

00:00:00	Biz Ellis	Host	Hi. I'm Biz.
00:00:01	Theresa Thorn	Host	And I'm Theresa.
00:00:03	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> .
00:00:21	Music	Music	"Summoning the Rawk" by Kevin MacLeod. Driving electric guitar and heavy drums.
00:00:24	Biz	Host	<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i> This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> —I don't think we can draw ourselves out of this problem! We talk to illustrator Shane Pangburn about art, work, and a baby during the pandemic. Plus, school is coming for Biz.
00:00:39	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Biz and caller:</b> Woooo!
00:00:42	Caller	Caller	I'm checking in. I... well, it's actually really funny. I was just going through a drive-through coffee line and my poor barista was like, "Are you doing anything fun this weekend?" I was like, "No. There's a pandemic. Like, we're staying home. What? What?" Then I realized I <u>am</u> doing something fun this weekend, because we just repainted my daughter's playroom and it used to be the room of all the things? Y'know, where you store everything in there and you hope that no one ever looks because it's like frightening how much stuff you have—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			—and you're afraid they're gonna call a TV show on you? But we emptied it out and we painted it, so, yeah! We're gonna be spending the weekend playing in the playroom. The way playrooms were designed. So yay! You're doing a good job! I'm doing a good job! Or maybe I'm not! But—'cause I now just moved all the things to a different room. But that's fine! Have a good day! Bye!
00:01:31	Biz	Host	Yayyy! Thank you for wooing with me and you are doing a good job. Everybody's got a room like that or a closet like that or a bed in which you should never look under. That has that in it. Maybe we should look at it more as the fun room. Where all the fun stuff has gone to die. But now it's— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Now it's a place to play. So that is a good job. And that actually will feel remarkable and I hope it has felt remarkable. And... I dunno. It takes a lot to get it all together. So you are doing wonderful. I love it. Good job.
			I'm also doing alright. Before I get into what's going on with me, I just wanna say—like I've been saying throughout the whole pandemic—what a great job you guys are doing. You really are. I just wanna give, y'know, a special thank-you to essential workers who are everywhere. Around us. All the time. And... like many things that are beautiful, we miss them <i>[through laughter]</i> the first few times around. We might have overlooked them. But we are not overlooking you now. You're beautiful and wonderful and we appreciate you. And... whether you are in the medical profession to the grocery, farming, food production industry, to the people to bring our hospitals and doctors' offices the supplies they need—I— y'know.

Or just to keep them clean! God! Every time—y’know, you always think, “I’m gonna go to the—I gotta go to the doctor for my physical” or “I’ve gotta go to the grocery store.” There’s this trust that somebody has gone in there and disinfected everything and cleaned everything. And not just once, but like, every—what—30 minutes? Hour? I don’t know! Right? And so... thank you, all the people who are out there helping keep things safe and clean. That is of dire importance. Thank you to our postal service who, throughout this entire thing, have still been delivering our mail and touching it. You know what I mean? It’s a big deal! Thank you for doing that. And to our teachers, many of whom are already back in either remote classrooms or... in class. I... thank you for willing to be part of this incredibly weird start to school. You are amazing. And I appreciate you so much. *[Deep breath.]*

And as always, to all the people who are volunteering their time—whether it be geared towards the pandemic or to children and families who rely on schools being open? There are so many wonderful volunteers who have been taking care of those families while the schools have been shut down. And to all those who are volunteering to help make sure our election goes smoothly, I... appreciate you. So much.

00:04:52 Biz

Host

So it is the last week of August, and we have not started school yet. Our school starts back right after the Labor Day weekend. And I have many friends who have already started school. Or at least one of the kids in their house have started school. And I’ve been talking to other parents. Just from what I gather— *[Laughs.]* Even with the best efforts and best-laid plans, it’s as bumpy start. And so I—it actually made me kind of feel good to hear that? Which is weird? And it hasn’t been at the fault of the teachers? But as a parent, I’ve watched parent after parent say, like, “I don’t know how I’m supposed to do this.” Right? And... I hear kids—sixth graders; seventh graders; like, totally melting down and crying and being overwhelmed. *[Laughs.]* Like—when they’re doing this all remotely. And... it is a lot.

And why I say it makes me feel good is when we get into it in another week, I have a set of expectations that I need to remember the first week is gonna go however the first week’s gonna go. Maybe good. Maybe not good. This is true for the second week. *[Laughs.]* But eventually, the bumps will hopefully iron themselves out. And... what I have enjoyed about hearing people’s experiences is the grace that they are extending to each other? *[Laughs.]* And to the teachers; and the teachers to the parents. It’s the kids, guys. I’m so sorry. *[Laughs.]* Sorry. Kids are—this is hard! Aaaaah! So I am trying to prepare to give myself that grace. *[Laughs.]* ‘Cause none of us have had a break since spring. So... like, nothing new has come out to make it fixed. So, y’know. It’s... it’s hard. And I am just trying to steel myself up for it. *[Laughs.]* Especially the part in which Ellis is supposed to be learning without me sitting next to him, which is the only way he would learn last year. So looking forward to how that’s gonna work. I’m trying very hard to avoid the myth that this is somehow within my control. *[Laughs.]* Hooray.

00:07:52	Music	Music	Speaking of myths, I think that ties in nicely to what we're gonna talk about today with our guest, Shane Pangburn, about the myth that our art and our work are sometimes supposed to be escapes. Banjo strums; cheerful banjo music continues through dialogue.
00:07:53	Theresa	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> .
00:08:00	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.
00:08:04	Theresa	Host	Nothing we say constitutes <u>professional</u> parenting advice.
00:08:07	Biz	Host	Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.
00:08:11	Theresa	Host	Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

*[Banjo music fades out.]*

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

00:08:16	Biz	Host	We're back with the wonderful Shane Pangburn, who grew up in rural Illinois and now lives in Los Angeles, where he writes whenever not drawing, watching TV, caring for an infant child, or otherwise working. His middle grade series <i>The Reject Room</i> debuts in 2021. He also produces YALLWEST, the nation's largest youth and young adult literary festival <u>and</u> illustrates <i>The Unbelievable Oliver</i> series from Pseudonymous Bosch. Welcome, Shane! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:08:54	Shane Pangburn	Host	Hi! Very happy to be here! Thank you for having me!
00:08:58	Biz	Host	Well, I'm so glad you could join us and we'll never tell the listeners how many times I had to say "Pseudonymous Bosch" over and over. Long before you even got on the call, Shane. I've been practicing it. And then my husband came in and said what is was based on and threw another word at me and everything went out the window. So before we get into that—'cause that's what we're gonna talk about today, guys. Pronunciation. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I wanted to know, Shane, please tell us—who lives in your house?
00:09:37	Shane	Host	In my house is my lovely wife, Jennifer, who is part of the MaxFun family.
00:09:42	Biz	Host	And we love her. She's lovely.
00:09:44	Shane	Host	I also love her.
00:09:45	Biz	Host	Good!
00:09:46	Shane	Host	And agree on the lovely part. And our dog, George, who is really underfoot right now, but a wonderful, wonderful poodle mix.

*[Biz laughs.]*

And our son, Ezra, who is ten months old and just honestly a really easy baby? *[Laughs.]* But it's still very hard.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:10:07	Biz	Host	I think when people say "easy baby," there's a real sliding scale. Right? Like, I think there's a lot of confusion around what "easy baby" means. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Like, I think people like kind of imagine there's an easy baby, which is like a baby in a Disney movie who's always giggling and like... burping like enchantments. And then the other side is like a demon baby who's, y'know, biting 24 hours a
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day. Like, not even just like the—I had a—yeah. I had a biter. Y’know, and screaming. Yeah. I mean, just like—can talk in full sentences and all those sentences are swears. Like, I feel like those are the two spectrums that—and it’s really—it’s really neither.  
[Laughs.]

00:10:59 Shane Host Yeah. Yeah. Like, Ezra bites like twice a day. Just like enough to turn me into a were-baby. And then, like, otherwise is really is giggling most of the time. But there’s—like, it’s—the operative word is “baby” in “good baby/bad baby,” because no matter what it’s still someone you have to care for for the entire day.

[Biz laughs.]

And even if they are a good sleeper, you’re still like 12 hours of baby programming. Like—

[Biz laughs.]

00:11:29 Biz Host Yeah. It takes a lot out of you! And here’s the thing—babies are—I mean, they’re cute, but they’re a little boring. Like, they don’t play back, per se.

00:11:39 Shane Host He doesn’t know anything! He has to learn everything! And he’s gonna learn it from me and Jenn!

[Biz laughs.]

00:11:45 Biz Host And we’re very busy.  
Yeah! I know! And they like... when you say, y’know, you’re taking care of and like engaging with a baby all day, it really is... all day. And... it’s kind of monotonous. I remember a lot of like... oh my god. It’s only ten. It’s only ten in the morning! It’s only—how is it only ten in the morning? It’s been—I’ve been awake maybe forever. So I don’t understand how there’s a whole day left. Yeah.

00:12:17 Shane Host ‘Cause on a regular schedule, we’re five hours in at ten. And—

00:12:20 Biz Host Oh yeah! Five hours in, easy! Half a day! Half a day over.

00:12:23 Shane Host And if I’m five hours into a movie, I’m three hours out of leaving that movie.

[Biz laughs.]

00:12:27 Biz Host Yeah! Unless it’s, y’know—

00:12:31 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** —unless it’s like the end of a trilogy. Right. Yeah.

00:12:36 Shane Host **Shane:** No, I’m not—no. [Laughs.]

00:12:37 Biz Host We’re taking a break!

00:12:37 Biz Host Yeah. [Laughs.]

00:12:40 Biz Host Yeah. There aren’t really breaks. So that’s fun. Now that we’ve established babies in the house. In the best case scenario, when you have a baby in your house, it can be isolating. ‘K? A lot—or some people find it very isolating. Some people? May be the greatest thing that’s ever happened. And you don’t get out as much. Like, social stuff. Really shifts. But this also describes what a pandemic is doing to people. And so— [Laughs.] You are my one test subject of—you have a baby in your house, and both things are happening... do you feel that one is isolating you more than the other? Or like, is it—do you get a chance to just blame the pandemic for stuff that’s really your baby’s fault? I’m just kidding.  
[Laughs.]

00:13:35 Shane Host No, it's fine. Like... first off, our baby is flawless.  
00:13:39 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Shane:** Obviously. I mean, he's a baby.

00:13:42 Shane Host **Biz:** Yes. I know. Your baby is perfect. I know.  
But if we had to choose between who's worse, our baby or the pandemic, it is a tough race. *[Laughs.]* No, it's— *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

No, obviously the pandemic is the most isolating force we've ever known. Certainly in my lifetime. Absolutely in Ezra's lifetime, which is quite short. But yeah! Having a baby is isolating. We talked a lot, my wife and I, about how the first couple months were like being its own quarantine. You have this child. Especially before vaccinations, which, y'know, we've kept to his vaccination schedule. But you don't want necessarily to have him out around everyone all at once. You feel very protective. You don't know what you're doing. You never know what you're doing but you really don't know what you're doing. And so we tried our best to do that. And then just as he was getting more mobile, more crawling, more interested in the world around him and reacting to it? Is when the pandemic hit. And so for a while I think it was relatively the normal status quo we were in. And now, months and months later—'cause the pandemic's been going on for, like... 700 weeks now?

00:14:47 Biz Host Yeah. 700—I think it's 700 weeks. I'm pretty sure that's it. Yep.  
00:14:51 Shane Host Yeah. Yeah, yeah. So our baby's— *[Laughs.]* 700 weeks old.  
*[Laughs.]*

00:14:54 Biz Host Your baby's 22. *[Laughs.]*  
00:14:58 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Shane:** *[Through laughter]* He's—and he's—

00:15:01 Biz Host **Biz:** Really what's great is that time means nothing?  
Time means nothing in the pandemic, so your baby will be ten months forever.

00:15:04 Shane Host He's never known a face other than my wife and I. *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

*[Through laughter]* He's— *[Laughs.]* His only conversation that he's aware of are like, our adult interests. *[Laughs.]* And yeah. He—so now it's getting to be where that's the isolation. Like, he is ready. He wants to crawl through the world. He—y'know, he doesn't want to walk through the world yet, but very very soon he's standing up. And he loves being outside and he gets so excited when I put on a mask.

*[Biz gasps.]*

Like, when he sees me put on a mask? He knows we're going outside. And he knows that like he's gonna see people and things and noises. And so like there's this delight. Like, the literal clapping 'cause he's doing that now? Like, he loves, like, baby clapping? And like I'll put on a mask and it is—it is like we have turned on *Sesame Street*.

00:15:56 Biz Host Yeah. It's like you're, y'know, coming out for a night at, y'know, Carnegie Hall. Everybody's applauding. I never—it never crossed

00:16:22 Crosstalk Crosstalk my mind, the Pavlovian, like, connection of mask and going out for babies. Like, but that's... that... I—it makes total sense!  
**Biz:** It also plays into my theory that like dogs and babies are a lot alike. But!

00:16:28 Biz Host **Shane:** Oh, completely! Oh, yeah.  
This is—that's amazing?

*[Shane laughs.]*

00:16:49 Shane Host And it's amazing but I also like... how does that feel? Right? Like, is it weird that like masks are a part of the baby—like, this experience? I mean, I don't... I would've overthought everything and I still do overthink everything?  
Well you're still going through it! Like, you're still experiencing things with, y'know, the child of a younger age and the child of the preteen age and how they're dealing with it. It is—it's weird, but it's, y'know, it's not weird to see your son like joyful and happy and a baby smiling.

00:17:04 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Shane:** Like, that takes the weirdness right away.

00:17:07 Shane Host **Biz:** Oh, yeah! No! Yes! Of course! *[Laughs.]*  
'Cause it's like this immediate boost of joy. Like, you can't dwell *[through laughter]* on like the dystopian weirdness of it—

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:17:14 Crosstalk Crosstalk —'cause you're like, "Oh, my son's happy!"  
**Shane:** Like, you don't think about like—oh, well—

00:17:19 Biz Host **Biz:** Oh, I can. I can dwell for hours about it.  
Alright? I'm gonna dwell on this and my children don't applaud when I put on a mask.

*[Shane laughs.]*

00:18:22 Shane Host Well talk to me about what else—I mean, because I think there is a... when Katy Belle was that age, when she was ten months she started—she was an early walker and we were in Brooklyn. And she got up at the crack-ass of dawn and we would go to the park next, y'know, near our apartment. And—at like 6 AM. And there were like four other parents and their 6 AM just starting to walk kids. And it was an opportunity to make a connection. It served these two purposes—one, us being able to connect to other parents; and two, getting this kid out of the house. And like... I also found that I needed to be out when things got super nuts. Right? When I was just having too much of a baby—have you guys found that difficult during the pandemic?

We're trying to figure that out. 'Cause we'd like to socialize him more. And like right before the pandemic we were going—we tried Gymboree and like, with the park and like the same kind of group you were talking about, I'd go there in the morning. There was even like a baby movement class that we were doing? And of course all that's shut down. Now he does walk around the park and he does, y'know, interact with people a little bit? But we really haven't done a lot with other kids 'cause at that age there's no masking or anything

and the science still feels so weird. So we're talking to couples we know who have similar aged children and doing meet-ups and doing things like that. And the plan was to do that, honestly, this next week. So we're gonna try. And see if our son can be socialized. *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:19:11 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Shane:** *[Through laughter]* He's—if he's ready for people.

00:19:16 Biz Host **Biz:** It's like—it—I swear, I feel like—where's Renee? Where's Renee from *Can I Pet Your Dog?* So I can be like, "This is what happens if you don't take your dogs to the dog park right away. If you don't socialize 'em, they're gonna like just pee on somebody's floor the first time somebody shows up." Right? Like, it's... but you're right. I mean, and this is actually, though, a concern for lots of people. Y'know. It's just a weird place. This is—I don't know if you know this, but it's weird out there.

00:19:44 Shane Host Yeah, man. It's strange and it's odd and it's weird. *[Laughs.]*

00:19:47 Biz Host Yeah! Yeah! I'm not—still not a fan!

00:19:51 Shane Host *[Through laughter]* I don't love it! It's not my preferred—

*[Biz laughs.]*

And like I worked from home before this? *[Through laughter]* And like—

00:19:58 Biz Host Yeah! I know I was gonna say! Yeah!

00:20:01 Shane Host *[Through laughter]* And I was admitting to myself, there are whole days that are no different whatsoever.

*[Biz laughs.]*

And yet at the same time, like, they're not better! Like, this is—there is no day where I'm like, "This! This was better! Than my life a year ago!" *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

*[Through laughter]* And like there's great joy in my life! Like, we really do love being with our son and things are good. But it's—it's like— *[Laughs.]*

00:20:25 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Shane:** It's like, did you know this still sucks? *[Laughs.]*

**Biz:** And now Shane's crying. *[Laughs.]*

00:20:32 Biz Host Yes. This—you have just spoken for every person on the planet, possibly. It is! Like, there's—I think I was talking about this last week on this show. I've spoken to like—I've been in these like group Zooms and everybody's asked, like, "What have you learned during the pandemic?" Or whatever. And I wanna say, "Banjo." But like everybody else is like, "I've really enjoyed this time off *[through laughter]* with my children." And I'm like—

00:21:00 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** "Hnn. Eh. That's not, like, my first place to go, but—"

00:21:07 Biz Host **Shane:** *[Whispering]* I—I feel like—I feel like they're all lying! I think they might be lying, but—but maybe not. Maybe, like, you just said, there is a joy about—if you are lucky enough to like the

people in your house. 'K? And this—that helps a great deal. Then there is some joy. And you're able to have these joyous moments. But at the same time, it's not better than it was when you could go take a walk around the block or like... take your kid to a place where people understood you. *[Through laughter]* Or, y'know, even have two hours a day while a kid is at daycare of more, if they're at school. So you're right. It's not better.

00:21:47 Shane Host

I don't think those people are lying. I kind of whispered they were lying. I think—

00:21:50 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**Biz:** No, I had made the same joke. *[Laughs.]*

00:21:54 Shane Host

**Shane:** I think that you—I think that you hear—I think you hear other people say it and then you just feel, like, “Well, am I a bad parent if I don't agree?” And you're 100% right. Like, and I'm sure you've found amazing joy and there's things you've learned about your children that you wouldn't have otherwise. *[Through laughter]* And maybe that's good, maybe that's bad.

00:22:11 Biz Host

Right. So... you have—you work from home. 'Cause you are an illustrator.

00:22:17 Shane Host

Correct.

00:22:18 Biz Host

So I'm gonna make a sweeping... misstatement that is probably borderline insulting. Saying, “What a delightfully easy job you have, and how great for you.” Because you can just... draw your way out of, y'know, your frustration. The stress. The isolation. And I... and it's—you—when you were talking about this before the show, you used the word “myth.” And I actually would like to explore it because we've had different artists on over the years. And it is very easy to assume that people who are artistically talented in some way and have turned that into their career... therefore also see it as a means of... like... self-care.

00:23:11 Shane Host

Sure.

00:23:12 Biz Host

Right? And I—that may be a really unfair assessment.

00:23:18 Shane Host

No! I think you're right in that there is a joy in being able to draw in these creative outlets. I would be absolutely lying if I didn't say that my job was easier than a lot of people's? Certainly I'm not going out in the world, putting myself at risk for the lives of others? But it's also a job. Like... at the end of the day, like, you can love drawing, but very few people love doing something for eight hours a day or more. *[Laughs.]*

00:23:44 Biz Host

Parenting. *[Laughs.]*

00:23:45 Shane Host

Yeah. Parenting. Y'know, parenting, y'know, it's—

*[Biz laughs.]*

Twelve-hour parenting day is better than a fourteen. *[Through laughter]* And same with art. And no matter how much you love doing it, there's real work at it. And it can be therapeutic, but at the same time, like, people say like, “Oh, these are difficult times and that brings out creativity.” No! It brings out depression like everybody else! And like maybe you can spin that. And maybe that's something you can harness. But it's just like... can you harness that into doing the dishes better? Can you harness that in—no! For the most part, we all fail in these environments and it's true for creative work, too. But it is a better position to be in than... a job that is otherwise has, y'know, real-world complications.



00:24:35 Biz Host Well, but it's—I think what's interesting is that it... I know that I have and continue to struggle finding... what used to be creative outlets that I was able to, y'know, participate in and brought me great job. Before children were in my house.

00:24:56 Shane Host Uh-huh.

00:24:58 Biz Host And... I've struggled since kids arrived in not only finding those creative outlets again, but being able to commit to them in a way that I would have in an earlier time. That I would've used as stress relief or just would have been nice and fun. And I know a lot of creative people who have struggled with that. And then we have other creative people who are like, "Oh my gosh. I had a baby and then I was just like writing songs 24 hours a day and like... art just came out of my vagina and like, it was just nonstop."

00:25:37 Shane Host Sure.

00:25:38 Biz Host But when it's related to work, I wonder, like... I wonder... what... that struggle becomes. Because, y'know, when you're tired, it's hard to do anything that you like or is even work. Even if you used to like it. How do you keep yourself motivated to even do the job part of it?

00:25:59 Shane Host Deadlines. *[Laughs.]*

00:26:01 Biz Host Oh, deadlines.

00:26:02 Shane Host So it's just—honestly, it's just the job. Like, treating it as a job. Like, treating it—'cause there are—y'know, you can have creative outlets and then you can have work and they can be the same. They can mesh well together. But if you're really gonna get things done when you're tired and you need to get it done and you need to do these other things, too, because there's the baby there and he must be fed or, y'know, at least watered once a day. And—

*[Biz laughs.]*

You— *[Laughs.]* And so you just need structure. And like if the deadline's—like, with a large project like a novel, y'know, there isn't just one deadline. There's many. And so just setting them for yourself and like sticking to that like a calendar. Like a work schedule. And that's hard to do and I don't always do it. But—and then, as you said before—finding joy. Like, just—like, finding a peace where you're like, "Oh, I actually enjoy doing this and this is why I wanna do this." And like, adding a nuance that makes you laugh. That makes you happy. Is incredibly helpful. And sometimes hard to do, but also it's a good indicator that you're not doing it right if it's not bringing you joy. 'Cause the goal in the end is—with these kind of creative endeavors, like children's books, is—among other things—to bring joy. And that should be any creative endeavor.

00:27:19 Biz Host Well, I think... that got me thinking about this other myth that I was participating in in some of my previous questions, which is that artistic work is not work? When it is. And that's almost a societal thing of, y'know, I know this is true of comedians, writers, singers, illustrators, y'know, like, artists. That there's never an assumption that it would be hard to meet your deadline because *[mocking voice]* "It's just so much fun anyway! You're just drawing!"

*[Shane laughs.]*

Right? Like— *[Laughs.]*

00:27:56 Shane Host Yeah. Have you ever had, like, an artistic endeavor that then became a work beyond, obviously, award-winning podcast and book.

00:28:05 Biz Host *[Biz laughs.]*  
I—there’s no awards. Does “soul-sucking”? I think there’s the sound of a vacuum that’s coming now that’s just like sucking... your—no. I love this. But I’m just saying like... I can imagine if I—‘cause I’ve always had those thoughts of like, “Oh, look at this. I just macrame’d this thing. Watch out, Etsy! Here I come!” I will not wanna do it the moment it becomes, like— *[Laughs.]* Something—it was sort of like my endeavor into making masks? For... the pandemic? I was like, “I’m gonna make this family some masks! Look at me! It’s a reason to sew! And—” *[Laughs.]*

00:28:43 Shane Host How many did you make?

00:28:45 Biz Host Three! And there are four of us in this family?

*[Shane laughs loudly.]*

00:29:23 Shane Host And they—they are beautiful. But. I—by the end—was just like, “I fucking hate this *[through laughter]* so much!” There is no joy in these. *[Laughs.]* So you have been working on the—here it comes, guys—Pseudonymous Bosch series since the beginning! Do you wanna talk a little bit about that? That’s—those are really fun. Like, my oldest loves that series. So.

00:29:39 Crosstalk Crosstalk Well, yeah. I mean, I adore Pseudonymous Bosch. And I actually met—I met him through his grandmother, who came in and picked up his first book at the bookstore when I was a children’s bookseller. And told me, “My grandson wrote this series.”

00:29:39 Crosstalk *[Biz laughs.]*  
**Biz:** That’s the best. That’s my mother. Was it my mother? Who had shown up? Yeah. It was everybody’s mother.

00:29:46 Shane Host **Shane:** That I’m like—that’s—it was—it was your mother. I forgot to tell you about your— *[Laughs.]*  
Your cousin, Pseudonymous. Of the Bosch family. And I was like, “Oh, that’s amazing, Mrs. Bosch!” And she’s like, “It’s a fake name.”

*[Both laugh enthusiastically.]*

00:30:13 Biz Host And so I ended up doing book events with him and we became friends and I helped just—in almost an assistant role. I played the role of his typist rabbit, Quiche Lorraine?

00:30:15 Shane Host *[Biz laughs.]*  
“Quiche Lorraine.” So good.  
*[Through laughter]* And we got talking and decided to create a series for younger kids, because they could incorporate art, which is something that I had gotten out of. I wasn’t being a professional illustrator. I was out of college and through college but had stepped away and this was an opportunity for us to work together, build a new story, and so he had always had magic and magicians as part of his thing and he wanted to do a story about a kid magician and he wanted to do a story—his daughters have no interest in his work. None whatsoever. Which is true of a lot of creative people.

*[Biz laughs.]*

And so he thought, “Maybe if I put them so that the co-leads are these twin girls that *[through laughter]* they’ll be excited.”

*[Biz laughs.]*

And they were, for minutes.

*[Both laugh.]*

And so it’s—y’know. He’s very much the writer, but we developed it together. ‘Cause the art is on every page and mixed throughout. Y’know. It’s incredibly collaborative and really a joy because a lot of illustrators do not have that relationship. As most publishing, you come in later on a project. It exists. The illustrations are called out for you. And that was certainly my role as like a textbook illustrator earlier in my life. *[Through laughter]* Uh, there’s no creative—like, you do not get to choose—

00:31:30 Biz Host

Oh my god. What textbooks did you do? Like, what was the subject matter of your textbooks?

00:31:34 Shane Host

So I worked for a textbook illustration house? So I did physics, algebra—

00:31:40 Biz Host

I love it.

00:31:41 Shane Host

I was pretty low on the totem pole? So I did a lot of math books, which would be just formatting charts. And to call that illustration is something I was allowed to do.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:31:53 Biz Host

Well tell—I do wanna get to your new series, but before that I do wanna hear about YALLWEST.

00:32:02 Shane Host

Sure! This was supposed to be our sixth year and we ended up calling it YALLSTAYHOME?

*[Biz laughs.]*

It was gonna be April 23<sup>rd</sup>, which—I don’t know if you remember back that far, but it was also bad.

00:32:17 Biz Host

Yeah. It was also bad.

00:32:19 Shane Host

And so we—y’know, we pivoted to an online platform. Which brought, actually, a broader audience, but a different audience. But traditionally it’s at Santa Monica High School every year and has been since 2015. And it’s a young adult/middle grade book festival and we bring in authors from all over the country. All over the world. And it’s grown huge! It can get up to 20,000 people.

00:32:40 Biz Host

Nice!

00:32:41 Shane Host

And it’s a lot of kids, too, which is incredible. A lot of book events tend to cater more towards craft and people who are older and trying to write books themselves, but at the YALLWEST and then there’s a YALLFEST in Charleston, South Carolina, you see a lot of the actual kids that are, y’know, marketing to, I guess, is the harshest word? But the people who these books are for. And it’s a real joy and it’s something I’m incredibly glad to be a part of every year? *[Through laughter]* And we’re anxious to bring it back next year. And so of course at Santa Monica High School—if you’ve ever

been there—it's almost its own movie set. In fact, a lot of movies were set there.

*[Biz laughs.]*

And we deal with the facilities department, who mainly sets up movie sets? And they're like, "Yeah. Well, you guys are easier than Netflix."

*[Biz laughs.]*

I'm like, "That's what we want. That's what we're looking for."

*[Laughs.]*

00:33:31	Biz	Host	That's—you should put that on your press packet. "We're a lot easier than Netflix." So— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Well talk to me about the new series. <i>The Reject Room</i> .
00:33:43	Shane	Host	Sure. So it's coming out next year, and I'm still in the process of, y'know, getting it, like, y'know. Books take a very long time from conception. Like, <i>The Unbelievable Oliver</i> series, y'know, we started that I think in 2016 and steadily progressed like, y'know, to get it to release in 2019. In this case, it should come out in 2021 and it is a series of a ragtag bunch of kids and middle school thrown into the reject room, which is a place for bad kids and underperforming kids to hide and be hid from test schools. And so the school doesn't have to deal with them. And they break out and cause a ruckus on Standardized Testing Day?
00:34:24	Biz	Host	Yes! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:34:25	Shane	Host	In order to make good, productive change at their school and a little bit of mayhem. And so it's a fun, like, kind of in the heist genre of a team of experts.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:34:37	Biz	Host	Picking their way through the school.
00:34:38	Shane	Host	Oh, fun!
			It's really a joy to write. But also, like, those are—y'know, you're really thinking about, "Oh, this plot could go to this—" And even at the middle grade level, that can get a lot to think about. But it's a lot of fun. And I think it'll be really a joy.
00:34:52	Biz	Host	Oh, I'm so excited! Well, when it is about to be released you will come back on.
00:34:58	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Biz:</b> We will celebrate it.
			<b>Shane:</b> That would be a blessing.
00:35:01	Biz	Host	When it comes back out. Shane, thank you so much for joining us!
			—
00:35:06	Shane	Host	Thank you, Biz!
00:35:07	Biz	Host	I feel like we've been trying to have you on for a while and I'm so glad we were able to. And... y'know, congratulations, again, to you and Jenn on keeping a baby alive for ten months! I think that's some impressive work!
00:35:24	Shane	Host	Yeah! I mean, we're going for 11 now and I think we're gonna make it. <i>[Laughs.]</i>

*[Biz laughs.]*

I'm so grateful to you. I'm so grateful to Theresa, who I know is—our hearts go out to her and her family. And just really happy to be here and you're doing a great job.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:35:45 Biz Host Thank you! So are you and so is Jenn and so is Ezra. Everybody's doing a wonderful job! And we're gonna have you stick around and do genius and fails with us! You lucky person, you! *[Laughs.]*  
00:36:00 Music Music "Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.

*[Music fades out.]*

00:36:18 Music Music Laid-back acoustic guitar plays in the background.  
00:36:19 Biz Promo *One Bad Mother* is supported in part by KiwiCo. This school year will be unlike any other, whether your kids are going back to school or logging on into classrooms from home. Well, we do have a little bit of help. KiwiCo sends hands-on projects to your door. They are broken into different age groups. Making the projects age-appropriate. Ellis has been getting Kiwi crates forever, as has Katy Belle.

And I just wanna say, I recently stole Katy Belle's crate. She gets things from the Maker crate series. I stole it and I made a macrame plant hanger. *[Laughs.]* And a pot! To go in it! And it was wonderful. KiwiCo is redefining learning with hands-on projects that build confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills. There's something for every kid or kid-at-heart—looking at myself, everybody!—at KiwiCo. Get your first month free on select crates at [KiwiCo.com/badmother](https://www.kiwico.com/badmother). That's [K-I-W-I-C-O.com/badmother](https://www.k-i-w-i-c-o.com/badmother).

*[Music fades out.]*

00:37:41 Theresa Host 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.  
00:38:01 Biz Host Genius fail time, Shane. Please allow me... to genius you.  
00:38:08 Clip Clip *[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]*

**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!

*[Biz and Theresa repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss their respective genius moments of the week.]*

00:38:23 Biz Host Guys, here's my genius. Katy Belle turned 11 and... I took her in for her physical. Her annual physical. Which is not usually a big deal, but during a pandemic—where one might feel going to a doctor's office *[through laughter]* is—

00:38:43 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** —unsettling—

**Shane:** Scary.

00:38:44 Biz Host We did it. We did it 'cause she was due for her round of vaccines? And so we did it! And she was very brave and I was very brave and we went in with our masks and... we—I actually—I just want to give a shoutout. They—everybody—it was so well-run. I don't think we

ran into anyone. I mean, like, we were there at the very beginning of the day so like 8:45 they screened us as we came in. Y'know, we used elbows throughout the entire building.

*[Shane laughs.]*

And there were no other children in the pediatrics area. I know that there were kids in there because you could hear babies screaming with joy from their vaccinations. And—yeah! We just—we got through it. And then we came home and burned all of our *[through laughter]* clothes. *[Laughs.]* I took a shower and then we all just—ehhh. So detoxed. But you know what? Those vaccines are still really important during this time and you gotta go in and do it and so I feel like a genius. For doing it.

00:39:57 Shane Host

It's—with, y'know, a baby like we have, we've been to the doctor a fair amount and only one of us can go. Which is this weird ostracizing thing 'cause we wanna be in this together but that's not the reality of it right now. And the mask and then—*[sighs.]* It is—it's nerve-wracking. And I am very proud of you and Katy Belle for getting through it.

00:40:17 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**Shane:** And I think that it is genius to do it.

00:40:20 Biz Host

**Biz:** Thank you, Shane! *[Laughs.]*

00:40:23 Shane Host

Thank you! Alright. Lay it on me.

*[Deep breath.]* My genius is that Ezra is finally—he started crawling and moving and standing and all this and pulling up on absolutely everything and it's impossible to keep him in one place. So I created a videogame out of my child?

*[Biz laughs.]*

Where I start him in a save screen, which is his room? *[Through laughter]* And then he's allowed to crawl and there's like little things that he really likes, like, a postal tube and a ball of yarn in-between on his way to the living room? Where he can go until he finds something that could kill him and then we bring him back.

*[Biz laughs.]*

To one. And you can kill about ten minutes each time with that thing? And it is—it feels really good. *[Laughs.]*

00:41:10 Biz Host

*[Biz laughs.]*

That... is genius.

*[Shane laughs.]*

That is really genius. I—the best I ever could come up with was turning on, like, '80s music and pretending I was a mom in the '80s? *[Laughs.]* But I really like the idea of, "This is—I am in a videogame! And these are the side quests. These are the different things we've got to do today." I love it! Good job! Good job.

00:41:37 Shane Host

Thank you.

00:41:38 Caller Caller

*[Answering machine beeps.]*

This is a genius. I am a mother of three. Six, five, and one-and-a-half. And when everything starts melting down I generally grab snacks. Oftentimes, it's the pouch. Go team pouch because you can just... kill the crying or whining faces with pouch.

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

Pre-corona, I grabbed three pouches. 'Cause I have three children. Post-corona? My genius is grabbing four. Because while the kids are calming down, my blood sugar is going up and I feel way better! I get it that I'm supposed to be eating, like, not pouches.

*[Biz laughs.]*

But! Unsweetened applesauce is a healthy snack for my kids! I don't know! I felt pure genius and I feel good! And I don't feel as stretched thin. I don't know! Thought I'd just share it with y'all!

*[Biz laughs.]*

Whatever your kid count is, add just one more. You get a little snack, too. And everything feels better.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:42:58	Biz	Host	Anyways. You guys are all doing a really good job. Hang in there. Ugh. Hang in there. Bye. Oh my god. You are a genius! You are a genius! That... okay. Yay, team pouch. Theresa's team pouch; I am team banana. Both might work in this scenario. But I—this is such a wonderful use of the pouch. <i>[Laughs.]</i> To stop the crying. And the calming down. But <u>you</u> using the pouch—this is not one you would share at the office party or a cocktail soiree. You wouldn't be like, "I had about three pouches today." Like, you're not gonna... that's not shareable information. But it's shareable with us. I think you're cool! What do you think, Shane?
00:43:40	Shane	Host	I think that's great! And I'm like—I could use a snack every once in a while and I'm not gonna make myself apples with blueberry with a little bit of cinnamon and some whole oats, all put together in perfectly—no! I'm gonna eat a granola bar or something at best. Like, no, this pouch is <u>designed</u> —  <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>  —to give the exact nutrients you need. You've hacked the system. You no longer have to provide for yourself in any way. We should all eat out of bags.
00:44:07	Biz	Host	That's right. Fuck chewing!  <i>[Shane laughs.]</i>
00:44:16	Clip	Clip	You are doing such a good job! Really are. Good job. Failures. <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>

*[Timpani with foot pedal engaged for humorous effect.]*

**Biz:** *[Calmly]* You suck!

*[Biz and Theresa repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss their respective failures of the week.]*

00:44:23	Biz	Host	Let me fail you, Shane. This is—this really isn't a parenting fail. It's just one of those, like, weird fails. And I will preface—it's okay, guys. I do—I'm just sharing this as a fail and I do not need solutions.
00:44:40	Shane	Host	Okay.
00:44:42	Biz	Host	I... <i>[Laughs.]</i> I've been slowly trying to add things to the outside of our house to make it a nice place for me to go. 'Cause I'm running—every room in our house is being taken by somebody. And so I'm just trying to find a little place for me! And so I've been trying to keep the plants that are outside alive. And I've been enjoying the front of the house more than the back of the house recently, so I wanted some bird feeders for the front. And I found these very pretty—pretty birdfeeders. They are like balls. They're like... like, think about—if a larger size would be like at a circus in which someone rode a motorcycle around and around in?
00:45:26	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Biz:</b> This is like a metal—it—no, no.
00:45:30	Biz	Host	<b>Shane:</b> Could an elephant be on this ball, or no? No. This is—That's like a—that's a ball. This is more like a... round cage. Almost. So it's like it's circular. And it's... all one piece. And it's, y'know, got little tiny holes all over it where you would pick out the birdseed, I suppose, if you are a bird. And they're red and blue and yellow and I thought, I'm gonna have these beautiful balls hanging in my front yard and I'm gonna enjoy birds. And so I discovered I don't have a lot of places to hang birdfeeders in the front of my house, but I've managed. And the only thing that has been interested in my birdfeeders is a plucky little squirrel. These are supposed to be, also, by the way, "The squirrels can't bother these because they're like round" or whatever. I dunno. It's a lie. Squirrels can do whatever they want.
00:46:21	Shane	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> They don't care!
00:46:23	Biz	Host	They don't care! And this squirrel has easily reached the red feeder. And just hangs from it, like, upside—I mean, it is providing some entertainment. And I suppose what's wrong with feeding a squirrel? But I also just want some birds and I keep finding 'em all over the ground and everything knocked out and <i>[makes whiny noise]</i> "I just want—" Stefan's like, "Put grease on it." I'm like, "I'm not gonna—no. No. No."
00:46:52	Shane	Host	Are these hummingbirds you're looking for? Or—
00:46:55	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Biz:</b> No, I just want some regular old birds.
00:46:58	Biz	Host	<b>Shane:</b> Any birds. Just—just birds. I've got a hummingbird feeder, but the hummingbird only likes to come when I've turned, like, the kid sprinkler on. Then we have a hummingbird who's like, "Water? Hot damn!" And I'm like, "There's a birdfeeder with sweet nectar in it!" Anyway. I'm—I'm—I just can't seem to get nature right in my backyard, but oh well. I do have a new friend that is a squirrel and I'm just waiting for the rats to come. Now! Please—please fail me. <i>[Laughs.]</i>



00:47:28 Shane Host So we had to take our ten-month-old's phone privileges away?  
00:47:34 Biz Host Oh yeah. That does start. Yeah. *[Laughs.]*  
00:47:37 Shane Host Not his real phone. His meeme and pawpaw—my parents—got him a—like, a toy reflective phone? That is handheld and weighs about five pounds? *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*  
00:47:49 Biz Host Is it a rotary? Is it like the old— *[Laughs.]*  
00:47:54 Shane Host *[Through laughter]* I don't—I don't know. I mean, it's supposedly a smartphone. It does play a cat that meows at you. A dog that barks at you. And it reflects our baby.

*[Biz laughs.]*

But he used it to climb on me to reach the window and then throw it at the window as hard as he could and he broke a pane of glass in our living room.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:48:20 Biz Host He was thrilled.  
Wow! Yeah. Yeah. Was that—did ya—did ya think it was just a cute little moment and you laughed, or were you initially like, "What the—!"

00:48:29 Shane Host It's even worse! I didn't know he'd done it for like a minute!  
*[Laughs.]*

00:48:33 Biz Host Oh yeah! Yeah!  
00:48:35 Shane Host And then I turned back around and I'm like, "Uh-oh."

*[Biz laughs.]*

Oh no! I've just been letting my baby get thrilled by this glass.  
*[Laughs.]* And he's right there! *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*  
00:48:50 Biz Host "Uh-oh!" That's the best thing I've ever heard, right there. That is—the number of times, "Oh... uh-oh!" That's—  
00:48:59 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Yeah. I'm with ya.

**Shane:** It was a particularly small crack with no additional glass around or anything.

00:49:04 Shane Host And then we pulled the playpen away and we pulled me away so that I was no longer a ladder to danger. And now he does—he has to find something else. He's no longer allowed rocks, basically, that he can toss at a window. *[Laughs.]*

00:49:17 Biz Host Yeah. No matter how cute they are and what noises they make. You can't do it. Also—man. Your debut rock'n'roll album better be called "Ladder to Danger." Because that's—

*[Both laugh.]*

00:49:36 Shane Host That's the most—"Dad: Ladder to Danger!" *[Sings.]*  
I'm not quite that sad dad yet, but I'll get there. I—'cause guitar is really embarrassing for an older child.  
00:49:42 Biz Host Oh, you'll get there.

*[Shane laughs.]*

00:49:46 Shane Host  
00:49:49 Caller Caller

You'll get there. *[Laughs.]* Trust me.  
I can't wait.  
*[Answering machine beeps.]*

So this is a fail. My daughter got stung by a wasp and is terrified to go outside. Which is really a problem because—pandemic! And we don't have anything to do except to play outside and watch TV until their brains rot and ooze out their ears.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:51:00 Biz Host

And so... *[sighs.]* I've been trying to be patient with her. But today it was so bad that she would not even go from the house to the car. Like, I couldn't even get her to do that. And so—and she like—I mean, she was terrified. Like, I had to drag her out to the car. And... while we were in the car, I threatened her with making her stay outside until she was okay with bugs again. And... now that I've had a little bit of time to cool down, I realize that that was really awful. And I... am a horrible parent. So. I thought I'd call and share it with everyone. You guys are doing a great job. Bye.

Well, unlike what I would normally tell you, you're actually not a horrible parent? And, y'know, this is—this is a heavy fail, but it's not... you're not... the only person who's done this. I mean, like, I've even joked on the show about the old, "You need to clean this up. You don't wanna clean this up? They're all gonna go away!" Right? And— *[Laughs.]* Like, that maneuver? Which never struck me as something that was scarring until we watched a movie in which like a really horrible mother—like a real one—like, a really bad mom—said that to her kids?

And... and like all the kids—like, all of us got kinda quiet for a second? And I was like, "I'm not gonna do that again." Right? Like, okay. Maybe... maybe that's being processed differently than I think. And I'm gonna take it all away. Or I'm gonna—you're gonna have to sit outside. My kids have also gone through the terrified-to-be-outside or terrified-to-be-in-the-tub. Y'know, Ellis right now is scared to be in his own room and I'm just like—I'm with you. It's right there on the tip of my tongue. *[Scary voice]* "Well, we are gonna sit in this room until you're not scared anymore!"

*[Shane laughs.]*

00:52:54 Music Music

Like... your child is not the only one who's in a pandemic right now? You are under a tremendous amount of stress and anxiety and pressure. And that's just on the best day with a kid in your house. So like... I—the guilt is real and the bad feeling is 100% real. And that's why it's a fail, because we realize when we make mistakes. But you're actually—you're doing—you're doing alright. You're okay. You're doing like a horrible job, but not in the way that you think you are. *[Laughs.]*

"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.]*

00:53:18 Music  
00:53:19 Biz Host

Cheerful ukulele with whistling plays in background. *One Bad Mother* is supported in part by Booknicks, a teacher-facilitated, interactive subscription box and online book club for middle-grade readers. A curated selection of books for different reading and developmental levels is offered every month, along with big idea questions, weekly emailed reading guides, and monthly activities that corresponding with the theme of the book to help readers engage more deeply with the material. Katy Belle received her first Booknicks book at the beginning of last month. It turned out to be one of her favorite books, and she's been really enjoying the projects that went along with the book.

They sent with it origami paper and a little note and at the end of the month, for this particular book, they learned origami and it just helped tie in with the themes of the book and what was happening. It was incredibly interactive, which makes the reading so much more engaging. Like I said, at the end of the month, children participate in an interactive, teacher-led virtual book club with teachers and other students from around the country. Get 20% off your first month at [Booknicks.com](https://www.booknicks.com) when you use the promo code "bad20" at [Booknicks.com](https://www.booknicks.com).

00:54:44 Promo Clip

*[Music fades out.]*

**Music:** Gentle, upbeat piano music.

**Helen Hong:** Hey, J. Keith.

**J. Keith van Straaten:** Hey, Helen! Hey, you've got another true/false quiz for me?

**Helen:** Yep! Our trivia podcast *Go Fact Yourself* used to be in front a live audience.

**J. Keith:** True! Turns out that's not so safe anymore.

**Helen:** Correct! Next. Unfortunately this means we can no longer record the show.

**J. Keith:** False! The show still comes out every first and third Friday of the month.

**Helen:** Correct! Finally, we still have great celebrity guests answering trivia about things they love on every episode of *Go Fact Yourself*.

**J. Keith:** Definitely true.

00:55:14 Promo Clip

**Helen:** And for bonus points, name some of them.

**J. Keith:** Recently we've had, uh, Ophira Eisenberg plus tons of surprise experts like Yeardeley Smith and Suzanne Somers.

**Helen:** Perfect score!

**J. Keith:** Woohoo!

**Helen:** You can hear *Go Fact Yourself* every first and third Friday of the month, with all the great guests and trivia that we've always had. And if you don't listen, you can go fact yourself!

**J. Keith:** That's the name of our podcast!

**Helen:** Correct!

**J. Keith:** Woohoo!

[*Music finishes.*]

00:55:34 Promo Clip

**Music:** Rhythmic percussion and bass.

**Speaker 1:** I listen to *Bullseye* because Jesse always has really good questions.

**Jesse Thorn:** What did John Malkovich wear when he was 20?

**Speaker 2:** [*Laughs.*] I don't know how to describe it!

**Speaker 3:** There's always that moment where Jesse asks a question that the person he's interviewing has not thought of before?

**Speaker 4:** I don't think anyone's ever said that to me or acknowledged that to me and that is so real!

00:56:07 Biz Host

**Jesse Thorn:** *Bullseye!* Interviews with creators you love and creators you need to know. From [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) and NPR. That was such a pleasure to talk with Shane. I—if you or your children have not yet been introduced to *The Unbelievable Oliver* series from Pseudonymous Bosch, go check it out. It's wonderful. Ellis—who is now six—we're just about to start the latest in the series just because it's that perfect combination of illustration on a page and a chapter book? And it's such a wonderful, fun series to get into. So definitely check that out. And as soon as *The Reject Room* comes out, we will get Shane back on here to talk about that, too! Speaking of series. [*Laughs.*] One of the long-running series on *One Bad Mother* is listening to a mom have a breakdown. So let's settle in... and check it out!

00:57:09 Caller Caller

[*Answering machine beeps.*]

Hi, *One bad Mother*. It is 2 o'clock in the afternoon and I'm drinking a beer. Now that might sound like a genius or a fail, but it's in fact a rant. I am a teacher of young children and I have a one-year-old son at home and I am really struggling about going back to school this year. My school district is planning on offering a virtual teaching and in-person teaching. And I know other people think different things, but I do not think it's safe. And I am convinced that I am going to bring home COVID and kill my son and husband. And... I am aware that I'm an adult and a mother and a teacher. And I'm supposed to be able to be rational. And I think that I might be crazy!

But that's my reality, I guess. I just... don't know what to do. And I wish that I could make the decisions about what's gonna happen and not other people. I have not slept all week because I am just so anxious about what's going on. And... if I'm forced to be in person in my classroom? I might just quit. And then I need to find something else to do because we need the money. Thank you for listening. I feel like I can't really express these thoughts to many people. And the people I do express them to, like my husband, friends, get tired of listening. And don't know how to fix it, either. So... I just needed to rant. You're doing a great job. I don't know if I am.

00:58:54 Biz

Host

Well, you are doing a good job. You are. And... that is one of the reasons that the Hotline is there. It's—sometimes we just need to like vomit out what's happening? Y'know? For us? *[Sighs.]* This is such a part of this experience. This... global pandemic that we are going through. Is... y'know, how do we talk about our fears and our concerns with others when everybody has fears and concerns? Y'know? We've touched on that a couple of times. Y'know, like, I'd rather accept the worst-case scenario and it makes me crazy when somebody's like, "It's gonna be over in a week." And then I have to realize that that person who's getting by by thinking it'll be over in a week wants to murder me. *[Laughs.]* Because of my more gloom-and-doom perspective.

And the same goes with returning to school or learning remotely. Teachers have children. Lots of the time. *[Laughs.]* You're in a situation right now that not only forces you to have to think about your own health and safety, but the health and safety of your family. And the health and safety of the kids that you teach! And this—everybody's going through this, regardless of their job. If your job is having to go out—whether you're a lawyer and you've got to be in an office or you need to be in court; whether you're a doctor; whether you—it doesn't matter! If you are out around people daily, in close contact, that fear of getting it and bringing it home and passing it on is a real fear. Same for people who have multigenerational families living in their house. People who need to visit their own parents. Okay?

So—*[sighs.]* You're not crazy to have that fear. If you are, then I'm married to crazy. Because, y'know, Stefan 100% believes that if he goes out—I mean, he's working it out. He's going—we're starting to trade off the grocery shopping duties because of how much anxiety it can produce for us. But that he's gonna get it and bring it back and die. *[Laughs.]* So just like... I'm—he's rational. I'm rational. I'm a very rational person. But I do get it. Every time I go out... for... something that we need in the house, and we—again—have limited this to almost nothing. I still come home and think—is this the day? We went to the doctor's! We went to the doctors! Sick people are at the doctor's!

Like, without a pandemic... there are lots of times we went into the doctor for a physical and came out sick *[through laughter]* because there were sick kids there. Right? Like, that's how that works! And... like... I did. That whole day I thought, *[makes nervous noise]* Did we bring it back in? Did we—y'know. It is... it's anxiety. It's fear of the unknown. And... once again, you're being put in an incredibly

01:03:41 Biz

Host

difficult situation in which people are making decisions for you? That you may not agree with? Which then presents a whole new series of decisions and challenges. Where there are still no good answers. But you're doing a remarkable job? You're doing a remarkable job. I'll listen to you tell me that you're going crazy over and over again. It's totally fine. No judgment. 'K? You're doing... remarkable. And... I appreciate you as a teacher. And I really do hope that a resolution will come for you that will work. I really do. Everybody? What did we learn today? We learned that we are still on this submarine voyage of self-quarantining through an ocean of pandemic. Guys. Just... keeps going. When are we going to get to resurface? I would really, really like to know. And it's so weird because—[sighs.] It's starting to feel normal? Right? Like... it doesn't—like, ugh, I hate that! 'Cause it's still not normal. School is coming back. I—y'know. Choices are really difficult to make. Aaaaah! But sometimes escaping into a good book with your kids can be helpful. For example... we learned that the wonderful series *The Unbelievable Oliver* series from Pseudonymous Bosch—illustrated by our wonderful, patient, kind— [Laughs.] guest, Shane Pangburn—is one of those books that you can use to get away with.

And I was—also appreciated Shane reminding me that just because your job involves your art doesn't make it any less of a job. And I think especially right now when we're all working from home—or many of us are still working from home—man. It can be very easy to slip into the, "Eh, is this really work?" Or letting other people define what your work is? It's work! Mm-kay? So... I appreciated him being willing to discuss that.

You are all doing a remarkable job. You really are! And you know what? I actually hear a lot on the Hotline and I so appreciate this 'cause it serves as a reminder for me. I've been getting a lot of woos and check-ins and I love that. And a lot of the check-ins involve people saying, "You know what? At the moment, I am doing okay." And we get to also do okay during this pandemic. Okay? You are entitled to do okay! You are our—this is definitely a time in which, like, the concept of doing it at someone? Or somebody is doing it at you? Is really ramped up. Y'know, I can't... we're not at a place where we are gonna do like a babysitter or somebody coming in. 'K? But I know other people who can and have. And they are not doing that at me. Right? They are—that is the choice that they need to make for their family for it to work right now. Just like our choice is ours.

The fact that we're not is not doing it at the people who are. Right? Us not doing it is not a judgment saying you shouldn't have done it. And their choice is not a judgment that we should have. We've got to remember—each family needs to make decisions that are best for them. Okay? And we need to respect those decisions and just know that for as unknown as it all is? Their choice doesn't have to be one that you also have to make. Okay? Like, it—everybody's just making the best choices for themselves and their family that they can right now. So do not feel bad about your choices. Because they are all really hard? And don't feel bad if you've made choices that feel like, y'know, a luxury! Good for fucking you, man! Good job!

Okay? We're not doing it at each other. It's just—ugh. Beat that into our heads. Because you're all doing amazing. You're all doing amazing. And we are gonna continue to get through this. And we will continue to be here as long as the pandemic and hopefully well beyond the pandemic. *[Laughs.]* I will talk to you guys next week. Bye!

01:08:09 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*

01:08:34 Biz Host

*[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]*  
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01:09:03 Theresa Host

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

01:09:26 Speaker 1 Guest

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

01:09:29 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

01:09:30 Speaker 3 Guest

Artist owned—

01:09:31 Speaker 4 Guest

—Audience supported.