, the president of the Royal College of Physicians introduced the idea of actually mixing the chocolate with milk, right, which is something that he saw people doing in Jamaica. And that made the drink look the most like it does today.

Travis: So up til then, were they just drinking like melted chocolate kinda thing?

Teresa: No, they were doing a very similar thing to what the Mayans were doing, right. It was more of like a posset.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Teresa: Right, with the addition of chocolate and sugar.

Travis: Okay. But it wasn't just like, "We're melting the—" You're not just drinking, you know, what am I thi— Like you wouldn't dip strawberries in to cover 'em in chocolate.

Teresa: Oh.

Travis: They weren't just chugging down melted—

Teresa: No.

Travis: Hunk of melted chocolate, yeah.

Teresa: No no no. Like I said, it was more of like a posset or a porridgey kind of drink.

Travis: Okay. I can't wait to learn more about them drinking porridge chocolate, but first!

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: How about a word from another MaxFun show?

[transition theme music plays]

Hal Lublin: Big E is a former WWE champion.

Danielle Radford: He spent 10 years at the top sharing the ring with John Cena and Roman Raines.

Lindsey Kelk: So, what's next?

Big E: When I retire, I'm gonna move to the desert, I am going to delete all my socials, I'm gonna disappear, y'all will never hear from me again. I'm gonna just sit on the couch, chill, and live my life.

Hal Lublin: From the legendary tag team The New Day.

Danielle Radford: It's Big E on *Tights and Fights*.

Big E: Feel like I need to listen to a few episodes you guys have because this was really enjoyable, so.

Danielle Radford: Oh no. [chuckles]

Big E: Thank you so much for your time. Oh yes. Oh yes.

Danielle Radford: [laughs]

Lindsey Kelk: Available on MaximumFun, or wherever you get your podcasts.

John Hodgman: The following are real reenactments of pretend emergency calls.

Operator: 911.

Caller One: [panicked] My husband! It's my husband!

Operator: Calm down, please. What about your husband?

Caller One: He loads the dishwasher wrong. Please help! [while crying]
Please help me.

[call transition sound effect plays]

Operator: Where are you now, ma'am?

Caller Two: At the kitchen table. I was with my dad. He mispronounces words intentionally.

John Hodgman: There are plenty of podcasts on the hunt for justice, but only one podcast has the courage to take on the silly crimes. *Judge John Hodgman*. The only true crime podcast that won't leave you feeling sad and bad and scared for once. Only on maximumfun.org.

[pause]

Travis: Okay, so they stole the chocolate from the Mayans.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And then they stole the idea of adding milk from Jamaica.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Okay, who are we gonna steal from next?

Teresa: [chuckles] Well, funny that you mention it.

Travis: Ah!

Teresa: Because—

Travis: It's almost like it's predictable.

Teresa: Well.

Travis: Like a pattern.

Teresa: One of the things that definitely happened at chocolate houses was gambling.

Travis: Mm.

Teresa: So we could steal from each other.

Travis: Could you imagine like a husband coming home, and the wife being like, "You stink of chocolate! Have you been at the chocolate house again?!"

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: "Gambling? Have you been at the chocolate house?!"

Teresa: There is a long and storied history of men disappearing to different places, whether it be coffee house, chocolate house, tavern, any of these things, and women coming out staunchly against them going because they were shirking their responsibilities at home.

Travis: So wait, so did women come out in force about the chocolate house?

Teresa: Not particularly because they also enjoyed the chocolate.

Travis: Ah, okay.

Teresa: But it was the idea that men were going to these places instead of coming home. There was a Women Against Coffee Houses movement for certain.

Travis: Recently, me and Teresa and the kids were travelling, and I saw a guy with a T-shirt that said, "Barbeque, it's like chocolate for men."

Teresa: Oh.

Travis: And it bothered me so much.

Teresa: [giggles]

Travis: Because one, everybody can enjoy barbeque. And two, like since when has chocolate been a gendered thing? And three, now I'm learning, men used to disappear in chocolate houses all the time. This is like high heels, this is like makeup, all that stuff.

Teresa: Yup.

Travis: Wigs, all of it. Anyways.

Teresa: Anyways, I would be remiss if I didn't mention some of the things that Alex found that they'd place bets on. There was a betting book discovered by a historian, and it was so ridiculous that they wondered if it was satire. Let me tell you about some of these bets.

Travis: Were they betting in the Puppy Bowl.

Teresa: Whether or not a man could live for 12 hours underwater. Which raindrop would reach the bottom of a windowpane first. [chuckles]

Travis: Okay, here's my theory on this. Is that they were enjoying these—

Teresa: I love that you grabbed the desk with both hands.

Travis: Yeah, they were enjoying the chocolate house.

Teresa: [chuckles] "Stop this train."

Travis: They're enjoying the chocolate house.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And then quickly realized like, "This isn't getting us drunk, and we're very present in our thoughts. And we're not used to talking to each other. Hey, it's raining outside. Which one of those drops do you think's gonna get—" Like guys, can you— do you not have hobbies?

Teresa: Mm. No.

Travis: Do you not have things that you like?

Teresa: Nope.

Travis: How do you test to see if a man could live underwater for 12 hours.

Teresa: Gentlemen rarely had nothing if not time.

Travis: Yeah. They needed jobs. [chuckles]

Teresa: You may have heard of White's, right? That is a club that is mentioned quite often in this time in history, and it's a former chocolate house, and that is—

Travis: So they served White's chocolate.

Teresa: Haaaaa. Let's see, that was a famous of Charles, the king, King Charles then. And then The Cocoa Tree, which was a favorite of Lord Byron, that's still around and it is now the headquarters of the Royal Automobile Club.

Travis: Oh okay, cool.

Teresa: Chocolate, like all things, they decided at one point must be good for you, right? People are drinking it, they like it, let's make it medicine.

Travis: Oh, uh-huh.

Teresa: Up until the 19th century, doctors prescribed drinking chocolate for stomach troubles, liver diseases, hangovers, and as an aphrodisiac.

Travis: Here's what's fun about that is that there are many things throughout history, I'm sure that we have a big crossover audience with *Sawbones*, where we look back on it now and like if a doctor said it to you now, you'd be like, "Are you trying to kill me?" right.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: But I love the idea of going to a doctor now and being like, "My stomach hurts," and them being like, "Here's some chocolate."

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: And me being like, "I don't think this will help, but also thank you. [chuckles] Also I do— Yeah. Okay, cool."

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: "Also, I do like chocolate. I appreciate that very much."

Teresa: Definitely. Chocolate will cure what ails you, I often feel that way.

Travis: Yeah. Now chocolate does have— I'm sure that— It's— Chocolate is in there with like red wine and stuff.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Where it's like very year somebody's like, "Study finds!" and it's like, "Man, you're cherry picking one sentence out of like this whole—" Anyways.

Teresa: Anyways.

Travis: But it doesn't cure things.

Teresa: No. Here is the last step in this hot chocolate to get to us where we are today. In 1828, a man from the Netherlands made the preparation of the drink much easier.

Instead of melting solid chocolate, Coenraad Johannes van Houten developed the first cocoa powder by creating a press that separate the greasy cocoa butter from the cacao seeds, and left behind pure chocolate powder, which was now easier to stir into milk or water.

And combining the powder with small amounts of cocoa butter, you could also manufacture chocolate bars, right. So you're like—

Travis: That dude is a gamechanger.

Teresa: Totally. And so his invention is one of the reasons that chocolate became more accessible. So during the industrial revolution became available to the masses, and therefore less exclusive, but people still loved it, right? It spread around Europe, to the United States, and so like every different country has their own kind of like preparation, right?

Spain still has a very thick hot chocolate drink that is thickened with cornstarch. Italy has a similarly thick brew with the texture almost like pudding, remember from before? French hot chocolate is famous for having a very dark, almost bittersweet flavor.

Travis: I think I would like that. I drink my coffee black, I think I would like—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: — French hot chocolate.

Teresa: And so today, hot chocolate is so beloved in the US that you can buy it pretty much anywhere. According to a 2022 poll, hot chocolate dominates when it comes to people's favorite holiday drinks, beating out tea, apple cider, and eggnog. And I actually preferred hot chocolate to coffee until the birth of my first child.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: When I started making a mocha-type drink with half coffee, half chocolate. And now [chuckles] I have moved completely to coffee because I need it. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, 'cause kids are exhausting and life is exhausting, and you know, I— this— It's so interesting because once again, what I find as we talk about like beverages in different places, food in different places, any kind of thing like that, that you're like, "Yeah, in Spain it's like this. In France, it's like this. In this it—"

And it's like, "And then in America, you could buy it anywhere." And I'm like that's not a special preparation. America. America. Listen, we're a great melting pot. Now let's take those ideas and form a new idea out of them. Let's have our own hot chocolate identity.

Teresa: Well I mean I think that the fact that it's made with powdered milk and cocoa is kind of its own thing, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Instead of made with like chocolate bars and hot milk over the stove.

Travis: I'm just saying, I think we could really mix it up, really make it weird

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Put salt in ours.

Teresa: Ooo.

Travis: You know?

Teresa: I love a little salty chocolate.

Travis: Somethin' like that, there we go.

Teresa: Here are some serving tips, tricks, etiquettes. You could try adding some bar chocolate to your hot chocolate, I have done this

actually as well. It does, because of the cocoa butter, it does create a slight kind of oily film on the top, if you can get past that. But it—

Travis: Grow up.

Teresa: It does— [chuckles]

Travis: Sometimes hot chocolate has an oily film, grow up, toughen up.

Teresa: But you can, if you try it while making it on the stove, you can emulsify that oil by mixing it constantly. So if you wanted to swap out some of the powdered chocolate, you could do that. But make sure not to get the milk too hot because you don't want it to boil. We're talking about between 140 to 160 degrees Fahrenheit.

Travis: Which would be three degrees Celsius.

Teresa: Would it?

Travis: No.

Teresa: No, it wouldn't. And you can always try to find your perfect level of water to milk, or all milk, or all water, whatever your preference is.

Travis: None of it, just eat the powder.

Teresa: However. [sighs] If you add some milk, whether it is powdered or liquid milk, it does emulsify better than water with the cocoa, because of the fatty acids in the milk. Almond milk and oat milk also have similar properties, although less fatty acids, so try and play around and figure out what you like the best.

Travis: Between 60 and 70 degrees Celsius.

Teresa: Thank you. If you are serving hot chocolate at a party, might I recommend a crockpot or a slow cooker.

Travis: Ooo la la.

Teresa: Right, so you can ladle it out and keep the milk or water at a good temperature, without scalding it. Another thing that you can do is

whisk the milk, either before you throw it in, or with the chocolate as well. Again, that makes it kind of frothy, right. And gives it a different texture.

Travis: Or get a milk frother.

Teresa: Ooo yeah, we have one of those, I love that. And people, especially in the US, love toppings. Things like peppermint candies, cinnamon sticks, marshmallows, whipped cream, all that stuff.

Travis: Doritos.

Teresa: Ah, ah, hm? Doritos?

Travis: I mean listen, as long as we're mixin' it up, we're changin' it up, who knows what you could put in there. Flamin' Hot Cheetos.

Teresa: Allllright...

Travis: Here in America, we nasty.

Teresa: [laughs] Depending upon where you are, you may be served accoutrement with your hot chocolate, things like churros or madeleines, right?

Travis: Ooo, yeah. Biscotti.

Teresa: Biscotti, sure. But if you are in a different place, such as let's say Paris, and you are served hot chocolate, it pretty much comes the way that it comes, right? It would be considered rude to ask for say marshmallows, although you could ask for non-dairy milks. That is becoming more and more prevalent all across the world.

And do be prepared that if you are in Europe and ask for drinking chocolate or hot chocolate, it may be served to you in a very small cup. Maybe an espresso cup or a demitasse, because it is very, like I said, it can be very thick, and so it's quite rich.

Travis: There you go.

Teresa: Take your time. Enjoy the magic.

Travis: Enjoy. Be there in the momeeeent. Chocolate is for savoring.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Chocolate is for lovers. Hey everybody, thank you so much for joining us. Wanted to give a biiiiig thank you to Alex, you researcher. [chuckles] I don't know why I said it like that.

Teresa: I don't— [chuckles]

Travis: A biiiiig thank youuuuu.

Teresa: Like it's—

Travis: "We're comin' to you live from—"

Teresa: Yeah, like monster truck, "Sunday Sunday Sunday." [laughs]

Travis: "Sunday Sunday Sunday, we're gonna say thank you to Aleeeex. And Rachel. Pay for the whole seat, but only use the eeeedge."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: [in monster truck announcer voice] Thank you to you for listening, monster truck fans.

Teresa: Okay, you're done.

Travis: [normal] Okay yeah, I'll stop now.

Teresa: That's enough, thanks.

Travis: Thank you to you for listening. We could make the show without you, but why would we? That would be weird. That would be weird. We wanna tell you there's new merch in February now over at the McElroy merch store, go to mcelroymerch.com.

You can go to Champions Grove and there's just a few packages left there, come stay with me and some other actual play RPG creators in the forests of Hawking Hills, Ohio at Ravenwood Castle. Play some games, make new friends, have fun.

Teresa: LARPs, perhaps?

Travis: Maybe. We also have the scholarship application there to come and stay in one of the cabins if you'd like to apply for that, or purchase your own package, you can go to championsgrove.com.

My Brother, My Brother and Me and *Adventure Zone* are coming to Florida in just a couple weeks. Go to bit.ly/mcelroytours for all the information. What else, Teresa?

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

As always, we are taking topic submissions, and questions, and idioms. Please send all of those to shmannerscast@gmail.com, and make sure to say hi to Alex because she reads every single one.

Travis: And that's gonna do it for us, so join us again next time.

Teresa: No RSVP required!

Travis: You've been listening to *Shmanners*.

Teresa: [in a posh voice] Manners shmanners... get it?

[outro theme music plays]

[ukulele chord]

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