

00:00:00	Biz Ellis	Host	Hi. I'm Biz.
00:00:01	Theresa Thorn	Host	And I'm Theresa.
00:00:02	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 good job.
00:00:21	Music	Music	"Summon 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> —M is for the Motherlode of stigma associated with motherhood! We talk to Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti about her new picture book for moms. Plus, it's Max Fun Drive!
00:00:39	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz and caller: Wooooo!
00:00:41	Caller	Caller	<i>[Singing]</i> I am not panicking! I am not panicking! I'm in the middle of a car so I can renew my license. Renew my license. But my car is in the shop because the check engine light turned on and is clearly leaking oil! Wow, that sucks! And hey, this morning I need to drive a half hour to get my second vaccine!
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			And I have anxiety about driving new cars! New carssss! And also driving new places scares the shit out of meeeee! <i>[Regular voice]</i> And I'm expecting that I'm gonna have all the side effects from the second dose because that's just how my anxiety works!
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:01:47	Biz	Host	Oh, dear god. Everything is fine. It's going to be fine. I'm breathing in. <i>[Inhales.]</i> I'm breathing out. <i>[Exhales.]</i> Everything... is fine. Thank you. Thank you. <i>[Singing]</i> Everything's going to be fiiiiine! Because you're not panicking! <i>[Regular voice]</i> I think we should just only—sorry, let me do that again, then. <i>[Singing]</i> I think we should only sing! Out! Our anxiety! Heyyy! <i>[Regular voice]</i> I think you are remarkable! Look at you. You are taking care of things that need to be taken care of, even when they make you uncomfortable, and that is really remarkable, actually. So good, good job. You know what <u>also</u> makes me want to <i>[singing lightly]</i> sing a little soooong? <i>[Regular voice]</i> Is Max Fun Drive! Boo-doop-boo-doop-boop-boop! Its Max Fun Drive! And I'm gonna tell you... what Max Fun Drive means. If you already <u>know</u> what it means and want to hear what we have planned, you also will want to listen to this. Quick spoiler: There will be Chutney!
			Okay. First of all, <i>One Bad Mother</i> is an independent podcast. We are part of a family of podcasts in the Maximum Fun network. 'K? So that's one. Two, <i>One Bad Mother</i> —us!—we are funded by listener support. To make this show, it is us and you. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Okay? We're able to pay for the Hotline, our website, recording equipment, and—most importantly—your support is responsible for us being able to have our fabulous new producer, The Gabe! And—listener support also pays our salary. We work for you! So over the

next two weeks, we are going to be—once again—asking you to support *One Bad Mother* so that we can continue to make *One Bad Mother*. The community that we have built over the last eight years means so much to me and is so powerful and impactful. We have always tried to be here for the community. And we are now looking to the community to be here for us. And for each other.

So as always, we thank you for allowing us to make the show. Thank you for everybody who's already become a member. We also know this is still a really hard time, but if you want to upgrade your membership or join or boost, just go to MaximumFun.org/join. It really is a gift to us when you do that?

00:04:37 Biz Host

Speaking of gifts—Mother's Day—again! Another example of how this is a very special community? Fuck Mother's Day! That's—*[Laughs.]* Who is it for? Who is it for? Is it for you, the mother? Is it for the mother-in-law? Is it for your mother? Is it—like—aah! It's so many mothers! Plus there's all that stuff about just strangers saying to you—because you're a woman—"Happy Mother's Day! Here's a flower!" And you're like, "I—what?! That—aah! Barf!" Simultaneously I do expect chocolates and a bottle of wine and a big homemade pasta card from my children for Mother's Day. So, y'know, balance.

Nothing says moms like our guest that we are gonna be talking to today, and that is Tony Award-winning Laura Benanti, who is going to talk to us about her new picture book, *M Is For MAMA (and also Merlot): A Modern Mom's ABCs*. And let's all just sit here and bask in the awkwardness of the fact that she is a Tony Award-winning actress for such things as *Gypsy*, and I just... basically shit-sang the entire opening of this show.

00:05:57 Music Music
00:05:58 Theresa Host

So *[singing]* everything's coming up Bii-izzz!

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.

00:06:05 Biz Host

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

00:06:09 Theresa Host
00:06:12 Biz Host

Nothing we say constitutes professional parenting advice.

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

00:06:16 Theresa Host

Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

[Banjo music fades out.]

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

00:06:21 Biz Host

This week, we are talking to Tony Award Winner and five-time Tony Award Nominee, Laura Benanti! The highly celebrated stage and screen actress. Of the course of the last year, Benanti frequently appeared on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* and her celebrated comedic portrayal of first lady Melania Trump which—just, by the way, *[kisses fingers.]* Mwah.

[Laura laughs.]

Additional television credits include series regular roles on the Samantha Bee- and Jason Jones-produced TBS show *The Detour*, *Go On* opposite Matthew Perry, *Starved* for FX, as well as reoccurring roles on *Supergirl*, ABC's *Nashville*, *Eli Stone*, CBS's *The Good Wife* and *Elementary*. Showtime's *Nurse Jackie* and *The Big C*—

[Laura laughs.]

—NBC's *The Sound of Music Live!*, *Law & Order: SVU* and USA's *Royal Pains*. Guys, I just wanted to make sure that there was at least one place you could anchor in on and be like, "Ah! Laura Benanti!" Now—

[Laura laughs.]

—one of my favorite things is that she earned the 2008 Tony Award for Outstanding Featured Actress in a musical, a Drama Desk Award, and an Outer Critics Circle Award for her [singing] revelatory [regular voice] portrayal of Louise in *Gypsy* opposite Patti LuPone! Dear god, that is an award in itself! The credits truly go on and on. Even more in the works, including her new board book for moms. [Laughs.] Called, *M Is For MAMA (and also Merlot): A Modern Mom's ABCs*. Welcome, Laura! Woo!

00:07:55 Laura Benanti Guest

Thank you so much for having me! I really appreciate it!

00:07:58 Biz Host

Laura, before we get into all of this amazingness—plus I'm just gonna pump you with fun questions because you're—you're a parent. And there's just so much there. I wanna ask you—who lives in your house?

00:08:13 Laura Guest

My husband, Patrick. My daughter, Ella, who is four. And our little dog, Petey-Pie, who is also four.

00:08:22 Biz Host

Who do you love more?

00:08:23 Laura Guest

My dog.

00:08:25 Biz Host

Okay, good. Just checking.

[Laura laughs.]

00:08:31 Laura Guest

I'm just check—[Laughs.] Well Petey-Pie got the—I sometimes whisper to her when I'm petting her, "I love you the most."

00:08:35 Biz Host

Yeah! "I love you the most! You're my favorite."

00:08:37 Laura Guest

"You're my favorite!"

00:08:38 Biz Host

"You're my favorite!" Okay. Four years old. That's a lot. People always talk about twos and they talk about threes and what they really should just say is that every number going forward is something—something. [Laughs.]

00:08:59 Laura Guest

Yeah! It's so funny 'cause people are like, "Oh, that's a fun age!" And I'm like, "Is it?"

00:09:03 Biz Host

"No it's not. Is it?"

00:09:05 Laura Guest

No, it's not fun. I don't think it's fun. Like—

00:09:07 Biz Host

I haven't had fun in years! [Laughs.]

00:09:09 Laura Guest

No! Nope! [Laughs.]

00:09:11 Biz Host

Yeah. How's four going?

00:09:14 Laura Guest

Y'know... [Laughs.] Four has been... [Laughs.] Four has been real hard. Honestly, when three—I thought two was fine. I was like,

“Terrible twos? Whatever. Twos are fine! She’s still adorable.”
Three hit and I was like, “...What is going on. What is—who is this monster? Why are you punching me in the face? What’s happening? Like, why are you literally kicking at me? Like, looking me in the eye and making the decision to punch me in my face.”
Yeah! Like, you’ve made the decision! You’re looking at me!
Yeah! You’re like, “I see you.” Yeah.
And now I’m gonna just do it! Yeah! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah! Yeah!
You’re not just flailing. You’re like, “I’m gonna punch you.”
No. “I’m gonna punch you in the face. In public.” *[Laughs.]*
Yes! In public! And then I’m gonna have to carry her out like I’m holding a surfboard while she kicks.
Biz: And then everybody’s going to stare at me.

Laura: Stares at you like you’re *[singing]* a terrible mom! Yep.
Hey, aren’t you the worst! Right. Though I will say on this show we have now gotten to the point of, if anybody applauds you while you’re football carrying your child out of someplace? Know that they’re a *One Bad Mother*. Know that they’ve been listening to the show. You’ll get the, “Good job! That’s what you’re supposed to do! It sucks!” *[Laughs.]*
100%, yeah! I have left a full shopping cart in the grocery store just full of stuff. And I’m like, “Alright. We’re abandoning it. You don’t get to be around people anymore, ma’am.”

[Biz laughs.]

So—
Alright. So then comes four, and—and with the pandemic!
Dude. She’s been wearing a mask for a quarter of her life.
I know. Isn’t that weird?
Like, when you really break it down like that? It’s really tricky. So y’know the work of being three and four is socializing! Is figuring out how to be a person in the world! And instead, she’s just stuck at home with me and her dad and our dog wearing a mask. Not being able to see any facial expressions. And she’s pissed! And I don’t blame her. But I’m like, “Guess who didn’t cause this pandemic? Me!”
Oh, sorry. Sorry. *[Laughs.]*
But lord, she’s mad at me. She is mad at me!
Yeah. That’ll just fester as a little resentment kernel for the rest of, y’know, her life. That’s fun. Yeah! And it must be hard since you love the dog more.
[Laughs.] I mean, obviously. *[Laughs.]*
That also probably plays into it. Yeah. I gotta tell ya, it’s been—I’ve mentioned this before after talking to guests who have said that when they put their mask on, their babies know they’re going out. Right? Like, it used to be like if you saw the stroller come out or keys, that would signal. But now it’s the mask. And... it’s so weird! It is weird!
If I put makeup on, she knows. Honestly.
Yeah! *[Laughs.]* If I put pants on, they know.
Biz: Somebody’s going out! *[Laughs.]*

Laura: Yeah! You put your pants on. *[Laughs.]*
When you put pants on with a zipper, they know you’re going out.

00:12:04 Biz Host Yep! With a zipper! Oh yeah. They know somebody's going someplace good, like the Target.

00:12:08 Laura Guest "What's going on? Are you going to the White House? Why are you in pants with a zipper?" *[Laughs.]*

00:12:13 Biz Host *[Biz laughs.]*
Ohhh, I love that that's all it took to get to the White House! That would be—I'd be there all the time!

00:12:18 Laura Guest I mean, apparently it was—yeah, exactly.

00:12:21 Biz Host Yeah, for a while there.

[Both laugh.]

00:12:25 Laura Guest Now they require the zippers and the masks.
Yes. Exactly.

00:12:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Before then, no shirt, no shoes—

00:12:29 Biz Host **Laura:** Not education. *[Laughs.]*
Not an education! Oh, zing! This is a good time. Alright. I have so many questions but I wanna start—let's just plug this book right off the bat. Because it is fun. And it is the most, like... relevant to technically this being a podcast in which parents listen to. *[Laughs.]*
And funny things. 'Cause I will take us in totally different directions.

[Laura laughs.]

But this is a board book for parents. And it is... so funny and charming and lovely and it literally takes you through the ABCs just like, y'know, all those board books for kids. Like, "A is for every animal on a farm. We live in a world now where you don't need to know every animal on a farm, but it's really important you know farm animals." *[Laughs.]*

[Laura laughs.]

But you've got, like, "A is for Astonishing." Right? You've—good job, look what you've done. And they're all so supportive and—
[Laughs.] One of my favorites is "E is for Everyone and all of their advice." And then the next one is "F is for F 'em! You know better!"
I—like, I—it's so—

00:13:41 Laura Guest Even better, "F 'em twice."

00:13:43 Biz Host Yeah! F 'em twice! Even better, F 'em twice. Because I think what I like about it and something that we've been trying to do on this show for—the reason I think we started it, which was we wanted... people to stop feeling like shit for being a mom.

00:14:03 Laura Guest Yeah! Exactly!

00:14:04 Biz Host Like, at its core. Stop feeling like shit. So talk to me about—talk to me about this.

00:14:07 Laura Guest Even the fact that there's like a term "mom guilt." There's not a term "dad guilt"! Y'know? It's—it really—we are obviously a very deep—there's a deep-seated misogyny in our culture. And I feel like I never experienced that more than when I became a mom. The idea—

00:14:27 Biz Host Well you become nameless! You become nameless. You become bodyless. You become "The Mom." I remember—*[Laughs.]* I remember—speaking of Stephen Colbert, I remember—we used to

live in New York. And it was our last couple of months before we moved out here. And we had a friend who was a writer on it so we got to go in and be in the audience. And the warm-up comedian—this is on his old show. And the warm-up comedian’s going around and he comes to my husband and he says, y’know, “What do you do?” And my husband’s like, “I do, y’know, graphic design and advertising! Blah, blah, blah!” And then he turns to me and I am like, a year into having a baby. And I... I had no answer—like, it was the saddest moment of me being like, “Do I say... ‘Mom’?” *[Laughs.]* Do I say Mom? Do I say “executive assistant”? Do I say “sketch comedian?” Like, all of those seemed like the worst... possible... answers that were going to still hold like a bit open... question of, like, doubt for people. Right? Like, y’know—“Well, ya can’t be that. Ya can’t be that, and ya can’t be that.” It was such a profound moment. And I’ve been struggling trying to answer that question, “What do you do?” Ever since.

00:15:45 Laura Guest

Yeah. It’s interesting. For me it really started—I miscarried before I had my daughter and then a bunch of times afterwards and people’s response to me openly talking about my miscarriage? They were so horrified. As if I like pulled my pants down in public and mooned everyone. And I was like, “Well, if my dog died or if my uncle died you’d be like, ‘I’m so sorry!’” And that was when I really started this journey of like, “Oh, wow. We just really don’t want women to exist outside of... like, what we’re comfortable with.” And women’s bodies and how our bodies work? Make people so deeply uncomfortable. And once you’ve—like, the idea that once you’ve had a baby that you somehow turn into like a ghost or a milk machine... and everyone gets to tell you what you’re doing right and wrong. It’s just so crazy. I had a really hard time breastfeeding my daughter. It just didn’t work out for us. And she was about four months old and I was in a store and I was putting her formula in the bottle and a woman came up to me and she said, “Is she adopted?” And I said—

00:16:53 Biz Host
00:16:54 Laura Guest

Shut. The door.
Oh, no! And I said, “I’m sorry—what?” And she was like, “Well is she adopted?” And I said, “No.” She said, “Well have you considered breastfeeding?”

00:17:05 Biz Host
00:17:06 Laura Guest

“Have you considered it?” *[Laughs.]*
Yeah. I mean, what I want—what I should’ve said is, “Have you considered my foot up your ass?” But instead I started sobbing hysterically. Sobbing. In front of this woman. And then took her through the journey of my breastfeeding struggles, including that I had seven lactation consultants. That it didn’t work. That I literally— one of them sent me to a shaman who covered me in eagle’s feathers and blew beer all over my body.

[Biz laughs.]

00:17:36 Biz Host
00:17:38 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Like, that’s how badly I wanted to breastfeed this kid. And can I tell you? She looked relieved.

Did she feel better?
Biz: Good. Thank god. I was—I wanted to make sure that she felt better.

Laura: She felt better! She felt better. Because—

00:17:43	Laura	Guest	She was—if I had just turned to her and said, “I choose to feed formula to my child,” I’m sure she would’ve ripped me a new one. But the fact that I was hysterically crying and <u>pained</u> with the fact that I wasn’t able to do this thing? She was like, “Okay, well, it’s still not great but at least you feel awful.” And like—and I developed, like—
00:18:03	Biz	Host	That’s the name of the next book! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:18:04	Laura	Guest	Yeah, seriously!
00:18:05	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Laura: “At least you feel awful.” Totally.
00:18:08	Laura	Guest	Biz: That’s the next book! “But at least you feel awful.” Yeah! At least you feel awful! And I had such bad postpartum depression and anxiety and part of it <u>was</u> just trying to... live up to these impossible expectations that are placed on all mothers! And then to add onto it, Instagram. And all of these breastfeeding in a field dressed like it’s Mormon Easter momfluencers. It’s just... it is... <u>so</u> beyond... what is healthy? So my friend Kate Mangiameli— <i>[Biz laughs.]</i> —so I wrote this book with my friend Kate. Kate is a soprano with the Metropolitan Opera. And she and I met—we looked at each other in a Starbucks at like six in the morning. We both had our babies. We both had like clearly been crying. And we started talking. We had no idea we were both performers. And we became friends just ‘cause we were moms who were like, “This is fucking haaaaard!”
00:19:00	Biz	Host	“This is the worst!” <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:19:03	Laura	Guest	Oh my god, this is the <u>worst</u> . We became best friends—yeah! And our babies became best friends. And we started texting each other, like, “A is for Asshole.” Y’know, like— <i>[Biz laughs.]</i> “B is for Bitch! You better listen to me!” And we were like, “Wait a minute! We should actually make a book like this! Because we wanna be the antidote to all of this other” <i>[beatifically]</i> “Motherhood is the most brilliant thing that will ever happen to you.”
00:19:30	Biz	Host	“Are you a vessel?”
00:19:32	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Laura: “I’m weaving a basket—”
00:19:34	Laura	Guest	Biz: “Like a magical vessel.” Yeah. I’m a magical vessel. My golden breastmilk. Like, all of it. All of that shit. I’m like, “I can’t do this. And we need to have an alternative that you can give to a mom at a baby shower that’s like in solidarity. That is diverse. That shows moms of all different colors. Y’know, and—and is like, ‘This is hard <u>and</u> it’s also awesome. You’re amazing.’” B is for Boobies or Bottles. Either way. C is for C-Section and your warrior mama scar. So we go through and are like, “You’re awesome no matter where you are in this.” Because nobody prepares you for how fucking hard it is. Nobody does. Except for my mother. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:20:14	Biz	Host	Right! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:20:16	Laura	Guest	My mother was like, “Listen. That baby’s gonna come out and you’re gonna not love it.” <i>[Laughs.]</i> I was like, “Cool.”
00:20:21	Biz	Host	Oh, see, but that’s so nice!

00:20:22 Laura Guest It was amazing! It was incredible. She was like, “You’re meeting a stranger. You don’t love every stranger you meet. You’re pushing a stranger out of your vagina or they’re cutting it out of your stomach then they place it on your chest and are just like, ‘Good luck!’ You’ve never met them! You don’t know them! They don’t know you! It’s a relationship!” And that was the most generous thing anyone did for me. Y’know. Was to prepare me!

00:20:44 Biz Host That is actually... really nice. Because y’know, with my first I felt a good connection despite the depression. And—but with my second? I just... I just called him “the boy” for a long time. That was a hard relationship. It was—‘cause it was so different and so—and that goes right back into freeing you from guilt that you didn’t ask for and you don’t deserve by saying, y’know, “You might not even like him. Right off the bat. You might not feel—” *[Through laughter]* This notion that we have children and are just gonna be great at it? It’s absurd.

00:21:33 Laura Guest It’s absurd!

00:21:34 Biz Host It’s an absurd—there is nothing else like it. And then you have—there are eight million books out there and they all—no matter how hard they try, they—they still leave you with, “Well if that didn’t work, there’s something wrong with how I’m doing it.” But there’s also this giant list of things they don’t tell you! There is no book—except for ours—that tells you a kid’s going to poop in the tub. No one tells you that you’re gonna just, like, “What am I supposed to do with this?” And no one tells you they’re gonna poop in the tub and no one tells you that probably an hour later? You’re gonna get in that tub. Like—

[Both laugh.]

You’re gonna get in the tub! No one’s like, “This is how you feed your baby while you’re on the toilet.” Right? Like that’s not—if you haven’t fed your baby or sat on a toilet with a baby in your lap, then you’re a witch.

[Laura laughs.]

You’re a witch! You’ve done something amazing! What is it?! Right? Somebody was on the show the other day and they were saying, y’know, “Well, I’m working from home. This is my office. This is where I work.” And she had like—she had a lotta kids! And I was like, “Do you have a hex on your door? How are you keeping your children from not coming in this room? What do you mean you’ve got a room?!” And she was like, “Oh, no. They’re just outside—*[Laughs.]* Crying. I just am not listening.” And I—*[Laughs.]* Was just like, “Good—good job!”

00:23:03 Laura Guest 100%. And I just bribe my child. I’m like, “If you can stay downstairs until 12:15 I will give you a Starburst.” *[Laughs.]*

00:23:09 Biz Host Yeah. That’s right. That’s right! Again, no one tells you about the benefits of bribing. I mean, I could never have gotten my kids to leave parks or playgrounds if I wasn’t ready to shell out candy or food. I mean, I was—my sister and I both were raised on like bar bet and bribes from our dad. Y’know? Where it was like, “Ope!”

00:23:32 Laura Guest Bar bets? *[Laughs.]*

00:23:33 Biz Host Yeah, well they were! They were like—y’know, my sister remembers, “I’ll betcha a dollar ya can’t fold up the TV trays with

your eyes closed.” Right? Just—amusing my father. Alright. So this book is amazing and I—y’know, honestly I wanted to go down some other paths but I really think I wanna ask the following. Because of everything we just talked about. So... self-sabotage. And so I... look at... the people that I get to interview who are—we just interviewed Lizzie and Wendy Molyneux, the head writers of *The Great North*. They are writing on *Bob’s Burgers*. Just these two power—and they have like a thousand kids between them. *[Laughs.]* Just like so many kids! I now sometimes wonder if my self-sabotage was—y’know, “I can’t—I can’t do both. I can’t parent and pursue.” Right? So going back to what we were talking about, do you think... and the answer is “yes.” I’m gonna answer for you. *[Laughs.]* Do you think inherently it is because we are women that we feel... that there needs to be that choice? Like, you are—you have a child. And you are pushing past, “Oh, I can’t. I’ve got a kid.” And you’re working. You’re doing all of these things. But that’s ‘cause I had my daughter later. I was 37!

00:25:08 Laura Guest
00:25:10 Biz Host

Well I had mine—well, yeah. I had mine later as well. And I think for me, part of it was, “Well, I’m tired. I’m tired now.” *[Through laughter]* “I’m tired.”

00:25:20 Laura Guest
00:25:21 Biz Host

Yes!
“I’m tired. Maybe I’ll just do this! I bet—I bet I would be great out in a field with a big hat breastfeeding as the sun came through—”

[Laura laughs.]

00:25:21 Crosstalk Crosstalk

“—and making all of my children’s—” Right?
Biz: Like this other character. This other role. Yeah! While I read poetry.

00:25:34 Biz Host

Laura: While you read poetry? Mm-hm. Yeah.
And my children love to hear me play guitar.

[Laura laughs.]

00:25:45 Laura Guest
00:25:47 Biz Host

“Stop it! Mama... Stop it!” But do you—have you wrestled with self-sabotage? Have you wrestled with—
Yes!
[Through laughter]—using your family as an excuse? *[Laughs.]*
Sorry.

00:25:51 Laura Guest

Y’know, I don’t—I mean, I... I self-sabotaged a lot when I was younger? Like every success I’ve had is in spite of me? Like, I absolutely did my best to ruin my life. And whatever angels are around me, I’m so grateful for? ‘Cause I really did a lot of self-sabotaging. In my twenties. And I started when I was eighteen. I started acting when I was eighteen years old on Broadway. And like, y’know. I went from boyfriend to boyfriend and then husband to husband and just always poured all of my energy into them. I’m very good at pouring all of my energy into somebody else. Which is why I thought I would make an incredible mother! *[Laughs.]*

00:26:27 Biz Host
00:26:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Mom, right? Exactly! Exactly! *[Laughs.]*
Laura: So—but weirdly—

00:26:31 Biz Host
00:26:34 Laura Guest

Biz: And here’s the thing—
You probably are! Like, you probably are, it’s just—
I try.

00:26:35 Biz Host It's just not the same. *[Laughs.]* It's just different.
00:26:37 Laura Guest Yeah. I mean, I think weirdly after having my daughter there was something about it that actually made me feel even more driven? Because I was—in my mind—so bad at it right away. I couldn't breastfeed. And then I had such severe postpartum depression that my husband was like, "We need to go to a hospital." It was really scary. And my daughter has some sensory issues and some atypical behaviors that make me feel like a failure 'cause I can't soothe her. And so I started to—I think—go back to the place where I know I'm good at it! Y'know? And I started working even more and even more. And—but I—it's not like I was away from her more. I was bringing her with me. So I was bringing a kid with sensory issues to fittings—

[Biz laughs.]

—and she was literally—she would hold onto my body. Like a little koala bear. While they're undressing me and putting clothes on me. And they'd be like, "Can you put her down?" And I was like, "Okay!" And I put her down and she would scream like she was being set on fire and they'd be like, "Pick her up! Pick her up!" And so then it was—

00:27:41 Biz Host Oh! Do you have my second child? *[Laughs.]*
00:27:43 Laura Guest Probably! She could not... be away from me for one single moment. One single—I mean, to this day. And then my poor husband, by the time we go to sleep I am like, "I do not need one more person climbing on me today. Thank you."
00:27:57 Biz Host Yes! Yes! But again! Not that they write that down. I mean, even when the cats would come and get in my lap I'd be like, "Jesus! Get off of me, cat!"
00:28:05 Laura Guest "No one touch me. No one—" I also realized today—my husband was telling me a story—

[Biz laughs.]

—and I was responding exactly how I respond to my daughter. Where I'm like, "Uh-huh! Oh, cool! Uh-huh! Cool. Oh wow. Wow!" And he was like, "Are you—are you listening?" I was like, "Uh-huh!" No. So yeah! I self-sabotage all the time. But I think I try so hard in my motherhood because it does not come naturally to me. I am not a person who feels like, "I got this." And y'know, I read all the books. All of which, by the way, have conflicting advice. Y'know. I tried to do the Janet Lansbury "Get down on her level; look her in the eye and repeat back to her, 'You're struggling!'" And my daughter literally screams in my face, "Stand up! Stand. Up!"

[Laughs.]

00:28:55 Biz Host Yeah! Yes! So much of it doesn't work! *[Laughs.]*
00:28:57 Laura Guest No! And I'll be like, "You're mad. You're having big feelings!" And she's like, *[screaming]* "Stop saying that! Stop saying that!"

[Biz laughs.]

00:29:08 Biz Host And I'm like, "Okay." And then—
00:29:11 Laura Guest "Alright. I'm having big feelings. I have to step away right now."
"I'm having big feelings. I'm gonna go lock myself in the bathroom and spoon-feed peanut butter into my mouth and sob." Yeah. So

like—I just—it didn’t—it never came easily to me. And I just thought that it would because I love children and I’ve had stepdaughters and... like, I’m very maternal in my instincts towards humans in general? But then I had this person and I was like, “I’m supposed to feed you with these? Okay, cool. Alright. It’s not working out. Everyone seems real mad at me about that. And now I’m really sad and I’m thinking about really dark things!” Yeah! “And those thoughts are scary to me and I shouldn’t be feeling this way and what is wrong with me?” And it wasn’t until I found the camaraderie of other moms who are open and honest saying, “This is fucking hard!” That I was like, “I am not alone. I don’t feel as alone.” I think—I—it’s just—fuck any question I have about Broadway. I’m having a good time talking about this.

00:30:01 Biz Host

[Laura laughs.]

Yeah, Broadway’ll come back, guys! It’ll be fine. Alright. So.

[Laughs.]

00:30:10 Laura Guest

And it will!

00:30:12 Biz Host

And it will! Good! That question’s answered.

00:30:14 Laura Guest

Fine. Done. *[Laughs.]*

00:30:15 Biz Host

That’s right. Done! One of the things we try and do on the show is that normalizing. Because I think... I remember being surprised by how isolating parenting is. Even being in the middle of like Brooklyn. I was all alone. And... I have a wonderful opportunity with this show to hear from other parents. And you think about—I—like—it allowed me to open my mind and empathy to understand that I’m in the middle of Brooklyn, but some people are literally in the middle of nowhere. *[Laughs.]* There’s no one! There’s no one around. They are truly isolated. I think that isolation can... lend itself to that feeling of, “It must be me. I’m doing it wrong. No one else is feeding their child on a toilet right now.” Other things are like... let’s say a baby winds up in a house through your body. ‘K? No one... like, when you think about injuries—A, people rarely call them “injuries” to your body. So we won’t call ‘em an injury so we won’t treat them. And don’t talk about it ‘cause that’s gross. And we don’t wanna hear about it. And... just like great-grandma, you just learn to live with it and then we never are allowed to address these things that we then allow ourselves to be limited by.

00:31:53 Laura Guest

Yeah! I still pee a little every time I laugh.

00:31:55 Biz Host

Oh yeah! And you know what? Here’s the thing—these are treatable—in most cases. In most cases. They are treatable. But do we allow time for that treatment? Do we allow the research for that treatment? No, no, no, no. No, no. If you were—we had this guest once who was like, “If you were in a car accident, you would be given physical therapy and all this time to recover. You have a baby? You better get back to work!” Right? Like, no physical therapy. No recovery.

00:32:25 Laura Guest

And you better get that body back!

00:32:26 Biz Host

Oh, yeah. Whatever the fuck that is. My body got shifted in all kinda directions when there was a baby inside of it and everything went back. It just went in the wrong place! It’s just in so many different—

[Laura laughs.]

—places! And I’m like, “What the fuck is ‘a body back’? I don’t want that body back!” Oh, yeah. The pressures on our physical bodies. I just want them to all go to hell.

00:32:48 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Laura:** I know. Same. And if you are—and if you’re a Black woman?

00:32:52 Laura Guest **Biz:** Like, but—miscarriage!
If you are a Black mother? Forget it. You know, Black women are twelve times more likely to die in childbirth in New York City! The liberal bastion of—of the United States. Twelve times more likely. And it’s not because Black women’s bodies don’t work. It’s because they’re not listened to. Women are not listened to and Black women are listened to not at all.

00:33:14 Biz Host Yeah. Not at all. And when you look at some of the science in how we—like, the medical research into women’s pregnant bodies—there is so little. I sometimes feel like—sometimes feel like, “Eh, 100 years ago they were like, ‘This is how women do it. Good enough! Let’s don’t update that! We don’t need to update that!’”

00:33:37 Laura Guest Yeah. Meanwhile they’re like, “Your baby’s the size of a raspberry!”

[Biz laughs.]

“Your baby’s growing toenails!” I’m like, “My nipples are the size of dinner plates and they hurt. Can we talk about that for a second?”
“No, no, no, no, no, no, no. *[Repeats “no” at length.]*”

00:33:50 Biz Host Ew! Yuck!

00:33:52 Laura Guest “Keep those nipples to yourself. But you better use them to feed your baby.”

00:33:55 Biz Host What if I say my nipples are the size of papayas?

[Laura laughs.]

Would that be—if I said that they were like fruit—what if I said I was leaking like... a watermelon that had just been sliced open on a hot day? Would that—would that make it better? No?

00:34:11 Laura Guest I think not.

00:34:12 Biz Host Miscarriage—

00:34:13 Laura Guest Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh.

00:34:14 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Don’t talk about miscarriage! Aaagh!

00:34:15 Biz Host **Laura:** Yeah. Don’t talk it.
Yeah. Don’t talk about birth stories. *[Makes gagging noise.]*

00:34:17 Laura Guest No. Oh my gosh. Totally *[inaudible]*. And don’t try to breastfeed in public.

00:34:22 Biz Host Oh! But why aren’t you breastfeeding?! *[Laughs.]*

00:34:24 Laura Guest Exactly! Exactly!

00:34:25 Biz Host But listen to your language when you said, “I couldn’t breastfeed.” Right? Like, even that language implies you failed at something. And I don’t have better language. I mean, don’t get me wrong. There’s no... better language out there right now. Though I know very smart people are working on that. But like... all of it comes back to the sensation of feeling like it’s your fault. And I—when I had mine, I was older in my late ‘30s and there weren’t mommy—mommy blogs were just starting. So my influences were, like, Pottery Barn catalogs. I’m like, “Oh! Well if I just had everything white—” *[Laughs.]*

00:35:10	Laura	Guest	Sure! Yeah. If everything were a neutral cream color.
00:35:14	Biz	Host	Look how those children are so well-behaved with that throw pillow on the floor! This would make me a better mother. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:35:22	Laura	Guest	Totally. Totally!
00:35:23	Biz	Host	Aah. I just—I'm so glad that you've written this. Because it really is important that we continue to push the feeling of normalcy, no matter how kids wind up in your house. And the more we all feel comfortable talking about it, whether it be... as women or as men listening... then we will be able to help tackle issues like people of color just not being listened to. The notion that there's only one voice for how to parent is—again—absurd!
00:36:05	Laura	Guest	Yes. It's absurd. And the notion that that voice is an ever-present, calm, and loving and—voice. That needs nothing in return. Y'know? That it's—
00:36:16	Biz	Host	Yeah. Don't you feel you need stuff?
00:36:18	Laura	Guest	Yeah. And frankly, I want my daughter to know that I need stuff. I want her to know it's normal. And also if she punches me in the face? I want her to know that that's not okay. Y'know, like of course she's having big feelings and of course I'm not gonna hit her back. Of course that. But also, I'm not gonna be like, <i>[sweetly]</i> , "Oh, you're having big feelings!" I'm gonna be like, <i>[sternly]</i> "You can't hit me. You're not allowed to hit people." Yeah!
00:36:41	Biz	Host	That's right! Yeah! "You're not allowed to hit people."
00:36:43	Laura	Guest	Yeah! Because honestly, what it is—they're aliens! They're aliens who've landed on this planet and they don't know the rules. And our job is to teach them the rules. And so... y'know... for me, the idea that what you were saying—to your point earlier—that we are supposed to just naturally be good at this <u>immediately</u> after being physically exhausted and battered and bruised and beaten—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			—and— <u>and</u> having no sleep. The fact that we're supposed to do this with unending patience and love is too much to ask of a person. It really is. And the more it's asked, the harder it is. 'Cause I think the more we are sort of requiring that sort of performative motherhood from people, like, the less you're actually going to connect to the true experience that you are having in that moment! And that's gonna keep you away from connecting to your baby.
00:37:32	Biz	Host	Yeah! No. You're absolutely—you're <u>absolutely</u> right. That is why I enjoy a bar so low that I just trip over it. It becomes a hazard—
			<i>[Laura laughs.]</i>
			—for the children in this house. "Watch out! Watch out for the cat and watch out for the bar. Watch it! There's a bar! It's very low! It's <u>very</u> low." Alright. Laura? I could talk to you forever about this. But it's—we're—
00:37:58	Laura	Guest	But we're done! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:38:00	Biz	Host	I have to stop! But we're done. But we're done. Broadway's coming back. Parenthood is hard. And there's a wonderful board book for—
00:38:06	Laura	Guest	Get this book! Watch <i>Gossip Girl</i> . <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:38:08	Biz	Host	Watch—so awesome. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I did. I had all these beautiful questions that were like, " <i>Gossip Girl</i> and social media and New York. How <u>is</u> New York doing? What do you think as you live in New York?" Right? Screw it!

00:38:19	Laura	Guest	This is better. I'd rather talk about nipple plate—y'know, nipples that are the size of dinner plates.
00:38:23	Biz	Host	Nipple papayas.
00:38:24	Laura	Guest	Nipple papayas. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:38:25	Biz	Host	Nipple papayas. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I love it. Thank you so much for joining us.
00:38:29	Laura	Guest	Thank <u>you</u> !
00:38:30	Biz	Host	Thank you for writing this book and adding your voice to the normalization of how hard this is.
00:38:39	Laura	Guest	Well thank you for being at the forefront of it. 'Cause honestly, like, you having your voice be one of the only ones saying what you feel is normal? Like, that's pretty lifesaving. And I'm not saying that lightly. When you have postpartum depression and anxiety, it is—it can be really dangerous. And to be able to listen to and read—y'know, somebody saying like, "This is okay. You are okay." Is genuinely lifesaving. So I really genuinely wanna thank you for that.
00:39:10	Biz	Host	Well I really appreciate it. It... has been... a... gift to myself to be able to do this. To realize how not alone I am. So that's just it! Let's normalize, normalize—everybody go out and talk about your miscarriage and other things that came out of your body!
00:39:27	Laura	Guest	Talk about your nipples!
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:39:31	Biz	Host	Also, I don't love my dog more. Oh, of course you don't love your dog more!
			<i>[Laura laughs.]</i>
00:39:34	Laura	Guest	I can just picture the comments right now.
00:39:36	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: It's—it's even—oh no, not with this group! Not with this group!
			Laura: "This bitch loves her dog more." Alright, good, good, good. Alright. Phew.
00:39:41	Biz	Host	Everybody, we're gonna link you up to where you can find out more information about <i>M Is For MAMA (and also Merlot): A Modern Mom's ABCs</i> . Obviously all you have to do is turn on the television and you can find— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Laura laughs.]</i>
			—you can find Laura somewhere. On a screen. I'm really sad that we couldn't bump it with trumpets, but I just can't wait for the return <i>[through laughter]</i> of Broadway.
00:40:05	Laura	Guest	Me, too.
00:40:06	Biz	Host	And... seeing you back up on the stage. My sister is in New York still and has seen you in all of your stuff—
00:40:14	Laura	Guest	Aww!
00:40:15	Biz	Host	—and just with the Patti LuPone and really wanted me to pursue a lot of Patti LuPone questions with you. But we'll have to do it later.
00:40:20	Laura	Guest	Okay.
00:40:21	Biz	Host	Thank you so much!
00:40:22	Laura	Guest	Thank you!
00:40:23	Biz	Host	You're doing a really good job, by the way.
00:40:24	Laura	Guest	So are you.
00:40:25	Biz	Host	Thank you!
00:40:26	Laura	Guest	Yeah.

00:40:28	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: Alright. Goodbye.
00:40:29	Music	Music	Laura: Alright! Bye! <i>[Laughs.]</i> “Ones and Zeroes” by “Awesome.” Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.
00:40:46	Theresa	Host	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> Hey, you know what it’s time for! This week’s genius and fails! This is the part of the show where we share our genius moment of the week, as well as our failures, and feel <u>better</u> about ourselves by hearing yours. You can share some of your own by calling 206-350-9485. That’s 206-350-9485.
00:41:06	Biz	Host	<i>[Singing]</i> Genius fail time, Theresa! Theresa’s here with me—over Zoom! Yeah! And we’re here to do... genius and failuresss! <i>[Regular voice]</i> Like that? The voice crack! The voice crack! That was a fail. Before I ask you—
			<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i>
00:41:32	Theresa	Host	—about your genius moment, I wanted to say, “Hello.”
00:41:33	Biz	Host	Hi!
00:41:35	Theresa	Host	Hi, Theresa. Are you excited?
00:41:37	Biz	Host	I’m <u>really</u> excited today.
00:41:48	Theresa	Host	I’m <u>excited</u> today, too, because we’re talking about geniuses and like the biggest genius of <u>all</u> is Max Fun Drive.
			It <u>is</u> the biggest genius of all. It’s—it’s what makes Maximum Fun special? It’s why our network is all about community and all about our listeners. Because we are listener-supported! And once a year, we come to you guys and we say, “Let’s keep doing this! Let’s keep—”
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:42:18	Biz	Host	“—making this show together.” And you guys tend to show up for us and it tends to be a pretty good time and very encouraging! Which is why at this point of the show, <u>we</u> are going <i>[singing]</i> to tell you all the ways that we want to show you we love you! Boop! <i>[Regular voice]</i> Here comes the first thing. Get a pen. To write this down. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Over the next two weeks—May 3 rd through May 14 th —be sure to check us out on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. A lot on Instagram, though. Just FYI. Sometimes I’m very bad at posting things on social media. For some Max Fun Drive fun! Like Chutney adventures. This year’s <i>One Bad Mother</i> pin. The return of Bop It. Banjo touching. And super fun stretch goal bonuses. Plus, the actual gifts that Max Fun gives when you become a member. And so much more! Theresa, would you—let’s just see if we can tell them a little bit about the MaxFun gifts.
00:43:19	Theresa	Host	Yeah. And these are—just to be clear—these are gifts—G-I-F-T-Ss.
00:43:25	Biz	Host	S’s.
00:43:26	Theresa	Host	Not to be confused with “gifs.” We’re not just gonna be giving you guys a bunch of gifs. I mean, gifs are fun.
00:43:32	Biz	Host	A bunch of me just vomiting rainbows? Blaaaagh.
00:43:35	Theresa	Host	Yeah. I mean, you guys can totally have those if that’s what you want?
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>

00:43:39	Biz	Host	Somebody let us know.
00:43:41	Theresa	Host	Like, if that's <u>really</u> what you want? Yes.
			<i>[Biz makes vomiting noise again.]</i>
			Of course you can have all the gifs you want of Biz vomiting rainbows.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			But there are actual <u>gifts</u> that you are entitled to receive when you—
00:43:53	Biz	Host	Tell me what I'm entitled to! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:43:54	Theresa	Host	—When you become a new or upgrading member of Maximum Fun during the Max Fun Drive! So. For \$5 a month or more, you get the bonus content. And we are eight years in to creating bonus content at this point? So that doesn't just mean the <u>new</u> bonus episodes. That means you get <u>all</u> the bonus stuff that's on there from every past year of the Max Fun Drive on <i>One Bad Mother</i> . And all the bonus episodes from other MaxFun shows. So it works out to something like over 200 hours of bonus content.
00:44:30	Biz	Host	Let's stay up all night and feed our babies!
			<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i>
00:44:37	Theresa	Host	And have something to listen to! Alright.
00:44:39	Biz	Host	Yeah. You will not run out of content.
00:44:41	Theresa	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Nope.
			Yeah. And then if you join at the \$10 a month level, you will get the bonus content <u>and</u> a pin. And this year's <i>One Bad Mother</i> enameled pin is... a slice of cake. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			And it says, "Cake Parenting." And it's the best. It may be the best one that we've done!
00:45:00	Biz	Host	It's a real runner-up with "Sack of Bananas." I mean, if you had "Sack of Bananas" <u>and</u> "Cake Parenting" on your lapel or your diaper bag, I mean... it would sum up parenting in a nutshell.
00:45:17	Theresa	Host	So true. Yes.
00:45:18	Biz	Host	In a nutshell. You would be pulling a Chutney if you had both of these pins out in public.
00:45:25	Theresa	Host	Or you pick one depending on your mood for the day. And better yet, just indicate to your family, "If I'm wearing the 'Sack of Bananas' pin?"
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			"Don't—don't come around expecting cake. Because it's a 'Sack of Bananas' day."
00:45:39	Biz	Host	Yeah. Yeah.
00:45:41	Theresa	Host	"But if I'm wearing the 'Cake Parenting' pin? I'm ready to make it work. Okay?"
00:45:46	Biz	Host	It's a temperature gauge.
00:45:47	Theresa	Host	Yeah, it is. So stay tuned online and on social media and listen to the shows as soon as they come out during the drive because

we're going to be announcing goal challenges and rewards throughout the Drive. And then Biz is gonna let us know when we hit 500 new or upgrading supporters. Because—

00:46:07 Biz Host —we are going to release a surprise episode I made with Eric O’Keeffe that I like to call, “One Bad Supernatural.” Where he and I talk about the TV show *Supernatural*. And it has very little to do with parenting. *[Laughs.]*

00:46:25 Theresa Host So guys, to join, upgrade, or boost your membership, just go to MaximumFun.org/join!

00:46:32 Biz Host Now. That was a lot of geniusing right there. But Theresa? I’d like to ask you very directly... to genius me.

00:46:42 Clip Clip *[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]*

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

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

00:46:56 Theresa Host Okay. Last week was my wonderful partner, Jesse’s, birthday.

00:47:04 Biz Host Happy birthday!

00:47:05 Theresa Host Yeah. he turned 40. It was a big one. I felt a little apprehensive about—how do you celebrate somebody’s 40th birthday when things are kinda really still very rough in life right now? I wanted it to be really special. It ended up working out really nicely and the best part was I honestly don’t know how or why but I’m gonna take credit for this? Each one of our kids made something for him. And this has been like one of those things about parenting where I just always assumed that from the time they were toddlers I’d be like, “It’s so-and-so’s birthday! Let’s make them a card!”

[Biz laughs.]

And then my kids would say, “Yes!” And they would sit down and make art for 45 minutes and be like really committed to making something really nice? And that just has never happened. I mean, it’s just never happened. It’s just not... they’re not interested in fulfilling my desire for them—

[Biz laughs.]

—to make stuff for me to feel good about other people’s celebrations.

00:48:11 Biz Host Wow. Weird!

00:48:13 Theresa Host Weird. But for whatever reason—probably ‘cause I’m great—I was able to get each of them to make something for him and they each made something really heartfelt and specific to them. Oscar made a comic for Jesse. About a dad. It was really cute. And Grace made flashcards for him that were really funny and really sweet that she performed for him?

[Biz laughs.]

When we were having birthday dinner. And then Curtis, our four-year-old, made a card that he then transformed into a little model of

00:49:01	Biz	Host	a house. And they all just were actually into it and it was actually meaningful. So yeah. That was great. It made me feel really good. That <u>is</u> really good! Oh my god! You should take credit for that!
00:49:04	Theresa	Host	Thank you. I did.
00:49:06	Biz	Host	Yeah! You— <u>good</u> ! Happy birthday to Theresa! Very good! Well that's genius. I'm ripping up the backyard. So Stefan and I are finally gonna try and do something with our backyard that—it really actually does look like a school playground? Y'know, something that hasn't been taken care of very well. There's something dangerous lurking about. Probably a lot of grass. Some of the grass is growing. Some of it's not. And it just—children can roam free. <i>[Laughs.]</i> There. And we're finally gonna do something with it. And we had somebody come to talk to us about it and they said, "Look. If you wanna save some money, you're gonna wanna dig all the grass—like, all that stuff up yourself. 'Cause it's expensive to do it." And I was like, "Okay." So Stefan and I started hacking away at our grass. Now you're thinking, "Why is that a genius?" Well, here we go. One, Stefan and I are doing something together! <i>[Laughs.]</i> That's really nice! Two, it's physical. And physical affects my mood <u>so</u> fast. It is like a drug. Getting outside and being physical. Three, in the process of digging up the yard, I have found <u>so</u> much fun treasure-y stuff! I have found little ten—rusted, now—cars from the 1900s. I found a 1930s, 1940s—it's like what a credit card used to be? They're called "charge plates." And they're metal and it had the information of a person who used to live in this house! In the 1940s. Whoa.
00:50:49	Theresa	Host	What?! And then— <i>[Laughs.]</i> I have found marbles. I have found old coins. I have found—like, just so much fun stuff. If you guys want, I will post them on the Instagram so you can see what I've been digging up. And it is like... somebody asked me to come over and play. I swear. Like, I just go outside and I dig and I got a metal detector and then I dig and I sift and— <i>[Laughs.]</i> It brings me—it brings me <u>such</u> fucking joy.
00:50:50	Biz	Host	
00:51:22	Theresa	Host	<i>[Theresa laughs.]</i> Good job!
00:51:26	Biz	Host	Thank you!
00:51:27	Caller	Caller	<i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i>
			Hi, Biz and Theresa! Coming at ya with a genius. So I'm approaching middle-aged—whatever that means—but things just don't work the same anymore. My neck hurts when I wake up. My back hurts when I wake up. Yadda, yadda. I have repurposed my Boppy pillow from my children when they were infants into my sleeping pillow. And it cradles my neck just perfectly. And keeps me in a position all night where I actually wake up not insanely sore every morning. So... I thought that was a genius. And for anybody else who has neck trouble out there—try your Boppy pillow! Thanks, you're doing a great job.
00:52:11	Biz	Host	So are you! This is a genius repurposing of a baby product. It's <u>so</u> good. This is one of those ones where I wonder what the price difference would be depending on what you named it. 'Cause we've talked about in the past that, like, "I've got a photo album! It's \$10!" "It's your baby photo album. It's \$500."
00:52:33	Theresa	Host	Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i>

00:52:35 Biz Host Your wedding photo album. Has the word “wedding” on it. It’s \$500. So like... *[Laughs.]* “It’s a maternity blanket. It’s \$75!” It’s a blanket. *[Laughs.]* So the Boppy—as it is designed for helping, y’know, hold babies’ bottles and boobs—it’s gonna have one price point. But then when it becomes like—what is it—the Boppin’ Spine. Right? Something that helps with sleep? When it becomes a more medical—does that make it more expensive? Or less expensive than being a baby product?

00:53:12 Theresa Host That’s a great question.

00:53:14 Biz Host I think I’m gonna take the rest of my life to research it. *[Laughs.]*

00:53:17 Theresa Host Yeah. Take that on. Take it on right now. Yeah.

00:53:21 Biz Host I’m gonna take that on. Just gonna tell my kids, “Sorry. I can’t be your mother anymore.”

00:53:25 Theresa Host “I’m busy running numbers, you guys. I’m running numbers.”

[Biz makes computing noise.]

00:53:29 Biz Host That’s my calculator? Sound?

00:53:31 Theresa Host Yeah. It was! It was.

00:53:32 Biz Host Thanks.

00:53:33 Theresa Host I mean, maybe I just think that because I could see your fingers typing up and down? But yeah.

00:53:37 Biz Host Yeah, but even my fingers were pointing in totally opposite directions as if I had two calculators—yeah. Two calculators.

00:53:43 Theresa Host ‘Cause you’re running so many numbers!

[Biz makes computing noise again, then “Bing!” and a ripping noise.]

00:53:50 Biz Host That’s the—yuck. That was a horrible sound effect of me pulling the—

00:53:54 Theresa Host Pulling the paper out?

00:53:56 Biz Host Pulling the paper out. And the answer is—32.

[Theresa laughs.]

You’re doing—*[Laughs.]* Doing such a good job. You’re doing such a good job.

00:54:07 Theresa Host Good job.

00:54:09 Biz Host Failures.

00:54:10 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.]

00:54:16 Biz Host Fail me, Theresa.

00:54:17 Theresa Host Lots of potential failures to share, but I think I’m gonna go with one that happened today. Just ‘cause it feels real fresh. And that is that I was helping Oscar, my seven-year-old, with his math this morning. And... definitely he—it ended in tears.

[Biz laughs.]

And it's like, it—I feel like that would've happened early on in remote schooling? Just because... nobody knows what they're doing. But like at this point we're into our groove. I know how to work with him and when not to work with him on things.

[Biz laughs.]

And we're just trying to learn to tell time.

[Biz groans sympathetically.]

And it was one of those things where it was like... I... just—my—whatever was going on with me? I could not let go of, “Look. It's fucking obvious! It's so easy!”

00:55:13 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Biz: “5! 10! 15! 20!” *[Laughs.]*

00:55:18 Theresa Host

Theresa: “Look. Always—if it's at the 6, it's just always half-past!” “It's—you're only looking at half-past right now! All of these are half-past so it's always gonna be on the 6!” *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

“It's always gonna be there and it's always—mmm!” And poor kid. Y'know. He'll be fine.

00:55:34 Biz Host

Sorry, Oscar.

00:55:35 Theresa Host

He'll be fine. He'll get there. And—

00:55:37 Biz Host

He'll have a digital watch.

00:55:38 Theresa Host

And he knows I love him and—

00:55:40 Biz Host

[Sighs.] Wow. I'm sorry.

00:55:42 Theresa Host

It did not—yeah. And it was so unnecessary. Like, who cares? It's not like the test is tomorrow to graduate from first grade.

00:55:48 Biz Host

Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:55:50 Theresa Host

No!

00:55:51 Biz Host

Here's the thing—he'll know how to tell time by the time he goes to college. *[Laughs.]*

00:55:55 Theresa Host

I mean, I guess. Or he could just ask Siri what time it is.

00:55:58 Biz Host

Yeah. Yeah! I think so. I am so sorry. Yeah. Every time I realize Ellis has no idea how to tell time? I'm like, “Ugggh! Just—aaack!” ‘Cause I've tried and it just—within like a minute, y'know, this is too existential to try—I need this to be a teacher *[through laughter]* project. I can't do it! Can't do it. You're doing a horrible job.

00:56:23 Theresa Host

Yes.

00:56:24 Biz Host

I mean, like, for sure.

00:56:25 Theresa Host

No, I am. I definitely am.

00:56:27 Biz Host

Okay. This one—I am surprised it only just now happened. But yesterday I was going to pick Ellis up from school. And I parked the car. And I got out. And I walked up to where I was to pick them up, and it was just as I'd walked up—like, right—there are two or three parents there waiting. There's the teacher. I've already walked past one teacher and said, “Hello.” And that's when I realize—I don't have a mask on. Like—and then—*[Laughs.]* And then I did the thing that we all do, which is not at all helpful—I just took my hands and covered my mouth. Like, that, *[panicking]* “I don't have a mask! Oop!” Right? And then I was so surprised and this one guy—I was like, “Oh my god! I don't have the—” And he was like, “Pull your

shirt up!" And I'm like, "That's not any better!" I was just like—
[through laughter] I was just doing a bunch of dumb physical things
with my body. To try and—that would have no benefits in group
safety.

00:57:32 Theresa Host
00:57:35 Biz Host
00:57:36 Theresa Host
00:57:38 Biz Host

It's like the naked dream. It's like—
Yeah! But I did it!
It's like that almost. Yeah.
And I was like, "Ellis, quick! We have to run back to the car!
[Through laughter] I don't have my mask!" I'm like—it just—oh. It
was—I felt so... blecccch.

00:57:48 Theresa Host
00:57:52 Biz Host
00:57:55 Caller Caller

Yes. I—yes. You... do suck.
I'm fucking monster. I know. I know!
[Answering machine beeps.]

Hi, Biz and Theresa! I am calling in with a fail. So... my toddler was
not liking baths for a little bit and so getting him interested in it
was—y'know—we tried adding the whole color thing. "Do you want
to take a blue bath? Do you want to take a green bath?" And all of
that and he got really into it. Which was awesome. So it made bath
time super easy. And thennn... he's also speech delayed. So
y'know at some point in time he started saying, "Yellow" really
good. Really well. And he was going, "Lello! Lello!" And so he only
wanted yellow baths. And so now he's totally stuck on yellow baths.
And that's all he wants to take. I tried to get him other color baths
and now it's just yellow baths and just constantly—and it cracks me
up and it's a fail 'cause it just looks like giant pee baths.

[Biz laughs.]

And I hope he—it's been like six months now.

[Biz laughs.]

And it's just such a weird bath time. But anyway. That's my fail. You
guys are doing a great job. I've got a kid taking a pee bath every
night, so, anyway. Thank you. Bye.

00:59:11 Biz Host

Well. Just so you know, colored bath or not, your kid's taking a pee
bath every night anyway.

[Theresa laughs.]

I mean, the kids aren't like, "I'm peeing in the tub." There's so many
times I would walk past either one of my kids and I'd be like, "Wait a
second. Are you peeing?!" *[Laughs.]* And then—"Huh?" So I—yeah.
So one, they're already in a pee bath. Two, what I love about this—
this brings up the question, with time does more comedy and
silliness arrive out of something that's happening in your house?
Like, the first couple of days you're like, "Yellow bath." It may not
even occur to you that it looks like pee. And then you're like two
weeks in. And you're like, "That looks like pee. That's weird. No one
cares." And then you're like six months in and I bet you wanna tell
everybody. *[Laughs.]* I would wanna tell everybody by six months! I
would wanna be like, "Hey, my kid's taking a pee bath. I got a
picture. You wanna see it?" *[Laughs.]*

01:00:14 Theresa Host

Well that's what I was imagining! I was imagining—'cause
sometimes the kids are really cute in the bath? And you're taking a

picture... and... you know, maybe you're trying not to get body parts in the picture or whatever. But I can see having the impulse to take the picture and then being like, "Well, what are people gonna—what are my parents—if I send this to my parents, what are they gonna think if the water's just yellow?" And so you're trying to not... but then it becomes a thing. Like, no one can see that there's yellow... water. That my child is bathing in. *[Laughs.]*

01:00:48 Biz Host

I know! It's just like that whole—it's just so funny what we associate with colors. 'Cause we've also had the pee bath. The yellow bath. Where you're like, "Huh. It does look like pee." And it catches you off guard. It surprises you if you suddenly walk back in and you're like, "Whoa! Oh, it's the color tabs." Yeah, yeah. We used to live in those. Well? You... are doing—I don't know. Like a horrible... job. Letting your imagination run wild repeatedly about the liquid in which your child is bathing? Yeah. Let's go with that. Let's go with that.

01:01:28 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.]

01:01:53 Biz Host

Okay. Everybody? Let's settle in together... with Theresa. And listen to a mom have a breakdown.

01:02:05 Caller Caller

[Answering machine beeps.]

Hey! This is Christian. I'm calling from San Clemente, California, with a dad rant. And I'm a parent to a special needs kid. He has—he's a person with autism. And as an autistic person he experiences the world differently? But he's smart. And I'm really tired of people apologizing for my kid's autism when they say "Hi" and I'm like, "Oh, he's nonverbal. He's not gonna respond to you. He has his own—he's a person with autism." And them saying they're sorry. I'm not fucking sorry! You shouldn't be fucking sorry. He's the best thing that's ever happened to me. And given that it's Autism Acceptance Month and that people with autism and autistic people and, y'know, a bunch of different conditions need to be celebrated this month because of neurodiversity? I just think that there are some things that we need to say. A, autistic people—you're fucking perfect. We love you. You are what's good in this world. Two, people who don't understand neurodiversity? Get educated. It's just as important as being educated on race. Because neurodiverse does not mean slow. It does not mean disabled. And three? Stop fucking apologizing to me!

[Biz laughs.]

01:03:35 Biz Host

I'm not unhappy! Shut the fuck up! So thanks, guys. Bye. Whew! Dad rant. Needed to get that off his chest. And this is where to do it. I really appreciate your call. Frustration aside, I think this—*[sighs]*. This is such a part of that category of being mindful of how we use language and what we say. And I can see the easiness and the natural inclination to say, "Oh, I'm sorry." *[Laughs.]* Now, I think—I could see that happening to a person. So I wanna start

there with that sort of space. I also can really understand how that can feel if you are a parent with a neurodiverse child. And the connotations that something like that must—comes with a statement like that. Yeah. It's—it's—[Laughs.] It's not the right thing to say. [Laughs.] Even—not even a little the right thing to say. And so when you call and you share things like this, it helps get that message out there. That that's not the right thing to say. Or to be mindful about your words.

Neurodiversity—being differently wired—this is such a new time in our culture in which the spotlight is being focused more on that. Acceptance is becoming part of how we walk through the world. And so much of that has to do with educating ourselves and being aware and learning more. And... your call actually reminded me that recently—as part of the *One Bad Mother* Facebook private group community—we have a *One Bad Mother* autism subgroup. And they held an Ask Me Anything on the main board, and people got to ask questions about autism. And A, it was just such a gift that those parents gave the community? And it was definitely an opportunity to learn something. Sometimes asking the questions isn't easy. It can be scary to ask. But we should all go out and try and find out more about these things that we're not as familiar with. 'K?

And so, to you, ranting dad, you're doing a seriously amazing job. You are so lucky to have the child that you have. And that child is so lucky to have you. And I think you are both truly fucking remarkable. You're doing a really, really good job. Theresa? You know who's also doing a really good job? You. I'm so glad that you're here. You know who's also doing a good job? Our listeners. And supporters. All of you who are supporting *One Bad Mother* during the Max Fun Drive. Thank you. You're doing a good job. Yeah. You guys are awesome. Thank you for showing up for us. And Biz, thank you for keeping this show going throughout the pandemic. You're totally amazing.

01:07:05 Theresa Host

01:07:14 Biz Host

01:07:29 Theresa Host

01:07:31 Biz Host

01:07:32 Crosstalk Crosstalk

01:07:34 Biz Host

Thank you for making it possible to keep [through laughter] doing the genius and fail segment by being my friend and joining me each week to do these calls. Theresa? You're doing a good job and I will talk to you next week!

See ya next week!

Okay!

Biz and Theresa [Biz in a singsong voice]: Byeeee!

What did we learn today, everyone? Well—[Laughs.] We learned that Laura Benanti is a good time. Wow! Hello, new best friend! Talk about the importance of... being honest. About the experiences we have when children come into our lives. It just—it can't be emphasized enough. And there can't be enough of us out there talking about it. Right? Normalize. Normalize. Normalize. Plus her book is so funny! And so is she! She was just a total delight. And here's a little fun thing. That is, at the beginning of the interview, I mispronounced her name. And then I tried to retake that over... and over... and I just mispronounced her name—like, to her—in front of her over Zoom—over... and over... and over again. And I would like to say that Laura Benanti is very nice. [Laughs.] For not hanging up right then.

Guys? We've learned that we need to rely on each other. And I just wanna say... I hope that *One Bad Mother*—that we've been able to be there for you. Not only through parenting, but also through this pandemic. It means the world that we've been able to continue making this show and it is so very important to me to continue to be able... to remind you guys that you're normal? *[Laughs.]* That it's all okay? That you're not alone? And that you're doing a really good job. If the show has been a part of your life; if we have had an impact on you as a parent or as a person; if we've helped you get through this pandemic or any other difficult time, I hope that you will become a member during the Max Fun Drive and support *One Bad Mother*. All levels are valuable and important, from \$5 a month to—I mean, heck if you—if you are doing very well and would like to support us at the \$200 a month level, I mean, I'm not going to stop you. But—*[Laughs.]* But seriously, guys, \$5 a month means the world. You can also boost your membership now, which means you don't have to go at one of the preset levels. If you just wanna raise your membership by a dollar or two dollars you can do that. If you are already a member and have been supporting us? Thank you so much. I appreciate it.

If you can't support the show financially right now? That's fine. I totally get it. This is a weird time and we're still gonna be here for you no matter what. You can support us, as always, by going to iTunes and writing reviews or just getting the word out about why you listen to the show and why supporting the show is important on social media—with the hashtag #MaxFunDrive. So there are lots of ways to support us. And remember, when you support the show? IN a lot of ways you are supporting listeners who cannot support at this point in time. So, y'know. Let's just go out and be supportive.

Everybody? You're doing a remarkable job. So much is changing within the world of the pandemic while at the same time not feeling vey different or any more certain. And yet we still have to go and walk through that. And that's a really confusing place. And... we have to remember that, y'know, we're all experiencing grief and loss on some level. And what I really, really want you to remember? Is that—look where we are! You are doing it! You're doing a remarkable job! Yes, all those things are true, but you're also still here. You are also still showing up. Getting up. And doing stuff. You're going to bed. You're getting up. And you're doing it again. You're setting an achievable bar, which could be very low. *[Laughs.]* That is still okay. You're just... amazing. Let's go out and be amazing to each other. And I will talk to you next week. Bye! “Mama Blues” by Cornbread Ted and the Butterbeans. Strumming acoustic guitar with harmonica and lyrics.

01:12:20 Music Music

*I got the lowdown momma blues
Got the 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.*

[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]

01:12:44	Biz	Host	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 .
01:13:12	Theresa	Host	<i>One Bad Mother</i> is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to MaximumFun.org/donate .
01:13:36	Music	Transition	<i>[Music continues for a while before fading out.]</i> A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:13:37	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
01:13:38	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:13:40	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:13:41	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.