

## Departure with a Belly Chapter 4

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Victoria helplessly objected, "I'm not completely drenched despite the rain.

Moreover, I'm fine." She then walked over to Alaric's desk and placed the report for yesterday on it. "This is yesterday's summary. I've sorted it up.

Now, I have work to do, so I'll leave the two of you to your reunion."

She glanced at Claudia, who immediately smiled at her.

When she left, Alaric was frowning hard.

"Alaric?"

He only snapped out of his thoughts when Claudia called out to him.

His reaction confused her, but she sounded kind and caring when saying,

"Victoria doesn't look so well. She might be your secretary now, but she

used to be the precious daughter of the Selwyns before they went

bankrupt. You cannot be too hard on her."

Too hard on her? Alaric internally laughed. Who could be hard on that

woman?

However, he did not say any of that; instead, responding with a grunt of acknowledgment.

Meanwhile, Victoria shuffled back to her office with heavy feet and a heavy head. As soon as she sat down, she could not help but slump over her desk. Suddenly, her head was spinning hard.

She lost track of time until she finally heard Yasmin's voice.

"Victoria, why don't you go home and rest?"

At that moment, Victoria felt so lethargic and sick that her only response was, "Yasmin, let me sleep for a while." Following that, she immediately fell into a deep sleep.

She had a dream in which she was eighteen again. On that day, she and

Alaric had their coming-of-age celebration. So, their families decided to co-host the party. That evening, she specifically put on her favorite blue dress, curled her hair, and had her nails done. She planned to confess her love to him.

After a long, fruitless search, she located him in the garden. As she walked over to him, she heard his friends teasing him.

“You’re an adult now, Al. Are there any girls you like? Maybe you can get engaged,” one of them said.

“Victoria’s quite nice. She’s always hanging around you,” another said.

When Victoria heard that, she instinctively stopped walking, wanting to listen to what Alaric had to say. After all, his answer was vital to what she would do next.

However, she did not hear his response as someone spoke up first.

“Victoria is impossible. Al only sees her as his little sister. Everyone knows

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the only one in his mind is Claudia.”

Claudia...

Then, Victoria snuck a glance at Alaric.

That evening, Alaric sat on the stone bench, his legs so long that they barely touched the ground. He had a faint smile and didn’t object to what they said.

“Indeed. Claudia is more feminine, gentle, and beautiful, but Victoria is only a little girl. Moreover, Claudia is Alaric’s savior.” The boy who spoke was Bane Morison, one of Alaric’s best friends. He loved teasing Victoria. Every time they met, he would insist on pulling on her pigtails.

He was also one of the people Victoria hated the most. I'm not a little girl!

"That's right," one of Alaric's friends said. "The waters were so dangerous back then. If she had not jumped down to save you, Alaric Cadogan might not be alive today."

Alaric nodded. Finally, there was a response from him as he hummed in agreement.

Under the moonlight, his face looked very calm. "The spot beside me will always be hers."

Suddenly, Victoria's heart literally shattered in two when she heard that.

She stood there dumbfounded as the blood drained from her face, turning her skin stark white. However, she did not expect her confession would be rejected before it was even given.

Claudia had saved Alaric's life, and everyone was talking about it.

Customarily, heroes would rescue damsels in distress. In the case of Alaric

and Claudia, however, a young woman came to the rescue of a man.

On the other hand, Victoria was not aware of the matter.

She had also fallen into the river, resulting in a high fever. When she finally woke up, she had forgotten about the events and had no idea how or why she had fallen into the river. One of her classmates said she accidentally fell in because she was too playful.

However, it always felt like she had forgotten something. Unfortunately, try as she might, she could not remember anything about it. As time went on, she completely forgot about it.

Still, Victoria did not expect Alaric to be obsessed with the person who saved him.

It would have been great if I had been the one to save him.

Her dream self's emotions seemed to merge with her current emotions.

At that moment, her heart felt like it was weighed down by a boulder. Her head throbbed, and she mused, Why wasn't I the one who rescued him back then? If only... If only...

Suddenly, Alaric appeared before Victoria in the dream. His eyes were cold and emotionless. "Abort the baby, Victoria."

Meanwhile, Claudia stood beside him, her vine-like arms wrapped around

his side.

“Are you keeping the baby because you want to ruin our love, Victoria?”

she asked.

When he heard the word ‘ruin,’ his eyes went colder. He stepped forward and grabbed Victoria’s chin. “Behave, or I will make my move.”

His grip was so hard that it felt like he would shatter her jaw.

She struggled arduously but eventually woke up from the dream, her body

drenched in a cold sweat.

As soon as her eyes opened, she saw a busy highway outside the window.

Is it... a dream? Why does it feel so real?

Then, she heaved a sigh.

“Oh, you’re awake, Victoria.” Hearing the soft voice coming from ahead, she looked up to find Claudia staring at her worriedly. “Thank goodness. I was so worried something had happened to you.”

Why is she here? Realization soon struck Victoria. She turned to look at the driver. It was Alaric, and Claudia was sitting in the passenger seat.

When he heard Victoria had woken up, he glanced at her in the rearview mirror.

“You’re up. What hurts? Tell the doctor everything when we’re at the hospital.”

Victoria’s heart had been pounding hard from her nightmare. She had finally calmed her heart down, but what he said made it race again from anxiety. “No. I don’t need to go to the hospital. I’m fine.”

He shot her another look when he heard that. “Why are you causing a fuss? Don’t you know you have a fever?”

“Yes, Victoria, you are burning up really badly. You have to go to the hospital,” Claudia said in agreement. “Al said you got wet walking home in the rain yesterday. What happened?”

What happens? Victoria stared at Claudia. Her pale lips moved, but she ultimately said nothing. She was definitely present for yesterday’s prank.

Why else would she inquire if not to imply something?

After a moment of thought, Claudia’s face turned worried as she guiltily asked, “Is it because yesterday—”

“Anyway, we’ll be going to the hospital first,” Alaric interrupted in his deep

and steady voice. “Rest for the next few days until you get better. You don’t need to head into the office during this time.”

Then, Claudia shot him a puzzled look for his interruption.

Meanwhile, Victoria lowered her eyes as a spine–chillingly icy look flashed in her beautiful eyes. He is very protective of the person for whom he cares the most.

It took a few long minutes before she finally looked up and responded, “I won’t go to the hospital.”

He frowned. Today, she seems incredibly stubborn.

“What’s your plan? How can you not go to the hospital when you’re sick?”

“I know my body,” she shot back with pursed lips.