



# SCARLET WILSON

A Baby to Save Their Marriage



# Scarlet Wilson

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### **Аннотация**

Falling in love all over again...Marrying gorgeous Caleb Conner is the happiest day of Addison's life. But in the years that follow, no matter how much she yearns for her husband, the driven tycoon is increasingly out of reach...The pressures of work might have taken over his time, but Caleb hasn't stopped loving Addison. Now he hopes a holiday in paradise will show his wife that he remembers the magic they share. Only their marriage has another surprise on the horizon: a secret Addison can't keep much longer!

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**Scarlet Wilson**

discover these

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And can the Connors save their seemingly perfect marriage?

Find out in Caleb and Addison's story.

*A Baby to Save Their Marriage*

Available now!

**A Baby to Save Their Marriage**

Scarlet Wilson



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**SCARLET WILSON** writes for both Mills & Boon Cherish and Mills & Boon Medical Romance. She lives on the west coast of Scotland with her fiancé and their two sons. She loves to hear from readers and can be reached via her website, [www.scarlet-wilson.com](http://www.scarlet-wilson.com).

This book is dedicated to my two honorary “crazy” nieces, Sarah Mason and Jakki Lee. Just remember in later life I’ll blackmail you with all the stories!

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## [CHAPTER ONE](#)

ADDISON WAS PACING. She couldn't help it. It was three o'clock and Caleb still wasn't home. They had to leave for the airport in an hour and he hadn't even packed.

The doorbell rang and she hurried to answer. Lara, her son Tristan's nanny, stood on the doorstep, rain dripping from her hair and nose.

'Lara? What on earth? Come in, come in.'

Lara stumbled over the doorstep, dragging a large suitcase behind her. 'I'm so sorry, Addison. I know you're just about to leave for your holiday. But I had nowhere else to go.'

'What's wrong?' Addison was trying not to panic. Lara was the perfect nanny. Her son Tristan adored her. It didn't matter they were about to go on a month-long holiday, she wanted to be sure Lara wasn't in any kind of trouble.

Lara sniffed. 'I had a Sliding Doors moment. I got the earlier Tube home and Josh...' her voice wobbled '...he was in bed with the next-door neighbour.' Her shoulders started to shake.

'What? He what?' Addison was enraged. 'That lazy, good-for-nothing ratbag. You've paid the rent for how long? He doesn't even contribute and he treats you like that?' She'd never liked Lara's boyfriend and now she knew exactly why.

She put her arm around Lara's shoulders and guided her into

the kitchen, pressing a few buttons on her coffee machine.

‘Here, let me get you something.’ The machine only took a few minutes, then she sat down across from Lara. ‘What are you going to do?’

Lara bit her lip. ‘I’m sorry, I panicked. I just stuffed a case and left. I know this is the last thing you need right now.’

Addison silently sucked in a breath. Lara was perceptive. Addison had never said a word to her but she’d obviously picked up on the stress in the household.

‘What do you need?’

Lara seemed nervous. ‘I was wondering... I’ll need to find somewhere else to stay. Is there any chance I could stay here while you’re away?’

Something simple. ‘Absolutely. No problem at all.’ She stood up. ‘And, Lara? Don’t give up your holiday. You saved long and hard for that. Don’t let him spoil it for you. Go, and enjoy every second without him.’ She reached over and gave Lara’s shoulder a squeeze. ‘Now, will you be okay? Caleb and I will be out of your hair within the hour. I need to finish packing.’

Lara gave a nod and a grateful smile. ‘Thanks, Addison. I owe you, big time.’

Addison met her gaze. ‘You deserve someone who loves and respects you, just remember that.’

She walked out of the kitchen and into the large hallway just as the door opened again. Caleb. Also soaked to the skin and still on his phone.

She felt herself prickle. ‘Caleb? Do you know—?’

He gestured to her to stop talking as he continued his conversation. ‘Frank, I know exactly how important this is. I will deal with it. I promise you. The price of the stock won’t fall. I’ve been working on these negotiations for months. I’m not about to let anything get in the way.’

He looked tired. His shirt and trousers were wrinkled and she knew that he’d worked through the night. He was doing that more and more now as the business had just exploded.

With Caleb, she would never need to worry about another woman. He didn’t have enough hours in the day for her and Tristan, let alone another woman. For the last three years his work had been everything. They’d drifted further and further apart. The man she used to love cuddling up to barely came to bed any more. If he wasn’t working at his office in the city, he was working in his office in the house.

Her work had exploded too. She’d started as a naïve young student who’d lost her sister to ovarian cancer, setting up a website and trying to get information out to others. Then, a famous celebrity had been diagnosed with the same cancer—and credited the information she’d read on Addison’s site as being the catalyst for her challenging her doctor’s diagnosis. After that, things had just gone crazy.

The last ten years had been a whirlwind. She’d met Caleb at a charity auction and fallen head over heels in love. They’d got married, had Tristan and life had seemed perfect. She’d hired

some people to help her with the charity and Caleb's business had started to take off.

To the outside world they were the perfect couple—the perfect family. She couldn't deny her husband was handsome; even with the deep furrows in his brow and tired lines around his eyes he could still make her heart flutter. Tristan, their son, was like a mini-me version of his father. They lived in one of the best areas in London.

But a few weeks ago she'd got a wake-up call. Something she hadn't even had a chance to sit down and talk to her husband about.

That was when she'd realised just how far they'd slipped from one another. That was when she'd booked this holiday and told Caleb to arrange the time off. She had some major decisions to make. And they desperately needed some time away together as a family. She needed to be able to talk to her husband without fear of a phone ringing or an email pinging into his inbox to distract him.

He was still talking into his mobile. He'd barely even acknowledged her. Her stomach gave a little twist. She couldn't keep living like this. This wasn't living. It was existing.

This was the man who'd made her laugh, cry and scream with excitement when they'd first met. This was the man who'd spent every single night taking her in his arms and talking until the early hours of the morning. Then, he'd get up early and bring her breakfast in bed. When they'd got married he'd surprised her

by flying in her friends from all over the world—all expenses covered. When she'd shown him the pregnancy test one morning he'd whooped with joy and by the time she'd got home after work the house had been filled with pink and blue helium balloons.

A million special memories of a relationship that seemed to have died.

A few weeks ago she'd tried to arrange something special. Lara had watched Tristan and she'd spent hours preparing Caleb's favourite meal, setting the table and lighting candles on their rarely used dining table. She'd changed into a dark pink dress that he'd bought her a few years earlier and sat and waited for him to appear. And waited...and waited...and waited.

The silver dome covering the second pregnancy test had never been lifted.

The candles had finally burned down and gone out. The dinner had been ruined and her dress tossed back into the wardrobe. He hadn't got in until just after two a.m.—that was when she'd finally felt the sag of the bed as he'd sat down.

She'd never mentioned a thing to him. A tiny little part of her was worried. They'd disagreed a year earlier about expanding their family. She'd been keen—but Caleb hadn't.

She'd been hoping and praying that he'd be delighted they were unexpectedly pregnant—just as he'd been the last time. And that tiny little seed of doubt had allowed itself to take root and grow over the last few weeks because it just felt as if he was slipping further and further away from her.

The phone rang and she picked it up. Caleb was still talking on his mobile—still not even looking at her.

‘Hello, can I speak to Addison Connor please?’

She vaguely recognised the voice. ‘This is Mrs Connor.’

‘Ah, Addison. It’s Dr Mackay.’

It was like a cool breeze dancing over her skin. Her obstetrician. She’d seen him last week to have her pregnancy confirmed and her first scan and tests.

Her eyes went automatically to Caleb. She was conscious he would be able to hear her words but he was far too engrossed in his own phone call to notice her.

‘What can I do for you?’

The doctor hesitated. ‘I wonder if you would be able to come along to the clinic later today, or tomorrow.’

The cool breeze turned into an arctic chill. ‘Why?’

‘We need to have a chat.’

‘I’m leaving in an hour’s time. I’ll be out of the country for a month. I can’t come to the clinic. If you need to discuss something with me then do it now.’

She was being curt. But she couldn’t help it. This didn’t sound like good news. Everything had seemed fine the other day. Her ultrasound had appeared fine and her pregnancy had seemed to be progressing as normal.

She heard him draw in a deep breath. ‘This isn’t ideal. I’d prefer to do this face to face.’

‘I’m sorry, that just isn’t possible. What do you need to tell

me?’

He gave a sigh. ‘We need to talk about your test results from your NT test.’

She straightened up. ‘The measurement at the back of neck? I saw that being done. The...’ She glanced towards Caleb. She’d almost said sonographer. But he’d turned his back and was facing into their front room. ‘The technician never said there was a problem.’ She paid attention. She could remember the sonographer taking a few minutes to take the tiny measurement needed.

‘I realise that. But you’ll know that we calculate risk based on a number of things. We use the nuchal translucency measurement, along with the blood test and mother’s age, to calculate risk. Our tests at this stage show you could be at higher risk of having a baby affected by Down’s syndrome.’

Her heart skipped a beat. ‘How high?’

All other noise just faded into the background. The only thing she could focus on right now was what the doctor was saying.

He spoke clearly. ‘The screening test gives us a range. We would normally expect the measurement of a nuchal translucency test to be under three point five millimetres. Yours was slightly above that at three point seven. A woman of thirty would normally have a risk of around one in a thousand. Along with your age and your blood test results it means that your risk of having a baby affected by Down’s syndrome is around one in one hundred and forty.’

There was a roaring sound in her ears. This wasn't happening. This couldn't be happening. Everything had looked fine. She'd had this test before when she was pregnant with Tristan. No one had phoned her then. She'd just received a letter in the post a week later saying she was low risk.

'Mrs Connor?'

'I thought you were more at risk if you were in your forties. I've just turned thirty.' Her brain was trying to make sense of what she'd just been told.

'Age can be a factor, but that's not always the case. If you'd like we can consider some other tests. You've just passed the first trimester of pregnancy so we're too late for a CVS test.'

She had no idea what he was talking about.

'But we could arrange an amniocentesis at fifteen weeks. Along with other detailed scans.'

'That has risks, doesn't it?'

'There is a small risk of miscarriage associated with amniocentesis.'

'Then, no. In fact, no to other tests. I don't want any. It won't change my mind about anything.'

There was a few seconds' silence. From the other side of the room Caleb caught her eye momentarily. A few years ago he'd been her rock—her everything. But as she was hearing this news today she'd never felt so alone.

'Mrs Connor, I'll support you in any decision. You would be offered a detailed scan routinely at twenty weeks. I'd really like

you to still attend. If your child is affected by Down's syndrome there is a chance of cardiac defects. It's something we could pick up on the scan and plan for prior to your delivery. It's really in the best interests of your child.'

She tried to be rational. She took a deep breath and paused a few seconds to think. She could remember having the detailed scan with Tristan. That was when they'd found out they were having a little boy. They'd been so excited as soon as they'd left the scan room they'd headed to the nearest baby shop to look for baby-boy clothes.

She squeezed her eyes closed for a few seconds. Now, she felt as if she couldn't even rely on Caleb to make time in his diary for their baby scan. In her head she could already see herself attending alone.

The background noise that had muted before became crystal clear.

Caleb was still on the phone. 'I can do that tonight. No problem. Just give me a bit of time.' He glanced over towards Addison and jerked when he saw her watching him. 'There's something I need to sort out at home.'

Anger sparked through her. Was he talking about her? Had he forgotten they were supposed to be leaving for the airport in less than an hour?

Her stomach turned over. Oh, no. He wouldn't dare? Would he?

She turned her attention back to the phone. 'Of course I'll

attend. I leave today and will be gone for a month. Can I make an appointment to see you when I come back?’

‘Of course, Mrs Connor. My secretary will arrange that and get both appointments to you shortly. In the meantime, if you need to contact me, please feel free.’

Addison put down the phone and turned to face Caleb.

He took a step towards her. ‘Addison—honey...’

When was the last time he’d called her that? Was it when he’d missed Tristan singing Christmas carols at nursery? Or was it when he’d promised to bath Tristan and put him to bed but got delayed at work once again? Tristan had finally fallen asleep clutching the book he’d wanted Caleb to read to him.

She held up her hand. ‘Get packed, Caleb. Taxi will be here in forty minutes.’

He held up his phone. ‘Things have gone crazy at work. This merger is just huge. It’s taking up every hour of every day. Timing is crucial. I just can’t go away right now. As for four weeks? It’s just far too long. There’s no way I can make that work. I have to be here.’

All the pent-up rage, frustration and disappointment that had been bubbling under the surface for the last three years erupted to the surface.

‘Everything takes up every hour of the day for you, Caleb—or haven’t you noticed? You don’t even seem to realise you have a family any more. You’re never here and when you are here, you might as well not be.’

He flinched. But she wasn't sorry. She'd had too many let-downs over the last year and too many dinners for one to care any more.

He shook his head. 'That's not fair, Addison.'

'That's not fair? That's not fair?' She couldn't help it. She was shouting now. 'Let me tell you what's not fair. Your son, spending the whole time at nursery with his eyes fixed on the door when he was singing his Christmas carols and waiting for you to appear. I know you said there was an emergency at work—something that couldn't wait—but try explaining that to a four-year-old.' She pointed to herself. 'It's not you that has to see his face, Caleb. It's me.'

She could see the pure frustration on his face. He dropped his case and ran his fingers through his still-damp hair. He could barely meet her gaze. And that just made her worse.

'Please stop.'

She was shaking now. This had been building for a while. They'd needed to sit down and talk for a long time. But they just hadn't got around to it—probably because Caleb was never there.

It was a miracle she was pregnant at all. But twelve weeks ago had been the last time they'd made love after Caleb had fallen into bed late one night. She'd had the faintest glimmer of hope that maybe he'd start noticing her again, maybe he'd start talking. It had been their anniversary and she'd thought that he'd forgotten. For their first few anniversaries they'd always made a fuss of each other and gone away to a hotel overnight. He'd finally come home

clutching a beautiful bunch of flowers, a hastily written card and a thin gold bracelet that came from a jeweller's based inside a popular London hotel—it was probably the only place that was open late at night. The effort had brought tears to her eyes and ignited a spark of passion that had been missing between them for a while. She'd hoped that it would be a turning point for them both. But the next day had been no different from all the others.

'This deal is crucial. I've been working on it for months. The next couple of weeks will be the most vital. I need to be here.'

'You need to be with your family.'

He held up his hands. 'Maybe I could come out in a few weeks, once things have quietened down, and spend some time with you and Tristan then?'

'But things never quieten down. You and I both know that, Caleb.' She straightened her shoulders. She'd had enough. She'd been pushed as far as she could go and tolerated as much as she could.

This was the point of no return.

'In thirty minutes' time, Tristan and I are leaving for the airport. If you're not on that plane with us, when we come back in a month, we won't be coming back here.'

'What?' His eyes widened.

'I'm done, Caleb. I'm done with Tristan and I playing second best to everything else in your life. Let me make this easy for you. Make a decision. You have thirty minutes.'

\* \* \*

Caleb Connor's life seemed to be falling apart around him. He'd never seen his beautiful wife look so angry. But there was more than that: she looked cold—something he'd never associated with Addison.

He'd come home, hoping to placate her and send her and Tristan on the holiday she'd insisted on booking. She'd seemed so unhappy recently and he knew it was partly his fault.

She was right. He was never here. Work just seemed to have taken over his whole life. He'd won an award a few years ago as Business Person of the Year and since then everything had skyrocketed.

And things just kept slipping. The nursery carol service, putting Tristan to bed, and he was sure he'd missed a few things he was supposed to be doing with Addison. But she'd never said anything. He'd just got the frosty reception when he'd come home at night. Most times he hadn't even noticed the frosty reception because he'd been so late Addison had already been sleeping.

It was a mistake. And he knew it. But right now was a vital time. He, and his partner, were building their business. Making sure they had a good foundation and reputation on which to base other business. This was a temporary situation. He'd never expected Addison to react like this. He'd never seen her act like this before.

But that wasn't all. She looked pale. She looked worried. And that was before she told him she and Tristan might not come

back.

‘Addison, be reasonable.’

Her voice chilled him. ‘I’ve spent the last three years being reasonable and making excuses for you never being around. I’m done. I’m done doing that. I manage to get a work-life balance and so should you. If your family isn’t your priority, then you don’t deserve a family.’

The words stung. But the truth was he couldn’t be completely surprised. Things had been strained for so long. What had happened to the relaxed, happy people they both used to be? Last year they’d finally employed a nanny when Addison had felt her work commitments had increased. Lara had been a blessing. But Addison still made time for Tristan. She never missed any of his doctor’s appointments or nursery performances.

Not like him.

A wave of guilt washed over him.

‘Maybe we could wait, maybe we could go somewhere later in the year?’

Addison picked up the notepad she’d been writing on next to the phone.

She sighed. ‘Then it will be another deal, another business. I’m tired of this. Decide what your priorities are. Because I’ve had enough.’

‘You’re giving me an ultimatum?’

He couldn’t believe it. It felt like a bolt out of the blue. And he couldn’t believe Addison was actually behaving like this.

She walked over to him and looked up at him with her clear green eyes. He'd never seen them look so sincere. There was no hesitation. None at all. 'Yes, I am.' She turned and walked up the stairs.

He sagged against the wall as his phone rang again. He pulled it out of his pocket. Harry. His partner. He'd need to talk to him later.

He shrugged off his damp coat. What on earth was he going to do? He had a million different things still to sort out for this deal. He'd assumed he would come home, placate Addison, give both her and Tristan a kiss, send them on their way and get back to work.

'Daddy!' Tristan ran down the stairs towards him. 'Come and see what I've packed.'

His heart melted as he scooped the little guy up into his arms. Tristan kept talking. 'We're going on a big plane. And then on a little plane. Can you buy a plane, Daddy?'

He walked up the stairs towards Tristan's room. 'Daddy, you're all wet. What have you been doing?'

He smiled. 'I've been out in the rain.'

He set Tristan down at the entrance to his room and Tristan dive-bombed on top of his neatly packed case. 'Whee! Look, Daddy, I've sneaked in some extra toys.' He peered over his shoulder. 'Shh...don't tell Mummy.'

Caleb sat down on the bed and glanced in the case. Sure enough, tucked in between socks and sunscreen were a whole

array of wrestlers and a tiny army of cars. He let out a laugh. Tristan always did this. Addison would tell him he was allowed to bring two wrestlers, or two cars, depending on where they were going, and Tristan would find a way to sneak another few into his pockets, Addison's bag or, on occasion, Caleb's briefcase.

He felt a little pang. When was the last time Tristan had done that?

And more importantly, why would it be his briefcase? It felt as if it were permanently attached to his hand—and that must be the way it seemed to his son.

He leaned forward as he watched Tristan play. A full-blown wrestling match had started above the clothes. When was the last time he'd watched Tristan play?

Everything Addison had just said to him was firing off sparks in his brain. In most instances, he was searching desperately for memories of the last time he'd done something with his wife and son. And the more he searched, the guiltier he felt.

She'd meant it. She'd looked into his eyes and meant it when she'd said they wouldn't come home.

He'd thought Addison and he would be together for ever. At least, that was what it used to feel like. He'd already decided a few days ago that there was no way he could go on this holiday. He just actually hadn't taken the time to sit down and talk to his wife about it.

More fool him.

Something was wrong. Something was very wrong and he

hadn't paid attention until around ten minutes ago.

He knew exactly what had happened to Addison.

He had.

He pulled his phone out of his pocket as he watched Tristan. He was still in charge of the wrestling match. He was so happy and good-natured. He couldn't ask for a better son.

Tristan glanced at him and thrust a wrestler towards him. 'Here, Daddy, you can have this one. He's getting old, like you.'

There was such an innocence in his words. Tristan thought he was old? But of course he did. He'd spent the last three years looking tired and that would be all the memories that Tristan had of him.

He looked around the room. It was still decorated in baby blues. Underneath the bed was a pile of fresh wallpaper, bedding and stickers all covered in pictures of planets. He'd promised to decorate around eight months ago. The pile had been there ever since.

But there was more. Addison had brought up the subject of having another baby around a year ago.

He'd always imagined they'd have a big family. He'd always wanted to have a big family.

But her words had gripped him in a way he hadn't expected.

They'd never really sat down and discussed it. But Addison had paled into a shadow of herself in the months after giving birth to Tristan. He'd helped as much as he could. He'd frequently got up and done the night feeds. He'd made excuses for not being at

work. He'd stayed around as frequently as he could, at first, to try and give her a break, and then to try and get them to spend time together as a family. For the first few months her face had been almost blank when she'd looked at Tristan. It had felt as if she were slipping away a little more each day.

He'd spoken to the GP. He'd spoken to the health visitor—asking what else he could do. They'd reassured him he was doing everything he could and just to be patient. Finally, he'd seen little glimpses of his wife again. A smile when she saw Tristan smile. A willingness to take part. The dark circles had eventually dimmed beneath her eyes and the spark of life that always surrounded her had finally emerged again.

He couldn't let that happen to her again. He wouldn't do that to his wife again.

As he stared around Tristan's room it was as if everything came crashing down on him all at once.

He'd thought he might lose his family once before.

There was no way he could let this happen. There was no way he was letting his family slip through his fingers. The thought of coming home at night to an empty house filled him with horror.

He had to sort this. He had to. He didn't want to imagine his world without them in it.

He pressed the redial button on his phone. 'Harry, there's been a change of plan.'

His phone buzzed as he kept talking. He walked through to the bedroom. Addison wasn't there. A large suitcase was sitting

open on the bed, completely empty. It must be for him.

As Harry kept talking Caleb reached into his large wardrobe and picked up a whole stack of T-shirts, dropping them into the suitcase exactly the way they were. He had to lean further back to find a pile of shorts. He sent a silent prayer above that they might actually still fit as he threw them and some swimming shorts into the case. Underwear was easy. He pulled out one entire drawer and tipped it up into the case.

Feet. What would he wear on his feet?

He looked down. His feet were damp from his earlier walk through the soaked London streets. He kicked off his shoes and dropped his trousers to the floor. His shirt was pulled over his head and abandoned with the rest of his things on the floor.

What to travel in? He grabbed a pair of three-quarter-length trousers and a polo shirt, sticking his feet into a pair of baseball boots and throwing some others in the case.

Tristan appeared at the door and smiled at his father's packing efforts. He tucked a few wrestlers into the case along with a London bus, New York taxi cab and space shuttle. 'I had a few spares. I'll give you a little loan.'

Caleb laughed. By the time Tristan was finished the entire contents of his room would be hidden between the three cases.

Caleb looked around. Was he done? His briefcase sat in the corner of the room. The charging cables for his phone and laptop were in there. He'd be able to work wherever they were. Internet was everywhere these days and as for international calls? He'd

just need to swallow the costs.

A quick check of the en suite gave him some deodorant, his toothbrush and his shaving gear. At the last second he reached over to grab some aftershave and then stopped, put it back, and grabbed another one from under the sink. Harry had finally finished talking.

'I'll be at the airport in an hour. I'll send you that report from the lounge.' He rang off. The buzz had been a text message.

His best friend, Reuben Tyler. He was on his way back from LA. Reuben's roof had been undergoing repairs and the roofers had discovered asbestos. He couldn't stay there. He knew Caleb was going on holiday, could he stay at his?

Caleb dashed off a reply telling him where the key was and how to turn off the alarm. Best not mention it to Addison. Reuben wasn't exactly her favourite of Caleb's friends.

He glanced at the case. Done. What else could he need? Why did some people spend days packing?

He zipped it up and picked it off the bed.

As he walked down the stairs he heard the taxi beep outside.

'Come on, Tristan!' shouted Addison. 'It's time to go.'

She hadn't noticed him yet. Was she really just going to walk out of the front door without talking to him again?

The taxi driver appeared at the door and picked up the two waiting cases.

Tristan bolted down the stairs ahead of him carrying two wrestlers. Addison smiled and shook her head. 'No way, you've

already got ten in your backpack. That's the limit.' She held out his small red baseball jacket and waited for him to slide his arms inside.

She'd changed. She was wearing cream casual trousers and a pink top.

Caleb cleared his throat.

Addison did a double take. She was shocked. She was stunned that he'd actually packed and changed. Did she really think that little of him? Did she really think that he'd just let his wife and child leave without a fight?

'You've packed.'

He stepped forward and sat his case down. 'I've packed.' He looked her straight in the eye.

She blinked and picked up the passport she'd left sitting on the side table and slid it into her bag.

The taxi driver stuck his head inside and picked up the case. 'Last one?'

Caleb nodded.

'And where we headed?'

'Heathrow.'

Caleb cringed inwardly. He couldn't even remember where they were going. He knew it was hot. It might be the Caribbean, or the Seychelles—somewhere like that. He remembered her mentioning it was a long flight, first stop LA and after that...

Nope. He just couldn't remember. It hadn't registered in his brain.

Like so many other things.

He turned back to pick up his briefcase. Addison frowned and he tried not to be annoyed.

He was coming on holiday. He would be spending time with them. But he also needed to do some work. Surely she could understand that?

She took Tristan's hand firmly in hers. 'Let's go, honey, we need to get on the big plane.'

'Come on, Daddy!' yelled Tristan over his shoulder.

Caleb glanced at the abandoned wrestlers on the side table. He picked them up and tucked them in his briefcase. Anything to keep the little guy happy.

Addison was strapping Tristan into the back of the cab.

She straightened up and stretched her back. 'Okay?' he asked as he walked up behind her.

She didn't even answer the question. Her mind seemed to be away in a world of its own.

He paused before he climbed in the cab. 'Addison, everything will be fine.'

He didn't want to acknowledge what had just happened between them. He didn't want to acknowledge the fact his wife had just issued him with an ultimatum. He didn't want to give brain space to the fact she'd just threatened to leave.

Her clear green eyes met his. 'Will it?' she asked before she climbed in the cab and slammed the door, staring straight ahead.

Caleb swallowed. Addison seemed anything but fine.

Where did they go from here?

## CHAPTER TWO

THREE HOURS LATER they were finally on their flight. Addison had felt herself silently fume as Caleb had spent most of his time on his computer or on his phone in the business lounge while she kept Tristan entertained.

Her head was in turmoil. She wanted to snatch the computer from his hands and search for everything she could find on nuchal screening and being labelled high risk.

But that wouldn't help her. Nothing would help her right now. Her heart had flip-flopped when Dr Mackay had told her children with Down's syndrome could have heart problems. Somewhere in the back of her mind she'd heard that before. Weren't there other associated conditions? She just didn't know enough about these things. She had no background knowledge in anything medical related.

At some point she would need to tell Caleb about the pregnancy. Then, she'd need to tell him about the phone call.

She wasn't sure how he would react to any of it.

She was still shocked that he'd actually come.

It was weird. Even though things had been awkward between them, if you'd asked her a few days ago, she would never have thought that Caleb would try and back out of the holiday.

Even though she'd reminded him on a few occasions to pack his case—and he hadn't got around to it—she'd still hoped he'd remember.

But when he'd been late back today and been so busy on his phone her heart had sunk like a stone. And when he'd actually started to say that he was too busy and the timing didn't suit she'd wanted to throw something at him.

That had been it. That had been the point that the mist had come down and she'd been at the point of no return. The phone call hadn't helped. But it hadn't been the catalyst. Caleb and his complete disregard of her and Tristan had been the catalyst.

When she'd given him the ultimatum she'd actually thought he wouldn't come. She'd actually thought she'd just called time on their marriage.

She'd had to disappear into one of the empty bathrooms upstairs to allow herself some silent sobs.

All she could think about right now was how she would cope on her own with two children. Tristan was just a ball of energy. He would be over the moon to find out he was going to have a little brother or sister. But Tristan had been a poor sleeper. He'd suffered from colic and no amount of remedies or different kinds of bottles had helped. Sometimes at night he'd screamed for hours. She'd only managed to cope because she'd had Caleb right by her side.

He'd always known when to send her back to bed and disappear with the screaming Tristan downstairs. A few hours later she'd find him slumped on the sofa with a peaceful Tristan sleeping on his chest.

How would she manage if this baby was the same and there

was no Caleb to help?

She sucked in a deep breath. She'd never felt so unsettled. She'd never felt so restless. She'd never felt so alone.

She was scared. The next few weeks would tell her everything she needed to know. Whether she was in this alone, or whether her husband would be at her side.

They couldn't keep going the way they were. Somewhere along the line they'd lost each other.

'Flight 234 to LAX is now boarding at Gate Twelve.'

She sat upright. 'Come on, Tristan, that's us. It's time to go.'

He scrambled to his feet, anxious to get on board the plane. Caleb was still typing away on his computer.

Addison couldn't help a silent smirk. When he reached their destination he'd get a huge wake-up call when he realised there was no phone line and no Internet. Did he honestly think it was acceptable to come on holiday with his family and spend his time working?

Sometimes Caleb had rocks in his head.

She boarded the plane with Tristan and helped him set up his television for a kids' show. She didn't say a word when Caleb finally sat down next to them.

The stewardess appeared. 'Champagne?'

'Apple juice, please.'

Caleb looked surprised but didn't comment. He accepted the glass of champagne and started sipping.

The ten-hour flight took them well into the middle of the night

and Tristan spent a good part of it fast asleep. When they had to change planes at LAX for Tahiti, Caleb carried him through the airport and settled him back into his seat on the next plane.

Eight hours later they switched onto their final fifty-minute flight to the Bora Boras.

As they'd landed in Tahiti his phone had beeped. He'd pulled it out of his pocket, glanced at it and pushed it away again.

She felt a little twinge. Maybe she should warn him that after the next flight he wouldn't get a signal? But part of her was afraid he might refuse to get on the next plane. And she was just too exhausted to have another fight.

She hadn't been able to relax on any of the flights so far. She was too keyed up. Her mind was constantly spinning. By the time she reached the Bora Boras she would be fit only to fall into bed.

The small white plane had only fifty passengers. Even though she was absolutely exhausted, the view from the plane was spectacular. The travel agent had told her that writers and artists called the Bora Boras the most beautiful islands in the world. They weren't wrong.

For this part of the journey, she was glad she was still awake.

The aerial view of the green, jagged volcanic peak of towering Mount Otemanu appeared on the horizon. It was surrounded by a captivating, vivid blue lagoon. As they descended she was amazed by the many blues of the Bora Bora lagoon. It wasn't one island, instead it was a collection. The airport was on its own islet, one of a number of small barrier islands forming a

ring around the lagoon. There were a variety of resorts set on the beautiful sandy beaches. Some extended out over the lagoon with their wooden walkways connecting to thatched-roof over-water bungalows. Others had lodges perched on the steep hillside and some had hideaway villas set right on the water's edge. Each resort seemed more beautiful than the one before.

Fifty minutes later they had arrived in paradise.

'Welcome to the Bora Boras,' shouted the pilot as they landed.

The airport was small. A smart dark-skinned man was waiting with a sign saying Connor.

He gave them a polite nod and took their luggage, guiding them over to a glistening white boat on a wooden pier. Caleb stopped and looked around. The view of the blue lagoon was dazzling, bright turquoise next to white sandy beaches. And even though the lagoon was a hive of activity, it also had an air of tranquillity about it.

'Wow,' he said quietly.

Addison pressed her lips together. This was entirely what she'd wanted to capture. A bit of peace. A bit of luxury. And a bit of togetherness. Would they really be able to capture all three?

'We get to go on a boat!' shouted Tristan. She'd no idea where he got his energy from. After twenty hours of travel she'd expected him to be as exhausted as she was. But he'd slept part way on both flights while, no matter how hard she tried, she just couldn't sleep sitting up.

They climbed on board the sleek white boat. Tristan ran up

to the front where he could watch the boat being steered. It didn't take long to cross the beautiful lagoon and drop them at their resort where they were met with staff greeting them with fresh leis, who picked up their bags and checked them in. Their bungalow sat on the white sandy beach. It had a large sitting room and kitchen, with two bedrooms and a master suite that opened out onto the beach. The rooms were luxurious while still paying homage to the Polynesian style. They also had a small over-water bungalow with thatched roof and walkway and its own hot tub. Tristan couldn't hide his excitement when he saw the glass panel in the floor with fish swimming underneath in the tropical waters. 'Look, Mummy, look!'

It couldn't be more perfect. She'd been nervous about them staying in the bungalows over water since Tristan was coming with them. But this had been a compromise. This way she had the safety of a beach house with the magic of the water bungalow too.

She unpacked their clothes as Caleb looked around. The first thing he unpacked was his computer. Apart from when stepping off the plane, he hadn't really taken in the beauty around them.

She tried to hide her frustration but twenty hours of travel would wear anyone's patience thin.

She dug out Tristan's beach wear and covered him in sunscreen. It took him less than a minute to run across the sand and start digging with his spade and splashing in the water. She changed into her swimming costume and arranged herself under

the nearby parasol and sun lounger where she could watch him.

Her peace lasted less than five minutes.

‘How do I connect to the Internet?’ Caleb asked from the doorway of the bungalow.

‘You don’t.’

He frowned. ‘What do you mean?’

She shook her head. ‘There is no Internet.’

The furrows on his brow deepened. He hadn’t changed his clothes or stopped to appreciate their surroundings. ‘There has to be. Where is the phone line?’

She shrugged. ‘I don’t think there is one. There’s an intercom that links to Reception if we need anything. I think we just use that.’

She was doing her absolute best to appear casual. It was pretty ironic really since she was staring over at the volcanic peak of Mount Otemanu. She absolutely knew that when he realised there was definitely no phone or Internet he’d go off with more explosions than Mount Otemanu ever had.

The doors to the house were wide open so she could hear him moving around inside. Part of her felt a little sad. They’d just landed in paradise and he hadn’t come out to play with his son in the sand, or to sit next to her on the sun lounger. It made her absolutely determined that she’d made the right decision. She needed a chance to see her husband again. She needed a chance to see how he was without any of the trappings of work attached to him. They needed a chance to be stripped bare. And this was

the only place to do it. There was no room for distractions here. It was just them, and Tristan.

And the secret baby package.

She looked back at the bungalow and watched as he paced around inside, stressing and searching the room for any hidden phone lines or Wi-Fi connections.

The Caleb Connor that she'd met ten years ago would never have stressed about being constantly connected to the world. He would never have spent time on holiday virtually ignoring his wife and child.

This was the life she led now. And this was the reason she knew she had to take a step to see if this marriage could be saved. She would never introduce another child into this way of life.

Oh, no matter what the outcome of this holiday, she would always have this baby. But she wanted to be prepared. She wanted to have time to plan, to know whether she would be doing this alone or not—particularly if she and her baby needed additional support.

One in one hundred and forty. Most people would think the odds were in their favour.

In one hundred and thirty-nine chances the baby wouldn't be affected.

But in one of those chances it would.

She'd thought about this before. When she'd had Tristan she'd been told she was low risk. But her midwife had carefully explained that low risk didn't equal no risk. There was always that

possibility. And she'd understood that then, just as she did now.

It was amazing how much this had caused her to focus. The holiday had been booked. Since she'd found out she was pregnant she knew she needed to deal with the elephant in the room. In fact, she was pretty sure an elephant could have been sitting in their front room and Caleb wouldn't have noticed. That was how distant he'd been.

The distance made her uncomfortable. It reminded her of a time before—a time that seemed a little hazy for her—a time where the distance between them had been her fault. She squeezed her eyes closed for a second. She didn't like to remember anything about that.

She heard a loud beep. It was Caleb on the intercom. 'How do I connect to the Internet?'

The bright sing-song voice answered straight away. 'No Internet here. Sorry.'

'What do you mean there's no Internet? Everywhere has Internet. There must be somewhere I can get a connection?' She could hear the anger in his voice. It drifted out of the doors towards them and Tristan, who had come back to play next to her, looked up from digging in the sand. She shook her head and he put his head back down and kept building his castle.

'No connection on the Bora Boras, sir.'

'What about a phone? Can I have access to a phone?'

'Only radio contact with the mainland, sir. That's the beauty of our resort. Most people come here specially.'

She heard the click again then the thudding footsteps. A few seconds later the small amount of sun sneaking under the parasol was blocked out.

He had his hands on his hips. His lips were pressed tightly together and there was a tic in his jaw. 'Tell me you know where the Wi-Fi is.' There was a tad of desperation in his voice.

She pushed her sunglasses up on her head and pressed her hand against her chest in mock horror. 'There's no Wi-Fi?' She sagged back against the sun lounger. 'Tragedy.' She shot him a little smile. 'Your computer and phone will probably spontaneously combust now. Just as well there's a perfect ocean to throw them in.'

He sighed and sat down, running his fingers through his hair. 'Oh, Addison. I'm in the middle of a deal right now. This could make or break our company. The only reason I came was because I knew I could still work remotely.'

'And that's why I didn't tell you.'

She put her hand on Tristan's shoulder. 'Why don't you go inside and have a little lie down for a while? I'll come inside and put a DVD on for you.' He disappeared quickly into the bungalow.

Addison swung her legs around and stood up, the warm sand beneath her feet.

'You're absolutely right. I deliberately picked a place with no phone and no Internet. Ask yourself why. You've forgotten we even exist. You treat us as if we're not important. This deal could

make or break your company?' She waved her hand. 'I've heard that for the last three years. Maybe the first time I believed it. But every time after that? I don't think so.'

She stepped closer to him. Close enough that she could see the exhaustion in his face and the fine lines that had appeared all around his eyes. 'What I do believe is that the only reason you came is because you thought you could work here remotely.' She shook her head. 'Think about that for a minute, Caleb. Just think about it. Do you think that's normal for a family holiday? Do you think that's what most husbands and fathers do on holiday?'

He at least had the good sense to look embarrassed. 'You know how important this is.'

'No, Caleb. I know how important you think it is. There's a difference. I think you'll find that in the scale of life it's not that important at all.'

Now he looked annoyed again. 'Well, in order to pay the mortgage and the bills I think you'll find work is important.'

'More important than your family?'

He waved his hand. 'Now you're just being ridiculous.'

'No. No, I'm not. And don't worry about your business. Harry will deal with everything. He's more than capable.'

'And how do you know that?'

She sighed. 'Because I spoke to him before we left. He knew that once you got here you'd have no phone, no Internet.'

Caleb looked stunned. 'What? Harry knew?'

She started to walk away. She'd had enough of this. 'Of course

he knew. Seems like he didn't think it was such a bad idea. And you can stop checking your phone for emails or messages. There are no signal towers out here. I'm actually surprised Harry messaged you at all.'

Caleb shook his head. 'Earlier? In Tahiti? It wasn't Harry. It was Reuben.'

She couldn't help it. She raised her eyebrows. She always did that when she heard this name. 'Reuben Tyler? What did he want?'

Caleb shrugged. 'He needed somewhere to stay. His flat's got asbestos in the roof. I told him he could stay at ours.'

Her mouth fell open. 'You did what?'

He seemed surprised. 'What's the big deal? We're not there. The house is empty.'

'Oh, no.' Now she started pacing. 'The house isn't empty. Lara. Lara's in the house.'

Now Caleb looked confused. 'Why would Lara be in the house? I never saw her.'

Addison spun around. 'She appeared just before you did. Seems she went home and found her boyfriend in bed with the neighbour.' She threw up her hands. 'This is what I'm talking about, Caleb. She was right there. Right there sitting in our kitchen. You didn't even notice.'

He frowned. 'Reuben will be expecting the place to be empty. That's what I told him.'

'And Lara will be expecting to have the house to herself. She

needs a bit of time to sort herself out. The last thing she needs right now is Reuben Tyler. She won't even know who he is.'

Caleb shook his head. 'Well, it's too late now. They'll both be in the house and according to you we have no way to get in touch.'

Addison cringed. He was right. There was no way to get in touch. The world seemed to love Reuben Tyler but she didn't. Probably because she'd walked in one night just as he'd taken a swing at her husband. Caleb had said it was nothing. But it wasn't nothing to her.

'There's really no Internet?'

'We're back to that again?'

He nodded. She could see the stress on his face. It was practically emanating from his pores. Part of her felt a tiny bit sorry for him. It was like going cold turkey. But there was nothing he could do.

She folded her arms across her chest. 'There is no Internet, Caleb. It's four weeks. Live with it.'

He took a deep breath and turned towards her. His brown eyes fixed on hers. It was the first time in for ever that he'd really looked at her. Really looked at her.

'What's going on with you, Addison?'

She blinked. 'What's going on with me? Are you serious?'

Why did every conversation feel as if it ended up as a fight?

'Yeah, I'm serious. I can't believe what you said to me back home.'

'And I can't believe you came home from work an hour before

we were due to leave and thought you would tell me you weren't coming on holiday. At what point in your life did that seem okay to you?

'Everything is a fight with you these days.'

He'd just echoed her thoughts. She thought this was all him. Was he trying to imply it was her too?

It lit a fuse in her. How dared he? Didn't he know what she'd just been told? Didn't he understand how worried she was?

Of course he didn't. She hadn't told him yet.

And at some point she'd need to.

Just not yet. Not until she knew.

She didn't want to tell him about the pregnancy. She didn't want to tell him about the scary news. She didn't need her husband to feel sorry for her. She needed him to love her. To love her enough to feel as if he could be there and support her.

Telling him about the pregnancy right now could make him tell her everything would be fine. And knowing Caleb, he'd probably think it would be. Then he'd go right home and start working hundred-hour weeks again.

She needed more than that. She needed more for this marriage.

'How can everything be a fight when you're never there?'

He sighed. 'You work too. There's been nights when you've been busy too. There have been events you've had to go to—people you've had to meet.'

She nodded her head. 'You're absolutely right. But the

difference between you and me is that, when I know I'm going to be out at night, I make sure I've spent time with Tristan during the day.'

'That's easy for you to do.'

'Actually, it isn't. But I make the time.'

She bit her lip. Everything was a fight between them right now. And she hated that.

'Always fault-finding, always criticising. Can I ever do anything right in your eyes these days?'

And it looked as if this was going to become a fight too.

Trouble was, she was just too tired for this. She wasn't sure if it was the travel that had exhausted her, or the pregnancy. She could remember at this stage in her pregnancy with Tristan she'd come home from work and go straight to bed. In those days, Caleb would just come to bed with her.

She turned away. She just wanted to sleep now. She couldn't even be bothered changing out of her swimsuit.

'You gave me an ultimatum.' His voice was quiet, almost whispered. It was as if he was still getting over the shock. 'Why would you do that? It was just straight out of the blue.'

She stopped walking. Her hand was on the door. From here she could see that Tristan was already sleeping. She hadn't even got around to putting the DVD on. That was fine. She would just climb in next to him.

She kept her voice low too. 'It wasn't out of the blue, Caleb. This has been building for the last few years. We've slipped

away from each other—we've lost each other...' her voice started to break '...and I've had enough. I can't live like this any more because I don't feel as if I'm living.'

She glanced over her shoulder. 'This is it for us, Caleb. I chose this place deliberately because I didn't want Tristan and I to compete with your work any more. Some people think this place is paradise. You? I think you've barely noticed. We came here because I wanted to see if we had anything left worth saving. Because right now—I just don't know.'

She took one final look. He looked as if she'd just punched him in the guts.

So she turned, and went to bed.

### CHAPTER THREE

CALEB COULDN'T SLEEP. He should be sleeping after twenty hours' travel and staying up since they'd arrived but after the conversation with Addison, sleep was nowhere near him.

It felt as if she'd stuck a knife into his chest and twisted it.

But more importantly it was obvious that she didn't think this marriage could be saved. How on earth had he reached this point? Had he been sleepwalking through life not to have noticed how his wife felt?

Tristan and Addison were sleeping in one of the double beds together. He'd tried to sleep in the other with no success. Then, he'd tried the bed in the water bungalow. But the gentle lap, lap of the water underneath had only kept his mind buzzing. In the end, he'd ended up on the beach.

They'd probably spent a fortune on this holiday and he was sleeping like a beach bum. But the air seemed stiller out here. And although there was still a background noise from the lapping waves, it didn't seem as amplified out here.

He couldn't sleep because he was gripped with panic. Panic that life as he knew it was just about to slip through his fingers.

Work was still preying on his mind. At one point in the middle of the night he'd actually opened his computer and started working on something. But after half an hour he'd realised the futility of his actions. By the time he'd got home Harry would have worked on another version of this. It made no sense for him to do the same thing. But that didn't stop his fingers drumming on the table in irritation.

He couldn't help it. Working had almost become a compulsion—an addiction. How sad was that?

He wasn't sure he even knew how to relax any more. Just sitting annoyed him. His brain constantly revolving, thinking about the work-related things he could be doing.

Part of him was angry at Addison for forcing this on him.

Part of him understood the point she was trying to make. If he had an Internet connection he probably wouldn't have seen the sun set or rise again. He probably wouldn't have watched the fishes swimming underneath the glass panel under the coffee table.

He probably wouldn't have had time to wonder what he could say to his wife to make her change her mind.

She seemed different. Distant. As if she had a hundred other things that she wasn't saying to him. And to be honest, what she'd already said felt like enough. He didn't know how he'd cope if she said any more.

A waiter appeared at the beach bungalow carrying a large tray. Breakfast. Was it that time already?

Caleb nodded as the man set the loaded tray down in the kitchen and left again. Eggs, bacon, croissants and breakfast cereal for Tristan. Addison must have pre-ordered all this. He glanced into the bedroom. They were still sleeping.

He jumped in the shower and quickly changed. He wasn't sure quite what Addison expected today. He hadn't paid enough attention; he didn't even know what there was to do around here.

He stood at the bedroom door for a minute. Even sleeping, she looked stressed. The bedclothes were all messed up and it was obvious she'd tossed and turned all night. That wasn't like her. Addison used to sleep like the dead. He used to joke that a marching band could come through their house in the middle of the night and she wouldn't hear it.

Tristan was lying halfway across his mother's chest in his superhero pyjamas. Caleb's heart gave a squeeze. When was the last time he'd had a chance to see them like this?

It had been too long. She was right about the Christmas carol stuff. He'd had every intention of being there. But just as he'd been about to leave he'd received an emergency call from Singapore. One of their investors had taken unwell and he'd been

asked to contact the family urgently. It had taken fourteen phone calls to track down his son and by the time he'd finally left the office Tristan's concert was already finished. He'd sat in the car park outside, looking at the darkened building and cursing himself that he hadn't got there on time.

He walked over to the bed and gave Tristan a little shake. 'Hey, superhero. Wake up. It's breakfast time and we've got a beach to play on.'

Bing. Just like that he was wide awake. He jumped down from the bed and ran through to the bathroom. Addison's eyes flickered open. Just for a second she looked fine. Then, whatever it was that was on her mind seemed to come flooding in again. He could almost see the shutters coming down.

'Breakfast is here,' he said. 'I'll take Tristan through.'

She gave a nod and turned away, climbing out of the bed and slipping on her dressing gown. This wasn't how they used to wake up. Before Tristan, some days they hadn't got up at all. When Tristan was a baby they used to bring him in beside them in the morning. He'd coo and smile quite happily, with not a single bit of guilt that he'd kept them up most of the night.

But those days were long gone. Caleb got up at five these days and was in the office for six. He didn't even recognise the breakfast cereal sitting on the kitchen table. He picked it up and stared at it.

'My favourite!' shouted Tristan, pulling himself up onto one of the chairs. 'What's the toy?'

‘Let’s see,’ said Caleb, sitting down next to him and opening the pack. A horrible plastic spider dropped out onto the table. Tristan let out a shriek and jumped up laughing. Caleb started laughing too. Within a few minutes the breakfast cereal was scattered everywhere and the bowls upturned as they played ‘catch the spider’.

By the time he looked up Addison was standing in the doorway, watching Tristan and smiling. ‘What’s all this noise?’

Tristan lifted his prize. ‘It was a spider this time, Mum!’

‘Oh, no! Not a spider.’ She came over to the table and sat around the other side. ‘Well, I’m not sitting next to a spider.’

She stared at the covered plates for a second. It was almost as if the silver domes lost her in thought. But she blinked and removed them. The smell of bacon and eggs filled the room.

Caleb lifted up the cups and coffee pot and started pouring.

‘Oh, no. I’m going to have lemon tea instead.’

He raised his eyebrows. ‘But you love coffee.’

She shrugged. ‘I’m on a health kick.’

He sat down opposite her and picked up his knife and fork. ‘Skinny latte with sugar-free caramel, skinny extra shot macchiato.’

The edges of her lips started to turn upwards.

‘Skinny cortado, skinny mocha cortado. Shall I keep going?’

She rolled her eyes as she poured boiling water into her cup and added a slice of freshly cut lemon.

‘You know what they say—too much caffeine makes a girl

cranky.’

He couldn’t help but smile. There was definitely an atmosphere between them. How could there be anything else after what had happened? But things didn’t seem quite so antagonistic this morning.

‘This from a woman who had a state-of-the-art coffee machine installed in our kitchen because...’ he leaned across the table towards her ‘...and I quote, “it’s got to be cheaper than the ten cups I buy a day from the coffee shops”.’ He pointed to her cup. ‘And now you’re drinking tea?’

‘A girl’s entitled to change her mind.’ The words came out like lightning—just the way Addison usually was. But as soon as she’d said them her face fell. Almost as if she realised how they could be interpreted.

Had Addison changed her mind about him?

Tristan chose that second to ping his plastic spider across the table and straight into Addison’s cup.

‘Yow!’ She stood up as water splashed all over her. It was the first time he’d noticed she’d barely touched her breakfast.

She held her hand out towards Tristan. ‘Let’s go and get ready.’ She looked up at Caleb. ‘There’s a kids’ club every morning for a few hours. Playing with other kids will be good for him. He’ll be back with us every afternoon.’

Work. It was the first thought that shot across his mind.

Addison walked away holding Tristan’s hand, her outline silhouetted by the sun streaming through one of the windows.

Her hair might be tied up in a funny knot on top of her head, and she didn't have a scrap of make-up on, but his wife was still a stunner.

So, why was it, when he knew Tristan would be gone every morning, his first thought had been he could work?

He leaned forward and put his head in his hands. Five years ago that absolutely wouldn't have been the first thought on his mind. His mind would probably have gone in a whole other direction.

He was embarrassed to admit that thought—even to himself.

He stood up and walked through to the bedroom. 'I'll take him.'

'What?' Addison looked surprised; she was pulling some clothes for Tristan out of the drawers.

'If you point me in the right direction, I'll take him to the kids' club. You can stay and get showered and dressed.'

'No.' It was out before he'd barely finished speaking. 'I mean... I haven't seen the kids' club yet. I want to check it out. To make sure I'm happy to leave him there.'

His annoyance flared. It was almost as if she didn't trust him to be able to do that. To take Tristan to the kids' club and make sure it was okay. But he tempered it down. The last thing he needed to do today was have another argument. He picked up the clothes she'd looked out. 'In that case, we'll do it together. I'll get Tristan dressed while you shower.'

She hesitated for second, then nodded. 'Okay, I'll be ready in

ten minutes.’

She grabbed a dress and some underwear and headed into the bathroom, closing the door behind her.

It was the little things. The little things he was starting to notice. She didn’t used to close the door when she showered. On past occasions he’d joined her.

But today, it felt like just another sign that Addison was shutting him out.

He sighed and dressed Tristan, taking him out to the beach when he was ready. But Tristan pointed to the clear blue sea. ‘Can we see the fishes?’

‘Sure.’ Caleb took his hand and led him along the walkway and into the over-water bungalow. They pushed the coffee table away and lay down next to the glass panel. There was a small piece of coral underneath and it was alive with activity.

‘What’s that one, Dad? The red and white one? And what’s the blue one? It looks like Dory. Do you think we’ll see Nemo too?’

Caleb shook his head and stared down at the gorgeous brightly coloured fish. He didn’t have a single clue what any of them were. A large one swam past right underneath their noses. It was turquoise blue with pink stripes and little dashes of yellow. It looked like a painting Tristan would do at nursery. It was followed by a few much smaller, zebra-striped fish.

‘I like that one,’ said Tristan. ‘Can we give it a name?’

Caleb smiled. ‘Sure we can. What will we call it?’

‘Tristan,’ he suggested.

Caleb tried not to laugh. ‘We’ll have to see if we can buy a book somewhere to tell us what all the fishes are.’ He looked around. ‘And there are lots of boats. Maybe one day we can swim along the coral reef and go snorkelling.’

‘What’s snorkling?’

Caleb laughed. ‘It’s where you go under the water and breathe through a little tube. You have a pair of goggles on so you can see all the fishes.’

‘We can go and swim with the fishes?’ Tristan looked mesmerised.

‘Sure we can. Daddy will find out how today.’

Tristan’s innocent gaze narrowed. ‘You won’t forget?’

Something twisted inside him. That was what his four-year-old associated with him—Daddy always forgetting his promises?

‘I won’t forget,’ he said quickly. It felt like a kick somewhere painful. There was something horrible and uncomfortable about his little boy asking him that question. It was one thing for Addison to call him on his misdeeds, it was quite another for his four-year-old.

But there was something else. His brain was still spinning. Review a contract, phone that client, check the small print on another contract, speak to their lawyer about an impending business deal. He moved uncomfortably and glanced around. His shoulders were tense. His little boy was playing around him and his mind was still full of work things. Work things he could do nothing about.

So why were they still there? Why were they still running through his brain? Why couldn't he just relax and spend time with his son? Was it possible he'd forgotten how to relax?

There was a movement out of the corner of his eye. Addison was standing in the doorway, carrying Tristan's backpack in one hand. She was wearing a short red sundress and had a pair of sunglasses on her head.

She knelt down next to them and pulled some sunscreen out of the backpack, slathering it over Tristan's skin as he squirmed. When she finished she pulled a baseball cap from the backpack and stuck it on his head. 'Right. Let's go and see the kids' club.'

It was odd—walking away from a place and not locking all the doors behind you.

They strolled up the path towards the main resort. There was a variety of palm trees and green bushes with the occasional burst of bright red and orange flowers. The whole resort seemed to have been planned to perfection.

The kids' club was through the main reception and next to a small kids' pool. It was shaded, with a variety of toys, ranging from chalk boards, to racing cars, a complete tiny wooden house and a table for arts and crafts. There were four other kids all playing already with two play leaders. One of the play leaders came over straight away. 'Hi, I'm Kohia. Is this Tristan?'

Tristan nodded. 'How did she know my name, Mummy?'

Kohia knelt down. 'I know all the special boys and girls that are coming to play here.' She handed a clipboard to Addison.

‘We need you to answer a few questions about Tristan’s medical history, any allergies and likes and dislikes. After that we’re good to go.’

Caleb looked around. Everything seemed fine. The area was clean and tidy, the kids looked happy and the play leaders seemed to know what they were doing. Addison handed back the clipboard and waited a few minutes to make sure Tristan was settled. He was instantly distracted by a painting session at a nearby table. Kohia gave them a wave. ‘Come back around one o’clock.’

Caleb glanced at his watch. Three and a half hours. What on earth would they do?

\* \* \*

This morning had been strange. Caleb seemed in a better mood. He’d finally accepted there was no Internet or phone line and she hadn’t seen him touch his computer at all. It felt like a miracle.

He was still on edge. They both were. But the tenseness in his muscles seemed to have dissipated a little. His shoulders weren’t quite as tense but the furrows in his brow were still there. She could only imagine hers were the same.

Kohia shouted to them as they walked down the path. ‘If you haven’t tried the patisserie inside yet, you should definitely give it a go. The coconut cake is the best ever!’

Caleb turned towards her. ‘Well, there’s a recommendation. Why don’t we give it a try when we’ve looked around?’

She gave a nod. She could sense his nerves jangling again. Was he worried he might actually need to talk to her—spend time with her?

Her stomach gave a little lurch. She'd thought the other night that she might have fallen out of love with her husband. And that made her feel horrible. But it hadn't occurred to her that the same might have happened for him.

They walked in silence for a while, strolling through the tropical gardens. She'd never seen so many shades of green dotted with bright splashes of colour. Every now and then the foliage parted to give perfect views of the blue ocean and rolling sands. The resort complex was huge. There were five other beach bungalows like theirs, each with their own smaller over-water bungalow. Around the other side of the complex were twenty larger over-water bungalows with thatched roofs and a variety of walkways. The central hotel had four restaurants, three bars, a gym, training classes, a few shops, a spa and the huge, welcoming patisserie. The smell of coffee almost came to meet them.

She felt herself twitch. She craved it. She craved it so badly. She hadn't actually realised how much she loved it, or how much she drank. But as soon as she'd realised she was pregnant she'd switched to caffeine-free tea. She didn't want to take any chances with this baby. Not when the odds were apparently stacked against her anyway.

Caleb automatically walked in the direction of the patisserie, his eyes drawn to a huge glass cabinet packed with a variety of

cakes.

‘Skinny caramel latte?’ She shook her head again.

‘I’ll have green tea.’ She drifted along the edge of the glass cabinet just as her stomach gave a telltale rumble.

Caleb pointed to the cakes. ‘Which one do you want?’ He turned towards her, a quizzical look on his face. ‘You didn’t eat much this morning at all. You must be starving.’

She was. She’d been unsettled at breakfast and she didn’t think it was anything to do with her pregnancy. Morning sickness had never been a problem before. It was most likely just the state of her life and the decisions she’d need to make.

She licked her lips as she looked at the labels on the cakes. She pointed to the coconut cake. Four layers of sponge with jam and coconut cream frosting. She didn’t even want to think about the calories. Since she’d hardly had any breakfast—or eaten much on the flights yesterday—she figured it would all work out. ‘I’ll have a piece of that. What about you?’

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