

Chapter 69: Apart

Damon's POV

"I'm looking for my wife, she was rushed here a while ago, apparently she's in labor or something", I said to the receptionist still trying to catch my breath as I rushed here immediately a er I got the call from my mother

"What's your wife's name, Sir?", she asked as she paged through something that seemed like a records book

"Layla. Layla Kingsley", I took my tie o and unbuttoned the collar button so that I could breathe properly. The receptionist scanned through the book as quickly as she could.

"She's in the maternity ward on 3rd floor, second door on your le ", she directed, and I thanked her before running towards the elevator, frantically pressing on the up button

When I got o the elevator, my mother was pacing down in the waiting area and the closer I got, I saw that Layla's door was closed, and she stopped me just when I was about to walk in

"You can't go in there", she warned

"Why not? My wife is in there?", I prompted, but she shook her head.

"Because I was in there a and the nurses escorted me out", she placed her hands on her hips. "Layla is having complications of labor"

"What do you mean?", my eyes widened as she shrugged

"I don't know what to say exactly, but I'm waiting for the doctor to explain what is going on", she said worriedly as she continued to pace up and down

"There's something you're not telling me mother. What's going on?"

"I'm worried about her okay?", I could see it in her eyes that she was afraid of what was going on behind those closed doors, and she involuntarily implanted the same amount of fear into me

"Did something happen?"

"Before her water broke, she was bleeding", she said as it seemed she played the incident in her mind

"Bleeding?!", I asked alarmed, and she nodded her head with tears in her eyes. I placed both my hands on my head as I turned to sit down. My heart rate accelerated as I started breathing heavily.

"Damon, are you okay?", my mother asked as she knelt in front of me and I nodded as I still had some di iculties breathing. A nurse was passing by and my mother called out to her attention.

"We need some help here please", she asked and the nurse walked toward us

"Are you okay, Sir?", she asked, and I nodded

"I just need some water", I breathed out, and she quickly ran to the water tank not far from where we were and bought me a cup of water shortly. My mother helped me drink it as I couldn't hold the plastic cup cause my hands are shaking.

"I think he's having another panic attack", my mother said and the nurse called my attention

"Sir, look at me", she said, and I rose my eyes to look at her. "I need you to come down okay?", she encouraged, and I nodded my head.

"Please try to take long, slow breaths through your nose", she said, and I took those breaths, with her and my mother helping. "Hold your breath to the count of three". I held my breath.

One

Two

Three

"Good. Now exhale through your pursed lips while you relax your muscles in your face, jaw and shoulders", she said, and I did as she instructed me. I felt a bit better.

"Are you okay?", she asked, and I nodded my head. "Would you like me to get you some medication?"

"I'll be fine, thanks", I said, and she nodded and turned to my mother. "Ma'am, please don't let him out of your sight please, just in case of another panic attack", she said and my mother nodded as she rubbed my back and thanks her as she stepped away.

"Are you alright?", she asked, and I nodded my head and thanked her. "She's going to be okay", she pulled me onto her shoulder. "They both are going to be okay"

One

Two

Three

"Damon", a voice said, and we noticed Lelo running to our direction. James and Stacy were right behind her.

"Hey, are you guys okay?", she engulfed me in a hug, then my mother

"Your mother called and told us what happened", Stacy said as they sat beside us. "What's going on?. Is Layla going to be okay?"

"We don't know anything yet. We've been sitting here for like six hours. No one is saying anything", my mother answered and their shoulders slumped down in disappointment.

Why is that when we're at the hospital I have this bad feeling of receiving bad news?. No news is good news, right?

But not in this case. Nothing is ever good with Layla being in hospital. The last time we were here, both lives were at stake. Today, I have the feeling it's even worse than before

Cedric, Hendric and Quinton ran from the elevator to us.

"What's going on?", Cedric asked panicking. "Is my daughter going to be okay?", he asked again and my mother explained to them what she's been saying all along. I just sat there, with my hands covering my face.

A er an hour, Dr Khan walked up, and we all stood up, and I walked up to her. "Please tell me you have good news for me", I said, and she took a deep breath and entwined her fingers behind her back.

"Layla experienced what we call placental abruption, which is a serious pregnancy complication whereby the placenta detached from the uterus. That's was why she was bleeding", she stated and there were gasps from behind me.

"Why did the abruption happen?", my mother asked

"Layla had a sudden increase in blood pressure, commonly known as preeclampsia. Preeclampsia increased the risk of the placental abruption", she said as looked at all of us attentively.

"What does this mean? For her and the baby?", Quinton asked.

"We had to perform an emergency C-section because the abruption derived the baby of oxygen and nutrients", Dr Khan continued explaining

"And?", I asked nervously, clenching my fists, awaiting her response

"Well,", her lips spread into a smile. "You're now a father to a beautiful baby girl!"

There were breaths of relief and happiness as they exchanged hugs behind me

"But because she was born prematurely, she's going to have to stay awhile in the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit. But by the looks of things, both mother and baby are going to be okay", she said, and I laughed as James patted me on the shoulder.

"Congratulations Daddy", he said as he extended his hands for our unique handshake

"Thank you", I said as we broke contact and my mother pulled me for a hug

"Can I see them?", I asked Dr Khan and she nodded her head

"But I can only let one to two people at a time first in the intensive care nursery. I can only let you see Layla later on today, the anesthesia has to wear o first", she said, and we nodded.

"So Damon, would you like to see her first?", she asked, and I nodded my head as I followed behind her

In the nursery, I need to firstly wash my hands, so avoid exposing my little one to germs. Then put on gloves and a musk. The baby was laying in an incubator, with a lot of tubes and pipes connected to her small body. It was heartbreaking seeing her for the first time, in that situation. She looked so small and fragile. Her little hands were closed in a tight fist as she slept soundly. She looked so beautiful, just like her mother. I smiled as she jerked her tiny feet and rooted her head a little.

"Can I hold her?", I asked Dr Khan, and she shook her head

"I still have to monitor her for a couple of days first, then I'll let you know if you can engage in a skin-to-skin contact with her", she said, and I nodded my head okay. "You can reach inside and touch her hand though, it may be very reassuring for her", she smiled, and I smiled as I placed my hand into the circle entrance of the incubator and touched her tiny hand. I smiled as I caressed it so ly. It made the feeling so real, I was a father to a beautiful baby girl.

"I'll give you two a moment", she excused herself and I nodded at her and turned to my baby girl again

"Hey there princess", I said, and I gave her hand a so caress again.

"I'm so happy to finally meet you", I laughed to myself as I looked at her small face. "You're so beautiful", I breathed out, and I felt her tiny hand wrap around my finger. "Everything is going to be okay, yeah?", I spoke to her like she can understand me. "Soon, well be reunited as a family. This is just for a couple of weeks, then we can take you home, where you belong. Alongside me, your Mommy and your brother, Dylan. You'd like that, wouldn't you?"

I nodded my head on her behalf

One

Two

Three

"Mr Kingsley?", a nurse called to my attention as we were getting something to eat in the cafeteria. "Your wife is awake"

"Really?", I smiled, and she nodded. The others motioned that I quickly go to her. When I opened her ward, she was looking around in confusion and tried to push herself up.

"Wait, wait", I said when I reached her bed and took her arms in mine

"Where am I?", she asked as I brushed her hair with my hand as I sat next to her on her bed, facing her

"You're in the hospital", I entwined our fingers together, and she breathed out heavily

"Is our baby okay?", she asked, and I nodded my head while chuckling to myself

"She is, she's perfectly fine", I said and Layla laughed before she covered her mouth with her other hand and started crying

"It's a girl?", she smiled a er her short sob. "Is she okay?"

I nodded. "She's in the neonatal intensive care unit at the moment because she was born prematurely, but Dr Khan is positive our baby girl is a fighter, and she's going to be able to breath on her own in the coming weeks", I said, and she laughed as she wiped o some tears o her face.

"She's so beautiful Layla, I can't wait until you finally meet her", I laughed to myself as I thought of her. She smiled before a wave of discomfort went through her face.

"Are you okay?", I asked as I was about to stand up to call the nurse, but she stopped by grabbing my arm

"I'm fine", she smiled, but there was something else she wasn't telling me." Come closer", she motioned with her hands and I leaned to her, she cupped my face in her hands and locked eyes with me before opening her mouth to speak.

"Something is wrong with me", she started having di iculty breathing. "If I don't make it, please don't hold our baby responsible".

"Can someone please come and help me-", she turned my face to look at her as I was calling out for a nurse or a doctor

"I want her to be loved, the same way I love both her and Dylan"

"Layla, no-"

"I need you to promise me you'll protect the both of them at all time", she started slurring those words and seemed to have a di iculty continuing what she wanted to say. Her grip tightened on my arm as tears flooded her eyes. "And that you'll always be there for them"

"Layla, please don't do this", I begged as I witnessed her eyes narrowing, like she was slowly losing consciousness.

"Please stay with me", I cried before I heard the sound of the monitor beeping and my heart started pounding hard against my chest in fear

"Layla, don't close your eyes", I took her into my arms and a tear escaped her half opened eyes before she trailed her fingers on my cheek

"I just want you to know that I l-love y-you", she whispered before she went numb into my arms and the monitor started to make that distill sound when the beeping stopped. Her heart rate decreased, and I saw a faint straight line on the monitor.

"Layla?", I tried to shake her awake, but she wasn't waking up. Dr Khan and a group of nurses stormed into the room and of them grabbed me to escort me out of the room, but I refused.

"Mr Kingsley, we need you to get out right now", Dr Khan commanded as she bought the resuscitator device closer to Layla and took the two electrodes in her hands, the nurse beside her turned on the device

"Clear", Dr Khan announced as she placed the two electrodes on Layla's torso, and she jerked up. The last thing I saw was her lifeless body falling back onto the bed as the nurse pushed me outside and slammed the door behind me.

A er what seemed like hours, Dr Khan walked to meet an anxious crowd, awaiting clarification with her arms folded. She took a deep breath before telling us that,

"Layla has fallen into a coma"