

MAX PARADOX

MOTHERHOOD

IS NOT WHAT THEY SAID IT WAS

A Brutally Honest, Darkly Funny Guide to
Surviving the Absurdity of Being a Mother



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INTRO

Motherhood is often described as a miracle.

This is usually said by people who are not currently looking for a missing shoe while holding a crying child and answering an email that starts with "just circling back."

Motherhood arrives wrapped in soft colors and big promises.
Fulfillment.

Purpose.

Love like you've never known.

It does not mention the noise.

Not the cute noise.

The constant noise.

The kind of noise that continues even when the house is quiet, because your brain has learned to reproduce it on its own.

No one tells you that motherhood is not a role you step into.

It is a system update that installs itself overnight.

You wake up as the same person, but nothing runs the same anymore.

You still have thoughts.

They just get interrupted mid-sentence.

You still have needs.

They are now considered optional.

You still exist.

But mostly as a background process.

Motherhood turns time into something abstract.

Mornings last four hours.

Years disappear in a blink.

You can clearly remember a tantrum from three years ago,
but not what you ate yesterday
or whether you ate at all.

Everyone agrees it's hard.

They just don't agree on what "hard" means.

Hard is not the big dramatic moments.

Hard is the accumulation.

The endless repetition.

The decisions that don't matter but still must be made.

The emotional labor of keeping several tiny humans alive
while pretending this is all very natural.

- You will be asked what's for dinner every day for the rest of your life.
- The answer will never be correct.
- You will eventually stop answering and still be blamed.

Motherhood is praised loudly and supported quietly.

Very quietly.

So quietly you're not sure support was ever part of the plan.

You are expected to be patient, intuitive, resilient, organized, nurturing, calm, and productive.

Preferably before coffee.

You are supposed to love every moment.

Especially the moments you secretly hate.

Especially those.

Because motherhood does not erase your personality.

It puts it under pressure.

It reveals things.

Your limits.

Your contradictions.

Your capacity to function on four hours of sleep while negotiating with someone who cannot be reasoned with and will not be ignored.

It also introduces guilt as a permanent feature.

Guilt for working.

Guilt for not working.

Guilt for being present.

Guilt for needing space.

Guilt for enjoying silence too much when it finally appears.

- You will miss your child while they are in the other room.
- You will also fantasize about being alone in a hotel room with no responsibilities.
- Both feelings will exist at the same time.

Motherhood is full of moments that are supposedly magical.
And many of them are.

Briefly.

Until someone spills something sticky on something important.

This book is not here to explain motherhood.
It doesn't need explaining.

This book is here to sit next to you on the couch,
look at the chaos,
and quietly say,
"Yes. This is exactly as ridiculous as it feels."

Not to fix it.

Not to optimize it.

Not to turn it into a lesson.

Just to notice.

Because sometimes the only relief comes from realizing
that the problem is not you.

It's the absurdity.

And it's everywhere.

Chapter 1 - The Myth of the Prepared Woman

There is a woman society believes exists.

She is calm.

She is organized.

She knew what she was doing before the baby arrived.

She read the books.

She took the classes.

She bought the right things.

She is not you.

She is not anyone.

But everyone keeps referring to her,
as if she might walk in at any moment
and take over.

Preparation is the first lie of motherhood.

It starts early.

During pregnancy.

When people ask if you're ready.

Ready for what, exactly, is never specified.

Sleep deprivation.

Identity erosion.

The emotional weight of being someone's entire world while still being expected to function in the old one.

You are told to prepare anyway.

So you do.

You research strollers like you're choosing a vehicle for Mars.

You compare car seats with the intensity of a safety engineer.

You read articles written by people who clearly had help.

You prepare your home.

You prepare your body.

You prepare your heart.

No one prepares you for the moment when preparation becomes irrelevant.

Because motherhood does not ask what you planned.

It does not check your notes.

It does not respect your system.

It arrives and immediately starts improvising.

The prepared woman was supposed to know things.