

**EPISODE 1525**

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**FT:** So Money episode 1525, living your best life when you're the f-ing worst, with Laura Belgray, author of the new book *Tough Titties*.

**'LB:** *All these things that I was not supposed to do led me right to where I am supposed to be. And so I am for taking that windy path and being okay with your life, even if it doesn't hit the milestones that you're supposed to in the order that you're supposed to; get a great job, move up the ladder, find the one, have kids, et cetera, et cetera."*

[INTRO]

[00:01:05]

**FT:** Welcome to So Money, everybody. I'm Farnoosh Torabi. Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023. I am back from Puerto Rico. Let me tell you, my keynote rocked it. It wasn't perfect because what is, but I'm excited that I was able to share this new talk of mine about fear and money from the *Healthy State Of Panic* book, which you can pre-order now at [ahealthystateofpanic.com](http://ahealthystateofpanic.com). I did this in front of an incredible audience at the Our Money, Our Power Financial Freedom Summit in Puerto Rico, hosted by none other than Jannese Torres, who is the creator of Yo Quiero Dinero podcast and just a force in the Latina community, helping women of color make that money.

I'm back with something new to celebrate, and that is my very, very dear friend, Laura Belgray's, new book, *Tough Titties*, which comes out tomorrow. You know Laura. She's an email and copywriting expert, Founder of Talking Shrimp, self-described, unapologetic, lazy person. Her memoir/unhelp book, *Tough Titties*, comes out tomorrow. It's a memoir about a misfit, Laura, coming of age in the eighties and nineties New York City screwing up at life but finally finding success with her first million dollar year at age 50.

The book, as her husband calls it, is loser Sex and the City. It's for you if you've ever felt behind in your life or your career, if you've ever felt the pain of not fitting in. Laura's here to give us all

permission to be ourselves unapologetically. Stay tuned for the end of the episode when I will share how you can win a copy of *Tough Titties*. I have several to give out. So make sure you listen to the episode. Wait till the end and hear those easy instructions. Here's Laura Belgray.

[INTERVIEW]

[00:03:00]

**FT:** Laura Belgray, welcome back to So Money this time as the author of, oh, my gosh, this book, *Tough Titties: On Living Your Best Life When You're the F-ing Worst*. Congratulations. How do you feel? How do you feel at this stage?

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**LB:** Thank you so much, Farnoosh. I feel so many different things. I feel proud, like kind of a sense of surrealness that it actually exists after all these years of working on it. Like, "Oh, it's a book, and who is this person with the book?" Then also overwhelmed with all the things, as you know because you're on the same road just a little behind me. There's an infinite number of things to do. There are infinite ways that you can throw everything at your success, and it's just like where does it end. Where do you draw the line?

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**FT:** It doesn't. That's the crappy part about all this is you never feel like you can just exhale and be like, "I'm done. I did all the things that I was supposed to do to bring this book to life and have it be successful." I remember when you first told me you wanted to write a book. It was at my book workshop. This was now, I want to say, like 2017, 2018. Those years get really confusing for me.

Certainly, this book has also been in you for your entire life. This is a book that is not just great with advice on how to, as you say, succeed at life when you're the f-ing worst, living your best life when you're the f-ing worst. We're going to get into some of those tactics, how you've done it

so exceptionally. But it is a memoir. It's a series of essays that capture your comeuppance in New York City.

Everybody knows I love a good New York City life story. I love when someone was born here, experienced it. A lot of us here are just like new. We come bright-eyed, bushy-tailed. But you like really roughed it in the beginning and have seen the wealth disparity grow. Anyway, let's start with who this book is for. I was laughing because like if you're answering yes to this question, this book is for you, and here's the question. Ever feel stuck and behind in your life or career? That's kind of everybody, right?

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**LB:** Yes. You know what? I was just on another podcast, Terri Cole's podcast, The Terri Cole Show. We were talking about that exact same thing. She said she was at some conference I think where somebody asked who in this room, and it was somebody big. I forget him, but who in this room feels like they are behind where they're supposed to be in life. She said every single hand in the room went up, and it was like thousands of people. So I would agree with that that that's pretty much all of us. I know very few people who feel like they're exactly where they are supposed to be or have surpassed it.

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**FT:** Right, right. But more specifically, this book is for those of us within that cohort who want – we kind of know what we want. We don't give two Fs about anything, but we kind of want a life to go at our pace, and we might make decisions that are counter-culture. We don't want to have children or maybe we don't want to work the typical nine-to-five. Or maybe we do. So this book is really a permission slip as one of your – I think it was Marie Forleo who gave you a great quote here. She says, "It's sort of a permission slip for being 100% you." Tell us a little about Laura Belgray, the author, in terms of how are you the worst.

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**LB:** I know worse in so many ways, and it's funny because a lot of people will read the subtitle and say, "But you're not the worst." Meaning I'm not a bad person. No, I'm not a bad person. But I feel like I'm someone who ends up saying, "I'm so sorry. I'm the worst," a whole lot. I think throughout my life I've had a lot of people say, "Oh, you're killing me, Belgray," whether – because I am a professional disappointment and maybe don't do the things that I say I'm going to do, including for myself like, "Hey, everyone. I'm going to write a book." Then, "Where's your book? You're killing me. Why aren't you writing your book?"

Just I tend to be late. I really try not to be, but I think I have a lateness disability. I'm just going to call it that so that it's official, and there are allowances made for me. I've willingly gotten into toxic, ill-advised relationships. I'm no longer in that phase of my life. Thank God. I'm like in a very happy relationship but entered into a long-term relationship with a married man in my around 29, my early 30s. Just done a lot of things the wrong way and can't get – I like to use an expression we used, I think, in the nineties. Can't get with the program in terms of like getting to work on time.

I could – I survived corporate life for all of six months because I just couldn't. I couldn't follow the chain of command. I couldn't write in the voice that they wanted me to write in which the boss called elegant and up here. I wanted everything to be in my voice and cheeky. I could not, for the life of me, get there at 10am and then 9am when they switch to summer hours. So those are some of the ways in which I feel like I am the worst.

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**FT:** Yet you are living your best life which I want to get into as well. But why do you think the world is ready for this self-unhelp book, as you title it? Your husband also calls it the loser Sex and the City, another reason to read this book because I think we all want that permission to do things our way, even if it is disappointing to others, and not feel like we're any less better off or we have any less potential to achieve what we want to achieve.

Why do you think this book is hitting such a positive court? I mean, people are in love with this book. Really, they are. I mean, this is not your typical –

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**LB:** Thank you.

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**FT:** We don't even know where to categorize this book because it is so different than what is out there.

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**LB:** Yes, because I've – I am really fearing that it'll be put in the how-to category, and I don't want that because I say it is not a how-to. It's more of a how not to.

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**FT:** How not to.

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**LB:** It's a how not to. I think that it's striking a chord because people feel relieved when they hear someone say what they're thinking and admit that they do things wrong and that they go against the grain and cannot get with all the advice out there to wake up at 5:00 and then take a cold plunge and work out in the shower and –

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**FT:** Right. All before 9am.

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**LB:** Yes. Everyone is out there telling you to optimize and even the way they tell you to – they think they're giving you permission like, "It's okay to rest. It's not selfish to rest." But then they

tell you how to schedule in your rest. I don't know. You're supposed to – like all the advice out there about relaxing and resting and getting enough sleep and fighting burnout all seems to be in the same vein as the hustle stuff and the grind stuff. It's just all one and the same. I think people are relieved to hear someone say, “I don't get it right. I screw up all the time.”

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**FT:** There's wisdom in that. Can we be completely honest? I mean, maybe you didn't realize in your 20s and maybe even your early 30s that what you were doing was leading up to living your best life. But for those who feel like they're in the mess of things, and maybe they are the folks who are like, “Oh, you're killing me.” They hear that a lot in their lives. What do you want the message for them to be, like something that you wish you had recognized maybe even earlier in your comeuppance, in your career, and also in your personal life, as you were making choices that weren't the traditional choices?

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**LB:** Yes. I think that one thing that I realized as I was writing the book because I really didn't know how it was going to end, what it was going to be while I was writing all these stories, I just knew that, thematically, it was a lot of examples of me being a not-supposed-to person, doing things not the way I'm supposed to. I realized by the end like, wow, all these things that I was not supposed to do led me right to where I am supposed to be. So I am foretaking that windy path and being okay with your life, even if it doesn't hit the milestones that you're supposed to in the order that you're supposed to; get a great job, move up the ladder, find the one, have kids, et cetera, et cetera.

Some of us go through phases and take a more windy route. So I think that that would be my message to people is that it's very likely all these not-supposed-to moments in your life are leading you to where you're supposed to be. Just for example, me being late all the time, especially in my early 20s, that led to me meeting my best friend. There's a chapter called Sorry, I'm Late, where because I was late to meet a friend for lunch at her job, I got there, and this woman who was at the front desk said, “Oh, my gosh. You must be Laura. Susan was mad at

you for being late, so she went to Bendel's to punish you and buy stockings and make you wait. So do you want a Diet Coke?" I was like, "Yes, please." I sat there and talked with her.

By the time Susan came back, it was like, "Susan who?" This person was my new best friend, and is still my best friend to this day, and has been a part of my life ever since, and read a portion of my wedding ceremony, and was at my dad's funeral and burial, and there for every milestone of my life. It's all because I was late. So that's just one example. Also, the husband I just mentioned, who the person I met and married, I met through people that I had met when I was going out like it was my job. That's all chronicled in a chapter that I won't name on your show. We'll just call it chapter nine, just in case, because we didn't tell anyone to have earmuffs on.

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**FT:** Right. My kids sometimes listen to the podcast. Not as much as I'd probably like them to. You call yourself a late bloomer. Talk about how that manifested to this now career that you have where you are making seven figures, but maybe not as early as a lot of us would think that would happen. You did this as you were turning 50 years old. But also the beauty in what you do which is you run The Copy Cure with Marie Forleo. You're the Founder of Talking Shrimp. Your whole – your genius is copy and writing beautiful copy and a lot of that copy helping people who are entrepreneurs and marketers to convert. You write these incredible emails which I say like even if you aren't interested in entrepreneurship or selling or marketing or business, like follow Laura's newsletter because you will learn a lot about how to write funny, compelling, tight copy, which is what you just like to do. You somehow turn this into a massive business. Tell me everything.

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**LB:** Yes. Okay. Where should I start? Well, when I was five, now, I –

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**FT:** Yes.

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**LB:** So to a lot of people, like none of this might seem like a late bloomer path because I did after what seemed like a long time in my early 20s after college but was really only like a year and change, I did get a job, and that led to an internship and led to more jobs, et cetera. But I always felt like I was behind. I was not able to climb a ladder. I still – I always felt like I haven't found my thing. I haven't found my thing.

Then I got into writing TV promos which was a dream job. I found out there was a job that involved watching a lot of TV and writing these little things during the commercials that advertise the shows. Those were promos, and I was like, “Holy crap. That's a job. I need that job.” I did go and get that job, and I had it for many years. But then kind of typical of me, I got complacent. When other people were moving on or telling me I should be moving on to something bigger, I just didn't. I was just like, “Well, it's nice here, and I don't know what I would – I want to write something bigger and something in my voice with maybe more lasting power.”

These are things – these spots that I wrote were – they were really fun to write, and it was great. But they had air for a couple of weeks, and then they were gone. I was like, “What am I going to write? Do I write a book? I don't have a book idea. Do I write a screenplay? I don't have a screenplay idea.” I actually took a course called Writers Boot Camp three times and never wrote. It was a screenwriting course in Manhattan in person. I showed up like for every class. The teacher who was the same one who taught it each session was very amused that I kept coming back and not writing a screenplay. Then eventually –

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**FT:** She was getting rich because of your inability to close the deal here, you know.

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**LB:** Exactly. I don't think she was getting rich, but someone was making money off of me. Then in around 2009, Marie Forlea, who I had met in years earlier in the hip-hop class at Crunch, got



me into the online world. She pulled me in, and she asked me to – we were good friends who would walk home together from class, from hip-hop class, and I would talk about what I did. She talked about what she did. So she knew I was a copywriter. She asked me to speak at her first live event which was called Rich Happy and Hot Live. It was 50 people in the Soho House library.

I talked about – I gave a talk called five secrets to non-sucky copy, and people started coming up to me and afterwards and asking like, “Hey, can you help me with my website? I'm a realtor. I don't know what to put on it. I don't know what to put on my about page, et cetera.” I was like, “Yes, I can do that,” even though the only kind of copy I had written was in promos, and it was a totally different thing. I was like I knew I could do better than most people at writing in a conversational tone, like a person.

I started taking clients and started building an online-based business of client work, like working with people one-to-one on their copy for their websites, their emails, their marketing, all that kind of stuff, and eventually pivoted once again when I got tired of having clients, and really just I hated looking at my schedule. I loved the work I did with them in like when we were in the session together, when we were on the phone or on Skype at the time, in a Google Doc. I really liked what we were doing, but I hated seeing them on my calendar.

That's when I decided to figure out like how can I make a living without doing these one-on-ones, without having things on my calendar, by just like having my week look like a lot of email writing, sitting on my couch, and writing emails at my own pace, at my leisure. I'd already figured out how to have a life where I didn't have to set an alarm. I didn't take any clients before noon or 1:00. But now, I wanted to take that to the next level and have lots of blank space on my calendar.

So I started creating programs. I had already started The Copy Cure with Marie, and that gave me a taste of what was possible, like having a course out there that people bought, and it made a lot of money, especially partnering with Marie because she had the infrastructure and the list. But to be able to make a living doing that and then also just writing my emails as a way to sell whatever I was offering. I pivoted to that, and it made a – like I didn't know if I was going to be able to make up the difference in income. Like if I drop my clients, am I ever – will I ever make

up that income by just selling some courses, et cetera? I created a group program, a mastermind called Shrimp Club. That was the year that I made my first million in a year because it worked.

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**FT:** Yes, and because you were doing it your way. We share a friend, Susie Moore, who likes to talk about letting it be easy. I think as much as that, maybe we resist that because we think like no. We feel like hard means better. It's kind of true. It's kind of true. When have you ever like sweated over something, and then it came out perfect? It's such a myth.

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**LB:** It is. I've never valued doing it the hard way. I often end up doing it the hard way because I'm inefficient. Or I try to skip. I try to make it easy, and I cut corners or skip steps. Then it becomes a mess. But my spirit is always about making it easy because I do not locate my self-worth in working hard, in how hard I work or how busy I am. I actually feel kind of ashamed when I'm trying too hard or when I'm too busy and value having it be easy.

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**FT:** Well, it speaks to why I like to look at an empty calendar where I might get a little nervous when I see an empty calendar. Like I'm not doing enough. How am I actually – like this is a – I'm living a lie, like I'm not doing anything. I'm curious. Where do you think this personality of yours comes from? Is it like – did you inherit this from a parent? It's kind of incredible. You do give yourself the credit, right? Like how you are.

Maybe in our 20s we don't recognize the value in it because every – it's so counter-culture, and everybody wants you to like jump out of college and get the job and start working and paying your dues and have that full busy calendar as a sign of success. But you somehow like just were never sucked into that. You did resist that. So what do you think is sort of the psychopathy behind that? The **[inaudible 00:22:22]**. Yes.

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**LB:** The psychology?

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**FT:** The psychology.

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**LB:** Because some of it is a pathology.

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**FT:** [inaudible 00:22:29]. Yes.

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**LB:** I am a psychopath.

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**FT:** Pathology. That's the word. Not the psychopath. It's pathology.

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**LB:** Yes, the pathology. Yes. I don't think either my parents are like me or were – my dad is now, I will say, passed. I usually say dead, but that's kind of jarring. But my dad is no longer with us, but he – my mom is a pretty hard worker, though. She likes her leisure time and never wanted to work full-time, actually. She's always said like, "I would never want to have a full-time job." She liked working part-time. She likes having – she actually likes to sleep fairly late. We're a bunch of night owls. I said my mom isn't like me, but maybe she is, thinking about it out loud.

My dad is a bit – he was always a bit of a rebel in the same way that I am. Like not a cool rebel, not someone who was like racing cars and doing drugs or anything like that. Not wearing a leather jacket like James Dean. I've never done a drug, except for like sleep gummies with THC and have no tattoos or anything like that. But I think that if I were to take one of those personality tests, like the four – what is it? Is it Gretchen Rubin's? There's like the questioner, the obliher, the rebel, and I forget what the other one is. But I am both a questioner and a rebel. I don't – I question authority, I question things that I'm supposed to do, and I rebel against expectations of me, for better or for worse. I mean, sometimes, I've really sabotaged my success and trajectory by saying, “No, I'm not going to do it because you want me to.”

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**FT:** Well, you write about this in one of your chapters called Baby Fever, where you explore your ultimate decision to not have children. It was like you tested yourself. You're like, “Well, if this was something that was illegal, would I still want to not do it because I am that rebel? Maybe I am drawn to things that are naughty.” But the answer was still no.

I'd love to explore that a little bit because we talk about that sometimes on this show, these big life decisions that do carry a cost. Many more people now are preferring to not have children. While we've come a bit, like we've come a far away, like I think we can accept this and acknowledge this, and we don't shun people for this choice. But there's still something out there that does leave some women and men like feeling guilty, regretful, like awkward around their family and loved ones. How did you know this was not your path, and how did you stick to it?

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**LB:** Yes. So unlike a lot of women I've talked to who are child-free by choice, I did not always know in my bones or at least didn't acknowledge that I knew that I didn't want kids. I was on the fence for a long time because I didn't actively want them. But I was waiting to want them because there was so much pressure to – everyone said, “Someday, you'll change your mind. Someday, you will want them. It'll hit you. Some sort of maternal longing will just sneak up on you one day, and then you will want to have a kid.” It never happened. I was just waiting and waiting.

It was tough to make a decision, to come to a clear like hard no on it because I was looking everywhere for examples of older women who were now past the choice, past childbearing years, and could say, "I didn't have kids, and I never regretted it, and I love my life." All there was was Dame Helen Mirren. She was the only one that I could find when I Googled and like Oprah. But people would talk about Oprah with a sadness. Like Oprah, she's rich. She's got an empire. She's got Stedman and Gayle. She's got an avocado orchard. But she still doesn't have it all. I was just so afraid of that regret.

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**FT:** Women just can't win. When you become wealthy, you can't win. When you're not wealthy, it's not – that's not fun. You're right. Even Jennifer Aniston, still the article is like, "Is that a baby bump?" She just had a hamburger. Like leave the woman alone.

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**LB:** Right. It's like she's been publicly forgiven because it came out recently that she did want to have kids. So it turns out she wasn't this shrew who wouldn't give Justin Theroux kids. That was the mythology around her. Like, "She doesn't want kids. What a biatch. No wonder they're divorced. No wonder he dumped her."

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**FT:** I love how you write in that chapter about how there is also this like separation of women who – well, this perception that like if you're a woman with children versus a woman who doesn't have children, like there's no more friendship. You can't get along. I want to say for the record like you and I are different in those departments, but we get together. We make it happen. I think that that is part of the fear too is that maybe like you're in a different club. You're in a different category of woman. So you can't mix with other categories of women.

It's sort of like when I go to pick up my kids at school. It's like the stay-at-home moms versus the working moms. Nobody really cares. But I have to say, when we get to talking about work, like

there's a little bit of maybe like awkwardness around that if one person's not working, one person is. There's no permission to just own your decisions and then move on from there.

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**LB:** Right. I will say that that was one of the things that occurred to me was like not that I wouldn't get along with people or connect with them anymore if I didn't have kids, and they did. But that I would be excluded from this club where everybody made connections and it's like, "Oh." My sister lives in Silver Lake, and her world is full of like, "Oh, yes. We're friends with Dax Shepard and Kristen Bell from the school." Like everybody's friends with and who like meets these big, important people because they have kids at the same school. I was like, "Oh, I'm going to miss us out on a lot of those connections."

Somebody assured me. She reassured me like, "Trust me. You have as many – you're shoved together with as many people you cannot stand or way more people you can't stand through your kids than you are with people you really like and want to make friends with." Then you also start to – this is one of the things that comforted me also. They'd say, "And then you also start to judge your friends because maybe you don't like the way they parent, and it causes a rift between you." So there's no perfect solution.

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**FT:** There is no shortage of reasons to start disliking people. Okay, that's what I'm learning. Going back to the very beginning of this episode when I mentioned that you grew up in New York, and you still live in New York, you're a true New Yorker through and through, I love – again, talking to the authentic New Yorkers. You grew up in New York City during the seventies, and eighties. The wealth disparity back then, how would you compare it to the wealth disparity now in what is still the country, at least the country's most expensive city? I don't think any longer the world but definitely in America.

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**LB:** Yes. It is so different now than it was growing up. When I was a kid, I went to two private schools, and they were both very different in their kind of tone and ethic around money and around wealth. The first one was more kind of new money and what we would then call jappy. Well, you're not allowed to say that now. I can because I'm Jewish but –

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**FT:** Jewish [inaudible 00:30:40]. I learned that when I moved to the main line of Philadelphia.

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**LB:** Yes. It was like back then, it was just someone who was like, I don't know, showy and liked to go to the mall back in the eighties. It's like, "Oh, yes. She's always going to the mall, someone who had lots of Benetton." Then I switched to a very old money school. It was an all-girls school on the Upper East Side, which was way more kind of posh and gentry – genteel is what I would call it.

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**FT:** Brand names with no labels.

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**LB:** Yes, exactly. Right. No labels. Drive a beat up Volvo in the Hamptons. Like don't show that you have a lot of wealth, even though you have a Renoir in the TV room. So there was a big difference in culture between those. But between now and then, like I still – even at the old money really fancy school, there were all kinds – there was a whole range of kids in my class. There was one of my friends. Her dad was a cartoonist for The New Yorker, and they lived in a rent-controlled apartment. There were a lot of kids of authors and artists.

My dad was a shrink but not a psychiatrist, a psychotherapist. He didn't make like buckets of money, and we could still afford – my parents could afford to send two kids to private school and live on the Upper West Side in a classic six without being hugely wealthy, by just being

comfortable. That's just not possible anymore. Now, it's like – and now, there are SUVs piled up in front of the schools, stretching for blocks like a traffic jam of black SUVs at all these private schools. We didn't have that then. It wasn't the same, and it wasn't like everybody you knew was a hedge funder's kid.

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**FT:** Oh, don't I know it? I mean, it's crazy. I was reading the article in New York Magazine, it was recent, about what would it cost to live in New York in your dream scenario. They interviewed a bunch of 20-somethings. They did a similar article when I was in my 20s that I read. But it was cool. It was sort of like a choose your own adventure in New York as a 20-something. Adventure meaning like where you would live and how you would – where you spent your money. Did you have kids? Did you not have kids.

At the end, it would punch out or crank out a number for you like, “Here's how much you need to earn every year.” Mine was a million dollars a year, and I was making \$42,000 at the time.” I was like, “Okay, I guess I'm going to move stat because I could not even fathom how to get to seven figures like that by the time I was like ready to have kids.” So all this to say, fast forward to this new article, and they – again, back to your commentary about the wealth disparity. This woman in the article in her 20s, her perfect life in New York was three kids in a Brooklyn Heights Brownstone, full like –

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**LB:** Yes, full Brownstone.

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**FT:** [inaudible 00:33:56] like and who wants to eat out at all the fancy restaurants. The New York Magazine, which is where I want to fault them, they said, “Okay, you're going to need \$700,000 a year.” I was like –

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**LB:** Oh, yes. I saw that.

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**FT:** What?

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**LB:** That was a shockingly low number. I'm like, "That's not –"

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**FT:** Like that has to be after taxes, right? Because she's really making like 1.5. Then even then, she's making some trade-offs because that's not going to get you three kids in private school. A townhome is like eight million dollars, so –

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**LB:** Depending on the neighborhood, it can be \$26 million.

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**FT:** On the waterfront in Brooklyn. Anyway, that article really frustrated me because I was like that's a lot of money still, but it's still – like even if – making \$700,000 sadly in – with those demands. You're struggling some days, I would imagine, unless you have inheritance or family money.

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**LB:** Well, and then you consider college. If they're planning to send their – those kids to college. That wasn't factored in.

[00:34:56]

**FT:** There was no more money left for college for these.

[00:34:58]

**LB:** None, not a cent. The one lifestyle that looked doable, just from our point of view but probably not the guy who wanted that lifestyle, it was like 120-something thousand. He wanted like a sick apartment in Bushwick and to party and spend the month or up to like two months a year in Europe, which we both have learned is cheaper than hanging out here.

[00:35:27]

**FT:** Being that Bushwick apartment for 10,000 a month, I guess. But yet not to give the New York Magazine too much of a plug, but that was an interesting conversation starter of an article.

[00:35:39]

**LB:** It was.

[00:35:40]

**FT:** Tell me about the title, *Tough Titties*. Also, everybody, just order the book. I'm going to actually give away several copies of this to the audience. So stay tuned. At the end of the episode, I'll share how you can win a free copy of *Tough Titties*. It's very on brand with you, Laura. It's got sort of this like seventies retro vibe going on in the cover. But I want to know the story behind the title *Tough Titties* before we go. Tell us.

[00:36:04]

**LB:** Yes. So, I mean, for a long time, I didn't know what the book was, and it was coming out, like all these stories about New York. Kind of my working title for a while was New Dork City, but

I knew that wasn't the whole story. It's like there are a lot of dork stories in it, but it does take us to the current day, and that seemed too like Judy Blume, *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*.

Then one day, I found myself saying something that I say all the time. I realized, "Oh, I just said tough titties." I say that all the time, I guess, because I'm still 12 and because it is my natural response to things that I am supposed to do like, "Oh, you want me to come in at 9am and stay till 5:00 or 6:00. Tough titties. You want me to have kids? Like you do tough titties. You want me to pound the pavement my first day out of college and like score a corporate job and wear pantyhose and get to an office and wear a power suit? Tough titties." So that is where that comes from. It is just a natural response to that supposed-to life that we talked about in the beginning.

[00:37:13]

**FT:** I love it, and I'm so thrilled for you. I'm thrilled for everybody who's going to read this book. Laura Belgray, thank you so much. I can't wait to celebrate this book with you and everybody. Make sure to stay tuned to learn how to get a copy of *Tough Titties: On Living Your Best Life When You're the F-ing Worst*.

[00:37:31]

**LB:** Thank you so much, Farnoosh. This is a blast.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[00:37:36]

**FT:** Thanks so much to Laura Belgray for joining us. If you'd like to receive a copy of *Tough Titties*, I have several to give out. To enter, leave a review of this episode in the Apple Podcast review section for this show. Tell us what you liked about our conversation, and I will select a few winners at the end of next week to receive copies of *Tough Titties*. We've got all this week and all of next week to leave your reviews. I will send those reminders. But do it. Pre-copy. This book is really, really funny. As Kelly Ripa said, "I love *Tough Titties*. I didn't want it to end." I can't

wait to give you a copy. Leave a review and keep listening to the show to hopefully hear your name next Friday. Until then, I hope your day is So Money.

[END]