



LOUISA HEATON

Reunited by Their
Pregnancy Surprise



**MEDICAL
ROMANCE**



Louisa Heaton
Reunited By Their
Pregnancy Surprise
Серия «Mills & Boon Medical»

Аннотация

Reclaiming his wife...and his babyObstetrician Sam Saint wakes in hospital after an accident to find he doesn't remember the last eighteen months. The beautiful woman by his bedside is in fact his wife... and she's pregnant!Midwife Emily never thought her husband would want the child she longs for. But now she's expecting his baby, she's determined to fight for their marriage. And as they rediscover each other, Emily and Sam find themselves making new memories—ones they'll both treasure, for ever!

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Reclaiming his wife...and his baby!

Obstetrician Sam Saint wakes in hospital after an accident to find he doesn't remember the past eighteen months. The beautiful woman by his bedside is in fact his wife...and she's pregnant!

Midwife Emily never thought her husband would want the child she longs for. But now that she's expecting his baby, she's determined to fight for their marriage. And as they rediscover each other, Emily and Sam find themselves making new memories—ones they'll both treasure forever!

'They... er...did some tests on me after the accident. Blood tests.'

He nodded, frowning. 'Go on.'

'They found something.'

His face filled with concern and she could imagine what he was thinking. A mass. A shadow. Some disease...

'What did they find?'

Emily searched his face, knowing the response he would give, knowing how his face would crumple at hearing the news, not sure if she could bear the way he would drop all contact with her, drop her hand that he was clutching so tight.

She'd missed him. So much!

But he'd made it clear he didn't want a baby with her. Telling him this was the hardest thing she would ever have to do.

'They found...' She paused, swallowing hard. 'I'm pregnant, Sam. I'm having our baby.'

Dear Reader,

Years ago, when my dad was in the army and stationed in Singapore, he overturned a water truck in the jungle and sustained a head injury. When he woke in hospital he had no idea of who he was or what had happened. The padre in the hospital found a love letter in his uniform pocket from my mum and he wrote to her, telling her what had happened and that she would need to help my father regain his memories—and make him fall in love with her all over again!

I always told my mum that she missed a trick in not ‘reprogramming’ my dad into a romantic Alpha hero! But, no, she did the right thing and told him the truth instead—even though my dad had sometimes been a naughty boy!

So I *had* to write an amnesia story for myself, and I really hope you will enjoy reading about Emily and Sam as they go on their own journey to find Sam’s memories and restore their love.

Happy reading!

Louisa xxx

LOUISA HEATON lives on Hayling Island, Hampshire, with her husband, four children and a small zoo. She has worked in various roles in the health industry—most recently four years as a Community First Responder, answering 999 calls. When not writing, Louisa enjoys other creative pursuits, including reading, quilting and patchwork—usually instead of the things she ought to be doing!

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For my mum and dad, who had their own amnesia story.

[Praise for Louisa Heaton](#)

‘An emotional rollercoaster ride... One Life-Changing Night is medical drama at its best.’

—Goodreads

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[CHAPTER ONE](#)

HER HEELS CLICK-CLACKED down the hospital

corridor, a hurried, tense staccato, as Emily headed for the familiar room that Sam had been moved to after his short stay in the ICU.

She cut a striking figure in her stylish clothes, her long honey-blond locks held back by sunglasses on her head and her large expensive bag swinging from the crook of her elbow. Her face, beautiful without the aid of make-up, was today showing strain. Lines and dark circles framed her eyes. And those who saw her noted the way her fingers twisted and fidgeted at her wedding band.

The Beverly West Hospital was the biggest and most prestigious hospital in Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, California. Sam's care here had been amazing. From the second he'd been scooped from their crumpled, steaming vehicle and blue-lighted to its doors, Emily had not doubted for one second the level of care they had both received. Apart from that split second when she'd first received her pregnancy test results...

Outside Sam's room she could see Dr Waters and her team, standing discussing something in low voices, with the occasional glance at Sam's notes on a clipboard. They looked serious. Concerned. But why? Hadn't they just rung her with the news that he was starting to wake up? That was good, right?

Dr Waters looked up as she became aware of Emily's approach and, meeting her by the door to the room, pasted a polite smile onto her face. 'Mrs Saint—'

'Is he awake?' She bit her lip and again twisted the wedding

ring on her finger.

This was it. Now or never. She would go inside her husband's room and either find a man who was happy to be alive and willing to work on any problem, or the bear of a husband she'd been used to over the last few difficult months.

'He is. He's tired, and occasionally lapses back into sleep—which is normal considering the trauma his brain has been through. Coma patients usually take a day or two to wake properly.'

'I can go in and see him? Talk to him?'

The call from Dr Waters had come in the early hours of the morning. The phone ringing had not woken her. She'd already been awake. Lying in her very empty bed, staring at the ceiling and trying—still—to decide what was best to do.

Leave Sam? Or stay and fight for their marriage?

She'd even pulled a suitcase out and laid it on the bed one day, stood staring at it in numb indecision. Her heart wavering. It had all seemed so very clear-cut before the car crash. But now...? Knowing that he was sick...knowing that she was pregnant?

She had returned the suitcase to its storage spot and closed the doors on it. Her mind ran back to the times when Sam had refused to talk to her about having children, clamming up the second she raised it. Why had he done that? Over and over again? What hadn't he been telling her? There had to be something, but his refusal even to talk to her about it had been hurtful. They'd got to a point when they had barely been speaking to one another.

Her brain had almost torn itself in two, trying to figure out his secret. Thinking of one scenario and then another. None had seemed likely, and she'd begun to believe that maybe he just didn't want to have a child with her.

Emily had stared at the closed closet doors, knowing that she would do what was right. And the right thing here was to give Sam time to recover and then let him know about the baby. Because then there was a small chance—a tiny, infinitesimal chance—that now the baby was no longer hypothetical but real and here he might change his mind.

She couldn't leave him without him knowing the truth. And if he heard the news about the pregnancy and still didn't want to be there for her and their child then she would go. Step out into the world on her own, even though doing so would break her heart. She didn't want to leave Sam, but he'd made life unbearable—had backed her into a corner.

Dr Waters shifted, looking at her colleagues, who all understood the implicit suggestion that perhaps they should leave, allow her to talk to Mrs Saint alone. They gave her sympathetic smiles and scurried away.

'Of course, but before you go in there's something you need to know.'

Her blood ran cold. Was there a problem? Brain injury? Dr Waters had mentioned that there might be the possibility of something like that once before. But Sam had recovered so quickly! His coma had been short, the ICP had dropped to

normal levels incredibly quickly...

‘What is it?’

Sam could have anything wrong. Be blind. Deaf. Find it difficult to talk or maybe swallow.

‘We spoke once before about the damage that might have occurred to Sam’s brain because of the injury to his head, and after a quick examination of your husband we believe that there seems to be some sort of memory deficit—mainly amnesia. It could be temporary, of course. He might remember everything after he’s had another good sleep. But right now Sam seems...confused about his own timeline.’

Emily let out a long, slow, measured breath. Amnesia? She’d been fearing the worst! Temporary amnesia they could deal with.

‘Is that all?’

Dr Waters frowned. ‘Amnesia is a significant condition. I’m not sure you understand the full—’

‘I’m going in to see him.’ She cut off the doctor and stepped into Sam’s room. She’d been waiting long enough for this moment. Ten long days. Nothing more could keep them apart.

Ten days. It had seemed like a lifetime.

Sometimes in those ten days she’d held his hand in hers, taking advantage of the fact that he was unconscious, remembering the happier times when they’d been close, pretending it was still that way. Sometimes she’d read to him from that day’s newspaper, hoping that the sound of her voice would bring him back. And sometimes she’d just sat and stared at him, mulling everything

over in her head, thinking of where they'd gone wrong and how she could fix it. Imagining the day he would wake—the day his eyelids would flutter open and he would see her, sitting by his bedside like a sentinel. How he would smile and say her name, reach out slowly for her hand and kiss her fingertips...

Okay, so maybe she lived in a fantasy land at times, but surely a touch of escapism had never hurt anyone.

'Sam?' So much hope, so much need was in the pitch of her voice.

Her husband lay in bed, his face pale and relaxed against pure white starched hospital pillows, his blue eyes slowly opening, wincing at the light in the room before fixing his gaze upon her.

And smiling!

It's been too long since you smiled at me like that...

It was like when they'd first been going out. The way he would look at her as if he was already in love with her. As if she was pure joy for him. Had no faults. Had not driven him crazy yet with endless requests to start a family. Okay, maybe not crazy, but she had tried to start that conversation lots of times. In the end even she had refused to talk. It had been too hard. Their conversations would always somehow end in arguments, and it had been easier just not to talk at all. She'd feared what would happen if they did.

Perhaps that had been a bad thing to do. Shutting down their communication. But she'd been trying to protect their relationship. She hadn't wanted it to end.

Sucking in a breath, she rushed to his side, dropping her bag on the floor, not caring as she reached for his outstretched hand, stooping down to kiss him, feeling his bristles scrape her face as his lips met hers. Nothing mattered at that moment apart from the fact that he was alive. Awake. Back with her. She never wanted to go through those ten days ever again.

It didn't matter that they'd been arguing. She was just happy that he was awake. Reacting. That he was looking at her and he was smiling and—

'How are you feeling?' She stroked his face, looking for clues, looking for any sign of discomfort that he might be trying to hide. Making sure that he wasn't in any pain. Her professional skills as a nurse-midwife were coming to the fore.

'Better for seeing you, Em,' he croaked, squeezing her fingers, and she looked down at their entwined hands and smiled.

All those days she had sat holding his hands and he had never squeezed back. Never shown any sign of life in his fingers. They'd just lain there, limp. Breaking her heart. It felt so good to be touching him again. Gaining strength from him.

'I've been so worried!' She sat on the bed facing him and ran her thumb over the backs of his hands.

He closed his eyes briefly, as if he couldn't stand the knowledge that she'd been so concerned for him. 'The doc says we've been in a car accident?'

The confusion in his face was heart-rending, but Emily guessed that this was the amnesia that Dr Waters had mentioned.

Sam couldn't remember the crash. Sometimes people's brains would exclude certain bad experiences or memories, to help prevent itself from feeling hurt. Like a safety mechanism. If that was all that had happened to him then they'd both got away from this lightly.

'Yes.'

'Were you hurt?'

The concern in his voice and the way his blue eyes darkened at the thought relieved her. He did care for her! He wasn't angry at what had happened between them prior to this.

That was good, right? It took something like this to wake people up. To make them notice what was important in life. Each other. They were stronger together than they were apart. Even if they had been disagreeing. Giving each other the cold shoulder.

'Not really. Just whiplash.'

He frowned. 'Whiplash can be serious, Em. Have you been checked out by the doctors?'

He reached up to stroke her face, then his hand fell to her shoulders and neck to rub at her muscles, but he must be feeling tired because his hand dropped back to the bed, his eyes closing as he drifted in and out of sleep, before opening them again.

'Look at me. Weak as a kitten.'

'You need to rest. You've been out of it for ten days.'

'Ten days?' He looked upset.

'They had to put you in an induced coma, Sam. Your brain got shook around in that hard skull of yours.'

He sighed and closed his eyes again and she realised with a sudden pang that he had drifted back to sleep. And she hadn't had a chance to tell him their news, yet.

It can wait. It's waited this long. What's a few more hours?

Right now he was happy to see her. Relieved. All signs of their previous turmoil was gone. They were speaking to each other. Something they hadn't done properly for weeks, and she'd missed that.

But it was odd, wasn't it? That he should be so happy to see her? After the last few days of stony silences, the weeks of arguing and disagreement...

She liked it that he was being nice. Concerned about her whiplash, concerned about her health, but she wasn't used to it. It was throwing her slightly.

Having to wait a little longer to deliver the news that she was pregnant was just fine. Because she had no idea how he would react to that. Probably not very well, and then they would be back to being at war with each other. She didn't mind holding off on that for a while.

She liked what they had right now, thank you very much. The talking. The concern for each other's wellbeing. The holding hands.

Emily stared at his hand in hers, lifted it to her mouth and kissed it, inhaling the scent of him, breathing it in like vital oxygen. Then she got up off the bed and settled into her usual chair, staring long and hard at her husband.

She was getting him back. He'd smiled at her!

She felt sure there was a chance...all this just might be okay.

* * *

Sam slowly came to. He had a wicked headache, but he appeared to be still in hospital, attached to God only knew how many wires and monitors and, beside him, her head slumped to her shoulder, asleep, was his beautiful fiancée Emily.

She looked tired. Exhausted, even. Her face was a little pale beneath wave upon wave of that gorgeous hair of hers. But then he assumed she would be. Hadn't she, or someone, told him that he'd been out of it for ten days? After some accident he couldn't even recall?

Ten days. What had he missed? Probably nothing too much. That serial he'd been watching on television had been scheduled to show its last episode the other week, so probably that. There was still another month or so before Emily's birthday, so thankfully not that. He had a big surprise planned. He was hoping to take her to Las Vegas.

It was strange, though. Only ten days and he could swear that her hair seemed longer. A little more sun-bleached. Those honey tones were brighter than normal. And were those new clothes? He hadn't seen them before. But then again, Em did enjoy shopping. Perhaps she'd gone out and treated herself whilst she'd been waiting for him to recover? A little pick-me-up?

He lifted his head off the pillow to check himself out. There didn't appear to be any limbs wrapped in bandages, no plaster

casts or anything like that. Had he just got a head injury? That would explain the headache, and the fact that he'd been out of it for a while. He hated it that he was laid up in hospital, because they still had so much to do. Not only did they need to tell everyone that Emily had accepted his proposal of marriage, but there was so much to do at work, too!

His idea, of building an exclusive five-star birth centre—the Monterey Birth Centre—was close to fruition. They'd toured the halls just last week and everything had looked perfect. Almost ready for their Grand Opening.

It was going to be massive. He wanted the Monterey to be the premier birthing centre in the whole of the US. He wanted people to aspire to have their babies there, to be treated as if they were royalty and enjoy the ultimate birthing experience, which he and his team would provide whilst their patients were being fed with delectable dishes provided by a team of Michelin-starred chefs in the kitchen.

It had taken a lot of planning. And sourcing funding. But he'd found people—mainly people whose babies he had already delivered safely—to sponsor and endorse the Monterey. He'd secured a great board of directors—along with himself and Emily, of course—and his excitement for this project had driven him onward like nothing he had ever experienced before. There'd been so much to think about! But he enjoyed that.

Asking Emily to marry him had been the icing on the cake. And she'd said yes. So he guessed now he'd be busy planning a

wedding, too!

They hadn't been going out long. Six months? But there was something about her—something that had reached out and grabbed him. She'd seemed so...vulnerable when they'd first met, and he'd been cautious not to scare her with his desire to be by her side. He'd not been able to pinpoint the source of that vulnerability and, to be honest, they'd both been so busy at work, and setting up the Monterey, that it hadn't seemed all that important after a while.

Emily had blossomed by his side, driven on by their shared vision. She was everything he could have wished for and he loved her deeply. She cared for and loved delivering babies as much as he did.

But today she looked exhausted. She must have been handling any last hiccups at the birth centre, working and having to deal with his accident and their families all by herself. No wonder she looked shattered. Had they put off the Grand Opening whilst they'd waited for him to recover?

For a brief moment he just lay there and stared at her, his heart swelling with love for the woman at his side, but after a minute or so he couldn't stand it any more and reached out to take her hand. Needing to touch her. To connect.

She blinked herself awake in seconds. 'Sam?'

He smiled and lifted her hand to his lips, pressed a kiss upon it. 'Sleeping Beauty.'

She glanced at her watch in confusion. 'I've been asleep for

three hours!’ She rubbed at her eyes and then glanced at him with concern. ‘How are you? Are you in any pain?’

‘Just a headache.’

‘Should I call a nurse?’

‘No, it’s fine. It’s understandable, considering my head got bashed. I’m sure there’s some morphine being dripped in to me somewhere...’ He looked up at the various drips and then smiled at her. ‘I’ve missed you.’ He squeezed her fingers, wishing he could be holding her in his arms. Wishing he could get her to come and lie beside him upon the bed. He needed to feel her next to him.

She looked a little apprehensive. ‘You’ve been in a coma.’

‘So you keep saying. But what about you? How are you doing? Any problems with Monterey I need to know about?’

Emily frowned and shook her head. ‘No. It’s all going very well.’

He let out a sigh. ‘That’s great news. How did Harry get on with the window treatments? Did he make the changes we asked him to?’

His fiancée looked at him, lines furrowing her brow. ‘What?’

‘The curtains and sashing in The Nightingale Suite. We decided to change them to that lighter gold colour. Has he done it yet? If he hasn’t we need to get on that—the Grand Opening is only a few days away.’

She continued to look at him with puzzlement. ‘What are you talking about?’

‘The curtains were too dark. That suite is going to be our most prestigious—we want it right for the press tour. Think of the spread of pictures...’

‘Press tour? We haven’t had a press tour since...’ Her voice drifted away and she suddenly looked at him, her eyes searching his face as she sucked in a breath. ‘Sam, what day do you think it is?’

He closed his eyes and thought about it. He’d proposed on Friday, he’d been in a coma for ten days, so today had to be... ‘Monday? Tuesday, maybe?’

She shook her head, her choppy blonde locks shimmering around her shoulders. ‘No. I mean the month. The year.’

Month and year? What was she talking about? He’d been out for ten days, they’d said! He told her the date and watched as what little colour there was leached from her face. She turned away from him, her curtain of honey-blond hair hiding her face from his as she pulled her hands free of his grasp.

Her recoiling from him made him feel nervous. What didn’t he know? ‘Why are you asking? I’m not that much out of step, am I?’

He heard her sniff. Watched as she reached into her bag and pulled out a small hankie, dabbing at her eyes before she turned back to face him, bracing herself to prepare to say something she clearly thought he wouldn’t be ready to hear.

‘Sam... We’ve been married for eighteen months. The Monterey has been open and running for just over a year now.’

Sam stared at her hard. He swallowed painfully and his hands scrunched up the bedding as he made fists.

Eighteen months?

No! That's ridiculous...

'Why would you say that? Why would you even play a trick like that?'

A tear dripped onto her cheek and with clear-cut pain in her voice she said, 'I'm not lying to you.'

'Emily...'

'Sam, please, listen—'

But he wasn't listening. Not any more. Em was playing some cruel trick on him, and he didn't know why, but the doctors would have to tell him the truth! The nurses would. He'd make them show him a newspaper or something. This was completely ridiculous. There was no way that he'd lost all that time. He'd know. There'd be signs!

Sam stabbed at the button that would call a nurse to his bedside and kept doing so, ignoring Emily's pleas, her cries. She was standing now, her hand covering her mouth, looking at him with those wide, tear-filled eyes...

The door opened and a nurse he hadn't seen before came in. She glanced at Emily in concern before turning to him. 'Mr Saint?'

'I need to see the doctor in charge of my care.'

The nurse kept on looking between the two of them, not sure exactly what had happened. 'Dr Waters has gone home for the

evening. I can get—’

‘Get someone! Someone who knows what they’re talking about!’ He glared at Emily, angry at her, and watched as she snatched up her handbag and ran from the room.

The nurse nodded and hurried out, and with both women gone he felt his anger deflate slightly.

Married eighteen months? Emily was crazy. Perhaps she’d had the bump on the head and not him!

He lay in the bed, fury surging through him, and waited for someone who knew what they were talking about to come and tell him the truth.

There was no way he had lost that amount of time.

CHAPTER TWO

EMILY RAN FROM Sam’s room, throwing her bag to the floor and sagging against the wall opposite. She slid down it until she sat hunched on the floor, like a puppet without her strings.

He couldn’t remember! He had no idea of how much time had passed! He thought...he thought that... She heard his words once again, spoken with such certainty, such concern. ‘How did Harry get on with the window treatments? Did he make the changes we asked him to?’

Window treatments?

I remember! It was a week before the Grand Opening. He’d proposed just the night before...

The nurse who had followed her out of Sam’s room came over to her, hunched down and draped her arm softly around her

shoulders. ‘Are you okay, Mrs Saint?’

She could barely breathe...so, no, she wasn’t okay. But she managed to suck in a deep, steadying breath and struggle back to her feet. Another breath and she nodded that she was all right.

‘The doctor told me... Dr Waters...she told me that Sam had a little amnesia, but I thought that she meant that...that he’d forgotten the accident. Not two whole years of his life!’

It was so much for her to take in. And she couldn’t imagine how he felt! Well, she didn’t have to, did she? He was furious at the idea. And she could understand why. Sam was a driven man, always pushing himself to fill every second of his life and enjoy it. The man didn’t sit still for a minute.

And he’d forgotten it all. The opening of the birth centre. The massive celebrations...the parties. The first birth and all the births since. The amazing write-ups they’d received, the recommendations, the people who were attracted to the Monterey—celebrities, the rich... Royalty had even given birth there.

And not just everything that had happened at work. If it were true—if he really didn’t remember—then he’d also forgotten their wedding. The preparations, the wedding night, the honeymoon in Paris...

The arguments... The fact that I told him I was going to leave him!

Emily bit down hard on her lip and accepted a plastic cup of water from the nurse, who had hurried to the small self-service

station in the corridor. 'Thank you.'

'I'll page the on-call doctor.'

Emily nodded. 'Thank you.' She smiled weakly at the nurse, noting the relief on her face, her name badge—Melanie. 'And I think you'd better show him a webpage, or perhaps a newspaper. Prove the date to him. I'm not sure he believes me.'

Melanie looked uncertain. 'I think maybe the doctor ought to do that.'

'Maybe. Or perhaps I ought to do it? Do you have a copy of today's paper?'

Not that she wanted to go in there and do that to him. Prove to him that all that she'd said was true. That he was a man out of time with everyone else.

How did you get your head around something like that?

'I'd like whoever's on call to talk to both of us. I need to know what this means. Why it's happened. What we should be doing...' Her thoughts drifted off onto some nightmarish plane where Sam never regained those two years and she had to fill him in on everything. The long hours he'd put in, his absences from home, the arguments...

And somehow I need to tell him I'm pregnant too!

She felt sick. The weight of all this duty pressed down upon her. A thick ball of nausea sat low and curdled in her stomach and she could taste bile in the back of her throat, despite the drink of cool, refreshing water from the cup. Was there an easy way to tell a man that you were married, but that the two of you had

been arguing constantly and that just under two weeks ago you'd told that same man you were going to leave him?

Because you refused to have a child with me and, oh, by the way, I'm actually pregnant! I found out after the accident. They did tests.

Yes, she really couldn't see that nugget of information going down very well with him.

It was all going wrong. Everything.

She tried to rack her brains for what she knew about amnesia, but apart from the general knowledge that it meant you couldn't remember things, she wasn't sure what else she knew about it. It wasn't something she'd specialised in. She was a certified nurse-midwife. She looked after labouring women.

She knew that there were different types of amnesia—some amnesia was permanent and some temporary. Dr Waters had said it might be so. If Sam's was temporary then he would regain his memories on his own and everything would be back to the way it was before...

But I was leaving him before.

She swallowed hard, seeing in her mind's eye that day she'd laid the suitcase upon the bed and stared at it. Then she'd lain a hand on her abdomen. This wasn't just about her and Sam any more. There was a baby to consider, and there was no way she was going to let her child be rejected by its father before it was even born. She knew what it felt like to be left behind and unwanted. It hurt. Left you bewildered. Made you question

yourself. Your own value. She would not put her own child through that.

Emily swallowed the last of the water and crumpled the plastic cup. She put it into a trash can and walked back over to Sam's door, put her hand on it, waiting, taking a deep breath.

She was about to go back in when Melanie reappeared.

'I have a paper for you.'

She looked down. Saw the day's headlines. The date. 'Thank you.' Her mouth felt dry. There was a strange, tinny sort of taste in her mouth and she wondered if she were going to be sick.

'And the doctor will come down as soon as he's finished with a patient on the next floor. Ten minutes?'

Emily nodded, swallowing hard. 'Brilliant. Thanks.'

She watched as Melanie headed back to answer a ringing telephone and then with one final inhalation she pushed open Sam's door and stepped inside.

Their gazes met across the room.

If I'm going to get through this then I need to be strong.

'I've brought you something.'

'An apology?' He sounded bitter. Hurt.

'No. I don't need to give you one. But I will give you this.' She walked across the room and handed him the newspaper before stepping back. As if imagining that the second he confirmed the date for himself he would somehow explode. 'Look at the date.'

At first she didn't think he would look at it, but he finally lifted the paper and scanned the first page for the date.

She knew the exact second his gaze fell upon it. He seemed to stiffen, the muscle in his jaw flickering, the focus in his eyes intensifying before he flipped through, checking that all the other pages stated the same date, too. Then he went back to the beginning, scanned the headlines.

Sam dropped the paper as if it were contaminated, closing his eyes briefly as it all sank in.

‘Two years? I’ve lost two years?’

He sounded so broken. So hurt. It made her heart ache. Made her feel like she needed to cross the room to him and take him in her arms and hug him better. She didn’t want him to be hurting. She never had.

‘I’m so sorry, Sam. But it’s true. We’ve been married eighteen months now. We honeymooned in Paris. We were very happy.’

He instantly looked up, met her gaze, pinning her with his normally soft blue eyes. ‘Were?’

She tried not to cry. She seemed to be so emotional since finding out she was pregnant. She struggled to keep control of her voice. ‘We’re having one or two...problems.’

Sam bristled. ‘What kind of problems?’

Emily shook her head. ‘We can talk about those later. The doctor’s coming to talk to you now. About the amnesia.’

‘Are there problems at work? Is the Monterey failing?’

She could hear the fear in his voice. The concern. ‘No. It’s doing very well. The launch was amazing and we’ve had almost full capacity from day one. You haven’t stopped working—

working all hours to make it a success.’

At that moment the door opened and a new doctor came in, holding Sam’s case notes in his hands.

Emily snapped to attention and crossed her arms, stepping back out of the doctor’s way.

‘Mr and Mrs Saint? I’m Dr Elijah Penn—how can I be of assistance?’

She managed a weak smile and went over to shake Dr Penn’s hand. ‘Hello, Doctor. My husband has just learned that he’s lost two years of his memory after his head injury. We were in a car crash together ten days ago. We were wondering if you could tell us some more about what to expect, and what we can do to help him regain his memory.’

Dr Penn frowned. ‘I’ve only had a brief read-through of your notes, Mr Saint, and without giving you a thorough examination and questioning you myself over what you remember I can’t be precise here. There are many different types of amnesia caused by traumatic head injury and right now it would be hard to be specific.’

‘Can you tell us what you do know?’

‘I wouldn’t like to guess, as I’m not your husband’s physician and I wouldn’t want to tell you anything erroneous. But if you’ll give me a moment or two with your husband then I’ll tell you what I can.’

Emily nodded. Okay. That sounded sensible. She left Sam’s room once again and went and sat outside. From her purse

she pulled out her cell phone and felt drawn to the photo album. Opening it, she began flicking through. Perhaps there was something here that might help Sam? Perhaps if he looked at their moments together that might provoke some kind of memory?

There were lots to go through. Many of the photographs were from work. Mothers-to-be whom she'd become great friends with, bouquets that she'd been sent as thanks. There were some pictures of the house after they'd had some work done on it. Other people's babies.

Why weren't there any pictures of her and Sam together? She had a few selfies. One or two of Sam in scrubs about to go into a Caesarean section, and then one of him relaxing at the house, reading a work journal. In neither of them was he smiling that beautiful smile she hadn't seen for such a long time. When had he last smiled at her? Apart from today? Because that didn't count any more, did it? He was of the mind-set that she'd just accepted his proposal. He thought they were happy.

If only...

She scrolled furiously through the rest of the photos. Nothing of them together except for one right at the beginning, when she'd first got the phone, of her and Sam, heads together, smiling at the camera.

When had that been? She checked the date stamp. It had been just after the Monterey had opened. Of course they'd been happy then. Work had been enthralling. They'd been busy. Passing like

ships in the night, sometimes, but planning their wedding.

She felt the tears threaten once again and stood up abruptly, shaking them off. What on earth was she going to do? And how was Sam feeling? Thinking they were blissfully happy only to learn that he couldn't remember his own wedding and had no idea that over the last eighteen months he had slowly been distancing himself from her.

The doctor came to the door. 'Would you like to come in?'

Emily shoved the phone back in her jacket pocket and hurried through, glancing at Sam. He looked glum, but reached out his hand.

Puzzled, but hopeful, she went over to him and took his hand in hers, her heart pounding in her chest because he'd reached out to her. Needed her. He hadn't done that for such a long time.

'Bad news?'

Dr Penn held his clipboard against his chest. 'I've had a chance to chat with your husband. Ask him a few questions. See what he understands of his situation. You've both been very lucky in that you escaped the car accident with a minimum amount of injuries. But from my understanding from this limited examination I would presume to say that Sam is suffering from a retrograde amnesia.'

Emily squeezed his fingers and looked at him. 'Which is...?'

'It can be caused by various conditions including head trauma, which Sam has gone through. Retrograde amnesia means that Sam's most recent memories are less likely to be recalled, but his

long-term memories are easier for him to remember.'

'Right.'

'It's usually temporary, which is the good thing—though I have to warn you, of course, that not everyone will experience it that way. Sam may be unlucky. We have no way of knowing for sure into which camp Sam will fall.'

'But if it is temporary...is there anything we can do to try and help the memories come back?'

Dr Penn nodded. 'It can help to try and provoke those memories. Show Sam familiar things—photos, videos, possessions, favourite foods, smells, clothing. Anything and everything that might help the memories come back.'

'Places? Like if I took him to where we got married or our favourite restaurant?'

'Anywhere he can be immersed for as long as possible should help. Usually it's not just one item that makes memories return but a drowning in overall sensation—place, aroma, sounds, people. All of it at once. Like *déjà-vu*.'

Sam spoke up. 'So if I went home...that might do it?'

'It could, but I can't promise anything. Memories can take days or even weeks to return.' He swallowed. 'Maybe longer.'

'And would they all come back straight away?'

'It's different for everyone.'

Sam squeezed her hand. 'So can I go home?'

Dr Penn shook his head. 'Not straight away. I know you didn't suffer any broken bones or organ damage, but you did have a

nasty hit to the head and you had a stent fitted to drain fluid. We need to monitor you for a while yet, and if you manage to stay stable, with no spikes of temperature or complications, and physio goes well, then maybe we'll look at letting you go.' He smiled. 'Now, if you'll excuse me, I have another patient to attend to.'

They watched the doctor disappear and Emily turned to Sam, aware that they were still holding hands. It was nice. It had been a long time since he had held her like that and she hated how much she needed his touch to reassure her. She didn't want to let him go. She never had.

'How are you feeling, Sam? After all that?'

'It's a lot to take in. But I guess I ought to look on the bright side.'

She frowned. 'Bright side?'

He nodded. 'Yes. I know who I am. I know who you are. I still have all the knowledge that lets me be an OB/GYN. I can still work—eventually.' He waited until she looked him fully in the eyes. 'I know how much I love you.'

She swallowed and smiled, trying to still the beating of her heart. It was running away with joy at his words. For how long had she yearned to hear those simple words from Sam?

But there's still so much you don't know!

Could she truly revel in those three simple words? He'd said he loved her, but he still didn't know the truth of their marriage.

He'd hurt her. She'd felt so rejected, so forgotten as Sam

had stayed at work, or gone to fundraising galas without her, or disappeared to play tennis with his lawyer. All those arguments they'd had...all those harsh words they'd said to each other out of spite or desperation. How could she forget all they had gone through?

He had. Completely. Right now he was unaware of it all.

But she...? She remembered it all too well. Every argument was a scar upon her heart.

He was trying to be positive. She could see that. Feel that. Should she burst his bubble now? Tell him about the baby?

He needed to know. Needed to hear the truth so that he could be in full possession of the facts. The facts he needed, anyway.

'There's something more, Sam.'

'Oh?'

'You're not going to like it.'

He smiled. 'Let me be the judge of that.'

His smile twanged her heartstrings. It was so familiar! Held so much of that gorgeous cheeky charm that she'd fallen in love with!

But she knew. Knew Sam didn't want a baby. He wasn't ready for one after being married for eighteen months. Why would he feel ready for one when he'd thought they weren't even married?

'They...did some tests on me after the accident. Blood tests.'

He nodded, frowning. 'Go on.'

'They found something.'

His face filled with concern and she could imagine what he

was thinking. Cancer. A mass. A shadow. Some disease...

‘What did they find?’

She searched his face, knowing the response he would give, knowing how his face would crumple at hearing the news, not sure if she could bear the way he would drop all contact with her, let go of the hand that he was clutching so tight. Be angry with her again just as she’d started to enjoy the way he held her hand, the way he’d smiled at her before he started to learn the truth.

She’d missed him. So much!

But he’d made it clear he didn’t want a baby with her, so telling him this was the hardest thing she would ever have to do. It might end them. But she had no choice.

‘They found...’ She paused, swallowing hard, ‘I’m pregnant, Sam. I’m having our baby.’

* * *

He knew he was staring at her, but he couldn’t stop. She was...pregnant?

Images of Serena instantly flooded his brain and he blinked them away. No. He would not think of her. That was all too raw, still. Because even though many years had passed he’d pushed away what had happened and stamped it down low.

Pregnant. Pregnant! Emily. His fiancée. No. That was wrong—Emily was now apparently his wife. For almost two years. And she was having a—

He swallowed hard.

He loved this woman. He loved her so much! He should be

pleased. But the way she was looking at him right now... Like she was frightened of his response? Like she was expecting him to start stamping around the room, or throwing things, or—

Sam knew what he ought to do. He should smile, say that it was great news, pretend that he was thrilled, but...

I'm going to be a father. I'm going to be...a father!

Surely she knew how he felt about this? What had happened to Serena had almost destroyed him. How had they been so careless?

Tentacles of fear wrapped themselves around him and tried to suck him down into that deep, dark well of pain he'd kept hidden for so long. Having that kind of responsibility, having to be the one to take care of a young baby every day, was just so...

His heart thudded in his chest so loudly he thought he could hear it in his ears. His skin grew hot, clammy, and he could feel the beginning of the shakes. My body...it's surging with adrenaline... The last time he'd felt this way had been after they'd found Serena...

Sam blinked slowly. Emily was still waiting for his reaction, and though the idea of becoming a father terrified him he loved her so much he just knew he couldn't let her see it. Couldn't let her see his inadequacies. Couldn't let her see his Achilles' heel. She would think him an absolute monster if he started on her about this, and both of them had been through too much just lately. His true reaction would have to wait. Maybe when he was out of hospital they could talk sensibly about this.

So he managed to let out a breath and grasped her fingers tightly. ‘You’re pregnant? Emily...that’s so...’ he forced the word, trying to make it sound authentic ‘...amazing!’

And he pulled her into his arms and clasped her tightly, breathing in the delicious scent of her honey hair and closing his eyes with such intense pain in his heart, hoping that she could not sense his betrayal.

He felt her relax and sink into him, gasping with relief.

* * *

‘You mean it? You’re happy?’ Emily pulled back to search his face, her own riddled with tears, unable to believe that this was true. But true it was. Because Sam was nodding and smiling and happy. And somehow this Sam—this version of Sam who had believed it was two years earlier and they were newly engaged—seemed happy at the idea of becoming a father!

And if he’s happy then...maybe we can be happy too?

She kissed his face without thinking, clutching it with hands that were trembling. She’d been about to leave him! She’d almost packed her things. Had written him that letter. They’d crashed their car arguing over this. It was unbelievable.

His reaction, though welcome, was startling. Now the relief of telling him about the baby had passed without bad incident she began to feel pangs of doubt.

‘Of course I mean it. How could I not?’ He swallowed. ‘How far along are you?’ he asked, with real curiosity.

She smiled, almost shyly, amazed that she was getting to talk

to him about this. Normally! Without him throwing a fit and storming out! ‘About nine weeks, I think.’

‘Nine weeks...’ He looked up at her and smiled broadly once again. ‘Still in the first trimester? I guess we really ought not to tell anyone yet.’

‘You could tell your family if you want to.’

Sam shook his head. ‘No, I...I think it’s best we wait until you’re in the fourth month.’

‘Okay. Whatever you think is best. I’m so glad you’re happy about this. I thought—’

‘Thought what?’

She shook her head, as if her answer had been too silly to contemplate. ‘It doesn’t matter.’

This truly was an opportunity, Emily thought, for them to save their marriage. Sam loved her. He seemed happy to be a father. Was there any need to tell him what their relationship had really been like? This might be a chance for Emily to wipe their slates clean and start again.

Although it wouldn’t be a totally fresh start. Because for her the upset of the last few weeks and months was still there. Just because Sam didn’t know, it didn’t mean that she’d forget too. But it might be a start. A way to save them, built on who they had been in the beginning of their relationship. In love. Supporting each other’s hopes and dreams. There had been no need for her to get the suitcase out of the closet.

And what harm could it do? They’d nearly separated, but

now...? Now things seemed to have changed. Sam seemed happy about the baby, despite everything, and that was what she'd wanted the most. She'd been granted her wish—only a fool would throw it all away now. She'd been desperate before, when she'd been on the verge of leaving him. But now she was being presented with a second chance.

And, yes, his memories might come back to him and cause them problems later, but what if they didn't? And if they did—well, Sam was happy to be a dad right now. If they both worked really hard on their relationship, then surely all that was in the past...could be washed under the bridge?

This was a second chance for them, and for the sake of their unborn baby Emily was prepared to risk it.

She'd always fought for their marriage. Had tried everything to save it. What was one last secret?

* * *

The second Emily left his hospital room to head home for the night Sam slumped back against his pillows, exhausted.

A baby...

It was such a huge responsibility. For years. A lifetime. And the weight of that responsibility was not something he thought he could bear.

What had he been thinking, getting Emily pregnant? Had they not been using protection? How had he allowed himself this colossal mistake?

He couldn't be a good father. Hadn't he proved himself

incapable of looking after a baby? That was why being an OB/GYN was so beautiful. He could keep babies safe at work. Get them through their nine months of gestation as safely and healthily as possible and then make sure that the mother delivered her child without problems.

At the hospital he had a team. He was supported. He had the most recent advancements, tests and medications at his fingertips. Was able to experience joy with the family as he brought new life into the world. Holding a newborn baby...there was nothing in the world like it. It was a privilege. Magical. A brand-new person and he would be the first one to hold it, before he delivered it into the hands of its parents. The elation, the thrill in the room could not be surpassed. And then, once the umbilical cord was clamped and cut, Sam's job—Sam's responsibility—was over. He could relax. Let go.

Sam loved delivering babies. Hadn't he wanted to do that for so long? Hadn't he delighted in the miracle of birth so much he had made it his vocation? Deciding that because he hadn't been able to save Serena he could save others?

But after the birth?

No. That was when it could all go wrong. It was why he'd interviewed and hired the best, most elite team of neonatologists and paediatricians for aftercare at his Monterey centre.

He'd vowed never to put himself in that position again, and when he'd first met Emily he'd thought he'd found someone just like him. Someone who loved delivering babies but who didn't

want one of their own.

Wasn't that what she'd said? Early on? He felt sure that she had. He had a blurry recollection of it.

They'd met in a delivery room. Their eyes meeting across a crowded stirrup. Em had been working as a private midwife and had brought in a couple whose home birth plan had gone awry. As the OB/GYN on call, he'd gone to the room to assist with a Ventouse delivery and had been physically struck by the sight of her beside her patient, clutching the mother's hand through each contraction, coaching her, intently focused on her.

He recalled a brief moment of wondering who this beautiful new midwife was before he'd got to work, and once the baby had arrived—safely, of course—he had left the room. Only for her to follow him outside and thank him.

I stared at her.

He smiled at the memory. He'd literally been struck dumb. Unable to speak. Her blonde hair had been messy, her cheeks rosy, and she'd been wearing these crazy dangly earrings with turquoise stones that almost matched her eyes. And she'd been wearing flats, so she'd seemed only as tall as his shoulders, and he could remember thinking that she was like an elf.

Eventually he'd managed to get his tongue and mouth to form simple words. 'You did a great job in there.'

'Me? No, it was nothing to do with me. You did all the work.'

'Well, it's my job.'

'Yes.' She'd stared back at him as if she'd been trying to work

something out in her head. ‘I love having babies.’

He’d frowned. ‘You have children of your own?’

She’d shaken her head, as if realising she’d said something that she shouldn’t. ‘No! God, no! I don’t want any yet.’

He’d smiled, intrigued. He’d wanted to know more about her. Wanted to see her.

His only focus had been to be with her. To soak her up. They’d had such fun together, shared so many likes and opinions.

It had been easy to get carried away in the whirlwind.

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