

One Bad Mother

Searching for Meaning in Motherhood and the Philadelphia Police Academy



One Bad Mother:
Searching for Meaning in
Motherhood and the
Philadelphia Police Academy

BY MEGAN WILLIAMS

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After her six-year-old daughter puts a hammer through a wall, Megan Williams decides to abandon a career as an academic and become a police officer. It's not lost on her that she may have applied to the Police Academy to escape the realities of mothering twins born via IVF at twenty-nine weeks. As the twins grow and test her endlessly, she feels she is failing. She needs a win.

During a grueling application process, Megan measures herself against the other candidates and confronts the normative notions of what it is to be a good mother. The paralyzing fear that she is a bad mother looms large in her head, as does the real possibility that she might not make the cut at the Academy. With its intertwined narratives of police recruitment and motherhood, the memoir provides an unflinching journalistic view of big-city law enforcement, set atop a personal journey during which Megan learns gratitude and makes peace with a motherhood far different from the dream sold to her by our culture.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Previous to her decision to apply to the Police Department, **Megan Williams** was a professor of English at various universities for over twenty years. After graduating from Haverford College, Megan received her Ph.D. in English from Temple University and taught at Lafayette College and Santa Clara University. Portions of *One Bad Mother* have received recognition from the New Millennium Award in Nonfiction, the *Cagibi Magazine* Prize, Panther Creek Award in Non-Fiction, and William Faulkner Creative Writers' Competition. Last year, Williams won the PNWA award for nonfiction. She and her family currently reside in Bellingham, Washington.



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