

Becomes 99

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Bill's POV

Dr. Sanchez leads us into the sonogram room where the gentle hum of the ultrasound machine fills the air with a subtle buzz of anticipation. It's dimly lit, making the screen in front of us the brightest thing in the room. Serena carefully lies down on the examination table, looking a bit tense. I pull up a chair close to her, our hands immediately finding each other for a reassuring grip.

"Let's start," Dr. Sanchez says as she applies a cold gel on Serena's belly. She picks up the ultrasound wand and begins to glide it across. The screen starts showing wavy lines and vague shapes that gradually become clearer.

"There we go," Dr. Sanchez says, tweaking some controls on the machine. The outline of our baby comes into view, his little movements are faint but undeniable. An incredible feeling of awe hits me as I watch—this is really happening. W(w)w.nOvelWOrM.(c)M

A tear slips out as I take it all in, feeling a rush of emotions about becoming a dad. Dr. Sanchez looks over and says, "You're at 20 weeks now, so it's a good time to find out the sex of the baby if you'd like." She looks between Serena and me for an

answer.

Serena and I share a quick look and she nods. "Yes, we'd like to know," she says, her voice full of both excitement and a hint of nerves.

Dr. Sanchez gives a nod and turns back to the monitor, her hands expertly maneuvering the wand. A moment later, she points to a spot on the screen, her face lighting up with a smile. "Congratulations, it's a boy." WwW.NovElworm.com

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a son, our

Serena and I lock eyes, both our faces wet with tears. The words sink in. It feels like everything just stops for a moment, except for the pounding of my heart, loud in my ears.

Dr. Sanchez gives us some time to compose ourselves before she continues with the rest of the appointment. She turns back to the ultrasound machine and prints out a couple of pictures of the sonogram. The images, still a bit blurry and mysterious, somehow make everything feel even more real.

"Here are some pictures for you to take home," Dr. Sanchez says, handing the glossy prints to Serena. She looks at them, her smile broadening, and then hands one to me.

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Dr. Sanchez then shifts into her more clinical role "co your last few appointments, I'd like to start you on a new vitamin supplement. It'll

based on the scans and help with iron levels, which is important as you head into the second half of your pregnancy." She writes down the prescription, explaining how Serena should take it. I listen carefully, noting down the details in my mind so I can help Serena remember later.

As she's explaining, I find myself staring at the picture in my hand, our son's first ever photo. It suddenly strikes me that I want one just for myself, a copy to keep at my place.

"Dr. Sanchez, could I get a copy of one of these pictures too?" I ask, holding up the sonogram image. "I'd love to have one for myself."

"Of course, Bill," she responds warmly, printing another copy. "Keep this with you."

Dr. Sanchez hands me the additional print, and I carefully take it from her. "Thank you," I say, the weight of the moment making my voice a bit thicker than usual.

Serena smiles at both of us, her eyes still shining from earlier emotions. "Yes, thank you so much, Dr. Sanchez. This means a lot to us."

"You're very welcome. Remember, if you have any questions or if there's anything you're unsure about, don't hesitate to call," she says.

"We will," I assure her, clutching the sonogram picture a little tighter. "And we'll see you at the next appointment."

"Looking forward to it," Dr. Sanchez replies, smiling as she turns back to her desk.

Serena and I head out of the office, stepping into the cool air outside. We're quiet as we walk down the steps of the clinic, each of us wrapped up in our own thoughts. I'm pondering what it really means to be a dad — how much things are going to change, the responsibility, and all the ways I want to make things good for our little

guy.

And more than anything, I want to make sure Serena feels supported and safe through all of this. WwW.MOve(w)ORM.CcM

"Bill? We get to the bottom of the steps and suddenly Serena stops. She turns to me, "Her voice snaps me out of my daze. I look at her, and before I can respond, she steps in and gives me a big hug. It's firm and warm, and we just stand there on the sidewalk, holding each other. It's one of those hugs that feels like it could last forever, but it's probably only a minute or two. Everything else kind of melts away.

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"Thank you for today," she says, her voice soft against my chest.

I give her a squeeze back. "Of course," I say, finding my voice again. "I wouldn't have missed it for anything."