

## Departure with a Belly Chapter 24

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Chapter 24

There she goes again, talking like that.

1/11

Victoria used to think of Claudia as a gentle and sweet person because of how generous and modest she was in public.

But this was the second time she said something like this after her recent return to the country.

The first time was about Alaric, and now it was about the house's servants.

What appeared to be gratitude was actually her staking her claim.

But the reality was Claudia had no right over either Alaric or the servants.

It would be reasonable for her to say these words now if she and Alaric were lovers before.

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80%

**2/11**

But they were never even together, Victoria thought. So, what gives her the right to talk to me this way?

What's more, if they were a couple back then, Victoria wouldn't have agreed to this fake marriage no matter how much she liked Alaric.

However, Claudia did help her before.

And so, Victoria could only bite her lip to calm herself down while she repressed the discomfort in her chest. She only let out a small smile without saying anything.

Her lack of discomfort, or even reaction, was as frustrating as pouring water into a leaking bowl for Claudia.

However, Claudia knew that she couldn't delay this any longer. "Shall we talk in the mini garden?" she asked with a smile.

It was probably due to how Victoria completely ignored Claudia's friend

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before that made Claudia panic. So, after she finished speaking, she lowered her voice and added, "Walls have ears. Let's not talk here."

80%

3/11

"Okay." Victoria nodded and stood up to walk outside.

If possible, she didn't want to waste even one minute talking to Claudia.

However, "favor" was probably the hardest thing to return to someone.

When they reached the mini garden, Victoria led Claudia to a remote and secluded area.

Claudia finally felt more relaxed after she took a look around. Talking here shouldn't be a problem.

Still, she wasn't completely at ease.

"No one will eavesdrop on our conversation here, right?"

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Victoria came to a short pause before she shook her head. "The servants rarely come here. The gardener usually comes in the morning to water and maintain the plants."

**4/11**

It was almost afternoon now.

"Good," Claudia sighed, relieved. She then flashed Victoria a friendly smile as she took out an envelope from her pocket and handed it to Victoria.

"This is for you," she said.

Victoria only took a glance without accepting it.

Seeing her standing there without moving, Claudia took a step forward and placed the envelope in Victoria's palm.

It was a thin envelope that Victoria had a feeling she knew what was inside.

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With her fingertips pinching the envelope, she felt her heart continue to sink.

5/11

The corners of her lips pulled into a smile as she looked at Claudia. “What is the meaning of this?”

“Ahem...” Claudia had a guilty glint in her eyes. “Victoria, you are a smart woman. I’m sure you know what this is. I won’t put it into words.”

“Oh, yeah?” However, Victoria seemed to have a fixation on something as she bit her lower lip with her pearly whites. “I may not know what you mean if you don’t say it outright.”

Claudia’s face darkened immediately.

She didn’t want to directly mention Victoria’s pregnancy.

Alaric was still clueless about this.

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Now that she came to Victoria to solve the problem, she could only hint at it instead of being straightforward about it.

6/11

She didn't trust Victoria. If Victoria had a recording device with her and recorded Claudia's words, the beautiful image that Claudia created for herself would crumble in an instant the moment Victoria sent the recorded content to Alaric.

She could never let that happen.

She thought that Victoria would be an easy opponent to handle before she came here.

But she didn't think that now.

Victoria wouldn't have gotten pregnant if she was easy to deal with.

Thinking of this, Claudia stepped forward and opened the envelope for Victoria, showing a 7-million check.

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Claudia uttered softly, "You have worked hard in the past 2 years. You helped Al a lot both in and out of the company, and he told me that you are a capable woman who can endure hardships. I'm sure it hasn't been

easy on you to live a life like this when you were brought up as the young miss of the Selwyn Family. This isn't a lot of money, but I'm giving you this sincerely. You can buy what you like and get some healthy food for yourself."

When she mentioned those last few words, she deliberately tightened her grip on Victoria's wrist and gently pressed the palm of Victoria's hand with her fingertips.

Victoria raised her gaze and looked directly into Claudia's eyes.

Claudia nodded at her and let out a soft, regretful sigh, and she even reached out to lightly pat Victoria on the shoulder.

She looked as though she couldn't say any more than this.

**7/11**

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Victoria suddenly felt suffocated looking at her.

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Alaric asked her to take a vacation in the office yesterday. Just like

Claudia, he was hinting at her to take good care of her health.

80%

8/11

For them to hint at something like this... They care about their dignity a whole lot, don't they?

Victoria's cherry lips moved a little.

What should I say?

Should I thank them for worrying about my body? For giving me a break from work and giving me money to let me recuperate?

Will I disappoint them if I don't accept any of those?

Suddenly, she noticed how ridiculous all of this was. Here she was, struggling with making a decision, and yet someone else was deciding

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her future for her.

80%

Seeing the grief and indignation in Victoria's eyes, Claudia wanted to say something, only to see Victoria push the check back to her.

"Victoria..."

9/11

Does she not want the check? Why won't she take it? Panicking, Claudia urged, "Is the sum too small for you? This is all I can give you for now. If you think it's too little, I can-"

"It's all right," Victoria coldly cut her off. As she shook her head, she firmly stated, "I don't want money."

Claudia was frozen in place.

"You don't want money?" she repeated.

What does she want then? Alaric?

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A mean look flashed in her eyes when she thought that Victoria was exactly like what her friends said. She refused to give up her position as Mrs. Cadogan, now that it had been 2 years since she held onto the title!

Victoria nodded and insisted, "I don't want money."

10/11

She had already made a decision she herself didn't think she would make before Claudia came.

She wanted the child.

She would give birth to it and raise it well without relying on anyone else.

The child had nothing to do with anyone but her.

Since she had decided to do that, it wouldn't make sense for her to take Claudia's money.

Not only Claudia's, but Victoria also wouldn't even take Alaric's money if he

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gave her any.

She would be indebted to Claudia again if she took the money.

11/11

What if Alaric wants the child back? What if Claudia can't accept the existence of the child someday?

Because of that, she wanted neither Claudia's nor Alaric's money.

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