

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.
00:00:20	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> —what does it mean to be a young adult, besides knowing everything? We talk to Young Adult author Martin Wilson about LGBTQ books and authors for the middle-school set. Plus, Biz lets it rip... again!
00:00:41	Crosstalk Caller	Crosstalk Caller	Biz and caller: Wooooo!
00:00:45			I'm calling to woo with you and check in. Because I don't think this belongs as either a genius or a fail. In fact, maybe it's a Jumbotron. Because I would like to give a big shoutout to my butt for collecting all of the hair that falls out of my head when I take a shower. It gives me more time that I'm not cleaning my drain and it clumps it all together and I'm not sure what's happening because I'm not really postpartum anymore, unless you count three years.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			And my hair's just falling out and clumping. And every single time I get out of the shower, I need to check for the clump that's stuck in my butt.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:01:47	Biz	Host	And so I literally tell no one about this. Because it's so weird. But probably it happens to a lot of people. So I thought I would just give a shoutout to my butt. So thank you for this hotline. You guys are doing such a great job, and I love the show. Thanks. Wow. That... may be one of my favorite check-ins, ever. And it just falls so squarely in that sweet spot of, "Yeah! Who are you gonna tell about this? Who would you <u>ever</u> bring this up to?" Like... it's a weird thing to share. And it's the <u>perfect</u> thing to share on this show. I would like to first say that your butt is doing an excellent job. This is weird. I don't know how your butt is collecting that hair, but I guarantee you—you are not alone. I guarantee you. 'Cause get over to the Facebook group 'cause I am sure that within minutes of this airing there will be a thread about other body places that gather hair where it falls, as it were. I really love this. So much. And your hair—I am so sorry about the hair falling out. It is weird, isn't it? I am sure you are not the only—mine fell out for a good... year? Year and a half, maybe? Maybe longer? And then, y'know, the stress of having children under three in my house, that didn't do a lot for my hair, either. But yeah. I just think you're doing an amazing job. Your butt's doing an amazing job. And this whole community is doing an amazing job, because this is where we come for the honesty, guys. This is where it comes to be shared. If you're scared of saying things 'cause no one's going to, like, look at

you the same ever again? This is where you come to share it. Because we will just keep looking at you. *[Laughs.]* You're doing a great job. Thank you for checking in.

Speaking of thank-you's... *[singing]* da-da, da-da, da-da-da-da-duh-duh! *[Regular voice]* Gabe, we need to find some sort of intense thank-you music. That's like, "It's time for thank-you's!" *[Mimics percussion with strong, driving beat.]* I don't know. But let's ponder on that, 'cause that could be a lot of fun.

00:03:50 Music Music

Heavy electric guitar and driving percussion overlaid with "Ohh, oh-oh, oh-oh" and "Hey-ey-ey-ey-ey" lyrics.

00:04:04 Biz Host

Thank you, everyone in the medical profession. I'm so sorry that we just keep fucking things up and now the numbers are rising again. I'm really... y'know, we can't have anything nice. Haven't we proven that time and time again? So thank you for continuing to... not run away? *[Laughs.]* It's really nice. And that is also to everyone who works in the medical profession, not just the amazing doctors and nurses and RNs and EMTs but all the people who make doctors' offices and hospitals and other medical facilities, y'know, function and be clean. You're amazing. A special shoutout to hospice care workers. I just want you to know that I see you and the care that hospice can provide to families is... really... remarkable. And I know that this probably has been a unfortunately busy time this last year. And I just want you to know that I see you.

Librarians, it's summer. *[Singing]* Summer reading! *[Regular voice]* Thank you for being open again and recommending books and just being awesome. Transportation workers? Thank you. Because, y'know, we're returning to the world. And even before we started returning to the world, people still had to get around. And you showed up to your job and you did it. And... I just hope—even on a non-pandemic day—that people who drive us places and get us from A to B and make sure that's possible deserve a ton of respect and thank-you's. So thank you. Sanitation workers? *[Singing]* Thank youuuu! *[Regular voice]* You guys have made this bearable on many levels. Thank you. Thank you for that. IT people. I'm not sure we've really shouted out specifically to IT, but the past year has relied heavily on our computers and our devices and knowing that our office equipment's gonna work and like Zooms and video conferences and—blargh! And you guys probably have received a lot of really dumb calls. So I—thank you for your patience. Thank you for helping everything run.

Teachers, I love you. School staff, I love you. I really hope you're having an amazing summer break 'cause we're all coming back. So that—and it's gonna be weird. So thank you. And then finally, vaccines. Vaccines—the people who made vaccines and the people who poke you and the people who are gonna sign up to go door-to-door and reach out to people who have a hard time accessing information and vaccines. Thank you. If you have not gotten vaccinated, and there is not a medical reason for you to not get vaccinated, go get vaccinated. If you have questions about vaccinations—*[Laughs.]* The internet is full of answers! Well, okay. Not all part of the—let's be really clear. Go to the CDC. Call your doctor. Ask a pharmacy. Like, check reliable, fact-based sources for the benefits or potential risks of a vaccine. But I will tell you right

now—the vaccine is doing wonders. So let’s all go out and get those vaccines.

00:07:42 Biz Host Now onto me and my little check-in. Guys, we’re still letting it rip here in the house. If you don’t know what I’m talking about, I’m talking about Beyblades. I don’t know why I am encouraging the—*[Laughs.]* The Beyblading as much as I am. I think I might kind of like them. But I also like the idea of going onto Craigslist and other websites and searching for people who are ready to get rid of their very used Beyblades. We’re not looking for perfection. I’m looking for somebody who—for twenty bucks—wants to pass me a giant bag *[through laughter]* of Beyblades. So last week I found a woman who was doing that, and they were close by, so I went and got them. And it like—it was filled with like first-gen Beyblades, guys. Who have I become? I don’t—*[Laughs.]* This is like the weirdest conversation I’ve had in a long time. But it had like first-generation—the metal fusion Beys and then there was some sort of like Shogun Beyblades. And then Bey Warriors, which work... guys, Beyblades are tops. They’re spinning tops. That’s what they are. And you battle with them. ‘K?

But they had these called Bey Warriors and it was like a top that had a monster guy on it. And I was like, there’s no way that’s gonna stay standing. It did! It did. And they are really kind of fun. But my issue—what I’m taking issue with right now—is I just want to know what types of Beyblades we’ve acquired. And we like to mix up all the Beyblades and try out different combinations of tops and bottoms and metals and tips and all this stuff. And I just want a resource where I can then look at these parts and say, “Oh, this goes with this” or “this is, y’know, Dragonoid Z” or something. Right? Like... Version 2. Whatever. I just want to know what they’re called. And there is no fucking website or book that I can find in which I can search by image. Where I can just pull up images and then go from there. Lego? Lego kills it. I’ve got—we’ve got Lego encyclopedias for *Star Wars* or Ninjago Lego encyclopedias. And you open up the book and it’s like the name of every character with their picture! So you could go through and be like, “Oh, I have this one! And these are its parts!” Beyblades, you’ve been out since 1999. There should be a book that I can easily find!

Speaking of reading—*[Laughs.]* I think that’s gonna tie in nicely as we continue looking at summer reading in the summer on *One Bad Mother*, because we are gonna be talking to Martin Wilson, who is an author of Young Adult novels about the best LGBTQ books and authors for young adults.

00:10:43 Music Music Banjo strums; cheerful banjo music continues through dialogue.

00:10:44 Theresa Host Please—take a moment to remember: If you’re friends of the hosts of *One Bad Mother*, you should assume that when we talk about other moms, we’re talking about you.

00:10:51 Biz Host If you are married to the host of *One Bad Mother*, we definitely are talking about you.

00:10:55 Theresa Host Nothing we say constitutes professional parenting advice.

00:10:58 Biz Host Biz and Theresa’s children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.

00:11:02 Theresa Host Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

[Banjo music fades out.]

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

00:11:07 Biz Host I am so excited to be welcoming Martin Wilson onto *One Bad Mother*. Martin Wilson was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He received a BA from Vanderbilt University and an MFA from the University of Florida. His debut novel, *What They Always Tell Us*, won the Alabama Author Award for Best Young Adult Book and was a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award. His second novel, *We Now Return to Regular Life*, was also a finalist for a Lambda Literary Award. He lives in New York City where he works as a publicist in book publishing. And this fall he is going to teach a course at Mount Holyoke University! And he is an old friend of mine from Tuscaloosa, Alabama Central High!

00:11:55 Crosstalk Crosstalk [Martin whoops.]
Biz: Welcome!

00:11:56 Martin Wilson Guest **Martin:** Oh my god. It's so good to be here!

[Biz laughs.]

00:12:01 Biz Host Long time, no see!
We'll just go ahead and let you share the story. Do you wanna share the story?

00:12:06 Martin Guest About how you made me gay?

00:12:08 Biz Host [Laughs.] See? I knew it! Alright. Yes.

00:12:10 Martin Guest That's our thing, isn't it?

00:12:12 Biz Host That's our thing, apparently. Is I made Martin—as well as a number of other guys—gay.

00:12:16 Martin Guest I mean—[Laughs.]

00:12:17 Biz Host If you've got a talent, use it!

00:12:19 Martin Guest You were like a one bright spot of those years.

[Biz laughs.]

00:12:31 Biz Host It's pretty crazy that I write about those years and I remember—I realize I remember very little, compared to your sister Helen remembers every detail.
Yeah. I'm with you. I don't remember a lot. But I remember you picking me up from that dance.

00:12:38 Martin Guest Oh my god. Was I in tenth grade, you were a freshman?

00:12:40 Biz Host Yeah. Probably.

00:12:41 Martin Guest Yeah. Was it homecoming? Yeah, it was homecoming.

00:12:44 Biz Host Who knows! [Laughs.]

00:12:46 Martin Guest You did not make me gay, but that's a fun story.

00:12:48 Biz Host I know.

[Martin laughs.]

00:12:54 Crosstalk Crosstalk I know. Well it was the story that every time we would run into each other at one of Helen Michelle's parties—
Martin: That was our story.
Biz: If a cocktail or two had been had—

00:12:57	Biz	Host	<p><i>[Martin laughs.]</i></p> <p>It was “Here comes Elizabeth, the girl who made me gay.” I feel like that should be like a ukulele song. <i>[Singing]</i> “Oh, the girl who made me gay! <i>[Regular voice]</i> I wanna start with <u>your</u> work before we get into talking about young adults as like a genre. Your first book—as well as your second—both have characters who are gay and are sort of... wrestling with not being able to tell or being in situations. And Helen Michelle and I joke but it’s not much of a joke that like... we didn’t know anybody gay. Which is a lie! We knew plenty of people who were gay. Y’know. In the ‘80s in the very, very Deep South. What was it like when you started writing about this? And connecting your own past experiences?”</p>
00:13:48	Martin	Guest	<p>It was interesting ‘cause in some ways my characters are a little more... self-aware than I was? Y’know, I think that era—it was such a weird... like, we knew certain people—famous people—were gay but we didn’t say that? And we didn’t acknowledge it? But it was kinda like... you just kinda knew with it? You know what I’m saying? Like Boy George or George Michael or that sort of thing. So my characters are a little more self-aware than I was because I think I never really saw any gay person in the world that I could relate to. And that’s not to disparage anyone who was openly gay; I just—y’know, I couldn’t identify with anyone I knew who was gay. And so I—for a long time I thought, “I can’t be gay.” Even though I knew from a very young age that I was just like, “I’m never gonna get married. I don’t want kids.” And not that you—gay people can have kids now, but back then I was just like, “I don’t feel this desire to have this kind of... normal life. So-called ‘normal life.’” So it took me until college, really. And when I finally realized it it was just such a relief.</p> <p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i></p> <p>And I just felt calm. Now I can admit that I liked ABBA! <i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:15:05	Biz	Host	<p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i></p> <p>And other men! <i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:15:06	Martin	Guest	<p>Other men! I mean, I didn’t really come out right away. It was like an inner peace. But I stopped the whole charade of watching <i>Friends</i> saying how hot Jennifer Aniston was. Or, y’know, just typical bullshit guy talk. And y’know, it was like about a year in college that I had to be in the closet and then I moved to Austin and came out. And so going back and writing about it—my characters don’t really—y’know, they’re not out of the closet? But they have people in the first book—of course he has a boyfriend. And this new book I’m working on is kind of a weird sequel to the first book. But it’s almost like I’m writing even more of a fantasy because it’s about a character who finds a community of other gay—secretly-gay teens. And I kinda wanna just to sort of rewrite gay kids back into those stories. It’s set in 1990 and into 1991 and y’know I try to make it as realistic as possible, but in some ways it’s a wish fulfillment. Like, I wish I had these two gay friends in Central. And...</p>
00:16:11	Biz	Host	<p>Yeah. I remember in my class, y’know, one of my dearest friends—who <u>is</u> openly gay now—but I can remember him coming over to my house and being so upset because there was a rumor going</p>

around that he and this other boy had been seen kissing or doing something intimate in the locker room. Right?

00:16:33 Martin Guest Oh gosh.
00:16:34 Biz Host I know! And of course it just was going everywhere. “You’re gay! You’re gay!” And I remember just being like—*[Laughs.]* ‘Cause at the time, again, there was no real language as much for it. I mean, am I supposed to say, “You’re not gay!” But what am I supposed to... say? But that period—that was ‘91. And that period of time, there may have been gay friends to be had. But just people... it was treated as if it wasn’t even an option. Like, even a thing. And you’re right. You didn’t have role models. There was no teacher who was out. There was no—like, my kids grow up with kids in their classes with two moms and two dads and like openly gay teachers and trans, y’know, friends. And it’s like... wonderful! But also shockingly different than what we grew up with.

00:17:28 Martin Guest And people sort of—I think now it’s so common, but you can roll your eyes, like, “representation matters!” But it really does. And we didn’t have representation. The gay characters in movies—and there were no trans characters. I mean, maybe there were but they were even more like... y’know, out there than gay characters. But the gay characters were like jokes! Y’know?

00:17:49 Biz Host Yeah! Well right! I always think of Anthony from *Designing Women* who they said wasn’t gay. And he even had a girlfriend. But I’m like, that man...

00:17:56 Martin Guest I’m like, “Please, girl!”
00:17:58 Biz Host I know!

[Both laugh.]

00:18:01 Martin Guest You are so gay! Y’know—
00:18:02 Biz Host He was so gay.
He was so gay. And like... but you’re right. Even on TV, it was... never—the closest we had to somebody out was Jack Tripper on *Three’s Company*. And he wasn’t even gay. He was—it was like... it was cool to pretend you were gay so you could be around hot chicks. *[Laughs.]*

00:18:22 Martin Guest Right. Such times. Not to mention this book that has not been published yet—or maybe will never be published, who knows—but I did kind of a lot of weird research for it. And part of that entailed looking at Tuscaloosa news. Like, you can look at Tuscaloosa news as it appeared on the internet—there’s a website you can go to. And I went day by day—

[Biz gasps.]

And I mean, it was hard on my eyes. But the articles about AIDS were just like... crazy. And no wonder you didn’t wanna acknowledge you were gay. Because there was that going on, too. And the articles were very like, “This dentist gave this girl AIDS!” And “This man opened this hospice in Mississippi and they wanna run him out of town because they don’t want gays to molest their children!” And it was just so like... all these depressing, scary kind of articles. So I mean it’s probably a lot harder for young people to kind of imagine what it was like back then. And there were many great things about that time. There’s a lot of nostalgia attached. But y’know, there was a lot of awful stuff, too. Obviously.

00:19:28 Biz Host Well right. I mean, it really... I've said this on the show a couple of times. That my oldest—who's now going by Raiden—

00:19:35 Martin Guest Raiden, yeah.

00:19:36 Biz Host Is like—their sixth-grade, seventh-grade class—it's like a fight to out-gay each other. Right? To be like, "Who is gayer or who is more trans or who is more pan? Or who is more—" I mean, like—they have words that I am constantly trying to keep up with. And I keep thinking about like the worst thing somebody could've called you at Central was a lesbian. Right? Like—*[Laughs.]*

[Martin laughs.]

00:20:04 Martin Guest I'm not! I just like wearing jeans! Right? It was...

00:20:05 Biz Host Oh my god.
Right? It really is remarkable... that was... y'know. Yeah. It was high school. That was middle school. Your first book is not the same as your second. Your second—

00:20:18 Martin Guest Oh god, no.

00:20:19 Biz Host —is deeply disturbing on lots of levels. But beautiful. But it's, like... it's less of a—like, the first one's more of a coming-of-age and like—y'know, all this. The second one, it's about a kid who had been kidnapped. Abducted. And then is found like three years later. And it's dealing with all the people who were in his life that he steps back into. And I wanna get into what Young Adult means, because both of those—I get into, like... those two storylines. And one I could be like, "Yeah! I see it." But the one with the abduction, I'm like, "I don't even know if I can get through this!" *[Laughs.]* Like, even though it's so wonderful. So you've been working in the Young Adult genre for a while now. In fact, you just judged the Lambda Awards for Young Adults. And people who don't know, Lambda is a literary agency that's like championed LGBTQ books. And authors. For a long time. Even though I really wanna be like, "Lambda Lambda Lambda" from like *Revenge of the Nerds*. Which is not what it is.

[Martin laughs.]

00:21:32 Martin Guest It's not what that is. It's not. Not that at all. Not even a little. So—

00:21:43 Biz Host But Lambda has some gay, y'know, history. I think—don't ask me to go into it, but there's a lot of organizations that have the word "Lambda" for LGBTQ. Yeah.

00:22:03 Martin Guest Talk to me about... what makes for Young Adult classification. And how as a publicist and as an author one can determine what's enough? What's not enough? What's too much? Right?

00:22:07 Biz Host Right. It's a good question and I'm gonna be teaching a writing course this fall.

00:22:08 Martin Guest Oh, teach me, Martin!

[Laughs.] About this. It's gonna be insane. I'm really excited. But I'm gonna have to kinda grapple with this. The short answer really—we'll get into some other LGBT books that I read for the Lambdas because there are so many LGBTQ books for Young Adult and Middle Grade and even picture books. And when I got my first Lambda nomination, I think there were maybe like... twenty. Like—*[Laughs.]* Or maybe more, but now, y'know, there were like... 150+. It's just exploded. And—which is fantastic. And one book I read was

pretty racy and very sexual and I'll talk about it later 'cause I learned a lot from it.

00:22:51 Biz Host I'm like, "Please don't let that be the one that's on Raiden's shelf right now." *[Laughs.]*

00:22:54 Martin Guest No. I don't think that's the one. *[Laughs.]*

00:22:56 Biz Host I'm like, "You're reading? Great. Go pick out some books. Let's go." Anyway. *[Laughs.]*

00:23:01 Martin Guest But I was like, "Wow, he got away with a lot here!" And I think, y'know... I think it's not really subject matter as much as... perspective of the person's point of view or telling the story? So y'know, I always say—example, *To Kill a Mockingbird* is not YA even though it has young protagonists. Because Scout is telling a story looking back from an adult perspective and has that wisdom of adulthood. And Young Adult really is the characters are in that moment living that life and they don't have that later knowledge that, y'know... Scout had. Or other kind of narrators had. So—and that—y'know, some people will be cynical and say, like, "It's a marketing decision!" Or... I do think it has to be the perspective of being in that moment. What helps me capture that is I write in the present tense, because I just—I like it. A lot of people don't like it. But it helps me keep it kind of, "This is happening to this character right now." So. That's the simple answer. I think there's other subtle things. You can get into the line editing of something. But that's like the biggest thing to me. And I think if you kinda start trying to write YA and you're dumbing it down and you're thinking you can't do something, then you're not doing it right. I think—

[Biz laughs.]

00:24:20 Biz Host Right? No, that's—yeah.

00:24:22 Martin Guest I mean, I was in a book club with Helen and one of the books I remember I read—we read—years before I wrote the second novel and it was about this young woman who—it was written by a woman... I think—I can't remember her name. Elizabeth Scott, maybe? And it was about this woman—this young girl, sorry—who was abducted by this guy. And it was like very dark and disturbing and went there. And I was like, "Wow. This—" But it was Young Adult. And I was like, "I can do this, too!"

00:24:48 Biz Host I can do that!

00:24:50 Martin Guest I can do that!

[Both laugh.]

00:24:52 Biz Host I can write dark and disturbing for young people! Yeah!

00:24:54 Martin Guest Oh. But that book—that book nearly killed me. I can't tell ya. Ugh. I mean, I'm proud of it and I'm glad it's out in the world and—

00:25:01 Biz Host You had to go dark places to write it. I don't know if there could be anything darker than the Tuscaloosa news in the '90s. But like—

[Martin laughs.]

00:25:10 Martin Guest And the TV choices in the '90s!

00:25:12 Biz Host God! Were there ever moments in any of it—'cause you're working on the third book—where you're like, "Uhhh... should—" I mean like, has there been hesitancy? Is it like you said, the hesitancy is the sign that you should keep going? Or... and I ask this because—y'know. I feel like the next thing I'm gonna say is gonna sound like, *[lecturing voice]* "You have a responsibility as a writer to do it so that every child reads it the same way." *[Regular voice]* Raiden is

definitely a kid who processes the world by taking it in and trying it out. And that happens through friends. It happens through shows. It happens through reading.

And there's wonderful things about that. Like there are a lot of great things that they've read and that they've then pursued in sort of trying on? Then there's stuff like cutting! Right? Or there's stuff like... depression and talking about mental illness. And—which is great. But simultaneously I'm now walking through that with them because they're like... trying it on. I will never limit what they read. Right? But like... it's something that I think if I was creating it, how would I—like, with that as an experience. Would that slow me down and—or—yeah. I don't know. I guess as a writer you just... you write what you wanna write and it will either hit with people or not. But have you had those moments?

00:26:41	Martin	Guest	I mean, y'know, the first book I think the scene I worried about was the shower. And I—
00:26:45	Biz	Host	Oh yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:26:46	Martin	Guest	That wasn't ever— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:26:47	Biz	Host	Yes! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:26:48	Martin	Guest	Which all my gay friends love.
00:26:50	Biz	Host	I bet! I know.
00:26:51	Martin	Guest	Pervs.
00:26:52	Biz	Host	Everybody in Tuscaloosa was like, "Tennis?!" Anyway, go ahead. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:26:55	Martin	Guest	I know.
00:26:56	Biz	Host	I was like, "Is tennis code for 'gay' in Alabama?" <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:26:59	Martin	Guest	Back then I think it was. Even though none of my tennis teammates were gay, I don't think. But I think—and this is more true of the second book—but I think I've just started to kind of... one thing that I always got from reading and from writing is just like, I don't know how you can be a big reader and a person who maybe cares about quality television or movies that represents humanity in all its ugliness and beauty. And the second book I just kinda wanted to write about... I just want people to—when you read—to see people with more complexity. Y'know.

There's—one of my favorite novels is *Atonement*. I don't know if you ever read that. It's by Ian McEwan and there's—it's this amazing, y'know, crazily-structured novel. But the first section is this young girl—British girl—and she writes plays and she just writes like crazy. And she has this thought that—she's like, "No one can be as complex as I am. No one can be as deep as I am. Because if they are, then the world is unbearably complicated." And guess what? It's unbearably complicated. Because not everyone maybe has the same depth or intelligence, but everyone is a human being with deep wants and deep feelings and I guess in the second book I wanted to show how, y'know, a damaged person can still rise above that. And also show that like... the person who did that to him, you can't just write that person off as some demon monster. Like, we have to start understanding people. And treating people better. I don't know. I'm sort of rambling here? But...

00:28:44	Biz	Host	No. I understand. It is—we live in... and it's super-heightened right now, but it's always existed. We live in a culture that wants to make us one-dimensional. That wants to make us very binary. And that there's no way to connect. Right? Based on like <u>one</u> thing.
----------	-----	------	---

00:29:06	Martin	Guest	Right. Right.
00:29:08	Biz	Host	And I really do think of like Hillary Clinton and that debate with Trump where the question is, "Can you say something nice about each other?"
			<i>[Martin laughs.]</i>
			And she says, "He loves his children." <i>[Laughs.]</i> And I was like, "You know what?"
00:29:25	Martin	Guest	But does he?!
00:29:26	Biz	Host	I know. I know. But this was way back, now!
00:29:29	Martin	Guest	But I get your point.
00:29:31	Biz	Host	But it's that finding—like, we talk about it on the show a lot. Like, however shitty and crazed you feel, no one sees the aging parents in your house. Or the kid that's got—that's just screaming at you all day. Not for any real reason. It's just what they're doing. Right? Or the job or you've hurt yourself or like whatever. No one sees that? So like try to see that! Right? In people. So it's much easier to just say "monster." Right? Because... trying to see more than that... I think can trigger that feeling in us that we're okay with it. Right? And I'm just like, "No, I'm not!"
00:30:10	Martin	Guest	Right. That doesn't—
00:30:12	Biz	Host	Yeah. I'm not. I just understand that that person is like... a monster-plus. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:30:16	Martin	Guest	Right. I mean, you have to understand them as a human because you can't fix the problems without acknowledging that. Y'know. I mean, you dehumanize—even when you dehumanize someone like that, it's still not a good thing. Y'know.
00:30:30	Biz	Host	Well it leads you to think that there's only one.
00:30:33	Martin	Guest	The new book is sort of—not—it's so much in the vein of the first one, but like even more so? It's been a joy to write. Totally the opposite of the second one. <i>[Laughs.]</i> But y'know it's very much about a kid who is realizing that he's lonely but he also starts to realize that everyone around him is a complex person and they have things going on with themselves, too. And it's very much about getting outside yourself. Which I think—
00:30:59	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Martin: Y'know, maybe he's—
			Biz: Which is impossible for teens to do!
00:31:01	Biz	Host	What are you talking about? No, it's not impossible. It's not—
00:31:04	Martin	Guest	Maybe he's precocious!
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:31:06	Biz	Host	Like, that seems like it's easier to come out and say that you're gay than it is to like... see the world through other people's eyes.
00:31:12	Martin	Guest	But when he—y'know, he was lonely. He was lonely like I was. And I think when you're lonely you're forced inward. And when you're forced inward you find some ways to cope. And y'know for me it was like creativity and other weird things. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			And in some ways I'm thankful for that because if I had a different experience I might, y'know, never have picked up a pen or, y'know, typed or whatever. And I'm glad I did. So.

00:31:40 Biz Host Yeah. Well I think that's actually that's the looking-back perspective that it's hard to explain. Or as a person with kids, having to witness. That like, "Ugh. Don't wanna watch you go through this." It's about to be a big suck-fest—

00:31:53 Martin Guest I mean, it must be awful.

00:31:55 Biz Host —in here. And I know that there's nothing I can say. There's not like a single thing that you're gonna believe or hear or anything. And I also know you're gonna have to go through some of this to come out on the other side of it. And like... yeah! It's awful. I don't wanna do that.

00:32:15 Martin Guest That must be so tough.

00:32:16 Biz Host It's horrible! I hate it! *[Laughs.]* I don't like it, Martin! I do not like it! I want to fix it! But I can't.

00:32:23 Martin Guest I know. You can't.

00:32:25 Biz Host I just turn the television up. Okay. *[Laughs.]*

[Martin laughs.]

I say, "If you're gonna go through horrible things, can you do it at your friend's house? That would be a lot easier. Please." You're telling me that your newest one still is back in Tuscaloosa. Again. In the not-so-distant past. Have you... ever thought about like writing like—what is it like to write a book now about being gay or being somewhere in the LGBTQ world when it's not like it was in 1991? '92? Right? I mean, it is still that way in lots of places. In this country. So I guess you can always write about that? But like... have you ever wanted to write one where it's just like, everybody fucking loves you. *[Laughs.]*

00:33:14 Martin Guest But where is the story in that?

00:33:15 Biz Host I know. That's true. That's not very fun. That's not fun.

00:33:18 Martin Guest I mean...

[Biz laughs.]

Maybe one day. I think—*[Laughs.]* But you said it. I mean, it's not like that everywhere. Not every place is California or New York or... y'know, not every place is a city. And so I think just—there's something about being that age that's still kind of like... not a problem. But, y'know. Has plenty of room for y'know drama and... y'know. I don't know. Hard feelings. And—

00:33:46 Biz Host What you said is exactly right. It doesn't actually—I don't think it matters where a kid is. At that age, you're more prone to feel alone and like no one else is like you. Even if you're surrounded by people who are just like you. There's something... very turned-in in that time period. Alright. Talk to me about the boom in—*[Laughs.]* Young Adult books!

00:34:13 Martin Guest Well that's a good segue because there were books I read that basically exist in that world where, y'know, everyone's gay and everyone's happy. Not everyone's happy, but...

00:34:23 Biz Host Were they any good? No. *[Laughs.]*

[Martin laughs.]

00:34:27 Martin Guest I will say it was really interesting judging, because it was... and I just outed myself as a judge, but—

00:34:33 Biz Host I think I said it earlier. *[Laughs.]*

00:34:35 Martin Guest I mean, I've told some people. But I haven't told the people who were nominees. But there are so many new—more books. And that's really fantastic. There is a lot of it is like, y'know, meh. Not that great. But there was—I actually was like thinking there'd be a lot of more middling work? 'Cause I had kind of not been reading a lot of Young Adult fiction over the past few years. I just kinda went in my little bubble and was working on my own book and felt very disconnected from that world. And I still kind of do. That's a whole other story.

[Biz laughs.]

00:35:22 Biz Host But there is so much that was great. So the YA list, especially, was hard to winnow down to the five nominees. But one of the books I'll mention was *Camp* by L. C. Rosen.

00:35:26 Martin Guest I've seen that one! We haven't read that one yet, but I've seen that out and about.

00:35:26 Martin Guest It's really—it's just great. It's not perfect, but it's just full of life. And it's set at this camp that—y'know, it's a fictional camp full of LGBTQ kids only. And it's—the main character is this kind of theatre-loving gay kid who has a big crush on this really hot, masculine guy. And so he decides—it's like his third year at the camp so he had decided before the book begins to like butch it up? So this guy would notice him?

[Biz laughs.]

00:35:59 Biz Host It's just like—it doesn't matter who you're into. You all gonna do the same thing to try to attract. "I'm gonna femme it up! I'm gonna butch it up! I'm gonna—this is the summer I'll make myself over and they'll love me!" Right? Yeah. Anyway. [Laughs.]

00:36:15 Martin Guest It's really well done. It's—y'know, it handles toxic masculinity. It handles—but I learned a lot of the lingo? I'm like, "What is this? What is that?" I mean, I'm gonna sound like an old fart, but like...

00:36:27 Biz Host Well, we are old. But yeah.

00:36:29 Martin Guest There was a term and I—don't ask me it now, 'cause I'm forgetting—but there's all these definitions of like—there's a certain person who can only have sex if they're in love. Which... is I guess is—

00:36:41 Biz Host Let me go call the two kids who are in my house right now over to just go down the entire—

00:36:45 Martin Guest They will educate us.

00:36:47 Biz Host To educate us. Because it really... I was like, "What? What's the difference between that and that?" Like, there were a couple times where I'm like, "Isn't that the same thing?" And it's like, "No, there's a nuanced difference." And I'm like, "Great. Great." [Laughs.] Good!

00:37:05 Martin Guest And this book was an education! It has all the characters.

[Biz laughs.]

00:37:13 Biz Host And it's really well done! And it's fun and it's—y'know, it's very sexual. So you might wanna... So was camp!

00:37:14 Martin Guest —save that one for later.

00:37:15 Biz Host Pyew, pyew! [Laughs.]

00:37:16 Martin Guest But it was kinda—y'know, it's kind of a fantasy. I don't think such a camp exists yet, but I loved it. And I'm glad a book like that is in the

00:37:31 Biz Host world. And I would say that is an example of a story with like
00:37:34 Martin Guest conflict and drama and tension, but set in a world that's... like—
Just everybody happens to be gay. Right? Like, that's it!
Everyone's gay and it's mostly great and everyone loves each other
and it's fantasy world, but then there's the external world still
intrudes. Y'know. Like the parents of one of the kids doesn't want
him to—they're okay with him being gay, but they don't want him to
be that kind of gay. Y'know.

[Biz laughs.]

They want him to play soccer and not be on the drama team or
whatever. So.

00:37:56 Biz Host *[Biz laughs.]*
I'm sorry. I'm just like, god, we just can never get it right. We just
are so fucked up. *[Laughs.]* We are just so like—I'm like—again,
you could take the sexual identity out of that story and still have
adults being like, "Don't be in the theatre" or don't be—y'know—
right? Like and yet we all sit here and say, "Everybody's so
different." But I'm like, "No you're not!" *[Laughs.]*

[Martin laughs.]

00:38:30 Martin Guest Everybody's doing the same thing they've done forever. Except
with better language. That's all.
Yes.

00:38:32 Biz Host *[Both laugh.]*
00:38:35 Martin Guest Alright. What else? What else is exciting out there?
So another one I loved... and I wanna mention at least the Young
Adult ones and we can maybe go into the other ones too, but one I
really loved was called—is called *Sasha Masha*? And it's by a
writer named Agnes Borinsky. A trans writer. And it's this—because
I'm gay, people who are not gay assume that I know everything
about being trans, too? And nothing could be further from the truth.

[Biz laughs.]

00:39:03 Biz Host So. It's not the same!
00:39:04 Martin Guest You're not an expert?
I know. Sadly, no. But.

[Biz laughs.]

I've read a few trans YA/Middle Grade novels, and it just—it's just
fascinating. The stories are always different. There's not one same
experience, although there's some universal things that are going
on. But it was a fascinating—I loved the writing. It was very just kind
of like... it was unlike a lot of the YA writing I'd read. It was very
cool and direct and not kind of like... it wasn't like, there was a lot
of... a lot of the writing I encountered in judging was like, "Look! I'm
being YA!" Y'know? Like, "I am YA!" Like, y'know, it's—

[Biz laughs.]

00:39:48 Biz Host I don't mean to sound like a jerk, but there's a lot of that. And—
Well when you have to read a ton of that stuff? It begins to fall
through the sides. I—no, I understand. Yeah.

00:39:55 Martin Guest And a lot of the good stuff stands out and there's a lot of the good
stuff. So it was easy to like—anyway. The writing in it was just kind
of like... it was almost like Bret Easton Ellis kind of writing, but
like—but not. Not as dark and depraved. But it was just like a
different style. But anyway, it's about this boy who has this lesbian
friend who moved away and he's in high school and he's dating this
girl. But then he thinks at the time that with his friend—who moved
away—they dressed up and he wore a dress. And he decided he
just—a name came to him: "Sasha Masha." And it's about their
journey to y'know figuring out who they really are. And it ends,
y'know, it ends open-ended. It doesn't have some kind of pat
ending. It's more about the journey to like self-acceptance and then
what comes next is not in the book. But I thought it was fantastic.

00:40:52 Biz Host Oh, that's great.

00:40:53 Martin Guest And it was loved by all the judges, as well. So—and I probably will
teach that book in my class this fall. So. Yes.

00:40:59 Biz Host Ooh! That's awesome. Very nice. That is high praise!

00:41:03 Martin Guest I really loved it. And y'know, it was one of those books that didn't
get—it didn't get a lot of attention as far as I know? There are a lot
of books that were in the mix that I knew had gotten a big push
from the company and showed up on all those lists that, y'know,
drive publicists like me crazy. Like "The Top 22 Books Coming Out
This Fall!" And it's like, "My book's not on it! Why not?!"

[Biz laughs.]

But a lot of the hyped books, y'know, I didn't love as much as some
of the ones that were not as hyped. So *Sasha Masha* was definitely
one of those. The one that won was fantastic. It's a graphic novel
called *Flamer*.

00:41:41 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Martin:** By Mike—

00:41:44 Biz Host **Biz:** Oh, okay. I was gonna ask if there was a graphic novel.
'Cause we're very into that in this house.

00:41:46 Martin Guest Oh, you will—there are some great—there are two that were
finalists in the YA category. So *Flamer* won and it was just fantastic.
Another camp novel about a young boy who—I think he's Filipino-
American and he goes to this camp and y'know—it's—I related to it
a lot. It was just very much like... it's not a coming-out story as
well? He has these feelings for this cute guy in his troop. Or maybe
it's a Boy Scout. Sorry. It's been a while. But the way the writer—
the story was beautiful and just the art—how the art enhanced the
story? It was just a really brilliant piece of work. And it really broke
my heart. It was wonderful.

[Biz laughs.]

So in the end the heart won. The heartbreaking won the day.
Another wonderful graphic novel that we—was a finalist called *The
Magic Fish* by Trung Le Nguyen? A Vietnamese-American writer.
And it's about a young boy who is, y'know, is gay. And his mother
misses her homeland. It mixes in these fables and it's—it's really
interesting. It's really well done. And the other finalist was a really

sweet story—novel called *You Should See Me in a Crown* by Leah Johnson. And it got a lot of—

00:43:15 Biz Host That's a great name.

00:43:16 Martin Guest Yeah. It's great. It got a lot of good coverage and it's just like a book you're so happy that's out in the world. It's about a Black girl and she wants to be the prom queen so she can get a scholarship and yeah. It's a lot of fun. So there were books that I wish would've made it as well that were every bit as just as good as those. But. Those are five fantastic reading recommendations. For anyone out there who needs them. *[Laughs.]*

00:43:41 Biz Host Oh, we always need them! We are always looking. We're always looking. What's the—give me a younger category! Do you have those, too? Do you have a couple from those?

00:43:52 Martin Guest Yes! So the one that won is called *King and the Dragonflies* by Kacen Callender? Who is a trans author. And they won the National Book Award, actually, also.

00:44:02 Biz Host Wow!

00:44:03 Martin Guest For this book. And it's about a boy in Louisiana whose brother had died and he's realizing he's gay and there's another boy in town—a white boy—and they kind of have a friendship. And y'know it tackles racism and sexuality. It's just really beautifully written as well. *The Deep & Dark Blue* by Niki Smith is another graphic novel. It's sort of set in a fantasy world and it's about two brothers—it's kinda hard to describe.

[Biz laughs.]

It's—*[Laughs.]* I don't read a lot of stuff like that? So I'm like, I'm gonna sound like an idiot if I try to describe the plot. But it also has a trans or gender-nonbinary character? Which, y'know, they're sort of rare for that age group and it was good to see that represented. *A High Five for Glenn Burke* was a really great Middle Grade novel and it's about a gay middle school kid and he's obsessed with—he plays baseball. And he's obsessed with this professional athlete named Glenn Burke, who was a professional baseball player who—not only was he gay, but he invented the high-five. So.

00:45:12 Biz Host What?! That's great.

00:45:14 Martin Guest The story—yeah. It's—Glenn Burke has a really interesting kind of sad story, but he was kind of thrown out after he came out. And anyway. And then there were two great—

00:45:25 Biz Host High-fives! *[Laughs.]*

00:45:27 Martin Guest High-fives!

00:45:28 Biz Host High-fives! *[Laughs.]*

00:45:29 Martin Guest And I'll try to stop being blather so much, but there were two great picture books. And one was called *Our Subway Baby* and it was about these two gay men who find this baby on the subway platform. It's a true story.

00:45:42 Biz Host What?!

00:45:43 Martin Guest And they—yes! It's a true story! I couldn't believe it. I don't know if I ever heard this story when I lived in New York.

00:45:49 Biz Host Yeah. Okay.

00:45:50 Martin Guest But they rescued him and it became a big thing and then, y'know, long story short they ended up adopting him. And the story is sweet.

00:45:57 Biz Host Yeah. You find 'em, they're yours. *[Laughs.]* That's how it works! That's how you get kids in your house! You just find 'em!

00:46:04	Martin	Guest	And it's crazy. But it's—the artwork is wonderful and it's by—the writer is Peter Mercurio. And the artist is Leo Espinosa. But the really amazing thing about it is when I finished, they have this afterword in the back. And they show the two gay dads with their son who's like in college now. And he's this beautiful kid. It's really sweet. It was great. And the last one is this other cute picture book, <i>From Archie to Zack</i> by Vincent X. Kirsch. And it's about two little boys who just love each other. And they don't think about it. They don't ask "What is it" and question it and try to label it. They just... they just love each other and they wanna hold hands. So. It was very sweet. So.
00:46:48	Biz	Host	<i>[Sings.]</i> The world can change, everybody! I know.
00:46:53	Martin	Guest	I mean, the world is a better place for LGBTQ kids today for sure. It's not a perfect world, but I'm glad these books exists and there are many others.
00:47:01	Biz	Host	Martin, thank you so much for joining us.
00:47:03	Martin	Guest	Thank you!
00:47:04	Biz	Host	And have a wonderful rest of your day!
00:47:06	Martin	Guest	You, too. So great seeing you.
00:47:09	Biz	Host	Good to see you. Bye!
00:47:10	Martin	Guest	Bye!
00:47:11	Music	Music	"Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:47:28	Music	Promo	Cheerful ukulele with whistling plays in background.
00:47:29	Biz	Host	<i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by Made In. If quality and craftsmanship is important to you, you should check out Made In! Made In is a cookware and kitchenware brand that works with renowned chefs and artisans to produce some of the world's best pots, pans, knives, and wineglasses. I have a chef's knife from Made In and if you are like me, and did not grow up with quality knives— <i>[Laughs.]</i> The first time you use one? It is... <u>amazing!</u> It is the—it's like, "Why have I been making everything so difficult all of these years?" And again, Made In does not just do knives. Made In products are made to last and they offer a lifetime guarantee. Right now, Made In is offering our listeners 15% off your first order with promo code "badmother." This is the best discount available <u>anywhere</u> online for Made In products. Go to Made InCookware.com/badmother and use promo code "badmother" for 15% off your first order. That's Made InCookware.com/badmother . Use promo code "badmother."
			<i>[Music fades.]</i>
00:48:53	Theresa	Host	Hey, you know what it's time for! This week's genius and fails! This is the part of the show where we share our genius moment of the week, as well as our failures, and feel <u>better</u> about ourselves by hearing yours. You can share some of your own by calling 206-350-9485. That's 206-350-9485.
00:49:12	Biz	Host	Genius fail time, Gabe! <i>[Laughs.]</i> Woo! I'm getting the Gabe jazz hands. Theresa is still hiding in the bathroom. Don't worry; I don't think she's trapped in the bathroom. I think she's just recovering in there. The best that she can. So once again, it is time... for... geniuses. Genius me, me!
00:49:41	Clip	Clip	<i>[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]</i>

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!

00:49:55 Biz Host Okay. For Christmas, I received a gift card to our local comic book store. And I had not used it. And I used it. Two days ago. And I went in and it's a wonderful comic book store where I can say stuff like, "Oh, thirteen years ago I read this comic book series—the last thing I read would be DC *Final Crisis* and I read every, like, y'know, appendage of that. But y'know, I haven't read here—" Blah, blah. And the guy just... took my virtual hand, as it were, and we walked through that comic book store and they pointed out where all the new stuff is starting. The new big overarching storylines. And really good authors. And I went nuts. I went nuts. And I brought home a huge stack of trades—which are just sort of collections of all the little individual tiny paper comic books? And there's just a big stack next to my bed! And I, of course, have already burned through two of them and they were excellent! They were good. *DCeased*. So it's like "deceased" but they spell it with a DC? And it's about, like, this plague that takes over the entire—it's amazing. Superheroes get turned. It's all awful. People like—but it's just great. So I'm doing a really good job taking care of myself. Thumbs up from Gabe!
[Answering machine beeps.]

00:51:31 Caller Caller Hey, y'all. I have a genius that definitely nobody cares about. I have a one-year-old that for the life of us we cannot cut this one's nails. She just wiggles, squiggles, and refuses to hold still. Well today I was wearing her in a backpack and she fell asleep! And so I went over and got the nail clippers and pulled her little hands forward while she was sleeping and I'm on the move and I trimmed her nails. So now she can stop scratching the back of my neck. It feels so nice. Oh, and Theresa, I know how to dial the Hotline number because I can hear your voice saying it in my head when I go to dial.

[Biz laughs.]

00:52:16 Biz Host You guys are doing a great job. And today, so am I. You are doing a great job and you are right! Who is gonna listen to that story? Again, besides us. Besides us. This is like where we begin to trick all of you guys and sort of brainwash you—"No one cares but us! You can only trust us!" Though I dare us to go out into the world and share these stories anew! I mean, we're all kind of coming back into the world, right? No one really knows how to talk to each other anymore. This is the perfect time to unload all of our parenting geniuses! This is genius. Two geniuses: one, getting it done; and two, even thinking to do it when the baby fell asleep on your back! You... are amazing!

00:52:58 Clip Clip Failures.
[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]

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

[Timpani with foot pedal engaged for humorous effect.]

00:53:05 Biz Host **Biz:** *[Calmly]* You suck!
Fail me, Biz. *[Laughs.]* Okay. I will. So in my constant pursuit for finding deals for Beyblades or Lego Ninjago—because I gotta tell ya, Ellis plays with this stuff and creates all these stories and it's just awesome. And I just—like, I love watching it happen. So I'm alright, y'know, cruising the eBay and the Etsy for stuff. Well, I found... a set of Ninjago minifigures from the Serpentine season, so it had all of the—like—Ninjago ninjas, and then all the different snake characters. Again, if you have not reached this in your parenting yet, let this just be a foreshadowing for you. Okay? And if yo'ure in this, you know where I am. You know why I've gone completely insane.

Anyway, I found this set. It said "Lego Ninjago." And I got it and I gave it to Ellis and Ellis was just like, "This is the greatest thing ever!" We've been playing with it. And they took some to summer camp and their friend—who knows a great deal about Legos—this seven-year-old knows a lot about Legos. Shared some facts about these Legos, and the next morning Ellis comes to wake me up and just says, very matter-of-factly, "The Legos you got me were fakes." And I was like, "What?!" "They're fakes. So-and-so—" *[Laughs.]* "So-and-so—" I'm just gonna say that the kid's name is Carl. "Carl says they're fake." And I was like, "I am pretty sure they're not fake, Ellis!" You know, that like—"You should ask your father." "Carl says they're fake."

And I don't know why this got under my skin, but it did. 'Cause I'd done this nice thing. And the fact that I bought fakes made me like really mad and that my seven-year-old's calling me out on—I don't know. This... really pissed me off. And Stefan comes out later and says, "Yep. They're not official Legos." And I'm like, "Guys, I know what a fucking Lego looks like. It's not like they're total garbage versions. They are so creepily—I don't understand how they're not Legos!" Anyway, I have reached out to that person and said, "These are not Legos, according to the entire seven-year-old population of Pasadena, California." And so hopefully I will get a refund on these. But I bought Ellis fakes! Augh! I'm a monster. And Gabe is giving me the big thumbs down. Big thumbs down.

00:56:02 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hi, Biz. Hi, Theresa. I'm calling with a fail. So I've got two kids. My youngest is two-and-a-half. I still have this big pregnancy pillow hanging around my house?

[Biz laughs.]

Because, y'know. It's... *[inaudible]*. I don't get rid of stuff. But I saw it recently and I thought, "I'm tired of picking up this thing. I'm not having any more babies. Somebody else can have this pillow." So I put it on my local buy-nothing group. I posted. I said, "Hey, I've got this pillow. Who wants it?" Someone said yes so now tonight I'm walking over to give it to them. Just drop it on their porch. Leave it with 'em. My daughter—my sweet, nearly-six-year-old daughter—saw me with this bag. With this giant pillow inside it. And she broke down. She says, "Mom, you can't get rid of the snakey pillow! We haven't played with it in forever! I forgot about it! Please don't get

rid of it!” And I was like, that’s exactly why I’m getting rid of it! No one touches this damn thing anymore! *[Sighs.]* God. Anyways. That’s my fail. Long story short, my husband calmed her down. Blah, blah, blah. She’s fine now, but... seriously? Seriously. I’m failing as a parent. Thanks, guys.

00:57:20 Biz Host

Oh yeah. You’re doing a horrible job. And let’s all—let’s all be real about this—you start this story off by saying, “Then I saw it on the floor.” We all know how big a pregnancy pillow is. You could live in a six-bedroom mansion and you would still trip over that fucking thing ‘cause it’s huge. It’s like a life raft. It is ginormous. It is cumbersome. If I was going to use the word correctly, a pregnancy pillow is... cumbersome. And, A, you had it a while. That’s impressive. And B, I’m actually very impressed that you were gonna throw it away, but yeah. Children having emotional attachment to things that they shouldn’t is really frustrating. As a parent. And that’s why in our house we just treat it like we’re trying to get rid of a dead body and we don’t want anybody to see it. *[Through laughter]*

There was this stuffed dog, Bubba, who we had for a really long time. And it was really gross. It was big. It was like one of those big stuffed animal, y’know, the length of like a desk or something. And Onion—the cat—loved Bubba. And loved Bubba in a way that left a smell? And... it just—it was gross, guys. I needed to get rid of that thing. And—*[Laughs.]* We did. We did. I just was like, *[whispering]* “Stefan, come here. Come here! We’re gonna get rid of Bubba, but we need to like put it in a bag so that if anybody opens the big trash can for some reason they don’t see it?” And we did. WE just snuck it out in the dark of night. So let that be a lesson to you. Sneak things like that out in the dark of night. *[Laughs.]* You are doing a horrible job thinking that you can just get rid of something that belongs solely to you. Ha!

00:59:18 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.*

00:59:42 Music Promo
00:59:43 Biz Host

[Music fades out.]

Chill synth music plays in background.

One Bad Mother is supported in part by Boll & Branch. Little details, everybody. It’s the little things in life that make life better. And as a parent, I have found finding those little things that are just for me very difficult to find. *[Laughs.]* So when I do, I grab onto them and hold on for dear life. And that is what I do with Boll & Branch sheets. I do squeeze those things for dear life! *[Laughs.]* These are so soft. Boll & Branch manufacturing partners are family-owned businesses that share the same values and standards and they stand behind their products and honor a 30-night worry-free guarantee. The only place I have left is my bed right now. *[Laughs.]* And even that I have to share with the cats. Having the perfect sheets makes that little alone time that I do have feel remarkable. To experience an entirely new standard of comfort, visit BollAndBranch.com. Get 15% off your first set of sheets with promo

01:01:14 Promo Clip code “badmother.” That’s B-O-L-L-AndBranch.com, promo code “badmother.”
[Background music.]

Will Campos: Since the dawn of time, screenwriters have taken months to craft their stories! But now, three Hollywood professionals shall attempt the impossible: break a story in one hour!

[Music change.]

Freddie Wong: That’s right! Here on *Story Break*, I, Freddie Wong—

Matt Arnold: —Matt Arnold—

Will: —and Will Campos—

Freddie: —the creators behind award-winning shows like Video Game High School—

Matt: —have one hour to turn a humble idea into an awesome movie.

Will: Now, an awesome movie starts with an awesome title.

Matt: I chose The Billionaire’s Marriage Valley.

Freddie: [Stifling laughter] Mine was Christmas Pregnant Paradise.
[Everyone laughs.]

Matt: Okay, next we need a protagonist.

Will: So I’ve heard Wario best described as [laughing] Libertarian Mario. [Someone laughs.]

Freddie: And of course, every great movie needs a stellar pitch.

Will: In order to get to Heaven, sometimes you gotta raise a little hell.

Freddie: Ha-ha, that’s the tagline! [Someone laughs.] Check out *Story Break* every week on MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

01:02:04 Promo Clip **Music:** Intense sci-fi music.

Jordan Morris: Hey, I’m Jordan Morris, creator of the Max Fun scripted sci-fi comedy podcast *Bubble*. We just released a special episode of *Bubble* to celebrate the launch of our new graphic novel. At SF Sketchfest in 2019, we recorded a live show with Alison Becker, Eliza Skinner, Mike Mitchell, Cristela Alonzo, and special guests Jean Grae, Jonathan Coulton, Jesse Thorn, Nick Wiger, and a bunch of other cool folks.

Speaker 1: We suspect he'll show signs of mutation when in a state of excitement. Now, Annie matched with him on Tinder, so she's gonna act as the honeypot.

[The audience laughs at regular intervals.]

Annie: I do enjoy being called a honeypot.

Speaker 2: Hey. You know what's better than honey? Gravy!

Annie: *[Gasps.]* Ooh, yeah! Can I be the gravy sack?!

Jordan: Out now on MaximumFun.org and wherever you get podcasts. And pick up the graphic novel at your local bookstore today.

[Music ends.]

01:03:00 Biz Host

Alright, everybody. Settle down and settle in. It's time to listen to a mom have a breakdown.

01:03:08 Caller Caller

[Answering machine beeps.]

Hi, Biz and Theresa. This is a rant. I... am leaving for a—what—three-night vacation. Vacation? We're going out of town tomorrow.

[Biz laughs.]

With Leftie and our two kids, who are three and almost two. And... I work full time. As does Leftie. But it's just the mental load of packing that's insane! It's absolutely bonkers. It's...

[Biz laughs.]

Trying to do a good job at work. And be on all the phone calls and, y'know, do all the things. While simultaneously counting diapers and wipes and making sure that there are enough clothes in case, y'know, there's a blowout. And poop bags and... diaper wipes and diaper cream and toothbrush and toothpaste for all of them. For everyone. And nail clippers. And lotion. And shampoo. And everything. And we're staying at an Airbnb, so we have to do a grocery pickup. So download the app for the local grocery store. Make a list for that. I mean, it's just—it's crazy town! And I'm tired. And I don't have enough brainpower for it.

[Biz laughs.]

01:04:27 Biz Host

And I think that's all? I love you guys. You guys are great. Bye. Ya think that's all? That's enough! You're doing an amazing job! Ohhh. I really... had blocked that out of my mind. That experience. You just brought it ricing back. Being president of packing is definitely one of those responsibilities that I don't think anybody even thinks to talk about before the trips start happening for the first time? It's not like you're like, "What do you wanna name the baby?" "Let's name him this!" "I can't wait to kiss baby toes." "Me, too! It's going to be so good!" "Oh, okay. Let's talk about maybe sleeping at night and shifts and taking care of the baby—no one's like, "Okay. In a year from now when we take a trip, who's in charge of

packing?" [Laughs.] No one thinks about that, but it's—it is like planning for some Arctic expedition.

You're right. You do have to count diapers. You do have to like—and—whatever you pack in your carryon? You're going to go through them. Let's say you pack like ten diapers for a three-hour flight across country. Oh yeah. Those are gone. Those are gonna be gone so fast. I remember one of our trips I think—yeah, it was Ellis. Ellis blew out that diaper every forty minutes. And it was just like—[lost for words] What is happening? Right up the back. You know what I'm talking about. Right? You gotta have the change of clothes. You gotta—and then like so just your general carryon just becomes its own thing. How many diapers are in there? How many changes of clothes? And then you gotta remember changes of clothes for yourself, because that baby is gonna pee on you. Or throw up on you!

And y'know, it... it is definitely a moment for budding resentment. Right? Like, it is a... a garden bed. Just ready for resentment to grow. As you have to—because you are the one who is thinking of all the tiniest details. And don't forget the loveys! And don't forget whatever the kid needs to sleep at night! Y'know. And then the charging cords. And then the—the list goes on! And on. And that is on top of your normal work in which it sounds like you also have to deal with a long list of planning. And kind of keeping everything in the front of your head. And... I just... want you to know that we see you? We see you standing there doing this. We really, really see you. It is a lot. And my other favorite thing that you said was, "We're going on a vacation. No, wait! We're going away for three days." [Laughs.] It's like exactly what that is! That is not a vacation. You are going—everybody should just refer to vacations with children as, "Going away for X amount of days." [Laughs.] This is definitely not a vacation. You are doing an amazing job. And I hope you packed something special just for you. You are doing remarkable. I feel like today was just a show about unpacking and packing. Don't you think? [Laughs.] From our rant in which you're president of packing to the wonderful Martin Wilson who is helping to really hammer in the summer of reading! *One Bad Mother!* Talking about Young Adult novels that are about and by people who are from the LGBTQ community. And it's... it was just so nice talking to Martin and remembering—like, we both made choices in our lives to be places where diversity was—I dunno. Just reflected more around us all the time. Right?

01:08:07 Biz Host

And I do remember—Martin's right. There was no gay role model. That you could identify. Not even a role model! Just somebody you could identify with and say, "That's an adult who is not heterosexual." Right? Like, that just didn't exist. And I know in lots of places I'm sure it still feels like it doesn't exist. But he's right. Like, even in a time where it feels much more acceptable if you think that your voice doesn't matter, you might be wrong. It really could matter to somebody who's very close to you. And I think that's true of lots of aspects of our lives! Y'know. We all impact each other. And that can be... really amazing! I'm gonna only think about the amazing ways we can impact each other? [Laughs.]

And I also really liked talking to Martin about the idea that even the worst of us out there are made up of many different dimensions. And y'know, we don't know what's going on, y'know, what happened five minutes before we ran into that person in the parking lot. We don't know what happened five minutes before when, y'know, that person cut in front of you in the checkout line or left the cart right in the middle of the parking space! Right? Like—*[Laughs.]* These people are not monsters. But you understand what I'm trying to get at. That like, trying to approach each other with, y'know, deeper understanding that we are more than just these, y'know, one-word descriptions is good. It's good.

You are not a one-word description. *[Laughs.]* I'm not a one-word description, despite what they wrote in my yearbook. Everybody? You're doing a wonderful job! It's also really hard to go out and be very empathetic and nice and like, eh, sometimes we also don't have that energy in us, either. And that's okay, too. Okay? You're all doing remarkable. We are halfway through summer, everybody! Halfway! And you're doing it! And I will talk to you next week. Bye!!!

01:11:27 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.*

01:11:51 Biz Host *[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]* We'd like to thank MaxFun; our producer, Gabe Mara; our husbands, Stefan Lawrence and Jesse Thorn; our perfect children, who provide us with inspiration to say all these horrible things; and of course, you, our listeners. To find out more about the songs you heard on today's podcast and more about the show, please go to MaximumFun.org/onebadmother. For information about live shows, our book and press, please check out OneBadMotherPodcast.com.

01:12:20 Theresa Host *One Bad Mother* is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to MaximumFun.org/join.

01:12:43 Music Transition *[Music continues for a while before fading out.]* A cheerful ukulele chord.

01:12:44 Speaker 1 Guest MaximumFun.org.

01:12:46 Speaker 2 Guest Comedy and culture.

01:12:47 Speaker 3 Guest Artist owned—

01:12:48 Speaker 4 Guest —Audience supported.