

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 One Bad Mother 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.
00:00:20	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> —shh! Don't tell! We talk secrets with Deesha Philyaw. Plus, Biz was sick.
00:00:33	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz and caller: Wooo!
00:00:35	Caller	Caller	I am calling with a woo!

*[Biz laughs.]*

Because this is not quite a fail; not quite a genius. Just a woo. I forgot that my child was, in fact, a child. My eight-year-old is signed up for sleepaway camp for the first time and while ordering him toiletries to take away with him, I was looking at the body washes and I said, "Men's bodywash? That's stupid! Bodywash is bodywash." But then—having already chosen the brand—I realized that the men's bodywash was on sale for less than the bodywash. So I bought him the men's bodywash. We got back. We smelled it. It did not smell good. Because my child is a child and is not a man. So I then ordered him the child's bodywash, because he's a child. So I have an eight-year-old and I feel very in-between about when we're getting things that are geared for children because it's too cutesy. Is it too young? Or is it what he likes? Because he is, in fact, a child. So this is my woo and my observation and my current crisis.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:01:55	Biz	Host	I hope you're all doing well. Thanks for bringing us so much joy and light each week and for your wonderful communities! Thank you. You're all doing a great job. I think we should identify all things as "my current crisis." <i>[Laughs.]</i> First of all, you're doing an amazing job. Second of all, you are right! Eight! Are they adults, or as they still child—yeah, okay. They're still a child. Yes. But eight does get into that tricky area of—are they—do they still wanna hold your hand in public? Do they want man bodywash? Do they need a razor? Should they start driving? These are all important questions. The thing is is sometimes we don't really know what the answer is until we're presented with the new question each time. Right? So like, you're doing a good job. I get it. The man's bodywash. Isn't it refreshing to know that there is still a child living in your house who does not stink yet? And that is excellent.
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Speaking of things that are excellent, it's time for the weekly thank-you's. *[Singing "doo-doo" and clapping along to it.]* Thaaaank you! *[Regular voice]* I can never get tired of the thanking roll call, as it were. Thank you, medical workers. You know who you are. You are

the wonderful people who continue to care for all of us, whether we have COVID or whether we are just sick or whether we've broke a leg or whether we are dealing with a serious medical condition. Thank you to all of the people who staff hospitals and other medical centers, making sure that those stay clean and that they stay safe and that they are places in which we can come and feel secure. Thank you to everybody who's just entering all that data! I see you! You are very valuable to this entire process. Thank you so much.

Vaccinations. Thank you for vaccinations. Thank you for the people who made the vaccinations. Thank you for the people who continue to study the vaccinations to find out how the vaccinations are affecting us and helping us fight this still-going pandemic. Guys, it's still happening. And thank you to all of you who've gotten vaccinated. If you can get vaccinated, please go get vaccinated. I understand that not everybody can get vaccinated due to certain medical conditions or maybe it's your age. Maybe you're listening and you're eleven. I understand. That's frustrating. But that makes it all the more important for those of us who are able to be vaccinated to be vaccinated. Let's do it!

Thank you to transportation workers. Thank you to the people who deliver our mail and our packages. Thank you to the people who are working in airports and other places where people are returning for vacations and trips and travel. A, thank you for returning. And B, thank you for keeping those spaces clean and sanitized. I really appreciate you. Thank you to everybody at grocery stores and other shopping areas. Thank you to people who have restaurants and have adapted to make it so that we can return to support you. And thank you to teachers. I hope you are having a very good summer break. And libraries? Thank you. Thank you, librarians. I love you. So thank you, thank you, thank you.

00:05:35 Biz

Host

Now here's my check-in. We all got sick in this house. Poor Ellis brought home a little summer cold from the summer camp. And *[through laughter]* it's just a super horrible runny nose. And I had gotten some texts from some friends who had kids at the same summer camp saying, "Hey, my kid is home with a runny nose. Just giving you a heads up." And everybody went and got COVID tested so we know that it wasn't COVID. But like, Ellis was fine and then Friday night I'm putting him to bed and it just, like—it was as if somebody took a bucket and then just dumped sick on him. IT just—one minute he was not sick. And the next minute, he was up alllll night. Poor baby! And it was just like the super congestion, which is really gross.

And I—*[Laughs.]* And of course three days later Raiden and I had it. Stefan had it very, very, very mildly, so he was president of everything. Yeah. It just was one of those things where it was like, "Oh my god, we haven't been sick in a year in this house!" *[Laughs.]* Because we haven't gone anywhere because of the pandemic. We just weren't exposed to anything. We were very low risk takers so it was very weird to suddenly all be sick and gross in the house. And I just handled it the way any professional would—I just turned that television on and we watched so much *Ninjago* and so much, like... no, it was just a lot of *Ninjago*. We did that. Raiden

was very brave to put up with that, but Raiden has learned that any screen is a good screen, regardless of what's on it.

So that is where we have been. And the thing about being sick these days is I did kinda wanna keep it a secret. I didn't wanna tell anybody 'cause I didn't want everybody to think that we had the COVID, even though we're vaccinated. But the kids aren't vaccinated. It's very complicated. Nothing like a pandemic to make you stress out about what others will think of you. I think that ties in nicely with what we're gonna talk about today with Deesha Philyaw, author of the new book *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies*.

00:07:50 Music Music  
00:07:51 Theresa Host

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

00:07:58 Biz Host

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

00:08:02 Theresa Host  
00:08:05 Biz Host

Nothing we say constitutes professional parenting advice.

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

00:08:09 Theresa Host

Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

*[Banjo music fades out.]*

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

00:08:14 Biz Host

Guys, I am so excited! *[Laughs.]* I am so excited to welcome back Deesha Philyaw, whose debut short story collection *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies* won the 2021 PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, the 2021 Story Prize, and the 2020 LA Times Book Prize. The Art Seidenbaum Award for First Fiction and was a finalist for the 2020 National Book Award for Fiction. *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies* focuses on Black women, sex, and the Black church, and is being adapted—I bet!—for television by HBO Max with Tessa Thompson executive producing. Deesha is also a Kimbilio Fiction Fellow and will be the 2022/2023 John and Renee Grisham Writer-In-Residence at the University of Mississippi. Whoa! Welcome back, Deesha! *[Laughs.]*

00:09:16 Deesha Philyaw Guest

Thank you! Thank you, thank you, Biz!

00:09:19 Biz Host

For those of you who have been longtime listeners—or if you're doing the weird podcast thing where you just start at the beginning and time means nothing—Deesha was back on our show—are you ready for this? 2013! Episode 29!

*[Deesha laughs.]*

Episode 29! That's crazy! And before we get into how much the bio has changed—though the first one was very impressive, too!—I want to ask what we asked you once before: who lives in your house? *[Laughs.]*

00:09:50 Deesha Guest

Okay. *[Laughs.]* Now it's a little more complicated, I think.

*[Biz laughs.]*

So first there's Fudgy, who is my pug. And she's always here. And then there's my youngest daughter, who is here for two weeks and then she's with her dad for two weeks. And then my older daughter—y'know, she's a full adult and she's in college. And she was with her dad all the time and she was virtual in college, but when she comes back from vacation she's going to be living in the apartment that's attached to my house. So technically she doesn't live with me, but she kinda does.

00:10:33 Biz Host  
00:10:37 Deesha Guest

Oh yeah. You're gonna always be lurking about. *[Laughs.]*  
Well we've been talking about boundaries and not lurking. We'll see how that works.

*[Biz laughs.]*

I'm trying. I'm gonna try really hard. But also, y'know, I got my own things going on up here, so, y'know.

00:10:51 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**Biz:** Yes! Yeah! What do you have going on?

**Deesha:** I don't want her lurking up here either!

00:10:54 Biz Host  
00:10:56 Deesha Guest  
00:10:57 Biz Host  
00:10:59 Deesha Guest

Yeah! *[Laughs.]* Don't lurk up here!  
*[Through laughter]* Exactly.  
Anybody else lurking about?  
Nope! Like, right now Fudgy is staring at me like this. You can't see her but she's like—

00:11:02 Biz Host

Fudgy is really an amazing name for a pug, given what pugs look like. And—

00:11:07 Deesha Guest

Well she's a black pug. And her brother was Caramel, and he was fawn. He's the—the tan color. But he passed away in October.

00:11:17 Biz Host  
00:11:18 Deesha Guest

Oh, baby!  
And so that's part of why she's like she is. She has separation anxiety. So y'know. She's always wanting to be held and rubbed and—

*[Biz laughs.]*

—somehow—she probably hears a change in my voice? And she's like, "Oh, we're doing an event now? Are we? Are we doing an event?"

00:11:37 Biz Host  
00:11:38 Deesha Guest

Are we going? Where are we going? I need a little hat! Yeah.  
Y'know. And so—she's been on my lap for some of these but I'm not doing that today. *[Warning tone.]* No. No. We're not starting that up again. No. *[Regular voice]* Like, the side-eye! She's got this side-eye happening right now.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:11:51 Biz Host

Alright. Deesha, the last time—like I said—you were here—still a very impressive bio. You were on talking about co-parenting. You had written the *Co-Parenting 101* book, which I remembering being so impressed—A—and this is a dumb thing to be impressed by. But just the phrasing "co-parenting" as opposed to all the other choices of how those things could be said. And I've recommended that book so many times.

00:12:21 Deesha Guest  
00:12:22 Biz Host  
00:12:24 Deesha Guest

Thank you!  
Because sadly there's a lot of people—*[Laughs.]*  
Yeah! Half of all couples!

00:12:26 Biz Host Half of all couples. Y’know. The kids get in your house and things get weird.

00:12:30 Deesha Guest Mm-hm.

00:12:31 Biz Host So here we are. Nine? Eight? Eight years later. And you are a National Book Award Finalist!

*[Deesha laughs.]*

You have got this amazing collection of short fictional stories. *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies*. You’ve gotta—what have you been up to? How did this come about? What did—

00:12:54 Deesha Guest A little busy. So—

*[Biz laughs.]*

Y’know, the co-parenting book was a detour from fiction, which is what I was—what I started writing twenty years ago. And I, y’know, I was writing some short stories but I was really trying to write novels in the beginning. But more than anything I just wanted to get published. Somewhere. Anywhere. And so I got this gig online writing as a columnist for this site called *Literary Mama*. And that’s when I started writing, but mostly about adoptive parenting. And then my ex and I got the idea to start building a brand and working towards a book on co-parenting. And so that was a really long detour away from fiction. And y’know, but in the background it was always like, “Oh, I’m gonna work a little bit on this novel. I’m gonna work on this story.” And then the book came out in 2013 the same year I was on your show. And for a couple of years that was my thing. Y’know. I was big on social media with it. We had a couple of speaking engagements, but it—y’know, we definitely didn’t have the marketing, y’know, resources that my current book has behind it.

*[Biz laughs.]*

Thanks to, y’know, the publisher.

00:14:08 Biz Host Correct. That is a—yeah! *[Laughs.]*

00:14:10 Deesha Guest So it makes a huge difference. And so I—y’know, we had the book but then very quickly it was like, “Okay, I’ve gotta go on to do other things because I’ve gotta make a living.” Y’know. And so I started doing freelance—well not “started,” but continued freelancing for a while. Still working on these stories. Still working on a novel. In 2016 I got a nine-to-five. I went corporate for a little while. But that freed me up from freelancing, which allowed me to finish the collection that I was working on. And so the—y’know, the collection is a set of nine stories about Black women, sex in the Black church, and right just before I turned in the manuscript for it, I left my corporate job. Literally walked out one day ‘cause I had had it up to here. And I didn’t have a plan. *[Laughs.]* I didn’t know what I was gonna do. But then I ended up getting, y’know, some contract work so that helped me stay afloat. And then, y’know, it was like, wait a year and then the book’s gonna come out. And it came out!

*[Laughs.]*

00:15:18 Biz Host Yeah! It did! It came out with guns blazing, as it were! I know!

*[Deesha laughs.]*

It's so awesome! And—okay. I think I know what the secret is that *Church Ladies* have, and that is a lot of sex.

*[Deesha laughs.]*

Fully—I don't know! I—y'know, I'm not a back book blurb-er, but here I go. I'm going into the book and I'm like, "La, la, la. *[Shrieks]* Whoaaa! Yeah!" The very first story is titled "Eula," and in my notes here I literally have, "Sweet Lord."

*[Both laugh.]*

I just was like, whew! And what that first story does, I think, really sets this tone for... for this theme of secrets. Right? And it's not—and these aren't necessarily the secrets like... that I'm keeping from you. A lot of it's like secrets we keep from ourselves. In this one I felt—with that one it was like this secret of... living a lie? Right? So okay. And you got—and there are all other kind of secrets. Where did these start to come from?

00:16:34 Deesha Guest

Yeah. They—each one has its own kind of weird origin story. Y'know. With "Eula," it was me thinking about this—y'know, so many of the church women of my youth and how when I was a kid and becoming a teenager, I was very curious about them and their sex lives. Because, y'know, church was, "Don't, don't, don't" and "You can't and you shouldn't and Hell and damnation" and y'know—

*[Biz laughs.]*

And you've got, y'know, "Sex is reserved for heterosexual marriage." And yet there were all of these single women. And so I just wondered, y'know. Or their husbands had died or whatever. And I just wondered, like, well how did they handle all of these feelings? 'Cause I'm a teenager and I'm having these feelings and what do you do with these feelings and do they masturbate? Y'know? Do they have sex with men in secret? Do they have sex with women? Y'know. So even when I was younger I was very curious about these women's sex lives. And then, y'know, moving—y'know, having had my own life experiences as an adult woman and writing these stories, I started thinking about how many women, y'know, outwardly—it doesn't seem like they're struggling at all. It's like they're just faithful and they—you don't even think that they think about sex or whatever. But I'm like, "But they have to." Y'know, we were built for intimacy. We were built for touch. And so how did these women manage to go years—decades—without touch? Without sex? And—

00:18:08 Biz Host

Turns out they weren't, according to your book!

*[Deesha laughs.]*

00:18:12 Deesha Guest

They were getting all kind of touched! *[Laughs.]* Well and that's the thing! So, y'know, they're very careful. Y'know, "I don't wanna cause myself to stumble" so they avoid men and they avoid certain situations. But who are they with all the time? Other women! And so I imagined that there would be these two women who—in their earnest struggle to be chaste—as they've

been taught that they're supposed to be because they're not married—that they would, y'know, have this commitment but then suddenly it's like, "Wait a minute. Here you are. I'm looking at you; you looking at me!" *[Laughs.]* Y'know?

00:18:43 Biz Host Yeah! It almost doesn't really count. Because... we're both women. And so—like—going through the story and I keep thinking it's gonna go a certain way... and I'm like, "Oh no! One of these—Eula is literally just creating this... false world for herself. Thinking, y'know—'Well eventually I'll find a husband and you deserve a husband and we're gonna have—'" Right? And at the same time, these two women are very intimate with—very intimate with each other.

00:19:21 Deesha Guest Yeah! Once a year.

00:19:22 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz and Deesha:** Once a year.

00:19:23 Biz Host I know! Yes. But like—it is—again—such a good introduction into these stories. And I gotta imagine when you started and you're thinking, y'know, through themes—there are a lotta different ways you could go about dealing with what "secret" means or whatever. And I know I'm dumbing it down by saying "secret, secret, secret." But sex is a through line throughout the whole thing. Which I think is actually really good, because you're right! This is—what do they do? Y'know? *[Laughs.]*

00:19:57 Deesha Guest And it's because the church is obsessed with sex and specifically with women and sex and women's sexual agency and women's reproduction and all of this. And somebody asked me, like, "Why sex?" And I said, "Well, because of the church!" Y'know? This is—you can't write about women and the church and not write about sex. Because there's this fixation on controlling us and controlling our sex lives and our sexual freedom. And that's why, y'know, it was just very natural. It was a very natural topic. But then also the church specifically tries to control people around sex with binaries. You are this or you're that. Y'know, you're going to heaven or you're going to hell. And good/bad and y'know the whore/Madonna. All of these things. And we know that many of us don't live binary lives. And so you've got instant conflict. The minute you give human beings a binary, there's the conflict of trying to fit when you don't fit. And then trying to hide it or not hide it. When you get free of the binary, that's a story. So there's just so much potential. Y'know. And so other stories, though, had different origins. Like the story Jael, there's a story in the Bible about a woman named Jael and years ago I read that story somewhere and... my mind was blown by how much violence there was! I know there's a lot of violence in the Bible, but I had never read such a violent Biblical story that featured a woman killing someone. And she nails this guy's head to the floor.

00:21:30 Biz Host Fucking Medea. All over it.

00:21:32 Deesha Guest And I was like—

*[Biz laughs.]*

Yeah! And I was like, "That's personal." Y'know? So I saved that story—that Bible story—and I was like, "I don't know what I'm gonna do." And then I start—sometimes the way I develop ideas is like, "What if?" Right? So I was like, "What if somebody gave a kid that name? Why would you do that? Who would do that? And what if she was a fourteen-year-old girl? And what implications would

this name have for her?" 'Cause I think names are powerful. And y'know, who was it that named her? Okay, it was this great-grandmother and it was a part of a tradition. Well, why is she—she lives with her great-grandmother. Well why does she live with her great-grandmother? Where's her mother? And then how do we—what's going on with them? And I got the idea that the great-grandmother's reading the diary. And I remembered that that was something that I grew up hearing—if you go looking for something, you're going to find it. And that's how we started with Granny's voice and, y'know, I was just turning the mattress like I do, y'know?  
*[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

And there was the diary just right there when I turned the mattress! But you know what, you kept coming back to that diary, though. You weren't turning the mattress every day, Granny. So y'know, so we have Granny and she's fretting over, y'know, this child who has gone astray. So then I thought, well, we need to hear from Jael and what is she saying in this journal that's got Granny so up in arms? Well—

*[Biz laughs.]*

—she thinks that the pastor's wife is fine and has a fat ass. And like—*[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:23:01 Biz Host  
00:23:02 Deesha Guest

Y'know?  
It's so good!  
And looks like Thelma on *Good Times*.

*[Both laugh riotously.]*

00:23:13 Biz Host

So she's crushing! And then it was just fun from there. It was like, "Now I got a story." Y'know. But it's great. And there—like—that one is really... fun and then you've got the ones where—what is it, "Not-Daniel"? Where it's—that's another situation where I can—y'know, the premise is basically, you're—what do adults do who don't really know each other except for the fact that they are both at hospice with their dying parent. Right? Like, how do they release this stuff? I loved that story—

00:23:44 Deesha Guest  
00:23:45 Biz Host

Thank you!  
—too! And I just—I think what was great is that... each situation is so not binary. And each situation... calls for the thing that sometimes the stereotype of church does not do, which is understanding all things going into it. A larger picture. Because any of these little bits of the story could spark these reactions and these actions and these chains of choices. And here's a question, though. I need—I'm wondering as I'm listening—I mean, as I'm reading the book—I'm wondering—I don't know what your relationship with the church is.

00:24:30 Deesha Guest

Mm-hm.



00:24:31	Biz	Host	But it does feel like this whole book is a secret. Like I feel like I need to keep it secret! <i>[Laughs.]</i> This is a very—like—I would assume a character in this book would not be happy with this book. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:24:45	Deesha	Guest	Yeah. Right. So y'know, but I've been surprised at how many church ladies have reached out to tell me that they love it! I've done a number of book clubs with, y'know, some of the members are church women. I've done a book club with all Black women pastors who love the book. I've had people—older Black women, who I was really surprised were into it. And people were doing things like—they're like, "I sent my aunt—my holy-roller aunt—your book! And she texted me and was like, 'What is this? I just read the first!'"
00:25:20	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<i>[Biz laughs.]</i> <b>Deesha:</b> 'Cause "Eula"—
00:25:24	Deesha	Guest	<b>Biz:</b> That's great. "Eula." <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:25:26	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	But they keep reading, y'know? <b>Biz:</b> Because it's good!
00:25:29	Deesha	Guest	<b>Deesha:</b> They keep reading because we've all— We can all relate to some part of it. But for me, yes. I—y'know, I grew up in the church. I don't have what some people call church hurt? Where—like, the teachings of the church were very confusing to me and they were very limiting in many ways and there were a lot of things that over my adulthood that I have unlearned, but, y'know, for others, y'know, the church has done a lot of harm. And y'know, the book explores some of that. And so I'm always happy when I hear from readers who tell me that these stories reflected some of their experiences and some of the church hurt that they've had. And y'know, for people who've walked away from the church they feel very validated. And then also people who remain in the church, the book sort of gave them an occasion to start what hopefully can be healing conversations about how the church needs to change and make amends.
00:26:27	Biz	Host	Yeah. I mean—that—again, that you even can write these stories. Right? That shows that there's such a need for people to stop feeling like there's an expectation—like, an unrealistic expectation. I mean, 'cause that's not just in the church. That's <u>everywhere</u> .
00:26:43	Deesha	Guest	Y'know, you make a good point when you say it's everywhere. Because I did—I was part of a book club discussion and there was one woman who I could tell was clearly not feeling the book, which is fine. And her question for me—she said, y'know, "Do you consider yourself to be inside or outside of the church? And if you are outside of the church, has anyone questioned your right to write about this?" And I said, "Well, I am outside of the church. I have not gone to church for—at this point—fifteen years." I stopped going when I was around 35. And I said, "But for those 35 years before, I was in the church." I said, "So I think that is part of what gives me the right." I said, "But also—the harm and the good that the church does... doesn't stay within the church. It comes out and affects <u>all</u> of us. So everybody then has a right to critique the church."
00:27:39	Biz	Host	Yeah. You can fill "church" in with a number of different things. Y'know? And like— <i>[Laughs.]</i> And you can also go back and say, "It's not just the church who has been—for a very long time—trying to control and... state what the rights are for women and their

bodies.” *[Laughs.]* So—but I like it all set in the church ‘cause I like that little old ladies doing their own thing!

*[Deesha laughs.]*

00:28:14 Deesha Guest  
Anyway. Was there a story in here that you struggled with writing? Or was there one—and/or—was there one that you were like, “Done! I know it!” Possibly “Eula.” *[Laughs.]*  
Yeah. The one that I just—I feel—I felt good about as I was writing it and just it made me feel warm and fuzzy was “How to Make Love to a Physicist.” Like, I was so happy that they got to be happy and it was just fun to write. There’s a lot of sensual detail—not just sexual, but all of the senses are engaged in that story and I enjoyed that. And it felt right. Y’know. When I finished it. The one that to this day I still sometimes go, “Yeah... I’m not so sure” was “When Eddie Levert Comes.” I felt like—is this a story? Am I sure it’s a story? What’s it about? I don’t know. *[Laughs.]* Y’know? I struggled to—I knew I kinda had an idea how I wanted it to end? But I didn’t know quite how to get there for a while and I wasn’t sure that I had enough stuff. That there was enough conflict. That enough happened in the story. It’s a really quiet story. And it’s just like quiet people. Like, I’m always like, “What are you thinking? What do you want? Are you okay?” Y’know? So like—with a quiet story it’s the same thing. Like, “Are you okay? Are you sure? Is it alright?” So that’s the one I kind of feel the least confident about.

00:29:32 Biz Host  
*[Biz laughs.]*  
That’s one of the ones that I was reading and thinking, “Oh, this poor daughter.” This—part of that story is just... how... powerful not being seen is? And... this mother sees everybody but her daughter. Who is the only one taking care of her. And that, to me, I just thought—I assumed that that is very relatable for a lot of people. To varying degrees. And it’s a quieter story but like—

00:30:08 Deesha Guest  
Yeah. Well—I’ve heard or read somewhere years ago that women are some of the fiercest guardians of the patriarchy. Y’know. And so in this story—as you know—a daughter’s taking care of her mother. But y’know, her mother is convinced that singer Eddie Levert is coming any day now to get her. She’s excited when her son comes to see her. And then even Tony, the boyfriend—the daughter’s boyfriend or guy—y’know, her friend-with-benefits—when she talks and is chatty with him. So even in her dementia, that hard-wiring towards men. Like, y’know, mama loves the men! And some of that came from my experience with my great-grandmother, who had Alzheimer’s. And she lived with us for a while when I was in college. So I wasn’t there full-time. But there was a point where there were four generations of us in the house. My great-grandmother, my grandmother, my mother, and me. And she wasn’t quite sure who any of us were. But when I would bring—like, I brought home the guy that I ended up marrying—my co-parent—and she was like—she was so excited. And she was like, “I know you! I remember you from Cordele, Georgia. And he has never been to Cordele, Georgia. But she just perked right up! Y’know?”

*[Biz laughs.]*

She also said she—‘cause we’d watch television and she’d see Bill Cosby and she’d go, “He’s from Cordele, Georgia.” Everybody’s from Cordele, Georgia.

00:31:35 Biz Host Everybody’s from Cordele, Georgia.  
00:31:36 Deesha Guest But they were all men! *[Laughs.]* All men. And so y’know, it’s just that—y’know. And the frustration the daughter must have felt. That every man—including Eddie Levert—who doesn’t even know this woman exists!

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:31:57 Biz Host She’s—her mother’s thinking about these guys but she’s the one that’s doing the labor. And isn’t that how it goes?  
Yeah. Well but—y’know. Is there—let’s discuss! Is there not a way to support the patriarchy by staying in that role? Right? Of not demanding the men to... y’know...

00:32:10 Deesha Guest Help out!  
00:32:11 Biz Host Help out?  
00:32:12 Deesha Guest Like, she tries that with her brother!  
00:32:13 Biz Host She does. She does. But it’s like... y’know. Still... easy for them to, like, “Please do it?” “Nope!”

*[Both laugh.]*

00:32:35 Deesha Guest Let’s talk other things in this journey of... writing. Do you have a writing mantra? Do you have, like... something that helps you work?  
I think it’s—yeah. Gosh. There’s a lot. But rewriting is writing. Y’know. Learning to embrace revision. And that’s one of the things that I find was an early mistake I made as a newbie writer and that a lot of newbie writers make, is that we want validation so much and validation through getting published and some great writer telling us that our writing is good. That we are focused on the wrong things. Y’know. And not the work of writing. And just revising and polishing and experimenting and trying something else. It just—I mean, writing is work! Y’know? It is work. And it takes time, but it’s worth it when you invest in that time. And y’know, I try to still keep learning as a writer. Y’know. Learning from other writers. I try to read a lot, too. When I’ve had—y’know, looked at other people’s writing under different circumstances, I can tell you a writer who doesn’t read. Juts like, “Boom.” I can immediately tell who doesn’t read. And y’know. So just thinking of yourself as always learning. Still having things to learn. Not at some point you have arrived. Knowing that we all write drafts that we don’t want to see the light of day!

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:34:23 Biz Host Y’know? And that you have to be willing to be messy. I don’t write with outlines, for example. They work for some people. They don’t work for me. But to put the mess on the page and then shape it up. And then shape it up. And that you can do that and there’s so many rounds of shaping up that you can do. And nobody wants to hear that. *[Laughs.]* Y’know? Nobody wants to hear that it’s all of that. It’s like, “Dammit, I just wanna write the story!” Y’know?  
And it to brilliant as soon as it comes out!

00:34:26 Deesha Guest And it just—it just really... doesn't work like that. So.  
00:34:31 Biz Host Well that's a shame. *[Laughs.]*  
00:34:33 Deesha Guest Yeah. And so, y'know, I'm trying to be like Toni Morrison? 'Cause what Toni Morrison said was that the revising—the rewriting—is the part of writing that she's most—she was most enthusiastic about. And that's what I want. And that's how I feel most of the time! 'Cause the drafting—the getting it down and that stuff? That's torture. 'Cause it's like, "What is this going to be? I'm not sure!" Like, I've had the same page of notes for months now about this story and I have an idea of who this character is and I put her in a situation and she had a couple of things she had to say and... now what? I don't know. I have no idea. And I gotta keep just dumping things and asking her questions. Y'know. Sometimes I do a character sketch and as I start to find things out about the character—answer questions about the character—that gives me some ideas about how to—'cause basically what we do is create these characters and then thwart them.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:35:43 Biz Host Make them want something and then keep it from them over and over again until we finally let them have it or don't let them have it, ultimately.  
00:35:45 Deesha Guest Like parenting.  
Yeah! Y'know.

*[Biz laughs.]*

That's it. Y'know. Just like constantly trying to keep your kid from falling down—y'know. Well actually, it's sort of the opposite. It's like the anti-parent. You just keep letting them fall down the stairs over and over again. *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:36:00 Biz Host And then finally—  
00:36:02 Deesha Guest "I'll help you up."  
00:36:04 Biz Host Yeah. Exactly. So.  
Alright. Well you—so big reader. I really enjoy short stories, because—either short personal essays or short fiction stories. And especially with, y'know, younger children in the house. *[Laughs.]* Those are things I can really embrace.  
00:36:20 Deesha Guest Mm-hm.  
00:36:22 Biz Host Who else do you really like right now? Who have you found to really be enjoying?  
00:36:27 Deesha Guest Yeah! I'm trying to think. I—the nice thing about when your book gets a lot of awards, other people send you their books to read?

*[Biz laughs.]*

So I don't know if these will be out by the time this episode airs, but you can probably preorder them. There's one by—a collection of stories by Destiny Birdsong, who's a poet. And I love when poets write fiction. I love it. And so she has written a novel in three separate stories called *Nobody's Magic*. And they're Southern stories and one of the things that connects the three women—the

main characters in these stories—is that they all have albinism. And so—

00:37:11 Biz Host Oh, interesting!

00:37:12 Deesha Guest Y'know. So it's really kind of... the stories aren't about them having albinism, necessarily? I mean, their whole world's built around it. But that is a factor. Y'know. So these stories are just... just—she just draws you right into these worlds. And again, very Southern. So I'm always here for the Southern stories. So I just finished this collection called *Walking on Cowrie Shells* by Nana Nkweti? And most of the women characters and girls in these stories are Cameroonian or Cameroonian-American. And so y'know it's a blend of immigrants and American-born folks and human beings and supernatural folks and the stories are really funny. She's got some satire. She's got some young adult lit in there. She's got suspense. She's got sci-fi. Like, y'know. She does it all. I just came away from this collection like, "Is there anything that she can't do?" She's got—y'know, the elders in there and she's got Gen X. Or Gen Z. Not Gen X. That's us. Y'know, just the range, y'know. So it's like—y'know, my youngest daughter likes K-dramas and there are these characters that like K-dramas and anime and there's Comic Con in there. So she's got a lot of stuff going on, and it all comes together and there's all this nuance and just sensitivity and just really beautiful writing. And you'll be interested in this—there's a theme—there's some themes that run through a number of the stories around like motherhood and fertility? In really kind of unexpected ways. Right? So the first story in the collection is called "It Takes A Village, Some Say." And it's satire.

*[Biz laughs.]*

And she somehow brings together—you're gonna be like, "You are totally lying." She brings together findom—are you familiar with findom?

00:39:03 Biz Host What is findom?

00:39:05 Deesha Guest Financial domination? So it's like a submissive/domination thing? Sexual fetish?

00:39:10 Biz Host With finances? *[Laughs.]*

00:39:12 Deesha Guest Yeah. Well you—the submissive has to pay in gifts to the dom. And it's a fetish. She brings that together with international adoption. And like the shady business of international adoption. It works. I know it sounds crazy but it's hilarious. But also she's making some really important points and there's this white woman who adopts a Cameroonian—she and her husband adopt a Cameroonian girl. And she's very serious. And she says, "People think Bono and Bill Gates are helping the continent, but really it's us." *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:39:52 Biz Host I love it! I love it!

00:39:54 Deesha Guest *[Through laughter]* Oh my gosh!

00:39:56 Biz Host I... love it. Alright, Deesha. I—we're gonna have to wrap up, because I could talk forever with you about a whole bunch of stuff, too! I mean, like—we have to stop. But what I do wanna say is... good job!

00:40:11 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** I—this is so great! I, like... it's so great. This book is so exciting.

00:40:17	Biz	Host	<b>Deesha:</b> Thank you! Thanks! It's so good. Y'know. I—I love it when good people do good things—
00:40:23	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Deesha:</b> I do, too! Thank you!
00:40:26	Biz	Host	<b>Biz:</b> And the universe just unfolds itself for them. So I—y'know, writing a book ain't easy and getting it out there ain't easy and you... you and this book deserve all of the praise that you are receiving. And everybody knows where to get a book, but we're gonna link you up to where to get a book. And we'll link people up to those two stories as well to support other authors. And anything else you'd like us to let people know about. I can't wait for this to come on HBO. I'm gonna have to get a subscription—
00:40:59	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Deesha:</b> Oh, I'm so excited!
00:41:03	Biz	Host	<b>Biz:</b> —renewed. I can't—I mean, we're gonna have to have you back on to talk about that! 'Cause that's gotta be a whole other process that I would love to find out about.
00:41:07	Deesha	Guest	Yes. We're just getting started. We don't have the timeline yet, but I have my cowriter because I'm not an experienced screenwriter so I have to write with someone. And she's fantastic. And so... we—y'know, just made that partnership happen so we're formalizing that arrangement now. And then hopefully we'll get our marching orders in terms of a—y'know, I need a deadline. I need somebody to—y'know, I'm the Girl Scout. Tell me when my homework's due. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:41:32	Biz	Host	Yeah, exactly! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:41:34	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Deesha:</b> Or I'll take forever!
00:41:35	Biz	Host	<b>Biz:</b> I love it! Well I also would love to just play fantasy casting with you at some point in time. And just pull out the actors' names and just be like, "This is Eula! This is—" I don't know who Eula could be, though. I'm actually <i>[inaudible]</i> .  <i>[Deesha laughs.]</i>
00:41:53	Deesha	Guest	Alright, Deesha! Thank you so much for joining us and congratulations.
00:41:56	Biz	Host	Thank you. And you're welcome. Thanks for having me.
00:41:57	Music	Music	Absolutely! "Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.
00:42:14	Music	Promo	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> Cheerful ukulele with whistling plays in background.
00:42:15	Biz	Promo	<i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by Dipsea. Everyone needs an escape, but those can be hard to come by right now. Enter Dipsea! Let yourself get lost in a world where good things happen and where your pleasure is the only priority. True story. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I recently took a little trip and when I was on that trip, I had a hotel room all to myself. And you know what I did? I listened to Dipsea every night. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Dipsea is an audio app full of short, sexy stories designed to turn you on. And one of the things that I love the most is you can really set your preferences so that the stories you

get are really in your wheelhouse, as it were. But it's also very easy to try a story that's a little different. Woo! For listeners of the show, Dipsea is offering an extended 30-day free trial when you go to [DipseaStories.com/badmother](https://DipseaStories.com/badmother). That's 30 days of full access for free when you go to [D-I-P-S-E-A-Stories.com/badmother](https://D-I-P-S-E-A-Stories.com/badmother). [DipseaStories.com/badmother](https://DipseaStories.com/badmother).

00:43:38	Theresa	Host	<p><i>[Music fades out.]</i></p> <p>Hey, you know what it's time for! This week's genius and fails! This is the part of the show where we share our genius moment of the week, as well as our failures, and feel <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.</p>
00:43:58	Biz	Host	<p>Genius fail time. Theresa is still being a genius and hiding in the bathroom. I salute you, Theresa! I hope you've got wine in that bathroom. And now, it's time... for me to genius me.</p>
00:44:17	Clip	Clip	<p><i>[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]</i></p>
00:44:32	Biz	Host	<p><b>Biz:</b> Wow! Oh my God! Oh my <u>God!</u> I <u>saw</u> what you did! Oh my God! I'm paying <u>attention!</u> <u>Wow!</u> You, mom, are a <u>genius</u>. Oh my <u>God</u>, that's <u>fucking genius!</u></p> <p>Okay. The genius is... when the pandemic was starting—like, we hadn't been locked down yet. But my prepper mind went out and bought a shit-ton of cold medication in case we did get sick, 'cause I knew that cold medicine would at least help with some of the symptoms. And ta-daaa! It's been a year. Nothing has expired. But I reached under that sink, buddy, and I found my stash of children's Tylenol and mama's NyQuil. And it was a <i>[singing]</i> joyyy! <i>[Regular voice]</i> My prepping paranoia really paid off just this once.</p>
00:45:11	Caller	Caller	<p><i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i></p> <p>Oh, I have such a genius. I was preparing dinner and I wanted to eat some ice cream. But I didn't wanna share it with my children, because—one—there wasn't very much! There wasn't really enough to share. And two, my children shouldn't eat ice cream before dinner. Only me.</p> <p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i></p> <p>But the kids were also running around and they might see me, so I took the carton of ice cream and I put it in one half of the sink and then, when I was surreptitiously grabbing a bite as they walked by, they just thought I was washing dishes while I cooked!</p> <p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i></p> <p>And they didn't notice at all. And I got to eat my ice cream. It was pretty genius.</p>
00:45:55	Biz	Host	<p>You are like a genius factory. That is what you are. That is—<i>[Laughs.]</i> That just falls into that genius sweet spot of, like... maybe before you had kids you had found somebody telling you that story very kind of sad? <i>[Laughs.]</i> But post-kids, you're like, "Oh my god, that is a really great idea! You should write a book about something like that!" No, I think it's amazing. And it's a really good idea, and I 100% will be trying that. So thank you very much for your contribution to parenting. You are doing an amazing job. Failures!</p>

00:46:35 Clip Clip *[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]*

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

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

00:46:42 Biz Host **Biz:** *[Calmly]* You suck!  
Fail me, me. I'm pretty sure at some point in time I shared how great I was 'cause I'd created a chore chart? I dunno. I dunno, maybe I did. Maybe I didn't. But I did. I had created a chore chart. And the kids were doing it 'cause they wanted money, 'cause I pay for chores in this house. And they really wanted money and every week there was a chore. I mean, they were dumb. They were simple little chores, but it was something every day from setting the table to wiping down the bathroom to—y'know, just simple stuff. And while it's a real pain in the ass to remind them to do it, it's still—were less jobs for me to have to do.

And my fail is that it just fell apart so fast over the last, like, week and a half. Like, summer has just made—and especially with everybody being sick? Oh yeah. Not a single chore done. I didn't even remind people about the chores. I didn't even tell so it was just a full de-evolution of the chore chart. And I know that today's Friday. It's Friday. They're gonna ask for their pay. And I'm gonna be like, "I'm sorry. Did you do any chores?" And then there's gonna be a lot of screaming. And I don't really have anywhere to go, guys. I have to just sit here and take it. Like a big, wet sponge. *[Laughs.]* And I don't wanna do that, either! Can somebody do that chore for me?

00:48:12 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hey, y'all! I'm calling in a fail. It's like a small-scale fail, though. Really kind of a dumb one. I just pulled up to the store to run in and grab animal feed for all of our farm animals? And got distracted getting the toddler out of the car and running into the store and making sure everyone had masks on and all that and did all my shopping and, y'know, got a few extra things and spent longer than I should've in the store. And then was walking out after checking out and had a moment of panic because I couldn't find my keys. Like, anywhere. Nobody had them. Nobody could find them. Get all the way to the car—yeah! I just left the car running. And unlocked. And just sitting there, running away in the parking lot.

*[Biz laughs.]*

While I strolled around the farm store picking up crap that I didn't need. So... obviously I'm very tired and should have had more coffee before I left because I just let my car run in the parking lot in a busy town for like an hour. Cool. I'm gonna turn my car off when I get to the grocery store. That's how I'm gonna do better.

*[Biz laughs.]*

And you all are already doing a wonderful job. Bye!



00:49:34	Biz	Host	<p><i>[Child shouts "Bye!"]</i></p> <p>I guess the real question here is—did anybody see? Because... it is—I gotta tell you—as someone who has left my keys in the car? Who has left my keys, like, in the lock outside—like, the door. Left the keys in the door as if I went to lock it and just left it. The worst was the time—‘cause I’ve done it many times. Any—or like in the trunk or something? And each time I come back and I’m like, “Oh! Jesus! I can’t believe I did that!” But the worst was the time where my sister had come to visit me and we went out just prowling. Y’know. I was pretending like I was a person and we were going out shopping and looking at things and having lunch. And we came back and I—that was when—like, to the car that was in this parking garage. And that’s when I started looking for the keys and I couldn’t find them and we walked up and I was like, “Oh. There they are.” In the door of my car. And she was like, “Jesus Christ! I can’t believe you did that!” And I’m like, <i>[laughs feebly]</i>. And I just thought, “This is why people start worrying about other people.” So y’know. I knew I was alright. I was just a little tired, too. So I definitely see you, and I can wholeheartedly agree that it was a... fail. That you are failing at going out in the world. Or really the real fail is thinking that you are just a normal people who can do things anymore. Ha, ha!</p>
00:51:09	Music	Music	<p>“Mom Song” by Adira Amram. Mellow piano music with lyrics.</p> <p>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.</p>
00:51:33	Music	Promo	<p><i>[Music fades out.]</i></p> <p>Mellow synth music plays in background.</p>
00:51:34	Biz	Promo	<p><i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by Hello Fresh. Skip trips to the grocery store and count on Hello Fresh to make home cooking easy, fun, and affordable. We have thoroughly enjoyed our Hello Fresh deliveries. They deliver high-quality, pre-portioned ingredients so you can make meals that are delicious and nutritious and you don’t have to run around with extra parts or pieces that you didn’t need. And you know who also has been enjoying Hello Fresh? My parents! My parents are older. And it is a little harder to get to the grocery store and to plan meals and to make things the way they used to. And they have <u>really</u> enjoyed Hello Fresh twice a week. They make solid meals. And I just am so thankful that this service is available. So go to <a href="https://HelloFresh.com/badmother14">HelloFresh.com/badmother14</a> and use code “badmother14” for up to 14 free meals, plus free shipping! That takes care of summer, doesn’t it? That’s <a href="https://HelloFresh.com/badmother14">HelloFresh.com/badmother14</a>, and code “badmother14” for up to 14 free meals.</p>
00:52:53	Promo	Clip	<p><i>[Music fades.]</i></p> <p><b>Music:</b> “Baby You Change Your Mind” by Nouvellas.</p> <p><b>Raleigh Smirl:</b> Hello! I’m Raleigh Smirl.</p> <p><b>Sydnee McElroy:</b> I’m Sydnee McElroy.</p> <p><b>Taylor Smirl:</b> And I’m Taylor Smirl.</p>

**Raleigh:** And we host Still Buffering, a cross-generational guide to the culture that made us.

**Sydnee:** Every week, we share media that made us who we are. Things like *Archie* comics!

**Taylor:** Sailor Moon.

**Raleigh:** And lots of Taylor Swift.

**Taylor:** And now that Raleigh's an adult, it comes with 100% more butts.

**Raleigh:** And now I am totally comfortable with it.

**Sydnee:** So, check out new episodes of Still Buffering every Thursday on [MaximumFun.org](https://MaximumFun.org).

**Taylor:** Butts, butts, butts. Join in, Raleigh. Butts, butts, butts, butts.

**Raleigh:** Butts, butts, butts, butts, butts.

**Sydnee:** Butts, butts, butts, butts, butts.

*[Raleigh laughs and the music fades out.]*

**Music:** Light, rhythmic keyboard over drums plays in background.

**Tre'vell Anderson:** Hey there, beautiful people! Did you hear that good, good news?

**Jarrett Hill:** Something about the baby Jesus?

**Tre'vell:** Mmmm! He's coming back! *[Laughs.]*

**Jarrett:** Or—do you mean the fact that Apple Podcasts has named *FANTI* one of the best shows of 2020?

**Tre'vell:** I mean, we already knew that we was hot stuff, but a little external validation never hurts. Okay?

**Jarrett:** *[Through laughter]* Hosted by me, writer and journalist Jarrett Hill.

**Tre'vell:** And me, the ebony enchantress myself—

*[Jarrett laughs.]*

**Tre'vell:** —Tre'vell Anderson.

**Jarrett:** *FANTI* is your home for complex conversations about the grey areas in our lives; the people, places, and things we're huge fans of but got some anti feelings toward.

00:53:34    Promo    Clip

**Tre'vell:** You name it, we *FANTI* it. Nobody's off-limits.

**Jarrett:** Check us out every Thursday on [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) or wherever you get your slay-worthy audio.

00:54:22 Biz Host *[Music ends.]*  
Alright, everyone. Let's settle down. And settle in. For a mom having a breakdown.  
00:54:30 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hi, guys. This is a rant-slash-fail. *[Sighs.]* My five-year-old, he told me the other day that he wanted to grow up and do what I did and be a nothing? And already I've been second-guessing every decision that I've made in my life up to this point. I'm 37 and I feel like I'm going through a midlife crisis. *[Sighs.]* Because I never imagined to have four kids. I have four boys. And it's—he is the jerkiest of them all. He's—

*[Biz laughs.]*

And then the next week he referred to me as, "Hey, person who makes the food."

*[Biz gasps.]*

And I just... kids are assholes. So I just wanted to say that you guys—your show has been so validating. I've had so many depressing thoughts over the last week and a half because he—this particular kid—is just being a total jerk. So thank you for letting me listen, and talking about so many varieties of things. And I've just been so grateful to have stumbled upon your show. Have a great day! Thanks.

00:55:49 Biz Host Okay, first of all—you're doing an amazing job. You really are. You are not doing nothing? *[Laughs.]* I can guarantee you you are not doing nothing! You have four children in your house! And that's a lot of children in your house. And I don't even know what all the ages are. I just know that one of 'em's five and five is very interesting. Interesting. With its own challenges. The five. Okay. There's two types of things kids say to you. One, when they say stuff without knowing that it's hurtful. Right? Like the—I can totally see the "I wanna grow up to be just like you and do nothing!" I can understand that being the kind of thing *[through laughter]* coming out where they didn't mean it in a mean way. But as an adult we take it in and we process it and we're like, "Oh, god, I am nothing!" Okay. That's camp A. Camp B is sometimes kids are just raging jerks! And they do say something that they know is not nice! And you feel bad. So that's great. Camp A and Camp B both end in the same thing—feeling bad. So I just really see you.

And there's something like... perversely fucked up when your feelings get hurt by your kid. Because your logical brain knows that your kids, they're—this is developmental. Every kid's different. It's really confusing when you've got multiple kids in your house and one of 'em behaves one way and the other one behaves the other way. And you're like, "No, no, no. How come this one is being really nice and you're not being nice. You're being really awful." And then

00:58:20

Biz

Host

you're like—it's real easy to forget that they're just totally different people and you've been giving them both the same amount of love and support that still isn't always going to affect how they behave all the time? That's a disappointing one. I'm really sorry about that. But I still feel bad. I can't stand it. I'm like, "I'm so nice to you guys! Why do you guys—A—always think that I'm gonna be mad and yell at you? And why won't you share with me? You guys all just come up and wanna lick my ice cream cone and if I want like a Skittle from your giant bag of Skittles, you're like, 'No!'" *[Laughs.]* As if I'm a monster who's gonna just down the whole thing in my mouth. And then there's the whole spiral of just like, "Well, that's it. This is somehow my fault. I've raised them to be crazy. I've raised them to have no respect for me." That's 100% sure. And—oh! And they're probably going to behave this way to every person they've ever met. It was funny—I was talking to my mama the other day and she was like, "Y'know? I really didn't care how horrible you guys were to me, as long as you went out in the world and were good to others." And I was like, "God, that's depressing!" That is— *[Laughs.]* "I didn't wanna be awful to you!" I'm sure I was, but like—y'know? I say that because it is sort of all of our fates when we let kids into our house. And when you're tired? And burned out... and empty and you're not having a chance to sort of... refill, y'know, your bucket, as it were, for yourself—it makes it hard to hear when your kid's a jerk.

And this is something I hate to admit—it's really hard to do anything about it sometimes. 'Cause you're fucking really tired. And you're like, y'know, "I could easily—" There've been lots of times I've been like, "Do not speak to me that way. That is not acceptable. We will not have that in this house." Then they say something again and I'm like, "What did I say? There will be no TV for you. Oh, I'm just so tired. I don't think I can actually—that just means you're gonna wanna talk to me this whole time and I don't wanna talk to you. 'Cause I'm still mad at the thing you said. Wouldn't it just be easy if you just went and watched television right now?" *[Laughs.]*

So I hear you. I see you. You are not alone. You are not nothing. You are amazing. And you are doing a really, really good job. Everybody? You are also doing an amazing job. It's so funny, talking with Deesha and after having read her book and just all the things we've listened to together on this show over the years—it's still so true that we sometimes feel we have to live our lives for others or we need to come across a certain way. Or... we're not always really aware of what's happening in someone else's house based on, y'know, how we interact with them outside of their house. And I just feel like that is almost everything that is parenting. So... I see you. You're doing a good job. You actually get to do this for yourself. *[Laughs.]* Not for others. Your instincts are right. Listen to them. It's not a competition. No one is doing it at you. And most importantly, you are not alone. You are doing an amazing job. I will talk to you next week. Bye!!!!

01:01:44

Music

Music

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

I got the lowdown momma blues  
Got the the lowdown momma blues  
Gots the lowdown momma blues

The lowdown momma blues.  
Gots the lowdown momma blues  
Got the lowdown momma blues  
You know that's right.

01:02:09	Biz	Host	<i>[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]</i> 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 <a href="http://MaximumFun.org/onebadmother">MaximumFun.org/onebadmother</a> . For information about live shows, our book and press, please check out <a href="http://OneBadMotherPodcast.com">OneBadMotherPodcast.com</a> . <i>One Bad Mother</i> is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to <a href="http://MaximumFun.org/donate">MaximumFun.org/donate</a> .
01:02:37	Theresa	Host	
01:03:01	Music	Transition	<i>[Music continues for a while before fading out.]</i> A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:03:02	Speaker 1	Guest	<a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> .
01:03:03	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:03:04	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:03:05	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.