

**Ep #89: Lessons from Our Favorite TV Parents:  
Parenthood Prep After Dark with Margaret Mason Tate**



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Devon Clement**

## **Ep #89: Lessons from Our Favorite TV Parents: Parenthood Prep After Dark with Margaret Mason Tate**

We're doing something a little different today. Margaret and I had a chance to sit down late at night and chat about some favorite parenting movie moments. We're calling it *Parenthood Prep After Dark*, so stay tuned. Just as a heads up, the recording quality isn't as good as we usually do because we were recording together in person. How exciting. We haven't actually nailed that down yet so I appreciate your patience but it should be worth listening to and hopefully not too annoying. Stay tuned.

Welcome to *Parenthood Prep*, the only show that helps sleep-deprived parents and overwhelmed parents-to-be successfully navigate those all-important early years with their baby, toddler, and child. If you are ready to provide the best care for your newborn, manage those toddler tantrums, and grow with your child, you're in the right place. Now here's your host, baby and parenting expert, Devon Clement.

Devon Clement: Hello. Good evening. This is the first edition of *Parenthood Prep After Dark*, which was a great idea that Margaret and I had after half a glass of Prosecco Rosé each. Oh, no, Brut Rosé, we're fancy. And yeah, we're here together in person at Margaret's house with her dogs and cats and...

Margaret: With all of my folks, my babies, my sugars, my sugar britches.

Devon Clement: What do you want to talk about?

Margaret: TV, always.

Devon Clement: I mean, same.

Margaret: Every minute of every day.

Devon Clement: We watched earlier the series premiere of *The OC*, which is a show that I have never watched.

Margaret: And I only knew of it because I sat behind girls who would talk about it.

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Devon Clement: That's fair.

Margaret: in class. That's fair. Yeah.

Devon Clement: Yeah.

Margaret: So I think it's, I think it's a great idea to say that our dear friend, Cara,

Devon Clement: Yes.

Margaret: Is professing. She's of course professorizing. Yeah, she is the professor of a course that involves teen television. and its influence on pop culture.

Devon Clement: And we heard about it, us two grown women, almost 40 and over 40. And we were like, we need to take this class for our freshman seminar and please and thank you, give us the syllabus immediately. We got notebooks.

Margaret: Yeah. So we literally have notebooks and the syllabus and the discussion questions.

Devon Clement: And so we fully intend to do the final project.

Margaret: Did we work today, no? Yes

Devon Clement: Yes, obviously.

Margaret: And, we did our homework. Studious as we are. So we watched the beginning of the OC.

Devon Clement: Which is, I guess notoriously one of the best pilots of all time. Which I was disappointed about because apparently the show is great for one season and then becomes very uneven.

Margaret: You know what? I got to tell you, that is a diplomatic way of phrasing that and I appreciate that. I mean, cheers to kindness.

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Devon Clement: You know I have a friend who is very insistent that when you cheers, you make eye contact and like stare directly at each other. But when - they're Colombian. He's Colombian. And so when you're cheering with multiple people, he's just staring at everybody with like bug eyes, like every single person around the table. It's charming, but it's weird. So we're talking about TV and kids, babies in TV, and parents more specifically, because this really, this is not a podcast for kids or babies. This is a podcast for parents.

Margaret: Yeah.

Devon Clement: And parents to be.

Margaret: Absolutely.

Devon Clement: So, one of the, I think most obvious examples from our media pop cultural life of parents is Rugrats.

Margaret: Yes.

Devon Clement: Right? You got to see the parents, the kids. It was such, I think a realistic portrayal in a lot of ways.

Margaret: I think it was so every family.

Devon Clement: Yeah.

Margaret: Just everybody could see themselves in that neighborhood, you know? You know how The Simpsons is Springfield, but you don't know if it's Missouri or Illinois or New Jersey. I just kind of very much appreciate that aspect of it.

Devon Clement: Yeah, and you know, you've got the kids having their own adventures, but you really, they really flesh out the characters of the parents.

Margaret: Yeah. Oh man, they're such real people.

Devon Clement: Yeah.

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Margaret: you know? They're really, really human. And and I love that. Like I love being able to see you in - what's the mom's name, Mrs.? So Angelica's mom.

Devon Clement: Angelica's mom. I only know this because I looked it up earlier. Her name is Charlotte, Charlotte Pickles.

Margaret: That's right. Charlotte Pickles.

Devon Clement: I know, the blonde ponytail.

Margaret: Right? Just serving cunt. Absolutely. Jonathan. And I got to tell you, Jonathan loved that shit. You know he did.

Devon Clement: My god, are you kidding? Jonathan was absolutely a twink.

Margaret: No. This is what I'm saying. Sometimes you go into that mode like socially, not to us, but to, you know, people that we're working with or or collaborating with or whatever, you know, you get real in that mode.

Devon Clement: Multiple friends have told me that when they are in my presence, when I am like doing a client call or a prospect call, they're like, I don't know who that was, but she was great. Like, I forget what Wes called me, Work Devon or something. But you know, back in the day, when it was really just me running the business and I didn't have my amazing team, if I had to talk to a client or somebody called me while I was at a birthday party or something, I had to take the call.

Margaret: For sure.

Devon Clement: So I was like constantly, you know, stepping away taking calls, taking emails, and I said all the time, I was like, I feel like Angelica's mom. She's like trying to be at the family barbecue, but she's just like walking away on her phone. Jonathan.

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Margaret: Listen, but Jonathan got shit done and they built that empire just like you built HFA to be honest. Correct.

Devon Clement: And she married a handsome blonde man with a kind heart.

Margaret: Oh my God. And let me tell you something, who worshiped that woman. All the men in the Rugrats verse are such wife guys.

Devon Clement: They really are.

Margaret: You know what I mean?

Devon Clement: I think it was a really refreshing twist from every 90s sitcom of grumpy, balding dad and like super hot, sexy mom, and they would bicker and fight and just like, so unappealing.

Margaret: Yeah, do not sign me up. In fact, unsubscribe and if you send me anything else, I'm going to take legal action. Go away.

Devon Clement: Return it. Like I want, yeah, I want a husband who is going to make up songs about our sick baby while I'm like losing my marbles.

Margaret: I want to, you know what I mean? I want to see a Seder.

Devon Clement: Right?

Margaret: Oh my god, this anyway, I'm not gonna get in.

Devon Clement: Let my babies go. We watch it every year. It's so good. It's legitimately so good. And the Hanukkah episode, the Macca babies.

Margaret: Do you remember the Maccabee Foster kitties? Oh, this might have been 2019.

Devon Clement: We had Passover once this year.

Margaret: Oh, no, no, no, this was this was I'm thinking of these cats. This these cats would be five years old by now. Okay, I do just really quickly want to say

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that in the notes of this that I took diligently for my job as a professional human being that this says Margaret calls the parents in Rugrats a queer platonic polycule.

Devon Clement: Tell me what's wrong. What, where's the lie?

Margaret: This is what I'm saying.

Devon Clement: Especially the twin's mom.

Margaret: Correct.

Devon Clement: The dad had that curly hair.

Margaret: Howard, for sure. Yeah, Howard.

Devon Clement: What was her name? Anyway, she was really, I think maybe my first example of like an outspoken feminist.

Margaret: Yeah, right.

Devon Clement: My mother certainly was. She was not a trad wife or anything like that, but she was not wearing, you know, sweatshirts with the female symbol and a sweatband.

Margaret: There was no sweatband on that lady.

Devon Clement: No, no.

Margaret: She likes her, she likes a good bang. She would never.

Devon Clement: That's true. She means hair bangs. I don't know. My mother might also like a, I don't, I don't really know. I don't want to talk about that.

Margaret: Listen. She has a crush on someone.

Devon Clement: Wait, a human man or like?

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Margaret: A human man. He's in a band that we go see. Like at a local bar, a little old man band at a local bar and she, I am 7 seconds away from either throwing the string in your maze or stopping recording to grill you about this. Are you fucking kidding?

Devon Clement: He's married and his wife is lovely. And I think she just likes him because he's in a band, you know.

Margaret: I don't know anything about that and I never have and I never even would.

Devon Clement: No, I was never, I was never a musician girly. You know what I liked? I liked a bartender. Like a good...

Margaret: Interesting.

Devon Clement: A good burly like. Good face, good hair, cracks jokes behind the bar, gives you a free shot every so often.

Margaret: My terrible, horrible, no good, very bad situationship is in fact a barkeep.

Devon Clement: So, okay, so yeah, I mean they kind of are a queer polycule. And you know what it is? They have so much community.

Margaret: Absolutely.

Devon Clement: I would love to see parents today bring their kids together on like a weekend day or whatever day and just fucking hang out.

Margaret: Well, so, pardon me while I expertly pivot, okay? Even in my cups, but like that legitimately reminds me of what we were talking about the nanny on Muppet Babies or her legs.

Devon Clement: Who I found out recently was played by Barbara Billingsley who played June Cleaver, the ultimate housewife mom. Isn't that cute?

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Margaret: So you know these fucking muppets are being well cared for.

Devon Clement: Right.

Margaret: Which makes our point even more salient, which is that they threw them muppets.

Devon Clement: They had this playroom. It was safe. You know, they weren't sticking forks in electric outlets. They weren't breaking glass.

Margaret: Age appropriate toys.

Devon Clement: They had age appropriate toys, books, they played, they used their imagination. They rocketed off to space or whatever.

Margaret: They sang songs. They did their stuff, man. They worked out conflict. They did all kind of, they comforted each other.

Devon Clement: I miss that show. I used to watch it every Saturday morning.

Margaret: Oh my god, it's the best. Listen, one of the best things about this new timeline that we're in that I have decided that we're in is the new Muppet Show. They're bringing back the Muppet Show.

Devon Clement: Oh, also there's a Miss Piggy movie with Emma Stone and Jennifer Lawrence. And when someone asked which one of you is playing Miss Piggy, they were like, are you fucking kidding me?

Margaret: Yeah. Get out of here. What kind of terrible journalism school did you go to?

Devon Clement: Miss Piggy is playing her goddamn self.

Margaret: Wow. Imagine.

Devon Clement: Yeah, so Muppet babies, she would come in, she would check on them. You know, feed them.

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Margaret: Yeah. We think she brought them food.

Devon Clement: Yeah. We think we remember that.

Margaret: Yeah.

Devon Clement: But like, they were left to their own devices. But the thing with Rugrats is that they would put the kids together, the kids would play, and also the parents were talking, you know, talking, socializing and hanging out. Maybe they were doing chores. This is one of my big like things I wish more people did is like, just come over to somebody else's house with your kids and do chores together.

Margaret: So, shout out to our mutual friend Mimi Lorenzo, who she and I used to do grocery shopping dates. I would have Hamish on my back, who legitimately Hamish, as they are now, just angel on this earth. On my back, as long as Hamish could like look around and be kind of present in the situation, totally fine, totally happy to to hang. And, you know, Mimi's baby was much younger and so, you know, also being worn and we would do our grocery shopping. And that was like we would we might not be able to spend other time together. But we definitely could spend that time together.

Devon Clement: Totally.

Margaret: And it was a great balm to the soul.

Devon Clement: I love that. My experience is as a nanny, especially when I worked as a nanny or as a postpartum doula, with moms who were not leaving the house to go to work.

Margaret: Oh.

Devon Clement: One, you know, was a stay at home mom, but she had, you know, two kids and some responsibilities and some stuff she would do. And so she had me just, you know, there for extra hands. Honestly, you know what? I think people are judgmental of that and I don't care. And one thing she said to

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me one time was that my husband has a big job and he commutes to New York and he does not want to come home from work to me being stressed and exhausted from taking care of two kids by myself all day. So he thinks it's good that we have this so that everyone is in a better mood. And I'm like, you're goddamn right.

Margaret: Absolutely.

Devon Clement: But a good portion of our day was spent just like bullshitting with each other. You know, keeping each other company. She was lonely, whatever. And then I was, you know, being a postpartum doula, moms in that early first few weeks, first few months, like that, you know, maybe dad's back to work or other, you know, partners back to work, whatever and they're feeling like isolated and alone. I'm there to like hang out with you, talk to you. Like sometimes you want to be with your babies and I'm doing your dishes. And sometimes you want to, you know, work on a piece of art for the baby's room because you're an artist and a creative professional, but you haven't been able to use that and I take care of the babies while you do.

Or like my twin nanny client for so long that I really felt a lot of the time like we were just like two moms with our babies hanging out together. Like, oh, I'll make lunch for us today. Oh, you, I mean, obviously, I was there to work. So I was not, you know, taking breaks like she was, but like, it was very much switching on and off. I'll take care of this, you take care of that. Oh, you need to run out. Okay. Oh, you want me to go run an errand? And really the company was so important for both of us.

Margaret: And this is introvert, extrovert, this is every verb. This is...

Devon Clement: It truly is.

Margaret: I have gotten a ton of stuff done on this trip while you've been with me.

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Devon Clement: Well, especially because I think even for introverts, taking care of a small child is simultaneously so time consuming and so boring.

Margaret: So boring. It's genuinely so boring.

Devon Clement: Genuinely so boring.

Margaret: Like, it's very challenging when what you've been doing heretofore, even just as a person, even if not in your profession, if you are a hyper intellectual person, it is mind numbing. And then you feel like dog shit. You feel really guilty about that because, you know, you've wanted this and you're made for this and...

Devon Clement: Especially if you like had trouble getting pregnant or whatever and now you're like, this actually sucks. Yeah, when I was nannying like by myself at the end of the day, I'd be like, what did I do with my brain today? My entire creative outlet was like dressing her and doing her hair. And like, thank God for that because it was...

Margaret: Yeah.

Devon Clement: So anyway, back to the the television thing, parents having something to do, some interaction. So yeah, so for introverts, you know, you want to be reading a book or watching a show or scrolling your phone and instead you're like spooning applesauce into this baby's mouth 1600 times a week and then cleaning it all up and starting over.

Margaret: Yeah, like bro, babies who can't smile back are very hard. It's very difficult to not have that kind of emotional exchange.

Devon Clement: Babies who do smile back but they're like crawling all over, climbing the furniture trying to die and all you're doing is like saving them from themselves all day long, it like takes up just enough of your brain.

Margaret: Right, to where it's not restful.

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Devon Clement: It's not restful. It's not interesting. You can't have your own thoughts or whatever. I mean, I did like when I was working that that live in client over the summer that I've talked about, I had an audiobook in my ear pretty much constantly.

Margaret: Our friend, our mutual friend who plowed through audio books. I mean, it was astonishing, genuinely astonishing.

Devon Clement: I did like the entire Agatha Christie collection.

Margaret: I think she did some Game of Thrones. It was genuinely - it was crazy. But I think the point that connects all of this to what we were just talking about is that the parents have lives, the parents are entities of themselves. That, I want that to bring us to. ..

Devon Clement: Well and - are we done talking about Rugrats? Because I have one more thing to say about Rugrats.

Margaret: Say it.

Devon Clement: Which I think was pretty abnormal for the time, although it was starting to come around. The dads were there as much as the moms. And in fact, in Chucky's case, the dad was the exclusive solo parent.

Margaret: Oh, yeah. RIP. RIP, Chucky's mom.

Devon Clement: She was a real one.

Margaret: She was. She was a baddie, I bet.

Devon Clement: Married to Chaz.

Margaret: Honey, I bet Chaz fucks. Can I be honest?

Devon Clement: Oh jeez. All right, well now we have to go here. Like which one of the Rugrats dads? Well, you know, I'm gonna go ahead and say Stu because - not Stu, Drew.

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Margaret: You're a Drew girlie.

Devon Clement: I'm Charlotte. So.

Margaret: And he's blonde.

Devon Clement: We are not having an Angelica though. My child, that's my sister. My child is not going to be...

Margaret: Oh wow. Honestly though, your sister does kind of look like Angelica.

Devon Clement: I know.

Margaret: Oh, I see. You've already done this mentally. I see.

Devon Clement: Yeah. Also that show came out when she was little. So it was just very easy to...

Margaret: A little on the nose. Yeah. So in the name of parents having their own identity, being their own person, the notes that I have for Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead, what a movie, these are the notes. Are you ready for this? To make sure the points that we hit, fuck y'all, I'm going to Europe.

Devon Clement: Correct.

Margaret: We know.

Devon Clement: Listen, why wouldn't you go to Europe, leave your kids, your your teens and preteens and your small child, I think? No, there's a a young a young one.

Margaret: No, I think there's a like one Hamish's age.

Devon Clement: Well, there's, you know, the one who bought the ring for his girlfriend. She was my moon goddess. But then I think there was like a little sister. Okay, so there was Sue Ellen, Swell.

Margaret: Yeah. Oh my God. I kind of.

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Devon Clement: I'm right on top of that, Rose. Then there was Kenny, the like stoner brother. The dishes are done, man.

Margaret: Have you, and I mean this sincerely in your entire adult life, ever done dishes without saying to myself, the dishes are done, man.

Devon Clement: I've not. Zero times. No times has that happened.

Margaret: Not when I had COVID, not when I was in labor, not when my mom died.

Devon Clement: Through your tears, the dishes are done, man.

Margaret: You're laughing cause you know that I do.

Devon Clement: Absolutely. You think I don't? The number of times when my assistant texts me something she needs me to do and I say, I'm right on top of that, Rose. I'm not. I'm often not. That's the whole point of saying I'm right on top of that, Rose.

Margaret: She does not listen to this, I bet.

Devon Clement: That's her voice you hear at the beginning of the podcast, but she doesn't, I don't think she listens. She doesn't have kids. Okay, so then there was the like preteen like 13 year old brother.

Margaret: Girl.

Devon Clement: No, the brother who had the girlfriend Cynthia. She was my moon goddess because he used some of the money to like buy her jewelry.

Margaret: It's a chip. Remember? It's a chip.

Devon Clement: You bought her a diamond? It's a chip. My moon goddess. And then I think there was like a, not a baby baby, but like a little, a little one. There was. There had to be. It wouldn't have been funny if there wasn't.

Margaret: Are you trying to tell me that there was not a girl?

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Devon Clement: That's what I'm saying. I think there was like a little girl.

Margaret: All right.

Devon Clement: Okay, we're looking this up. While you look this up, I actually have a little bit of a pet peeve about podcasts where people just say shit. Just say some things out in the world. And I'm like, this is not live. You can look this up. You definitely can. And you are wrong.

Margaret: Just say some things. Well, so but while I'm doing that though.

Devon Clement: Dan Savage, the woman who wrote Heated Rivalry is queer. She is not straight. Good to know. Also, Jillian on True Crime Obsessed, people do run out of gas when they have cars. I have done it many times.

Margaret: Oh God. Let's listen, Jillian.

Devon Clement: It was like a a scammer criminal person who turned out to be a thing, but they like said they ran out of gas. And she notoriously grew up in New York City and never got a driver's license or whatever. And she's like, that's so stupid. Like you don't just run out of gas. And I was like, the fuck you don't.

Margaret: Let me tell you about being an adult human being who has done that on multiple occasions in multiple cities and states. We're not going to do this Jillian.

Devon Clement: You don't drive a car so don't pretend you know.

Margaret: So then, okay, fine. While I look up...

Devon Clement: I think that what that really is is a statement to, the kids were like fuckups, right? Kenny was always getting stoned with his friends. Sue Ellen was just like, you know, doing whatever, cheerleading or whatever. And they had no choice but to step up and figure out how to buy food, support the little kids, you know, get shit done, and they all grew up from this forced independence. The kids don't even get now when they're in college and after college.

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Margaret: Yeah, for sure. I mean, they don't, I'm telling you. It's very challenging to do it right now. I have told my kid a few different times, I wish that I were raising you in 1997. Like I wish I were my mom.

Devon Clement: And, I mean, something that is not talked about enough, and I think we need to talk about more is I think the reason parents are so much more stressed and overwhelmed than than our parents were is because you're expected to like, not only be aware of and watch your kid 24/7, but also like entertain them 24/7. Like, fuck no. They got a break from us. They sent us out in the morning and we came home at night.

Margaret: Wait, I totally forgot David Duchovny does some time in this.

Devon Clement: Wait, he's not the boyfriend.

Margaret: No, no, no.

Devon Clement: That's oh no, he's like the villain, the villain's boyfriend. So she's the sister of the hot dog guy.

Margaret: This does not help. IMDB is ruining everything about my life and I hope that they get to hear this. No, I don't. Okay, so the kids Swell, and FYI, she is going on a vacation to not Europe, whoops. It's real far. With her boyfriend. It's a vacation. It is not a work trip. Honey, it is not a work trip. She said, fuck these kids.

Devon Clement: I hired a random old ass mean lady that we've never met before.

Margaret: We have no basically no way to contact you except to like call twice. for \$40 a piece.

Devon Clement: \$40 a minute. And that's it.

Margaret: Okay, we're both correct. Are you ready? So there's Swell, right? And then there's 15 year old Kenny.

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Devon Clement: Sure.

Margaret: Who I thought would be a little older.

Devon Clement: He becomes a chef and he goes to culinary school. It's so great.

Margaret: He goes to culinary school.

Margaret: 14 year old Zach. See, this is why she needs, this is why she needs this vacation. Seriously. So it's Swell who is 17, then 15 year old Kenny, 14 year old Zach with the moon goddess, 12 year old Melissa, who I know I remember because I kind of had a crush on her. And 10 year old Walter. And remember Walter breaks his little arm. Oh my God. Remember Walter. Anyway, they hire Mrs. Sturak and she dies to death immediately. She could not die faster. Which is good because I mean, that's a big plot point.

Devon Clement: And the reason why Swell needs to like get this corporate job and all this stuff is because they accidentally leave all the money that the mom left. She left this big fat envelope full of cash and it's in the old lady's pocket. So they have no babysitter, great. No money.

Margaret: Very bad.

Devon Clement: Very bad. And they do not want the mom to come back from Australia even if they did it would take weeks.

Margaret: And think about how much it would cost to fly back that fast.

Devon Clement: What they didn't want to happen was for her to get another babysitter because she would have just gotten another babysitter. But they did not want that. Anyway, yes, fuck off to Australia. Let your kids figure it out. You know, I want to say I hate comparing children to animals, but I kind of don't because I think a lot of the principles are the same. Like when I have sleep trained the baby of anyone who has interacted with horses, they're like, oh my God, this is just like horses. They pick up on your emotions, they pick up on your

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energy. You have to have like a firm hold on the reins or they don't trust you. You have this relationship. You're not the boss of the horse. That horse could stomp you and kill you if it wanted to, but the horse trusts you to like have these boundaries and have this like authority and if you are like slack on the reins and you're flopping around, the horse is going to be like, what the fuck are you doing? I'm not going to jump over shit for you.

Margaret: Absolutely.

Devon Clement: And when you build that relationship with your horse, it's like really beautiful, and it's the same thing with your kids. So what I was going to say is that I've talked about my sister's dogs before. They are very anxious. They're getting better. She's done a lot of training with them. When they took a huge leap forward, huge leap forward was when they went on vacation for like a weekend and left the dogs with me and my mother and Alex. And they love and trust my mother. She's Grammy. But they're big and she like can't walk them cause if they bolt or pull, she'll fall down. She's 72. Like she did not feel, she feels very safe watching them like in her home.

Margaret: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Devon Clement: But she lives in a condo. She can't really let them out. She also can't sleep out. So she couldn't sleep at my sister's house and let them out in the yard.

Margaret: Wait, why?

Devon Clement: She's just an anxious mess. She won't sleep out. So we concocted this plan basically where Alex and I had friends at our house, but we all live really close to each other. So I was like, Alex and I will take the dogs out for walks while you have them and then they'll sleep there with you and whatever. She's like, I don't even care if they pee on my floor. Like I'll just clean it up. It's fine. But like, we sort of collectively took care of them. And they love her. She's one of their top people, like three basically, mom, dad and Grammy.

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And then they, were starting to get to like me, but they were scared of Alex. He's very tall. And they're worried about men, who isn't?

Margaret: Yeah, for sure. That's safe.

Devon Clement: But after this like long weekend of us taking care of them, they were totally different. I mean, they still, you know, acted out a little bit when like, you know, Kim and Jeff got home and stuff, but they just overall are so much calmer around other people because they were sort of forced to just cope with it. And it wasn't a total stranger. She didn't like randomly pull in someone they've never met before to like watch them for the weekend, but...

Margaret: No Mrs. Durac.

Devon Clement: Right. But their comfort level just grew so much. It also reminds me of something a client told me years ago, which is that her older child, who was like three, he was in daycare part time. He'd go like two days a week. And he was having a hard time with it. He was having a hard time going, he was having a hard time separating. And she asked the daycare teacher. She's like, what should we do? Should we pull him out? And the daycare teacher said, no, you should send him more.

Margaret: Five days a week, baby. Absolutely. I was gonna say the same thing.

Devon Clement: And the mom was like, okay, we'll give it a try. Like that. Oh yeah. It was his routine. It was a breeze.

Margaret: Yeah. Oh yeah. And then they'll fight you if you try not to go on the weekend.

Devon Clement: Every student I had when I taught preschool special ed who cried their entire first day, resisted everything was the one who was the most obsessed with school. I got notes all the time like, he woke up, he had a meltdown on Saturday because he wasn't going to school and see you.

Margaret: Yeah, it's hard on the weekend to go to school, man. Absolutely.

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Devon Clement: It was, it was. So yeah, so I think pushing, pushing the little birdies out of the nest.

Margaret: So, because they could have it all if we just provide them the opportunities. Now, who else tried to have it all? Can you think of a TV character? Little, little Irish lady named Murphy Brown.

Devon Clement: Oh, sure. I mean, she did have it all though.

Margaret: Yeah, that's the point. Like she had it all. Now, we will get to the fact that there is a 30 Rock episode entitled Murphy Brown Lied to Us.

Devon Clement: Tell me everything. I'm not as familiar with 30 Rock as you. I do love it.

Margaret: Yeah, I do. We'll get to that in a second. But for right now, Murphy Brown is so well known for being this single mother who did this by choice and, you know, had a super big deal high paying job.

Devon Clement: What do you mean?

Margaret: It wasn't a choice to have...

Devon Clement: Oh, sure. No, but I think that right now the new terminology of single mother by choice is like used a donor and got pregnant intentionally on purpose. She got pregnant accidentally and made the choice to raise the baby, which is still, which is still a big deal. I just want to distinguish that there are people who go into this on my own for instance, wants to be 100% sure, you know, intentionally from the jump.

Margaret: es. She had a choice to make and said, I'm gonna be a single mom. And did it and had this kick ass job and you know, was really, really good at it.

Devon Clement: And, in a time where it was extremely weird to do that.

Margaret: Very. Very. Like, I tell this all the time because, you know, I think it matters. My first flight was at six weeks because my mom had an audition. And

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we got on a flight from the downtown airport in Greenville and flew to Charleston, did that audition and flew back. And her best friend went with her for me, right? And you know what I mean, because like it was huge. Her career was huge. It was a big deal. and that was weird. She got a lot of shit for that. So for Murphy Brown to be on TV doing that was so cool. Yeah. But also, can we just shout out Elvin? Hey, Domenici.

Devon Clement: Elvin.

Margaret: Elvin. Her painter. Who never stopped painting.

Devon Clement: Her painter.

Margaret: He wore the painting clothes all the time. It was just his thing all the time.

Devon Clement: What a sitcom fucking character that was, right? I do miss that. I don't miss the the parenting relationship, straight relationship dynamic from 90s sitcoms, but I do miss like remember Cody on Step by Step?

Margaret: Agreed. Absolutely I do.

Devon Clement: The hot cousin who like lived in the driveway.

Margaret: With one in the camper in the driveway. And he had seven and a half brain cells and we were all like, smash.

Devon Clement: Still would.

Margaret: Would. Next question. No, it's absolutely ridiculous.

Devon Clement: Elvin the painter. And, you know, he probably wasn't experienced with babies.

Margaret: No.

Devon Clement: But he was there and he pitched in and then she hired him as her nanny.

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Margaret: And guess what, just exactly like the Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead thing. I almost said Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Club, which I got to tell you, we really need to take it there. Like that's a crossover that we really need to do. Because they could have just called the baby.

Devon Clement: They could have just called the babysitter's club.

Margaret: Okay. Can you imagine like the rotation of people coming in and out? Like but the very like Christie coming in to take care of the 15 year old brother. And there's like the bong smoke in Christie's face and she's like, I'm pretty sure your mother wouldn't agree with that.

Devon Clement: Oh, Christie would straighten him out in a second. Are you kidding me? No. Christie would slap him across the face, be like, do the dishes for real, dude. And that would be that. You're returning this fucking piece of jewelry, Zach.

Margaret: It's a chip.

Devon Clement: She was my moon goddess.

Margaret: I got to be honest with you and, you know, this is going to be unbelievably controversial. I'm so sorry that I'm saying this on your podcast, but sometimes when I see people post pictures of jewelry, I think to myself, it's a chip. I'm so sorry, but I do.

Devon Clement: You're so mean. She's so mean. She is the most bougie southern antique furniture, fucking heirloom linens.

Margaret: Please understand that we won't need to spend any time on this except that the notes on this just say a Goofy Movie and the notes say, dogs, right?

Devon Clement: Wait, you know what? I have more to say about Murphy Brown.

Margaret: Oh, wonderful.

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Devon Clement: I think people get too uptight about who is taking care of their kids. Oh. Seven snaps for that.

Margaret: I've told this story before, my friend Rachel, who is a single mom by choice.

Devon Clement: Real choice, real choice. When he was first born in 2022, her baby, she asked me to babysit him when she had to go to like a follow up doctor's appointment. He was like two weeks old or something. And I had it all lined up. I was going to babysit him. And then I was exposed to COVID. I didn't have COVID, but it was at the time where we were still like real careful about that. I had been with a friend who was diagnosed or tested positive and so she was like, okay, yeah. I was like, yeah, you probably shouldn't babysit. I was like, I probably shouldn't babysit. I'm so sorry, yada yada.

So she asked another friend of ours. And that friend was like, I have never in my life taken care of a newborn. And Rachel was like, until two weeks ago, I hadn't either. You'll be fine. I'm going to feed him before I go. You're going to keep him alive for an hour and a half and then I'm going to come back and it's going to be fine. And it was. Correct. And it was. And she has just because she benefits from having support, has not been overly precious about who's involved with her baby. And I think it has been so beneficial to both her and him, like, you know, she did say which was very cute. My mom when they come down to our house and they're like outside and stuff. My mom loves him and she loves to play and hang out with him and they go in the pool and they make up games and it's so cute. Stuff she never - this woman never went in the pool when I was a child. And what and I don't mean like the two times a summer we were near a pool, she didn't go in. I mean, we were at the pool in our neighborhood every freaking day and this woman did not touch the water ever.

Margaret: She didn't wear a bathing suit there.

Devon Clement: What?

Margaret: She probably didn't wear a bathing suit there.

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Devon Clement: Homie, you think Susan Clement was not in her bikini on her lounge chair getting a tan? You are wrong, but the 80s hair was coiffed. The makeup was on. She was not going in the water.

Margaret: Straight out of stranger things.

Devon Clement: Now, as great auntie slash GG to all these children, she is splashing around, playing with toys. I'm like, who are you? Meanwhile, I'm the one who's like, don't get my hair wet.

Margaret: I have an incredible picture of my mother giving my, you know, 18 month old child coffee. And I'm just like, what is happening?

Devon Clement: I love those memes that are like, my parents suddenly have a lot of McDonald's money that they didn't used to have.

Margaret: It's incredible how much they're willing to give.

Devon Clement: Anyway, Rachel said to me, I think my mom and Zuriel were like alone in the backyard and Rachel's like, oh, I never worry. I was like, I love when your mom watches him because I know she's even more paranoid than I am. So she trusts her. Give me, is there any more? Give me a little. I would probably agree with that. Little bubbly ASMR there. So anyway, our lessons are have a queer platonic polycule. Let your beloved painter become your nanny.

Margaret: Yeah. Toss a bunch of similar, not same, similarly aged grouping kids in an age appropriate playroom with their imaginations, a couple of toys, and some books. And uh let your legs do the walking.

Devon Clement: Throw your teenagers directly into the deep end by making them grow the fuck up overnight.

Margaret: And believing that they can.

Devon Clement: Honestly, the fact that her mom was mad that a fashion show was going on in the backyard when she got home was...

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Margaret: Girlfriend, they put on a fashion show. Like that's amazing. That's an event. As somebody who has done event, I mean, you know this, I've been doing events since I was 22. That's a lot of work. It's unbelievable. It's almost like it's a movie.

Devon Clement: We just spoke earlier today. You were production assistant on Oklahoma when you were six.

Margaret: I was.

Devon Clement: So, listen, start them young.

Margaret: I'm telling you, man. Yeah, get yourself an Elvin, like you said. A Goofy movie, dogs, right?

Devon Clement: Single dad, Goofy.

Margaret: I mean, single dad king. Absolutely. I also have down here, Dawson's parents boning.

Devon Clement: Tell me everything. You didn't watch Dawson's Creek because you were a little bit too old to have caught the wave.

Devon Clement: Yeah, I think it was on, no. No, I think I was like age appropriate for them, but it was just not my not my vibe.

Margaret: Sure.

Devon Clement: I was watching Friends reruns. I don't. Word.

Margaret: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So Dawson's Creek though affected a great many of us, if I may. And one of the like beginning setups for establishing characters was that Dawson's parents were like real into each other and liked to bone on like on the coffee table in the middle of the afternoon. Not ideal for a home with you know, people walking in and out of it and absolutely incredible if I were to be married for that length of time, you'd better be trying to fuck me on this coffee table.

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Devon Clement: Well you know what, you have a 16 year old kid and you're still as horny for each other as my mom is for the guy in the band.

Margaret: I love him so much. I bet he's playing Eagle songs and she's just like, I love this.

Devon Clement: No. Well, I don't want to give away too much just in case. I'm hyperbolizing. She likes him, she likes his band. It's an Irish band. They play Irish folk songs.

Margaret: I'm about done with this conversation. I'm about to have to call this lady. I also have Rachel Green and Ross Geller, Emma and Ben.

Devon Clement: So that, I mean, there's definitely some real life parenting that happens in that show. Some. Honestly, more than anything else, I think there's real life anting.

Margaret: Look alive, Judy.

Devon Clement: Monica Bang. Monica Bang. Ducks have heads. What kind of scary ass clowns came to your birthday? Yeah, I mean, I think that's sort of the opposite of real life parenting because how often did you see Ross and Rachel together with no Emma? And like, where is she? Who is watching her? There was the episode with the Manny, Freddie Prince Jr. Okay, there's a lesson. Don't be sexist.

Margaret: Don't be sexist and hire that Manny, girl.

Devon Clement: His madeleines were light as air. We know who's gonna be the Crumpus. Can we make a podcast where we just quote friends?

Margaret: So there is this new poetic form that's originated by Jericho Brown who is, he's a big deal poet at Emory.

Devon Clement: The name sounds familiar.

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Margaret: He's a big deal poet and he's out of Emory University, which is local to me. And so he originated this poetic form called a duplex and I have created several duplexes out of just lines from - like I did one with lines from Succession. I did one with titles of Twilight Zone episodes.

Devon Clement: Oh. I want to read these poems. Why don't I know about them?

Margaret: I'll do what you tell me even if it doesn't make any sense and I don't care.

Devon Clement: One, just random side note, I really want there to be 10 to 20% of high school just devoted to like being a person in the world in so many ways. And maybe there's a like months long unit on like organizing your finances and that kind of stuff. Whatever, but I do think there should be like a brief workshop, 30 minutes, an hour long that every high school student in America has to go through called How to Use a Microphone Properly, because even if you don't ever intend to be a podcaster, a singer, a performer in any way, you are going to give an eulogy at your grandpa's funeral. You are going to volunteer to be the announcer at the 50 50 for the Lions Club or what the fuck ever. And everyone talks into the microphone like this and it's terrible. And so often I am like, everyone needs to just learn how to use a microphone.

Margaret: Yeah.

Devon Clement: Or karaoke. Stop.

Margaret: Well, it does not help that music videos had cut my life into pieces. You know what I'm saying?

Devon Clement: Yeah, but even then, I think they're doing a better job. Well, also they have professional sound engineers. Like, you got to help, you got to help the people out when you don't have the professional sound engineers.

Margaret: Listen hearts.

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Devon Clement: So, wait, let's go back to - first of all, I want to hear your poems, but the 30 Rock Murphy Brown lied to us.

Margaret: Yes, so in season six, there is an episode called Murphy Brown Lied. I think it's, I think it's called that. I trust myself, but now that, you know, it's on your podcast, you want facts. Not fiction.

Devon Clement: I do want facts. I mean if you're a little bit off, it's fine. But when the podcast hosts just like riff about something that they are totally incorrect about, I'm like.

Margaret: No, I'm bang on. Season six, episode 18, Murphy Brown lied to us. And Liz Lemon has always tried to have it all. She's tried to balance career, personal life, she's trying to, you know, maybe have a a romantic life or a family or whatever. She's always wanted to have kids and in this episode, it is like super evident that there is no way to do it and you're going to fucking fail and you're being set up. Like how much women are being set up to fail here. Even with honestly the best support sometimes. And so I mean, it was just a commentary on that, which essentially the whole show is, if you really.

Devon Clement: Well, and frankly, Murphy Brown was not perfect.

Margaret: Yeah, sure.

Devon Clement: She was far from perfect and she had a lot of help and a lot of support. I mean, I think her painter moved in with her maybe.

Margaret: No, no. Elvin definitely moves in.

Devon Clement: And she had her friends and she had money.

Margaret: She did. She had a very well established career and, you know, she even had, you know, famously she had inept support at work, but she did have support at work.

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Devon Clement: She had support at work. She, you know, was at a place where she could take time off, work from home, you know, do whatever. And I think that that it's so critical. And it's really not addressed as just such a key element.

Margaret: Well, and in the, in the episode, I mean it's, it's very like kind of on the nose. I mean there is literally a woman in an elevator that Liz is in like on the phone saying, well who's gonna take care of the baby? I still have to do X and Y and Z. And she's saying into the phone as she's, you know, rocking her crying baby in the elevator of 30 Rock. Murphy Brown lied to us. She lied.

Devon Clement: Yeah. Honestly.

Margaret: It's so easy to feel like that, you know what I mean? I, you know, I feel like that sometimes, but honestly, being, like we're saying, being resourced, being in community, being respected in your professional community, all of those things go a long way. A long way. Listen, I don't have any other things on here, but I just want you to know that this is one of my favorite things that I've ever had to do for work.

Devon Clement: We do so many fun things for work.

Margaret: It is so true. But this, doing the little notes for this was so funny. I got to actually write down with my iPad, a goofy movie, dogs, right?

Devon Clement: Did she die too, the mom in that?

Margaret: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Devon Clement: I haven't seen it since I watched it with like kids I babysat for a hundred years ago.

Margaret: Well, she doesn't die in the movie, but it's canon that she's dead. It's like a Finding Nemo situation.

Devon Clement: Well, I mean, that's the thing. But that's the thing with Disney. Like when you have two well adjusted parents who love you, there's no movie.

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Margaret: As I have said about someone we both know and love who you might be getting married to, you know, in the very beginning, I thought, you know, his parents love each other and him. What are we gonna fucking talk about?

Devon Clement: You know, it was weird to like get used to that. One of the first questions I ask new people when I meet them, new adults, not maybe the first, it's a little weird to come out swinging like that, but like, you know, just in conversation, are your parents still together? And if they say yes, I follow up with should they be?

Margaret: Yeah. Is that, is that a good idea?

Devon Clement: More often than not, the answer is no.

Margaret: Oh, for sure.

Devon Clement: But sometimes it's yes, which is really cute. It's very inspirational. Like Rebecca, her parents are like obsessed with each other. I love that. I love that. Give me more of that. And it's nice having those role models and not thinking that being married for x number of years means you're not having sex, you're bickering constantly, you're estranged. Husband is a loser who's a misogynist and who hates you and you hate him and like. What was that the Jim, was it not Jim Belushi? Some other show, I forget what it's called, but Jamie Gertz was the wife and she is stunning. So gorgeous. And the husband was literally a short bald toilet salesman.

Margaret: Wow.

Devon Clement: And I'm just like, Jamie Gertz, what are you doing?

Margaret: Yeah. Get it together, girlfriend.

Devon Clement: Yeah.

Margaret: And on that note, I think we're going to leave it. Get it together, girlfriend. You need to be more like Dee Dee Pickles.

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Devon Clement: You need to be more like Dee Dee Pickles.

Margaret: Look to Dee Dee Pickles to enlighten your lives.

Devon Clement: Or Sue Ellen's mom in Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead or the Nanny of Muppet Babies. Go get fucked in Australia, babies. We love you so much.

Devon Clement: We love you so much. Bye.

Margaret: Bye.

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