

00:00:00	Biz Ellis	Host	Hi. I'm Biz.
00:00:01	Theresa Thorn	Host	And I'm Theresa.
00:00:03	Biz	Host	Due to the pandemic, we bring you <i>One Bad Mother</i> straight from our homes—including such interruptions as: children! Animal noises! And more! So let's all get a little closer while we have to be so far apart. And remember—we are doing a <u>good job</u> .
00:00:21	Music	Music	"Summoning the Rawk" by Kevin MacLeod. Driving electric guitar and heavy drums.
00:00:25	Biz	Host	<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i> This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> —live and let grow! We welcome back Lenore Skenazy of Free-range Parenting and Let Grow to talk about the benefits of childhood independence. Plus, Ellis stops by for a visit.
00:00:40	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz and caller: Wooooo!
00:00:47	Caller	Caller	<i>[Both laugh.]</i> Oh. Hi, Biz. Hi, Theresa. I was trying to figure out if I could call it a genius and I was like, "No, no. I'm just gonna call and check in." 'Cause it's just life. I am, y'know, life is kind of extra wild right now always. COVID cases going up. But I still am lucky enough that daycare is open? Although that's increasingly nerve-wracking. But I'm on my way to pick up my daughter, which is always kind of an ordeal 'cause she doesn't want to get in the car so I have a series of different levels of bribes. Which ultimately cumulated in gummies. Apparently my daughter—well, she <u>used</u> to do just about anything for gummies. Now she just expects them 'cause that's— <i>[inaudible]</i> is gone. But I started grabbing two packs of gummies just in case—heaven help me—I did not have gummies. Which are fruit snacks. And I sometimes eat them. Because I need snacks, too, apparently. And today I was packing up snacks and I was like, "I need a snack." Grabbed another thing of gummies, and I'm like, "I don't <u>want</u> to eat gummies. I am gonna bring myself an actual snack. That I actually wanna eat." Halfway through dinner, so I'll have to finish that when I get home. Just throwing things in an Instant Pot, hitting go. I think it's monumentally unfair that dinner still has to happen every day. <i>[Biz laughs.]</i> 'Cause I mean I like eating but making dinner somehow always manages to be some kind of ordeal in the chaos after pickup. And trying to get a child to cooperate. But yeah! That's how I'm doing. Doing okay. <i>[Biz laughs.]</i> With a side of anxiety that doesn't quite ever fully go away. And thank you so much for the podcast! Doing such a great job and I love you both. Bye!
00:02:59	Biz	Host	Well, thank you for that check-in. You are also doing an incredibly good job. I— <i>[Laughs.]</i> This is like... the level of energy I think all parents have right now? Is the like, "I mean, I like eating. But... why do I have to cook dinner? Like every night." Yeah. Oh. Every night. You're just standing there and you're cooking it. Also, golly! The whole concept of the bribe turning into a routine? This is a

nightmare! This is a nightmare! *[Through laughter]* This is like the basis of so many geniuses that become failures. Well, I think you're doing a very good job remembering that you're a self and that you need a snack, too. I think you're doing great! You are! You're doing a wonderful job!

Also doing a wonderful job are *[singing]* healthcare workers! Essential workers! *[Regular voice]* Everybody who is in the healthcare industry, from nurses to doctors to RNs to EMTs to—I'm gonna say the same thing every week, because every week, everybody's doing the same thing. All the people who keep the facilities clean. Lab workers. All the people who are setting up and helping people get their vaccines? People who are working help lines to help people navigate vaccine sign-up? Every state, every city, every county can be different and it's confusing and so good job to everyone out there who is stepping up and stepping in to help people get the information and the access they need to vaccines. And to just general healthcare. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you to all of our educators and people in the education industry. We are trying to figure all of this out and I see you and I appreciate it. Thank you to the postal service. Thank you to people who work in the food and grocery and retail industry. You're keeping everybody going? And that's not something you signed up for. *[Laughs.]* So I really see you and I appreciate that you continue to show up. I will continue to smile and say thank you to you through my mask. When I am there. And to be mindful. And thank you to everyone who continue to wear masks. It's really important to do that! It's something we all know will help. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you. And now for a little special treat, Ellis is going to come in for a little quick Q&A. *[Announcer voice]* Duh-da-da-daaa! Ladies and gentlemen? Introducing Ellis Gustav Lawrence.

00:06:16	Ellis Lawrence	Guest	Ellis, it's been a while since you have stopped by to say hello. Hello. Hello!
00:06:17	Biz	Host	Hello. I have a question for you.
00:06:20	Ellis	Guest	What is the question?
00:06:23	Biz	Host	Okay. The question is—what is something like that you wanna do that would make you feel independent? Like something <u>without</u> your parents.
00:06:37	Ellis	Host	Going on a walk! All by myself! And what is this?
00:06:42	Biz	Host	That's chocolate. You don't get any of that. Okay.
00:06:44	Ellis	Guest	I want chocolate.
00:06:46	Biz	Host	I know you want chocolate. But you're <i>[through laughter]</i> here to talk about being independent. So you wanna go for a walk by yourself? Outside?!
00:06:56	Ellis	Guest	Yes!
00:06:57	Biz	Host	What?!
00:06:58	Ellis	Guest	Yes!
00:06:59	Biz	Host	That's scary for me!
00:07:01	Ellis	Guest	Not for me!
00:07:02	Biz	Host	Yeah? Well tell me what you would do!
00:07:05	Ellis	Guest	I—
00:07:06	Biz	Host	Just run crazy through the streets?
00:07:08	Ellis	Guest	No. I would be on the sidewalk and walk.

00:07:11 Biz Host Yeah? But you know I'm scared to let you do that. I'm scared that like what if somebody pulls out of their driveway?

00:07:18 Ellis Guest I'll look! And see if they're there.

00:07:21 Biz Host Oh. Well I'm also scared that like what if you get lost?

00:07:25 Ellis Guest Oh, I'll knock on one of the people's doors that I know!

00:07:31 Biz Host Ohhh! We do know people on the street. This sounds very responsible.

00:07:37 Ellis Guest I know people on the street 'cause I'm just going up the street and back down!

00:07:42 Biz Host Yeah? How do you think that would make you feel?

00:07:46 Ellis Guest Actually I—it would make me feel grown-up.

00:07:49 Biz Host What?! You're seven! That is practically grown-up. You really want that chocolate.

00:07:56 Ellis Guest *[Whispering]* Chocolate!

00:07:59 Biz Host *[Biz laughs.]*
Okay. I'm going to give you this special mama chocolate that I just got through telling Gabe I don't give to anybody. Is there anything else you wanna say to the *One Bad Mother* community?

00:08:15 Ellis Guest Byeeeeee! I hope you have a great dayyyy!

00:08:21 Biz Host Yep!

00:08:22 Ellis Guest Bye, listeners!

00:08:25 Biz Host *[Biz laughs.]*
Alright. Take your chocolate. Don't let your sibling know that you had it! Well, everybody, I think that ties in nicely to what we're gonna talk about today, which is—childhood independence with return guest Lenore Skenazy.

00:08:42 Music Music Banjo strums; cheerful banjo music continues through dialogue.

00:08:44 Theresa Host 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.

00:08:51 Biz Host If you are married to the host of *One Bad Mother*, we definitely are talking about you.

00:08:55 Theresa Host Nothing we say constitutes professional parenting advice.

00:08:58 Biz Host Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.

00:09:01 Theresa Host Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

[Banjo music fades out.]

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

00:09:09 Biz Host This week, we are welcoming back Lenore Skenazy, who is cofounder and president of Let Grow, a nonprofit promoting childhood independence. Ever since her column "Why I Let My Nine-Year-Old Ride the Subway Alone"—woohoo!—created *[through laughter]* a media firestorm, Lenore has been declaring that our kids are actually smarter and safer than our culture gives them credit for. She is the author of *Free-Range Kids*, a book turned movement that garnered her the nickname "America's Worst Mom." She has been profiled everywhere from the *New Yorker* to the *New York Times* and spoken everywhere from Microsoft to DreamWorks to the—this is one of my favorites—Bulgarian Happiness Festival! Woo-hoo!

00:09:55 Biz Host *[Lenore laughs.]*
 You may have seen her on the *Today Show*, the *Daily Show*, *Dr. Phil*, or her own Discovery TV reality show, *World's Worst Mom*. At Let Grow, Lenore oversees school programs and online community, legislative efforts, and myth busting—all promoting the idea that when adults step back, kids step in. Now this is also—I really appreciate that you included this particular bragging part of your bio. Are you ready? Here it goes: “Before all of this, she was a reporter and columnist at the *New York Daily News* and *New York Sun* and she also used to write for *MAD Magazine* and *Cracked*. Yes! This is—that is high, high esteem for me.

[Lenore laughs.]

Who is perpetually twelve years old. Welcome back to the show, Lenore! The last time we had you on was—are you ready for this? Episode 7!

00:10:52 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** *[Through laughter]* Oh, wow. I know you’re on like three hundred and something, right?

00:10:57 Biz Host **Biz:** This will be—yeah!
 We’re at 391 is this one, which is amazing. So this is really a fun question. Thank you very much! This is a really fun question. Who lives in your house, y’know, now? *[Laughs.]*

00:11:10 Lenore Skenazy Guest *[Through laughter]* My ever-dwindling life, is what you’re talking about?

[Biz laughs.]

How un-fun are you now, Lenore? We talked to you when you were in the ripe prime of motherhood and now you’re this scraggly old lady, as evidenced by your hair that we see on the Zoom that I’m not allowing you to show.

00:11:23 Biz Host I love it!

00:11:25 Lenore Guest So here I have a husband—still alive and well. And since he was vaccinated yesterday I think I’ve got him for longer than that.

00:11:30 Biz Host Oooh!

00:11:32 Lenore Guest And our 22-year-old—the subway rider—is living at home but right now he’s at his job. So he’s got a job but he’s living at home.

00:11:39 Biz Host That—many are. *[Laughs.]*

00:11:41 Lenore Guest Yes. They are. Right.

00:11:44 Biz Host There’s a pandemic going on. Did you know that?

00:11:45 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** Oh no! That explains the vaccine! *[Laughs.]*

00:11:50 Biz Host **Biz:** I’m not sure if it reached you. *[Laughs.]*
 Alright. Well let’s—here’s what I’d like to kind of start with. I think—guys, I mention it in the bio. You can go back to, y’know. Episode 7. I do not wanna spend this entire time reliving the Subway story. Basically—Lenore thought that she knew what was best for her own child, and she let them do that.

00:12:12 Lenore Guest How dare she!

00:12:13 Biz Host And then the public shaming started. So there we go. Thank god the Twitter wasn’t around back then.

00:12:20 Lenore Guest It’s true! Twitter wasn’t there yet! Right!

00:12:21 Biz Host That would have—

00:12:23 Lenore Guest I would have been Bean Dad! *[Laughs.]*

00:12:24	Biz	Host	Oh! Right! You would've been—
00:12:26	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Lenore: I would've been Bean Dad! Bean Mom! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:12:30	Biz	Host	Biz: You would've been Bean Dad! I know. Alright. So I <u>do</u> , though, wanna retouch on the notion of free-range parenting. So let's just give us a quick refresher on free-range parenting before we get into everything.
00:12:44	Lenore	Guest	So free-range parenting is what people of a certain age recall as—actually, I wouldn't even say—I said they recall it as “parenting,” but when people were just parenting they didn't call it parenting? They just had kids? <i>[Laughs.]</i> It wasn't a public sport. It wasn't—you weren't given a report card.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			You weren't bragging about it all the time. You weren't schlepping them everywhere all the time. You just had the kids and you loved them and you fed them and you were interested in them, but not everything was done with them or for them. And the reason I even say that it's a good idea to take a little bit of a step back is because it's taking up all of our time as well as encroaching on any independence of theirs. So I realize with the pandemic you take a step back and there you are in the remote learning thing. Somebody just tweeted—speaking of which—that she accidentally gave her seventeen-year-old son the finger? And realized that he was on? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			His high school class at the moment? So I'm sure she's in jail by now. And for the record, I don't recommend giving your child <u>any</u> fingers. They're yours.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			But the problem is that we've sort of been—as a culture—told that our kids can't handle anything safely or successfully on their own. And free-range parenting says, “Oh yes they can.” <i>[Laughs.]</i> And that's it. And it allows parents—we support them. We also support you if you wanna do more for your kids. It's up to the parents but it's not up to the shamers and it's not up to the government to say this is exactly the level of attention you must give to every one of their issues.
00:14:13	Biz	Host	Actually, I really like that clarification. The “It's up to you as the parent. Not the other voices in the room.” And y'know we've talked about that <i>[through laughter]</i> over the last three hundred and something show!
00:14:28	Lenore	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Yeah! 391!
00:14:30	Biz	Host	There's no way—there's no one way every child is different even in your own house. And—
00:14:37	Lenore	Guest	Every day is different! My god! Y'know, it sort of depends on—did you drink a lot of coffee? Did you get enough sleep? Are you mad about like—why did—we skipped ahead in <i>Schitt's Creek</i> and now we are in the wrong spot and we have to go backwards and it's just not as funny?

[Biz laughs.]

Y'know, I mean there's a lot of different variables in anyone's life. And yeah, we do talk about like, "Oh, all kids are different." But—*[sighs.]* It isn't even that. It's sort of what makes you feel good and what you have the time for and what you have the money for and what are your priorities and they all are always shifting.

00:15:10 Biz Host

That—well it's the shifting that I wanted to ask you about. In your own sort of journey in this universe—right? Like, there's the Lenore from when this all sort of began to the Lenore of the free-range parenting beginning. Like, just writing the book. To... now the nonprofit, Let Grow. What, if anything, has sort of changed for you as you've navigated through all of this? Anything, or are you like, "Nope! It's all good." *[Laughs.]*

00:15:44 Lenore Guest

[Lenore laughs.]

It's all—all—let's see. So I never was afraid of strangers or the Subways, but now both my sons are old enough to drive and I'm terrified. Let's just put it out there.

[Biz laughs.]

Driving—and the other day, there was a blizzard and the mayor here in New York City said no one should be driving. Which I immediately ran to my 22-year-old son's room and said, "See? Nobody should be driving. There's the mayor. It's on my phone."

[Biz laughs.]

And he being the—I guess—independent young man we wanted to raise—

00:16:12 Biz Host

Dammit!

00:16:13 Lenore Guest

—went out and drove, goddammit, to his job and then when he showed up and I was on the phone so I couldn't ask him what it was, he showed up far too early! He showed back at home at one in the afternoon. I'm like, "Oh no! No! Is everything—" y'know, "Was the car totaled? Are you okay? How's the person in the other car? How about the other ten in the pileup?" And it turned out no, they just sent everybody home. Because obviously it was ridiculous to go driving on that day. So mom was right, but mom was wrong in that then he got to come home early and get paid for a whole day and, y'know, what do I know about driving except that it's scary and terrifying? So—

[Biz laughs.]

—y'know, physician, heal thyself. I'd say that I've always been a nervous parent, just not nervous about some things. But I think that's probably pretty normal and what you're allowed to be the parent you are. *[Laughs.]* Y'know? So that's it.

00:17:01 Biz Host

Well—see, now, one of the things I love about talking to people and listening to people even more importantly is—I catch myself with my own notions of what I thought. And whatever I thought is probably actually more of a reflection on myself. *[Laughs.]* But—

00:17:20 Lenore Guest

Everything is. *[Laughs.]*

00:17:21 Biz Host Everything is! But I wanna be like, “No, no, no, no, no! You’re Lenore! You’re the free-range parent guru! You aren’t scared of anything!”

[Lenore laughs.]

“And I’m not doing enough!” And so like—and I just have to tell you how nice it is to hear you say that you’re terrified of many things. And I’d like to kind of explore that notion of... some things I am good with and some things I am not. And I have found myself in that situation so many times. I’ve known people whose kids are what I call, y’know, the climbers. Like you see ‘em on top of the roof if they could be.

00:18:04 Lenore Guest Oh, oh, not social climbers. Okay. Actual climbers. Like—
00:18:06 Biz Host Not social climbers. Regular old climbers. We’re not into the social climbers yet. Just good old-fashioned climbers. Physical kids that can jump from tree to—and do it flawlessly. Right? I didn’t make those?

[Lenore laughs.]

Despite how much I’d like them to be that? I—they have not touched the dome int eh backyard ever ‘cause of spiders, right?

[Laughs.] So—

00:18:31 Lenore Guest I don’t blame ‘em.
00:18:32 Biz Host Yeah. I don’t blame ‘em. That’s fine. But like... I have gone through my own journey of, “It’s my fault that they’re not climbers.” Right? Somehow, I’ve done this. Or I do the, “No, no. No, no. They’re mental acrobats. They’re more into the mental challenges!” Right? Like... and what did that parent do that was different? What—so with the website and the book and the new Let Grow—when people reach out to you? Is this what they’re reaching out about? Like, what do they tend to come to you with? What are they looking for? Probably permission. *[Laughs.]*

00:19:12 Lenore Guest Interesting. Well I think reassurance. And we’re all looking for reassurance, especially in a culture that is really has this new pastime, which is, y’know, shaking a finger at a mom for doing something, y’know, two degrees different from the way I would do it or you would do it. So a lot of times they write to me kinda shakily! Like, y’know, “Am I a terrible mother? I ___” And then they fill in the blank with something that they did that was completely normal that nobody would’ve even thought about. For a second. A generation ago. And then I provide reassurance in that. And then they also wonder—like me—how can you stop being so afraid in a culture that really, y’know, has figured out the best way to get anybody’s attention or money or adulation is by saying that something terrible is happening to kids and if you only do it this way they’ll be fine. And I worry sometimes that we’re doing that, too! We’re saying, “Kids will be great if you let them go!” But we also think kids will be great, period—

[Biz laughs.]

—if they have parents who love them and there’s some food around. And the other thing is that I’d like to say—y’know, I believe that we have been fed a lot of fear by our culture. Our culture is—I’d

say—awful. That way. In terms of making us worry about everything all the time. And I usually keep a stack of parents' magazines—it's over there—next to my computer so that I can just read aloud from whatever has annoyed me in the most recent issue.

[Biz laughs.]

About something new that we have to do and it's written in sort of cheerful language—

00:20:45 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Lenore: But like the most recent one—

00:20:50 Lenore Guest

Biz: *[Cheerfully, and a bit patronizingly]* “Ten Things You’re Doing Wrong Loving Your Child.” *[Laughs.]*

Yes! Right! Right! My favorite one—actually, I don’t even have it. It’s in my closet. But my favorite one is—and I think it might’ve been in *Parenting* magazine. Not *Parents*. Was there was a hug how-to.

[Biz laughs.]

00:21:05 Biz Host
00:21:07 Lenore Guest

Let me say that again. There was a hug... how-to. Right?

“Ten Ways You’re Hugging Your Children Wrong!”

Wrong! Right! Right! And it does tell you—it says what to do! It says, “Get down to your little one’s level.” It’s like, “Oh, you mean I don’t hug them from above like to the dome of their head?”

[Biz laughs.]

“That’s not how I hug?” And it says, “Hold them closely, chests touching.” And I’m thinking, like, “Oh, because I was always holding them behind my back and that was always hurting me and it hurt them and I didn’t feel very close and they didn’t feel loved and...” So by the time you have magazines telling you how to hug your child? That you could get it wrong or that you were thinking like, “Oh, god, do I really have to hug ‘em?” “Oh, it’s really good developmentally.” *[Without enthusiasm]* “Honeyyyy... come here... it’s hug time.”

[Biz laughs.]

There’s something wrong with our culture! But the most recent one I had was *Parents* magazine. And it was “How to Read to Your Child to Raise a Reader.” And one of the things it said was—they spend so little time when they’re young kids and they’re looking at picture books, they spend so little time looking at the type. And I’m like, “Hm. Could it be because there are pictures?”

00:22:07 Biz Host
00:22:09 Lenore Guest

It’s a picture book!

Yeah. Well that’s not good enough. Not if you wanna raise a reader, goldarnit! And to raise a reader it said to like point out the title. And then to simply say, “Look! There are seven words in this title!” And I’m—

00:22:23 Biz Host
00:22:25 Lenore Guest

That’s exhausting.

It’s not only exhausting; it’s the opposite of how you read. If you’re reading—*[robotically]* “I wonder how many words are in the title. I wonder how—” *[regular voice]* Y’know, it’s like AI or something!

[Biz laughs.]

It has nothing to do with being interested or cuddly or close or following a story or falling into a book or using your imagination. It is the antithesis of reading. And here it is, a magazine telling you *[sternly and robotically]* that if you want to raise a good reader who will read *Parents* magazine soon *[regular voice]* you should be doing something that is the opposite of normal. And the thing that—it's not only the opposite of normal, it's more work. It's less fun. It's less natural. *[Laughs.]* Right? And it is to an end in itself. Y'know. The end is to raise a reader who does well on their SATs and goes to Princeton—

[Biz laughs.]

—and that's a society that is spinning us around and really giving us terrible advice. And part of the advice is that you on your own are gonna do it wrong. You are gonna ruin your child. You're gonna stunt them. Hurt them. And if you're just interacting like a human with another human who's young who you usually love and who often annoys you, that's not enough!

00:23:41 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Lenore: It's just a lot of pressure. Mm-hm. You don't stop feeling like shit! *[Laughs.]*

00:23:52 Biz Host
00:23:55 Lenore Guest
00:23:57 Biz Host

Biz: Alright. Well, now how do I stop feeling like shit for— *[Laughs.]* For having modeled something for my child, Lenore?

Y'know, like because—I remember my mother—I was—I remember mine!

I remember—she's pretty great. My first child was like, I dunno, one-and-a-half. Two. We were living in Brooklyn at the time and I'd take her to the playground. It'd be full of kids. Everybody's running around. And I remember as a new parent being very precious about any injury that might befall my child. Right? As is—

00:24:17 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Lenore: Emphasis on “fall.”

00:24:20 Biz Host

Biz: —my—as is my wont.

And other times I would see kids climbing and doing things that I thought, “That kid's gonna fall off and knock their teeth out.” Now I kept that to myself, except I called my mother. Right? I was like, “Mom! How do I feel? What am I supposed to do? Blah, blah, blah!” And she said, “I knew that you guys were going to fall. But if you were gonna fall right in front of me? I was going to catch you.” Right? “Like, if I was within an arm's reach, I'm gonna do that.” And to me, that fit with something that helped me walk through the world with kids. They're not always gonna be in arm's reach. Right? They're gonna fall on the other side of the playground—

00:25:02 Lenore Guest

Actually, I love that! Because it tells you two things. It tells you you're not an overbearing horrible helicopter parent because you are catching them when they fall, and then it also tells you that they're gonna be fine without you doing that because of course they won't always be with you.

00:25:16 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Biz: Right. And I—

00:25:19 Biz Host

Lenore: So it gives you both. Yeah.

But that notion of... catching—it's a trap. Sometimes. I feel in our culture. The trap of... “You're not being—you're not letting your kids

00:25:35 Crosstalk Crosstalk be independent enough. You're not free-range enough." Or "You're a helicopter." Right? Like—
Lenore: Oh, yeah. No. There's that. It's like—yeah.

00:25:41 Lenore Guest **Biz:** Every action! Every action is horrible! *[Laughs.]*
00:25:42 Crosstalk Crosstalk That's true! And so—
Lenore: So my advice—

00:25:45 Lenore Guest **Biz:** Thank you! *[Laughs.]*
My advice is your mother's advice, actually! Let me channel your mother for a second.

00:25:48 Biz Host Okay, mama. *[Laughs.]*
00:25:49 Lenore Guest They are gonna fall. And how great not to always be there! Because I think that there's this weird sort of... I dunno. Infinite loop. Which is that we're with our kids—like me, with my kids, and I'd think, "Oh my god, they're crossing the street looking down at their phones. Oh my god. They can't possibly cross the street by themselves." And I'm walking them across the street.

[Biz laughs.]

If I was not with them, I have to assume—'cause they've made it to this point—that at least some point they actually look up and see if cars are coming at them. Because there isn't somebody to help them. But because we're with them and we see them sort of, y'know, giving all their responsibility to us, we think they're completely irresponsible so we don't give them any responsibility because they—

[Biz laughs.]

00:26:35 Biz Host And it's just this—it just keeps going on.
"Watch your step. Watch your step. Watch your step."
00:26:38 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** "Watch your step. Watch your step. Watch your step! Watch your step." *[Laughs.]* It's like wait—I know! I know.

00:26:46 Lenore Guest **Lenore:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Really. "Honey, are you sure? Is that okay? Are you sure? Watch out! That's wet! It's slippery! It's wet!" I do that to my husband! Oh my god! There's—y'know, it's like—
—snow. It's like, y'know, he probably—we both grew up in Chicago. We know from snow. We know it's not Velcro. Right? It's not shag carpeting! It's slippery! Why do I feel compelled to tell him, y'know, "It's really slippery out there! You moron who has never encountered snow before 'cause you're from Hawaii!" That's not the case! So.

00:27:06 Biz Host Alright. Let's talk pandemic for a second. Because—can I—this is the—this is the strange correlation I have come up with.

00:27:14 Lenore Guest Okay. Let's hear it.
00:27:17 Biz Host I wonder if the level of independence granted to a child is tied to how much time you have to spend with the child. Right now, for nine months, I've been in this house with both of my children. And the amount of independence I started giving them? *[Laughs.]*

00:27:38 Lenore Guest Exponential!
00:27:40 Biz Host Has blossomed! I'm just like, "Go."
00:27:42 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** That's really great! Actually, I should be talking to you! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!

00:27:46 Biz Host **Biz:** Go, go, go, go, go! Yeah, yeah!
But I think for us, I think that's actually one of the positive parts of it. Because I can't. I can't. And it—what the pandemic's done is put the spotlight on—I cannot. I cannot work from home and do all this. "You are old enough to make your fucking lunch. Go do it. You are old enough to get a snack for yourself. Get it." Right? "Go outside. Go outside!" I told my seven-year-old—who was having a breakdown about dribbling a ball and that they were never, ever going to be able to dribble this ball. And I said, "You know what?"

00:28:19 Lenore Guest That's probable.
00:28:20 Biz Host I was so tired. I said, "You know what? You know what my father woulda said to me?" He was like, "What?" "You're gonna stay outside until you can dribble that ball."

00:28:30 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** Wow!

00:28:31 Biz Host **Biz:** He was like—
He goes, "Really?" I said, "Yeah." "Are you gonna lock me outside until I can dribble the ball?" And I was like, "Would you like me to?"

[Lenore laughs.]

00:28:43 Lenore Guest "Yes." "Alrighty-roo!" That kid can dribble. Anyway. *[Laughs.]*
00:28:46 Biz Host Wowwww. I love that! That's so great!
I feel like the pandemic is really hard. Because it's this like... unseeable fall. Right? Like, y'know, at the playground if I'm watching my kid, y'know, walk on the monkey bars, I can be like, I can see what the fall would look like. Right? *[Laughs.]*

00:29:06 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** But with the pandemic—

00:29:08 Biz Host **Lenore:** Why is that great? *[Laughs.]*
I know! Isn't that great? I have this horrible—my husband's always like, "Guys, remember—your mother only sees the absolute worst outcomes of all situations." And I was like—

00:29:18 Lenore Guest You know I have a phrase for that now?
00:29:21 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Oh, what is the phrase?

00:29:23 Lenore Guest **Lenore:** Do you know that—it's—
It's called "Worst-first thinking." Coming up with the worst-case scenario first and proceeding as if it's likely to happen. It's really—

00:29:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** It's always teeth.

00:29:31 Biz Host **Lenore:** It explains a lot. Yeah.
Always teeth. You're always gonna lose your teeth.

00:29:34 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** I've heard that already in this—just in this podcast we've mentioned the teeth being knocked out several times already. Yes.

00:29:39 Biz Host **Biz:** Well it took me—I would like to—I know. Yeah! Well—
That is because I moved from death—okay, the worst thing that's gonna happen is probably not death. The worst—quote-unquote "worst" thing—is probably knocking your teeth out. And that lets me sleep. Now. Back to the pandemic.

[Lenore laughs.]

Kids are getting pretty fucked up during this pandemic. Because we can't get out. I don't know. I'm getting the face! I'm getting the Lenore face of "No, they're not." But like, I... I know the benefits of what—say—my eleven-year-old's going through would be to be doing that at a school away from me. There's so much learning that should take place without me there. *[Laughs.]*

00:30:16 Lenore Guest Mm-hm. Mm-hm. But like here you are right now! You're not with her now! Here you are, and, y'know, locked in a closet somewhere. *[Laughs.]* Doing your podcast.

00:30:23 Biz Host No, that's true. But I mean, like—yes. That is true. But they are also not around their peers. They're not in their, let's say, peer village. Right now. Learning those experiences that I can't... I can't teach them. It shouldn't be my job to teach them some of the—

00:30:42 Lenore Guest Right. You can't. You can't. It's experiential. Yeah.

00:30:45 Biz Host Exactly! And their experience—at least, for example, in California—is to not be able to go a lot of places. Our choices are limited. And so I wonder about the effects of the pandemic and I also think adults—we're not gonna come out of this perfect, either. We're all going to suddenly have a level of anxiety that we may or may not have had before this. You don't think people are freaking out? She's giving me this look—

00:31:12 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** —and I'm like—

00:31:14 Lenore Guest **Lenore:** I'm giving you so many looks—

00:31:17 Crosstalk Crosstalk —because I think that there—I don't know the answer. **Lenore:** So I shouldn't look so smugly. I know. Alright. Yes I do! Here's the answer. The answer is: G! *[Laughs.]* It's 72!

Biz: Dammit! Lenore! *[Laughs.]* Okay, great. *[Laughs.]* "All of the above!"

00:31:27 Lenore Guest Right, right, right, right, right. "Ask again later." Really old reference.

00:31:33 Biz Host No, I love that reference! Go ahead.

00:31:35 Lenore Guest So a couple of things. First of all, kids were doing so much online anyway before the pandemic. We almost forget that like most of their social life was online anyhow. So that isn't that dramatically different. Obviously they're not going to school and that's a big difference, but they're spending a lot of time still doing their relating—like they were doing before—online.

00:31:53 Biz Host Yeah, but I think that's true for slightly older kids.

00:31:56 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** I mean, my seven-year-old was never really on a computer.

00:32:01 Biz Host **Lenore:** Yeah, that's true. That's true. Yeah. Probably not a— And we never kept our kids from technology or whatever, but it was always—y'know, here and there mixed with other things. Now I got an eleven-year-old coming into themselves and wanting, y'know, all of that, like, "What are my mirrors? What am I looking at? How am I defining myself?" And they're just beginning to learn about that interaction socially online. And I mean if I already had a kid who was nose-deep into a phone or computer, I agree. It would be one thing. But with slightly younger kids, it's like, "Well, there's no putting the genie back in the bottle with this." I mean, when we come out of this—I mean, and it's *[in hokey optimistic voice]* a wonderful learning opportunity. And we get to like— *[Laughs.]* Go through all that!

00:32:46 Lenore Guest We get to know each other so much better!

00:32:49 Biz Host Blah, blah, blah, blah.

00:32:50 Lenore Guest Alright. So I'm gonna blah, blah, blah for a few minutes, too. So here's a couple of notes that I wrote. One was, "Ringo." Why did I write down "Ringo"? Because I started—and this will show you that I have no grit—I started but did not finish the gigantic, unending, LBJ-like nine-volume series about the *Beatles*, which actually told you about where their grandparents had grown up. And I thought, "This is just a little too granular for me." Or grandparent-lar.

00:33:16 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Granny-ular. *[Laughs.]*

00:33:19 Lenore Guest **Lenore:** Grand-ular. Yeah, right. right. But the thing is that Ringo spent a year or two—and I can't remember—in a hospital. He had something. I don't know—what was it—pleurisy? Polio? Whatever he had, he was stuck in a hospital bed for a long time. At least a year. And I think he ended up okay!

00:33:39 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** Y'know? He had some success. Right? Some professional success.

00:33:43 Lenore Guest **Biz:** Eh, he's alright. Yeah. *[Laughs.]* So... I think that we forget how outrageously resilient this species is.

[Biz gasps.]

Especially young people. Yeah. I think about—even my father-in-law was blinded at sixteen and stuck in a hospital and wanted to kill himself and ended up a lawyer, strangely enough. Which would make me want to kill myself. But the point is that we are really resilient. And we are—as a society—always looking to find something to say, like, "Oh my god! This terrible thing just happened and it's gonna—" And then we fill in the blank with how it's going to affect children in some horrible way. It's a pastime. It's a hobby. It's the mad libs of modern life. I feel like I should do a mad libs about the pandemic! Because of the—

00:34:24 Biz Host "Worst fear." *[Laughs.]*

00:34:25 Lenore Guest —"blank," y'know, it is people—children are "blankly" becoming "blank" "blanks." Y'know. This is bad for them because "blank."

00:34:33 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** Actually, it's a great idea!

00:34:36 Biz Host **Biz:** Right. You could be like—

00:34:38 Crosstalk Crosstalk Actually, it's so good. You could do like, "Scary noun."
Lenore: Yes! Yes! *[Laughs.]* Yes!

00:34:41 Lenore Guest **Biz:** "Horrible adjective." Right? Yeah. "Just like..." and then fill in other natural disaster in the last thousand years. Pandemic Mad Lib. I actually love that idea. And I have to say—

00:34:50 Biz Host This is—

00:34:51 Lenore Guest So in terms of Mad Libs, I just have to brag here just like I brag about *MAD Magazine*. So when I was a kid, in high school I read a book called—god, I can't remember. It was by Roger Price. I can't remember what the book was. It was like *How to Drive Yourself Crazy* or something like that.

[Biz laughs.]

And I tracked him down through the publisher and wrote him a letter and he wrote back and we became pen pals and he's the inventor of Mad Libs!

00:35:11 Biz Host No! Oh my god!

00:35:13 Lenore Guest Yes! Yes, I used to send him funny poems. He would critique them. He was not that easy a guy. Yeah.

[Biz laughs.]

00:35:17 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** That's amazing!

Lenore: And I met him when I went out to California. I met him. So Roger Price of Price, Stern, & Sloan. You can look at any Mad Lib. That was him. Isn't that cool?

00:35:24 Biz Host Oh... my gosh. Because that's how my children are learning adverbs, adjectives, and nouns at this point in time.

00:35:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** It is! It's great, isn't it! Yeah! Fun is the way to learn anything!

Biz: It's great! It really is.

00:35:33 Lenore Guest Okay. So Ringo. Ringo is one thing.

00:35:36 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** Ringo rebounded from his year—his pandemic-type year.

Biz: Resilience. Mm-hm.

00:35:39 Lenore Guest I wrote "PTG." What's "PTG?"

00:35:42 Biz Host I don't know!

00:35:44 Lenore Guest Post-traumatic growth.

[Biz gasps.]

It actually is more common than post-traumatic stress! Those who study it say. And what is post-traumatic growth? I think you can guess! You go down. You had a trauma. And then you come back up with new purpose. New perspective. It's sort of the opposite of, like, you win the lottery and you think, "My life is gonna be great!" And then six months later you're in debt and divorced—

[Biz laughs.]

—and your dog has rabies and you think, "Wow, this sucks." It's the opposite of that. [Laughs.]

00:36:13 Biz Host Okay. Whatever that is, the opposite of that. [Laughs.]

00:36:15 Lenore Guest It's the opposite. Which is that you rebound! I mean, if we couldn't rebound from anything we would be this very different species. And for some reason—and I think it has to do with clicks and selling anything—we are always talking about the downside of things. Which is why at Let Grow we did a survey towards the beginning of the pandemic asking parents, like, "What new things are your kids doing now? Are they helping around the house? How do you feel about them?" Gave them a list of adjectives.

[Biz laughs.]

No, really! And the adjective—the list always changed so it's not like the one thing is always at the top. But in the end, the bottom was "disappointed." The one that got the least votes was "disappointed." And the two top ones were "impressed" and "proud." It was "proud."

00:37:03 Biz Host Yeah. No actually... actually that makes a remarkable amount of sense and it sounds like you've done some research into this.
[Laughs.]

00:37:10 Lenore Guest Actually, we did our own research into it! We asked 1600 children and 1600 adults across the economic and geographic spectrum. And when we asked the kids, "What new thing did you learn last week just for fun, if anything?" It was just amazing! I mean, it's sort of like your kid dribbling. That wasn't because there was a dribbling test that was coming up. Right?

[Biz laughs.]

Right? They didn't have to pass dribbling to go onto the green letters in spelling or something. What is that? So the point is that we heard—y'know, kids were learning. Obviously tons of baking was going on. All the bikes were sold out at Walmart. Kids were babysitting more 'cause their parents were busy and they were making their snacks and once they were making their snacks sometimes they got a little more elaborate and then they started making a meal and maybe they even used the oven and maybe they used the oven without exploding or burning themselves.

[Biz laughs.]

And the whole idea—so the guy I was just interviewing for a Q&A—LetGrow.org! It should be up soon!—is this professor of psychology who was talking about anxiety. And what anxiety is is mistakenly thinking that something is dangerous. It's too scary or too hard or you're gonna fail in it and hurt yourself in a way that you won't recover. And when you're scared of doing something that isn't dangerous but it's in your head as dangerous—like walking the dog; climbing a tree; whatever—any time you avoid it—your mom says, "Okay, you don't have to walk the dog. I'll walk the dog. Or I'll open the oven for you." You get this feeling of—you're flooded with relief, which is such a great feeling that you associate it with the joy of not doing that other thing, which then becomes more and more scary.

And that's called aversion. And until you are exposed to walking the dog. Climbing the tree. Being locked out. Having to take the test. All these things—until you are exposed to them in real life, like, "Hey! I could handle that!" you don't grow. You shrink from things. As opposed to—that's why we call ourselves "Let Grow." Because our slogan is "When adults step back, kids step up." And some of the things that we're seeing—adults are stepping back! "I have to do my podcast now! You go make your snack!" And then they make their snack and the oven isn't scary anymore! It's not a threat to life and limb, it's the thing that allows you to go from brownie batter to brownies.

00:39:30 Biz Host My god! That person was smart! *[Laughs.]*

00:39:33 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** Yeah. Yeah.

00:39:36 Biz Host **Biz:** That is—
 Actually, that's incredibly insightful. I wanna wrap up on Let Grow. I wanna—like, this is—this has come out of all of this. And tell us about the site, but I also wanna say how many great resources there are on it.

00:39:51 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Biz: So talk to us a little bit—

00:39:54 Lenore Guest

Lenore: *[Laughs.]* We did—yeah. We just totally redid the site—
—so maybe there are, maybe there aren't!

[Biz laughs.]

But— *[Laughs.]* So a couple years ago, two other people who were concerned about sort of the growing fragility of kids? Especially as they reached high school and college age. Were thinking, “Well, it doesn't happen the second you step on campus, that suddenly, y'know, you're thrown for a loop because you have an argument with somebody. There's a mouse in your room. Or whatever. It must be that kids are being somehow overprotected into not being as competent or confident as they could be. As we would hope. Who is fighting that battle?” And so they found me and they said—actually one of the guys was Jonathan Haidt? Who wrote a book called *The Coddling of the American Mind*. He's the coauthor of that very popular book. So they said, “Let's start an organization together and we will be promoting childhood independence.” And I was like, “You're kidding! I'll work with people and I'll have a salary? I've been ten years in the wilderness as a freelance writer, scraping by giving speeches all the time? Sounds good!”

[Biz laughs.]

“I mean, yes! Let's make that organization!” So we started it and we called it Let Grow. We were gonna call it Let Go and Let Grow, and we realized that it's hard to let go until you do. So to say it to people is a bad idea. Let's just talk about the upside, which is the growth. So we call it Let Grow—L-E-T-G-R-O-W.org—and actually I'm going to go look at the site right now because you know—
Oh, you should!

00:41:13 Biz Host
00:41:14 Lenore Guest

I have to tell ya, 'cause we reconfigured it today. And I had to remember what's at the top! So actually the most important thing we have—of course we have a blog, and we have our mission statement and we list all our books that all of us have written, and we have a laws and advocacy tab at the top because we are trying to change the laws so that parents don't have to think twice if they do want their kid to play outside or walk to school or come home in the afternoon when you're not there because you're working two jobs. And we don't want that to be mistaken for neglect. Y'know. Giving your kid some independence is different from ignoring dangers. Putting them in dangers' way. Abusing them. All that stuff we don't want to happen to kids? But we don't want parents to have to second-guess their rational decisions or their seat-of-the-pants decisions because your husband's car broke down and you have to leave the seven-year-old all along because you have to go get him and that's not neglect. That's life. Okay?

So in our laws and advocacy section it talks about how we're working with a bunch of states right now—six states right now—trying to change the laws—narrow the neglect laws so that it, y'know, independence is not mistaken for neglect. I'd say that teachers and educators should check out our school programs, but also parents, because just what I was talking about now with the Let

Grow Project really is—it's free to download everything on our site. It's free. And it show you—it just gives you the confidence to say, "Y'know, there is a reason to let my kid do some stuff on her own or his own. It's not just because it's more convenient for me. It's not just because Lenore says so."

[Biz laughs.]

00:42:50 Biz Host There is something that happened—although I do say so.
00:42:53 Lenore Guest I'm like, "Okay. Lenore said so." *[Laughs.]*
But if you look at the videos you'll just see amazing things. All these adorable kids who didn't realize how much they could do. And how happy they would be and how proud. And one of my favorite stories—and I don't think it's on there, but I should put it on there—is after one of the schools did the Let Grow Project where they give the kids the homework assignment "Go home and do something on your own without your parents. Something new." I went back at the beginning of the next school year after they'd done the project a year before. And she said, "Well what's really great is there are so few—fewer kids are sticking out their feet now." And I'm like, "...Huh?" *[Laughs.]* I mean—yeah. I know. Like, "What? So they used to be tripping each other? What kind of school are you running?"

[Biz laughs.]

00:43:36 Biz Host "What kind of jerks are you raising here? That sounds so bad!" And
00:43:39 Lenore Guest she's like, "No, no, no. There are fewer kids sticking out their feet for the teacher to tie their shoe for them."
[Gasps.] That's great.
Yeah. So that's what we're talking about! It's like—it's sort of like we're always doing things for our kids because they're always asking and then they're always asking so we're always doing and we assume that they can't do it because they've asked us to do it and so we don't make them do it. Like your kid with the dribbling! You assumed that he could dribble! Or she. I don't know.
00:43:56 Biz Host Yeah. That kid can dribble just fine. *[Laughs.]*
00:43:58 Lenore Guest Right! Right, right! As can, y'know, most kids if you give them some time and a ball.
00:44:03 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** Recommend that part. Yeah.
Biz: Yeah. Well, that helped.
00:44:06 Lenore Guest That was probably your mistake to begin with? Without the ball? That was really—
00:44:09 Biz Host Yeah. I know. He had a stick in his hand and I was like—
00:44:11 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lenore:** Yeah. "This is not bouncing. How come everyone else can do this?" Yeah. Not good for the self-esteem!
Biz: "What is the problem?" *[Laughs.]* "What am I doing wrong as a mother?"
00:44:18 Lenore Guest *[Through laughter]* Yeah. Really. He's not dribbling the pen. He's not dribbling the stick. The towel doesn't work. What could it be?
00:44:23 Biz Host I know. It's so weird. *[Laughs.]*
00:44:24 Lenore Guest Right. Right, right, right.
00:44:26 Biz Host Lenore, thank you for coming back and joining us again. Congratulations on everything that—

00:44:32	Lenore	Guest	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Paid work.
00:44:34	Biz	Host	—well-paid work! But also everything that’s come out of the simple act of letting your child ride the Subway—I think you’re actually a very good mother.
00:44:41	Lenore	Guest	<i>[Dismissively]</i> Nya, nya, nya-nya nya.
00:44:43	Biz	Host	And— <i>[Laughs.]</i> And we’re gonna make sure that we link everybody up to LetGrow.org. I agree, those school programs and the different activities that you have on there for people? They really are helpful! I appreciate the work and thought that’s gone into it. Thank you so much!
00:45:00	Lenore	Guest	Thank you! Thanks! I mean, from one bad mom to another.
00:45:04	Biz	Host	That’s right!
00:45:05	Lenore	Guest	Although I am actually the worst.
00:45:08	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Lenore: Officially America’s worst. But there ya go. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			Biz: Well you’re the worst! That’s— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:45:10	Biz	Host	Well here’s to many more years of doing a horrible job. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:45:13	Lenore	Guest	Thank you! You, too! And you, too, Gabe!
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:45:16	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Lenore: Alright. Thanks! Bye!
			Biz: Thank you! Alright. Bye!
00:45:19	Biz	Host	“Ones and Zeroes” by “Awesome.” Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:45:36	Biz	Promo	<i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by KiwiCo. With a KiwiCo subscription, you and your child get everything you’ll need to create unforgettable moments shipped right to your door.
00:45:49	Theresa	Promo	We have had <u>so</u> much fun in our house thanks to KiwiCo. Recently my nine-year-old daughter Gracie has been really into watching old episodes of <i>Dexter’s Laboratory</i> ?
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			And she’s been really into wearing her little lab coat around and wanting to have like her own little lab. And I checked and Kiwi Crate has <u>multiple</u> kits for chemistry! And like mixing colors and using little test tubes. And Gracie was just working on one of those this morning! And having a total blast. So with different science, art, and geography crates for kids of all ages, there is something for <u>every</u> kid at KiwiCo.
00:46:32	Biz	Promo	KiwiCo is redefining learning with hands-on projects that build confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills.
00:46:38	Theresa	Promo	Get 30% off your first month, plus free shipping on any crate line, with code “badmother” at KiwiCo.com .
00:46:46	Biz	Promo	That’s 30% off your first month at K-I-W-I-C-O.com , promo code “badmother.”
00:46:55	Theresa	Host	Hey, you know what it’s time for! This week’s genius and fails! This is the part of the show where we share our genius moment of the week, as well as our failures, and feel <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.
00:47:19	Biz	Host	Genius fail time, Theresa. Are you here, Theresa? Theresa! Are you here?!

00:47:28 Theresa Host I'm here!
00:47:29 Biz Host It's like magic words! It's like saying "Beetlejuice" three times or like "Bloody Mary" in the mirror. Not that you are a nightmare like either of those?

[Theresa laughs.]

00:47:42 Crosstalk Crosstalk But I feel like it's my magic words to be like, "Genius fail time, Theresa!"
Theresa: Ohhhh. And then here I am. Yeah.

00:47:45 Biz Host **Biz:** Boblblblblblp!
And then you like appear like I've said your name and now you're here!

00:47:48 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** Yes! I'm here!

00:47:52 Biz Host **Biz:** That's so nice!
It's so nice.
00:47:53 Theresa Host It is really nice. I really enjoy being here.
00:47:55 Biz Host I wish I could poof you out of your different situations just by saying "Genius fail time, Theresa." Just at any time.
00:48:05 Theresa Host That would be so good. Just to summon me away from wherever—yeah.

[Biz laughs.]

00:48:13 Biz Host That would be so good.
00:48:14 Theresa Host That would be nice. But here's what I wanna do.
00:48:15 Biz Host Okay.
00:48:18 Clip Clip I would like to ask you to genius me.
[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]

Biz: Wow! Oh my God! Oh my God! I saw what you did! Oh my God! I'm paying attention! Wow! You, mom, are a genius. Oh my God, that's fucking genius!

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

00:48:32 Theresa Host I will do that. I would like to follow up on something that I talked about last week, which was the fail of allowing my kids to decide that they would have a sleepover.

00:48:47 Biz Host Oh! *[Laughs.]* I—I eagerly await to hear the update. *[Laughs.]*
00:48:54 Theresa Host Yeah! Okay! Well, I mean... so... I'm talking about it in genius. So that should give you an idea. But basically, like... we—they were very excited about it.

[Biz laughs.]

And we never talked about any activities that would be involved? Like, all we talked about was that the kids would—was that Curtis would sleep in Gracie's room. And I think things got late 'cause we had a movie night like I said we were gonna have. And so we had the movie night and then we went upstairs and I pulled out Curtis's sleeping bag and I put it on the floor next to Gracie's bed. Oscar got interested and he wanted to join, which I thought might lead to thinks getting even crazier, but Grace and Curtis were happy to

have Oscar join them. So we also brought in a sleeping bag for Oscar.

00:49:55 Biz Host Of course.

00:49:57 Theresa Host Grace offered to read them a book? ‘Cause that’s what we do at that time? So I just like sat there taking pictures of them ‘cause I was like, “This is—”

[Biz laughs.]

“—so cute. It’s so cute!” And then they went to bed.

00:50:13 Biz Host Wait. What?

00:50:15 Theresa Host Yeah! Like, it was like—it was so weird. It was like they acted like it was the normal night-time routine, except they were all together on the floor. In Gracie’s room instead of where they usually are. I don’t—I can’t explain it? I am gonna take credit for it. Because I’m gonna take credit for anything good that happens in my house. ‘Cause I always feel bad for all the—and take on all the bad stuff that happens in my house. So at least I get to enjoy the good stuff that happens. But it was great. And—like, the next day—like, everybody slept well. Everything was fine the next day. We cleaned up and they never asked again, like, “Can we do it again?” Like it was just like, they did it, it was fun, and it was over. And that was it.

00:51:04 Biz Host Wow!

00:51:05 Theresa Host It was amazing.

00:51:07 Biz Host That’s amazing. I am actually... so glad—

[Theresa laughs.]

—this was the outcome of this fail. From last week. Like, I had high hopes ‘cause I’ve seen it work in this house.

00:51:26 Theresa Host Uh-huh.

00:51:28 Biz Host And I didn’t wanna be like, *[high-pitched voice]* “Oh in my house—”

00:51:30 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** “Oh, it’ll be fine!” Yeah! Of course.

00:51:35 Biz Host **Biz:** “In mine—” But in my mind I was like, “This could work!” “This could actually be good!” But I didn’t wanna set that bar. I am so glad! And y’know, I’m even more glad that they didn’t ask immediately to do it again? Like that’s—I know that’s a weird thing to say, but—

00:51:46 Theresa Host ‘Cause then you’re just like, “Come on. Let’s—yeah.”

00:51:49 Biz Host Come on. Not gonna be that good every time. That is such a good job and you are the reason that worked.

00:51:57 Theresa Host *[Through laughter]* Thank you.

00:51:59 Biz Host You’re— *[Laughs.]* You’re welcome. Okay. I can’t escape this house. ‘K? I can’t go anywhere. Can’t remove myself to go somewhere—

00:52:09 Theresa Host Unless you’re delivering a baked good to the Thorn household.

[Laughs.]

00:52:12 Biz Host Yeah. Unless I’m delivering baked goods to the Thorns. Which sadly we’ve just run out of the last birthday for this year. Well, no. Gonna wait ‘til fall comes. Anyway. Long story short, the videogame *Animal Crossing* is now in our house. *Animal Crossing* is a game in which you create a little island and you can build like your own little house. Like, there’s no end to this game. You’re not battling anybody. You’re just... world-creating. But you’re like a cute little thing and it’s cute little animals and it’s all, “I’m gonna go fish all

day!” Right? So the evil part of *Animal Crossing* is only one person can be the island—main island resident. So whatever they choose for the island, goes. Now the first genius is I never let the game in the house because you can’t switch profiles and then create your own island like you could if you were playing any other game. You can do your own game. Like, right?

00:53:20 Theresa Host
00:53:21 Biz Host
00:53:23 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Your own user. Yeah.
With this, it’s by console.
Theresa: Wow. Okay.

00:53:26 Theresa Host
00:53:30 Biz Host
00:53:33 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Biz: I know. I was like—
I’m not bringing this hell into this house. Of my two children fighting—
It’s just like bringing all the conflicts of your own household—
Biz: I was like, “Who the fuck is this—right! Who is this game for?”

00:53:37 Biz Host

Theresa: —again. It’s like a repeat—yeah.
“Why would we do this?” So I had told Kat that, “You want this game? You can get yourself your own console.” And for a year, they saved up. And they did. They got their own console and I bought the game and this is very exciting and it’s its own genius but we’re getting to mine! But I decide I’ll play it on Ellis’s. I’ll let Ellis do their own island on the main console and I will just live on their island! He takes horrible care of his island. *[Laughs.]* There’s garbage everywhere. He built a museum right in front of my house.

[Theresa laughs.]

So that was annoying. And there’re all these people walking around on the island. Like all this stuff. So— *[Laughs.]* My genius is that a certain point in the game, you can pay a great deal of money to move your house. *[Laughs.]* And when that option became available, I paid that money. Like, not real money. Island money. I fished a lot to get some money.

[Theresa laughs.]

00:54:53 Theresa Host
00:54:56 Biz Host

I moved my house to the farthest, most remote spot of the island. You have to have like a ladder to get there. There’s no bridge to it. This sounds so good.
And when I told Stefan—who does not play the game, right?—I said, “So Stefan... I have moved my house to the farthest part of the island.” And he could not stop laughing.

[Theresa laughs.]

00:55:23 Theresa Host
00:55:24 Biz Host

And he said, “This is genius because you can’t do this in your real life but I love that in your fake island life you’re like, ‘I’m going to be so far away!’” *[Laughs.]*
“I will pick up and move!”
[Making grunting noise, as though lifting something heavy.] I will decorate however I want to. I don’t have to save things I find. I can just sell ‘em! I can just throw ‘em away! I don’t have to do it! I don’t have to!

00:55:35 Theresa Host

Ellis will never know.

00:55:38 Biz Host He'll never know. He'll never know. Anyway. The world is broken and so am I. Yayyy! *[Laughs.]*

00:55:45 Theresa Host Yayyyy! *[Laughs.]* Good job!

00:55:47 Biz Host I guess.

00:55:49 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Move over, Albert Einstein, 'cause I am the genius. I just got a text message with a photo of my toddler successfully napping at the babysitter's house! Which is a strange place. Which she's never napped at before. And you wanna know why she napped there, guys? You wanna know why? 'Cause I sleep trained her! Me! Not daddy! Not grandma's advice! Not listening to the next-door lady. I did that. I am a genius. I need a trophy. Thank you.

00:56:31 Biz Host *[Biz laughs.]*
[Through laughter] I just—my favorite part about this is, "Move over, Albert Einstein! There's a new genius in town!"

[Theresa laughs.]

"My kid slept somewhere weird!" *[Laughs.]* I think this is genius, and you're right. You figured out whatever magical spell or set of steps or whatever got your kid to sleep. Like, routine. Special triggers. Ding-ding! Ring the bell! *[Snores]* Sound asleep! Whatever it is that you did. And... you didn't let everybody tell you how you should do it!

00:57:06 Theresa Host Right!

00:57:07 Biz Host You just did it! And it worked!

00:57:10 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** In this instant—

Theresa: It totally worked. Yeah.

00:57:13 Biz Host Yeah! You're doing amazing!

00:57:15 Theresa Host Yeah. You're amazing. Great job.

00:57:17 Biz Host Failures.

00:57:18 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.]

00:57:24 Biz Host Fail me, Theresa.

00:57:26 Theresa Host Okay. I... forgot a thing. That I learned before. Already one time before. And had to relearn that thing. That thing being—

00:57:40 Biz Host Is it a bicycle? *[Laughs.]*

00:57:43 Theresa Host Nope! Not a bicycle. We've got that one under control.

00:57:46 Biz Host Dammit! *[Laughs.]*

00:57:49 Theresa Host So... Transformer toys. Some of them are really annoying to transform. And like way too hard for most kids to transform.

00:58:02 Biz Host True.

00:58:04 Theresa Host We learned that a long time ago. And then we weren't into Transformers for a really long time.

00:58:10 Biz Host I wonder why.
[Multiple people laugh.]

00:58:15 Theresa Host They're too fucking hard! Anyway, go ahead.
So recently we've gotten back into Transformers. And... *[Laughs.]*
There's a birthday happening. And Curtis is turning four. And—

00:58:30 Biz Host Happy birthday, Curtis! Alright, alright, alright!
00:58:34 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Birthdays and Transformers.

00:58:37 Theresa Host **Theresa:** Anyways, we got some Transformers.
And really they are so hard. I mean, it's like a puzzle! If you think about it as a puzzle, it's pretty cool! 'Cause it's a hard puzzle to do, for me, as an adult. Do you think my kids really like that and that's really how they want to interact with their Transformer toys that they're just playing imaginary games with? No. Not so much.

00:58:59 Biz Host I'm gonna guess no.
00:59:02 Theresa Host There was a lot of screaming. A lot of crying. A lot of disappointment. A lot of... "Can we write a horrible review? Can we call—"

[Biz laughs.]

00:59:20 Biz Host "—where we got this from and tell us that they owe us money for making us go through this?"
Oh my god. I would've been like, "Here's the phone! I'm out!"
[Laughs.]

00:59:25 Biz Host *[Theresa laughs.]*
Oh god! Ugh!
00:59:29 Theresa Host Yeah! And it's—it—honestly, it's just a thing. It's just one of those things that happens. But the fact that it was happening to me again—like, three years later? I was like, "Yeah, I already knew this. I just forgot to think about it when I was picking out what we were getting." Y'know, I forgot to look for the one that's like a two-step. Y'know.

00:59:48 Biz Host Yeah, but even... even with the forgetting—even if you hadn't forgotten—enough time has passed that it's acceptable to think it's not gonna be as bad as the first time. I'm just gonna put that out there, too. Because I—I've been there. Y'know? And they are—Transformers are hard. Sometimes you have to like be holding something in one place to get the next thing—

01:00:16 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** Mm-hm! Oh yes.

01:00:19 Theresa Host **Biz:** —to lock into place.
You have to do these very slight, subtle maneuvers? To get something inside. And—

01:00:25 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Put the hands in. And you take the hands out.

01:00:28 Theresa Host **Theresa:** Put this notch into—
Did you turn the hand?
01:00:29 Biz Host Twist the head?
01:00:30 Theresa Host And then there's the wrist joint and the elbow joint.
01:00:32 Biz Host Right. "Is it a car? Was I trying to turn it back into a car or was I trying to turn it back into the robot?"

[Theresa laughs.]

01:00:42 Theresa Host "I don't know! I can't remember!"
I mean, can I just add onto this that now I'm the—because I'm the only one who can do it, now I'm also the one doing it... every time somebody wants theirs *[through laughter]* switched.

01:00:55 Biz Host Oh yeah. What's easier, teaching your kids to tie their shoes, use the DVR, or change a Transformer? I dunno! It's the new challenge. The new parenting challenge. I'm sorry. No one likes fucking birthdays where everybody is screaming about a nice thing you got them. I'm very sorry.

01:01:18 Theresa Host Thank you.

01:01:19 Biz Host Okay. I think I shared on this show that the kids had—at some point in time—started like... y'know, I think I had yelled something like, "Go outside! I don't care what you do! *[Through laughter]* Just go outside!"

[Theresa laughs.]

And they were outside playing with the hose. We have this very sick old lemon tree that comes back to kind of life every year when we have like two weeks of rain? And then it's like, "Whoa! I'm alive!" And then it just dries out the rest of the year? Producing about five lemons a year. *[Laughs.]* Anyhoo.

01:01:54 Theresa Host That's weird. It's almost like trees and fruit need water to grow! Huh!

01:01:58 Biz Host I know. It is strange. We are learning this. But the tree got a lot of water this year because the kids invented this game called "the dam game." Hahaha. I love my kids.

[Theresa laughs.]

Where they run the hose and then they build dams around the lemon tree 'cause the lemon tree is sort of like in a little circle of stones, right? So you can access the mud. And they've been playing the dam game for a while. They play it like all the time. Like, in-between breaks at school they'll be like, "Do you wanna go play the dam game?" "Yeah! I do!" And they go outside and I'm like, "This is the greatest thing I've ever—ahhh! I love it! I don't care what you do!" This has been going on for months. Here comes Sunday. And Stefan walks up to me and says, "The lemon tree... is dead." And I said, "What do you mean?" "I mean, it's completely fallen over." So Kat had gone out to pick a lemon and upon picking it, the entire tree *[through laughter]* just—

01:02:56 Theresa Host Came out of the ground. Oh.

01:02:58 Biz Host And it wasn't a big tree, by the way. This was like a tree a little taller than me. Maybe six feet. Not huge. And weak. But anyway. They had just put so much water in there that—like, basically they created a sinkhole? And the tree just... like, when I went out days later to look at it, I do think there's this sinking process to that whole bricked-in area.

[Theresa laughs.]

01:03:33 Theresa Host I'm like, "I don't remember the ground being two inches lower than the brick on the inside. Like, that seems weird." So...
Wow.

01:03:35 Biz Host Property damage.
 01:03:36 Theresa Host Yes.
 01:03:37 Biz Host But let me tell you—I'm gonna tell you this, though. The 100% fucking worth it.
 01:03:42 Theresa Host I knew you were gonna say that!
 01:03:43 Biz Host It was 100% worth it! If they wanna ruin every tree they can just ruin the yard! *[Laughs.]* If they just play together nicely outside for hours.

[Theresa laughs.]

01:03:57 Theresa Host Anyhoo.
 01:03:58 Biz Host I'm with you.
 01:03:59 Caller Host There ya go.
 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hi, *One Bad Mother!* I am calling with a fail. And it is one of those very special fails that started out as a super smart genius. My two-and-a-half-year-old loves *Octonauts*, and also hates wearing clothes.

[Biz laughs.]

So I had the bright idea—used it a couple times—y'know, a blue shirt to an orange shirt and say, "Oh yeah, wear this! This is your Captain Barnacles shirt!" or "This is your Kwazii shirt!" And it totally worked. And in the morning he immediately gets dressed in his whatever I'm calling his Captain Barnacles pants or his Dashi shirt.

[Biz laughs.]

The problem is, is they're all just regular clothes. So now he will insist on a Dashi shirt and only want to wear a Dashi shirt and I don't know what the fuck shirt I randomly called a Dashi shirt. Or a Tweak shirt. So now it's a mess in the morning of trying to figure out what actual shirt he is talking about. So you're all doing a wonderful job. Clearly, I'm not. Love the show! Bye.

01:05:16 Theresa Host There's a lot of characters in *Octonauts*.
 01:05:18 Biz Host There are a lot of characters.
 01:05:19 Theresa Host That's a lot to keep straight.
 01:05:22 Biz Host I know. Especially if you get into the Vegimals. Right? Like, those guys. There's a lot of 'em?
 01:05:29 Theresa Host Yeah.
 01:05:30 Biz Host Yeah.
 01:05:31 Theresa Host And the clothing is... on the one hand, this is genius because almost anything can be a this character or that character shirt. But that makes it also really *[through laughter]* hard to remember?

01:05:44 Biz Host I feel like my greatest discovery as a parent so far has been the... commitment that fast problem-solving forces you into.

01:06:00 Theresa Host Yeah. That's right.
 01:06:01 Biz Host You can't just come up with a clever solution to a problem that then doesn't become a problem for you. Like—

[Theresa laughs.]

01:06:11 Theresa Host Yeah. Yeah.
 01:06:12 Biz Host So again, everybody needs to stop problem-solving.

[Theresa laughs.]

And enjoy our *Octonauts* as God intended us to. Naked. On the couch.

01:06:26 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.]

01:06:48 Music Music

Inspirational keyboard music plays in background.

01:06:49 Theresa Promo

One Bad Mother is supported in part by Rothy’s, the company making stylish, sustainable shoes and bags that are carefully crafted with eco-friendly materials like repurposed plastic water bottles and marine plastic.

01:07:03 Biz Promo

[Excitedly] They are made out of plastic water bottles! Take that, marine plastic! *[Regular voice]* I love living in tennis shoes and I have to wear shoes that actually look like I am a grown person out in the world. *[Laughs.]* And the Rothy’s shoes are so sophisticated-looking when they’re on, but they’re so comfortable. And are you ready for this? You can put them in the washing machine. This is like a magic shoe.

01:07:32 Theresa Promo

Check out all the amazing shoes, bags, and masks available right now at Rothys.com/mother.

01:07:40 Biz Promo

That’s Rothys.com—R-O-T-H-Y-S.com/mother.

01:07:48 Theresa Promo

Style and sustainability meet to create your new favorites.

01:07:52 Biz Promo

Head over to Rothys.com/mother todayyy!

[Music ends.]

01:07:58 Promo Clip

Music: Strumming banjo.

Announcer: Welcome!

Four voices overlapping: Thank you. Thanks. No problem. Thank you!

Announcer: These are real podcast listeners, not actors! What do you look for in a podcast?

Speaker 1: Reliability is big for me.

Speaker 2: Power.

Speaker 3: I’d say comfort?

Announcer: What do you think of this?

[Sound of something crashing.]

Three voices in unison: Oohhh!

Speaker 2: That’s *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*

Speaker 1: *Jordan, Jesse, Go!?*

Speaker 2: They came out of the... floor?

[Thumping sound.]

Speaker 2: And down from the ceiling?

Speaker 3: That can't be safe.

Speaker 4: I'm upset. Can we go now?

Announcer: Soon.

Music: Cheerful, jangly music plays.

Announcer: *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*—a real podcast.

[Music fades out.]

01:08:36 Promo Clip

Music: Gentle, rhythmic music underscores the dialogue.

Janet Varney: We are so thrilled at your interest in attending Hieronymous Wigenstaff's School for Heroism and Villainy! Wigenstaff's beautiful campus boasts state-of-the-art facilities and instructors with real-world experience! We are also proud to say that our alumni have gone on to be professional heroes and villains in the most renowned kingdoms in the world!

But of course, you are not applying to the main school, are you? You're applying for our sidekick and henchperson annex! You will still benefit from the school's amazing campus, and! You'll have a lifetime of steady employment. Of course... there's no guarantee how long that lifetime will be.

Travis McElroy: Join the McElroys as they return to Dungeons and Dragons with *The Adventure Zone: Graduation*. Every other Thursday on Maximum Fun, or wherever podcasts are found.

[Music ends.]

01:09:28 Biz Host

Well, everyone? Here we are, ready to settle in with our favorite Theresa while we listen to a mom have a breakdown.

01:09:38 Caller Caller

[Answering machine beeps.]

Hey, *One Bad Mother*. This is either a rant or a fail. I guess it's kind of a fail. I'm just curious—why is it that if we ever speak the words that our kids are like doing well; that we've got into a groove; that things are going well; like, things are good—like, literally if we ever say those things or even think those things it's like a guarantee that probably within 24 hours shit will hit the fan. Everything goes wrong. It's like literally the act of saying the words. I don't know. I don't know! Just curious. Hopefully you don't hear all the screaming in the background, but yeah. I have *[inaudible]* the words. I had a moment of being proud.

[Biz laughs.]

[Sighs.] Now countdown to bed. You're all doing a great job and I am not!

01:10:40 Biz Host First of all, you are doing a remarkable job. I like the idea that this might have been a fail simply by saying something [through laughter] nice about your life or your children?

01:10:58 Theresa Host I like the idea that this can happen even by just thinking the thoughts. Like, which you also mentioned in your call. And this—I had a very similar thought process a couple of days ago. Where I thought to myself, like, “Okay. Things are like getting manageable.” And I then my immediate next thought was, “Oh no! Oh no!”

[Biz laughs.]

01:11:27 Biz Host [Through laughter] Because genuinely—
Oh no! Oh no! [Laughs.]

01:11:30 Theresa Host —for real! Because it's—the last ten times in history that I can—the most recent ten times that I can remember having that thought? Just immediately were followed by something [through laughter] terrible happening.

01:11:48 Biz Host Yeah. No, for us—in this house, it's like, “Oh, I think Ellis has really turned a corner.” [Laughs.]

[Theresa laughs.]

01:12:25 Theresa Host “Ellis has gotten such control over his emotions. They've been doing such a good job of handling!” And then that's—even the notion of the like, when Stefan will be like, “Did you see that? The Legos he was carrying fell and shattered and he just picked 'em up and started building!” And I just pulled my watch out and looked and started counting down. 10, 9, 8, 7—[screaming] “Ahhhh!” Right? Right. But that doesn't—so—but it doesn't negate the things that we're seeing. That are real. Like, that's the thing. It's like—it's that our expectations are getting messed up by these things we're noticing, which are real! Like, noticing a moment being okay—

[Biz laughs.]

—is real! It's not a jinx. It's not stepping stones to disaster. It is a real thing! But it makes us think now this is my life. Like, for some reason we don't just accept that moment—

[Biz laughs.]

01:13:11 Biz Host We think, like, “Okay. Now this moment is what all the future moments will be like.”

01:13:32 Theresa Host And it's deeply disappointing when it's not! Well it's—but you know what? I think it's also good moments. Right? Good moments are not as emotionally... like... stressful or like they don't carry the same weight?

01:13:33 Biz Host Mm-hm!

01:14:04 Theresa Host As bad. So like, not yelling when Lego bricks fall apart is great! That's all it is! It's just really great! And now we all get out move on with whatever we were doing. There was no... loss of energy to that. Right? When they break, and there is a massive emotional breakdown, everything stops. And it becomes very tiring.

01:14:04 Theresa Host Yes.

01:14:05 Biz Host That—and so that’s why that feels like there’s more of that than the other. There’s more of that that’s worse. We all want the like, *[relaxed]* “Ahhh!” Like, that is a better place! Right? You’re doing a really good job.

01:14:21 Theresa Host Yeah! You are!

01:14:23 Biz Host And I guess just try not to ever acknowledge that anything’s good ever again. That’s... that’s the takeaway. Right, Theresa?

01:14:34 Theresa Host *[Theresa laughs.]* Or maybe—maybe if I just like step on a Lego right away whenever I have that thought?

01:14:40 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Theresa:** Then it will—yeah!

01:14:45 Biz Host **Biz:** Keep a jack in your hand! *[Laughs.]* Squeeze it! *[Laughs.]* “Oh my god, everybody’s so great!” *[In pain]* “Ahhhh!”

[Multiple people laugh.]

Oh. Broken. Theresa? I am so happy to see you. I hope that Curtis had a wonderful birthday, despite the Transformers.

[Theresa laughs.]

01:15:15 Theresa Host And you are doing a very good job. I can see it.

01:15:18 Biz Host Thank you, Biz. So are you.

01:15:27 Crosstalk Crosstalk *[Theresa laughs.]* **Biz and Theresa:** Bye!!!

01:15:30 Biz Host What did we learn? We took a long time learning. It was a long episode. But I gotta tell ya, that was worth it to me. I love Lenore so much. And I am so glad that I had the opportunity to come back seven years later and tell her, “No, no, no—I assumed that you were perfect and that you let your kids do everything and I was the monster for not doing it.” And being told that she, herself, is terrified of many things regarding her children. So that was a big plus. And y’know, just the reminder that— *[Laughs darkly.]* They do have to go do some stuff on their own. Sometimes. And it is scary! And I think her point on—you let them do the things that you are okay with. Right? Like, that—it’s okay to acknowledge where your comfort zone is and where your “I’m terrified of everything” zone is as the parent? And then navigate from there. Not be mad or judgmental of either of those two places. We all have both of those places. And those comfort level lines are different for each one of us. ‘K? Some things that I am totally fine letting my kid do might freak somebody else out and vice-versa, and that is fine! That’s okay. But there really is benefit to our kids gaining more and more independence. Drive a car at seven? No. Make a sandwich? Yes! And yes. I acknowledge— *[Laughs.]* That sometimes it is work? *[Laughs.]* To let a child be independent? Or you have to just let go of whatever mess is gonna be there or whatever you’re gonna hear from the background and the noise in the kitchen or whatever, and to just go ahead and give yourself permission to be stressing out about that in the other room.

01:17:53	Music	Music	<p>Everybody? You're doing a remarkable job. You really are. This is really too much. On top of a lot. And I see you. And... I will talk to you again next week! Bye!</p> <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>
01:18:17	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. <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>
01:18:46	Theresa	Host	<p><i>[Music continues for a while before fading out.]</i></p>
01:19:09	Music	Transition	A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:19:10	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
01:19:12	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:19:13	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:19:13	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.