

Departure with a Belly Chapter 7

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Victoria spoke plainly and straightforwardly, unlike Claudia's polite but indirect approach.

Suddenly, Claudia felt awkward. "I—I didn't mean that."

Nonetheless, Victoria didn't bother with her and changed the topic. Before leaving the clinic, Dominic gave her some medicine. He advised Claudia, "Although your friend doesn't want to take medicine, she should try to drink some if possible. I prescribed traditional medicine, and it won't harm her body. Only drink it a few times."

"Okay."

Soon, the three of them left the clinic and returned to the Cadogan Residence. As soon as they pulled into the driveway, Victoria, still in discomfort, attempted to exit the vehicle. All she wanted was to return to her room and sleep it off. Unfortunately, she stumbled and nearly fell forward as she stepped out of the car. Then, Alaric quickly caught her by the arm and frowned. "You're in this state, yet you still refuse to take medicine or get a shot. You're something else."

Claudia followed them out of the car and saw their hands touch. She hurried over and helped Victoria. "Let me help her, Al."

She assisted Victoria into the house, and when she saw the maids, she greeted them. The maids looked at Claudia with surprise in their eyes.

"Did I see wrong? Wasn't that Miss Johnson?"

"Who is Miss Johnson?"

Most of the long-serving maids in the villa knew Claudia, but some newer ones didn't.

"Claudia Johnson. She's the woman that Mr. Cadogan likes. Don't you know that?"

"Mr. Cadogan likes her?" The young maid's eyes widened. "Isn't Mr. Cadogan already married?"

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"Most marriages within wealthy families are only business deals. No real love involved," said the older maid, who had spent many long years in the Cadogan Residence and spoke confidently. "You guys are new here, so you don't understand. However, I was there when it all happened. Claudia isn't any random woman Mr. Cadogan likes. She actually saved his life."

She went abroad to study for some time, and he's been waiting for her ever since."

"So, why did Mr. Cadogan marry someone else?" asked one of the listening maids.

"Well, that's because Old Mrs. Cadogan got sick and wanted to see him settle down and start a family. He had no choice but to find someone else.

At that time, the Selwyn Family had gone bankrupt, so you know how it goes," the older maid finished with a sly smirk. "It's a secret within

upper-class society. Not many people know about it, so don't spread it around."

"I actually thought Mr. Cadogan and his wife were really in love. I had no idea it's all merely an act," one of the other maids said, sounding disappointed.

"Of course, it is all an act. Don't be so naive," the older maid responded.

As they were about to say more, a cough interrupted them. They turned around to see Hector standing there, his face dark and stern expression.

"Don't you have work to do?" he asked, and the group dispersed like startled birds.

Once they were gone, he stood there. He was a man in his fifties with gray hairs in his eyebrows. He furrowed his brow when he heard that Claudia had returned.

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That explains why the madam had been acting strangely last night.

Meanwhile, Claudia helped Victoria back to her room.

“Thank you,” Victoria said.

“Don’t mention it,” Claudia replied with a smile. “You should get some rest now.”

“Okay.” Victoria took off her shoes and lay down. That was when she noticed Alaric entering the room slowly, his eyes wandering carelessly over her until they landed on Claudia.

“Shall I send you home?” he asked. After all, Claudia was in the Cadogan Residence and had no reason to stay there. So, she nodded. “Sure, thanks.”

Before leaving, she glanced around the room and noticed a handcrafted men’s suit on the coat rack outside. Only Alaric would wear that style.

Suddenly, her face turned a little paler, and she silently followed him with

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her lips pursed. Once everyone was gone, Victoria opened her eyes and looked up at the white coiling, feeling lost.

What should I do about the child?

Being pregnant was not like anything else. She could hide her feelings for him well for a year, two years, or even 10 years, but what about being pregnant? She couldn't hide it when the time came for her belly to show.

The more she thought about it, the more her head spun, and she gradually fell into a long, deep sleep.

In her dream, Victoria felt someone undoing her collar and then something cold covering her body. Her body was hot, and she felt comfortable. With a sigh, she instinctively grabbed the person's arm with her arms and legs. Then, she heard a muffled groan and heavy breathing. Her neck was held roughly but gently, and her lips were wetly covered. Soon, something probed into her mouth.

She frowned and bit down on the foreign object, feeling the taste of blood in her mouth and the man's painful gasp. Then, she had been pushed aside before someone forcefully pinched her cheek. She faintly heard the

person say, "I've pampered you too much, haven't I? You even bit down on me."

She winced in pain, grumbling and pushing away the person's hand before falling into a deep sleep.

When Victoria woke up, it was already evening.

A maid was by her side, who was delighted to see her wake up. "Mrs. Cadogan, you're awake."

The maid approached her, placing a hand on her forehead. "Thank goodness you've finally cooled down, Mrs. Cadogan."

Victoria looked at the maid before her, thinking of specific fragmented memories. Then, she asked, "Have you been caring for me this whole time?"

The maid's eyes sparkled while she nodded in response. As soon as she heard that, Victoria's hopeful expression faded, and she looked away.

Those fragmented memories led her to believe that Alaric had been caring for her the entire time, but it wasn't him.

Victoria was lost in thought when the maid brought a bowl of medicine over. "Mrs. Cadogan, it's good that you're awake now. The medicine is still warm. You should drink it now."

The pungent aroma of traditional medicine filled the air, causing Victoria to frown and instinctively avoid it.

“Mrs. Cadogan, please drink it while it’s still warm. It will be cold in a while,” the maid said, bringing the bowl closer to her.

Victoria moved back, turning her head away. “Put it down there first. I’ll drink it later.”

“You-”

“I’m a little hungry. Can you go downstairs and get me something to eat? Don’t worry; I’ll finish the medicine when you return with food.” She had slept for a long time and was really hungry now.

The maid thought for a moment before nodding. “Okay, I’ll go downstairs and get something for you. Please drink the medicine, Mrs. Cadogan.”

“Yeah...”

The maid eventually left, and Victoria lifted the covers and climbed out of bed. She carried the dark traditional medicine and walked to the bathroom to pour it down the toilet. As she watched the medicine flush away, leaving no trace behind, she breathed a sigh of relief. Then, she wouldn’t have to be cajoled into drinking it.

She straightened back up with the empty bowl before turning around, only to see that Alaric had arrived without notice. Leaning against the

bathroom door, he stared at her with sharp eyes. "What are you doing?"