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|----------|---------------|--------|--|
| 00:00:00 | Biz Ellis     | Host   | Hi. I'm Biz.   |
| 00:00:02 | 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.  |
| 00:00:25 | Biz           | Host   | <i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i><br>This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> —being a part of the sandwich generation can be a hard bite to swallow! We talk to Adrienne Day about the chaotic circle of caregiving. Plus, Biz is tired of all the "help."   |
| 00:00:38 | Biz           | Host   | <b>Biz and caller:</b> Wooooo!   |
| 00:00:42 | Caller        | Caller | That was cathartic. I'm... I'm okay. I'm... this is gonna turn into a little bit of a rant, I think? 'Cause I'm so tired of hearing the phrase "It's up to you" about everything these days? 'Cause everything is, y'know, a loaded decision? Nothing is easy for anyone, I know. And I'm being asked by family about Halloween plans—or not Halloween. I don't even know. That just happened.   |
|          |               |        | <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>   |
|          |               |        | Holiday plans. That's where I'm going. And I don't want to do anything! I don't want to travel anywhere! I can't! I mean, none of this... is any better. Nothing has changed. It's worse! So stop saying, "It's up to you, but I really want to see my grandkids" or with my husband, like, "It's up to you, but I really think we should go." I don't wanna travel. And it's not up to me. None of this is up to me.  |
|          |               |        | <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>   |
|          |               |        | Like, at—fuck. If it was up to me, things would be so different! I mean... I don't understand why anything is being phrased as "up to me." 'Cause this is not. Not something that I wanna do. And I'm not cancelling holiday plans <u>at</u> anyone, but I think that we need to cancel holiday plans! I think everyone should! And I'm not judging the people who aren't. I'm sure they're making the best decision that they can. But it's not—it's not up to them. None of this is up to anybody. It's just something we have to do, and I wish that my family would stop making these decisions up to me so that when I make them, someone's always mad. |
|          |               |        | <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>   |
| 00:02:24 | Biz           | Host   | <i>[Sighs.]</i> Okay.<br>Oh yeah. You circled right around and honed right in on the target—it's up to you to be the asshole. <i>[Laughs.]</i> That's what it's up to you to be. That is why everybody—you are right. It's up to you... like, that actually—I think I was okay with "It's up to you" a while ago. Pre-pandemic. And I'm okay with "It's up to you" not followed with "...but." Right? Any time <u>anything</u> is followed with "but," that means whatever option or thing they were saying or giving to you before the but? Is about to be eliminated. "I love you, but..." <i>[Laughs.]</i>  |

“Look. I am enjoying this, but.” Right? “It’s up to you, but I think whatever answer you come up with is going to be crushingly disappointing to all of us concerned and you don’t love us.” So yeah.

This is—you’re right! It’s not up to anybody right now! And people are passing that buck off on you. And that, like—it’s sinister! It’s a little sinister and sneaky, isn’t it? And I—I don’t know. I think you’re right, and I—*[sighs.]* I think what “It’s up to you” makes me think of is how it is... up to everyone involved to be part of the decision-making process? And to not shy away from it or... try to avoid being the one who has to make the hard decision or the bearer of bad news? Maybe you could be like, “Alright. It’s up to me, but whatever my answer is, you’re gonna be the one communicating it to all members of the family. It’s up to me—for you to be the messenger.” *[Laughs.]* I think you’re doing a really good job. You’re right. This is—it’s too much. And it’s not helpful.

Speaking of helpful and phrases that we say sometimes without thinking about, I really, really, really want to shoutout a very special thank-you to all of those working in the ICUs. We had a rant from a parents whose partner works in the ICU, and she was saying how hard it was to hear the phrase “COVID fatigue,” because she was witnessing real fatigue from her husband and others in the ICU. And look. We are always learning how to be more mindful in the use of language. And yes. Yes. We are all tired of all the effects that COVID has dished out on us. But just like “Mommy wars” and things like that, these are catchphrases that people are generating for news; for soundbites; to help communicate certain feelings; and then we—the consumers of such media—take them on and use them in a very loose way and—yes. We are tired. I am so tired I can’t, like... I can’t walk through the day without stumbling into, like, some sort of emotional trap around here. So I know if I am, everybody is.

And it is okay to say that we are tired, but I—I do appreciate this rant call that I listened to, because those that are on the frontlines in trying to keep people alive? Who have contracted COVID and to keep those healthy who are susceptible to COVID—are fucking exhausted. And I just want to say that we see you? And you are amazing? And... the best way for me to honor those that are working the frontlines is to put on a mask and I hope everyone will put on a mask as a symbol of how much we support those in these professions. In these—y’know—frontline essential workers. Instead of yelling out the window, put a mask on. So thank you, thank you, thank you.

00:07:07 Biz

Host

Also—things that are helpful and not helpful—not really sure which side I’m leaning on in this weird intro today, but— *[Laughs.]* We’ve been in our house together as a family unit for a while. And my check-in today is just that where we are in the “we’ve all been together too long without any place to go” phase is the “everybody trying to be quote-unquote ‘helpful’ by correcting everything that everybody does.” *[Laughs.]* Like, if you say a word wrong—like, you just use the wrong word. And those of us who have had super brain and they have super brain forever, we might use the wrong word in place of another word. And then that word has to be corrected.

Usually by a child. And they have to correct each other. It's not just me being correct, which I have no patience for. It is having to listen to people correct each other in this house? And there's—it's negating. Okay, guys? It's— *[Laughs.]*

I'm like, "Just let it go." I'll say that sometimes to the children. "Just let it go. You don't have to—" "But I'm trying to be helpful!" It's not. It's not helpful! I say, "Your sibling is not gonna walk through life thinking it's 'Starflux.' They're gonna figure it out one day and sort it out. They'll fix it. Okay? We don't have to correct every single time." And everybody? Please stop correcting my Swedish in this house. This is why I don't even try to speak Swedish. Because now I have three people all like, look—I got an accent. Alright? I try my best. I try my best! Okay? So much of the helpful correcting and it might make me go out for milk and never come back! *[Laughs.]*

Speaking of things that make you—how many times have I said "speaking of things" already? Are we playing a drinking game today, guys? I think— *[Laughs.]* Why not? It's the holidays! Speaking of "speaking of things"—Gabe's now looking at me like I've lost my mind. Speaking... of... reasons to walk out your door and never come back—today we are gonna talk with Adrienne Day, who is a journalist who recently wrote a piece about parenting up and down the generational ladder during the pandemic.

00:09:41 Music Music  
00:09:42 Theresa Host

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

00:09:50 Biz Host

If you are married to the host of *One Bad Mother*, we definitely are talking about you.

00:09:53 Theresa Host  
00:09:56 Biz Host

Nothing we say constitutes professional parenting advice.

Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.

00:10:00 Theresa Host

Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

*[Banjo music fades out.]*

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

00:10:05 Biz Host

Today we are welcoming Adrienne Day, who is a journalist, writer, editor, and native New Yorker. She's contributed to *The New York Times*, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, *O! The Oprah Magazine*, *Grist*, *Nautilus*, *New York Magazine*, and *The Village Voice* among other outlets. She was a senior editor at *Entertainment Weekly* and the editor at Spin.com before— *[Laughs.]* I love this part—she got too old and too tired to go to rock shows five nights a week. I am very with you. A recent essay of hers about parenting up and down the generational ladder during the pandemic was published in *The New York Times* and—mwah, ha, ha, ha, ha!—what I want to talk with Adrienne about today. Welcome, Adrienne!

00:10:49 Adrienne Day Guest

Thank you so much. It's great to be here.

00:10:51 Biz Host

So let me start by asking you—who lives in your house?

00:10:55 Adrienne Guest

Sure! Well, it's me. I live in my house. And my husband, Pratik, and our daughter, Lulu, who is six years old. And—

*[Biz laughs.]*

—our cat, who’s two. We just adopted him. He’s our pandemic pet/drunk comfort kitty. *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

He’s really good at that. And yeah! Various molds, probably. There’s a lot of random things probably growing in the crevices. But I think that covers the bases.

00:11:26 Biz Host

Oh, pandemic cattt! That is wonderful. Two years old—can I ask what the cat’s name is?

00:11:35 Adrienne Guest

Yes! It is—right now—it’s changed a bunch. Right now it’s “Clyde Sunshine Patosky Dia de Sarkar.”

00:11:45 Biz Host

That’s a great name. You should—I always like to throw a “General” or a “Captain” or something. Or “Mister”—

*[Adam laughs.]*

00:11:57 Adrienne Guest

—in front of it. ‘Cause that just makes it even better. So. *[Laughs.]* Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. It’s a whole complex evolution, but it was Sunshine but my daughter said, “How about Clid?” And I was like, “Ooooh.”

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:12:09 Biz Host

Like, “Close! Close!”

**Biz:** General—General Clid. Yeah. That would be... not—sorry.

00:12:15 Adrienne Guest

**Adrienne:** We’re— *[Laughs.]* So I’m like, y’know—

00:12:18 Biz Host

“Clid” is a little awkward, but how about “Clyde”? So.

That’s really, really a save that you made there. *[Laughs.]*

*[Adam laughs.]*

00:12:22 Adrienne Guest

Poor Clid.

00:12:25 Biz Host

Oh, poor Clid. No one can find Clid! Where’s Clid?

*[Adam laughs.]*

00:12:35 Biz Host

It’s like you’re reaching around trying to find Clid but you keep missing it! It’s right in front of you!

**Adrienne:** It’s right there. Just look.

00:12:38 Biz Host

**Biz:** Oh, funny. Alright. So.

You recently wrote this piece for *The New York Times* about your experience sort of being between—as the caregiver for your folks and your own family. And surprise! You are not alone. *[Laughs.]* It’s a very—this is a situation I think so many of us find ourselves in even in the best of circumstances? Like, not a pandemic? Really, really threatening people of a certain age? And I don’t know. I just really... wanted to talk— *[through laughter]* to someone else—about sort of that feeling experience we have in that place. As the one in the middle of the sandwich, as it were. So I’m gonna start just by asking you to talk a little bit about—why did you write the piece? I can probably guess, but it’s fun in interviews to ask questions like that. So.

00:13:39 Adrienne Guest Sure! Well I actually got asked to write it. So my old intern—I used to work at *Spin* magazine, as you pointed out, and one of my interns is not the head of the parenting section. So—although I think she’s now just a columnist. But at the time she was. And so I sent a few questions her way. We batted them back and forth. She’s like, “Well, why don’t you write about this?” I was like—I mean, basically, I had all of these sort of fleshed-out pitches and then just a complaint. *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

The complaint was, “My life sucks. I’m taking care of my parents and my kid and we even have an elderly cat who just turned 18, so it’s like everyone in my life is either too old or too fucking young.” So she’s like, “Yeah.” So she basically said, “Why don’t you write about that?” So that’s what I did.

00:14:23 Biz Host Did you—did it help? *[Laughs.]* Writing about it?

*[Adam laughs.]*

00:14:32 Adrienne Guest Uh—yeah. I mean, it helped in that like...

*[Biz laughs.]*

Yeah. It did. It was sort of a—what do you call it when you, um... what’s the word for it?

00:14:41 Biz Host Cathartic? Sort of—

00:14:42 Adrienne Guest *[Through laughter]* Cathartic. Thank you. Oh, cathartic. Yes. It definitely felt cathartic and then a fair—I was surprised at the amount of people that saw it and reached out who were in similar circumstances. And, y’know, one thing I mentioned—I sort of hint at it in the essay, but I didn’t really explore it, is—is my mom has dementia and it’s pretty advanced at this point. Y’know. And sort of just balancing that and the kid and then—y’know, my dad is—he’s your sort of—I mean, they’re still alive. They’re still together, which is pretty remarkable. But y’know, he’s an old white man. *[Laughs.]*

00:15:21 Biz Host Mm-hm.

00:15:22 Adrienne Guest And old white men were never... they don’t know how to care give. That wasn’t part of their upbringing. Y’know. He’s an academic. He’s a scientist. He spent the past 30, 40 years in a laboratory. That’s what he’s good at. Y’know. When it comes to caregiving or cooking food or—oh my god, even helping someone get dressed or toileting? Like, forget about it. Forget about it. So there was a time when I was helping change diapers on both ends. Whoof! Yeah. So. Pretty—pretty intense stuff.

00:15:56 Biz Host Those activities on either end are not what I would call emotionally bolstering? Like—

*[Both laugh.]*

Y’know? Like, “Well, I feel pretty good about the day.” Y’know? Like—y’know—at the end of the piece, you talk about, y’know, it’s a nice way to wrap it up. With “Caregiving for those you love is an act of love.” Y’know, obviously, I obviously want to care for my parents. I don’t know if they want me to. And I—

00:16:29 Adrienne Guest Okay.

00:16:32 Biz Host Y'know what I mean? And I don't think it's gonna feel rewarding all the time. I don't know. Like, talk to me a little bit about that.

00:16:39 Adrienne Guest Oh my gosh. Uh, okay. Um—

00:16:42 Biz Host If you want to. *[Laughs.]*

00:16:43 Adrienne Guest Yeah! Yeah! No, I'm totally—I'm—basically, I've sort of—I mean, I've been dealing with this for the past ten years. It's not—it's been a gradual thing. So y'know, it's like—I think you go through like the grieving process, which is really intense and it's, y'know, it's an ambiguous loss because the person is still there. They're just not the person that they were? So it's a very strange... experience.

00:17:06 Biz Host I appreciate how you ended the piece with recognizing that obviously there is love and joy coming from loving and taking care of those that you love. However, it can't possibly feel like that all the time. Can it? *[Laughs.]* I mean—

00:17:28 Adrienne Guest No. No. No. There's—there are times—I mean, my parents have a caregiver now. A full-time caregiver. But they didn't when my kid was really little. And so I was basically learning how to take care of my mom as I was learning to take care of my kid. And that was just overwhelming. And I also had complications after my daughter was born, too. *[Laughs.]* I mean, I could really talk a lot about some pretty *[through laughter]* disgusting topics.

00:17:58 Biz Host Well we can change topic at any point in time, Adrienne.

00:18:02 Adrienne Guest Let's just say I had to have an emergency C-section and I picked up an infection at the hospital that turned out to be antibiotic resistant. So I was sick—very sick for the first six months of her life and then it took about a year to get fully better. So.

00:18:17 Biz Host That is—I'm just gonna stop and say that is incredible hard.

00:18:21 Biz Host **Biz:** That's a lot. That's a lot.

00:18:24 Adrienne Guest **Adrienne:** Yeah. It was hard. It was hard. So, y'know, even though in the pandemic things have been incredibly challenging and, y'know, I mean especially when the schools shut down. We can talk about this stuff. I'm sure you've got your own stories. But they've got this caregiver now. And so it's actually gotten a lot easier in some ways? Like, she—

00:18:44 Biz Host No, well, it lets you—

00:18:45 Biz Host **Biz:** It lets you sort of step out, right? Like, it's...

00:18:49 Biz Host **Adrienne:** It gives you room. It gives you room. Yeah. You get to be... more like child again a little bit? As well as caregiver? You get to care in a different way, I would—right? Like, it's not—some of the physical stuff is so challenging.

00:19:03 Adrienne Guest Yes. And not having to deal with the physical stuff is just *[through laughter]* such a blessing.

*[Biz laughs.]*

So I'm so glad. And my daughter, too! It's like, she can wipe her own butt now. It's like, "Hoo, hoo! Alright! Graduated from the diapers!"

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:19:19 Biz Host **Biz:** Level up!

**Adrienne:** So we're pretty excited about that.

00:19:22 Adrienne Guest Yeah, but y'know, one other thing I was gonna say about it is it's incredibly difficult, but dementia is also kind of funny. And I don't mean to belittle people that have dementia or their caregivers. I mean, it's grueling. It's agonizing. It's just like this ambiguous loss. You, y'know, mourn the person who was and in my case my mom was a really great person. We had—like many teenagers, we went through difficult times. But she was very—I was an only child and she was very... she was a great mom. Like, she showed up. But y'know, it's like... *[Laughs.]* After a while—

*[Biz laughs.]*

—so my mom's hearing is not great right now, and that combined with dementia, it's like the world's worst game of Telephone.

*[Both laugh.]*

So I'll be like, "Mom, I gotta go to the bank." And she'll be like, "Ya gotta go get tanked?" It's like everything is just ninety degrees off and this happens all the time. So it just becomes funny. And I think it just helps... it's a coping mechanism. But why not? I remember Joan Rivers was also—when she talked about her husband, y'know, her husband passed away. I guess he had a heart attack or something and she was at a restaurant with her daughter, looking at the menu. And she's like, "Well I'm really glad that your dad's dead or else these prices would kill him all over again!"

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:20:50 Biz Host Y'know? *[Laughs.]* So yeah. Humor is a coping mechanism. Oh. Yes. It'll help us survive and live a million more years. Which may not be great for our children, who then have to care for us! Anyway. But I wanna—something else in your piece that I really... was touched by... and again, I just don't think we talk about it very much. And that was your daughter... the, like, incessant... sort of jealous reaction. And I don't think jealousy is necessarily the right word. That feels like that has a lot of like... mature... experience. But I know exactly what you mean. It's this need. It is like an animalistic sort of need that if you are showing attention to someone else—who they know—and it's not even just like the stranger on the street. It's someone that you obviously also love. Right? *[Laughs.]* That they've got to throw themselves—like, I have gone to hug Stefan, my husband, and Ellis—our youngest—will just see us. Cross the room. And wedge themselves in. To the point where we're just staring and looking at each other like, "Huh. There ya go. I see that."

00:22:01 Adrienne Guest I know. It does wonders for the romance, doesn't it?

00:22:04 Biz Host Yeah. Oh, it's real helpful.

00:22:05 Adrienne Guest Especially—out daughter's been sleeping in our room for the past three years. But that's another story.

00:22:08 Biz Host That's another helpful thing for—

00:22:11 Adrienne Guest *[Sighs.]* How old are your kids? When does this stop?

00:22:13 Biz Host Mine are now—my youngest just turned seven, so I know what it's like to have a six-year-old in your house. So that's something. And my oldest is eleven. Did you see how I have to think about that? I don't have a lot of thought. They're kids. They're walking.

00:22:35 Adrienne Guest *[Both laugh.]*  
 Oh man. Yeah. That's the fact that I can't hug my husband or my mom or the cat, even. And she'll just tackle us like there's—y'know, elbowing anything that gets in the way. We had this one time that I was walking—back when my mom was actually watching. She was in a wheelchair but still very unstable. We were walking down the street, and I actually ended up tripping my mom. So she tripped over my foot and she fell on—she hit the sidewalk. And I was like... "Fuck." Y'know, and I ran over to check on her. And my daughter had a fit. Like in the middle of the street and was just screaming and crying. So I ran over to her, and I had to minister to her and leave *[through laughter]* my mom on the sidewalk.

00:23:20 Biz Host *[Biz laughs.]*  
 Well now somebody else is like, "You're a monster to seniors."  
 00:23:23 Biz Host **Adrienne:** You can't win! You can't win. You can't win.

00:23:28 Biz Host **Biz:** You cannot. You cannot win.  
 So did... like you said, you've been kind of... it's a very slow, sneaky process. And I've heard that before, the like... it's not... yes. There are situations sometimes where we find ourselves very quickly placed into a situation in which we are taking on a caregiver role to our caregivers. And other times, it is this real slow, gradual... one day you show and you see a little. The next time it's a little more. Eh, a little more. And y'know... that's... I guess—*[sighs.]* How are you doing? You know what I mean? Like I feel like there's a little bit of like... that's a long time of getting used to something while trying to get used to having a kid in your house while, y'know... everything. There's so many layers to it, and I—did you ever find a way to care for yourself during this? 'Cause that's always kind of a bullshit thing. Like, how did you navigate it? Are you still navigating it, I assume. But.

00:24:39 Adrienne Guest Yeah. That's a good question. I guess it's really hard to sort of think about yourself when you're just—it's your job. It's a job you never applied for this job. You never wanted this job, necessarily, but you got the job. Y'know, obviously I made a choice to have my kid and she's awesome, but, y'know, she's also crazy. If I could like sort of, y'know, rework her DNA a little bit and make her a little bit less crazy I would do it. But—

00:25:09 Biz Host *[Biz laughs.]*  
 That'd just affect something else weird. *[Laughs.]*  
 00:25:11 Adrienne Guest Yeah. Exactly. Something else. She'd have like five heads or something. So I'll take the crazy. *[Through laughter]* I'll take the crazy. Yeah.

*[Biz laughs.]*  
 Gosh. Y'know, I think it was just like those—the first—the few years when she was really young and taking care of my mom or helping take care of her. My dad has been around and he's done the best he can. So I'm grateful to have him and of course my husband and then—and yeah. We've made it work. And as I've said, things have gotten easier of late. So I guess it's sort of giving me time to look back and be like, "Holy shit. I went through a hurricane!"



00:25:48 Biz Host Yeah. And you've come out in a pandemic. Enjoy.

00:25:51 Adrienne Guest *[Both laugh.]*  
00:25:56 Biz Host *[Through laughter]* This sucks. *[Laughs.]*  
Did you find that the like... pandemic... I can't tell you how many conversations I had with friends who all were saying, "I have to call my parents and they're like, 'I'm not wearing a mask!' And I'm like, 'God! Mom! Dad! Just wear a mask!'" And I'm like, "Wow. No one's even sick and you're already taking on the role of—y'know? The parent." But... yeah. I don't know. Did you—did you already have care for your folks when this started? How did that like—even that's gotta make ya nuts a little bit, right?

00:26:29 Adrienne Guest Yeah. So we—I had recently—so my mom had been in rehab. She had fallen and... I can't even remember. I mean, she's broken—she's got advanced osteoporosis. She's broken everything. So she had a fall last summer and oh, that's right. She broke a bunch of ribs and they punctured her lungs.

00:26:47 Biz Host Yeah. That's what you said in the article.  
00:26:50 Adrienne Guest And like—everything filled up with air and blood and that's bad. If you're in your mid-80s—or early—well, she's sort of—83? 84? I don't remember. Yes. Exceptionally bad. So they kept her for a while and then she graduated to a nursing facility and it was just—that was a very dark period 'cause we didn't have help and my dad was going insane and he would just go visit the facility every day and just sit there for hours and hours. And I'm like, "Do you want to play music or a movie or something? Why are you just sitting there?" Then he'd bring the paper and would read it to her but she wasn't really aware of what was going on.

So mom got discharged and went home and couldn't do anything. It's like she was having accidents and like... y'know... all this stuff. And my dad was just like, "I'm losing my mind." So I'm like, "I'm hiring someone." So I found someone. Who started, I think, in November or December? So she'd just been there for a few months, but she's been—it has changed everyone's life. But her daughter got sick in... April. And so she—it wasn't COVID, but she was afraid that it was COVID, so she was afraid to come to my parents' place for several weeks. And that was sort of—I think I wrote about the essay—about that. Doing these food drops and—but not wanting to get too close to my dad and opening the window just a little bit so my daughter could shout out, "Hi, Grandpa!"

00:28:18 Biz Host *[Both laugh.]*  
Yeah. But I think that's—y'know, this additional weird, like, sort of cloud of, "Ughhhh." With the recent surgeries related to the lungs and now you've got the cat—gah, gah, gah, gah! Y'know? Like and the best we could do is just walk through it. But like... it's still... I think what we don't do enough is... acknowledge... y'know. That toll. Y'know? Like it's still there, chipping away. Chip, chip, chip, chip, chip! Chip, chip!

00:28:52 Adrienne Guest Yeah. It's...  
00:28:54 Biz Host It's a lot.  
00:28:55 Adrienne Guest Yeah. Roz Chast wrote about that. What is that? Um—  
00:28:58 Biz Host It's something—I love that book. It's like—  
00:29:01 Adrienne Guest Oh, *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?*. That was my life! Like, only child. Older parents. Being a parent yourself. And

having an occupation that is kind of... not gonna say “dispensable”? But she’s a cartoonist! And so she—y’know, I remember there’s one panel where she’s like, the mom’s at the facility and she’s calling the nurses over and being like, “Okay, I’m gonna go draw!” Y’know? Like—

*[Biz laughs.]*

|          |          |       |   |
|----------|----------|-------|---|
| 00:29:27 | Biz      | Host  | Like “Roz out!”   |
| 00:29:28 | Adrienne | Guest | Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i>  |
|          |          |       | And y’know, it’s like, “I’m gonna go home and write, I guess? A profile of someone? Like, do I—should I be doing this?” Like you do just outsourcing the unpleasant stuff to people who are—don’t really have any other options. Like, taking these jobs that, y’know, where people who have—in a better position, I guess, wouldn’t necessarily take.  |
| 00:29:48 | Biz      | Host  | It leads me to kind of where I want to wrap up, and that is—it’s great that you mention Roz, because reading Roz’s—I remember my mother <u>sent</u> me that book.   |
| 00:29:58 | Adrienne | Guest | She did?  |
| 00:29:59 | Biz      | Host  | Like, years ago. Yeah! A while ago. Saying, “Get ready.” Y’know? Like— <i>[Laughs.]</i> “Just go ahead and get ready. For this.”  |
| 00:30:07 | Adrienne | Guest | That’s awesome that they’re like— <i>[Laughs.]</i> That’s funny.  |
| 00:30:10 | Biz      | Host  | Yeah. It was very awesome and very awful. But it was... <u>very</u> helpful to read! And... I know that it helped a lot of people reading it feel seen and not as crazy and alone. So I kinda wanna end with... the response that you’ve gotten. Y’know? Like—what’s nice about your piece is that—yeah. I just think we need to write more and more and more and <u>more</u> about these kinds of things so that we can all stop feeling crazy. So yeah.                                   |
| 00:30:40 | Adrienne | Guest | Yeah. It was—I mean, it was pretty awesome. I mean a lot of it was my, y’know, friends and a lot of my peers who are kind of in my age group being like, “Oh my god, I was just talking about this article with my book club and people were really commiserating!” And yeah. It’s like we’re at an age where our parents get sick. Those of us who are still lucky to have parents in our lives. I know people who don’t have parents anymore and they don’t—they certainly don’t envy me. |

*[Biz laughs.]*

But I am, y’know, blessed to have had them for this long and to be able to spend time with them. And my daughter is their only grandchild because I was an—I come from a small family, so it’s like when they see her it’s just like, y’know, everything changes. They just totally light up and that’s one reason that we go and see them, even though it’s not protocol. We’re careful with our own bubbles, but. Yes. So it’s the outpouring really—it was—I was overwhelmed. I had to shut down. I didn’t respond to anything for several days. I didn’t look at email; I didn’t look at socials, such as they are. I don’t have very impressive socials, but I was just like—I couldn’t handle it. It was too much. *[Laughs.]* I’m also not used to—I’ve interviewed, I’ve done hundreds—maybe thousands—of interviews? But I’m not used to the microscope being on me so I get very... I guess I’m kind of weirdly private in a lot of ways? Which is why I wrote about *[through laughter]* this private sphere. *[Laughs.]*

|          |          |       |  |
|----------|----------|-------|--|
| 00:32:06 | Biz      | Host  | Yeah! I was gonna say, which is why you wrote all about your life. <i>[Laughs.]</i>  |
| 00:32:09 | Adrienne | Guest | Never mind. Maybe I'm not that private. <i>[Laughs.]</i>   |
| 00:32:12 | Biz      | Host  | Well I—I appreciated you writing about it.   |
| 00:32:15 | Adrienne | Guest | Thank you.   |
| 00:32:17 | Biz      | Host  | Because I think—again—so many people are carrying this right now. And... y'know. One of the main themes of this show is just how strange it is—we don't talk about so much in general. I mean, we now talk about everything. But like, it's—how easy it is to find yourself feeling very isolated and very much the only person going through it and it's just not true. And by sharing the story, I'm sure was a relief to many people. Doesn't fix anything, but it's nice to know you're not alone. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Y'know? So... I appreciate it. |
| 00:32:58 | Adrienne | Guest | Oh yeah. Especially now. I mean, when everyone's sheltering in place or whatever or... y'know. Yeah. Isolating can be scary and we're heading into winter, so yeah! I just—y'know, it's—you aren't alone out there, whoever's listening to this. And um—   |
| 00:33:11 | Biz      | Host  | That's right! And I can't wait to see what other deeply personal story you decide—<br><br><i>[Adrienne laughs.]</i>  |
| 00:33:18 | Adrienne | Guest | —maybe in the future to share with the entire world. <i>[Laughs.]</i><br>Oh, I have a few.   |
| 00:33:21 | Biz      | Host  | <i>[Biz laughs.]</i><br>I'm sure, yeah!  |
| 00:33:22 | Adrienne | Guest | I'm just polishing 'em. <i>[Laughs.]</i>   |
| 00:33:25 | Biz      | Host  | Well Adrienne, thank you so much for joining us. Thanks for writing the piece. We'll link everybody up to where they can read it, if they hadn't read it already. And I just—you're doing a really good job. There's a—you got a lot going on. It's not, like... I see you. <i>[Laughs.]</i>   |
| 00:33:42 | Biz      | Host  | <i>[Adrienne laughs.]</i><br><b>Adrienne:</b> Thank you. Thank you.  |
| 00:33:46 | Adrienne | Guest | <b>Biz:</b> You're doing a really good job.<br>I'm trying. And same—back at you! And everyone else listening. It's not easy, but.  |
| 00:33:50 | Biz      | Host  | Yeah, thanks. We're all just showing up, man.<br><br><i>[Both laugh.]</i>  |
| 00:33:56 | Adrienne | Guest | Alright. Have a good one.  |
| 00:33:57 | Music    | Music | Okay. Thank you so much.<br>"Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.   |
| 00:34:14 | Music    | Music | <i>[Music fades out.]</i><br>Cheerful ukulele with whistling plays in background.  |
| 00:34:15 | Biz      | Promo | <i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by Native. With the holiday season right around the corner, get into the spirit by indulging in the sights and sounds and <u>scents</u> of the season! It's a great time to update your Native collection with their candy cane holiday scent. Ho, ho, ho!  |

|          |         |       |  |
|----------|---------|-------|--|
| 00:34:33 | Theresa | Promo | <p><i>[Laughs.]</i> Okay, you guys. I was a little skeptical, I'll admit, when I saw that my new deodorant was candy cane-scented.</p> <p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i></p> <p>I wasn't sure I wanted to smell like a candy cane? But I went for it. I've been using it for a couple of weeks now, and I actually <u>really</u>, really like it. I don't feel like I smell like a candy cane, but it is a really nice, pleasant, like, <u>mild</u> but enjoyable scent. And Native has ingredients you've heard of like coconut oil and shea butter. It's also vegan and never tested on animals. Plus, the candy cane gift set makes for a great gift option, and all Native products are great stocking stuffers.</p> |
| 00:35:16 | Biz     | Promo | <p>Shop Native's holiday collection today by going to <a href="https://NativeDeo.com/badmother">NativeDeo.com/badmother</a>. Or use promo code "Badmother" at checkout and get 20% off your first order. That's <a href="https://NativeD-E-O.com/badmother">NativeD-E-O.com/badmother</a>, or use promo code "badmother" at checkout for 20% off your first order.</p>   |
| 00:35:41 | Theresa | Host  | <p><i>[Music fades out.]</i></p> <p>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.</p>   |
| 00:36:00 | Biz     | Host  | Genius fail time, Theresa. Woo! Genius me.   |
| 00:36:07 | Clip    | Clip  | <p><i>[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]</i></p> <p><b>Biz:</b> Wow! Oh my God! Oh my <u>God!</u> I <u>saw</u> what you did! Oh my God! I'm paying <u>attention!</u> <u>Wow!</u> You, mom, are a <u>genius</u>. Oh my <u>God</u>, that's <u>fucking genius!</u></p> <p><i>[Biz and Theresa repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss their respective genius moments of the week.]</i></p>   |
| 00:36:22 | Theresa | Host  | <p>Okay.</p> <p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i></p> <p>So... my nine-year-old daughter, Gracie, received as a gift a pack of cards for the game Old Maid.</p>   |
| 00:36:36 | Biz     | Host  | Oh!  |
| 00:36:37 | Theresa | Host  | <p>Which I just hadn't thought about in a really long time, and she wanted to play and I was like, "Yeah, I'll play." And I was explaining the rules and sitting down and as I was explaining the rules—</p> <p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i></p> <p>I found myself explaining what an Old Maid is, and she was horrified.</p>  |
| 00:36:53 | Biz     | Host  | Sure.  |
| 00:36:54 | Theresa | Host  | <p>As somebody who has said—recently—that she does not plan to marry. Y'know. Which is great. She was like looking at me like, "How is this possible that this is a thing?" And I said—</p>  |
| 00:37:10 | Biz     | Guest | Oh, it's called "sexism." <i>[Laughs.]</i>   |
| 00:37:11 | Theresa | Host  | <p>Yeah. It's called sexism. Yeah. And so we talked about, "Wow. This is very, very anti-feminist. And just very, like, <u>old</u>." It's just like an old</p>   |

idea. It's not even something people say anymore. But the game is actually still pretty fun and so we're playing and as we're playing, I said, "Let's not call it Old Maid! Why don't we call it—" And I thought for a second, and then I said, "Let's call it Happy Woman." *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:37:41 Biz Host  
00:37:44 Theresa Host

*[Through laughter]* I love it!

So she was cool with that, so we renamed it Happy Woman. And then—to take it one step further—we realized, why not make the rule that whoever ends up with the Happy Woman card at the end is the winner?

00:37:57 Biz Host

Right!

00:37:58 Theresa Host

Rather than the loser.

00:37:59 Biz Host

Than the loser. *[Laughs.]*

00:38:02 Theresa Host

Yeah! And I was pretty proud of myself for that.

00:38:06 Biz Host

You should be pretty proud of yourself! That is excellent. I just—with my kids, when we were doing Old Maid? I was like—they're like—A, they didn't ask. And B, Stefan and I made a big deal about being like, "Well, you don't want to wind up with the Olllld Maidd!" *[Laughs.]*

*[Theresa laughs.]*

But I like your way a lot better. That's a lot healthier. You're doing such a good—

00:38:32 Theresa Host

Either way.

00:38:33 Biz Host

You know what? You're really doing a good job.

00:38:35 Theresa Host

Thank you.

00:38:36 Biz Host

I think that's fucking genius. Alright. I read a whole book. Da, da-da daaaa!

00:38:42 Theresa Host

Whoa.

00:38:43 Biz Host

I know!

00:38:44 Theresa Host

Whoa. Whoa. Whoa.

00:38:45 Biz Host

I gobbled it up! I gobbled it. So some of you may remember that a previous genius had been I reached out to my family a couple of months ago and I said, "I need help. I'd really like books sand puzzles." And they sent them. And the wonderful owner of the little bookstore Murder By the Book in Texas—it's a cozy mystery place—worked with me and one of the books that they sent was *The Haunting of Maddy Clare*. It's like part cozy, part historical fiction, part romance—hello! There was some *[rolls r]* rrrromance! And by "romance" I mean sex. And a ghost! This—this was everything I could've ever wanted. And I gobbled. I read during the day sometimes when I could've been filling that time with something important! Like...

00:39:39 Theresa Host

So good!

00:39:40 Biz Host

Work or cleaning! Yeah. So I just—

00:39:43 Theresa Host

That's when you know you have something going for you.

00:39:46 Theresa Host

**Biz:** Yes! Yes. Thank you! Thank you.

**Theresa:** Yeah. So good. Good job!

00:39:49 Caller Caller

*[Answering machine beeps.]*

I am calling with a genius. Today I prevented glitter from coming into my house.

*[Biz laughs.]*

Because I remember the glitter episode, so I know not to let glitter into my house. And my kids are now six and eight years old and we successfully have never had glitter. Well today my eight-year-old asked me, could she have glitter for Christmas? I asked her, is there anything you want for Christmas, and the one thing she asked for is glitter for art projects. And I just had to tell her no.

*[Biz laughs.]*

'Cause there is no way in the middle of a pandemic—especially—am I bringing glitter into my house for the first time. So the genius is that I prevented glitter from coming into my house. There might be a fail in there that the one Christmas gift she wanted I had to say no to. But at least there's no glitter coming in my house.

*[Biz laughs.]*

|          |         |      |  |
|----------|---------|------|--|
| 00:40:41 | Biz     | Host | You're doing a great job. Thank you.<br><b>Biz:</b> <u>You</u> —   |
| 00:40:42 | Biz     | Host | <b>Theresa:</b> This is amazing.<br>—are—a statue should be built to you in every craft aisle everywhere. Or actually, in Target parking lots everywhere. That is where the statues of great parenting moments should go, is the Target parking lot. You are <u>so</u> good! |
| 00:41:02 | Theresa | Host | Yeah! You're so good!  |
| 00:41:05 | Biz     | Host | What a great boundary! "Sorry, this just isn't a glitter house."   |
| 00:41:09 | Theresa | Host | Yeah.  |
| 00:41:10 | Biz     | Host | <b>Biz:</b> Right? It's like, "Sorry."   |
| 00:41:13 | Theresa | Host | <b>Theresa:</b> I'm not—I'm not doing it.  |
| 00:41:16 | Theresa | Host | It's not even like, "I'm gonna think about it." It's like—<br><b>Theresa:</b> That one is not gonna happen.  |
| 00:41:19 | Biz     | Host | <b>Biz:</b> We don't listen to—right!<br>We don't listen to rock 'n' roll. We go to church on Sundays. They'll never be glitter. Whatever your family thing is—  |
|          |         |      | <i>[Theresa laughs.]</i>   |
| 00:41:29 | Theresa | Host | —I think you're doing an amazing job.<br>I also—I love the part where you said, "There's no way during a pandemic I'm gonna do it for the first time." Like, as though—  |
|          |         |      | <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>   |
|          |         |      | "Well yeah, if we'd been through glitter before than maybe? But not for the first time! Not now! Not with everything else going on! It's not time to bring glitter into this!"   |
|          |         |      | <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>   |
| 00:41:50 | Biz     | Host | That's right. There—we've—we need our limits.  |
| 00:41:56 | Theresa | Host | Yeah!  |
| 00:41:57 | Biz     | Host | Limits!  |

00:41:58 Theresa Host Yeah.  
00:41:59 Biz Host Remarkable. Statue. Failures.  
00:42:01 Clip Clip *[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]*

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

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

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

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

00:42:08 Biz Host Fail me, Theresa.  
00:42:09 Theresa Host I can do that.  
00:42:11 Biz Host Mm-kay.  
00:42:12 Theresa Host So we have one of those doll—baby doll strollers? This one currently belongs to Curtis, my three-and-a-half-year-old. It’s one of those things that like—whenever we haven’t had one in the house? They need to have one. They’re desperate for one. “Why do I not have a stroller for the babies?”

*[Biz laughs.]*

Once we have it, it’s like not getting that much use. Like, it just doesn’t get used that much. And for some reason I have always had trouble closing the doll babies’ umbrella strollers? I don’t know why. I’m great with regular strollers for regular human babies! But these ones for some reason I’m always having issues with them. I’ve broken one in the past.

*[Biz laughs.]*

Trying to close it. Being so angry. And so the other night it was like the end of the night and it was that time of day where the kids are going to bed and we never did clean up really and so there’s just stuff everywhere and I’m agitated and I don’t want to take it out on them so I take it out on the stroller by just saying, like, in my mind I think my exact thoughts were like, “I don’t care if this breaks it. I’m just gonna close it right now. It’s going to close.” Like, I was like, “I don’t care. I’m closing it.” And as I closed it, I did something that caused it to slam on my—

00:43:40 Biz Host Oh!  
00:43:41 Theresa Host —finger. My right hand—and I’m right-handed—pointer finger? Index finger, I guess it’s called?  
00:43:49 Biz Host Mm-hm. Yeah. Pointing at you—  
00:43:50 Biz Host **Biz:** Blaming you for breaking the stroller. Yeah.

**Theresa:** The main finger. This is like the finger. Yes!  
00:43:54 Theresa Host Pointing at myself—  
00:43:55 Biz Host Yeah. That’s the—yeah. Pointer. The guilt finger.  
00:43:58 Theresa Host For being bad. ‘Cause I’m bad.  
00:44:01 Biz Host Bad, bad, bad! *[Laughs.]*  
00:44:01 Theresa Host And it hurt so bad that I don’t even know how a kid’s toy could make a person this badly hurt. It seemed shocking that it would make it through the rigorous toy vetting—whatever—process that they do

because they're afraid of lawsuits. I mean, really, I was holding back tears. And—this was like a three-weeks-ago fail, you guys? That I've been hanging onto? My finger is still fucked up! Like, I really—I punched a hole in my finger. Do you know what I'm saying?

00:44:40 Biz Host Yeah! I know what you're saying! I know!

00:44:43 Theresa Host It's like the skin has to heal but what's under the skin also has to heal—like, it's *[through laughter]* really, really not okay. I have to tend to it multiple times a day.

00:44:53 Biz Host It's where that little triangle is on the baby umbrella stroller. That little, like—it's—that's supposed—and then it doesn't.

00:45:04 Theresa Host You're aware of exactly what happened. Yes.

00:45:07 Biz Host I fucking hate those baby strollers. Those babies need to fucking walk.

*[Both laugh.]*

00:45:19 Theresa Host You're doing a horrible job.

00:45:21 Biz Host Yep. Thanks.

00:45:35 Theresa Host Mm. So... Ellis had their physical. And—I dunno. Maybe I'll get through this, guys, without losing my shit. 'Cause I had therapy today. And y'know? We all just like let it pile up. Like a big shit sandwich.

00:45:36 Biz Host And once you open it?

00:45:38 Theresa Host Yeah! Once you open it—

00:45:40 Biz Host It's open.

*[Gagging noise]* Eh! It just—and it—y'know, here's the funny thing in therapy. It wasn't even the lead topic. But I think I've mentioned in the past, Ellis is tall and skinny. And once again, Ellis's weight is just—is below. It's below. Where it should be. He comes from a family of high metabolism. He's a picky eater, and by "picky" I mean there are the exact same things this kid eats every day forever. And... y'know, the doctor had said—and I was ready for that. Y'know? I was like, "Yeah, that's cool." And then the doctor had said, y'know, "If they don't gain weight by—in a year, we're gonna have to do some bloodwork just to check on stuff." Okay. All of this is fine. And then like, two days later, that like... "Somehow this is my fault. Why can't I—I'm not feeding my child enough. They're getting no protein. I should've been forcing them to eat food, obviously."

00:46:47 Biz Host **Biz:** Right? Like, there's—that would've worked great. I should've been harder and more serious—

**Theresa:** Right. 'Cause that would've worked. That would've worked. Yeah. Would've worked really well, so I don't know why you didn't do that. Yeah. Yeah!

00:46:57 Biz Host About getting them to not be so picky. Also! Y'know. I'm a—like, my kid is underweight! Underweight! And—

00:47:08 Theresa Host It's so stressful.

00:47:09 Biz Host And now I have to, like, the next place my mind went was, "Alright. Now it's time to fix it." I mean, I don't know what that involves, but like, this idea of now my brain is gonna be thinking about, like, "How do I get more protein in and do I have to make more fucking muffins?" I really don't like making smoothies, guys, and I know smoothies are the answer to everything? And we even have a stick blender. It shouldn't be hard. I fucking hate making smoothies.



Okay? And so, like, I dunno. It's just one more thing to think about. And I know it's not really my fault? But like—and I know we feed that kid, like, healthy, good food. But all at the same time, it really... makes me feel like shit. So. There ya go.

00:48:02 Theresa Host Yeah. It's really—it's one of those things that now you just get to think about.

00:48:07 Biz Host All the time. Mm-hm.

00:48:09 Theresa Host And feel bad. Like, there's no—it's not like now that the doctor said that, now you're like, "Okay, well then I'll fix this problem and then that will be good." It's like actually the opposite of that. Because now... there really isn't anything for you to do except think about it.

00:48:25 Biz Host Yeah! Yeah. It's not like I'm gonna start creatively cooking something that's suddenly—that's not gonna like..

00:48:33 Theresa Host That's not what—that's just not—yeah.

00:48:36 Biz Host I just—y'know. I dunno. This is just one of those pointing fingers. I need to go slam my finger in a baby stroller? So it can't keep pointing back at me.

00:48:49 Theresa Host Yep. I recommend it.

00:48:50 Biz Host Thank you!

00:48:52 Theresa Host It hurts really bad. It's a great distraction.

00:48:54 Biz Host That's what I need! Clearly. *[Laughs.]*

00:48:58 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Oh, hey! This is a fail. I have to pee. I have to pee. I'm driving someplace and I have to pee. And this is a fail that keeps happening to me because I haven't been driving anywhere in like... what—seven months? Eight months? I don't know. It still feels like March. But like, I gotta pee so bad! And I don't wanna stop anywhere! Like, I'm so good. I tell my kids, I'm like, "Gotta go potty before we go!"

*[Biz laughs.]*

And it's like, "Did I go potty?" And then, "I don't think I did! Ah!" And I'm just gonna hold it and be uncomfortable for the next 45 minutes. Because... pandemic. I'm so mad at myself 'cause this is a real thing that's been happening to me. A lot.

*[Both hosts laugh.]*

Anyways. Ta-da!

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:49:56 Biz Host Heyyyy!

*[Theresa laughs.]*

*[Through laughter]* You are doing a horrible job! I love this fail so much. This is—no one—no one wants to say to themselves, "Have you pottied before you go?" None of us remember that! We are walking—

00:50:14 Theresa Host We are out of routine. We're not—

00:50:17 Biz Host Walking third, fourth, fifth place. Whatever—wherever that is in your house. That is, like, that's the jersey we're wearing. And you're right. We don't drive a lot of places as much right now? And so it's

really easy to forget. I—yeah. Do you remember that genius, though? The woman—  
 00:50:40 Theresa Host Peeing in the diaper?  
 00:50:41 Biz Host Peeing in the diaper ‘cause she had the babies asleep and she didn’t wanna get ‘em out? So, y’know. Desperate times, desperate measures.  
 00:50:48 Theresa Host Yeah. You gotta do what you gotta do.  
 00:50:50 Biz Host Gotta do what you gotta do. I thought that was fucking genius. So you’re failing at not using the bathroom. You’re failing at this happening repeatedly.

*[Theresa laughs.]*

And you’re failing for not keeping diapers in your car for emergencies.  
 00:51:05 Theresa Host To pee into.  
 00:51:06 Biz Host Like this. Just to pee into. *[Laughs.]*  
 00:51:09 Theresa Host Pee on?  
 00:51:10 Biz Host To pee on? I don’t know. Would you put the whole thing on like you were dressing, or would you just like sit on it?  
 00:51:16 Theresa Host You could slip it into your undies.  
 00:51:19 Biz Host Yeah? That would be a really weird feeling.  
 00:51:22 Theresa Host It doesn’t sound fun.  
 00:51:23 Biz Host No, but it—  
 00:51:25 Theresa Host But hey.  
 00:51:26 Biz Host 2020! *[Laughs.]*  
 00:51:27 Theresa Host Yeah!  
 00:51:28 Biz Host Nothing sounds fun.  
 00:51:29 Theresa Host Nothing’s fun. Yeah. Very true.  
 00:51:32 Biz Host Well, you’re doing a horrible job.  
 00:51:33 Music Music “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.]*

00:51:56 Music Music Inspirational piano music plays in background.  
 00:51:58 Theresa Promo *One Bad Mother* is supported in part by Calm.  
 00:52:01 Biz Promo 2020 has been a lot, as has all of the years I’ve had children in my house. *[Laughs.]*

*[Theresa laughs.]*

And the Calm app is incredibly helpful for less stress and more sleep? And not just at night. When I first got it—when I was at my peak of emotional breakdown-ing? I used it car line. You can use it any time you are in a car and can sit somewhere by yourself for five to ten minutes.  
 00:52:32 Theresa Promo For listeners of the show, Calm is offering a special, limited-time promotion of 40% off a Calm premium subscription. At [Calm.com/badmother](https://calm.com/badmother). That’s 40% off unlimited access to Calm’s entire library and new content is added every week. Get started today at [Calm.com/badmother](https://calm.com/badmother). That’s [Calm.com/badmother](https://calm.com/badmother).

00:53:01 Promo Clip *[Music fades out.]*  
**Music:** Swingy, jazzy orchestral music.

**John Hodgman:** Hey, everyone! It's I, John Hodgman of the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

**Elliott Kalan:** And I, Elliott Kalan of the *Flop House* podcast.

**John:** And we've made a whole new podcast! A 12-episode special miniseries called *I, Podius*. In which we recap, discuss, and explore the very famous 1976 BBC miniseries about Ancient Rome called *I, Claudius*! We've got incredible guests such as Gillian Jacobs, Paul F. Tompkins, as well as star of *I, Claudius* Sir Patrick Stewart! And his son! Non-Sir Daniel Stewart.

**Elliott:** Don't worry, Dan, you'll get there someday.

**John:** *I, Podius* is the name of the show! Every week from [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) for only 12 weeks. Get 'em at [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org), or wherever you get your podcasts.

00:53:47 Promo Clip *[Music fades out.]*  
**Music:** Upbeat, cheerful music plays in the background.

**Allie Goertz:** Hi, I'm Allie Goertz!

**Julia Prescott:** And I'm Julia Prescott. And we host—

**Both:** —Round Springfield!

**Allie:** Round Springfield is a Simpsons-adjacent podcast where we talk to your favorite Simpsons writers, voice actors, and everyone who's worked on the show to talk about shows that aren't The Simpsons! So we're gonna be talking to people like David X. Cohen, Yeardeley Smith, Tim Long, about other projects they've worked on. Sometimes projects that didn't go well?

**Julia:** Mmm!

**Allie:** Some failures.

**Julia:** Yeah?

**Allie:** Some rejections.

**Julia:** Some failed pilots. Some failed life events. *[Laughs.]*

**Allie:** Yeah! We just talk to all the failure of The Simpsons.

**Julia:** Yeah!

**Allie:** So if you really love your Simpsons trivia and want to get to know the people who worked on The Simpsons a little bit better? Come by Round Springfield!

**Julia:** Every-other week on MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts!

*[Music fades out.]*

00:54:32 Biz Host

*[Singing]* Oh, the weather outside is frightful... *[regular voice]* And so is everything about this year! *[Laughs.]* Which I... think sets the mood for us to settle in and listen to a mom have a breakdown.

00:54:48 Caller Caller

*[Answering machine beeps.]*

'K. This is a breakdown that feels like a fail but it's probably actually a genius. I don't know. My husband's in the hospital again having another surgery, after being in and out for a year and almost dying twice. And we have a thirteen-year-old and I feel like such a failure as a mom because I'm working and I can't just take off—'cause this is a new job—to devote all my time to both my husband and my daughter simultaneously and she's having to stay with the wonderful angel that is a neighbor who has kids her own age, who actually get her to read willingly, so god bless all of them.

*[Biz laughs.]*

But I come home and I'm tired, even though all I've done is work and visit my husband in the hospital and yet I have this other human I need to take care of and I don't even need to feed her because the neighbor's doing it. But I'm still so tired and I look around and there's laundry that needs to be done and I'm not cooking a home-cooked meal every night and doing the cleaning and everything that I need to do and I—I can't even bring myself to eat sometimes it feels like and I'm just—I'm breaking down. But I'm still going to therapy and talking about it and I'm still existing and taking care of my kid, so I guess that's a genius. I don't know. Y'all are doing a good job. I am not. Thanks for letting me scream into the void.

00:56:23 Biz Host

Okay. Couple of things, and the first thing—you know what's coming, and everybody who's listening to this podcast is screaming it out loud at you at this moment, and that is—you are doing a remarkable fucking job. Alright? *[Lost for words, so makes garbled noises.]*

00:56:45 Theresa Host

Yeah. We can't get the words out fast enough. It's—you're doing such a good job. In such a hard situation.

00:56:56 Biz Host

Yes! These are—these are really difficult things you're dealing with! Objectively.

00:57:03 Theresa Host

00:57:04 Biz Host

**Theresa:** Objectively very difficult.

**Biz:** And—objectively! Yes.

00:57:07 Biz Host

What is bullshit garbage stuff... that we need to not focus our attention on—is shit like homecooked meals and fucking laundry. Those are the things that, when we are so tired, and we are so spent, and we are so full... and... we feel like our control is slipping away, that it is really easy to focus on. Those are sort of like the monsters under the bed that are like, "Oh, ho ho! Is she tired? Rawr! You're not doing this thing that magazines tell you you're supposed to be doing!" Or that it looks like all your neighbors are successfully doing. Right? Like—

00:57:51 Theresa Host

Yeah. We absolve you. Of the homecooked meals thing. It's over. This is not the time for that.

|          |         |      |   |
|----------|---------|------|---|
| 00:57:59 | Biz     | Host | Mm-mm.  |
| 00:58:01 | Theresa | Host | Don't waste your precious, <u>very</u> limited energy on that. You're doing a <u>million</u> amazing things.  |
|          |         |      | <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>  |
|          |         |      | And because your partner is the one who's having health issues and in the hospital, you don't have that other person there to even, like, share this kind of stuff with—I mean, I'm sure you're communicating, but it's not the same. Like, y'know. You're—this is a <u>lot</u> on your shoulders. So any possible thing you can take off your shoulders, now is the time to do it. Like, take it off! Now is totally the time to do it. You could also do it other times, but now? For sure.   |
| 00:58:45 | Biz     | Host | We can get too hard on ourselves and not even be aware of it. Right? Like, not even—we can beat ourselves up about things that—it actually sounds like you're doing amazing. You <u>are</u> showing up for your job.  |
| 00:58:59 | Theresa | Host | Yeah!   |
| 00:59:00 | Biz     | Host | Right? Which is a lot. You have provided a safe space for your child to go. Okay? That is a big deal.   |
| 00:59:08 | Theresa | Host | It's huge! Yes.   |
| 00:59:10 | Biz     | Host | Right? And you are not alone in the fact that your child has to rely on neighbors or friends or after school or whatever. And you are providing a wonderful safe place for them. You're doing an <u>amazing</u> job trusting your neighbor and allowing someone to help you! God! That's <u>good</u> work! And you're also carrying all the emotional weight of your partner. Who is... sick and ill and that can have emotional repercussions on you. I heard you say he's almost died, and that—ah! That's like a really big emotional pivot of ahh! Uhh! Huh! Huh! Right?  |
| 00:59:55 | Theresa | Host | Yes. It's so much. I'm really... hugging you from afar. You're amazing.   |
| 01:00:00 | Biz     | Host | Mm-hm. Theresa? You are <u>also</u> doing a very good job.  |
| 01:00:06 | Theresa | Host | Thanks, Biz.  |
| 01:00:07 | Biz     | Host | Yeah. No, you really... you really are. And I appreciate having you as my friend.   |
| 01:00:15 | Theresa | Host | Thank you. I appreciate you, and I also see what a good job you're doing right now.   |
| 01:00:21 | Biz     | Host | Mm. Thank you.  |
| 01:00:23 | Theresa | Host | Alright!  |
| 01:00:24 | Biz     | Host | I will see you next week, Theresa!  |
| 01:00:25 | Theresa | Host | I will see you next week.   |
| 01:00:26 | Biz     | Host | <b>Biz and Theresa:</b> Bye!  |
| 01:00:27 | Biz     | Host | Well, everyone... what did we learn today? We've learned—I don't—I don't know. <i>[Laughs.]</i> This is all still happening? I think we've learned that it's all still happening. I think we've learned that we're all doing a pretty good job showing up? Every day? And probably that we are... being much harder on ourselves than we need to be? And that, y'know, where we can let go of stuff? The things that maybe were important at some point that really aren't now, we can let go of those things? And I think what I liked so much about talking with Adrienne was just that this is how it is. This is—this is where we are, guys. This is—pandemic or no pandemic, we are always—if we have kids in our house, <u>and</u> we still have parents or caregivers of us that are still alive, we have found ourselves in the weird place of... being the parent and being the child. |

And... there's a good chance we're still trying to figure out how to be both of those things? And I know there have been lots of times I definitely want to be the child around my kids. "No! No! No! Me, me, me! Stop it! Pay attention to me!" And then it's weird when I find myself having to be more parental with my folks. I—y'know, none of it's easy and nobody likes it. My children don't like it, and I'm pretty sure my parents don't like it. And I don't like it. So— *[Laughs.]* Great. *[Laughs.]* So I think the lesson that I'm learning is... once again, not to let stories and images and whatever people want to use to sell me something—or to make me feel like I'm supposed to be a certain way or have a certain feeling about these sort of very normal experiences—is bullshit. *[Laughs.]* I don't have to enjoy it! Right? I can love it and hate it.

Everybody? You are doing... a remarkable job. If there is one thing that I learn every time I listen to the Hotline, is that nobody is winning or losing at having too much to do, having too much on them, having... not enough sleep. Being too tired. Like, there's—it's really difficult. In its own way. For all of us. It's Dante's—I mean, it just goes back to Dante's—your personal hell! What is your personal hell? I dunno. No better time to find out than right now! So you're all doing amazing. I see you showing up and doing something. Maybe it's the best you got that day, maybe it's not. But you did something. You did it. Good job! Let's get up tomorrow and do something else. And I will talk to you next week. Bye!

01:03:52 Music Music

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

*I got the lowdown momma blues  
Got the lowdown momma blues  
Gots the lowdown momma blues  
The lowdown momma blues  
Gots the lowdown momma blues  
Got the lowdown momma blues  
You know that's right*

01:04:16 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](http://MaximumFun.org/onebadmother). For information about live shows, our book and press, please check out [OneBadMotherPodcast.com](http://OneBadMotherPodcast.com). *One Bad Mother* is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to [MaximumFun.org/donate](http://MaximumFun.org/donate).

01:04:44 Theresa Host

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

01:05:07 Music Transition

A cheerful ukulele chord.

01:05:09 Speaker 1 Guest

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

01:05:11 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

01:05:12 Speaker 3 Guest

Artist owned—

01:05:13 Speaker 4 Guest

—Audience supported.