

Departure with a Belly Chapter 16

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“Now that you put it that way, it makes sense.”

“It is a fact, to begin with. What young mistress would work as a secretary?”

“But I don’t get it. Why a fake marriage?”

“I’m sure there’s a reason. Word is that Miss Selwyn and Mr. Cadogan grew up together. Back then, when the Selwyns went bankrupt, Mr. Cadogan started dating her probably because he wanted to help her out. I mean, look at it. Is there anyone who dares bully Miss Selwyn now?”

“Is that so? Well, Mr. Cadogan sure is a great guy.”

“I even heard that Mr. Cadogan has been waiting for Claudia Johnson’s return all these years. I swear, only our boss is that loyal.”

As the people gossiped, Victoria stood behind them and listened instead of stepping away. She looked calm on the surface, as though she was not the topic of their gossip.

Soon, Noel pulled over at the entrance and rolled down the window, revealing his dashing looks. “C’mon, get in.”

Just like that, Victoria entered his car under everyone's gazes, and it was not after the vehicle had gone far that the people who gossiped came to themselves.

"That was... Miss Selwyn, wasn't it?"

"I think so."

"Then, do you think she heard what we said earlier?"

"So what if she did? We're not the ones who spread the rumor. We heard from them. Besides, there's no wrong with what we've said. Are we not

telling the truth? Otherwise, why wouldn't she correct us? She must be hiding something."

"She probably didn't know how to either. After all, that woman was sitting in Mr. Cadogan's car when he passed by."

The group continued gossiping as they looked at the car which had already gone far.

Meanwhile, Victoria rolled the window up impassively and watched the retreating trees and buildings with an extremely heavy heart as the employees' heated gossip replayed in her head, as well as... the black Cayenne that flashed past them.

"What's up? You look distracted," Noel asked when he noticed her

glumness.

Victoria came to her senses at that and pulled a forced smile. "It's nothing.

Might just be the after-effects of being sick."

He sighed in response. "You... How long were you going to keep it from me?"

His words rendered her frozen.

"What are you talking about?"

What have I kept from him? Can he possibly have found out that I'm pregnant? But who was it who told him? The only one who knows I'm pregnant is Summer, other than the doctors at the hospital.

Of course, she ruled out the possibility at once.

Because of her, Summer and Noel knew each other as well and kept an

amicable relationship. Both she and Summer thought of Noel as a big brother figure, but Summer would never reveal anything about her to him.

Hence, what he knew might not be her pregnancy.

"Why didn't you tell me Claudia has returned?" he asked moments later.

Victoria froze for a second upon hearing his question. He was not talking

about her pregnancy.

In truth, she had become jumpy for the past two days because of her pregnancy. At that, she breathed a sigh of relief and monotoned. “What does her return have to do with you?”

Her words rendered him speechless, and he gazed at the young woman helplessly. Had he not known her well, he would have likely assumed she was retorting him.

“You’re right. It doesn’t, but what about you? Does it have nothing to do with you too?”

Victoria fell silent at that, and Noel continued, “I already know you two were a no-show when you first started dating him. Especially when you

know what he said, but you still...” The man left his words hanging, but his tone and emotions were enough to convey his message.

He was disappointed in her.

On the other hand, she was glad that he did not know about her pregnancy, or his tone would be even more awful than it was now.

Perhaps because she was mostly silent, Noel said nothing more after that.

After taking her to a restaurant and ordering their lunch, he told Victoria,

“Wait for me here. I’ll be back in ten.”

“Alright.” She nodded, having no energy to bother with what he was up to.

Ten minutes later, he returned with a bag of stuff.

“Here, take this.”

“What is it?”

“Medicine.” He revealed. “You’re sick, aren’t you? You’re already a grown woman. You should keep some regular medicine with you at all times, no? You can pop one in whenever you don’t feel well.”

“But I’m already fine.” She fell into somewhat of a trance as she looked at the bag of items.

“Keep it for next time, then.”

“Okay.”

With that, she put the bag away. In it was a comprehensive pile of regular pills.

“Thanks, Noel.”

“Don’t mention it.” He poked her head. “Don’t shut me out, okay? Tell me if

you're met with whatever trouble."

"Got it."

Subsequently, the two fell silent and ate their lunch quietly.

Moments later, Noel could not resist asking, "You've already met Claudia, haven't you?"

Victoria's hands froze for a split second before she nodded. "Yeah."

"So, what is she trying now, coming right for Alaric as soon as she comes back? She wants to rekindle their love?"

'Rekindle their love' sounded like nails on a chalkboard for Victoria as she corrected. "Not rekindling. What real relationship did they have from the start?"

Sure, Alaric had said what he had said, but the two were not seeing each other at the time.

Speaking of which, Victoria never understood this.

How come the two never dated back then? By right, the two would have become a couple when he declared that the spot next to his would forever be Claudia, who was also in love with him!

Then again, it was useless even if she figured it out now.

"Already defending him?"

Noel could not help but quirk an eyebrow, leading the young woman to purse her lips and mumble, "I'm just stating a fact."

He's already brought her to the office and even let others badmouth you. yet you're still defending him?" he argued with deeply furrowed brows.

What was it that he overheard at the office pantry this morning?

"You guys have heard about it, haven't you? Mr. Cadogan's rightful girlfriend has returned."

"Rightful girlfriend? Isn't Mr. Cadogan already married? What rightful girlfriend are you talking about?"

"The marriage is fake, of course. If it's real, would Mr. Cadogan be willing to let his wife work as a secretary? This one is the real deal. Word is that she had saved Mr. Cadogan once. Plus, she's from an affluent family and has

finally returned from studying abroad. She and Mr. Cadogan are the real perfect match."

"What? If she's seeing Mr. Cadogan, what about Miss Selwyn?"

"Are you even hearing yourself? What else can she do other than to go back to her rags when she fails to go from rags to riches?!"

Those words had probably ticked their funny bones as everyone in the

pantry guffawed uncontrollably.

Meanwhile, Noel, who was standing outside, clenched his mug grimly.

Does she have to do with Victoria's sudden illness? Or else, how can it be so coincidental?