

Departure with a Belly Chapter 341

Departure with a Belly Chapter 341

Chapter 341

“Are you done with your questions?” Victoria looked at him lightly. “If you already have answers to everything you want to know, will you stop disturbing me after this?”

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Alaric raised his head abruptly and looked at her in disbelief. “Are you going to push me away even if I didn’t see that message or ask you to get an abortion?”

She smiled slightly, tone light. “Is it my fault that you didn’t see the message? You entrusted her with your phone even though you can never be away from it, so you should bear the consequence, Alaric. Have you forgotten the stormy night when you all were at the snooker club and I was asked to bring you an umbrella thanks to a prank message, thus being laughed at by your friends? Did you know I had just received the news of my pregnancy at the hospital before heading there?”

His hands, dangling at his sides, clenched tightly while his pupils expanded.

“I was so gullible back then, thinking that I could use the opportunity to tell you the good news. Even if we are in a fake marriage, I actually got pregnant and you might be able to accept it. What a pity that I had gone there but was mocked in such a horrible way.

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Alaric had never heard all of this before and hearing it now made him feel cold as if he

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had fallen straight into hell. Victoria had received amazing news and wanted to share it with him but ended up being the laughingstock. It was no surprise that he had seen her drenched from the rain that night when he returned. How hurt she had to be that night! What made it worse was that he had asked her for a divorce that night. It wasn't shocking that she would tell him such an important piece of information via a text message; she was probably too scared to tell him face-to-face even if she had the courage.

He felt extremely regretful and angry. "I'm sorry, I didn't know that-"

At this point in time, hearing his apology didn't make Victoria feel anything. Truthfully, she had waited a long time for this, but some things seemed to have faded with time.

"What can your apology do for me now, Alaric? You would still choose your savior given another chance. You would still ask me for a divorce that night and entrust her completely with your phone. I don't want to be involved in this anymore whether you two were together or *not* in the past five years. I have already distanced myself from you both five years ago."

Alaric didn't answer. His intention *to* care for the child with her was no longer so strong

after hearing her analysis. What right does he have in asking her to forgive him when he was in the wrong?

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She looked up at him. "If you really do like children, you can have your own children in the future. You can have any type you want with the privileges you have so just leave me and my children alone, okay?"

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His lips formed a thin line as he felt a bitter taste in his mouth. He stared at her and did not agree or refuse her request.

"If you can agree to it, then I will be extremely grateful to you."

His fists were clenched as he bit out. "I cannot just watch you fall into another man's embrace while bringing the children along. You want to be with Bane, right?"

Victoria was speechless. If she was honest, she didn't really want to be with Bane, but would Alaric give up if she admitted to that? Alaric wasn't that kind of person though; if she really admitted to that, he might go mad.

Eventually, she answered, "I am not planning to be with anyone. I just want to be alone with my children."

"If so, why can't you let me help care for them too?" His voice was bitter, and he found it difficult to speak. "I mean... I'm their biological father."

“You’re just related by blood, which doesn’t mean much,” she retorted lightly.

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Doesn’t mean much. Doesn’t mean much?! Alaric could only hear the words.

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reverberating in his brain as he looked down at Victoria who was in the wheelchair with a bitter smile. That was true; so what if they were related by blood? He hadn’t fulfilled his responsibilities as a father at all in the past five years. Of course, hearing her say that she wouldn’t date anyone made him relieved. If there wasn’t anyone at her side, that meant he might have a chance with her in the future.

However, the most important thing right now was her injuries.

After some consideration, he rapidly came up with a decision that was most beneficial to her. “Fine. I’ll agree to anything you say. However, your priority right now is recovering from your injuries. Besides, the results aren’t out yet.”

She eyed him with surprise, probably because he had agreed far too quickly without even arguing with *her*. That made her suspicious. Is he giving up because I said I won’t be with anyone? It’s been five years, and he is still as possessive as ever.

She lowered her gaze as a sneer flashed within, but Alaric didn’t notice it. Even if he did

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he could only pretend he hadn't.

When the results were finally out which determined that her injury wasn't serious, Alaric helped her deal with the discharge procedure and took her home after leaving the hospital. Victoria hadn't intended to let him in but as soon as the door opened, he led

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the two kids straight inside. It happened so quickly that she didn't even have the chance to protest, and he even stared at her as she stood in the doorway without moving.

"Why aren't you coming in?"

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Victoria was speechless at how he made it sound like it was his home. She entered the house with a flabbergasted look, suppressing the urge to kick him out in front of the children.

The nanny had been employed by Bane and so knew him as the master of the house. Seeing another man here shocked her, but she didn't dare say anything because of her job. Instead, she watched from one corner and offered help whenever it was needed.

Alaric glanced at her and observed his surroundings. "Isn't this place too small, what with the two children and you?"

Victoria looked around as if she had heard something surprising. "You think?"

"Yes. The place is too small and doesn't have much space for other activities besides

sleeping.” He was still studying the place as if annoyed by it.

After a moment, he suddenly turned to her. “I’d like to negotiate. I won’t fight you for the

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children, but I’d like to provide all of you with another home.”

She controlled her temper. “There’s no need for that. I will take them outside if they need space for activities.”

“Aren’t you busy managing your company? You might not have time to take them outside.”

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Victoria fell silent at that. Alaric looked over at her when she didn’t reply and explained to her upon seeing her expression. “Don’t take it the wrong way. I have no intention of blaming you. I just feel that the children are far too young and should experience more interesting activities.”

She was flabbergasted. “I know what you mean, but your suggestion. is impossible. Are you going to build the facilities right in their home?”

She didn’t expect him to actually nod. “Yes.”

She had no words and was about to ask whether anyone could just do that whenever they wanted before remembering his background as well as the enormous wealth he had given her when she had just returned to the country. She was certain that he would make arrangements the moment she allowed it.

“So?” Alaric asked that question as she had expected when she didn’t reply.

Victoria was slightly impatient but didn’t want to say some things in front of the children, so she turned to the nanny. “Can you bring them away to check their class schedule for tomorrow?”

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The nanny who had stood off to one side like a robot immediately came back to herself and approached them. “Okay, Miss Selwyn.”

She then took the two kids away, upon which Victoria immediately spoke. “We agreed to it in the hospital, didn’t we? You agreed to leave me and the children alone.”

“Yes.” Alaric nodded. “I did, but does my suggestion go against the promise?”

“No, but I’m not going to accept your suggestion.”

“Why?”

“Why? Because I don’t need it. I don’t have enough money to waste on all of that, okay?” Her intention was to refuse his request, but she didn’t know if he really didn’t realize that or if he was faking it as he answered, “I do. I can arrange for someone to fix things up so you and the children can move in.”

She frowned at that. “That isn’t what we agreed to.”

He looked at her. “What difference is there? I am just arranging a home for you.” He then seemed to recall something and paused for a moment. “You said you didn’t have enough money. Why did you ask the lawyer to return everything then?”

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“Why do you need to ask that question? It’s not my money.”

“Why not? It’s your part of the divorce settlement.”

Victoria frowned. “I don’t want your money.”

They were in a fake marriage anyway, so why would she need her part of the divorce settlement?

“Fine. It’s okay if you don’t want the money. I’ll get someone to work on the house tomorrow.”

Victoria didn’t know what to say to that. She could now see that his promise to leave her and her children alone had merely been verbal; his actions didn’t actually show it since he had to get up to something. Such circumstances might happen again in the future, and the thought of which made her head throb.

She gritted her teeth. “When I said leave us alone, I meant that you should no longer appear in front of us or give us anything, such as a house.”

Alaric didn’t seem to understand. “You don’t want a house? Then what do you want?”

“Alaric!” she shouted with some exasperation. “What do you want? Were you not clear
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enough about what I said in the hospital?”

Of course, he was. He understood it extremely well, but even if he did, he couldn’t just give up on them.

He eventually took a less direct approach. “I just wanted to contribute some compensation. Even if you refuse to recognize it, I’m still their father. I can give them a better environment to grow up in and won’t fight with you over them. I even recorded it and gave it to you as evidence. Are you still concerned?”

“Besides, you can refuse everything I have offered, but why don’t you ask the two children? Do they not want them too?”

She coldly answered, “They’re my children and will listen to me.”

He didn’t get angry and merely smiled. “I will get someone to design the plans tomorrow and give them to you when it is done. Once you’re satisfied, I will hire workers to start on the construction. You should rest well tonight; make sure that you don’t get your injury wet or sleep facedown. It’s best that you take a few days off from work too.”

“Are you

done?” Her attitude was still cold no matter how gentle his words were. “I’m grateful to you for sending me back but if you are done talking, please leave.”

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He wasn't irritated by her distant attitude and nodded calmly instead. "Fine then. I'll go home first."

He didn't say anything else and left quickly. The room fell quiet after the door closed, giving her a surreal feeling. It might have been because he had always annoyed her, and his decisive departure was a little hard to get used to.

After a long silence, the nanny opened the door and looked at her worriedly. "Miss Selwyn."

Recalling that the nanny had been hired by Bane, she asked, "Do you all still talk to Bane?"

The nanny had worked for more than ten years and knew exactly what she was implying. "Don't worry, Miss Selwyn. Even if Mr. Morison had hired us, you are still our mistress. We all have professional conduct and will never betray your privacy except under unusual circumstances."

Her words satisfied Victoria. It would be nice if every nanny had such a profound understanding of things.

The nanny was relieved by Victoria's reaction. Working for rich families as a nanny paid well and she wasn't going to do something harmful which wouldn't benefit her anyway.

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Plus, Miss Selwyn wouldn't be paying Mr. Morison any rent if there were a possibility of them getting together.

After coming down from her home, Alaric stood beneath the streetlight for a long time. He did not say anything, so the driver did not dare approach and merely parked the car by the road to wait quietly.

It was a while before Alaric looked toward the driver. The latter, who had been paying attention to Alaric's every movement, immediately moved the car before Alaric and got down to open the car door.

"Mr. Cadogan."

Alaric got into the car and called Terrance as soon as they set off. "Get a designer to design a house for me."

The driver eavesdropped on the conversation behind him as he drove.

Design a house? Just when he has just come down from Miss Selwyn's home? Is it for her and the children to live in?

He didn't have to wonder about it since he had his confirmation upon hearing Alaric

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mention children's bedrooms and entertainment facilities.

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However, the driver wondered if he had misheard as he listened to what Alaric said afterward. A house with various entertainment facilities and even a library? Is Mr. Cadogan sure that he's building a house and not a shopping mall? Or perhaps it is his plan to build a shopping mall right inside the house?

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Alaric kept throwing ideas about how to design the house at Terrance along the way. Terrance didn't really analyze Alaric's words. The moment Alaric shared his first idea, Terrance fulfilled his responsibility by turning on the voice recorder and opening his notebook. He recorded Alaric's orders and noted them down at the same time.

“That’s all for now. I’ll update you if there are any other ideas. We can leave the rest to the designer.”

“All right, Mr. Cadogan.”

Alaric hung up the phone before Terrance could finish.

A few moments later, it finally dawned on Terrance. Wait a minute. Did Mr. Cadogan say something about designing a house? A house with that kind of setup? For real?

The car stopped at the same time Alaric ended the call.

“We have arrived, Mr. Cadogan.”

He hummed a response before putting his phone into his pocket and exiting the car.

At that moment, all he could think about was the possible designs for the house. Are we missing something? I’ll have to add them later. I better write down everything once I’m home.

Alaric let his imagination run free when he talked to Terrance in the car earlier.

Moreover, it was his first time being a father. Thus, he allowed his limited knowledge to guide him, but he wasn’t a father before. Therefore, he didn’t know much about being a father.

I have to do some research and note them down.

At first, Alaric was thinking about entrusting the design to somebody else. But he suddenly felt he should take over the design instead of depending on others.

He hadn’t gone far when the thoughts flooded his mind.

Therefore, he wasn’t aware that someone was trailing behind him when he got out of the car.

Since he was lost in his thoughts, he walked fast without paying attention to his surroundings. The person could no longer follow, so they called out to him. “Al.”

The person caught up with him when he paused at the name. She panted heavily as she spun around to face him.

Alaric’s expression turned cold at the sight of the person. “What are you doing here?”

He’s not as nice to me as usual. Probably have figured out that I deleted his message.

She knew she was screwed before leaving the sick room.

Once the outsiders were gone, all Alaric needed to do was talk to Victoria.

She was hoping that Alaric didn’t ask. Judging from his expression, it’s just my wishful thinking. He must’ve talked to Victoria.

A plan was formed in her mind when she was on her way to meet Alaric.

I can manage even if he knows the truth.

Thus, she immediately burst into tears when she locked eyes with him. “Al, I have something to tell you.”

Even though Claudia saved Alaric’s life in the past, he couldn’t accept the fact that she deleted the message dedicated to him and that she reached out to Victoria in secret and asked Victoria to abort the children.

“What is it?”

“You found out what happened with the message, didn’t you?” Even though it was a long shot, Claudia couldn’t help but try asking.

As expected, Alaric’s gaze remained cold after she asked him the question.

The lack of response instantly cleared her doubts. She threw the speech, which she formulated before she came, on Alaric without any delay.

“I’m sorry, Al. It’s indeed my fault. I shouldn’t have hidden the truth from you, but I did it for a reason! You were faking a marriage, but she dared sleep with you and got

pregnant with your children. How could I let that happen? You know I adore you. I was blinded by rage and took the wrong approach. It's all because I love you!"

Then, Claudia sniffed. She calmed down a little before taking a few steps toward him. "And most importantly, all I did was delete the message. I didn't hurt her. She still gave birth to the children in the end safely. I'll treat the children as my own if you like, and I don't need more children. What do you say?"

He watched her coldly. "I don't need an outsider's help to raise my children."

"Al..."

Alaric clenched his fists on his sides as he fixed his dark menacing eyes on her. "If it weren't because you save my life... If it weren't..." He gritted his teeth at the thought, unable to finish the sentence.

Claudia could sense a hint of anger in his murmur and the intimidating aura he emanated. She had a feeling that she wouldn't get away with it that easily if she weren't his lifesaver.

She knew from experience that he would get rid of the person and their family if someone ever got on his bad side.

If Claudia had a sense of propriety, she'd stopped now, considering his contorted expression.

Even though she made mistakes, Alaric would still see her as his savior. All she needed to do was behave from now on and try not to be a nuisance.

Therefore, not even he or his family would dare hurt her. What was more, the Cadogan Family would aid her family in the business field. The Johnson Family could enjoy the benefits provided by the Cadogan Family as long as there was peace between them.

However, Claudia was one step away from becoming the wife of the company president.

And now you're telling me Alaric chooses somebody over me?
betrayed her belief.

The title of 'Mrs. Cadogan' belongs to nobody but me!

Alaric suppressed the swirling emotions within him before speaking up. "I don't want to see you again."

After that, he walked into the house, leaving her outside alone.

Claudia stood in the chilly air for a long time until she felt dampness on her face as the breeze dried her tears. Her longing for Alaric and resentment for Victoria grew and ingrained in her.

She returned to the hotel with a stiff body and messy hair.

Scarlette happened to initiate a video call with Claudia. At first, Claudia refused to pick up the phone due to her bad mood. However, after finding out it was from her mother, she felt a pang of sadness. She answered the call without fixing her appearance. As soon as the call was connected, she burst into tears. "Mom!"

Scarlette was enjoying a beauty treatment at the moment. She had applied a mask on her face when she called Claudia with a smile, but she wasn't expecting to see her daughter crying. She immediately tore the mask off her face and expressed her concerns. "What happened, Claudia? Is something wrong?"

Scarlette finally saw the full picture after Claudia spilled everything.

"What should I do, Mom?"

She fixed her daughter with a stern look. "You're too softhearted. You should've gotten rid of her in the first place, but you didn't. And that's what you've got."

Claudia spoke through her s***bs. "What if I talk to Victoria again? I can force her to fulfill her promise of leaving the country."

"What's the point of it?" Scarlett scolded. "Both of you agreed on five years. Now she had carried out the promise. What do you want to talk to her about? You had five years, but you let them go to waste."

The words hurt Claudia. "The things are beyond my control. Who would've known he'd wait for her after all these years?"

"There's no other option! You must find a way to give birth to his child."

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"G—Giving birth to his child?" Claudia yelped in surprise. Scarlett's words truly shocked

her. "What do you mean, Mom? How am I supposed to do that? He doesn't even want to

see me. You have no idea how he glared at me as if I'm his enemy just now."

To her surprise, Scarlett returned her discouraging words with a frown. "No need to fret. You're the daughter of the Johnson Family. You shouldn't be afraid of such a small thing."

"But I—"

"Nothing would change the fact that you saved his life. Even though he found out what you did in the past, he can't do anything. But I honestly did not expect him to have such a strong moral compass. If only I..."

At that, Scarlett trailed off, not finishing her sentence. Instead, she changed the topic by shifting the attention back to Claudia.

"Having his children is the only advantage Victoria has, which is also the reason Alaric chooses her over you without hesitation. But it changes things if you're also pregnant with his child. Moreover, you saved him. There's no doubt he would choose you this time."

Claudia didn't answer.

“No offense, even though both of you aren’t engaged, you should’ve understood the importance of carrying a man’s child. Men are all the same. He’ll marry you once you’re pregnant. Even if he refuses, his family will force him to. How could you not know this?”

Claudia bit her lips. She was shameful to tell her mother the truth.

Scarlette waited for a long time, but there was no answer from Claudia. Therefore, she urged her daughter with a frown, “Speak up. I’m listening.”

“I...” After moments of hesitation, Claudia cast her eyes to the ground. “I—I tried to seduce him, but I never had the chance.”

Scarlette’s brows shot up in surprise when she processed the meaning in Claudia’s words. “What? Are you trying to tell me that you never slept with him over the past five years?”

It embarrassed her, but Claudia could only nod.

“You couldn’t even find a chance after spending time around him over all these years?”

“I can’t...”

“And never for once did he make a move on you?”

“No! He didn’t!” The harder Scarlette pressed the matter, the stronger Claudia felt like an

unattractive woman. She cut Scarlette off out of spite.

For a moment, the statement made Scarlette speechless.

She wasn’t expecting to learn that Alaric was different from the other men.

He’s indeed an excellent man.

However, even an excellent man has needs in that aspect. Furthermore, Claudia is young and beautiful and is always around him. How could he not have any feelings for her at all?

Does he have no sexual desire?

“Have you tried?”

Claudia’s cheeks were flaring. “I did.”

“Then? What’s his reaction?”

“Mom, he forbids any person to pull that trick on him since then.”

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The whole story was very clear to Scarlett after hearing Claudia’s answer. “He’s surprisingly determined. I must admit. He’s a lot tougher than I thought. If you get to marry him and capture his heart, you won’t have to worry about making a living for the rest of your life.”

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“Now he only has his eyes on Victoria. I don’t understand this woman. Shouldn’t she find a man to take over the responsibility of her children’s father right after the divorce? She should’ve married someone instead of staying single!”

Scarlett explained, “Even if she thinks like a normal person, her children’s father is Alaric. How could she possibly give up on a man with such a high status?”

Claudia was confused. “Then why did she agree on going abroad for five years if she didn’t want to give up on him?”

“You have a point. Who would’ve thought she’d kept her promise? Whatever. It doesn’t matter. We can’t change the fact she gave birth to his children and still managed to turn his head even after five years. Fixing your relationship with Alaric is what matters. It’s best to get pregnant with his child as soon as possible.”

“But he doesn’t even want to talk to me anymore.”

“I’ll create opportunities for you. Just follow my order.”

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Watching her mother on the screen, Claudia eventually nodded.

It was late at night, but the lights in Alaric's study room were still on.

He leaned over the table with a pen in his hand. Ideas were written all over the papers before him. He even added the basic outline of the house in his notes.

His usually tidy and clean table was a mess, but he paid no mind to it as he was focusing on the designs.

He didn't realize that the time flew when his mind was occupied by something else.

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The first ray of sunlight already appeared in the sky when Alaric finally decided to call it a day. His eyes were bloodshot after an all-nighter.

He didn't sleep at all. Even so, he was motivated, not feeling tired at all.

He glanced at his watch. Victoria and the kids must be sleeping at this hour.

Therefore, Alaric put away the designs he did overnight in a safe place. He thought the designs have room for improvement. After that, he got up to shut the window, so the wind wouldn't blow the designs off.

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After that, he double-checked the designs to ensure they were in a safe place before going into the bathroom to get washed.

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He threw himself into designing the house right after he came home last night without taking time to complete the other tasks. He didn't even have time to bathe.

I need to make myself presentable before meeting up with her.

Victoria didn't sleep well last night. She woke up with dark circles under her eyes.

The recent events drained her energy, and she looked like she lost a lot of weight over

the last few days. It was shown in her sharper jawline.

She woke up to the tingling pain around the wound on her forehead.

Even though the results showed that she was fine, she was still in pain, especially since

she woke up this morning. The pain from her wound was stronger than before.

Victoria tried to recall when she sat up in her bed. Did I get my wound wet in the shower yesterday? Did I get reinfection?

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Her walk to her wardrobe was interrupted by severe pain in her head. It vanished before she could tell what happened.

At the same moment, a memory from her childhood flashed in her eyes.

It happened in a split second. She barely made out the blurry image. I'm crying for help in a river. The water is almost drowning me.

The memory was new to Victoria.

She searched in her mind for it, but she had no idea such a thing happened to her in the past. But I was a child at that time. Could it be that I was...

A thought suddenly struck her.

Once, she got sick after falling into the water when she was a child. After that, she even forgot about something. Could it be my lost memory?

Putting her hand on her temple, Victoria lightly shook her head.

After she recovered, she tried to recall how she fell into the water but to no avail. She didn't even know how she was rescued. People only found her passing out at the riverside. Fortunately, her classmates arrived in time, or else she would've fallen into

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the river again.

After she got home, she was bedridden with a serious fever for a long time. When she finally recovered, she couldn't remember anything.

It seems like my memories are coming back.

What's wrong with me? Did I regain my memory just because I hit my head? But why isn't it more detailed?

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However, Victoria could only recall that little bit. Whenever she tried to delve deeper, her mind would go blank, and she couldn't remember anything else. With that, she was lost in thought for a long time as she sat on the edge of the bed, but that image was the only thing that came to her mind. In the end, she reluctantly gave up and got up when she noticed that the sun had risen. When she left the room, she happened to encounter both of her children who had walked out after getting themselves dressed.

Good habits should be developed from a young age. So, Victoria had taught both of them to prepare the clothes they would wear tomorrow morning in advance. That way, when they woke up and got out of their beds the next day, they would get changed without procrastinating or they would run the risk of catching a cold. At first, the two children struggled to maintain such a habit, but they were able to do it well after they got used to it.

However, since the weather had turned cold, Victoria couldn't help but be worried for them, so she walked up to check if they were sufficiently layered up. They could easily catch a cold if they wore too little since children normally had weak immune systems

whenever the seasons would change, and it would be awful to their bodies if they got sick. Nonetheless, she was relieved as soon as she confirmed that the two little ones were dressed warmly.

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“Mommy.” Nicole suddenly tugged at Victoria’s finger and asked, “Mommy, can we have waffles for breakfast today?”

Victoria paused for a moment at her suggestion and then said, “Alright, Mommy will make them for you.”

“No, I don’t want Mommy’s. I want the ones sold by street vendors,” Nicole pleaded softly while hugging her arm.

Victoria was puzzled upon hearing that. “Why do you want to eat from street vendors? Is Mommy’s cooking not tasty?”

Nicole pursed her lips and didn’t speak after hearing that, but Nathan, who was standing beside her, said, “Mommy, she just wants to eat junk food sold outside which includes waffles, hot chocolate, and churros sold on the street.”

“Nathan!!”

Victoria was speechless after hearing what Nathan said. Aha.

It was quite simple to make just the waffles. She could also make hot chocolate and even churros, but it was a bit late for all these right now. Normally, Victoria wouldn’t even bother considering allowing the children to eat these things, but when she was

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faced with Nicole’s piteous gaze... She could only nod in resignation. “Let’s go.”

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The three of them left the house after putting on their outerwear. While they were on their way down to the lobby, Victoria thought that since she had made things clear to Alaric at the hospital yesterday, he probably wouldn't show up today. Alas, she was lost in her thoughts when she heard the two children calling out, "Mr. Night."

As soon as she snapped out of it, she saw Alaric walking toward her with large strides, and he instinctively took the two children's school bags from her hands. Victoria reflexively tightened her grip on the bag straps. Naturally, he felt the resistance, so his gaze paused on her for a moment, but the next second, he effortlessly took the bag from her grip.

"Why are you here?" Victoria bit her lip and asked in a lowered voice.

"To show you the design plan."

"Design plan?" Victoria was puzzled and wasn't sure what he wanted to show her that early in the morning.

"Yes, let's discuss it in the car." With that, Alaric walked away with the school bags, while both children followed suit.

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She stood in place as she watched the scene in front of her as she didn't expect him to be so persistent. However, based on her impression of him, Alaric had always been pestering her. When they were young, if the two had a quarrel and she ignored him, he would block her in the forest while she was on her way to school. He would stretch out his long arms to block her way and glare at her fiercely.

"Didn't you hear me call you this morning?" She was so furious that she refused to answer.

“You sure are something, Ms. Snowball. You’ve now learned to ignore me?”

Victoria raised her head and said stubbornly, “So what if I ignore you? Who do you think you are? Are you some big shot? Must I answer you just because you called me?” She then angrily pushed him away, but after taking a few steps, he caught her wrist tightly and pulled her back.

“Don’t think of running away. Let’s make things clear.” If he didn’t intercept her at school,

he would definitely go to her house. Because they knew each other since young, whenever he arrived at her house, the household servants would naturally let him in with a smile, even though Victoria kept telling the butler not to bother.

The butler would always smile and say, “Miss Victoria, did you and Mr. Cadogan quarrel again? It’s normal for children to quarrel. You’ll make up later.”

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“In his dreams! I won’t be friends with him anymore. You shouldn’t let him in, or I’ll be angry.”

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“Please open the door and let me in, or she will remain upset until the end of the month.” At that time, the butler had always favored Alaric. He would open the door immediately upon Alaric’s request. Victoria always suspected that the butler had been bribed by Alaric.

“Mommy?” Victoria snapped out of her reverie as soon as she heard her child’s voice and realized that she had been standing still for some time. The two children had already got into the car, so she had no choice but to walk over.

After she got in the car, she deliberately chose a place far away from Alaric. Of course,

Alaric noticed but he merely calmly withdrew his gaze.

“You’re up so early. Have you had breakfast?”

“Mr. Night, Mommy is taking us to eat waffles.”

Waffles? Alaric furrowed his eyebrows imperceptibly, “Are you getting it from the roadside stalls?”

“Yes!” Perhaps he also found it unbelievable as he cast a strange look at Victoria.

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Victoria originally wanted to ignore him, but she thought of something after noticing his peculiar gaze, and said, “What? Are you embarrassed to eat waffles at a stall?” After she said that, she sized him up and continued, “Indeed, you don’t look like someone who would eat waffles at roadside stalls. Should we get out of the car then?”

“No.” Alaric quickly pressed her knee. Such physical intimacy would have been seen as crossing the line since both of them were divorced but surprisingly, Victoria didn’t think that there was something wrong with it.

“As long as it’s what you and the children want to do, no matter what it is, I can do it.”

“Is that so?” Victoria sneered sarcastically, “Mr. Night, you don’t have to lower your standards.”

The use of the title ‘Mr. Night’ made Alaric furrow his brows. “Victoria, don’t call me by that name anymore,” he said.

“Why? Didn’t you choose that name yourself? Why shouldn’t I call you by that name?”

“You know my real name.”

“That so?” Victoria looked out the window indifferently.

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Alaric pursed his lips and didn't say anything. Instead, he handed her the stack of design drafts that he had stayed up all night to complete. “Have a look.”

7/7

Since they were currently having a business collaboration, Victoria assumed it was work-related and didn't refuse. She reached out and took it without hesitation. At the same time, she wondered if he would always use work as an excuse to approach her. I wonder what sort of nonsense he could make up. How long can he do it for? Victoria was surprised after flipping through the pages. She was somewhat astonished because she initially thought it was work-related, but it turned out to be architectural designs and they were exactly like what he had mentioned before he left last night.