

Epilogue

Layla's POV

It was Ava's first birthday today. She was in my arms as I stood by her nursery window, looking at the event coordinator & catering team busy decorating the backyard into a red and white Minnie Mouse theme party, and by the looks of things, they were not holding anything back, this was definitely going to be one heck of a celebration.

I didn't see why we had to throw such a big party for a one-year-old, she won't remember anything and will probably be asleep most of the time. But hey, who am I to say anything? Damon started making arrangements for this day when she was barely even six months old. Pecks of being a daddies' girl huh?

"Happy birthday my angel", I kissed her temple as she tugged on her red and white dotted skirt as she looked up on me and tried to pull her pacifier out her mouth. She was always doing something with her hands, like couldn't keep still for a long time. It was the fourth time today she took off her headband and threw it on the floor and then have this look in her eyes when she looked down on it and at me, like she was telling me to pick it up for her so that she can throw it on the floor again.

I kissed on her bundled curly dark brown locks as I adjusted the headband on her head again. Red and white were definitely her colors, she looked so adorable in her Minnie mouse printed tee and her red, white dotted skirt and white leggings, then of course her black with a red bow tie headband she tried to pull off every chance she got.

"There they are", Damon smiled as he walked in the nursery and wrapped his arms around us. "My two beautiful girls", he kissed my cheek and then took Ava in his arms and lifted her up and did this weird thing of tilting her side to side whilst she was in the air. Ava seemed to love this because she let out a laugh and Damon brought her to his chest and kissed her cheek. "My baby girl looks even more beautiful today, doesn't she?" , he asked she giggled and clapped her hands as if she was agreeing to what he was saying

"Happy birthday my princess", he kissed her forehead and held her close to him

"I really think this party is really unnecessary", I said as I neatly packed Ava's clean clothes into the drawer

"Well, you should get used to this because it's a first of many", he said as he looked at me, he frowned. "You're not even ready yet", he pouted his bottom lip. He placed Ava in her cot.

"Come", he took me by the hand out of the nursery to our bedroom. "You need to get dressed, the guests will be arriving soon", he said as he pushed me in the walk in closet.

"Momma", Dylan tugged on my shirt as I helped Mary pack the "Thank You" gifts for the guests. I've been saying this party is a bit overboard for a one-year-old mean we only had family and close friends coming today.

"Yes sweetie?", I looked down on him, and he showed me a small fluffy stuffed rabbit.

"I got Ava this for her birthday. Do you think she's going to like it?", he asked sweetly and my heart melted.

"Of course she will honey", I said as I took the rabbit in my hands. "It's so cute", I exclaimed, and he laughed as he took it in his hands again.

"Great, I'm going to give it to her", he said as he ran up the stairs

He was so overprotective over Ava, he and Damon together were just a dangerous combination. I don't want to think of the time when she has goes on her first date or gets her first boyfriend, I bet the Kingsley men will be breathing down the young fellas neck all the time.

I laughed to myself as I recalled the day we bought Ava home, Dylan couldn't hide the disappointment from his face.

"So, it's a girl?" he asked again for confirmation and I nodded my head at him. "I wanted a baby brother" he folded his arms and twisted his bottom lip. "Who am I going to play soccer with?"

"She, too, can play soccer too you know, it's no longer just a boy's game" I said, and he took a step closer and peeked inside the baby blanket to look at her, Ava's brown eyes were wide open as they stared at each other

"Do you know what having a little sister means Dylan?" Damon asked as he sat beside me and Dylan nodded his head

"It means I won't be getting enough attention as I did before" he blurted out and Damon and I chuckled

"No, it means now you're an older brother now. The standards are high now, so are the responsibilities" Damon pointed out and Dylan's eyebrows furrowed in confusion.

"What responsibilities?"

"You're not just her older brother, but you're also her protector. Do you know why she needs protection?"

"Because she's a girl?" Dylan questioned, and we exchanged looks.

"Uh, no" he laughed nervously. "It's because she's precious" Dylan gave a nod "And always have her back whenever she needs you too, defend her and always keep her safe" he said and Dylan nodded his head.

"I can do that" he stood confidently.

"You forgot the most important responsibility" Daddy added as he kissed Ava's cheek.

"I did?" Damon asked amused, and he nodded. "What did I forget bud?"

"To love her unconditionally"

I felt Damon wrap his arms around my waist and Mary smiled before she excused herself to go lend a helping hand in the garden. "I'm very happy Mrs Kingsley", he turned me to face him.

"Why is that?", my arms traveled up his chest to wrap around his neck and he took a deep breath before the corner of his lips turned into a warm smile.

"I get to wake each and everyday beside you. We have a beautiful family. The company is doing really well", he took a deep breath and smiled. "I feel like I can finally breathe. The heavy weight has finally been lifted off my shoulders", his stormy grey orbs lit up. "The future looks promising, and I get to share all of that with you", his lips brightened as he leaned to kiss me on the lips. "I love you Layla, so so much", he breathed, and I smiled against his lips.

"I love you too."

"Really?", a voice deadpanned behind us, and it was Quinton walking in with his gift in hand. "This is a kiddies party, we're not expecting anything more than PG13 around here", he joked, and I jumped in excitement as I threw myself in his arms around him, and he hugged me back tightly.

"I'm so glad you could make it", I said as he released me and him and Damon shared a brotherly hug

"I would never miss my only niece's first birthday", he said as The Kingsley walked through the door, never coming empty-handed of course, I went to greet them, and we all exchanged hugs. Even grandfather was able to tolerate the long trip just to be able to be at this party. He had to balance his weight on his walking stick and Kim came to just in case he needed medical attention.

I kissed both his cheeks before walking with him to the back. My father, Daniel, Matt, Michelle, Taylor and Ashley were the first to arrive. Matt and Mitchell's daughter, Chrissy was such a quiet little darling, you would swear she wasn't there whilst Taylor and Ashley's son, Shawn was the complete opposite, saying that he was already learning to use his own words at such a young age was an understatement. He demanded attention, and he surely received it. They were both so cute though, I could just cuddle them forever. We decided to include them in this big birthday celebration, it was too big for Ava to celebrate on her own, I surely hope they grow up to be really great friends though.

Today the weather was beautiful, a perfect day to be outside and enjoy the perfect sunny day, no clouds in sight. "Right here in the shade it's fine", Grandfather pointed to the seats under the stretch tent when I asked him where does he wish to sit. "I'll be okay Layla", he patted me on the arm as I helped him seat down

"Kim, if he gives you problems:"

"You'll be the first to know", she smiled at me

"Great", I looked at Grandad, who was rolling his eyes and laughed. Damon came carrying Ava in his arms, before mother took her from him and kissed her cheeks.

"I can see the party has already started without me", Lelo said over my shoulder and I don't know how and when she stood behind me. I turned and jumped excitedly before I engulfed her in a bear hug, and we swirled around.

"I missed you", I said as we broke away from the hug.

"I missed you too", she smiled before she held the presents she got Ava against my face. "I got my cupcake a few things", she said excitedly.

"Thank you", I accepted them from her

"The other one is from Stacy and James. They let me with me before they left for their first anniversary vacation", she entwined our arms together.

"Yeah, they video called me this morning to sing Ava happy birthday", I laughed as I recalled Ava looking everywhere besides the screen when they sang to her, then she had the audacity to giggle when they finished. The only time she maintained eye contact, was when she is being fed.

"I thought Bruce was coming with you today", I said as we walked to place the presents as in the present box. Bruce was, according to her, her almost boyfriend. They were seeing each other, but haven't officialized their relationship as yet. He seemed like a great guy though, he was a pilot, he was really handsome, they had a lot in common and looked really good together. I felt her heave a sigh.

"Yeah, he had a family emergency, so", she shrugged

"Pity. I was looking forward to meeting him", I said in disappointment.

"Maybe next time, around New year's maybe?", she said, and I nodded my head.

"Sure thing. Want something to drink?"

"Yes please", she grinned before we chatted on our way to get something to drink

"Layla?", I heard someone call my name and when I turned around to look, she spotted me before she walked towards us. It was Maya, my PA.

"Hi", she smiled nervously. Both Lelo and I greeted back. "I'm so sorry to disturb, Mary let me in", she apologized, but I reassured her it's okay. "Um Layla, I know this is not the right time because it's time with your family, but you let yesterday without signing these documents for me, they are really urgent", she said as she handed them to me. They completely slipped my mind yesterday because I was so preoccupied with the release of a new book. I owned a publishing company. Slowly but surely, we were getting there. Damon helped me with the start-up capital and also recommended Maya for me as my PA. She proved herself as an asset to the small publishing house I had and was very dedicated. I would be so lost without her. She's a bit clumsy, but she's such a hard worker. I signed the documents and gave them back to her.

"Thank you, I need to file these right away, I'll see you Monday", she smiled before she clumsily tripped on her feet but quickly regained her balance

"Thank you, Maya", I waved her goodbye and she waved back

"Is she always this clumsy?", Lelo laughed and I sighed dramatically as I laughed

"Always"

Damon's POV

"Happy birthday to you" everyone sang to Ava, Layla and I blew out her candles for her on the cake. "Yaayyy" everyone clapped their hands. We both kissed her on her cheeks and she giggled. We cut the cake, Ava's finding it to her satisfaction to smear some cake frosting on her face, looking as twice adorable.

"Come to great-granpa", Hendric picked her up from my lap and him and my father were debating on how long to hold her before my father gets to hold her

"Seems you're not the only one she has wrapped around her tiny little finger", Layla joked as I circled my arm around her waist as we looked at the two men

"I actually feel a bit jealous right now", I said, and she laughed. "Have you seen Dylan anywhere?"

"He was with Quinton a few minutes ago", I said and not even a minute passed, Quinton walked towards us, breathing out heavily

"The questions your son is asking me....", he shook his head as he placed both his hands on his hips. "I feel like I need a strong drink", he said, and we laughed.

"I need to attend to the girls", Layla smiled as she untangled herself from me

"Did he ask you why do you have nipples if you don't breastfeed?", I joked because I got those kinds of questions from him. The kind I didn't know where to start when I even attempt to answer. Quinton laughed really hard.

"He asked you that?", he asked between laughs and I nodded as we sat next to Matt, Daniel and Taylor. Things between Daniel and I were better than just okay, I managed to put all that's happened behind me because he proved himself that he would always put this family first, in everything he does. We were back to being brothers again, just like we were in collage.

"He asked me a lot of questions, but the one that stood out was why am I still single even after all these years", Quinton rolled his eyes and the guys and I snickered

"That's a really good question", Matt rose his glass in a toast

"Even Dylan can see that you need to get laid, real quick", Daniel teased as he took a sip from his drink and I laughed. Quinton faked as he laughed.

"Really funny guys", he deadpanned

"I think we should hook you up with a girl one of these days Quinton, I'll be a matchmaker for you if you want", Taylor wiggled his eyebrows suggestively at him

"No, thanks", Quinton put out his hand at him, telling him he's not interested, and we laughed. We chatted for a couple of minutes before we caught a glimpse of Dylan running towards us and the guys quickly stood to their feet.

"That's our cue", they walked away, leaving me alone with him

"Hey Buddy", I messed up his hair. "Are you enjoying the party?", I asked, and he nodded his head.

"I have a question Dadda"

Oh, boy

"What is it bud?", I tried not to sound too intimidated by what he's going to ask me next

"I want to know how it all began, you and Momma", he said and a smile played on my face, this was an easy one. I picked him up and put him on my lap. I rose my eyes to see Layla, laughing with her head threw back as they were talking with Lelo, Michelle and Ashley. My smiled broadened and my heart felt complete. She made me feel complete. I looked at Dylan, who already was looking at me in anticipation.

"Well buddy...", I started before Layla looked over at me, and we locked eyes, then she smiled. "It all started on our wedding day"

And finally it's a wrap my beautiful people. I would like to take this moment and thank each and one of you for reading this book and giving it a chance. It wouldn't have gotten so much recognition without your support, your votes and comments. I really hope it was all worth it in the end. I know this was not the kind of ending some of you were expecting, but there's been enough tears, battles, ups and downs in this book to last a lifetime, so why not end on a happy note, right?

Thank you guys so so much! You're all just amazing. It gave me great joy writing this knowing that somewhere out there y'all are waiting for an update. It was the motivation I really needed hey and I didn't want to let y'all down. And now we've reached the end of TUNAYSHU...It's been a long journey. We're over 80K reads now yayy

Please remember to Vote. Share. Comment

Till we meet agin

Love,

Teeyay