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Serena's POV

"Baby? What baby?" Calvin's eyes widen in shock at what he just heard. Serena, are you pregnant?"

"Oh, fuck," Stevie whispers under her breath, instantly regretting her slip.

Words fail me at the moment, so I simply nod, confirming Calvin's suspicions without saying a word.

Calvin sighs. "Is it Bill's child?" he asks gently.

With a heavy heart, I nod once again.

Calvin rubs his temple, his expression unreadable. It's hard to tell if he's mad, disappointed, or maybe a bit of both. "Does Bill know?" he finally asks.

"No, he doesn't know," I say quietly, looking down. I can't bring myself to

look at Calvin.

I'm worried that by keeping such a big secret, I might have just lost his friendship.

After a moment of silence, Calvin finally speaks. "You must have your reasons for not telling him. I won't say anything; it's not my place."

"Really?" I ask, surprised. It's hard to believe Calvin would keep such a huge secret from his own nephew.

"I promise. Your secret's safe with me," he reassures me.

Calvin gently guides me across a particularly bumpy section of the road. I notice he's become even more attentive and gentlemanly since finding out I'm pregnant. Despite his kindness, I can't help but

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hint of sadness in him.

Calvin is quiet as he drives us back to my apartment, lost in deep thought.

When we arrive, Stevie announces that she has to leave because she has a date. This leaves only Calvin and me at the front of my apartment.

"Thank you for all your help today, Calvin. I don't know what I'd do without you," I say.

"No big deal," Calvin responds. There's an awkwardness between us, likely because he's processing what I just revealed to him today.

"Well, I should probably go inside now," I say. "Bye."

turn and begin to climb the stairs, but Calvin gently holds my wrist, stopping me in my tracks.

"Serena, wait," Calvin says.

I turn to face him, sensing that he wants to say something. I can't help but hope that he'll finally admit what he truly feels about me.

I lock eyes with Calvin, bracing myself for whatever he's about to say next. But then, abruptly, my phone rings, slicing through the tension like a knife. I fumble for it, breaking our gaze, and answer to find Stevie on

the other end.

"Hey, I left something at your place. Mind if I swing by tomorrow to pick it up?" she asks.

I hesitate for a moment, my mind racing. "Actually, I've got a doctor's check-up scheduled for tomorrow," I explain, hoping she won't press further.

"No worries, I can give you a ride there. How's that sound?" Stevie offers.

I agree, grateful for her offer, but then she throws in a teasing comment that sends my heart into my throat. "Or maybe you want your 'boyfriend' to pick you up?" she jokes.

Panic surges through me, and I hurriedly deny it. "No, that's okay. You coming is perfect," I stammer, glancing at Calvin. I'm suddenly acutely aware of his presence next to me, even though I know he can't hear Stevie's words. My heart pounds, and I feel a flush of nervousness, wondering what he'd think if he knew what Stevie had just said.

After ending the call with Stevie, I turn to Calvin, a bit hesitant. "Is it. okay if we reschedule our dinner? I have a baby check-up tomorrow," I ask, hoping he won't mind.

Calvin nods, understandingly. "It's fine, I'm actually quite busy tomorrow too. I have a day-long meeting," he explains, then adds with a sincere tone, "Take care, you and Stevie."

I nod in appreciation. We fall into silence, each lost in our own thoughts. Then, remembering the moment before my phone rang,

I can't help but ask, "You were about to say something earlier, before Stevie called. What was it?"

Calvin pauses, then shakes his head slightly. "It's nothing, don't worry. about it," he says, but his voice lacks conviction. I can tell he's holding back, not wanting to share whatever was on his mind.

"Oh, okay," I say. There's a part of me that wants to press further, to understand what's going on in his head, but I decide to respect his wish to keep it to himself, at least for now,

Calvin glances at his watch and notes the time. "It's getting late. I better

head out," he says.

"Yeah, it is late. Thanks for everything today, Calvin," I say as I smile at him.

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"No problem, Serena. Remember, if you need anything, just call me."

"I will. Goodnight, Calvin."

"Goodnight, Serena." He gives a small wave and turns to leave, each step seeming reluctant.

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"No problem, Serena. Remember, if you need anything, just call me."

"I will. Goodnight, Calvin."

"Goodnight, Serena." He gives a small wave and turns to leave, each step seeming reluctant.

As I head upstairs, my mind replays the day's events. The reality that I'll soon be selling my jewelry in a store, all thanks to Calvin's help.

Lost in these thoughts, I'm completely taken aback when I notice a figure standing at my front door. It takes me a moment to recognize him

it's Bill, looking somewhat improved from the last time I saw him, his cast now removed.

"Fuck, Bill! You scared me," I exclaim, my heart racing from the surprise.

Seeing Bill initially makes me nervous. Did he see Calvin drop me off? But then I remind myself, we're divorced, so it really shouldn't matter. Why are you here, Bill?" I ask.

Bill doesn't really answer my question. Instead, he hands me a check for \$10 million dollars. "Here, take this."

"What the hell is this?" I ask, offended.

"All I'm asking is for you to stay away from my uncle, that's it. I can give you more money than he can," he says, as if that would solve everything.

Hearing this, I feel annoyed and a little hurt. Bill always acts like I'm just after money, which is so unfair.

"You don't get it," I tell him, frustrated. "You always think so little of me."

Bill looks a bit surprised by my reaction. "I didn't mean it that way," he says, trying to backpedal.

"Well, what do you really want, Serena?"

I don't hesitate with my answer. "I want you to stay away from me, Bill. That's all I want."

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I tear the check into pieces and throw them at him, hoping this makes it crystal clear that I won't be swayed by his money.

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