

# GOLDEN GIRL

## Chelsea Kane is showin' 2017 who's boss

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“Hello!” Chelsea Kane cheerfully chirps when I tell her I'm recording our conversation.

We are in the living room of the beautiful blonde, brown-eyed actress' hotel suite in The London NYC. Even though spring officially sprung yesterday, it's still chilly in Manhattan, so she has paired a black, long-sleeved turtleneck with a sleeveless, charcoal-white-grey dress, and dark, thigh-high socks. Chelsea is all smiles and sunshine—which I'm sure is her nature—but also because she's having one of those can-life-get-any-better? years—and we're only four months into 2017.

*Baby Daddy*, the show on which Chelsea plays Riley Perrin, is currently in its sixth season, recently celebrated their 100th episode, and won a People's Choice Award for Favorite Cable TV Comedy in January. “It's been the best season as far as, I guess, memorable moments...a lot of really special milestones in recent months.” She takes a sip from the mug she clasps with both hands and smiles. So, what's it like to be part of a show that has gone on this long? “It's such an elite club to be a part of, hitting 100 episodes. When I found out that was happening this year, I kinda was Googling shows that have come before us and it is absolutely amazing. It's very surreal 'cause it seems like the last five years flew by. I couldn't ask for a better group of people to spend my 20s with.”

To commemorate their 100th episode, *Baby Daddy's* cast got matching tattoos of the safety pin from the series' logo—an idea introduced by Jean-Luc Bilodeau, who plays Ben Wheeler, and executive producer Heidi Clements. “There are a lot of beautiful tattooed people on our set. I was a little nervous. This is my first tattoo that you could see,” she laughs, “so, I was a little more reserved and kinda panicked about it all coming together. But we did it. And I love them, I carry them with me all the time anyway, so I might as well have something to show for it.” Chelsea placed hers on her hip to

avoid extra hours spent in the hair and makeup chair—two hours is already long enough for her. “Tahj [Mowry, who plays Tucker Dobbs] spends as much time as I do in the makeup chair 'cause he has sleeves, so he's getting his airbrushed every morning,” she comments on her costar's tattoos.

This season, Riley is pregnant with hulking, hot, hockey player Danny Wheeler's (played by Derek Theler) baby. A fun experience, Chelsea loved playing pregnant and sporting her weighted bellies. “I could tell actors working on other shows and different crews were looking at me like: Is she? Like, that awkward: Do I say congratulations or not? It was funny walking around with a glass of wine and pregnancy belly.” She laughs. Since Riley is a badass lawyer, they made sure to touch on concerns pregnant career women sometimes have, like the fear of being overlooked for a promotion because of maternity leave and fear of becoming a new mother, which Chelsea appreciated. “Riley is terrified she's going to screw this kid up, which personally I can relate to. I think the idea of being a mom is such a huge, terrifying responsibility.”

At the end of the season, viewers get to meet Diley's (the cute couple's name) baby. Chelsea experienced a flood of emotions and some real tears holding the week-old baby. “It was so beautiful and delicate and very overwhelming,” she says with a smile. Since they weren't sure whether *Baby Daddy* was returning for a seventh season, they wrapped everything up, just in case. “As someone who has played this character for five years and given so much of myself to Riley, and the fans who have stuck with us for so long, we wanted to make sure that we didn't leave anything open-ended, 'cause that's just so painful.”

Over their five years together, the cast has become incredibly tight. Chelsea had heard horror stories, as she was growing up in theater, about how cutthroat show business



is, so she was pleasantly surprised that *Baby Daddy* ended up being “the happiest place to work.” The cast, who are like a second family to her, spend a lot of time together off set as well. “No one’s immediate family is there, so we spend a lot of holidays together—any hard times are spent at each other’s houses and we get each other through everything.” (*Baby Daddy* is set in New York City, but films in Los Angeles.) They have trivia nights, *The Bachelor* viewing parties, sleepovers—they even have a cast-and-crew band. When they’re on hiatus, Chelsea often sleeps over at Melissa Peterman’s (who plays Bonnie Wheeler) house, and Tahj keeps an extra pair of pajamas at Chelsea’s place. “There’s so much love and warmth and safety and fun.” Simply peek at her Instagram and you’ll find a number of heartwarming photos of the tightknit bunch.

While you’re there, you’ll also notice Chelsea’s affinity for traveling. Two summers ago, the adventurous actress went backpacking through

Europe—Ireland, England and France—with costar Jean-Luc. “We stayed in hostels, usually all-boys hostels, so it was definitely a smelly learning curve for me,” she laughs. The Phoenix native also likes going on hiking trips, and has done the Grand Canyon and the 26-mile Inca Trail to Machu Picchu with her cousins and two aunts in Peru. “As an actor working on a series like this, to know you have work to come back to is a rare gift, so the last couple of seasons I really took advantage knowing I can spend a little money without working, and come back and not be totally screwed.” She laughs.

Though Chelsea subscribes to the philosophy of trying everything once, don’t expect her to go skydiving or hot-air-ballooning—she’s afraid of heights. “That was one of the hardest things for me when we were hiking up Machu Picchu. You climb up to some of these ruins and you’re standing on a tiny, little ledge or the Grand Canyon. So, there were a few mini panic attacks. Other than that, I’ll

eat anything... My backpack usually sounds like a maraca though, ’cause I bring all of the nausea pills and everything to keep me going.” With the holidays behind us and spring here, she’s getting that itch to take off to someplace, though she doesn’t know where just yet.

One might surmise—from social media—that Chelsea is always flitting from one exotic, exciting place to the next, which is why she thinks fans would be surprised to find out how much time she actually spends alone in sweats. “Outside of traveling, I’m really a homebody. I’m an only child and did homeschooling and everything... I go to the movies by myself. I go to dinner by myself. I very much like my alone time. Going to events or anything like that, that’s a blast or going to work. But at the end of the night, to come home and watch *Forensic Files* by my lonesome is one of my favorite hobbies.” Recently, she adopted another somewhat-surprising hobby while visiting her parents in Sedona, Arizona (who live on a little pecan orchard!) over the holidays: puzzles. “My mom put a puzzle in my stocking and I got obsessed. I did like four of them when I was home. I would just bake a fresh batch of chocolate chip cookies and do another puzzle. It’s kinda like my meditation—chilling out with a puzzle.”

With the weather warming up, this “desert-dweller” loves to be outdoors, especially for alfresco meals with friends. “It’s fun to go to friend’s houses, do those twinkle-light-dinners outside, that perfect temperature at sunset. I love spring.” Are you hosting these get-togethers or are you the one who’s going? “I’m the one who’s going. I think you would want to invite me more than have me host.” She laughs. Chelsea confesses that up until a year ago, visitors would think she had just moved in—when she’d already been there for three years. She handled it and has gotten rid of the boxes being used as bedside tables. Even though her house is company-friendly now, she was a little hesitant about hosting one of their *Bachelor* viewing parties. “It was so funny. I don’t know if I’m a good hostess. I find myself fluffing [she smacks a pillow on the couch to show me] pillows behind people after they leave, which I think makes everyone uncomfortable. So, I gotta work on just chilling and letting it happen,” she says with a smile.

Chilling is something that Chelsea can do a lot of, since she’s currently on hiatus. So, what’s next? “If *Baby Daddy* is over, it’s back to the drawing board or a lot of possibilities of what could come next, because I was pretty much all-consumed by the show for the last couple of years.” Ideally, she’d love to stay in comedy and continue following in her idols’—the Mary Tyler Moores—footsteps. “I love working on a soundstage and multi-cam situation and driving onto the lot like, ‘Good Morning, Bob! [she waves] Good Morning, Bill!’ I love that.” Plus, Chelsea is a natural at the

physical comedy. As Riley, she has tackled Tucker, wrestled a girl at a hockey game, fallen off a gurney... "I definitely discovered that I have an iron deficiency working on this show because there have been a couple of pratfalls where I've had bruises everywhere. People were like, do you need a safe word? I'm like, Ohmygod. I'm fine. I swear. It's my job," she says with a wide smile.

Before *Baby Daddy*, Chelsea had appeared in films and TV series like *Jonas*, *Bratz*, *One Tree Hill*, and *Lovestruck: The Musical*. "That was one of my favorite projects ever," she says of the latter, which she starred in alongside Jane Seymour. *Lovestruck* allowed Chelsea to showcase the refined dancing skills she picked up from her stint on *Dancing with the Stars*— where she

came in third place. Since I'm a fan of *One Tree Hill* and have sat down with a few of the cast in the past (Sophia, Jana, Bryan), I had to bring up her mean-girl role. I'm glad I did, because I learned two new things: that her character, Tara Richards, was written in for her, and

that Stephen Colletti was her then-boyfriend. Since Chelsea was a frequent fixture on the set, visiting Stephen during her time off, *OTH* creator Mark Schwahn asked the actress if she wanted to play something "really mean" while she was there. And this is how Tara —Brooke Davis' restaurant rival/

Chris Keller's cheating-girlfriend— was born. "I got to do all my scenes with Stephen and Tyler Hilton and it was just an absolute blast and living in North Carolina for a couple months was a nice little break from L.A., too."

As she's reflecting on her career, she points out how each job led her to the next. "I did *Dancing with the Stars* and then through that got this movie, *Lovestruck*, which was actually through ABC Family, Freeform, which is how I ended up on *Baby Daddy*. I give a lot of love to *Dancing with the Stars*, 'cause I can see each little stepping stone from one job to the next," she says thoughtfully. We're keeping our fingers crossed that season seven of *Baby Daddy* is in the cards, but we know that whatever stone Chelsea ends up on next, this golden girl is going to shine. ML

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Keep up with Chelsea on [www.facebook.com/chelseakane](http://www.facebook.com/chelseakane), Instagram/Twitter: @Chelseakane and [www.chelseakane.com](http://www.chelseakane.com) *Baby Daddy* airs on Mondays at 8:30pm ET/PT on Freeform.





## We want more!

### ON HER SIGNATURE, SHORT LOCKS

"The short hair kinda started with a like, circa Britney Spears-2009 breakdown. I had been on Disney and I had done the *Bratz* movie, where I had hair extensions in because without them I looked unhealthy compared to the other girls onscreen with me 'cause there was just so much beautiful hair happening all around me. So, it kinda started with: You have to get these off of my head. Cut 'em all off! So, that's where the short hair kinda came to and I just have always loved it. Now, it's become my way of, [when] finishing a role, switching out of it. I'll cut it all off or dye it pink or cut bangs," say Chelsea, who doesn't have specific person she goes to, and will have someone on set do it or walk into the closest salon when she feels like a change. All your haircuts are so cute and great, are people always telling you that? "People seem to love it. I'm so grateful. I always tell everyone if they're thinking of short hair, to go for it. I found it very liberating... I think I'll always be a short-haired girl."

### ON PLAYING RILEY

"I do love that she's such a career woman and still has time for her friends... I love that she can hang with the boys. I kinda consider myself a guy's girl too, that I don't need someone to go to the bathroom with me." She laughs. "What I love about the whole kind of message and ensemble of *Baby Daddy* is that we can all kinda be super-flawed and basically horrible people sometimes, but there's this underlying message of love and support and everyone showing up for each other when it really matters. And that's definitely who Riley is. She can be a little crazy, but she shows up where it counts. And I love, love, love, love [claps her hands] that our writers let her not be the perfect woman. There's like a slow leak in Riley's crazy balloon. She flips out. She's emotional. She might overact, so I think that's awesome and that's what I really love about her and what we have in common. I usually finally flip out at the worst possible time."

### ON WHAT SHE'S WATCHING ON TV

"I've always loved *Girls*, that's one of those I get together with my girlfriends and watch. I've been watching *Feud*, *Game of Thrones*—can't wait for it to come back. Love Bill Maher. Love John Oliver, watch John Oliver religiously. But more than that, I've been catching up on old movies. I watched *Funny Girl* the other night, just made me so happy. Um yeah, it goes in waves. There's also a lot of *Forensic Files* and *Cops* happening. I love all of those morbid, dark, like crime-solving, real life stuff. I find them fascinating."