

Aiden

She's late. She's *never* late.

I glance at my phone again, looking at the reservation time again. This year, Summer insisted that she would be the one doing the heavy lifting this Valentine's.

She shouldn't be heavy lifting anyway, my wife's going to give birth any day and I've been a wreck.

Our baby girl is playing overtime. The doctor told us to keep watch, monitor everything, and be ready. Summer, being Summer, refuses to sit still. I've lured her in with chai and turkish dramas but that stopped working by the second week.

We've tried everything to get labor going. I've happily complied with every suggestion. But she's exhausted. She's in pain. And watching her uncomfortable is hard to see.

"Sum, I've been at this restaurant for an hour, please call me back. I need to know you're okay." I leave my third voicemail. I down my glass of water.

The server comes to fill it again. The staff are huge fans so I was happy to sign autographs and FaceTime their kids. But that only made me think of Summer and our kid.

"Would you like to order for your wife?" the server asks me.

"I think I'm going to head out, but thank you." I drop a few bills on the table and head back to my car. It's the sports car Summer hates and I've never thought of selling it but now with our daughter on the way, she might be able to convince me.

When I'm in the car Bunny Patrol flashes on my screen.

"Happy Valentine's day!" Kian exclaims in the FaceTime, tossing pink confetti at the camera, and wearing nothing but angel wings.

Eli's wearing a suit, and pans the camera over to Nina and Sean following behind him, as if warning us. The class Sage teaches has their recital today so they must be backstage after the performance.

Dylan's in bed, messy hair, and red lipstick all over his face. Sierra's laying on his chest sound asleep. They're in Connecticut, so they're a few hours ahead.

"What are your guys' plans?" he asks. "Scarlett and I just spent two hours painting each other in the dark."

"There are kids with me," Eli chides. Though Sean is well into college and Nina's graduating high school this year. I guess to him they'll always be kids.

“It wasn’t dirty!” Kian insists but then he looks at the camera and laughs. “Okay, it was but that was because of the shower after.”

Eli deadpans.

“Lighten up, Westbrook. You’re just mad your girl’s at work. What about you, Cap?”

“Shouldn’t you be with Sunny?” Dylan chimes in.

“She’s not answering her phone. I just got stood up by my wife.”

They all laugh. “Man, Sunny really isn’t ever going to give it you easy.”

“That’s how I like it.”

“I’m sure you do,” Dylan muses. “Do you have any idea when my niece is coming? We’ve been on standby ready to fly out.”

“Nothing yet. She’s being stubborn.”

“Just like her mom,” they all say in unison.

I glare. “Watch it.”

“Don’t tell Sunny I said that,” Kian quickly adds. “Maybe try having—”

Summer’s name pops up and I immediately answer. “Sum? What’s going on, where are you?”

“Where are *you*?” she says, sounding annoyed. “Did you seriously stand up your *very* pregnant wife on Valentine’s Day? That is low, so, so...” she pauses to catch her breath, “low.”

The pause worries me. “I was about to go home to find you. You’re in the restaurant?”

No, Amara just dropped me off because my original ride, Sampson, suddenly couldn’t. I think he’s doing something for Amara, so we may or may not be getting a call about how she hurt him because he refuses to understand that she hates surprises.” She finishes with a lot of pauses and tiny grunts that make my pulse erratic.

I’m already headed to the restaurant again. “Summer. Are you okay?”

“Fine. Let’s just celebrate. I made plans,” she insists.

I don’t believe her, and when I see the woman on the sidewalk with her long brown hair in waves down her back and a pink flowy dress, I take my first real breath in hours.

My wife has always been stunning, but right now, under the setting sun making her brown skin glow, and the hand on her belly, I wonder how I got so lucky.

Sometimes, I think my parents are watching and pulling some strings.

I put my phone in my pocket. “Screw dinner, let’s go to my car.” She lets me kiss her.

She pouts. “We have plans.”

"I know. But it's our last one before the baby, and you deserve something nice. You've been so helpful these past few months and I know I haven't been...pleasant."

I shake my head. "I've fallen deeper in love with you every day you grow our daughter."

Summer straightens suddenly. I watch her carefully, skeptical when her eyes come to mine and they widen. "Come on, let's go inside." She tries to pull me forward.

I don't move. "Sum, what's going on?"

"Nothing. Seriously, let's have dinn—" Her face contorts in pain.

"You're having contractions?" Immediately I'm using my watch to time them like our doula said.

When it's over she starts walking like nothing happened "It's probably just Braxton Hicks."

In the years I've known Summer, I've learned how to read her. She's stubborn, even now. Scared probably. So I follow close behind, waiting for her to drop the façade.

Five minutes later she's having another contraction.

Immediately, I text the group chat: **It's happening.**

Replies blow up my phone, but I only stare across the table at my wife in active labour yet pretending not to be. "Summer, you've been waiting for this baby to be out for weeks. What could be a better Valentine's than meeting our baby girl?"

She swallows. "I'm scared."

I take her hand. "You're going to do great, baby. I'll be there the entire time, you know that."

Summer nods a little too vehemently. "I think my water just broke."

I don't wait, I carry her out of the restaurant and straight to my car.

"Ugh, I better not give birth in this stupid car," she mutters. "Then you'll never sell it."

I drive to Mount Sinai and let her squeeze my hand as hard as she wants, knowing in a few hours, my daughter will be doing the same.

Dylan

The night started off calm.

"I have a pair of scissors. Think again before taking another step," Sierra says, glaring at me from across the room.

See, completely calm.

She's so pretty. It doesn't help that she's dressed up in red lingerie and lipstick to match, though she's hidden it under a silk robe.

I have no clue what's got her so riled up. We had the perfect morning. Breakfast in bed, a successful skate, and a long, long game of foreplay that's got us both wound up.

"This doesn't sound like the fun stabbing you usually threaten me with."

"It's not supposed to be fun."

I take a step but she reaches for the scissors, and I halt. "Sierra, can you tell me what happened?"

"Are you serious right now?" She huffs and she's up and dodges me to head downstairs. She goes to the living room and rearranges the pillows on the couch.

"What are you doing?" I ask.

"Making your bed."

"Very funny." I take a pillow from her. "I don't even know what happened. And besides you expect me to believe you wore that just to make me sleep on the couch?"

She pivots, her hands going to her hips and the movement opening her silk robe.

I drop to my knees in front of her. "I'm sorry."

Her green eyes light up. "You don't even know what you're apologizing for."

"I know, but if it upsets you this much then I'm wrong," I tell her.

Sierra bites down a smile. "You're forgiven."

My head rears back. "Seriously? What were you even mad about?"

She gives me an evil, evil smile. "Nothing. But I did just win a bet."

What the hell? "What bet?"

"Kian bet me that I couldn't have you on your knees saying sorry to me today."

Fucking Kian. Of course. "And what do you get if you win?"

"Nothing to worry your pretty head about, just be ready for a little furry guest. But feel free to stay down there, I *love* when you beg."

"Keep it up, and I promise you, you'll be the one begging and I won't give in this time."

She smirks, cocky as hell.

I wrap my arm around her legs and carry her over my shoulder. "Bad girls get punished, baby."

The moment her back hits our bed, her robe comes off, and I kiss a path up her thigh. Her hands slip into my hair and I shake them off until she lets out a frustrated groan and fists the bed sheets.

"Not gonna work, firefly."

I bite the inside of her thigh. "You gonna fuck with me again?"

“N-never. Promise.”

I press the lightest touch to her clit, and watch her whole body shake. “I don’t believe you.”

“I’m sor—” she cuts herself off. “I won’t. Just touch me.”

“Take it off,” I say, and she pulls off the bralette. She cups her tits as she looks at me with mischievous green eyes, knowing my weak spot.

I slap a light hand between her thighs and she jumps, glaring at me. “Don’t try it.”

“I need you, Dylan,” she whispers, and the look she gives me hooks my ribcage. “I always do.”

There’s never a moment when she says it and doesn’t affect me like this. Then she takes my face into her hands, and I’m hypnotized.

“I’m sorry about the bet. It was dumb.”

I kiss the words away. “I’ve had my fair share of bets. And you know I don’t like it when you say sorry to me.”

“I love you,” she says instead.

And it doesn’t take much more for me to slide into her, and feel every one of her orgasms rush through her body. It’s much later when we’re still in bed that my phone dings.

Aiden: It’s happening.

Elias

Aiden: It’s happening.

Three hours have passed since that text, and I’ve never driven back to the city so fast.

The passenger side door opens. “I grabbed her clothes and the hospital bag. Did she say she needed anything else?” Sage asks when she sits back in the car.

We stopped by Aiden and Summer’s house to grab the things they couldn’t. Nina and Sean are in the back, talking excitedly about finally having a new family member.

“That was it. Aiden already had a back up in his car.”

Sage smiles. “He knows her too well.”

I take her hand in mine, running the other over her soft curls before pulling her into kiss me. “Sorry we didn’t get a proper Valentine’s, baby.”

She laughs, light and airy. “Are you kidding? This might be the best one yet. And I saw the chocolate cake in the fridge this morning. Thank you.”

“But you didn’t even get to eat it yet.”

She brushes a hand over the sage tattoo on my wrist. “Still. It means a lot.”

When we enter the labour and delivery wing of Mount Sinai, the other elevator dings open and Dylan and Kian step out with Scarlett and Sierra following behind.

Sean and Nina are first to run up to them, hugging them tight.

“That was fast,” I say, knowing they were both in Connecticut.

“We’ve got hookups,” says Kian, looking smug.

“Lukas Preston let us take his jet,” Dylan explains. “Apparently Kian’s annoyed Summer’s dad enough that he’s given up saying anything but yes to him.”

Kian plays for New York which means Summer’s dad is his coach.

Right then we see Lukas and Divya Preston, nervously pacing in the hall.

“You ready, Grandpa?” Kian says, smacking a hand to Lukas’ back. He only gives him a look.

As the clock strikes closer to midnight, Amara, Sampson, and Aiden’s grandparents arrive. I relax, knowing he’d want them here, and Lukas Preston made sure of that. Sage squeezes my hand tight.

At exactly 11:59pm on Valentine’s Day, a loud cry drifts out of the hospital room. Aiden comes out an hour later, eyes glistening, hair mussed. “She’s here.”

Lukas hugs him first. “Congratulations, Dad,” he says. And I’m sure Aiden’s about to cry again.

Inside, Summer’s holding the baby, smiling through happy tears. “It happened,” she says.

Aiden is beaming. “Everyone meet our daughter, Aurora Divya Crawford.”