

Nights That Are Silver

A Novel

By
Amy Rewolinski

Chapter 1

In the beginning ... they were together.

Two babies, both born on the same day; one in the morning and one in the late afternoon. They were both born in the same state, and in the same city, in the same hospital. At night, for one brief night, they were placed side by side in their hospital cribs, the nurses excitedly watching over them when they realized that their breathing was exactly in sync. They breathed in and out, and in and out.

As fictional as it may sound, it is true.

The day after his birth, Aaron Thomas Harper was taken away in his mother's loving arms, his father being extremely overprotective as he carefully drove the car home, six miles away from the hospital. Aaron was taken with his parents to live in a small and modest home that had been awaiting his arrival for close to seven months.

He was the Harper's first child, but he wasn't the last.

Aaron's birth was one of joy. He was brought into the world by not only his parents and doctor and nurses, but extended family was there as well. The moment his arrival was announced, cheers went up and cigars were passed. After that, his whole life was watched over in excitement, as each new day brought joy and light to so many people.

Emily Marie Dylan, the other child born that day, has a story that is vastly different from Aaron's. She was the one born in the afternoon, when the sun was just beginning to fade into the sky, giving the clouds a rose colored look. When the outside light coming into the hospital room was beginning to vanish, giving out a shadow to each person there for that one brief moment before the hospital evening lights are turned on.

Emily's birth was one that was later talked about as a sad story between the nurses. Her mother, Marie Dylan, was only 16 years old when she gave birth to Emily. She had been in labor for close to 10 hours on that fateful day. As many labors can become, Marie's was especially hard. The agony was so extreme that by the time Emily's head was beginning to crown, Marie was screaming at the top of her lungs.

"One more push, Marie! You can do it, come on! Push!" The doctor encouraged, his hands on her upper thighs.

Marie stopped a moment, felt fire on and within her pelvic area, and took a deep breath. She looked around the room, seeing the doctor and the two nurses; one by the doctor holding a receiving blanket, and the other at her side wiping the sweat off Marie's face. As she stared about her, Marie suddenly realized how much things had changed. How different she was now, since the year before. For one brief moment in time, she saw herself from above, and for a moment didn't even recognize herself.

With a wild scream, Marie pushed like she never had pushed before. She felt the extreme pain begin to leave her body as her daughter slowly slipped out ... out ... out of her, and into the doctor's well-trained arms. Instantly Marie missed her daughter's presence inside her. Instantly she knew that she was alone.

The baby's cries mixed in with her mother's as the nurses cleaned her. Marie laid her head back on the soaked pillow, feeling exhaustion overtake her as she closed her eyes.

"Would you like to see your daughter?" The nurse asked her a few minutes later, and Marie opened her glazed eyes and stared at the nurse as though she didn't understand the question brought before her.

The nurse raised her eyebrows as she waited for Marie to answer, the small bundle in her arms wiggling slightly, as though to break free.

"Yes," Marie finally answered softly, her eyes beginning to tear. "I need to see her." The nurse smiled softly, a very sad smile, and slowly lowered the child down for Marie to see.

She took in everything. The small and delicate features, the few wisps of black hair, and the tiny fingers that moved busily. And that nose! That nose most assuredly belonged to her father. When she scrunched up her face as though she were going to start crying, Marie was reminded of her sister, who made that same expression.

A tear slipped out of Marie's eye as she was thinking those thoughts, then another and another. Soon she was crying fully, unable to stop.

"Are you all right?" The nurse asked, and Marie nodded.

"I just-" At that moment, before she even had a chance to finish, Marie's wish came true. Slowly, as though she had all the time in the world, Emily's eyes slowly opened. Dark blue eyes, Emily's, met damp brown ones as mother and daughter stared at one another for the first time.

"Can I hold her?" Marie asked, and the nurse was quick to oblige. Carefully she lowered the tiny bundle into the young girl's arms, and watched as Marie talked to her daughter.

She spoke quietly at first, murmuring what the nurse thought were nonsense words. But soon Marie began to talk louder, and everyone there was able to understand what she was telling the newborn baby.

"...and I want you to have a good life, one that is full of happiness and special moments. I want you to have everything that you would ever want! But ... I most especially want you to know that I wouldn't be sending you away if I thought I could give you all these things, because I don't want you to go at all, I really don't! If I thought that I could keep you and make you happy ... if I had any choice at all, it would be to never let you out of

my arms! Believe that...because it's true..." She stopped here, unable to go on, her sobs choking her as she tried to hold her daughter without crushing her.

"I have to take her now." The nurse interrupted gently, and Marie nodded, knowing that that was going to happen eventually. Gently she lowered her head to her daughter and kissed her forehead twice.

"What will you name her?" The kindhearted nurse asked, and for a moment Marie didn't answer as she slowly lost herself in her daughter's eyes once more.

"What will you-" The nurse began again.

"Emily," Marie answered softly, interrupting the nurse. "Her name is Emily Marie." The nurse, Marie will never know her name, smiled and nodded.

"A beautiful name."

"Do you think it's wrong of me to give her my name?"

"Of course not! Marie is a lovely name, you should know that." Marie nodded her head thoughtfully, and then looked down at Emily once more.

"I just wanted to give her something of mine." A pause, then a small intake of breath.

"I love you," she told her softly, and for one brief moment, it seemed as though Emily answered her back with her eyes. The way her eyes closed softly and then opened just as slowly, and the way that Emily stared deeply into Marie's eyes as only a child can do without embarrassment.

With one more kiss and a last squeeze goodbye, Marie quickly handed her back, knowing that she had just made the biggest mistake of her life.

"Take her," she told the nurse. The minute she was out of her arms, Marie turned her body toward the window by her bed and curled herself into a ball, finally letting the exhaustion take over her fully and completely.

Marie's cries mixed in with Emily's as her daughter was taken out of the room and into the nursery, where she would spend the next 11 years moving from home to broken home.

The mother and child wailed as they were separated. The woman in the next room listened intently as she nursed her newborn son, at the wails that echoed from down the hall.

“Why is that girl crying?” She asked her nurse, and Sara Hampton, a heavy woman in her early 40’s with hair dyed red, didn’t look at her as she responded quickly while trying to make a bed.

“Adoption. The child is only 16 years-old, and she’s giving her baby up for adoption.” Helen Harper gasped softly as she heard that, and then held her son tightly in her arms.

“That’s sad.” She told the nurse with feeling, and when the nurse had left, she looked down to her son and stared into his eyes as she tried to imagine ever giving him up.

“I could never do that, Aaron,” She told him softly as he gently laid across her chest. She leaned down and gently kissed the top of his head, in that special spot babies have.

“I would never give you up.”

~

After hearing these two stories, after comparing them side-by-side, you have to admit how different we are as people. Lives that are so vastly different that soon entwine themselves together as the years go by.

Who could ever have imagined that these two babies would some day grow up and find each other, by accident no less? Who could ever have thought that the world wasn’t big enough to keep the two apart?

After all these years, I still have to admit. We are so lucky sometimes to find one another. In everyone’s life there come so many obstacles that must be figured out, and choices that must be decided, and sometimes everything depends on whether or not the right choice is made.

Aaron and Emily are not exactly unique when it came to the situations and choices that they themselves had to encounter. But the way that they choose to overcome those complications, and the way that the choices they made eventually brought them to the same place...why, it’s damn near impossible to have planned it. Only something bigger than ourselves, a higher power, could have done that, and in so perfect a way.

Aaron and Emily were meant for each other, and because of that nothing that they did, nor anything that came in their way, could have kept them apart. Their story was meant to be told because it offers hope to everyone ... because it teaches us lessons that we might never have learned otherwise ... because it shows the world how simple, and yet how completely complicated it all is ... to find one another.