

00:00:00	Biz	Host	Hi. I'm Biz.
00:00:02	Theresa	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.
00:00:25	Biz	Host	<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i> This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> , you are not alone! Because your college-age kid is living in your basement. We talk to author and cohost of the podcast <i>Tiny Victories</i> , Annabelle Gurwitch. Plus, Biz has something lurking in her pantry!
00:00:39	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz and caller: Wooooo!
00:00:42	Caller	Caller	Calling with a check-in.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			I have a cheesecake in the oven, which is like... yeah! I'm feeling pretty good about that! A little context and backstory to my cheesecake, though; I did actually buy my graham cracker crust—like, a premade graham cracker crust—back in, like, oh god. March or April? I think it was early on in the lockdown. And I was panic-shopping at the grocery store, grabbing whatever I could grab off the shelves.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			And I saw graham cracker crust and thought, "Oh, I can make a cheesecake! Since we'll be home." And I bought it and <i>[through laughter]</i> I've never made a cheesecake before—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			—but it seemed like a good idea at the time. It's now October. Like, end of October. So however many weeks or months it's been, that crust has like been sitting there on my counter for this whole time. And I have—it's taken me this long to get all of the ingredients in the house at the same time? Which is like—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			—not that many ingredients, you guys. It's like cream cheese, eggs, sugar, and vanilla. I think that's it. Like, that's it. But yeah. Have all four of those at the same time in the right quantity? It's just taken me a little while! But I did it! So yeah! I have a cheesecake in the oven right now and I feel like I'm doing... a pretty good job today. And so are you! Thanks for the show, guys. Bye.
00:02:17	Biz	Host	Wow. I... love you. I— <i>[Laughs.]</i> I... really like the fact that—well, A, you're doing a very good job. Just the fact that you have a cheesecake in your oven. And I'm assuming that means you're not pregnant. "She's got a cheesecake in the oven!" Anyway. Why is it a bun? It could be a cheesecake. Or like, a strudel. Anyway, the fact that when the pandemic began... in terms of shutting things down in March, that you thought "I need this graham cracker crust

pie crust, because that's—I'm gonna make a cheesecake during this very short pandemic that we're about to have." And now it's *[through laughter]* nine months later? Maybe more. I don't know. I don't use time anymore. And— *[Laughs.]* You're just now making the cheesecake... this is so symbolic, I think, of like everything. Of all of us. The beginning of the pancake—the beginning of the pancake.

Guys? Let me try that again. The beginning of the pandemic, "I'm gonna start, y'know, making bread!" Or "I'm gonna start, y'know, canning things! I'll start a garden! I'm gonna make a cheesecake! I bet I'm gonna—" Whatever. Whatever it was, we all have things still sitting in our pantry. *[Laughs.]* That we have not pulled out or put in the oven. So I think you're remarkable and I think that was a really good check-in that you just gave me and I wish I... had cheesecake in my oven! I don't. I would've probably just eaten the graham cracker crust pie shell. I would've done that! That is delicious to me.

Guys? What's also delicious to me is thank-yous. And it's *[singing]* time for the *One Bad Mother* thank-youuuuus! *[Regular voice]* Sorry about that, guys. Alright! *[Laughs.]* Thank you, health care workers. You are amazing. You are essential. You are neck-deep in it right now as this second surge is growing. And I know that so many of you are now in places where things are really out of control, and... you are not getting a lot of down time and you are faced with some very difficult things that you have to witness every single day and night. And... I really appreciate that you are there. And I really wanna say thank-you to everyone who supports the medical industry, whether it is data entry; whether it is... janitorial services. Supplies. Shipments. All of it. All of it is needed to make it all work. And like so many things, sometimes we only see one part of it and we kind of stop thinking about it there? When the experience we're having is tied to roots that go much deeper.

00:05:27 Biz

Host

So thank you, thank you, thank you to—I'm never gonna stop thanking the postal service. Thank you for all you did during the election! Woo woوو! And for continuing to deliver my mail. *[Laughs.]* That's great. Thank you to teachers. You are really doing a good job. Wow. That's... it's too much. And—oh, god. I just could go on forever about teachers, but I'm gonna stop now. Thank you. Thank you, everyone. Thank you everyone who is out there listening to the experts. Believing in science. Taking care of themselves and others. This isn't just about taking care of you; it is about protecting those around you that you know and that you don't know. So thank you, thank you, thank you for being kind. You're all doing a really good job.

I... also have something lurking in my pantry. *[Laughs.]* I—she just made me think of this. I don't have a lot going on, guys. This is definitely one of those weeks where—if you were to say, "What'd you do this week?" I'd be like, "I have no idea. Has a week passed? I don't know. Didn't I just record yesterday?" I don't know, guys, what has happened *[through laughter]* in the last week. We're all still here, as is a can of Trader Joe black olives that—I can't even remember the recipe that I was gonna put those in? And why I thought, like, canned olives might be better than fresh? I don't live in a place where there are no olives. There are—like, if I—y'know,

any place I go to get a can of olives probably has an olive bar. Be it safe or not. Or a fresher option for olives. But they sit there in like the very back corner and—just waiting for me to use them. *[Laughs.]* And I refuse to get rid of them. I will come up with something to do with these olives, guys! Sometime before the pandemic is over. Which means I got lots of time!

Speaking of lots of time, it's really easy to feel that you are alone right now. It's very isolating. But good news—you're not alone. Because there's a good chance you've got kids in your house and they're also not allowed to leave the house. Or better yet, your college-age kid is living in your basement. And I think that's gonna tie in nicely to what we're gonna talk about today with Annabelle Gurwitch of the podcast *Tiny Victories*.

00:08:05	Music	Music	Banjo strums; cheerful banjo music continues through dialogue.
00:08:06	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> .
00:08:13	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.
00:08:18	Theresa	Host	Nothing we say constitutes <u>professional</u> parenting advice.
00:08:21	Biz	Host	Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.
00:08:25	Theresa	Host	Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

[Banjo music fades out.]

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

00:08:31	Biz	Host	This week, we are welcoming Annabelle Gurwitch, who is the author of <i>I See You Made An Effort</i> , a New York Times Bestseller and Thurber Prize finalist. <i>Wherever You Go, There You Are; You Say Tomato, I Say Shut Up. [Laughs.]</i> And <i>Fired</i> . She was the long-time host of <i>Dinner and a Movie</i> on TBS, a regular NPR contributor, <u>and</u> has written for <i>The New Yorker</i> , the <i>New York Times</i> , the <i>Los Angeles Times</i> , the <i>Wall Street Journal</i> , and <i>Hadassah</i> . Her new book— <i>You're Leaving When?</i> —comes out in March 2021 and she also cohosts the podcast <i>Tiny Victories</i> on the Maximum Fun podcast network! Welcome, Annabelle! Wooo!
00:09:18	Annabelle	Guest	Hello! Thank you! Thank you so much for having me here!
00:09:22	Biz	Host	Not only welcome to the show, but welcome to the MaxFun family!
00:09:26	Annabelle	Guest	Thank you. I have been stalking Jesse Thorn and MaxFun for years and <i>[dramatically]</i> finally I wore them down with my tiny podcast. <i>[Regular voice]</i> I mean, that's the whole thing! It's a tiny show. It's 15 minutes or less where—I like to say—we try to give people reasons to get from their night pajamas into their day pajamas.

[Biz laughs.]

00:09:51	Biz	Host	It is spectacular. I have enjoyed all three of the very first episodes.
00:09:56	Annabelle	Guest	Aw!
00:09:57	Biz	Host	That are out, and we will talk about that more. But first, I wanna ask you what we ask all our guests: who lives in your house?
00:10:06	Annabelle	Guest	I am currently sharing my home with my offspring. 22 years old. Recent college graduate, COVID Class of 2020. They are living the dream—

[Biz laughs.]

—back at home. In a childhood bedroom. Living with mom. Can't go out anywhere. No place to go. Can't get a job. Nothing happening in town. We're just sooo—it's so much fun! We're having—
Is it great? *[Laughs.]*

00:10:37 Biz Host
00:10:39 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Annabelle: *[Through laughter]* Oh. It's a—it's a treat. *[Laughs.]*

00:10:42 Annabelle Guest
00:10:45 Biz Host
00:10:48 Annabelle Guest

Biz: It's so great. You are so lucky.

You are so lucky. *[Laughs.]*

It is so awful.

You know what's funny? We have yet had the opportunity to talk to somebody in this particular setup, and I'm very excited to make some sweeping assumptions.

00:11:01 Biz Host
00:11:03 Annabelle Guest
00:11:04 Biz Host
00:11:05 Annabelle Guest

Okay, hit me. Yep.

Are you ready?

Uh-huh.

Okay. I'm going to assume they love seeing you every day and they come up and they're, like, making you breakfast. They're like—

[Annabelle laughs so hard that anything she tries to say is inaudible.]

—“Mom, let me do your laundry.” How's that? Is that good? Am I on it? That's one. That's assumption one. Stop—something's wrong with Annabelle!

00:11:25 Annabelle Guest

Okay.

[Biz laughs.]

I'm just—I was laughing but then that turned to tears. I'm gonna just say—I, too, had this fantasy. That when my kid came home, that—their preferred pronounces are they/them/theirs—so Ezra would come home and be like, “Hey, mom. I wanna do these chores around the house.” Y'know? And y'know “You've taken care of me—” No. Okay.

[Biz laughs.]

So let me just say within one week of their arrival back at home, it was like so obvious that this was really difficult. That I decided I needed to go on vacation. So I packed my overnight bag. I went downstairs. Locked myself in the guest bedroom *[through laughter]* and said—

[Biz laughs.]

“There's no one here by the name ‘Mom.’” And then Ezra would like yell, “Mom! Do we have turkey in the house?” “I don't know! I'm on vacation!” “Mom, the sink's not working!” “You'll figure it out! I'm on vacation!” Finally I got this knock on the door, like a timid knock, like—*[knocking lightly]* tentative, “Mom?” And I was like, “Oh, is it turn-down service? My hotel here?” Yeah. Ezra opens the door, gives me a hug, and says, “Mom? You're the best mom in the whole world. And I think you're having a psychotic break. I'm really worried *[through laughter]* about you.” *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

But then we ended up—I thought of a way for us to end up, like, working out some of our aggression. Some of this mom rage pandemic stuff.

00:13:10	Biz	Host	Yeah, let's just stop. I wanna just take this quick break 'cause I really wanna be there with you. And like—basically... I know if— from my own personal experiences of many, many college attempts, and various roaming about and being 22 at some point, that was probably not a time in which I was checking in a lot. And I knew a <u>lot</u> about <u>everything</u> , by the way. And I was really with it. And... so to suddenly—like—the idea of being home—suddenly, after college! Like, after being a full-on grown person—that—like there's a whole level of adjustment of like how you <u>see</u> each other. Right? Like—
00:14:02	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: Right? Like—
00:14:05	Annabelle	Guest	Annabelle: Well, it goes from like small issues to large issues. So first of all, I don't know if you know the lingo.
00:14:08	Biz	Host	I probably don't.
00:14:09	Annabelle	Guest	[Inaudible] Like, I'll walk—I'll come out in public. Y'know, "public" these days means "in the living room." Like, "Oh, I'm going to the public square—my living room." And Ezra will say, "Mom! What's with your drip?" Okay, that means—
00:14:28	Biz	Host	My drip?
00:14:30	Annabelle	Guest	Your outfit. "How's my drip?" Means, like, "What's your—"
00:14:33	Biz	Host	I'm like, "Do you think I'm on my period right now? Get out of my house!" I'm like, "How's my drip?!"
00:14:38	Annabelle	Guest	Yeah. No. Other language, which is like "Mom, the drip!" So it's like everything I wear is visually offensive. Like I have committed a crime against sight. Like, 'cause I have clothes on because my kid wears sort of like a marshmallow... shapeless... being? Like a sci-fi version of like—I don't know if you saw that movie where it was like the aliens came to earth but they were kind of like jellyfish? What was it called? <i>Arrival. Arrival.</i>
00:15:13	Biz	Host	Oh yes. <i>Arrival.</i> Okay.
00:15:14	Annabelle	Guest	Like, formless—that's what my child looks like. And if I wear things that resemble clothes, I just get this like—so first of all, the judgment is hideous. And then there's like the hygienically challenged part of it? Like, I have different standards than a 22-year-old.
00:15:34	Biz	Host	Do you think yours are higher or lower at this stage of the pandemic? [Laughs.]
00:15:38	Annabelle	Guest	Let's—I mean, first of all, variable. However. Like, in the bathroom I don't wanna wade through a sea of hair.
00:15:48	Biz	Host	No. Ugh. Ugh!
00:15:51	Annabelle	Guest	Like, that is not my goal. No! No! But 22-year-olds don't notice this stuff. They just don't see it. And then things like, okay. They have the responsibility of taking the garbage out. The garbage comes—I mean, I take nothing for granted. I'm so thrilled the garbage actually gets picked up on Thursdays at like 7AM. So usually they wait 'til 6:59AM to put it out. Which means I am stressing out because we're home so much. We have <u>so</u> much stuff! It's like—
00:16:27	Biz	Host	You also have <u>lots</u> of opportunities to take the trash out before 6:59! It's not like you're coming in late from work! [Laughs.]

00:16:34 Annabelle Guest Yes. No. It absolutely has to wait 'til the last minute. I mean, this week—sure enough—6—okay. I'm exaggerating. It was 6:58.

00:16:44 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Oh, you're a monster! God.

00:16:47 Annabelle Guest **Annabelle:** 6:58. And—and—
I just went out, I'm like, "I'm fucking doing it myself." So I'm outside. All of a sudden, Ezra streaks out in their underwear. Y'know. And by the way, it's light out. So other neighbors are out doing it too, and there they are, like, "Oh, I'm going to help you with that, mom!" "Oh, thanks! Thanks, half-naked person who is, y'know—oh, thank you. So helpful. Really appreciate it." So y'know it's just like sort of a—and then it's just like, they just don't want to be... like... y'know, it's too much contact. That whole point was they were gonna come home. That was the plan. Come home, save money. But they never anticipated being in the house so much. Y'know?

00:17:31 Biz Host Yeah. No. That's—that is... I think that's it. But I have to ask, because it sounds like such an opportunity... now that they are old—y'know, when you have younger kids and you kind of wanna fuck with them—now, I grew up in a house where my parents—there were no limits to the weird stuff that would be completely unacceptable now. But now everybody's like, "Eh, maybe that one's—maybe one's—maybe one kid's a little sensitive. I've got another one who's this." Right? And then—but now that that kid is 22, that kid's sturdy. That kid's a—you could really mess with this kid now. Like, you could walk—like, for the fact—if he's constantly complaining about your clothes, you could just come out naked and say "Is this good?" And then like—right? Tell me you're having some fun.

00:18:21 Annabelle Guest 'K. First of all, you're talking to someone who—for the first, maybe 15 years of my kid's life, I tried to convince them that the cat was their sister who had gotten stuck in a Halloween costume—

[Biz laughs.]

—and the zipper had grown over.

00:18:38 Biz Host All the way to 15! That's pretty impressive.

00:18:42 Annabelle Guest Well the thing was, was they were like a complete stoner at 15. They are a sober person now, but at 15 it—you would think it would've stopped. But because of the sort of weed habit at that moment, there were moments when they just really wondered whether or not it was true. But when they were really little, I would catch Ezra looking for the zipper on the cat. It just goes—actually, I wrote about some of those stories in another one of my books. But at this point, are we—oh, I—I can't! I can't. I can't really say we're having a—I can't. I can't do it. But—

00:19:20 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Say it! Say it.

00:19:21 Annabelle Guest **Annabelle:** But—there—okay. Okay.
Well let me just say, there are a couple things that are highlights. For one thing is, I have a big backyard. And when they were little we played every day after school, kickball. Right? This kickball went on for years. But when they were coming home from college, I got a badminton net. Badminton is the best!

00:19:43 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Annabelle:** It's so stupid! *[Laughs.]*

Biz: *[Screaming]* We're doing it, too!

00:19:46 Biz Host But we're not even playing it with a net! Like, I just—we had some like birdies laying around? And then I was like, I'm gonna get these badminton, y'know—we literally have two rackets and some badmintons and since the pandemic began, my daughter—who's 11—and I go out and we just hit it at each other and now it's like... morphed into the most competitive, like, she'll hit it just right at my feet and she'll be like, "That counts." And I'll be like, "Oh, yeah? Well then this counts." And then like I hit it as hard as I can. So it's very therapeutic. It is so much fun!

00:20:21 Annabelle Guest It is so much fun. I also think it's fun because—I mean, I know that there are actually like competitive badminton teams? But basically, you can't do right or wrong. It's just... fun! So that has been fun. And also they played for so long with their friends that there's like holes in the backyard. Like, they dug through the grass and so I really wanted to, y'know, like, provide that. And then—actually—we recorded an episode of *Tiny Victories*—it hasn't aired yet—about—I took Ezra. We went to a smash room. Or a rage—have you heard of those?

00:20:59 Biz Host Ohhh! I've heard of those. Are those available during the pandemic?

00:21:02 Annabelle Guest Well, okay. It is pandemic entertainment. They still are open because when you go, you have to be covered head-to-toe. You wear *[inaudible]* shield and gloves and so, y'know, you can put a mask on. It's kind of like, well, it was made for this. So you go to this place and there's a place—I drove out to like the hinterlands on the edges of Los Angeles. We get to this place and it's like a pawn shop in the front. Like there are all these items that you can smash.

[Biz laughs.]

00:21:41 Crosstalk Crosstalk Like vases and plates and mugs. There's like a "Keep Calm and Carry On" mug. I'm like, "Ooh, I want that one—" **Biz:** Oh, I want that. I want that one. Yeah.

00:21:44 Annabelle Guest **Annabelle:** Yeah, exactly. Right? And we went in. We were issued baseball bats. And I think it was a tire iron? I don't know. I've never really seen a tire iron.

[Biz laughs.]

00:22:07 Crosstalk Crosstalk And then we went into a room and we smashed things! And y'know, I'm not gonna say it was like we changed anything in the world, but it was satisfying. I'm not gonna lie. **Annabelle:** *[Inaudible.]* It was!

00:22:08 Biz Host **Biz:** That is satisfying. *[Laughs.]* Let's pretend that this is a show that helps people. Was there anything that you guys actually figured out as a way to survive any of this? I mean...

00:22:19 Annabelle Guest Oh, boy. Y'know? *[Laughs.]* I— *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

Not really. I wanna be really honest. I would like to tell you that we have, but first of all—one thing I think is really important. If you have

an open plan style house where, y'know, you have like... rooms that sort of like just move into—get out of there now.

00:22:45 Biz Host Yeah. Not good. Not good.
00:22:47 Annabelle Guest Not good!

[Biz laughs.]

I mean, the only thing that saves our life is like doors. Y'know? Having doors and like just being able to shut the door and also there's something that I really do believe in, and that is low expectations. If you lower your expectations, you will always be happy. Now, who can do that entirely? But—I—if I can manage to have lower expectations of them, I mean... and I can sometimes work up an empathy? Not always.

00:23:21 Biz Host Yeah. Not always. No.
00:23:24 Annabelle Guest Because I'm paying the bills!

[Biz laughs.]

But when I can work up the empathy to think how hard it is for kids of every age right now. I mean, so hard.

00:23:33 Biz Host I know. It does suck. It really sucks.
00:23:36 Annabelle Guest Yeah. And there is—okay. One more thing. There is one other thing that we do do together, is—I got us hooked up and this is—you'll laugh at this, I think. I got us hooked up with a local group. We make lunches on Sundays for people who can't afford lunch and food in the pandemic. So it's an activity that we do together and we make the lunches and we put them in the paper bags. We deliver them to the—where we live, it's the Hollywood Food Coalition. And they distribute them. And then your kid gets to say to their friends, "Oh yeah, I'm making lunches for people who are food insecure!" As if they thought of it. As if it was there idea. As if they were paying for it! But it gives them like street cred. Yeah.

[Biz laughs.]

00:24:29 Biz Host Actually, I love that. That is actually a wonderful way to spend some time 'cause like... we talk on the show a lot about the fact that it's really hard to make decisions now. There aren't really good decisions? Like, even if you make a decision—

00:24:45 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Annabelle:** Okay, yeah. I'm gonna tell you about a decision. Yeah. Here's a decision—

00:24:49 Annabelle Guest **Biz:** —they're not like, "Woo!" Right. Okay. —that we have just made in my house.

[Biz laughs.]

When I say "we have made," I have made unilaterally. Okay?
[Laughs.] So okay. This is gonna... it's sad. But it's bittersweet. Okay? So we just lost a pet. Okay? We—

00:25:05 Biz Host It wasn't—I mean, it wasn't their sister, was it? *[Laughs.]*
00:25:08 Annabelle Guest Oh, we're a couple cats beyond that. But yeah. We said goodbye to Ezra's sister. So *[sad voice]* we lost a cat.

00:25:16 Biz Host Oh.
00:25:17 Annabelle Guest Something happened to our cat. He just got really sick all of a sudden and we had to say goodbye to him. And I love—this cat has

been my pandemic boyfriend. 'Cause I'm single, and let me just say—I've spent a little too intimate time with that cat.

[Biz laughs.]

It's kind of like out of control. So I am bereft. But Ezra's also bereft because this is his childhood pet. Their childhood pet. Right? This is the cat they grew up with. I mean, it's really upsetting. So... we had to make this decision, but it was just so hard to make—and so I had to decide, "Okay, this is what—"

00:25:55 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Biz: We have to—

00:25:58 Annabelle Guest

Annabelle: But we sort of came to a conclusion about that.

00:26:04 Biz Host

But then... I started looking for kittens. I'm like, "I need kittens!"
Kittens, Yeah!

00:26:06 Annabelle Guest

And Ezra has said to me a couple days ago—'cause this is all in the last few days. "I'm not ready for kittens." And I said, "Okay. Okay. I'll wait." And then I decided—I can't wait. I need kittens! I need kittens.
[Laughs.] Kitten comfort.

00:26:23 Biz Host

How many kittens are in that house now?

00:26:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Annabelle: 17. *[Through laughter]* Kidding! No, I—

Biz: 32. Whaaaat?! 32. 17. Give or take. Doesn't matter.

[Both laugh.]

00:26:34 Annabelle Guest

I'm gonna go meet some kittens, y'know.

[Biz gasps excitedly.]

00:26:36 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Biz: Ohhh, kitten meeting! Kitten meeting! I have three cats—

00:26:42 Biz Host

Annabelle: Like... two. Like two. Two. I know! I know!

00:26:45 Annabelle Guest

—in this room right now. So yeah.

I've seen them and I was like, yeah. But Ezra said, "I'm not ready for them." And I said, "Okay." And then I came downstairs the next day after we decided that and I said, "I'm overruling you. I'm getting kittens." And we're gonna have to do another show where we check in about this? Because—because here's the thing. Ezra said, "Well, I just want you to know, you can go ahead and get kittens but I'm not going to have any part of that."

[Biz laughs.]

00:27:19 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Biz: I—let me write my—

00:27:20 Biz Host

Annabelle: You're gonna tell me—

I'm gonna write down my predictions. And put 'em in a jar. Bury them. And then we'll pull them back out and see! Now I have to say—get ready for this segue—buckle up! That sounds like a tiny victory.

[Annabelle laughs.]

00:27:44 Crosstalk Crosstalk

My friend. So let's talk about the new podcast! *Tiny Victories*. 'Cause it really actually does sound like a tiny victory?

Annabelle: Oh, you're right! You're right!

Biz: To me, that's my idea of a tiny victory.

00:27:48 Biz Host Though—‘cause we have on the show genius and fail moments. Where people like, y’know, because as a parent no one really gives a shit what you’re doing? Like, if your kid slapped you can’t share that with somebody and expect them to be like, “That’s amazing.” Right? And if you fail, though, however, everyone will look at you and tell you how horrible you are. So we like to celebrate this. And then I go listen to *Tiny Victories*, thinking, “Woo! I’ll take more of this!” And it’s like... it wasn’t necessarily like an action. Like a victorious win. It was this—your, like, first episode is about like—what was it? It was studying the—

00:28:31 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** It was like an archaeological, paleo—yeah! The cave paintings! Yeah! *[Laughs.]*

00:28:39 Annabelle Guest **Annabelle:** Paleo—yeah. It’s a rethinking of the cave painting drawings. And a kind of redemption for human nature. But everything that we—every show is devoted to—it could be something we’ve heard about or something we’ve experienced. Like, today we just recorded a show about something I thought I would never take pleasure in. But it fits with the tiny victory idea. Which is—during the pandemic, people have developed hobbies they’ve gotten really good at? But what I consider a tiny victory—‘cause I’m a real Type A person. When I do something, I have to do it better and I have to make it a thing. Is I’ve found things that I suck at. That the world doesn’t need.

[Biz laughs.]

00:29:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk And I’m never gonna make money from, but I love doing. Like I’ve—I call that “puttering” because that’s lower—**Biz:** Oh, puttering! That’s a—puttering. She’s in there, puttering. Yeah. Yeah. Puttering.

00:29:37 Annabelle Guest **Annabelle:** Puttering! Yes! Puttering, right? So some people are gardening and making food supplies. I am planting things and then accidentally pulling them out thinking they’re weeds later. I suck at it. I’m not in any sense gardening. No. I’m below gardening. I’m puttering in the garden. And it’s a tiny victory for me to do something that I don’t have to get better at. That I don’t have to be good at. That I’m not gonna make money from. So if I can spend, like, an hour a week and do that, that’s—for me—a tiny victory. When I’m not pushing myself and—oh, how great am I and can I make the best sourdough loaf in my side of town?

[Biz laughs.]

00:30:28 Biz Host Can I turn my kitchen into a bakery? Am I launching a business? A pandemic business? I mean, am I winning the pandemic? Are you winning pandemics? Nope. You’re puttering.

00:30:32 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Annabelle:** I’m puttering. And, y’know. Yeah. Right. Right. I know. I know.

Biz: Oh, this sounds like a new podcast right here! *Puttering. Puttering with Annabelle. [Laughs.]*

00:30:38 Annabelle Guest Yeah. It's just—the idea would have terrified me before. And the whole idea of tiny victories is—when this pandemic started, it just seemed like any really—and also—I mean, really.

00:30:51 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** All of life.

00:30:53 Annabelle Guest **Annabelle:** Even before this. It's just gotten harder and harder to be like, looking for these huge wins. And I feel like the thing that really sustains me are small mercies. Like, and just—and appreciating that! Y'know? I feel like it's a really underserved idea and it sounds good, but how do you do it? So the idea of the podcast is that Laura and I—my cohost, Laura House—we are cultivating this frame of mind where we try to notice these things so that then we can enjoy it. Because, y'know, we're also all moving so fast or so slowly. I mean, it works both ways.

[Biz laughs.]

And not—you're either in like a malaise—a dazed malaise—or you're moving so quickly you're frenetic. I mean, particularly if you're a parent. It's like, grrr, so fast! Like, when do you have that moment? And so we have a tiny victory hotline and if I can give that number out—

00:31:54 Biz Host Oh, you give it out and we will load it onto the notes so people can call it. Yes. Give it out!

00:32:01 Annabelle Guest It's so much fun. And actually—'K. Here's the tiny victory hotline and I wanna share a call we just got. I'll tell you what the person said. It was so great. So the number for the tiny victory hotline is 323-285-1675. That's 323-285-1675. And if you call and you can leave a message, like, it's a minute long 'cause we want to play it on the show—is only 15 minutes long—we got a call from someone named Theo. Theo said that they were saving up—they're 18 years old. They're listening to our show. They're saving up for a tattoo since they were 15. They finally got the money when they had a car accident and they took the side mirror off the car and now they have to give the money to their mom. And they can't get the tattoo.

But they feel good about doing the right thing and I'm like, "Oh my god! This is every mom's dream!" And this is like—I was like, "I just love this tiny—" And they said, y'know, and Theo said, "And when I do get the money, I'll appreciate it even more 'cause I will have worked for it." I mean, I just like—oh my god. And they were taking that time to recognize that they had sort of done something that they felt was the right thing. And in their moral code. And they thought it was a victory for their nature. For them at 18 to do that. I was like, oh my god, that's so cool.

00:33:36 Biz Host The added level to that as a listener would be... this victory that not all people suck. Right? That like—that people are out there and maybe—maybe it's okay! Maybe we're okay. Annabelle? Thank you so much for joining us today. And thank you for becoming part of the MaxFun family and the *Tiny Victories* podcast. If there was ever a podcast that our listeners could easily fall in love with, this would be it! They have to sit through like a hour ten with me! But like fifteen minutes is a joy! And we also like to call and leave messages online, so that's good. We look forward to the new book. Let us know when that's coming out. I like that it's just coming out sort of—

00:34:37	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	I like that it's coming out the exact time we went into lockdown a year ago today. Annabelle: <i>[Sighs.]</i> Yeah. I know. I know. I know. It's crazy. Oh yes! So true. So true.
00:34:47	Annabelle	Guest	Biz: Just—don't—don't miss out on that publicity. Y'know. That's great! <i>[Laughs.]</i> Well and you know what? We'll be in touch 'cause I'll have to tell you how many days, minutes, hours, seconds, Ezra has resisted kitten love.
00:34:57	Biz	Host	Yeah. Maybe we'll just do like a quick check-in.
00:34:59	Annabelle	Guest	Okay. Okay. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:35:01	Biz	Host	On next week's podcast. Just be like, real quick. Just call. Whatever we need to do. Alright. Thank you so much! We'll link everybody up to where they can find out more and they can hear the show, so yayyyy! <i>[Claps.]</i> Thank you.
00:35:13	Annabelle	Guest	Oh, thank you! Byeee!
00:35:16	Biz	Host	<i>[Singing]</i> Byeeeee!
00:35:17	Music	Music	"Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.
00:35:34	Music	Music	<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:35:35	Theresa	Host	Laid-back, cheerful ukulele and whistling plays in background. <i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by StoryWorth. Gathering friends and family for Thanksgiving might be challenging this year, but that doesn't mean we can't <u>feel</u> close with a chance to tell their story and share memories using StoryWorth.
00:35:48	Biz	Host	Every week, StoryWorth will email your family member different story prompts, like, "How has your life turned out differently than you imagined it?" I liked asking my parents questions like, "Who was your first love? Was it each other?"
00:36:06	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i> Theresa: Just trying to start shit.
00:36:08	Biz	Host	Biz: I don't know. I'm just trying to start stuff. But for real, when you think—as a parent—when I think about all the things my children <u>do</u> not know... and may <u>never</u> know about me!—I'm like, "Oh, I get it." <i>[Laughs.]</i> There's probably a lot of "don't know" about my parents. So StoryWorth is a great way to get those conversations going? And—after one year, StoryWorth will compile <u>all</u> of the stories, including pictures, into a beautiful keepsake book that's shipped out for free.
00:36:42	Theresa	Host	Give your loved ones the gift of spending time together wherever you live with StoryWorth. Get started right away with no shipping required by going to StoryWorth.com/badmother . You'll get \$10 off your first purchase. That's StoryWorth.com/badmother for \$10 off.
00:37:03	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.

00:37:23 Biz Host Wellll... genius fail time, everyone! It's my favorite time of the show and the week because I get to lay eyeballs upon the lovely Theresa Thorn!

00:37:36 Theresa Host I'm—hi. I'm starting to get so used to how you look on screen.

00:37:42 Biz Host Ugh. Yeah?

00:37:45 Theresa Host I feel like it's gonna be—no, you look great!

00:37:47 Biz Host No, thank you.

00:37:48 Theresa Host It's everyone. Everybody looks like slightly... fuzzy.

00:37:52 Biz Host Yeah. Fuzzy. Yeah.

00:37:53 Theresa Host Y'know? So when I see you in real life—I hope I do someday—I'm gonna be like, "Oh, yeah! This is what Biz actually looks like."
[Laughs.]

00:38:02 Biz Host Do you think we'll be able to recognize each other, or will we have perhaps gone... like... blind from staring at screens all day?

00:38:11 Theresa Host That's a good question! It remains to be seen. We don't know what the results of this pandemic will be.

[Theresa laughs.]

00:38:20 Biz Host Something to add to the list of possibilities. *[Laughs.]* Genius me, Theresa!

00:38:27 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.]

00:38:42 Theresa Host Okay. So... this was something that should have been obvious, but wasn't. But running races on the street in front of the house with my kids. Like...

[Biz laughs.]

I wouldn't have thought to do this because I'd be like afraid that somebody would leave. *[Laughs.]* Or...

00:39:07 Biz Host Just go out for milk and never come back.

00:39:08 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Any of 'em could. Right! All. *[Laughs.]*

Theresa: Yeah! Just keep—just start racing and then just keep going. *[Laughs.]*

00:39:14 Biz Host Just—what is that? Gump style. Forrest Gump. Just never stop running.

00:39:18 Theresa Host Yes! Exactly. But we are like at the point now where people are... and when I say people, I mean young people—are feeling like more regulated and more happy to be around home and like more able to follow rules that they couldn't follow before. And this was one of our therapists who had this idea of like, "Oh, yeah! Let's go out—you wanna run races in front?" And I was like, "Oh god. Ohhh god." Like, ugh!

[Biz laughs.]

Like, I—there's so many things about this that just make me like—can I just not go? I don't wanna be a part of this. It's so stressful to me. *[Laughs.]* I know. And sure enough, it was great. And it's now

like a thing that we do, even when the therapist is not around. Where like if people are kind of... y'know... shifty and have energy—and it's not like we have so much time that we could go on an outing—I can just say, like, “Do you guys wanna run races in front?” And a lot of times they say yes and we do like a few races and we have a distance that—like, we know where the boundaries are and we know where we like to race to. And it's so great because the kids are running full-out. Like, they're using all their strength and their energy and they really get their energy out! Like, really well, really fast. So... it's been awesome! It's actually been kind of fun, also.

[Biz laughs.]

00:40:51 Biz Host So. Hey. Running races.
You are doing a good job running races! That is a really good job!
Good job!
00:40:58 Theresa Host Thank you!
00:40:59 Biz Host Alright. Just to show you the level of genius—like, where I'm at in the world—I could not think of a genius. And then Stefan says to me—I said, “Stefan! Have any geniuses?” And there's a bit long, “What did we do this week?” There's a lot of that. And then suddenly he goes— *[Laughs.]* “Chickpeas!”

[Theresa laughs.]

And I was like, “Chickpeas?” He's like, “Yeah! You've started using chickpeas in everything and it's delicious!” And I was like, you know what? I'm gonna take that. I'm gonna take chickpeas as my genius. Guys? I have never really had chickpeas unless they were like in a hummus or I was out somewhere. I didn't grow up in a chickpea house. And like even in New York salad bar days, I was like, “What are those? I don't even know what that is.” Y'know?
00:41:47 Theresa Host I knew what they were but I never selected them. Yeah.
00:41:50 Biz Host I was like, “Why would I do that?” But I'm trying to like make meals out of the cans that we've got everywhere and like I have started—
00:41:57 Theresa Host You've just got cans of chickpeas everywhere.
00:41:59 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** Those cans are just every— *[Laughs.]*

Biz: I—now I do 'cause I've— *[Laughs.]*
00:42:03 Biz Host One mistake at the grocery store. I have learned how to cook things with some chickpeas and they were delicious!
00:42:10 Theresa Host That's so cool!
00:42:12 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** They were good!

Theresa: I feel like this is more—
00:42:15 Theresa Host This is a real genius. Because it's trying something different!
00:42:18 Biz Host I tried something different and—I mean, no one else in this fucking house will try anything different.

[Theresa laughs.]

00:42:28 Theresa Host But I did, and it was chickpea delicious. So—
00:42:29 Biz Host So great.
00:42:30 Theresa Host Chickpeas, everybody! *[Laughs.]*
Chickpeas. Good job, Biz.

00:42:34 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

I think that I have a genius. I have two highly musical children because their father is a musical adult person. And so we don't get our children fake instruments—like, kid instruments—we give them real—like a real keyboard and a real microphone. And my kids have trouble listening in the morning time. But just now I asked them a question into the microphone with the—real microphone, with it turned on—

[Biz laughs.]

—so my voice is loud. And said, “Just so you know, if you need me, blah, blah, blah.” I don't know. And then they responded! The first time! The first time I asked them a question, they responded and said, “Yes.” And they never do that! Like, it usually takes me three or four times. And they responded the first time! So I'm using that microphone any time I need them to cut it out and do what I'm asking them to do. We'll see if this continues. IT probably won't. But for now, it's a genius. You're doing a great job. Thank you.

00:43:46 Biz Host You are a genius. There—I gotta tell you, the first thing that comes to my mind is how you worded it—“They are musical. And their father is musical.” And it insinuates that you are not musical. To me, it's like there's definitely a narrative being told here *[through laughter]* about what's in the house. And I love that you embraced the microphone. Right? Like—

00:44:18 Theresa Host You're like, “I can do this, too. I can use it for what I need to use it for.”

00:44:21 Biz Host Yeah! *[Through laughter]* Watch me take your love of music and twist it!

[Theresa laughs.]

00:44:31 Theresa Host Into hardcore parenting rock'n'roll! Is this thing on? *[Laughs.]* I also think— I also think the idea that it will stop working—while there's some truth to that, I also think you've just opened the door to a whole realm of new possibilities. I mean, you could just do a quick, y'know, just play something really quick on the keyboard—like, it doesn't even have to be an actual song, but just use music to get their attention.

00:44:55 Biz Host Maybe you're a standup. Maybe you could try out all kind of new material on your children when they need to cut it out. Right? Like, you could try—they could be not listening and you could be like, *[deep, scary growl.]* And they'll be like, “What is that?!” And you'll be like, “I dunno. I didn't hear anything.” I think... I think you've got a lot of play happening with this mic.

00:45:18 Theresa Host Yeah. It's great.

00:45:19 Biz Host You are doing a great job.

00:45:20 Theresa Host Good job.

00:45:21 Biz Host Failures!

00:45:22 Clip Clip *[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]*

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

[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.]

00:45:28 Biz Host

Fail me, Theresa.

00:45:30 Theresa Host

Okay. So we have talked in the recent past about the snacking that's taking place during the screen—the school Zoom. Whatever. Whatever it is.

00:45:40 Biz Host

Any amount. Actually, it's not even the screen, really, with Oscar. It's any time he's doing schoolwork or supposed to be doing schoolwork? He needs to have like a hundred snacks right in front of him.

00:45:41 Theresa Host

[Biz laughs.]

And so it's really out of control! And I had the idea of gum and was like, gum is great. Because maybe it'll—like, I've heard that it can actually help people focus and maybe it will give him something to do, and he really likes gum. So it's like a special treat. So I bought, just, like, a big thing of gum. Like the kind that I know that they like. And—but I—

00:46:22 Biz Host

Like, Halloween amounts of gum? Like a big—

00:46:25 Theresa Host

I bought one of those—I bought one of those packs. That's like in—

00:46:29 Biz Host

Ah. That's got multiple—

00:46:31 Theresa Host

Yeah. It's got like, it probably had like nine packs of gum in it or something. And I—but I was too depleted to like... be in charge of it? Like I think I just like wanted it to work—

[Biz laughs.]

—and didn't wanna think about it. And so I just like put it out.

[Laughs.]

[Biz laughs.]

00:46:53 Biz Host

Like chicken feed, but with gum. Yeah.

00:46:56 Theresa Host

Yeah. I just let anyone have gum that wanted gum in their rooms. They could have their own stash. They had it—there was like some in the kitchen. There's some on their desks. There's some in—like, under their pillow. Like there was just so much gum and I was like, they're gonna be able to handle this, right? 'Cause I was thinking—worst-case scenario, they're chewing it whenever they're doing schoolwork but—or not eating. But it's like one at a time, right?

00:47:22 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Biz: That's the worst-case scenario? *[Laughs.]*

00:47:25 Theresa Host

Theresa: But it wasn't take—

Well—it's—so I was just—I just was not thinking. This is why this is a fail! I was not thinking it through. I was like, "This will be fine." What ended up happening was, they became... power-crazed.

[Biz laughs.]

By all the gum that they had access to. And they started chewing many pieces of gum at a time. Like, they quote-unquote "discovered" that they actually like four pieces at a time way better than one at a time. And so there was just like—and the gum

wrappers were just everywhere. And just everybody was just eating—just chewing all this gum! Just nonstop. And it would—we just went through the gum. I mean, it was out of control. And as I was seeing it happening, I was too tired to rein it back in. I was just like, well, this will play out. And I just won't buy more.

[Biz laughs.]

00:48:19 Biz Host Well that's a little genius nugget hidden in the midst of all of that!

[Theresa laughs.]

I like the idea that your kids were “discovering” things about themselves. They're like budding scientists. Learning all about themselves. I also—

00:48:33 Theresa Host They were really excited to share that insight with me.

00:48:35 Biz Host Yeah. That—

[Theresa laughs.]

I like— *[through laughter]* I also just like how much fucking gum is all over the house. You're doing a horrible job try—I mean, 'cause I—ha, ha, ha, trying to solve a problem. It really is a—'cause this is where I am, as well. It's the like... somebody's gonna ask me something and I'm gonna say yes, or worse—I'm gonna suggest a thing. And then I'm not gonna follow up or put any of the energy that needs to happen to help it work. And then that just spirals out into something much larger that I would then have to deal with. Yeah. I'm... wow. Amazing!

00:49:23 Theresa Host Mm-hm!

00:49:24 Biz Host Mm. Okay.

[Theresa laughs.]

You know how... I like a schedule. We're a schedule family. I mean, everybody who listens to this show knows this. We have the kids—as babies, they thrived on schedule. As toddlers, thrived on—we got sleeping schedules and bedtime—we like a schedule. And scheduling during the pandemic has been very important. Right? For everybody's sanity. And the thing that we have not been scheduling at all is any sort of regular hygiene.

[Theresa laughs.]

For the kids. Now I've said often—we just don't wash Ellis's hair. He just hates it. And I—they hate it and I—we rarely do it. I just keep cutting it. More and more. But Cat... Cat's older now. Cat used to like to shower every day! If they could. And now it's like, once a week. And... that's not... good.

00:50:32 Theresa Host That's not enough, probably.

00:50:33 Biz Host That's not good enough. It's not—it's not good enough. And I mean that's just part of the scheduling things. There's also a lot of this happening? In the middle of the day—“Cat, how you doing on your schoolwork?” “Great!” “Got anything outstanding?” “Just a little math!” “Okay. Great.” “I'm gonna do it la—” “Okay, great.” Then nine o'clock rolls around—*[panicky voice]* “the right pages of math and I'm a failure!” *[Regular voice]* And I—ehh, blah, blah. But we do

have movie nights scheduled. And we have when— *[Laughs.]*
When the kids can play the Switch. Scheduled! So—

[Theresa laughs.]

00:51:10	Theresa	Host	I'm doing great, guys.
00:51:12	Biz	Host	You're doing okay.
00:51:14	Theresa	Host	That's alright. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:51:15	Biz	Host	It's okay.
			Everything's upside-down in the pandemic!

[Both laugh.]

00:51:20	Caller	Caller	<i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i>
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Hello, bad mothers! So... this started as a genius. I put the kids in front of the TV because—hello, quarantine! I got coffee. I bought donuts yesterday. Put one on my coffee. It's a chocolate sprinkle one. Delicious. Sitting outside. Throwing the ball for the dogs. Enjoying one of the last good days of fall in my state.

[Biz laughs.]

And... eating my donut. Y'know, the frosting is falling off on my lap and it's—but it's delicious and throwing the balls for the dogs and I look down at my lap and there's—I've finished the donut and I look down and there's some chocolate just sitting in my lap and I put it in my mouth and it is not chocolate. It is dirt. From throwing the ball for the dogs. So... the rest of the genius—so this is a fail. *[Laughs.]* It's just—it was a tricky fail. *[Laughs.]* It was one of those moment where I put the dirt in my mouth and thought, "Yeah. Yeah. This is—"

[Biz laughs.]

"This is right."

[Biz laughs.]

Well you guys are doing a horrible job. And— *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

00:52:39	Biz	Host	In the way that you're actually doing amazing. And I hope you didn't eat dirt today! Like I did! Have a good day. <i>[Through laughter]</i> Bye.
00:52:43	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	The question really is, we're not sure if we've eaten dirt today. Theresa: It's so true.

00:52:44	Biz	Host	Biz: I mean, like that's— That's the question I think we all have to ask ourselves. Yeah. Or better yet—
00:52:49	Theresa	Host	Or just how much.
00:52:51	Biz	Host	I was gonna say " <u>Avoid</u> asking ourselves."
00:52:54	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: Oh yeah. Absolutely.

00:52:56	Biz	Host	Biz: Because there comes a point— —where—does it help knowing?
00:52:59	Theresa	Host	No.

00:53:00	Biz	Host	I don't know if it does. I really liked your fail because... it was that acceptance of, like—I've done that. Right? Like you put it—I've done it with the cat food. Not on purpose. But like I clean something—y'know, like you're cleaning at the same time and then like maybe you touched it but like whatever and you're not really paying attention and you're fucking tired and it touches your mouth. It's like in there. And you're like... huh. Like, did anybody see it? Does anybody <u>care</u> is really the question. The answer is "no." Will anybody be impressed by this story? <u>No</u> .
			<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i>
			And then you're like, "Well what do I do?" Just go on. You just go on.
00:53:43	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: Yeah. Just move on. Yeah.
			Biz: Move on.
00:53:46	Theresa	Host	I really liked your acceptance about the dirt. I liked how... you were just like—you were just accepting that like things fall apart. Like you still had those genius things. You had the coffee. You had the donut. You were throwing the ball—I mean, all those things still happened, and it just happened to end with a mouthful of dirt. Which—
00:54:03	Biz	Host	As most things do. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:54:05	Theresa	Host	Yeah! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:54:08	Biz	Host	Also, thanks for telling us we're doing a bad job! That's very validating.
00:54:11	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: Thank you! I liked it, too!
			Theresa: I know! I liked that! Yeah!
00:54:14	Biz	Host	Well, you also are doing a horrible job.
00:54:16	Theresa	Host	Yep.
00:54:18	Biz	Host	We'll teach you the handshake later.
00:54:20	Music	Music	"Mom Song" by Adira Amram. Mellow piano music with lyrics.
			<i>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.</i>
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:54:42	Biz	Host	Inspirational keyboard music plays in background.
00:54:43	Theresa	Host	<i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by Billie. Self-care and routine are more important than ever. Whatever you're using to get ready for the day should make you feel amazing!
00:54:54	Biz	Host	Meet Billie! When you want an extra-smooth shave, use Billie! Just the other day, I had someone very close to me text me and say, "Do you really use Billie? Is it any good?" <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i>
			She listens to the show. And I am so pleased that I could say, "I actually do use Billie, and it actually <u>is</u> worth it!" When I do find the time to shave my legs.
			<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i>

00:55:28	Theresa	Host	<p>It gives me the smooth—I don't have to go two or three times over the same place—and trust me, I'm giving that razor a workout. Plus, their new limited-edition bundles make the perfect gift <u>and</u> come wrapped and ready. So go to MyBillie.com/mother. It's just \$9 to get your starter kit, plus free shipping always. Go to MyBillie.com/mother. That's spelled My-B-I-L-L-I-E.com/mother.</p>
00:55:53	Promo	Clip	<p><i>[Music ends.]</i> Rachel McElroy: Congratulations! You've won a ticket to attend an exclusive opportunity in a relaxing environment with two lovers. <i>[Laughs.]</i></p> <p>Griffin McElroy: Wow! Well this sounds like a sort of... proposition of sorts, but really it's an ad for our podcast, <i>Wonderful!</i> It's a show we do here on Maximum Fun where we talk about things that we like and things that we're into.</p> <p>Rachel: I'm Rachel McElroy and you just heard Griffin McElroy and we are excited for you to join us as we talk about movies and music and books!</p> <p>Griffin: Things like sneezing. Or... the idea of rain.</p> <p><i>[Both laugh.]</i></p> <p>Rachel: Can you get news or information you can use?</p> <p><i>[Simultaneously]</i> Rachel: I don't think so! Griffin: Absolutely you cannot!</p> <p>Griffin: Because we're here to talk to you about pumpernickel bread.</p> <p>Rachel: You can find new episodes on Wednesdays.</p>
00:56:37	Promo	Clip	<p>Gruff announcer voice: So catch the waaaave! Music: Laid-back drums and synth.</p> <p>David Letterman: I can remember as a child thinking it was odd that here was this can full of meat.</p> <p>Jesse Thorn: I'm Jesse Thorn. This week, on my show <i>Bullseye</i>, David Letterman—on shame, regret, and canned hams.</p> <p>David: Is this the best delivery version of pork?"</p> <p>Jesse: That's this week on <i>Bullseye</i> from MaximumFun.org and NPR.</p>
00:57:05	Biz	Host	<p><i>[Music ceases.]</i> Guys? It's time to cuddle up close to Theresa—or whatever Theresa substitute you might have nearby—and let's listen to a mom have a breakdown.</p>
00:57:17	Caller	Caller	<p><i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i></p>

I was gonna say this is a rant and I think it's actually more *[tearfully]* of a mom having a breakdown! I just—*[sighs.]* I just feel like I can't talk to anyone about this shit because everybody has their own problems. I can't pile any more on my husband. I am like... he's already doing so much. Like everyone else has all of their own shit going on and it feels like too much to pile it on and just like, we're both professors working from home, mostly, but not all the way at home. Two-year-old and a four-year-old not in childcare because of, y'know, a pandemic. And like a kid with heart defect and me with like asthma and a bunch of shit and it just... there's just all of that and then also like I just want *[tearfully]* ten minutes where there's not a small child tugging at me or screaming at me or *[whiny voice]* whining at me *[inaudible]*. *[Regular voice]* Or like adult—

00:58:24 Biz Host The call got cut off. *[Laughs.]*

00:58:26 Theresa Host Yeah.

00:58:28 Biz Host But. We understand. *[Laughs.]*

00:58:33 Theresa Host Yeah. You—you said it. You had—you could've said more, but we got it. We got it.

00:58:40 Biz Host Oh ho ho! Loud and clear. Y'know—*[sighs.]* First of all, you're doing a great job.

00:58:48 Theresa Host Yes, you are!

00:58:49 Biz Host Okay? You know what's funny about the pandemic? Nothing. But I'm gonna say it in a quippy sort of way. What's funny about the pandemic is, it's almost impossible to try and explain why it's hard and put any order to—like, it used to be you guys would—we would have people call and they'd be like, "I don't feel good and this is really sad and everything's upsetting" and then like right before the hang-up, they're like, "My father died." And I'm like, "Wow! You coulda led with that. And that would—" But now, there is no good one to lead with! There's incredible stress at work. I don't know where that would come on the list. It's enough on its own. You've got very young children in your house that—like—they can't do stuff on their own! *[Laughs.]* That's not how old they are! That is also a thing. One of them has heart issues? In the middle of a pandemic? That's enough. You have asthma in the middle of a pandemic that attacks the lungs? That is enough. Those are all enough! And then—

01:00:03 Theresa Host I mean, it starts—right?—with the pandemic. Like, the fact of the pandemic for all of us is where it starts. Right? Like that is enough to call in about. Like, the anxiety...

[Biz laughs.]

01:00:21 Biz Host —is there! Because of that already.

01:00:21 Biz Host Mm-hm.

01:00:23 Theresa Host And then all of these layers.

01:00:25 Biz Host Right!

01:00:27 Theresa Host Above and beyond just the regular parenting layers.

01:00:30 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Which—the parenting layer—right! Which were—

01:00:33 Biz Host **Theresa:** And like marriage layers and like... yeah.

01:00:39 Theresa Host —in their own right enough. Of a reason. To call in.

01:00:41 Biz Host Yeah.

01:00:41 Biz Host Because it's too much! And the question that really stands out to me is the one of... basically, "Where am I supposed to put my

stuff?” Right? “Where am I supposed to put my emotional stuff?” Because this is, I think, a really easy place to be. Like, in our own minds. Of... it’s so much. I don’t know how I’m supposed to get through this. I know that probably sharing would help, but I’m also keenly aware of how difficult everybody is having a go at it right now. So I should probably sit on it, which then—as the queen of sitting on things and shitting diamonds all day long—it doesn’t—

01:01:32 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** That doesn’t help!

01:01:35 Biz Host **Theresa:** It doesn’t get better! Yeah!

01:01:48 Theresa Host It doesn’t get better! And it’s a really good question that we’re all stuck with right now. “Where am I supposed to put this?” And I don’t necessarily—Theresa, do you know where I can put it? *[Laughs.]* *[Laughs.]* Well I actually have something to add to what you’re saying. Because I think part of it is like, “Oh, my—y’know, my husband has so much going on, too. I don’t wanna like burden him or—” whoever you would normally go to, all of these people have their own shit. I think part of it is us being aware of not wanting to add to other people’s stuff. But I think the other part is—when we’re feeling so much and we’re so sensitive and emotions and anxieties are running so high? We don’t want to open up about how we’re feeling unless it’s to somebody that we know is going to be able to receive that in a way and respond in a way that will make us actually feel better.

And like when I look at the people are me who are my support system, I know they love me. I know they have my back. I know they deeply care about what’s going on with me. But I don’t necessarily know that like—if my—like, y’know, if a friend comes to me saying they have such-and-such going on, I’m taking a deep breath and saying like, “What can I say here? Because I can’t take this on right now.” I can’t really be their person ‘cause I can’t—I don’t have somebody doing that for me. Like, I don’t—I’m not okay, either. So like— *[Laughs.]* It’s really delicate, I think!

01:03:09 Biz Host It is delicate. But that makes me wonder, like, is there room... to... for both people to be able to—to state what their boundary is in that situation?

01:03:23 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Right? Like—Like I wouldn’t—

01:03:26 Biz Host **Theresa:** Yeah! Like, I think so. Yeah.

01:03:40 Theresa Host I know that if I came to you, even though knowing all that’s happening and that you’ve got a load on you—like if I came, I could say “I’m going to—I need to unload somewhere to somebody who understands me.”

01:03:42 Biz Host Yeah. Yes.

01:03:56 Theresa Host “I don’t need anything.” Right? And you can say, “I will—I have the space to listen. I can’t give you anything.” Right? Like that could be a helpful way to do it.

01:03:59 Biz Host I think so. Yeah.

01:04:11 Theresa Host Because the thing that we should avoid is assuming no one can take it. That you’re not allowed to. And that’s where I think the danger lies. So.

No, I think it’s true! I think—but I think this is a real... thing that’s holding a lot of us back. Is that we don’t feel safe sharing and we don’t—we’re worried about burdening those that we love! So like... if we’re all feeling that way, I totally agree with you, Biz. We can all

help each other by saying like, “Yeah, I’m a wreck. But I want to hear what’s going on!” Like—

[Biz laughs.]

01:04:37 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Like, “I’m here for you. I might—” Yeah.
Theresa: Like, “I’m here for you now.” Yeah.

01:04:40 Biz Host

Biz: Yeah. Sometimes we just need to hear—
—that said. Like, that opening. To others. Right? Like...

01:04:46 Theresa Host

Totally. Totally.

01:04:49 Biz Host

So it—*[sighs.]* Look. You are doing a good job.

01:04:52 Theresa Host

Yeah. You are.

01:04:53 Biz Host

The Hotline can handle anything. It can hold all the stress. It can hold all the rants. So you can always call and use it. You’re not alone. And... y’know, you really are doing a good job in incredibly impossible circumstances. And everything you’re feeling is completely valid.

01:05:17 Theresa Host

Yes. All of that is true.

01:05:19 Biz Host

Theresa? *[Singing]* It’s so nice to see you! *[Regular voice]* Theresa? Thank you for coming and doing genius and fails with me. And... doing rants. I think you’re wonderful. And I hope you have a really good week! You’re doing a great job!

01:05:44 Theresa Host

Thanks, Biz! I... *[long pause]* think that you’re doing a really good—
[Laughs.] Sorry. *[Laughs.]*

[Both laugh at length.]

01:06:02 Biz Host

Biz? Thank you for everything that you’re doing and for being my friend. And I look forward to seeing you soon.

Oh yes. Guys? What did we learn today? We learned—as always—the importance of celebrating the small things! The little moments! The little geniuses! And... the tiny victories! We need it. We need it now more than ever. ‘Cause it actually is really easy to get stuck just seeing some of the bad. I was talking to my therapist today and I was telling her that Cat recently was struggling with math and then somehow that spiraled into this whole narrative about not being good at anything. And I was so reminded of the fact that like how one—one incident that we are struggling with—like, one thing we find ourselves pushing against? Can open the door for that narrative to come in. That, y’know. Uhh! I forgot to get such-and-such at the store! I’m so forgetful. And then the narrative leads to—I don’t even understand why people wanna hang out with me! Right? Like— *[Laughs.]* It goes fast!

It’s much—the positive narrative is like trying to get up a hill sometimes while the negative one just like snowballs down the hill as fast as it can. And so that is why we really should be celebrating those little moments and not—I don’t mean like in a Hallmark-y kind of way. I mean, like, yes. I am going to build on this. This was good. Right? Like, I—I did this. Or I saw this. And that was good. Now what can I add to that narrative that is good about me and those around me? So, y’know. I—and that was just really fun talking to Annabelle. That was—I just felt like I was a person again talking to somebody. We also learned that it’s alright to have something

hiding in your pantry that you haven't used, and in fact, you don't ever have to fucking use it if you don't want to.

Guys? We are still in the middle of a pandemic. I feel like three months ago it was very easy to say how weird it is to feel like caught between things feeling normal but you know that nothing's normal? And nine months in, that feeling's even weirder? Like, hearing the number every day go up of cases in the country and knowing what that looks like? Like, knowing that that is not good and that hospitals are filling up and that people are really sick! And yet at the same time, it's back to that, like... "I'm in my house and looking out my window and everything looks lovely! Things aren't that bad!" Like, this is a real mindfuck. And maybe kids are in school. Maybe they're not. Maybe things are opening up where you live or maybe things are about to get closed back down. And winter's coming.

Guys? It's just a time that we need to get prepared for! We need to start collecting those tiny victories and those genius moments like nuts! Like we're like squirrels stuffing our faces, our cheek pouches, with nuts for the winter! Right? And just really try to remember that you're doing a good job! You're doing a remarkable job! There is so much that you are trying to balance right now. And it's hard and... it's... y'know. Sometimes lonely. And isolating. And sometimes it feels like no one gives a shit but that's not true? I give a shit. Theresa gives a shit. And your fellow One Bad Parents give a shit. And probably more people than you know give a shit. So let's start really, really clinging to those tiny moments. Let's start working really hard on the better narrative for ourselves. And let's just remember to be nice to each other and ourselves. Because you deserve it! Y'know? You don't have to do it all by yourself. I see you. You are amazing. And I will talk to you next week. Bye!

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

01:10:30 Music Music

*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*

01:10:54 Biz Host

[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]
We'd like to thank MaxFun; our producer, Gabe Mara; our husbands, Stefan Lawrence and Jesse Thorn; our perfect children, who provide us with inspiration to say all these horrible things; and of course, you, our listeners. To find out more about the songs you heard on today's podcast and more about the show, please go to MaximumFun.org/onebadmother. For information about live shows, our book and press, please check out OneBadMotherPodcast.com. *One Bad Mother* is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to MaximumFun.org/donate.

01:11:24 Theresa Host

01:11:46 Biz Host

[Music continues for a while before fading out.]
A cheerful ukulele chord.

01:11:47	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
01:11:49	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:11:50	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:11:51	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.