

David grabbed Maddie's arm and pulled her around to face him. "I had a nice time too. Actually, I had a fantastic time." He smiled that smile that caused her breath to catch every time she saw it. That smile helped keep her tears at bay. "Maybe we can continue celebrating with a drink or two?" He raised an eyebrow. David's heart was beating like a drum but outwardly he looked calm and nonchalant. "I mean if you want to invite me in that is." Please invite me in he thought.

Maddie looked into David's green eyes. "Well, if you want to come in for a while?" What *are* you doing Maddie? You're looking for trouble!

"Do you want me to?"

"If you want to?"

David laughed. "Yes I want to."

They both stood there for a minute staring at each other waiting for the other to make the first move. David decided he better let the limo driver go.

"I'll be back in a flash." Maddie watched him go over to the limo. David raced to tip the limo driver and was soon backing at Maddie's side. "So shall we go in?"

Maddie took off her wrap and threw it on the side table as she walked into her house. She turned her head to look at David who was following so close behind her she could feel his breath on her neck. "Make yourself a cocktail. I'll have a white wine." She told him as she headed toward the sofa in her living room. Maddie stepped out of her heels as she strode over to her sofa. Maddie was excited and nervous having David in her home again. It had been so long since the last time he was there. She wasn't sure if having him here alone was the right thing to do but she couldn't resist being with him as long as she could. She had never been so confused in her entire life.

David reluctantly took his eyes off Maddie's shapely derriere as he went to make the drinks. He took off his suit jacket and tie and threw them on the table next to Maddie's wrap. David saw Maddie step out of her heels and sit on her couch and cross her long legs revealing the thigh highs under her dress. David's mouth went dry so he took a long pull on the tequila he had poured for himself. He replenished his drink, poured a large white wine for Maddie and headed toward her. He gave Maddie her drink as he flopped down beside her. David looked around; it had been

so long since he was last invited in to her home. He noticed there was something missing from Maddie's living room this time of year: all of her Christmas decorations and the huge tree she put up every year. He knew how much she loved that Christmas tree.

"Where's the tree?" David asked sipping his drink. He was anxious to hear her answer.

Maddie shrugged. She didn't want to reveal how unhappy she really was. David obviously didn't know how sad she was. "I don't know. I just didn't have the time to decorate this year I guess."

"Maddie, every year you make the time. You love that tree. I was a little surprised to find out a few years back that you actually loved Christmas." David laughed at the memory of discovering Maddie wasn't the Grinch after all.

She shrugged again. "I don't know David. I'm just not feeling in the holiday spirit this year. *Ok?*" She snapped at him. How could he not understand the way she felt over the loss of their baby? She couldn't help being annoyed that he didn't seem to understand her pain.

"Yeah Ok. I'm sorry." David told her placing a strand of her hair behind her ear and gazing into the sad blue eyes Maddie tried to hide from the world. Suddenly, he realized what she was trying to tell him. Boy was he dumb. "I know."

Maddie felt tears prick her eyes but she would not give in to them; no not tonight. She forced a smile to her face. She had gotten good at that. "Anyway." She changed the subject. "That was a wonderful party David. I'm glad I let you persuade me into going with you. I had a good time."

David smiled that crooked smile that dazzled her senses. "Me too. I had a very good time. Maybe we can continue that very good time right here." David reached into his pocket and pulled out the mistletoe. He hoped she would be open to continuing where they left off earlier. "Gee look what snuck into my pocket." He held the mistletoe over their heads and leaned in for a kiss.

Maddie gave David that half sexy half shy smile he had come to love and covered his mouth with hers. It felt like a bolt of lightning had hit when their lips met. David began to lick her tongue with his which he knew she had always loved. Maddie

hands began to play with the buttons on David's shirt as she their tongues played a symphony in their mouths. No one could kiss like David. Maddie felt her insides melting as their kisses grew in intensity.

David's hands wandered over Maddie's body exploring and pleasuring all the places he knew she loved; he was rewarded for his efforts by Maddie's moans of ecstasy. His mouth left hers and his tongue beat a path of fire over her neck to that spot that drove her wild with desire. He felt Maddie's hands rip open his shirt and felt her tongue and lips ravishing his chest. David gasped in pleasure as he slowly took off Maddie's party dress and sodden panties leaving her squirming beside him clad only in her thigh highs which turned David on completely. "I'm gonna make you come baby. I bet you missed this huh? Bet you missed how I make you come. Let go baby. Come for me."

Maddie felt as if she would explode from within as David's hands played over her body. One hand was wrapped around her body and was fondling her breast as the other was running up and down her leg, over her thighs and between her legs. She couldn't help it as her body began to move in time to his hands. She was so close to release; a release her body remembered and missed. When David began to whisper in her ear in that melted caramel voice she began to come in waves and waves of passion. She heard her voice screaming out David's name through the fog of her orgasm. The spasms seemed to go on forever as her hands pulled at David's hair. Finally, her orgasm subsided. Maddie opened her eyes and they met David's green ones which were boring into her with his urges and desires. She heard him chuckle deep in his throat as her brain rebooted.

"That sounded fantastic baby." David told her pushing her damp hair off of her face. He looked down at Maddie who was flushed and damp from what sounded like an amazing orgasm. He bent over and kissed her eyelids. "If you're a good girl there may be more for you tonight." David winked. "Or maybe a bad girl." His hands couldn't help but fondle her beautiful breasts. He winked at her. "A real bad girl."

Maddie was still aroused. She wanted David inside her. She missed his lovemaking and the way he made her body come alive. No man had ever come close to making her feel the way David could with just his kisses; when he touched her and made love to her she was lost in a vortex of need so deep that it seemed unreal. She had once hated that feeling but now she craved it with every fiber of her being. "Make love to me David." She told him unbuckling his pants; her fingers were rubbing the

impressive bulge inside. She heard David gasp as she pulled down his zipper and released his manhood into her hands. David kicked off his boxers and pants while Maddie pulled off his shirt leaving him naked before her. Maddie's eyes drank in David's muscular body and felt her most intimate places ache with a need so strong she began to moan against his mouth. "Please David. Now."

"Your wish has always been my demand Blondie." David picked her up in his arms and carried her up the stairs to her bedroom. He placed her on the bed and stood there stroking his manhood and gazing down at her with green heat.

Maddie shivered with desire as she watched David touch himself. Her hand automatically reached between her own legs as she watched him. She saw David's eyes grow darker with passion as he approached the bed slowly.

The idea that Maddie was so aroused that she was actually touching herself almost made David fall over the edge. "Yea baby feels good doesn't it?" He purred as he sat beside her on her bed. He put his hand on hers mimicking her moves; he bent his head over hers and began kissing her neck with slow wet kisses. He felt Maddie jerk as she fell over the edge again into an orgasm that rocked her soul. She began to claw at the sheets as David's mouth covered hers leading her into yet another orgasm. She came down to earth with a thud and opened her eyes. Their eyes met as David gently pushed into her and began to rotate his hips against hers. "Oh David." Maddie felt his manhood moving inside her. Her body began to move against him. She let David control their lovemaking following his lead her body hungry for his. "David. David." Maddie whimpered his name. She was telling him how good it felt and her words were turning David's body in to hot lava.

David made love to Maddie slowly using his whole body to give her pleasure. He moved his manhood inside her slowly at first building up to fast short firm strokes that brought cries of delight from Maddie. David was panting hard, sweat falling in his eyes as he neared his release. He felt Maddie pulsate around him as she came for the fourth time. David was calling her name, telling Maddie how good she made him feel as he spiraled out of control into a mind blowing orgasm. David flopped over onto his back pulling Maddie against him. "Wow!" He smiled into her eyes.

"Wow!" She copied him smiling back at him. "That was pretty terrific."

“Great great.” David told her pulling her up so he could kiss her. “I’m ready for one more round. You up to it babe?” He put her hand his once again aroused member. “It’s been too long.”

Maddie scooted down the length of David’s body and took him in her mouth. He immediately tangled his hands in her hair as she pleased him with her tongue and lips. David closed his eyes tightly as he enjoyed the feel of Maddie’s mouth and tongue working magic below. He loved the way she licked and kissed him there like she really loved it and just wasn’t doing it for him. “You like doing that. Don’t you babe?” He murmured as he felt her tongue licking him just the way he liked it. David felt as if he was about to come so he pulled Maddie up and pushed her down on the bed. He covered her body with his pressing her down on the mattress as she plunged into her. Their second coupling was wilder, more intense than the first. It left them sated but exhausted as they both fell into a deep, dreamless sleep a few minutes after it was over.

Maddie woke up with a start. Did she dream last night? No, her body felt pleasantly sore in all the right places. She sat up realizing she was alone in the big bed she had just shared with David. *David?* Where was he? Maddie felt her heart drop to her feet and an icy cold thought run through her mind. He must have left to catch his plane to Philly. Did she really think he was going to change his plans to spend the holidays with her? When would she accept that David no longer was in love with her? And last night he had just been horny and she hadn’t put up any resistance to his advances; had she? She wanted him last night with a need so strong she was powerless against it. Now that need felt like ashes in her mouth along with the taste of David that still lingered. He hadn’t even woken her up to say goodbye! Maddie felt her heart shatter into pieces. Maddie jumped out of bed. She was bone tired and sad but knew she could not spend the night in that bed with the sheets smelling of David and the sex they had shared. She would change the bed in the morning; tonight she would sleep on the couch; the one in the den where she had not just reached heaven under David’s hands. Maddie felt the tears spilling down her cheeks as she grabbed her blanket and pillow and approached the stairs leading downstairs.

At first, she thought she was in her dream again. Maddie looked at the Christmas tree she had *not* put up twinkling in her living room. She blinked her eyes willing herself to wake up from yet another dream. She heard a noise and looked down to see David dressed only in his Santa boxers carrying a box or ornaments into the room. He looked up at her with a start. “Maddie? I thought you’d still be sleeping.”

He put down the box, turned back to her and winked. "I mean last night was pretty exhausting and all." He threw her a crooked smile. "I thought you'd be dead to the world."

Maddie wiped the tears off her face. She was staring wide eyed at the tree and at David. For a moment David wasn't sure he had done the right thing. He wanted to surprise her with the tree. He thought that would make her happy but the way she was looking at the tree was making him question what he had done. Wait was she crying? "Maddie? Did I do wrong?"

Maddie heard the question and uncertainty and yes, hurt in David's voice and she was quick to reassure him. "Oh no! I love it! I just was surprised to see you here. I thought you left."

David shook his head and looked at her with confused eyes. "Left? Why would I leave?" His eyes bored into her turning cold. Did she expect to find him gone to save her from her pact making? Can this be happening again? These thoughts were flying through David's mind and making him angry. "Do you want me to leave? Or maybe we need to make a pact first?" He snapped. He instantly regretted his bitter tone and biting words when he saw the devastation on Maddie's face. He rushed over to her.

Maddie took a step back up the stairs. What was David saying? She didn't want to make a pact. She loved him. She was happy he had tried to make her happy by putting up her tree. She figured he would leave in the morning but she was happy he hadn't snuck away. She would enjoy the time they had together before he really left her. "NO!" She cried. "What are you saying? I don't want you to leave! And no I will not utter the word *pact*." Her voice shook on the last word. She looked back at her tree all lit up and then she looked back at him. Maddie could see the uncertainty in David's eyes. She wanted to assure him he had done a wonderful thing for her. "Thank you!" She stepped down the stairs and headed toward the tree. "It's beautiful David. I really can't believe you did this for me."

David followed her in to the living room. "I just wanted to see you smile. Everyone deserves to have their tree up Maddie. I told you last night I knew you loved to put up your tree up every year but I do understand how you feel." And he did; he was as shattered as she was.

Maddie looked over at David. Did this man still love her? He didn't tell her last night during their lovemaking. He probably just felt sorry for her.

"I was just going to put the decorations by the tree and quietly slip back in to bed next to you. When we woke in the morning and came down I wanted to surprise you and then we could decorate it together." Maddie stared at the tree. David didn't know why things couldn't be easy for them. He was trying hard to make things up to her. But he felt like he was failing.

"Hey I got a great idea Blondie, since you are up why don't we decorate the tree now?"

"Now? It's so early."

"So what. Come on it will be fun." David walked over to the stereo and turned on one of those channels that played 24 hour Christmas music. He walked over to the box of ornaments and took a couple out. He handed a beautiful snowman ornament to Maddie. She took the ornament from him with a half-smile. She watched him place an ornament on her tree then Maddie placed the snowman on the tree carefully.

"What time do you have to leave?" Maddie asked David as she reached down for another ornament. She didn't want to look at him.

"I already told you I wasn't leaving."

"I know not now David. But in the morning, your flight to Philly."

David looked at Maddie. "Don't worry about my flight to Philly."

"David I don't want you running late because of me. I understand you have to catch your flight. "

"I'm not going." He looked at her intensely.

"What?"

"I'm not going."

"David don't be ridiculous your family is waiting."

"I'm with my family."

"David your Dad and Ritchie are waiting for you."

"I talked to my Dad told him I wasn't coming home. He was disappointed but he understood why."

"You should be with your family David."

David walked up to Maddie and grabbed her by the arms. "Listen to me sweetheart you are my family! I love you, you silly little girl."

Maddie was taken aback by the forceful way David grabbed her. She was struck numb by the green of his eyes and the love she saw in their depths. He did love her! Maddie's heart leapt with joy!

"You know I'm not going home to Chicago?"

"Yes Agnes told me. I was only going home cause I thought you were. I couldn't stand to be in LA knowing you weren't."

Maddie was trying to take everything in; David declaring his love for her, saying she was his family, staying with her for Christmas. Was this another cruel dream that she would awake from broken hearted?

David stared at Maddie who was silently gazing at the tree. Maybe she didn't want him. That thought was like a knife through his heart. "Didn't last night mean anything to you? Cause it meant the world to me."

Maddie turned to David who was standing close behind her. Her eyes met his confused ones. "Yes it meant everything to me too David." She looked at him hard. "How can you ask me that question? I've never stopped loving you!"

David threw her his crooked smile. "Me too. I meant what I said; I love you. I've missed you" He reached out his hand to touch her cheek and she leaned into it.

"I love you too David. I missed you too." Maddie whispered barely loud enough for him to hear. He smiled down at her and lowered his head to hers and found her lips waiting for his. They shared a gentle kiss filled with love and promises. David

pulled away first. He looked down at her tenderly. "Hey come on lets finish putting the ornaments on the tree."

Maddie nodded at him. David started grabbing ornaments and placing them high up on the tree while Maddie placed the ornaments lower. Maddie watched him; she smiled to herself when she saw how he looked at the ornament and then found the perfect place to hang it with such a serious expression on his handsome face. David looked over at Maddie who he saw was staring at him. He flashed her the irresistible smirk that turned her to mush inside.

David finally pulled out the angel which fit on top of the tree while Maddie stood on the stepladder. David handed her the angel which she placed lovingly at the top of the tree. David pulled Maddie into his arms as they both marveled at the tree in front of them.

"It's beautiful David." Maddie's smile was brighter than the twinkling lights on the tree.

"Looks pretty great, great. This was fun." David hugged her tightly.

"Yes, so much fun." Maddie never thought she would be decorating her tree with David in the middle of the night.

"How about I make us some hot chocolate?" David asked her.

"Sounds great." Maddie told him happily.

"Get comfy by the tree and I'll be back in a flash." David winked as she strode toward the kitchen clad only in his holiday boxers.

Maddie watched David walk in to the kitchen and laughed. She sat by the tree to wait for David to bring the cocoa. She was admiring the tree and thinking of what a wonderful Christmas this was turning into so at first she didn't hear the song playing on the radio. Then it hit her. Before she knew it the tears started to fall down her cheeks before she could stop them. Why was this song making her cry? It was supposed to be a happy tune but it made her think of the baby that should be with them under the tree. Would she ever get over that loss? Maddie sobbed into her hands.

David grabbed the mugs of hot chocolate and walked back into the living room. He stopped short when he noticed Maddie sobbing by the tree. He heard the song playing on the radio, 'I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus'. He placed the mugs down quickly on the coffee table and turned off the radio. David rushed over to her on the floor and pulled her into his arms. Maddie collapsed into his warm embrace. "It's ok babe. I understand sweetheart. I'm here. I'm not going anywhere. I promise. Just let it out babe I got ya."

Maddie continued to sob in David's arms. He stroked her hair and whispered words of love in her ear. After a few minutes, Maddie finally quieted down. David took his fingers and gently wiped the tears off her cheeks. She pulled away and started slapping him on his head and face. The slaps didn't hurt but David was surprised at her sudden vehemence toward him. David grabbed her hands and held them over her head. "Whoa babe! What's the matter?"

"What's the matter? What's the matter?" She shrieked at him. "I'll tell you what's the matter! You are a fucking liar! You told me in the hospital you would be there for me and where the hell were you?? *Where??*" She pulled her hands out of his grasp. "As I remember I spent every night sleeping alone and sobbing into my pillow!"

David didn't know what to say. He knew she was right to be angry. But he had his reasons or so he thought at the time. "I tried to be there for you." David said as he sat up now.

"You did? When was this? I don't recall you trying at all David! You just avoided me. You didn't try at all." Maddie cried. "He was our son!"

"You can say *our* son now but you were so goddamn adamant that he wasn't my son the whole time you were pregnant."

"That's not true!!!" Maddie cried

"Yes it is!" David's voice was harsh. "You told me coldly to my face he's not yours. Do you remember that? Well I do. And you said it to me quite a few times; more than once I might add."

"Yes but I thought I was saying the truth! The doctor in Chicago was so sure about calendars and dates etc."

“So what? You were with Sam a couple of days before we got together! How could anyone know for sure??” David practically yelled. All the buried feelings were coming to the surface. For both of them. “Maddie you were with Sam what one time? You were with me dozens and dozens of times! The chances are he was *mine*! How could you be so sure that the baby was Sam’s?? Yes I know there was always a possibility that he *wasn’t* mine but the possibility he *was* mine was a hell of a lot greater. You’re a smart girl. It made me feel like you lied and just didn’t want me to be the father. I figured you believed that I wouldn’t have been a good father.”

Maddie shook her head. “No never I never thought that. You would have made a great father I just believed what the doctor told me.”

“Well he was wrong. And so were you.”

“What if he turned out to be Sam’s? I didn’t want you to feel obligated to another man’s child.”

“I would never have felt obligated. I love you and I would have loved the baby even if it wasn’t mine. He was a part of you. God when we found out he was mine I was so angry with you. I felt I lost out on so much. Maybe, ok yes, I did abandon you. I know it was wrong but I was so wrapped up in my own grief and anger I pushed your feelings out of my mind.” David pulled her into his arms. “Sorry babe. I never meant to leave you alone and hurt you. Forgive me?”

“I made mistakes I know I have to live with them too.” Tears fell from Maddie's eyes. “But how do I know you won’t run out on me again when the going gets tough?” Maddie needed to hear his answer.

David held her against his chest. Maddie could hear his heart beating. “My biggest mistake is getting angry and staying away when I should have been by your side. I know I was wrong and I will never abandon you again. I learned my lesson.” David kissed the top of her head. “I almost lost you. I can’t live without you.”

Maddie looked up into the emerald eyes she loved. “I can’t live without you either and even if I could I don’t want to.”

David was about to say something to Maddie but she crushed her lips against his; she plunged her tongue into his mouth moving it in and out mimicking the act of love. David returned her kisses with a passion he had never felt for anyone else.

The heat between them could ignite the rug beneath their bodies. Their kisses grew frantic as they held each other like they never wanted to let go. Maddie began to rub David's hardness inside his boxers. She loved the feeling of holding him in her hands. Maddie breathed against his mouth: "David please makes love to me. I need you."

David needed her too. He laid her back slowly on the floor by the tree as he untied her robe and opened it baring her naked body. He slipped the robe off her body as Maddie helped him ease his boxers off. Her hands were stroking his erection as David lay next to her on his side; his hands fondled her body. His fingers trailed down the the side of her breasts to her belly to her inner thighs. Maddie was moaning telling him how much she loved how his hands felt on her. David smiled down at her as his tongue ravaged her mouth. His fingers danced to her most intimate place where he found her ready for him.

"David now please." Maddie pleaded.

David leaned over Maddie and with one quick thrust he was deep inside her warmth. Maddie wrapped her legs around David's waist as she felt him enter her. She wanted to pull him deep inside of her. David started out the pace for them slow and easy. He was taking his time to show her how much her loved and worshipped her. David wanted to give Maddie all the pleasure he possibly could. He whispered in her ear how he loved her. He purred how much he loved being inside her.

Maddie held on tightly to David and moved with him. It was a deliciously slow lovemaking that took her breath away. David kissed her lips, her cheeks over to her ear then down her neck finding the spot that was his, the spot he found all those years ago during their first night of lovemaking. Maddie sighed and moaned in pleasure as David kissed that spot on her neck. Only David could play her body like a fine instrument. David was getting close to an orgasm and wanted Maddie to come with him. He moved his hips in and out faster. "Maddie I'm almost there baby come on sweetheart let go with me babe. I love you."

Maddie knew she was ready to let go with him. "Oh God! I love you too David!" They both let go together and held on tight as they felt each other pulsate and quiver as they reached the peak of their orgasms. Maddie's body tingled inside and out as she came back to earth slowly. David felt as if his head had been blown off but gradually his orgasm subsided. He went to pull out of Maddie but she wrapped her legs tighter around David's waist. "Not yet." Maddie told him not wanting to lose their closeness. David lay above her for a few minutes as his heart beat re-

turned to normal. Finally, he felt Maddie relax and unwrap her legs from his waist. David rolled onto his side. He looked at Maddie's flushed face in the light of the tree. "You're so beautiful." David told her. He looked around the living room and saw the blanket Maddie had carried down from her bedroom; he got up off the floor and grabbed it. He lay back on the floor next to Maddie and threw the blanket over them. He pulled her close to him. Maddie laid her head on his chest and one arm across his waist. She sighed. They lay there wrapped in each other's arms staring at the tree in silence.

"You ok?" David asked as he stroked her silky blonde hair.

Maddie nodded against his chest. She pressed her lips to his chest and kissed it ever so gently. Maddie felt the need to tell David something she had been living with for a while. "I've been having this dream lately. Well different dreams actually for a while. "

"What kinda dream?"

Maddie fell silent for a minute, then continued. "They all start off the same, happy, like the dream I had this week. It's Christmas. I come into the living room and the tree is decorated so beautifully; the lights twinkling. I feel so happy when I see you and our son by the tree. He's about a year and a half and you're holding him as he's riding this little rocking horse. The baby is squealing with delight and you look over and see me so you pick him up to bring over to me. I really don't see his face except I see your eyes staring back at me. I see two sets of identical green eyes looking at me. I reach out to take him from you and my hands find nothing there. He's gone and I scream for you to find him and then I wake up. Sometimes I want to go right to sleep to get back to the happy part of the dream but I don't because I can't bear to keep losing him over and over."

"Sweetheart I'm so sorry."

"Will they ever stop David? Will I ever stop dreaming of losing him?"

David wondered could her dream actually be something else. He reached out to pull her closer to him and was glad when she cuddled into his arms. He kissed the top of her head. "Maddie do you think maybe you dream could be about the future?"

"What do you mean?"

"What if it's our child in the future? Another child."

She looked up at him eyes wide and wet. "Another child?"

David nodded. "Maybe you're dreaming of a Christmas that hasn't happened yet."

"I don't know." Maddie was skeptical.

"Yes you do. Deep down inside you know that it's the truth. Honey I promise you next Christmas and every Christmas after that will be filled with joy and the love of a child. Maybe we started the dream coming true tonight."

"You mean maybe I'll get pregnant?" Maddie lifted her head to look in David's eyes.

"Yes." David smiled broadly. Trust me I have a very good feeling about this."

"Oh you do huh?"

"Yes I do uh huh." David's eyes twinkled.

Maddie thought about it. What if David was right? What if it wasn't a bad dream? What if it was a glimpse into their future? "David I'm afraid to hope. I can't bear to be let down again."

"Listen to me honey. Whatever happens I will be here for you. I will *never* leave you alone again. Can you forgive me babe?"

"Of course I forgive you." She hugged him. "As long as you forgive me too."

David nodded happily. "Let's make this the best Christmas ever." He told her as he picked her off the floor and headed upstairs. "Now I'm going to give you a really BIG Christmas present. I think you've been a naughty girl so you get my special gift." David teased as he carried her up to her bedroom.

The next couple of days went by quickly for Maddie and David. They spent most of those days in bed making love over and over. Both had felt so alone for too long without the other. They only left the bed to eat and shower. But on Christmas Eve they emerged from their cocoon of love in order to take care of some important

business. David needed to go home to get some fresh clothes and both of them wanted to surprise the other with a special present. David told Maddie he was going to cook her Christmas Eve dinner the Addison way so he needed to go to the fish market and the grocery store. They left each other with a kiss and a promise to meet back at Maddie's house as soon as possible. Maddie let David take the BMW since she only needed to make one stop and she didn't want him to know where she was heading.

Later that day David opened Maddie's front door with his key. David realized he hadn't used that key for quite some time. "Yo Maddie" David called out as he shut the front door. David was carrying a black duffel bag and shopping bags from the various stores he visited.

Maddie looked down at her watch and wondered when David would get back. They were only apart a couple hours but she missed him. Happily, she heard his voice call out to her and heard the front door slam.

Maddie headed to the living room. She had been in the kitchen rinsing out pots and pans she hardly used. She saw David place his black duffel bag down on the ground by the couch. "Hey I was wondering when you were getting back." She said as she walked up to David.

"Hey babe I'm sorry I took so long the stores are really busy."

"That's ok. You're here now." They greeted each other with a kiss.

"So missed me huh?"

"Maybe." Maddie smiled at him.

Maddie took a bag from David and followed him into the kitchen and they started to unpack the bags. There was pasta and cloves of garlic, shrimp and mussels and scallops; bread crumbs and even a fresh baked caramel crumb apple pie. David thought of everything. Maddie watched as David pulled out a bottle of wine and then started to grab what he needed to cook. David immediately began to clean the fish. He looked like a pro in the kitchen.

Maddie remembered the meals David had cooked for them during that crazy month they had spent together. She loved to remember how passionate their lovemaking

was but she hated remembering how she fought loving him and all the crazy pacts she made him make.

David was asking Maddie about what the Hayes' family ate on Christmas Eve. He looked over at her when she didn't answer him. He saw she was lost in thought. "Earth to Maddie. You ok?"

Maddie pulled herself out of those painful memories and realized things were different now and she wasn't going to let anything ruin their Christmas Eve.

"Yes I'm great. So tell me what are you making for us? "

A big smile came over David's face as he proceeded to tell her about the fish dinner he was preparing for them.

"Well you see Christmas Eve at the Addison home there was always fish on the menu. Being the owner of a fish market and all my dad brought home lots of fish and could prepare it many different ways. My mom did most of the cooking but when it came to fish dinners my dad ran the kitchen. And well he made it his business to teach Richie and me how to prepare fish." David laughed. "He told us if we knew how to prepare fish we would never be hungry. Usually all my aunts and uncles and cousins came over to celebrate Christmas Eve. It was a lot of fun." David grew quiet. "After my mom died we still had Christmas Eve at our house but it was never the same."

Maddie hated to see David sad. "I'm sorry David. It must have been hard on you and your brother and of course your father must have been devastated."

David nodded. "He was." David smiled at Maddie brushing away the sad memories. He knew he and Maddie were going to make some wonderful new ones over the years. "Hey listen enough of the painful memories. This is our first special Christmas as a couple and I want it to be fantastic!"

Maddie smiled back. "So do you need any help?"

"Nah Chef Addison has got it under control." David told her as he breaded the fish and put on a pot of water to boil. "I just wanna hear about Christmas Eve at the Hayes' residence."

Maddie grinned. “Well Carmelita’s mother, Carmen was our maid at the time and she always prepared a meal for us before she left to go home to her own family. We usually had a roast beef that was roasting in the oven filling the house with delicious aromas. We also had mashed potatoes, gravy and different vegetables. And dessert was pies and ice cream.”

David loved listening to Maddie tell him about her childhood and see her eyes light up. “Did you have company?”

Maddie nodded. “Oh yes my aunt and uncles and of course the Crawfords who were my parents’ best friends.” She stopped when he realized what she had just admitted to David.

David stopped what he was doing and looked at her. “So you spent Christmas with Sam?”

“David we were just kids. It meant nothing.”

“Ok well it just makes me feel jealous to know Sam had you to himself for all those years.”

Maddie ran over to David and hugged him. He held up his hands which were dirty with bread crumb and flour and laughed. “Well you have me now and forever.” She kissed his lips hungrily.

“Ok Ok.” David laughed with her. “I get it. Finish the story. Did you get loads of gifts? Well of course you did. Daddy’s little princess. The only child. I bet you were spoiled rotten.”

Maddie nodded happily. “Yes, I admit I need get a lot of gifts.” She looked at David as he was putting salt in the boiling water. “Didn’t you get what you wanted for Christmas?”

David shrugged. “When my mom was alive she made sure Santa brought us what we asked for. After she died we were older and I guess my dad didn’t think gifts were that important. We always got something but usually nothing we really wanted.” David laughed but the laugh wasn’t happy. “Anyway that was a long time ago.”

Maddie felt the love she felt for David welling up in her heart. She swore to herself she would make it up to him for all the Christmases they were alive. "Sorry."

David dismissed it with a wave. "So what did you do on Christmas Day?"

Maddie pushed her hair behind her ears. "We usually had dinner at the Country Club."

"With the Crawfords?" David asked but in a teasing way.

"Sometimes." She admitted with a grin.

"Boy I bet your parents were disappointed when you and Buck Rogers didn't wind up together."

Maddie shook her head. "Actually they don't really like Sam. My parent think he's too rigid and boring." She chuckled.

"Ya think?" David hooted.

David loved listening to Maddie open up about her past. It was something they never shared with each other before. He felt even closer to her and was happy to see the smile on her face as she regaled him with childhood stories. David in turn told her about some of the occurrences at his family's holidays and soon they were convulsed with laughter.

David wiped the tears from his eyes. "Family!" He hooted again. Then he grew serious again. "I ran into my friend Louis. I think I may have mentioned him to you. We're been bowling together since I came to LA. I've become good friends with him and his wife Mary. I've spent some holidays at their house over the years. He thought I was going home to Philly this year and when he heard I was staying in town he insisted I come join them for Christmas dinner."

"Oh that's so nice of him." Maddie didn't understand how David could leave her alone for Christmas after the last few days they spent together. Maybe he wasn't as serious as she thought he was.

"Yeah his wife Mary is really nice. They are a great couple. Married for about five or six years with two adorable little kids. The other guys from the bowling team and their families will be there too."

"I'm sure you'll have a nice time." Maddie felt hurt and disappointed.

"Wait. What? The invite is for *us*. I told them I was spending Christmas with you and they were thrilled. They insisted I finally bring you round to meet them. Babe you think I was going to leave you alone on Christmas?"

"They know about me?" Maddie was surprised.

"Yeah they do." David nodded. "And get it through your thick skull we aren't ever going to be apart on Christmas again! I want you to meet my friends."

"Oh David I don't know. I don't know any of them I'd be out of place."

"No you won't. Come on we'll go and have a great time. And I want to show you off."

Maddie saw the look in his eyes. How could she say no? "Ok fine I'll go."

"Great great!" David pulled Maddie to him and kissed her and wrapped his arms around her. "I love you babe."

Maddie shivered when she felt David's breath in her ear. "I love you too David."

After an enjoyable dinner Maddie went into the living room and sat on the couch with her bare feet tucked under her. David followed her with two glasses of wine. He sat down next to her. "Here you go Blondie." David handed Maddie her glass of chilled wine.

"Thank you." Maddie took the wine and sipped it. "Oh David the meal was delicious." She patted her stomach. "But I'm so full."

"Thanks I'm glad you enjoyed it." David took her hand and kissed her. "Get used to it. I'm gonna be cooking for you for a long time."

Maddie was happy to hear David talking about their future; something he had never done during that month they were together.

"Sounds wonderful." Maddie placed her glass on the coffee table.

"So you up for dessert?"

"What do you have in mind handsome?" Maddie's eyes were dark with desire.

David chuckled. "I was talking about the pie. Sex, sex, sex, is that all you have on your mind Miss Hayes?" He leaned in and kissed her throat. "And you always said I think with my underwear."

Maddie giggled as David tickled her stomach. "Oh you meant the pie?" She playfully pushed him off of her. "Oh no I couldn't eat another bite." She told him lewdly licking her lips.

David felt his insides burning. "I'm sure there's something you might enjoy in your mouth right about now. But that will have to wait." David moved closer to her and turned her back to him. He took out something from his pocket. He gently pushed up Maddie's hair and placed something around her neck.

Maddie felt David put something around her neck and fall above her cleavage. She looked down and saw a beautiful diamond heart sparkling on a thin gold chain. "Oh David this is beautiful!!" She cried excitedly as she fingered the diamond heart. "I love it."

David kissed her neck then moved his mouth up to her ear. "You always have my heart."

Maddie turned around and covered David's mouth with hers. They kissed for a few minutes then Maddie pulled away and jumped up. She ran to her purse and took out a thick envelope. She collapsed on the couch and handed the envelope to David. "Go ahead open it!"

David took the envelope, it felt thick. He had no idea what it could be. He quickly tore open the envelope and his mouth dropped. "Wow are you kidding me? I can't believe it. You got me season tickets to the Lakers games! Two courtside seats? Maddie these tickets are so expensive. I love it. This is the best gift anyone has ever given me. Thank you babe." He winked as he placed the envelope on the table and pushed Maddie down on the couch. "Now we can thank each other properly." David teased as he slowly peeled away Maddie's clothes. Before long the lovers were wrapped up in each other on the couch making passionate love. When it was over Maddie lay in front of David on her side on the couch. David continued to kiss her neck and shoulders. Maddie touched the diamond heart lovingly. That was

the only thing she wore. She threw her leg over David's hip and smiled into his eyes. "You said I have your heart well you have mine too."

"Promise?"

Maddie nodded as she climbed on top of David. Santa wasn't the only one coming that special Christmas Eve.

Maddie was nervous when they approached the gaily decorated ranch house where David's friends Louis and Mary lived. She held on the box of pastries they were bringing as she thought of meeting David's friends. She didn't understand why she was so nervous. She was afraid that she wouldn't fit in with the middle class couples David was friends with. After all what did she have in common with the wives and girlfriends of David's friends? She hoped that she would have things to talk about with them. She knew that her life had been and still was much different than the women she was going to meet that day. For a minute she wished she hadn't agreed to come but then she looked over at David who was turning off the ignition and she knew she had done the right thing. If she wanted a future with the man beside her she needed to learn to get along in his world.

David could see how tense Maddie was by the way she was clutching the box of pastries against her chest. "Hey sweetheart I don't think crushed pastries are on the menu." He teased looking over at her with a crooked smile and a twinkle in his eyes. "What's wrong?" he asked in a soft voice filled with concern.

Maddie shook her head and let out a small laugh. "I don't know. Maybe nobody will like me." Maddie sounded about ten years old.

David let out a laugh. "Are you nuts? Everyone is gonna love you!" He pushed a tendril of her hair behind her ear. "You're smart, beautiful, funny." He winked at her. "What's not to like?"

"Maybe I won't have anything in common with them." Maddie looked at him with her eyes wide with unease. "Maybe I won't have anything to talk about!"

David just smiled at her. How he loved her. "I'm sure you'll do fine!"

Maddie shook her head again this time more forcefully. "I'm not like you David! I don't fit in easily. I don't, I *can't* just talk to strangers." Her voice shook.

David could see how upset Maddie was. "Listen, if it makes you feel better I will stick close to you until you're comfortable."

'Oh no! Don't be stupid! I don't want you to chain yourself to me." Maddie nodded her head. "I'll be fine David."

"You sure?"

She nodded again. David leaned in and kissed her tenderly on the mouth "I love you Maddie." He kissed her again. "Thanks for coming with me today."

Maddie smiled at him as she opened the car door. "Well here goes nothing."

A couple of hours later Maddie couldn't remember what she had been so nervous about. From the moment she stepped in the front door she had felt comfortable. Everyone was so friendly and nice that she lost her fear of not fitting in immediately. The women took her under their wing as David went into the den to watch a football game with his friends.

Maddie was helping Mary with dessert in the kitchen while the other women gathered the children to put on their pajamas. Maddie saw Mary's eyes on her and was for a minute unnerved until she saw the twinkle in the other woman's clear brown eyes. "You can't imagine how happy I am to see a real smile on David's face."

Maddie looked up from arranging the pastries on a festive serving tray depicting Santa and his reindeer. "What do you mean?"

Mary shrugged. "I mean the last few months David was one miserable man." Mary shook her head. "Well actually he hasn't seemed very happy for a long time." Maddie remained silent as Mary continued. "We didn't know what to expect when David told us he was bringing you today. We've lived through all of the ups and downs with him: the first realization he was wild over you, Chicago, Walter, the baby, all of it."

Maddie was stunned that this woman who she had never met before today was so close to David that she knew all about their relationship. Maddie didn't know what to say. "I know I was wrong in many ways."

Mary interrupted. "And so was he. Let's not put blame on anyone here because that is not what I was doing." Mary smiled at Maddie. "I just want you to know that man is madly in love with you and has been for more than five years." Mary laughed. "Do you know how many women we tried to fix him up with? Sure he would date them for a bit then next thing we knew David had one reason or another why things didn't work out."

Maddie was tongue tied.

"It was because those women weren't you." Mary stared deeply into Maddie's eyes. "I want that smile to stay on his face."

Maddie nodded. "Oh it will. I'm madly in love with him too." Maddie smiled at Mary.

Mary nodded and smiled happily. "Wonderful." She held up the platter of cookies she had been fixing. "Let's go feed the troops."

Maddie followed Mary carrying the tray of pastries with a light heart. She saw David sitting on the floor surrounded by the pajama clad children. He had given them the presents he had brought them and they were all happily playing with the toys. David looked like a big kid as he laughed and played along with the children. Maddie put the tray down and headed toward David. She bent down and kissed him warmly on the corner of his mouth then she whispered in his ear how much she loved him. David's smile lit up his face as he grabbed onto Maddie and pulled her on the floor next to him and the children. She laughed as she watched the children play next to David.

"You guys gonna have some dessert?" Louis called to them thrilled with their happiness. It had been a long time coming Louis thought to himself.

The rest of the day passed in a flurry of laughter, games and lively conversation. Maddie couldn't remember the last time she had so much fun. She was happy that David had taken her to meet his friends. Finally, it was time to leave. David and Maddie said their goodbyes with promises of getting together soon. David smiled at Maddie as they walked to the car. He opened her door then scooted around to get in the driver's seat. He looked at her his eyes sparkling as he started the car. "You had a good time?"

Maddie put her hand on his muscular thigh. "I had a wonderful time David." Maddie told him sincerely. "I can't remember when I had a nicer Christmas. Your friends are great people."

"They're our friends now baby." David covered her hand with his. "They all loved you. Wanted to know how I lucked out with a beauty like you." He teased. "I told them they never saw what's in my pants." He saw the horrified look on Maddie's face. "Just kidding." He laughed. "I mean about the pants line." He bent over and kissed her. "I told them I was the luckiest guy on earth."

"Well a little bird told me that they tried to fix you up quite a few times. I even saw a picture on the mantle of you with some pretty brunette on your lap." Maddie was interested on hearing what David was going to say. She was still slightly insecure in his love.

David's eyes bore into hers. "Yes that's true. They kept throwing different girls at me. Some were nice some weren't." He laughed. "Some I saw for one date some I spent more time with but they never worked out." He pushed a lock of hair off of her forehead. "That girl in the picture? I think her name was Sharon but I only went out with her once or twice."

"Well you look awfully friendly." Maddie pointed out.

"Well she was an awfully friendly girl." He teased. "But really Maddie none of them worked out."

Maddie looked at him with a question in her eyes. "Why?"

"*Why?*" David picked up her hand and kissed it. "Cause they weren't you. I love *you* Maddie. Get it? *You.*"

Maddie smiled and nodded. "Ok got it."

"We good babe?"

"No we're great." She told him.

When they reached Maddie's house they were happy yet tired. They spent the rest of Christmas night wrapped around each other under the cozy comforter alternately making love and sleeping. Both of them knew this was just the beginning for them.

They knew that this time their love would survive. They had learned their lessons from the past and wouldn't make the same mistakes again.

The rest of the week flew by for Maddie and David. They spent almost every waking moment together. They spent most of the time making love but this time David was taking no chances. He made sure to take Maddie out to dinner and lunch; they went to the movies and the mall. They even spent one night driving around LA to see the Christmas decorations and lights. They were just happy to be together.

Soon New Year's Eve was upon them. David had made reservations at Maddie's favorite restaurant to celebrate the New Year. He made early reservations so they would be sure to be home when the clock struck 12. David had something very special planned for that night.

Maddie walked into the front door of her house ahead of David. She threw her wrap and purse on the side table and slipped out of her heels. David watched Maddie and thought how magnificent she looked in her simple black halter dress. She was still and would always be drop dead gorgeous to him. He smiled as he saw her turn on the tree and stand in front of it. David strode behind her and wrapped his arms around her waist pulling her against him.

Maddie sighed and leaned back into David's strong embrace. She tilted her head to the side when she felt his lips caress her neck. She sighed again as his lips found that spot on her hairline that aroused her so. "Tonight was wonderful David. I had a great time. Thank you for taking me to my favorite restaurant. It was the perfect way to end this amazing week."

"Dinner and dancing with my girl is always perfect. But the night isn't over yet sweetheart. We still have lots we can do." David continued kissing Maddie's neck; she started to get lost in the feelings he evoked in her. She could feel David moving his hips slowly against her back side. She turned around and smiled up into his eyes. "Hey big fella. It's almost midnight. Let's watch the ball drop then we can continue with our own celebration upstairs." Maddie walked over to the television and clicked it on.

In the meantime David went into the kitchen to get the bottle of champagne he had bought especially for that night.

Maddie got comfy on the couch waiting for David to come back. She listened to Dick Clark talk about past New Years' Eves. He was making his usual speech about how you should say goodbye to this past year and welcome a new brighter one but this time the words meant something to Maddie. She planned to start off the New Year the right way; wrapped in the arms of the man she loved. Maddie was blissful and hopeful for the first time in a long time. She was happy that she had agreed to go to the Christmas party with David when he asked. It was the start of a new life together. Dick Clark was telling the audience it was close to midnight. She wondered what was taking David so long. "David come on they are going to start the countdown any minute."

"Ok I'll be right in babe. Tell Dick to hold the countdown." He joked nervously.

David stood at the kitchen counter looking down at the two champagne glasses. He looked anxious. He took a deep breath grabbed the glasses and the bottle of champagne and walked into the living room.

Maddie looked up at him and smiled when she saw him enter the room. She patted the spot on the couch next to her. David threw her a dazzling smile that made her knees weak. He sat down beside her and placed the open bottle of champagne down on the coffee table.

"Oh it's almost midnight!" Maddie said happily as reached out her hand to David.

"10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1! Happy New Year!" Maddie and David said together. David leaned into Maddie and covered her mouth with his in a sweet lingering kiss full of love.

"Happy New Year baby. This is going to be a great great year!" David grabbed the bottle of champagne and poured 2 glasses.

Maddie was watching everyone celebrating on TV. "David did you ever go to Times Square on New Year's Eve?"

David laughed at the memories. "Yeah I did go a few times. Was kinda wild. Tons of people, lots of drinking. A big party."

"Oh I know how you love big parties."

David looked at her with green heat. "I'd rather be here with our little party of two than anywhere else."

Maddie felt her stomach flip at David's words as she held the glass up to take a sip.

"Whoa Maddie wait a sec. I think I see something in your glass."

Maddie was puzzled. "Something in my glass?" Just as she was about to look in the glass she felt David pull it out of her hand.

"What is this?" David peered into the glass. Maddie watched as he stuck his finger into the glass. "What have we got here?" He asked as he pulled out something shiny.

David held out the sparkling object in front of Maddie's face. At first she wasn't sure what she was looking at then the realization dawned on her. Her face lit up. "David! A ring? For *me*?"

David nodded excitedly as he wiped the ring off on his shirt.

Maddie felt tears forming in her eyes. She watched as David got off the couch and kneeled down in front of her. She felt the tears run down her cheeks.

David looked up at Maddie and saw she was crying. He hoped that was a good thing. David took a deep breath. "Maddie I love you. I think I've loved you from the first time I laid my eyes on you. This past week has made me realize I never ever want to be without you. I want to take care of you and make you happy every day of the rest of our lives. I know it hasn't been easy for us but I want you to know that you can count on me. I promise to be the man you deserve. I will be true to you forever. I want you to be my wife and the mother of my children. Maddie, sweetheart, I don't have much to offer in the form of money but I will give you my whole heart and soul. I hope that I can make you proud to have me as your husband. Will you say yes? Will you marry me?"

Maddie had her hand up to her mouth. She had never expected this from David tonight. Actually, she had always thought David didn't want to get married again. She was glad she had been wrong. She saw David stare at her she could tell he was very nervous. That made her love him even more. She tried to find her voice. Maddie nodded her head. "Yes! I will marry you!" She cried as she extended her hand to David.

David could finally breathe again. He looked at Maddie with glistening eyes as he took her left hand and placed the 1.1 carat diamond engagement ring on her left hand. It fit perfectly. The ring was white gold princess cut three stone and fit her perfectly. The diamonds sparkled as Maddie held her hand up to gaze at the ring. "David this is the most beautiful ring I've ever seen." She looked at him closely she couldn't help it. "Between this and this." She fingered the heart around her neck. "You must have spent quite a bit of money."

David nodded. "To tell you the truth I took what you said to heart and banked those bonus checks we've been getting the last couple of years." He stared into her ecstatic blue eyes. "I guess I knew there was something important I needed to save for." David pulled her on his lap.

"Oh David." Maddie leaned into David's embrace and their lips met in a kiss of happiness and forever.

Maddie pulled back first and rested her head against David's chest. She was staring down at the ring. Who could believe six years ago when she walked into City of Angels she would one day be engaged to David Addison? She laughed.

David looked at her. "What's so funny?"

"I was just thinking of the first day we met and how I slapped you. Who knew we would one day be together like this."

David looked at her seriously. "I did. Kismet remember. And I just told you I loved you from the get-go Miss Madolyn Hayes."

Maddie grinned. "Wait till everyone comes back to work this week. They will be so happy for us." Maddie grinned from ear to ear. "I can't wait to tell them. Oh especially Agnes."

David was thrilled that she wanted the staff to know about them although it would be pretty hard to hide their marriage. David shook his head. "Agnes will be over the moon. Blue Moon, red moon, every moon."

Maddie nodded. "Oh and in the morning I'm going to call my parents on the ship. They're going to be so happy. They always liked you."

"Yeah and my dad and Ritchie will be happy for us too. I kinda clued them in on my plans so in the morning I just have to call with the results." David petted Maddie's silky tresses. "But no more talk tonight."

"So what do you have in mind?" Maddie gave David a seductive look.

David smiled at her. "I think you'll enjoy what I plan to do to you for the rest of the night; over and over and over again. Don't plan on sleeping at all." He said with wicked grin.

Maddie shivered at the thought of David making love to her all night. She couldn't wait to feel his hands on her. David leaned down and kissed her softly on her mouth. He licked Maddie's mouth and she opened her mouth to help his tongue find hers. Their tongues danced together for a few minutes till they were both breathless.

David pulled away and whispered against her mouth. "Come on babe lets go upstairs. I want to show you how much I love you." David stood and held out his hand to Maddie; she took it and got off the couch. They walked hand and hand over to the stairs. They walked up the stairs together and kissed their way to Maddie's (soon to be their) bedroom.

David stopped Maddie at the door and scooped her into his strong arms. "I want to practice carrying you over the threshold babe."

Maddie laughed as she wrapped her arms around David's neck and pulled him in for another kiss.

David gently placed Maddie on the bed and for the rest of the night they made love and talked about the future they would have together.

Epilogue

The beautifully decorated Christmas tree took up a large portion of the living room; its sprawling branches donned with shiny ornaments and bright lights beckoning onlookers to come closer. Underneath the tree were dozens of gaily wrapped gifts; including a toy rocking horse which was being ridden by a fair headed little boy held on the horse by muscular arms which belonged to a slightly balding man with laughing green eyes.

“What a wonderful Christmas!” Maddie cried in joy as she entered the room bearing cups of cocoa. She smiled as two pairs of identical green eyes turned her way. David picked up the bright eyed toddler and approached Maddie with sparkling eyes that put the lights on the Christmas tree to shame. “Merry Christmas Mommy!” David held out the boy to Maddie.

Maddie put the cocoa on the side table. She took the toddler from David and hugged him close to her. She kissed the boy’s blonde head as she smiled at her husband. “Merry Christmas Daddy.”

David approached his wife and son and hugged them both tightly. They laughed as the little boy began to squirm out of his mother’s arms. “OK DJ.” Maddie told the toddler as she placed him on the floor. DJ was short for David Jr. and was a nickname David had given his son. DJ was 15 months old and an adorable little toddler who brought so much happiness to Maddie and David's life. The towheaded little boy ran to his toys and began to play with a big red fire engine. “Does he ever walk?” She shook her head as she looked up into the green eyes she adored.

David laughed as he sat on the floor and sipped his cocoa. He motioned for Maddie to sit down next to him. She protested mildly. “David we have so much to do before our families get here.” She landed on her butt when David grabbed her arm and pulled her down beside him. “David!” Maddie cried out playfully.

David handed Maddie her cup. “Drink your hot cocoa before it becomes cold cocoa.” He smiled. “Relax babe. We have plenty of time and you know your mom and Stephanie love helping you in the kitchen.”

Maddie rolled her eyes as she took the cup of cocoa. “That’s only because they still don’t trust my cooking abilities.”

David shook his head. “Welllll.” Maddie slapped him playfully on his arm as she took a sip of cocoa. They happily watched their son play with his toys under the tree. Santa had been very generous and the toddler couldn’t make up his mind what toy to play with next. David heard Maddie’s sigh of contentment. He put down his cup and pulled her into his lap.

Maddie leaned back into David's chest as she continued to watch son. “You know David you were right?”

David looked at her. "I was?"

She nodded. "You were. You told me two years ago when I was so lost and devastated over the loss of our first son that things would work out." Maddie paused. "When I told you about my dream that night you were so quick to reassure me that the dream was actually a glimpse into the future. A look into a happy Christmas that was to come. I was so afraid to hope that it could be true. But here we are." She cuddled into David's arms. "I'm so very happy."

"Me too babe." He told her seriously. "Our little family of three has made me the happiest man alive." He hugged her. "Just the three of us under the tree before everyone comes should be a family tradition."

Maddie looked over at their son. She knew now was the perfect time to tell David the news. "How bout a family of four under the tree next year?" Maddie raised an eyebrow.

At first David looked at her confused and then it dawned on him what Maddie was hinting. His smile could light up the world. "Are you saying what I think you're saying?"

Maddie nodded her smile as wide as his. "Merry Christmas Daddy. I just found out and I couldn't wait to tell you."

David jumped up and picked up the baby who began to laugh as his dad tickled him. "Did you hear the great news son? Just think DJ next year Santa will be coming for two mini Addisons." David threw the boy in the air and caught him. The boy's laughter filled the room.

"You're gonna be a big brother."

Maddie laughed with her two boys. "David! Stop! You'll make him throw up!"

David caught the baby one more time and flopped on the floor beside the tree. DJ ran off to play with his toys again. Maddie sat down next to him. David hugged his wife close to him. "Maddie this is the best Christmas gift. Wow wait till the whole family finds out tonight."

Maddie smiled. "I know they will be so happy to be grandparents again. We are so lucky."

"Yes we are." David agreed. David pulled something out of his pocket. He held his arm over their heads. Maddie smiled as she looked up at the mistletoe above her head. "Thank God for this mistletoe." He told her. "I saved it. This started it all two years ago reuniting us."

Maddie tilted her head up to meet David's lips. "I love you David. Thank you for giving us a second chance."

David's lips were almost touching hers. "Thank you for letting me." Their kiss was soft and sweet and full of the love they knew would last them a lifetime.

THE END