

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.
00:00:21	Music	Music	"Summon the Rawk" by Kevin MacLeod. Driving electric guitar and heavy drums.
00:00:24	Biz	Host	<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i> This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> —sibling rivalry, animal-style! We talk with Ellen Weatherford from the <i>Just the Zoo of Us</i> podcast. Plus, Biz has a gift for her kids: disappointment.
00:00:41	Caller	Caller	Woooooo! <i>[Laughs.]</i> Hi, Biz and Theresa. This is a check-in. I have a two-year-old and a four-year-old and they've had Hand-Foot-Mouth for a week and it makes them act like devils. Like, literally just insane, devilish humans. They're so mean and angry and mean to each other and mean to me and screaming all the time and I swear usually they're like above-average in terms of kindness? And Hand-Foot-Mouth turns them into this thing that I don't even recognize as a member of my family anymore. And this happens every year. Every year they get it, and every year this happens. And... I am a stay-at-home mom, and my husband's working from home because it's COVID and life and... I gave him the monitor and neither of them are asleep and I just went to the grocery store and it's the week of Thanksgiving and I went and I was hoping for long lines 'cause that would just be nice to stand there. Anyways, it wasn't busy. <i>[Biz laughs.]</i> Which actually was much nicer. So that was good. And I'm feeling a little calmer now, and I feel like I can be yelled at again when I get home. <i>[Biz laughs.]</i> And then maybe some more later. And maybe again in the middle of the night and then tomorrow morning. Because I went somewhere by myself. You're doing a good job. And I'm doing a really fucking awesome job.
00:02:05	Biz	Host	You are doing a really fucking awesome job. Wow. <i>[Singing]</i> I have a feeling there's gonna be a theme this week about space. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Oh my god. You really are actually doing a great job. I hear and see you. Hand, foot, and mouth disease—I'm just gonna say this again. For our listeners who maybe are pregnant or maybe have kids that haven't gone into preschool, y'know, don't panic. Not every child who goes to preschool gets Hand, Foot, & Mouth disease. But it's a thing that happens, and it's possibly—at least for me—it was one of the scariest-named things that my kid could get? Like, to me it sounded like some 1800s, like, I don't know. The plague. "Hand, Foot, & Mouth disease—what?!" And it's just a virus, I think. Is it a virus? I don't know. Science show. Just stumped Gabe. But it's—it does make kids kinda, y'know, not

happy. Wouldn't make me happy, either! I don't want it. So, A, you have a two- and a four-year-old in your house, so enough said. For them to be grumpy, bonus. You get a parenting bonus for that. I... would rather focus, though, on the "I just left the house and went to the grocery store" where you're so in need—*[Laughs.]* Of alone time that you wish you could stand in a grocery store line. *[Laughs.]* I recently have confessed that I will arrive at car line to pick my kids up—they car the line of cars waiting to pick your kids up, "car line"—I will go wait in car line, like, really early. Like... people are still in classes. They're not getting ready to go. Because it's alone time! For me! *[Laughs.]* In the car! Just... sitting in car line. By myself. So I hear you and I see you and I really hate that going to the store, waiting in car line, hiding in the bathroom, is all the window we sometimes get? In order to get ourselves to a place where—as you said—you get to get yelled at again. I am so sorry about that. And we all know—it's not like somebody's like, "Yeah! Go to hell!" It's just kids! They yell! They, like, don't understand self-regulation yet. And so you just get yelled at a lot, and I'm really sorry. I'm very, very sorry. You are doing a really good job.

[Singing] You know who else is doing a good job? People out in the world! Thank-you time!

00:04:48 Music Music

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

00:05:02 Biz Host

Thank you—la, la, la. It's a record that repeats. Scratch, scratch, scratch. Thank you, everybody in the medical industry. You're amazing. I don't need to break it down again. You all know who you are. There is no job that is not important when it comes to caring for the sick. There aren't. So thank you! Thank you, people in the travel industry. Thank you for keeping the planes clean and disinfected and, oh my god, the people who help clean the restrooms in an airport? I love you! Thank you. Because travelers—we're just in our own horrible worlds of, like, "Aaaah! Ooh! Everybody's against me and I gotta get places and I didn't plan well and oh god, I've got kids!" Like, all of those things. We're not always being respectful of your house, AKA airport. So thank you to all the people who are working, especially those who have to work on the holidays, regardless of the holiday. You might have to be working and I appreciate you. I really, really do.

And special shout-out to people who work in food banks, as well as with other services that provide for those who are in need. Women's shelters, family shelters, children at this time of year. It is a great time to go check out any local, y'know, charities or churches or offices in your neighborhood to see if there is the Secret Angel Project or—basically you get a wish list from a kid. I have—that's such a fun thing to do! So I just—thank you for all of you who are organizing that. Just thank you. I see you. And as always, teachers? I love you. I love you so much. Like, it's... maybe gonna get uncomfortable. I'm sorry about that. But I really love you.

00:07:05 Biz Host

Speaking of uncomfortable, Christmas—tick, tick, tick. That's the holiday we celebrate in this house. Tick, tick, tick, tick, tick! It's coming! And that means un-meetable expectations. And even more unpredictable meltdowns. Okay. Couple days ago, at the dinner table, Ellis just suddenly got upset. *[Laughs.]* There was no

conversation. That was none of that. He just—suddenly Ellis was like, “I am sad!” I was like, “Why are you sad? What is happening?” “We are the only people who don’t have our tree yet. Everybody in my class has their tree and everybody’s having Christmas fun but us! It’s awful!” And I’m like, “Okay. That’s not true. I know that’s not true, ‘cause not everybody in your class celebrates Christmas, so back it up.” [Laughs.] Two, we always get our tree usually around the 10th of December ‘cause we do a real tree, and that means— [Laughs.] ‘Real tree.’ ‘Fake tree.’ It’s like—it’s like I got a ‘real, natural’ birth? Whatever. We go somewhere where somebody has chopped down a tree and we bring it home. If you have a tree that you assemble? It is also a real tree. [Laughs.] Just gonna have like the tree wars. Anyway.

So I said, “Look, it’s coming.” [Unintelligible dramatic whining.] Everything’s horrible. Today, I have this advent calendar that I made when Raiden was like one. And I mean, Pottery Barn has nothing on me. Felt. Felt numbers. It’s on canvas. And it hangs up, and I love it. Anyway. On today’s advent, it was treeeee! We’re gonna go get a tree after school. Ellis comes running into the bed this morning at the crack of dawn, “We’re gonna get a tree today!” And I’m like, “Yeah, it’s gonna be so great!” BOOM! Sadness. “I never get to have any say in the tree. I don’t get any say in Christmas. I don’t get anything! I don’t have anything!” Mind you guys, this is like—it has not been two weeks since Ellis’s birthday. ‘K? And these children really are fine when it comes to the basic necessities. Plus, plus.

So I was like, “Whoa, whoa, whoa. Whoa, whoa, whoa.” The tradition in our house is Ellis gets to pick their own, small, tiny tree that goes on the porch. This was an answer to the fact that Raiden gets to put the angel on top of the tree, so that’s a special job. And the other special job is Ellis gets to pick a little tree that’s just all their own! They get to decorate it. They get to do—it is all theirs! No one has input into this tree! [Laughs.] But—as of this morning—that was unfair. They don’t get anything. They get nothing. And... “I’m gonna get to say what tree we get for the family, but no one gets to say anything about my tree.” And I was like, “Nope, sorry. That’s actually not how that’s gonna happen.” So... holidays. I’m really looking forward to going and picking that tree up later today, and that turning into some sort of horrible frustration. Back to our check-in caller—I, too, need a little space. Don’t have a lot of space for being yelled at, especially when it comes to something nice! I’m trying to do something nice! [Laughs.] That always fails.

Anyway, it’s times like this that makes me wonder how other parents are dealing with their children, which I think will tie in nicely to what we’re gonna talk about today with Ellen Weatherford of the podcast *Just the Zoo of Us*.

00:10:55	Music	Music	Banjo strums; cheerful banjo music continues through dialogue.
00:10:56	Theresa	Host	Please—take a moment to remember: If you’re friends of the hosts of <i>One Bad Mother</i> , you should <u>assume</u> that when we talk about other moms, we’re talking about <u>you</u> .
00:11:03	Biz	Host	If you are <u>married</u> to the host of <i>One Bad Mother</i> , we <u>definitely are</u> talking about you.
00:11:08	Theresa	Host	Nothing we say constitutes <u>professional</u> parenting advice.

00:11:10	Biz	Host	Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.
00:11:14	Theresa	Host	Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.
			<i>[Banjo music fades out.]</i>
			<i>[Biz and her guest repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss the weekly topic.]</i>
00:11:19	Biz	Host	This week, I am very excited to welcome back Ellen Weatherford, who works in nonprofit administration in Jacksonville, Florida. Outside of work, she finds joy in photography, video games, art, and spending time with her family. Really?! Anyhoo. Ha, ha! Old joke.
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
			Ellen's love for podcasts started with <i>This American Life</i> when she was eleven years old, and love for animals goes way back farther than she can remember. She hopes that her podcast— <i>Just the Zoo of Us</i> —will inspire in others the same love and appreciation for our animal friends. I basically wanna make Ellen an honorary <i>Wild Kratt</i> , not that I have the authority to do so.
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
			And one last thing—during the MaxFun Block Party that recently happened, Ellen and I also did a little podcast where we talked about an octopus parenting style. But! All of that said—if this is your very first time listening, get ready to meet her! Welcome, Ellen! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:12:20	Ellen Weatherford	Guest	Thank you so much! It's so good to talk to you again! I just—I couldn't stay away. You're just—you're so magnetic that I just couldn't—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:12:32	Biz	Host	—I couldn't keep myself from looping back up. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Well I am very glad. Everybody needs to know that behind Ellen—her—whatever, Zoom wallpaper or whatever you—I don't know what the kids call it these days! It is made up of a beautiful jellyfish.
00:12:46	Ellen	Guest	This is actually my real background. This is what's actually behind me right now.
00:12:50	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: That's what's behind you all the time! Yeah.
00:12:52	Biz	Host	Ellen: This is not a virtual background. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I apologize. You're right.
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
			I forgot. Ellen is just literally floating in the deepest—
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
00:12:59	Ellen	Guest	—parts of the sea. Amidst a void full of beautiful jellyfish.

00:13:02	Biz	Host	That's right. And at any minute, guys—I'm pretty excited—a kid might just appear in the void.
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
			Because that's what happens in our lives. But I don't wanna ruin anything. No spoilers. Ellen, who lives in your house?
00:13:16	Ellen	Guest	Okay. So there's me, Ellen, the mom. I am 27?
00:13:22	Biz	Host	Ooh, we're gonna get ages! Hot damn! Woo!
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
00:13:26	Ellen	Guest	I don't know! I thought that ages were a part of it, 'cause like...
00:13:29	Biz	Host	No, they don't have to be, but now you've said it. And so we're keeping it in. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:13:33	Ellen	Guest	Okay. Alright.
00:13:36	Biz	Host	It's okay. I—do you wanna know how old I am? I'm about to be 48 in just a couple of weeks.
00:13:42	Ellen	Guest	Crushing it. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:13:44	Biz	Host	I know. Crushing it. Alright! So.
00:13:46	Ellen	Guest	Okay. So there's me—the mom. And then there's my husband—
00:13:49	Biz	Host	27! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
00:13:50	Ellen	Guest	There's my husband, Christian. I won't put him on blast by saying his age publicly, but he's—it's not too far from mine. It's okay. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:14:00	Biz	Host	138! Anyway. Go ahead. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:14:03	Ellen	Guest	2,000 years old.
00:14:04	Biz	Host	2,000 years old. Right. He's a turtle. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:14:07	Ellen	Guest	And then there is—let's see. I guess I'll go in order of—the order in which they were added to my family. There was my dog, Puppy. She is ten years old.
00:14:15	Biz	Host	Your dog's name is Puppy?
00:14:17	Ellen	Guest	Her name is Puppy. I—
00:14:18	Biz	Host	That's the best! No! It's good.
00:14:20	Ellen	Guest	She's a beagle and she is a mess. But I've—like, I tried to give her a more interesting name when I got her? 'Cause I got her from a friend who couldn't keep her. And so I was like, y'know, "I'm gonna give her a more interesting name than that." And I tried, and this poor dog? She's got about one brain cell left in her whole head.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			It was a wonder she learned one name in the first place?
00:14:45	Biz	Host	Oh, the baby!
00:14:46	Ellen	Guest	So like trying to learn a new name was really just pushing it a little too far. So she's stuck with Puppy forever. So after Puppy is my older son, Isaac, who is the <i>Minecraft</i> aficionado of the house. He's the <i>Minecraft</i> guy. I mean, we're like a gaming family so we all are into videogames? But he's a <i>Minecraft</i> guy. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:15:05	Biz	Host	Okay. Everybody's got their special thing. So <i>Minecraft</i> . Wait—where's your niche? What's your videogame niche?
00:15:13	Ellen	Guest	<i>Pokémon</i> , I would say.
00:15:14	Biz	Host	Ohhh!

00:15:16 Ellen Guest I'm the *Pokémon* one in the house.
00:15:18 Biz Host Oh, very good!

[Ellen laughs.]

00:15:20 Ellen Guest Alright.
00:15:23 Biz Host After Isaac is the cat, Ackee.
00:15:27 Ellen Guest Ackee—I remember Ackee! I remember hearing about Ackee.
He also—you may see him *[through laughter]* you may see him
pass through my screen here 'cause he likes to shove his butt up in
the webcam as I'm talking? And then the youngest is little baby
Fenley, who's only a year old! He's a teeny beanie.

00:15:41 Biz Host Oh god. How are—a year old?! How are you?
00:15:45 Ellen Guest We're doing—y'know, we're doing pretty good.

[Biz laughs.]

[Through laughter] 'Cause—those—personally, a couple months
were not super fun? Those first few months were rough!

00:15:55 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** No! I mean, somebody enjoys them, but I wasn't one of those.

Ellen: Yeah. But it ain't me. *[Laughs.]*

00:16:00 Biz Host Yeah. I wasn't one of those either. I was like, this is—
00:16:02 Ellen Guest No. I mean, I'm a—I'm a firm believer—I feel like early newborn
childhood is heavily overromanticized?

00:16:10 Biz Host Yes! Oh, yes! In fact, I don't want to ruin it, but possibly all of
motherhood is overly romanticized.

00:16:18 Ellen Guest Yeah! It's—

[Biz laughs.]

—I feel like there's so much pressure to, like, during the newborn
phase to be like, "You have to get the newborn photos done and
you have to treasure every moment because—" and I'm like,
"Okay, I'm just waiting until I can—I'm waiting for the day when I
can tell him to go to the bathroom." Y'know, like—

00:16:37 Biz Host Right. Right. They can hold their head up themselves. Y'know. I
like—

00:16:41 Ellen Guest It's—there's a lot to get through, y'know? And I'm not the kind of
person who heavily identifies with the pregnancy, childbirth, and
breastfeeding experience? It's not part of who I—

00:16:52 Biz Host Not your thing.
00:16:53 Ellen Guest No, it's not like who I am. I know a lot of people just so identify with
it and it's just very much like a part of who they are, and that's not
me at all? So— *[Laughs.]*

00:17:03 Biz Host Well, you're out! You're out, then! Ellen, you're out of the
motherhood ring gang!

00:17:09 Ellen Guest Disqualified for sure.
00:17:10 Biz Host Yeah! Disqualified! *[Laughs.]*
00:17:12 Ellen Guest It very much feels like something you just gotta get through,
y'know? It's like, I'm—I'm so much more interested in the long-term
parenting? I'm trying to be like, "Let's all be adults who go to lunch
together." *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

00:17:27 Biz Host I'm in it for the long game.
Yup. I'm in it for the, "They've gone to college and don't ever call anymore."
[Ellen laughs.]

00:17:36 Ellen Guest I'm ready for somebody to not talk to me.
I, unfortunately, crushed my mother's dreams of that day, because I bother her frequently. *[Laughs.]*

00:17:42 Biz Host Oh! There ya go. There's gonna be payback. There's something karmic in it.

00:17:46 Ellen Guest My poor mom, we never left her alone. We never stopped. We never stopped bothering our poor mom.
[Biz laughs.]

00:17:56 Biz Host She still has to deal with me and my sister every day. *[Laughs.]*
Oh god! Alright. We're moving on to more parenting fun things unrelated to us.
[Ellen laughs.]

So real quick—tell us about what the podcast is, *Just the Zoo of Us*. It's over here on MaxFun guys, so it's very easy to find!
[Ellen laughs.]

00:18:19 Ellen Guest And we'll link it. We'll link it. But quick review of *Just the Zoo of Us*! Yeah! It's funny that you say review, 'cause that's what we do is we review animals. And we give them little ratings out of ten for their physical adaptations—so things built into an animal's body that let it do a good job of the things it's trying to do; ingenuity, so like clever behaviors, things the animal's doing to kinda make it happen in this horrible world they're dwelling in.
[Biz laughs.]

And then aesthetics! Sometimes we just gush about how cute they are. Sometimes we absolutely roast them for how not-cute they are. Sometimes they're getting pretty dragged *[through laughter]* in the aesthetics section.

00:18:56 Biz Host Taking some stuff out on the—

00:18:58 Ellen Guest Yeah. Sometimes we're working out our own, like— *[Laughs.]*

00:19:00 Biz Host Own issues! Yeah! *[Laughs.]*

00:19:01 Ellen Guest We're working out our own stuff.

00:19:03 Biz Host 'Cause you can't do that with babies. So to do that with animals makes a lot more sense.

00:19:07 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** You can't be like, "Well, that baby—" Well, sure.

Ellen: You can like kinda do it with your own baby? But people don't like it when you do it with their baby. *[Laughs.]*

00:19:12 Biz Host No. Fair enough. Fair enough. That's why that podcast never took off.
[Ellen laughs.]

So have you had an animal that you've reviewed that is like... the numbers are way uneven. Right? Like, they are the most beautiful, worthless animal *[through laughter]* ever?

00:19:31 Ellen Guest Yeah! Yeah, specifically the one that comes into mind that has pretty much that exact spread you're describing is the Luna moth?

00:19:39 Biz Host Oh, the Luna moth! That—you know how I know about the Luna moth? *Animal Crossing*. Because that's—

[Ellen laughs.]

—this is how me and my children learn. Anyway! Go ahead!

[Laughs.]

00:19:48 Ellen Guest It's—hey, I'm not kidding! It's a valuable, like, that you can learn some actual serious stuff from Blathers.

00:19:54 Biz Host That is actually 100% true. Anyway. But—

[Ellen laughs.]

00:19:57 Ellen Guest Yeah! So the Luna moth, y'know, is just an incredibly gorgeous—you look at one and if you see one out and about in the wild? You will never forget that.

00:20:06 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Sorry! Gabe is making a face. Everybody—Gabe is making—

Ellen: It is an unforgettable experience to see a Luna moth. You don't like Luna moths? *[Laughs.]*

00:20:14 Biz Host —the most horrid face so I'm now gonna have to google Luna moth. Hold on. One second. Everybody? Stop the podcast.

00:20:21 Ellen Guest If you've ever seen the commercials for the sleeping medication Lunesta? They have the Luna moth in them.

00:20:27 Biz Host Okay. That's a Luna moth. Gabe! Gabe is having such a reaction to the Luna moth! I kinda love it. Good Gabe.

00:20:37 Ellen Guest Yeah! It's gorgeous! And we've seen them in the wild a few times, which is a fun experience to have. It feels—when you see one out and about, you just feel like you've been blessed for that day. Right? It's like, this has been a good day. I've been chosen.

[Biz laughs.]

It feels good to see one. But the thing about them—they're absolutely gorgeous, but they're—they spend the vast majority of their life as a caterpillar. It's a pretty big, bulky caterpillar. But a lot of caterpillars have cool defenses; they might be spiky, they might be poisonous, they might have some sort of interesting camouflage. The Luna moth caterpillar? It's just big and squishy. There's nothing really to it. And then they metamorphose into a giant, big, beautiful Luna moth, in which case they lose their mouthparts. They don't eat. They exist for the sole purpose of finding another Luna moth to mate with. So they're entirely, singularly, focused *[through laughter]* on just finding a mate.

00:21:41 Biz Host They're so lucky! *[Laughs.]*

00:21:43 Ellen Guest They literally don't even eat. And so since they lose their mouthparts and they can't eat anymore, they only live for another, like... couple weeks, maybe? And then they die! Y'know? And so I was just like, "Man, they really don't—they really didn't do a whole lot to protect themselves? They just kinda didn't bother in bulking up their defenses or anything." Most other caterpillars will kinda tank up a little bit, but the Luna moths? "No, I'm just gonna be

			super-hot. I'm gonna be super beautiful, sexiest moth in the world, and just hope that gets me by." <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:22:17	Biz	Host	Hope that gets—it has worked for some, everybody.
00:22:21	Ellen	Guest	Clearly, 'cause they're still here. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:22:22	Biz	Host	Yeah! Exactly! Alright. But this makes me think. So, this is making me think about parenting styles, as it were. My brain's just gonna go to this place. So people, we live a pretty long time, I would say compared to a majority of species that are out there. Right? Like, I know that there are turtles and like sharks, blah, blah, blah—but the insect world, they're not living that long. Some of the smaller animals probably do. But humans? We're in it for a while. So I'm wondering if an animal or creature—a living thing—is more quote-unquote "maternal/paternal" if they have a longer life expectancy? Than a shorter. Because like you said, the Luna moth's like, "I gotta just do it and then be done."
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
			"Because that's it and I'm not gonna teach—"
00:23:16	Ellen	Guest	And they also don't take care of their young, y'know? Like—
00:23:18	Biz	Host	Yeah! "I don't take care of my young. I might even eat it. I don't know."
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
			But what are your thoughts on that, not-an-actual-scientist?
			<i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:23:25	Ellen	Guest	Right. So I was gonna say, I'm not a zoologist. I'm not a scientist. But. Y'know.
00:23:30	Biz	Host	But I play one on a podcast and that's fine! I play a parent every day. So.
00:23:35	Ellen	Guest	Yeah! There's this idea of these two different types of reproductive strategies, I guess? Being K-selective versus R-selective. So an animal that is—I'm pretty sure it's the K-selective—will have fewer offspring at a time—so like, one or two—but will devote a lot of energy into raising that offspring. So it's like a high-investment, hoping that they will increase the chances that those very few offspring they had will make it to adulthood. And then there's R-selective, where they're just pumping out babies. Y'know? Like think of like... in <i>Finding Nemo</i> , in the first scene where they look at their eggs and they have thousands and thousands and thousands of eggs. They know—like, evolutionarily—know—the individual fish itself doesn't know—but they get that most of those babies aren't gonna make it. Most of those babies are gonna get eaten. They might not even hatch! Y'know? They're gonna get eaten by a barracuda. So— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:24:40	Biz	Host	Sure. But can I just say that Disney really didn't play up the fact that those fish know that they're probably—it was like, "EVERYBODY'S DEAD! WHY? OH MY GOD! THIS IS SO SAD!"
			<i>[Ellen laughs.]</i>
			Yeah. I was like, "Whoa! Whoa!"
00:24:55	Ellen	Guest	Well, like, clownfish really—they'll fan water over their babies, but they don't care that much about their babies. Y'know? It's not that big a deal. But I know they had to zhush it up for the movie, y'know.

But yeah. There's this idea that you can have a lot of babies and you just kinda cross your fingers for them. It's like, "Well, hope this works out for you! Goodbye! Have fun!" Fish do this a lot, where they'll just kinda—they won't even bother—like, sometimes they won't even bother mating with other fish? They'll just—they're called "broadcast spawners," where they just kinda like—y'know, broadcast—

00:25:28 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Biz:** Sounds like a dating approach.

00:25:33 Ellen Guest
00:25:36 Biz Host **Ellen:** Spew sperm into the water.
And then, y'know, hope that it meets with an egg. *[Laughs.]*
Wow. That's right. I've been to frat parties like that. Ha, ha. Ah, guys, the lord help me. Anyway. Yuck. Anyway! *[Laughs.]*

00:25:46 Ellen Guest
00:25:49 Biz Host It's not—it's not a... not glamorous.
No! No. No. No. It's not for the Luna moths.

[Ellen laughs.]

00:26:09 Ellen Guest Alright. So with that—what are some of the animals that do the K-style? Like, where they—like us! Like us! Having a couple and—or maybe just one—and being done?
Yeah, you'll see it in mammals. Specifically, like, large mammals. So humans, elephants, whales. Like, larger mammals will do this. Anything with a smaller—what you think of as like a "litter" size? Bears, large cats. Stuff like that that you'll think of like... nature documentaries like to follow them? Like your standard fare, like BBC *Planet Earth*. Sort of like, growing up (insert animal here). But like the larger mammals. But birds will do it, too. Y'know, birds will put a high investment into their chicks. Like bald eagles put a lot into their chicks. When we talked for the Block Party episode, we talked about emus. And emu dads put a lot of effort into raising their babies. They'll keep their babies around for a long time. Birds will do this a lot. There are some reptiles that will stick around with their babies. Alligators. Alligators raise their babies. Not for a super long time, but they'll at least like... they do a really cute thing where they carry their babies around in their mouths, if you've ever seen it?

00:27:10 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ellen:** It's really cute.

00:27:13 Ellen Guest **Biz:** Oh, I have seen that! On *Wild Kratts*. Anyway.
Isn't it nice? *[Laughs.]* I think it's cute! Because we think of alligators as being like big, scary monsters but they're just sweet, loving mothers.

00:27:22 Biz Host Until they rip you from the banks. And drag you under! Anyway.
00:27:28 Ellen Guest I've lived my whole life in Florida, so, y'know, we're kinda like... gators are like, y'know.

00:27:36 Biz Host "It's just alligators." *[Laughs.]* Literally, everybody, Ellen is just shrugging at me. Like, "Yeah. You live with earthquakes. Screw this." Anyway. When it comes to parenting styles—like, 'cause I wonder... if it—does it matter if you are a small family planning—you're into family planning, as an animal—or you are a "I'm gonna shoot my sperm everywhere" kind of planner. Which one—
[Laughs.] Just imagine like, *[singing]* here's my vagina swimming through the water! Hope it works out! *[Regular voice]* 'Cause guys, again, I am a biologist. Anyway.

[Ellen laughs.]

I'm wondering—so I am a mammal who has had two animals that I have put a great deal of time and effort into.

00:28:25 Ellen Guest
00:28:26 Biz Host

It's a high investment. *[Laughs.]*

I mean, high investment and guess who it's costing? Anyway.

[Ellen laughs.]

[Laughs.] It's one of those shows, guys. Anyway. With that, I also strive to use the sibling relationship to help them, like, develop in different ways—socially, how to work with other people, how to go into someone's room, read their diary and then cover your tracks—like, whatever it is, those are skills.

00:28:55 Ellen Guest
00:28:57 Biz Host

Like, mild espionage.

Mild espionage is definitely something you learn from siblings.

So... in the animal kingdom, are there sibling relationships? And again, Disney has lied to me for years. So.

00:29:11 Ellen Guest

Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:29:12 Biz Host

Yep!

00:29:13 Ellen Guest

Yeah.

00:29:14 Biz Host

Yep!

00:29:15 Ellen Guest

Y'know, like, I—one thing—like... sorry. *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

00:29:23 Biz Host

My brain just blue screened? Just completely shut down.

00:29:26 Ellen Guest

You got a one-year-old in your house, man.

[Laughs.] Y'know, one of the biggest offenders, I think, of weird animal dynamics in Disney is *The Lion King*? Like, *The Lion King's* really weird. Because they were just trying to take *Hamlet* and re-skin it, basically? Like, apply lines to—

00:29:40 Biz Host

Don't say "re-skin it" when you're talking about animals! *[Laughs.]*

00:29:43 Ellen Guest

I was thinking about videogames, when you change your skin.

[Laughs.]

00:29:45 Biz Host

I know. I know. It's very good. But like—agh!

00:29:49 Ellen Guest

But yeah. That one is really weird. But yeah! I mean, a lot of animals do—even if they have a small litter size—those siblings will be raised together, y'know? Where like... one that comes into mind of like animals that have really close sibling relationships would be cheetahs? Where cheetah cubs will stick together. The male cheetah cubs will stay together into adulthood. And—

00:30:11 Biz Host

Really!

00:30:12 Ellen Guest

Even maybe even forever. Where the males will just kind of stay with their brothers? Cheetah males have really close sibling relationships where they stay with each other even after they've left their mom. The male cubs might stay together. So you'll see a lot of nature documentaries about cheetahs where they usually will like follow them from their little cub days into adulthood. And cheetahs don't often make it to adulthood? So if they do it's really cool to see. But like cheetah cubs are raised in these small litters, y'know? So they just really grow up together and they learn to hunt together and then they just kinda stick together.

00:30:47 Biz Host

Alright.

00:30:48 Ellen Guest

Some primates—like, a lot of lemurs, smaller monkeys, like bonobos or something, they really take the sort of "it takes a

00:31:09	Biz	Host	village” approach to raising children? Right? Where they might not even keep track of what baby belongs to which member of the community? Right? They just—they’re so all-hands-on-deck—
00:31:11	Ellen	Guest	They’re like a village. It takes a village.
00:31:22	Biz	Host	Yeah! I think the word for that is alloparenting? Where it doesn’t even matter who the baby’s parents are, because everyone’s involved with taking care of every child.
00:31:24	Ellen	Guest	It’s a commune! I love it! I love it.
00:31:25	Biz	Host	It is! It is a hippy commune.
00:31:28	Ellen	Guest	It is a hippy commune. I love it. I’m fine with that.
			And, y’know, humans—y’know, used to do that too! In lots of parts of the world, they still do that. But where I live, certainly not.
			<i>[Laughs.]</i> The vibe anymore. I wish it was. That would be so cool.
			<i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:31:40	Biz	Host	I know. Wouldn’t that be awesome? Wouldn’t it be so nice?
			<i>[Laughs.]</i> Yeah.
00:31:45	Ellen	Guest	Yeah. But you see this alloparenting, you see this a lot in like lemurs and monkeys and stuff. Where like, even researchers who were studying them? They’ll be like, I have no idea who that monkey’s parents are because they get passed around so much that you lose track of who gave birth to who. Y’know. Doesn’t matter. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:32:04	Biz	Host	Alright. Well are there any where the parents just stand back and let the siblings kill each other? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:32:09	Ellen	Guest	Yeah. I mean, are we zooming out to animals in general?
00:32:14	Biz	Host	Real—I’m talking, like, <u>real</u> hands-off parenting. Real free-range.
			<i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:32:19	Ellen	Guest	So... most—the one that immediately comes to mind is sharks. Not all sharks, but sharks reproduce in a lot of different ways? But a lot of sharks reproduce with something that’s called ovoviviparity. So ovoviviparous sharks are basically, like... making an egg inside of their body in the sense that it’s not attached to a placenta? Like ours is? But then the egg hatches inside of the mama shark’s body and then it’s born out—like, alive. She’s not laying an egg. So a lot of times, sharks that do this... <i>[Laughs.]</i> The pups—they’re called pups—before they’re born, they will have a little battle royale.
			Inside.
00:33:04	Biz	Host	Inside the—inside the shark!
00:33:07	Ellen	Guest	Inside their mom’s body before they’re born, they’ll start taking each other out. So they’re kind of like—
00:33:14	Biz	Host	How many might be in there?
00:33:15	Ellen	Guest	Y’know, I don’t think it’s that many? And they’re really, really small. This is something that happens in a lot of different species of sharks, so it’s gonna depend on which one you’re talking about. Some of them can be pretty little? But they start taking each other out before they’re even born.
00:33:30	Biz	Host	Oooooo!
00:33:32	Ellen	Guest	And then I was talking to—we did an episode with one of my favorite comedians in the entire world, Vinny Thomas, and he was talking about pronghorns with us, and mentioned that pronghorns will do something very similar. And they’re mammals! Y’know?
			Like, they’re um—
00:33:46	Biz	Host	Yeah. What is a “pronghorn”?
00:33:48	Ellen	Guest	So a pronghorn is—they live in the plains in North America. They are called antelopes, but they’re not antelopes?
00:33:56	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: I know “where antelopes play.” Yeah. Where—yeah.

00:34:00	Ellen	Guest	Ellen: They're related to giraffes. Yeah! Yeah, yeah, yeah. So they look like antelopes but they're related to giraffes. But they're really cool, but they will do something very similar where they'll start taking each other out before they're even born. So yeah! Some sibling rivalries between animals can get really fierce. And naturally, no. The parent does not do anything about that 'cause that is one fewer mouth to feed, y'know? So she's kinda like, "Alright. Well." <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:34:22	Biz	Host	This is how we're gonna wrap this up. Alright.

[Ellen laughs.]

You—this is where we're wrapping up today, and that is—I feel that for human parents—again, we've talked about the romanticizing of parenthood. We've talked about—as society has developed, there's less of the "it takes a village" and with more isolated parenting comes more judgment comes more "I'm not doing it right; how am I supposed to—" Right? Like this. And then we have sort of devolved into this, "Not only am I going to invest energy and time, I'm going to maybe do more than I even should." Right? And—or at least just question myself for the rest of my life. But is there a parenting style, y'know, now I'm just gonna have one of those discussions where my brain goes through thinking, "Well, y'know, humans, we got that thumb! And then we got fire! And then everything started to fall apart. We didn't need to rely on the things that we probably—the styles of parenting we probably had." 'Cause people did used to—a long time ago—have lots of kids! Because you were probably going to lose a kid! Right? Because of disease; because of... war. Because of just life was really hard without, y'know, houses. And so... now in many parts of the world, it's pretty cushy! In comparison. And I wonder if that sort of changed how we approach... where we should step in and where we should step out as parents, versus what some of our animal friends do.

00:36:03	Ellen	Guest	Do you mean in terms of—
00:36:05	Biz	Host	I don't have a question now. I just realized I'm just waxing philosophically, wishing I could, y'know, sometimes eat my children.

[Ellen laughs.]

00:36:13	Ellen	Guest	I think—I think I kinda—I think I get where you're going with like, at what point do we kind of like send our children off into the world, y'know. Like, okay, go on about your business now. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:36:24	Biz	Host	Yeah! Yeah, yeah, yeah. You're a little colt! Go!

[Ellen laughs.]

00:36:28	Ellen	Guest	Yeah! Y'know, it is interesting to see, like, first of all—in different cultures around the world even now, that y'know in a lot of different cultures that are not modern American culture—
00:36:40	Biz	Host	What?!
00:36:41	Ellen	Guest	It's totally cool for your kid to live with you for their whole life, y'know? It's encouraged! And then you're encouraged to take care of your parents when you get older! In sort of the modern, y'know, contemporary American culture that is when you're eighteen—
00:36:56	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Ellen: You gotta get to gettin'!

00:37:01	Biz	Host	Biz: You're out! Get out! Get out! You don't have to go home, but you can't stay here. You gotta get out. Right.
00:37:04	Ellen	Guest	And I would say that a lot of animals do get to a point where they're no longer supporting their offspring, y'know? We— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Funny example is that we were outside in our backyard. We have this backyard that's up against these woods and a retention pond.
00:37:22	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: Is it haunted?
00:37:24	Ellen	Guest	Ellen: So we get all sorts of— Is it haunted?
00:37:25	Biz	Host	Yeah! Is it haunted?
00:37:26	Ellen	Guest	Oh, for sure. Yeah.
00:37:27	Biz	Host	Yeah. Okay. Good.
00:37:28	Ellen	Guest	Absolutely. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:37:29	Biz	Host	Every story I hear of a family who's got—"our yard backs up to these woods—"
00:37:33	Ellen	Guest	It's for sure haunted.
00:37:35	Biz	Host	There's a—it's haunted. Anyway. Go ahead.
00:37:37	Ellen	Guest	Yeah. So we were outside—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:37:47	Biz	Host	No, we weren't even outside. We were inside. And we hear this screaming. From the woods. And so we're like— Haunted.
00:37:48	Ellen	Guest	"Oh, no." So we go outside. We're just standing on the back porch, and we hear this periodic screaming. It's the same scream, but a few minutes apart?
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			And it sounds like a child screaming in the woods. Like screaming bloody murder. And so Christian and I were outside—this was like the middle of the night. It's like midnight. And we're like, "Should we call the police? What do we do? Do we go look to go check on this child who sounds like they're being tortured?" And so eventually I thought about it, and I took out my phone and I took out just a little sound clip of it? And I asked around some of my birding friends. I said—
00:38:27	Biz	Host	Oh, your birding friends!
00:38:29	Ellen	Guest	Some of my birding friends. And I said, "Do y'all know what this could be?" It was a Great Horned Owl—
			<i>[Biz gasps.]</i>
			But specifically a juvenile Great Horned Owl whose parents had left it. And it was like ready to be an adult? But not emotionally?
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			So what it was doing is it was calling out to its parents saying, "Come back and feed me!" But the parents weren't coming back 'cause the parents were like, "No, you're ready to be an adult owl now."
00:38:54	Biz	Host	Oh my god! It is everything that is gonna be the eventual—

[Ellen laughs.]

00:39:01 Ellen Guest —end of this parenting project we're all doing.
00:39:02 Biz Host It's a very relatable struggle! *[Laughs.]*
00:39:05 Ellen Guest Wow! That is... relatable. And that—
So the owl was screaming, like, "Come back and feed me!"

[Biz mimics owl's scream.]

00:39:09 Biz Host And it's like, "You can do it on your own! Oh god!" Oh my god.
Wow. This is really relatable.
00:39:16 Ellen Guest Yeah. So bird parents go through it too. *[Laughs.]*
00:39:18 Biz Host Oh. Yeah. "Come back and throw up in my mouth!" Alright.
00:39:21 Ellen Guest I know. We're all fighting that struggle. *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

00:39:24 Biz Host Ellen, that is the perfect place—

[Ellen laughs.]

00:39:32 Ellen Guest —to end this today. That was phenomenal. And...
Oh, I'm so glad.
00:39:33 Biz Host I enjoyed that tremendously. And everybody, if you also enjoyed
that tremendously, and—again—want to judge things other than
your own children and the friends around you, I highly recommend
Just the Zoo of Us, where you can take that out on animals.

[Both laugh.]

00:39:54 Ellen Guest Love it! Thank you so much, Ellen! I really appreciate it.
00:39:57 Biz Host Of course! Thank you, Biz! It was so great to see you again!
00:39:59 Ellen Guest It was so nice to see you again! Alright, bye!
00:40:01 Music Music Bye!!!
"Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar
with drum and woodwinds.

[Music fades out.]

00:40:18 Music Promo Cheerful ukulele with whistling plays in background.
00:40:19 Biz Promo *One Bad Mother* is supported in part by MadelIn. If quality and
craftsmanship is important to you, you should check out MadelIn.
MadelIn is a cookware and kitchenware brand that works with
renowned chefs and artisans to produce some of the world's best
pots, pans, and wineglasses. And as you all know, they also make
knives! I just used my beautiful MadelIn knife just today to chop up
a bunch of old produce to go in the compost bin. That stuff needed
a good, sharp knife to get through it. Who knew that leeks could be
that hard to cut once they have expired? Right now, MadelIn is
offering our listeners 15% off your first order with promo code
"Badmother." This is the best discount available anywhere online
for MadelIn products. Go to MadelnCookware.com/badmother and
use promo code "badmother" for 15% off your first order. That's
MadelnCookware.com/badmother. Use promo code "badmother."

[Music fades out.]

00:41:25 Music Promo Inspirational keyboard music plays in background.

00:41:26	Biz	Promo	<p><i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by Butcher Box. When it comes to the meat that will be the centerpiece of your holiday meals? Quality matters! Every month, Butcher Box ships a curated selection of high-quality meat with no antibiotics and no added hormones right to your house. In our last Butcher Box, we enjoyed steaks, ground beef, and chicken. And it has made getting dinner ready and meal planning for the week a heck of a lot easier! This holiday, Butcher Box is giving new members one pack of bacon for free in <u>every</u> box! Woo! Plus \$20 off each box for the first five months of your membership. That is free bacon for life! And up to \$100 off. Sign up at ButcherBox.com/obm. That's ButcherBox.com/obm.</p>
00:42:21	Theresa	Host	<p><i>[Music fades out.]</i> Hey, you know what it's time for! This week's genius and fails! This is the part of the show where we share our genius moment of the week, as well as our failures, and feel <u>better</u> about ourselves by hearing yours. You can share some of your own by calling 206-350-9485. That's 206-350-9485.</p>
00:42:41	Biz	Host	Genius fail time! Genius me, me!
00:42:45	Clip	Clip	<i>[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]</i>
00:42:59	Biz	Host	<p>Biz: Wow! Oh my God! Oh my <u>God!</u> I <u>saw</u> what you did! Oh my God! I'm paying <u>attention!</u> <u>Wow!</u> You, mom, are a <u>genius</u>. Oh my <u>God</u>, that's <u>fucking genius!</u></p> <p>Pretty sure I used this one last year, but I'm using it again! When I pulled out the advent calendar, I had remembered to save <u>all</u> of the previous advent little slips of paper. They don't always apply, right? 'Cause there's some stuff we're not do—but like, 80% I can reuse. So I don't have to freak out and be like, "Aaah! It's 5 AM and I didn't write an advent and I haven't thought of anything!" I can just open the drawer and be like, "Oh! Tree! Oh, <i>Rudolph</i> movie!" Right? Like, it's so... I'm so pleased with myself for remembering to do that. Plus, I remember to take the thumbtacks that I use to hang the advent calendar up and put them in one of the pockets.</p> <p><i>[Singing]</i> Geniussss!</p> <p><i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i></p>
00:43:45	Caller	Caller	<p>This is a genius. So my toddler—preschooler? Toddler? She's three. Anyway. Is a slow walker. And take normal levels of slow walker and then double it in your imagination because she also has cerebral palsy. Anyway. So. But she's three, so she wants to walk. And sometimes we're late and I fight with the urge of like—I gotta let her walk. It's good for her and it's what she wants, or am I gonna carry her to the car? If I carry her to the car, she's gonna be mad. But! She rides horses, physical therapy, and she loves physical therapy. So if Mama is a horse, and you ride the Mama horse to the car, and the Mama horse can gallop to the car when we're late, I get to walk fast, make the toddler giggle, and she gets to practice her words 'cause she does the same commands she does at physical therapy. So she tells me to walk on and tells me to stop. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Which is also really cute. Anyway. I'm a genius. I solved the what do I do when I want to run to the car but don't wanna make the toddler scream problem. At least for the moment. Ope! She needs something. You're doing a great job. Bye.</p>

00:44:57	Biz	Host	<p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i> You are doing a great job! Is what you are doing. You are doing a remarkable job. <i>[Singing]</i> Mama is a horse! <i>[Regular voice]</i> I—y’know, I—I think being a horse or being, like, a cat restaurant—“And here is your cat food!” Right? Like, whatever it is. We’ve all panic-yelled out something that seems ridiculous and our children are like, “Cool! I’ll do it if it’s that!” So being a horse? That is genius. That... is genius. Failures! Fail me, me.</p>
00:45:31	Clip	Clip	<p><i>[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]</i></p> <p>Theresa: <i>[In a voice akin to the Wicked Witch of the West]</i> Fail. Fail. Fail. <u>FAIL!</u></p> <p><i>[Timpani with foot pedal engaged for humorous effect.]</i></p>
00:45:38	Biz	Host	<p>Biz: <i>[Calmly]</i> You <u>suck!</u> Okay. Despite the fact that I’ve done such a good job with the advent calendar—remembering to save all the adverts to make life a lot easier—I still somehow—every—we are day ten into the advent calendar. And except for the first day, I have forgotten to put any of those slips into the advent. I just forget. Ellis will be like, “I have to do the advent!” And I’ll be like, “Wait!” Right? <i>[Laughs.]</i> So... ugh. Winning. Just, y’know, can’t—can’t win for losing or lose for winning or whatever that saying is.</p>
00:46:19	Caller	Caller	<p><i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i></p> <p>Hi! I’m calling with a fail. Which is actually a two-part fail ‘cause it’s also a daycare fail. Today—this whole week I’ve been doing daycare drop-off and pick-up. My husband usually does it but he is traveling for work this week, so I... did what I had to do. We get home, and I searched the bag before we left to make sure we had anything. Everything was good. Get home, my kid says he wants—there’s two cups. And there were two sippy cups. And I thought, “Oh, that’s weird. Maybe I didn’t check the bag good enough after his last day of school.” So whatever. No big deal. I then proceeded to give my child a cup and it wasn’t until after he finished the drink of water that I realized that I had two identical cups with two different name labels on them, and I definitely did not give him the one that is his name. So... y’know, that’s super great during COVID and when he’s sick and in three days we’re gonna know why. So just check the name labels next time you go to daycare. Alright. Have a great day. You’re doing a great job. Bye.</p>
00:47:25	Biz	Host	<p>That... I am surprised that this is not, like, one of a <u>hundred</u> calls based on this very fail! I—that seems like that would be so easy to do! Wow. That... yeah! I—y’know? Like most fails, you just kinda are so tired and so working through the day, minute by minute to get to the next minute, that when you see things like that—like, “Oh, these two are exactly alike!” You just kinda go, “Okay.” <i>[Laughs.]</i> Like, you—like, our ability to investigate further is not great. There’s no <i>CSI: Parenting</i> show. Where people are like, “Oh, this sippy cup actually belongs to—” Right? So you have failed, and I’m glad you’re ready for the inevitable “my kid is sick. And yeah, I know exactly how they got sick.” Well, you’re doing a horrible job. <i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:48:26	Music	Music	<p>“Mom Song” by Adira Amram. Mellow piano music with lyrics.</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.*

00:48:51 Promo Clip

[Music fades out.]

Music: Exciting techno music plays.

Tre'vell Anderson: Hey there, beautiful people! I'm Tre'vell Anderson.

Jarrett Hill: And I'm Jarrett Hill. We are the hosts of *FANTI*, the show where we have complex and complicated conversations about the grey areas in our lives, the things that we really, really love sometimes but also have some problematic feelings about.

Tre'vell: Yes, we get into it all. You wanna know our thoughts about Nicki Minaj and all her foolishness? We got you. You wanna know our thoughts about gentrification and perhaps some positive?—question mark?—

Jarrett: Uh-oh.

Tre'vell: —aspects of gentrification? We get into that, too! Every single Thursday, you can check us out at MaximumFun.org. Listen, you know you want it, honey, so come on and get it!

[Jarrett laughs.]

Tre'vell: Period!

00:49:36 Promo Clip

[Music fades out.]

Music: Bright, cheerful music.

Ellen Weatherford: Hey, there! I'm Ellen Weatherford.

Christian Weatherford: And I'm Christian Weatherford.

Ellen: And we've got big feelings about animals that we just gotta share.

Christian: On *Just the Zoo of Us*, your new favorite animal review podcast, we're here to critically evaluate how each animal excels and how it doesn't, rating them out of 10 on their effectiveness, ingenuity, and aesthetics.

Ellen: Guest experts give you their takes informed by actual, real-life experiences studying and working with very cool animals, like sharks, cheetahs, and sea turtles.

Christian: It's a field trip to the zoo for your ears.

Ellen: So, if you or your kids have ever wondered if a pigeon can count, why sloths move so slow, or how a spider sees the world, find out with us every Wednesday on *Just the Zoo of Us*, which can now be found in its natural habitat, on MaximumFun.org.

Christian: Listen and subscribe wherever you get your podcasts.

00:50:29 Biz Host *[Music ends, punctuated with an undulating wild animal call.]*
Alright, everybody. It's time... to listen to a mom have a
breakdown.

00:50:33 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hi, this is a rant. I have a three-and-a-half-year-old who is in preschool. And he started in August and he has been sick seven times. And that's not the rant. Sickness happens. I get it. But in the COVID era, every sickness means a COVID test. Which means he has had seven COVID tests. And he has figured this out now. And so this morning we went for our seventh COVID test since August? And he wouldn't give them his nose! He just wouldn't do it! And... they wouldn't let me do it. The *[inaudible]* last week? Because we did this last week because he's been sick every single week? They let me do it. It was like, y'know, the rapid, barely-in-the-nose swab. They just let me do it. And this week they wouldn't let me do it! And he would not give them his nose! I tried to hold his hands, but you know what? You can just turn a head! And we just couldn't do it! We just could not do a COVID test! And three-and-a-half-year-olds can't spit enough to do the spit test! So we just don't have COVID results? Which means now we're just home. Assuming he has COVID. Because we can't access the ticket to going back to preschool. Like, I don't—I don't even know what the rant part is?

[Biz laughs.]

It's like, you'll get this. Right? I don't have to explain. I just... don't wanna be in a pandemic anymore. I don't wanna take my son to get his brain smooched every single week—

[Biz laughs.]

—and really that would be fine if we could actually successfully do it. But now we're just home. For two weeks. Even though the technology is there. Because my three-year-old won't give up his nose. Ughhhh! Thank you for the hotline.

00:52:16 Biz Host Oh, man. You're doing a great job. And that, my friend, was an excellent rant. That was all that I think rants should be. Let's—let's all take a moment to really... sit in the seats of those with very little kids. Or kids who might be differently-wired in a way that makes them seriously not wanna be swabbed. Or, y'know, let's face it—some of us don't want to have something stuck in our noses. Let's all sit there. For a minute. And remember that all of them are having a really shitty day trying to help their kids, or the people in their lives, get tested for COVID. This two-year-old and three-year-old? That is—I—when I think of the list of things that I couldn't get my kids to do at different ages? Or things that I knew was going to be an infinite struggle to get them to do. It's a long list. And it's such a drain on you as the parent?

Like... *[sighs.]* There's a level of "everybody's watching me." There's also the level of, "wait a second, I was able to do this last week; why can't I do it this week?" There's also the, "Why won't my

three-year-old let me stick this up their nose?" As well as the, "Of course my three-year-old doesn't want me to stick it up their nose!" I—like—guys? Ellis—when they were a baby—could not stand having—y'know, you go in and they do the little tape measure around your head to see how your head is growing? This was—there was no physical, basically, for the first two years, that was not 90% screaming. For things that you're like, "Well that shouldn't be a big deal." Right? With all the nurses and stuff being like, "Why is your kid screaming about that?" Right? I mean, they didn't say that. But I know that's what they were thinking, 'cause I was very tired. [Laughs.]

So we have the need for the test. We all understand why we need the test. You clearly understand why we need the test. None of that makes getting that test done easier. The having to stay home is also really frustrating. And unpredictable. And takes a tremendous toll on you because of work. Or even if you are working from home, you're still not getting any of that time that you would be getting if your child was at daycare. So I—it's just really too much. It is too much. And I am crossing my fingers that we will head into a time in which we can have more options? For testing? Especially kids under five? And to all of you who have to get your kids tested, and it's a struggle, I really see you. And you, my friend? You call this hotline and you yell whenever you want. That was a—again—exactly what it—of course you're not mad at anybody. It's just bullshit. It's bullshit.

00:56:09

Biz

Host

Well, everybody, aaaah. Sometimes that's all I've got in me, is just noises. I miss having Theresa here to just "Bleeeeh" at each other occasionally. But I had such a nice time talking with Ellen. And— [Laughs.] I know that these are just discussions about how other animals do things. I understand. I am not a shark. I mean, I am a shark in the sense of like how I move through this. Like all parents. We've talked about that for years. We are sharks. But y'know, I listen to these different—clearly I don't wanna eat my young. Clearly I don't want to abandon them before they are ready to be kicked out of the nest. And I want them to live a very long time.

But?! I still can't help but be like, "Oh, maybe I'm—" How is it, at this stage in the game, I can self-judge myself based on parenting styles of animals? That are not even close to being related to me? "Well, that panda really does a good job of setting boundaries." Like, y'know, "my kids would be way more independent if I was like a armadillo." I don't know. Sorry, Ellen. I'm just—now I'm just throwing animals out that probably don't do that. Anyway, I just—like—will there ever be a time where I'm like, "I have nailed this!" I don't know! Will it be a time for any of us? Or maybe I'm just really tired of having people in my house all the time. That could be it, too. That could be it, too. I wonder if there's an animal that just wanders off for a month. [Laughs.] And then comes back. We'll have Ellen back on to talk about that.

Everybody? You're doing a really good job. It's the holidays, which means so many different things for so many different people. But the one thing we all can relate to is suddenly kids are in our house possibly more than normal, or people are wanting to come to our house more than normal. Like, y'know, sometimes we're all like—

we got kids, they don't go to school yet, we have to be home with babies or whatever. And you get into a groove and then suddenly it's a holiday and every relative wants to come over. And like, "Aaahhh!" Right? So it's just a sort of burrito filled with ingredients that can fill you up or really cause some issues. *[Laughs.]* Either way! It could lead you to hiding in the bathroom, which we know is the way to go when it's too much.

Regardless, you are doing a good job caring for your family. You are doing a good job setting the boundaries that you need during this time. And just like every day—but especially during the holidays—let me just be the one to tell you that I see you. And that you are doing a remarkable job. And—I will talk to you next week! Byeeeeeee!

00:59:12 Music Music "Mama Blues" by Cornbread Ted and the Butterbeans. Strumming acoustic guitar with harmonica and lyrics.

*I got the lowdown mamma blues
Got the the lowdown mamma blues
Gots the lowdown mamma blues
The lowdown mamma blues.
Gots the lowdown mamma blues
Got the lowdown mamma blues
You know that's right.*

00:59:36 Biz Host *[Music fades.]*
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.

01:00:04 Theresa Host *One Bad Mother* is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to MaximumFun.org/donate.

01:00:27 Music Transition *[Music resumes for a while before fading out.]*
A cheerful ukulele chord.

01:00:28 Speaker 1 Guest MaximumFun.org.

01:00:30 Speaker 2 Guest Comedy and culture.

01:00:31 Speaker 3 Guest Artist owned—

01:00:32 Speaker 4 Guest —Audience supported.