

00:00:00 Tamar S:

Um, so, you know, we waited. It was important to me to wait until I was, no-, I was old-, but like a little bit older, um, than some people to have a child. Um, I had not like a super tumultuous childhood, but like, a little bit. And like my parents were divorced and it was just like, kind of, and they were like, had us kind of young and so I like, just always wanted like, not that. And so it was very important to, for me. Um, I've been with my now husband for like 17 years, but, um, we like waited a really long time, which is very important to me 'cause I wanted us to be like, settled, like have the whatever jobs we were gonna have, have a house we were gonna live in, like all of that stuff. So, um, that's just where I'm sort of coming from.

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And, um, so we did that, you know, waited until, well, [laughter] until we had the jobs we're gonna have. Um, of course we were in the process of buying a house and then, and I was pregnant and, um, then the pandemic hit and everything got shut down and then we were like sort of panicking and, um, it was a very, the pregnancy was very like, I mean, I guess everybody's like, Covid pregnancies were sort of like weird in that sense. [S2 affirmative] Where it was like very isolated. Like, I had like, just told my coworkers in mid-February 2020 that I was pregnant, um, because I had gotten, like, I did like the, uh, I wanted to wait until I got like the prenatal, um, blood test, you know [S2 affirmative] and just like to find out everything was fine and whatever got like the, the gender and all that stuff.

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Um, and then I told my coworkers when I was pretty far along, 'cause I was just like super nervous, you know, I was just like, oh, I'm so old. Which I know is like, seems stupid, but [laughter], I was like, like, what if something, you know? Like things can go wrong, obviously. So, um, so I had like, kind of just told my, you know, co- I, I had told some other people earlier on, um, but, you know, I just told my coworkers that I was pregnant and then like two weeks later, you know, we got sent home, like for what we thought was gonna be like two weeks and ended up being [right] two years. So. [right] um, so it was just very, and I wasn't, you know, I wasn't even showing it. So basically my whole pregnancy was like at home [S2 affirmative], um, which was [laughter], you know, I think it ended up actually, like, in retrospect, I'm actually really glad, like, I think it ended up being a good thing.

00:02:19:

Um, although it did feel very weird, [laughter], you know [S2 affirmative] and I, I'm someone who's like, I don't really love, like, I never go to the doctor. I'm very fortunate to be super healthy. So obviously [laughter], you know, but like, I don't really like going to the doctor, but I'm also like, I'm very much like, yep, just whatever is the normal medical path for things is what I'm gonna do. So, you know, I like didn't actually think all that much about like different types of birth or like [S2 affirmative] you know, like anything somewhat unusual. It was just like, I was just like, no, I'm just gonna like, have an OB and go to a hospital and, you know, get an epidural and all the things. And that was just like my, you know, my, my plan, which was like a non-plan, like, that's just kind of like the default, I guess, [laughter] [S2 affirmative].

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But that's just kind of like, that's like, I don't know, that's how I am. I'm just not like, I, I guess I just, like, for me, the actual birth itself was just not something that I was super in, invested in [S2 affirmative]. Um, but I was, you know, during pregnancy, you know, I was like obviously like,

you know, reading all these things and, um, I, uh, I guess my whole pregnancy was, again, it was like, it was home, but I tried to like, you know, be pretty healthy and, and do all the things and um, and prepare. And then, um, we did end up, like finally when the real estate market opened back up, we did end up getting a house, like, and moving in, um, like two weeks before, before [of course, of course] my child was born course, which is like a little bit insane [laughter].

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Um, that was a little bit crazy. But, uh, so like, the whole thing was like, it was just a little, it was a little bit stressful, especially because I felt like we'd, like made so intentionally planned for, you know, obviously you planned and everyone laughs, you know, but it's like so intentionally planned, but it's okay. Like this is, everything's gonna be like, set and everything will be normal. [S2 affirmative] And then it was like all of a sudden nothing was normal. [S2 affirmative] And I'm like, what the hell? This isn't fair. Yeah. So, um, anyway, so it, and I had like, I, I think this is actually a little non-standard and I think I, like, I'm not very good at like, advocating for myself, like medically, so I don't know whether, I think U of M was like taking Covid very seriously, which I appreciate of course,

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but, um, I had like, almost no in-person appointments at all, which like people have since told me was like a little odd. Like [yeah] I literally only had the one ultrasound at 20 weeks. Um, you know, I did go in for like a 10-week appointment and got like, they did, they just did like a fetal doppler so I could hear a heartbeat. But like people are like, oh yeah, I had like multiple ultrasounds and like [S2 affirmative] a lot more conversation about what was going on. And, you know, in retrospect, like it was all fine because I was super fortunate to just have like a super, a very healthy pregnancy and a very healthy child. But like, if anything had been going wrong, I feel like I wouldn't have had a whole lot of support [laughter]. [S2 affirmative] You know? [S2 affirmative] Um, and maybe things would've been different, but it was just like, it was a little stressful cause I was just like, you know, I had like literally v- virtual appointments with a different OB every single time.

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Yeah. And, um, like, so just like phone calls and they would give, they like sent me home with a blood pressure monitor and a scale and they were just like, okay, so you just like take your blood pressure, weigh yourself before every appointment. And then it was pretty much like a five-minute thing where we're just like, okay, so how are you feeling? How are things like, does everything seem good? And I'm like, I don't know, this is my first pregnancy. [laughter] Like, I guess so. It doesn't really seem normal because I've never actually like birthed a human before. So it was just very strange. And um, and again, it was fine for me 'cause I'm not somebody who, like, I wasn't trying to do anything super unusual and again, I had like a very healthy pregnancy, but in retrospect a lot of it was just like, it was just a little weird and it was like very isolating and we don't live near any family or anything.

00:06:01:

[S2 affirmative] So, um, and obviously with Covid it was just like, didn't really see anybody [laughter].

00:06:06 Speaker 2:

Yeah. Yeah. It's very different.

00:06:07 Tamar S:

Um, yeah, it was, it was, it was very odd. Um, you know, until we could start seeing people outside, and by that time I was like, you know, quite pregnant. So, um, yeah. So that was, that was kind of a strange time. That was just like sort of the setting of the whole pregnancy. Um, let's see. So then, um, again, because, so because of the Covid protocols I, you were allowed to have, I think, at first you were only supposed to have, you were only allowed to have one person in the, in the room, but they did change it like right before I was supposed to give birth. Um, so that you could have two, but they had to be like, you had to like name them ahead of time and all of this stuff, so

00:06:47 Tamar S:

[S2 affirmative] um, I, you know, obviously my husband was gonna be there, but I, I also wanted my mom to come and so, you know, okay, I put her name down and my mom lives in western New York [S2 affirmative] and um, so, you know, she has like a little bit of a drive to get there, but she was, you know, prepared, you know, kind of waiting for the time. So now leading up to all this, sorry to back up just a tiny bit. [laughter].

00:07:09 S2:

It's ok. That's ok.

00:07:10 Tamar S:

So the original due date that they gave me at like my 10 week appointment was, you know, they just based on your last period [S2 affirmative] and I like kind of [laughter], it was kind of stupid because I, like, I, you know, I had been sort of like tracking and everything, so I like knew exactly when I ovulated.

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And so I was like, I knew based on that, that it should be August 6th. And then, but what they told me based on my last period was August 2nd. And I was like, man, I should have just lied. So they would like [laughter], 'cause I wanted it to be like, right, you know, not that like, it's, again, it seems so silly but [laughter], but I was just like, no, that's not what it's, that's not what it's gonna be. Like, who cares when your last period was [laughter] but, uh, [laughter]. So they didn't do that. And then when I got the, um, the 20-week ultrasound, they, you know, did, they gave me a date based on measurement and they said August 10th, which I thought was really funny cause I was like, oh, that's my birthday. Like how fun would that be if we were birthday twins? So I was super excited about this.

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And then [laughter], once it got closer, I, I saw my, so I, you know, by the end of course I was actually seeing my OB in person, so I think it was my 38-week appointment or something, she was like, okay, so you're like due in, you know, like six days or something. And I was like, no, no, no, I'm, cause I was going by August 10th, the latest date [S2 affirmative] I was like, no, no, no, I've got two weeks. And she's like, uh, no, no, it says here like August, August 2nd. And I was like, no, but they told me at the ultrasound that it's like this. And she's like, oh yeah, if it's not a difference of more than two weeks from the original date, then they don't even change it.

Um, so that was just kind of funny 'cause I felt, I was like, I'm just completely unprepared for this [yeah].

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Um, and again, not that it really mattered. And so she did end up, um, by the way, so she did end up being born on the sixth, which was the date that I had [look at you] originally said based on my ovulation, which was amazing. [laughter]. I thought that was very cool. Even though I was, I like, in my head, like as soon as they told me the ultrasound techs or whoever, um, said it was like a birthday in my head I was like, okay, definitely gonna be born on my birthday. I was like, so like when I went into labor, I was like, this can't, this can't be right. Like, this is a few days too early. I'm a very like by the book person. So like, you know, like to me like again, like, now this seems so silly, but it was just like, okay,

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like, you know, I read textbooks and it's like, okay, so it says, you know, the nurses said like, once your, I don't remember the numbers, but it's like, once your contractions are this long and this many minutes apart [S2 affirmative] you know, that's when it's a good idea to start thinking about going to the hospital. So I was like, okay, great. You know, as soon as like I contractions started, I started measuring them, um, you know, expecting some period of time will pass, then they'll be at the right length [laughter] and, and you know, distance and time apart [S2 affirmative] and, and then I'll go to the hospital [laughter]. So of course, you know, not very long in my contractions were already not long enough, but they were super close together. And so I'm just like, wait, this isn't right. This isn't what's supposed to happen.

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So, you know, I called the nurse triage line and it's like the middle of the night, or not the, quite the middle of the night. The first interaction started at like 10:00 PM So the first thing I did actually was I, I went and I took a shower [S2 affirmative] um, I like washed and blow dried my hair and styled my hair, [laughter] put on like a tiny bit of makeup [laughter]. 'Cause I was just like, I don't know when the next time I'm gonna be able to do this is so true. That's what I'm doing, [laughter]. And I don't regret it because my birth pictures look great, [laughter].

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Um, so yeah. And then so the contractions are kind of coming sort of fast, um, but like weren't super long. And so anyway, I called the nurse triage line. They're like, well, you know, you can, you can come in and we'll, you know, check everything and um, and see how you, see how you're doing. So, um, you know, I held out for as long as I felt like I could and I was like, okay, like I feel like I really wanna get to the hospital. I was so nervous about, um, you know, I've heard somebody stories about like, oh, you wait too long and like the epidural doesn't work. And I was just like, oh no, I don't want this to happen. So, um, so I get there, they, they bring me in because of the Covid rules. This is actually kind of nice, the, like I think you normally switch rooms, like you first go into one room and then later they'll put you in like the delivery room, but they didn't [S2 affirmative]

00:11:14:

they weren't doing any room switching cause there was too much sanitizing. So it was like whatever this first room is that's like where you're staying or something. [S2 affirmative] So anyway, so they like brought me in and checked me in. I was, you know, one centimeter and they're just like, okay, well why don't you like walk around for a little bit? And they're like, don't

worry, you don't have to go home, like you're we'll we'll admit you. And I'm like, 'cause like nobody was there [laughter]. I was like, okay, all right. [laughter]. So we like walk around the hospital and you know, the contractions were just, they were so close together. So like Scott and I, like Scott's like getting there, my husband, but he is there with me and he is, um, you know, getting some food or whatever. And I'm just like, every 30 seconds I'm like, okay, this really hurts [laughter].

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So I walk around in a and like, for like, you know, an hour as much as long as I could take. And then I come back and I'm like, okay, can you check me again? And I was not very much more dilated at that point, but they were like, it's okay, it's fine. We're just gonna, we're we'll bring you in and um, and this is where it starts to get fuzzy cause I'm just like, I can't rem- like, I like, what I really can't remember is how much time was passing at any point, but [sure] I'm, I feel like I should be able to figure this out by like, when I went in and when she was born. But who knows. Anyway, at some point, you know, I'm in the room, they, there's all kinds of prepping and everything and they, you know, eventually got me the, the epidural, um, so that I could sleep.

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'Cause you know, I hadn't slept at all. And I was like, well, okay, if I have a little time, like it'd be nice to like, you know, start this thing out, like getting a little bit of sleep. So [laughter] [S2 affirmative]. So, um, anyway, so, so I got the epidural, which Scott tells me, um, he's like, oh yeah, that was the scariest part [laughter], which is like cracks me up 'cause he wasn't the one giving birth, but he had to like witness them, you know, doing the epidural, which I'm like, I didn't have to see it. So yeah, I mean, I'm glad I didn't have to see it because I'm, I'm not, I don't get like queasy about that kind of stuff, but I'm not like into it either. So [laughter] I was just like, yeah, I don't really [laughter].

00:13:02 S2:

That's fair.

00:13:03 Tamar S:

Yeah. Like I don't, I don't need to see that. Um, but it was definitely not the most memorable part of the whole experience for me. So it's just, but again, I didn't have to really see it. So, and there were, you know, it's a teaching hospital, so there were like kind of like a lot of people and they were just like, always somebody, like watching somebody else do everything. So I felt like there were just like a whole lot of like, people in the room, which was weird because, you know, it was like Covid and so like, I was used to like not seeing anybody inside [S2 affirmative] for months and months. And so it was very strange to like be in this room [S2 affirmative] with like all these people [laughter] like inside. And of course everyone was wearing masks. Although actually they, I guess they had implemented a rule, like, as long as I got a negative covid test, I didn't have to wear a mask.

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Cause I was really worried about having to like labor with a mask on. That sounded really terrible. [absolutely, yeah] Um, so I didn't have to, so that was nice. Um, so, okay. Yeah, so they did the, the epidural and I did actually go to sleep for a little bit, which was really great. Um, I had talked to my mom at that point 'cause you know, it was like overnight I kind of texted her. I

was okay, like, start driving as soon as you can, you know [S2 affirmative]. Um, but because it was the middle of the night, so she didn't like come until later and I was like, well, okay, I guess we'll figure out if she has time or not to get here. But I was just like, you know, I guess in my head it's like you hear about 24 hours of laboring and stuff like that [S2 affirmative],

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and so I, I kind of just assumed that there was more time and it ended up being that she had like no chance of getting here on time. [laughter], which is okay. Um, so, um, um, oh yeah, so I remember so waking up and, you know, so I was still like pretty numb and my husband went home, he went home. Um, you know, I was like, why don't you like go eat something and go take a shower or whatever, like, we probably still have a little time and then, and then come back. And I was not super dilated at that point. Um, and then, uh, I remember like feeling this weird sensation, you know, and I was very numb, but I was just like, oh, something, something strange is happening. And then I called the nurse in and she was like, oh yeah, I think your water's breaking.

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I was like, oh, ok, that's cool. You know, it was just like this sort of like, again, I was like so numbed up, it was just like this very mild pressure, but I was like, this is a different feeling than like, it wasn't like the the numbed up contractions. It was something else. And I was like, something weird is happening. I was like, oh, that's so cool, like, I don't even know what that means, but I know that's a good thing, you know,

00:15:23 S2:

[laughter] It is a thing.

00:15:24 TamarS:

Yeah. So she was right because not too long after I was, you know, wet all of a sudden and I was like, oh, okay, all right. I guess like, I was like, so how, what does that mean? Does that mean that I have like, not very much time? And she's like, well, it doesn't really mean anything.

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She's like, but you are a little bit more dilated right now. And so, um, I, and I don't remember how far along I was, but they started, they gave me the impression like, yeah, things might actually, it looks like things maybe are moving a little bit faster. So I like texted my husband and, um, said like, okay, like, you know, you don't need to ru- what did I say? I was like, you don't need to rush, but don't dawdle either, [laughter]. And so he says he saw this text and he was like, oh shit, you know?

00:16:00 S2:

Yeah, of course, of course.

00:16:01 Tamar S:

Better get back. Yeah. Um, so, so he comes back, my mom has, has still not arrived. She's driving and she's like, way far out. And I was like, started to panic, okay, my mom's not gonna be here. I was like, but I really want someone else to be here. And like, so Molly Wilson was my, my like backup person. [S2 affirmative] um, and so [laughter], so I was like, okay, well if my,

my mom's not gonna make it, so I really want like Molly to be in the room. And they're like, oh, well you only have like, you know, one named person and it's, you know, it's like your mom. So like, you can't have, you know, you can't have this other person in the room. And so, so I was like, okay, like, you know, I text Molly this and, you know, you know her, um, she was not gonna stand for that [laughter], so, um, so she's like, yeah, it's, it's fine, I'll figure it out. And [laughter] [S2 affirmative] So, you know, things are progressing, getting a lot closer. I, um, at that point I remember I like, I, I can't remember again how long, so Scott got back, you know, we're all ready and they're just like, okay, like we, you're basically ready to, to start pushing and Oh, I remember.

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Okay, so backing up just a little bit, um, you know, if I'd had like a normal non covid pregnancy, I always thought like, okay, like I guess people take like Lamaze classes or things like that [S2 affirmative], you know, I'm sort of prepared for this birth and like what it's supposed to be like. But again, because of covid, like I didn't do any of those things. Like there were some virtual classes and so I remember asking my OB like, do I need to do anything? Like, do I need to know anything ahead of time? Or like, is somebody just gonna tell me what to do? And she's like, oh, the nurses will tell you what to do. And I was like, okay. So I didn't, I did not prepare at all. I was like, I don't really know. I know that there's like breathing techniques and stuff, [laughter] but I was like, I didn't know what pushing meant.

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So they were just like, okay, so you're gonna push. And I was like, okay. So just, just describe to me what that, what that is like [S2 affirmative] and I can't remember what I, they gave like a specific, they were like, okay, it's kind of like you're trying to poop, but like, but not exactly, I can't remember, but [S2 affirmative] you know, and I, um, you know, at that point I'd been doing like a lot of like prenatal yoga and I was like pretty good at like the, you know, ujjayi breathing and stuff like that. And so I was like, I was like, okay, I got this. And so I like listened to the instructions, I'm like, I'm gonna do this exactly. And so I, you know, started pushing and they were like, wow, you are really, really good at this [laughter]. And I was like, you're remembering to breathe all the things.

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And I was like, oh, great. Like, I love it. Like [laughter],

00:18:22 S2:

Yeah, well done you.

00:18:23 Tamar S:

I'm just, I'm just an expert. Um, so yeah, it was like coming pretty fast and, um, [laughter] basically. So I, like, I didn't, I don't remember how long it ended up pushing, but it wasn't very long. And I know at, at one point they said like, okay, like, do you wanna, 'cause so Molly's like downstairs, she's trying to, she is like arguing with security or whatever. She's like, she's gonna get in the room. And I'm like, she's, and she's like, I think texting with, with Scott and just said like, I'm like working on it, don't worry. She's like, I'm gonna threaten them with my husband, like blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I'm gonna figure out how to get up there. [laughter]. So at some point, I actually didn't know this until later, I thought she just like pushed past people and got and found her way up.

00:19:02:

But I think my OB actually called down and they were like, let her in for god's sake. Like [laughter], so like, she was close and so like the, the nurse, the nurse is actually like, why don't you actually not push through this contraction otherwise, cause I think this is gonna be like the last push. And um, so I was like, okay. So we like paused for one contraction and then, um, and then the next one like start pushing and like literally like as I am like pushing her out, um, Molly's like running, running in the door [laughter] Immediately starts taking all kinds of very unflattering pictures, which I'm very grateful to have. Um, and that was it. I mean, it was like, it was like pretty fast. It was like, I, like one of the nurses actually said to me afterwards, she's like, this is one of those deliveries that like, you actually shouldn't tell people about.

00:19:48:

'Cause it was like too like easy, too textbook, it was too- I was like, this is great. Like I could do this so many times.

00:19:54 S2:

What is people's deal with this [laughter]?

00:19:56 Tamar S:

Like, this is very fast. Very I was like, you guys person must not know how to breathe or something. Just listen to the instructions. [laughter]. Um, I don't know. I mean, she was fairly small, like not, I mean, I was like a 10-pound baby, so I was like, ex- not, I wasn't actually expecting this because they told me like roughly how much big she was measuring, but I was pretty big. And so I was like, I had thought that that was gonna be, you know, my experience. [S2 affirmative] She was like six and a half pounds so, you know, small-ish, but had a like, has a pretty small head. Like she was, you know, so that was helpful [laughter]. Um, so yeah, so she just kinda like came right out and um, and I remember like, yeah, just not even knowing what to expect in that moment, like immediately started crying and, and I remember like Molly saying like, oh, good, strong lungs. And I'm like, oh right, I should have been listening for that. Like, that's great. That's a good thing. And, um, yeah. And so I, uh, you know, they, I I had said like all the normal things I wanted like a, you know, immediate skin to skin and delayed washing or [laughter], whatever it's

00:20:56 S2:

[S2 affirmative]

00:21:00 Tamar S:

Um, so yeah, she was kind of just put on me and um, and she was perfect and she was just like, everything went really well and yeah, she was just like this tiny little person and, and started nursing like pretty quickly and easily. And, um, yeah.

00:21:17 S2:

So then, um, with Covid, how long did you stay in the hospital, afterwards?

00:21:22 Tamar S:

We were there, um, yeah, it was definitely longer, um, or like shorter time than I think that they used to have people in. Um, it was under 48 hours total. She was born at 12 around noon on August 6th. And I had gone in like after midnight on the, so I guess it was on the sixth. Yeah. And then, but I remember like by the next day, like the 7th, um, I was like ready to go. Like I just like wanted to get out of there. Like I was just like, didn't wanna be in the hospital anymore again, 'cause we just didn't, I was like, okay, like this is fine. Like, let's go. And I just remember I took so long to be discharged [S2 affirmative] cause they were sort of shorter staffed and, and all this stuff. Um, so like probably 36 hours total in the hospital.

00:22:09 S2:

[S2 affirmative] And you felt ready to go home?

00:22:13 Tamar S:

I did. Yeah. Very much. I remember they had like, you know, they had like this, um, IV in my arm, um, which, you know, had originally been like, well like during the, um, the delivery and then they just like kept it in there afterwards for like painkillers and all this stuff. And it was just so funny 'cause there are so many things that, you know, in immediate recovery that like, you could possibly complain about, things that'll hurt and whatever. But the thing that like was driving me nuts is just like, the way it was taped on my arm was really bothering me. And I was like, I have to get this IV out. I was like, and they were like, well it has to stay in for 24 hours, you know, just in case, I don't even remember, just in case something, and I was just like, I want it out,

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'cause I have like super tiny veins and so like, they had a hard time getting it in, and so it was got like taped, like weirdly [S2 affirmative] and it was like pulling on my skin and I'm like, I have to get this IV outta my arm. [laughter]. Meanwhile I'm like sitting like cross-legged, like for some reason, like, you know, walking around the room and like, and, and like nursing her, like, it was like no big deal. Like, I was just like weird. I don't know whether it was just like endorphins or like, again, I just had a really easy recovery so that was like a big part of it. Um, but, uh, I just, like the IV was the thing that was driving me nuts. So I was just like, I have to get this out [laughter]. And um, so once that was out I was like, I'm a little calmer. And I was just like, yeah, I guess we're just, we're ready to go. And my mom was at my house at that point waiting for me. She couldn't come [S2 affirmative] um, so, um, so I wanted to like get home and then, you know, see her and [S2 affirmative]. Yeah. So I was like ready to go. I was ready to, to get out of there [laughter].

00:23:52 S2:

So that's like the question. Right. When did your mom get there?

00:23:55 Tamar S:

Right? That's a good question. [laughter] After she was born, but not like, um, like not, it was like only like a couple hours, so it was like torture for her, you know? [S2 affirmative] Cause then it was like a full, like 24 hours, like waiting for her to get, for us to get like home to [S2

affirmative] to our house. [S2 affirmative] And, but you know, she had like, you know, unpacked, like grocery shopped, like got everything ready, so she was like sort of preparing and then just like anxiously like, okay, okay, okay. [S2 affirmative] First grandchild also. [S2 affirmative] And um, so, uh, yeah, so she got there a little too late [laughter], which was fine. Um, but um, and then she was, ended up being able to stay with us for a couple weeks, which was really great [nice.] And, um, yeah.