

00:00:01	Biz	Host	This is Biz. I'm a part-time working mom with two full-blown kids.
00:00:05	Theresa	Host	And I'm Theresa. I have a family business, two young kids, and a toddler.
00:00:09	Biz	Host	This is a show about life after giving life. Don't listen with your kids, 'cause there will be swears. This... is <i>One Bad Mother</i> .
00:00:17	Music	Music	"Summoning the Rawk" by Kevin MacLeod. Driving electric guitar and heavy drums.
<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i>			
00:00:21	Biz	Host	This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> —it's ruined! And it's all your fault! Plus, Biz chooses Curtain #3, Theresa loves antibiotics, and we talk to John Kenny about love poems for people with children.
00:00:36	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz and Theresa: <i>[Cheering]</i> Woooo! <i>[Biz draws it out into a song.]</i>
00:00:40	Biz	Host	Theresa?
00:00:40	Theresa	Host	Yes.
00:00:41	Biz	Host	How are you?
00:00:42	Theresa	Host	<i>[Excitedly.]</i> Okay.
<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>			
00:00:57	Biz	Host	I just have to share that over Christmas, I don't know—I didn't post about this? But I really should have. I was in Urgent Care on Christmas day! I was in Urgent Care on Christmas Day. So—
00:01:00	Theresa	Host	Merrrry Christmas! Yes! And like—
<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>			
I—oddly enough, I <u>don't</u> know if I'm just really haggard and broken? <u>Or</u> I'm getting really good at this? Maybe a little bit of both? But it did <u>not</u> feel like a big deal to me. <i>[Laughs.]</i>			
<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>			
It did <u>not</u> feel like Christmas was ruined. It was not that distressing or upsetting to me, or stressful! It was just that we were going to the mountains the next day, and Curtis was on day five of, like, a fever! And, like, feeling really sick and that was after being sick so many times? That like—and we hadn't had antibiotics and like—it was just not going away.			
<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>			
And I was like, we can't <u>go</u> to the mountains like this! Like, it just won't happen. So I said to Jesse, I mean, we can, like, postpone our trip, or like I can take him to Urgent Care today. And get antibiotics. And he was like—great! Sounds great! You wanna take him? Do you want me to take him or you wanna go? And I was like, I wanna go!			
00:01:53	Biz	Host	I'll go!
00:01:53	Theresa	Host	Yeah! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>			
00:01:54	Biz	Host	Get me out of this house!
00:01:56	Theresa	Host	Exactly!
00:01:56	Biz	Host	I will take <u>this</u> child— <i>[Laughs.]</i>

00:01:58	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: Yes! You stay here—
00:02:00	Theresa	Host	Biz: Me! Me! <i>[Laughs.]</i> —and, like, set up videogames or whatever you need to do. And we went, and you know, it's like kinda quiet? And people are kind of extra-nice 'cause it's Christmas. And we—and Curtis was <u>amazing</u> because that's Curtis. Thank you, Curtis.
00:02:16	Biz	Host	Hey, hey, hey!
00:02:17	Theresa	Host	Yeah! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:02:17	Biz	Host	Alright, alright, alright! Here comes Curtis!
00:02:20	Theresa	Host	Here comes the bangs! The bangs are long enough to hide the sore on his head that he keeps picking over and over again!
00:02:27	Biz	Host	Beauti—put a band-aid on it!
00:02:30	Theresa	Host	<i>[Both laugh.]</i> And so we went. And like, we got antibiotics and... I'm <u>not</u> —I <u>understand</u> that antibiotics are controversial— <i>[Biz laughs.]</i> —and that they have—like, there are some problems with antibiotics. And like, overuse of antibiotics. I <u>really</u> get that. <u>This</u> was a situation where—this kid has not needed antibiotics for a long, long time. And I <u>really</u> didn't see another way out of this. Sure!
00:02:53	Biz	Host	And, like, the doctor agreed. Y'know? And so we got the antibiotics, and I just—I felt <u>great</u> .
00:02:54	Theresa	Host	<i>[Biz laughs.]</i> I was like—and he's also—of course, because it's Curtis, he's great with taking his medicine. Oh, yeah!
00:03:04	Biz	Host	He has no problem taking his medicine. He's happy to do it 20 times. 'Cause you have to do it for 10 days, twice a day! He was happy to do it every time. He even—I forgot to give it to him a couple nights? And I had to go in and give it to him in his sleep? That was fine, too. He didn't even <i>[though laughter]</i> wake up!
00:03:05	Theresa	Host	<i>[Biz laughs.]</i> Um—so I was just really happy. Like, and— <i>[Singing]</i> What child is this? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:03:27	Biz	Host	I know! I know. And so partially—so partially it's that, but also it's that—I realize, like, partly the reason I was so <u>happy</u> was that he'd been sick for <u>so</u> long? And like—on and off? Where like I thought he would—he was better or he <u>was</u> better but then he would pick up something <u>else</u> . And so—the—the span of 10 days where he was on antibiotics, was like the <u>longest</u> chunk of time since the summer where I haven't had to wonder—are you getting sick? Or see that he was getting sick again. Like, 10 days was a <u>huge</u> amount of time to have him be, like, basically healthy! And like, I—I had—like—I was pretty, like, secure that he was gonna be healthy during that span. Now we finished the antibiotics a few days ago.
00:03:29	Theresa	Host	

[Biz laughs.]

			He's back at school. Christmas Break is over for him. So I <u>assume</u> —
00:04:16	Biz	Host	Just a sponge for disease! <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:04:18	Theresa	Host	It's coming—right on back into my house. I totally get that. But it was a glorious—
			<i>[Biz sighs.]</i>
00:04:27	Biz	Host	It was a glorious moment! It was a great Christmas at Urgent Care. I gotta tell ya—I <u>love</u> medicine. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:04:31	Theresa	Host	Mm-hm! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:04:33	Biz	Host	And—I just—I was listening to you, and—at the beginning, with a lot of justification there at the beginning about the antibiotics a little bit. I just... one, you're doing a great job.
00:04:44	Theresa	Host	Thank you!
00:04:44	Biz	Host	Two, I'm just thinking about all of us. And like... I was like—ugh! We gotta save our judgment for other things. For like, when the flags are <u>really</u> waving! When there's like—you can see fire <u>and</u> smoke! As opposed to like... you could've also told me that story, and I would <u>hope</u> for <u>all</u> of us that we would've been like, yeah! I—I'm glad you went to the Urgent Care and <i>[though laughter]</i> got medicine for your child! As opposed to us now feeling—
00:05:12	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: —that we have to, like—look, I know that the—look.
00:05:16	Biz	Host	Theresa: Like we have to justify that that's okay. Yeah. I also know that some people <u>don't</u> know! That's our—I mean, like—there's lots of levels of knowledge out there! But like... it... it is—I've just like... that's one of those things I'm gonna try to do different! Right? To be like—I'm just gonna listen to my friend telling a story.
00:05:32	Theresa	Host	Like, don't sweat the—that little stuff.
00:05:35	Biz	Host	Yeah! Yeah, yeah, yeah! I mean—
00:05:37	Theresa	Host	Don't take on... antibiotics. Like—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:05:46	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	—that's not <u>my</u> job as a parent to take that on. That whole situation. Right. Biz: And I, as your friend, just wanna hear this nice story about your time on Christmas Day. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:05:52	Theresa	Host	Theresa: Thank you. Thank you! Very true.
00:05:55	Biz	Host	Very true. My nice—my nice Christmas at Urgent Care.
00:05:57	Theresa	Host	On a very special Christmas. Yes.
			<i>[Both laugh.]</i>
00:05:59	Theresa	Host	How are you, Biz?
00:06:00	Biz	Host	I'm... I'm alright. First, before I get into my little story that I wanna share—I want to just say... I love parents. You guys are all doing a good job. Sometimes... sometimes I really don't like parents. And sometimes we save the “good job” stuff for the end of the show, but like—today was—Stefan had taken the kids to school on their first

day back after Winter Break last week and I got to take them today, and I just got to see all the parents. People were catching up.

And I have—either I am more receptive to honesty from parents? *[Laughs.]* Or... or people are just getting better about talking about stuff? I don't know. Maybe I'm being a better listener. But like—I heard some, like... y'know. Listening to people I was hearing the ups and down. Regardless of how—they weren't saying it like I would say it, like everything is shit. *[Laughs.]*

[Through laughter]

But it was like, oh, this and a little drop about, y'know, neurodiversity, a little drop about, y'know, that break was hard. A little drop about issues with snacking at school. Y'know? Where I just was like—you guys are all just fucking working hard. And trying your best.

00:07:09 Theresa Host
00:07:09 Biz Host
00:07:14 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Yes!
And we're all very different. But like—I like it.
Biz: I like it!

00:07:16 Biz Host

Theresa: I like it, too. I like it so much.
I just was like—ahh! I'm gonna just try and really be listening more.
That said—I was on *Let's Make a Deal!*

[Both laugh wildly.]

Life dream fulfilled! And—not only did I get called up, I got to do the big deal of the day!

00:07:37 Theresa Host
00:07:38 Biz Host
00:07:41 Theresa Host
00:07:42 Biz Host

Oh my god.
And this was very exciting, but there's really two things I wanna talk about.
Okay.
One was the story of what led me to picking Curtain #3. I was going to a Starbucks—not my normal Starbucks, but one I'm familiar with—on the way to pick up my friend and go to the show.
Uh-huh.

00:07:57 Theresa Host
00:07:58 Biz Host

Uh, very early in the morning. I go, standing in line, there's this guy in front of me. Probably a little older than me? So like, maybe early 50s? And he turns to me and he says—I—I really like your glasses. And I say—oh, thanks! I mean, he wasn't being weird or anything. Every time I tell this story, people look at me like, ohhh! Yuck! I'm like—no, he was just a human talking to me. And I said thank you. And he said—they remind me of my mom, and I was like, oh! I hope in a good way. And he said yes.

And then, like, there's this pause and he goes, "Well, there's this picture... it's making me think of this picture of my mom in front of this care that she used to have—" and he names the car. "Holding me and my—y'know, my brothers next to her, and it just—yeah. It's really nice to think of her." And I was like—that's—that's great! I am—I am so glad! Um, and there's a little bit more interaction like that. He goes up to get his coffee. I go up to get my coffee, and when I order it, I'm ready to pay, and the woman says—uh, yours is already paid for.

00:09:00 Theresa Host

Oh, nice!

00:09:00	Biz	Host	And I say, oh! By—and she’s like, yes. He paid for your coffee! And I turn to him and I said, thank you so much. And he said—y’know, thank you for helping me think about, y’know, my mom today. And so I sit down and I think—
00:09:14	Theresa	Host	Wow.
00:09:15	Biz	Host	This is—this is important.
00:09:17	Theresa	Host	Yeah! Yeah!
00:09:19	Biz	Host	And I turn to him and I say—I gotta tell ya. I think this is—we’re having an important interaction. I’m going to be on <i>Let’s Make a Deal</i> today. Y’know. And if I get called up—right? Like, I’m going to be in the audience. And we start talking about the gameshow. And I say—if I get called up and I make it to the big deal, what curtain should I pick?
00:09:40	Theresa	Host	Oh my god.
00:09:42	Biz	Host	And he does this whole, like, thing. Some of it involves religion. That’s okay. But anyway, the resulting number is three. And I say, you know what? I will pick curtain three if I get called up today. I got called up. I picked curtain three. And I won the big deal—
			<i>[Through laughter]</i>
			—of the day! The <u>very</u> next day I went <u>back</u> to that Starbucks.
00:10:02	Theresa	Host	Okay. On purpose.
00:10:04	Biz	Host	On purpose.
00:10:04	Theresa	Host	In case he might be there.
00:10:05	Biz	Host	Nope! I was hoping I actually <u>wouldn’t</u> run into him?
00:10:07	Theresa	Host	Oh.
00:10:08	Biz	Host	But I got a gift card for him and put a healthy amount of thank-you money on it with a note that just said, thank you so much, blah, blah, blah. This is when the show’s gonna air. And he was like, a regular there according to the woman. And I gave it to her to pass on to him.
00:10:24	Theresa	Host	Whoa!
00:10:25	Biz	Host	I know!
00:10:25	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: Whoa!
			Biz: I know! I felt—
00:10:27	Biz	Host	Yeah.
00:10:27	Theresa	Host	And won!
00:10:28	Biz	Host	It was such a, like, an epic thing! Which leads me to the real prize—and the real—the real big deal was... the <u>entire</u> day. The <u>entire</u> time I was on that show, and getting there and prepping for it and picking the costumes. I felt... more like—not just a self, but <u>myself</u> ? Than I have... since—definitely since kids. And if not longer.
00:10:58	Theresa	Host	Wow.
00:10:59	Biz	Host	Like—I... it was <u>such</u> joy and it was <u>so</u> —I felt <u>so</u> ... <u>me</u> ? If that makes sense?
00:11:08	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: Completely! It makes complete sense!
			Biz: Like, I felt—
00:11:10	Biz	Host	<u>Me</u> . I didn’t think about anybody else. I wasn’t thinking—I just was like—I am here to do this.
00:11:15	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: You were in your element!
			Biz: This is such—
00:11:16	Biz	Host	I was in my element!

00:11:16 Theresa Host You knew what you were there to do.
00:11:18 Biz Host Yeah! And it felt... so... great! I was like, oh, I remember who I am and what my skillset is! *[Laughs.]*

00:11:25 Theresa Host Yes!
00:11:27 Biz Host It was—anyway. So that was the real deal, and it was really nice and I had a really nice time.

00:11:32 Theresa Host Um, that's amazing.
00:11:34 Biz Host Thank you.
00:11:34 Theresa Host Thank you for sharing that with us? Because may we all... like, learn from that—

[Biz laughs.]

—that that is—that that can happen. Like, can we all just be open to that.

00:11:45 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** You know what I mean?

Biz: I know. It was a very open day?
00:11:48 Theresa Host So good!
00:11:49 Biz Host And I just was like—I want more days like that, man. I want more of those days! Um—

00:11:56 Theresa Host Good job.
00:11:56 Biz Host Thank you. What I would like less days of, though, is... being blamed for all things wrong in a child's life.

00:12:06 Theresa Host Yes.
00:12:07 Biz Host Today, we are gonna talk about how it's ruined, and it's all your fault. *[Laughs.]*

00:12:14 Music Music Banjo strums; cheerful banjo music continues through dialogue.
00:12:15 Theresa Host Please—take a moment to remember: If you're friends of the hosts of *One Bad Mother*, you should assume that when we talk about other moms, we're talking about you.

00:12:22 Biz Host If you are married to the host of *One Bad Mother*, we definitely are talking about you.

00:12:26 Theresa Host Nothing we say constitutes professional parenting advice.
00:12:29 Biz Host Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.

00:12:33 Theresa Host Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

[Banjo music fades out.]

00:12:38 Biz Host Theresa.
00:12:39 Theresa Host Yes.
00:12:40 Biz Host You and I have discovered we are experiencing something similar in our houses.

00:12:45 Theresa Host Yes.
00:12:46 Biz Host From our six-year-olds.
00:12:48 Theresa Host Yes.
00:12:49 Biz Host I... will admit that I've—have been feeling very alone in it? And overwhelmed in it. And while I do not wish it upon anyone, it did make me feel better. *[Laughs.]* Knowing it was happening to you.

00:13:04 Theresa Host Yeah.
00:13:05 Biz Host So I thought what we would do is at the beginning, talk about what's happening. And then... really spend the—the time talking about how it makes us feel as people.

00:13:18 Theresa Host Yes.
00:13:19 Biz Host In the world. Not like a self. So I'll start.
00:13:22 Theresa Host Uh-huh. *[Laughs.]*

00:13:23 Biz Host And that is—Ellis—who I have never... not said he's a bit more.
 00:13:29 Theresa Host Yeah!
 00:13:30 Theresa Host From newborn days.
 00:13:30 Biz Host From newborn days. I—he is emotion-led. Y'know. Very empathetic, I think is the word I'm starting to like latch onto to help me understand him?
 00:13:41 Theresa Host He's very sensitive?
 00:13:43 Biz Host Very sensitive. Very—
 00:13:45 Theresa Host In all the ways that you can be sensitive I think? Like—
 00:13:48 Biz Host When he's big, he's big! When he's happy? He's happy! When he is sad, it is earth-shattering. I will give you a brief example and that is—a couple of days ago, Stefan and I were in our, like, den listening to records. Like, he was listening to records and I was reading. And the kids were in their rooms, and I thought I could hear Ellis screaming.

Not like, I'm in trouble screaming, but like I'm really mad screaming? And... Stefan, turn it down. Turn the music down. I think Ellis is screaming. And... we listen again. And we don't hear it and I call out—is everything okay? And I hear Katy Belle say, yeah! And I said, well I thought I heard Ellis screaming! And Ellis—I hear this voice—I wasn't screaming! And that's when I realized it was a power saw from next door?

[Theresa laughs.]

The guy was using, like, the full-on table power saw? Bzzz! And then the kids thought that was hilarious. That I thought that was Ellis. And then I realized I was a shell of a person. But currently, Ellis will be going through his day, doing many things that he likes. Mm-hm.

00:14:56 Theresa Host Charmed life. 'K? Then, something will happen like... it's later in the day than he thought it was. Or... he didn't—and he realizes he hasn't had a chance to do something else that he wanted. Another example is, a friend left and this was very... upsetting. Even though we all knew it was coming. And it goes from everything is okay to... like, level 11, uh, screaming. Upset. Can't control the emotions. I can't calm down. My day is ruined. It's ruined! Is it ruined? You've—we did all these—no! They were a waste of time! We—we played, y'know, board games! Like—all day! You wasted my time—

[Theresa sighs deeply.]

—doing that! It was a waste! My day is ruined! Everything is awful and it—and it's your fault for ruining it. And for messing it up. And then you can't help him calm down. I have yet—in the full six years *[though laughter]* of having Ellis in my life—found the—and I still try!—let's take some breath. Let's stomp it out—like, all the things you're supposed to do! They do not do. Because he is in such a state that he's like... I can't do those things. And then even if it dips, it then... goes back up again.

00:16:28 Theresa Host Right.
 00:16:29 Biz Host And... it... it feels new? Even though...
 00:16:35 Theresa Host I know.

00:16:36 Biz Host It's—I know it's just another version of it? But it feels new. And I hate it for a multitude of reasons that I will get into later. You—please, please make me feel better!

[Theresa laughs.]

00:16:53 Theresa Host By telling me what's happening in your house!
Yeah! So it's—it's very similar with my six-year-old, Oscar. And... I will just add that—feeling like it's new? I also am thinking—I was on the phone with my sister on the way here, and she's like—and he—he didn't used to do that, right? And I'm like—well, he's always kind of struggled with like emotional regulation. I mean—most little kids do. To some extent.

But this feels like some... new evolution of it. And I'm not sure—I can't put my finger on what's different about it. But it does feel like something we're going through right now in our house. Just in order to, like, focus our conversation a little bit—'cause we could go off in many directions on this—one of the things that has been really hard for me is *[though laughter]* the... like... this is your fault. You ruined this.

00:17:51 Biz Host Yes!

00:17:51 Theresa Host Thing.

00:17:52 Biz Host Yep.

00:17:52 Theresa Host Because—you know, I went through with Gracie—and we're continuing to work on emotional regulation with her? With all our kids! It's—it's a common part of parenting and childhood! And I think I have... gotten a lot better at staying calm in those moments? Because I know that they're doing work in those moments? And I know that those moments kind of need to happen and that—and I can help them by staying calm. That's something I have to offer.

And I—I have really gotten better at it! But there's also, like, a limit to it! And... what I've noticed is that sometimes... I can be calm for a while, but... somehow, the like... somehow, like, when Oscar tells me that it's my fault? Or accuses me of being the reason he's upset? Which he does a lot. Like—that is when I really start my—my skills at staying calm start to break down at that point.

[Biz laughs.]

Like, really. Because—and it's weird, too, 'cause it's like—it's almost like—I know he's—I know he's not, like, maniacal! But it's almost like he's doing it on—like, he's finding a way to drag me to that place with him. Because it's like... if I am not upset, I think in a way it kind of pisses him off! Because he's like... you're not seeing that this is like such a big deal! And that's when he starts to say, like... well, this wouldn't even be happening if you wouldn't have—you started this thing about blah, blah, blah! And it's like—it's all complete bullshit. It's—it's such utter bullshit.

00:19:31 Biz Host Yeah! And sorry that I played with you today.

00:19:34 Theresa Host Exactly! Or like, I'm sorry that I... whatever!

00:19:39 Biz Host Wore a sweatshirt!

00:19:40 Theresa Host It's beyond absurd. Or just like—he's already upset and then I try to help him and whatever I did was the wrong way to try to help him and that's the real reason he's upset. Was the way I tried to help

00:20:00 Biz Host him when he was upset. He doesn't—he's already forgotten about why he was upset. The real problem is me. And—like—
00:20:02 Theresa Host I can't imagine why this makes us feel bad! [Laughs.]
Well—exactly! And—so—it's—it's almost funny? It's funny in the sense that it's like... so absurd? But in the moment, if I try to laugh it off, obviously that makes everything worse. So I can't laugh it off. And, like, I—like, thinking about it while you were talking just now, I was realizing, like—part of why... it's so hard when he does this... is that... number one, like, we're trained to defend ourselves.

00:20:48 Biz Host So like, immediately I'm doing what I shouldn't be doing, which is going back through and saying, well that doesn't actually make sense. You asked me to—and I'm trying to argue his feelings with him, which doesn't work. But also, the core issue? Is—I'm already blaming myself for this whole thing.

00:20:50 Theresa Host Yeah. Yeah.

00:20:51 Biz Host From day one—

00:20:51 Theresa Host From day one!

00:20:57 Biz Host From the moment he was conceived, I am already blaming myself for all of the stuff in his life.

00:21:25 Theresa Host Yes. There we go. Here we have landed in it. So I think one of the big feelings is... I—do not like... being yelled at like that. And being told that... I've ruined something for this child when my entire life has been about supporting and caring for this child.

00:21:25 Biz Host Yeah.

00:21:25 Biz Host If, like, he had been doing chores all day, maybe I'm a monster. Right? But like—it's never all day! Right? Like, there are expectations we have that the kids need to do and they know them. They're not a huge surprise. It pushes a big button for me. And makes me feel like shit! And on top of that, I also—the other button that gets pushed is the—not being able to find a solution? Like, not for me. For him!

The idea that he struggles with... regulating these emotions or finding the... good thing or the—remembering, like—seeing the balance of it all? Which again, I understand—developmental—everybody at their own pace. We've been doing the show for years, guys. We know the work!

But for me—in a purely selfish, unscientific way—I am like, oh my god! Can you not? This is horrible that you can't figure this out! Right? As a person whose sole motivation is hard work and problem-solving. Okay? Ugh! So—that's... really hard. And what happens—what I have found has been happening with this is... it really is draining me? It's just... sucking all the good out of me. And then filling me back up with his rage!

00:22:59 Theresa Host Yes.

00:23:00 Biz Host And then I feel... so gross. And as I mentioned before—and I told Theresa and I think this ties in to what you said earlier—I go—once he gets down to bed, I... was in my room, like, with my puzzle. [Laughs.] Like, I need to put things where they belong and they won't argue with me. Puzzle pieces. Sitting there. I'm listening to, like, calming music in my room.

And I'm so just, like, on that verge of tears where they're just, like, here they come! Just a little! Now they go back. Here they come,

just a little! They're just, like, there. And I could hear this voice in my head, like, screaming? Saying—I am a good mother. I am a good mother. This is not your fault. This is not your fault! Because it puts into—like, I feel to blame that he can't figure this out.

00:23:52 Theresa Host
00:23:53 Biz Host
Yeah.
And I'm like—I did not create this. Y'know? 'Cause there's that—we've talked about that. Like, "I created the monster! I am— 'cause I didn't do x, y, and z, my kids are assholes!" Right? Like—
[Laughs.]

00:24:05 Crosstalk Crosstalk
Theresa: It's not—that's not what it is. Yeah.

00:24:08 Biz Host
00:24:11 Theresa Host
Biz: It ain't—that's not it! But—
That's the state that I'm left in!
Right! Yes! I feel—my version of that? Is... I—I just feel so depleted. I'm not even thinking words. But I am, like, walking around the house like a—almost like an old woman. Like, I'm like—I have, like—I move slower? After, like, two or three of those really intense outbursts? Like—I just feel broken! I feel really broken.

And like, the same thing used to happen a lot with Grace when she would have, like, a really hard time. And... sometimes I feel like I've, like, how people describe, like, oh, I've been hit by a truck. Like, obviously I don't feel like I've actually been hit by a truck? But I just feel that, like—my body hurts.

00:24:51 Biz Host
00:24:51 Theresa Host
Yeah!
My body hurts. And... I'm just—I just—I sort of have this mental feeling of, like, I give up now. Like, there's nothing I can really offer. Anymore. Like, I'm—I'm done.

00:25:05 Biz Host
I feel like you talking about feeling like an [though laughter] old lady? Actually is a great—'cause it—it—it feels like... you are physically depleted. You're emotionally depleted. You're energy deplete—right? Like, it's... it is just, like, well, then I guess it's time to pass on to the other side.

[Theresa laughs.]

00:25:25 Crosstalk Crosstalk
You know what I mean? Like—
Theresa: I'm, like, shuffling around the house. Like—yeah! Yes! My life force! [Laughs.]

00:25:34 Biz Host
00:25:38 Theresa Host
00:25:39 Biz Host
Biz: Yeah! The moving slower. Your life force literally feels like it's been ripped from your body!
You've gotta wait for it to fill back up! That's awful, guys.
It is!
It's awful! I hate it! This is one of those places as a parent that I fucking can't stand.

00:25:46 Theresa Host
00:25:47 Biz Host
Yeah.
Because... not only do you feel like shit during it, and you have to be, like, a reasonable person who, like... vaguely understands how children work.

00:25:59 Theresa Host
00:25:59 Biz Host
Yeah.
Right? And you gotta try and remember those two things at the same time, which is really hard, and the struggle to not lose your shit is also depleting. And that said—I also hate it when I lose my shit on it.

00:26:14 Theresa Host Yeah. I'm with you. I think—I mean, I think—there's work that I'm able to do with Oscar on this stuff when he's calm.

00:26:23 Biz Host Yeah!

00:26:24 Theresa Host Like, at other times. And like—I think part of why this is so hard is that there are so many times in the day where he's so... thoughtful! And caring. And like—

[Biz laughs.]

"I'm so sorry, Mom, I don't wanna be like that!" Y'know? Like—and so, like... and—and like—I really believe him! Like, it's very sincere. And... and then—like, some—seemingly with no rhyme or reason, something that would never have been okay when he was upset is completely fine and a good suggestion! When he's feeling calm. But it—what's hard about that is it— *[Laughs.]* I know that, like, we're the parents? And we're just supposed to be strong and be, like, happy with them that they're having those, like, moments as well?

[Biz laughs.]

But it feels—it just feels very unfair? To feel... that... I'm always carrying this feeling... that something's about to break.

00:27:20 Biz Host Yeah!

00:27:21 Theresa Host And he doesn't have to do that! Like, I—and I—I understand that... he has different—his workload is different than mine. Like, his things that he's working on are also really hard. For him. But like... it's just... it just feels...

00:27:37 Biz Host Unfair?

00:27:38 Theresa Host It feels really unfair sometimes!

00:27:40 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** And like, I feel like—

Biz: I agree!

00:27:42 Theresa Host —when it comes to... getting help from professionals—which we do, in our family, like we have—I've joked on this show about how many *[though laughter]* therapists we have supporting our family.

[Biz laughs.]

And like, I'm really grateful! Because we have really learned a lot from our therapists and we've... we have come a long way? But like, one problem that I have, I think, is that... y'know, when I'm talking to my therapist about how hard it is, you know, she's very—very supportive of how I feel and what I'm going through, but she doesn't know a lot about how to help my kids.

Whereas when I'm talking to my kids' therapist, they sometimes have a lot of really great ideas about how to support my kids? But it feels very dismissive of me. And like, what I'm going through. And like, how... how hard that it on me and, like... so...

00:28:32 Biz Host Yes.

00:28:33 Theresa Host I'm doing a lot of that integration myself? Like, between working with those different people? And sometimes it's... sometimes it's just... too hard! Sometimes it's just not enough. Like—

00:28:45 Biz Host It's really hard when you're already carrying—like you said—the emotional weight of—when's it gonna happen? Like, Ellis is a

fucking joy. I mean, he is just like a little bit of rainbow just shoots out of his face!

00:28:59 Theresa Host You guys heard him on the show. *[Laughs.]*

00:29:01 Biz Host Yeah! I was like—I was like—I will say it took me back to that day of, like... no one believes my house is haunted. Because they're seeing my house look so nice!

00:29:10 Theresa Host I know.

00:29:11 Biz Host And then... three hours later, the walls are bleeding! But that's a reflection of, like—the—and I'm trying to do the celebrating those moments versus the other. But you are—it's the walking on eggshells. It's the anticipation, which is also hard work to carry! Yeah. I just—I just feel like... there's just so much... work. It just reminds me that, like... this is unbelievably hard. And... like... I feel... physically and emotionally just, like, fucked up.

[Theresa laughs.]

00:29:49 Theresa Host Yes!

00:29:50 Biz Host And—and yet—I'm gonna keep doing it. And like—

00:29:56 Theresa Host You're gonna keep doing it.

00:29:57 Biz Host I'm gonna keep doing it, and you're gonna keep doing it. And I just... really—gonna try real hard to be nice to fucking everybody. 'Cause everybody's got some version of this in their house! There is a hard thing happening—different degrees!—different degrees. But like... holy shit.

I am tired of feeling—like, from a purely selfish *One Bad Mother* standpoint, I'm tired of feeling like shit. I don't like getting yelled at. If anybody else yelled at me like that, I would be done with them. *[Laughs.]* They would not be in my circle. Anymore. I am tired of feeling that drained? And I wish my kid could figure it all out instantaneously.

[Theresa laughs.]

00:30:48 Theresa Host Yes, please!

00:30:49 Biz Host Yes, please! I'll have what she's having!

00:30:52 Music Music "Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.

[Music fades out.]

00:31:11 Biz Promo **Music:** Laid-back acoustic guitar plays in the background.

00:31:14 Theresa Promo *One Bad Mother* is brought to you in part by ThirdLove. ThirdLove uses measurements of millions of people to design bras in over 80 sizes with all-day comfort and support. I have to say—I really enjoy my ThirdLove bra. Did you know that breast shape matters when you find a good fit?

00:31:31 Biz Promo What?! *[Laughs.]*

00:31:31 Theresa Promo In about 60 seconds, ThirdLove's fit finder quiz helps you identify your breast size and shape and finds styles that fit your body.

00:31:39 Biz Promo Their bras feature straps designed not to slip! *[Laughs.]* Tagless labels—yesss! And lightweight memory foam cups. Every customer has 60 days to wear it, wash it, and put it to the test, and if you don't love it? Return it and ThirdLove will wash it and donate it to a woman in need. Guys, I'm just gonna say—half-sizes.

00:32:02 Theresa Promo ThirdLove knows there's a perfect bra for everyone. So right now they're offering our listeners 15% off your first order. Go to

ThirdLove.com/mother now to find your perfect-fitting bra and get 15% off your first purchase. That's ThirdLove.com/mother for 15% off today.

00:32:28 Theresa Clip *[Music ends.]*
Hey, you know what it's time for! This week's genius and fails! This is the part of the show where we share our genius moment of the week, as well as our failures, and feel better about ourselves by hearing yours. You can share some of your own by calling 206-350-9485. That's 206-350-9485.

00:32:48 Clip Clip Genius fail time, Theresa. Genius me!
00:32:52 Clip Clip *[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]*

00:33:05 Theresa Host **Biz:** Wow! Oh my God! Oh my God! I saw what you did! Oh my God! I'm paying attention! Wow! You, mom, are a genius. Oh my God, that's fucking genius!
Okay. So Jesse and I have been plotting to make our kids—

[Biz laughs.]
—do sports.

[Biz laughs.]
And um—and I mean that in, like, the kindest, gentlest way possible. But, um, Gracie has been taking this, like, girls softball clinic and it's like really small and sometimes she's the only one there and so she gets a lot of personalized attention and it's like... she's been doing really great with it. And then we figured out that there is a little kids' soccer class that meets at the same time at the same park!

00:33:39 Biz Host What?!

00:33:40 Theresa Host And so we're like—let's do—let's just do it! And so we agreed we were gonna do it. And it's like through the Parks & Rec, so it's like very inexpensive and y'know, whatever. So we're like—

00:33:50 Biz Host Freaking love Parks & Rec!

00:33:52 Theresa Host Yeah, it's the best! And so we—we were gonna do it, and then we kind of forgot about it 'cause we got busy over winter break. And then yesterday—Monday—Jesse texted me like, what are their birthdates? I'm at the park getting them registered for the thing.

[Biz gasps.]
And I was like—okay. Great! But then I found—like, he told me then that the first one was that night. And you know my kids. They need to prepare. They can't just... come home from their day and find out we're going at 5:00 to the park for your first class! And even Grace, who had done this clinic before, it's been weeks 'cause it was like the last session. And so... I— *[Laughs.]* I took it upon myself to make this happen. 'Cause I didn't want them to miss the first class. I wanted to get started on the right foot. And basically I knew Curtis would be happy to go.

[Biz laughs.]

'Cause that's him. And he's just been watching—he just wants to. So I knew he'd be okay. But I had to, like, explain it to Oscar in a way that made him wanna go? But I did using mom magic? And then Grace came home from her first day back at school—

[Biz whoops.]

—from winter break, and I started telling her right away when she got home, like, we've got about an hour and then we're going back out for—for softball! And she's like—what? I didn't have any warning on—'cause she knows she gets a warning? So she's like, I didn't have any warning on this. This is the first time I'm hearing about this. I'm not doing that. There's no way I'm doing that.

[Biz laughs.]

00:35:17	Theresa	Host	And I just remembered that I had been thinking I would get pizza for them that night anyway? So I said, like, well after we go—well, yeah, we are gonna go, actually. 'Cause I'm sorry we didn't realize tonight was the first night. We are gonna go. But afterwards we're gonna get pizza! And like, it just shifted her gears to where—she never said, like, okay, fine, I'll go? But she just <u>did</u> it? Like, she just got ready and went? Pizza, guys. Pizza.
00:35:42	Biz	Host	That... is so great.
00:35:44	Theresa	Host	Thank you.
00:35:44	Biz	Host	Good job! That's a lot of fucking work.
00:35:46	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: It was. Yeah.
00:35:48	Theresa	Host	Biz: Good job. Good job! Thank you!
00:35:50	Biz	Host	<i>[Biz laughs.]</i> This episode is coming out on my birthday week!
00:35:54	Theresa	Host	Yayyy! Happy birthday!
00:35:56	Biz	Host	And the big difference between when we started this show—
00:35:59	Theresa	Host	Uh-huh.
00:35:59	Biz	Host	And the last two years at least that I can think of—I... just wanna pat myself on the back for getting really good about asking for what I want! I still have not figured out about asking for plans or—I still really wanna have, like, a Kenny Rogers party where everybody has to come dressed up as Kenny Rogers?
00:36:16	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: That sounds good.
00:36:18	Biz	Host	Biz: And we listen to Kenny Rogers—
00:36:20	Theresa	Host	—and we watch <i>The Gambler</i> in the backyard?
00:36:21	Biz	Host	Yeah.
00:36:36	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	But—I also am like, eh-h-h, maybe we'll do it in the summer. But in terms of gifts that I <u>need</u> , or would <u>like</u> —I have been <u>really</u> doing a great job! Last year, I got everything I wanted!
00:36:41	Biz	Host	Theresa: Because you <u>knew</u> what you wanted and then you went to ask for it. That's <u>so</u> good.
00:36:41	Biz	Host	Biz: And I loved it 'cause I knew what I wanted and I asked! And then I asked again!
00:36:46	Theresa	Host	Yeah! Even though there was some, like, hinting, oh, all your shopping's already done! Uh-uh!
00:36:46	Theresa	Host	No.

00:36:47 Biz Host Here's my list!

00:36:47 Theresa Host I haven't asked yet! Yeah.

00:36:48 Biz Host I haven't asked!

00:36:49 Theresa Host Yeah.

00:36:50 Biz Host For anything.

00:36:50 Theresa Host Very nice.

00:36:51 Biz Host And so I just am like—I can do that.

00:36:53 Theresa Host Good job!

00:36:54 Biz Host Thank you!

00:36:54 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** So good!

00:36:58 Caller Caller **Biz:** *[Singing]* With age comes wisdom! *[Laughs.]*
[Answering machine beeps.]

Hi, *One Bad Mother!* I'm calling with a genius! I am currently a stay-at-home mom with a 11-month-old baby. Um, I've been off with her since she was born and I have a four-and-a-half-year old who goes to school. And I was feeling kind of resentful that I was the only one home and I was cleaning the kitchen constantly. Um, and always cleaning up after kids and it felt like I was the only one who was ever standing in that kitchen.

[Biz laughs.]

So I decided that—for my own mental health—I would stop cleaning the kitchen during the day. So now during the day, the dishes pile up. The dishwasher doesn't get touched. I don't rinse things. I don't clean things. I just put them in the kitchen. And then when my husband gets home from work? I clean up the kitchen before I prep dinner because it's really annoying to cook in a messy kitchen. But I don't do it all day long. And the resentment about being in the kitchen a lot has definitely lessened. And I'm actively not looking at my kitchen all day. And it feels really, really good. That's my genius. I stopped cleaning during the day.

[Biz laughs.]

Thanks, guys. Take care.

00:38:09 Biz Host It's a really good genius!

00:38:10 Theresa Host Yeah! That's really good!

00:38:11 Biz Host I suffer from the constant cleaning.

00:38:14 Theresa Host Yeah.

00:38:14 Biz Host Just for it to get trashed again. I... totally... this like reminds me of, like, one of my favorite genius calls from the latest spectacular. The woman who chose to sit in a different spot at dinner.

00:38:27 Theresa Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah.

00:38:28 Biz Host I think this is a good "Let's try this!"

00:38:30 Theresa Host Yeah!

00:38:31 Biz Host I will admit—I was thinking you were gonna say—"And then when my husband comes home—"

00:38:34 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** "—he cleans all that shit up and then I cook dinner." We can work towards it. It's okay. It's okay.

Theresa: Yeah. He cleans the kitchen. Yeah. Yeah. That's okay. Yeah.

00:38:41 Biz Host We can try something different another day! *[Laughs.]*

00:38:42 Theresa Host Maybe—but maybe she also wants a break from the kids at that point.

00:38:44 Biz Host Yes! By that time.

00:38:45 Theresa Host And so it's like a good—you know what I mean?

00:38:47 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** That would be me!

00:38:50 Theresa Host **Theresa:** Like, turn on some music and clean the kitchen—
—while you make dinner. While husband is like hanging out with the kids. I could see that—

00:38:54 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** —being even better.

00:38:56 Biz Host **Biz:** Actually—
—that would be me. So you're doing an amazing job!

00:38:59 Theresa Host Yeah! You're amazing.

00:38:59 Biz Host Oh, I love it!

00:39:00 Theresa Host I love it, too.

00:39:02 Biz Host Failures!

00:39:03 Biz Host *[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]*

Theresa: *[In a voice akin to the Wicked Witch of the West]* Fail. Fail. FAIL!

[Timpani with foot pedal engaged for humorous effect.]

00:39:09 Biz Host **Biz:** *[Calmly]* You suck!
Fail me, Theresa.

00:39:10 Theresa Host I don't know why I thought it would be a good idea to have... Curtis, my almost-three-year-old, walk one of my dogs. Um—

[Biz laughs.]

I—obviously, I supervised. But I was like, I think—I think he can do this because Cocoa is pretty old now and she can't go that far? So I was like—we're just gonna do, like, a short little walk and then we'll go back! And he was actually doing so incredibly well. I was amazed at how well he was doing. And he had the leash all by himself and they're walking along. And then what I forgot is that Cocoa always gets really excited when it's time to turn back and go home?

[Biz laughs.]

00:39:48 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** *[Through laughter]* Thank God, I'm going home!

00:39:50 Theresa Host **Theresa:** I just completely forgot!
And as soon as she heard me say, like, "Okay!", she just turned around and just... ran full-speed towards home? And it—of course—Curtis just face-planted. Like, didn't occur to him to let go of the leash. So he just slammed *[though laughter]* his whole body on the ground and he'd been doing so good and then now he was crying and his face was covered in dirt.

00:40:12 Biz Host Ohhh!

00:40:13 Theresa Host And that—and I was also holding my camera.

[Biz laughs.]

Like, as that happened because it—

00:40:18 Biz Host Smile! *[Laughs.]*
00:40:18 Theresa Host —I was like, thinking I was doing such a good, cute thing.

[Biz laughs.]

00:40:23 Biz Host Yeah.
I—gotta tell ya. First, you're doing an awful job. But as you started, I was like... I really wish that—I know she's not gonna say this. But I really hope she says, "I figured Curtis was old enough to walk the dog, so I let them go."

00:40:36 Theresa Host Yeah. *[Laughs.]* And that—and they never came back!
00:40:40 Biz Host And they never came back! It was great.
00:40:42 Biz Host So—uh, my mother's, uh, birthday is two days before Christmas.
00:40:47 Theresa Host Uh-huh.
00:40:48 Biz Host Hasn't changed!
00:40:49 Theresa Host Uh-huh...?
00:40:51 Biz Host And I—and we even do, like, an advent calendar thing at home? Like... not just the chocolates, but like, we're counting down. So I know it's two days before. Uh, we called her? We did all the songs. And happy—in English and in Swedish. And whoopity woo—call us back. 'Cause it's the mess—the answering machine. And then... the next day... or maybe even two days later—I was like... huh. It's Christmas Eve! That's two days after I called her—yeah! Okay! I called her on the wrong day.

00:41:28 Theresa Host Wow.
00:41:30 Biz Host Yeah. I... did not, uh, feel great about that! I mean, there was nothing to do.

00:41:35 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Can't fix that! It's done!

00:41:38 Biz Host **Theresa:** No. it's already done. Yeah.
00:41:40 Theresa Host But like... wow.
00:41:41 Crosstalk Host Yeah. That sucks.
Crosstalk **Theresa:** I'm sorry. Yeah.

00:41:43 Biz Host **Biz:** It did! Eh, it did—
00:41:44 Theresa Host It did really suck.
00:41:46 Biz Host Probably confused her, too! *[Laughs.]*
00:41:50 Theresa Host I know! I know. I know. Probably. *[Laughs.]* Ho hooo!
00:41:52 Biz Host Like, is today my birthday?
I would've been that way. I would've been like, thanks! *[Laughs.]*
Happy birthday to me. *[Laughs.]*

00:41:56 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hello! This is a fail. We make, uh, smoothies in our house that have, like, broccoli and carrots and banana and lots of peanut butter. And spinach. And vanilla. And... milk. And cocoa powder? And it—maybe it sounds more vegetable-y than it is. I don't know. It's great 'cause it tastes pretty good and it has a shitton of vegetables in it! And that's not really the point of the story.

The point of the story is—we use baby carrots, and three times now, I have accidentally put the bag of baby carrots back in the freezer instead of the fridge. Which means that I've taken three bags of baby carrots—like, full!—that we would otherwise be able to snack on, and I have instead frozen them. And... it's not—it's not

good. I mean, it still works for smoothies but then we don't have carrots to eat.

[Biz laughs.]

Uh, which is actually fine? 'Cause I hate eating raw carrots?

[Laughs.]

[Biz laughs.]

But my husband and my children really like it. *[Laughs.]* Yeah. Anyway. Uh—God bless this hotline. Okay. I love you. Bye.

00:43:02	Biz	Host	Yes!
00:43:02	Theresa	Host	Yeah.
00:43:03	Biz	Host	God bless this hotline.
00:43:05	Theresa	Host	Putting stuff—
00:43:05	Biz	Host	Biz and Theresa: —in the wrong place.
00:43:08	Theresa	Host	Just a constant struggle.
00:43:09	Biz	Host	It is!
00:43:10	Theresa	Host	For all of us. Isn't it?
00:43:11	Biz	Host	I—I <u>still</u> today, will be going over to pour water in the coffee machine and I hover over the grinder.
00:43:20	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: You think about it. Yep.
00:43:23	Biz	Host	Biz: I hover over the grinder! And I think—look at me! I'm starting to do the pour! I'm tilting! I need to go here. Yeah! Things that—there is a sausage missing in our house.
00:43:35	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: Ooooh!
00:43:37	Biz	Host	Biz: Stefan says— —he brought—we were gonna do, like, smorgasbord? Y'know, like, cheese and sausage thing? Which is what we do on Christmas just to chill out. And he had brought all the stuff. And then... <i>[Laughs.]</i> Like—that night he's like—I coulda sworn—I <u>know</u> I bought a sausage! I don't—I don't see where the sausage is. And I was like, we are gonna find that sausage one day.
00:44:04	Theresa	Host	<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i> And it's gonna be... One day the sausage will come to us.
00:44:06	Biz	Host	It will. It will find you.
00:44:19	Theresa	Host	It will find us. Well—despite all the validating of the good job you're doing making those healthy fucking smoothies, you're doing a <u>horrible</u> job just functioning as a human in the world.
00:44:19	Biz	Host	Yeah! Ugh. Whoa. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:44:23	Music	Music	<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i> You're doing awful. "Mom Song" by Adira Amram. Mellow piano music with lyrics.

*You are the greatest mom I've ever known
I love you, I love you
When I have a problem, I call you on the phone*

I love you, I love you

[Music fades out.]

00:44:51 Biz Host Hey, Theresa! Let's call someone today!

Theresa! Today we are calling John Kenney, who is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the humorous poetry collections, *Love Poems for Married People* and *Love Poems for People with Children*, and the novels *Talk to Me* and *Truth in Advertising*, which won the Thurber Prize for American Humor. He has worked for many years as a copywriter and he has also been a contributor to the *New Yorker* magazine since 1999. He lives in Brooklyn, New York—welcome, John!

00:45:32 John Kenney Guest Thank you so much for having me.

00:45:34 Biz Host Thank you so much for joining us! Before we get in to, uh, the very classic art form of poetry, I would like to ask you what we ask all our guests, which is—who lives in your house?

00:45:45 John Guest Who lives in my house? Um, I live there. Um, when I'm allowed to. Um—

[Biz laughs.]

—I live with my, um, amazing wife, Lissa. And our two children, uh, Lulu, who turns 11 next week, and wants an iPhone desperately—

[Biz laughs.]

—and her little brother, who's seven, Hewitt. Who is a Yankees fan despite the fact that his father is from Boston and our 11-year-old—I don't know what breed she is—dog, Muffin.

[Biz laughs.]

00:46:16 Biz Host And I did not—I did not name her. Uh—
Wow. Uh, 11 and 7. That is one year off from both of my children. Uh, we should really just one day have a forum for people with 10- and 11-year-olds to talk about iPhones. But that's not why we're here today! We are here to talk about *[though laughter]* your poetry books, *Love Poems for Married People* and *Love Poems for People With Children*. These are a delight. They are a delight. And I—I just wanna start with a poem, so that our listeners can understand why we think it's so delightful. Let's start with... "Orgy"! I believe that came out of... the *Love Poems for Married People*? Is that correct?

00:46:59 John Guest That's good.

00:47:01 Biz Host Okay. Would you please share us?

00:47:03 John Guest "Orgy."

Autumn, overcast and cool. Woodsmoke-scented air. Leaves in the yard.

We decided to go out back, among the tall hedgerows to rake and bag the leaves.

You said, in a very sexy voice, "We're out of garbage bags."
And then shrugging, I might have seen your breasts move—

[Biz laughs.]

—had they not been covered under your fleece sweatshirt, work shirt, and t-shirt.

“Well, I’m going in now!” You said.

Later, we heated up Dinty Moore beef stew.

[Biz laughs.]

And then you went to bed. I watched half of a *Jason Bourne* movie.

[Biz laughs.]

Did I say “orgy”? Sorry. My mind wandered. I meant “yard work.”

[Biz laughs.]

00:47:52 Biz Host I... I—I love this so very much. Because... it is steeped in honesty. I—I—I don’t know if it was the description of the sweater? The clothing attire? Or the... watching half a *Jason Bourne* movie? But I understand all of that.

[Theresa laughs.]

00:48:14 John Guest Yeah, I mean, for six months in the winter we live in Brooklyn, New York. You know—uh—the number of layers on my wife? I don’t see her naked in—for—I would say five months.

[Biz laughs.]

00:48:27 Biz Host Yeah. It’s—Theresa, that was one of your favorites.

00:48:30 Theresa Host Yeah! I just—the amount of acceptance? In this poem? I really appreciate. Like, it just—it just is! It just is what it is.

[All laugh.]

00:48:41 Biz Host I would like to now, uh, share—with you guys—I—Stefan and I—uh, my husband Stefan—he and I read them all over the holiday break while eating fondue.

[Theresa laughs.]

Which seemed the most appropriate way to read anything titled *Love Poems*. And we—we took turns swapping the books and—and reading them to each other. And then when my daughter would in come in—because we were like, uh, you’re eating early. It’s fondue night for your parents. *[Laughs.]* It’s for us! Fondue.

She’d come in and be like, what are you reading? And we’re like, nothing! For you! Go to your room! And be sullen! And then we would sit and eat fondue and read the pieces, and I would like for—I have another request for a poem that really tickled us while we were having our fondue in our very, I guess, romantic evening? And that would be... one about... the phone sex?

00:49:47 John Guest Yeah, absolutely. Uh—and—yeah, I just—I don’t write just about sex. So—

00:49:52 Biz Host No, it’s okay. We have another one that we will request later. But—*[Laughs.]*

00:49:56 John Guest So, this is called, “Sexting Isn’t This, Apparently.”

[Biz laughs.]

I did not know, during the monthly wrote calisthenics of our sex, that you would be upset if I sent a quick text message to my college roommate, Marie. Who texted back, and asked if I had watched *Ozark*. I texted, yes. It's amazing! I love Jason Bateman. And I guess I was surprised—and from the look on your face, you were certainly surprised—that I was sexting. Except you said, that's not sexting.

[Biz laughs.]

So I texted Marie to ask her, and she texted back: LOL, are you really having sex right now?

[Biz and Theresa laugh.]

I said I was. But not anymore. That you had stormed out of the room and tripped and fell in the hall. And Marie said, that's a little funny. I sent a smile emoji, because it was a little funny.

00:51:02 Biz Host
00:51:05 John Guest
00:51:08 Biz Host

I... also really like this. And I—
Not that any of these are autobiographical.
No, I appreciate that! But let's actually—let's talk a little bit about what inspires a poem, like, where do you start with your—with your poems? And obviously we do not assume they are all autobiographical. However, there's a feeling of realness to all of your poems. *[Laughs.]*

00:51:25 John Guest

Um... thank you, I think. Um—

[Biz and Theresa chuckle.]

You know—they start—the—the heavy lifting, I think, is that—the title.

00:51:33 Biz Host
00:51:34 John Guest

Mm.
It's almost like a kind of a headline. And... you know, I—I can't give enough credit to my wife. Uh, we've been—I mean, I'm the luckiest man in America. We've been married for 15 years, and she's a wonderful writer and a great editor in that she's incredibly honest. Y'know? She—she will both line-edit something, but also sort of macro-edit and say, look, it's just—it doesn't work.

But she'll also come up with great ideas, uh, for things. So... poetry! And again, I—I don't think what I do is poetry. Poetry is so hard because it's this incredible distillation, right? It has to be such a clear little diamond of a truth, and there's no room for excess. So, y'know, so much of it lies, I think, in—in the title.

00:52:24 Biz Host

Well, that's interesting that you say that about your wife. I—there—two things. One, there are definitely some poems that are written from the perspective of—I could—I assume—the wife! Like, where it's—you come up behind me, you put your hands on my shoulders, you—right? Like, there's—

00:52:43 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John: Absolutely, yeah! And—and I made a point—

00:52:47 John Guest

Biz: And I—yeah! And I love those!
Um, y'know, the guy is always the—the boob in these. And the women is—the woman is always the hero in these. That's how it is in my marriage, anyway! So um—

00:52:57 Biz Host Uh, that's very good! But let's talk about kids. Let's talk about the *Love Poems for People with Children*. And this is one that doesn't talk about sex. Could you share with us—I think—is it “Family Vacations”?

00:53:11 John Guest “Family Vacation.”

00:53:12 Biz Host Yes.

00:53:13 John Guest “Family Vacation.”

This is relaxing, I think to myself—

[Biz laughs.]

—on the first day of our vacation, as I hide in the men's room of a Roy Rogers at a rest stop, just off bumper-to-bumper I-95. While the kids continue fighting with tennis rackets in the backseat, and only five more hours to go. I don't want to leave this place, I whisper aloud. Neither do I, says the man in the next stall.

[Biz laughs.]

00:53:50 Biz Host I love this one so very much! It's so—

00:53:52 John Guest My—we—we just—we just got back from, y'know, through about—it was a long Christmas break! And uh... y'know, we stayed local and did lots of daytrips with the kids and on the day—*[laughs]*—the kids went back to school, my wife texted me at about 9:30 from her office, saying—I'm so happy today I could cry. *[Laughs.]*

[Biz and Theresa laugh appreciatively.]

00:54:18 Biz Host It's also a good working title for a poem! Uh—

00:54:21 John Guest Yeah.

00:54:22 Biz Host Do you have a favorite that—that you would like to share?

00:54:26 John Guest There's—there's one I'm fond of. That I will be happy to read!

00:54:30 Biz Host Oh, thank you!

00:54:32 John Guest Uh, it—this is called “Why Are You in the Shower With Me?”

[Biz laughs.]

Did the bathtub shrink? I ask, because here we are—naked, showering together, like we once did all the time. Remember? At the beginning? We would stand and talk, seals slipping by one another, a playful ease letting the other into the stream. Now? I'm not sure what you're doing in here.

[Biz laughs.]

I'm—I'm freezing. There's shampoo stinging my eyes. You just stepped on my foot. For the love of Christ, who flushed the toilet? Because I'm being scalded alive. Get out, now! It was a nice idea, though, honey. Could you close the door?

00:55:21 Biz Host *[Laughs.]* Oh! That is a very good one.

00:55:25 Theresa Host It really is.

00:55:26 Biz Host Yeah!

00:55:26 John Guest If—if I tried to get into the shower with my wife... she would beat me senseless with a bar of soap.

00:55:34 Biz Host Yeah, I—there are definitely moments where I think back to the beginning stages of the relationship with my husband. And I—there was!

00:55:44	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: Shower, bathtime, lotta fun—lotta fun stuff!
			Theresa: Yeah! Shower, that was nice! Yeah!
00:55:49	Biz	Host	John: Oh! There was—
00:55:49	John	Guest	And I, too— There was lots of stuff.
00:55:50	Biz	Host	<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i> Yeah! And I remember thinking—I—it—it is that exact thing. How could there <u>possibly</u> be room anymore? In this shower? I—it feels <u>impossible</u> , and ugh! I don't want to be touched! There's so much touching!
			<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i>
00:56:09	John	Guest	There wouldn't be enough room in here! A lot of touching. There's a lot of—there's just—there's just—I don't—
00:56:14	Biz	Host	I don't—how is that a thing? Uh—
00:56:16	John	Guest	I think we crave privacy now.
			<i>[Biz and Theresa agree; laugh.]</i>
			I have a friend who's a comic, and he has an eight-year-old and twin three-year-olds—
			<i>[Biz gasps.]</i>
			—and he has to go on the road a lot, and his wife said to him—listen. You better be having sex in that hotel room because if you're sleeping through the night, I'll kill you.
00:56:36	Biz	Host	<i>[Biz and Theresa laugh.]</i> <i>[Through laughter]</i> That is—that is—uh, yeah! I'm familiar with that feeling! Well, let's wrap up on—what are you—what are you working on now?
00:56:44	John	Guest	Well, there is talk of a, uh, a new book called, uh, <i>Love Poems for Anxious People</i> .
00:56:54	Biz	Host	<i>[Biz laughs.]</i> Yeah? That's—
00:56:55	John	Guest	But I'm too stressed to write it.
00:56:57	Biz	Host	Yeah. Well that is wonderful. John, I cannot say thank you enough for these two love poem books. I—I will have to say, as a parent, I find reading to not be the thing that was—that is pleasurable as it once was. <i>[Laughs.]</i> And so—what I love about these collections is that I can enjoy them a page at a time. Any time!
			And yet they are each filled with such... honesty that it is just, like, little tiny delights that I get to unwrap whenever. Whether I'm having fondue or not. We're gonna link everybody up to where they can get a copy of it, as well as to your other works. Thank you <u>so</u> much for joining us!
00:57:48	John	Guest	Thank you so much for having me. I really appreciate it.
00:57:50	Biz	Host	Absolutely. I hope you have a good new year.

00:57:53 00:57:57	John Music	Guest Music	<p>You as well. “Telephone,” by “Awesome.” Down-tempo guitar and falsetto singing.</p> <p><i>Brainwaves send a message: Pick up the phone (When you, I call) Arm is moving now, no longer stone (When you, I call) Hand reaches out with a will of its own (When you, I call)</i></p>
00:58:21	Promo	Clip	<p><i>[Music fades out.]</i> Music: Upbeat, cheerful music with clapping in the background.</p> <p>Jesse Thorn: Hey, gang! Jesse here, the founder of Maximum Fun, and with me is Stacey Molski, who is—among other things—the lady who responds to all of your Tweets.</p> <p>Stacey Molski: Hi everyone! I also send you newsletters.</p> <p>Jesse: Uh, so anyway. Something really awesome. You! MaxFun listeners have given us the chance to do something <u>really</u> cool on behalf of our entire community, and we wanted to tell you about it.</p> <p>Stacey: Last summer, following the MaxFun drive, we put <u>all</u> of the enamel pins on sale to \$10 and up members, with proceeds going to the National CASA/GAL Association for Children.</p> <p>Jesse: Your generous support and enthusiasm raised over a <u>hundred</u> thousand dollars. Our bookkeeper, Steph, would be quick to tell me the exact total is \$109,025, to be exact.</p> <p>Stacey: Your money will go toward pairing kids who've experienced abuse or neglect with court-appointed advocates or guardian ad litem volunteers.</p> <p>Jesse: In other words, kids in tough spots will have somebody in their corner. Knowledgeable grown-ups who are on their team through court dates and life upheavals and confusing situations, whatever.</p> <p>Stacey: The money we raised together is going to help a <u>lot</u> of kids.</p> <p>Jesse: Whether you bought pins or not, you can help us build on that \$109,000 foundation. Make a donation to support National CASA/GAL, and help some of our nation's most vulnerable children, at MaximumFun.org/casa. That's MaximumFun.org/casa.</p> <p>Stacey: And seriously, thank you. Our community rules.</p>
01:00:00	Promo	Clip	<p><i>[Music fades out.]</i> <i>[Music.]</i></p> <p>Travis McElroy: I'm Travis McElroy.</p> <p>Courtney Enlow: I'm Courtney Enlow.</p>

Brent Black: I'm Brent Black, and we're the hosts of *Trends Like These*.

Courtney: *Trends Like These* is an Internet news show where we take the stories trending on social media, and go beyond the headlines!

Travis: We'll give you the actual facts of the story, and not just the knee-jerk reactions.

Brent: Plus we end every episode with a ray of hope that we call The Wi-Five of the Week.

Travis: So join us every Friday on Maximum Fun.

Courtney: Or wherever you get your podcasts!

Brent: *Trends Like These*. Real life friends talking Internet trends.

[Music ends.]

01:00:31	Biz	Host	Do you think that poetry is like those songs that like Daniel Tiger's mother always—y'know, like, we're always like, ah, if there was a way—maybe if I sing it it'll feel better?
01:00:43	Theresa	Host	Mm-hm.
01:00:43	Biz	Host	Like, maybe there's something about seeing it in poetry? That makes you go, oh.
01:00:49	Theresa	Host	Like—my life is actually beautiful!
01:00:50	Biz	Host	It's beautiful.

[Theresa laughs.]

It's beautiful. *[Laughs.]* I love these poems, guys. *Love Poems for Married People* and *Love Poems for People with Children*. I cannot recommend it enough. What I also will always recommend, is listening to a mom have a breakdown.

01:01:12	Caller	Caller
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[Answering machine beeps.]

Okay. So this is a rant. I'm standing in the stupid Target line—

[Biz laughs.]

Um, and—which, to start off with, there's like more than enough people in this Target 'cause it's Christmastime and I'm shopping. And all I want is a dustpan. So I go to Target and I get in this stupid line and everyone in front of me is buying everything and in the course of, like, our shopping, of course my, like, 21-month-old has picked up a stupid \$5 toy that I'm not gonna buy for him but I'm gonna let him hold 'til we get to the register because he's almost two and because he does things like have tantrums if he sits in the carseat for too long.

Anyway, the lady in front of us turns around and says, oh, does he like that strawberry thing? And I say, yeah. I said I'm not gonna buy it for him, but yeah. And she picks up the puzzle that she has in her hands and says, oh, well this is actually really good too! It has

numbers on it and, y'know, my son is—my grandson is two and he's already counting all the way up to 100!

Fuck you, Target lady!

[Biz laughs.]

My son is 21 months old, and he hasn't talked yet! Besides to say "mama," "dada," and "moo" and "baa." Okay? So why—what is your need? What is your need here to, like, brag to me about your grandson who's just so smart and counting all the way up to 100. My kid has sensory processing disorder! And he was a preemie! And he was three pounds when he was born! And I just don't—really, really, really, really, really, really don't like it when other people out in public make me feel shitty for what my child can do at his age. I just don't like it.

How about if you really wanna comment, how about you just turn around and say, oh my god! He's so cute! What is—what is the deal? So that's my rant. I'm really upset. I know I'm gonna come across this the rest of my life with my kid, but I just—just stop it! Just stop making me feel shitty because my kid is at a different developmental level than yours. Thank you. You guys are doing a good job. Bye.

01:03:25 Biz Host
01:03:27 Crosstalk Crosstalk

You are doing... a good job!

Theresa: Uh-huh! You're doing such a good job!

01:03:29 Biz Host

Biz: And—just such a good job!

And I really like the advice— *[Laughs.]* That you, uh, recommended of—oh my god, that's a cute baby! You can't go wrong with "Oh my god, that's a cute baby!"

01:03:43 Theresa Host
01:03:44 Biz Host

Oh, look how cute your kid is!

Look how cute your kid is! You're avoiding all the traps. 'Cause again, we don't know what somebody's going through!

01:03:53 Theresa Host

May I also recommend saying, "What a cutie!" or "Look how cute your kid is!" and not gendering your little kid! Like—there's so many—you can let go of so many additional weird things? *[Laughs.]* And just limit it to—look at that kid. What a great job you're doing. Or—look how cute that kid is! 'Cause all of the kids are cute! That would be true no matter what!

01:04:20 Biz Host
01:04:21 Theresa Host
01:04:22 Biz Host

[Laughs.] You won't be lying!

Yeah.

And I—like—I just wanna tell you what a good job you're doing and I—*[sighs.]* Listening to you talk about the, like... sensation of when this woman said this to you, feeling... like... feeling judged and feeling bad and feeling like, y'know, my kid's gonna have struggles, y'know. This is gonna be—like... it reminded me a little of like what we were talking about at the beginning. And about like... *[sighs.]*

You are doing a good job? And there's nothing anyone is ever gonna say that should make you feel like you are not. You are so in the middle of it right now. And with 21 months? The—after—uh, premature birth, after all of those things—I mean, 21 months is not a time—enough time to have processed and, like, integrated those different events.

01:05:27 Theresa Host Yeah! Well, and there's also still just, like, a lot you don't know! Like, you're just—you're just living with your kid! And caring for your kid. And learning more about who they are while they become who they are.

01:05:38 Biz Host That's right! And as we have proven time and time again, we all feel super responsible for the things that aren't in our control.

01:05:49 Theresa Host Yep.

01:05:50 Biz Host And you—

01:05:51 Theresa Host I mean, you should be buying the puzzle—

01:05:53 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Oh, obviously!

01:05:56 Theresa Host **Theresa:** —that has the letters on it?
And the numbers? Because that will make a big difference.

01:05:59 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Oh! It's a huge difference! Yeah! Yeah!

01:06:03 Biz Host **Theresa:** It's better than the strawberry thing that he was holding.
[Laughs.]
He clearly is begging for something different than the strawberry thing. Right? Like... what the fuck!

[Theresa laughs.]

01:06:12 Crosstalk Crosstalk What did—that's what—I like that this woman's like—
Biz: What's the—does he like the strawberry thing?

01:06:15 Biz Host **Theresa:** So—yeah. Does he like it?
I like that you give such—you gave no shits about the strawberry thing that—I'm like, why would this woman ask about it? Were there numbers on it? Was there an activity related to the strawberry thing, or was it just a fucking strawberry? 'Cause if it was just a fucking strawberry? This woman... had no right to compare it to a puzzle!
[Laughs.]

01:06:38 Theresa Host It seems like she was—it seems like, from your story, that the woman was looking for an opportunity to talk about her grandchild.
Great.

01:06:46 Biz Host That's fair.

01:06:47 Theresa Host Fine.

01:06:48 Biz Host Mm-hm.

01:06:48 Theresa Host Great for them. [Laughs.]

01:06:50 Biz Host Yes. But what do we know? We know... we know nothing about what is going on with other people! And sometimes we can innocently step in it by wanting to talk about our own experiences.
Mm-hm!

01:07:07 Theresa Host Right? Yes, we all know... we're not doing it at anybody and they are not doing it at us. None of that takes away from the feeling experiences we have when we run into it.

01:07:22 Theresa Host Yep.

01:07:22 Biz Host Okay? And you are doing... a remarkable job.

01:07:27 Theresa Host Yeah, you are!

01:07:28 Biz Host You're in Target and you're standing up to your 21-month-old about a—to me, I was like—I didn't know where this was going? But I was like—good job not buying that toy!

01:07:41 Theresa Host Yeah!

01:07:42 Biz Host You got this! Right? Like—I—you're doing such a good job.

01:07:47 Theresa Host Yes, you are.

01:07:49 Biz Host Should just be high-fiving at Target all the fucking time. Theresa, what did we learn today? I... I don't think we've done a show like this in a—in a while. But like... I really... feel like... I—I'm not sure I learned anything? Except that, like, the reminder of how... really hard it is? As, like, my voice cracks. *[Laughs.]* How really hard it is. At different stages. And... y'know, I think I had texted you a show idea about, like, the ebb and flow of how I feel about parenting?

But I think we just covered that today. Like, there's... there are definitely moments where I feel great about *[though laughter]* life choices and the job I'm doing and my family and, like, all those things. And then just as quickly, I will get hit by the sensation of why am I doing this? I don't like this at all! Like, at all! I feel bad about it. I don't like how I feel; I'm feeling tired and depleted and I don't wanna be yelled at by my kids and like no one understands and I could be doing something else with my life, and—I hate that feeling!

01:09:12 Theresa Host Yes.

01:09:13 Biz Host 'Cause I feel like I'm not supposed to feel that way.

01:09:15 Theresa Host Yes.

01:09:16 Biz Host And... that is the rub, as it were. Like... I think one of the hardest things about parenting for me is... when I have those feelings, feeling like I'm doing something wrong for having those feelings.

01:09:32 Theresa Host Yep! Feeling worse because of the feelings.

01:09:36 Biz Host Yeah! Because of the feelings. Oh, I have to fucking stop that. Y'know? I guess we just learned that kids are all struggling. I like that you kept referring to it as work? They all have their own work that they're doing? And... that... we as their caretakers have to... live through it.

01:09:58 Theresa Host Yep!

01:10:00 Biz Host *[Through laughter]* I was just—we have feelings, too! We have feelings, too.

01:10:04 Theresa Host We do. Did you guys know that?

01:10:07 Biz Host Did you know that?

01:10:08 Theresa Host Did you guys know that we have feelings? *[Laughs.]*

01:10:10 Biz Host We have feelings too, you know. It's not my fault! This is your fault! You ruined my life! *[Laughs.]*

01:10:20 Theresa Host *[Theresa laughs.]* I was just gonna say, we definitely deserve trophies for having not ever have said that. *[Laughs.]*

01:10:24 Biz Host Yeah. Yeah. Obviously—*[though laughter]* this is—this is my safe space to come in and say all the things I'm not gonna say! You guys are like my hotline.

01:10:32 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** *[In voice of exaggerated outrage]* I ruined everything? I did? *[Laughs.]*

01:10:37 Biz Host **Biz:** I ruined— *[Laughs.]* Look at yourself! *[Laughs.]* I could be playing the banjo by now! I could have a—I could be on the stage! Getting my Academy Award! I could be doing... something different!

[Theresa laughs.]

Definitely enjoying showers with my partner in a different way! God! Your fault! Your fault. On that note—you guys are all doing a remarkable job.

01:11:07	Theresa	Host	You are.
01:11:09	Biz	Host	We see you. Let's go out and see each other, and let's go out and look for those moments when they present themselves that allow us to feel like a self. Step out of our parenting bodies and approach the world as we once did. Theresa? You are doing <u>such</u> a good job.
01:11:33	Theresa	Host	Thanks, Biz. So are you.
01:11:36	Biz	Host	Thank you. We will talk to you guys next week!
01:11:39	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz and Theresa: Bye!!!!
01:11:41	Music	Music	"Mama Blues" by Cornbread Ted and the Butterbeans. Strumming acoustic guitar with harmonica and lyrics.
			<i>I got the lowdown momma blues Got the the lowdown momma blues Gots the lowdown momma blues The lowdown momma blues Gots the lowdown momma blues Got the lowdown momma blues You know that's right</i>
01:12:06	Biz	Clip	<i>[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]</i> We'd like to thank MaxFun; our producer, Hannah Smith; our husbands, Stefan Lawrence and Jesse Thorn; our perfect children, who provide us with inspiration to say all these horrible things; and of course, you, our listeners. To find out more about the songs you heard on today's podcast and more about the show, please go to MaximumFun.org/onebadmother . For information about live shows, our book and press, please check out OneBadMotherPodcast.com . <i>One Bad Mother</i> is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to MaximumFun.org/donate .
01:12:34	Theresa	Host	<i>[Music continues for a while before fading out.]</i> MaximumFun.org .
01:12:57	Speaker 1	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:13:00	Speaker 2	Guest	Artist owned—
01:13:01	Speaker 3	Guest	—Audience supported.
01:13:02	Speaker 4	Guest	