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Amazon's "Catastrophe" Perfectly Captures the Lives of Sleep Deprived Parents

By Paige Towers • May 17, 2016 at 11:40am

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The season two premiere of the hit UK comedy, "Catastrophe,"

opens on a scene of married couple, Sharon and Rob, in bed, watching TV. Nine months pregnant, Sharon is wearing a self-described "old lady bra" and both she and Rob are eating something resembling yogurt from mugs when a late night fight breaks out: Rob wants to have sex, Sharon rejects him, both of them are cranky and exhausted. Smash cut to a few minutes later, and they've clearly

made up, only to be interrupted midact by their toddler walking into the bedroom.

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The old kid walking in on the act is a comedy cliché, one that would be quickly written off. However, the lead up to that moment illustrates the brilliance of "Catastrophe." So many truths are encapsulated in the small scene: the far from sexy pajamas, the moodiness, the arguing, the exhasution. And it's but one of many similarly unglamorous scenes that illustrate why the TV show (the second season of which was released on Amazon Prime this April), may be the most realistic depiction of how marriage and kids screw with your sleep and romantic life. These people are real and they are really freakin' tired .

"Catastrophe" — which was created by Irish actress, writer, producer and director, Sharon Horgan, and American actor, comedian and writer — is about a couple who have a wild weeklong fling in London and accidentally get pregnant, after which they decide to take a shot at making a life together

Rob Delaney

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The show is notorious for not tiptoeing around tough issues: when Horgan and Delaney first set out to create it, they decided early that they wanted to capture a nonHollywood version of life. And that involved portraying true exhaustion.

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And that messiness pops up everywhere. Take a scene in season 2 where Rob and Sharon go to Paris for a romantic weekend getaway. The episode could have easily devolved into a series of sexy croissant shots and romantic walks along the rue de pas. Instead Rob and Sharon hightail it to the nearest

and try to communicate in broken French about how Sharon forgot her breast pump, after which they have a very public argument (and then very public makeup session) about Rob's alcoholism.

la pharmacie

But what the show really nails is the nitty gritty realities of parenthood. In a later episode when Rob and Sharon are going out to celebrate their anniversary, Rob warns the babysitter about waking up their newborn, saying, "if you pick her up and

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you soothe her and you mess up her sleep training, I'll know about it and I'll come to your house and wake you up, okay?" When the babysitter asks when they'll be back, Sharon grins and replies, "Well I don't know because it's a surprise!" to which Rob follows up with the disappointing truth: "We'll be back around 11."

It's a funny moment — and one that's utterly refreshing. So many shows — even good ones — choose to depict parents as chipper, energetic people who are uninhibited by the demands of having children. On the final season of "Parks and Recreation," Leslie and her husband Ben are parents to toddleraged triplets but somehow spend long, tireless days at the office and

still have time to attend parties. You'd think we'd see at least one episode where Leslie and Ben were cleaning up vomit or on all fours in the living room, picking up toys. No, "Parks and Recreation" wasn't centered on the complexities of parenting, but it would've been nice to see some real world issues. And this is not a singular issue: Were "Friends" Ross and Rachel real parents, their kid would've been snatched up by child services long ago.

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Delaney In an April 2016 interview with GQ,

— who is a married father of three —
confirmed that he and Horgan both mined their personal lives in order to create authentic situations.

“Life is pretty bananas,” he said. “In real life, my wife and I try to absolutely create little islands of peace. We get a babysitter every Sunday morning from 9 to 1 and we go out and we just be with each other in the morning.” This idea of having to hire somebody to watch your kids just so you can have a little facetime with your loved one definitely seems like something that might turn up in an episode of “Catastrophe.”

By the end of the season two premiere, Sharon and Rob have finally crawled into bed after a long day of troubleshooting. It’s a very rare moment of rest in the lives of two characters who get very little down time: Sharon is now dealing with postpartum depression, Rob is flirting with the idea of an affair

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and they're both so tired that when they wake up at 7:15 one morning in a later episode, they consider it to be "leisurely."

Now this is something that sleepdeprived viewers everywhere can relate to.

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