

David

I step out of the shower, towel wrapped around my waist, my mind still hazy from sleep. Then I see her—Amelia, pacing like she's in a race with herself. Such a thing is nothing new because my girl eats anxiety for breakfast. Her brow is furrowed, her lips are pressed tightly together, and she is mumbling to herself; I freeze in the doorway, feeling that familiar knot in my stomach. She has not been like this for a while, so something serious is up.

I clear my throat. "Hey darling... what's going on? You okay?"

She doesn't answer at first, just keeps pacing. The knot in my gut tightens. I know this look. It's that anxious energy she gets when she's trying to process something big. Almost always, it's something that she believes doesn't have a simple solution. I bite my lip, fighting the instinct to go into fixing mode.

Trying to relax and give her space to come to terms with whatever it is, I stay by her in silence until she is ready to share what is bothering her.

Amelia stops pacing suddenly. "Umm...I...uhhhh...you...no, or...yes!"

Great! She just had an entire conversation in her head.

She paces again, and after half an hour, I am really worried now.

Is it Dayana?

Did she come back to bother her? Is she sick, and it's terrible?

"David," she says, finally stopping before me, her hands trembling just a little as she holds something out. It's a little white stick. The kind you get at the drugstore. The kind I know *exactly* what it means, even though I don't want to.

I stare at it. The two little pink lines are bold and glaring, like a neon sign flashing, "*This Is Real*".

I open my mouth, but the words don't come. I'm just... frozen. My pulse spikes, a fresh rush of panic running through my veins.

"Amelia..." I croak. My voice doesn't even sound like mine. "Is this... is this a joke?"

She's looking at me, waiting. I can't look away from her face, the way she's standing there, trying to keep her own fear in check, but I can see it. I can always see it. The way her eyes are wide, her jaw tight. I'm not the only one freaking out right now.

“No,” she says, her voice shaky but resolute. “David, we’re having a baby.”

The room feels like it’s closing in. My chest is heavy, like the surrounding air just doubled in weight. I take a step back, my mind spinning. I can’t breathe. My fingers are numb. My throat is tight.

I think about my childhood, remember the silence that followed my dad’s temper tantrums, the way my mom tried to keep the image of the perfect family while the world fell apart around us. Memories of sneaking food from the fridge haunt me, hiding from mother so she wouldn’t punish me. The way I promised myself I’d never put a kid through that kind of chaos.

Swallowing hard, forcing the words out. They feel like thorns in my tongue.

“Amelia, I—I don’t know if I can do this.” My voice is quiet, but the fear in it feels loud, like it’s echoing off every wall in the room. “I can’t—I can’t be like him, like her. I can’t mess this up.”

Amelia takes a step closer, her face softening, though I can see the fear in her eyes too. She reaches out for me, but I pull away instinctively, like I’m afraid I’ll break her if I get too close. I want to be strong and be the force that propel us forward, but I am so damn afraid of not deserving this.

I want to tell her it’s going to be okay, but I can’t even convince myself of that and I will never lie to my beautiful wife.

She is my life.

“I don’t know if I can raise a kid,” I admit, my voice cracking. “I’m scared, my love. What if I... what if I end up like them? What if I screw this up?”

Her lips tremble, and tears start welling up in her eyes, but she holds them back. Amelia doesn’t let them fall. My little lamb is strong, always so strong. But this... this is new. And I can see it, just under the surface. She’s terrified, too.

“I’m scared too,” she says, her voice small, almost a whisper. “You know I... I don’t even like kids, David. I don’t know how to be a mom. I can barely babysit without freaking out and give them ice cream so they don’t scream. What if I don’t know what I’m doing and something bad happens? What if I mess up?” Her eyes go wide. “What if they eat my books?”

My heart stutters. The woman who made me believe in love is adorable.

“Amelia,” I say, stepping closer, needing to hold her even though I’m shaking. “You’re not going to mess up. We’re not going to mess up.” She gives me an incredulous look. “Okay! Maybe we mess up a lot and the kid breaks its head or doesn’t like to read—”

She gasps. “Oh, that is horrible!”

“We’ll figure it out. Together.”

Shaking her head, looking down, rubbing her hands together, she whispers. “But I don’t know how to do this. I’ve never been good with kids. I know nothing about how to raise a child.”

I lift her chin, making her look at me. “My beautiful, smart, sexy as hell, purple obsessed, caffeine crazed wife, you don’t have to know everything right now. Look at me. I don’t know how to be a perfect dad. Have no idea of what I’m doing either. But I know this: I love you. And if any part of me wants to do this, it wants to do it with you. No matter what.”

She stares at me for a long time, as if she’s trying to read me, trying to see if I’m being serious. Finally, she nods, though the worry is still there, sitting heavily on her shoulders.

“I love you too,” she breathes, her voice barely above a whisper. “And I want to be a good mom. But David, what if... what if I mess up the kid? What if I’m not good enough?”

I pull her into my arms, holding her, my chest tight with emotion. Her body trembles against mine, and the way her hands cling to me like she’s trying to anchor herself to something stable makes me want to reassure her even more.

“You’re good enough,” I murmur into her hair. “You’re more than enough. And I’m going to be here. Every step of the way. You’re not alone in this, darling. We’re in this together. And if we mess up... we’ll fix it. Because we have each other. Always and forever.”

Amelia takes a shaky breath, pulling back just a little to look up at me. “You really think we can do this?”

I nod, my heart still pounding, but this time, it’s not fear. It’s hope. “Yeah. I do. I really do.”

She smiles, the kind of smile that starts small, like she’s not sure it’s okay to let herself feel it, but it spreads across her face anyway, soft and full of relief.

“You are going to be the best dad, dick-tator!”

Pressing my lips to hers, I take my time tasting her. "Together, little lamb."

"Okay," she whispers. "Together."

And somehow, just like that, the air doesn't feel so heavy. There are still doubts and fears, but they don't matter. I am with the love of my life and I know one thing for sure—I'm not going to face any of them alone.