

00:00:00	Jesse Thorn	Promo	<p>Hey folks, it's Jesse, the founder of MaxFun. Since we postponed our annual MaxFunDrive in mid-March, we have gotten a lot of questions about if and when we'd be rescheduling it. And honestly, we've been asking ourselves the same thing! Well, now we have an answer for you. The 2020 MaxFunDrive will start on July 13<sup>th</sup>. That's coming up soon. We decided to have the Drive now because it's always brought a lot of joy and excitement to our community and certainly to us. And to be totally honest, it's also the main source of income for some of our hosts.</p> <p>Like pretty much everything right now, this year's drive is gonna be a little different. Uh, we'll still be bringing you very special episodes, fun community activities, premium thank-you gifts; but we also know it's a weird time and, for some folks, a really difficult one. Some people are in a position to become new or upgrading members. Others can't right now. And that is okay. We'll have ways for you to support MaxFun at <u>every</u> level, including some ways that won't cost you anything.</p> <p>We're also gonna run the Drive for four weeks instead of two. We didn't think it was a good time to be rushing anybody and, uh, having a longer Drive lets us be a little more <i>[laughs lightly]</i> low-key in our Drive pitch. It also gives us more time to do <u>fun</u> stuff! Like the weekly livestreams we'll be putting on for charity throughout the Drive. Most importantly, we want the 2020 MaxFunDrive to highlight all the ways we support each other and our communities. We also wanna show how grateful <u>we</u> are to you for making all the work that we do possible. Stay safe. We'll see ya July 13<sup>th</sup> for the MaxFunDrive.</p>
00:01:35	Biz	Host	Hi. I'm Biz.
00:01:37	Theresa	Host	And I'm Theresa.
00:01:39	Biz	Host	Due to the pandemic, we bring you <i>One Bad Mother</i> straight from our homes—including such interruptions as: children! Animal noises! And more! So let's all get a little closer while we have to be so far apart. And remember—we are doing a <u>good job</u> .
00:01:56	Music	Music	"Summoning the Rawk" by Kevin MacLeod. Driving electric guitar and heavy drums.
00:02:00	Biz	Host	<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i> This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> —congratulations! You're stepmom of the year! Plus, Biz feels pressure and we welcome back special cohost Rebecca Blum.
00:02:12	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Biz and Rebecca:</b> Woooo!
00:02:16	Biz	Host	<u>You</u> ... woo'd! With me!
00:02:19	Rebecca	Host	I did! I—
00:02:20	Biz	Host	How do you feel? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:02:22	Rebecca	Host	I feel great.
00:02:23	Biz	Host	Was that good for you? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:02:25	Rebecca	Host	It was. I've been waiting a long time to woo with you, Biz.
00:02:29	Biz	Host	Woo! I gotta tell you, it does feel good to woo with somebody again.
00:02:34	Rebecca	Host	Yeah.
00:02:36	Biz	Host	Don't, y'know. Don't tell Theresa I'm woo-ing with someone.

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

Before I ask you how you are doing—because it is important—but before I do that, I just wanna take a moment because, guys, the COVID is still here. The pandemic is still happening. As well as everything. Everything is still happening at the zoo, as they were to say. And so I wanna just start by saying—once again—a “we see you” to essential workers. Oh my god. You’ve been really carrying the load here for a while. And we see you and appreciate you.

To all of those who are out volunteering in all sorts of ways, whether you are helping to try and track the virus or, y’know, again, to all those who are out volunteering to help our elections happen safely this year? I just wanna give a big shoutout. People who are helping get food and supplies to people who need them. Like, the breakfast and lunch programs to kids who would normally get those during summer school or during school. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

I just wanna give a special shoutout this week to people who live in multigenerational families. That’s a big load. You got—you’ve got, y’know, people in your house who are targets of the virus just because of how old they are. *[Through non-humorous laughter]* Ha, ha, ha! You’re welcome! And, y’know, kids. And there’s you. And there’s a good chance that you are both a parent and a child in that situation and that’s difficult and I just wanna say, I see you. Finally, everybody out there is having to make hard choices right now, and... it’s hard. And we see you.

So I—that’s—that’s it. Keep on... keep on keeping on. Uh, or just scream! *[Laughs.]* Just call the Hotline and scream indefinitely. Now... let me turn things inward. Rebecca, you’re in a closet again. *[Laughs.]*

00:04:43	Rebecca	Host	I sure am. But it’s a new one!
00:04:45	Biz	Host	It is a new closet!
00:04:47	Rebecca	Host	So I’ve already found some toys to eliminate.
00:04:49	Biz	Host	Good.
00:04:51	Rebecca	Host	That the children have outgrown. So I—y’know what, this is productive for me.
00:04:54	Biz	Host	I am glad to be encouraging closet purging. How <u>are</u> you?
00:05:02	Rebecca	Host	<i>[Sighs deeply.]</i> I have just returned from a one-night camping trip with a 15-month-old.
00:05:09	Biz	Host	Wow. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:05:11	Rebecca	Host	And I’ve taken a shower. So I’m much better <u>now</u> than I would have been, y’know, an hour ago. But it was—that was a little rough. We—the—we went camping with him once when he was about four months old, I think, last summer. And it was great ‘cause, y’know, I put him down. He didn’t go anywhere. It was fantastic. But he—this time, he was like... he wanted to run everywhere? Especially into the firepit. Of course. And then it just was like the volume was turned up. Like, he just, like, he wanted to go-go-go but he just couldn’t stop? Y’know, one of those?
00:05:49	Biz	Host	Yeah, yeah.
00:05:51	Rebecca	Host	You know?
00:05:52	Biz	Host	I know. I’ve heard of those.
00:05:54	Rebecca	Host	And so there was, like, two or three hours where I felt like a really terrible <i>[through laughter]</i> mother.

*[Biz laughs.]*

I was just like, this is not fun for me. This is not fun for anyone who can hear me. And this is not enjoyable. But then we all slept really well and so now we're a little better.

00:06:14 Biz Host Yeah. And then you just did that beautiful camping, wake-up-sticky, wet and sticky kind of vibe. Which is, y'know. I think the perpetual state of a toddler, really. At this age.

00:06:28 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Wet and sticky.

**Rebecca:** Pretty similar.

00:06:31 Biz Host Yeah. Yeah. I... I salute you.

00:06:34 Rebecca Host Thank you.

00:06:36 Biz Host For the effort.

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

Did you—you went into the—I just wanna make sure that, like, that this is definitely one of those situations that you went into it with one idea... and then another idea— *[Laughs.]* Came to you in the process. And then—and then you came out either a little stronger or a little more broken? *[Laughs.]*

00:06:59 Rebecca Host It's a little bit of both.

00:07:01 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Little bit of both. Little A. Little B.

**Rebecca:** You know. Really.

00:07:04 Biz Host Are you gonna go again?

00:07:06 Rebecca Host Yes. Now that I know what to expect?

00:07:09 Biz Host So good.

00:07:11 Rebecca Host Like, we put him in the backpack—like, hiking backpack? And then that was, like, oh! You can't run into the firepit now! So problem solved.

*[Biz laughs.]*

So—

00:07:18 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Was he—was he just...

**Rebecca:** Y'know. Just—we're learning tricks.

00:07:21 Biz Host Was he just in the backpack, like, even when you weren't hiking? Like, you just stuck him in there like when you were sitting around?

00:07:27 Rebecca Host Oh, yeah.

00:07:29 Biz Host Oh, you're genius! *[Laughs.]*

00:07:30 Rebecca Host Yeah! I was like, oh, this is fine now 'cause I'm not constantly worried about you falling into an open, hot firepit.

00:07:38 Biz Host Huh. That's... actually an image I can 100% envision in my head 'cause I had that backpack and never used that backpack because we never got past the vision of being outdoorsy and—you can go back to those episodes, guys, of me constantly talking about that damn backpack—

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

—that I never used! But yeah! It's a good kid holder when you're not moving!

00:08:07 Rebecca Host It is a good kid holder. And he's happy in there! Like, he feels like he can see everybody. Like, he wasn't miserable. So it—it felt good!

00:08:14	Biz	Host	That's good.
00:08:16	Rebecca	Host	Yeah. How are <u>you</u> , Biz?
00:08:19	Biz	Host	I'm alright. I'm a little tired and still coming down from a fail, but I will share later. But I don't know. This is—tell me if I am the only one experiencing this. Rebecca, you will speak for all other people.
00:08:34	Rebecca	Host	Excellent. I love doing that.
00:08:37	Biz	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> It this just me, or has the pandemic <u>somehow</u> —like, in the sheltering-in-place—somehow <u>amped up</u> the pressure to be some sort of perfect parent? You would think it would have the <u>opposite</u> effect. Right? You would think it would be like, eh, just make sure pants, uh, are in the house.
			<i>[Rebecca laughs.]</i>
			But instead, it's more like, I will be like, "Why do I feel like I need to be working even harder, like, to meet expectations that I don't even know if they <u>exist</u> ?" Right? Like—
00:09:18	Rebecca	Host	Yes. I mean, I think that happened <u>immediately</u> .
00:09:20	Biz	Host	Yeah. Right? It did! It happened immediately! And here's the horrible truth—this has gone on a <u>while</u> . And so I would've thought I would've eased on out of this. I would've eased on down the road, as it were, and I have not. And... <i>[Laughs.]</i> I had the unsettling realization that, let's see. Everybody who's in this house was either born into this family or chose to be in this family.
			<i>[Rebecca laughs.]</i>
			So like, expectations—it's not like they're getting their information from somewhere else. Their expectations <u>may</u> have actually been set by... me. D'oh! Which is the <u>worst</u> !
			<i>[Rebecca laughs.]</i>
			I don't like that! I'm like, how— <i>[makes frustrated noise]</i> . Y'know, it starts off so easy! Just, like, oh, I'll just do one Pinterest activity with them! Or like— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:10:16	Rebecca	Host	Mm-hm.
00:10:18	Biz	Host	And then there you are, years later, feeling like you... <u>have</u> to meet some crazy expectation that no one's really asking you for. And you could've just nipped in the bud by saying, "Go watch something." Like, earlier, maybe.
00:10:35	Rebecca	Host	Yeah.
00:10:37	Biz	Host	Yeah. So that's where I am. A journey of self-introspection, which is never a good journey for me to go on. Especially... when we're all trapped at home. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Together. With nowhere to go. But I think expectations is sort of a nice... segue into what we're gonna talk about today. Or really, I'm gonna ask <u>you</u> more about today, which is—being stepmom of the year.
00:11:08	Music	Music	Banjo strums; cheerful banjo music continues through dialogue.
00:11:09	Rebecca	Host	Please—take a moment to remember: If you're friends of the hosts of <i>One Bad Mother</i> , you should <u>assume</u> that when we talk about other moms, we're talking about <u>you</u> .
00:11:17	Biz	Host	If you are <u>married</u> to the host of <i>One Bad Mother</i> , we <u>definitely are</u> talking about you.
00:11:20	Rebecca	Host	Nothing we say constitutes <u>professional</u> parenting advice.

00:11:24 Biz Host Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.

00:11:27 Rebecca Host Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

*[Banjo music fades out.]*

*[Biz and Rebecca repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss the weekly topic.]*

00:11:33 Biz Host Rebecca.

00:11:35 Rebecca Host Yes.

00:11:37 Biz Host Stepmom-ing. You are being generous enough to share with us, today, in our discussion, some of the—I believe this is correct—the pressure you felt to be “Stepmom of the Year” when you became a stepparent. But I wanted to kind of set the picture with everything I know about stepparents.

00:11:58 Rebecca Host Thank you.

00:12:00 Biz Host And those things are all based on cliché, sort of, tropes. That have been fed to me and have never once served me wrong. *[Laughs.]* Clichés, guys? The cornerstone of truth. Especially in parenting. So if I know anything... I know that there's a good chance in general that if there is a step- before mom or dad, you're probably evil. So I'm just gonna set that up right there.

00:12:34 Rebecca Host Immediately.

00:12:36 Biz Host Immediately. Evil. Stepmoms, also, are known to either be super younger than whatever the current status is of the original unit, and like the money. So if you are a man who is marrying another woman, you're probably filthy rich. Okay? So these are just some—again—television. Dads, you're not off the hook! If you are a stepdad, you are just trying to be somebody's buddy. Or—

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

—you think the only thing this family needs is more discipline.

00:13:23 Rebecca Host Yes.

00:13:25 Biz Host And that— *[Laughs.]* That's never good. Whatever it is, you're not real people.

00:13:30 Rebecca Host Oh, no. We're just a placeholder.

00:13:33 Biz Host Yeah. You're a place— *[Laughs.]* Damn!

00:13:35 Rebecca Host For sure.

00:13:38 Biz Host Damn. You're a placeholder! Alright. Well let's just— *[Laughs.]* Let's just get right into that!

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

Last week you were on and we were talking and you had said that you had this vision of your future with family. A lotta kids. You just were surprised that it kinda came all at once.

00:13:55 Rebecca Host Yeah. It's not usually how it goes.

00:13:57 Biz Host Yeah. Can you remind us all who lives in your house.

00:14:00 Rebecca Host Right. So it's myself and my husband, Chuck, who's eight years older than me. So plays in a tiny bit to that stereotype.

00:14:08 Biz Host Okay. Little bit.

00:14:10 Rebecca Host Just a little bit.

*[Biz laughs.]*

And then, um—like, when he’s talking about graduating high school I try to remind him that I was ten.

00:14:16 Biz Host That’s good. *[Laughs.]*

00:14:19 Rebecca Host And then a little baby, Noam. And then our four stepkids, as they come in and out of the picture. And they are 10, 15, 17, and 20.

00:14:33 Biz Host Okay. That’s a range.

00:14:37 Rebecca Host It’s quite a range. And when I came into the picture it was 5 years ago. So it was 5-15.

00:14:43 Biz Host Whew! Alright. So you guys got married five years ago.

00:14:49 Rebecca Host Yes. We just celebrated our fifth wedding anniversary.

00:14:51 Biz Host Congratulations.

00:14:54 Rebecca Host Thank you.

00:14:56 Biz Host So have the kids always been coparented, as it were, between the two households?

00:15:02 Rebecca Host Yeah. It’s tricky. And we have a unique situation? Where what we decided was going to be best was going to be to stick with our unique situation and remain very close by. To be accessible as much as they’d like us to be. So we live about a mile away from their mom.

00:15:22 Biz Host Nice.

00:15:25 Rebecca Host Yeah.

00:15:27 Biz Host So let’s go back to the beginning, then! Let’s go back to your dating.

00:15:35 Rebecca Host This is exciting. And now—yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:15:51 Biz Host Yeah! So you would think that when I saw this, like, really cute guy and I was like, hm, he’s not wearing a wedding ring! And then someone said, “Oh, he’s super great! Also he has four children.” That’s where my brain didn’t go.

00:15:54 Rebecca Host What? *[Laughs.]*

00:15:56 Biz Host Huh? My brain went, “Sounds great!”

00:16:00 Rebecca Host Yeah! *[Laughs.]* More of that, please!

00:16:34 Biz Host Yeah. Which in hindsight, I was—I have thought, oh, that’s—that’s interesting. Like, that’s probably unique and maybe concerning. But. *[Laughs.]*

00:16:36 Rebecca Host *[Biz laughs.]*

00:16:56 Biz Host But I think for me—because I’m an educator and I’ve worked with young children for so long—that it felt very, like, oh, I can do that. That is no problem. And I definitely had no idea what I was getting into. And—I’ll say on top of that—I have two stepparents! So. Do you?

00:17:09 Rebecca Host Yeah! So that has been really helpful as a stepparent. To be able to, y’know, how many times as a parent do you look back and think, “What would my mom do in this situation?” or “What would my dad do?” So it’s extremely helpful to think, “Well what would my stepmom do” or “What would my stepdad do,” and—y’know—for better or for worse, how would that make me feel and how would I like to proceed?

00:17:09 Rebecca Host Oh, that’s—that’s remarkable! So your history is... your parents separated and then both remarried. And did you have stepsiblings? I have—I was kind of the only kid in the house, but I had—had. I have!

*[Biz laughs.]*

Two half-sisters from my dad's second marriage. We're very close. And then I have two stepsisters from my mom's second marriage. But now he's—he's ill and I see them a lot more and it's been actually really nice.

00:17:31 Biz Host Yeah. So... I—actually, I wanna kinda jump back then and ask you—if you don't mind—like, I certainly—once I was married and I had kids, I was very keenly aware of things I wanted and didn't want before I had them. Right? Like, based on... my experiences growing up. And then even with kids. Now. Like, they're here. Uh, have these— *[Laughs.]* They're right outside the door!

00:18:07 Rebecca Host They're really right there.

00:18:09 Biz Host They're really right there! Uh, having these moments of being, like, do I wanna—how did my parents handle it? Did I want to handle it the same way? Do I want to take a different approach? You and I had talked last week about, like, how we envisioned your future. And you had said that your parents had separated but you still envisioned, "I'm gonna get married. I'm gonna, like, la la la la la!" And then.. so there probably wasn't a vision of... I'm gonna marry somebody who's already been married and I have all the stuff that I watched my family go through. Maybe.

00:18:45 Rebecca Host Yeah. There definitely wasn't any of that. Um—

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:18:51 Biz Host At all? I, um—  
No? Alright! *[Laughs.]*

00:18:53 Rebecca Host *[Rebecca laughs.]*  
I had just broken up with a guy. I was, like, 31. And the woman I was working for at the time said, "Oh, I know a guy... who's divorced and has a young kid." Someone else. And I remember being like, "Oh, is that it? That's it? That's all that's left for me now that I'm 31? Is that—is that what you're telling me? This is my best shot?" *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:19:15 Biz Host And...  
Yeah! That's it.

00:19:18 Rebecca Host Yep. It is.

00:19:21 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** That's all you got.

00:19:23 Rebecca Host **Rebecca:** Um, it kind of warmed me up to the idea—  
—because she said, "Married guys are great." Not married guys. "Divorced guys are great." *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:19:30 Biz Host Duhh! Because—  
Wrong-o!

00:19:32 Rebecca Host Yeah. Because they've been married. They probably wanna be married again. And they have, like, some idea of what it's actually like to be married. And that—I probably—and then I met my husband probably two or three months later. And so at that point, I was like, "Oh, that's an interesting idea. That that experience can be useful in marriage and not..." You know what I mean? Like, it

can be helpful. So then what happened really quickly was the first time—I mean, we dated for a while before I met his kids.

And then when I did meet them... I think—y’know, my parents’ divorce and my kind of, like, not messy. They were very good at it. But it’s tricky. It’s a lot to navigate as a child. And I think the first time I met them I remember we were—we’d gone to the beach and I was sitting there and we’d kind of—we’d had a whole day together and it was really nice. And I was like, “Oh, I get it!” I had to go through all of these things because it’s going to be really helpful for these children.” Like, this—my experiences are gonna be these experiences as a stepparent. And that was where my nice, rosy outlook began.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:20:47	Biz	Host	I am responsible for how all of these children are going to experience the idea of divorce, new marriages, what parents are—I got it! If anyone can do it—
00:21:00	Rebecca	Host	
00:21:03	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Rebecca:</b> I think I actually did say that to a friend.
00:21:06	Rebecca	Host	<b>Biz:</b> You can do it!
00:21:08	Biz	Host	I was like, “If anyone can be successful at this, it’s me.”
00:21:13	Rebecca	Host	You went to school! To learn how to be with kids! So.
00:21:16	Biz	Host	I did!
			You can easily—as <u>all</u> teachers listening to this show right now know. All of your education in early childhood <u>totally</u> applies to your children. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:21:27	Rebecca	Host	Yeah! Totally! So it was like, it’s no big deal. I can do that. So I’ll be great at it.
00:21:31	Biz	Host	This is gonna be great. No worries.
00:21:34	Rebecca	Host	It’s gonna be great.
00:21:36	Biz	Host	Ah. So... that’s interesting. Was there also an air of, like... I definitely also <u>don’t</u> wanna fuck this up for them? ‘Cause I—I understand what you’re saying with the, like... “I understand I’m setting this template.” Right? And like, that is a very... healthy—I think—way to describe the intent. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Whether it’s, y’know, even remotely attainable or doesn’t, like, mess you up down the road. But like, there’s also—see, I would easily go to the other side of it, which is... “I can’t mess this up. I can’t mess this up.”
00:22:16	Rebecca	Host	I think that that really says a lot about how humble you are? And how... overly optimistic I am. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I think that’s what that says.
00:22:24	Biz	Host	I don’t think it’s humble. Here’s the old test that we do in our family. When we bought this house—I’ve shared this story before. When we bought this house, I—that I am living in, right now—we had somebody coming out to, like, shut off some gas lines that weren’t used and we discovered in the back room—where the children sleep—there was a crawlspace. Like, pull up the old board, there’s a crawlspace to get under the house. Now I call— <i>[Laughs.]</i> My parents. And I say, “There’s a crawlspace in one of the bedrooms.” And the first thing <u>they</u> say—and I said—was, “There’s a body in it.”

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

When I call Stefan and tell him, his first response is, “There’s buried treasure in it.” And I’m like—and it was so funny to ask different people. There are definitely two types of people. People who



assume there's a body in the crawlspace, or there's treasure in the crawlspace. So I'm not sure "humble" Is the right word in this?

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

If you are very optimistic, I am more "the apocalypse is lurking behind me at all times." But I appreciate it.

00:23:36 Rebecca Host  
00:23:38 Biz Host

There are benefits to both.  
There are—oh, yes, there are.

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

So can I ask—how did those first interactions go? I mean, that's a big age range of kids all at different stages developmentally, right? Like...

00:23:50 Rebecca Host

Yeah. When I was thinking back to how it was in the beginning—*[sighs.]* I think I did—I put a ton of pressure on myself? Which is... par for the course. Um, but I remember being, like, in the kitchen making dinner and we are in a second-story apartment and I could hear them coming up the stairs? Like, their dad had gone and picked them up and they'd come back. And I have this terrifying feeling like an elephant sitting on my chest? And I thought—someday, that sound won't scare the life out of me anymore. Like, it just—I wanted to do so well at it and you're right. There were so many different requirements? Like, one kid would've been very different than four kids. And I did my best and I made mistakes along the way and I was reminded of those mistakes frequently by children. *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

And, um... y'know. But I do remember also a lot at the time saying, "They're really kind." I mean, first of all, my stepchildren are really lovely human beings and they have been very generous in spirit with me. When, like, they didn't have to be. But—

*[Biz laughs.]*

I remembered saying at the time, like, "Well, they're really kind because only one of them's really mad at me at once."

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:25:20 Biz Host  
00:25:22 Rebecca Host  
00:25:24 Biz Host  
00:25:27 Rebecca Host  
00:25:29 Biz Host

Like, they take turns. But one of em's always pissed at me. Nice.

I don't always know why.

Yeah. Well, that's the real mystery of all parenting. *[Laughs.]*

Yes. *[Laughs.]*

Why is this child yelling at me right now? Why are you so mad at me? Well that is very generous of them that they would spread out the anger.

00:25:36 Rebecca Host  
00:25:41 Biz Host

Yes. It's much more manageable than the concentrated.

Can I ask about... like... guilt traps as the parent. Because I... have wrestled with how I have ruined everything for my children many times. Y'know, like, oh, Christmas is ruined because I can't make this perfect. Right? Like, I mean—I sat on the floor crying at Katy

Belle when she was four, like *[wild voice]* “I gotta make this perfect!” *[Regular voice]* Right? When I’m like—now I look back on that, I’m like, oh my god! She just—she could never have even processed that what she was asking that I was taking it in and chewing it up in a totally different way? But like, y’know. I’d like to think that sort of guilt trap we all experience and, y’know, exactly the same. But probably not! Like, I would imagine it’s ratched up a little bit when it’s new for everybody.

00:26:39 Rebecca Host

Yes. It’s extremely—I mean, I experienced it that way? Really ratcheted up? But also... it does take a level of the pressure off. Because I am not one of their two parents. I am one of their four parents, ‘cause they also have a stepdad. And so that kind of like evens out that guilt a little bit. So... I don’t think my, y’know, newly-15-year-old stepdaughter—I don’t think she did anything for her birthday and I don’t know if that was COVID or—I don’t know what happened? I don’t have the full story? But I made sure to make her a birthday dinner and make a birthday cake and do the whole thing because I felt that, like, we—you should have this. And that’s important to me. But I share that responsibility with four people. And so that is kind of nice. *[Laughs.]*

00:27:32 Biz Host

I totally see the, like, sharing with the four people—in my own two-person parent household, it’s a really easy place for me to go... that... not only does—should all the guilt be spread around, but all the responsibility should be spread around. Right? Like, y’know, shouldn’t we all be planning this dinner? Shouldn’t we all—are we all coordinating? I would struggle with that. Because I would—I mean, I feel like you guys are doing such a good job if there’s—it’s so easy for resentment to come up between me and Stefan when it comes to, like, the kids. And that’s a lot to balance for... you.

00:28:19 Rebecca Host

Yeah.

00:28:21 Biz Host

How are you doing? I mean, like, how are you doing? Be—you’re in it. You’ve been in it for five years and now you’re saying you can balance the guilt, but I—I—like, at the beginning, what was it like?

00:28:32 Rebecca Host

I think—so, like, you know, you have your kid and you learn through trial and error over a long period of time. Right? Like, those are—those are some long days. In which you are like, “Oh! That didn’t work! I’ll try it this way!” or “Oh, I thought it would go like this and it didn’t.” When you’re a stepparent—times four—you learn it all in your face really, really fast with a lot of people watching.

*[Biz laughs.]*

And that can be... really difficult! And it’s like it’s—um, like anything, it’s—with a steep learning curve—you figure it out a little faster. It’s hard. It’s really difficult. And I think—I was thinking about this and how we were framing it around wanting to be this perfect stepparent and I was thinking... I never had this thought at the time, but it also probably—like any relationship—if you’re a stepparent, right? There is clearly a relationship that came before you. And... like, any time you’re after someone else, maybe it’s just me but I’m very competitive and a people-pleaser!

*[Biz laughs.]*

And I think there was a lot of pressure to be doing it better. And it’s very easy to say it was—clearly there was some problem because

those people are no longer married. And so it's very natural to kind of just wanna, like, for me it was very natural to wanna one-up them.

00:30:03 Biz Host Yeah. I would—I could see that. Especially... like, especially in the parenting realm. Right? Like—

00:30:10 Rebecca Host Yes. Oh! Definitely!

00:30:13 Biz Host I can be just as good if not better!

00:30:15 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** And cooler! Oooh! That's right! *[Laughs.]*

00:30:19 Rebecca Host **Rebecca:** Let me show you how much better I am, actually. So it's like a different level of mommy wars? It's like a whole different arena. And I had to learn to acknowledge—these are amazing children. So they've clearly had two amazing parents who put a lot into them and have made them, y'know, have helped them come to be this way and I'm not going to get anywhere by... wanting to one-up her?

00:30:48 Biz Host Yeah. No.

00:30:50 Rebecca Host I'm only going to get there because I have some appreciation and then we're all gonna relax.

00:30:55 Biz Host *[Through laughter]* Yeah!

00:30:57 Rebecca Host Then everybody can relax. 'Cause you can see it. Like, if there's tension, the kids, like, their shoulders go up. And when we chill out, they chill out. It's like, *[inaudible]* with anything.

00:31:09 Biz Host Yeah. No. That sucks. It is a horrible discovery that our emotional state affects this kids. It is the worst. It is up there in my top five of, like, for real? I cannot get mad and upset or, like, feel stressed out and you're not gonna like absorb it like a sponge? Like, what is that about?!

00:31:33 Rebecca Host And if you're a teacher, Biz? You get to do it every day!

00:31:36 Biz Host Do you? I have a sidetrack on that 'cause I think—you know I love the teachers. They're the best! But like, oh, we're about to open Biz's eyes, everybody. Put on your sunglasses. I love it. I love it! *[Singing]* I like learning! *[Regular voice]* So if you are... yeah, I guess so. If you're stressed out as the teacher in the classroom... then the kids absorb it too.

00:32:04 Rebecca Host Totally.

00:32:06 Biz Host Wow.

00:32:08 Rebecca Host And a lot of times when you... things aren't going well? Right? As the teacher, from your perspective, things aren't going well and they're not doing what you want them to do? If you just... take a breath! And start over! And come in calm, things kinda fall into line. But it's really hard.

00:32:28 Biz Host That's hard! Whew! Wow. Once again—thank you, teachers. *[Laughs.]*

00:32:33 Rebecca Host You're welcome.

00:32:36 Biz Host I wanna kind of loop now into... you have a baby. Who's not really a baby anymore but I think he's a baby.

00:32:47 Rebecca Host He's a little baby.

00:32:49 Biz Host He's a baby. He's not in school. He's a baby! And... this is a product of your love and marriage. And—how does that play into all of this emotionally or into, like, y'know?

00:33:05 Rebecca Host I think the kids really like it, which is great. 'Cause that can go one of two ways. But their mom has had two more kids in her second marriage, so they're a little bit used to it? And I think it makes them feel more like we're a family. Like, there are kids in this house all the time.

00:33:23	Biz	Host	Yeah. Yeah. We're not just, like, home from college visiting or something. Right? Like, even for the ten-year-old a little. Right? Like—
00:33:31	Rebecca	Host	Yeah! I think it really—she told us for years that she wanted us to have a baby.
00:33:35	Biz	Host	Yeah.
00:33:38	Rebecca	Host	So, um—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:33:40	Biz	Host	It kind of— Get on it! Get on it!
00:33:42	Rebecca	Host	Yes. No pressure!
00:33:43	Biz	Host	No pressure. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:33:45	Rebecca	Host	But yeah, he kind of became, like, a glue. Like a little glue. And it's sweet because it also takes off the pressure from <u>my</u> uterus to produce <u>any</u> more.
00:33:53	Biz	Host	Oh, yeah!
00:33:55	Rebecca	Host	He has four siblings!
00:33:58	Biz	Host	Yeah! So, let me wrap up on this. I started off by joking about, like, tropes and, y'know, clichés and horrible things. And you said at one point in time during this discussion, sort of the mommy wars—that pressure—everybody's watching you. And I guess I've had ample opportunity as a... non-stepparent on this show to talk about what I think has been really difficult or hard or people aren't paying attention to or aware that they are doing or of or saying. What do you think are some of the, like, preconceived ideas and hang-ups that are out there that we should start kind of getting our heads around as not jumping to that assumption?
00:34:49	Rebecca	Host	I think... that... idea that... this person has been thrown into parenthood? And, y'know, giving them a breather? Would be the first place to start. Like, um... a friend said to me in the last year—just, like, comparing me to her husband's new wife. And I was like, yeah, I've been doing this for four years. She just started. Like, give her a minute!
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			She just started off with two teenaged girls! It's a lot! It's a <u>lot</u> ! Imagine where your kids are now and you didn't get <u>any</u> of that previous experience with them. You just jumped in cold. So I think that that's really, like, just a lot of space and kindness that we talk about and what I really love about the <i>One bad Mother</i> community of just not judging. Giving some space. And it's hard! It's hard. There's so much involved. There's past relationships and new relationships and children and it's extremely difficult, but giving that person... a second to get their grounding?
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			And catch their breath? And figure out the basics? Yeah, that'd be a really great place to start.
00:36:13	Biz	Host	Ooh, I like that. That is a really nice place to start.
00:36:17	Music	Music	"Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.

00:36:35	Music	Music	<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:36:35	Biz	Promo	Laid-back guitar music plays in background. <i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by Billie. Self-care and routine are always important. Whatever you're using to get ready for the day should make you feel amazing! Meet Billie. They've recreated everyday essentials by delivering premium razors and high-performing body care directly to you. No pink tax. No visit to the drugstore. You may not have noticed this, but it's summer! <i>[Laughs.]</i> It is definitely time to bust out your Billies, as it were. <i>[Laughs.]</i> And get those pits ready for summer! Go to <a href="http://MyBillie.com">MyBillie.com</a> to get their starter kit for just \$9. That includes their award-winning razor, two refill blades, and a magnetic holder that keeps your razor safe and dry in-between uses. To get started, go to <a href="http://MyBillie.com/mother">MyBillie.com/mother</a> to get the best razor you will ever own. Best part? The starter kit is just \$9 plus free shipping, always. Go to <a href="http://MyBillie.com/mother">MyBillie.com/mother</a> —spelled My B-I-L-L-I-E.com/mother.
00:37:50	Theresa	Host	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> 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 <u>better</u> about ourselves by hearing yours. You can share some of your own by calling 206-350-9485. That's 206-350-9485.
00:38:09	Biz	Host	Genius fail time, Rebecca. Genius me!
00:38:13	Clip	Clip	<i>[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]</i>  <b>Biz:</b> Wow! Oh my God! Oh my <u>God!</u> I <u>saw</u> what you did! Oh my God! I'm paying <u>attention!</u> <u>Wow!</u> You, mom, are a <u>genius</u> . Oh my <u>God</u> , that's <u>fucking genius!</u>  <i>[Biz and Rebecca repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss their respective genius moments of the week.]</i>
00:38:28	Rebecca	Host	This... Monday. It was the 15-year-old's birthday. And—as I previously mentioned—I didn't think she'd done much for it so I wanted to really make her a nice dinner. Bake her a cake. That's what I do. Like, that's our family birthday tradition. So while that's happening—no, we've had dinner. I'm baking a cake. The baby—'cause he climbs on everything—has climbed up to the table. Has decided to play with a glass... glass, and is putting <i>[inaudible]</i> in it.  <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>  I'm not in this room. I'm in the other room baking the cake. And the glass gets knocked over and he falls over. There's a huge sound. I shout expletives. And then I walk over. I see him laying in a pile of glass shards—  <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>  But you know what my genius is? I still finished that stupid cake! <i>[Laughs.]</i>  <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:39:28	Biz	Host	Did you pick that baby up? You picked that baby up!
00:39:32	Rebecca	Host	Yes, of course I picked the baby up! No, I picked the baby up. We washed him off. He took a bath. He soaked in the bath with the ten-

00:39:46 Biz Host year-old. She made sure he was okay. All the little shards came out. But I was like, “I’m finishing this cake if it’s the last thing I do!” And then you baked that cake. Good job! That is just brilliant. You are a genius, madame! Okay. My genius is... I just—this is gonna sound crazy, given sheltering in place. But there is a beautiful, large garden here near us. Descanso Gardens. It’s gorgeous and it’s very large. And if you are a member, you can come any time and then they’re limiting public ticket-buying. Like, you have to like, if you—normally you can just walk up and pay and go in. But now, to limit the numbers of people in, you have to, like, basically make a reservation for when you wanna come to the park? But if you’re a member you also have an extra hour in the morning and an extra hour at night where it’s just you. And—not just you. Y’know, members.

And I decided that this might be a good place for us to do some sort of outdoor exploring ‘cause it’s not like there’s play equipment. You’re not, like, touching stuff. You’re just walking around in the woods. And I went this morning and I found a Adirondack chair that was literally not paired with any other chair that was, like, overlooking this pond and I could watch ducks and birds and I just sat there. And it was nice. It was really nice, guys. *[Laughs.]* It was so nice!

00:41:19 Rebecca Host That’s really nice!

00:41:21 Biz Host It was nice. I didn’t have to be near anybody, because it’s—again—it’s the woods. It’s like a garden. I’m not going to the rose part—like, the popular part. I just wanna be, like, next to a tree far away from people. And that is doable there. And we all had our masks on and I am gonna have the best skin ever this year because my face is always covered when I’m out.

00:41:47 Rebecca Host Good job.

00:41:49 Biz Host Thank you!

00:41:51 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hi, Biz and Theresa. I’m calling with a genius. Ever since having my second child I’ve been taking my daily shower in the evening before I go to bed. She’s not almost one-and-a-half. It’s been about a year and a half of doing this because, y’know, you get kid-grimy during the day. It feels good to clean off, go to bed relaxed. I figured out a way to make it even more relaxing. I moved a lamp into my bathroom so now when I shower, I have what I’m calling a “dark shower.” The light is dim. It’s enough that I can see safely in the shower.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:42:31 Crosstalk Crosstalk It’s dark. Calming. I can’t see how dirty my shower is.

**Biz:** *[Through laughter]* Oh my god.

00:42:34 Caller Caller **Caller:** And I go to bed relaxed!

00:42:37 Biz Host So it’s a genius! I’m... a genius.

00:42:42 Rebecca Host Oh my god, I love you! This is so genius.

00:42:44 Biz Host So brilliant.

It is so brilliant? In fact—in fact, I—like—you need to get on, like, Shower Lamps, like, right away!

00:42:52 Rebecca Host ShowerLamps.com.

00:42:55	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Rebecca:</b> You'll never notice how dirty your bathroom is—
			<b>Biz:</b> Shower lamp— <i>[Laughs.]</i> That's right!
00:42:57	Rebecca	Host	—before you go to sleep!
00:42:59	Biz	Host	Relax <u>almost</u> in the dark! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:43:02	Rebecca	Host	But enough that you could maybe shave your legs.
00:43:04	Biz	Host	That's right. Maybe.
00:43:07	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Biz and Rebecca:</b> Maybe.
00:43:09	Biz	Host	Don't put too much pressure on yourself. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I really love this idea. I—this is so good. You are doing an <u>excellent</u> job. Failures.
00:43:19	Clip	Clip	<i>[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]</i>
			<b>Theresa:</b> <i>[In a voice akin to the Wicked Witch of the West]</i> Fail. Fail. Fail. <u>FAIL!</u>
			<i>[Timpani with foot pedal engaged for humorous effect.]</i>
			<b>Biz:</b> <i>[Calmly]</i> You <u>suck!</u>
			<i>[Biz and Theresa repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss their respective failures of the week.]</i>
00:43:26	Biz	Host	Fail me, Rebecca.
00:43:28	Rebecca	Host	<i>[Sighs.]</i> Okay. So. We went camping.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:43:31	Biz	Host	The end.
00:43:34	Rebecca	Host	The end! Period. Done. End stop. No, we went camping and—as I mentioned last week—my baby is terrible at sleeping. So I was a little worried about getting him to sleep in the outdoors and him crying and other people hearing it and blech. But he was pretty worn out from being a total spaz, running around this campground. And he was in the backpack. He chilled out. And then I took him in the tent and laid down with him. Gave him a pacifier. But here's the thing—he is now obsessed with small jars. Specifically, pill bottles. And I had brought my nighttime medication in a pill bottle, but it only had the night's dosage. So I took my pills. And I was like, "Truly, I know that you will fall asleep if I hand you this stupid pill bottle." So my baby fell asleep lovingly holding a prescription jar near his face. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			And I was like, this is probably really bad.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:44:37	Biz	Host	I'm like, "How is this not your genius?" While "child falling onto glass" is not the fail?
			<i>[Rebecca laughs.]</i>
			I'm so confused, but I... yeah. I mean, yes, there's probably foreshadowing here. And—
00:44:53	Rebecca	Host	Yes! That's what I was thinking!
00:44:55	Biz	Host	Yeah. There's definitely fore—you should stay up every night worried about this.
00:45:00	Rebecca	Host	He is lovingly caressing my antidepressant bottle.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:45:07 Biz Host I mean, it felt bad. It felt really bad.  
Eh, my kid used to teethe on a severed finger from the Halloween box. Whatever! Whatever works! Also, you're doing a horrible, horrible job. Or—teaching your child that medication... for depression... is helpful.

00:45:27 Rebecca Host In responsible doses.

00:45:29 Biz Host That's right. *[Laughs.]* Right! Right. Well, you're doing horrible.

00:45:32 Rebecca Host Thanks.

00:45:34 Biz Host I... foreshadowed this at the top of the show. I—we were out of milk? Again, my genius is that I can—we can go a really long time without having to up the groceries. Right? I have now become the person who, like... looks like—well, the Apocalypse is upon us, but I'm like pushing and everything's like—it's like two carts to get to your car and stuff? But I normally go during the week in the, like, more morning-ish time. And we were coming back from the Gardens and I had Katy Belle with me and we had to go to the store. We were out of milk so we were gonna go ahead and get all the restocks of other things at the same time.

And... it's July 3<sup>rd</sup>, guys! It's the day before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. And it was... it was pandemonium. It wasn't so crowded—like, they were still making people like wait outside by the time we were coming out and like letting people in? But I felt like we had gotten there just before they realized they needed to do that? And it was just—I find grocery shopping stressful now anyway. And I had Katy Belle with me. And even though—and I normally do not take her. She's only come, like, once with me ever. And I remember when we were done with that trip, saying, "I don't really want you to come with me again." *[Laughs.]* "Again, it's not you—it's me! Like, I just wanna get this done and get out." Right?

And... y'know, she's—I'm like, *[makes stressed noise]* it was very stressful. Because I didn't want to chat about foods we wanted to try. I didn't wanna, like, chat or go slow or look at things. I didn't want to engage with people. I'd already been, like, outside in a garden. *[Laughs.]* Which is, of course, supposed to be relaxing! But it's still its own little bit of excitement. I'd been in a mask for several hours. I just... and I never realize how much anxiety it causes until I'm home? And it just... like, I'm just hunched and my shoulders are by my ears and the pain in my shoulder blades is like so tense and there's like no stretch that'll get it? And I just thought—like, I—I know better. I know better than to go, like, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July? In general? Like, in general! I wouldn't have gone on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July in a perfect world! And I went, like, in the middle of the day and it was a mistake. It was not good for my well-being. But thank you, all essential workers who were there working during that chaos. I see you.

00:48:21 Rebecca Host And... good job keeping your family fed.

00:48:25 Biz Host Eh, I got the fucking milk. *[Laughs.]*

00:48:28 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hey, guys! I'm calling with a fail. I bought my kid—my almost-five-year-old—a kid device today. Like, a tablet. And we bought it



because of distance learning. She really needs some educational support. I'm not a teacher. Etcetera, etcetera. So I caved and bought her a tablet. And I thought that was a great idea. I thought that was a genius. And now I'm realizing it's a fail because she can't interact with her one-and-a-half-year-old sister now and so now I have to interact with her one-and-a-half-year-old sister and that means I can't get anything done while she's on the tablet! So now later today I'm gonna have to turn it off and deal with the fight that comes from that. And I'm not gonna get anything done. Because now I have to entertain the baby instead *[through laughter]* of her entertaining the baby.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:49:25 Biz Host So that's my fail. Thanks, guys.  
Yeah. Yeah. I'm sorry.

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

00:49:58 Rebecca Host I mean, like... the fail is just thinking anything is possible anymore? It's... so hard. You think you solve one thing; it opens up something else. I—yeah—I—yeah. You're doing a horrible job trying to provide educational tools for your children. And... y'know, entertaining your smaller child.  
00:50:01 Biz Host And trying to be a human.  
00:50:05 Rebecca Host Yeah! See... that—again—the core of the fail—  
00:50:08 Biz Host That's probably where you went wrong.  
00:50:10 Rebecca Host Yeah. You just tried to be a human.  
Yeah. That's—don't do that.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:50:14 Biz Host That's—that's a bad idea.  
That's a bad idea. Is there an app for that?

*[Rebecca laughs.]*

00:50:20 Music Music Just—no one can see me swiping.  
"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.]*

00:50:45 Promo Clip **Music:** Mellow synth piano plays in background.

**Brea Grant:** Hey! I'm Brea Grant, an e-reader who loves spoilers and chocolate.

**Mallory O'Meara:** And I'm Mallory O'Meara, a print book collector who will murder you if you spoil a book for me.

**Brea:** And we're the host of *Reading Glasses*, a podcast designed to help you read better.

**Mallory:** Over the past few years, we've figured out why people read.

**Brea:** Self-improvement.

**Mallory:** Escapism.

**Brea:** To distract ourselves from the world burning down.

**Mallory:** And... why they don't.

**Brea:** Not enough time.

**Mallory:** Not knowing what to read.

**Brea:** And being overwhelmed by the number on their TBR list.

**Mallory:** And we are here to help you with that. We will help you conquer your TBR pile... while probably adding a bunch of books to it.

**Brea:** *Reading Glasses.*

**Mallory:** Every week—

**Brea:** —on MaximumFun.org.

*[Music fades out.]*

00:51:29 Promo

Clip

**Speaker 1:** *[With crackling and static, as though speaking through a walkie-talkie]* Rocketship One, this is Mission Control. Come in.

**Speaker 2:** *[Similar crackling and static]* This is Rocketship One! Go ahead!

**Speaker 1:** Rocketship? What's your status on MaxFunDrive? Shouldn't we have seen it by now?

**Speaker 2:** Sorry about that, Mission Control. Turns out I miscalculated.

*[Beeping noises.]*

**Speaker 2:** Current projected ETA for MaxFunDrive is...

*[Computer beeps.]*

**Speaker 2:** —July 13? But it looks different. It'll be for...

*[Quick beep.]*

**Speaker 2:** —four weeks. So it's longer than expected. But all readings point to—

*[Quick beep.]*

**Speaker 2:** —low-key?

**Speaker 1:** *[Sound of keyboard clacking in background]* Oh! That will be good. But can you verify that there are still special gifts for new and upgrading monthly members?

**Speaker 2:** Verified. Sweet gifts for new and upgrading members, plus amazing new episodes and even special weekly livestreams for charity.

**Speaker 1:** Copy that! Rocketship, can you confirm ETA for MaxFunDrive?

**Speaker 2:** Mm, 90% probability of MaxFunDrive from July 13 to August 7.

**Speaker 1:** Did you say... 90%?

**Speaker 2:** There were a couple of decibel noises and I might've carried a zero wrong...

**Speaker 1:** I—I'm just gonna pencil in July 13 to August 7. Mission Control out.

00:52:35 Biz Host

*[Sound of crackling communications device.]*

Whew! That was so nice talking to Rebecca and I have to say—*[Laughs.]* I'm really glad she was willing to come on and talk about her experiences! Because it is very easy to... walk through the world thinking everybody's experience is very similar to your own when, in fact, we are all having different experiences. Again, there are some things that are shared. But there's a lot of stuff that's not. And it's good to remember—I really appreciated her point about, y'know, when somebody becomes a new parent to older children, to give them a break! This is totally brand-new! Let them make as many mistakes as somebody who had—has an infant in their house is gonna get to make. So many mistakes. Let's just all bask in our mistakes. Speaking of basking. I am now going to bask in a mom having a breakdown!

00:53:39 Caller Caller

*[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hey, *One Bad Mothers*, this is a COVID breakdown. I don't know why going to Trader Joes always sets off a breakdown. Maybe because it used to be, like, a really happy place for me. I would, y'know, go in, get some samples, walk around, y'know, talk to the people who work there because I was in there all the time and they know me and my kids and sometimes I would go there late at night because—because I would go after the kids went to bed 'cause it was easier. And now they're not even open that late. So I can't even do that. Yeah. I was just—I was in there and... it's just—it's really stupid. They were playing the song "I'm Still Standing" by Elton John?

*[Biz laughs.]*

While I was looking at the nuts. And the woman next to me was singing along to the song? And I was just like—am I still standing?

*[Biz laughs.]*

Like, I'm on my feet but it doesn't really feel like standing. It feels like... I don't even know. Um, anyway. I don't know. And then checking out with the partition—y'know, it's just like—it's just hard! It's just hard. Y 'know, it's just—doesn't feel the same and I—*[beginning to cry]* will it ever feel the same? Like, I—I don't know. I don't know. I want things to be safe but I want them to be... friendly and... I don't know. Anyway. You guys are doing a great job. I appreciate your show. Bye-bye.

00:55:10 Biz

Host

Oh, wow. I am very glad you called. I think everything you just said explains why I, myself, have been struggling with this and wasn't able to put it into words. First of all, you are doing a very good job. I... I get this! This is, like, another chapter of the—of this pandemic. That... we're not... giving enough credit to how it's affecting us. Trader Joe's used to be such a happy place for me that I would just break down out in the parking lot on a normal day, because it was a safe place! It was—*[Laughs.]* It was like, where I would go and not be with the kids for a while? So if I was gonna have a breakdown—just so many times crying in a Trader Joe's parking lot!

And it is a happy place! It is! It's like... almost has like a cult following? Right? Like, people who have a Trader Joe's—there are similar stores out there in the world. Wegman's, to those of you up in the Northeast. It is a happy place! There—your grocery stores are your community. And... I... totally... get it. That suddenly... it doesn't feel the same. And that in itself is unsettling and upsetting. And... there is something weird about everybody being in a mask. There is! That has a psychological affect. It's harder to talk to people. It's—it becomes stressful to just, like, "Can I reach for the scallions? Can I reach for these right now? Or do I have to wait?" Like, because I—I'm now—feel like I'm affecting somebody's space behind me and—but there's somebody in front of me who's trying to get the strawberries that are next to the scallions and, no, Trader Joe's doesn't put food up by letter. They just are close together at my Trader Joe's. It really becomes stressful!

And... I... really like the fact that you were triggered by that song! I... also love that song. And—*[Laughs.]* My Trader Joe's—I haven't gone very often. Since this all started. 'Cause I'm like—what store is the one that I can go get the most that we need from? So Trader Joe's has been, like, our real treat spot to go if we're gonna go get stuff from there? And they're always playing stuff, like, *[singing]* "Ain't no sunshine when she's gone!" *[Regular voice]* *[Laughs.]* I'm just like—*[makes crazed laugh sounds]*. Y'know? *[Laughs.]* It's all, like, super-awesome oldies? From the late '60s, early '70s. And... that is upsetting! That is upsetting music.

And... I just... see you? And I'm really... sorry. You are—you are still standing. Okay? Everybody is. It may not feel as strong a stance as we once had, but we're here. And... we all... have a chance to have each others' back on this. Okay? I don't know if—if it's ever gonna go back to feeling like it was. I don't know. And I hate that we don't know. It's just sort of like the—I don't know if it's ever gonna get easier with your kids! I don't know. I don't know. It'd

00:59:27 Biz

Host

be really easy to say yes, but we have all learned that that is not always true, and so I don't wanna be insulting and say that it will. I don't know what it's gonna be like. But we can all at least try... to... be really understanding of each other so that—whatever it is—it's not the absolute worst. You are doing a remarkable job.

What did we learn this week, guys? Well, we learned that being a stepparent is hard! *[Laughs.]* Did we really have to do all this to learn that? It is not easy because there is so much you're having to balance while, at the same time, suddenly finding kids in your house or kids that come into your house or— *[Laughs.]* Like, often enough for it to be, like, a habit. And it's a lot! You have your own—your own luggage that you're bringing into this.

Y'know, all of us—when kids come into our house, we are trying to weed through whatever our experiences were as kids? Whatever our expectations are as parents? And then... the reality of what it actually is like. And being flexible enough and kind enough to ourselves to roll with it. And what we are learning is to be kind enough and patient enough to let others roll with it as well. So a big thank-you to Rebecca for sharing her experiences!

Everybody? Real quick announcement, as you heard at the beginning of the show. A little pre-roll announcement from Jesse Thorn, who is the creator and head of Maximum Fun, which is the network that puts this podcast out. We usually have a MaxFunDrive, which is where we ask listeners to support the show. Our show is listener supported. But we put it off, because there was a pandemic and then it just—look, guys. It's a weird time to do a drive. *[Laughs.]* It just is! However, we... wanna keep making the show during this time and we wanna keep making this show after this time and the only way to make the show is with your support. So we're gonna do it.

I wanna let you guys know it's gonna be longer than usual. We're gonna do it for four weeks because we just want it to be super laid-back and easy? And not, like, *[screaming]* "Ahhh!" *[regular voice]* banging people on the head? We have got some fun things planned to keep us all amused during this time. So... stay tuned in to the next couple of shows throughout the month of July, 'cause we're gonna have some fun stuff happening each time. And again—as always—I appreciate everybody hanging in there while we are figuring out how to keep this show going.

01:02:15 Biz

Host

Theresa? You are doing... an excellent job. It is truly a lot that you guys are dealing with and I see you and I continue to hope you will take all the time that you need and we will all be here for you when you are ready to come back.

Everybody? You're also doing a good job. You are all also dealing with a lot. And... given how not-normal everything is, it makes all the stuff that we're dealing with even harder. This is exhausting. Yeah. I—I see you. Let's go out and see each other as people. *[Laughs.]* As just—people who are all tired and have a lot, probably, going on in their home at that moment. Or making hard decisions that very day. Or are dealing with loss and grief. So... let's just do that thing that we always try and do! Which is just... be nice! To each other. Unless somebody's being a really raging asshole, in

which—just cross the street. *[Laughs.]* Cross the street! And find something else to do.

Hannah? You are doing a very good job. Thank you so much for continuing to be with me every week. *[Laughs.]* Once again, thank you to Rebecca for joining me this week. I appreciate it. I appreciate it any time anybody wants to come on and be incredibly honest with us. So thank you so much. You are doing a wonderful job. Everybody, I'm gonna be back next week—with something new! *[Laughs.]* You're all doing a good job. And I'll talk to you next week. Bye!

01:04:25 Music Music

"Mama Blues" by Cornbread Ted and the Butterbeans. Strumming acoustic guitar with harmonica and lyrics.

*I got the lowdown momma blues  
Got 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*

01:04:49 Biz Host

*[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]*  
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](http://MaximumFun.org/onebadmother). For information about live shows, our book and press, please check out [OneBadMotherPodcast.com](http://OneBadMotherPodcast.com). *One Bad Mother* is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to [MaximumFun.org/donate](http://MaximumFun.org/donate).

01:05:18 Theresa Host

*[Music continues for a while before fading out.]*

01:05:41 Speaker 1 Guest

[MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org).

01:05:44 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

01:05:45 Speaker 3 Guest

Artist owned—

01:05:46 Speaker 4 Guest

—Audience supported.