

00:00:00	Biz	Host	Hi. I'm Biz.
00:00:01	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.
00:00:24	Biz	Host	<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i> This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> , trans-literation! We talk to author Kyle Lukoff about how trans characters aren't Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. Plus, Biz touches her banjo.
00:00:37	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz and caller: Wooooo!
00:00:40	Caller	Caller	Ha ha! I am barely holding it together!

[Biz laughs.]

That's how I'm doing. This morning, I get a call that my three-year-old needed to be picked up from daycare because she had a fever. And I'm like, "Okay. We're gonna make this work." 'Cause I am a high school science teacher and I teach remotely. So I can just stick her on the dog bed in my room with an iPad—

[Biz laughs.]

—while I try to teach thirty high schoolers about evolution. And then I found out that she can't go back to school unless she is 48 hours fever-free and has a doctor's note. Okay. Let's get her a doctor's appointment this weekend. I... am also on my way to bring my Leftese giant dog to the vet to get a biopsy because he is a lumpy boy.

[Biz laughs.]

And the only vehicle that he fits in is my car, which... needs its license plates reinstated—

[Biz laughs.]

—because insurance ran out and they—and because of COVID, we could not get an appointment with an RMV in time, so I'm illegally driving my sick dog to the vet, leaving my sick child at home. With my husband. Y'know. It'll work out. Oh, and also—ha ha! My mother-in-law is driving from Ohio with her freshly-negative COVID test to stay with us for ten days.

[Biz gasps.]

00:02:25	Biz	Host	I'm gonna hold it together. We're gonna do this. We'll get through it together. <i>[Through laughter]</i> You're doing a great job and so am I. You— <i>[Laughs.]</i> You really are doing a good job. Stefan and I like to call this kind of day... the... "If you give a pig a pancake" kind of day. Those of you familiar with the children's book—if you give a pig a pancake, it is just, like, about how one action can spiral into... just limitless work for you. And that is the day you're having. Right now.
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I'm... *[Laughs.]* So sorry! The thing about COVID right now is... it is so, like, easy for any one of those things to fall off the to-do list and then make itself apparent when you really need it to be correct? Like the license tag thing! Like, eh, get it, but we're not going anywhere. *[Laughs.]* Right? Where are we going? And then suddenly you have to go somewhere! I'm very sorry. That is a... lot. *[Laughs.]* But thank you for being a high school science teacher! I bet that is presenting a lot of challenges. *[Laughs.]* And you're amazing for doing it. So thank you.

Also, thank you to all of the... front line workers in the health industry! TO everybody in the health industry! It is winter. People are really sick. The numbers are really, really high right now, and I know that people—nurses, doctors, administrative workers—are working pretty much nonstop without a break. And I know that there isn't a lot of backup to step in and give people breaks. And I really see you. And... big thank you's to all the different people out there who created these vaccines that we're being able to roll out. I know that was an incredible amount of work under a ridiculous pressure-filled timeline, especially when, y'know, science—and what you're doing—isn't being supported by a lot of our leadership. So I just... really appreciate that work, and I look forward to getting stuck someday.

Thank you to all those who—even in these very difficult times—are volunteering and working to make sure that we have help and food in food banks, as well as presents for those who need them. Who do not have the same access that many of us have. So thank you to the volunteers. And thank you to everybody who's wearing your masks. Good job. Speaking of being grateful, it's that time of year in which I start to panic that I've raised horrible, ungrateful monsters. I'm pretty sure they aren't, but at the same time, not having left this house really in ten months... It can feel a little tight? I think I've spoken on this show about how stuff feels like noise to me? And it loud in this house! *[Laughs.]* It's so loud!

And I'm trying to find that Zen place between, "Well, at least this year everybody's is a little older and a little more mellow about stuff," but it's still just a lot. Like, I don't know. It just feels like a lot. And it's not even like I'm looking for gratitude about gifts. I'm looking for gratitude about like... everything. Right now. It's the like... "Can I have something to drink? Can I—could you make me some—a snack? Could you—" And I'm like, "You are standing there." We do have a rule in this house where if you have a cat in your lap, you pretty much can get away with not having to get up and fix something for yourself? But if you don't have a cat in your lap, then you need to get up and get it.

And we've talked about when you're really tired, you just kinda zombie through. You're like, "Okay, here's some water. Here's some food." Right? You just do it 'cause—ehhh. But especially around now, when I'm really fucking tired of cooking and I'm really fucking tired of staying on top of school stuff and emails and all the other things that need to happen in the house, and people giving me attitude about their jobs. Their chores that they know—they've been doing for years! It makes me... not feel very jolly. So there.

When I'm not feeling jolly, I like to turn to a good book. Which ties in nicely to who we are going to talk to today, who is Kyle Lukoff, who has written a wonderful new picture book about a young trans boy who is about to become a brother.

00:07:51 Music Music
 00:07:52 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.

00:07:59 Biz Host
 If you are married to the host of *One Bad Mother*, we definitely are talking about you.

00:08:03 Theresa Host
 00:08:06 Biz Host
 Nothing we say constitutes professional parenting advice. Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.

00:08:10 Theresa Host
 Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

[Banjo music fades out.]

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

00:08:14 Biz Host
 This week, we are welcoming Kyle Lukoff, who is the author of books like the Stonewall Award-winning *When Aidan Became a Brother*, *Explosion at the Poem Factory*, and the forthcoming middle-grade novel, *Too Bright to See*. While becoming a writer, he worked as a bookseller for ten years and then nine more years as a school librarian. Watch out! I'm not sure they know how much I love librarians! He lives in Brooklyn. Welcome, Kyle!

00:08:43 Kyle Guest
 Thank you! I would say it's nice to be here except I'm in my apartment. Which is nice. It's very nice here.

[Biz laughs.]

00:08:51 Biz Host
 You're in Brooklyn, so I know that—we used to live in Brooklyn, and no matter how nice your apartment is, living in it in a quarantine style for ten months... that's—it can be tight. It can be... tight.

00:09:05 Kyle Guest
 Luckily, I moved in mid-October. So I spent the first however-many months in my very small one-bedroom, and I moved in October to a much bigger two-bedroom with a roommate.

00:09:16 Biz Host
 00:09:17 Kyle Guest
 00:09:19 Biz Host
 Woo! That's amazing!
 Yeah.

00:09:31 Kyle Guest
 That's wonderful! Well, see, look. I was telling Kyle at the beginning that I really enjoy derailing. And we've already derailed before I ask the very important question of—who lives in your house?
 In my house I live with my roommate, who is the also Stonewall Award-winning author Meredith Russo. Who—

[Biz laughs.]

—our awards are hanging next to each other in the living room. So she won that for *If I Was Your Girl*, and her second novel's called *Birthday*. You should read it. It's amazing. We also live with Meredith's cat, who's named Shadow.

00:09:49 Biz Host
 00:09:51 Kyle Guest
 00:09:54 Biz Host
 Shadow!
 Yeah. She might come in at some point and meow at us.
 Yeah. Good. Mine constantly come in and out, meowing. So that's fine. That keeps it normal. That's kind of cool to have two authors—I mean, that's very old-school Hollywood sort of story. Right? Like,

y'know, the two authors were roommates. And then years and years later, as they're sitting around surrounded by all their awards at the Kennedy Center Honors, sharing stories of back in the day with Shadow in Brooklyn in a, y'know, snowstorm in a pandemic.

00:10:28 Kyle Guest We hope that someday somebody writes a history of trans literature for youth and includes our Boston marriage.

00:10:35 Biz Host Yes. I— *[Laughs.]* I love it. Well, that—yes! I'm sure they will include you, because you and she and Theresa and many have really been on sort of the front lines of this, y'know, move to make sure that... children's books—be they picture books up to middle and young adult—really are inclusive of trans kids. Trans stories. As well as LGBTQ+—like all of the—to really show this diversity in children's writings. And so I wanna actually start with *When Aidan Became a Brother*, which is your picture book. The book is so sweet and nice, and I read in a previous interview that you had done where you said that you wanted to write a picture book about a trans kid that really felt like a picture book. And I thought that was such an interesting... thing to say. And I... I guess I wanted to start off with asking you what that—what that means for you. And what you were hoping for this book to communicate. To do.

00:11:58 Kyle Guest That is a really good question. I mean, I've been asked similar questions to this before, but nobody has really picked up on that comment about wanting to write something that feels like a picture book. And I think there are a couple answers to that. One is that, y'know, so A, Aidan was not my first picture book. The first one that I published was called *A Storytelling of Ravens*. And then the second one that I sold it called *Explosion at the Poem Factory*. So by the time *Aidan* came out, I already had a couple books under my belt. And I had been a school librarian for several years at that point—

[Biz laughs.]

—reading hundreds of picture books. Hundreds! To hundreds of children. Of all different ages. And also as a writer, I have a tremendous amount of respect for picture books as a distinct and discreet art form that has structure and... I just want to keep saying “structure.” Like, every time someone asks me about picture books I keep coming back to the structure that picture books have to have in order to flow. In order to convey the information that it's trying to do in a way that allows children to fully take in the whole experience. And that allows for multiple re-readings.

00:13:09 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Yes, because when there's a kid in your house, you gotta read it a lot. Yeah.

Kyle: And getting more. Yeah. 'Cause you have to read them a million times.

00:13:17 Kyle Guest If you did it right! If you did it right, you have to read it a lot.

00:13:20 Biz Host If you did it right, it is enjoyable to read it multiple times. There are a couple of those, like, computer-written books that have made their way into this house that I had to read repeatedly with no joy, and they just—oops! I don't know where they are! I don't know where they are.

00:13:37 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Kyle:** “I lost it. I'm so sorry, sweetie. I don't know where that went.”

Biz: “Can you—go look for it! Go look for it.”

00:13:40	Biz	Host	“If you find it, we’ll read it.” <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:13:43	Kyle	Guest	So I wanted to write one that I... I wanted to write something that stood up to <u>my</u> standards for literary excellence. In the genre of picture books. But then also I wanted to write a story that wasn’t just a lesson. I wanted to write something that didn’t just say, “This is what it is to be transgender.” I wanted to write a story that had multiple interpretations, and that had room for all kinds of children. All kinds of families. To ask questions and to see themselves in it. I guess I just—yeah, I wanted to write a book and not just a lesson plan. I wanted to write something that you could read for a lot of reasons, not just because you wanted to explain a topic to a child. There are—there is value to those texts? 100%? That is just not the kind of story that I enjoy writing.
00:14:33	Biz	Host	In addition to being a story about... about Aidan being trans—and it flows together so well, but it’s—it’s not that there’s just one thing happening in this picture book. Right? We’re not <u>just</u> ... and I—I like that, because to me that makes it feel normal. It makes it feel like, “Oh! Whoops! Sorry. We thought you were a girl when you were born. That was our bad. I’m so glad you’ve let us know. <i>[Laughs.]</i> We’re gonna work together. We’re gonna fix that.” And then now, how does that play out <u>past</u> that part of the story?
00:15:14	Kyle	Guest	I—that’s exactly what I wanted to do. I wanted to write a book where the character’s trans identity played a role in their life similar—or in <u>his</u> life, because Aidan goes by “he” in pronouns—similar to how it plays in <u>my</u> life. Where being trans is a tremendous part of my life. I would say that it is interwoven in the majority of my day-to-day experiences? But it is <u>also</u> incorporated into my life in a holistic way. So I don’t only feel trans at the doctor’s office, but it’s also not a problem that I’m always trying to solve. It is just part of how I see the world. A part of how I see myself. In an extremely mundane way. So I wanted to show—I wanted to write a book where a kid’s trans identity was interwoven in and enriched his everyday experience? Without it being a struggle that he had to overcome.
00:16:07	Biz	Host	That is so interesting. And I appreciate the opportunity to think more about that. So let’s think more about that. ‘Cause I think that there were lots of moments within the story—again—that were like, peripherally about getting a new... sibling. And sort of—and not exactly about Aidan. I think about, they go to the paint store to get paint. And, y’know, the hardware store guy is like, “Oh, are you expecting a brother or a sister?” Right? And just even that language... Aidan—hearing that and taking it in...
00:16:44	Kyle	Guest	I think that’s something that you’re bringing up is something that I hear a lot about this book. You didn’t say this. Other people say this.
00:16:51	Biz	Host	Okay.
00:16:52	Kyle	Guest	People often say that it’s a story about a boy who—quote—“Just happens to be trans.” End quote.
00:16:57	Biz	Host	Ohhh.
00:16:58	Kyle	Guest	And that is not how I see this book.
00:17:01	Biz	Host	No! This was a whole journey!
00:17:03	Kyle	Guest	Because... yeah! And almost every line of dialogue is somehow a reference to gender and the way that it exists in the world and the way that Aidan responds to it. Whether it’s his gender; whether it’s other peoples’ expectations of what gender should be; <u>and</u> almost every page references his gender in some way. Like, the fact that

he's trans is not backgrounded. It is not... it is not something that happens and then it never comes up again. But it is interwoven into everything. From the names he chooses to, y'know, the balloons that they get when the baby is born. I mean, there's a couple pages. The page where he doesn't want to learn how to change diapers. That's just a kid *[through laughter]* not wanting that. Yeah.

00:17:44 Biz Host

Yeah! Of course! *[Laughs.]* There were moments where I felt like Aidan was carrying so much for someone of that age. Just being so keenly aware... of... the language people used. And his own concerns for... this... child that was coming. "What if I have made the wrong choices when it comes to color?" And there was this line that just kind of broke my heart a little bit? And, y'know, I've had conversations about it with others, where Aidan says, basically, that, y'know, how everybody had been wrong about him. And as a parent, that's hard! To hear. It's—I mean—and I—that there was a chunk of time in your child's life where you didn't actually know them. To... to their complete wholeness.

00:18:47 Kyle Guest

So there's that poem by that poet whose name I forget, where he says, "They fuck you up, your mom and dad. They may not mean to, but they do. They give you all the faults they had and add some extra just for you." And then it keeps going.

00:18:58 Biz Host

Philip Larkin is who that poet is.

00:19:01 Kyle Guest

Yes! Thank you.

00:19:02 Biz Host

Yes! You're welcome! Thank Gabe. *[Laughs.]*

00:19:05 Kyle Guest

Thanks, Gabe. Oh! So... so that line in *Aidan* is when Mom says, "When you were born, we didn't know you were going to be our son. We made some mistakes, but you helped us fix them." And then later at the end, Aidan says—or the narration says—"Maybe everything wouldn't be perfect for this baby. Maybe he would have to fix mistakes he didn't even know he was making. And maybe that was okay." And that's kind of me saying to pretty much everyone that you're going to make mistakes. Like, whether you're an extrovert and your kid is an introvert; whether you're a vegetarian and your kid decides that they want to be an artisanal butcher—

[Biz laughs.]

—your kids are entire human beings with emotional landscapes and interiority. That is not yours. That you cannot control. That you... cannot... necessarily predict. And I think it's important for pretty much any person in any relationship to know that you're going to make mistakes and learn how to accept that with grace. And do what you can to move forward.

00:20:12 Biz Host

Let's talk about the middle grade books. 'Cause not only do I have a first grader, I also have a middle schooler. So perfect! They—let's talk a little bit about *Too Bright To See*, which—to be honest—sounds like my kind of book, 'cause there's ghosts involved. It's a ghost story, coming-of-age, growing into a new gender identity—

00:20:39 Kyle Guest

You got it!

00:20:41 Biz Host

That's my idea of a good time! Throw in some crime solving and we're all ready to go!

[Kyle laughs.]

And you're welcome to come over and read it to me. So tell us about this.

00:20:51 Kyle Guest So... that one came about because I was in my library and it was the morning. And I was talking to a parent at my school who is also a kid's book writer. And I was telling her that I didn't know what book I wanted to write next. I knew that I wanted to write a middle grade novel; but I either wanted to write a middle grade novel about a transgender boy—because I didn't know of any good ones yet—but I also wanted to write a middle grade novel that was a ghost story, because when I was a kid, my dad told me about a short story that he never finished. Where the first sentence of the short story that he never finished writing was, "It was strange living at the old house now that Uncle Roderick was dead." And—

00:21:31 Biz Host Ooh!

00:21:32 Kyle Guest As a kid I was like, "My dad's a genius! I love that sentence!"

00:21:35 Biz Host Yeah! *[Laughs.]*

00:21:36 Kyle Guest And I just wanted to steal it. I wanted to steal that sentence from my dad and turn it into a whole book. And then I had a—like, there's peanut butter in my chocolate/there's chocolate in my peanut butter moment? Where I was like, "Oh, I'm gonna write a ghost story about a trans kid using that as the first sentence. Done."

[Biz laughs.]

00:21:55 Biz Host Instead of writing two books I'll just write the one. Well so—do you find it easy or challenging? Do you find there are certain traps you run the risk of falling into? When it comes to writing books with... trans characters? With, y'know, I mean—again—I would assume the trap of making it be... like... the only point? *[Laughs.]* Versus the trap of not acknowledging it whatsoever—which may not be a trap. I don't know! Yeah—what—what has this experience been like for you, especially as somebody who is trans?

00:22:30 Kyle Guest So I was gonna say, I can tell you the trap that cis people fall into.

00:22:34 Biz Host Oh, yeah! We just step in 'em all the time! It's like I got a bear trap stuck to my foot! *[Laughs.]*

00:22:40 Kyle Guest A bear trap. But I first—I came out as trans almost sixteen years ago. So that is—I feel like the traps that cis people fall into are the ones where I, like, found about them when I was twenty-two. And I was like, "I'm not gonna do that." Or I did, but I was 22 and now I'm 36. So I don't think I've written—so there's *Aidan*, there's the Max series, and there's *Too Bright to See*, and then I have another middle grade novel coming out after that. I just haven't finished it yet. So those are all of my books—oh, and the picture book that I wrote with Gavin Grimm, the teenage activist from Virginia. That one's coming out in 2022.

00:23:20 Biz Host Yayyy!

00:23:22 Kyle Guest It's called *If You Were a Kid Like Gavin*. Yeah. So I've written three, four, five—seven books? With trans main characters?

00:23:29 Biz Host So some experience.

00:23:30 Kyle Guest Yeah.

00:23:31 Biz Host Alright. Alright! If you say so. *[Laughs.]*

00:23:34 Kyle Guest *[Laughs.]* I'm just counting. I'm just doing math. I'm not bragging, I'm just counting.

[Biz laughs.]

And I have never used a character's birth name. Not once.

00:23:45	Biz	Host	Oh!
00:23:47	Kyle	Guest	And I actually don't know what any characters' birth names are. I do not know what Aidan's name used to be. The main character in <i>Too Bright to See</i> has a nickname that the character goes by the whole book until he picks a new name at the end. So he just goes by "Bug," because that's what his uncle called him when he was a baby. I don't know what Gavin's name used to be. I would never ask him that because I don't... care. So I'm not gonna use it in my book. My second middle grade novel has a bunch of trans characters, one of whom is still going by their given name but that's because they want to and because their parents gave them, intentionally, a gender-neutral name. And yeah, in the Max books I don't know what Max's name used to be. I don't say it. I didn't even think about it. And I think—and I see cis writers <u>all</u> the time—either they use a character's old name to cue you that this person is trans, <u>or</u> they just, like, avoid the topic in the most awkward way possible.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			Like... just... just... ugh. It's just like... we get it. We get it. Okay. Like, have you tried being graceful? Have you tried just being normal? Have you tried just being normal? I don't know.
00:24:52	Biz	Host	No! This is a difficult discussion! We have to make it as weird as possible! What are you talking about?
00:24:58	Kyle	Guest	Have you tried <u>not</u> doing that?
00:25:00	Biz	Host	Alright. Alright. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:25:02	Kyle	Guest	And then, similarly, like, to loop back to what we talked about earlier, there's one of two impulses that I see a lot of writers fall into. Mostly cis writers. One is that the character's trans identity has to be an ongoing struggle where they're <u>always</u> talking about how much they hate their body or how glad they are that they transitioned or how painful everything is, or they're just like constantly talking about it in a way that feels like... just an unnecessary layer on top of everything else that's going on. It's just, like, <u>constant</u> explication about their trans identity. And then the other route is to say, "This character's transgender" and then it nevvvver comes up again. And in the books that I try to write, the characters' trans identity is—I mean, as I said before—it is something that is integral to how they move through the world, but not as a problem they are constantly trying to solve.
00:25:59	Biz	Host	Outside of your own books— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Which, obviously, are the number-one choices for best books—is there one—for me, my all-time favorite—and this is probably a little younger, actually, than your traditional picture books? But it is <i>I Am A Bunny</i> by Richard Scarry. The "I am a bunny." Y'know. I could quote the entire thing. And it's got a musicality to it? And I can just... like... read it and I would read it over and over and there are definitely older books that I love. But is there anything that you're like, "This was a perfect—"
00:26:42	Kyle	Guest	Do you mean about the topics we've been talking about or just like any—any books for kids?
00:26:45	Biz	Host	No! Just in general. In general. You could give me one of each! Because your is <i>[makes kiss noise]</i> perfect with the topics we've been talking about.
00:26:52	Kyle	Guest	I mean, there are <u>so</u> many that I love. I think for babies I love Sandra Boynton? <i>But Not the Hippopotamus</i> , I could read that over—I <u>do</u> read that over and over and I love that one. It's

impossible for me to choose favorite picture books because there's so many, but I love *Big, Mean Mike* by Michelle Knudsen. I talk about that one all the time. I really love *The Dead Bird*, by Margaret Wise Brown, especially the new one with the illustrations by Christian Robinson.

00:27:16 Biz Host Ooh!

00:27:17 Kyle Guest I really like picture books about death. I don't know why.

00:27:20 Biz Host Yeah.

00:27:21 Kyle Guest I love *The Missing Piece* and *The Missing Piece Meets the Big O*, by Shel Silverstein.

00:27:24 Biz Host Oh god! "You can't do it 'til you can roll on your own!" Goddammit! It's so good. Oh, it's so good.

00:27:31 Kyle Guest Speaking of my dating life. [*Inaudible*] I mean, it sucks.

00:27:32 Biz Host [*Laughs.*] Yeah. It's like, some of us, we had to roll for a long time to work off the edges.

00:27:38 Kyle Guest For middle grade novels—I mean, I think Jason Reynolds is a once-in-a-lifetime author. Every book he writes is perfect. I also love *Fighting Words* by Kim Brubaker Bradley. Before we officially started talking I mentioned the *Anastasia Krupnik* books? Which I just reread and I still really like them.

00:27:54 Biz Host I love that.

00:27:55 Kyle Guest For young adult I really do have to plug my roommate's book, *Birthday*. By Meredith Russo. It is one of the best novels I've ever read. I tried to—I told my mom to read it and she texted me back, saying, "I tried to read it but I started crying too much and I just stopped."

[*Biz laughs.*]

Several people have told me that they've tried to read their book and they start crying too much—

[*Biz gasps.*]

—and they can't finish it. I finished it three times and cried the whole way through, every time.

00:28:22 Biz Host Yeah. Aw, that's wonderful. That's wonderful. Well, Kyle, I really want to say how much I appreciate your work.

00:28:31 Kyle Guest Thank you!

00:28:33 Biz Host Not only—because as I said at the beginning—I am a librarian fangirl? I really love librarians. I love librarians. And I love the library. So obviously, as a librarian geek, I am going to say thank you for all the work you have done as a librarian in helping children just get their hands on books and reading. And even more, thank you for allowing those experiences to... lead to writing these really wonderful books! We will make sure that we link everybody up to where they can not only find *When Aidan Became a Brother* to add to your library, as well as your school library—remember what we say! You get a copy for you, and you get a copy for your local library or your school library. Or both! And where they can just find out more about all the new books you've got coming out as well. So thank you so much for joining us.

00:29:36 Kyle Guest Thank you for having me on the show and for asking me so many good and interesting questions.

[*Biz laughs.*]

00:29:42	Biz	Host	We will definitely talk to you again soon, once all these wonderful new books come out! We should have you back on.
00:29:47	Kyle	Guest	Great! I would love that.
00:29:48	Biz	Host	So have a happy holiday! And yeah! Thank you very much.
00:29:53	Kyle	Guest	You too. My pleasure.
00:29:54	Biz	Host	Okay.
00:29:55	Biz	Host	“Ones and Zeroes” by “Awesome.” Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:30:10	Music	Music	Laid-back ukulele and whistling plays in background of promo dialogue.
00:30:11	Biz	Host	<i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by Care.com.
00:30:15	Theresa	Host	Guys, so many of us are doing sooooo many things right now. If you need help with any of those things, Care.com is there for you. If you need an extra hand with babysitting, housekeeping, dog walking, and <u>many</u> other things—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			—that we are all finding ourselves doing on a daily basis, check out Care.com! Biz and I both have premium memberships. It is a platform for finding all kinds of family care services. They also have senior care; they have tutoring; check it out! They have a large selection of local caregivers, and they’re dedicated to providing easy ways to find, manage, and pay for care.
00:31:00	Biz	Host	To save 30% off a Care.com premium membership, visit Care.com/badmother or use promo code “Badmother.”
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:31:14	Theresa	Clip	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.
00:31:33	Biz	Host	Genius fail time, Theresa. <i>[Falsetto singing]</i> Ohhhh! <i>[Regular voice]</i> Genius me!
00:31:41	Clip	Clip	<i>[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]</i>
			Biz: Wow! Oh my God! Oh my <u>God!</u> I <u>saw</u> what you did! Oh my God! I’m paying <u>attention!</u> <u>Wow!</u> You, mom, are a <u>genius</u> . Oh my <u>God</u> , that’s <u>fucking genius!</u>
			<i>[Biz and Theresa repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss their respective genius moments of the week.]</i>
00:31:54	Theresa	Host	Okay. This is one of those things I would never have thought I would ever have done... and put off for a really long time ‘cause I was like, “This is just a ton of work and it’s not gonna do anything.” But it does. And it is—I made a visual schedule for my kids. Which is basically just a magnetic whiteboard that has photo cutouts. I didn’t make magnets because—eh.
00:32:28	Biz	Host	Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:32:29	Theresa	Host	But I just printed out photos of the different teachers and therapists and people that they see, whether Zoom or otherwise. And pictures of each of my kids. And it’s a <u>huge</u> whiteboard. So there’s space for each person to have their schedule for the day. That includes

everybody that they're going to be seeing or doing something with that day. And... it's a little bit of extra work every night before I go to bed. I put together the schedule for the next day. But I have to do that work anyway because I have to figure out what's happening the next day. And what it's done is it's just saved a lot of *[through laughter]* like, really annoying conversations.

[Biz laughs.]

Basically the kids come out in the morning and they know where to look and they can very quickly and easily see what's happening that day. And, y'know, even Curtis—who is three and a half and he doesn't read yet—like, he can look at the schedule and see what's happening very quickly. And when people do have questions about what's happening, it's like a next-level question. It's one of those things where I avoided doing something like this because I'm like, "There's too many people and too many things. I can't have a new schedule every day with all these different things happening. That just sounds so annoying." But what happened was without that, I had to talk about what was happening and prepare everybody for what was happening over and over and over again. And actually the verbal—like, the auditory exchange? Is like much harder to do in a house where there's a lot of people and a lot of distractions and a lot of noise. And I don't always have time to sit down individually with each person and make sure that they understand, like, *[patiently]* "Today we're gonna do this. Then we're gonna do this. And did you hear that? Can you repeat back to me what we're doing?" *[Laughs.]* So we—all of that is so much better now. And it's just cool. 'Cause it's fun. They see a smiling face of a person they like and that's more fun than me saying "You have blah, blah, blah today."

00:34:42 Biz Host

I think that is so genius? That is amazing? And I totally understand the like, "Ehhh. I've done these things in the past and they never make any—like, they don't work. I labeled the toy bins with pictures and nobody ever shoved shit in it." Right? Right out of preschool? My kids aren't gonna do this! Like—that it worked is so great. I believe in this chart, Theresa. This schedule chart is going to be the gamechanger that leads you into the best 2021 ever!

00:35:22 Theresa Host

I think so.

[Biz laughs.]

00:35:27 Biz Host

Alright. I made the fudge.

00:35:30 Theresa Host

You sure did!

00:35:33 Biz Host

This was—I made that fudge early this year? And I did it on a day with the appropriate cool weather, so it didn't have the slightly squishy center. And I portioned it out for neighbors and for—I'm like, it's COVID. No one wants to fucking touch food, but I'd already received cookies from neighbors so I said "It's on!" And the best thing I did when portioning it out was make sure that Theresa got so much of the fudge. I mean, double layer in a tissue—she got, like, a tin of fudge! Everybody else got, like, *[singing]* four little pieces in a little box. *[Regular voice]* Right? But Theresa got an obscene amount of fudge, and I still don't think it was enough fudge. And then I drove it out to Theresa's, left it on the car, texting so that it didn't melt right away, and she was like— *[Laughs.]* I got this text

from you later that was like, “What were you yelling as you drove away?” And I was yelling “Don’t share it with anybody!”

[Theresa laughs.]

Or something like that. Anyway. I did my fudge job— *[Laughs.]* For the year. Is a thing I’m saying.

00:36:56 Theresa Host

It’s so good. And I’m just gonna tack on a bonus genius, which is that I am not sharing it with anyone.

00:37:03 Biz Host

Good.

00:37:04 Theresa Host

None of it.

00:37:05 Biz Host

Good!

00:37:06 Theresa Host

Because why even start? I don’t want them to have any of it. It’s for me.

00:37:10 Biz Host

Yeah. This is—

00:37:11 Theresa Host

So it’s mine.

00:37:12 Biz Host

—setting it up every year.

00:37:14 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Theresa: Yeah. Yeah. This is mine. Yeah.

Biz: “No, no, you never get this.” *[Laughs.]*

00:37:19 Biz Host

Alright. So yayyy for fudge!

00:37:22 Theresa Host

Good job.

[Biz laughs.]

00:37:24 Caller Caller

[Answering machine beeps.]

Hi Biz and Theresa! This is a genius, or at least I think it’s a genius. I have a three-year-old and this is the first Christmas where she’s really aware of what Christmas is, and she’s hyper-aware of what presents are. So I was really worried about putting the wrapped presents out under the tree ‘cause I was concerned she wouldn’t be able to leave them alone and she’d pick at them and they would stress her out. Anyway. So I got a kitchen sponge and I wrapped it up and—

[Biz laughs.]

—put it under the tree. And I told her if she ever feels like she needs to touch a present or unwrap a present, she can unwrap that one. And so she did. Like, several times in a row. And every time I rewrapped it—

[Biz laughs.]

—and I re-taped it and I’d just put the ribbon on again. And now she’s bored of unwrapping that present, and so she’s left all the other ones alone. So anyway, I now have a tree with lots of presents under it that aren’t getting harassed by a child and she’s not stressed and I’m not stressed, either. Anyway. Thanks for the show. Love it so much. You guys have a good day. Bye-bye.

[Biz laughs.]

00:38:20 Biz Host

It’s so good!

00:38:22 Theresa Host

It’s so good!

00:38:23 Biz Host

It’s so good. My first thought was, “I’ll put in... a... like, a box. Like an empty box. That’s no fun.” But like... and I gotta admit, I didn’t

think a sponge would be very fun, either. But clearly I have forgotten everything I once knew about three-year-olds. Which was—that sponge is great! Sponges are a lot of fun! And then you get to rewrap it and then they go do it. And how badly do you want to just... only give your child sponges now?

[Theresa laughs.]

For Christmas—so, the big sponges and little sponges and like, this is—or it becomes a family tradition! Every year!

00:39:03 Theresa Host
00:39:04 Biz Host
00:39:06 Crosstalk Crosstalk

The sponge! Oh!
You have to find the Christmas sponge!
Biz: *[Singing]* Christmas sponge! Christmas sponge!

00:39:09 Theresa Host

Theresa: That's so cute.
There's a part of me that wonders if like... you're just patting yourself on your back for your Christmas genius and then Christmas morning comes and you're like, "Okay! It's time to really open the presents!"

[Biz laughs.]

And she's like, "That's okay, mama. I've already—I don't need a sponge. I don't need any more sponges."

[Biz laughs.]

00:39:27 Biz Host
00:39:32 Theresa Host
00:39:33 Biz Host
00:39:35 Clip Clip

"I'm fine."
I know. I... love this. You are doing an amazing job.
Yeah, you are.
Failures.
[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.]

00:39:42 Biz Host
00:39:44 Theresa Host

Fail me, Theresa.
Okay. Okay. So Curtis—my three-and-a-half-year-old—goes to—he's back in preschool. His preschool reopened in the fall. And he likes it but has a hard time getting there in the morning. He really—I mean, it's understandable. At home there's siblings and a lot of Legos and there's fun things happening. So it's kind of hard for me to get him off to school every morning. This morning, I just...

[Biz laughs.]

I just really— *[Laughs.]* I really did a bad job. Like, I—

[Biz laughs.]

I—so basically, like, my patience level since COVID is so much better than it's ever been in life. Like, I have miraculous levels of patience now that I never was—I know. Biz it looking at me like I'm insane.

00:40:42 Biz Host

Did you just somehow absorb all of my patience? Maybe you've taken the patience of those around you 'cause my patience is not at that level. *[Laughs.]*

00:40:50 Theresa Host

We have done so many hours of floor time therapy?

[Biz laughs.]

That I—it's just part of everything now. So—and everything—I have all the time in the world, and that's fine. So one way that this has—and taking the urgency out of every situation is the thing that we practice the most. Which has made mostly leaving for school better, because there's just less stress if you go, "Well, what's the worst that can happen? He's a little late for preschool." Like, that's... that's... that is the—for some people, if they're trying to get somewhere where they could get fired, yes. That is urgent. That's an actual urgency moment. But for Curtis, he just needs to go and I need him to go there so that I can do other stuff that I need to do. But if it's ten minutes later... it's not that big of a deal. But I've gotten really out of the habit of just saying, like, "Time to go! Boom, boom, boom! Into the car! I'm picking you up. We're on our way." I just don't really do that anymore? So I do a lot of waiting for them to be ready. And moving things along and finding ways to move things along and finding things that make it so that he wants to go! So that he's ready to go! It takes forever and it's exhausting but that's what I do. This morning I was waiting for him to finish making this Lego thing. And I kinda was like, "It's really, y'know, come to a place where we can have it the way it is and then we'll work on it more after school, but it's time to go." And... he really couldn't let it go. So I kept waiting and waiting and waiting, and kept making suggestions and blah, blah, blah. And it really—he really—what I figured out later was, he didn't wanna come to a place where he could leave it. He was going to continue to have problems with his Legos for as long as possible so that he wouldn't have to go to school.

[Biz laughs.]

00:42:57 Crosstalk Crosstalk

And so—
Biz: Clever! Clever child.

00:43:02 Theresa Host

Theresa: Finally I'm like, walking him to the door. And I'm holding three pieces in my hands. Three pieces of multipart things. I'm like, "Yes, we can just carry it to the car. It's not a problem. You can hold it in your lap in the car." And as we get to the door, he starts screaming that I have to help him get the guy to sit in the thing so that he can—and I'm like, "Okay, fine. I'll put him in the thing." But then that's not working. And that's when I just was done? You were done!

00:43:26 Biz Host

00:43:27 Theresa Host

Like, I realized, "Oh, now my patience is out and we're not in the car and he's screaming." And I'm trying to get this Lego guy's head off so I can take the oxygen tank off—

[Biz laughs.]

—and I'm using my teeth, and— *[Laughs.]* And I'm saying really weird things now? Like, "Well this is really unpleasant. I'm not enjoying this at all. And then—"

00:43:47 Biz Host Yeah! Out loud! You're saying these out loud, right? Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

00:43:51 Theresa Host Yeah. Oh, totally. Totally. And I'm like, "Yeah. Wow. Yeah. I really should've made this happen fifteen minutes ago when I wasn't in this stressed-out state. 'Cause now he actually is late and I'm late." So... so then he—as I'm doing this last thing that he says he needed help with—he's taking all the pieces apart.

00:44:13 Biz Host Oh no.

00:44:14 Theresa Host He's taking them all apart. And then I do that thing which is like—

[Biz laughs.]

I'm like, "Are you kidding me right now? You just took it all—now they're all—so—forget it. So just forget it then." And I just pick him up and I take him to the car. *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

And I swear, you guys, it does not happen that way most days, but today? Today it did. And it was so stupid. Because I was like... I could have had this stupid thing happen and been on time, but instead I drew it out. I was—

00:44:51 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Yeah. You just—like, the taffy of stupid things just— *[Laughs.]*

00:44:57 Theresa Host **Theresa:** —paaatient. I let it unfold. I let it become more than it needed to be. And... y'know, we both felt bad. So yeah!

00:45:05 Biz Host Oh. You're doing a horrible... job.

00:45:08 Theresa Host I know.

[Biz laughs.]

00:45:11 Biz Host Yep. It's—everything is just the same as it's always been, and it's just ehhhh. And so, y'know, there had been the genius of taking the banjo lessons as like a little time for myself. And part of that time for myself was not only the day that I had the lesson, but it also meant, like, minimum... twenty minutes to just pick it up every day. That hasn't been happening. And so the pattern that I am in is... suddenly it's Monday, and I realize I have a banjo lesson, and I haven't... practiced anything. So everything stays very much the same as the previous week's lesson. And then I think that the banjo teacher is judging me on how shitty I am, and I'm like, "Okay. I know that they're not judging me." And also I've got a new banjo teacher who's like, "Y'know, if you're like in a jam session and suddenly you wanna—" And I'm like, "I'm never, ever *[through laughter]* gonna be in a jam session. I am an old lady who just wants to touch her banjo." So my failure is—now that I've touched the banjo? I'm not touching my banjo enough. And I'm gonna leave that there just like that. Now I'm not touching my banjo enough. And isn't that all of our problems? *[Laughs.]*

00:46:44 Theresa Host You suck.

00:46:45 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hi! This is a fail. I intentionally rearranged my schedule so that I could have a slower morning with my kids and that hopefully we wouldn't feel so rushed to, y'know, get the day started. Both my husband and I work out of the home during the middle of a pandemic, which is just awesome.

[Biz laughs.]

So they go to daycare and y'know, they're two and a half and eleven months? Ten months? Ten months.

[Biz laughs.]

So mornings are, y'know, just chaos. And I thought that not having to be at work at the ass-crack of dawn would make that a little bit better. I'll just say that it didn't.

[Biz laughs.]

And I'm gonna be a lot late to work and I don't even have my lunch packed like I normally do. And I don't—I just don't know how it happened. *[Laughs.]* Ugh. Okay. I suck. Anyway. Bye.

00:47:55 Biz Host
00:47:58 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Yeah! You suck. You suck as much as Theresa sucks.

Biz: See, when one of us sucks— *[Laughs.]*

00:48:02 Theresa Host

Theresa: Yeah. You're trying to make it better—yeah.

Trying to make it better, end up not having an impact or possibly making it worse for yourself.

00:48:08 Biz Host

Yeah! Like a bad—like a deep impact. Like a bad—nothing good. Yeah. Yeah! Again, reminder—any time something happens—failure-wise—you're not alone. So that's good. We've proven that today in the show. Theresa had no idea this was the failure that I had picked. And I was thinking, "Oh, here's this failure!" Yeah! No! Don't try to make life easier for yourself. Just struggle through! Struggle!

[Theresa laughs.]

00:48:46 Theresa Host

Upriver! Forever! This is how we are supposed to do it! You're doing a horrible job.

You are. I feel like I just wanna point out, I am reminded of a past episode of this show—

[Biz laughs.]

00:48:58 Biz Host
00:49:00 Theresa Host

—where I just ranted about how I couldn't fix mornings in general. Oh yeah. Yes!

And I think that that—I think that that is what's happening here? It's the more time you have in the morning just means more of that stuff. The more you have, the more of that that you get.

00:49:12 Biz Host

I like the way you put that? Like, "What we have here." Right? Or "What it looks like here." It makes me feel like we're parent scientists. Right? And it's like, "Ahh! When— *[Laughs.]* When all the elements are right in this study, then mornings are forever broken." Right? And so—

00:49:36 Theresa Host

Correct.

00:49:37	Biz	Host	Yeah! Well, again—booo!
00:49:39	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Theresa: Biz. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Biz—you—
			Biz: Booo!
00:49:42	Theresa	Host	Biz, you sound just like a scientist. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:49:44	Biz	Host	I do! Don't I sound like? Scientists say "Booo!" <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:49:49	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>
00:50:13	Music	Music	Inspirational keyboard music plays in background.
00:50:15	Theresa	Promo	<i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by Storyworth.
00:50:18	Biz	Promo	For many of us, the holidays look very different this year. We are not able to get together and in <u>my</u> family, part of getting together means storytelling and sharing memories. Storyworth is an online service that helps your loved one share stories through thought-provoking questions about their memories and personal thoughts. Every week, Storyworth emails your family member different story prompts, questions that you've never thought to ask, or—these days—you might come up with your own question like, "Have you ever been through anything like this before?" <i>[Both laugh.]</i> After one year, Storyworth will compile all your stories, including photos, into a beautiful keepsake book that is shipped for free. 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.
00:51:03	Theresa	Host	
00:51:23	Promo	Clip	<i>[Music ends.]</i> Music: Jaunty piano music plays in background. Jo Firestone: Hi! I'm Jo Firestone. Manolo Moreno: And I'm Manolo Moreno. Jo: And we host Dr. Gameshow, a podcast where listeners submit games and we play them, regardless of quality, with a dozen listeners from around the world. Manolo: We've had folks call in from as far as Sweden, South Africa, and the Philippines. Jo: Here's an example. This is a game we called "Zooney Deschanel," where you turn a celebrity's name into an animal pun. You have an example, Manolo? Manolo: Brad Gorilla Pit. Jo: Oh, that's a pun on "Gorilla Pits"?

Manolo: Yep.

Jo: I... don't know if that's—

Manolo: It's Brad Pitt.

Jo: Oh, okay.

Manolo: That's a high-quality game that you could expect.

Jo: Dr. Gameshow has new episodes every-other Wednesday on Maximum Fun.

Manolo: Check us out, please!

[Music fades out.]

00:52:08 Promo Host

Music: Low-key, up-tempo drums and bass guitar play in background.

Mallory O'Meara: Hey! I'm Mallory O'Meara, a weird fiction reader who enjoys whiskey and owns a book weight.

Brea Grant: And I'm Brea Grant, a science fiction reader who likes iced tea and reads to escape the world.

Mallory: And we host *Reading Glasses*, a weekly show that dives into reading suggestions, goals, complaints, and the really important questions like—what are the best reading snacks?

Brea: And seriously, Mallory, what is a book weight for?

Mallory: Every week, we talk about reading.

Brea: It's not a book club! You're not going to have to listen to us review a book you haven't read.

Mallory: You just have to be excited about books, authors, the bookish community, writing, and talking about reading!

Brea: We can literally talk about reading, like, all day long.

Mallory: *Reading Glasses!*

Brea: Every Thursday on MaximumFun.org. Glasses!

[Mallory laughs.]

00:52:54 Biz Host

Mallory: *[Through laughter]* I thought about doing that. *[Laughs.] [Singing]* Up on the rooftop click, click, click! Down through the chimney comes somebody having a *[through laughter]* horrible breakdown. *[Laughs.]*

[Theresa laughs.]

Let's listen to a mom have a breakdown! I'm pretty sure it's the sound of the season.

00:53:09 Caller Caller

[Answering machine beeps.]

Hi! This is a breakdown, I think. I realized that I am having a really hard time with things and... I know that once I reach out to my therapist she won't be able to see me for at least a week 'cause that's how it always is. And then at that point everything will be all better and I'll just tell her everything's fine so we'll just keep going through this spiral of "I don't get help when I'm not fine." So here I am! I just... I'm tired. I don't know how to do this anymore. I just... got a COVID test. Don't worry; everything's fine. Just precautionary. And I just pulled into my house to relieve my babysitter and I just find myself waiting until the last possible second to go back in my house because I just don't wanna be here any more. Not right now, anyway. Yes. That's, uh, that's it. I don't know what else to say. Thank you. Bye.

00:54:30 Biz Host

You are doing... a really good job. And there's not a lot more to say, except from us to say you're not alone in this at all. I... there are a couple of things I think we can address. One of them being the "I don't know how to do this anymore"? And oh, man. Talk about internal monologues being said out loud. There've been multiple times—out loud, usually in tears— *[Laughs.]* IN a Target parking lot. I have said those very words! "I don't know how I'm supposed to do that anymore!" And then that leads me to—"Did I ever know? What is this assumption that we all knew how to do this in the first place?" Like, where was that bar ever set? Basically, we're just all trying to get through it each day? And now we're all trying to get through it emotionally and physically, completely depleted, without any support systems. So the answer is, I dunno! There's a good chance we don't know how to get through this anymore. Okay? And you're doing a really good job.

00:55:46 Theresa Host

Yes. I also want to add—on the note about, like, "I'm not okay now and by the time I get to therapy I'll be fine—" *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

And I just recognize that so much, because I am somebody who—for years—went to therapy and like... for some reason, would just get there and be like, "Yeah, it's going pretty well." And I would report all the ways that it was going well. I don't really know why. I think maybe... 'cause when it's going well, it's really hard to revisit those dark places? Like... authentically? Because it's really hard to then get back out of there. So yeah. I mean, therapy is not—it's not perfect.

[Biz laughs.]

00:56:48 Biz Host

It's a lot of work. It's really tricky and you're totally entitled to just have sad, bad, dark moments that are not fixable right away. Like—Ugh. Which sucks! I mean—it does! It sucks! I even have therapy scheduled, y'know, every week. And I still have the problem of... y'know, the day before being like, "Oh, I can't wait for therapy tomorrow." I mean, completely... enraged and, like, need to work with somebody professional. To help me get through it. And then I go to sleep... and I wake up and I'm like, "Eh, I was grumpy. Like, I

know I was pretty unhappy yesterday and, y'know—like, it's—"
Yeah. That's really hard. And finally, on not wanting to go inside
your own house— [Laughs.]

[Theresa laughs.]

That is the most relatable thing you've said in the entire rant. I have
sat—and I would have to, like, park down the street? In case the
babysitter and Ellis were outside? Because if he spotted the car,
right? Then he'd know that I was there. So sometimes I would be
like, "Oh god, if I even drive past my house they're gonna happen to
be looking out the window and then they're gonna know and then
I'm gonna have to come home. And I'm gonna come home to
somebody who's really upset." Or better yet, I'm gonna sit here in
this room now—eleven years into this! [Laughs.] Eleven years into
there being living things in my house with needs—more than food
on the floor—and I'm gonna pretend when we're done recording
this show that I'm still recording. And I'm not gonna go out there.

00:58:29	Theresa	Host	Yeah.
00:58:30	Biz	Host	Yeah. Yeah.
00:58:32	Theresa	Host	Yes.
00:58:33	Biz	Host	You are doing... a good job.
00:58:37	Theresa	Host	Yes. You are.
00:58:40	Biz	Host	Theresa? You are doing a good job. Sometimes I like to just come park outside <u>your</u> house.
00:58:45	Theresa	Host	[Through laughter] Yeah.
00:58:46	Biz	Host	But in that case, I <u>do</u> wanna come in? But I can't.
00:58:49	Theresa	Host	Yeah. You're just not allowed to.
00:58:50	Biz	Host	But I'm not allowed to!
00:58:52	Theresa	Host	[Through laughter] Yeah.
00:58:53	Biz	Host	Ugh! But you're doing a wonderful job. If I do not talk to you—but I will—before then, I hope you have— [Laughs.] Whatever type of Christmas you can have. [Laughs.]

[Theresa laughs.]

00:59:13	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	I don't wanna be bullshit, being like, "Have a happy Christmas!" Biz: Y'know, I don't know! [Laughs.]
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00:59:20	Theresa	Host	Theresa: That is a truly reasonable... and authentic wish. Thank you. Thank you for that. I <u>also</u> —
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[Biz laughs.]

—think you're doing a good job, and I really hope you have some
fun!

00:59:33	Biz	Host	A... Christmas. [Laughs.]
00:59:34	Theresa	Host	On Christmas. Is that okay? I hope you have "some" fun on Christmas?
00:59:38	Biz	Host	Yeah! I will look for a little fun at Christmas.
00:59:44	Theresa	Host	Yeah. Great.
00:59:45	Biz	Host	That's a big bar, Theresa! [Laughs.]
00:59:47	Theresa	Host	Just some. Just some. Alright.
00:59:51	Biz	Host	Well, I will talk to you later.
00:59:53	Theresa	Host	Okay.
00:59:54	Biz	Host	Okay.

00:59:55 Theresa Host
00:59:56 Biz Host

Bye!
Bye!

[Singing] Oh, Theresa! *[Regular voice]* Theresa is my holiday gift under my tree every year. Guys? It's just not like the normal holiday season, is it? *[Laughs.]* It's such a weird time! So what did we learn today? We learned that the pandemic is still happening. It's really not that much better, and the holidays are here and you've already been hiding in the bathroom for so long that that doesn't even seem like a place to hide anymore! Like, ah! It's so strange! So y'know, in all honesty, happy... holidays. Have one.

We also learned from our wonderful guest, Kyle Lukoff, that you can have interesting, deep, multifaceted characters that are trans. That don't have to fall into the traps or tropes or boring setups that they have found themselves in in many children's books. One of the things, I think, that makes Kyle such a wonderful author is the point that he made about finding so many things boring about previously-written books featuring trans characters holds true for lots of children's literature. The great ones are great when they characters are more than one-note, and when the characters have interesting problems and objectives to overcome. And... I—I really appreciated the care and thought that Kyle put in to these characters and into his books and I just... I just love it! I just love the evolution of inclusion in children's literature. So go get that book! We learned that there's still time to get that book for someone as a gift for the holidays.

Everybody? You're doing a really good job! It's like the belly button of the holidays for many people right now. And there's snow. And there's a pandemic. And there's family guilt about not coming or being able to spend time with people. There's also been a remarkable amount of loss and holidays are not known for making that loss easier. As always with holidays, there's the pressure to "get it right!" Whatever the hell that means. I'm still trying to figure out why that question comes up in my own head about "getting it right." You're doing a really good job. It's not weird to feel like you don't know what else there is to do. Or you don't know how to do this. That's—that is an okay feeling to have right now.

And just as I wished Theresa, I wish you all some sort of holiday. *[Laughs.]* Whatever it is. May there be a little quiet, a little fun, and a little something special that reminds you how special you actually are. And! As a little treat! As a little treat! How long has it been since I've touched my banjo? I'm—gonna share with you guys some bad banjo playing. Guys? It's not gonna be good. In fact, it might be, like, I dunno. Banjos, some people are like, "Oh, even played badly some instruments are beautiful." I'm not sure banjos and bagpipes—those kinda fall in the same category together? So I am gonna try this and the joy of recording is that I can record this multiple times until it sounds like I want it to sound. And so—to all of you—I wish you a very happy touching of your own banjo.

[Biz plays the banjo slowly and methodically.]

Yay! Talk to you guys next week. Bye!

01:04:57	Music	Music	<p>“Mama Blues” by Cornbread Ted and the Butterbeans. Strumming acoustic guitar with harmonica and lyrics.</p> <p><i>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</i></p>
01:05:21	Biz	Host	<p><i>[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]</i></p> <p>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.</p>
01:05:49	Theresa	Host	<p><i>One Bad Mother</i> is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to MaximumFun.org/donate.</p>
01:06:13	Music	Transition	<p><i>[Music continues for a while before fading out.]</i></p> <p>A cheerful ukulele chord.</p>
01:06:14	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
01:06:16	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:06:17	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:06:18	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.