

## Departure with a Belly Chapter 12

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Summer initially thought Victoria's reaction was oddly calm, but after hearing the name 'Claudia', Vienna froze silent.

"I—I thought she'd never come back," she said after taking a long time to come to her senses.

For a moment, neither said anything.

Before the Selwyns had gone bankrupt, Summer, being Victoria's best friend, hung out with Victoria for a long time in the elite circle. Hence, she naturally knew that people loved talking about how Claudia saved Alaric. Plus, the two were a good-looking pair, and things could've ended up well too, but as Victoria's best friend, Summer's heart still ached for Victoria. Too bad too many crushes go unrequited and even die off silently in the end. Summer bit her lip and felt indignant for her friend.

"Actually, so what if she comes back at this time? I wouldn't back out if I were you. She and Alaric were never together in the first place. Besides, you two are already married, and you're now even pregnant. I swear the sky will fall before Alaric tells you to drop the baby!"

“Then you probably don’t know him well enough,” said Victoria, who had been silent all this while. After saying that, she looked up, causing Summer’s eyes to widen with incredulity. “What do you mean? He didn’t... Did he really?!”

“He will,” Victoria affirmed.

“That means you haven’t told him about it, have you?” Summer countered.

“How are you so certain he will?”

At that, Victoria pursed her lips and answered, “I’ve already sounded him out.

“You...” Summer instantly became disappointed in her friend. “What is that going to achieve? As if theory and practice are the same! You should tell him now. Say you’re pregnant. See how he reacts to it.”

Victoria fell silent in response, so Summer added, “Are you scared? Please, I swear on my life that Alaric will never tell you to drop it if he knows you’re pregnant. Wanna bet on it?”

“That’s not necessary.” Victoria shook her head after a moment of silence.

Then, she grabbed her bag and stood up. “Come on. I’ll get the bill.”

Before Summer could even react to what was happening, Victoria had

already gone to the cashier.

Livid, Summer could only grab her bag and follow her friend out.

After exiting the cafe, Summer walked beside Veronica. Seeing that the latter still had no intention of speaking up, Summer couldn't help but grab

"Victoria!"

her arm. "Victoria!"

Victoria stopped in her tracks and fixed her gaze on her best friend.

"Get a hold of yourself and trust me this once, will you? This isn't a small issue. I wouldn't be standing here and persuading you if you could drop your years of love for him. But you love him, don't you? Our happiness should lay in our own hands!"

"I..." Her words made Victoria hesitant and seeing so, Summer urged,

"Alright, let me ask you a few questions then."

"What is it?"

"People will eventually notice pregnancy with time, won't they?"

Victoria nodded.

"Then, are you worried people will notice?"

Victoria pondered and nodded again.

“There you go. Since you’re afraid people will notice, and you don’t intend to tell Alaric either, you’ll surely find a chance to drop the baby later.”

No, that’s not it. I just haven’t thought this through...

“Since you’ve already prepared for the worst, what’s there left for you to be afraid of? Won’t the worst–case scenario remain the same even if you tell him?”

“But...” Victoria’s lips trembled as her lashes fluttered. “We might still be friends if I keep this a secret, but if I tell him...”

Summer fell silent at that. Alright, I underestimated her love for Alaric.

It wasn’t until moments later that Summer sighed under her breath. “Vic, I know you love him, but has it ever crossed your mind that there’s no point in being friends if you can’t be with him? Besides, don’t you want to sound it out? Don’t you want to know if he feels the same about you? Either way, I refuse to believe he doesn’t have the slightest feelings for you seeing that he treats you so well.”

Yeah, he does treat me well, but... it’s all but a trade...

If it wasn’t that Griselda liked her and that the elder also happened to be sick, the two of them wouldn’t have gotten married at all. *To him, she was*

just a simple childhood friend.

Summer knew there was nothing she could do to persuade Victoria anymore, seeing she was still hesitant. “Anyhow, I’ve already said all I had to say. You think about the rest. It’s ultimately your *decision*, after all. There’s nothing more I can say.”

Before getting into the car, Summer still couldn’t stop herself from running back to her friend and said, “Victoria, our happiness lies in our own hands,

As lost as Victoria was still feeling right then, she smiled from the bottom of her heart and pinched Summer’s cheek. “All right, I got it. I’ll think long and hard about it.”

“Good. Go home, then. Call me if you need anything, okay?”

“Okay.”

As soon as Victoria returned to Cadogan Residence, Hector instantly approached her worryingly. “Where have you been, Mrs. Cadogan? Why have you gone out when you’re not feeling well? What if something happens to you?”

The butler’s worry touched Victoria. She thereafter reassured him, “I’m fine.”

“That’s good to hear.” Hector sized her up and finally heaved a sigh of relief after he was certain she was fine. “You should go back to rest, Mrs. Cadogan.”

“Alright.”

With that, Victoria went upstairs and returned to her room.

Silence filled the air after she closed the door with a thump. At that moment, Summer’s words rang in her ears now that she was all alone.

Our happiness lies in our own hands.

Actually, she believed in that saying; one should speak out and fight for their love. In fact, she did exactly that in the past. Hence, it was why she decided to confess her love. However, just as she was about to *do* so, she overheard Alaric saying his partner would forever be Claudia.

Forever...

She understood the concept of forever. She also knew Alaric was the kind who practiced what he preached. But...

Victoria clenched her phone.

Ever since hearing Summer’s suggestion, her greed became a vine that

had found something it could attach itself to, absorbing all the nutrients in the soil with all its might, growing rapidly.

Truth was, she actually wanted to follow Summer's suggestion and sound him out.

That said, she certainly wouldn't have the guts to tell Alaric the news right in front of him.

Perhaps... I can try texting him. He'll definitely know once he sees my text.

At that, Victoria's heart raced wildly like she had been triggered. Her hand that was clenching her phone also began trembling, so much so that she

only managed to unlock her phone via password, having failed a few times using her fingerprint.

Victoria opened up her chat history with Alaric.

Perhaps she was feeling apprehensive because she decided to open their text message history instead of using WhatsApp, the portal that they normally communicated with.

However, after she was in, she began feeling at a loss of what to do. How should she tell him about it?

It wasn't after she stared at the phone for a long time that she finally

decided to be a little more straightforward.

As Summer said, she was already prepared for the worst, so what was there for her to be fearful of?

At that, she texted, 'I'm pregnant.'

After that, she closed her eyes and sent it.