

## Becomes 100

Chapter 0100

Serena's POV

+25 BONUS @ww.N@vèLWøRm.com

Overjoyed by the ultrasound news of our baby boy, I suggest to Bill, "Let's go grab some coffee and maybe look at some books?" Bill smiles, the kind that shows he's just as eager to stretch out this day a little longer.

We head to the nearby bookstore with a cafe at the front. As

we walk in, the familiar smell of books and coffee gives the air a comforting weight. We order our drinks – mine a decaf, now and find our way to the parenting section.

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Bill picks up a book called "How to Baby–Proof Literally Everything" and gives me a playful look. "Looks like I'll have to study up for when he's over here," he jokes, making me laugh at the thought of our energetic little one exploring Bill's spotless apartment.

He quickly looks through the book and then, with a smile, shows me another one. How about "Dad Jokes for Every Occasion"? Gotta be ready," he jokes, and I playfully roll my eyes, laughing with him.

Then, Bill says, "Let's go see the kids' books. I want to get him something." His excitement is catching, and I follow him to the colorful shelves. He picks up "Goodnight Moon." "For bedtime at my place," he says softly, making my heart melt a little.

I find a book about baby animals and nudge him. "This one's for afternoons with me. We'll turn him into an animal lover for sure." Bill laughs and agrees, adding both books to the pile in his arms.

Next, he surprises me by picking out a tiny, stuffed dragon. "For his first guardian," Bill explains.

I can already picture our little boy cuddling up to that dragon, feeling safe and loved. It might seem like a small thing, but it means so much to me. It shows how much Bill wants to be a part of our son's life and how much he cares, even though he won't always be there.

We continue browsing, picking up a few more books like nursery rhymes and baby guides.

"Put these on my tab," Bill says when we reach the register. "It's my treat."

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"Are you sure?" I ask, furrowing my brow.

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"Absolutely," Bill says with a smile. "Consider it a thank you for putting up with me today."

Bill calls his driver to pick us up from the bookstore, and soon enough, a sleek, comfortable car pulls up to the curb. We slide into the back seat, our bags full of books nestled between us, and the driver greets us with a nod before pulling smoothly into traffic.

He mentions a baby name he came across in one of the books, sparking a playful debate between us about potential names for our son.

"Okay, what about Ethan?" Bill suggests, watching my reaction closely.

I ponder it for a moment, then shake my head with a smile. "It's nice, but I know three Ethans already. It has to be something unique."

Bill laughs, nodding in agreement as he flips through the book for more ideas. "Fair enough. How about Leo? Short, strong."

"Leo... I like that," I admit, warming to the idea as I picture a little boy with that name.

Throughout the ride, the atmosphere is open and warm. We toss names back and forth, sometimes serious, sometimes bursting into laughter when one of us throws out something absurd just to break the pattern. It feels good to talk like this, so freely and without the usual guards I have up.

I wonder if I'm opening up too fast, but being with Bill feels right. His energy and enthusiasm make the space between us feel smaller with every passing minute.

We pull up at my apartment building. As the car comes to a smooth stop, Bill quickly hops out and comes around to open my door. He gathers the pile of books we've collected and carefully carries them as we walk towards my apartment.

"We're not naming him after Joe Montana," I say with a playful eye roll. Bill is a huge -49ers fan, so I knew he'd try to slip his football hero into our baby's name.

He laughs and winks at me. "Can't blame a guy for trying! He's a legend." He pauses, then adds with a playful grin, "But don't worry, I have plenty of other equally amazing names up my sleeve."

laugh, shaking my head as we reach the front door. "Maybe for a middle name," I concede with a smirk, "but let's save the Hall of Fame names for his sports jerseys,

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not the birth certificate."

As we laugh and climb the stairs, a familiar voice interrupts us.

"Serena, I didn't know you have company," the voice says sharply.

I look up, surprised, to see Calvin blocking the path to my apartment. My heart jumps a bit not just from the surprise, but also from the sudden tension that fills the air.

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Calvin's face is hard to read at first, but his eyes give him away. They look angry, yet there's a cold, calculating look in them as if he's quickly figuring things out in his head. His jaw is clenched as he stares at me, then at Bill, who has stopped smiling. wWw.@ovè/wøRm.c@m

This can't be good.

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