

Miss Hayes and Mr. Addison Build Their Dream Office

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Part 2

"Okay, David, I'm back. It turns out the nurse needed to update our health insurance info, you know, like getting the number for our new office and . . . David? . . . David?"

"Huh?"

"David, haven't you been listening to anything I have been saying?"

"Uhh . . . yeah. You had to fetch some new number for a new insurance office, or somethin'."

"What's wrong? . . . You're not thinking about . . . **that** . . . are you?"

"What else is there to think about, unless you want to skip it?"

"We can't. We promised the readers we would tell the rest of the story."

"Maddie . . ."

"Look, if you want me to start this time, then I'll start."

"Are you sure you're up to the challenge?"

"David, you have to stop doing this."

"Maddie, if I didn't . . . okay, let the readers be the judge. But they're gonna agree with me . . . it was my fault."

It's not your . . . anyway, a week went by and I still didn't get the estimate on how much the new

office and renovations would cost. Ironically, I wasn't thinking much about it. We were extremely productive. David and I just solved our second case in two weeks. We spent the majority of the morning choosing which case to pick up next until David suggested for us to take a break for lunch. While David went out for lunch, I decided to stay in my office. I was seconds away from tearing into my tuna sandwich until I heard a beeping sound . . .

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"What is David's beeper doing here?" I wondered. He usually double checks, triple checks before he leaves without that thing. I slowly went over to the sofa to see who interrupted my lunch hour. I checked the number. "What do these people want?" I said out loud. I went back to my desk, picked up the phone, dialed the number and said, "Hello? Did somebody call for David Addison? . . . You did? Why didn't you tell me about the estimate? . . . What do you mean, "What estimate?" The estimate you have yet to send this office for about two months now. . . You what? . . . You what? . . . He what!! I dropped the phone, picked up my purse and sprinted, as much as a five and a half months pregnant woman can sprint, to David's office.

I tore into each one of his desk

drawers until I saw it. A yellow paper with three of the most shocking words written in red: PAID IN FULL.

Okay, I may have overreacted, slightly. My calm, rational side was over taken by my enraged, irrational side. I mean, what would you have done if the office you thought you didn't own had been bought without your prior knowledge? As I stepped out of the elevator from the 30th floor, my anger grew more intense with each step through the hallway. I stormed into the office that had been purchased behind my back. My Katherine Hepburn-like entrance would have had the perfect dramatic effect if I hadn't stumbled to the floor. I was anticipating that the door would be locked. I was shocked when the door flew open with ease and in turn, I flew right down to the carpet. Not to worry I was fine and the carpet smelled nice too. My attention quickly switched to what I came there for. I raised myself off the floor and shouted, "A hardhat for a hardhead."

"Honey, what are you doing here?" David asked with a surprised look on his face. He raced over to me and helped to keep my body from taking another visit to the carpet.

"What am I doing here? What are **you** doing here! And why do you have that stupid hardhat on your head!"

"The plaster and steel miss the top of my cranium when I have this on."

"Too bad. The plaster and steel would have knocked some sense of what you have left in your head!"

"Miss Hayes. Is there a problem?"

"You bet there's a problem!" I screamed to the contractor. "Where the hell do you get off buying this place after I specifically told you **not** to!"

"Wait a minute, you're not a mother, yet," David countered.

"What is that suppose to mean?" I argued back.

"It means the only one you have jurisdiction to give orders to is our munchkin inside your belly."

"I wouldn't have to give orders if you would just listen to me, instead of doing what ever you feel like doing!"

"I thought **this** is what you wanted! I bought it before you played your little three card Monte routine!" He yelled back.

"And what is **that** suppose to mean!"

"It **means** you switch your emotions and when you stop shuffling, I keep picking the wrong emotion to respond to! Sometimes I wonder if this is still worth it!"

"This? What's **this**!"?

"**This** is this relationship!"

After David bellowed his last barb, I realized our argument was the only thing making noise. The ham-

mering and sawing was silenced by our spirited conversations. I guess the workers felt the constant noise of their hammers would throw David and I off in the middle of hurling our latest insult. I needed to turn myself around and leave before he would shout the two most terrifying words that I would never want to hear come out of his mouth: IT'S OVER.

"You see that," He shouted. "You see that, guys! You're witnessing how Madolyn Hayes solves her problems!"

I turned around sharply and shouted, "At least I inform you when I need to solve my problems **before** I solve them, particularly with my checkbook!"

"Is that so!"

"Yes! That's so!"

"I guess you forget how you sleepwalked your way into an airplane, tripped into a window seat and flew to Chicago in the middle of the night!"

"How many times do I have to say 'I'm sorr' . . . and then it happened. I felt this excruciating pain. My eyes were filled with fear . . . the same fear, the same pain, I experienced the last time I was pregnant. David knew what that look in my eyes meant and raced me out of the office without saying a word and rushed me to the nearest hospital. . . .

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"Okay, I'm ready now."

"You don't have to if you don't want to, David."

"No, I want to tell them this part of the story."

"Only if you can handle it. "

"Maddie, I can handle it. Okay?"

"Okay."

"After I rushed Maddie to the hospital, she had to be checked in immediately. It turned out that she was having false labor. The doctor said it was brought on mainly through stress. I blocked out the rest of what she said. Because I thought it was a result of my impulsive behavior to surprise my love. And as a result she wouldn't have suffered through a close call. You know what? I have an idea. I'm gonna set up a poll. I'm gonna ask all of you out there if the false labor Maddie went through was actually my fault."

"David, for the last time . . ."

"I know, I know . . . but I want to know what they think about all this."

"If these people have enough sense, they'll see you had nothing to do with it. And since when do you care what others think about you?"

"I don't know. I still feel . . . I'm gonna get back to the story. After I waited four and a half hours in the hospital lobby, I was allowed to visit Maddie in her hospital room . . ."

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"Heey, baby. How are you feeling?" I gently rubbed her right arm and gave her a kiss on the cheek.

"Kind of tired, but I'll get over it." She gave me one of those angelic smiles that reminds me how much I really want to be with this woman.

"The Doctor said the baby's fine."

"Thank God," I said feeling the boulder roll off my shoulder.

"David."

"Hmm?"

"I've been thinking about what you did . . . buying the new office and everything."

"It was a big mistake. I should have told you from the get go. I'll tell the contractor to forget about it."

"No, David. It's fine. You were only trying to surprise me. If I hadn't overreacted, I would have appreciated it."

"Honest?"

"Honest."

"But I should have told you first," I insisted.

"David, it's okay."

"No, it's not. You landed in the hospital because of what you now say is okay."

"Sweetie, can you do me a favor?"

"Sure."

"Can I be left alone for a while?"

That threw me for a loop.

"Uhh, okay. When do you want me to come back?"

"Tomorrow."

That threw me for three loops.

"Tomorrow? Was it something I said?"

"No, honey, it's just that I'm so tired and the medication is beginning to kick in and . . ."

"No, I understand," I said with a straight face.

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, honey, I'm sure."

**I leaned in to kiss her irresistible unmade-up lips, which I consider sexier than any shade of lipstick she slides on.**

I kissed her on the cheek to convince her I was okay with her decision, although I still felt as though she was shutting me out.

"I'll see you tomorrow, okay?"

"Okay," I replied. I held her hand, kissed it and started to leave the room. When I reached the door, I turned around and gave Maddie my good-bye wave, then went back to something I once felt was so important. It had become the last thing I wanted to be involved in. But now, I'm happy I did it. Going back and supervising the renovation of our new office was a welcome distraction.

When I came home, I flipped off

my shoes and went straight to bed. "Why the hell did I do that?" I mumbled. I kept wondering why I always have this knack for screwing things up in my life. I felt that my only talent in life has expanded to wrecking not only Maddie's life, but also the life of our bambino . . . or bambina. Needless to say, I had trouble sleeping. I was staring at the ceiling for three hours before I felt things were getting unbearable. Why you ask? All right, I'll tell you. I would have finished a six-pack right around the two-hour mark. You have to understand, those were the kind of moments when feeling beer suds on my upper lip insulated my compulsion for driving my fist through my bedroom wall. All I heard running through my brain was, "I was so close to witnessing the third miscarriage of my baby making career . . . and this time, it would have been because of me." I heard those words over and over. It got to the point where my body got up from bed, led me to the kitchen, saw my hand pull the fridge door open, and grabbed the neck of a beer bottle.

Despite my annoying feeling of guilt, I scrambled around my darkened kitchen to find a bottle opener. I finally had my hands on the prized utensil and ripped the beer top open. Now normally when I did this, my arm used to tell my wrist, "Yo, it's time to give Dave what he wants." And usually my wrist responded by bringing the beer bottle to my mouth. My taste buds would benefit by getting a nice tingle as the cold liquid slipped down toward my liver. However, that

Read *Moonlighting Strangers*. We don't dwell on the past. We create in the present to make things happen for the future.

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Cont'd

night, my arm felt like cement. It wouldn't budge. It was as if my arm replied, "I'm on strike and I'm not letting this happen." I knew exactly why it happened. I couldn't do it. I gave my word to the woman I love and to our unborn child . . . my unborn child. "Damn it!" I shouted as I threw the damn bottle across the room. The shattering of the beer bottle mirrored the shattered hopes and dreams I knew was coming in a mere ten hours the second I would step into Maddie's hospital room.

"I really messed things up this time," I mumbled. I rang my hands through my unruly hair in frustration. If anybody ever wanted a description of what "Hell on Earth" felt like, well, I just described it for you.

It was miraculous enough to interrupt my pity party for three and a half hours of sleep; it was even more miraculous for me to have enough guts to show my smiling face to Maddie a few hours later. It was probably the best acting I've ever done.

"Hey, Blondie. How are you doing?" I said staring at her sweet face.

"Give me a kiss and find out."

I leaned in to kiss her irresistible unmade-up lips, which I consider sexier than any shade of lipstick she slides on.

"I feel much better," she said.

"Uh-oh, spoke to soon," I joked. "Yes, I see it . . . it's coming closer . . . uh-oh, it can't be, uh-no it's . . . it's . . . it's your breakfast! Ahhhhh!" I said playfully shielding my eyes as the nurse placed Maddie's breakfast on her table.

Hearing Maddie giggle was the only thing that saved me from going completely bonkers. Then she grabbed my hand and placed it on her tummy. It relaxed me a bit

until I felt our little one kick inside of her. The guilt forged past my comfort.

"Uhhh . . . I gotta go. I gotta go back to construction central and see all

the mishaps waiting to happen today."

"You're leaving now? You just came. I assumed you wanted to see my 'let-me-make-believe-I-don't-hate-this-glop' face as I'm eating my hospital-mandated scrambled eggs."

"You've said a mouthful."

"Make it worth my while," she said. "At least make it taste decent enough to make me eat another mouthful."

"I wish I could . . . but I can't. I'll be back as soon as I can."

I didn't wait for Maddie's response. I got out of the chair, turned around and slipped out of sight. I just . . . couldn't face what I almost did. . .

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"I didn't know you took it that hard, David."

"It was all I could think about."

"Me too. I couldn't believe I almost put myself in the same situation again."

"Maddie, it wasn't . . ."

"Yes, it **was** me, David. It was."

"Maddie."

"What time is it?"

"Huh? . . . Oh, uhh, three patients after you asked the last time."

"Let me rephrase that . . . David, where is the little hand and the big hand located on your watch?"

"Well, if you put it that way, it's three forty-eight."

"In the afternoon, I presume."

"The sun is still up, right?"

He didn't want you to suffer anymore, Miss Hayes. He didn't want you to settle for less.

"Incredibly, so am I. David, I wish I could have these pre-natal visits in my bedroom. That way, I can finally get some sleep."

"Don't fret, Maddie. We have about two hours to go into a room we should have been in three hours ago."

"It doesn't explain why it **has** to take so long, David."

"I thought you knew. We are in D.S.T."

"D.S.T.?"

"Doctor's Standard Time."

"I think this is the right time for me to continue with the story."

"While I was waiting for you to come back, I was hoping to melt my worries with the transvestite hooker who took drugs, but because he . . . or she was on a nationally syndicated talk show, tried to mend his or her ways and check into a drug treatment center -"

" 'Geraldo.' "

"Huh?"

"You were watching 'Geraldo', right?"

"No, 'Oprah.' "

"Nah, it can't be, Maddie. This doesn't sound like an 'Oprah' kinda show. It has 'Geraldo' written all over it."

"No, no. It was 'A Current Affair.' That's what it was. 'A Current Affair.' "

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, I'm sure, David."

"Are you aware that 'A Current Affair' is not a talk show?"

"Talk show, tabloid show, what difference does it make?"

"Maddie, by the angry expression you have on your face, I can guess you don't want to hear my reply."

"You guessed it. As I was saying, I was hoping that show would drown out my unwanted thoughts of knowing what a fool I've been. My couch potato situation was five minutes of what I considered to be a success until . . ."

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"Miss Hayes?"

I turned my head to the right and saw Agnes standing next to my bed holding a huge bouquet of red, yellow, and white roses.

"Agnes, you shouldn't have."

"I didn't."

That took me by surprise.

"I didn't do it alone. It was from all of us at the office," she clarified for me while placing the large bouquet on the table.

"How are you doing, Miss Hayes?"

"I'm all right . . . I suppose."

"I'm betting you won't want to hear this right now, but Mr. Addison bought that office to put you at ease."

"Put me at ease?"

"Uh-huh," Agnes said. "I'd heard him on the phone . . . hours after you left . . . he told the contractor to

make it the best office ever. He knew how much you suffered squeezing through one room to the next. He didn't want you to suffer anymore, Miss Hayes. He didn't want you to settle for less."

"You'd lose, Agnes."

"I'd lose what, Miss Hayes?"

"You'd lose that bet. I appreciate you telling me this. The weird thing about it is. . . when I stormed into that office yesterday, ranting like a lunatic, the person who I was really yelling at was me."

"Really?"

"I realized I couldn't jump off."

"Jump off?" Agnes asked with a puzzled look on her face.

"The freight train that has become my life."

"I'm sorry, Miss Hayes, I don't follow."

"It all stems from . . . I can't believe I am about to say this out loud. Before this false alarm, I would not have . . . but now . . . Agnes, what I going to say here, stays here, understand?"

"You have my word."

"Can you close the door, please?"

Agnes closed the door and came over to the edge of my bed and sat attentively.

"I can see you're confused. I'm confused as well by all of this . . . crazy behavior I've exhibited not only within the last day or so, but

for the last six, seven years. I always knew that David was 'the one.' "

"You did?" Agnes responded with an astonished look on her face.

"Yes, Agnes, I did."

"Ever since you first walked into Mr. Addison's office?"

"Well, no. Not that early, but it was early enough. It scared the hell out of me. I was secure in pushing men away, conveniently dating them from time-to-time on my terms. David was the first guy who tried to be a part of my life for quite sometime and I liked it. I liked it so much, I convinced myself **not** to like it."

"But why, Miss Hayes?" Agnes said in confusion. "Why would you go to such lengths to do such things."

"I had three long lasting relationships that ended in heartbreak."

"You really don't have to go into this now, Miss Hayes."

"Oh no, Agnes. I want to. I have to hear it come out of my mouth, finally, for the first time."

Despite Agnes's uneasy body language, she nodded her head in support.

"One of my relationships . . . well, you already met him."

"Sam?"

"Yup," I said in a far away look. "Sam. I've known him ever since grade school. I remember on our first grade field trip to the beach. A

## David was the first guy who tried to be apart of my life for quite sometime and I liked it.

six-year-old Sam said, 'We're buddies and we'll become boyfriend and girlfriend and then we'll become man and wife.' He said this as we continued to jump over wave after wave that crashed against our ankles. I believed what Sam told me. By 19, I was crushed when Sam chose NASA over me."

"I take it Sam was your first love." I nodded in agreement to Agnes' statement.

"I concentrated more on my fledgling modeling career and dating a jock or two. In my junior year in college was long term relationship number two. Eric. He was my assigned tutor in Calculus. The focus on my studies fell behind as my modeling career took off. It didn't take long for us to study more than quadratic equations. It got to the point where I was contemplating trading in my modeling career to hear 'Will you marry me?' Instead it was replaced with 'I'm transferring to Harvard Law.' "

"He didn't?"

"He also promised me our relationship would not change."

"But it did . . . didn't it?"

"Yes it did. I'm sure he has his own practice near the Boston area, a wife and kids. . . . anyway, I was devastated. There was another guy I had to push out of my mind. I did it by putting myself into modeling full time. I got blasted a few times and spent a few more nights pulsating my pelvic thrusts under a revolving silver ball, but I never got into the drug scene. And from what I've been through, 'free love' was too rich for my sanity. But still, I had fun. Within a few years, I was well established. I made the cover of Glamour, Vogue - twice - and Harper's Bazaar - three times. It was during my first Japanese cover shoot when I met long-term relationship number three. Adam. He was a world famous photographer. I thought I hit the big time! We were considered the power couple of the fashion world. I thought nothing could stop our trip to the altar until I found out he didn't need to - he was already married."

"How did he take it when you dumped him?"

"That's the thing, Agnes . . . I didn't."

"You didn't."

"I didn't. Stupid, I know. When I found out the truth a year too late. I was already in love with him."

"A year?"

"He knew how to hide it well, too. He'd tell me he had a last minute assignment. I didn't know it involved a wife and a kid."

"Why did you stay?"

"You hear it all the time, he said he was going to divorce her. Well, technically, it was true. He was separated when he met me and he was going through divorce proceedings."

"So what happened?"

"The four year relationship came to a halt when his wife invited herself onto one of my photo shoots. She informed me, after throwing both my suitcases across the room, calling me everything a wife would call a mistress, that he stopped the divorce. They were getting back together and he wanted me out of his apartment by midnight."

"How awful!" Agnes said with fright in her voice.

"After living through that last go-round, I decided love is something you only find in the movies or greeting cards. I was completely prepared to live without love . . . romantic love, that is. I was doing pretty well once I came to that decision. Six months later, I become the Blue Moon Shampoo girl. My dreams landing a lucrative contract had come true. I still remember how good it felt when I walked into my new house for the first time. I hope you don't mind me rambling on, Agnes."

"It's fine, Miss Hayes," she said in her most sentimental voice.

"The most ironic thing about it is, it took another man to up root my life to find the man who'd plant me firmly on solid ground. It scared me so much, Agnes. I kept thinking

about excuses to dismiss David, but he kept creeping back into my thoughts."

"Hasn't Mr. Addison proved he truly loves you and only you?"

"No, I already knew that. It's not what I'm afraid of now. I'm afraid I closed my heart so long, that now it's too late to invite David in completely, whole heartedly."

"Miss Hayes, was your purpose to bail out of purchasing the new office your way of protecting Mr. Addison for some reason?"

"Exactly," I said. "I was afraid I couldn't give him the unconditional love he deserves."

"Two years ago . . . maybe even a year ago, I would have agreed with you. However, today, in this hospital room, it sounds like you're getting ready to go to the point of no return."

"You think so?" I asked with less skepticism.

"Uh-huh."

"Why didn't I come to you sooner, Agnes. I would have saved a lot in psychiatrist bills. This is the most I've ever said to anyone . . . even my conversations with my mother have not been this cathartic."

"But Miss Hayes, you already knew."

"How so?"

"Why would you risk telling me this if you already realized that you had invited Mr. Addison into your heart . . . unconditionally?"

"The fear of losing this baby helped me see how much of a fool I've been. I just thought of it."

"Thought of what?"

"He would have been two years old."

"You mean, your first . . ."

"Yeah . . . my first . . ." I sighed hard to prevent from crying. "Last night I kept thinking, what if this was another baby I lost? How would I have handled it? And David? It would have been his third

child he'd lost. Would it have been the end for us?"

There was a w k w a r d silence for a few seconds. All I could come up with was "Thank

God, we'll never know the answer. I love him so much, Agnes. Now if only I could get it through my thick head to stop fighting it."

"Mr. Addison would've loved to hear you say that."

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"Yes, I would have, Maddie."

"Well, you know now."

No, I mean, you don't know how it feels to almost lose three babies.

"I also know that you're crazy if you think I would even think about leaving you if -"

"Let's not talk about it, David. I don't want to entertain the thought."

"You're right. The last thing I want to do is jinx the bambina."

"Or bambino."

"Well, while you were spilling your guts to Agnes, I had no choice but to share my agony with her other half. . ."

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My attention for detail diminished to the point where the hard hats would come up to me. They asked if I wanted to test the faucets knowing they fixed them two weeks earlier. However, my careful attention to detail took an anal retentive turn when Bert volunteered to take over as the Head Cheese.

"Now see this screwdriver I'm holding here?" Bert asked the

contractor who was obviously not interested. "This is a six inch screw driver. What you need is a seven inch screw driver and it's a Black and Decker instead of this nameless cheap excuse for a tool."

"Mm hmm" the contractor responded in a lackadaisical nod.

"We **can't** for under **any** circum-

stances use any of these cheap tools to construct this future oasis we will call Blue Moon. You have to use the proper tools for the right circumstances. I should know, I spent a lot of time with my dad in our garage making shelves for our library. I watched attentively with my Fisher Price tool belt, him with his Sears Roebuck handy man tool chest. I learned a great deal as I studied his every move in between the accidental cuts, bruises, and trips to the emergency room. I was inspired by his amazing display of skill and control therefore I am here to contribute my expertise."

"Mm hmm."

The contractor gave me a look with his eyes pleading to me "Come over here and get this annoying twerp out of my sight." However, I was in no mood for Bert's male bonding ritual.

"Okay Bertie, take five."

He didn't quite get the drift. He continued droning on about his experiences with power tools. I re-emphasized my point by grabbing his right arm and pulled him away from the infuriated contractor. I pulled Bert away just in time to avoid an "accidental" roundhouse to the head.

"But sir, I was about to explain the proper use of a band saw!"

"Can you shut your yap for a minute?"

"But Mr. Addison"

"Bert, take Nike's advice, just shut it!"

"Isn't it, 'Just do it?'"

"Yeah, that too."

The worried look on my face gave Bert the green light to spout his "You can lean on me" speech.

"Now, sir . . . I'm not going to drone on and on for an tremendous amount of time while you wait for me to get to the main point."

"Bert?"

"Yes?"

"Get to the main point."

"Ahh, yes . . . Mr. Addison please don't think you had anything to do with what Miss Hayes is going through."

"I appreciate your sentiments, but the fact remains I wish I knew how to think before I act."

"But . . ."

"Bertie, please. No pep talks, in fact, no talk, period. I don't deserve to feel better. It's my duty to beat myself up to a pulp."

"Sir . . . I understand . . . I mean, I **don't** really . . . understand, but . . . anyway, I can't imagine how horrible it must feel to think, 'I lost my second baby.' "

"You're right. You don't know."

"I know."

**He didn't take his eyes off the floor as he forced himself to sit in front of me next to my bed.**

"No. You don't," I insisted.

"I know, I don't." Bert said. "I don't even have a baby."

No, I mean, you don't know how it feels to almost lose three babies."

"Three?" Bert's eyes widened in shock.

"It wasn't a streak I wanted to keep."

"Oh my God . . . Mr. Addison . . . I didn't . . ."

"Yes, I know you didn't know, but now you know, so can we get off the subject?" I replied in exasperation.

"Sure."

Man, I hate it when I'm in this position. I hate hearing Bert ramble, but most of all I hate when he has nothing to say.

"Look, Bertie . . . it's nothing against you . . . it's just . . ."

"I know, sir. I know."

With a sympathetic pat on the back, I left him to resume his duty to annoy the hell out of everyone around him . . .

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"David, I hate it when you go through this."

"What was I supposed to think, Maddie. We almost lost our baby . . . again."

"You don't have to remind me."

"I did it again, haven't I? . . . I'm sorry."

"David, it's okay. How many times

do I have to say it?"

"I should have brought us a sleeping bag. Matter of fact, I could have went home, got the sleeping bag, came back, and still had time to wait for the nurse to say . . ."

"Miss Hayes?"

"Yes."

"You gave me the wrong number."

"Excuse me?"

"The phone number you gave me was for your new office."

"I'll go over to the desk and tell her, Maddie. I don't want you to over exert yourself for seven digits."

It's hard to notice, but David isn't as worried about this as he was when this happened a few months ago. I think the memories are bringing back the helpless feelings he surrendered to me when he came back to my hospital room the next morning. It made me see a side to him I've seldom seen . . . a scared, vulnerable side that made me feel comfortable enough to show him mine.

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"Hey sweetie. You awake?"

I get a slight adrenaline rush each time I hear his voice, it literally starts my day. I noticed how much I missed it when I woke up that morning and didn't hear my sliver tongued alarm clock.

"I'm feeling much better," I replied.

I don't like it when David's like this. He didn't take his eyes off the

floor as he forced himself to sit in front of me next to my bed. He couldn't look at me.

"David."

"You don't have to say it."

"Say it? Say what?"

"Say that all of this wasn't my doing. However, the fact remains . . ."

"I want you to move in with me."

I could tell by David's shocked look that I was taking a gigantic leap. I couldn't get that statement out any other way.

"Umm, I don't think I heard correctly. Maybe it's me, but it sounded like you said . . ."

"I want you to move in with me," I repeated.

"Why?" He asked in bewilderment. "Did the Doc increase your medication while you were asleep?"

"Why? You don't think it's a good idea?"

"No. I think it's a good, no, **great** idea. It's a wonderful idea. I'm just wondering how **you** got that idea."

"What do you mean how I got that idea?"

"I mean what I mean."

"You mean, you think I'm incapable of coming up with that idea?"

"That's exactly what I think."

"You know what I think?"

"Not anymore."

"I think I need to explain how I came up with that idea."

"Okay . . . I'm listening."

He stared at me like I had three heads.

"I had an interesting conversation yesterday and I realized what I was running from."

"Me?"

"No . . . yes . . . no, not exactly . . . but yes."

"Which is it?"

"I was afraid if I let myself love you . . . I mean, really, love you . . . unconditionally . . . you'd find a way to leave me."

"What?" David whispered in astonishment.

"Well, you know Sam."

"How can I forget?"

David's dry tone was the scar he carried from the battle he fought like hell to win . . . and then lost . . . thanks to me.

"While he was telling you about his proposal, he left out the fact that he chose being an astronaut over having a family."

"Are you saying . . ."

"Sam was trying to fix his mistake. If I hadn't met you, I would have been the one who made the mistake."

"Maddie -"

"Then there was Eric . . ."

"Baby, you don't have to do this."

"He took a page out of Sam's book and loved the law a hell of a lot more than me."

"Sweetie"

"And then came Adam."

"Maddie -"

"He left me for a whole different reason . . ."

"You don't have to explain . . ."

"This one left because he **already** had a wife and kid."

"What?"

"I know, I know. Stupid, wasn't it? However, you can't find a bigger fool than a woman in love."

"No, these bozos were the fools, Maddie."

"No, I had a bad judge of character."

"So when you met me -"

"So when I met you, I gave up on the notion that love actually exists . . . for me anyway. When you first told me you loved me I went into panic mode. I said to myself, he's going to leave me. I decided to beat you to the punch and leave first. But there was a problem."

"You were pregnant."

"I was pregnant. I thought, 'This will do it for sure. He's definitely going to leave me' . . . but when you sent me those baby books. I realized I couldn't fight it anymore. I had to come home."

"With a husband."

"With a husband and a baby I said wasn't yours. And to be honest, I really didn't know but -"

"It was another way to push me out of your life."

"You kept coming back, anyway. Who knew you were that stubborn?"

"Lucky me."

"And me," I said touching the left side of his face. "We finally split after you had a thing with you-know-who and our business went out of business. It was the worst time of my life."

"Now we're back together."

"Yes, we're back together and my unresolved feelings came back as well."

"So, your sudden change of heart about getting the new office was terrifying you . . . a new commitment you weren't sure you could sustain."

"Now do you understand why it's not your fault?"

"I still should have told you first, Maddie."

**I started to believe that even without painkillers, I was finally beginning to heal.**

"David," I was determined to make this clear to him. "All I could think about right before I had that false alarm was my deepest fear. I was so worried that you were going to tell me our relationship was over. I caused the false labor because of my stupid fears. Baby . . . I don't want to be afraid anymore. I want you to move in with me."

David shrugged his shoulders and said, "Okay."

"Just okay?"

He leaned in and gave me the most mesmerizing kiss anyone can experience while lying in a hospital bed.

"Just okay." He said in his low, sexy voice. His smile lit up my spirits . . . don't worry, I'm not going to say he lights up my life. My life is **not** a Debbie Boone record.

"The doctor told us I would be discharged in a few hours."

"What do you want me to do?"

"I want you to start putting some of your belongings into **our** house."

"Consider it done."

"The little belongings you have, that shouldn't take long," I chuckled.

"I love you, Madolyn Hayes."

"I love you, David Addison."

We would have continued kissing had it not been for the interruption by the nurse to give me my medicine. However, I started to believe that even without painkillers, I was finally beginning to heal.

After two months of hammering, sawing and David's snoring, it was time to check the fruits of our labor . . . no not **that** labor.

We walked in the room full of anticipation. David had me blindfolded as he took the blindfold off, my eyes were greeted to a pristine, immaculate office that was three times the size of our old office.

"David, it looks so beautiful."

I hugged him as tight as my stomach could bare . . . no, the pun wasn't intended.

"Yup," David said with pride. "It's all ours."

"And you're all mine." I gave him a huge kiss . . ."

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"Miss Hayes?"

"Did you say 'Miss Hayes,' David?"

"No. The nurse did."

"She did?"

"She did, Maddie. She did it three times."

"Miss Hayes?"

"Four times."

"Yes, yes. I'm here."

"The doctor will see you now."

"Oh . . . uhh, thank you . . . help me up, David."

"Thank God. If we waited another fifteen minutes, we would have landed in the Guinness Book of World Records for the most wasted afternoon in a Doctor's office."

"We didn't waste the afternoon David. We were able to tell our story. I hope everyone out there enjoyed it."

"If they're still reading, they enjoyed it. How are your legs? Can you stand up? Are you feeling okay?"

"I'm fine, David. Let's go."

"You all heard the lady. We gotta go. Hey, we'll meet again. I swear. We'll return just in time for you to read the next chapter of our lives, . . . See ya later."

"Bye-bye!"

"Maddie?"

"What?"

"I love you, baby."

"Love you, too."

If you didn't remember, the first part of this story appeared in the premiere issue (June/July 2002).

How can the fans send messages directly to their favorite *Moonlighting* stars? By putting messages in **Moonlighting Strangers**.