

## Chapter 48

Another hot day came, but not like all the others. There was a fresh breeze coming from the southern side of the planet bringing the smell of the ocean with it. Yaz took off her shoes, a hot stone warming the soles of her feet as she walked through the rows of unusual trees and trumpet flowers. She palmed her stomach and sat on one of the benches. Her eye caught a glimpse of a small lizard running between the stones. Murmur of people from the nearby market traveled through the air and for moments it felt as though they were right there next to her. She tilted her head back soaking in the sun as it bathed her face.

Gentle hands stroked down the sides of her face and she smiled as the smell of the ocean was replaced by the mint, beeswax and engine oil and soft lips pressed on hers. She opened her eyes with a smile and saw a pair of hazel eyes smiling back at her, hovering from behind her and fingers gliding over the curve of her belly.

"Ready to go?" she asked.

"Whenever you are" Doctor smiled and pressed her lips to her forehead. She closed her eyes again and leaned her back on her favorite rainbows.

"Mmmm...might be snowing home."

"Might be..."

"I hate the heat...but I do love the sun."

"I can always move us to spring" she smiled.

"So, when the baby is born...how will I know if she's born in June or December" she giggled.

"She was conceived in August by Earth calendar...so she will be born in August a year later Yaz"

"Right..." she frowned "Why was this so complicated in my mind then?" She giggled.

"Dunno Yaz...it's quite simple in mine" she replied smug.

Yaz burst out laughing then sat up opening her eyes "Right...I suppose we should go...shoes" she lifted her arm dangling her sandals.

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"Doctor" Sonya said "So what happens now with the machine we've built?"

Doctor walked around the console preparing Tardis for departure twisting and turning stuff and flipping her switches "It will slowly switch off Sonya, but it will take about two years for that to happen."

"And what if something goes wrong?"

"I'm only a call away" she grinned

"Oh...yeah of course" she stopped for a moment then lifted her head up again "And what if you're busy?"

"I'm always busy...I'll find time."

"But you always say time runs out."

Doctor huffed "What is this ten question quiz?...Right...ready to go?"

"Suppose so" Ryan said deflated.

"Well Sheffield here we come...Hold on" she pulled the lever, and they took off.

Tardis shook and swirled around their bags skid over the floor and everyone grabbed on to what ever they could.

"What's going oooon?" Yaz shouted.

"Hold on Yaz...Dunno like we're being pulled...I can't control the Tardis"

"You whaaa?"

"Don't panic...I'm sure we're gonna land somewhere?"

"Somewhere?" Nadjia asked horrified.

"It's gonna be fineeee" she shouted "...Hopefully...should be" she was grabbing on to machinery trying to set the sturdy course, but Tardis had a mind on its own "Hold oooooon...Ups"

"What's the ups?" Yas shouted.

"Arrrrh...it's alright Yaz...no panic" she grabbed one of the monitors with both hands and lost her balance slumping down the console and Yaz flew off landing in a massive soft armchair.

Tardis screeched to a halt. The Doctor opened one of her eyes, her face glued to the controls "Yaaaz!" she shouted and stood up

Yaz sat in the armchair her eyes wide as saucers with her mouth hanging open.

"You alright?"

"Yaz!" Nadjia and Hakim jumped in the same time

"I'm fine...I'm fine" she reached for Doctor's hand "What happened?"

"Dunno Yaz..." she ran towards the door and opened it

"Where are we?" Yaz asked.

"Aaaarrhhh....not Sheffield" Doctor squinted her eyes looking at the far distance.

Hakim stepped outside "Is that..."

"Babylon!" Doctor finished his sentence.

"Get out!" Ryan ran to the door

"Whaaaat?" Nadja looked at Yaz moving her hair of her face.

Yaz just shrugged her shoulders.

"Oh, come oooon" Sonya whined.

Doctor jumped over her and ran to the console "7th century BC Neo-Babylonian Empire....Why here?" she scrunched her face and ran back to the door wiping her sonic out "Sonic isn't picking up anything unusual" she said confused "Should we look around?" She smiled.

"Bloody hell...that's massive" Sonya said as she stepped outside.

The huge city could be seen in the distance spreading out for miles.

"Doctor...what about us going home?" Nadja asked.

"Why would you wanna go home...look at this" Hakim pointed and she frowned.

"It must be a reason why Tardis took us here...we could leave...But what if someone needs help?" Doctor said.

"I have a feeling like this happen Is a lot..." Nadja rolled her eyes "I suppose I'm not gonna miss getting up for work for another week."

"Goodie" Doctor jumped haply "I promise after this I'm taking you back to Sheffield...We have to go home anyway...baby and all that."

"Yeah...you really should Doctor" Nadja said.

"Right let's have a look."

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"This baby will be born on a side of a dirt road" Yaz said grumpy shaking a stone out of her shoe.

"No it won't Yaz.." Doctor said.

"Oh yeah...what do you call this then."

"Your hormones going crazy"

"Arrrrh" she grabbed her hand "We have to get stuff for the baby...You promised."

"And we will Yaz"

"We have no nappies...what if I go into labor?"

"Babies are born in Babylon Yaz...I'm sure they use nappies."

"We don't have a pram?"

"They invented the wheel not far from here...besides I can carry the baby.... Seriously Yaz you're not gonna have a baby in the middle of Babylon....And we are just having a look"

"Doctooooor"

"I'm messing you around...seriously you should know by now" Doctor laughed and kissed her temple.

"Mmmmm...I hope not" she frowned "you're counting better be right."

"It is...told ya...with a girl it can take even longer."

"I bloody hope not" Yaz laughed.

"I don't know why you stress so much when you have the Tardis" Sonya said "And your personal doctor" she laughed.

"Thank you, Sonya," Doctor said smug.

"I thought you wanted adventure Yaz" Ryan chuckled "But we could always leave you in a kitchen."

She smacked his shoulder.

"I was just looking forward to going home...specially after the last scare" she leaned her head on Doctor's shoulder.

"I know potato ...I'm sorry about that...But we might just have fun here...Maybe that's why Tardis brought us here"

"She never brings us to have fun" she laughed.

"That's comforting" Sonya said.

Nadja and Hakim were ignoring them, just taking loads of photos, and enjoying themselves.

"Well...they're happy" Yaz nodded.

"Would you rather go to work than do this?" Sonya laughed.

"You got a point."

"Did you ever work Doctor?"

"Yes, many times"

"Really? What did you do?"

"Teach...I love teaching."

"Really....What on Earth?"

"Mmmm...in university and high school"

"Cool....so what made you stop?"

"I haven't Sonya...I just do it when I feel like it. Maybe I'll go back to that when a baby is born it would be nice."

"What live on Earth?"

"I lived many times on Earth Sonya I don't just travel all the time...I do take breaks.... everyone needs a break...just my breaks are a bit longer."

"Such as?"

"Dunno once I took a break 100 years once 25 depends how I feel...But with Yaz it would be nice for her to have her family around with a baby.... Besides...there are physical and mental limits to the amount of time travel that a human can do Sonya before the displacement from their own timeline becomes untenable. Too much displacement can also cause problems for the timeline itself."

"So, what you're basically trying to say is that you two can't continue doing this?"

"Not forever Sonya...Yaz would lose the sense of her timeline...you as a family...she's not immortal and neither are you..."

"Well to put it in perspective Sonya...what Doctor is trying to say is that now you're gonna be here with us for say 2 months but when we bring you back it will be only half hour since you left. Nothing has changed...But it has for you...Mum noticed I was physically changed she had no idea I was almost 10 years older.... Which means...my time with you has shortened...I'm aging and you're staying same for me"

"Oh shit...I haven't thought about that."

"But we have" Yaz looked up to the Doctor with a pinch of sadness in her eyes.

"We're gonna find a way" she said with a small smile and kissed her forehead.

"Well...I'd like you to live on Earth for a while .... I wanna see the baby"

"You will...promise all the time" Yaz said.

"Doctor...Are you just gonna leave the Tardis out here?" Sonya asked

"It depends"

"On what?"

"Are we staying or leaving" she winked.

Their walk wasn't long and soon they stood in front of a massive entrance to the city. Beautiful blue bricks shined in the sun.

"That's huge" Sonya looked up."

"Ishtar gate...stunning, isn't it?" Doctor said.

"What are those?" Ryan frowned looking up at the walls.

"Aaa those Ryan are representations of major gods of the Babylonian pantheon...this is Marduk the national deity and chief god, with his servant dragon Mušḫuššu. It's a dragon with a snake-like head and tail, and this is Adad, also known as Ishkur, whose sacred animal was the aurochs extinct in your time. Adad had power over destructive storms and beneficial rain and those borders and patterns of rosettes are symbols of fertility."

"Well, Yaz you're in the right place" Ryan laughed.

"Very funny" she frowned at him.

Doctor ignored them looked around taking the scenery "I haven't been here in a long time .... I wonder what's new.... Alright let go...Nadjia, Hakim...come on...no doodling."

"Coming" Hakim said and snapped one more photo then turned his phone to the Doctor "Smile."

"You know you can't keep those Hakim" she said as they came closer.

"But you can...it will be a nice memory."

She looked at him softly and placed her hand on his shoulder "Come let's go...isn't it wonderful?" Her throat tightened. She didn't want to think of a day when all of this would be just a distant memory, so she turned her thoughts of getting them through the gate.

"Hello..." she smiled at the guard.

"Personal indentation plate please" the guard said, and Doctor frowned confused.

"Well, that's new" she turned towards the others then wiping the psychic paper out.

"Department of trade and industry" the guard read confused.

She looked at it confused herself.

"Never heard of it" he said.

"Oh well...you have now...very important department...monitoring...am... trade"

"So why there so many of you?"

"Loads of work mate...have you seen the size of this place" she said.

"I've never seen you before."

"We travel a lot" Ryan added.

"And a pregnant lady?"

"Oh... that happened on a way" Doctor scrunched her face and Yaz just looked at her frowning.

"Alright...come through" he stepped back.

"Thank you" Doctor smiled satisfied "Come on let's go" she waived and reached for Yaz's hand.

"Happened on a way?" Yaz said.

"Figure if speech Yaz"

"Really?"

"Doctor tripped over you Yaz" Ryan laughed and Doctor smacked the back of his head.

He just continued laughing rubbing the back of his head.

They walked through the gate to a buzzing street. People from everywhere walked around and stands with all sorts of produce were surrounding them. The smell of herbs and food was filling the air.

"Waaw look" Yaz pointed "Pyramid."

"Aaaa...that's not a pyramid Yaz that is a Ziggurat" Doctor said.

"What's the difference?"

"Pyramid was built as the final resting place of a Pharaoh...Ziggurat is the temple Yaz dedicated to the local god. Murdoc being a main deity of Babylon...We can have a look later" she wiped out a sonic and scanned the area "Still not picking up anything out of the ordinary" she frowned looking at the sonic "Oh well...let's have some fun then" she smiled "Aaaaaa look Yaz" she pointed to one of the stands.

"Are those toys?"

"Those are puzzle boxes" she came up to stand curious and picked up one from the stand "See you have to open it Yaz...but how do you do that...here try" she passed it to her

Yaz twirled it in her hand confused "Dunno" she laughed "Arrrh...it won't slide open" she kept turning it around in her hand.

"Maybe on this side Yaz" Sonya said.

"Aaaaa....I saw those on YouTube "Hakim said "Wait a minute...I can't remember...I think it has this special locking system."

Doctor nodded raising her eyebrows "It does. "

"Here dad you try."

"Yes....Now I remember" he turned it around and slid the opposite side and suddenly it opened up.

"Aaaaaa...five stars for Hakim" Doctor jumped.

"Look it has a little ball inside."

"That's so cool" Sonya said.

"You can hide secrets inside" Yaz said.

"Not from dad" Sonya laughed.

Yaz squirmed a bit holding on to her back.

"You alright Yaz?" Doctor asked.

"Yeah...just my back hurts a bit...it's the walking I think."

"Want us to sit down for a bit?"

"Yeah...can we?"



"Sure, we can...I am getting a bit peckish.... Food everyone?"

"It is lunch time" Ryan said.

"Alright follow me...I know just a place...I haven't been here in a long time so let's hope its still there if not well...we're gonna find someplace else."

"Alright" Yaz shrugged.

"Also, I have to get something for the Tardis...wasn't planning on stopping here...but since we're here."

"Another worm?" Ryan nudged Sonya laughing

"Oh, pleaseeee no"

"You alright mum?" Yaz asked concerned "You've been very quiet."

"Sure hun...just tiered a bit today...Don't worry...I'm sure I'll be fine when we eat something."

Doctor was like a trip adviser of the universe knowing every single tavern and a marketplace. She also had a thing about souvenirs. With parts she needed for Tardis jingling away in her coat pocket together with some souvenirs she already managed to snatch she took them for lunch to one of those typical local places as usual.

Yaz's hormones were getting the best of her cleaning up the second plate of food smearing bread over it cleaning it thoroughly.

"Want some cake Yaz?" The Doctor laughed.

"Mmmm" she nodded happily.

"Doctor" Ryan said "Can we go and have a look around?"

"Sure Ryan...Don't wonder off too far...don't get into trouble."

"Don't worry"

"I always worry ...off you go."

"Can we go as well, Doctor?" Hakim asked.

"Sure...go go...just...well same what told Ryan...and call me if you need me."

"Will do ...see you Doctor"

"See you" she waived.

"See you late honey" Nadja kissed Yaz's cheek.

"Have a nice time mum" she smiled.

With everyone leaving Yaz looked at the Doctor as her eyes were inquisitively roaming around.

"I'm sorry" she said quietly.

"Ha?" Doctor looked back at her "Sorry about what Yaz?"

"Having to stay with me here. I know it's boring...I know you would give your arm away to walk around."

"Don't be silly Yaz...this is nice"

"Yeah right...super exiting" she said deflated and took a little cup with her drink.

"Yaz it's alright..." Doctor reached for her hand over the table "Really...We can do something else...Hey you and me...we're a team...It's nice to be just the two of us"

"It is...that it is" she smiled.

"We can have some fun" Doctor smiled

"We can?"

"Sure, we can Yaz... just rest a bit...I know just the place to take you"

"Alright then"

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The Doctor held her hand as they walked through the endless streets until they came to the most gorgeous place. Yaz's eyes open wide as they approached a massive structure with endless arches and terraces filled with trees and plants. Flowers of all different colors were hanging over the walls and the smell of them filled the air. It filled with fountains and manmade waterfalls running over the walls.

"OMG...what is that?" Yaz looked up and around in wonder.

"Hanging gardens of Babylon Yaz"

"Waaaaawww...I thought they were just a legend."

"Nope...They were built by the king for his wife Yaz"

"My god...he must've loved her."

"He does Yaz...they are still alive...Come on" she tugged her hand.

"I can't climb that baby" Yaz said disappointing looking up at numerous steps.

"Just the first level Yaz...we don't need to go all the way to the top...I can carry you" she grinned.

"Noooo silly" Yaz laughed "Come on let's go and I'll just take some breaks on a way."

They climbed to the first level and Yaz leaned over the edge looking at the city below "Waaaaw...that's just stunning...it's so big."

"It's huge Yaz...it is believed that around 20 000 people live here plus all the travelers from all over the Mesopotamia and further."

"And all these plants"

"Oh, they are from all over the world Yaz"

"You said it was a long time since you came here...how long,"

"Oh around 200 years darling...it's gotten bigger."

They fell silent for a while Yaz looked around the city below and buzzing streets. The sun was slowly settling behind the horizon making the walls of the city glistening beautiful gold shimmer.

"Penny for your thoughts" Doctor said brushing her thumb over the side of her hand.

"I was thinking about all the places I saw with you" she smiled sideways to her "So amazing...this and Egypt and all the ancient worlds and all the stars and planets...And I thought how much more your eyes have seen...How many memories you have"

"Many Yaz..." Doctor turned towards her and ran her fingers over a long braid falling over her shoulder "So many some things are hard to remember."

She picked a small pink flower and put it in Yaz's hair right by her ear smiling at her "It's getting late...We should call the others and head back slowly."

"Do we have to go? Home, I mean" she reached for Doctor's hands lacing their fingers in the air.

"I thought you wanna go home Yaz I'm confused."

"I do...but there's so much to see here...Can we stay for a day or two?" She smiled.

"Really?" Doctor smiled widely twitching from excitement tugging her hands.

"Yeah really.... My hormones are making me mad sorry baby" Yaz brought her hand up to the side of neck "I wanna stay for a bit."

"Of course, we can Yaz" she pulled her in pressing a short kiss to her lips suddenly going from zero to a thousand "Oh Yaz there's soooo much to see here...Ziggurat...I have to show you Ziggurat and also the gate on the other side is amazing...Oh and you have to try the little things they make here out fruit...It's so yummy" she rambled on as they slowly went down the stairs.

"We need our stuff from the Tardis if we're gonna stay" she giggled

"That's alright Yaz I'll go with boys...Hakim can take their stuff and Ryan your sisters and his and I'll take ours...see sorted" she grinned and kissed her knuckles then put her hands underneath her armpits lifting her happily down from the last step.

"You though about it...admit it?"

"Maybe" she grinned kissing her cheek absolutely shining.

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"Right, all you lot go and get settled" Doctor said haply as they stood on the street "This is bit different then before as we're gonna share a house together" she opened the door to the courtyard.

"A house?" Sonya asked confused.

"Yes... everyone has three level houses here" she was saying as they walked inside the cute little courtyard "Kitchen is over there, bathroom over there, Sonya, Ryan...your room is on the first floor so is yours and Nadja's. We are up on the top floor...we also have a wonderful roof terrace. all the houses here have one."

"Doctor is there a problem here or...?" Nadja asked.

"Nooo...oh not this time" she said "This is just for fun...hopefully" she scrunched her face.

"Alright babe...don't forget my toiletries and I left my baby bracelet in a bedroom."

"No worries Yaz...Come on...let's go" she waived her hand to Ryan and Hakim

"Ryan" Sonya yelled "My makeup."

"I knooooow" he laughed.

"And a phone charger" she added.

"The whaaa?" Doctor looked at him confused.

"Just go with it" he said turning her by the shoulder

"Oh" Doctor shrugged still confused.

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Yaz walked into their room. It was beautiful with stone walls and wooden hand crafted furniture. Simple but beautiful. She opened the window and watched for a moment people passing by in a street below

then took her shoes off and laid on a bed. Her feet were swollen and heavy and the pain in her back was excruciating by this point, but the bed was nice and soft, and she sank into it. The baby was restless kicking the whole day. She was now moving all the time, always putting smiles on their faces. The Doctor found a special joy in it continuously chatting to her, telling her stories, and humming some Galifreyan songs. Yaz wondered many times what their life will look like one day when she's gonna be gone. Will she travel with her mother to all the wonderful places or find some other life for herself. Will she be as goofy as the Doctor and as hyper as her and she wondered how her baby will look like. What color of eyes will be and what kind of hair will she have. Will her skin be as pale as the Doctor's, or she will be the mix of them two. She ran her palm over her stomach and rolled on her side watching stars in the night sky.

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"Hey potato...I got everything...if I forgot something I go...." she looked towards the bed and smiled from the corner of her lips quietly placing all the stuff by the door, mindful of not waking her up, then took the cover pulling it over her and placed a long gentle kiss on her temple.

The sky was filled with stars that shone like millions of diamonds, and a light breeze coming from the desert played with the Doctor's hair as she sat on the roof. Torches illuminated the narrow stone streets, and the lights of the Ziggurat shone in the darkness of the night. She was lost in her thoughts, enjoying the silence of the night and one of the few moments she had recently to herself. But she didn't mind, she didn't miss the solitude or the long nights in an empty bed or the echo of the Tardis in the empty corridors while she was busy with endless repairs. He welcomed all the laughter, the constant footsteps of someone walking and the murmur of voices from the kitchen. But what she most welcomed was the sense of constancy, knowing that this time she wouldn't be watching the Tardis doors close forever behind her loved one, leaving her alone in desolation and sorrow.