### You Complete My World

**Summary**

Set in 1966 with original characters from Call the Midwife, with several new characters. A new nurse is assigned to Nonnatus House and throughout the year, the lives of all of the Nurses and Nuns will be effected by the newcomer. Patsy and Delia find new ways of looking at strengthening their relationship, in amongst a world that does not accept their relationship.

**Notes**

The first 8 chapters have been edited and updated.
Sister Julienne enters the Clinical room at the beginning of the day, she is there to announce that there will be a new midwife starting at Nonnatus House. Sister Julienne explains that the new nurse will be joining them at lunch that day. Nurse Crane standing at the head of the room, with clip board in hand, with the daily roster ready to be distributed amongst the midwives.

Nurse Crane asks, "What is the new nurse's name?" As she takes her pen out ready to write down the name.

Sister Julienne replies, "Her name is Esther Goldberg, and she is an experienced midwife."

Later within the day, Sister Julienne walks down the corridor from her office with a woman aged in her late twenties. The two women are talking as they head towards the dining table, to join the midwives and nun's for lunch. The new nurse is medium in height, her hair is shoulder length and is the color of Strawberry Blonde, she smiles and nods her head slightly to everyone sitting at the table.

Sister Julienne introduces the lady, "I would like for you all to meet our newest nurse and midwife, Esther Goldberg." Sister Julienne introduces each of the nun's and midwives by name. Esther walks around the table and shakes the hands of each of the Nun's and midwives, before Sister Julienne shows her to chair and indicates to Esther to sit and join them for lunch.

After the lunch meal blessing has been said, Nurse Crane who is seated to the right of Esther, asks Esther, "Where have you lived before? And what is your nursing experience?"

Esther replies, "I originally lived in the USA, which is where I trained as a nurse. My experiences include working as a MASH nurse for the US Army in Vietnam. I have only just recently moved to England within the last 7-8 months, with my family." Esther accent is that of a North American.

Sister Winifred then asks, "So what Hospital’s have you worked at in the USA?"

Esther replies "I worked in a couple of Hospital’s within the California state, then I joined up to assist with the Army Hospital near by my home at the time. It was just shortly that I was called up to active duty for a year in a M.A.S.H Hospital in Vietnam. After returning to L.A, i wanted a change started working as a midwife. Which i have found to be more rewarding."

Delia asks, “What was it like being a nurse in a M.A.S.H unit?”

Esther said “The work was hard, and you constantly worked long days. The hardest, thing for me, was seeing young men being brought into the operating theatre, and knowing that for some of them, their lives would be changed for ever. They would return home without a limb, or even worse they were affected mentally."

Valerie is sitting and listening and understands exactly what Esther is speaking about, as she previously worked as a nurse in the Army. Valerie asked, “Did you find it hard to readjust when
you came back from Vietnam?”

Esther replied “I guess what I found hard to come to terms with, was how quiet it was at night back at home. I found that I couldn’t sleep without a lot of noise around me. So, my family have gotten used to the radio playing during the night.” Although Esther was not sure just yet as to how much she should share with her new colleagues.

Over the rest of lunch, there were more discussions held with the new nurse. Esther shared more about her training and some of her upbringing. Esther didn’t openly share with her new work colleagues, she only shared that spent the first five years of her life in Hawaii, where her father worked at the Pearl Harbour Naval Base. She shared about her travels and living in Sydney, Australia for about 5 years before her family moved to California, USA. During her conversation with Sister Julienne, Esther had been mentioned that there would be times when she would be required to bring her 4-year-old niece Alice, to Nonnatus House. Sister Julienne explains this to the other nun’s and midwives.

Esther then says, “There are times at our house, times when we are busy and need some help to just kept her safe, and it is much appreciated.” Esther said “Alice is a really good kidl, she is happy as long as you supply her with enough paper and colour pencils to draw with. And the other most important thing to remember about Alice, is that she very much loves to eat cake. I will bring a cake when Alice come, and there will be enough to be shared by everyone as well for Alice to devour her share.”

Delia smiles and says “Sister Monica Joan is going to look forward to her visits. She is also partial to all things cake.”

Sister Julienne and Nurse Phyllis Crane after lunch ask Esther to stay, to show her around the main areas of Nonnatus House, and so that Esther can collect her new uniform. Phyllis then takes Esther outside to introduce her to Fred Buckle, who would assign her a bike to use during her rounds. Esther quickly explain to Phyllis and Fred, that she wouldn’t need a bike, as she had her own motorcycle. The motorcycle had been fitted out to allow for a nurse’s bag.

Fred was impressed by how well maintained the motorcycle appeared and said, “My this is a very nice bike, who works on it for you?”

Esther replies with a sense of pride, “I do, my father and brothers have over the years shown me how to maintain and work on different types of engines. This skill comes in handy when you get stuck and there is no one around to help.” Esther places into the special bag located on the back of the motorcycle, her new uniforms, and says goodbyes to Nurse Crane and Fred Buckle. She straps on her helmet and straddles the motorcycle. A though comes into her mind, that she is going to enjoy her time at Nonnatus House, as well as getting to know more about her colleagues, before driving towards her home.
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

It is the morning of Esther’s first day at Nonnatus House.

Chapter Notes

This Chapter has been reviewed and updated.

The early morning light flickers through the bedroom window, Esther begins to stir from her night’s sleep. Esther listens to the news report coming from the radio, and gently sits up in the bed and leans against the bedhead, as she takes in the surroundings of her bedroom. Next to the bedroom door is a large dresser, where several photo frames are displayed, these contain images of important people from her life. There are two sets of hair brushes and two different perfume bottles lying on top of the dresser. Next to her bed is a bedside table where a lamp, a radio and alarm clock sit. On the other side of the bed is an identical bedside table which also has a lamp resting on the table, although there is a book lying face down with the page opened to the last page that was read. Against the wall to the right of Esther’s side of the room, stands a large wooden wardrobe with two doors. Esther looks at the nurse’s uniform which is hanging off one of the doors of the wardrobe.

Esther begins to think back to when she was in the Army and how this uniform has more appeal, compared to the Army Green nurse’s uniform, she wore during her time in Vietnam. These memories start her to become anxious about her new working environment at Nonnatus House.

Esther thinks to herself, ‘Surely the work load at Nonnatus House is not going to be as stressful as working in the M.A.S.H unit.’

Esther closes her eyes and tells herself that she is no longer in the Army and that she is starting her new job as a Midwife at Nonnatus House. Once she has gathered her thoughts, Esther gently climbs out of the bed, making sure to not disturb the sleeping, warm and naked woman on the other side of the bed. Esther quietly dresses for the day making sure that the uniform is presentable. Just as she is about to leave the room, Esther turns to check that her lover is still sleeping, she then creeps over to the side of the bed and leans down and kisses her on the cheek. She then leaves the room and heads off to the kitchen for some breakfast, before leaving for Nonnatus House. As she is walking towards the front door to the house, she is stopped in her steps by the feeling of two little arms being wrapped around one of her legs. When she looks down, she notices her niece Alice standing looking up at her. Alice reaches her arms up indicating to be picked up Esther lifts the young girl and places the child onto her hip and gives her a hug.

Alice says, “Good luck for today. Will you bring me some candy when you come home tonight?”

Esther then looks at her brother Joshua, as he stands at the base of the stairs a smile forms on his face as he looks at his sister, because he knows that the little girl has the woman wrapped around her finger and buy a big bag of candy Alice.
Esther says “Yes, only if you are really good for your mum and dad.”

Esther did not live the typical lifestyle that of a single woman in the 1960’s. She lives with her female wife/lover Alexandria Stream, her brother Joshua, his wife Sarah and their daughter Alice. The house also accommodates their childhood friends; Simon Smith, Jonah Newman and John Brown. As Esther walked to her motorcycle, she smiles at the knowledge of how much she loves her unique family and is happy to live with them here in Popular. Joshua and Esther’s younger lives had been spent moving between different counties since she was 5 years of age.

Esther drives her motorcycle through the streets of Popular. Esther enjoys looking at the various buildings and thinks about the different people who live within the buildings. She wonders if they were happy with their lives, as she is at that very moment. Her family have been living in Popular for about 7-8 months, working on converting an abandoned warehouse on the dock of the Thames into their home. Each member of the household took great delight in their hard work.

The home consisted of 3 floors with 7 bedrooms, dining and living room on the bottom floor, 4 bathrooms, a laundry, kitchen and a vast backyard. They owned the warehouse located next door, that served as a photo studio, where Alexandria has set up a professional photo studio, she uses the space for taking and developing professional photos. Another floor of the building is use as offices and the last floor is used as a music room. Esther and the male housemates use this area to practice playing their musical instruments, without disturbing Sarah and little Alice.

As Esther arrived at Nonnatus House, her thoughts drift to the image of her naked wife sleeping in their bed this morning. Esther thinks about the love making from the night before and how she must keep this part of her life private from the midwives and nuns at Nonnatus House. She is all too aware of the consequences if the true nature of their relationship was discovered. Esther knows that she would lose her new job as well as her qualifications to work and practice as a trained nurse and midwife. She knows it will affect Alexandria’s career as a professional photographer. She loves her wife, so much that Esther will do everthing within her power to protect Alex from harm or despair.
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Its been four weeks since Esther begun working at Nonnatus House. During lunch one day Esther and Sister Winifred share different views on an aspect of midwifery. Esther brings Alice to Nonnatus House and later that day the midwives meet Alexandria for the first time. Alice invites the Nun’s and Midwives to an upcoming celebration at the house.

Chapter Notes

This Chapter has been reviewed and updated.

The first month of working at Nonnatus House proved to be both challenging as well as exciting. Esther was enjoying being part of a team of nurses, she also thrived on trying to make a difference within the Popular community. She also looks to the weekly clinic day, as this gave her the opportunity to know the expectant mothers. What Esther did struggle with about her duties, was some of the nursing practices being implemented at Nonnatus House. Esther always believes that the child’s father, should be with the mother during delivery.

From her experience of working as a midwife in the United States, she participated in several babies’ deliveries and the father of the child was present. She saw firsthand how the mother was more relaxed and able to focus on the birth of their child. Over lunch one day Esther found herself clashing with Sister Winifred on this subject.

Esther was sharing about the last birth she assisted with before coming to Popular, “The mother’s contractions had been extremely painful, and she was not yet fully dilated. My mother was becoming more anxious and finding it hard to focus on her breathing. I had to think quick and I remembered from previous visitation, the woman’s husband was able to calm her. So, I called him to come in and help me. He knew how to get his wife’s attention and she was then able to focus on her breathing, within 30 minutes, she had fully dilated and then not long after they were presented with a healthy baby girl.”

Sister Winifred spoke with a firmness to her voice, “You allowed a man to be in the room during a delivery! That is not the way we do things here at Nonnatus House.”

Esther sat and had to tell herself to stay calm, “From my experience in this matter, most times the father has been an asset to the procedure as well as offering support to the mother. I have found when observing the parents as they hold their child for the first time, the pair radiate love for each other and their child. This is something special and should not be denied because of old views and practices.”

Esther could see that Sister Winifred was become agitated, as her body language changed, she sat straight in her chair while she braced her shoulders, as if she was bracing herself for battle. Esther thought that it would be better for the long run to offer an olive branch and so she said, “Sister
Winifred we may not always agree on things, but we both have the best interests of our mothers and their babies at heart. Maybe before this gets out of hand, let’s agree that we disagree on this issue. I enjoy working alongside you and would like to not let this affect our working relationship.”

Sister Winifred looks at Esther and says, “Yes I agree, with you. Please forgive my firmness on this issue.” She smiles at Esther and reaches out her hand to Esther as a way of putting the disagreement to bed. Esther takes Sister Winifred’s hand and shakes it.

During the times in day when there are no deliveries or home visits to attend to, Esther stays and join the other midwives and nuns, discussing the latest movie over a cup of tea, but in Esther’s case – a cup of strong coffee. This time is special to Esther as starts to get to know her colleagues and finds herself like she has found some real friends she can confide in and trust.

Over the last month Esther found out that Patsy and Delia share a flat together, not far from Nonnatus House. Whereas Trixie, Val, Lucille and Phyllis live with the Nun’s at Nonnatus House. Esther enjoys lunchtime the most as she can sit and talk with all the Nun’s, especially Sister Monica Joan, whom Esther has taken a liking to. She loves to sit and listen to Sister Monica Joan quote Keats and then Old Testament Scripture, as this draws out Esther’s Jewish upbringing, as she remembers the times when her father would tell her the different Biblical stories of their ancestors as a child. Esther still has her faith, but some aspects of her life are not in tune with the Jewish faith. Watching the devotion of the Nun’s to their faith and prayer times, has sparked a desire to make it a priority to attend the local Synagogue.

Early one morning outside of Nonnatus House before their shifts, Patsy and Delia noticed Esther trying to park her motorcycle, with what looked like a very sleepy little girl seated behind her.

Delia asks, “Do you need any help?” as she walks toward Esther.

Esther replies, “Yes, it would be a great help if you could take my bag in for me.” As she gently picks up her niece in her arms.

Delia walks over to the back of the motorcycle and collects the bag and a box, while Patsy walks up the stairs to open the front door. Once inside Esther thanks Delia and Patsy for their help. Delia smiles and strokes the little girl’s strawberry blonde hair as the cute little girl is cradled in Esther’s arms.

Delia says, “Is this your niece Alice? She is such a cute little girl.”

While Esther, Patsy and Delia walk towards the lounge room, where Esther lies down Alice on the couch.

Esther replies, “Yes … Everyone at home is working today … I rang Sister Julienne to see if it would be alright for Alice to come and stay here until someone comes to pick her up.” Esther places a rug over the now sleeping child.

Esther then collects her bag and the paper box, she nods her head at Delia as way of showing appreciation for her assistance. Esther then lifts the lid of the paper box and show the contents to both Patsy and Delia.

Patsy comments, “You know that Sister Monica Joan is going to eat your cake if you don’t find somewhere to hid it from her.”

Esther smiles and says, “I know, that’s why I am going to leave a note on top of the box saying, ‘Cake inside, please eat.’” she walks over to the kitchen table and places the box on the table.
Esther was being paired with Delia today, the roster states they are on first delivery. Esther had learnt for Delia that she had only been working at Nonnatus House for a couple years after transferring from The London Hospital. Delia will be show her the procedures of a Nonnatus House birth, but to also assist her with learning the different routes around the streets of Popular. It is not long before the pair are called out to a birth, after arriving at the assigned address, Delia runs over the different routines and procedures with Esther. The delivery is a smooth birth for both Mother and Daughter, and the Father is very overjoyed at the sound of his daughters first cries. Delia and Esther finish and head back to Nonnatus House on the back of Esther’s Motorcycle. Delia enjoys the ride, which she makes known to Esther when they arrive at Nonnatus House.

Delia hands Esther the helmet she had been wearing, “Have you always ridden a motorcycle? It was really enjoyable and so much quicker than riding a bicycle to a birth.”

Esther takes the helmet from Delia and says, “I have noticed that I can get to my visits quicker, allowing for more care to be delivered to the patients. Although the motorcycle is a lot easier on the bone, when traveling over the cobble stone streets. How do you ladies cope with the continual jolting of your bones?”

As Esther and Delia finish with restocking their medical bags, they head into the dining area ready for a much-earned lunch meal. Esther notices how Patsy’s face lights up, as Delia walks to the seat next to her. From where Esther sits at the opposite side of Patsy and Delia, she catches Patsy glancing at Delia until the brunette returns the glance and smiles. Esther wonders if these two women, share the same kind of relationship as her and Alexandria (Alex as she loves to call her).

Sister Monica Joan and Alice are talking to each other, which Esther can only speculate that the pair are discussing the ‘Cake’ located in the middle of the table.

Nurse Crane turns to Esther who is sits next to her asks, “So how did your first birthi go?”

Esther and Delia both replies, “Very well, both mother and daughter are doing fine. The father was very excited to hold his daughter.”

Esther continues to say, “I was a bit nervous at first, but as the birth progressed, it all went smoothly, although I don’t think I could not done it without the help of Nurse Busby.”

Delia looks over at Esther and smiles before saying, “Thank you.”

Val asks Delia, “What was it like to ride on the back of the motorcycle?”

“It was so much fun travelling on the back of the motorcycle, it makes the journey so much quicker to reach the mother. And it was nice for a change to not have my bones jolt while riding over the cobble stones streets of Popular. I think I might need to start saving up for one.”

Delia looks around to all those siting at the table, before looking at Patsy with a cheeky smile and raises her eyebrow.

Alice kneels on her chair, so that she can talk to all the ladies at the table.

She says “We are going to have a big party at our house. I want you all to PLEASE COME!. We are going to have Pavalona!”

Esther shakes her head in embarrassment before she explains “I think you meant to say Pavlova, its a dessert that is very popular in Australia. I grew to love it when i lived there for 10 years. Sister Monica Joan you are going to love it. We are having a House warming and Birthday Party for Alexandria. It is in two weeks’ time, and I would like you all to come and help us celebrate.”
Patsy and Delia are first to accept, then one by one the other midwives and Nun’s except for Sister Winifred accept the invitation. The midwives and Nun’s begin discussing the upcoming party, when Nurse Crane gets up from the table.

“I believe that was a knock on the door, I will go and answer the door. “says Sister Winifred.

Sister Winifred and a beautiful woman of medium stature, and thin build and possess long flowing sandy blonde hair, walk to the dining area. The woman is wearing a summery dress and was in the process of removing her sunglasses from her eyes.

Sister Winifred says, “This lovely lady is Alexandria Stream, and she is here to pick up little Alice”

Alice leaps off her chair and runs to Alex and wraps her arms around the woman and yells, “Auntie Alex is here.”

Esther who shakes her head and smirks at the joy expressed by the child for her lover. Sister Winifred indicates for Alex to join them at the table for a cup of tea. Alice offers Alex the chair she has been sitting, and then climbs up onto her Auntie Alex’s lap.

Esther looks lovingly at Alex before introduces her to those seated at the table, “This is Alexandria Stream, but you can call her Alex. Alex lives with Alice, myself and the rest of the motley crew at home.”

Sister Monica Joan turns to Alex and places her hand on top of Alex’s and says, “My child, you must not leave with Alice before she has been able to sample this wonder cake, which has come to us from the heavens.”

Trixie asks Alex, “Where did you get your dress?”

Alex replies, “It was a gift from a client, after I had completed a fashion photo shot for them.”

Trixie says, “Well if you have any other clients, who wish to give away any more items of clothing find that they have, PLEASE keep us, especially me in mind. Sweetie.”

Alex smiles at Esther before saying to Trixie, “Esther has told me that you and I might become friends, as I can never get Esther to come clothes shopping with me. Maybe you might want to join me when you are not working?”

Trixie answers “YES please.”

Esther sits and watches her wife/lover Alex, and thinks to herself, how much she loves this woman and the difference she has made within her life over the years. Esther is always amazed at how natural Alex is at engaging people in conversation, this was what drew Esther to Alex in the first place all those years ago in LA. Esther smiles at the thought of how far they have come as a couple.
Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

It’s the day of the big party. Esther and Alex share a special moment early in the morning. The Midwives and Nun’s join with the other guests in the celebrating of the house warming of the Goldberg’s house and Alex’s birthday. Esther and Alex share a sexy dance on the dance floor.

Chapter Notes

This chapter has been reviewed and edited. This is a new version of the previous chapter.

Two weeks have passed since Alice had invited the midwives and nuns to the house warming and Alex’s birthday party. It is early in the morning and Esther wakes and makes her way towards the kitchen, she wants to prepare a special birthday breakfast for her lover. She knows that her lover Alex’s favourite breakfast is Bacon and Eggs on toast. This is a meal which Esther would not prepare, but because it’s Alex’s birthday, she wanted to prepare it for her. She carries the tray of a plate of Bacon and Eggs on toast with two cups of coffee and a small wrapped box perched on the tray. Esther enters their room and finds Alex sitting against the bedhead.

Esther walks over and says, “Good morning my love, Happy Birthday and Happy 5 years Wedding Anniversary.” Esther places the tray on Alex’s bedside table.

Alex beams with love for her wife and lover, before saying, “I really would like for you to show me as to how much you love me” as she raises her eyebrows and reaches and grabs at Esther top. Alex pulls Esther towards her and captures her lovers’ lips with her own. Esther pulls back and cups Alex’s face with her left hand, while the right-hand works pulls at Alex’s nightie, so that their bodies are pressing against each other. The kiss was soft and gentle in beginning, but soon becomes more intense, full of hunger and longing. Both women make short work at removing each other’s clothing, revealing two nude bodies.

Esther pulls back and takes in the sight before her and says, “I will never grow tired of looking at your beautiful body. I am so blessed as I am the only person to see and feel these wonderful large breasts of yours.” As a cheeky and sexy grin forms across her lips. For the next hour, the two lovers devote the time to exploring each other’s bodies and bringing each other to the level of pleasure only they could achieve.

Alex says, “I have enjoyed being your wife for the last 5 years. It’s a shame that we can’t tell our other friends, so that they can share in our joy.”

Esther declares her love for her wife, “I love you so much, these last 14 years since knowing you have been the greatest time of my life. I am so blessed to have found you.”

Alex smiles and pulls Esther in for a kiss and connects their hands together, while gazing into her
lover’s green eyes. Alex conveys without the use of words to Esther, she is truly loved. Esther pulls herself from Alex’s embrace and reaches over to the side table and picks up Alex’s present.

Always being the romantic Esther has put a lot of thought into this gift. Alex opens the wrapped box, she finds inside a necklace with a heart shaped locket. Alex opens the locket and finds on one side her favourite photo; it shows the pair on their Wedding day and the other side was empty. Alex looks at Esther with a questionable look on her face.

Esther responds, “It’s for the photo of our baby, I know that we have been trying to start a family. I can’t wait till we have a child of our own, I want to have a baby with you.” Esther holds Alex’s hand and waits for her reaction.

Alex has been wanting to have a child with Esther for such a long time, but the other times they had tried to conceive, each time it had not worked. Both Esther and Alex had talked about their concerns about not being able to conceive, but they decided that they would keep trying.

Alex smiles and says, “Yes it would be only fitting to have a photo of our child in this locket to carry next to my heart always.” They both move towards each other and kiss.

They are soon interrupted by a knock on their bedroom door and several voices coming from the other side of the door. Esther and Alex dress before opening the door and are greeted by all the other members of their household.

Alice runs into the room saying, “Happy Birthday, Auntie Alex.”

The rest of the day moves fast as everyone gets involved with the decorating, cooking and setting up of the backyard with a small stage, tables for the food and drinks, an area for people to sit on chairs and benches, they even set up a dance floor in front of the stage. The boys and Esther all play musical instruments, with Esther on rhythm guitar, Joshua on lead vocals and piano/keyboards, Simon on drums, Jonah on lead guitar and John on bass guitar and formed themselves into a band. They were going to play some covers and between sets, records will be played by a DJ for their guests to dance to.

During a rare moment when Esther was able to get a moment to sit and rest. Esther stated to reflect on her relationship with Alex. It all began 14 years earlier in LA, USA, when their different worlds collided. Esther was 16 and living in LA, USA and in her final years of High School. Alex had moved from London with her family to live in the USA, as her father had been transferred there for work.

The classroom teacher introduced Alex to the class before telling Alex to sit in the chair next to Esther. The teacher asked Esther to make sure that Alex was shown around the School, and Esther felt a desire to look out for the new girl and take her under her wing. They quickly became close friends, always looking for each other when they arrived at School in the mornings. The pair were always together during class breaks and even during the weekends they would find some reason to be together. Esther found she was surprised at how easy it was to be herself in Alex’s presence, something she had always struggled with. Esther would find making friends difficult and was alone most days before the arrival of Alex into her world. Esther’s home life was full of hardships caused by a mother who distanced herself for her daughter, and Esther learnt from an early age, not to let others in, mainly out of fear of being hurt.

Esther and Alex finally revealed their true feelings for each other when they were 18 years. It happened on the evening of their siblings Wedding. Esther’s brother had meet Alex’s sister Sarah about 6 months before their Wedding and their courtship was quick and were engaged within a month of dating. Both Esther and Alex had been asked to be Bridesmaids, so on the evening of the Joshua and Sarah’s Wedding, the two young friends found themselves dancing with their partnered
Groomsmen. Esther found it difficult to keep her eyes off Alex in her Bridesmaids dress. While
dancing the First Wedding dance of the evening, Esther could not understand as to why she was
angry that Alex was being held by Simon, when all Esther could think about was that she wanted
to be the one Alex was dancing with. As soon as the dance was over, Esther left the dance floor and
headed outside to have a cigarette, she didn’t realise how frustrated she had been, until she noticed
that she had just smoke 4 cigarettes with 5 minutes. Esther was about the head back inside, when
she heard Alex’s voice call out to her.

“Esther, why did you leave so soon after the dance? I wanted to have a dance with you, but you
were gone. What’s wrong? “Alex moved towards Esther and placed a hand on Esther’s shoulder.

Esther turned around to face Alex, she is filled with some many different emotions. Esther shakes
her head and says, “Nothing’s wrong.”

Alex says “I know there is something wrong, you have been acting strange the last couple of weeks
when we are together. Is there something that I have done?” Alex waits for Esther to reply and
stands close to her, blocking the way.

Esther knows that Alex will not let this rest, so she says with hesitation, “You have done nothing
wrong. It’s me… I have found that I like you more than a friend…. and I am frightened that you
might think that I strange and won’t like me anymore.” Esther starts to fidget and while looking at
the ground.

Esther was finding the silence from Alex difficult to bear and so she found looking at the ground
easier than looking at her friend. Esther then felt Alex’s hand under her chin, as her chin was lifted,
so that Esther was now looking directly into the eyes of Alex. Alex was smiling and then moved in
closer to Esther, the gap between the pair so small that Esther only had to lean in to kiss Alex on
the lips. They kissed each other and then pulled away before holding each other in an embrace.

Alex says, “I have been feeling the same way for a couple of months. It’s been so hard for me to
not make a move before today. I didn’t know if you felt the same, so I thought that I would keep it
to myself.” Alex takes hold of Esther’s hand and leads them back inside to the Wedding
celebrations.

Esther thoughts return to the present and she smiles at how these last 12 years have been the best
years of her life, as for the first time since being aged 5, she experiences what it is to be truly loved
completely by someone.

Alex comes outside to place some food on the tables, when she spies her lover and wife, sitting on
a bench. She sits next to Esther and they hold each other’s hand.

Alex says, “Penny for them?”

Esther blinks and looks at Alex before saying, “I was just thinking about the last 14 years and how
lucky I was that day, when you came into my life. I can’t wait for the others to meet all of the
midwives and nun’s from Nonnatus House.”

It is not long till it was time for the guests to arrive and the party is in full swing. Records are
playing, the guests are either dancing or sharing in the food and drinks. Not long into the evening,
the band start to play some covers of popular songs. Some of the songs have been requested by
Alex and the other guests. From where Esther is standing on the stage, she can observe her guests.
Near the table where the dessert is located, she spies Alice and Sister Monica Joan, from what
Esther saw, it looked as though the two were plotting how they could cut into the Pavlova (which
Alice was pointing at). Esther laughed when Sarah walked over to the table and caught the pair
before they could cut the dessert.

Esther then looked around and noticed that Val and Lucille were sitting on a bench and were talking between eating. Esther noticed how Val could not take her eyes off Lucille and she wondered if there was something between the two. Lucille was talking, and Val was listening to everything Lucille said. Esther also noticed that when Lucille stood up to collect some more food, that Val’s gaze followed Lucille’s every movement to the table and back to the bench.

Trixie was dancing with Patsy and Delia on the dance floor, Esther had noticed when she turned to say something to Simon that his eyes were focused on the blonde dancing. Simon soon realised that he had been sprung and turned his attention to the top of the drum kit.

Esther noticed that Patsy and Delia spent most of their time at the party in the presence of each other. They gave each other glances when one of them moved to collect some food or a drink. So, from where Esther stood on the stage, she saw the emotions behind the longing stares between the pair (she knew these looks as Alex and her would look at each other in much the same way when they were out in public).

The band takes a break and Esther finds herself having the opportunity to sit with her wife/lover on a bench.

Esther asks, “Are you enjoying yourself?”

Alex says, “Yes, but I would like to have a dance with my wife!” Esther stands and holds out her hand to Alex.

Esther leads Alex to the dance floor. The DJ plays the song ‘Cherry, Cherry’ and Esther throws caution to the wind, as she takes her wife into her arms and dances close to Alex in front of their new friends and colleagues. The dance becomes more heated, as Esther uses one of her feet to widen Alex’s legs apart, then moving her thigh between Alex’s legs. As they dance very close to each other, Esther, moves her thigh so that she is rubbing that area of Alex, which when aroused caused the woman to climax. Alex is soon gripping Esther’s shirt as her arousal peaks and she is unable to comprehend or make complete sentences.

All Alex is able to utter is “Oh …you …. don’t …play …. fair!”

Esther smirks and knows that her lover/wife is about to reach her peak and continues the dance until she feels the woman in her arms begin to shake from pleasure. Esther plants a kiss to Alex’s forehead and holds her tight, until the woman is relaxed and able to move.

During their dance, Esther looks around to see if the nuns or the other midwives have noticed their little dance. She notices that Delia has seen them and was mesmerised by the show before her. Esther notices Delia leaning into whisper into Patsy’s ear.

The night continued until late into the evening and soon it was time for their guests to head off their perspective homes. Esther sees off the last of the guests off at the door before she turns to watch her lover heading towards their bedroom. Alex stops and beckoned her wife to join her, Alex mouths the words that she wants to give her lover a night of pleasure. Esther found herself heading to her bedroom with a new eagerness to fulfil her wife’s desires.
Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Delia and Esther attend to a birth in Popular. Delia asks Esther to bring Alex to a dinner at Patsy and her flat on their next night off. Esther and Alex attend the dinner. Alex slips up and lets out a secret to Delia, while the two are in the kitchen putting the last touches to the evening meal. Delia asks Alex straight out if the two women are a couple.

Chapter Notes

This chapter has been reviewed and edited.

Delia and Esther are required to attend to a birth, which is likely to be a difficult case for just one nurse. Esther has been a midwife for over 5 years, and because she is new to the midwives, Nurse Crane suggests that Nurse Busby tag along for extra support.

Delia shows her excitement at being able to be work with Esther, when she says “It will be great to be of assistance. Although I am looking forward to having another ride on that motorcycle of yours.”

Patsy reminds both Esther and Delia, “Make sure that you both are careful!” Esther says, “I will make sure that Delia wears a helmet and understands that she needs to hold on tight to me, while we ride.” Esther notices Patsy staring at her sternly, and feels compelled to add, “Or Delia can hold onto the back of the motorcycle.”

The difficult birth turns out to be a routine birth and lasts for over several hours, as the time between contractions begin to shorten, and not long before the birth of a beautiful baby boy. Delia informs the father of the arrival and he offers the midwives a celebratory drink, which they refuse as they are still working and need to attend to other delivers.

While Esther is places and secures the nursing bags onto the back of the motorcycle, Delia asks, “Do you and Alex, ever go out on your days or nights off?”

Esther says, “Yes, but we mainly just go out to a restaurant, we have not really made too many friends here yet.”

Delia then asks while getting onto the back of the motorcycle, “Would you both like to come to Patsy’s and my flat one night for dinner? We would like to have the chance to get to know you both and share a meal with you.”

Esther is touched by Delia’s generosity and accepts the invitation eagerly. Upon arriving back at Nonnatus House, Delia informs Patsy of the upcoming dinner date between Esther and Alex at
their flat. Delia goes off to have a look at the roster and comes back to Esther and Patsy to arrange a date.

Over the lunch meal that day, Nurse Phyllis Crane asks Esther about the morning and how she found the birth.

Before Esther could reply, Delia says, “Esther was so great, she was able to put the nervous mother at ease, which made the birth that much more special for the mother. The father was also nervous, and Esther to put him at ease by just putting her hand on his shoulder, while she told him that all was going to be ok.”

Esther looks at Delia from across the table and says, “Thank you.”

Esther rushes in from her shift at Nonnatus House and realises that Alex and she will be running late for the dinner date at Patsy and Delia’s flat. Esther rushes into the bathroom and gets ready, while she overhears Alex talking with Trixie. Alex is already dressed and waiting in the lounge room, talking with Trixie (whom has been recently dating Simon, and has been coming over on her off evenings). Alex calls out, “Esther, you had better get a move on if we are not going to keep your friends waiting.”

Esther emerges in an elegant pants outfit. Esther collects their coats and walk towards the front door, leading Alex to the motorcycle. It is not long before Alex and Esther stand at the door of Patsy and Delia’s flat. Esther knocks on the front door and it opens, and they are warmly greeted by Patsy and ushers them inside.

Delia comes out of the kitchen and says, “Hello, Patsy will you please take Esther into the lounge room and make us some drinks. While Alex can come with me into the Kitchen to keep me company, as I get our meal ready.” Delia and Alex head off into the kitchen.

Patsy takes Alex and Esther’s coats and places them on the coat rack next to the front door. Patsy leads Esther to the lounge room and asks, “Would you like a drink? We have tea, coffee, alcoholic and soft drink.”

Esther says, “Alex will have a Gin and Tonic, but I will have a Coke, I really don’t drink that much so.”

While Esther and Patsy are talking in the lounge room, after Patsy had delivered Delia and Alex’s drinks to them in the kitchen. Delia has an alternative motive for asking for Alex’s help, she wants the chance to speak to Alex on her own. Delia and Alex begin to talk about everyday things, such as the weather and what it was like living in the USA.

Alex says, “I am so sorry that we were late in getting here tonight, but Esther was running late getting home from work. On her days off, I struggle to get her out of our bed, she always wants to stay in bed, but I want to go out.” Alex realised that she has slipped up and covers her mouth, before saying, “Please don’t let on to the nun’s or to the other midwives, as Esther will lose her job. Just forget that I even said anything.”

Delia reaches out to Alex and touches her hand to reassures her, “It’s the same for Patsy and me, we have to be careful as well. It’s nice to know that we have new friends who know the same struggles. Besides I was going to ask about that dance you both shared at the party, that was such a sight. I was glad that the Nun’s missed it, so you are lucky.” Alex and Delia shared a smile and Delia said, “We had better go and take this meal into our ladies and enjoy ourselves.”

Over the next couple of hours, the four ladies talk and share a beautiful meal. Esther feels at ease
with her new friends and notices that Alex and Delia, have bonded as they share a joke. Delia asks Alex and Esther, “I noticed that you both like to dance, next week Patsy and I are going to the Gateway Club, and would you like to join us?”

Patsy leans over to Delia and whispers, “What are you up to Busby?”

Esther has a puzzled look on her face, as Alex says, “What is the Gateway Club?”
Delia says, “It’s a club where women like us, can go and dance together, without any concerns. You can dance close together and no one worries about it.”

Esther and Patsy look at each other, as if to say WHAT IS GOING ON HERE. Alex reaches over and places a hand across the back of Esther’s neck and turns to her before saying, “It’s OK Delia knows about us. I really would like to be able to slow dance with you in public and not just in our bedroom.”

Esther smiles at her wife and leans in to kiss her in front of her friends, she then looks at Delia and Patsy and says, “I guess we are going out dancing.”

Patsy says, “Esther, do you want to join me outside for a smoke?” Both women stand and head out the front door of the flat.

Alex is happy and begins to flirt with Esther when she returns from having a cigarette with Patsy. Esther realises that Alex is very keen to get home, so after helping with cleaning up, the pair say their goodbyes and make plans for their trip to the Gateway Club the following week.

Esther drives the pair through the streets of Popular towards their home, when she feels Alex placing kisses to the back of her neck. Alex’s hands move from being around her waist, to roaming lower and between her spread legs. Esther knows exactly what is on her lover’s mind, and speeds up the motorcycle, as she realises the urgency of desire surging through her own body for her lover. They just make it home and into their room before Alex pounces upon Esther and makes known her intentions for the rest of the evening.
Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

It’s the night when Delia, Patsy, Esther and Alex go to The Gateway Club. The night starts off well but Esther’s jealousy (after she has had a couple of drinks), lands her in trouble and not just with Alex, but with a woman, who tries to pick up Alex. Fists are exchanged, Patsy plays nurse as she patches up Esther. Alex shares another moment from their past, where Esther’s jealous side ruined a perfect day.

Chapter Notes

This chapter has been reviewed and edited.

Esther and Alex are excited to be going out for the night and be free to love each other in the presence of other women like themselves. Esther is so excited, she begins the evening sharing a couple of glasses of Whiskey with Patsy and Delia, while Alex has a glass of Gin and Tonic. Alex is not sure if Esther’s drinking is going to be a positive side to the evening or not.

Esther when she does drink alcohol, she either becomes cheeky, seductive or jealous and aggressive. Alex is secretly hoping for the first two and not the latter. After having something to eat and sharing a couple more drinks, the four women head out towards the Gateway Club. Esther can’t keep her hands-off Alex at first, upon arriving inside the Gateway Club, as she finds Alex so attractive and all she wants to do is touch her. Esther’s motive is to make sure her lover know she is very much turned on and ready for any kind of action. The two couples make their way to the dance floor and don’t waste any time, as each couple begin to dance.

Esther begins to kiss her lover on the lips, before moving her lips further down her neck and towards Alex’s shoulder. While kissing Alex, Esther’s feet are making short work at parting her lover’s legs, so that her thigh is pressed hard against Alex’s centre and begins to grind against her lover to the beat of the music. Alex nettles her head into Esther’s chest, while her hands grab hold of Esther’s top and begins to crumple it in her hands.

Esther looks over at her friends and notice them dancing close and being very affectionally with each other. Esther then turns her focus back onto her lover and continues to work Alex into a frenzy. After a couple of songs being played Esther feels her lover reach the peak of pleasure. After Alex has come down from her organism, Esther indicates to Alex to go and find them a booth to seat at, while she heads to the bar to get them some drinks. Esther heads to the bar and watches her lover, she finds it hard to concentrate on ordering their drinks as she is instantly distracted by how attractive Alex is this evening.

Alex finds a booth for Esther, Patsy, Delia and herself can sit at. Once seated Delia leans over and takes Patsy’s hand in hers. They share a long and lingering kiss before Delia rests her head on Patsy’s shoulder. Esther waits to order their drinks, when she notices a woman standing next to the booth, where the three women are siting. From where Esther stood, it looked as though the woman
is flirting with Alex. Esther orders their drinks and makes her way to the booth, with every step to the booth, Esther feels a rage growing inside of her. Alex was her wife, and no one was going to flirt with her, especially in front of her.

Esther places the drinks onto the table, and then turns to the woman and asks, “IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH?” Her voice is raised as she feels her body stiffens.

The woman looks over at Esther before returning her attention back to Alex. Alex sits up in the seat of the booth, showing that she is uneasy with the interaction between Esther and the other woman. Esther’s rage and jealous nature will not let up and she moves closer to the woman.

The woman then turns and faces Esther and says, “I am just paying some much-needed attention to this beautiful woman. What is it to you anyway? It’s not like that she belongs to you. Because if she was yours, you would not have left her side. If she was mine, I would not leave her for a second.”

This was all it took for Esther to lose it, her right hand formed a fist and before she knew what was happening, she swung and hit the woman right in the nose. The woman stepped back and then it was on, the two women were exchanging blows, each of the women were hitting the other with force and a determination to demonstrate their affections for Alex.

Patsy jumps up from the booth and pulls Esther back from hitting the woman, while another woman in the club was able to restrain the other woman. Alex and Delia collect the coats and head towards the door, Patsy and Esther follow them outside. Alex is fuming and refuses to look at Esther or acknowledge that Esther is hurt and requires medical attention.

The four ladies head to Esther and Alex’s place, once inside Patsy asks for the first aid kit, so she can attend to the cuts and bruises to Esther’s face and hands. Alex hands the first aid kit to Patsy and walks into the lounge room, before sitting down on the couch. She places her head into her hands and begins to cry, mainly out of frustration, but also because a fun night was ruined. Delia walks over to Alex and sits next to her, she gives her new friend a hug and holds her as she cries on her shoulder.

Patsy has finished patching up Esther’s wounds, Esther walks into the lounge room and straight to the bar, she pours herself a very large glass of whiskey and drinks it straight down, before refilling the glass.

Alex yells at her, “Drinking is what got us into this mess. I think you need to stop before you ruin the rest of the evening.”

Esther looks at her and then back to the glass in her hand. She walks over to where Alex is sitting and tries to soothe things over with her, she kneels in front of Alex and cups her wife’s face in her hands. Alex brushes Esther’s hands away before standing up and walking over to the opposite wall, where she pulls down a photo frame and holds it in her hands and sobs.

Patsy enters the room after tidying up the bathroom and finds Alex standing next to the wall, crying and holding a photo frame. Patsy moves towards Alex, who hands Patsy the photo. The photo is a lovely shot of Alex and Esther dressed like they are part of a wedding party. The two women are laughing, and they look very much in love with each other.

Patsy asks, “Who’s Wedding are you at?”

Alex says between sobs, “Ours, …it was on …my birthday …5 years ago. Esther had surprised me, …by taking me out on a yacht…. for the day. My sister Sarah …. had made sure that there ….
was a special dress for me… to wear and when we were out at sea, Esther took my hand… and got down on one knee ….and asked me to Marry her, right there on that yacht. “Alex pulls herself together before continuing saying, “The captain of the yacht was able to marry us, and it was legal as we were out at sea, where there no laws against our marriage.”

Delia is shocked and stares at Patsy. Esther has moved to sit on the couch before saying, “It was a lovely day, and Alex you looked so lovely my dear, so much so that I could not believe that you became my wife that day. The ceremony was wonderful, and you looked so ravishing in that dress, that I could not take my eyes off you all day.”

Alex walks to Delia and sits next to her, while showing her the photo, “It all was so fantastic, Esther had made all my dreams come true and I was so looking forward to sharing our first night as a married couple, when a woman happened to come over to talk to me. Esther had gone to fix something in our cabin on the yacht, when she had come back Esther saw this woman standing close to me. What Esther did not realise was that woman had only come up to me to congratulate us on the celebration. Esther become jealous and when I saw her face, I could tell she was angry and before I could explain. She hit the woman, and we spent the rest of our Wedding Night arguing.”

Esther just sat there looking at the floor, before realising that she still was holding the full glass of whiskey. She placed on the side table. She walks to Alex and kneel before her, taking her hands and placing on either side of Alex’s tear stained face.

Looking into her wife’s eyes, Esther simply says, “I am so sorry for ruining our Wedding Day and for tonight. You know that I love you more that I love myself. You are the best thing to have happened in my life. You know that I have never really known what is to be truly loved by someone. And all I want to do is protect you and love you for the rest of our lives. I know this not much of an apology, but I will spend the rest of my life making it up to you. I promise.” Esther places a kiss on her lover’s lips before reaching her arms around her shoulders and pulling her into a firm and lingering embrace.

Alex buries her head into Esther’s chest and mutters, “We will survive this, just like always. I just wished you were not so quick to get jealous, you should know that after 12 years together. I am not going anywhere! You Fool.”

Patsy says, “I think Delia and I will head on home now, You two need to spend time together.” Alex sees Delia and Patsy off at the door. Esther picks up the photo and smiles because of all the photos that line the wall, this is her favourite, as it shows the pair relaxed as they look at each other with so much love on their faces. Alex walks back to the room and leans against the doorframe and takes in the sight of her wife and lover.

Joshua comes running down the hallway and bumps into his sister-in-law. Joshua is smiling like the cat who just swallowed the canary.

Joshua announces to Esther and Alex, “The package is ready for delivery, when you are ready. Just knock on the bathroom door, and I will give you the goods.” He then walks away towards the lower floor bathroom and shuts the door.

Alex looks over at Esther and laughs, as she has forgotten that weeks ago, the three had planned to try that evening to conceive a child. Esther’s and her own child, they had tried 4 times without success and they both desperately long for a child, a child of their own. Esther was clearly drunk and stumbled down the hallway towards their bedroom. Alex followed her wife after she had replaced the photo back onto the wall. She found Esther trying to get dressed for bed. Alex stood in the doorway to their bedroom looking at a drunk Esther, trying to put her PJ bottoms over her head.
Alex laughs and walk to Esther. Alex takes the PJ bottoms from Esther and gives her lover a kiss. Esther reaches around, and grabs hold of Alex’s hips and pulls her into her. Esther then made short work of removing Alex’s clothes and pulling Alex onto the bed, they begin to make love.

After they both climaxed, Alex heads off to the kitchen, where she collects the Turkey baster and then heads back to their bedroom. She stops at the bathroom door and knocks. Joshua opens the door and hands Alex a cup filled with his sperm. Alex then returns to Esther and she prepares the sperm into the turkey baster, before handing it to Esther. They both hope that this time, they will conceive and in nine months, they would be holding their own bundle of joy.
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Two months pass since the Gateway Club incident. Alex shows no sign of being pregnant. Life and work at Nonnatus House is moving along. It is the day before Esther’s 30th Birthday and she receives a letter, which is going to affect all the Goldberg household. Esther has a meeting with Sister Julienne and Nurse Phyllis Crane to discuss an idea she has which involves all at Nonnatus House going away for a week.

Chapter Notes

This chapter has been reviewed and edited.

The day starts like any other day off for Esther, she sleeps in, while Alex heads next door to work on booked photo shoots for the day. About midmorning Esther pulls herself out from her bed. It has been about 2 months since Alex and her had tried to conceive a child, but Alex shows no signs of being pregnant. Esther gives up hoping of having a special present for her 30th Birthday, which was tomorrow, a day she rarely enjoys. It was just another reminder of the number of years since she last set eyes on her mother.

Her mother found out about her relationship with Alex not long after her 18th Birthday, when she caught them kissing on Esther’s bed. That was the day her mother kicked her only daughter out of the house forever and told her she was dead to her. The only thing that has made the day bearable over the years, was the love of Alex. Esther makes a mental note she would not think about the woman named Hannah Goldberg, the woman who had brought her into the world, but when her father died, (when Esther was 5 years) the woman began to hate the girl, whom now was an adult woman.

Esther was preparing some morning coffee to take next door to Alex when she was startled to hear a knock at the front door. Esther answers the door and was surprised to see a young Army soldier standing there.

He politely asked if this was the residence of a “Miss Esther Goldberg?” He is holding in his hands a telegram.

Esther knows straight away, what this means and begins to dread opening the telegram, which is to be handed to her. After taking the letter and politely saying, “Goodbye” to the young soldier, she opens the telegram, which states that she is to report for active duty in 3 weeks as a M.A.S.H. nurse in Vietnam for a tour of 6 months.

Esther takes into Alex her morning coffee, while holding the telegram.

Alex takes the telegram and reads it, she then looks at Esther and said, “Why now? Haven’t you already served and given them enough?”
Esther closes the gap between them and hugs her lover. Esther says, “I need to go and speak with Sister Julienne and Nurse Crane, I will be back later today. We will talk more about this later. I will tell the others at dinner tonight. I love you Alex.” Esther turns and walks out the door.

Upon arriving at Nonnatus House, Esther arranges to speak with Sister Julienne and Nurse Crane, in Sister Julienne’s office to discuss her impending departure for active service in Vietnam. Sister Julienne and Nurse Crane are supportive and give Esther reassurance that when she returns that her position at Nonnatus House would still be there for her to come back to. Esther has over the last 6 months found that the midwives and nun’s have become more like her family and wanted to show how much they mean to her. Esther suggests that the last week before she leaves for 6 months, that all the midwives and nun’s join her family on a holiday near the ocean.

Sister Julienne first reminds Esther that the mothers and babies of Popular would not wait for them to return from a week’s holiday. Esther had already thought this through and came up with a suggestion which would see that all the mothers and babies of Popular would be seen to, while the midwives and nuns took time off for a change. Esther had some friends who were experienced midwives and whom she could call on to cover the shifts and workload. Then there was the arranging of the accommodation, her Uncle Saul was a Commander in the Army and had connections to a near by camp site. Esther reassures Sister Julienne that the nuns have access to a Chapel to use for their prayers, and there was enough room for all. Sister Julienne realises the heartfelt motive behind the invitation and accepts. Sister Julienne informs Esther she will let the others know of the upcoming holiday beside the sea side over lunch. The rest of details were discussed between the three women and what will the relieving staff require the week before, so that they can learn the routine and routes. Then there was the issue of organising for a nurse to take on the role of Esther during her absence.

Over the evening meal at the Goldberg household, the discussion turns towards the upcoming events in the next three weeks.

Esther announces, “The week before I leave for active duty, we are all going on a holiday near the sea side. We will be staying at a camp site that Uncle Saul has arranged for us. And by the way, all of the midwives and nuns from Nonnatus House will be joining us for the week.” Esther looks around the table and notices that Alex looking unhappy.

Simon says, “We will have to organise a bus, that way Esther and I can take turns at driving. It will be so great to spend some time together before you leave us.”

Joshua says, “We might even take the surfboards and hopefully catch some waves, while we are there. Alice, I will be able to teach you to surf.”

Alice jumps up from her chair and runs around to her father and gives him a hug. Sarah takes Alice off to bed. Sarah soon appears in the doorway of the lounge room, with a painful look on her face. Joshua rushes to her side and they announce that Sarah is in labour. Esther rushes over to assist Sarah to the spare room opposite her bedroom. Over the next couple of hours, Esther and Sarah are focused upon the delivery of a baby. It is not much longer before there was the cry of a baby coming from the room. Esther exists the room to announce that Joshua is the proud father of a baby boy. Joshua enters the room and is united with his wife and baby boy.

Before Sarah’s labour had begun, Simon had left to take Trixie on a date. Only the week before had Simon told Esther that he was besotted with Trixie and believed he was in love with her. Esther told Simon that she was happy for him and wished him all the best.

After Esther had made sure that Sarah and the baby were well and settled for the evening, Esther made her way down the hallway in search of Alex. Esther could not locate her in the lounge room,
so she headed to their bedroom. Once opening the door, she found Alex sitting on her side of the bed. Esther walks over to Alex and sits down next to her on the bed.

Alex turns to Esther and says, “You could have discussed this with me, before going inviting everyone to join us during our last week together I was hoping that we could have spent the week away alone. You know how I coped the last time you were sent overseas on active duty. I am so mad at you.”

Esther knew this would be the response she would get, so it didn’t surprise her, when Alex threw a pillow and a blanket at her and told her, “And don’t think that you are sleeping in this bed tonight. You are sleeping on the couch. I can’t look at you now. Get out.”
Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

It’s the day of Esther’s 30th Birthday, it does not start well, sleeping on the couch, after having a fight with her lover/wife. On her way to Nonnatus House, Esther is the first on the scene of a very tragic vehicle accident. The rest of the day is spent at the Clinic, then at the end of her shift, Esther meets her Uncle Saul. What happens next sheds light on Esther’s own tragic past of loss and death.

Chapter Notes

This chapter has been reviewed and edited.

Esther has not slept much after she had been banished to the couch for the night. Esther remembers how angry her wife was the night before. Now it’s the morning of her 30th Birthday. She leaves the house before anyone else in the house can wish her Birthday wishes. All she wants to do today is not focus on herself, but that of her mother’s needs.

The journey to Nonnatus House normally took about 10 minutes, but this morning it was not to be for Esther. For not far from Nonnatus House, Esther comes across the wreckage of two motor vehicles, with five injured persons trapped inside the vehicles. As she is the first on the scene, Esther springs into action by assessing and attending to each of the victims. She makes the decision to attend to the most injured person before moving onto the next person. All she can do is provide the injured with the best first aid care. Esther does her best to keep the injured persons alive, but their injuries are to serious. Four of the five injured persons die before any other medical care can arrive. After the last ambulance leaves, Esther gives a report to the Police, who have attended before continuing towards Nonnatus House. Esther does not realise that her uniform is covered in the deceased person’s blood. Her thoughts are fixed on making it through the rest of the day.

Sister Julienne has already been informed of the accident, as Esther had asked a bystander to call Nonnatus House. Upon arriving, Sister Julienne notices the state of Esther’s dress and offers her a new uniform and allows her to freshen herself up.

Sister Julienne says, “Here is a new uniform, please make use of the bathroom upstairs to freshen yourself. Then come back down and we will have a talk over a cup of tea.”

“Thank you, Sister Julienne.” Esther heads up the stairs towards the bathroom. About half an hour later, she returns down stairs.

Sister Julienne is sitting at table waiting for Esther to return. When she hears Esther walking down the corridor towards the kitchen, Sister Julienne stands up and makes her way over to the stove. Sister Julienne asks, “Nurse Goldberg, please take a seat, I will make us a pot of tea.” She collects two cups and prepares the tea, before bringing it to the table.

Sister Julienne pours Esther a cup of tea and begins to say, “I believe that you have had a rather
difficult experience this morning. It is never easy when we lose a life. It is alright to be unsettled by the loss of four lives. We at Nonnatus House consider you to be part of our family, and we always look after our family.” She reaches over and takes Esther’s hand and gives her a handkerchief.

Esther has been holding in the tears for the deceased, at the touch of Sister Julienne’s hand, she feels the tears flow down her cheeks. Sister Julienne gives the younger woman a hug and holds her while she cries. They stay like this until Esther can talk about her feelings.

Esther decides to share only her feelings about the accident and nothing else with the Sister, “It’s just that their injuries were too serious and I needed extra medical help. The ambulance took too long to get there. I tried my best and I could not save them.”

“Esther do not under estimate your abilities as a nurse and midwife. You are an asset to our team at Nonnatus House. Nurse Crane has arranged for your roster to be covered by the other midwives, so that you can attend Clinic this afternoon. After that you are to go home and allow your family to provide you with moral support. I will include you in my Prayers.” Sister Julienne places her hand on Esther’s shoulder, as a way of reassuring the younger woman, that she is cared for.

Esther works through the rest of the day on auto pilot. Her work colleagues and friends try to engage her in conversation, but Esther only wants to focus on her work, as this is how she copes best in situations like these. Esther is thankful that the Clinic is busy today provides a much-desired distraction from her thoughts. She throws herself into her work and even finds herself lavishing attention onto the last baby of the day. Esther shares a joke with the baby’s mother, and they both laugh, while the child is being weigh, before attended to her notes. Esther longs to head home and curl up in her bed and not come out for the next couple days.

After Clinic all the midwives and nun’s head back to Nonnatus House to return their medical bags and repack them for the next day. Esther heads out to her motorcycle when she is surprised by to see her Uncle Saul waiting outside for her, (whom has been like a father figure in her, since the death of her own father when she was only 5).

Uncle Saul says, “Happy Birthday, my baby girl! I’ve come to take you out for a Birthday drink, before we head home for your Birthday dinner.” They both head off together on the back of Esther’s motorcycle.

Uncle Saul always made sure that Esther’s birthdays were a special celebration, as he knew his own sister’s distaste for her daughter, after the death of her father Josh at Pearl Harbour. <

Uncle and Niece head off to a local pub to have that drink, just as Patsy and Delia are leaving for the day. Unknown to Esther, Alex has arranged a special surprise Birthday Party and Patsy and Delia are on their way to get ready for the party. They are not sure as to whom the older man is Esther, but are concerned for their friend, especially after the horrendous day Esther had experienced.

Four hours after the end of Esther’s shift, she arrives home, drunk and stinking of cigar smoke. Alex is fuming, of all nights that Esther has chosen this night to get drunk and be late home. All the guests are assembled ready to shout, “HAPPY BIRTHDAY.” Alex opens the front door and Esther can tell that she is not impressed.

Alex says, “Your drunk and you stink of cigar smoke.”

Esther raises her hand and says, “Guilty as charged.”
She tried to smooth it over with Alex by seductively kissing her, but Alex is not having anything of this sort of behaviour. Before Esther’s arrival, Patsy and Delia informed Alex about Esther’s day, Alex is angrier with Uncle Saul for allowing Esther to drink so much. Alex glares at Esther as she stumbles into the hallway, just as Alice runs out and grabs hold of her Auntie’s hand and pulls her into the lounge room. Esther is surprised to see Patsy, Delia, Trixie, Val, Lucille, Phyllis, and all the other members of her family, standing around the table and wishing her Birthday celebrations.

Esther is moved to tears and looks to Alex. Esther is unsteady on her feet, so she sits down in a chair at the head of the table, she reaches out her hand and grabs Alex around the waist and pulls her so that is Alex sitting on her lap. Esther’s arms wrap around Alex’s waist and she rests her chin on Alex’s shoulder. Music is playing in the background and everyone is in top spirits and stories are shared about Esther and her life over the years. Most of the stories are happy ones, with some stories causing the guests to burst out in laughter.

Sarah shares a more serious story. “I remember meeting Esther, one day when I had to pick up Alex after the two had gone to an afternoon movie. I was to pick Alex up from the coffee shop. Which is when Esther introduced me to her brother. I was smitten with Joshua from that moment on. So, I am glad that you were born 30 years ago, because I would not have a wonderful husband, daughter and a baby boy. I am also thankful for the joy and love, you bring into my sister’s life.”

Alex speaks next, “You have changed my life and given me the courage to go for my dreams. I love you so much.” Alex is close to tears as her emotions have been raw as of late.

Esther finally speaks, “I am so blessed to be loved by you all. Although I would like to have received the news that Alex you were pregnant! But it is good that you are not, with me leaving for 6 months. I don’t think that I could handle being away knowing that you are carrying our child.” Esther kisses the back of Alex’s neck and then leans her chin on her lover’s shoulder.

Alex says, “Ah, about that, me being pregnant. I went to the Doctor’s today and found out that I am about 2 months pregnant. We are going to have a baby after all.”

Esther is speechless and lost for words. She moves her hand towards Alex’s face and turns her face so that she can kiss Alex.

Esther says, “We’re pregnant, we are having a baby!” She then places her hand on top of Alex’s tummy and cries tears of joy. Everyone at the table offer congratulations, even though some are confused as to how this child’s conception was achieved.

Delia, Patsy, Val, Lucille, Phyllis and Trixie all offer their services as midwives to Alex, while Esther is away. Everyone is enjoying themselves and the Birthday cake is brought out for Esther to blow out the candles, which she ropes Alice in to help her with. After the candles are blown out, Alice giggles and climbs onto her father’s lap before eating her slice of cake.

The phone then rings and John answers the call. He comes back into the lounge room and says, “Its for you Esther, and its long distance.”

Esther picks up the phone and says, “Hello?” She is not prepared to hear the callers voice to be that of her old army buddy’s mother. Esther stands in the hallway holding the phone receiver to her ear and listens to Paula Williams say, “I am so sorry to have to call you on your Birthday. It’s about Mary.” The woman’s voice then starts to break into sobs, after a short while, Paula starts again to speak, “Mary received a notice that she was to report for another 6-month tour of active duty. You know how Mary only survived the last tour. Mary took her own life yesterday.” Paula breaks down and cries over the phone.
Esther is in shock at first but soon looks along at the different photos which hang along the hallway. She takes down a photo which was taken during her last tour of duty in Vietnam, it shows Esther and Mary standing outside the M.A.S.H hospital. She remembers the day, they had both just finished a 16-hour day in theatre and were glad to be standing outside in the sunshine. Esther also remembered that Mary had found it difficult to return to a normal life in the United States. Esther is filled with an anger which she has never experienced before, and she drops the phone receiver, before she punches her right fist through the glass photo frame.

Everyone at the table hears the smashing of glass and rush out to see what the noise is. John finds the phone receiver dangling and a voice saying, “Hello, is anyone there?” John picks up the phone and talks with the caller and learns about Mary. Alex finds the smashed glass and the photo lying on the floor. Joshua notices the door leading to the backyard is swinging shut and Esther is nowhere to be found. What they all hear next causes them concern, as the noises from the backyard, sound like someone hitting a tree with their fists and talking in Hebrew.

Joshua and Alex are the first into the backyard and find Esther attacking a tree trunk with her bare fists. As she hits the trunk Esther speaks in Hebrew and is getting more and more worked up. Alex has heard these Hebrew words before, but does not know their meaning, so she turns to Joshua and asks him to translate.

Joshua begins to translate, “I regret ever giving birth to you. The day your father came home, and we made love and we conceived you was one of the worst days of my life. I wished that you were never born, because then your father would not have died at Pearl Harbour trying to save your life. Then you would never had encouraged your brother Joe to enlist to fight in Korea and die there. Your brother Saul would not have gone surfing that day, had you not been born. Saul would not have been on the road that day and would not been killed, because you wanted to go surfing that day. And now I find that you are not only in love with a Gentile girl. You are dead to me, now get out of this house and never come back.”

Joshua turns to Alex and asks, “Alex, did my mother say these things to Esther?”

Alex replies, “Yes, she caught us kissing on Esther’s bed, then she just started yelling at Esther in Hebrew. Esther has never told me what was said, only that she no longer had a mother.”

Joshua begins to cry as he also experienced their mother’s hatred for his choice of a Gentile wife and turns to his wife and collapse into her arms.

Esther collapses onto her knees, her hands are raw and bloody. She begins to mumble, “It’s all my fault that they died. It’s better that I was never born.” Esther drops her head into her hands and sobs.

Alex rushes to her lovers’ side and holds her lover tightly, while planting kisses to the top of Esther’s head. Alex lifts Esther’s head so that she is looking straight into her eyes, before saying, “It is not your fault that your father and brothers died. Think of all the different lives that have been touched and changed because of you. I would not have had the love of a wonderful woman, who loved me wholeheartedly. We would not be having a child and all these people that are gathered here tonight, all love you and have been touched by you.” Esther cries and buries her head into Alex’s shoulder.

Uncle Saul suggests that Alex bring Esther inside to have first aid care applied to her hands. Phyllis is standing next to Uncle Saul, something that Esther notices. She has noticed that her Uncle’s face lights up when the older midwife is present or when her name is mentioned. Everyone moves back inside, where Patsy once again patches up Esther’s hands, before returning to Delia’s side.
Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

It’s a week after Esther’s birthday, and Val has come to help with the decorating of the baby’s room. During the day, Val asks Esther, as to how she knew that she felt more than just friendship of Alex. Esther tells Val about the day when Alex and she confessed their true feelings for each other. Later that evening Esther stops for a coffee and bumps into Patsy and Delia, before meeting Alex for a date.

Esther has the paint, paint brushes, drop covers for the floor, snacks and drinks, already to decorating the baby’s room, opposite Alex and her bedroom. Esther promised Alex that she would have the baby’s room already, before she left for active duty. Alex had chosen a lovely lavender paint to cover the walls of the room and a baby’s cot had been purchased. Alex and Sarah were heading to the Clinic today and then off for a spot of lunch later in the day. Leaving Esther to tackle the baby’s room by herself. A couple of days before while waiting in the medical room in Nonnatus House, Esther had mentioned to Val, Patsy, Delia and Lucille (who were getting their bags ready for the day), the task that lay ahead of her at home. Val offered to assist her, as she had the morning off and was only to happy to help in any way.

Val arrives early and is prepared to get started on the job at hand. Esther prepares them a hot drink before leading Val towards the room.

“I have prepared the walls, so they are ready for us to start painting. What side of the room do you want to work on?” says Esther as she points to the walls and waits for Val to respond.

“I think I will start over on the right side of the room, you can take the left side and we can work around towards the middle.” Val says.

“Sounds like a good idea, first I will go and grab the radio.” Esther heads out of the room and soon returns with a portable radio. “I will get this going and we can listen to music as we go. It will help to make the time go much quicker.” Esther says as she smiles and hands Val a paint brush. Esther opens the paint can and they start painting the walls.

“So, Val have you always lived in Popular?”

“Yes, I was born in Popular, and Sister Monica Joan was my mother’s midwife, when I was born.”

“Oh, it must be exciting to be part of the midwives at Nonnatus House and living alongside Sister Monica Joan.” Esther dips her brush into the paint and starts painting the wall.

“Sister Monica Joan recognised me when I was standing in the kitchen at Nonnatus House on my first day. I never knew that about my birth, that there was a connection to the Sister’s and Midwives.” Val says.

The pair talk while they work and before long, the first coat of paint has been applied to the entire walls of the room. Both Val and Esther stand in the middle of the room and admire their work. “I believe we have done a very good job on this first coat. I will finish it in a couple of days, when the men of the house have some spare time.”
Esther thinks that she senses that Val wants to talk to her about something, so she asks, “Is there something on your mind that you want to talk about? You can ask me anything, I have nothing to hide.” As Esther and Val walk to the kitchen to have some lunch.

Once in the kitchen Val sits at the kitchen table and clears her throat, “There has been something I have been meaning to ask you, but it might be to personal.”

“I can’t answer any questions if you don’t ask them. I am quite sure there is no topic that is too personal for me to talk about. So, what is on your mind?” Esther places a plate of sandwiches in front of them before taking a seat.

“What was it like when you first started to have feelings for Alex? Did it worry you at first that she was a girl? How did you notice you were interested in her romantically?” Val looks at the sandwich in her hand.

“Ah, before I answer those questions. May I ask you, are you beginning to have feelings for another female?” Esther reaches over and gently touches Val’s shoulder.

“I am interested in someone, but I don’t know if she is interested in me.” Val looks at Esther.

“Ok, where to begin, Alex and myself had been asked to be Bridesmaids for Alex’s sister Sarah, as she was marrying my brother Joshua. We were both 18 and in our last year of High School. For me, it all started about 4 months before the wedding. I had to sleep over at Alex’s this night, as we were heading off early the next day to another town to try on Bridesmaids outfits. Alex and I were to share her double bed for the night. Alex was getting dressed and while she was undressing, all I could do was just stare at the back of her naked body. I remember thinking, ‘Oh please turn around’ and she did. I liked what I saw but felt embarrassed, so I looked away. She finished getting dressed and joined me in bed. We spent time talking before falling asleep. I woke through the night, when I felt a strange feeling against my left leg, I looked and noticed that Alex had turned over in her sleep and was lying on me. Her head was resting on my chest and her left leg was draped over my left leg. At first, I thought that it would feel strange, but it felt right. I guess that I started to realise that I wanted to go to sleep and waking next to Alex for the rest of my life.”

Esther glances at her Wedding ring on her second finger of her left hand.

“After that night, I did not know how to behave around Alex. While working one day at a local coffee shop, I overheard two people talking about some man who had been caught kissing another man. The way they spoke about the act, they made it sound as if had been something evil and disgusting. I realised then that maybe that it was not the right thing to desire Alex in that way. I decided to avoid spending too much time with her, by making excuses for dodging her.”

“How did she react to you avoiding her?” Val asks.

“In the beginning, she believed the excuses I gave her, but then on the evening of the Wedding when we had to dance with the Groomsman for the Bridal Dance, it became obvious something was amiss. I found it extremely difficult to keep my eyes off Alex in her Bridesmaids dress, as she looked divine. While we were dancing I could not understand as to why I was angry with Alex being held by Simon, when I wanted to be the one dancing with Alex. As soon as the dance was over, I left the reception and headed outside to have a cigarette, I smoked 4 cigarettes within 5 minutes. I was about to head back inside, when I heard Alex’s voice.” Esther drinks her cup of tea, looking at Val.

“Alex asked me ‘why I left so soon after the dance? I wanted to have a dance with you, but you were gone. What’s wrong?’ Alex moved towards me and placed a hand on my shoulder. I turned around to face Alex. I shook my head and said, “Nothing’s wrong.” Alex said “I know something
wrong, you have been acting strange the last couple of weeks when we are together. You have even been avoiding me. Is there something that I have done?” Alex stood close to me and blocked my way.” Esther smiles at Val.

“Alex is type of person who does not let things rest until she has gotten to the bottom of the matter. I said, “You have done nothing wrong. It’s me… I have found that I like you more than a friend…. and I am frightened that you might think that I strange and won’t like me anymore.”’” Esther said.

“I found the silence from Alex too difficult to bear. I then felt Alex’s hand under my chin, and I was looking directly into the Alex’s eyes. Alex smiled and moved closer to me, the gap between us so small that I only had to lean in to kiss her on the lips. We kissed each other for a while before we pulled apart and then we hugged. I didn’t want the moment to end. Alex said, “I have been feeling the same way for a couple of months. It’s been so hard for me to not make a move before today. I didn’t know if you felt the same, so I thought that I would keep it to myself.”’ Alex held my hand and we went back into the Wedding celebrations. We have been together from that moment on.” Esther notices that they have finished their sandwiches, and she stands and clears the plate and cups. She then returns to the table.

“Does that answer some of your questions?” Esther offers a look of sincerity to Val, who is holding her cigarette lighter in her hand.

“Would you like to have a smoke? I could really do with one.” Val offers Esther a cigarette.

“Yes, lets go and sit in the sun and we can continue this talk outside.” Esther and Val walk out into the Backyard.

Once outside they sit on a couple of lounge chairs, Esther asks Val, “How long have you been feeling an attraction for this woman?”

“For over 6 months, there have been times when I think, she is interested, but then other times, I am confused. When she smiles, I have butterflies in my stomach. Her smile brightens up my day. There have been times when our hands have brushed against each other, when we sit or stand close to next to each other and it feels like electricity is shooting through my body.” Val says before taking a puff from her cigarette.

“Can I ask, is this woman, Lucille? …. It’s just that at the House warming party, I noticed how you were looking at her. You could not take your eyes off her it was like you were captivated by her.” Esther offers Val a supportive touch on the arm.

“Oh, was I that obvious! I wonder what Lucille thought that night?” Val places her hands over her face, as if to hide her bashfulness.

“From what I saw, I think she enjoyed having your whole attention, I even thought I saw her blush a couple of times, when you got up to collect some more food, before returning to her side.” Esther looks at Val with a raised eyebrow and a smile.

“There was also the time when we went for a walk one evening and Lucille stumped her toe on a raised cobblestone, she started to fall, so I caught her in my arms. Her skin felt so smooth to touch and all I could think of was that I loved holding her in my arms. When Lucille regained her balance, we looked at each other and it felt so intense, I wanted to pull her towards me and kiss her on the lips. We were interrupted by a noise and we continued to walk back to Nonnatus House.” Val looks at her hands.
“All you can do is talk with her. Lucille knows about Alex and me…. Maybe you can ask her what she thinks about two women loving each other. See how she responds, if she is understanding, as I think she is, then share with her your feelings towards her. That would be my advice to you.”

Esther leans over to Val in the lounge chair next to her and takes her hand, she gives Val’s hand a squeeze.

After Val has left for her afternoon shift at Nonnatus House, Esther finishes up in the baby’s room, making sure that all the paint brushes are clean and put away for the next coat of paint. The paint tin is also stored away until it is required again. The cot was together and placed alongside the right wall of the room. Just inside the door to the right is the dresser, ready for Alex to fill with baby clothes, Esther has placed two photo frames on top, one with a photo of Esther and the other of Alex. Esther desires her child to know that they are loved completely by two parents, who have longed for this child.

Esther rushes out of the house to get a couple of things for her date with Alex later that evening. She has plans to purchase red roses to give to Alex, before heading to her favourite restaurant. The day has gone quick and before Esther realises, it is late afternoon. She is feeling exhausted after the past week, Esther decides to grab herself a coffee before heading home. Esther arrives at ‘The Silver Buckle’ and enters not knowing that Patsy and Delia were there on a date.

“Hello Esther.” Delia waves at Esther. Patsy smiles.

“Hello Delia and Patsy. I just came in for a coffee before heading home to take Alex on a date.” Esther says on her way to order at the counter.

Delia looks in Patsy’s direction. Patsy says, “Would you like to join us?” Patsy indicates to Esther sit at one of the spare chairs at their table.

“That would be nice, if it’s not inconvenient.” Esther sits down at their table.

Once she sits down, Esther covers her mouth, yawns and shakes her head, as if she is trying to keep herself awake. “I am sorry about that, I have not been having much sleep this past week.”

“You do look rather tired.” Patsy says looking at her friend.

“Are you worried about leaving for active duty?” Delia asks.

“No, since Alex found out she was pregnant, her appetite for sex has increased.” Esther stops talking as Patsy almost chokes on her coffee.

“Are you alright Patsy?” Delia in a concerned tone.

“Ah, yes, it’s just that I didn’t expect to hear that answer.” Patsy says.

Esther looks to make sure that no one is listening to their conversation, before speaking softly, “I am sorry about coming out with that, it’s just I can’t keep up with her demands. Five rounds of love making every night, after working all day, has left me exhausted. Last night, after getting into bed, I was so relaxed and before I could stop myself, I fell asleep.” Esther takes a sip of her coffee. Delia and Patsy’s eyebrows are raised as they look at Esther.

“The next thing I felt was a sharp pain to the left-hand side of my face. I looked up and saw Alex sitting on top of me, yelling at me, about how ‘boring it must be to make love to her.’ I tried to explain, but she would not listen. You know that in all of the 12 years we have been together, it has only been in the last month, that I have banished twice to sleep on the lounge.” Esther says in a whispered voice before taking another sip of her coffee.
“Is that why you are taking Alex out on a date?” Delia asks.

“Yes.” Esther finishes her coffee and looks at her watch.

“Before you head off, can I ask you a question about your ring?” Delia asks shyly.

“Yes, what would you like to know.” Esther moves her left hand closer to Delia to look at.

“Why do you wear your wedding band on the second finger on your left hand?” Delia looks at Esther’s hand and admires her wedding band.

“I knew that wearing it on my ring finger, I would be hounded by people regarding as to whom I had married. I decided to wear my ring on the second finger of my left hand. Alex and I know the real meaning of the rings and that is all that matters. Alex wears her wedding band on the same finger, but she wears her engagement ring on her ring finger on her right hand.” Esther smiles as she turns the ring around her finger, before looking at Delia. Esther notices the chain around Delia’s neck, with a ring hanging from it.

“That is so lovely.” Delia lovingly stares at Patsy.

“It’s how you chose to look at things. I notice you are wearing a ring around your neck, I am guessing it is a ring from Patsy.” Esther looks at Patsy and Delia. Patsy nods.

“That ring on the chain, it’s a symbol of your love for each other. The only thing that matters is that each of you understands the real meaning of the ring. No one else needs to know. It’s between the two of you.” Esther softly speaks before looking at her watch.

“I have to head off, I don’t want to suffer the wrath of an angry pregnant Alex for being late home for our date. Enjoy the rest of your night, Patsy and Delia. I will see you back at work.” Esther stands and leaves the coffee shop.

Before leaving the Silver Buckle, Esther makes sure the purchased bouquet of red roses is secured in the bag on the back of the motorcycle. Esther then heads off towards home, looking forward to being able to wine and dine her lover for the evening, before ravishing her lover when they arrived home.
Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

Uncle Saul share with Esther about his budding romance with a certain Nurse Crane. Written from the POV of Uncle Saul. Esther shares the happy news about Uncle Saul and Nurse Crane with Alex over dinner.

Uncle Saul sits waiting nervously for Esther to arrive at the pub that afternoon. He keeps an eye on the pub’s front door hoping that the next person to come through the door, is his niece. For the first time in his life, Uncle Saul is in love with a beautiful woman, and knows that he wants to tell the world, but first he must tell Esther, his niece. Ever since her birth, the pair have always had a special connection with the child, now a woman, and it was only right that she be the first person, he shares the news with.

Esther eventually walks into the pub and acknowledges her Uncle and heads towards him. Uncle Saul stands and gives his niece a hug and signals for her to sit down at the table, while he heads to the bar to order them a drink. Once Uncle Saul has returned to the table and handed Esther her drink, he says, “I guess you are wondering as to why I asked you to meet me here? There is something I need to tell you.” He notices the concerned look upon Esther’s face. “Don’t fret my love, it is not bad news. In fact, it is the great news I could ever hoped to tell you.” He glances over at Esther, whose face has changed from concern to a puzzled look.

“I have been dating Phyllis Crane for the last couple of months. Before I had asked her on a date, it all started the night of your house warming party. I saw Phyllis walk into the backyard and I could not believe how beautiful she was. I knew that I made to a point of going over and introducing myself to Phyllis and the nun Sister Julienne. While we were talking, I learned Phyllis loves and learning Spanish. It has always been a dream of mine to learn another language, so I asked if she would be interested in teaching me Spanish. We decided to meet regularly over coffee, so that Phyllis could teach me Spanish. I have become a keen learner, mainly because the teacher is very easy on the eyes as well as an excellent tutor.” Uncle Saul takes a sip from his Whiskey.

“Are you happy Uncle? What a stupid question, you smile everytime you say her name. “

“Yes, I am. I now know what you feel for Alex. How when you are not with her, your heart aches to be with her. I never thought that I would ever say this, but I am in love.” Uncle Saul grins, as he looks over at his niece.

“Apart from her beauty, what else is it that draws you towards Phyllis?”

“I think it was her straightforwardness, without being harsh that stands out for me. She tells it as she sees things and does not hold back.” There was a spark appear in his eyes. “I also love the fact that Phyllis is always sure of herself, her confidence shines through when she makes decisions and then follows through with them.” Uncle Saul looks over Esther’s shoulder.

“After two months of learning Spanish and meeting for coffee, I got the nerve to ask Phyllis if she would like to go out on a date to a Spanish Restaurant, she said ‘yes’. I booked the table and asked if I could take a menu home, I wanted to impress Phyllis by ordering our meal in Spanish. Phyllis was so impressed that when I escorted her back to Nonnatus House that night, she accepted my
invitation to another date. We have been seeing each other ever since. I have fallen in love with Phyllis.” Uncle Saul lights up a cigar and offers one to Esther to smoke.

“Does she feel the same?” Esther says, just before taking a puff.

“I hope she does, I am yet to tell her the depth of my feelings. I have only told her, that I cared for her deeply.”

“You must tell her, or she will not know where she stands with you. I you truly love her, then let her know.” Esther drinks the last of her Whiskey, Uncle Saul goes and orders another round.

They continue to talk about how Alex’s pregnancy is going and how the baby’s room has now completed. Esther tells Uncle Saul about the numerous baby clothes, Alex has been able to collect, and neatly stored away in the dresser. Esther and Uncle Saul lose track of the time, before Esther realises the time and says, “I have to go home, Alex is waiting for me. I am so happy for you and Phyllis.”

Uncle Saul has a date with a certain older midwife and decides to declare his love for Phyllis and tell her that he is in love with her. They both head off to their partners, not before they give each other a hug goodbye.

Esther arrives home and greets Alex with a cheeky smile and half lidden eyes, before placing her hands-on Alex’s hips and drawing her deep into her body. Esther lovingly stares into Alex’s eyes while one hand wanders around Alex’s waist and down to grab one of Alex’s bum cheeks, giving it a squeeze. Alex wraps her arms around Esther’s neck and runs a hand through Esther’s hair, before Esther’s lips captures Alex’s lips in a passionate kiss, with Esther’s tongue caressing Alex’s lip, seeking for access to Alex’s own tongue. Alex grants Esther access to her tongue they stay locked in this embrace, Esther’s own desire grows between her legs. Alex pulls back and grabs the sides of Esther’s face and stares into her lover/wife eyes.

“Well that was a wonderful way to say Hello. How was your afternoon meeting up with your Uncle Saul? Alex asks, while walking over to the kitchen counter.

“How did you know that I met with Uncle Saul?” Esther asks while stealing a carrot to eat, trying to not get her hand slapped away by Alex.

“Because your lips taste like Whiskey and you breathe smells like Cigars. You only drink Whiskey and smoke Cigars with Uncle Saul and when you get home you seduce me.” Alex smirks as she focuses on her cooking.

Esther sits at the table and watches Alex’s bottom swaying as she stirs the contents of a pot on the stove. Esther is mesmerised by her lover’s movements, Alex stops and turns around with her hands on her hips, “Are you going to tell me or not?”

Esther shakes her head, regaining her thoughts while looking at Alex. Esther smiles and begins to say, “Uncle Saul wanted to talk to me about him dating Nurse Crane.” Alex sits down on Esther’s knee. Esther places her hand on top of Alex’s stomach and gently caresses the small bump.

“Well tell me the details. Phyllis is a lovely lady and Uncle Saul has been rather happy as of late. Now we know why.” Alex pleads with Esther.

“Uncle Saul is in love with Phyllis.” Esther says as she holds Alex in her arms.

“I think Uncle Saul might even ask Phyllis to marry him before long. I am so happy for him, it would be great if they got married, they both deserve to have someone to love and be loved back.
Much like what we have, my beautiful and sexy wife.” Esther embraces her lover and wife, before pulling her into a passionate kiss.

They hold each other before Alex stands and returns to the stove. Esther sets the table, by placing plates and cutlery out for them to use. They sit and eat their meal, before Esther cleans up the dishes, she sends Alex off to have a shower, with the instruction to wait for her in their bedroom later.
Chapter 11

Chapter Summary

The midwives and nun’s travel aboard a bus with the Goldberg family and friends to a week away by the sea side. Patsy, Delia, Alex and Esther share a conversation about babies.

It was early morning when Sister Monica Joan, Sister Julienne, Sister Winifred, Phyllis, Val, Patsy, Delia, Lucille and Trixie, stood at the base of the stairs of Nonnatus House. Their luggage placed ready to be collected and placed into the luggage compartment of the soon to arrive transport. Trixie pulls out of her handbag a pair of sunglasses and place them on her nose. She then pulls out a mirror to check her make up and places it back into her handbag. Lucille and Val stand next to each other, to pass the time, Val shows Lucille her new wide brimmed hat, to wear while on the beach.

Patsy, Delia and Trixie discuss amongst themselves, how they are going to spend quality time working on their sun tans. Delia smirks, “Patsy, your milky legs of yours, do need to be exposed to some sun.”

Patsy playfully swipes at Delia’s arm, “Deels, I thought you always loved the way my legs look.”

The midwives and nun’s do not have to wait long, as a bus arrives in front of Nonnatus House. Simon is seated behind the driver’s seat and opens the bus door. Alice leaps out of the door and rushes over to Sister Monica Joan. Alice grabs hold of Sister Monica Joan’s hand and says, “Grandma Sister Monica Joan, we are going to the sea side. My Dad is going to show me to surf.” Sister Monica Joan looks shocked at Alice.

Everyone is shocked at the endearment behind the word ‘Grandma’. Sarah tells her daughter, “Alice, you just can’t call Sister Monica Joan, Grandma.” Sarah looks at Sister Monica Joan apologetically. “Sister Monica Joan, I am so sorry. Alice has never met her Grandma. I guess she sees you as a Grandma figure in her life.”

“I am honoured to be called Alice’s Grandma.” Sister Monica Joan reaches down and gives the child a hug.

The luggage is packed away in the luggage compartment of the bus and all the passengers are sit on board the bus. Simon drives the bus, while everyone shares stories of previous journeys to the sea side. Patsy and Delia sit next to each other. Val sits in the seat behind Lucille. Trixie is sitting behind Simon, so that she can talk with him as he drives. The nuns sit near to each other in separate seats. Phyllis is sitting with Sarah and discussing baby Levi’s progress. Alex and Esther are sitting together. Joshua and Alice share a seat, while Jonah and John sit in separate seats. The bus is filled with laughter and music as the bus travels along the road.

Along the journey, Simon decides to stop the bus, so that the passengers can have the opportunity to stretch their legs, as well as have a bite to eat. Esther takes over the driving duties for the rest of the journey. It is not long before the bus arrives at the camp, it is lunch time.

Before being shown to their accommodation for the week, the group met up with Uncle Saul, who
leads them to the dinning hall. They were greeted with a large long table decorated with various foods and drinks for them to devour.

After their lunch, Uncle Saul shows the group to their assigned accommodation for the week. Alex, Esther, Patsy and Delia were shown to a small two-bedroom cottage. Sarah, Joshua, Alice and Levi were directed to a small cottage. The nuns were shown to a cottage with 3 bedrooms, allowing the nuns to have privacy. Uncle Saul, Jonah, John and Simon were placed in a 4-bedroom cottage. Trixie, Val, Lucille and Phyllis were shown to a 4-bedroom cottage.

After unpacking their luggage, Alex mentions she is going to have a rest. Esther dressed in a t-shirt and shorts, heads to the beach with her surfboard tucked under her arm and a towel draped over her shoulder. Patsy and Delia head out to investigate the surrounding area, taking in the sea and the beach.

Two hours later Esther is sitting on her towel. She notices Patsy and Delia walking in her direction. She signals for them to come over and sit down on her towel.

“How was your surf?” Patsy asks as she sits down.

“Good, I miss being able to surf every day. When we lived in the US, if I was not surfing after work, you would find me sitting on the beach.” Esther looks out at the waves.

Delia shyly asks, “Alex is starting to show. You both look so happy.” Esther smiles.

“Yes, she is developing a baby bump. And we are so happy. I can’t believe that this is really happening.” Esther looks at both of her friends and notices Alex walking along the beach.

Esther stands and takes Alex’s hand and helps her with placing a blanket on the sand. Allowing Patsy, Delia and Alex more room to sit.

“I know how babies are made, but in your case, how did you get pregnant?” Delia asks.

“Deels!” A shocked and annoyed Patsy voices.

Alex says, “It’s alright Patsy, I was wondering when we be asked that question. It happened the night we had gone to the Gateway Club. After you left for the night, Joshua came down stairs and reminded us that we had organised to try and conceive a child that night. I walked into our bedroom and Esther was sitting on the bed, trying to put her pyjama bottoms over her head. She looked so cute, that I could not resist her advances when I tried to get her dressed instead we made love. Afterwards I went to the kitchen and collected the turkey baster and Joshua’s sperm, and all Esther had to do was inject it inside me.” Alex rubs her small baby bump.

Delia and Patsy’s look at Esther and Alex wide eyed, Delia blinks and blushes. Patsy turns to Delia saying, “You had to ask”

“Are you two thinking about having a baby?” Esther smiles.

“I would love to be able to have Patsy’s child, but we always thought that it would never be an option for us.” Delia sadly says looking at Patsy.

Patsy squeezes Delia’s hand, before placing her arm around her lover’s shoulder. Delia leans her head against Patsy’s chest and sighs.

Alex shifts herself to be closer to Esther, “You know Delia, it took a while before I could get this one to want to have a child.” pointing to Esther. “When I would bring the subject up, Esther would
either just say straight out ‘No’, or she would ignore me. We had the worst fights over having a child, I thought that it would be the end of us.” Esther plants a kiss on Alex’s forehead.

“I didn’t always ignore you. And if I remember correctly, it was you would storm out of the house, when I wouldn’t talk to you about my feelings.” Esther glances at Alex.

“Well I did have to drag them out of you, it took about four weeks before I got anything out of you.” Alex looks sternly at Esther.

“What was the problem?” Delia asks.

“I was not sure that I would be a great or even a good mother. I was afraid that I would end up like my mother. My father and mother always showed us children love and affection.” Esther sighs.

“When my father died trying to save me when I had gone with him to work that day. I had run off and went investigating the workshop. Being little, I could not see the truck coming into the machinery bay, my father saw me and knew I would have been run over, if he didn’t rush and push me away. He was struck by the truck, I sustained a mild head injury and required to be kept in hospital for 2 days. The mother who use to tuck me into bed at night and plant kisses on my forehead, died that day. For the next ten years, my mother would still make sure that I was fed and cared for, but never displayed any kind of love towards me.” Esther stares out at the ocean, with tears in her eyes.

“What parent would leave a 5-year child alone in a hospital bed for 2 days. I had no visitors in all that time. Joshua told me that she banned my brothers and Uncle from visiting me.” Esther wipes away a tear. Alex embraces her lover, by holding her close to her.

“When my brother Joe told us he wanted to enlist, I encouraged him. He was only in Korea for 3 months, when we received a telegram to say he had been killed in action. My mother threw the telegram at me and said, ‘I hope your satisfied.’ From that day onward, I saw to all my own needs, knowing that my mother would not. When we had family meals, we would all sat at the table, but she never spoke to me or even look at me. I cooked my own meals.” Esther looks at Alex and gives her a half smile.

“Then about 4 weeks later, after school one day my brother Saul, picked me up from School and took us surfing. We were having the greatest time out there on the waves. On our way home…” Esther struggles to continue and breaks down crying. Alex tightens her arms around Esther.

“Their car was hit head on by a drunk driver. Saul never made it and Esther was pinned by the dash board of the car. She spent 3 weeks in the hospital with no visitors.” Alex says as she cradles her lover in her arms.

Patsy and Delia hold each other’s hand. Patsy looks at her lover and pulls her close to her. Delia looks Patsy in the eye before planting a kiss on her cheek.

After she has been able to regain control of her emotions. Esther pulls off her t-shirt to reveal a bikini top. Esther points to a small on her top left chest, “This scar is a constant reminder of Pearl Harbour.” Esther then points to a scar on her right thigh, “This is from the car accident that killed my brother Saul.” Esther turns around to reveal a scar on her neck, “This scar is from the day my mother found Alex and me kissing. After my mother ordered me to leave the house, I was walking towards the door and I heard glass being broken, then I felt a sharp pain at the back of my neck. The next think that I remember is waking up in a hospital bed, with Alex sitting next to my bed.” Esther looks at her friends.
Patsy reaches over to Esther and holds her hand, “I understand what it is like to have lost loved ones and then to have a parent distant themselves from you. I lost my mother and sister during the war. After the war, my father distanced himself from me, by sending me to boarding school. We hardly saw each other, until he became ill and was dying. I was able to go to him before he died.” Delia holds Patsy hand.

Esther and Patsy exchange a look of understanding.

“If you were so sure that you didn’t want to have a child, what changed your mind?” Delia asks.

“It was about 2 years ago, I had been called out to a birth, which proved to be a difficult case. The mother had been in labour for over 12 hours and was still not fully dilated. The father and mother were living in a hippy commune and wanted no further medical interventions. The mother had already lost three babies before. She had lost the first child through a mischarge, the second at 7 months and their third child was a still born.” Esther looks over at Patsy and Delia.

“I had already assisted with another birth hours earlier in the day, I was exhausted by this time. I left the room and went into the kitchen to make a cup of coffee. I did not know what to do and was at my wits ends. While I waited for the kettle to boil, I remembered something my father told me when I was a little girl. He said, ‘When you are in trouble or unsure call out to Yahweh, (the sacred covenant name of the Lord).’ I said ‘Yahweh, if you are real, then please bring this child into the world. I don’t know what else to do.’” Esther holds Alex’s hand.

“When I checked the mother, she was fully dilated and half an hour later, she had given birth to a baby boy. The father said something that spoke to me, he said, ‘We will never be like our parents. We love each other, and we will shower this baby boy with all our love.’”

“On my way home, the father’s words kept repeating in my head. I stopped by the beach and spent time thinking. I realised that Alex has always meant the world to me. I love her and want her to be happy.”

“While sitting on the beach, the sun rose over the water, I understood in that very moment that there is a God. I could see a future where i was a mother. I realised I wanted to have a child with Alex. I headed home and when I saw her standing in our room, I wrapped my arms around her waist and said, ‘I want to have a baby with you, in fact I want lots of babies.’” Esther leans down and pulls up Alex’s shirt and kisses the small baby bump before sitting up and kisses Alex passionately.

"We have tried several times, but we have never gotten this far before.” Alex lovingly stares at Esther.

“I think we should head back and get ready for dinner.” Esther leans over and plants another kiss on Alex’s cheek, before standing and helping Alex to her feet.
Chapter 12

Chapter Summary

Patsy and Delia discuss the subject of babies and come to a decision on the topic.

Everyone had been having a great time that first night away. The men organised and cooked a barbeque of meat and vegetables (for Phyllis), on the beach and a camp fire for everyone to sit around. After the meal had been eaten, the group gathered around the camp fire and shared stories with each other. While Sister Monica Joan, Sister Julienne and Sister Winifred headed off to the chapel for compline.

Patsy lets out a yawn while stretching her arms in the air. Delia sitting next to her suggests, “I think you should go to bed, before you fall asleep here on the beach. Patsy.”

“Nurse Busby, I like the way you think.” Patsy whispers in Delia’s ear.

The pair walk back to the cottage, where Patsy suggests to Delia to get herself dressed for bed, while she attends to her nightly routine.

Patsy dresses in a summer short pyjama outfit and when she enters their bedroom, Delia is lying on top of the bed covers, dressed in a very summery and revealing nightie. Delia’s brunette hair is loose around her shoulders. Patsy swallows a lump in her throat. Delia pats the empty space on the bed next to her. Indicating for Patsy to join her on the bed. Patsy heads towards the bed.

“Pats, it’s a double bed. We don’t have to push our beds together.” Delia raises her eyebrows at Patsy.

Patsy lies down on the bed, she leans over to Delia and gives her a passionate kiss. Delia returns the kiss, while her hands undo the buttons of Patsy’s pyjama’s top. Delia pulls back to look at Patsy’s naked chest, before licking her lips. Within seconds, Patsy’s top is lying on the floor and Delia’s head and lips are working their way down to Patsy’s breasts.

Patsy’s hands make their way to the hem of Delia’s nightie and pulls it over her head, discarding it on to the floor. They both lose themselves as they make love to each other, driving each other over the edge of pleasure.

Delia rests her head on Patsy’s chest and places her arm around Patsy’s waist. They lie on the bed resting in each other’s arms. Delia’s fingers make small circles on Patsy’s stomach, while listening to Patsy’s heart through her chest. Patsy tightens her grip on Delia, “Deels …”

“Yes, Pats.”

“Do you remember when I gave you this ring?” Patsy reaches out and holds the ring, which hangs on a chain around Delia’s neck.

“Yes, I will never forget that night, when you proposed to me. Although we are not legally married, we are in our heads and hearts. Isn’t that all that matters, my cariad.” Delia looks into Patsy’s eyes.
“I want to be able to give you so much more, than what we already have. When you were talking
with Esther and Alex, you said that you want to have my baby.” Patsy looks tenderly in Delia’s
eyes.

“Yes…. I so much want to be able to give you a family. A family of our very own. I know how
you miss your parents and your sister. I have seen how you are with little Alice, and when I see you
reading to her, I can picture you reading to our child…. I never realised how much I have longed to
become a mother, until the last couple of months.” Delia raises up and rests on her elbows, looking
directly into Patsy’s eyes.

Patsy smiles at Delia, “I can see you being a mother. I have seen how you are with the babies at the
clinic. I can see me lying next to you in bed and cuddling you and your baby bump.”

“Are you saying that you want to have a baby, Pats.”

“We have to think about this Deels. What will we say when asked about the father? And your mam
will give you such a hard time about being single and pregnant. Do you think we are ready for a
child?” Patsy turns to face Delia.

“Pats, there is nothing more that I want is to have your baby, but if it makes you uncomfortable, we
don’t have to discuss it.” Delia looks sad and nudges her head under Patsy’s chin.

“Deels, it’s not that I am uncomfortable, it’s just that I worry about what it will mean for you
regarding your reputation.”

“Pats, you should know by now that people’s opinions don’t affect my decisions. Except for yours
my love.”

“Deels …. I love you …. ” Patsy lies on her back, holding Delia in an embrace. The lovers hold
onto each other, remaining still, listening to the other’s breathing. An image begins to form in
Patsy’s mind. She envisions a future where she holds a very pregnant Delia in her arms; Patsy sees
herself cuddling their baby in her arms, while Delia wraps her arms around Patsy’s waist, planting a
kiss on her cheek. Patsy smiles and lovingly glances at Delia, before pulling her closer into her
chest.

“Deels, our child will be well loved and cared for by both of us. I would love nothing more than to
be able to share with you in bringing our child into the world. Deels, I want to have a child with
you.”

Delia reaches over and cups Patsy’s face with her hands, then pulling her into a kiss, mixed with
passion and love. Patsy pulls back, allowing Delia to wipe the tears which roll down her cheeks.
Delia pulls Patsy towards her and plants kisses along her jawline and down her neck. Patsy sighs in
pleasure, she tilts her head to give Delia more access to her. Delia knows how to bring her lover to
the heights of pleasure. They make love to each other several times more that night.

Patsy makes a mental note to discuss with Delia later, about the finer details of getting pregnant.
Chapter Summary

The group spend their time exploring the surrounding area as well as enjoying time on the beach. One night around the camp fire Esther and Alex share memories of a trip to Jamaica with Val and Lucille. Val and Lucille share a kiss during a walk along the beach.

There was always somewhere to be explored either within the camp itself or within the surrounding area. The mornings were always spent on the beach, where Patsy, Delia, Trixie, Val, Lucille, Phyllis, Uncle Saul, Sister Julienne, Sister Winifred, Sister Monica Joan, Sarah, Alex, Alice and baby Levi, spent time either sitting under a beach umbrella or sunbaking in the sun, while the men (Joshua, Simon, Jonah and John), with Esther hit the surf.

Joshua one morning taught his daughter how to surf. First on the sand, then moving her into the water, when he was certain she was able to stand up on the surfboard. Alice fell several times, before she started to master the skill of standing up and staying on the board. She was very pleased with herself when she rode her first wave into the shore. Afterwards Alice ran up to Sister Monica Joan and her mother, with the biggest grin on her face. Sarah congratulated her daughter, as she held baby Levi in her arms.

Sister Monica Joan said, “My what a clever girl you are.”

Alice then returned to her surfboard on the edge of the beach, and headed back out to her father, standing not too far out in the water.

Esther, Simon, Jonah and John were catching their own waves. Each of them took turns at catching a wave and riding it in, making sure that they didn’t wipe out. Esther loves to be able to sit and watch the waves, for her it was more a connection with nature, rather than a physical activity. While out on the surfboard, she felt at peace, she was able to think more clearly, than when she was on land. It was her turn to catch the next wave, which was slightly bigger than the others, Esther starts paddling and soon is pushing up and standing on the board. She rides the wave, making some cuts through the water and travels towards the shore, riding the wave before it levels out.

On the beach the girls are enjoying being able to stretch out and lie in the sun, while listening to the portable radio playing current songs. Lucille offers to rub sunscreen cream onto Val’s back for her. Trixie is dressed in a bikini and is sipping on a lemonade, while Patsy and Delia lie on their towels, also wearing bikinis and sunglasses. Alex is wearing a one-piece swimsuit and resting on her towel. The nun’s, Sarah, baby Levi, Phyllis and Uncle Saul take shelter under the beach umbrella.

Later in the afternoons, Trixie and Simon would spend time together either going for a walk along the beach or join the others on their excursion into the nearby town. Patsy and Delia some afternoons opted to spend some alone time back to their accommodation, but on other days, they would join Simon and Trixie walking along the beach. Jonah, John, Val, Lucille, Esther, Alex, Sister Julienne, Sister Winifred, Sister Monica Joan and Alice would head into the local town in search of Ice Creams and other sweet treats. Joshua, Sarah and baby Levi took advantage of the quite time. Uncle Saul and Phyllis would head off on a nature walk holding each other’s hand or sit
and just read, enjoying the other’s company.

At night the meal was always prepared and cooked by the men in the group. Everyone would gather around the camp fire and share in the meal and conversations. When Sister Julienne, Sister Winifred and Sister Monica Joan retired for the evening, the portable radio would be brought out. As the music plays Simon encourages the rest of the group to get up and dance. The songs which are played over the wireless, are fast moving. Allowing everyone to dance freely, but after about 4 songs, a slow song like “Unchained Melody” begins to play. Trixie and Simon, Joshua and Sarah, Uncle Saul and Phyllis pair off and start to slow dance. Patsy, Delia, Esther, Alex, Val, Lucille, Jonah and John move back to around the fire.

One evening Val, Lucille, Esther and Alex are sitting around the fire, while the other’s either were dancing or had returned to their rooms.

Alex says, “Lucille, I have been meaning to tell you, that Esther and myself, went to Jamaica, five years ago.”

“Oh, where about in Jamaica did you go, and did you enjoy it?” Lucille says excitedly.

“We loved our time there, we spent two weeks in Montego Bay. I had been sent to Cornwall Beach for a bikini photo shoot. Esther came along to assist me, but she proved to be more of a hindrance than assistance.” Alex says while Esther lays her head on Alex’s lap.

“Oh, that is such a beautiful beach. With Cornwall beach as the backdrop, I can only imagine that the photos were fantastic. How many models did you have to photograph?” Lucille says with a hint of pride in her voice.

“The beach is gorgeous, and I would love to go back one day, for a holiday and not for work.” Alex looks down at Esther.

“Hey, I was not a hindrance.” Esther says with a hint of laughter in her voice.

“I just found it difficult to help you, especially when you were dressed in a bikini top and shorts.” Esther wiggles her eyebrows at Alex.

“All I could think about when I looked at you, was how beautiful you looked, and how much I wanted to get you out of that bikini top and shorts.” Esther winks at her lover.

Esther looks over at Lucille and notices she is blushing. Val sits close to Lucille and brushes her hand against Lucille’s hand.

“Why don’t we go for a moonlight walk along the beach, are you interested Lucille and Val?” Esther suggests, while standing and holding her hand out to Alex.

“That would be nice, would you like to go, Lucille?” Val asks.

“Yes.” Lucille reply’s.

They all start walking along the beach together at first, but Alex grabs hold of Esther’s hand and pulls her back so that they can share a moonlight kiss there on the beach. Val and Lucille talk as they continue to walk. Esther and Alex follow but a distance behind. Esther notices that Val and Lucille have stopped walking and are standing facing each other. From Esther’s view point, Val is talking to Lucille, before holding each other’s hands. Esther hints to Alex that they should give them some privacy.
Esther and Alex sit down on the sand and spend time kissing and holding each other. After some time, Esther glances in the direction that Val and Lucille had been standing, she sees the pair are sharing a kiss and then an embrace. Esther understands what has transpired between the pair, as she remembers the conversation with Val only weeks prior. Alex looks at Esther, who explains to her that Val has been attracted to Lucille.

Val and Lucille return to Esther and Alex, walking holding each other’s hand and smiling. Esther and Alex offer them a supportive smile and they continue walking back to the camp fire.
Chapter 14

Chapter Summary

Simon spends time thinking about his relationship with Trixie. During a walk along the beach, Simon hides an engagement ring in a rock pool, for Trixie to find.

Simon stood about 6 feet tall with black short hair and very handsome. He always maintained his fitness, by lifting weights and running every day. He worked as an architect for a firm in London, training and studying at University in America. Simon and Joshua had been friends since High School and always supported each other over the years. Simon had never been married, but had several girlfriends over the years, although none of them had captured his heart like Trixie.

Simon sits on the sand, looking out at the ocean. It is early in the morning, he gotten up before any of the others in his quarters. While watching the waves, Simon’s thoughts drift off to a vision of a certain blonde midwife. He thinks back to the moment when he first set eyes on the blonde; at the house warming party. Esther had only just finishing introducing Trixie to Simon, when he noticed her beautiful smile and stunning blue eyes. For the rest of the night, Simon found it difficult to not be drawn to Trixie, even when he was playing the drums, during the musical performances.

When Simon finally got the opportunity to talk in length with Trixie, later that evening, he found her more beautiful, as she talked about her work as a midwife, her favourite music and movies. By the end of the evening, Simon had been able to ask Trixie, if she would join him to the cinema on her day off.

Trixie said “Yes, I would love that.”

“I will give you a call at Nonnatus House tomorrow and work out the day and time.” Simon excitedly said.

Simon had driven to Nonnatus House and picked up Trixie, who was wearing a lovely cream dress, with a blue throw over jacket. All Simon could do was just looked at the vision before him, he had a lump in his throat. In all of Simon’s dating life, he had always been sure of himself, but here in this moment, he lost all ability to think straight. All he could do was offer Trixie his arm and walked them to the car, where he opened the door for Trixie. Simon treated Trixie to an afternoon matinee of Alfie and then to a coffee and cake. Simon noticed how easy it was to talk with Trixie, it didn’t feel difficult like when he had been with other women.

Before long Simon and Trixie were spending all their free time in the company of each other. They either spent time talking over a cup of coffee, or at the cinema’s or having a meal at a restaurant before heading out to a dance club. It was at a dance club, while dancing close to each other, that Simon got the courage to kiss Trixie on the lips. To his surprise, she returned the kiss, they danced the rest of the evening, with their arms wrapped around each other’s hips.

While sitting on the beach, Simon spent time thinking about the numerous conversations he and Trixie had over the last 5 months. He had been supportive towards Trixie when she told him about her father’s break down. Trixie explained how she would put on an outward show to others, that everything was alright, but, was she was hurting inside. Simon had seen over the last months how brave and strong Trixie was, in facing her problems with the determination she displayed. Simon
found he was falling in love with her.

Simon remembered one night while they shared a meal together at the Goldberg house, Simon offered Trixie an alcoholic drink, and Trixie told him, “I am sorry, but I cannot have a drink. You see I am an Alcoholic and have been attending Alcoholic Anonymous for the past 3 to 4 years.”

“I didn’t know, I am sorry…. You are so brave to face this problem and then attend the meetings.” Simon sat next to Trixie and took her in his arms. He plants a kiss on the top of her head.

“It has not always been easy. During 1963 I went to a Rehabilitation Centre after I relapsed. While there I learned how to identify the triggers which lead me to wanting a drink. I have to take each day as it comes.” Trixie said with a hint of sadness in her voice.

“I love you Trixie and I think you are the most beautiful and brave woman, I have ever seen and known.” Simon lifts Trixie’s chin and wiped away Trixie’s tears. He leant in and gave her a kiss.

An idea comes into Simon’s head while sitting on the beach that morning. He realises how much he loves Trixie. He loves her dedication to her work and patients. He loves her strength in facing her own difficult personal problems, such as her drinking and her father’s breakdown. He also loves her beautiful smile and blonde hair. If Simon was being true to himself, he always had a weakness for a beautiful blonde. Simon had in the past weeks been thinking about Esther and Alex, Joshua and Sarah, finding he desired to be married to Trixie.

Simon knew that the tide would be out later in the afternoon, allowing for the rock pools to be accessible by foot. He had already been thinking about marriage and had purchased a ring. The ring was an elegant but simple design, with a sizeable diamond. Trixie and Simon had planned to go for a walk later in the afternoon, so he was going to walk them by the rock pools.

Simon has steered Trixie towards the rock pools that afternoon. They are walking hand in hand as they investigated the different rock pools. Simon let go of Trixie’s hand, walking to investigate a larger rock pool further away.

“Trixie! Come here and look at this.”

“What is it Simon?”

“There is something shining in this rock pool. I’m not sure what it is? What do you think it could be Trixie?”

Trixie walks over to Simon, who is holding his hand out to Trixie.

Trixie bends down to have a closer look inside of the rock pool. “Simon, it that what I think it is?”

“Trixie, I love you and I was wondering if you would do me the honour of becoming my wife?” Simon reaches into the rock pool and pulls out the engagement ring. Holding it in his hand, he bends his knee and looks up at Trixie.

“Yes! Yes! I will marry you. I love you too Simon.”

Simon stands up and cups Trixie’s face with his hands, pulling her towards him and kisses her. Their kiss is passionate and full of love for each other. Trixie pulls back and buries her head into Simon’s shoulder, while wrapping her arms around his waist.

Simon and Trixie walk back to the camp, holding each other’s hand, they can not contain their happiness. Upon arriving back at camp, they announce their news to all the others. They are
congratulated, and Trixie shows off her ring to Patsy, Delia, Val, Lucille, Phyllis, Sister Monica Joan, Sister Julienne, Sister Winifred, Esther, Alex and Sarah.
Chapter 15

Chapter Summary

Uncle Saul surprises the group with a day out on a boat for their last day at the camp.

It’s the last day for the group at the camp, even though it seems like yesterday that they all arrived at the camp. Sarah helps Alice with her breakfast, while Aunty Esther cradles baby Levi. Alex smiles, as Esther talks to little Levi, calling him ‘Aunty Esther’s little man’ and kisses his little cheeks. Esther has always been affectionate with her niece and now her nephew, which speaks volumes to Alex, as she can only imagine what Esther will be like with their own child. Everyone is sitting at the table and are either eating or talking.

Uncle Saul stands and announces, “Today, I thought it would be nice to spend the day together. I have taken the liberty of renting out the services of a captain and his boat for today.”

Uncle Saul turns to address the Nun’s, “Sister’s, we will be leaving after you finish your compline for the morning, so you will be able to join us aboard the boat and enjoy the day, admiring God’s natural beauty out on the high seas.”

“That is so thoughtful of you. We would love to join you for the day.” Sister Julienne replies.

“That settles it then, we will meet at the bus at 10.30 am…. Esther, can you make sure that the bus is ready by then.?” Uncle Saul places his hand on Esther’s shoulder. Esther looks in disgust at her Uncle.

“Why me? Why can’t Simon see to it?” Esther protests.

“Because I want you to drive the bus, and you know how to check the engine.” Says a determined Uncle Saul.

Esther while holding baby Levi and sitting next to Alice, is quickly reminded that there were others present, and replies, “Oh ruddy heck!” Instead of repeating the swear words in her head.

Alex playfully slaps Esther. Esther frowns her eyebrows and tightens her lips at Alex.

Esther leaves the table, heading towards their accommodation, where she collects her wide brimmed hat and sunglasses. As she is going to run some maintenance checks on the bus, Esther changes into an old pair of shorts and top. She then huffs off towards the direction of the bus.

Esther checks the bus’s oil, which she finds is a bit low, and in need of a top up. Before long Esther’s face is covered with grease and oil, from where she has wiped her hands against her face and forehead. Alex comes down to check on how Esther is progressing and laughs at the sight of her lover and wife.

“What are you laughing at?” Esther asks.

“Esther.... you...look...like...a...grease.... monkey.... My favourite.... kind.... of.... animal.”

“Oh, well you had better come over here and give your grease monkey a kiss then.” Esther tries to
pull Alex towards her. Alex playfully pushes her away.

“No, you don’t. You keep your greasy hands and face to yourself.” Alex playfully swipes at Esther.

“I thought you liked it when I got all dirty!” Esther wiggles her eyebrows and smirks at Alex.

“Normally yes, but you need to go and get cleaned up and change your clothes before we go. We have about 30 minutes till Uncle Saul wants us at the bus.” Alex slaps Esther on the bum, as she walks past her.

Everyone gathers at the bus at 10.30, with a freshly clean Esther behind the driver’s wheel. Uncle Saul sits behind Esther and directs her to the location of the boat mooring.

They arrive to a large boat, which appears to be decked out for a party. There are fairy lights strung along the side of the boat and on top of the Captain’s bridge. The Captain is a man in his mid-fifties and welcomes them all on board with a hand shake as they walk up the gangplank.

Esther and Joshua offer to cast off the ropes from the dock. They are well accustomed to the running of a boat. Soon the boat is heading out to sea, Sarah makes sure that Alice is wearing a life jacket. Alice is excited to be on a boat and wants to see where the Captain has gone. Joshua takes her up to the boat’s bridge on the upper level of the boat, all the while keeping a hold on the child. He does not want her to distract the Captain, as he steers the boat towards the deeper ocean waters.

Down on the lower deck, Patsy, Delia, Trixie and Simon are sitting together on one of the four-seater benches. A smile forms on Delia’s face, as her leg is pressed hard against Patsy’s. Even though they can’t always display their love for each other in public, simple acts like this are always cherished.

Patsy leans towards Delia’s ear and sighs, before saying, “What a lovely day for a boat ride. Don’t you think so Trixie?”

“Yes, Patsy, I think we might even be able to work more on our tans.” Trixie stretches out her legs into the sun.

Alex and Esther, who is holding baby Levi, are sitting next to Val and Lucille. Sister Monica Joan, Sister Julienne and Sister Winifred have found seats in the galley. Uncle Saul, Phyllis, Jonah and John are standing looking towards the bow of the boat. Uncle Saul points out to everyone that there are dolphins on the left side of the boat. The nun’s come out to look at the dolphins and are excited to see such beauty.

Sister Monica Joan claps her hands together and quotes from Nehemiah, “You alone are the LORD You have made the heavens, The heaven of heavens with all their host, The earth and all that is on it, The seas and all that is in them You give life to all of them And the heavenly host bows down before You.”

The boat travels through the ocean waters with ease, allowing for a smooth journey. The Captain and his small crew bring the boat to a halt and lower the anchor. The Captain announces that the crew will soon have their lunch prepared and served in the galley. The crew arrange a lunch of cold meats and salads, allowing for everyone’s tastes to be catered for.

After lunch, the Captain explains that they will head towards a small beach where they all can explore for a couple of hours. Once the boat has reached the beach, the crew prepare a small dingy to transport 4 passengers at a time to the beach. It takes 5 trips back and forth to the beach, till
everyone is on the beach.

Patsy, Delia, Val, Lucille, Esther, Alex, Trixie, Sarah (with baby Levi) and Phyllis find a section of the beach to place their towels and lie in the sun. Baby Levi sleeps on a towel under an umbrella. The nuns are also sitting on towels but under a large beach umbrella, which was put up by the crew, so that they are not exposed to much sun. Val digs a hole in the sand, allowing for her and Lucille to hold each other’s hand without anyone noticing.

Alice is with Joshua swimming in the ocean, along with her Uncles Simon, Jonah and John. Uncle Saul is sitting and chatting with the Captain and the crew. The crew throughout the afternoon serve cool drinks and snacks to everyone. The girls eventually venture into the ocean waters to cool off after lying in the sun. Before long the Captain indicates that they are to return to the boat and back to the harbour.

On the journey back to the harbour, there is talking and laughing as Simon tries to entertain a very energetic Alice, whom is unable to sit still for too long. Simon comes up with a game of charades. Everyone is happy to join in as they team up into groups of 3 to 4. Throughout the game, Alex can sense that Esther is becoming preoccupied by something. Esther’s posture stiffens as the boat comes closer to port. Once the boat is moored, and the gangplank has been placed down, Esther is the first of the passengers to alight the boat and lights up a cigarette.

Esther puffs away on her cigarette, “Thank you Uncle Saul for such a lovely day. Do you have any other plans for the rest of the evening, that we don’t know about?” Esther annoyed says.

Uncle Saul looks with concern at Esther, “I have organised a special barbeque dinner, back at the camp. Is everything alright Esther?”

“Yes, everything is alright. I had better get the bus going. We are going to have to stop on the way back to fuel up.” Esther walks off in a huff.

The others have just caught up with Uncle Saul, Alex asks, “Where is Esther?”

“She has gone to get the bus.” Uncle Saul says, and then leans in close to Alex and whispers, “I think she is annoyed about something. She walked off in a huff.”

Esther brings the bus around and everyone climbs on board the bus. The journey back to the camp is a quite one, as everyone is either tired from being in the sun, or they are enjoying the scenery through the windows. Alice’s head is resting on her father’s shoulder, where she has fallen asleep. Baby Levi is starting to stir and making his presence known to his mother. Sarah moves to the back of the bus, so she can feed the hungry child. Esther remains quite and hardly speaks to Alex, sitting behind her.

Upon arriving at the camp, Esther remains in the bus, waiting for everyone to depart, she wants to take the bus and get it filled up with petrol.

Alex stops next Esther, “Why haven’t you turned the engine off?”

“I’m going to take the bus and get it fill it up with petrol.”

“I thought you might like to spend some time with me, before dinner?” Alex looks around to see if anyone is watching. No one is around, she runs a hand along Esther’s shoulder.

Esther shrugs her shoulder, causing Alex’s hand to fall onto the back of the driver’s seat, “I’m getting sick and tired of people telling me, what they think I want.” Esther says with an annoyance in her voice. She keeps her eyes facing straight ahead, her hands gripping the steering wheel with
such force, that her knuckles turn white.

“I was only thinking that you might of liked to just spend some time with me. But you want to be like this, then go and sulk…. You do make it hard for me to love you sometimes.” A hurt Alex exits the bus with tears in her eyes.

Esther curses herself for causing her lover and wife to cry. She closes the bus door and drives away to the local service station. While the bus is being filled, Esther wonders to herself as to why she is suddenly angry.
Chapter 16

Chapter Summary

Uncle Saul has arranged for a farewell barbeque for Esther on their last night at the camp. Around the camp fire, Esther and the boys sing songs. As the night wears on, Esther’s mood worsens, as the songs become more anti war themed. Alex and Esther eventually open to each other about their fears about the next couple of months.

Esther arrives back at camp and after parking the bus, she heads back to the cottage. She quietly hopes Alex is waiting for her, but knowing Alex, Esther does not hold out much hope. Alex is nowhere to be found, Esther collects her surfboard and walks down to the beach. For the first time that week, Esther’s heart is not that keen on catching waves, she is more longing to make things right with Alex.

On the beach, Uncle Saul is directing a small group of people in arranging the setting up of a large tent. Esther ventures over and investigates the fuss occurring in the tent. Uncle Saul has arranged for a large table with chairs to be set up in the middle of the tent. On the left side of the tent there is another large table, which has various types of salads set out, with space left for cooked meat to be placed. To the right side of the tent, is another identical table, with various desserts and cakes, along with Tea and Coffee. Outside the tent is a large roasting spit with a whole Lamb being cooked.

Uncle Saul spots Esther standing in the doorway of the tent, “You are not meant to see this yet.” He waves his hands in the air to indicate for Esther to move away from the tent.

“What are you up to Uncle?” A confused Esther asks.

“All will be revealed later, My girl. Now go and have a surf or spend time with that lovely wife of yours.” Uncle Saul pushes Esther away from the tent.

Along the beach is Alex, Lucille and Sarah with baby Levi, sitting on towels, watching Simon, Joshua, Jonah, John, Val and Alice, playing a game of beach cricket. Esther walks over and is asked to join in the game. She looks towards Alex, who refuses to look at her, but her face reveals that she has been crying. Esther decides to join the game, knowing that she is not going to be able to openly talk with Alex with the others around.

About an hour and half later, Uncle Saul makes his way over to the small group further down on the beach. He informs them that they are required to go and get dressed for dinner, which will be ready within about an hour. Esther walks over to Alex and offers her hand to her, Alex takes her hand and they walk back with the others.

Back at the cottage, Patsy and Delia are sitting in the small lounge room cuddling on the lounge. Esther fills them in on the evening meal arrangements. Alex is in their room getting ready when Esther comes into the room. Esther walks up behind a half-naked Alex and wraps her arms around her lover’s waist and resting her chin on Alex’s shoulder.

Esther says, “I am sorry, I should not have shrugged you off before. Please forgive me…. (kisses her lover’s cheek).”
“I forgive you Esther, but we need to talk about what is troubling you.” Alex starts to brush her hair.

“We will talk, but not right now.” Esther says, while looking at Alex.

“As long as we do.” Alex looks at Esther through the reflection of the mirror.

“Mmmmm.” Replies a very distracted Esther.

Alex turns and looks at Esther, who is admiring the new bra her wife is wearing. Esther has always been obsessed with Alex’s large breasts. And this bra was making Esther lose all concentration thus making the art of conversation a challenge. Alex turns around while shaking her head and draws her wife towards her saying, “See something you like?”

“Um… Ah…. (swallows a lump in her throat), Yes.” Esther reaches around Alex’s back and unhooks the bra, releasing Alex’s breasts and discards the bra onto the floor. Esther kisses Alex’s lips passionately before planting big kisses along her neck and working her way down to the breasts cupped in her hands. Esther spends time exploring her lover’s body, before attending to fulfilling Alex’s other sexual needs.

At the designated time, everyone arrives at the tent on the beach, and is amazed at the attention to detail, that has taken place. There are fire torches at the entrance of the tent, where they were met by waiters, who presented them with pre-dinner drinks. Once inside the tent had been decorated with lanterns. The table had been decorated with candles and the chairs had been covered with a silk purple cloth, to add a touch of flair to the evening. A camp fire had been set up outside a distance away from the tent.

Everyone was shown to their seats before Uncle Saul said, “As this will be Esther’s last night with us all, before heading to Vietnam the day after tomorrow. I wanted to give my niece a send-off, where she is surrounded by all those who care and love her.” Uncle Saul says with tears in his eyes.

“Please make your way over to the food table, and the staff will serve you. Please enjoy yourselves.” Uncle Saul points to the table on the left side of the tent.

After the food had been consumed, Sister Julienne stands and says, “Nurse Goldberg, since your arrival at Nonnatus House, I am sure I can speak on the behalf of all your colleagues, that you have made a difference in all of our lives. I know that Sister Monica Joan, has enjoyed spending time with you and your niece Alice. Your family at Nonnatus House wish you a safe time in Vietnam, and that you return to us safe and well. And I understand that your friend Alex, is expecting. You can be reassured that the midwives will be watching over her, while you are overseas. We send you off with the Lord’s protection.”

Esther grabs Alex’s hand under the table and squeezes it hard, as tears fill her eyes. Esther thanks Sister Julienne for her kind words.

Uncle Saul walks over to Esther and presents her with a small present, “This was your father’s and it is only fitting that you have it now. Take it with you and remember you have a large family that loves you.”

Esther opens the present and finds a compass. She remembers as a child her father would always have it with him, when they travelled. Her father showed her how the compass worked and how to find North. Her father explained how the different compass points had special meaning when you were lost and that it can help you find your way home. Alex reaches over and wipes Esther’s tears,
which are now streaming down her cheeks.

“Now, my precious child, as your Uncle, I am going to pray a Jewish prayer of protection over you.” Uncle Saul places a hand on Esther’s shoulder before saying, “O Lord grant that this night we may sleep in peace. And that in the morning our awakening may also be in peace. May our daytime be cloaked in your peace.”

Everyone responds with “Amen.”

Esther stands up, “I would like to thank everyone, for making this last week extra special for me and my family. It means so much to me, more than you will ever know.”

Joshua and Simon walk out of the tent, and after a while return with guitars and some percussion instruments in their hands. Jonah says, “Why don’t we have a sing a long around the camp fire?”

After everyone has settled on the blankets around the camp fire, Esther notices that baby Levi is being rather grizzly and not settling. She walks over and picks him up in her arms, “Ah, what is it my little man? Why are you so grizzly?” Baby Levi stops his grumbling noises, as he is cradled in his Aunts arms.

“You just wanted some Auntie Esther time.” Esther moves towards her brother, “How about singing a nice slow song, so I can have a dance with my little man.”

Joshua, John, Simon and Jonah start to play ‘Girl’ by The Beatles. Esther dances with baby Levi, who is starting to settle. Alex smiles as she watches her woman dancing with Levi, all the while picturing Esther dancing with their child.

By the end of the song, Levi has fallen asleep and Esther then places him into Sarah’s arms. Then Esther walks over and picks up a guitar and starts playing ‘Norwegian Wood’ by The Beatles, then Delia asks, “Can you play ‘Johnny B Goode’?”

They play and Delia, Patsy, Trixie, Alex, Val and Lucille all get up and start dancing on the sand. The boys and Esther continue to play fast and catchy songs, allowing the girls the opportunity to dance. Sister Winifred even gets up and joins in with the dancing.

So that everyone can continue to dance, Esther and the boys start to play more songs.

‘I can’t help myself.’ Four Tops
‘Cherry Cherry.’ Neil Diamond
‘I got you babe.’ Sonny and Cher
‘I’m a believer.’ The Monkees
‘Kicks.’ Paul Revere & The Raiders
‘Viva Las Vegas.’ Elvis Presley
‘Surfin Safari.’ The Beach Boys
‘Baby let me take you home.’ The Animals
‘Hang on Sloopy.’ The McCoys
‘Hound Dog.’ Elvis Presley
‘I’m looking through you.’ The Beatles
‘Can’t buy me love.’ The Beatles
‘Twist and Shout.’ The Beatles
‘A Hard Day’s Night.’ The Beatles

The nuns and Sarah (with a sleepy Alice and Levi) say their Goodnights to everyone else and leave. Sister Winifred carries sleeping Levi, while Sarah carries Alice back to their cottage.
Once the nuns and little ones have left for the night. The speed and tone of the songs change, allowing for the couples to slow dance. Esther puts down her guitar and walks over to Alex and asks, “May I have this dance, my beautiful love?” As Joshua starts to sing ‘Bring it on home to me’ by Sam Cooke. Patsy and Delia, Simon and Trixie, Val and Lucille and Uncle Saul and Phyllis all start to slow dance for the next several songs. Alex requests ‘You really got a hold on me’ by The Beatles, to which Esther sings along to the lyrics while she dances with Alex in a sexy manner, causing Alex to blush.

Alex kisses Esther before whispering in her ear, “I need to have a rest.” Esther leads Alex to a blanket and assists her to sit down. Esther sits next to Alex and kisses her on the back of her hand. Esther picks up her guitar and joins in playing the next song, ‘California Dreaming’ by The Mamas and the Pappa’s. Uncle Saul asks, “How about ‘Unchained Melody’?” Esther and Joshua both play and sing the song. Those of the band who were not dancing, continue to play some more slow dancing songs for the couples.

Alex is sitting to Esther’s left, Alex then leans her head on Esther’s shoulder, while placing her right hand around Esther’s back. Esther finishes playing and pulls Alex close to her, so that Alex’s right leg is sitting between Esther’s legs and Alex is seated half on Esther’s lap. Esther wraps her left arm around Alex’s back and gripped the neck of her guitar. The next song to be played is ‘And I love her’, by The Beatles.

Alex thinks back to when Esther first held her like this, 12 years ago. It was just after they had made love for the first time, 6 months after their first kiss. They were lying in bed, when Esther got up out of the bed and grabbed her dressing gown and walked out of the room. Alex thought that Esther was upset and disappointed with her. Her fears disappeared when Esther returned into the room, holding her guitar. Esther removed her dressing gown and climbed back into the bed with the guitar. Esther sat next to Alex and pulled her close, so that she was half seated on Esther’s lap. Esther wrapped her left arm around Alex’s back, so that Esther could hold both her favourite things in the world. Esther played ‘Greensleeves’ for Alex, while she gave Alex small kisses to her cheek.

Alex notices that Esther’s posture is becoming rigid as she continues to play. Alex knows that Esther has been anxious for most of the afternoon and wants to help relieve her lover’s frustration. Alex lowers her right hand so that it rests on the inside of Esther’s right thigh, she allows her hand to wander towards the middle of Esther’s groin. Alex gently rubs her hand against Esther’s groin, knowing that her hand is obscured by the body of the guitar.

Lucille asks, “Esther, you have not requested any songs. Are there any songs that you want to sing or play?” The couples begin to start returning to sit on the blankets and either sit close to their love one or cuddle up together.

Esther says, “Yes” and starts to play and sing ‘Turn, Turn, Turn’ by The Byrds, ‘The house of the rising sun’ by The Animals, ‘Masters of War’ by Bob Dylan and ‘Eve of Destruction’ by Barry McGuire.

After finishing playing the last note of ‘Eve of Destruction’, Esther has not noticed that she had been playing with such passion and force, that the neck of her guitar breaks away from the rest of the guitar.

Alex is seat to the left of Esther, and looks at her face, noticing that Esther’s jaw is clinched tight and there is a look of rage in her tear-filled eyes. Alex leans across to Esther, “I think we need to go to bed.” Esther turns her head towards Alex, but instead of answering she nods in agreement.

Alex leads Esther to their cottage, where once inside Alex leads Esther to the bathroom. Alex instructs, “You are going to have a shower and then it’s into bed. There will be no arguments about
it. That is an order!” Alex starts to remove Esther’s clothes, and gently pushes her towards the shower.

“Don’t you want to join me?” Esther asks in a seductive manner as she steps into the shower and turns on the water.

Alex removes her clothes and joins Esther in the shower. Alex says, “We are going to have a shower and freshen up. No fooling around Esther.”

After finishing their shower together, Esther steps out and holds her hand out for to steady Alex, as she exits the shower. Esther then hands her a towel before retrieving one for herself. Alex bends down and collects their clothes, before leading them with their towels wrapped around their naked bodies, to the bedroom.

Once inside their room, Esther closes the door behind them and reaches for Alex. She pulls Alex towards her, as Esther leans against the door, she removes the towels from around their bodies. Esther captures Alex’s lips in a heated kiss, while her hands cup Alex’s bottom. Alex places her hands around Esther’s neck, while Esther lifts Alex, allowing her to wrap her legs around Esther’s back. Esther walks carrying Alex to their bed and they make love to each other, but this time it is with a sense of urgency, as their time together is fast running out.

Later that night, Esther wakes to find the side of the bed, where Alex sleeps is empty. She feels the space where Alex have been lying and felt that the sheets were cool, indicating that Alex had been up for a while. Esther listens and hears someone crying in the small lounge room of the cottage. She goes out to investigate and finds Patsy and Delia comforting a crying Alex. Esther rushes over and sits next to Alex, then wraps her arms around the crying woman.

“Why are you so upset, my love? Is it because I haven’t talked to about why I shrugged you off this afternoon?” Esther’s hold on Alex tightens.

“I…. had…. a…. nightmare…..” Alex sobs. “I was dreaming…. that I was 7 to 8 months pregnant…. and was at home…. when there was a knock….at the front door…. I opened the door….and there was a solider…. holding a telegram.” Alex regains control of her emotions. “The solider asked if it was the home of Mr J Goldberg? I said yes. He handed me the telegram. Sarah was with me and she opened the telegram. She then handed it to me to read. It read that the US Government regretted to inform Joshua, that Captain Esther Goldberg was listed as Missing in Action.” Alex starts to cry again, burying her head into Esther’s chest.

Esther remains quiet. She squeezes Alex tighter and plants a kiss to the top of her head. They embrace each other for a while, before Esther says, “I am sorry that my leaving is causing you so much heartache. If I had my way, there would be NO WAR and I would not be leaving you.”

“Alex, I guess we both have been having to face our own fears today…. The reason I shrugged you off this afternoon, was because I just didn’t want to spend a small amount of time alone with you…. I wanted to spend the whole day alone with you. I didn’t want to be reminded of the fact that in about 56 hours, I will have landed in Vietnam and be having to assist with the patching up of young men, injured by warfare…. Knowing that I am having to leave you, and our child to go to a war zone, terrifies me…. I love you, and the thought of having to be away from you, now that we are finally having a baby, is killing me.” Esther breaks down and cries. During her sobs Esther says, “I am…. sorry….I didn’t…. talk to you before now.”

Delia and Patsy go into the small kitchenette and make them all a cup of tea. Patsy pulls Delia close into her and kisses her passionately. After returning Patsy’s kiss, Delia pulls away and asks, “What was that for, Pats?”
“I love you, and I wanted you to know it, even though I don’t always say it. I do love you Deels!”

“I love you too, Pats. Now come here and kiss me like that again.” Patsy does exactly that.

Patsy and Delia return to the lounge room with a pot of tea and four cups. The four friends share in a cup of tea, before heading off to their separate rooms. Esther leads Alex to their bed, where Esther holds Alex in her arms until the morning.
Chapter 17

Chapter Summary

The journey back to Popular. Esther’s last night as a civilian. Esther leaves for Vietnam.

The last morning at the camp after they all have partaken in eating breakfast, the group all participate with tidying up the camp. All the bed linen and towels are removed and bundled up for laundering. All other rubbish is collected and placed in the larger garbage bins to be collected later that day. Once all the baggage was load onto the bus and all the passengers were seated, Simon made the last-minute checks, before closing the door. Simon had been designated the role of first driver for today and Esther would take the last part of the journey.

Esther lies down on the back seat of the bus with her head resting on Alex’s lap. Baby Levi is securely being held in his Aunty Esther’s arms, and sleeps on her chest. Esther had a restless night, as Alex and she talked more in their room after talking in the lounge room. They both shared their feelings about being separated for the next 6 months. And how Esther was going to miss out on the different stages of Alex’s pregnancy. They held each other so tight that when they did finally fall asleep, they woke that morning still lying in the same position.

The ride back to Popular was uneventful, as everyone was happy to have had some time away from the busy pace of midwifery nursing. Sister Julienne was anxious to find out how the relief nurses had fared for the past week. Depending on the reports of the nurses and a discussion with Nurse Crane, Sister Julienne will make decision as to which relief nurse would be asked to fill in for Nurse Goldberg for the next 6 months.

Val and Lucille sit next to each other, taking pleasure in knowing that their legs were touching. Both women knew they will have to be discreet about their relationship and find ways in which they can be together. Val side glances at Lucille and thinks to herself, ‘I am truly and madly in love with this woman.’

Lucille feels Val looking at her and asks, “Is everything alright?”

“Um, ah, Yes. I was just thinking how beautiful you look.” Val whispers and they both smile at each other.

Esther wakes and moves to sit in the seat in front of Patsy and Delia. She turns around and says in a low voice, “Can I ask a favour of you, Patsy and Delia?”

“Yes.” They both answer in unison.

“While I am away, can you keep an eye on my girl and baby? Can you make sure that she goes to the Clinic for her check-ups? It will help me to know that Alex will be looked after by other women like us. Women who understand our situation.” Esther looks back at Alex, and half smiles.

“You can count on us to look out for Alex and the baby…. We both know what it is like to be separated from the one you love for a long period of time.” Delia replies while glancing in Patsy’s direction.
The bus arrives back at Nonnatus House where Patsy, Delia, Phyllis, Trixie, Val, Lucille, Sister Julienne, Sister Winifred and Sister Monica Joan all depart and say their goodbyes to Esther and the others. For Esther it is an emotional time as she hugs each one and says Goodbye to her Nonnatus House family. There are tears flowing as Esther turns and waves at the family for the last time for 6 months.

Once back at the Goldberg House, Esther leads Alex to their bedroom with their luggage from the last week. “I want you to pack an overnight bag for tonight. I have booked us a night at The Cavendish. Alex, I want our last night together to be special.” Esther places her hands-on Alex’s waist and kisses her on the lips.

Alex kisses Esther back. Then walks over to the wardrobe and pulls out a small overnight bag and a blue silk dress. She opens the dresser and pulls out underwear, but Esther stops her, when she reaches for a nightie.

“Somehow, I don’t think you’ll be needing that tonight! … (wiggles her eyebrows and gives a cheeky smile), I love the dress you have chosen to wear for tonight, because I plan to take you out for dinner and show you off.” Esther smirks.

Esther walks over to the wardrobe and removes an Army duffle bag, which had been packed previously and her Army Uniform. Once Alex finishes packing, Esther takes their bags and her uniform, to the front door. Esther phones for a cab to collect them. Then Esther says Goodbye to Simon, Jonah, John, Joshua, Sarah, Alice and Levi. As she hugs and kisses each of them, Esther finds it hard to speak, as she is close to crying. When she hugs little Alice and Levi, the dam walls which have been holding back the tears, finally break, the tears flow down her cheeks freely.

Alex holds Esther’s hand and squeezes it hard, to indicate her support as well as that the cab has arrived. Simon takes their luggage out to the cab and gives his friend a final hug, before assisting them into the cab. The family all are standing and waving a final Goodbye to their loved one, although Joshua will see his sister, when he picks up Alex the next morning.

The cab ride gives Esther time to regain control over her tears, as Alex gave her a hug, to reassure the woman, that she was loved and safe in her arms. Alex wipes Esther’s eyes with a handkerchief, and when the cab driver was not looking, she plants small kisses on Esther’s lips. They soon arrive at The Cavendish and check in, where they are taken to their room. Once inside the room, Esther and Alex inspect the room, they find that there is a large bathtub in the bathroom.

A romantically inspired Esther suggests, “Why don’t we have a relaxing bath together? I want to make the most of our time left. I also want to make love to you so badly, my love.”

Alex walks to the bath and starts the water running, before slowly removing her clothing. Alex winks and smirks at Esther. A naked Alex undresses Esther and leads her to the bath, where they both climb in. They spend time caressing each other’s naked bodies, while sharing kisses and whispering sweet talk to each other. Before long they are making love to each other and even after all these years together, they are so well attuned to each other’s needs.

As promised by Esther, they head out after their bath, to a fine restaurant, where Esther saw to it that all of Alex’s nutritional needs were seen to. Esther feels something rub against her right leg, she soon realises that Alex has removed her shoe and rubbing her foot up Esther’s leg. Esther is thankful for the long tablecloth, which hides the activity occurring under the table. Esther looks at Alex with a raised eyebrow, as Alex’s foot finds its desired designation, Esther’s groin. In the 12 years they have been together, Alex has mastered the skill of seduction and will puts this skill into practice when she is able to. Esther is suddenly unable to speak, she blinks and swallows hard, as Alex’s foot rubs the seam of Esther’s pants, driving Esther mad with desire. They had a wonderful
meal and when the waiter offered them the dessert menu, Alex said, “I don’t think we need to see
the Dessert Menu, thank you. We would like the bill, thank you.” Alex hungerly looked at Esther.

Esther and Alex walk back to the hotel and Esther looks over at Alex. And thinks that in the light
from the street lights and the moon, Alex could not look any more beautiful. There is no one as
they walk, and Alex wraps her arm around Esther’s waist and using her other hand to stoke
Esther’s arm. Esther feels the desire within herself to build again for her lover.

Once inside their hotel room, Esther is pounced upon by Alex. Esther holds her wife and lifts
Alex’s legs are wrapped around Esther’s back. Esther walks them to the lounge, where Esther
gently lowers Alex on her back. Esther kisses Alex, while her hands lifts the bottom of Alex’s
dress. Esther then moves down to remove Alex’s undies with her teeth.

“Your pants are so wet, my darling!” Esther holds the undies in her hands.

“It’s what happens to me, when I think about making love to you, sweetheart.” Alex grins.

Esther holds Alex’s undies to her nose and smells them, “Oh, they even smell heavenly, baby.”

Alex starts to unbutton Esther’s shirt, when her hands are grabbed by Esther. “No…you don’t…
you are all mine.” Esther waves a finger, as if to say ‘Nah’ to Alex. Esther then takes hold of
Alex’s hands, “Now you are not allowed to move your hands from around my neck. You drove me
crazy at the restaurant, now it’s my turn, Alex.”

Esther returns to Alex’s lips and kiss her, while two of her fingers enter Alex’s other lips. With
each kiss, Esther thrusts her fingers deeper and faster inside Alex. Esther lowers her head next to
Alex’s ear, while her fingers are beginning to drive her lover wild with desire. Alex’s sighs and
moans indicate her enjoyment. Her breathing becomes faster and shorter with each thrust of
Esther’s fingers.

“Oh, please don’t stop…Oh, Yes Baby…. I’m so close…. Esther, I’m going to c…o…m…e!”

Esther holds her fingers in place, while Alex rides out her orgasm. They kiss and profess their love
for each other. Esther crawls off Alex and stands up, she holds her hand out to Alex, Esther takes
Alex’s hand and helps her to her feet, before leading them to the bedroom. They undress each
other, and Alex pushes Esther back onto the bed. Esther lies with her head on the bedcovers and
looks at Alex, she loves what she sees before her. Alex’s baby bump even though it is small it’s
very noticeable. Esther lifts her arms and hands out to Alex to grab hold of, then she pulls Alex
towards her, so that she can straddle Esther’s hips. Alex bends down and passionately kisses
Esther, as she sets her sights on pleasing her wife and lover.

The morning arrives and before they know it, the time has arrived for Esther to dress in her Army
Uniform and bid her wife and lover Goodbye. They embrace and share a long kiss before Esther
says, “I love you, Alexandria Stream…. If I had not met you all those years ago, I would have
never known what it meant to be loved…. When you walk into the room, I feel as if I can take on
the world…. Your love opened my closed heart…. Take good care of our baby…. I LOVE YOU!”
Tears fall down Esther’s cheeks.

Alex buries her face into Esther’s chest, as she cries. Alex says between sobs, “I …Love…You…
to” Knowing that they will not be able to be open with their affections at the Airport, they kiss
each other passionately in the hotel room.

Joshua meets them in the hotel foyer and takes the pair to the International Airport, for Esther to
catch her flight to Vietnam. Alex cries as she watches Esther disappear behind the doors, which
lead to the boarding gates.
Chapter 18

Chapter Summary

Patsy and Delia ask Alex over for dinner at their flat. Patsy has some questions for Alex regarding how, Esther and she worked out the finer aspects of falling pregnant.

In keeping with their promise to Esther, Patsy and Delia checking up on Alex, usually over a coffee or dinner. Patsy and Delia have been talking more about them trying to have a baby. There were some questions that Patsy wanted to ask Alex, about the process of falling pregnant without having sex with a man. Delia suggests that they ask Alex over for dinner at their flat, where they can talk freely.

Patsy rings Alex and asks, “Delia and I were wondering if you would like to come for dinner at our place on Friday night this week?”

“Yes, that would be lovely. What time do you want me to come over?” Alex asks.

“We will say about 6pm, Delia and I have a late start the next day. You are most welcome to stay the night.” Patsy offers the use of their spare room to Alex.

“Thank you, that would be lovely, I am not that keen on traveling on my own late at night.”

Friday night arrives, and Delia has been cooking up a storm in the kitchen when Patsy comes home from her day at Nonnatus House, her stomach reacts to the lovely aroma coming from the kitchen. Patsy places her bag down beside the door, before walking to the kitchen door. She stops as she spies Delia wearing a yellow dress and is dancing while cooking. Patsy is transfixed by the Welshwoman’s bottom as it wiggles. Patsy moves quietly towards Delia and places her hands-on her lover’s hips and plants a kiss on her neck, before saying, “What a lovely sight to come home to!”

Delia turns around and cups Patsy’s face, “How was your day? Cariad”

“It was a good day, but it’s so much better now that I am holding you.” Patsy passionately kisses Delia, while her hands stroke Delia’s bottom.

“Pats, you’re got to control yourself, Cariad. Alex will be here soon. Go and get changed and I will make you a cuppa.”

“Alright Deels, as long as I can have one more kiss before I go?”

Delia pulls Patsy in to a long and tender kiss, before releasing her to go to change out of her uniform.

There is a knock at the front door to their flat which Delia answers. She greets Alex and takes her coat and places it onto the coat rack. Delia leads Alex into the kitchen and offers to make them a pot of tea. Delia and Alex are sitting at the kitchen table drinking their cup of tea, when Patsy returns. Delia stands up and makes Patsy her cup and hands it to her, along with a kiss to Patsy’s cheek.
Alex comments, “Dinner smells lovely, I can’t wait to eat.”

“Alex, dinner will not be long. Patsy will you please set the table for us.”

Patsy walks out of the kitchen towards the lounge room, she carries the cutlery for their meal. The table is quickly set and Delia plates up their dinner. The three women sit at the table and begin to eat.

Alex smiles, “This is delicious. Delia you are an excellent cook.”

“Thank you, I do all the cooking, while Patsy does the cleaning.”

Patsy looks at Alex and asks, “How are you feeling? You look radiant at 4 months.”

“I am finding that I am needing to go to the toilet more than normal. I am noticing that my clothes don’t fit me anymore. I am having to wear my Sister’s old maternity clothes.” Alex rubs her hands over her baby bump.

Patsy nervously asks, “Alex, can I ask you about how Esther and you, knew when to perform the act to get pregnant?”

“Yes, why are you two getting cluckly?” Alex smiles at her friends.

“Delia and I have been talking about the possibility of having children and were wondering as to how to work out when to start trying. Along with how to determine who the father will be? And we thought that you would be able to give us some advice?” Patsy holds Delia’s hand.

“First thing Esther and I had to work out was the timing of my cycle. When you finish your period, the next couple of weeks after, was when you are most fertile. We asked Joshua for his sperm and we used a Turkey baster, to insert the sperm inside me.” Alex tells Patsy and Delia.

“We tried several times, during those weeks. Esther always insisted that we make love before trying to get me pregnant. She believed this child was conceived by two people who love each other. So, there was a lot of love making before trying, and Joshua made several deposits for us. Although my sister didn’t miss out, she told me that after Joshua gave us his sperm, he would then make love to her.”

“Why did you decide on using Joshua’s sperm?” Patsy bashfully asks.

“I wanted to have Esther’s child, and with Joshua being her brother, we both thought that his sperm, would have some of Esther’s DNA. This child would partly share Esther’s and Joshua’s family traits.” Alex rubs her baby bump and smiles at her friends.

“If you are looking for someone to provide their sperm, maybe you could ask John to help. John offered his sperm to friends of Esther’s and mine, in the US, the two women being in the same situation as us, they too wanted to have a baby, but didn’t have a male relative. They have a beautiful girl and boy.” Alex places a hand on Patsy’s.

“Wouldn’t John at some stage, want to have a family of his own?” Delia asks.

“John was madly in love with a woman named, Paula. They married and were expecting their first child, when Paula was killed in accident. John has never dated anyone since. He says, ‘I would rather help others have the kind of happiness, I almost had.’ He understands the process and would be discreet, and supportive of your decisions.” Alex tells Patsy and Delia.
“If you would like, I could ask John for you. If you were nervous about asking him?” Alex offers.

Patsy thinks for a moment, “Thank you for offering to talk to John for us. Delia and I will discuss it with John, once we have worked out the timing of Delia’s cycle.”

Delia stands and clears the plates from the table, she heads into the kitchen and returns with dessert.

Patsy asks, “Have you heard from Esther lately?”

“Yes, I received a letter last week. From what she writes, it sounds very tense and stressful over there now. Her unit is rather busy with casualties arriving almost every part of the day. One day she stated she was standing at the surgical table for over 24 hours, with the only break was to go to the toilet and have a drink and snack.”

Alex becomes quiet and holds her baby bump. Patsy asks, “Are you worried about Esther?”

“Yes, I just am nervous with her being so close to the fighting. I am scared that something will happen to her, and I will be left to bring this child up on my own.” Tears form in Alex’s eyes.

“I’m sure Esther is making sure that she stays safe, so that she can come home to you and the baby.” Delia tries to reassure her friend.

They share dessert and a cup of tea, Alex shares how she has been developing the photos from their week away. Alex is thankful for the change in conversation. After a while Alex starts to yawn, and Patsy suggests that she head off to the spare bed for the night.

Patsy helps Delia with the dishes, and after they finish, she pulls Delia into a hug and whispers in her ear, “I love you Delia Busby.”

Delia looks at Patsy with love in her eyes, “Take me to bed and show me how much you love me.” Patsy leads Delia to their bedroom and shuts the door, so that they can make love without disturbing Alex in the room opposite.
Chapter 19

Chapter Summary

Patsy and Delia try to conceive a child with assistance from John.

Patsy and Delia met with John one afternoon and approached the subject of trying to conceive a child, and for his assistance in the matter. To their surprise John is ever so happy to play a part in their pregnancy. Delia worked out the timing of her cycle, with this knowledge the three organised dates and times to begin trying for a baby.

The day arrives for Patsy and Delia to attempt at becoming pregnant, both women had been rostered to work on the early shift this morning, with the following day off. Delia arranges for John to come over that evening for dinner and then start trying to create a life between them. Patsy is nervous all day, as she was worries that something might go wrong throughout the day, such as a labour taking to long. Her nerves are calmed when she sees Delia at Nonnatus House waiting to go home.

Patsy and Delia walk to their flat with a quickness in their steps, this afternoon. Delia has planned a stew for their meal and wants to get it started. While Patsy sets the table with candles and soft lighting to create a romantic atmosphere. Patsy selects several records to play in the background through dinner. Delia leaves the stew to cook while her and Patsy get ready for the evening.

“Pats, we should have a bath…we have some time before John arrives…it would be nice to relax in a warm bath with you. Cariad.”

“I’ll go and get the bath ready, Deels, you go and set out the clothes you want to dress in later. I will be waiting in the bath for you.”

When Delia enters the bathroom, Patsy is waiting in the bath for her. Delia removes her dressing gown and climbs into the bath. Patsy hands her a glass of Champagne and offers a toast, “Here is to us becoming parents. (tears form in her eyes), I never thought that it would ever happen for us.” Tears fall down her face.

Delia reaches over and wipes the tear that rolls down Patsy’s cheek, “Oh, my love, I have so much wanted to have your child. I am thankful for Esther and Alex, because without them, we would not have imagined that we could become parents. Now come here and give me a kiss.”

Patsy moves closer so that Delia can straddle her lap, while her arms wrap around the smaller woman’s waist and kisses her passionately. “Deels, thank you for loving me all these years. I know that there have been difficult and painful times. Delia you have stuck with me through it all. I love you so much. I can’t wait to make love to you before hopefully conceive our baby.”

They embrace and make love to each other until the water become cool. They climb out of the bath and after drying off, they get dressed for the evening. Patsy is dressed in a simple green pants and white button up shirt. Delia has chosen a lovely yellow dress, which clings to her body in all the right places. Delia knows that Patsy cannot resist her in this dress, and when she has worn it previously, the dress is quickly removed after they had come back from a night out.
John arrives at the designated time, Patsy greets him and asks, “Would you like a drink?”

John replies, “Yes, a Scotch and coke, would be nice, thank you.”

Patsy prepares their drinks, while she pours herself a whiskey and a gin and tonic for Delia. Delia greets John as she brings in their dinner. After dinner has been eaten, Patsy and Delia head off to their bedroom, and John stays in the lounge room until his contribution is required. Patsy being the hygiene freak that she is, makes sure that John has a sterile cup for him to use, and she has also sterilised the turkey baster. Pasty and Delia make love to each other, then Patsy comes out to collect John’s donation, then she heads back to Delia.

Patsy, Delia and John repeat this routine several times over the next couple of weeks. They eagerly await to see if they have conceived, or to find out if they must keep trying over the next several months. Delia and Patsy are both keen for a positive result from their attempts.

One and a half months has passed and Delia notices that her regular period has not appeared. Delia is excited at the prospect of being ‘in the family way’, but she wants to be certain. Delia makes an appointment with Dr Turner, to find out if she is pregnant.
Chapter 20

Chapter Summary

Months pass and Alex’s pregnancy is going to plan. The letters from Vietnam arrive on a regular basis. Alex become worried when they suddenly stop arriving. To make matters worse, Alex answers a knock at the front door, to find a soldier standing with a telegram in his hands.

Alex’s pregnancy progresses along rather well now she is in her 7th month, with her baby bump, now obvious under her clothing. Alex, Sarah, Alice and Levi attend the Clinic operated by Nonnatus House.

Delia picks up the next chart from the table, she smiles as she reads the name of her next mother before calling out, “Alexandria Stream.”

Alex moves towards Delia and follows her into a cubicle. Delia pulls the curtain around to give Alex privacy, as she lies on the examination bed, for Delia to perform the usual routine of checking the baby’s progress as well as the mother’s vitals. Delia listens to the baby’s heartbeat and she shakes her head, before listening again.

Alex shares with Delia, “You know, I always pictured Esther, carrying out these check-ups on me. I bet you are finding it hard to keep Patsy away from checking on your baby’s progress!”

“How do you know that I am pregnant?” A nervous Delia asks.

“Delia, you are absolutely glowing, I have also noticed how careful you are, when you were lifting some boxes before…. How far are you?”

“Almost 3 months, Patsy and I don’t want to say anything until we have pasted the first trimester. We are so ecstatic to finally becoming parents after so long. It’s all I have ever wanted, to give Patsy a family of our very own…. Can you keep our secret, until we are ready to make the joyful announcement?” Delia awaits her friends answer.

“Most certainly, I know exactly how you and Patsy feel. You can count on me.”

Patsy walks over to the booking chart and spies that Delia is with Alex. Patsy is on a short break and is wants to see Delia to see how she is feeling, after another bout of morning sickness. Patsy makes sure that no one is watching and slips behind the cubicle’s curtain, where she quietly slides up behind Delia and places her hands on her waist, causing Delia to jump with surprise. Alex laughs at Delia’s reaction.

Delia turns around to face a mischievous Patsy, “What are you up to Nurse Mount?”

Patsy tries to not laugh, while covering her mouth, “After being so sick this morning, I just wanted to see how you were feeling.”

“Pats, can you have a listen to the baby’s heartbeat for me, I am not sure if I am hearing correctly two sets of heartbeats?” Delia hands the listening device to Patsy.
Patsy leans down and listens to Alex’s stomach and listens for a moment. Patsy stands up and looks at Delia and Alex and says, “Deels, you are correct there are two heartbeats. Congratulations Alex, you are expecting twins.”

“What do you mean twins? I’m carrying twins. Oh, Esther is going to be surprised for sure.” A shocked Alex says.

“Pats, I have not been sick since we left the flat, although if you keep scaring me like that, I might not be responsible for what happens.” Delia turns back to Alex to assist her with sitting up.

Alex sits on the side of the examination bed, “Congratulations to you both. I only wish Esther could be here to celebrate in your happy news.” Patsy places her hand over Delia’s stomach.

“Thank you, Alex. Speaking of Esther, have you heard from her lately?” Patsy rubs Delia’s stomach, while looking at her friend.

Alex stands and walks over to collect her things off the chair in the cubicle, “I have been getting about 1 or 2 letters a week, but in the last 3 weeks there’s been no mail. Maybe there is a hold up somewhere along the line. All her letters are about the injured soldiers that pass through the M.A.S.H unit. She also writes about the different medical staff she works with. She asks about how the baby and I are, which I answer in my letters, I tell her about how my belly is growing in size.”

“You and Delia are still coming for dinner on Friday night? We were thinking of having a Pot Roast for dinner, if that is alright with you both?” Alex stops at the curtain.

“Yes, we will both be there, and a Pot Roast sounds lovely. Pats and I are looking forward to catching up in more relaxing surroundings.” Delia walks to the curtain with Alex’s chart. Patsy walks behind her, making sure that it looks as if Delia had to ask for her advice.

Nurse Anderson is checking on baby Levi’s growth and charts his development since his birth over 7 months ago, he is more active, vocal and alert to his surroundings. Lucille is easily captivated by the little boy’s cheeky smile, which beams back at her as she talks to him as she weighs him. Lucille picks him up and rest him on her hip, Levi reaches out his hand and tries to grab hold of her nose. Lucille playfully laughs when Levi misses her nose and grabs her chin.

Val is offering free Orange Juice to the other waiting mothers, she hears Lucille’s and a baby’s laughter. She looks over and watches the interaction between Levi and Lucille. Lucille notices Val watching her and Levi, and she smiles at her girlfriend.

Val walks over to Lucille, and places a hand on Levi’s back, allowing her fingers to brush Lucille’s arm, just long enough to convey her affection for the woman, but not long enough to draw attention from onlookers.

Val says, “My, you are growing up to be such a big young man, Mr Levi.” Lucille laughs as Levi reaches out his hand and places it on Val’s cheek.

Sarah laughs as she explains, “He is quite the ladies’ man.” Sarah removes Levi from Lucille and places him onto her hip. Val and Lucille continue to stand next to each other, so that their fingers brush against the others. Allowing a moment of intimacy between the women.

Alice locates Sister Monica Joan at the clinic and keeps the older nun well amused. Alice had brought her new doll which arrived from Vietnam and is showing it to Sister Monica Joan.

Alice tells Sister Monica Joan, “This is my new doll. Her name is Susie. Aunty Esther sent her to
me. Do you like her, Grandma?” Alice hands Sister Monica Joan her doll to look at.

“Susie is a lovely doll. I like her red dress. I think you are a lucky girl to have an Aunty who sends you presents.” Sister Monica Joan holds the doll and admires the red silk dress, before handing the doll back to Alice.

Alex, Sarah and children finish at the clinic and leave to have some lunch, before going home. Once arriving at home, Sarah takes Levi upstairs to change, Alice runs along to play with her doll in her room. Alex lies on the lounge; her feet are hurting. She longs for someone to come and rub her hurting feet but will settle to put her feet up for now on the lounge. Alex reaches out to retrieve the mail on the coffee table, she eagerly searches for any mail from Vietnam. There is none today, just like every other day for the last 3 weeks. Alex wonders if there was a backlog of mail from Vietnam and maybe that is why no mail has been arriving.

Alex’s thoughts are interrupted by a knocking at the front door. She answers the door and finds a young Army solider nervously standing on the doorstep.

The young man clears his throat before asking, “Is this the home of a Mr. J. Goldberg?”

“Yes? But he is not home right at this moment.” Alex spies a telegram in the young man’s hand.

“Well, you please pass this onto him.” He hands the telegram to Alex, who’s hand shakes as she reaches to take the telegram. She closes the door as her heart becomes heavy and feels as if it is now located in her throat. Alex dreads the news this telegram brings.

Sarah comes down the stairs to find her sister standing in the lounge room, shaking and holding a telegram. Sarah asks, “What is it Alex?”

“An Army solider delivered this telegram for Joshua. I know it’s about Esther.” Alex collapses onto the lounge, as her legs are weak from worry.

Sarah takes the telegram from Alex and opens it. Alex looks at her sister and asks, “What does it say? Is Esther ….”

“The telegram says that Esther is MIA.” Sarah hears her sister begin to cry and drops the telegram onto the coffee table. She sits with Alex and wraps her arm around her shoulder and allows the woman to bury her head into her shoulder and cry. The older sister provides comfort to her younger sister during her time of distress. Simon arrives home from working at the office and finds the pair crying on the lounge.

A confused and worried Simon walks into the lounge room and asks, “What is wrong? What has happened?”

Sarah picks up the telegram and hands it to Simon. His eyes widen as he reads the telegram and realises he needs to sit down, he needs time to process what he has read over in his head. Once it sinks into his brain, he rushes over to the phone and calls Trixie, who he knows will be on phone duty at Nonnatus House.

“Hello, Nonnatus House, Midwife Franklin, speaking. How can I be of service?”

“Hello…. Trixie…It’s Simon… I need you…..” Simon sobs.

“Simon, what is the matter, Sweetie”

“Trixie, it’s bad news about Esther… she is Missing in Action…. I need you…. can you come to
me?” Simon continues to sob as he speaks.

“I will be there as soon as I can, Simon, my love.”

“Thank you, I will be waiting for you.” Simon replies.

Trixie hangs up the phone and locates Sister Julienne, to explain her need to go to Simon and his family. Sister Julienne is understanding of the situation and offers to fill in on for Trixie. Phyllis returns from Clinic and Sister Julienne asks, “Nurse Crane are you able to take Nurse Franklin to the Goldberg household. They have just received news that Nurse Goldberg is Missing in Action.”

“I am most willing to take Nurse Franklin. Trixie let us see how we can help our friends during this difficult time. I’ll bring my medical bag with me, just in case.” Phyllis takes Trixie’s hand and gives it a squeeze and a reassuring look to the younger woman. They head off towards Phyllis’s car and are soon driving in the direction of the Goldberg’s house.

Sister Julienne walks towards the small alcove where the phone is located and takes up her position by the phone. She places her head into her hands and silently prayers for the safe return of Nurse Goldberg to the Goldberg family, to her friend Alex and to the Nonnatus House family.

Phyllis and Trixie arrive at the Goldberg house, the two women give each other reassuring looks of support before they exit the car. Phyllis knows that Saul is away and can not be contacted until his return in 2 days’ time. She is anxious about how he will take the news of Esther’s disappearance while on duty. Phyllis grabs her medical bag and follows Trixie up the stairs to the front door. John opens the door and ushers them inside, taking their coats and placing them onto the coat rack.

“Trixie, you will find Simon in the lounge room with all the others. He will be so happy to see you…Go on through.” John walks over to Phyllis.

“Phyllis, I am so glad that you have brought your medical bag, Alex is very upset with the news and I am worried for her and the baby.” John looks at Phyllis with tears in his eyes.

“Ah, young man, it is so touching to see how much you care for your friends.” Phyllis gently touches John’s shoulder, to convey reassurance and support to the young man.

“Phyllis, can you assist me with making a large pot of tea. I would like a minute to talk with you, if you wouldn’t mind?” John and Phyllis walk into the kitchen. John puts the kettle on to boil, while Phyllis prepares a pot with tea leaves. John collects the cups and pours milk into a milk jug.

“Phyllis, you know that for all of us in this house, has either lost our mothers to death, or they have disowned us….Phyllis over the last months, you have become a mother figure to us all in this house….Alex needs a mother’s love at this moment, and I know that you don’t have any children of your own, will you become our mother?…I have been shouldering the role of being the strong one, the one in control….but I am struggling to hold it together.” John holds tightly to the counter, before removing the screaming kettle.

Phyllis’s eyes are filled with tears, “My lad, I also have grown to love you all as if you were my own. I consider it be an honour to be a mother to you all…. I will check on Alex. You don’t have to carry the whole weight of having to be strong. You have friends and a wider family both here and at Nonnatus House, we will give you all the support you need…. Let’s get that pot of tea out to the others.” Phyllis gives John a hug and then they walk into the lounge room with the pot of tea, cups, milk jug and sugar.

Simon hugs Trixie and buries his head into her chest. Trixie rubs small circles on Simon’s back
and talks smoothly to him. “It’s going to be alright, I am here now…. I love you Simon.” Trixie kisses Simon’s forehead and holds him tighter, while he cries in her arms. Simon body trembles as he sobs for his dear friend.

John and Phyllis place the tea onto the coffee table, Phyllis moves to sit next to Alex on the lounge. Alex is hysterical, and Sarah explains to Phyllis, “None of us seem to be able to comfort her, she just keeps crying…. This is one moment when I miss our mother… (breaks down and cries).”

“Lass, I know that I cannot take the place of your mother, but in the past couple of months I have come to think of you as a daughter…. Come here and rest your head on my shoulder and cry.” Phyllis places an arm around Alex’s shoulder and pulls her so that Alex’s head is resting on Phyllis’s shoulder. Alex allows herself to relax in the older woman’s embrace. Phyllis reaches over to touch Sarah’s arm in way of support for the other sister.

The house remains quiet except for small cries from Alex and Joshua. Sarah spends her time supporting her husband and caring for their children. Little Alice plays with her toys in her room, while baby Levi sleeps in his cot. Phyllis checks Alex’s blood pressure and notes that it is slightly high for a pregnant woman of 7 months.

Phyllis suggests, “I think you need to go and have a lie down. Would it help if I came and sat with you, until you fell asleep?”

“I would appreciate that, thank you Phyl…no I should call you Mum.” Alex keeps her head resting on Phyllis’s chest.

Phyllis helps Alex to her feet and they walk to Alex and Esther’s bedroom. Alex removes her shoes and lies down on the bed. Phyllis notices the photos on the dresser. One photo catches Phyllis’s eye, it is a photo of Esther and Alex, locked in what appears to be a passionate kiss. Phyllis understands the depths of love which exist between the two women and as to why Alex is reacting to the news so strongly. Phyllis moves around to the other side of the bed and lies down next to Alex. Alex lies on her side and Phyllis rubs her back, trying to provide the expecting mother with comfort. Sleep eventually overtakes the younger woman as she drifts off. Phyllis stays by her side until the younger woman wakes the next morning.
Chapter 21

Chapter Summary


The midwives assemble in the clinical room of Nonnatus House when Sister Julienne enters the room with 2 new midwives in tow.

“Good morning Nurse’s, you will note that Nurse Franklin and Nurse Crane are not present with us today. We received news late yesterday afternoon from the Goldberg family, that Nurse Goldberg has been listed as Missing in Action. Both Nurse Franklin and Nurse Crane are providing the family with medical and emotional support to Miss Stream during this time as well as the other members of the family.” Sister Julienne pauses.

“With both Nurse Franklin and Nurse Crane otherwise detained elsewhere, Nurse Williams who has been doing a great job at filling in for Nurse Goldberg, has been able to ask two midwives to fill in, until Nurse Franklin and Nurse Crane can return. Please make welcome Nurse Morris and Nurse Wyle.” Sister Julienne turns to the new nurses and indicate to them to move to a space around the Clinical Table.

Val and Lucille are standing next to each other. Val reaches out and holds Lucille’s hand under the Clinical Table, when she hears the news about Esther. Lucille’s face reveals her heartfelt emotion of concern for Esther and Alex.

Lucille and Val offer, “Sister Julienne, would the family appreciate it if we stopped in after our shift to looking after Alice and baby Levi? We can also prepare some meals for them to have during the week. That way it can take some pressure off them as a family.”

“I think that is a lovely thought of you. From what Nurse Crane has told me, Sarah has her hands full with the children and caring for Joshua, who has taken the news hard. I will ring the family and let them know that you both will stop later in the day.” Sister Julienne looks at Lucille and Val.

“I am sure that having a couple of meals prepared for them, will be valued by the family. It will take a burden off their shoulders. I will ask Sister Winifred to put together some food for you to take with you.” Sister Julienne is happy that the midwives are rallying around their friend’s family.

“Sister Julienne, Patsy and I can relieve Nurse Crane, tomorrow as we both have the day off.” Delia offers. Patsy looks at Delia and smiles at her.

Meanwhile back at the Goldberg house, Nurse Crane is taking good care of Alex, by making sure that the young woman, does not become stressed or worried more than what she is currently experiencing. Both Trixie and Phyllis have been rather busy with comforting all the members of the Goldberg family. Trixie has been providing support to Simon and trying to get him to sleep,
even though it was for only 4 hours. Phyllis has been working with John and Jonah in preparing food for all the family, in between caring for Alex. Trixie has also been able to help with looking after Alice and Levi for Sarah, who has been caring for her husband. Joshua is at a loss as to what to do, his Uncle would know as to which US department to find out any information, regarding Esther, but Uncle Saul is not due back until tomorrow. Joshua must wait until then before any inquiries can be made. Joshua does know from his Jewish upbringing, that in times such as this, Prayer is always helpful to those in need.

“Hello Sister Julienne, this is Joshua Goldberg.”

“How are things today with your family.”

“Things are still the same here. I am ringing to ask if we could hold a prayer vigil at Nonnatus House on Friday evening?”

“You know that you and your family are very important to us at Nonnatus House, and it would be an honour to spend time with you in prayer for Esther. Would you like for us to arrange anything special, or would you like to organise some special prayers? Joshua there are going to be a couple of midwives coming to assist your family in relation to the young children. I do hope that will be alright with you?”

“Sarah would appreciate the extra help, as Alice does not understand and is constantly wanting to play. It makes it hard for Alex, who Nurse Crane is trying to keep stable, and Alice can be noisy when she plays. Is 7pm to late for the prayer vigil on Friday evening?”

“Joshua that time is fine with us. I will let the midwives, Sister Monica Joan and Sister Winifred know about Friday evening. We will provide supper. Please do not hesitate to call us if there is anything you need.”

“Thank you, Sister Julienne, for the love and support which has been given to my family during this time. We will see you on Friday evening.” Joshua hangs up.

During the lunch time meal at Nonnatus House, Sister Julienne announces, “The Goldberg family have asked for a prayer vigil to be held on Friday evening at Nonnatus House. At Nonnatus House, we view all our midwives as members of our family, and this is also the case in relation to the Goldberg family. It would be comforting to this family, to see all the midwives there for them on Friday evening. Nurse’s Morris and Wyle have volunteer to cover the phone and on call for the evening.”

Jonah is looking through some photo albums in the lounge room when the phone rings. He answers the phone, “Hello, Goldberg house.”

“How is this the home of a Captain Esther Goldberg?”

“Yes, who is asking?”

“My name is Captain Wendy Jones, and I until recently have been serving alongside Esther in Vietnam. Firstly, I would like to say is how sad I am to contact you, when Esther is missing. Secondly, Before I left to return home to the US, Esther asked me to personally deliver to her home a package. Is there a day when I can come over and talk with you all?”

“Yes, the whole family will be here tomorrow, so please come at 6pm and we will have dinner together. Do you have our address?”
“6 pm works for me, I will be bringing a friend with me as I do not drive. Esther gave me the address, so my friend will be able to find their way. I am looking forward to seeing and meeting all of you.”

Jonah hangs up the phone and walks into the kitchen, where Sarah, Val, Lucille and Alice are preparing the evening meal. Sarah asks, “Who was on the phone?”

“A woman named Captain Wendy Jones, she has been working with Esther in Vietnam. Esther gave her a package for us to deliver. I told her to come for dinner at 6pm tomorrow evening, and she will be bringing a friend.” Jonah explains.

“I can ask my Aunty who owns the Black Sail, if she would be able to make a Pot Pie for tomorrow night, if you would like me to?” Val asks and Sarah smiles as she nods.

Uncle Saul arrives back in London the next day and is met by a very tired and exhausted Phyllis. Phyllis arranged beforehand to meet Saul at the train station and drive him home. Saul sits in Phyllis’s car and asks why Phyllis is so tired, she replies, “I have some sad news to tell you. We received notification that Esther has been listed as missing in action two days ago and I have been caring for Alex ever since.”

“What, how can a nurse go missing in action? From my Army days, nurses didn’t leave the hospital.” Uncle Saul grabs hold of Phyllis’s arms. “Phyllis how are Alex and Joshua?”

“At first Alex was very distraught at the news, but with plenty of care and support from the midwives at Nonnatus House, she has started to come to terms with the situation, as best as anyone can. Joshua is taking the news a lot harder, as he says, ‘Esther is the only other blood family, apart from Uncle Saul, that I have left.’” Phyllis starts the car and begins to drive towards the Goldberg house.

Uncle Saul enters the lounge room of the Goldberg house and sees Alex and Sarah sitting on the lounge. He walks in and Alex meets him half way across the room. He wraps Alex in a hug embrace and they weep in each other’s arms. Sarah leaves the room and lets the other house members know that Uncle Saul has returned. Soon Alex and Uncle Saul are joined in the lounge room by Joshua, Simon, Jonah, Trixie, Phyllis, Alice, Sarah and baby Levi. They all join in together for a group hug, symbolising their unity as a family.

Val and Lucille arrive at 5pm with two Pot Pies in hand and begin to set about preparing the evening meal. Exactly at 6pm there is a knock at the front door and John opens the door and welcomes in Captain Wendy Jones, her friend Lucy Weeks and 9-month-old son Robert Weeks. Captain Wendy Jones is holding a large parcel, which she hands to John to take inside, while her friend Lucy presents him with a bottle of Red Wine.

John introduces Captain Wendy Jones to the members of the family and when he reaches Alex, Captain Jones looks shocked, when John says, “And this is Alex, a very dear friend of Esther’s.”

Captain Jones holds her hand out to shake a very pregnant Alex’s hand. Alex notices that Captain Jones is looking at her strangely. “Ah, um, you wouldn’t be a Professional Photographer by chance?” A puzzled Captain Jones asks Alex.

“Yes…. I am, how do you know?” A confused Alex says.
“It’s just that Esther said, ‘her sweetheart was a Professional Photographer and their name was Alex.’ When she talked about you, she always addressed you by your first name. She never said you were a female, I just assumed that Alex was a man.” Captain Jones says while taking a seat at the dinner table, as Lucy sits Robert on the floor to play with baby Levi as they eat their meal.

“Yes, it is me. Please do not inform on Esther, as she will lose her career as a nurse, if it was found out.” Alex pleads with Captain Jones.

“It is alright, your secret is safe with me. Lucy is my partner and Robert is our son. It explains so much now, because when she would receive a letter from home, she would read it constantly. I asked her one day what was so intriguing about her letter, she said, ‘Alex is telling me about a pregnant friend of ours, and she is supporting this friend as her husband is serving overseas.’ I told her I had left my son behind to come and serve. That it was torture to not be able to be there for my son and partner.” Captain Jones lovingly glances at Lucy and then at her son playing on the floor.

Uncle Saul asks, “Do you have any stories that you can tell us about Esther?

“There were times when she would tell you things to keep you going especially after a horrendous day in the OR. This one time, I was dead on my feet, and in the mess hall. Earlier in the day in the OR, I had a chance to have a small break and while standing against the wall, I rested my eyes and without realising I fell asleep standing up.”

“As I sat in the Mess tent, Esther came over to me and sat down with a cup of coffee. She said, ‘You look beat, you better look alive soon, because there is another wave of casualties to arrive.’ I just looked at her and she smirked and then said, ‘You remind me of how I must have looked like about a week and a half before I left the UK.’”

“Esther then took a sip of her coffee, before continuing, ‘I had been working long days as a midwife and then come home to Alex.’ Esther would gesture with her hand, ‘Now I have no problem with making love to Alex, but not 5 times or more a night.’ Esther looked over the top of her cup, ‘this one night, I was so tired that when I placed my head on the pillow, I fell asleep while Alex was making love to me.’”

“Esther looked into her cup and then said, ‘Alex was not amused, and I spent the night on the lounge.’ While listening to Esther, I was becoming alert and thankful for her sharing. I was able to face another 16 hours in the OR that day.” Captain Jones sheepishly looks at Alex.

“Oh, she told you about that, what other things has she told you about our sex life?” A very unimpressed Alex says.

“Nothing else. I can assure you of that. Esther is private when it came to be you. The most I got out of her was that ‘Alex is a professional photographer and that you have been together for 12 years.”’ Captain Jones looks at Lucy.

Joshua asks, “What can you tell us about Esther’s disappearance?”

“All I know is that two days before I left to come home, Esther, another nurse, a doctor and a private were sent to a medical station, which needed assistance. They were to stop at a village near by, to check on a mother and new born baby. When they arrived at the village, they were ambushed and taken by the Viet-con. Esther before she left handed me this package for me to deliver to you. I am sorry that I can not tell you any more other than that the Army were looking for them when I left.” A sad looking Captain Jones says.

Alice climbs up on her father’s lap and gives him a cuddle. Joshua hugs his daughter tightly while
tears roll down his cheeks. Sarah places her arm around her husband’s shoulder and rests her head on his arm.

Captain Jones stands up and walks over to the package and says, “Alice, I believe your Auntie has sent you a present in this box. Let’s see what we can find in here. Will you help me open the box, Alice?”

“A present for me!” Alice points to the box and then back to her chest.

Alice and Captain Jones open the box, to reveal small wrapped gifts labelled with the names of their recipients. Captain Jones locates Alice’s present and hands it to her, she rips the paper and runs to her father with a small girl doll in her hands.
Alex receives her letter from Esther and asks Patsy to read it for her.

After Captain Jones and family had left for the evening, Alex retires to her room with her gift in her hands. It’s only when she has closed the door to her bedroom, that she allows herself to glance at the small parcel in her shaking hands. Alex sits on Esther’s side of the bed and tries to open her gift, but finds her shaking hands are proving the simple task more of a challenge.

There is a knock-on Alex’s bedroom door, then a voice coming from the other side. Patsy and Delia say, “It’s Patsy and Delia, Alex can we come in? We’ve made you a cup of tea.”

“Yes, please come in.”

Patsy and Delia walk in and sit next to Alex on the bed, Delia is carrying a tray with three cups of tea. Alex looks at Patsy and asks, “Can you open this for me. I am having trouble trying to keep my hands from shaking.”

Patsy nods and takes the gift from Alex’s hands and gently opens it. Inside they find a letter addressed to Alex and a red silk two-piece outfit for their baby. Patsy hands the letter to Alex while Delia places the tray on the bedside table, and hands Alex a cup of tea.

“Patsy, I would really appreciate it if you read the letter to me. I don’t think that I can concentrate enough to read the letter.”

“I am happy to read the letter for you.”

Patsy and Alex sit on the bed, with their backs to the headboard and their legs stretched out over the covers. Delia sits at the foot of the bed next to Patsy’s legs. Alex rests her head on the edge of Patsy’s shoulder and stares at the pages in Patsy’s hands.

Patsy clears her throat as she begins to read the letter.

My Dearest Sweet Alex,

I am sorry that my previous letters have not been filled with words of affection, but I did not want to draw attention to our love. I hope that this letter finds you and our unborn child well and healthy. You are my world and I regret that there have been times when I have not let you know exactly how much you mean to me.

As I sit at my desk on the ward, my thoughts turn to you my precious love. That last day at the camp, you said, ‘You do make it hard for me to love you sometimes.’ I know that there have been times where I have said things which have made you question my love for you. Please know that you mean the world to me. You have brought a light into my life and you never have given up when things get tough.
I remember the moment you walked into the classroom 14 years ago and sat down next to me. You looked so beautiful in your jeans and shirt, and I thought even then, how gorgeous you were. Then you asked me to join you at the soda shop after school, and I was amazed at how easy it was to become your friend. All those years ago you showed me how to let someone into my heart. You accepted all the good and bad parts of me and yet you still wanted to be my friend.

Without knowing you, I would never have learned what true love is and how to love in return. On the day when my mum kicked me out of her life, you stayed with me and took me home to care for me. You held me while I cried that night. You could have rejected me, but you showed me what true love was, to love someone by putting their happiness before your own.

I love how when you fall asleep on my chest after we had made love. You wrap your arm across my waist and hold my hip and your leg rests between my legs. What I love the most is that your head rests on my chest and I can feel every one of your breaths. When I am troubled or worried, hearing your breathing helps to calm me and bring me back into the moment, where I am madly in love with you.

Not long after arriving in Vietnam, I found the present you hid in my duffle bag. Thank you for this little reminder of who I am coming home to. Your little present has helped me to get through all the lonely moments here. You are a fantastic photographer and I love how you look in the photos, especially the ones of you in the sexy knickers and bras, I have gone to bed dreaming of being able to remove those knickers with my teeth.

How are you coping with the baby? No doubt you are getting larger now and the baby is becoming more active. I hate not being there with you. When we discussed trying for a baby, I never thought that I would not be there, experiencing all the highs and lows of this pregnancy. We have both longed to become parents and now our little one will soon be here. I love you Alex for being patient with me, as I worked through my fears about being a good mother.

I miss being able to hold you close to me while we dance. You always place your head on my shoulder while I hold you close. I love it when you kiss me and how your lips taste so sweet. I love the noises you make when we make love, I never thought that love between women could be so wonderful. You have the most gorgeous body, especially when it is naked and wrapped in my arms and legs.

I am not ashamed for falling in love with you all those years ago when we were teenagers. The moment that I kissed you at our siblings’ wedding, I would not change it for anything. I remember our ‘first time’, how you cried in my arms after. When I asked as to why you were crying, you said that our love making was more than you ever dreamed of. I will never be ashamed of all the times we have made love to each other and how much I love to hear you call out when you orgasm, it fills my heart with so much joy. Knowing that I have been able to bring you so much pleasure all these years.

The day when we were ‘married’ on that yacht 5 years ago, was one of the happiest days in my life. Thank you for saying ‘yes’ to becoming my bride, even though in the eyes of the law, it is not legal. I so long for the day, when I can hold your hand while walking along the street. To be able to
kiss you when walking in the park and not have to check that there is no one around to see. I want the world to know how much I love you and to be able to wear our wedding bands on the correct finger.

Alex you push me to become a better version of myself. You show me that there is more to ourselves than what we can see. Thank you for believing and trusting in me for the past 12 years. You are an amazing woman, who is sure and stays true to themselves. I may have forgotten to tell you how awesome your photography is and that your photos reveal your talents of being able to see things, others can’t. I love you Alex and I will love you till my last breath.

I will close this letter here, as I am due to give handover soon. I love you so much more than you could ever know. Until we are reunited in Popular, I send you all my love and so much more.

Yours forever true love,

Esther.

PS. I LOVE YOU

xxxxxooooo

Patsy places the letter into Alex’s hands and pulls her into a hug. A beaming smile grows upon Patsy’s face as she looks at a tearful Delia at the foot of the bed.

Alex looks up from the letter in her lap, “Delia you are looking radiant. Pregnancy suits you so well.” Alex looks at both Patsy and Delia.

Patsy kneels on the bed and reaches over to place her hand on Delia’s belly. “Yes, Delia is looking so beautiful and her baby bump is becoming more noticeable now. I love being able to lie in bed next to Delia and rubbing her belly, knowing that our baby is growing inside.”

“Alex, I now know how Esther and you felt when you found out that you were finally expecting. I never thought that Delia and I could ever be able to become parents. This baby has become possible, all because of you.” Patsy lovingly looks into Delia’s eyes, while rubbing Delia’s tummy.
Chapter 23

Chapter Summary

It is Friday evening and the Goldberg family meet at Nonnatus House to join the nun’s and midwives for the Prayer vigil. Captain Jones has been invited to share in the service. Sister Monica Joan offers comfort to a tearful and afraid Alex. Saul proposes to Phyllis.

Friday evening arrives and Alex travels with Joshua, Sarah, Alice and baby Levi to Nonnatus House for the Prayer vigil for Esther. They are joined by Simon, Jonah, John, Uncle Saul and Captain Jones. The last couple of days seem to have blurred together, the only thing that Alex remembers from the previous days, is Patsy sitting on her bed and reading the last letter from Esther. Alex has read the letter so many times that it is now crumpled at the edges and the folds have lost their creases.

Sister Julienne meets the family at the front door of Nonnatus House and she gives each of them a warm embracing hug. Alice runs up the corridor in search of her adopted ‘Grandmother’ Sister Monica Joan, whom she finds seated in the lounge room. Sister Monica Joan smiles at Alice and opens her arms, as an invitation to the child to come to her and receive a hug. Alice leaps into Sister Monica Joan’s arms, while wrapping her little arms around the older woman’s neck. Sister Monica Joan pulls Alice onto her lap and tightens her embrace.

“My little one, I am so happy to see you. How is my precious girl?”

“Grandmother, I am sad. I miss my Aunty Esther.” Alice begins to cry on the older woman’s shoulder.

“I know, I miss her too. Why don’t we go into the chapel and say a prayer for your Aunty Esther?” Sister Monica Joan looks at Alice now sitting on her lap. Alice gently gets off Sister Monica Joan’s lap and waits for her to lead the way to the chapel.

Sister Monica Joan and Alice head to the chapel, which has been decorated with Lavender flowers on the chapel’s mantle, with candles placed at the ends of the mantle. Alice sits with Sister Monica Joan, Sister Julienne, Sister Winifred, Patsy, Delia, Alex, Joshua, Sarah and baby Levi in the front row pew. The next pew had Simon, Trixie, Uncle Saul, Phyllis, Jonah, John and Captain Jones, Val and Lucille.

Sister Julienne lead them in the first prayer, for the safety of Esther and the others who were missing in action. She also asked for the safe return of Esther to her immediate family in Poplar as well as to her Nonnatus House family. Everyone joined in when Sister Julienne closed the prayer with the word AMEN. Sister Julienne then asked Captain Jones to share her memories of Esther.

Captain Jones walks to the front of the Chapel, “Thank you, Sister Julienne, there are so many memories that come to mind. The first one is how much Esther enjoys listening to music. Normally Esther would play records or listen to the wireless radio, but there was this one time, we were in this little bar near the M.A.S.H unit, and she placed $2.00 in the jukebox and we all had to listen to “Surfer Girl” by The Beach Boys repeatedly. Esther sat with a big grin on her face while she drank her whiskey and smoked cigars. When she was asked why we had to listen to the song so much,
she just said, “The song reminded her of the sweetheart left back in Poplar.”

“Another thing about Esther, was her concern for the nurses which served under her command. Esther always made sure that each nurse received a birthday gift. The nurses appreciated their gifts and Esther’s concern for them, so much that when Esther had an extremely disastrous day in OR, the nurses the next day presented Esther with a present of a bag of grounded coffee beans from the states and chocolate.”

“The memory of Esther that stays with me the most, is her smile. Even after a gurgling day in the OR, Esther would still be able to walk onto the Ward and her smile would brighten the room. Esther would sit with the patients and show them the two photos, she carried with her. A photo of Alice and the other of Levi, every time she pulled these out, that smile would grow wider and brighter.” Captain Jones walks back to her seat in the pew.

Sister Julienne then returns to the front of the Chapel and leads them in singing “Amazing Grace” and “Abide in Me”. Sister Julienne asks Jonah to come forward to lead them in a Prayer for the injured soldiers and the medical personal who treat them. After finishing praying, Jonah then prays for the ending of the Vietnam War and for the safe return of all involved. Jonah then returns to his seat in the pew.

Sister Julienne then asks if there was anyone else who would like to share or pray.

Val stands and comes forward, “I would like to say that Esther’s disappearance has helped me to realise how precious life is. Before Esther left I helped her with the painting of Alex’s baby’s room and Esther reminded me that the most important thing is love and make sure that those you love, to know how you feel. I want to take this moment to say that I love all of you.”

Val sits back down next to Lucille, and Lucille takes Val’s hand and squeezes it. Val looks at Lucille and whispers into her ear, “I Love You”. Lucille looks directly at Val with tears in her eyes before resting her head on Val’s shoulder for a second.

Sister Julienne then says the last Prayer for the evening and asks that everyone join in sharing supper in the lounge room. Sister Monica Joan walks over to a very pregnant and upset Alex and sits next to the young woman. Sister Monica Joan takes Alex’s hand into hers and they sit there in the Chapel in silence.

Sister Monica Joan breaks the silence by saying, “There is a verse in Nahum, which says, ‘The \textbf{LORD} is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.’ Alex, take heart from the knowledge that God is watching over our dear girl. He will bring her home to you and her child you carry. I have seen the way she looks at you and how her voice brightens when she speaks about you. I know she loves you and you her.”

Alex rests her head onto Sister Monica Joan’s shoulder and allows her tears to fall, as they sit in the Chapel. After what seems a long time, Sister Monica Joan gently rubs Alex’s shoulder before saying, “Let’s go and have some supper. I know that there is cake and little Alice will eat it all before we get any!” Sister Monica Joan smiles while Alex laughs.

Alex and Sister Monica Joan walk out of the Chapel and down to the lounge room, where they spy a dinning table lined with food. Alex looks around the room and sees Phyllis standing in the middle of the room talking with Sarah, who is holding Levi in her arms. Levi is reaching out to Phyllis and grabs onto her collar of her shirt. Phyllis smiles at the small child as she talks with Sarah.

Uncle Saul is standing near a lounge chair in the room, he reaches into his suit coat and pulls a small box and hides it in his hand. Uncle Saul walks towards to where Phyllis is standing and takes
her hand into his and plants a kiss on her cheek. Phyllis turns around and looks at Uncle Saul.

Uncle Saul lowers himself to kneel on one knee, he looks up at Phyllis and begins to say, “Phyllis, before I met you, I never knew what real love was. Every time I am with you, I feel like I am alive and living for the first time in my life. I truly love you and will you do me the honour of marrying me?”

Tears form in Phyllis’ eyes as she says, “Yes, Saul, I would love to marry you.” Uncle Saul stands up and cups Phyllis’ face in his hands and pulls her in for a tender kiss. They hug each other before they are congratulated by all that are assembled in the lounge room.
Chapter 24

Chapter Summary

Val and Lucille go away for a Romantic weekend that they both will remember for the rest of their lives.

After the Prayer vigil Trixie and Simon approach Val and Lucille and the four of them walk outside to the garden area of Nonnatus House, to allow Trixie and Val the opportunity to have a cigarette. While the two women puff away Simon stands next to Lucille and asks, “Lucille, since coming to live in Poplar, have you ever gone and stayed in the country?”

Lucille says, “No but I have so wanted to see some of the countryside.”

“Trixie and I were due to go away next weekend. I had booked us a night’s stay in a lovely cottage in the country, but with Esther’s disappearance, we just can’t leave now. I spoke with Trixie and she spoke with Phyllis, and she has changed next weekend’s roster, to allow Val and yourself to have the weekend off.” Simon then walks over to Trixie and takes her hand in his. Val walks and stands next to Lucille.

Trixie says, “Simon has paid for everything and the owners of the cottage are unable to refund the cost. So, the cottage is still booked, and we would like it if you would go in our place. Simon booked two train tickets to leave early Saturday morning and to return the following day. You will also have a lovely evening out on the Saturday at a local restaurant. What do you say?”

Val looks over at Lucille, “It would be lovely to be able to spend some quality time together.”

Lucille’s hand is entwined with Val’s and she gives Val’s hand a light squeeze. “It would be nice to spend some time alone with you Val. Thank you Trixie and Simon, we will take you up on your offer.”

And that is how Val and Lucille found themselves staying in a cottage and sharing a bed together. Val and Lucille arrived at the train station very early the following Saturday morning. The train journey was an experience for Val and Lucille as they were able to enjoy the luxury of a train compartment to themselves. This gave the pair a rare opportunity to hold each other’s hands, without the worry of onlookers. Val even was able to steal a kiss or two throughout the journey. Within three hours Val and Lucille arrived at their destination and alight the train and collect their bags. Val and Lucille carry their bags and head towards their accommodation, Simon had received the key through the week, and gave it to Val before she left.

The cottage was set just slightly off the main road out of the little country town. Val was amazed to see so many flowers in the front garden as they walked up the path to the front door. Lucille said, “Is it so lovely Val? The cottage looks like it could be on a postcard, don’t you think?” Val nods while standing at the front door and opens the door with the key.

Once inside the front door, Val and Lucille noticed to their left a neat little kitchen with a dining table in the middle. To their right the lounge room with a lounge in the middle of the room facing the large fireplace, which is built into the centre of the cottage wall. Just off the lounge room were two doors, one door which led to the bathroom and the other to the bedroom.
Val and Lucille place their bags in the bedroom. Lucille nervously looks towards the double bed and then at Val.

Val says, “We don’t have to do anything other than just sleep in the bed…. I think I saw a place where we can get ourselves some lunch. And then we can walk around and explore the town.”

They soon are walking towards the town and head to the little coffee shop and order themselves some lunch. After eating their lunch, Val and Lucille head out and walk around the country town. They notice the local church in their travels and decide to explore the little cemetery, located at the side of the church. The pair walk around and look at the various headstones and comment on the different family names displayed. Lucille looks around and sees that there is no one around and she reaches out and takes Val’s hand into hers. They walk hand in hand throughout the cemetery until they reach the church’s gate.

Val notices the time and suggests, “We should start heading back to the cottage, we can have a rest before we have to get ready for our evening out at the restaurant.” Val lets go of Lucille’s hand as they walk back to the cottage. Val does not want to draw attention to their relationship, even in the little country town, where no one knows them.

Val opens the front door for Lucille and once they are both inside, Val closes the door, she reaches out and take hold of Lucille’s hand and turns her around to face her. Val pulls Lucille into a full-on passionate kiss, while her hands reach around Lucille’s waist. Lucille’s hands find their way around to the back of Val’s neck. Lucille pulls back to allow them to catch their breaths.

Val says, “I have been wanting to kiss you like that, all day… Lucille, kissing you does things to my body.” Val looks at Lucille with hunger in her eyes. Lucille blushes and wraps her arms around her torso to indicates, that it is cold in the cottage. Val smiles and nods, then turns towards the fireplace and sets about starting a fire to warm up the cottage. Lucille goes into the kitchen and puts on the kettle and makes them a cup of tea. Lucille returns to the lounge room with two cups of hot tea and finds Val sitting on the lounge. They sit cuddling each other and looking at the fire, which is now ablaze. The table at the restaurant is booked for 6pm and they have a couple of hours before they need to start to get ready. With the warmth of the fire and the closeness of their bodies, both Val and Lucille fall asleep in each other’s arms.

A couple of hours later Val wakes and admires how lovely Lucille looks as she sleeps in her arms. Val has had some experience with being intimate with another woman, but she had never fully gone ‘all the way’. Val secretly hopes that Lucille and she would be able to use this opportunity of having privacy to make love for the first time. Val knows that they need to get ready to go out, so she gently nudges Lucille awake. Lucille smiles and looks at Val, she then reaches her hand up to touch the side of Val’s face and kisses her on the lips.

Val offers Lucille the opportunity of using the bathroom to get ready. Val dresses in an elegant black trousers and sapphire blue button up shirt. Val sits on the lounge waiting for Lucille, and when she sees Lucille exits the bathroom in a red off the shoulder long evening dress, Val swallows the lump that develops in her throat before saying, “You’re a vision to look at Lucille. I am so lucky to be your girlfriend.” Lucille smiles as she walks over to Val and kisses her on the lips.

Val says, “Lucille, I love you.” They put on their winter coats and linking their arms as they walk towards the little restaurant. Upon arriving at the restaurant, Lucille commented that from the outside, it appeared to be small, but when they entered, they found that it the atmosphere inside was intimate and romantic. They were directed to a seclude area, which was off to the side of the rest of the main part of the restaurant. The table was set up with lit candles, cutlery, two
Champagne glasses and a red rose in a small vase in the centre of the table.

Upon seeing the location of the table both Val and Lucille blushed, as they were the only patrons in this section. Val leans into Lucille and whispers in her ear, “I have always wanted to take you out on a romantic date.” Lucille smiles as the waiter pulls out a chair.

The meal and the restaurant were fantastic and beyond Val and Lucille’s expectations. Both women were relaxed in the presence of each other. As they were the only people in the secluded section, Val became bold by taking hold of Lucille’s hand. Val rubs the back of Lucille’s hand with her thumb, while looking at Lucille with desire in her eyes. Lucille blushes and shyly glances down at her meal for a minute, before returning her eyes back to meet Val’s gaze.

They talked about what they enjoyed from their walk around the town that day. Lucille mentioned that she also enjoyed being in the country and away from the noise of the city. Val had a permanent smile on her face, every time she looked at Lucille.

After they finished at the restaurant, Val and Lucille walked back to the room at the cottage. Both women were nervous about sharing a double bed for the first time, and where they would not be disturbed or found by the nuns or other midwives. Lucille and Val have discussed about making love, Lucille revealed she had never been with anyone before. Val was partly scared and excited at being the first person to make love to Lucille.

Once inside the room Val suggests, “We should get dressed for bed. You can use the bathroom Lucille. I will get changed out here.” Val walks out to the fireplace and makes sure that the fire is well ablaze before heading back to the bedroom.

Lucille walks to her case and opens it to remove her nightwear, Lucille walks to the bathroom and closes the door.

Val changes into a revealing nightie. She then pours two glasses of Champagne which she collected from the fridge in the kitchen and turns on the radio to a station playing romantic music. Val turns on the lamps on both sides of the bed before turning off the main room light. Val wants this night to be special for Lucille and herself, whether they make love, just being able to spend the whole night in each other’s arms. Lucille comes out of the bathroom wearing a sexy blue nightie.

Val swallows hard the lump in her throat as she stares at Lucille. Val thinks right in that moment, Lucille is an absolute gorgeous angel, her gorgeous angel.


“I love you too, Val. I never knew what real love was before I met you.” Lucille places her free hand on Val’s cheek and leans in for a kiss.

Before Val can restrain herself, she finds her hands resting on Lucille’s hips and pulling her close, so that their bodies are pressed against each other. Val pulls back from their kiss and she takes their glasses and place them on a side table.

Lucille pouts and says, “Val, I was quite enjoying kissing you, why did you stop?”

“I just wanted to make sure we didn’t spill….” Lucille interrupts Val, by kissing her. Their kissing starts out gentle but then it becomes heated and they move towards the bed. Val feels the side of the bed behind her knees, she says, “Oh, we...um...don’t...um...have...to”

“Val, I so much want to make love to you. I just don’t know what to do?” Lucille says, her
bathing is short and deep, there is a hunger in her eyes.

“Lucille, I am just as unsure as to what to do, but we can both learn together. Are you SURE you are wanting to make love tonight?” Val sits on the side of the bed, with her hands resting on Lucille’s hips. Lucille wedges herself between Val’s open legs. Val looks directly into Lucille’s eyes.

Lucille cups Val’s face with her hands and leans down to kisses her with a hunger, something she has never experienced or felt before, but in her heart, Lucille knows that this feels right. Val’s hands hold and caress the hem of Lucille’s nightie, and with a nod from Lucille, she lifts the nightie, while standing and pulling it off over Lucille’s head. Lucille stands naked except for her underwear before Val. Lucille then lifts Val’s nightie off her and they are both semi naked before each other.

Val takes Lucille’s hand and led her to the bed, where Val assists Lucille to lie down then Val climbs on to the bed and lies next to Lucille. They kiss and caresses each other’s bodies, until their desires and heat between their legs become too great to resist.

“How can I remove these?” Val’s hands play with the elastic of Lucille’s undies.

“Yes, as long as I can remove yours.” Lucille looks at Val with a mischievous smile.

Val and Lucille remove each other’s undies and discard them onto the floor. Val begins to kiss her way along Lucille’s jawline and down her neck. Val finds Lucille’s skin soft to touch and becomes more turned on as she explores Lucille’s body. Val works her way to Lucille’s beautiful firm breasts, Val takes her time, kissing and caressing each breast with both her hands and mouth. Lucille lets out a moan, when Val takes into her mouth and sucks on a harden nipple. Val looks up at Lucille and sees that Lucille has her eyes shut and is panting. Val knows that what she is doing is bringing pleasure to Lucille. Val repeats her actions with the other nipple and Lucille is becoming more aroused. Lucille is very vocal in expressing the pleasure that she is experiencing.

Val kisses her way further down Lucille’s body, until she is looking directly at Lucille’s pussy. Val licks her lips as she takes in the sight and smell of a very aroused Lucille. Val looks up at Lucille and sees desire written all over her lover’s face. Val feels the throbbing between her own legs increase, and longs for Lucille to touch her there.

Val says, “I am going to use my mouth and tongue, to get you ready for me to make love to you. Is this alright with you Lucille?”

Lucille says, “Yes, I want to be ready for you. Please use your mouth and tongue on me.”

Val looks up at Lucille and smiles at her, as she says, “I so much love you.”

Val then spreads Lucille’s legs, so that she can have full access to her pleasure zone. Slowly and gently Val plants soft kisses to the smooth skin around Lucille’s entrance. Then using her tongue, she parts Lucille’s folds and licks gentle strokes up and down Lucille’s pussy. Val tastes the juices which escape from Lucille’s pussy, notices how sweet Lucille tastes. Val keeps up a constant rhythm with her tongue and every now and again, she would sucks and rubs Lucille’s clit, which causes Lucille to moan loudly. Val is afraid that Lucille is going to float off the bed, Val grabs hold of Lucille’s hips and holds her firmly.

“Baby, I am now going to place a finger inside you. It might hurt a little, let me know and I will stop.” Val moves herself up Lucille’s body, so that she can look her in the eye. Val wants to make sure that Lucille is comfortable with her making love to her. Val slowly places a finger inside
Lucille, Val keeps her finger still until she is sure that Lucille is comfortable with Val inside of her. Only when Val is sure that Lucille is ready, then Val gently moves her finger in and out at a comfortable rhythm.

Val moves up the bed and with her free hand caresses Lucille’s cheek before leaning in to kiss her. They kiss with passion and Val notices that Lucille is crying, and Val stops thrusting her finger inside Lucille, “Am I hurting you, my baby?”

“No, I always dreamed that my first time would be with the person I plan to spend my life with. Val, you are the person I want to spend the rest of my life loving and making love to. I love you so much.” Val wipes away the tears from Lucille’s cheek.

Val then says, “Now I am going to place another finger inside. This might hurt, because I am going to be stretching you. Remember to breath and know that I love you.” Val slides another finger inside and she loves how it feels to be inside Lucille and making love to her. Not long after Val has entered and moving her fingers inside Lucille, Lucille begins to moan and move her hips to met each of the thrusts of Val’s fingers. Val feels the walls of Lucille’s pussy begin to tighten and hears Lucille’s panting becoming faster. Val knows these are signs of a person about to climax.

Val’s thrusts are becoming faster as she senses Lucille is close to climaxing. Lucille lets out a loud moan and “Oh, Val….” Lucille’s body shakes and her back arches as Val holds her and whispers in her ear, “I have you my baby. This is what an orgasm feels like.”

Lucille kisses Val and rolls her onto her back before she plants kisses along Val’s neck and down the rest of her body. Val moans at the feeling of having Lucille’s lips on her body. Val guides Lucille in how to make love. Lucille is a quick learner and it’s turn in experiencing an orgasm at the hands of Lucille. After which both women take great delight in knowing that they have both experienced their first orgasm together.

Val took Lucille into her arms and held her close to her naked body, “Lucille, I know that the law does not allow us to marry, but in my heart, we are married. Tonight, will always be our Wedding night. I love you Lucille and I too want to spend the rest of my life with you.” Val (lying on her back, with Lucille in her arms), leans down and kisses the top of Lucille’s head. Lucille lies with her head resting on Val’s chest and her arm and leg draped over Val’s body. The two women drift off into peaceful sleep holding each other.
Chapter 25

Chapter Summary

Trixie and Simon get married. Alex receives news that Esther is safe and recovering from a wound.

Chapter Notes

NOTE: I find describing clothing difficult, so please forgive the description of Trixie’s Wedding dress and bridesmaids’ outfits.

Alex rests on the lounge, dressed in a beautiful navy-blue maternity dress. Her legs and back have been causing her discomfort these last couple of weeks, as she reaches her 8th month of pregnancy. Alex waits for the rest of the family to assemble in the lounge room, so she can capture them in a family portrait photo before heading to Simon’s Wedding to Trixie. Simon is dressed in a simple black tuxedo; white shirt and a single red rose in his lapel. Simon asked Joshua to be his best man with Jonah and John as groomsmen.

Everyone assembles in the lounge room and get into position for the group photo, while Alex set up her camera, to take the shots on a timer. Alex sat down and was handed Levi to hold, so that Sarah could hold up Alice. Click, Click, Click the photos were taken. Simon and his Wedding party headed out the door towards the awaiting hired car outside.

The phone rings as Alex and Sarah are about to leave the house. Alex answers the phone and after listening for a moment, she drops the phone receiver. Sarah picks up the phone, “I am sorry, my sister accidently dropped the phone. How can I help you?”

“I am ringing from the Head office of the USA Army. I have the pleasure to inform you that Captain Esther Goldberg had been found safe and is recovery at the medical hospital, from a slight wound. I am sorry to have caused your sister any reason for concern. Once she has recovered from her injury, Captain Goldberg will be sent home.” The young male voice says.

Sarah hangs up the phone and looks at Alex, who is crying. Sarah says, “It’s alright. They were ringing to let us know that they have found Esther. She is safe and recovery from a slight wound in a hospital.” Alex closes her eyes and exhales. Alex goes to the bathroom to freshen up and reapply her makeup. Alex, Sarah, Alice and Levi then leave for the Wedding.

Upon arriving at the small Church, Simon, Joshua, Jonah and John head in and see that the Church has been decorated by the Nun’s of Nonnatus House, the pews had white bows placed at the ends next to the aisle. The alter was decorated with flower arrangements, which had been made up of both Trixie’s and Simon’s favourite flowers. For Trixie it was red Roses and Simon it was purple Cattleya Orchids. Simon and the groomsmen stand talking in front of the altar, when Alex, Sarah, Alice and Levi arrive.

Alice runs up to her father and happily says, “They found Aunty Esther. She has a booboo to her
left shoulder.” Alice frowns but when she sees her father grin, her frown turns into a smile.

Sarah walks over and straightens Joshua’s tie, “The Army rang just after you left to say that Esther had been found and was in hospital with a slight wound. They did not say when she was to come home though.” Joshua holds his wife in his arms and kisses her. Sarah then takes Alice out to the foyer of the Church to wait for Trixie and her bridal party. Alice being the flower girl wears a lovely light blue dress with matching coloured shoes.

Being almost 8 months pregnant, Alex has asked her assistants to take the photos for the wedding. She has sent an assistant to cover Trixie’s pre-Wedding shots and another to cover the Wedding. Both assistants will then cover the Wedding Celebrations as well as photograph the guests, to create for the happy couple, their own keepsake of their happy day.

Alex sits in the front pew of the groom’s side and holds little Levi in her arms. He is a very active little boy, who is growing up fast. The rest of the guests arrive and start to make their way and places in the pews. The priest walks over to Simon and they go over the order of service while they wait for word that the Wedding party have arrived.

Outside two black BMW cars pull up outside the Church. The back-passenger door is opened by the car’s driver and Val appears and waits for the photographer to take a photo. The next to appear is Delia, and then Patsy, each waiting for their photo to be taken before existing the car. Then the back-passenger door of the second car is opened by the driver and Uncle Saul appears and steps out and he turns around and holds his hand out to Trixie. Trixie appears and takes Uncle Saul’s hand and steps out of the car. Patsy, Delia and Val attend to straightening out Trixie’s train and dress, before they all enter the Church foyer, to a waiting Alice. Once inside they all set about getting into their positions and wait.

Trixie has always known what her Wedding dress would look like. She is wearing a full-length white wedding dress made of a brilliant white silk fabric. The wedding gown had an empire line bodice decorated with Cornelli lace embroidery ribbon work. Patsy adjusts the veil above Trixie’s hair, so that the lace veil covers her face. Trixie has her hair set so that her long blonde locks are hanging around her shoulders, just the way Simon likes her hair. Trixie is holding a posse of red Roses and purple Cattleya Orchids.

The pianist plays the Wedding march and everyone in the church turn around to face the door of the Church. The door opens, and Alice stands holding a basket filled with red rose and tulip petals. As she walks down the aisle, she throws the petals on the carpet. Val is next to walk the aisle, wearing a purple simple but elegant off the shoulder formal dress. Val smiles as she walks down the aisle towards the front of the church. While standing at the front, Val turns around and locks eyes with Lucille.

Delia walks down the aisle next and her baby bump is very noticeable, but she still looks gorgeous to Patsy. Before Delia starts walking down the aisle, she turns around to smile at Patsy, “You look lovely Pats.”

“Deels, you are radiant. I think Pregnancy suits you.” Patsy winks at Delia.

Patsy is Trixie’s Bridesmaid and stands at the front of the church with the others waiting for Trixie to walk down the aisle. Uncle Saul walks Trixie down the aisle, she is overcome with emotion as she comes closer to Simon.

Uncle Saul whispers to Trixie, “You are doing fantastic. Simon is waiting for you.”

Trixie smiles, “He looks so handsome. I lucked out when I met Simon.” Uncle Saul smiles.
Before Trixie realises, Uncle Saul is letting go of her arm and presenting her hand to Simon to take hold of. They turn towards the front of the church and Priest. Simon leans in and says, “Trixie, you look wonderful. You are a vision of beauty.”

The priest stands and addresses the Wedding guests and party, before he looks at the Bride and Groom. He smiles as he holds a small open Bible in his hands, from which he reads from.

The priest asks Simon to repeat after him, “I, Simon Smith take thee, Beatrix Franklin, to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge myself to you.”

The priest then asks Trixie to repeat after him, “I, Beatrix Franklin take thee, Simon Smith, to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge myself to you.”

Simon and Trixie exchange rings.

“Simon Smith, do you take Beatrix Franklin to be your wedded wife, to live together in marriage? Do you promise to love her, comfort her, honour and keep her for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and health, and forsaking all others, be faithful only to her, for as long as you both shall live?” says the Priest. Simon answers, “I do.”

“Beatrix Franklin, do you take Simon Smith to be your wedded husband, to live together in marriage? Do you promise to love him, comfort him, honour and keep him for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and health, and forsaking all others, be faithful only to him, for as long as you both shall live?” says the Priest. Trixie answers, “I do.”

The priest then says, “I now pronounce you to be husband and wife. You can kiss the bride.”

Simon grins as he steps closer to Trixie and lifts her veil. He wipes away the tears which are rolling down her cheeks. He then places a finger under her chin and lifts it so that Trixie is looking straight into his eyes. Simon lowers his head so that his lips connect with Trixie’s. They kiss passionately as Simon holds Trixie in his arms. The guests all cheer as they watch the happy couple.

At the Wedding reception, Alex is a mixture of emotions, as she sits at the table and watch Simon and Trixie mingling with their guests. She remembers the day Esther and she had gotten ‘not legally’ married, she smiles and rubs her belly. Alex feels sad as her lover/wife is not there, to celebrate with the happy couple. Alex holds onto the piece of hope that had been given to her that very morning, ‘Esther was alive and safe’, recovering from a wound and soon be home. Home to her and their twins, Alex wonders how she is going to tell Esther, that their little family will soon become a family of four.

Simon watches Trixie as she spends time talking with the nun’s and smiles as he says to himself, ‘How did you get so lucky to have won the heart of this gorgeous lady?’ Trixie looks over and notices Simon staring at her, she walks over to him and pulls him into a passionate kiss.

Trixie says, “Esther would want us to be happy if she was here.”

“I haven’t had the chance to tell you Trixie, the Army rang this morning to say, Esther has been found and is recovering from a slight wound. She will be home soon. Esther would want us to be happy, although I am more than just happy. I am ecstatic, because I got to marry the most beautiful
woman in the world. I just married my best friend. I love you Trixie.” Before they can kiss, they are interrupted by Joshua.

“Guests now can our happy couple please take to the dance floor for their first dance as Husband and Wife.”

Simon leads Trixie to the dance floor and twirls her around and holds her in his arms. ‘At last’ by Etta James plays as Simon and Trixie dance around the floor. They are soon joined by the other members of their Wedding party. Uncle Saul and Phyllis also join them. For the rest of the reception, Simon and Trixie spend it in each other’s presence.

Patsy has always been protective of Delia and now that Delia is expecting, she insists that Delia take it easy. Delia is about 13 weeks pregnant and Patsy does not want anything to happen to Delia or the baby. After dancing for a while Delia sits and talks with Alex who is minding Levi. The women take the opportunity to talk about their pregnancies and play with Levi, who enjoys picking up cutlery and banging it on the table. Delia laughs as Patsy comes over and picks the young toddler and slow dances with him, Levi grabs onto Patsy’s hair and tries to eat it. Patsy gently moves the little hand and removes her hair from Levi’s grip. Levi then snuggles into the crook of Patsy’s neck and soon falls asleep while Patsy slow dances. Patsy walks to the table where Delia and Alex are sitting at. Patsy sits down next to Delia and holds the sleeping boy in her arms.

Delia smiles at Patsy, “I can’t wait till our baby arrives. You are going to be a fantastic Mum. I love you.” Patsy reaches out and holds Delia’s hand under the table, while their eyes lock on each other.

“Alex, it will not be that much longer before, your twins arrive. Have you been able to set up the babies’ room?” Patsy asks.

“Esther set it up before she left, but I’ve had to ask Jonah to put up another cot and change table. Everything else is in place, all it needs now is two little baby’s and Esther.” Alex rubs her belly and laughs.

“These babies are very active lately. I’m either being kicked or punched. Look you can even see their little feet.” Alex lifts her shirt to show Patsy and Delia. A small foot appears to push beneath her skin of her belly.

“How are you feeling? Are you finding that your more tired lately?” Delia asks.

“Yes, I am finding that I am tired all the time. I can’t get comfortable in bed, so I have taken to sleeping on the lounge. I knew that I would be have a large tummy, but I never thought that getting up out of a chair would be so difficult. Or trying to pick something off the floor, I no longer can just bend over. I must squat and then lean over. I am so looking forward to having my body back after the birth.” Alex laughs and then yawns.

Uncle Saul and Phyllis come over to the table and when they see that Alex is tired and Levi asleep in Patsy’s arms. They offer to take Alex, Alice and Levi home, allowing Joshua and Sarah the opportunity to enjoy the rest of the celebrations. Alex takes up the offer of an early night and after exchanging well wishes and goodbyes, Uncle Saul carries a sleepy Alice to the car. Phyllis follows Uncle Saul carrying sleeping Levi with Alex to the car. They all head back to the Goldberg house and once the children are tucked in bed, Alex sits down and shares a cup of tea with Phyllis and Uncle Saul, they talk about Esther’s return home.

Meanwhile Val and Lucille are talking quietly in a secluded corner of the reception hall. Lucille stands with her back against the wall, while Val presses her body flush against Lucille.
Val whispers, “Lucille, you look so amazing. You don’t know what you are doing to me. I want to take you back to Nonnatus House and make love to you so badly…. I just want to make you feel so good…. I want to lick you...” Before Val could continue Lucille launches herself at Val and takes her face in her hands and kisses her passionately.

“Val, you don’t know how gorgeous you look in this dress. I want to make love to you as well. Just thinking about your hands on my body, is making it hard for me to keep my hands off you. When we get back to Nonnatus House, you can have your wicked way with me… (Lucille kisses Val’s cheek and then her lips) all night long.” Lucille takes Val’s hand and leads them back to the reception. Lucille wiggles her hips as she walks in front of Val, Lucille smiles to herself as she feels Val’s hungry eyes lock onto her backside.
Chapter 26

Chapter Summary

Esther returns to Poplar and to a very heavily pregnant Alex. Patsy and Delia announce their baby news.

Esther steps off the train onto the station platform that early Winter morning, looking around to gather her bearings. She locates the stairs to the street above and starts to ascend the stairs. With every step Esther’s heart beats faster, as she becomes more excited at being so close to Alex and their home. Ever since being rescued, she has held onto the realisation that she was finally going to be able to hold Alex in her arms and soon their child. The wound to her left shoulder has begun to heal and it only hurts when she places pressure to the area. Right at this moment, her shoulder is causing her pain, but she pushes the pain and discomfort away and focuses her thoughts on reaching Alex and their home.

Once Esther reaches the snow lined streets of Poplar, she looks along the road to see if she can flag down a cab. While waiting for a cab, she rubs her throbbing shoulder and thinks about how she came about the injury to her shoulder.

The group of four had been taken by a small group of Viet con soldiers from the village they had stopped at to check on a new mother and child. The Viet con led the small group to an area in the jungle, where they were confronted by three wounded soldiers. Esther realised that they were to treat the injured soldiers and hopefully keep them alive. They all worked on the wounded soldiers with the limited medical supplies they had with them. All three injured soldiers survived their wounds, and through poor translating, thanked the group of four for their help. The Viet con soldiers treated the medical group with kindness and made sure that they were fed and well treated.

The day of the four medical group’s rescues, the Viet con soldiers realised that there was a battalion coming down the road, near where they were located in the jungle. The Viet con soldiers didn’t want to be captured, so they decided to set the four free. A Viet con soldier had a bayonet attached to his rifle and was crouched down trying to hide, when Esther accidently tripped over a stone and fell onto the bayonet. The bayonet penetrated Esther’s flesh but not enough for it to cause serious damage to any organs, although it did require stitches. The four prisoners were released to venture out of the jungle, towards the sounds of the battalion coming down the road.

Esther is pulled back into the present as a cab pulls up at the curb, the driver calls out, “Are you requiring a cab, Miss?”

Esther climbs in and is riding through the streets of Poplar towards her home and Alex. Esther finds the journey frustrating, as she longs to hold Alex in her arms and the trip appears to be taking to long, in her mind. The cab pulls up outside of her home and Esther quickly jumps out of the back of the cab, paying the fare and throwing her duffle bag over her right shoulder. She runs up the stairs and turns the door knob, to find that the door is open, she pushes the door open and for the first time in almost 6 months, she finally feels safe and secure.

Esther calls out, “Hello, is anyone home?” as she walks slowly inside the door. She drops her duffle bag onto the floor, while closing the front door with the heel of her boot.
She hears movement coming from within the lounge room and she walks to the doorframe. As she reaches the doorframe, Esther locks eyes with a very pregnant Alex, who is struggling to get up off the lounge. Esther walks over and holds out her hands to assist Alex with standing.

Once Alex is standing, Esther says, “I have been looking forward to see you, my love.” Esther pulls Alex into a passionate kiss, to convey the message ‘I love you, I missed you and I am never leaving you again.’

Esther steps back still holding onto Alex’s hands and takes a long look at a heavily pregnant Alex, “You look more beautiful than before I left. I think that being pregnant suits you. If I had known that I would have gotten you pregnant a lot sooner.” Esther wiggles her eyebrows and winks at Alex.

Alex begins to cry and buries her face into Esther’s Army Uniform, not caring that her tears will leave a wet patch. Esther holds Alex in her arms, plants little kisses to the top of her head and whispers, “It’s alright, I am home now. I am so sorry for causing you pain from worrying about me.” Alex pulls back to look at Esther, who wipes away her tears with her thumbs.

“I thought I had lost you and that I would have to raise our babies alone.” Alex says through her tears. Pulling herself together Alex continues, “But you’re here now, you must be tired after traveling? We had better get you to bed.” Alex looks at Esther with lust in her eyes.

“But I’m not tired.” Esther says.

“Who said anything about going to bed to sleep!!! (Alex wiggles her eyebrows and mischievously smiles at Esther, while her hands plays with Esther’s Army tie) I want you to make love to me, I’ve missed feeling your naked body pressed against mine. So, let’s get you out of these clothes and into bed.” Alex seductively smiles at Esther, taking her hand and leads them down the hallway to their bedroom.

“Oh, … come here you sexy thing!” Esther chases after Alex.

Once inside their bedroom, Alex lunges at Esther, pressing her back into the closed door. Alex quickly undresses Esther. Then Esther undresses Alex, their clothes lie in a pile on the floor. For the moment the pair could not care if the room appeared to be untidy, they only had eyes for each other.

“We have to be careful, my left shoulder is still healing. I’ll tell you all about how I came about that later. You will have to watch where you place your hands, my love.” Esther kisses Alex and moves them to lie on the bed. They spend time rediscovering each other’s bodies before making love.

After they have made love, Esther props herself on her elbows next to Alex and says, “I have missed the twins so much.” Esther cups Alex’s breasts with her hands and moves her head to take in her mouth, a hard nibble and begins to suck.

After a few minutes, Alex giggles and says, “Mmmmm, that feels great. But which set of twins have you missed? These ones (Alex points to her breasts), or these ones?” Alex moves her hands down to hold her belly. She looks at Esther, who has a questionable look on her face.

“What are you trying to say? Are we having two babies?” Esther asks with a quizzical look on her face as she glances at Alex. Esther holds up two fingers and looks at Alex and then at her baby bump. When Alex nods, Esther’s eyes widen as she begins to comprehend the fact that they will be parents to two children instead of one. Esther rolls over onto her back and looks at the ceiling,
while still holding Alex’s hand.

“Yes, we’re having twins. Delia and Patsy confirmed it during my 7th month check up at the clinic.” Alex sits up and looks down at Esther while smiling, then she leans down to give Esther a passionate kiss. A kiss to say that everything is going to be alright and that I love you.

“I love you Alex…. Oh, that means I must get another cot and change table set up in the nursery. (Esther suddenly sits up and is about to leap off the bed, but Alex grabs hold of Esther’s thigh to stop her.) And we will have to ….” Esther begins to ramble.

“You don’t have to worry about that, Joshua and Simon have already built us another cot and change table. I was able to get some more baby clothes. It’s all been taken care of. Now all you have to do is take care of my needs.” Alex interrupts Esther’s ramblings. Esther looks down at Alex’s naked body and licks her lips, as she feels the desires to suck her wife’s/lover’s hardened nipples and get lost for hours wedged between Alex’s breast.

“It looks like the breast fairy has arrived. I’ll come back to these, but first I have to introduce myself to our babies.” Esther wriggles her eyebrows while she caresses Alex’s very large breasts. Alex laughs as she strokes Esther’s face. Both women notice the hunger and lust in each other’s eyes for the other. The heat and passion for each other is still there after all these years and it burns bright and strong.

Esther wiggles her way down Alex’s body so that she is facing Alex’s belly. She reaches out and caresses the large belly before her. “Well hello there my little ones. Your mommies have been wanting to meet you so much, we can’t wait till you arrive, so we can finally see and hold you both.” Esther leans over and plants small kisses to Alex’s belly and then rests her head on top of her lovers/wife’s belly.

“You know Alex, I am going to be jealous of these little ones, because they will get to suck on these!” Esther slides up the bed to face Alex and draws circles around Alex’s nipples with her fingers.

“I have always LOVED your breasts. I have never forgotten the first day you came into class, I couldn’t take my eyes off your breasts. By then I already knew I liked girls, but I was never really attracted to other women’s breasts, until I saw you that day. Not even when I had to change in the locker rooms at school. I got to see the breasts of the other school girls, but I was never really turned on.” Esther places a lingering kiss on both of Alex’s breasts.

“So, when you came into the locker room and changed in front of me, I thought that my eyes were going to give away my desire for your breasts. That’s why I always turned around and looked into my open locker when you got changed in front of me. I didn’t think that you would be interested in me that way, so I tried to avoid looking at your breasts. Cause if I did look at them, I would spend my nights dreaming of touching, caressing, kissing and suck them, and I knew that eventually it would drive me crazy to be close to you and not touch you.” Esther looks directly into Alex’s eyes, while she rubs both of Alex’s nipples with her thumb and middle fingers.

Alex watches Esther and a groan escapes her slightly open mouth, indicating to Esther that she was experiencing pleasure from her attentive hands and mouth.

“Do you remember THAT day when you hugged me from behind on the benches of the stadium at school. I was watching Joshua practicing with his baseball team, two months before his wedding?” Esther bends over and sucks long and hard on a nipple while her hand caresses the other breast with her thumb and fingers.
“Yes, uh, oh that…. feels…. fantastic darling.” Alex moans.

Esther releases the nipple from her mouth, it makes a pop sound, the nipple is wet and glistens from Esther’s saliva. Esther props herself up on her elbows and looks at Alex. “You walked up the stairs and Wendy Lou were seated to my left and Peggy Sue was to my right. You walked up behind me and nudged me to move forward on the bench, and then you slide your legs around my waist and between my legs. Then you hugged me, your arms were pressed against my torso with my breasts resting on your arms. Then I felt your front pushing your breasts hard against my back. I could feel your nipples hardening each time you moved against my body. Then you rested your chin onto my shoulder. I was so turned on, that I was afraid to move.” Esther leans over and sucks on the Alex’s other nipple.

“I would get wet just looking at you, but when I felt your nibbles against me, I was afraid that I was going to need a change of underwear. Oh boy how do I love you Alexandria.” Esther props herself up on her elbows and kisses Alex gently at first on the lips but it quickly became heated. Esther pulls back so they could catch their breaths.

“Well I have always been turned on by your bum Esther. Every chance I got, I would sneak a peek at your perky firm bum. Especially when you wore jeans, boy… how they make your bum look so juicy. I just wanted to hold and kiss you so badly that day but when I saw that I couldn’t sit next to you, I knew that if I held you from behind, I could at least get a bit of a feel of that firm bum of yours against my groin.” Alex smirks as she raises her eyebrows at Esther.

“Esther, I want your mouth on my breasts, it feels so good when you graze your teeth against my nipples. I love how it feels when you suck them and hearing that pop sound when you release, it makes me want you so badly, that it hurts to breathe.” Esther obeys and takes a nipple in her mouth and sucks long and hard, every now again she would graze her teeth against the nipple, causing Alex to groan in pleasure. Esther’s hand cups and caresses the other breast. Esther then repeats the same actions on the other nipple.

Several hours later, Alex emerges from their bedroom dressed and walks towards the kitchen with a massive grin on her face. Sarah is preparing lunch for Alice and Levi, she notices Alex walk into the kitchen with a grin on her face and asks, “That smile on your face, doesn’t have anything to do with the Army duffle bag lying inside the front door?” Sarah and Alex both laughs.

“Yes, Esther’s home, she came in the door about 4 hours ago.” Alex looks at the table and realises that Alice heard her Aunty is home and is just about to climb off her chair.

Alex walks over to Alice and sits on the chair next to her and says, “Alice, honey, Aunty Esther is tired and needs her sleep. We don’t want to wake her up just yet. Why don’t we make her favourite biscuits and dinner, for when she wakes up?”

“Can I lick the spoon after? Aunty Alex.”

“Yes, you can.” Alex laughs.

Two days later Esther, Alex and Alice arrive at Nonnatus House to speak with Sister Julienne while the midwives are out on various calls. Sister Monica Joan answers the door and when she sees Esther, the older woman says, “We are now all complete, Nurse Goldberg has returned to us. Come in my children.” Sister Monica Joan pulls Esther into a hug before welcoming the others inside.

“Grandmother (Sister Monica Joan), Aunty Esther is back. She came back two days ago. I made her favourite biscuits for her, with Aunty Alex. And guess what? I got to lick the spoon. I have a cake for us to eat.” Alice says while holding the older woman’s hand, as they walk towards the
kitchen with a cake box in her hands.

“You sound like you had fun making the biscuits. And did your Aunty enjoy them?” Sister Monica Joan smiles at Alice.

“Aunty Esther said they were the best she had tasted.” Alice said with pride.

“I’ve came to see Sister Julienne. Sister Monica Joan is she free to speak to?” Esther asks.

The door to Sister Julienne’s office flings open as Sister Julienne steps out and embraces Esther in another hug. Esther has never experienced so many hugs, as she has occurred within the last two days. She is taken back by the affection displayed for her by her colleagues as well as her family. Sister Julienne indicates for Esther and Alex to go into her office, while she goes to the kitchen to prepared them some tea.

Sister Julienne returns with a tray of tea for all three of them. “Alice and Sister Monica Joan are having a tea party in the kitchen. So, we can talk freely Esther.”

“Thank you, Sister Julienne, um as you know Alex is expecting and is due within the next couple of weeks. I was wondering if I could return to work not until after the babies were born.” Esther asks while pouring tea for Sister Julienne, Alex and herself.

“Esther, as you know we at Nonnatus House consider all our girls as part of our family. You and your family have become a special part of our family. I have observed how you are with Alex, and please excuse me for being so bold in asking, but these babies Alex is carrying, they are yours as well?” Sister Julienne asks after taking a sip of her tea.

“Um, ah, (Esther rubs the back of her neck nervously) Yes. I guess there is no more need to hide the fact that Alex and I are a couple. We have been for 12 years. I know the repercussions for this, and if it means I lose my job and right to practice as a nurse, then I will take my love over my job any day. The time when I was classed as missing in action, showed me that life is to precious to live in fear and I no longer want to hide my love for Alex away from my family and friends.” Esther takes Alex’s hand and holds it tightly.

“Esther, you are a valuable member of this family, and we look after our family. If you fulfil your duties as a midwife and keep your private life, out of the public eye. Then I will not report anything of this situation. Your job will be here, when you choose to return.” Sister Julienne reaches out and takes Esther and Alex’s hands and smiles.

“Sister Julienne, thank you for understanding. Esther has been worried that you would not and has been quite anxious in discussing this with you. You have put both of our minds at rest. Ow, ouch. Esther your children are playing up.” Alex lifts her shirt to reveal her belly. Right at that moment all three women notice an outline of a small foot being pressed against the walls of Alex’s skin.

Sister Julienne chuckles, “From the looks of things, they appear to be very active. Now speaking of active little ones, we have better go and rescue Alice from Sister Monica Joan.”

Esther, Alex and Alice stay for lunch at Nonnatus House, to surprise the midwives as they return from their visits. Patsy comes in and notices her friend’s voice coming from the kitchen and she rushes down and drops her bag, just outside of the kitchen.

“Hello, Esther your back!” Patsy stands looking at her friend standing in the kitchen.

“Patsy.” Esther walks over to her friend and hugs her. “Do you want to go out and have a cigarette?”
“I had better make it quick before Delia comes back. I promised Delia that I would quit smoking.”

Patsy and Esther walk outside the back to have a puff. Esther asks, “Why have you promised to quit smoking? Is Delia putting her foot down?”

“No, it’s just that with Delia being 4 months pregnant, she is finding that she can’t stomach the smell anymore.”

“What? Delia’s pregnant! Oh boy. I go away and come back to a wife pregnant with twins and now your telling me, you and Delia are having a baby…. I am so happy for you both. Congratulations. Have you told the nuns or the other midwives yet?” Esther rolls her cigarette in her fingers, before taking a puff.

“No Delia wanted to wait till she was passed the first trimester. We were planning on announcing it today at lunch. Delia is just …” Patsy is interrupted.

“I am just what? And I thought Pats you said you were quitting smoking!” Delia stands with her hands on her hips with a ‘I’m not impressed’ look on her face.

“Deels, I was just saying how wonderful you look, that being pregnant suits you. (Patsy checks that no one else is around) I love you.” Patsy gives Delia a quick kiss on the lips.

The small group of friends walk back inside, and Esther is greeted by hugs from Sister Winifred, Val, Lucille and Phyllis (Trixie is away on her honeymoon), she can help Alex to a seat at the table. Over lunch, there was lots of questions asked of Esther about her time in Vietnam.

Towards the end of lunch, Delia says, “You may have noticed that recently it might look like I have put on some extra weight. There is a reason for this, I am 4 months pregnant.” Delia looks to Patsy for reassurance and support. Patsy smiles and holds Delia’s hand under the table.

Sister Monica Joan says, “We are having a bit of a baby boom at Nonnatus House. My precious child, you are radiant, and your little baby is going to be blessed to have you as their mother.”

Delia receives hugs and congratulations from everyone around the table. Sister Julienne reminds Delia to take things easy and to ask for help when she needs it and for her to come and have a more in-depth conversation regarding her due date.

Later that afternoon Val is in the clinical room unpacking her bag and placing her instruments into the autoclave, when Delia walks in from her shift. Delia is in the middle of unpacking her medical bag.

“How was the rest of your day, Delia?”

“Mr Brown’s wound needed to be redressed, while Mrs White’s little girl has gained another pound since her last check-up. Mrs White said that once her daughter took to feeding on the breast, she has put on weight and been growing fast.” Delia walks around to put her instruments into the autoclave, before turning it on.

Val stands next to Delia and checks to see if anyone else is around before asking, “Can I ask you, exactly how did you get pregnant? Did you have to sleep with a man?” Val nervously asks.

Delia looks at Val and says, “Why don’t we talk back at Patsy and my flat. We can talk more
freely there. Why do you ask? Are you and Lucille thinking about having children?”

“Oh…. it’s…. just that I love her and would like to have children with her, some day. I’m just curious about how women like us, would go about getting pregnant. And not have to sleep with a man, that’s all. It would be good to talk about this back more at your flat. Lucille and I will come over after I get changed.” Val whispers to Delia, so that they cannot be overheard.

Lucille sits in her and Val’s bedroom (after Trixie’s Wedding, Val suggested that Lucille move into her room, to give Phyllis some privacy), waiting for Val to finish getting changed. Val had mentioned that they were going to Patsy and Delia’s flat after work. Val enter the room and closes the door, then walks over to Lucille sitting on the bed. They smile at each other, Val leans down and kisses Lucille on the lips. Lucille returns the kiss and before they get carried away, Val pulls back and moves towards the closet to retrieve her clothes. While dressing, Val looks lovingly at Lucille.

“So why are we going to Patsy and Delia’s tonight?” Lucille asks.

“Oh, I wanted to talk with Delia about her pregnancy, without anyone listening.” Val walks over to Lucille and holds out her hand. Lucille takes hold of Val’s hand and stands up, there is only inches between the pair. Val pulls Lucille closer so that their hips are touching.

“Lucille, you know that I love you.” Val leans in and kisses Lucille passionately.

Lucille pulls back, smiles and says, “We had better not keep them waiting. Then we can come back here and pick up where we left off. (Lucille sways in Val’s arms, while stroking Val’s hair and looking directly into Val’s eyes.) It’s been a couple of days since we have been able to make love to each other and I really miss feeling your naked body next to mine.”

Val swallows the lump in her throat and tries to ignore the throbbing building within her groin. Lucille untangles herself from Val’s embrace and takes her hand and leads them out the door and head out of Nonnatus House towards Patsy and Delia’s flat.
Chapter 27

Chapter Summary

Esther has been home for a couple of days, when she starts having nightmares. Alex helps her to voice her fears.

Esther sits with her head resting against the side of the mesh tent. The M.A.S.H. unit had been informed that there would be a 30-minute break before the next wave of casualties arrive. Esther has already been working in the OR for over 8 hours that morning, so she decided to grab herself a cup of coffee in the mesh tent. Between taking sips of her coffee, she rests her eyes and envisions Alex on their Wedding day. Esther is pulled back into reality when Wendy sits down next to her on the bench.

“I can’t wait till I leave. I won’t have to spend all my day standing at an Operating table.” Wendy says before drinking her coffee. Esther turns her head towards her friend and smiles.

Esther looks at her watch and then outside the mesh tent to see the ambulances arrive with the new casualties. All they had been told was that there would be some civilians amongst the injured.

“No rest for the wicked. Their here earlier than expected. We had better get to it, Wendy.” Esther sculls her coffee and rises from her seat, then Wendy and her head out to triage.

The civilians were assessed and assigned to different locations around the triage area, before heading into the OR. Esther heads into the OR dressed in her nursing uniform after she had scrubbed her hands. She stood next to the OR table and waited for the surgeon to be masked by another nurse. An 8-month pregnant Vietnamese civilian woman was stretched in and placed on their table. The surgeon assesses the situation, the mother and child’s blood pressure are dangerously low, putting both the mother and child at risk of dying. The surgeon begins to perform a C-section, while Esther keeps tabs on their blood pressure, as well as assisting the surgeon with the various instruments for the procedure.

Esther looks down at the sheets which cover the rest of the mother’s body and she notices how the blood on the sheets is a bright red colour. She then looks at her uniform and it is also stained with the mother’s red blood.

A very worried surgeon says, “We had better make this fast, or we are going to lose them both. Nurse Goldberg get ready to receive the baby as soon as it comes out.”

Esther grabs a towel and stands at the ready. Within seconds the surgeon’s hands pull out of the woman’s belly a beautiful baby girl, he then hands the child over to Esther’s waiting hands. Esther looks at the baby, she wraps the child in the towel and begins to rub the child’s back. The little girl begins to cry, Esther then moves towards the unconscious mother, to tell her that she has a beautiful girl, when Esther sees the woman’s face. The face she is staring at is that of Alex.

Esther’s heart begins to race when she hears the anaesthetist say, “Her blood pressure is dropping, we’re going to lose her.”

The surgeon looks at Esther, “Nurse Goldberg, you need to see to the child, Nurse Jones will assist
with the patient. Now go!"

Esther does not move until Nurse Jones steps next to her and guides her out the OR doors. Nurse Jones then returns to the OR table, as the surgeon tries to save the woman on the table. Esther stands looking in at the OR through the window in the door, she does not realise that she has started to cry or that she is screaming.

Esther jolts up in her bed, she looks down and notices that her naked body is covered in sweat and that the bedsheets are drenched from her sweat. Esther turns to look to her left and sees that Alex is very much alive, and that the babies have not yet been born. It had all been a dream. Esther silently breathes a sigh of relief, as she runs a hand through her hair.

Alex was woken by Esther screaming, “ALEX! NO, YOU CAN’T LEAVE ME.” Alex sits up and places her arms around Esther’s waist and pulls her into a firm embrace. Esther sobs as she is being held by her lover/wife.

“Did you have a bad dream, baby?” Alex rubs her hand in a circular motion on Esther’s back.

“Yes, I dreamt that I was back in Vietnam and you were a casualty that had to be operated on. You and the baby had very low blood pressures. We had to perform a C-section to save you and the baby. We were able to deliver a healthy baby girl, but your blood pressure dropped, and they couldn’t save you.” Esther explains before breaking down and crying into Alex’s arms. After a short period of time Esther moves out of Alex’s embrace.

“I need to have a shower, I’m covered in sweat. I will change the sheets after the shower. You can go back to sleep, I’m alright now.” Esther climbs out of the bed and heads to the bathroom.

Esther runs the water so that she can take a bath. She sits on the side of the bath and stares at the running water, she is lost in her thoughts and it’s only when the water reaches half way up her calves, Esther realises and turns off the water. She lowers herself into the hot water, she leans against the wall of the bath, she closes her eyes, drops her head into her hands and cries.

Esther does not hear the bathroom door open, it’s only when she hears a familiar voice say, “Can I join you?” Esther raises her head out of her hands, her face is stained with tears.

Esther doesn’t voice a reply but holds out her hand for Alex to hold onto as she climbs into the bath. Esther steadies Alex so she can lower herself and sit in between Esther’s legs. Esther wraps her arms around Alex’s belly, her hands resting just above Alex’s navel. Esther rests her chin on Alex’s right shoulder and sighs. They relax in the bath silently before washing each other’s bodies. Alex reaches her right hand around to cup the side of Esther’s face, while her left-hand rubs Esther’s hands on her belly. They stay like this for a while, until the water turns cool and are forced to get out and return to their bed for warmth. Esther notices that Alex has changed the sheets before coming into her in the bath.

Once they had returned to their bed, Esther spoons against Alex’s back, as Alex is more comfortable to lie on her side, now that her belly is large and heavy. Alex breaks the silence, “What do you think your dream was about? Are you scared of losing me during childbirth?” Alex tightens her grip of Esther’s hands, that rest on top of her belly.

“I think that I am more afraid of something going wrong, and not being able to do anything to prevent it from happening…. I’m don’t know if I would cope if I ever lost you…. I love you so much that to imagine a world without you in it, scares me.” Esther kisses the back of Alex’s neck.
and rubs her belly.

Alex awkwardly turns over, to face Esther. Alex cups Esther’s cheek and looks directly into her eyes, “I love you so much that I too would not know how to live in a world without you in it…. I trust you and the other midwives, and I know that I will be safe in their hands. We just need to hold onto each other and know that we will get through this if we are together…. We have not come all this way, after all the years together to let this break us. I believe in you, I love you and I trust you with my life, Esther.” Alex kisses the tears which have run down her cheeks.

Esther smiles at Alex hoping to convey the message of ‘I feel the same way’. They begin to kiss passionately as if their lives depended on this kiss. Hands wonder over naked skin and soon they are making love to each other. The love making this time takes on a deeper level of intimacy and passion, as they both exposed their fears and concerns before each other. They reach their orgasms at the same time, afterwards they rest their heads in the crook of the other’s necks. They hold each other tightly and drift off into a deep sleep.

Esther’s dreams are peaceful and full of moments where she is holding both Alex and their babies in her arms. Although Esther knows that her time in Vietnam has left her with physical and emotional scars. Scars which will take time to work through with the help and love of Alex and their children. She reminds herself that everyday is new and is not been set in stone, the future is still to be written, and that Esther can mould her own future, a future which includes Alex and soon to be a family of four.
Chapter 28

Chapter Summary


It’s Christmas season and two weeks since Esther’s return to Poplar, the day of Uncle Saul and Phyllis Crane’s Wedding day has arrived. Uncle Saul is dressed in a Black business suit, with a pink rose in his lapel. Esther is dressed in her Army uniform and stands next to her Uncle in front of the fire place in the lounge room of the Goldberg house. Uncle Saul had asked Esther to be his ‘Best Man’, as Esther has always said, ‘that the best man for the job is always a woman.’

A very heavily 8½ month pregnant Alex is taking photos of the Groom and his ‘Best Man’. The family gather in the lounge room for a family photo, before heading to Nonnatus House for the ceremony. Both Uncle Saul and Phyllis wanted a small intimate ceremony with all their family and friends gathered to help in celebrate in their special day.

Alex has been feeling strange for most of the previous night, as she has been restless and unable to sleep in their bed. Esther had tried rubbing and massaging Alex’s lower back, but it didn’t seem to help to relieve the discomfort. The pair paced up and down the hallway in hope it will relieve Alex’s discomfort, but it only eased the uneasiness for a short while. Alex is tired and feeling uncomfortable as the babies are being very active in her womb, but she is happy to be able to observe the special day, with her lover/wife by her side.

Meanwhile at Nonnatus House, Phyllis is putting the final touches to her hair and makeup. Phyllis is dressed in a light blue skirt suit. Phyllis has asked Lucille to be her Maid of Honour, as they have shared a room for the last 3 years. Lucille is dressed in a simple blue dress and her hair loose around her shoulders. Val stands in the doorway admiring how beautiful Lucille looks in her dress, while Lucille presents Phyllis with a small but elegant boutique of Pink Roses.

Val stands daydreaming of a day when Lucille would be getting dressed in a white Wedding dress, and either Patsy or Delia would be her Maid of Honour. While Val gets dresses in an elegant suit and prepares for their own Wedding day, but this daydream will have to wait for now. Lucille turns around and spies Val staring at her with a far off look in her eyes.

Lucille smiles and walks to Val, “How are things coming along down in the Chapel?”

“Oh, um, everything is set and ready. The only thing that is missing, is the Bride and her Maid of Honour.” Val replies.

“Well Phyllis, are you ready to get married?” Lucille asks.

“Lucille, my Lass, we had better go down.” Phyllis walks to Lucille and places her hand on the younger woman’s arm.

Down in the Chapel, Uncle Saul and Esther stand before the Altar, along with the Priest waiting for the Bride and her Wedding Party to arrive. Placed on top of the Altar are Pink Roses in vases and lit candles. Patsy, Delia, Val, Trixie, Simon, Jonah, John, Joshua, Sarah, Alice, Levi. Alex, Sister Winifred and Sister Monica Joan are seated in the pews waiting. Sister Julienne has been asked to
walk Phyllis down the aisle.

Joshua plays the Wedding march on the piano, while Lucille begins to walk down the aisle. Sister Julienne smiles as she takes Phyllis’ elbow in hers and they walk down the aisle. Uncle Saul turns around and beams when he sees Phyllis, for in his eyes, she is the most beautiful woman that he has ever seen. His eyes well up with tears as Phyllis comes to stand beside him and takes his hand. Esther stands next to her Uncle and turns slightly to look over at Alex and smiles at her lover/wife. Their eyes met, and, in that moment, a message of love is conveyed between the two lovers.

Uncle Saul and Phyllis exchange vows and rings before their friends and family. The Priest declares them to be man and wife, he says, “You may kiss the bride.” To which Uncle Saul lovingly cups Phyllis’s face with his hands and kisses her tenderly. Everyone cheers for the happy couple and clap as the couple turn and face their family and friends, with smiles on their faces.

While standing next to Uncle Saul after the formal aspects of the ceremony have taken place, Esther turns and looks at Alex, she notices a painful look crosses Alex’s face. Esther quickly moves to Alex’s side and asks, “What is wrong darling? You look as if you’re in pain?”

“Oh, (moan) I think our babies are on the way. I think my waters have broken.” Alex looks down at her lap and sees a wet patch.

“Oh, umm, have you been experiencing any contractions?” Esther scratches her head trying to think. Esther normally knows what to do in this situation, but the woman in labour has never been her lover/wife. All Esther can do is holds Alex’s hand to show her support.

“Yes, OW Ugh. I don’t know how far apart the OW ugh contractions are? I thought you could time them Esther.” Alex winces in pain and grabs hold of her stomach with both hands.

“Patsy and Val, could you come and help me over here. Alex’s waters have broken. She is in labour.” Esther calls to Patsy and Val to assist her in getting Alex to a more comfortable location.

Patsy helps Esther in assisting Alex in standing and moving up the stairs to one of the spare bedrooms. Val follows them up the stairs and into the room. Patsy examines Alex and says, “You are in the first stage of labour and not fully dilated. I will go down stairs to collect my medical bag. Esther can you take over and give Alex some gentle back rubs while I’m gone.

Esther helps Alex to stand and hold onto the back of a chair, while Esther rubs circles to Alex’s lower back. Esther encourages Alex with her breathing between contractions. Patsy returns and Val times the space between contractions. Patsy and Val dress in their midwives’ white gowns and matching caps. With each contraction Esther holds Alex’s hand and allows her to squeeze it tight while continuing with rubbing Alex’s back with her free hand. Esther’s hand throbs with pain, but she pushes it away, as she knows that Alex is experiencing more pain.

Val and Patsy prepare the bed by laying down newspapers under the sheets and then remake the bed, while Alex and Esther pace around the room, holding onto each other. Esther continues to rub small circles to Alex’s lower back, while coaching Alex in controlling her breathing. Esther helps Alex to sit on the edge of the bed, she then lifts Alex’s legs and place them onto the mattress, while Alex manoeuvre’s further up the bed. Esther climbs onto the bed and sits behind Alex, so that her legs are pressed against Alex’s hips and slips her arms under Alex’s elbows.

“Alex, when you have another contraction, grab hold onto my legs or my hands. I can take it. And remember to breathe through the pain. Can you do that for me Alex?” Esther kisses Alex’s cheek. Esther rests her hands-on Alex’s tummy and gives her unborn children a lovingly tender caress.
Esther kisses Alex’s cheek saying, “Thank you Alex, for giving us this opportunity to become a family. I love you so much. I am so proud of you Alex, for carrying our child while I was away and being so brave through it all.”

“Ow, ugh, ow. I didn’t think the pain would be this bad. (Alex grabs tightly onto Esther’s thighs while she experiences another contraction) Esther whatever happens please don’t leave me, I don’t think I could do this without you with me.” Alex reaches a hand around to grip onto Esther’s Army shirt as she experiences another contraction.

Patsy re-examines Alex and says, “Your fully dilated. Now I need you to push on the next contraction. You need to make sure that you stop when I say so. We don’t want you to tear. Alright, now Esther can you help Alex with controlling her breathing?”

“We’re really doing this. Our babies will be here soon. Esther hooolllddd mee.” Alex screams in pain.

“Alex, I want you to focus on my breathing and copy me. We need you to breath short breathes because it will help in controlling your pain. Can you do it for me?” Esther softly speaks into Alex’s ear.

Val prepares the equipment such as the scissors to cut the umbilical cord and the dish to collect the afterbirth. Val watches and offers Esther a wet cloth to wipe the sweat from Alex’s brow. When the baby’s arrival is near, Val leaves the room to collect more warm water and towels, to wash the babies when they are delivered.

As the next contraction arrives, Patsy tells Alex to start pushing. Esther sits behind Alex and holds her in her arms. Alex pants and screams as she pushes, Patsy happily says, “That’s it, you are doing great. The head is crowning, and soon baby’s head will be here. Once the head is through, you can have a rest.”

“Our babies head is here… Look at all that reddish hair… Alex give me your hand.” Esther takes Alex’s hand and guides it down between her legs to touch the top of their baby’s head. The two women smile and shed tears while embracing each other.

“Now Alex, just one final push and baby will be here.” Patsy holds the baby’s head in her hands while Val stands next to her with a towel to wrap the child in.

Alex pushes and screams from the pain, while Esther holds her under her elbows and plants small kisses to Alex’s shoulder.

Patsy beams at Alex and says, “Alex, you have a baby boy. Val is going to give him a wash and then you can hold him. Now you can have a rest before the second baby is ready to arrive.”

Val holds the child in her arms and cradles him securely while she cleans him of the blood and amniotic fluid from his skin and mouth. Val rubs the little boy’s back as he has not taken a breath and therefore has not cried. The little boy begins to cry very loudly.

Alex looks at Patsy and Esther and says, “He has a good set of lungs, he definitely takes after Esther.” Esther looks over at Val, trying to get a glimpse of their son. Esther leans over Alex’s shoulder and kisses her.

“WE have a BOY.” Tears well up in both Esther and Alex’s eyes as they marvel at finally becoming parents. Val has wrapped the little boy in a towel and brings him over to Alex. Alex takes the child in her arms and Esther reaches her arms around Alex’s arms and they both embrace
their son for the first time. It’s only when the little boy is snuggled in his mother’s arms, that he stops crying and waves his little arms in the air.

Esther tearfully, “Oh, my baby boy and Levi are the only men, who have captured my heart. I love you so much, and we have waited so long for you to come into our lives.”

Val smiles at the little family as she sits next to them on the bed, “Do you have a name for him?”

“William Anthony Stream, after Alex’s father.” Esther and Alex speak in unison while looking at Val and Patsy.

“Just think Patsy, it will be your turn to become a mother in a couple of months. Delia is looking every bit the expectant mother, don’t you think.” Esther beams at Patsy.

Patsy laughingly, “Yes, I can’t wait till I can hold our child in my arms. Delia has already chosen the colour for the baby’s room. (Laughs) Delia wants me to spend my next day off, painting the baby’s room.”

“Val and I can help you, we are experts at painting baby rooms. We painted these little one’s room in one day. What do you say? Yes, to a bit of help.” Esther smirks as Val laughs.

“If you are offering, then I will take you up on the offer. With the three of us, we will have it done in one day. Delia has picked out yellow as the colour for the walls and we have a cot and change table. Delia wants to have everything ready, I just want Delia and the baby to be healthy.” Patsy looks at Val, Alex and Esther.

Patsy re-examines Alex, “Well it looks as if baby is wanting to come and join us. Alex, you need to hand William back to Val, you need to push again on the next contraction.”

“Val, please take good care of my little man.” Alex says as Val takes William into her arms.

Val coos and lovingly stares at the baby in her arms, he stretches out his little hands towards Val. She holds out a finger to the little boy and he grabs hold of it. Val daydreams, that she is holding Lucille’s and her child in her arms. Maybe they can have a child or more, but just for the time being, the young lovers are enjoying taking things one day at a time.

Patsy assists with the delivering of Esther and Alex’s baby girl, who like her brother has reddish hair and a very good set of lungs as she cries. Alex is exhausted after the delivery. Esther takes William in her arms and sits on the side of the bed, she beams with joy as she looks at her lover/wife. Esther leans in and gives Alex a kiss while Val cleans and washes the baby girl. Patsy waits for the afterbirth. William coos at his ‘mom’s’ as he lies in the crook of Esther’s elbow.

Alex is presented with her baby girl and right there in that moment, she had all that she has ever wanted in her life, someone whom she loves and whom loves her completely; a family which consists of two children to love and nurture. Alison scrunches up her nose while she waves her little arms. Alex looks down at her daughter lying in her arms and then back up at Esther. Alex grabs hold of Esther’s collar and pulls her so that their lips connect with force. They hear their baby’s cooing, Esther pulls back from the kiss, so that she can memorise the image before her, her little family.

“Alex, you are so amazing. Not only have you proved a wonderful home for our babies over the last 8½ months, but you also have brought these two wonderful lives into the world. I will spend the rest of my life indebted to you. Alex you can count on me to provide for you and our children.” Esther sits on the side of the bed, holding her son, while Alex holds their daughter.
“Hello Alison Susan Stream, we have been waiting to meet you.” Alex says while she cradles her daughter in her arms and plants a kiss to the little girl’s forehead.

After Esther has spent some time alone with Alex and their children, she walks down the stairs of Nonnatus House to the waiting family and friends who are waiting for news. Uncle Saul and Phyllis continued with the celebrating of their marriage, while Alex was giving birth upstairs.

Esther walks into the lounge room and announces, “We have a baby boy and girl. Their names are William Anthony and Alison Susan Stream. Alex is fine but very tired.” Esther is bombarded by hugs and congratulations from her friends and family.

“Jewish tradition states that I am to say a particular blessing for the birth of a boy. Please join me, ‘Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who is good and bestows good.’ And I also have to say a blessing for the birth of a girl. Please join me. ‘Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has allowed us to live, has preserved us, and has enabled us to reach this season.’ Amen.” Esther prayers.

Joshua walks up to his sister’s side and wraps his arm around her shoulder and pulls her into a hug. “I have never thanked you for giving me this opportunity to finally become a mother. Alex and I now have our very own family.” Esther whispers so that the nuns cannot hear.

“William has strawberry blonde hair and Alison has sandy blonde hair, and they both have a good set of lungs. They are the most beautiful babies that I have had the privilege of delivering.” Patsy declares after returning to the celebrations down stairs.

“Aunty Esther, can I see the babies?” Alice tugs on Esther’s Army uniform, Esther bends down and lifts her niece up into her arms.

“Only if Aunty Alex says it’s alright. Let’s go and see what she says.” Esther walks holding Alice in her arms as she walks them up the stairs and to the room, where Alex and the children are resting.

Esther knock on the door and Alex answers, “Yes, come in.”

“Alice asked if she can see her cousins?” Esther sticks her head around the partly open door.

“Yes, bring her in. Her cousins are sleeping, but she can look at them.” Alex nods at Esther.

Esther carries Alice into the room and walks them over to Alex who is lying on the bed with a sleeping child in both arms. Alice and Esther sit on the bed and look at the babies. The little girl talks with her Aunties while the babies sleep. After a while Esther takes Alice back down stairs to her parents. The Wedding celebrations finish, and the happy couple depart for their honeymoon in Spain. The rest of the friends and family leave shortly after, while the nuns, Val and Lucille help Esther and Alex with the babies. Sister Julienne offers Alex and Esther the use of the bedroom for the night, so that they would not have to travel with the babies at such a late hour during Winter.

The first night as a family is spent in a spare bedroom at Nonnatus House, and with some assistance from Val and Lucille throughout the night, Esther and Alex can care for their babies. Esther pushes the two single beds together, so that Alex and she could sleep with the babies snuggling between them. When the babies woke during the night, Alex was able to breastfeed her little ones, while Esther sat up in the bed, ready to assist with burping William and Alison, then change their nappies. After rocking the babies to sleep and placed back between Esther and Alex.

Esther lies on her side and faces Alex and their babies, she reaches out and drapes an arm over the
top of her children and rests her hand on Alex’s hip, Alex leans over and kisses Esther on the lips and whispers, “I love you.”

Esther smiles, “I love you too.” She looks at her family wrapped in her arm and thinks to herself that life cannot get any better than this. For Esther nothing else matters than having her wife and now her children in her life. Alex and Esther drift off into a restful slumber until the babies wake for another feeding and nappy change.
Chapter 29

Chapter Summary

The morning after the births of the twins. And a glimpse into the life of Esther and Alex after the birth of their twins.

Esther sits at the dining table at Nonnatus House, drinking a cup of coffee early in the morning, the Nuns are not even up for their prayers. The first night as a family of four had been spent sleeping on two single beds nudged together, so that William and Alison could sleep between their mothers. For most of the night, Alex was able to sleep as the labour and delivery had been exhausting on her body, she only woke to breastfeed the babies, while Esther attended to burping, changing nappies and rocking the twins back to sleep. For Esther the night was mostly spent sleeping very lightly, keeping an ear out for any sign of the babies being awake, or Alex being in any kind of discomfort. After the babies and Alex go back to sleep around 4 am in the morning, Esther decided to go down stairs and make a cup of coffee.

About 3 cups of coffee later, a very sleepy Alex ventures down stairs and into the kitchen in search for Esther.

“I woke up and reached out for you, but you weren’t there? How long have you been up?” Alex says as she walks around the back of Esther and wraps her arms around Esther’s neck and plants a peck on Esther’s cheek.

“I’ve been up since 4 am. How are you feeling today? Are you feeling sore?” Esther looks to see if anyone is up, and once she realises no one is around, she turns in her chair, so that Alex can sit on her lap. Esther wraps her arms around Alex’s waist and Alex’s arms are draped around Esther’s neck. Then Esther passionately kisses Alex. Esther pulls back to allow Alex to answer her.

“I am feeling rather sore in places, but other than that, I feel alright. I guess we will have to grab these quite moments, when we can. William and Alison will be awake soon, it’s been a while since their last feed. Can we stay like this for a minute?” Alex lays her head onto Esther’s left shoulder and closes her eyes.

Esther smiles, “We will have to move soon, the Nuns will be up soon for prayers. I would like to have another minute holding yo….” The sound of babies crying from upstairs interrupts Esther.

Before Alex gets off Esther’s lap the new mothers look at each other as if to say, ‘Welcome to parenthood’, Esther and Alex laugh as they quickly walk up the stairs to the bedroom. The twins are in full crying mode and Alex says,” OK, my little ones, Mama is here and so is your Mommy.”

Esther looks at Alex, “Which one of us is Mama and which one is Mommy?”

“Your Mommy and I am Mama. Can you carry William, while I carry Alison downstairs? I’ll feed them down there, that way we don’t wake up Val, Lucille and the Nuns.” Alex picks up Alison in her arms holding the little girl to her chest, while Esther has William in her arms. The little family of four head down stairs to the kitchen.

Unknown to the new mothers, Sister Monica Joan was already awake and getting dressed for the
day when she heard the cries of the babies from down the hall. When she entered the hallway to investigate, she noticed Alex and Esther entering the room. Sister Monica Joan decided to head down stairs and make herself a hot drink. Monica Joan is sitting in the lounge room, when Alex and Esther come back down stairs. Sister Monica Joan walks over to Alex and offers to hold Alison for her, while Alex feeds William, who is screaming the loudest of the pair. Alex sits on the lounge and raises her top to reveal a breast, while Esther places little William into Alex’s arms. Alex leans back into the lounge, while William sucks away on her breast. Esther walks over to the kitchen and puts the kettle on, she offers to make them all a hot drink.

Esther leans her back against the kitchen bench and watches Sister Monica Joan interacting with little Alison. Alison raises her arms towards Sister Monica Joan’s face, the other Nun smiles down at the little girl in her arms. Esther thinks back to her childhood and wonders what her life might have looked like if she had ‘Grandparents’ to love and care about her. Esther smiles to herself and her heart is filled with love and gratitude towards the older Nun. Her presence in Alice’s and now her own children’s life, as Sister Monica Joan has been more of a ‘Grandmother’ figure to her niece than that of a Nun.

After the twins had been breastfeed, burped and had their nappies changed. The midwives and Nun’s arrive for breakfast. Val, Lucille, Sister Julienne and Sister Winifred take it in turns to cuddle the twins and coo over them. The midwives and Nun’s give Alex and Esther the chance to eat their breakfast without having to juggle a baby in their arms.

Joshua and Alice arrive to collect Esther, Alex and the babies after the midwives had left for their rounds. This way Alice could not interrupt their routines and cause them to be late for their next point of call. Alice has gotten to know all the midwives rather well over the last year. She loves to spend time talking with them, especially Lucille, as she loves to read stories to Alice, when she visits Nonnatus House.

Joshua helps Esther to place the babies into the basinet on the back seat of the car. Esther then helped Alex to the front seat of the car, with Alice seated between Alex and Joshua. Esther sat in the back with the babies, holding tightly to the basinet as they travelled through the streets of Poplar to their home.

It’s been 4 months since the births of William and Alison Stream and both Esther and Alex have been relishing in the fact that they are now a complete little family of four. For the past several months when Esther has not been working, she has been assisting with the caring for their children. During the nights Esther insists she cares for the babies after Alex has breast feed them. Esther knows this was to allow her lover/wife the opportunity to catch up on extra sleep. Esther would change the baby’s nappies and settle them back to sleep. William would naturally settle without any hassle, whereas Alison requires extra cuddles and rocking in her Mommy’s strong arms.

The two babies were growing fast and reaching all the milestones for babies of their age. When Esther was at work, Alex looked and cared for her children throughout the day or night. Alex loves being a mother to her twins and watch them grow. Alex would document the baby’s day by taking photos of the babies as they slept, when they were awake and her favourite, being held by Esther. Alex also loves to photograph the babies being held by the other family members, as well as their friends. Patsy, Delia, Val and Lucille would pop by the house and catch up with Alex, when they were not working.

Alex’s favourite photo which sits on her bedside table, shows Esther asleep on the floor, with her right arm stretch above her head and her left arm laying down by her side. To Esther’s left lies a
sleeping Alison and to her right, a sleeping William. Both babies are sleeping in the same position as their Mommy.

Throughout the day the babies would sleep in their cots in their shared bedroom, whereas during the nights, their cots would be moved into Esther and Alex’s bedroom. This allowed both parents to keep a watchful eye on the young ones while their children slept. It also allowed the parents to reach their children, when they cried, as they had a habit of waking the other occupants of the house. Alex constantly tells Esther that both William and Alison got loud cries that from her, and their looks from her.

Before the cots were moved into their bedroom, Alex and Esther for the first couple of months after the births would just cuddle and rest. When Alex had healed and felt ready, they would make love before moving the cots into their room. Afterwards the couple would hold each other and talk about their day and how much they are in love with each other. Then Esther would dress and wrap herself in her dressing gown, before heading into the nursery to move the cots. Alex helps by making room within the bedroom for the cots. Once the cots have been positioned within their place, Esther and Alex stand next to the cots and look at their sleeping babies. Both mothers are amazed at how William’s hair is the same shade as his Mommy’s strawberry blonde hair and Alison’s hair is the same shade as her Mama’s sandy blonde hair. Both children take after their Mama in the looks department. After both Esther and Alex are content that their children have settled, the lovers return to their bed and fall asleep holding each other with a smile on their faces.
Chapter 30

Chapter Summary

Glimpse into Patsy and Delia’s life during the pregnancy.

2 months pregnant.

Patsy finished her shift at Nonnatus House and walked into her and Delia’s flat. Patsy slips off her shoes at the door, while she removes her coat and hangs it onto the coat rack. Delia has the day off and as she has been feeling unwell over the last couple of weeks. Patsy is hoping the day’s rest will be just what Delia needs.

Unknown to Patsy, Delia had visited Dr Turner’s surgery the week before, and when the Dr gave Delia the happy news that she is 2 months pregnant. Delia could not have been more happier to hear the news. As Delia headed back to her flat, she had an idea as to how she was going to break the news to Patsy. Delia approached the clothes shop, she pushed the door open and headed towards the baby clothes section. Once Delia located what she wanted, she made her purchase, Delia asked the shop attendant if they could do some embroidering for her on one of the items. Before Delia left the shop, she had arranged to collect the item, this time next week.

Patsy calls, “Delia, I’m home. Where are you?” Patsy walks further into their flat, looking for Delia.

“I’m in the lounge room, Cariad.”

Patsy walks into the lounge room and finds Delia sitting on the couch, reading a book and drinking a cuppa. Delia smiles at Patsy as she walks over to her and sits next to her. Patsy smiles, “How was your day?”

“I had a really great day, I went shopping. I bought you a present.” Delia hands Patsy a small wrapped package. Patsy takes the package and looks at Delia with a questionable look on her face.

“Go on Patsy, open it.” Delia turns to face Patsy. Patsy cautiously opens the card and read what is written inside.

‘Dear Mummy,

Today my Mam found out that I’ve been growing inside her belly for the last 2 months. I can’t wait to meet you. I will see you in 7 months.

Love

Baby Busby Mount xxoo’

Patsy stares at Delia before a smile crawls across her face. Patsy leans in and cups Delia’s face with her hands pulling the Brunette into a passionate kiss and embrace. Patsy pulls back, and she starts to unwrap the little present, which lies on her lap. What she unwraps causes her to laugh, she holds up a little baby’s bib, which has embodied on it ‘Nurse in training.’
“I went and saw Dr Turner on my day off last week, he says that I am about 2 months pregnant. I saw the baby’s bid and asked them if they could do some embroidering. We are going to be parents finally Patsy. I love you so much.” Delia lays her head on Patsy’s shoulder, as Patsy slides her arm around Delia’s waist.

“Oh, Patsy, you have another present that still needs to be opened.” Delia looks down at her button up shirt, her hands start to unbutton her shirt. After 3 buttons have been unbuttoned, Delia looks up at Patsy, who is staring at a very lacy red bra. Patsy licks her lips as Delia picks ups Patsy’s hands, bringing them up to the buttons.

“Are you just going to stare, or are you going to enjoy the rest of your present, Pats?” Delia says seductively. Patsy’s fingers begin to gently unbutton Delia’s shirt, then her skirt to reveal a matching underwear. Once all their clothes have been removed, they make love there on the lounge.

5 months pregnant.

Patsy is lying on her back in bed after a rather gurgling day of working at the clinic. Delia has come into the room, looking very refreshed from her shower. Patsy smiles at Delia. Delia looks at Patsy, “Why are you looking at me like that?”

Patsy says, “You look very gorgeous. I love watching your baby bump growing. Now come and get into bed, next to me.”

Delia climbs into their bed and slides in next to Patsy. Patsy kisses Delia passionately on the lips, the kiss becomes more heated. If there was any trace of either of them being exhausted, it soon disappeared as they began to make love to each other.

Patsy holds Delia in her arms, as they both come back down after their orgasms. Delia rests her head in the crook of Patsy’s neck, she drapes her right arm over Patsy’s stomach. Delia’s baby bump presses against Patsy’s right side. Patsy soon hears the soft snores that Delia makes when she is asleep. Patsy is about to drift off to sleep, when she feels something tickle her right side. Patsy looks at her side and the only thing touching her side, is Delia’s baby bump. Patsy feels the tickling sensation again, so she gently nudges Delia to wake.

“Deels, I can feel our baby moving. What does it feel like?” Patsy smiles as a sleepy Delia wake.

“I thought it was you moving in the bed…. I can feel the baby moving, it feels like a fluttering feeling.” Delia and Patsy have their hands resting on Delia’s baby bump.

A couple of days later, Patsy and Delia are having a date night out at the Silver Buckle. When Patsy is over at the Jukebox selecting a couple of songs for her and Delia to listen to. Delia is sitting at a table when a young gentleman approaches her.

The young man asks, “Hello, I was wondering if I could buy you a cup of coffee?” He stands next to Delia, waiting for a response.

“Thank you for the offer, but I am already here with a friend. She is just picking some songs on the Jukebox.” Delia says as she glances over at Patsy. The young man was not put off, as he took hold of the seat Patsy had been sitting in and pulling it around, so he can sit next to Delia.

Delia pushes her seat back so that her baby bump is showing. “I like a woman with a bit of weight. It just means there is more of you to love.” The young man smiles. Delia places a hand over her
mouth, to hide her smirk. Delia looks over her left shoulder and notices that Patsy is watching and looks as if she is about to blow her top.

Patsy marches over to their table and demands, “Excuse me, I believe you are sitting in my seat. I also thought I heard the lady say she was not interested. I think that it would be best that you leave. And for the record, the young lady is pregnant.”

In hearing that Delia was pregnant, the young man stood up and says, “I am truly sorry for interrupting your evening.”

“Pats, you didn’t have to scare the young man. Although I do like it when you get all protective. Now I would like to go home and reward my Knight in shining armour.” Delia smirks.

7 months pregnant.

Delia is in the kitchen waiting for the kettle to boil, the last week has been rather hard on her and the baby. Both her and Patsy have been working long hours delivering babies and attending to patients within the community. Over the months Delia’s baby bump has grown and in weight. Standing for long periods of time is also becoming more difficult on her back and legs. All she wants is to have a cup of tea, rest in bed and cuddle up with Patsy.

Patsy, Val and Esther had spent the day painting the walls of the nursery a bright shade of yellow. As Delia wants their baby’s room to reflect the morning light as it shines in through the window. Val and Esther had just left to go home, which means Patsy is left to assemble the baby’s cot and change table. Delia stands in the doorway of the nursery with a cup of tea in both hands and smiles. Patsy is wearing blue jeans and a t-shirt, which at that moment has ridden up to expose her abdomen, causing Delia to stare at her lover’s sexy body, while her body begins to stir with desire for her lover’s touch.

Patsy and Trixie catch up on one of their days off and decide to go shopping for clothes. Trixie talks about how she is loving being married to such a wonderful man. During their shopping spree, Patsy’s eye is caught by a window display of newly released baby outfits. She drags Trixie inside and they both swoon over the little outfits.

“Hey Sweetie, I can see your little one dressed in this one. Your baby is going to look so cute.” Trixie says while holding up a light-yellow baby’s button up top. Patsy smiles and reaches for the matching bottoms to make the set.

“I think Delia will just love this colour. Trixie, I just can’t wait till the baby is here. Delia and I have been wanting this baby for so long.” Patsy looks around before whispering into Trixie’s ear. The pair walk out of the shop with several baby clothes, as well as singlets and bibs.

8 months pregnant.

Delia continues to work at Nonnatus House, although she is on light duties, which means she is assigned to answering the phone and when required she maintains the Clinical room. This allows Delia to be off her feet during the day, as her back and legs are taking most of the baby’s weight. Patsy has also noticed that Delia’s breasts have grown larger, requiring a shopping trip to the haberdashery for some new bras. Although Patsy is not complaining about Delia’s increase in her breasts, because when they get home from working at Nonnatus House, Delia is quick to get them
both out of their clothes, so that they can make love or just cuddle on the bed.

One night after a very hard long day working at the Clinic, Patsy and Delia are spooning on the bed. Delia is the small and Patsy is the large spoon. Patsy nuzzles her nose against Delia’s neck while one hand reaches up and takes hold of Delia’s engagement ring, which hangs on her necklace.

“Do you remember when I asked you to Marry me?” Patsy asks.

“Yes, it was the night of the Halloween Scout Lantern night in 1960. We had that fight at ‘The Golden Buckle’ a couple of nights before. After the Lantern parade, we went out for a coffee, before you and I walked back to the Nurse’s Home. While we were walking, you stopped and checked to see if anyone was around, and then you pulled me in close to you and wrapped your arms around my waist. Then you pulled a small box out of your pocket, and opened it, while you declared how much you love me. You asked me to marry you even though the law will not allow it, in the box was this necklace for me to wear it around my neck. I kissed you on the lips and then said, ‘Yes you fool.’” Delia smiles.

“After your accident, I was able to get it back and keep for you to wear, when you came back. I still remember the first night when you came to live at Nonnatus House, we had just made love for the first time since your accident. You looked breathtaking, lying in my arms, with the moonlight radiating off your ring as it nestled against your naked body.” Patsy kisses Delia’s neck and along her shoulder.

Patsy then let’s go of the ring and reaches around to her bedside table. Patsy pulls the draw out and lifts out a box. She then brings the box around in front of Delia. “I know that legally we are not married, but in my heart and mind, I am yours and you are mine. We don’t need a piece of paper to say that we are married, we just need to know it in our hearts and minds…. (Patsy opens the box, to reveal two wedding bands, one large and one small.)” Patsy lifts out the small ring and starts to place it onto Delia’s ring finger on her left hand.

“Delia, with this ring, I thee Wed. With my body, I thee worship.” Patsy smiles. Delia takes the other ring out of the box, then turns to face Patsy.

“Patsy, with this ring, I thee Wed. With my body, I thee worship.” Delia slides the ring onto Patsy’s ring finger on her left hand. They kiss and spend the rest of the night cuddling before falling asleep in each other’s arms.

While Delia is at Nonnatus House, Patsy is continually checking to make sure that Delia is not over working herself and causing strain on herself and the baby. Patsy is becoming more and more protective of Delia and the baby, when they travel to and from Nonnatus House Patsy is constantly looking out to make sure that nothing bumps into Delia. And while they are at home, Patsy insists on doing all the house work and cooking, as she doesn’t want Delia to over do it.

Delia has a visit from her parents, who are frilled at finally becoming Grandparents. It has taken Delia’s mother to come to terms with the nature of her relationship with Patsy. Mrs Busby always loves her daughter and if she wanted to have any kind of relationship with Delia, it meant Mrs Busby would have also accept that Patsy and Delia love each other. Over the years Mrs Busby has seen firsthand the love Patsy feels for her daughter and would do anything for her to ensure Delia’s happiness. Mr Busby has always accepted Patsy and considered the two lovers to be married within their hearts, even if they couldn’t be legally married within the eyes of the law. Patsy and Mr Busby share some time together, while he puts the finishing touches to a rocking chair that he has made specially for their Grandchild. Mr and Mrs Busby stay for a week, but plan to return after the baby’s born, so that they can meet their Grandchild and help the new mother’s with getting
accustomed to their new arrival.
Baby James Busby arrives. Patsy and Delia are delighted to be parents.

It is April of 1967 and Delia is due to give birth to Patsy’s and her baby. The afternoon before Delia goes into labour, she rests on the lounge in their flat. Delia is restless and struggles to find a position in which she is comfortable with, even though she tries several, but to no avail. Her lower back is causing her the most discomfort as she feels an aching and nagging pain which lingers longer than she expects. Frustrated Delia gets up from the lounge and waddles towards the kitchen, hoping that walking will alleviate the pain. She stands next to the stove waiting for the kettle to boil, Delia gets the teapot ready while she waits, when she hears the front door of their flat opening. Delia looks at the clock on the kitchen wall and realises the time, Patsy is finally home. A smile grows across Delia’s face, as she has missed her lover, hearing her voice, kissing her lips and holding Patsy in her arms.

“Hello, Deels I’m home.” Patsy calls out while she takes off her coat and hangs it on the coat rack next to the front door.

“I’m in the kitchen, Pats.” Delia calls out.

Patsy walks towards the kitchen, she leans against the wood panel of the kitchen doorway, she admires a very pregnant and gorgeous Delia. Patsy quietly walks up behind Delia and wraps her arms around Delia’s waist, bringing her hands to rest on Delia’s large baby tummy. Patsy rests her chin on Delia’s right shoulder, before turning her face so that she can kiss Delia’s cheek.

“I’ve missed you Deels. (kiss) How has your day been darling?” Patsy asks, still hugging her lover from behind.

“I’ve missed you too, Pats. I tried having a rest, but my lower back is causing me grief and I feel so uncomfortable. I tried so many different positions, but none worked. So, I thought I would try to make a cup of tea. Do you want one Pats?” Delia turns around to face Patsy, she smiles at Patsy. Patsy lowers her head and kisses Delia on the lips.

“Yes, but you have a seat and I will get the tea for us. Then I will give your lower back a massage.” Patsy steps towards a chair at the kitchen table and pulls it out for Delia to sit on. After Delia has taken a seat, Patsy then moves towards the stove and pours the hot water into the teapot, she allows the tea to brew before she pours them both a cup of tea. Patsy brings the two cups to the table, Patsy places a cup in front of Delia and then sits next to her. Patsy reaches out her free hand and takes Delia’s hand, entwining their fingers together.

After they finished their cup of tea, Patsy stands up and holds out her hand towards Delia. Delia takes hold of Patsy’s outstretched hand and allows her lover to guide her towards their bedroom.

Patsy requests, “Delia, take off your dress and lie on the bed, on your side. I’ll go and get the lavender massage oil from the bathroom.” Patsy watches Delia takes her dress off and then helps Delia with lying in a comfortable position on the bed. Patsy places a small pillow between Delia’s knees. She then exists the room and collects the massage oil from the bathroom before returning to
Delia. Patsy quickly changes out of her uniform into a pair of green slacks and a white button up top.

Patsy climbs onto the bed and pours the lavender massage oil onto her hands. Patsy then gently places her hands onto Delia’s naked back. Delia lets out a moan, Patsy checks, “Are you in pain Deels? I haven’t hurt you?”

“Oh, no and yes. No as in that it’s just been over a week since you and I have made love. I’ve missed your touch, Pats. And yes, my back is causing me grief, that’s all.” Delia looks over her shoulder at Patsy.

“I’m sorry, it’s just been busy at Nonnatus House and by the time I get home, I’m exhausted. I’ve missed making love to you as well. (Patsy leans over Delia’s shoulder and kisses her on the lips) Now let me give you a massage and hopefully relieve some of your discomfort.” Patsy bends down and moves Delia’s brunette hair from her shoulders and kisses Delia’s soft beautiful skin. Delia moans and groans at the touch.

Patsy massages Delia’s back from her shoulders all the way down to the elastic band of Delia’s underwear. Once Patsy reaches Delia’s underwear, she pauses before gently lifting the elastic band and allowing her free hand to roam further south under the cotton underwear. Patsy cups Delia’s bottom and gives it a firm squeeze, while her other hand roams around to Delia’s front and caresses one of Delia’s breasts and hardened nibble. Delia turns slightly so that she can reach her hand around to cup Patsy’s face and pulls her into a heated kiss.

The heated kiss leads to Patsy quickly removing her clothing and the rest of Delia’s. The two women embrace, with Patsy holding Delia from behind. Patsy lifts one of Delia’s leg over her own leg and enters Delia. They make love several times that evening, only stopping to eat and eventually sleep. Delia found that the discomfort she had felt previously during that afternoon was gone, allowing her to sleep wrapped up in Patsy’s arms.

The next morning Patsy wakes early and tries to slip out of bed without waking a sleeping Delia. Patsy thought that she had succeeded until she heard a Delia sleepily says, “And where do you think you’re going? Leaving without even giving me a kiss goodbye?” Patsy lies back on the bed and kisses Delia. Patsy then gets up and dresses for the day.

Before heading off to work for the day, Patsy checks that Delia has everything and is alright with her leaving. With a sense of peace Patsy leaves for her shift at Nonnatus House, knowing that they have arranged for Esther to come and take Delia to the Goldberg house for the day.

“Deels, I will see you later today, at Esther and Alex’s.” Patsy is dressed in her nursing uniform and leans over to kiss a sleepy Delia, who is still in their bed.

“Have a good day. I love you Pats.”

“Remember that Esther is coming to pick you up in about an hour. I love you Deels.” Patsy feels Delia pulling her back into their bed. Patsy kisses Delia while she removes Delia’s hands from around her neck. Patsy then quickly leaves the room before Delia could make her late for work.

“Bye Deels.” Patsy says as she leaves their bedroom.

Esther has the day off and promised Phyllis that she would service her car, while Phyllis borrows their new car for the day. Esther comes around to Patsy and Delia’s flat an hour after Patsy had left for the day.
“Hi, Delia, how are you today? Alex is looking forward to being able to spend the day with you. Are you ready to go?” Esther stands in the hallway waiting for Delia.

“Yes, I’m just a bit slower lately. This baby is rather heavy today. (Delia places her hands under her belly) How are William and Alison?”

“William and Alison are growing every day. I can not believe that it’s been four months already.” Esther comments.

Delia and Esther make their way to the car and Esther helps Delia with sitting in the car. The pair then make their way through the streets of Poplar to the Goldberg house. Esther drives the car into the backyard of the Goldberg house, so that she can work on the car.

Alex comes out the back door and helps Delia out of the car, as Delia is heavily pregnant, she finds it difficult to get out of chairs and seats without some assistance. Esther, Alex and Delia head inside. Esther heads into their bedroom to change into her overalls, so that she can spend the morning working on Phyllis’ car. Alex and Delia head towards the kitchen to prepare them a cup of tea and a cup of coffee for Esther.

Once inside Delia places a hand around to support her lower back, while grimaces from the pain, she experiences. Alex notices the pain upon Delia’s face, “Delia, are you alright? Should I go and get Esther?”

“No, it’s my lower back that’s all. I’ve been having pain ever since yesterday afternoon. Don’t worry Esther, she is busy. And it will hopefully go away soon.” Delia winces in pain.

Alex makes a mental note to keep a close eye on Delia throughout the day. Alex hears her children cooing in their cots. “I think there’s two little people that want to get up. Are you able to carry Alison, while I carry William outside? We can sit in the shade and talk if you like Delia.” Alex and Delia walk towards the nursery

“That would be nice. I would love to hold and carry Alison for you.” Delia and Alex head into the nursery and find William giggling and waving his arms in the air, while Alison coos and kicks her legs.

Esther has the radio playing in the background while she lies under the bonnet of Phyllis’ car, she is working on the car’s engine. Sarah comes out of the back door with Alice and Levi in tow. The children are both dressed in blue overalls with black shirts underneath. Alex, Delia, William and Alison follow Sarah out to the backyard and the women sit and hold the babies in their arms. Delia is holding Alison and Alex holds William, Alex leads them over towards some outdoor furniture and a large umbrella. Sarah and Delia hold Alison and William on their knees as they sit on the chairs, while Alex collected a picnic blanket and places it onto the ground. She then places a couple of toys on the blanket, so that William and Alison can play.

Alice runs over to Esther’s legs, which are sticking out from under the car. Alice tugs on Esther’s legs and Esther wriggles out from under the car.

“Well, look at you and Levi. You look ready to help me with fixing the car.” A grease covered Esther grins at Alice and Levi, who has crawled over to her and Alice.

“Levi and I want to help. We can hand you the tools,” Alice offers.

“Well, then let’s get to work my little grease monkeys.” Esther touches Alice and Levi’s noses with grease covered fingers.
Alice squeals with joy, Levi laughs as he sits next to Esther. Esther lifts Alice and sits her on the side of the bonnet, so that she can look at the engine. Esther then leans down and lifts Levi and sits him next to his sister. Esther stands behind Levi, so that he does not fall, and she can keep an eye on him around the car.

Esther hands Alice a wrench, while pointing to a socket. “Alice use this to loosen this socket for me, please.”

Alice works at loosening the socket and hands back the wrench to her Aunty. Esther hands the wrench to Levi to hold onto, he then places part of the wrench in his mouth, while holding the other part. Esther and Alice laugh, but his mother Sarah is not so impressed and walks over to collect her son.

Sarah hands Esther back the wrench, “Well I hope you don’t turn your children into little grease monkey’s?”

“Alex won’t let me.” Esther pouts while glaring at her lover/wife and children.

“Now Alice, we need to change the spark plugs. I will get the right tool and you can help me.” Esther walks over to her tool box and retrieves the right tool for the job, before returning to the car and Alice. The pair then get to working on the spark plugs.

Delia, Alex and Sarah sit back and watch the interaction between Esther, Alice and Levi. Alex stares and admires being able to sit and look at her lover/wife’s amazing firm and strong arms. Esther is wearing a shirt which reveals her well-toned arm muscles from her nursing and lifting injured soldiers in Vietnam. Alex feels the rush of desire build between her thighs as she watches Esther working and flexing her muscles. If it was not for the fact that there were children, her sister and Delia present, Alex would have jumped Esther’s bones, right there in the backyard.

Esther and Alice are waiting for the car oil to drain, so they walk over to the blanket and sit down. Esther lies down and begins to play with her children. She lifts their little tops and blows raspberries on their bellies. William and Alison squeal with laughter as their Mommy plays with them.

“ESTHER don’t you get my babies all dirty with grease now.” Alex points a finger at Esther.

“There was a day when you used to like it when I got you all dirty.” Esther grins and winks at Alex. Alex blushes.

Throughout the day, Delia becomes more uncomfortable and around lunch, she feels a sharp pain which grips her and stops in her tracks, as she and Alex walks back outside, after lunch. Delia reaches out to Alex and squeezes her friends arm hard. Alex holds onto Delia. Delia bends over holding her belly and screams in pain. Alex and Delia are standing in the hallway.

“Ow, ouch, that hurts.” Delia pants.

“Delia are you…..” Alex is interrupted by Delia yelling out in pain.

“Ow …. Ow” Delia screams.

“Delia, I’m just going outside to get Esther. Here is a chair, sit down and I’ll be right back.” Alex pulls a chair from the dinning room into the hallway. She helps Delia with sitting on the chair. Alex then runs out the back door to Esther in the backyard.
“Esther, you need to come inside. Delia in labour!” Alex yells as she rushes outside to Esther.

Esther moves very quickly out from under the car and inside to Delia’s side. Delia is standing holding tightly to the back of the chair. Esther places a hand to Delia’s arm, just then they hear a ‘pop’ sound and a rush of liquid running down Delia’s legs.

Esther says, “Delia I think your waters have broken. We have better get you into our bedroom and try and make you a bit more comfortable.” Esther gently holds Delia’s hand and looks at Alex.

“Alex, can you go and ring Nonnatus House and inform them, that Delia’s waters have broken. Then can you help Delia….” Delia interrupts Esther.

“Patsy is working the phone shift today…. OW.”

“Well, let Patsy know that Delia’s waters have broken and that we are going to need a midwife to come with her. I will just change and then head out to collect them. Alex can you help Delia get changed out of her wet clothes after you have called.” Esther stands up and walks inside the house to clean herself before returning with two helmets and walks to her motorcycle.

Esther arrives at Nonnatus House within 10 minutes and Patsy is standing outside with Trixie. Esther’s motorcycle has been fitted with a sidecar, so that Alex can travel with her while holding onto their children. Patsy sits in the sidecar and Trixie sits on the bike and holds onto Esther. They quickly drive back to the Goldberg house.

Trixie and Esther set about preparing the bed with newspapers and remake the bed. Patsy holds Delia’s hands as they both walk around the room, trying to relieve some of Delia’s labour pains. Every now and then Delia will bend over from the pains of her contractions. Patsy rubs small circles on Delia’s back and holds her hand while she encourages Delia. Delia squeezes Patsy’s hand tightly during each contraction.

“I will leave you in Trixie’s capable hands, Delia and Patsy. I had a beer with my lunch, so I cannot assist with the delivery. I will be out in the backyard if you need anything, Trixie. Just call out and Alex will come and get me.” Esther says as she exits the room. Trixie smiles as she looks at her friends.

Patsy instructs Delia to breath through her pain. Patsy then helps Delia onto the bed. Patsy climbs onto the bed and sits behind Delia and holds her, while Trixie examines Delia.

“Delia, Sweetie, you’re almost fully dilated. So, with your next contraction, I would like you to not push. I know you want to, but you’re not ready now. Sweetie, you need to focus on your breathing for me.” Trixie sits on the end of the bed.

“Maybe a warm shower will be helpful Delia?” Patsy asks.

“I would like that, I feel all sticky after having my waters braking. Trixie could you could ask Alex for a towel and the use of the shower?” Delia with the help of Patsy, moves to the side of the bed.

“Sure thing. Delia. I’ll be right back.” Trixie exits the room.

“Patsy, help me to stand up.” Delia pleads. Patsy helps Delia with standing.

Trixie returns with a couple of towels, “Alex says that you are quite welcome to use the shower. Let’s help you Delia into the bathroom. I’m quite sure that Patsy will be able to help you with the shower.” Trixie and Patsy walk Delia to the bathroom. Trixie places the towels on the bench, while Patsy starts to run the water. Trixie leaves the bathroom, Patsy undresses out of her uniform and
helps Delia to remove her clothing. They move into the shower, with Patsy standing behind Delia, holding onto her hips, Patsy rubs the soap onto Delia’s back. Delia every now and again verbalises her pain with each contraction. Patsy holds her hand and encourages Delia with her breathing.

After the shower, Trixie hands Patsy some clothes that Alex had picked out for to change into. Patsy dresses in trackpants and a shirt, Patsy helps Delia to dress and then walk back into the bedroom. Trixie indicates for Delia to position herself onto the bed, so that she can examine her.

“That shower has worked. Delia you are now fully dilated. On your next contraction, I am wanting you to push. Grab hold of Patsy’s hand and remember the breathing.” Trixie prepares her instruments next to the towels on the bed.

As Delia experiences her next contraction, she pushes, “Ow, Ow, Ouch.” Delia grabs Patsy’s hands tightly and screams in pain.

“Deels, you are doing great. I am so proud of you. I love you.” Patsy encourages Delia. Patsy plants kisses to Delia’s sweaty cheek.

Patsy grabs a wet cloth that Trixie has handed to her, so that she can wipe the sweat from Delia’s face. Trixie continues to encourage Delia to pant with each push.

“Now Delia, the baby’s head has crowned. It’s important that you don’t push. Even though you have a contraction, you know that by pushing at this moment, you could tear, and we don’t want that. Patsy can you breathe with Delia when she has her next contraction?” Trixie looks at Delia and Patsy. Trixie gives the pair a reassuring smile.

“Delia, I need you to pant.” Patsy starts to pant. Delia copies her.

“Alright Delia, the baby’s shoulders are out now, on your next contraction, I know that you are exhausted, but you need to push with all that you have left.” Trixie says.

“Ow, Ow. Patsy, I can’t do it.” Delia collapses into Patsy’s arms.

Delia pushes with all her might as her body experiences another contraction. Trixie looks up at Patsy and Delia with a grin as she wraps a towel around a new born baby girl. The next thing that Patsy and Delia hear, is the sound of their baby’s cry.

“Deels, do you hear that? That’s our baby. Thank you for giving us a family. I love you.”

Val hands Delia her baby, “Congratulations Delia, you have a healthy baby boy.”

Delia takes her son into her arms and cries tears of joy, as she looks at the little face before her. Delia and Patsy notice the eyes of their son were blue and has brunette hair. Patsy moves from behind Delia, so that she is facing Delia and cradles her son’s head with her hand.

“Patsy met your son, he is so beautiful.” Delia gently hands Patsy their baby boy.

Patsy cries tears of joy and turns to Trixie, “Thank you for bringing our son into the world.”

Trixie say, “It’s an honour. I will need to deliver the afterbirth Delia.”

After the afterbirth was delivered, Trixie leave the little family to have some private time together. Delia and Patsy can not get enough of looking and holding their little bundle of joy. Patsy leans in and kisses Delia, while one of her hands caresses their baby boy’s head.
“So Deels, what are we going to call him?”

“I would like to call him James Emrick. Pats, to us he will be James Emrick Busby-Mount, but to the rest of the world, he will be James Emrick Busby.” A tearful Delia looks at Patsy, who is crying. Delia entwines their hands and fingers together, while bringing their hand up to her lips and plants a kiss onto Patsy’s hand. Patsy and Delia press their heads together, and shed tears, tears of joy.

“Delia, I so wished we could be legally married, then James would have both our last names and he would be legally ours. Thank you, Delia, for carrying and providing our son with a wonderful home for the last 9 months to grow in (Patsy places her hand on Delia’s stomach and caresses it). I love you so much and you look so beautiful.”

Delia looks at Patsy, “I chose James after your father and Emrick after my father. Emrick is Welsh for ‘Immortal’. I love you Patsy.” Patsy kisses Delia as tears fall down her cheeks. Patsy loves that Delia has chosen to name their son after his Grandfather.

James snuggles into her mum’s (Patsy) embrace, while her mam (Delia) looks at her two loves. Patsy grins as James stretches his arms and one of his little hand’s grabs hold of Patsy’s pinkie finger.

There’s a knock on the bedroom door and a voice, “Can I come in?” Patsy gets up off the bed, still holding James in her arms and walks to the bedroom door and opens it. Alex is standing there with her camera in her arms.

“I thought that you would like to capture this moment, to have some photos of your little boy. If that is alright with you?” Alex waits for an answer. Patsy turns around and Delia nods.

“Alex, we would love that, Thank you so much. Please come in and met Mr James Emrick Busby.” Patsy shows Alex her son.

Alex takes several photos of James lying on the bed, she takes photos of Delia holding her James. Alex captures a relaxed Patsy holding James in her hands. Patsy smiles and looks directly at her son. When the photos are eventually developed, this shot becomes Delia’s favourite, as it shows Patsy captured in a moment of joy. Alex then takes photos of the happy little family, Delia holding James with Patsy sitting behind wrapping the pair in her arms.

Esther finally finishes working on Phyllis’ car and offers to drive Patsy, Delia and their baby boy back to their flat.

Later that night Patsy and Delia lie in their own bed cradling their son between them.

“Delia, I want to say thank you for not giving up your dream of having our children. I know that the past years have not always been easy for us as a couple. But you have never given up on your dreams for us. Today you gave me the greatest gift anyone has ever given me, a son, we are a family. I love you so much and what I have here in this bed is all that matters to me. Delia I am going to spend the rest of my life caring for you and our child, you are never going to have to worry about anything.” Patsy sits up and looks at Delia. Delia has tears in her eyes and caresses Patsy’s cheek. They kiss trying to make sure not to wake the sleeping baby boy, who is snuggled in his baby blanket between the couple.

“Patsy, I love you so much, I never thought that I would ever find real love. Then I moved to
Delia and Patsy arrive at Nonnatus House several days later with Baby James. Patsy is beaming with pride as she holds her son in her arms as they walk down the corridor of Nonnatus House. Patsy and Delia have arrived just before lunchtime and everyone has gathered for lunch. Sister Monica Joan spies the happy couple first, she moves towards the couple and embraces them in a hug. Patsy looks down at her sleeping son in her arms, before gently placing the baby into Sister Monica Joan’s arms.

“Nurse Mount, this child is lovely and beautiful. He takes after her mother Nurse Busby, with his brunette hair and blue eyes.” Sister Monica Joan kisses the baby’s forehead, James wakens with a small cry, Sister Monica Joan hums a song which soothes the child. James looks up at the older woman and smiles. The rest of the Sisters and midwives all have their share of cuddles with the baby. Later Sister Julienne, Patsy, Delia and baby James head to Sister Julienne’s office to talk.

“Nurse Busby, you have a beautiful son, you must be so proud?” Sister Julienne says.

“Yes, Sister Julienne, I am so happy that he is finally here and in my arms. I now know how it feels for the mothers, we deliver babies for. The love you feel for your child is so great that all you want is the best for them.” Delia proudly says. Patsy sits next to her holding James in her arms.

“Nurse Mount, no doubt you are just as proud. Over the years I have noticed how close you too are, that there is more just friendship between the two of you. As I have told Nurse Goldberg, if you keep the nature of your relationship private and see to fulfilling your duties as a midwife at Nonnatus House. There is no reason for me to make comment…. Patsy it is evident how much you and Delia love each other. I am happy for the two of you. The two of you have now become a family of three instead of two.” Sister Julienne stands and gives Patsy and Delia hugs.

“Thank you, Sister Julienne, for your understanding and support. We will the nature of our relationship private. That you can count on.” Patsy says.

Mr and Mrs Busby arrive a week after James’ birth and are delighted to finally hold their Grandson. Their visit is only for a week, much to the delight of Delia, who just wants to be alone with Patsy and son. Patsy is grateful to Mrs Busby for helping with the little things around the house, as it gives her more time to care for both Delia and James, her little family. Patsy starts to see as to why Mrs Busby was so protective of Delia all those years ago when Delia had that bike accident. Now that Patsy was a mother, she realised that she would have done the same if she ever had to be in the same position, Mrs Busby was all those years ago. Patsy would move heaven and hell to protect her little family. Mr Busby was pleased to share his name with his Grandson, whom Mr Busby swore was a miniature version of his daughter.

About 3 months later, Patsy spends her day off with Delia and James in the park sharing a picnic lunch with Esther, Alex, William and Alison. The twins are growing and are now more mobile, bringing delight and smiles to their parents. James lies on the picnic blanket in a blue summer short outfit, he kicks his legs and babbles while Patsy lays next to her little boy. Patsy turns and holds her son’s little hand in her own, Delia looks at her loves and whispers to Alex, “Could you take a photo of my loves, they look so gorgeous?”
Alex pulls out her camera and takes photos of Patsy and her son. When these shots were developed and framed, Delia had them sent to her parent’s in Wales, as well as keeping one for the wall in Patsy and Delia’s unit.
Chapter 32

Chapter Summary

A snap shot of life 10 years later. This chapter looks at Esther and Alex.

10 YEARS LATER- Early July 1977

Towards the beginning of 1968. After a lot of consideration and planning The Goldberg gang decided to convert the offices in the second warehouse into apartments to accommodate the various growing families within their inner circle of friends. Simon drew up the plans for the apartments and photography studio. As Alex’s photography studio had become very successful, Simon built her a new and larger studio in the backyard of the second warehouse. The studio was large enough for several photographers to work without interfering in each other’s work. Alex was able to also take on several assistants to man the administration desk as well as run errands. By having another photographer working in the studio, it also allowed Alex the time to look after her growing family, especially when Esther had to work. The entrance to the photography studio was through a gate, which lead to the main street, this also provided privacy to the occupants of the apartments from the public.

On the bottom floor was a five-bedroom apartment, which housed Esther, Alex, William (10), Alison (10), Samuel (4) and Janice (1). On the second floor there was two apartments, one being a four-bedroom apartment and the other was a three-bedroom. The four bedrooms was occupied by Val, Lucille, Monica (5), Vince (2) and Catherine (3 months old). Jonah and Karen Newman and their adopted daughter Carol (3) moved into the other apartment on the second floor. While the third floor was converted into a three-bedroom apartment which housed Simon, Trixie, Paula (8) and Adam (5) and an office for Simon’s business.

This left the Goldberg house with vacant rooms. The rooms which had been used by Esther and Alex’s family, became Sister Monica Joan last home before her death at the age of 100 in 1973 (Sister Monica Joan moved in 1970). Sister Winifred and Sister Julienne continued to work at Nonnatus House with the addition Sister Paul, Sister Ruth and Sister Emmanuel to their order. While Sister Monica Joan was alive and living with the Goldberg’s, she enjoyed being around the different families which made up the Goldberg households, she quickly became Grandmother to all the children. The special relationship between Alice and Sister Monica Joan grew stronger over the years, as Alice would confide in the older woman.

On the second floor of the Goldberg house, John continued to live on his own, as he enjoyed being single and not having to be tied to anyone. The other two rooms on the second floor was turned into a larger room, which was occupied by Uncle Saul and Aunty Phyllis, who had retired from nursing, but still offered advice to the younger nurses over the years. The third floor was still occupied by Joshua, Sarah, Alice (15) and Levi (11). The backyards of the two houses, was turned into one large backyard, where an above ground swimming pool was situated. Along with several garages for the storage of vehicle’s, and an entertainment area, which included a BBQ and seating area.

ESTHER & ALEX

Alex’s photography studio had become successful, that she was able to employ another
photographer and two assistants, to work on the days when she needed to be available to care for her younger children. Samuel’s conception took the couple several tries before eventually being successful. Samuel arrived during the Autumn of 1973, he had been born with Sandy Blonde hair and emerald green eyes. He is a happy baby and is loved by his older siblings, who dote on him.

Janice was a cheeky little girl with strawberry blonde hair and emerald green eyes. Janice takes after Esther in looks and mannerisms, so Alex calls Janice her ‘little mini Esther’. Like all her other siblings, Janice slept in her parent’s room during the night. Both Alison and Janice share a special bond, as Janice would seek out her older sibling as soon as she hears Alison’s voice.

The morning dawns as an exhausted Esther returns home from working her fourth double shift in a row at Nonnatus House. After climbing off her motorcycle, Esther stretches her tired and sore body, by stretching her arms in the air and then bringing them back down behind her back and lifts them, so she can feel her muscles pull and stretch. Esther then brings her arms around to her front, she reaches into her leather jacket pocket and pulls out a packet of cigarettes. Since the birth of her children, Esther has cut down on her smoking and right now, all she wants is to have a smoke, a kiss from her beautiful wife, smiles from her children and then her bed. Esther lights a cigarette and enjoys her smoke, while she looks over the backyard and what needs to be done to bring the backyard to life for the 4th of July Party, which was planned for tomorrow afternoon. Esther finishes her smoke and puts it out then she heads up the back stairs and then along the corridor to her apartment’s front door.

Esther gently opens the front door as it is early in the morning and she does not want to wake up her family. Shoes and her jacket are removed and placed in their special spot, just inside the door. Esther puts her bike helmet onto the side table, next to the bowl they use for all their keys. Esther puts her keys inside the bowl and then starts to head towards her bedroom, but she stops as she hears noises coming from the kitchen. Standing leaning against the doorway to the kitchen, Esther takes in the scene before her, Alex swaying and singing with Janice on her left hip, as she waits for the kettle to boil. Samuel is sitting at the table.

Esther remembers when not long after their first time of sleeping together, Esther found Alex dancing around the kitchen wearing only one of Esther’s button up shirts and nothing more. Esther’s daydream is interrupted by Janice.

Janice spies her Mommy and calls, “Mommy. Kisses.” Janice points to her Mommy. Esther walks over to Alex and plants a kiss on her wife’s right cheek and places her left hand on Alex’s lower back. They walk over to the table to place Janice into the high chair, Esther gives Janice a peck on the cheek. Esther then walks around to Samuel and hugs and kisses her son.

“I’ve missed you Esther.” Alex says.

“I’ve missed you too. Patsy is great company and fun to work with, but I’d rather be home and cuddle up to you, darling.” Esther leans towards Alex and kisses her on the lips. Samuel pouts and starts to bang his little hands on the table.

Esther laughs and turns to her son, “And you want some attention, do you?” Esther starts to tickle Samuel, who starts to laugh.

“How was work? You look exhausted, I’ll make you a cup of tea and some toast. Then it’s off to bed with you.” Alex walks over to the stove and takes the kettle off the boil.

“Work was long and tiring. I am glad that my share of double shifts is over for a while. With Lucille being off after having her third baby, and Delia completing her training to become an educator in nursing. It just means we all must work that much more for the time being. I am so
looking forward to going to bed.” Esther says as she yawns.

After having some breakfast and spending time with her wife and son, Esther heads off to have a shower before going to bed to sleep. Esther was glad that she was not going to be working for the next couple of days and she can sleep the whole day. Alex was going to get William and Alison ready and off to school. Alex had the day free as the other photographer was working in the studio today. Alex woke her other children and reminded them to be quite as their Mom was trying to sleep.

William has grown to be a rather handsome young man, with Strawberry Blonde hair and sapphire blue eyes. Esther and Alex had taught their children to be respectful of others and show genuine concern for the wellbeing of others. William took after his Mom (Esther) in his temperament and mannerisms, whereas he had a real passion for photography. William was tall for a 10-year boy and enjoyed playing sports at school.

Alison also was a tall girl for a 10-year-old, but this did not matter to her friends. Alison’s best friend was Veronica Busby and the pair were inseparable inside and outside school. Alison also had Strawberry Blonde hair, but her eyes were emerald green just like her Mama’s (Alex). Alison is a studious student and enjoyed putting extra time and effort into her school work. Alison also enjoyed being able to spend quality time with her Mom and Mama, where it was just sitting with them on the couch or reading a book to them before her bedtime.

Today Alex had just come back from dropping the twins off at school, Janice was due for her morning nap, so Alex placed her into her cot in their bedroom. Janice was half asleep and before leaving Alex checked that Esther was sleeping soundly. Alex smiled and closed the door and headed back to the kitchen. After making a cup of coffee, Alex settled on the couch to finish reading her book, while Samuel played on the floor with his toy cars. Alex didn’t realise the time until she was interrupted from her reading by the ringing of the phone in the hallway. It was the twin’s school, there had been an incident and she needed to collect the twins. All they would tell Alex was that William had been in a fight and Alison was very upset.

Alex creeps into their bedroom and finds Janice awake and sitting in her cot. “You’re supposed to be sleeping young lady.”

Janice stands in her cot and points at Esther asleep in bed and says, “Mommy sleeping.” Janice pulls out her dummy from her mouth, making a ‘pop’ sound. Alex lifts Janice out of her cot and walks over to their bed and gently sits on the edge of the bed. Janice squirms her way out of her mother’s arms and crawls up towards Esther’s face and places her dummy into her Mommy’s open mouth. Janice then looks at her Mama and giggles, as Alex shakes her head. Alex then reaches over to the bedside table and picks up her camera and takes a photo of Esther sucking on Janice’s dummy and Janice laughing.

“Yes, Mommy is sleeping.” Alex did not want to have to wake Esther, but she has to go and collect William and Alison. From the information given by the school, Alex was unsure if she needed to take William to the hospital.

“Esther, darling you need to wake up. (Esther stirs and opens her eyes and blinks as her vision focuses on the faces of Alex and Janice. Esther realises she has a dummy in her mouth and smiles at Janice.) I am sorry but there’s been an incident at the school and I must collect William and Alison. I will get Sarah to take me and Samuel, but can you look after Janice. She has not had her morning nap, so maybe you two can cuddle and catch up on some more sleep.” Alex waits for Esther to register the information.

“What, are they hurt?” Esther sits up in the bed with a very concerned look on her face.
“All I have been told is that William was in a fight with another boy from his class. The Principal said that William was hurt and might need to go to the hospital…. Alison is also very upset, so I will bring her home as well… And James Busby was also involved, so I guess we will have to face Patsy and Delia.” Esther reaches out and hugs Janice in her arms.

Janice takes her dummy from her Mom and puts it in her mouth and sucking on it, while holding her teddy bear. Alex heads out the bedroom door after giving Esther one more kiss.

Esther looks at her daughter, “Well young lady, we had better get some more sleep. Miss Teddy Bear tells me that she wants to sleep with me.” Esther holds the teddy bear to her ear and then looks at Janice. Janice pouts and grabs Miss Teddy Bear and snuggles into her Mommy’s arm.

“Story first Mommy.” Janice pulls out her dummy, making a ‘pop’ sound.

“OK, then we sleep. There once was ….” Esther starts a story, but before she is even half way through, Janice is fast asleep on her chest, wrapped in her arms. Esther snuggles further down in her bed and falls asleep.

MEANWHILE AT THE SCHOOL….

Upon arriving at the school both Alex and Sarah head into the front office and say, “We are here to collect William and Alison Stream. The Principal called us about William being hurt in a fight.” Alex worries that her son is badly hurt and just wants to hold her son in her arms. Alex is trying to stay calm while they wait, the office lady stated that the Principal wanted to speak to her.

After speaking to the Principal and collecting her children, Alex leaves the school grounds with more steam coming out of her ears, than when she arrived. As soon as William and Alison are safely seating in the backseat of the car and their Mama is seated in the front, Sarah starts the car. Alex instructs Sarah to head towards the hospital, so that William can be seen to by a Doctor. Samuel sits in the middle of his siblings, William is to his right and Alison on his left.

IN THE CAR HEADING TO THE HOSPITAL.

“Will, you have a bobo. Mommy make it good.” Samuel says as he reaches for William’s hand. Samuel looks up at his brother, William turns his head towards Samuel and smiles.

“Yeah, Samuel, Mommy will make it good.” William looks at his bloody torn school shirt and sadly says, “Sorry, Mama for ruining my school shirt.”

“It’s all ok William, I can easily handle a torn shirt, but an injured Son, I am more concerned about. How is your lip?” Alex turns around to look at her children.

“Alison, it’s not your fault. Tony deserved it. He is such an idiot.” William says as he turns to look at Alison.

“William, I will not have you speak like that about anyone.” Alex snaps at her son.

“But it’s the truth Mama. Tony has been calling Alison and myself ‘children whose parents are dyke’s’. And while we were playing hang-man, he chose a four-letter word, which was spelt ‘dyke’. James and I were sick of watching Tony making Alison cry.” William looks out the window.

“Do you know what that word really means William and Alison?” Alex has completely turned around to look directly at William and Alison.
“James Busby told us it means ‘a dam’, but other people use it to describe women who love women. Like you and Mom.” William answers.

“I know that people use it to hurt people. But I know that Mama, you love Mom and she loves you. I was upset because Tony wants to be my special friend, but I don’t like him that way. And he also makes fun of James and his Mum’s.” Alison says as she looks out the window, making sure that no one sees the tears in her eyes. A trait which Alison has inherited from her mom Esther.

Alex’s heart breaks as she listens to her children, both her and Esther have spoken to the twins about the nature of their relationship and how for some people, don’t understand or accept them as being in love. William and Alison have grown up knowing that they are loved by their parents and that was all that mattered to them. Alex was sad that William was learning fast as to how hurtful some people can be towards others. William and Alison have always been caring and understanding children, to them their parents were no different to Paula and Adam’s parents, only that they were two women.

Sarah looks over at her sister and notices that she is crying, Sarah reaches out and holds her sister’s hand. Sarah parks the car in the Hospital carpark and they all enter the emergency department. Sarah finds them all seats, while Alex goes to the Emergency department office window and collects the paperwork to fill out. The little family wait patiently for William’s name to be called. It was close to lunch time and Sarah realised that both Alison, William, Alex and Samuel would need food. Sarah offers to go and get some food and a much-needed coffee for her and Alex. William is seen by the doctor and receives 3 stiches to his lip.

After leaving the Hospital, the journey back home was a very quiet one, as the twins looked out the window, while Samuel slept between them on the backseat. Alex was worrying about how to break the news to Esther. Sarah offers to watch the children for the afternoon, so that Alex and Esther can talk.

BACK HOME.

Upon arriving back at their home, Alex tells the twins to go and change their clothes and then to wait in the kitchen. Alex leaves Sarah to attend to Samuel, while she goes to wake Esther. Alex finds Esther and Janice still in bed, with Esther sleeping, and Janice awake playing with her teddy bear and sucking on her dummy. Alex gently lifts Janice off the bed and heads to the nursey to change her nappy, before heading back to the kitchen. Sarah takes Janice from Alex and places her into the high chair, Sarah then prepares drinks for the children. Alex collects some ice cubes and places them into a tea towel, and hands it to William to place on his eye.

“William, here put this on your eye for a while. I’ll be back, I’ll just go and talk with your Mom.” Alex says.

Alex walks into their bedroom and climbs onto her side of the bed. Alex kneels on the bed and looks at Esther who is sleeping on her back. Alex sits on the heels of her feet for a moment before leaning down and kisses Esther on the lips. Alex then leans back and waits. Esther stirs and as she blinks, Esther realises that Alex kissed her. Esther smiles and sits up in the bed, pulling Alex closer to her and bringing their lips together into a passionate kiss.

Alex looks at her wife, she bites her bottom lip as she thinks about how she is going to tell Esther about William and Alison. Esther knows the look and asks, “What happened at the school? Are the twins ok?”
“William was involved in a fist fight with another boy from his class. From what the Principle told me, the other boy had called Alison and William ‘children whose parents are dyke’s’. James Busby stood up to the other boy and asked the boy to stop being rude and then the boy, said ‘Your parents are dyke’s too, so why should I.’ During recess the playground teacher saw the other boy hitting James Busby to the ground. William then stepped in between the pair and hit the other boy back. The teacher said that she saw William hit the boy with his fist and then the boy hit William back several times before she could stop the fight.” Alex pauses so that Esther can wrap her head around the information.

“The Principal then explained that the school does not allow fighting and that all three boys are at fault. I then reminded the Principal, that the law has been changed and that it is not a crime for a woman or man to love another member of the same sex.” Alex says with anger in her voice.

“The Principal has decided that all three boys will stay home for the next week. The other boy will be moved to another class when he returns.” Alex sighs as Esther reaches out and takes Alex’s hand. Esther brings Alex’s hand to her lips and kisses it.

“How is William? How is Alison?” Esther waits for Alex to talk.

“William has a split bottom lip, he has 3 stitches. Alison is upset and quiet, she hardly spoke on the way to the hospital. This boy that started it all, wants to be Alison’s special friend, but she doesn’t. That’s when the comments started. Sarah has offered to take the kids this afternoon. Before Alison goes, I want us to talk with her. I’m worried about her.” Alex rests her head on Esther’s left shoulder, Esther places her arm around Alex and pulls her in closer to her side. They sit for a while, mainly thinking about Alison and William.

Holding hands, Esther and Alex enter the kitchen. Esther says, “Hi Champ.” Esther places her hand on William’s shoulder and gives it a light squeeze. Esther then walks over to Alison and gives her a hug before taking a seat. After having a drink and chat with the children, Alex and Esther ask Alison to come into the lounge room, while Sarah takes the other children over to the other Goldberg home.

Alison sits in the middle of the lounge, Esther sits on Alison’s right and Alex on her left. “Alison, your Mama has told me that Tony has been nasty to you, and that he wanted to be your special friend.” Esther says.

“I don’t like him like that, Mom.”

“Did you get upset because he used that word?” Alex asks.

“Yes, because the way he used it was to be nasty. He also made fun of James’ Mum’s and I got more upset that Tony was being nasty to James. And now Aunty Patsy and Aunty Delia are going to be angry with me, because James got hurt....” Alison starts to cry and leans into her Mom’s arms.

Esther and Alex look at each other and begin to realise that their little girl has a crush on James Busby and that maybe the feeling is mutual. Alex says, “William told me, while we were waiting for the Doctor, ‘As James and I walked out for recess, he told me that he was going to teach that boy a lesson. James told me that he doesn’t like it when Alison is upset.’”

“Alison, I don’t think your Aunties are going to be angry with you, if anything, I think they will be glad to know that their son has great friends like you and William. They will be happy to know that you care about James and that he cares about you. Would you like to call James and see how he is?” Esther says, while hugging her daughter tightly.
“Can I, William said that James had more blood on his clothes. We saw Aunty Delia and James only briefly at the Hospital, we didn’t get to talk. I would like to hear that he is ok. I really care about James, just like you care about Mama.” Alison sits up and looks at Esther and then at Alex.

“Alright, lets give James a call.” The three of them head out to the phone in the hallway. Alison speaks with James for a bit and then she hangs up the phone. A smile is plastered on Alison’s face as she walks into the kitchen, where her Mom and Mama had gone while she talked on the phone.

“How is James?” Esther and Alex ask.

“He has 3 stitches and a black right eye. Aunty Patsy and Aunty Delia are glad that James has William and me for friends. Can I go to Aunty Sarah’s now?”

“Yes. Have some fun and we will come and collect you all later. Why don’t we go out for some ‘Fish and Chips’ for dinner?” Esther says as she winks at Alison. Alison heads out the door. Esther and Alex breath a sigh of relief.

Alex looks at Esther and stands up and walks over to Esther. Alex then sits on Esther’s lap and pulls Esther into a passionate kiss. They pull apart and press their heads against each other. Esther slips a arm under Alex’s legs, while the other arm supports Alex’s back, Esther then walks Alex bridal style towards their bedroom. Once inside Esther heads to the bed and places Alex gently down onto the bed. Alex sits up and reaches over to her bedside table and opens the drawer and pulls out a harness and dildo. Alex dangles the harness on a finger in front of Esther.

“I’m guessing that you want me to wear it?” Esther asks while wriggling her eyebrows as she starts to remove her clothes.

“I want to feel both your hands on me, while your making love to me. And you can’t do that if one of your hands are busy, now can you?” Alex removes her clothes before lying on her side on the bed. She pats the empty side of the bed while looking at Esther.

“It would be my pleasure to fulfil your desires. I love you so much Alex.” Esther beckons Alex to help her with the harness, by moving a finger as if to say ‘come here’.

Alex helps Esther to position the harness on her hips, while Esther positions the dildo, so that edge which is pressed against her sex, will provide her pleasure as she thrusts the business end of the dildo into Alex.

Esther climbs onto the bed and crawls on her hands and knees up Alex’s naked body. Esther passionately kisses Alex’s lips and then plants kisses along Alex’s neck and down the rest of her body. Once Esther reaches the ‘twins’, she smiles as she takes an erect nipple into her mouth and begins to suck, while a hand caresses the other breast. Alex moans as she begins to feel herself becoming soaking wet between her legs. Esther releases the nipple from her lips and then focuses on the other erect nipple, allowing her hands to begin to wander further down Alex’s thighs. Esther positions her groin so that she is wedged between Alex’s open legs, Esther’s hands grab the side of Alex’s thighs and pulls them so that Alex can wrap them around Esther’s back. Alex continues to moan and groan as she experiences explosions of pleasure throughout her body.

Esther feels the end of the dildo pressing against her own clit and fights back the urge to rush towards her own orgasm. Alex reaches her hands and cups the side of Esther’s face, she pulls Esther so that she can look straight into her lovers’ eyes before kissing her.

“I love you so much.” Alex says as Esther stares directly into her eyes. Esther supports herself on her elbows as she hovers over Alex. Esther kisses Alex. One of Alex’s hand has moved to position...
the dildo, so that it can enter her wet pussy. Esther pushes fully into Alex, so that their bodies touch. At first Esther thrusts into Alex at a slow pace, which causes Alex to moan as her arms wrapped around Esther’s shoulders. As the pace picked up, so did the moans and groans from both women, as they headed towards reaching their orgasms. Within seconds of each other, both women took advantage of an empty house and screamed out in pleasure. Esther looks into her lovers’ face and sees so much love in her eyes. Esther thinks back to their first time and remembers that Alex had the same look in her eyes. Tears form in Esther’s eyes, Alex notices and asks, “Baby, what is wrong?”

“Nothing is wrong, you have that look in your eyes. The look you gave me after we first made love. I can’t believe that after 21 years together and four kids, you still love me as if we’re 18. I love you Alexandra Stream Goldberg.” Esther says as her tears fall. Alex reaches a hand up to stroke the left side of Esther’s face. They share a look of love and understanding.

After they make love, Esther holds Alex in her arms and they talk about the events of the day and how proud they are of their children. They are proud for the fact that their children have shown care for their friend. Although they have always encouraged their children to use their words rather than violence to settle their arguments.

Esther and Alex dress and then head towards the other house to collect their children from Sarah. The Stream-Goldberg family walk to the local café to purchase their ‘Fish and Chips’ dinner. Esther and Alex suggest that they eat their meal down by the docks, so that the children can watch the boats. Then on their way back home, the family stopped to purchase ice lollies. A treat that all the family enjoys, especially Samuel, who will require a bath when they reach their home, as the young boy ends up wearing more than he eats. Esther laughs as she watches Alison feeds Janice her first Ice Lolly, Janice makes a face while she keeps opening and closing her mouth. Janice then smiles as realises she likes the taste. Janice then cries when her sister is slow in giving her more.
Chapter 33

Chapter Summary

A snap shot in the lives of girls-this chapter looks at Patsy and Delia.

Early July 1977
PATSY & DELIA

It is early in the morning and a very tired Patsy makes her way up the stairs to her and Delia’s home in Chelsea. While Patsy opens the front door, the sound of a Harley Davison roars as Esther drives away towards her own home. Patsy is very thankful for her friend’s offer to drop her off at home after their night shift of being on call at Nonnatus House. Their night had been busy with a couple of home births, births which should have been easy but instead were difficult. By the end of the shift Patsy had assisted with bringing into the world two baby boys, each birth had its own problems, one boy was born with his umbilical cord wrapped around his neck and required a trip to The London for monitoring. The other baby boy decided that he wanted to enter the world feet first.

So, when Patsy entered her home that morning, she was very glad to be home, so she could kick off her shoes and grab a nice cup of tea and then head into a nice long shower. Although the thing that Patsy wanted the most to do was to lay her tired and weary eyes onto the face of the woman she loves, Delia. Oh Delia, the love of Patsy’s life, the mother of their three children and the only woman to bring Patsy’s body to heights of orgasms with a simple touch of her hands.

Once Patsy is inside her home, she hears Delia’s voice coming from the nursery, so Patsy assumes that baby Edwin was either awake and being feed or Delia was putting back in his crib, so he could sleep. Patsy heads down the hallway to the nursery and leans against the doorway, she smiles as she sees Delia cradling Edwin in her arms as she sways as she softly sings a Welsh lullaby to the 4-month Red haired baby boy. Patsy quietly walks over to Delia and stands behind her Welsh lover, Patsy snakes her long arms around Delia’s waist, before resting her chin on Delia’s right shoulder.

“Hello, young man. Good morning Delia.” Patsy places a peck on Delia’s right cheek as she looks down at her young baby boy.

“We just finished our morning feed, we had our nappy changed and now we are wanting our morning cuddles from our Mummy.” Delia turns so that she can hand Edwin over to Patsy. Patsy takes her son in her arms and brings him up so that his little head is resting on her left shoulder. Patsy and Delia walk back towards the kitchen, Delia knows that Patsy will be wanting a cup of tea, so she places the kettle on to boil. Patsy sways and holds her son close to her heart, she looks down into Edwin’s sapphire blue eyes. Edwin stretches his arms in the arm while he yawns, he then closes his little fingers into small fists, he then uses his fists to rub his eyes.

“I’ll go and put Edwin in his crib, then I come and have that cuppa.” Patsy takes Edwin to Delia, so she can place a kiss on her little boy’s forehead and rubs a hand through his tuff of red hair. Patsy takes Edwin to his crib, just like with all her children, Patsy rubs the top of Edwin’s head before leaning down to place a kiss on his cheek. Patsy makes sure that Edwin is comfortable and covered with a sheet, as it was warm at this time of the year. Edwin is fast asleep when Patsy closes the nursery door, leaving it ajar, so they can hear Edwin if he cries. Patsy heads back to the kitchen,
she is happy that their other children were still sleeping, as she wanted some quality time alone with Delia.

Delia sits at the kitchen table, sipping on a cup of tea. The children’s lunches have been made and placed into their separate bags, ready for the children to collect and place into their school bags. Delia looks up and notices that Patsy is back, she smiles, and stands up to pour Patsy’s cuppa in Patsy’s favourite cup and then heads to fridge to collect the milk. As Delia reaches into the fridge to collect the milk, Patsy smiles and quietly walks over to Delia and places her hands-on Delia’s hips, pulling the smaller woman closer into Patsy’s groin.

Delia jumps at the touch, she straightens herself and spins around with the bottle of milk in her hands.

“Oh, Pats, you startled me.” Delia moves closer into Patsy and they kiss.

“Mmmmm, now that has made my morning.” Patsy wraps her long arms around Delia’s waist and holds her tight.

“How was your night? You look tired, sit down and I will get you some breakfast, Cariad.” Delia kisses Patsy before heading over to the kettle and pouring Patsy her cuppa. Patsy sits at the table, Delia hands her the cuppa, which Patsy sips while watching Delia move around the kitchen. After all this time together, Patsy is still amazed at how she is turned on by Delia’s body. To Patsy, Delia’s body is more attractive especially after carrying and delivering three children.

“Work was long and tiring.” Patsy says.

Patsy loves how Delia keeps her brunette hair just long enough for it hung just below her shoulders when she has it up in a pony tail. Patsy loves when they are making love, how Delia’s hair cascades down and flows around her shoulders, especially when Delia is on top and riding Patsy’s fingers and when Delia climaxes, she leans down and captures Patsy’s lips and Delia’s hair curtains Patsy’s face and she can breathe in Delia’s fragrance.

Delia turns around and watches Patsy sitting at the table, lost in her thoughts, Delia thinks to herself how Patsy has changed over the years. Patsy still has her looks with a couple more wrinkles and freckles on her face. Patsy still has her luscious red hair although she still needs to dye her hair on a regular basis. Delia walks over to Patsy with their breakfast and after placing the plates onto the table, Delia runs a hand along the back of Patsy’s shoulders and then leans down to capture Patsy’s lips in a passionate kiss. Patsy pushes back her chair and pulls Delia down to sit on her lap, Patsy then wraps her arms around Delia’s waist, Patsy rests her chin on Delia’s shoulder, Delia wraps one arm around Patsy’s shoulder and the other hand snakes its way to cup Patsy’s groin. Delia feels through Patsy’s nylons and underwear is her arousal, which sparks Delia’s own desire.

“I see that you enjoyed your ride on Esther’s Harley, my baby.” Delia lifts the bottom of Patsy’s nurses’ uniform, just above her nickers. Delia feels the outside of Patsy’s undies and finds them to be soaking wet with Patsy’s juices. Delia then slips her hand under Patsy’s undies to feel the wetness between Patsy’s legs.

“Um, Yes.” Patsy moans into Delia’s neck.

“Oh, my poor baby, you must be sooo frustrated. Let me help to relieve you.” Delia kisses Patsy on the lips. Delia’s fingers work their way with Patsy’s clit. And then those skilful fingers find their way inside Patsy, causing her much pleasure.

“Yummmy.” Patsy unbuttons Delia’s top and begins to caress Delia’s very large breasts. Patsy then
brings her head down so that she can take one of Delia’s erect nipple into her mouth and begins to suck, and uses her tongue to flick it, which causes Delia to let out a moan. Patsy takes turns in giving the right amount of attention and care to Delia’s breasts. Patsy reaches a hand into Delia’s underwear to find Delia just as aroused. Patsy rubs and plays with Delia’s clt and uses two fingers to enter her lover’s entrance.

“Oh, Deels, I love youuu sooo much!” Patsy says as her body convulses as she reaches her much needed release. Patsy holds Delia tight against herself as she comes down from her orgasm.

“That’s so much better now, my baby…. Pats, um, I’m going to …. Paaatttssss.” Delia reaches her own orgasm.

“I have to go and wake James and Veronica. Can we talk about this later?” Delia kisses Patsy before standing and heading down the hallway to their children’s bedrooms.

“Yes.” Patsy sits and watches her lover walk away.

Patsy sits and finishes her cuppa, then stands and puts the empty breakfast dishes into the sink.

“MUM” James and Veronica say in unison as they come into the kitchen. Delia follows them close behind.

Patsy hugs her son and daughter before they sit down as a family and have breakfast. When James was born, Patsy made it a routine that no matter how tired she was after working a night shift, she would make the time to spend time with her children at the beginning of their day. Patsy and Delia love their children and marvel at how much James take after Delia in his thoughts and mannerisms, whereas Veronica takes after her mum (Patsy).

Both children have brunette hair and sapphire blue eyes. James is a very active 10-year-old and loves to play sport. He spends most of his free time with his best friend William Stream, you can always find the pair playing a game of one on one basketball or practicing their rugby moves. James is tall for a boy of 10 years. Patsy and James have always been close since his birth, so much so that when James has a problem, he would head to his Mum to talk it through. James has also inherited his parent’s protective nature and will stand up for those whom he loves and cares for.

Veronica takes after her Mum in her mannerism and is very particular about how things are arranged in her bedroom. Veronica also loves to join her Mum in the cleaning duties around the house. When Veronica was born Delia was the parent to whom Veronica bonded with and have shared a special bond with ever since. Veronica’s hair is brunette and wavy, she likes to keep her hair shoulder length, as she prefers it to be easy to manage. Like her parent’s Veronica has inherited bright sapphire blue eyes and a killer smile with dimples.

Ever since the day when the British Government changed the law, relating to homosexual relationships being illegal in 1967. Patsy and Delia decided that they would be open with their children regarding the nature of their relationship. With the change of the law, Delia and Patsy were able to walk down the streets of Poplar holding each other’s hands, while Patsy pushed a pram with either James or Veronica inside. When the children were old enough to understand, Patsy and Delia sat them down and discussed the nature of their relationship and how some people still do not understand and will be nasty. Patsy and Delia have always stressed that violence would not change people’s minds and that James and Veronica should use their words instead.

Delia’s parents would visit at least once a month for the first couple of the children’s lives. Delia’s mam loved her grandchildren and when Delia, Patsy and the children visited them in Wales, Delia’s mam would be heard bragging about her Grandchildren to her friends. Veronica had a
connection with her Grandma as they both loved to cook. James connected with his Grandad, who would show James how to fix things and they both discussed sports. As the children grew, both Patsy and Delia found it easier to travel to Wales to visit, rather than for her parents to travel as they were getting older and the journey would tire her parents. Patsy had purchased a car for her family and this made the trips to Wales easier for all parties.

After Delia took James and Veronica off to school, Patsy headed off to have a shower and then climb into bed to sleep. Delia takes James, Veronica to school, while she pushes Edwin in the pram. Delia then heads back home after she collects a couple of things at the shop. Patsy hopes that Delia will climb into bed with her, even to just to cwtsh and catch up on sleep when she returns. Patsy was fast asleep when Delia and Edwin return home, Delia feeds Edwin, then changes his nappy, before wheeling his crib into their bedroom, so that Edwin can sleep while she and Patsy catch up on some much-needed sleep. Edwin coos as he lies on his back and kicks his long legs, Delia thinks that her son is going to be rather tall, like his Mum.

Delia slips off her summer dress and hangs it over the love seat in the corner of the room and walks over to the dresser and pulls out a summer nightie. After removing her bra and slipping on the nightie, Delia slips under the sheet on her side of the queen size bed. Patsy is sleeping on her back, Delia lays on her right side so that she is facing Patsy, she then rests her head on Patsy’s chest. When Patsy feels the extra weight on her chest, she moves her left arm and pulls Delia in close to her body. Delia snuggles in and soon falls asleep being held in the arms of ‘the love of her life’, with their baby boy sleeping nearby.

A couple of hours later, Delia is woken by the sound of the phone ringing in the hallway of their home. Delia sits up and checks to make sure that Patsy is still sleeping, which she is. Delia quickly climbs out of the bed to answer the phone. It is the School and they want her to come and collect James, as there had been an incident and he was hurt. Delia can feel her heart beating faster and her palms starting to sweat. Delia realises that she is not going to be able to drive in this state and that she needs to wake Patsy. Delia sighs and collects her thoughts before heading back into her bedroom. She runs into their bedroom and sits on the edge of the bed, Delia reaches out and strokes Patsy’s hair, hoping this will stir Patsy from her slumber. Patsy begins to stir at Delia’s touch, and smiles at her Welsh love.

“Pats, we have to go and collect James from School. There has been an incident and he is hurt.” Delia says with a quake in her voice. Delia goes to Edwin’s crib and lifts him out, Edwin grumbles as he is disturbed from his sleep. Delia changes Edwin’s nappy and lays him on their bed.

Patsy sits bolt up right in the bed, her eyes wide open. She throws the bedsheet off her body and she jumps out of the bed. Both Patsy and Delia dress and head out the door to their car. Patsy places Edwin into his basinet and secures it safely on the back seat of the car. Patsy drives to the School, she glances over at Delia and reaches out her left hand and takes Delia’s hand in hers. Delia squeezes Patsy’s hand, they travel in silence as they worry about their son.

AT THE SCHOOL

Patsy and Delia arrive at the School and met the Principal.

“Miss Busby, I am sorry that we have to meet under these circumstances. James has been involved in a fist fight and sustained a split lip and black right eye. It appears that during recess, James and another boy got into a fight and William Stream joined in to support James.” The Principal stops and allows the two women to comprehend what he had just told them.
“What was the fight over? And I don’t believe that James would start a fight?” Delia asks as tears stream down her face.

“From what I have been able to find out, the other boy started the fight by antagonising James by saying nasty things about Alison Stream parents and yourselves. I have decided that all boys will be made to stay home for the rest of the week. William and James can return to class a week Monday. I have also decided that the other boy will be moved into another class, to prevent any other incidents from occurring. I have informed Miss Stream about the incident, she is on her way to collect her son. The other boys’ parents have been informed and have already collected their son. Do you have any other questions for me?” The Principal sat back in his chair and rested his elbows on the arms of the chair.

There was a knock on the door and the Principal said, “Come in.”

The door opens and there stands James in his torn and bloody school shirt. James was holding a handkerchief filled with ice to his lip. Delia and Patsy turn around and when they see their son, Delia quickly gets up out of the chair and rushes to James side and hugs him. Delia reaches out her hand and gently pulled the handkerchief from James’ lip, what she saw made her angry. “James has a slip lip and a black eye! Where has your Sick bay nurses been trained?” She turns around to face the Principal, Patsy stops Delia from tearing the Principal to shreds.

“Delia, I think it might be best that we take James to the Hospital to be checked.” Patsy stands up and walks over to Delia, she places a gentle hand to Delia’s left arm, while she looks down at James.

ON THE WAY TO THE HOSPITAL

On the way to the hospital James tells his Mum and Mam, “Tony has been tormenting Alison and William about their mum’s relationship for the past couple of weeks. We had to play a game of Hangman at our table and when it was Tony’s turn, he had drawn four lines. After the word was spelt, it read ‘dyke’. Tony then looked straight at Alison and laughed, as she started to cry.” James looks at his brother in the basinet and holds his hand, while Patsy drives. Delia looks at her son with tears in her eyes.

“I then told Tony to be quiet, but he just looked at me and said, ‘Your parents are dyke’s, so why should I?’ On our way out to recess, I said to William that I was going to teach Tony a lesson. I punched him first…. I know Mam that I am supposed to use my words, but when I saw Alison so upset, it made me so mad.” James holds his handkerchief to his lip.

Patsy and Delia share a look of concern between them. They soon reach The London and after parking the car, they head to the emergency department, with Patsy holding Edwin in her arms. After James was seen to by the Doctor, Delia and James come out to the waiting area and notice Alex, Sarah, William, Alison and Samuel waiting to be seen. William also had a split lip, James told his Mam that William had stepped in and stood up for James.

BACK AT HOME

Once Patsy, Delia, James and Edwin have returned home, James heads to his room to drop off his School bag and to change out of his clothes. Delia takes Edwin and feeds her son, before joining Patsy in the kitchen. Patsy, Delia and Edwin wait for James, Patsy pours three glasses of cold Iced Tea, as James comes in, sporting 3 stitches on his bottom lip and a black right eye. James holds ice wrapped in a cloth to his eye.
“James, you said that you got mad because you saw how upset Alison was. Do you like her?” Delia asks.

“Mam, Tony asked Alison to be his special friend, and she told him ‘No’. I want to be her special friend. I like her the same way you like Mum.” James says before taking a sip of his ice-cold drink.

“What do you like about Alison?” Patsy asks while holding Delia’s hand.

“Mum, I love how she smiles, my heart jumps when I see her smile. Alison always knows how to make me laugh and she always makes sure I have the right pencils at School.” James says shyly.

“Mam and Mum, do you think that I could take Alison some flowers tomorrow, when we go to the Goldberg’s 4th of July Party? It wouldn’t be too much?” James asks.

“No, James I think it would be lovely. I think some bright colours would be nice. But Roses are out, just for the moment, I think you are just too young for those just now. We will pick the flowers on the way.” Patsy says as she rests a hand on her son’s shoulder.

“And maybe you could make her a card to go with the flowers. I know that some girls like to be wooed with flowers and cards.” Delia smiles as she and Patsy share a knowing look between them. Edwin sits on Delia’s lap and coos at his family around the table.

Patsy and Delia smile and give James a hug to reassure him that they love him. James asks, “Can I go to my room, I want to have a lay down.”

“Yes, go ahead, just keep that ice pack on your eye. I’ll come in later and check on you. I love you son.” Patsy says as she places a kiss to her son’s head.

Later that night after the children had gone to bed, Patsy checks on Veronica, James and Edwin before heading towards her and Delia’s bedroom. Once reaching the doorway, Patsy finds Delia lounging on their bed, wearing a sexy teddy which just covers her lady parts. Patsy closes the door behind her and stands and stares at her lovely lover.

“Well Cariad, I’ve been waiting for you. Come to bed and help me to remove this.” Delia points to the ribbon just covering her breasts. Patsy swallows the lump in her throat, while she begins to remove her own clothes. Patsy heads to the bed and climbs up next to Delia.

Patsy kisses Delia passionately as her hands roam over Delia’s body. After carrying two children, Delia’s breasts had grown larger, which Patsy loves as there is more breasts for her to caress and suck. Delia breaks their kissing, “Pats, you know that James takes after me in the romantic stakes.”

Patsy looks at Delia with a curious look, “How do mean?”

“Cariad, do you not remember how we first got together?” Delia looks at Patsy while stroking Patsy’s arm.

“I remember, we had been friends for a year, and we had gone to the pictures that night. While watching the picture, I could not take my eyes off you, as you looked gorgeous in that dress you were wearing. Then you brushed the back of your hand against mine, I thought I was going to explode from the joy it caused me to feel.” Patsy says, between placing kisses along Delia’s collarbone. Delia lets out a small moan.

“We walked back to the Nurses home and we got caught in the rain, so we ran inside, and I pulled
you into my bedroom. Once inside and when the door was closed, you looked so beautiful with your hair all wet, and all I wanted to do right then was to kiss you so bad. That was why I pushed you back against the door and cupped your face in my hands and kissed you. I felt so alive once I had kissed you.” Delia says while she runs her hands through Patsy’s hair.

Patsy removes Delia’s teddy and reveals Delia’s naked body. Patsy is filled with desire and takes a nipple into her mouth, while caressing the other breast with her hand. Delia releases a moan and then a plea, “Pats, please, I need you to touch me, I need you to fill me, I want you Cariad.”

“Well when you put it that way, then I must fulfil your needs then darling.” Patsy’s hand snakes itself to touch Delia’s clit and she caresses the pleasure spot. Then she pushes two fingers between Delia’s folds and thrusts them in and out, until Delia reached her orgasm. Patsy knew that Delia was not far as Delia’s muscles squeezed around Patsy’s fingers. Delia whispered Patsy’s name as she climaxed. Patsy peppered Delia’s lips with small kisses and then one long passionate kiss.

Delia rolls Patsy over onto her back, so that she can return the favour. Delia has Patsy experiencing pleasure like she has never known before. Oh, how she loves this Welsh woman of hers. After seeing to fulfilling Patsy’s needs, they dress so that if their children come in, they are dressed. Patsy holds Delia so that Delia can rest her head on her chest with Patsy’s arm wrapped around Delia’s back. They fall asleep knowing that their children are safe in their beds.
Chapter 34

Chapter Summary

A snapshot into the lives of the girls 10 years later. This chapter looks at Val & Lucille.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Early July 1977
VAL & LUCILLE

Val and Lucille’s apartment had been set up so that when you entered through the front door, you found yourself standing in a small hallway with a door on your left, leading into the kitchen and a door on your right lead to the lounge room and dining room. The hallway continued down towards the four-bedrooms, two bathrooms and laundry. One side of the hallway wall is decorated with numerous photo frames. These photo frames are filled with photos of Val and Lucille’s three children, Monica, Vince and Catherine. All the photos show the children at different ages with either one of their parents. When you entered through the front door, you knew that this was a place full of love and understanding, where you felt welcomed and accepted.

Lucille and Val’s bedroom naturally being the largest of the bedrooms, when entered you would find a Queen size wooden based four post bed located in the middle of the room, with a large window behind the bed. On both sides of the bed were wooden bed side tables, on Lucille’s side was a lamp and a photo framed picture of Val seated holding a newly born Vince and Monica standing next to her Mom. Val’s wooden bed side table also housed a matching lamp to Lucille’s, an alarm clock and a photo framed picture of Lucille, Monica and toddler Vince. Just inside the bedroom door to your left is a double dresser and a double door wardrobe. On the right side of the room is a love seat, where Lucille and Val would sit, cuddle and talk after a long day. Another couple of items of furniture within their bedroom include a rocking chair and a cot.

Monica and Vince’s bedrooms were decorated to showcase the different tastes of the children. Monica loves to read and has a small bookcase which rests on the left side of her purple painted bedroom wall. On the right side of her room is her bed and between the bookcase and bed, is a desk, which lies on top of it is writing paper and colour pencils strewn over the desk, tucked under the desk is a wooden chair for Monica to use. On the desk is also a lamp, which sits next to her bed, with a book open at the part that Monica had finished reading. A dresser sits against the bedroom door wall (on the left) and the other side is where the wardrobe sits.

Vince’s bedroom has green painted walls, his room is set up the same as Monica’s but instead of a bookshelf, Vince has an area where he can paint and draw. Even though he is a toddler, Vince clearly has a gift for art. As his drawings and paintings lined the wall of the family lounge room and Sister Julienne’s office at Nonnatus House. Both Val and Lucille have always encouraged their children to follow their dreams.

The last bedroom is set up as the nursery, with light yellow painted walls. Within the room is a change table, a cot and a dresser. In the corner of the nursery is a small four leg table which has resting on top of it, a lamp and a small book. Next to the table is a rocking chair and several stuffed
toys. Resting against the far wall, is a closet which houses, Catherine’s clothes as well as her blankets. Catherine sleeps in the nursery during the day, while during the evenings and nights, she sleeps in with Val and Lucille.

Lucille rests on the lounge, she reads while her older children play on the rug on the floor next to her. Monica plays with their dolls and laughs at something her small brother has done with his toy truck. Meanwhile Catherine is in the nursery, she begins to stir after her sleep and starts to cry, just to let her Muma know that she is awake and hungry. Lucille heads down to the nursery and smiles at her daughter as she bends over the side of the cot and lifts the crying baby up and into her arms.

“Shh, Catherine, Muma here. Are you hungry my little one?” Lucille says as she grabs a burping cloth and walks out of the nursery towards the lounge room. Lucille sits on the lounge and using the burping cloth, she covers her breasts, as she situates Catherine, so the grizzling baby can be breastfed.

Lucille looks at her children and remembers the times when her and Val first discussed having children. During a night of love making in their new apartment, Val was holding Lucille in her arms, while Lucille rested her head on Val’s naked chest.

Val asked, “Lucille, have you ever thought about us having children?”

“Yes, I have always wanted to have at least 2 or 3 children. I never thought that women like us could, but after getting to know Esther and Alex, I now see that it can be a possibility. Do you want children?” Lucille lifts her head and looks up at Val, Lucille places a hand on Val’s chest.

“I want to have children with you. Remember when Delia announced that her and Patsy were going to be parents. And we met up with them later that night and Delia explained how John assisted with providing the sperm. We could ask him to help us? That’s if you want to carry?” Val smiles as she lifts Lucille’s chin so that she can kiss her lips.

Monica, Vince and Catherine take after their Muma (Lucille) with their looks and hair. John assisted with the suppling of the much-needed sperm, while Lucille carried the babies. Val (Ma) provided Lucille with all the support and reassurance throughout all the pregnancies.

Lucille found each pregnancy to be different, with Monica she experienced morning sickness for the first trimester, she also experienced she craved sweet foods. Monica’s birth was long and lasted for 24 hours. Patsy assisted with the delivery and Val was able to be present throughout the birth. Val and Lucille cried as they held their much longed for daughter and chosen her name after Sister Monica Joan. Sister Monica Joan held a special place in the hearts of both Lucille and Val. For Val, Sister Monica Joan had been present and assisted with her own birth. Sister Monica Joan held a special place in Lucille’s heart as the par shared a common interest in all things Keats.

After moving into their new home, Lucille had written to her parents to inform them of her change of address. Her parents came to visit and soon discovered the true nature of Lucille and Val’s relationship. After her parents returned home, they sent a letter which indicated that they still loved their daughter, but as for her sexuality, it was best that it was kept secret. So, when Lucille informed her parents of the arrival of their first Grandchild, it came as a shock to Lucille when she received a letter from her parents, saying that she was no longer their daughter and that they had no grandchild. Naturally it hurt Lucille deeply and she was sad and cried for weeks. Val comforted her throughout this period of their life together. After a couple of months of grieving, Lucille realised that she needed to focus on her family, the family that she shared with Val.
Vince’s conception and birth proved to be a difficult time for Lucille. As she continued to work as a midwife during the first and second trimesters, Lucille found one delivery to cause her to rethink about bringing another child into the world. Lucille had been called out to a home birth and when she arrived the expectant mother, refused to allow Lucille to attend to delivering her child, as the mother considered Lucille to be incompetent. After making a call to Nonnatus House, Nurse Goldberg was sent to assist Lucille. Even with both Nurse’s present, the expectant mother continued to refuse their services, as she regarded them to be ‘sick’ women who loved other women.

Nurse Goldberg tells the mother, “In that case, I will call for an ambulance to come and collect you. They can take you to The London and you can have your baby there. By the way I will not have you speak about my college in such a demeaning way.” Esther says before she heads towards the phone to call for an ambulance. But the expectant mother soon realises that she had better allow the nurses to assist with the birth, and not have to travel all the way into The London.

Later that night, while lying in their bed, Lucille cries as she rests in Val’s arms. Val has always been an attentive lover both in and outside the bedroom. Val reassures Lucille that they have longed to have children and they love them so much. Val held Lucille throughout that night and planted small and tender kisses to Lucille’s forehead. Val repeated what Delia had said years before while Patsy was away in Hong Kong, ‘No one can really choose who they fall in love with.’ Val and Lucille knew that their children would be of mixed colour, but they both were determined that their children would know that the colour of their skin didn’t matter, what was inside was what counted. And that they are loved wholeheartedly by both their Muma and Ma.

Val walks into the lounge room holding a bunch of flowers and hands them to Lucille. Lucille stays on the lounge as Catherine has not yet finish feeding. Val sits next to Lucille and pulls Lucille into a strong and passionate kiss. Val rests her head on Lucille’s shoulder and looks at her children playing on the floor. After a short time Val moves off the lounge and over to her daughter and son, planting a kiss to the top of their heads.

“How have my babies been today?” Val sits down to play with her children.

“Ma, you promised to bring us candy if we were good for Muma. Vince and I have been very good. Catherine even went down for her nap.” Monica says as she climbs into her Ma’s lap. Monica searches her Ma’s midwives’ uniform pockets for candy.

Val laughs as she reaches into the left pocket and pulls out two lollipops. She hands them to Monica and Vince, who quickly pop the candy into their mouths. “Thank you, Ma.” Monica and Vince give their Ma a kiss on the cheek.

Catherine has finished her feed and Lucille places her onto her left shoulder and rubs the little girl’s back. After a short while, Catherine lets out a very loud burp.

“Ma, Cath, let out a big piggy.” Vince says as he laughs.

“Yes, Vince, she sure did. I had better take her and go and change her.” Val says as she stands up and walks over to Lucille. Val reaches and gently picks up Catherine in her hands.

“Hello, my precious one. Are you needing a change?” Val holds her close to her chest and rubs small circles on the little girl’s back. Val kisses her daughter’s head, “I love you my little one.”

Val then heads back down towards the nursery and changes Catherine’s dirty nappy. Catherine lies
on the change table and waves her little arms and legs in the air, while she smiles at her Ma. Val says, “Are you ready for the tickle monster, little one?”

Val lifts Catherine’s singlet up to reveal her tummy, and then Val leans down and blows raspberries on Catherine’s tummy. Catherine laughs and her little hands grab hold of Val’s brunette hair and pulls it hard. Even though it hurts, Val loves that her daughter is happy. Soon Lucille comes to the door of the nursery and says, “When you two are finished playing with the tickle monster, there is a cup of coffee waiting for Ma in the kitchen.”

“Well Catherine, I think it’s time we finished up here.” Val picks Catherine up and carries her in her arms towards the kitchen.

After having their cup of coffee, Val says, “I’m going to go and have a shower, and then I will take over with Catherine.” Val heads out of the lounge room and down towards their bedroom. She collects her clothes and takes herself into the bathroom.

After her shower, Val comes into the lounge room and takes Catherine from Lucille. The little baby girl coos as she is cradled in her Ma’s arms. Val sits on the lounge next to Lucille and looks at her other children playing on the floor and sucking on their lollipops. Monica turns and faces her parents and stops playing and pulls out of her mouth the last of her lollipop.

“Muma and Ma, when did you know you love love each other?” Monica sits on her knees looking at her parents.

“Monica, what do you mean by love love?” Lucille asks.

“Parents who live together love love each other. That’s what Alice says.” Monica says.

Val and Lucille look at each other and then at their daughter. “I first started to fall in love with your Muma, the first time I saw her. Your Muma was late in arriving to start work at Nonnatus House. It was the worst Winter we ever had, and it was late at night, when your Muma finally arrived. I fell in love with her smile. But I didn’t tell your Muma that I love love her until 3 years later.” Val says as she moves Catherine to rest her little head on Val’s shoulder. Val then reaches out and holds Lucille’s hand.

“I started to fall in love with your Ma, when she patched up my cut knee. I had fallen over just before arriving at Nonnatus House. Your Ma was so gentle with me as she attended to my knee and later making sure that I felt at home. Your Ma and I told each other that we love love each other, when we were away on a holiday by the sea. Your Ma, kissed me on the beach.” Lucille smiles as Val lifts their entwined hands to her lips and kisses the back of Lucille’s hand.

Vince has been listening to his parents talking about how they fell in love. His tummy begins to grumble, Val hears and says, “I think we had better get some dinner. What do you say we treat ourselves to some Hot Chips and some Fish Cakes?”

“Yes, please Ma.” Monica and Vince jump up and down joyfully. Lucille smiles. Catherine has fallen asleep and drooled on Val’s shoulder.

“I’ll go and put Catherine down to sleep. Val why don’t you take Monica. Vince can stay with me, we can make cookies while your out.” Lucille gently takes Catherine into her arms and walks towards the nursery.

“Alright Monica, go and get your shoes and then we can go.” Val helps Monica with tying up her shoe laces.
“Ma, can I have the piggy tail sausage?” Vince asks.

“Yes, you can have a piggy tail sausage, it’s called a Cumberland Sausage.” Val smiles as she takes Monica’s hand and they head out to the Chip shop.

Lucille and Vince make cookies and decorate them with red, white and blue stars. The door opens and the smell of hot chips, fish cakes and a Cumberland Sausage hits Vince’s nose and he runs to help bring in the food to the kitchen. After all the food has been dished up, the little family sit around the kitchen table and eat their meal. Val takes Lucille’s hand and leans over to kiss Lucille on the cheek. Val looks at her family and her heart is filled with love.

“Thank you, Lucille, for giving us this family. I love you so much.” Val looks at Lucille and notices the tears in her Jamaican lover’s eyes. Val places her hands-on Lucille’s cheeks and wipes away the tears that have fallen.

“I love you to Val.” Lucille leans over and kisses Val. They go back to eating their meal. Afterwards Val takes her children and begins to run their bath. Lucille comes in to the bathroom holding their pyjama’s. Catherine can be heard cooing and Lucille goes and picks her up out of her cot. Lucille returns with Catherine and after the children have been bathed, Catherine is given a bath and changed into her night clothes. Val dresses her children and takes them to their beds. Val begins to read to Monica from her book of Nursey Rhymes, after she finishes, Val kisses her daughter goodnight. Val then reads to Vince and tucks him in, then plants a goodnight kiss to his forehead. Lucille comes in to Monica and Vince and says goodnight to them both, while she holds Catherine in her arms.

Lucille joins Val in their bedroom and places Catherine in her cot, next to her side of the bed. Val then leans over the side of the cot and kisses her daughter goodnight. Lucille pulls back the covers of their bed and starts to change into her own nightie, while Val sits on the edge of the bed and watches.

“Are you enjoying the show?” Lucille smirks as she walks over to Val and straddles her waist.

Val just wraps her arms around Lucille’s waist and pulls her closer to her chest. They fall back onto the bed and kiss each other passionately. Soon Val has Lucille undressed and lying naked on the bed and the kisses that Val places to Lucille’s skin, provoke moans to escape from Lucille’s lips. Lucille sits up and says, “I think your too overdressed. Why don’t you correct that, Val?” Val removes her clothes and returns to pleasing Lucille. They make love several times that night, only stopping to attend to Catherine when she wakes.

Chapter End Notes

Always enjoy to hear your comments on the story. Please leave me a comment.
Chapter 35

Chapter Summary

A snapshot into the lives of the girls 10 later. This chapter looks at Trixie & Simon.

Early July 1977
TRIXIE & SIMON

Life for Trixie and Simon before their children arrived on the scene, was one of travel to places such as Paris and New York. Mainly so that Simon could expand his architect skills by learning from other experienced architects, but also so that Trixie could partake in the various new fashions available. As Trixie loved to keep track of the latest clothing styles, Simon made sure that Trixie was included in his travel plans, as well as providing her with enough funds to make purchases when she desired.

Both Trixie and Simon desired to have children of their own, after becoming Auntie and Uncle to Esther & Alex’s children, as well as Patsy & Delia’s children. About half way through their second year of marriage, Trixie and Simon were lying in bed one night. Trixie rested her head on Simon’s bare chest after a session of making love, when she said, “Simon, I’m worried that we will never have children.”

“Why do you say that?” Simon looks over at Trixie.

“We have been trying for the past 6 months and I am still not pregnant…. It’s just that Esther and Alex; Patsy and Delia were all pregnant after their first try…. I.” Trixie says before she starts to cry and bury her head into the crook of Simon’s chest.

“Shh, Trixie it’s alright…. I’ll let you in on a secret, it took Esther and Alex over 8 months to fall pregnant with the twins. And John told me that it took Patsy and Delia a couple of times as well. Trixie, I love you no matter if we have children or not. We can try when ever we want, unlike Esther and Alex; Patsy and Delia.” Simon gently rubs the small of Trixie’s naked back while he planted small kisses to her forehead.

“I’m just worried that it will never happen for us. I so much want to give birth to our children, to give us a family.” Trixie leans on her elbows so that she can look Simon in the face. Simon looks back at her with a grin on his face.

“Well, Mrs Smith I think that you are overthinking too much and that we should just get down to having some fun while we try for a baby. Now come here I do believe that I have the cure for the very thing that ails you.” Simon winks at Trixie before he rolls her naked body so that she is lying on top of him. Trixie smiles back at Simon as she straddles his waist and positions herself, ready to take his hard cock into her.

They were to discover later that night they conceived their first child and would be due April 1969.

Sarah’s pregnancy was a challenge for Trixie as she started to question her abilities to be a good mother to her child. Trixie’s feared that her own experience of poor parental role model, would cause her to make the same poor choices her parents made, regarding her upbringing. Phyllis as
usual reassured Trixie that she has been making the right choices for her and her children, ever since Trixie started to face her alcoholism. By choosing to be sober, Trixie had changed the course of direction her life was to follow, thus making her a very good role model for her unborn child. With the support from her husband and friends, Trixie’s self confidence grew and blossomed throughout her pregnancy.

With Simon’s architect business being run from his office next their home, Simon was close at hand when Trixie went into labour with Sarah. Patsy and Phyllis were called at Nonnatus House and assisted with the delivery. As Phyllis had been such a support to Trixie not only throughout her pregnancy, but also with Trixie’s Alcoholism, Simon and Trixie named their daughter, Sarah Phyllis Smith. Phyllis was shocked and touched that the couple thought so highly of her, not only as a colleague, but also as a friend and a parent.

Three years after Sarah’s birth, Trixie and Simon welcomed into the world, their son Adam Saul Smith. As Saul has been a father figure throughout Simon’s life. Both Sarah and Adam took after their mother with bright blue eyes and blonde hair. Although Adam had a mischievous streak and was known to be rather naughty when he chose to be. And it was not uncommon for ‘ADAM SAUL SMITH’ to be heard coming from Trixie and Simon’s home.

One time when Adam was about 2 years old, Trixie had already given Sarah her bath and it was Adam’s turn. So, Trixie was able to get the young boy undressed and out of his clothes, and when she lifted Adam into the bath, he kicked and splashed so much that Trixie’s clothes were soaked through. Adam ran out of the bathroom, screaming “NO, NO” with Trixie close behind.

“ADAM SAUL SMITH, you get back here now.” Trixie said loudly to her son as they stood at opposite ends of the hallway.

“NOPE.” Adam said, as he stood with his hands on his hips. Just at this moment, Simon walked in through the front door. Simon could see what was happening and quietly walked up behind Adam and lifted the young boy up and back towards the bathroom.

“NO, the bath monster goin to get me. Daddy help me.” Adam tries to wiggle his way out of his father’s hold.

“The bath monster?” Simon quizzes Adam.

“Yes, the bath monster.” Adam points at Trixie.

“How about I help with bath time? I can make sure that the bath monster, stays away.” Simon says as he lowers Adam in the bathroom.

“Yes, Daddy, you protect me.” Adam clings to his father’s legs, as he peers around them at Trixie. Trixie laughs as her son is too cute to be angry at. Trixie knows that she loves her little family.

About a year after Adam’s birth, Trixie decided that she would further her own education as a Nurse, so that she could provide training to new upcoming nurses in the Nurse’s College. Simon supported Trixie and happily took on the role of ‘Home Dad’ while Trixie studied and worked at Nonnatus House. With her new training and years of experience of midwifery, Trixie secured a position at the Nurse’s College. Trixie’s self confidence had always been secure in her abilities as a nurse, but with this new aspect of her life, Trixie realised just how far she had come in her own life. From being a woman trained in nursing and midwifery to be a wife, mother and now a mentor to others.
Trixie and her daughter Sarah, on a Saturday would spend the day, shopping and exploring the latest fashions. Sarah is rather close to her mother, whereas Adam loved to spend time with his father, going to different sporting events, such as watching the local soccer club.

Simon was able to turn a shed into a backyard gym, where he would teach all the boys in their little community, how to box and take care of themselves. Simon made sure that the boys understood that violence is not the solution, and that boxing was only to be used as a way of defending themselves.

Simon arrives home after picking up their children from school as he returned from a worksite near their school. The children run through the door and place their school bags in their rooms and change out of their school clothes and dress in play clothes. Trixie who is 5 months pregnant, waits for her little family in the kitchen, she prepares for Sarah and Adam some cool drinks and snacks.

“Hello, my sweetie’s. How was school? How was work?” Trixie says, while she starts to pour Sarah and Adam a cool drink, as they start to dig into the biscuits that are set out on a plate on the table. Simon kisses Trixie’s forehead as he walks over to make her and himself a cup of coffee.

“It was ok, James and William were in a fight during recess.” Adam replied after having a sip of his drink.

“What!” Trixie and Simon sit around the kitchen table.

“James had a fight with another boy and then William got involved.” Sarah says, she holds her cool drink in her left hand while she holds a biscuit in her right.

“I’ll ring Patsy and Esther later to find out how the boys are.” Trixie says. Simon takes Trixie’s hand in his and looks at Trixie.

Later that night after talking with Patsy and Esther, Trixie checks on her own children in their beds. As she places kisses to their cheeks and tucks them in, Trixie smiles as she remembers back to when she was so worried that her and Simon would never have children, and now she has a daughter and a son with another on the way.
Chapter 36

Chapter Summary

A snap shot into the lives of the girls 10 later. This chapter looks at Saul & Phyllis.

Early July 1977
Saul & Phyllis
The last ten years for Saul and Phyllis have been filled with semi-retirement for Phyllis. This allowed Phyllis and Saul to take time to travel throughout Spain each year during the Winter months. As the couple have started to find the winter months in England, over the years to be that bit more unbearable, so they would travel and enjoy the warmer winter temperatures of Spain.

Even though Phyllis has cut back on her work load at Nonnatus House, the midwives and Nun’s enjoyed Phyllis’ input and advice on all nursing matters. Phyllis could always be counted on to assist with filling in on the roster and especially Clinic days, which were always busy for all the midwives. Now that Delia and Lucille now being taking time away from their duties, to care for their new born children, Phyllis has stepped up to the challenge of assisting with Mother’s as they give birth at home. Phyllis is grateful that her husband has been able to secure her a new car to use, as her previous car was now no longer in use. Phyllis has always been a very fit woman and has taken great care of her health, so it is no surprise that she is still able to climb the numerous stairs to various mother’s homes.

Apart from their working life, the couple enjoy the company of their 15 Grandchildren, 6 of which are blood related to Saul, but as Phyllis says, “Blood does not always make you part of a family.” For Saul and Phyllis, they love each Grandchild with the same amount of love and affection. All the children are spoilt by Phyllis and Saul, so that when the children return to their parents, it’s the parents who must face the fall out, especially when they must confront spoilt children behaviours, such as refusing to eat their meal, as they had a special treat at Grandma and Grandpa’s place. The older children learn over the years how to appreciate their Grandparents and the various gifts they receive from their travels. The younger children don’t always understand why when they are with Grandma and Grandpa, they are allowed, but when they go home, their parent’s say ‘No’. There a lot of tears and tantrums from both children and parents.

Although Phyllis and Saul treat all their Grandchildren the same, Trixie’s children hold a special place in the older couple’s hearts. Over the years, Phyllis and Trixie’s relationship has blossomed from co-workers to close and dear friends. Phyllis has supported Trixie through her drinking problem and Trixie’s need to attend her Alcoholics Anonymous meetings over the years. Phyllis is proud of all her ‘Daughters’, but she is so proud of Trixie’s triumphs over her drinking habit, and views this as a sign of Trixie’s inner strength and determination.

When Trixie told Phyllis that she wanted to give back to Nursing, by taking on further training to become an instructor at the Nursing College, Phyllis gave Trixie a hug and encouragement to achieve her goal. Phyllis and Saul along with everyone else attended Trixie’s graduation day. Phyllis and Saul are always happy to mind different Grandchild, so that their parents can either go out on a ‘date night’ or in the case of Delia & Patsy, and Lucille & Val, so that they can work different shifts and not have to worry about their children. Delia and Patsy’s children enjoy their time at Grandma and Grandpa Goldberg’s place, because there are always their cousins to play
with. Val and Lucille’s children love Grandpa Goldberg as he always has lollies for them. Grandma Goldberg has lots of different books that she reads to them and lets Monica and Vince hold the book, as she reads it to them. Catherine likes to reach for Phyllis’ glasses, but is yet to be successful. Catherine giggles when Grandpa Saul kisses her on the cheek, as he has grown a moustache, causing Catherine’s laughter.

Phyllis and Saul have filled their flat with various souvenirs from their travels. Their favour is a painting of a Spanish country side scene. Phyllis was drawn to the painting, while they were shopping in a Spanish country town market on year on their travels. The painting dictated a tranquil Spanish country scene, with meadows and a single rural building. The artist used bright oil paints to show how the sunlight brought the meadow and the animals in the fields to life. Whenever Vince visits Phyllis, the small boy always stares at the painting while he eats his biscuits. Vince loves to look at the different paintings which grace the walls of his Grampa and GramMa (Jamaican for Grandfather and Grandmother).

Patsy and Delia’s children also spend time with their Grandma and Grandpa Goldberg at least once a week. The home of Saul and Phyllis is a favourite for the children of the Phyllis’ Midwives girls. Phyllis takes great pride in watching the children of her girls, as they grow from being new born babies to young girls and boys.

Saul still loves to spend time with his favourite Niece, as they meet every week, and talk over a couple of whiskey’s and cigars. Esther for the past couple of years, had made the choice to give up smoking and reduce her drinking. So, when she spends time with her Uncle once a week, she returns home to Alex slightly drunk and very handsy in the bedroom. Ever since Samuel could talk, he would run to Alex and tell her that his ‘Mommy walk and talk funny’, when Esther returns home on these nights. Alex then knows that she is going to be in for it as Esther will be wanting to ‘get it on’. The night before the Fourth of July BBQ, Uncle Saul and Esther share a couple of Whiskey’s and cigars, as they discuss the events of the day.
Chapter 37

Chapter Summary

The Fourth of July Party

Esther wakes to the sound of Janice crying from her cot in their bedroom. Esther lets Alex get some extra sleep, being that the two women were very active, seeing to satisfying each other’s sexual needs. Esther climbs out of their bed, trying to not wake her lover as she sleeps. Esther quickly gets dressed in a pair of shorts and a t shirt, as she knows that she will be getting dressed in her Army uniform later in the morning.

Janice pulls herself up by holding onto the rails of her cot, her dummy lies discarded on the mattress near her little feet. Janice uses one hand to rub her eyes, while the other holds the side of her cot, she looks over at her mother’s bed. When Janice notices that her Mommy has gotten out of bed and coming over towards her, the little girl raises her cubby arms into the air, releasing little sobs as tears run down her cheeks. Janice is still learning how to balance on her little legs and begins to wobble. Esther reaches into the cot to pick up Janice and brings her close to her chest, as she tries to soothe her daughter, but rubbing small circle shapes on the small of the little girls back.

“There, there my little girl. Mommy has you now, what do you say we go and get you a bottle.” Esther says while walking out of her bedroom and down towards the kitchen.

“Bot bot.” Janice says as she reaches one of her chubby arms up to tap the side of her Mom’s face.

“Yes, Janice, we are going to get you a bot bot, then a bath, a fresh nappy and then some clothes.” Esther enters the kitchen and places Janice into her high chair. Esther hands Janice her little teddy bear that she plays with while she waits for her bottle. The strawberry haired teddy bear is scruffy now, but when Esther first was given it, the bear was wearing an army uniform and cap. Alex had purchased the bear for Esther, as she said it reminded Alex of Esther, her very own Army Teddy Bear.

Esther then moves over to the cupboard and pulls out Janice’s baby formula and starts to make Janice’s bottle, before placing the kettle onto boil. Esther then moves over to another cupboard and pulls out her coffee mug and places a spoonful of coffee into the mug. Esther turns around and looks at her daughter and wonders where has the time gone. She remembers the day when Alex sat Esther down on the side of their bed and told Esther the happy news that they were to become parents again. Esther is pulled from her thoughts by the squealing of the boiling kettle. Esther turns around and takes the kettle of the stove and begins to pour water into her mug. Esther then pours some hot water into a jug, which Janice’s bottle is resting. Esther allows the water to heat up Janice’s bottle, while she collects the milk for her coffee. While waiting for the bottle to heat, Esther looks outside the kitchen window and takes a sip of her coffee.

“Mama.” Janice calls out, as she looks up from playing with her ‘Mummy bear’. Esther turns around and notices Alex dressed in her dressing gown and leaning against the kitchen doorframe. Alex smiles at her two girls before moving towards Janice and plants a kiss on top of her head. Alex then walks and stands in front of Esther, Alex reaches out her hands and places them around Esther’s waist. Alex leans in and gives Esther a kiss before resting her head on Esther’s chest. Esther always loves spending moments like this with her wife and children, she lives for moments...
such as these.

Soon Janice’s bottle is ready and once she has it, the little girl is drinking away and playing with her ‘Mummy bear’. As Janice is drinking, Esther and Alex take the chance to sit down at the table and spend some quality time with their youngest daughter. It is not long before the women hear several other little footsteps coming up the hallway towards the kitchen.

“Mommy and Mama.” William, Alison and Samuel all say in unison, as they enter the kitchen. Janice giggles as she sees her other siblings. Alison walks over and picks Janice up and cuddles her in her arms. Esther and Alex kiss the foreheads of all their children as they walk around the kitchen, the pair begin to prepare their children’s breakfast. They all sit around the kitchen table and enjoy each other’s company.

Esther asks, “How is your lip? Do you have any pain this morning, William?”

“No, Mom.” William says.

“You will tell your Mama, if you have any pain, while I’m away this morning. Your Mama can give you some pain relief.” Esther says while taking a sip of her coffee.

Alison has Janice sitting on her lap, while William helps Samuel with buttering his toast and Esther leaning back in her chair drinking her coffee. Alex watches the scene around the table and thinks to herself, ‘How did I ever get to be so lucky?’ Alex stands up and walks over to plant a passionate kiss on Esther’s lips.

After breakfast has been tired up and the children went about attending to their morning routines, Esther baths Janice before dressing her daughter. Alex comes into their bedroom and takes Janice out into the lounge room and places her into the playpen. Alex then heads back down towards the bathroom, where Esther has started the shower. Alex sits on the side of the bath, while Esther has a shower.

“What time do you think you will be back this afternoon?” Alex inquires.

“I should be back about 4pm. I promise to not be late. Hopefully this year, there won’t be any dramas at the club.” Esther says while she washes her hair. Esther pops her head out so that she can look at her lover, as she winks. “Then I’m all yours, to have your evil and sexy way with, that’s if you’re not…” Esther is interrupted by Alex’s kiss to her lips.

Alex starts to blush, even after all these years, Esther still has the power to make Alex desire her lover. On the day of their Fourth of July party day, Esther volunteers at a Returned Servicemen’s clinic for Veterans. Esther dresses in her Army Nurse’s uniform while Alex watches with desire building within her legs for her lover. Alex has a soft spot for the uniform, as it shows off Esther’s well-defined arms and legs. Alex keeps herself from wanting to rip Esther’s clothes off her and then have her way with her lover in their bathroom, but she controls herself for later that evening.

Esther says goodbye to her children as she heads out the door to her Harley Davison motorcycle. Alex starts to prepare the food for the afternoon, while William and Alison head out into the backyard to help with the setting up of the decorations. Samuel and Janice play in the lounge room, as Alex worked on the food in the kitchen. Alex stops when she hears Janice begin to cry from the lounge room, indicating that she is hungry and due for her nap. As Alex prepares Janice’s bottle, Samuel walks into the kitchen and tugs on her dress.

“Mama, can I have food to? I’m hungry.” Samuel asks.
“Yes, my little man. What would you like to eat? Would you like some chips or some crackers and cheese?” Alex says while feeling the temperature of Janice’s bottle.

Samuel stands and thinks for a little while, as he places his thumb and first finger on his chin and rubs it with them. “I would like crackers and cheese, please Mama.” Samuel pulls a chair to the fridge and opens the door. Samuel then pulls out from inside the fridge, the cheese and then turns around to place it onto the table. Alex watches and smiles at how much her little boy has grown, while she reaches up into the cupboard to locate the crackers. Soon both younger Goldberg children are feed and are resting in their beds.

Meanwhile outside the backyard is being decorated for the Fourth of July party, which was to occur that afternoon. Esther and Alex’s older children were showing Trixie’s Sarah and Adam were to place the streamers. Joshua, Simon, Jonah and John oversaw the heavier items required for the party, such as the locating of the Barbeque and sound system. William was given the responsibility of overseeing the music for the festivities, as he also took after his mother and uncle in his love for music. Alison helped with the setting up of the food tables with the help of her Aunt Sarah and Aunt Lucille.

Alice had arrived home from her Saturday morning job at the local grocery store in Poplar and was happy to watch and play with Lucille and Val’s children along with Carol. Alice loved being an older sister to not only her brother Levi, but to the other children who she called her cousins. Levi oversaw making sure that the pool was clean and free from any leaves which may have fallen into the water. The backyard started to take shape for the party, with tables and chairs for people to sit and eat at, there was even an area set up for the babies to rest, while their parents mingled.

Soon it was time for the party to start, and the guests which were Patsy, Delia and their children, along with all the other members of the Goldberg household, including Alex, Samuel, Janice, Jonah, Karen, John, Grandpa Saul and Grandma Phyllis. The only person that was still to arrive was Esther.

Patsy, Delia, James, Veronica and Edwin arrived and were greeted by a very cheeky Samuel and Vince at the bottom of the back steps to the backyard. The two little boys were always up to mischief when they were together, and today was no exception. Samuel and Vince sprayed James and Veronica with water from their water guns, before running away, with Veronica close behind in chase of the two. Baby Edwin was due for his afternoon nap and was grizzly while Patsy held him in her arms. Delia took her son from Patsy, so that the redhead could retrieve his pram from their vehicle. Once Patsy had the pram set up under the shade of the large tree in the backyard, Delia placed Edwin down for his nap. Patsy took control of gently pushing the pram, until Edwin had fallen asleep.

Meanwhile James stood close to his Mam and held a pink flower in his hands. James was nervous to approach Alison, but with some words of encouragement from his Mam (Delia), James made his way over to Alison. “Alison, I wanted to give you this flower. Um, I, um (James runs a shaking hand through his hair, while he looked at Alison), wanted to say that I like you and that I’m sorry about you getting upset yesterday.”

Alison smiles as she reaches out and takes the flower from James. “Thank you for the flower and for standing up for me yesterday. I like you too James.” Alison leans in and gives James a peck on his cheek. James lifts his head and looks directly into Alison’s eyes and the largest grin appears upon his face. Alison asks, “Would you like to get a drink and something to eat?” She holds out her hand and waits for James to take hold of it with his. They head off towards the food and drink table, before joining up with the other older children.
Alex watched from a distance as her oldest daughter accepted her first flower from a suitor, Alex’s heart swelled with pride that her daughter had no only received her first flower, but that she had a part in raising such a wonderful girl. Alex walked over to Patsy and Delia, who also had been watching the interaction between the young ones. Alex is holding Janice in her arms, when she says, “Did what I just saw happen? Should Esther and I be worried?” Janice starts to get fidgety in her arms as the little girl tries to wiggle her way out of her mother’s grip. Alex places Janice onto a rug that she had placed down earlier.

Patsy smirks, “Yes, Delia’s son just gave your daughter a flower.”

“What do you mean, My son? I’ll have you know Patsy Mount, that James Busby is very much both our son.” Delia says with determination in her voice and her hands on her hips.

Patsy laughs, “It’s just that he takes after you, when approaching girls, if I remember correctly.” Patsy raises her eyebrows at Delia.

“Patsy, I made the first move on you all those years ago, because I was sick of waiting for you. I wanted to kiss and do a lot more things with you, and I had been waiting for a year, for you to make a move. I say that it’s good that James goes after what he wants. And Alex, you and Esther don’t have to worry. I think that sort of thing will be a long way off. James told us last night that he likes Alison and he wanted to get her a flower. I would be worried if they were older” Delia says as she walks to stand in front of Patsy. Delia reaches up and plays with the hem of Patsy’s shirt collar, before leaning up and kissing Patsy.

Patsy and Delia pull away from their kiss and turn to look at Alex. Patsy looks at Delia, “I was just scared that you didn’t feel the same. I am glad that you did kiss me all those years ago, or we would not have any home or kids.”

“It’s lucky that Esther was not here to see, knowing her, she would have asked James as to what his intentions were towards her daughter. And that it is something that I am not ready for just yet.” Alex says before Patsy, Delia and she bust out in laughter, at the thought of Esther giving poor James the ‘What to expect when dating my daughter’ talk.

The party is in full swing, with the Barbeque going and food being cooked by the men, while the women and children enjoyed themselves. William was in his element as he manned the music for the party. Just about 4 o’clock there was a revving noise coming from outside the backyard gate. Alex looked over to the gate and then around the backyard, in search of her son Samuel and then Janice, as she knew that the noise was Esther returning. The younger children of Esther and Alex loved their Mom’s motorcycle and that if given the chance, Samuel would run to his Mom and raise his arms in the air to be picked up and given a ride. Janice loved the sound the motorcycle made and would turn her hands into fists and roll them, so that they looked like she was driving a motorcycle, while making raspberry noises.

Esther opened the gate and made sure that there were no children around before riding the bike inside. When she saw Samuel running towards her, she knew that he would want a ride, so when he reached her, Esther leant down and lifted her son onto her bike, sitting the little boy in front of her, so that he could hold onto the handlebars. She rode the bike into the garage and parked it. Samuel then ran out of the garage and up to his Mama. Samuel tugged on her jeans and said, “Mommy, smelly bad. She stinky, Mama. She needs bath. You give her bath.” Samuel then runs off to join his cousins and siblings.

Alex longingly looked at her wife and was reminded of how she felt the day Esther returned from Vietnam, when she was pregnant with the twins. That uniform was such a turn on and when Esther wore it, Alex wanted to have her way with her wife. Alex knew that she was going to have to take a
Esther is taking her time in walking over to Alex and is unsteady on her feet as she walks. Alex groans and rolls her eyes. She knows that Esther has had a couple of Whiskey’s and been smoking cigars. Since the birth of the twins, Esther had made a choice to cut down on her drinking, so when she did drink, even a small amount, it would be enough to make her tipsy. Esther eventually made her way over to Alex, smiling as she snaked her arms around Alex’s waist and leant in for a kiss. Alex played along and kissed Esther back, then Esther said, “How’s my sexyyyy baby?”

“Samuel says, that you stink and that I should give you a bath and that I should give you one. Come with me you.” Alex says in a sexy voice as she begins to walk towards the house. Alex turns and using her pointer finger, she wiggles it as if to say, ‘come with me’. On the way inside, Alex asks Val to keep an eye on a sleeping Janice. Esther eagerly follows her wife inside and is very willing to have that bath if Alex joined her.

Half an hour later, a freshly cleaned and changed Esther and Alex return to the party. Alex makes her way over to join Lucille and Delia, as they watch their infant children in their prams. Lucille asks Alex, “What is it about our loves that makes us crazy with desire for them so much?”

Delia thinks about her answer, while Alex says, “For me, it’s the uniform. When Esther wears it, oh boy, I’m a goner.”

Delia says, “For me, it’s a combination of things, Patsy’s voice and red hair. When Patsy comes up behind me and hugs me, and whispers in my ear, I go weak in the knees.”

Lucille smiles as she thinks about her answer and then starts to blush, “It’s Val’s hands and especially her fingers, if you know what I mean.” All three women smirk as they look over at their women, who are sitting and talking.

Joshua announces about 8 o’clock that they were going to set off the fireworks, so that if the parents with young babies could head inside and watch from the door. All the younger and older children gathered around the male adults near the back fence. Each child was given a sparkler to hold and play with while the men lit the fireworks. As the fireworks lit the night sky, Esther and Alex stood together holding Janice in their arms, while they watched Samuel with his older brother, drawing in the air with their sparklers. Once their sparklers had fizzed out, William collected some more and they both were playing again. The sight brought such delight to Esther’s heart, after all that she had been through in her life, she never thought that she would be so happy and content. She owed all that she had to the woman standing beside her, Alex the love of her life and in that moment, Esther understood what it meant ‘You complete my world.’

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