

-Faith FOREVER-

Part One

Twenty-nine year old Jaylynn Hallewell briskly walked down the brightly lit corridors of the pediatric emergency room in the Central Valley Hospital. She was headed for a well-deserved break in the staff room. Her stethoscope gently rapped against her chest as she walked.

Mechanically, Jaylynn reached for her identification badge and held it against the electronic scanner which beeped, unlocked the door, and let her in.

Already she had cared for at least a dozen pediatric cases and it was only 2:30 pm. A stapled finger, a twisted ankle, a broken collarbone, a light case of dehydration, a banged up shoulder, the list went on and on. She smiled at an incoming text from her husband which read: *I'll call the agency for you to make sure the next batch of paperwork is still due to arrive this week. I love you, babe, have a good day!* Jaylynn quickly sent a response before eating her lunch.

After lunch she was asked to assist another nurse in transporting a young girl up a few floors to the intensive care unit. After the girl was settled in a private room, Jaylynn was summoned to the main ICU desk. A nurse there told her the head boss wanted her to stay and help in the ICU for the rest of her shift. Jaylynn cheerfully agreed. Her heart and passion was for the ICU patients. Especially pediatric.

Jaylynn was qualified to work in other parts of the hospital, but she had asked that she might spend the majority of her time in the pediatric ICU and ER.

Maybe her love for pediatric care had come from growing up in a large family and always being the one patching up skinned knees and paper cuts for her younger siblings. Now that she was a wife to a wonderful husband (Jordan) and a mother to two bits of sunshine, Lilian and Calvin, the passion had only grown.

Another passion that had grown between her and her husband had been the desire for adoption. She had several good friends who were adopted from various places, and one of her

siblings had been adopted as well. They were almost completely through the process of being able to adopt through the nearby Christian crisis pregnancy center. Batch after batch of paperwork had flooded their inboxes and mail boxes. They had finished their home study, visited the agency multiple times for meetings, and attended two seminars. The agency said it would be anywhere between a few months and even years before they were placed with a child. Come what may, Jaylynn and Jordan had said, they were sticking it out with faith that some day they would become the forever parents to a needy child.

Part Two

After her 4 am to 4 pm shift at the hospital, Jaylynn arrived home, welcomed by the wafting smell of dinner that met her at the door. She hung her coat, dropped her keys in the little dish by the door, took off her shoes, and was suddenly enveloped in a large hug from her two kids. She kissed Lilian and ruffled Calvin's hair. Jordan shoved his way through his kids to kiss Jaylynn. "Kids, let me get to momma, huh? Hey, baby, dinner will be ready in forty-five minutes. How was work?"

As the kids went skipping away to play in the living room, Jordan took his wife's hand and led her to the kitchen. Strewn about one side of the kitchen island was her husband's work. A Bible, a commentary, and a large legal pad full of his scrawly handwriting. On the counter stood a Crock-Pot of soup. Jaylynn sniffed appreciatively at the delicious scent and proceeded to tell her husband about her day. When she was through, he briefly described his day, then shoved a stack of about dozen papers across the counter to where she stood.

"Last batch, Jaylynn, then we're done! I didn't even have to call in, it arrived before I could pick up the phone." Jordan said.

"Thank God, I was praying this would be the last of it, there was so much!" Jaylynn said with a light laugh. "After the kids go to bed, we can finish this up. Babe, we are so close, I can feel it. Way deep in my gut, I know the prize worth fighting for is nearer to us than we know."

In a few days, Jaylynn and Jordan would realize how true her words had been.

Part Three

Two days later....

As usual, before Jaylynn left for work, Jordan joined his wife in the living room, and together they lifted up their voices in earnest prayer. Prayer for their families, their two kids, their worries, blessings, their personal faith and walk with Christ, and requests. At the end of their prayer, they prayed for their adoption process, and that God would send them a child to love and cherish.

With a parting kiss, Jaylynn headed out for another day of work, leaving Jordan to brew his ritual cup of coffee and resume his studies.

At the hospital Jaylynn clocked in and discovered that the ICU was needing her to cover for another nurse who had called in sick. Jaylynn found an elevator to carry her up four floors. The doors had just closed her in when her phone rang. Not her work phone, but her personal one.

Worried something might be wrong, she whipped it out and looked at the caller ID on the screen. It was the adoption agency.

“Hello, Jaylynn, sorry I called so early. It’s Bailey. We have some news for you.” Jaylynn quickly ran through all the possibilities. *Shoot, did I mess something up in the paper work? Did I forget to send something in?* “There’s a little baby in need of a family, and we thought of you guys.”

Right in the middle of the elevator car, Jaylynn sat down, clutching the phone for dear life.

“Oh, Bailey, really?” *Oh God, is this really it?* “Tell me more, Bailey!”

“It’s a little girl, Jaylynn, and she’s only three weeks old. We need to know soon whether you can do this or not. Again, I apologize for the suddenness. She’s currently being hospitalized so she can be further evaluated for some possible heart problems. I-”

Jaylynn cut her off. “Where, Bailey? Where?”

“Central Valley.”

The baby was *here!*

Immediately after Bailey hung up, Jaylynn called Jordan and after a quick conversation, they felt that this was what God wanted them to do. Jaylynn called Bailey back and both women had a hard time containing their emotions.

Part Four

Three days later, Bailey had finished all the legal ramifications that would enable them to meet up at the hospital and see this little baby. *Their* little girl.

A baby girl in a hospital crib lay awaiting them. Her light hair, green eyes, and rosy cheeks were vibrant and seemed to glow. Little fists waved in the air, searching, seeking.

Tears flowed. Even Jordan couldn't stop the tears of joy from running down his cheeks. No longer would this child be alone. She had a family now. Forever.

When they brought her home five months and three surgeries later, they applied a custom vinyl word art over little Faith Hallewell's crib that read something like this:

Loved, not scorned;

Cherished, not abandoned;

Beloved, not forgotten;

Forever, not momentary.

You are OURS;

You are. FOREVER.