

What Happens In Vegas - Free Novel by C. Qualls

Chapter 19

Shannon's article hit the news stands and garnered a lot of attention. Just in time too. Two more articles popped up the same day as hers, but with her references, the other two were discredited. She stated clear facts and interviewed Corey, Gerry, and Mrs. Harvey to support her claims. The reporter of the first article was found to be a "special friend" of Ms. Cavanagh. Because he pissed off the wrong person, namely Fredrick, the reporter was fired and Shannon got the job. The other two articles ended up having a drop in company sales for the week. The gossip around the office died quickly after the catty girl got fired. No one wanted to insult the bosses. I continue to do my work like I normally would.

Fredrick and I have an OB appointment today. It's my first visit and I am really nervous. Fredrick found the best Obstetrician in the state and set up the appointment. He doesn't want the media to know about the baby, so we make a stop at a nearby parking garage. Corey is waiting for us in one of Fredrick's lesser known vehicles, the Lexus. It's so pretty. Corey is a good driver, but on occasion, he has a habit of taking weird routes to get where we're going. Today is no different.

We arrive at the doctor's office and I'm so confused. There is no one around. It's like a ghost town when we walk in. "Where is everyone?"

Fredrick holds my hips from behind me and whispers in my ear. "I made the arrangements so we can control the number of people that are aware of your pregnancy." The only one here is a nurse. She greets us and shows us to a room. She takes my vitals and has me follow her to another room with a tilted exam bed thing and a giant television screen. She asks me to get undressed from the bottom down and gives me a paper sheet. I'm waiting on the exam bed when there is a knock on the door. I'm expecting the nurse, but Fredrick surprises me when he walks in along with the nurse. I'm glad he's here. He's like a rock I can always lean on, especially in my most nerve wracking situations.

"Alright, sweetie we're going to do an ultrasound and see if we can find a heartbeat." This ultrasound isn't like what you see on TV, where they put a wand on the belly. No, this is called a trans vaginal ultrasound. The nurse puts a condom on a stick and squeezes gel on the tip. "Okay, deep breath sweetie. Fredrick is at my side, holding my hand, as she inserts the probe. Can you

say awkward. The screen goes black and white. There's a small area that's black, and in the middle is a white little dot, it looks like a little gummy bear. "That's your baby. You're 6 weeks and 5 days. Let's see if we can get a heart beat, it might be a little early though." She presses on the buttons, then nothing. "Still just a little too early. We'll get it next time." The nurse hands Fredrick a picture of my gummy bear then let's me get dressed.

Fredrick's POV

Julia enters the room and I can't look at her. Six, almost seven weeks. She told me she was a virgin and that I took it from her. How can that be? She was so sincere when she told me, how could I not believe her. Six weeks pregnant. There must be a mistake. I saw her innocence. I felt her innocence. Six weeks? Did she play me? It has to be someone else's baby. I'm crushed. My beautiful, perfect wife. The only person in this world I truly care about, is not what I thought, and it is killing me. It hurts so much. She betrayed me. How can I live with her now? I care about her so much, how can I live without her? We made a deal, so I'm not backing out of it, but how can I ever trust her again? My heart sinks in my chest and my hands are sweating. Doctor Burns enters the room right behind her. "Mrs. Draven everything looks good. We will see you once a month until you get to 28 weeks, then we'll start seeing you more often. I'll write a prescription for prenatal vitamins. I recommend taking them at night, they tend to make morning sickness worse. Next visit we'll take some blood work. Sound good?"

I can't hold back. I have to addresses the doctor. I have to make it clear that I know she lied to me. "I have one question. The timing doesn't line up. We've only been together a month and she was a virgin. How can she be 6 weeks?"

Doctor Burns nods. "Yes, that can be confusing. The date is based on her last menstrual cycle, not the date of conception. We kind of skip over that period of time."

I look at Julia and exhale a breath that was caught in my throat. She didn't lie. She didn't play me. Everything I've felt was real. Every touch, every smile was genuine. My heart beats fast. I am so relieved. It is my baby. My Julia is carrying my baby. I hold up the picture in my hand and can't help but smile. It's my baby, and everything is right in the world. I kiss her head and take her hand. My beautiful, innocent wife.

She hasn't spoken a word since the doctors office. I wonder if she knows I didn't believe her. Damn, I'm an ass. She has always been honest with me. She takes a breath. "Fredrick, you..."

I cut off her words before she can say anything more. "Julia. I'm sorry. I doubted you back there. When the nurse said your gestational age, I was crushed. I thought the worst of you. My mind went to places it should not have. You are the best person I've ever known. I'm so sorry."

She takes my hand. "I understand. I was confused too. I'm glad you asked. And thank you for acknowledging your mistake. You know, it could've turned out really bad between us if you hadn't said anything to the doctor."

I kiss her hand. "You really are an amazing woman. The best wife ever." I love my Julia. It took me until now to realize it. The thought of not having her almost killed me. Why did it take me so long to figure it out? How could I have doubted her? How could I have doubted my love for her. I know she loves me wholeheartedly. There is no question of it. She shows me every single moment of every single day. My heart beats faster as my revelation takes hold of me. I want to hear her say it. "Tell me you love me."

She squeezes my hand. "You first."

I knew she would say that. If that's the way it has to be, I'll wait until the perfect moment. If I have to say it first to get her to say it, I will. I kiss her hand then tickle her leg. "What's for dinner, my pregnant wife?"

She giggles and pushes my hand away to stop the tickling. "I could go for a some pasta."

I nod my head. "Italian it is."

She finishes every bite of her dish and still orders a tiramisu. She offers to share with me, but I'm full. She shrugs her shoulder. "Your loss."

Every time she takes a bite, she savors the flavors. I steal a bite. It tastes better than the last time we had one together. "What is in this, it tastes different?" I take another bite and slowly savor the flavors.

She giggles. "They put amaretto in it. Good, huh."

I nod and take another bite, savoring it as well. I wash it down with her water. My drink would clash with the flavor. I stopped drinking alcohol outside of home. With Julia and my baby in the car, I'm carrying precious cargo. She finishes her dessert, but I want one more taste. I trace my tongue along her lips. She opens up and massages my tongue with her own. "Delicious. I'm in the mood to taste you now."

She giggles, then stands up. "Let's hurry home then."

Things have been pretty normal for the past month. We made a second trip to the doctor and we were able to hear the heartbeat. It was so fast and sweet. Julia still gets morning sickness, which is actually an all day thing. The doctor said it would start to ease once she hits the second trimester. Tacos aren't as high up on her food list anymore, which is a huge relief for me. Junk food, ugh. She still can't stand the smell of coffee and now perfume, cigarette smoke, and anything in the Asian food category makes her sick. Mornings are even worse for her. She sometimes needs a third alarm to get out of bed, third alarm being me kissing her until she finally drags herself out of bed. But even with all that, she is still radiant as ever. I have a hard time peeling my eyes away from her, even with her tiny paunch that is just being to form. I love her so much.

It's Friday afternoon. She's writing on a piece of paper, then crossing the words out. I lean against the wall behind her and just watch her for a minute. "Hey, sexy mama."

She nearly jumps out of her chair. Her hand goes to her very alluring chest. "Damn it Fredrick, you scared the crap out of me."

I chuckle in amusement. "Sorry. I need you in my office, please."

She stands up. "Of course." She follows behind me, I just know she's taking the opportunity to check out my ass. I peer over my shoulder just to check. Her eyes are definitely looking lower. I smile to myself.

She sits in her usual place on the sofa. I sit in front of her on the coffee table so I can speak to her face to face. "I just hired a new guard. I'm going to get more because I want you to have a team of your own. You can pick who you want, but Corey will head them up."

She gives me a look of confusion. "Why do I need a team of bodyguards?"

Shelby has been pretty active lately. She's been following Julia a lot, almost to the point of stalking. Julia is in danger, but I don't want to scare her. "We still haven't figured out who killed my father, which means he could still be working for Baker or even Ms. Cavanagh." Which is a huge concern of mine, one that causes extra stress. I continue to explain the situation. "Kyle has been keeping an eye on her since we were in Vegas. She has been meeting with some pretty shady people, and has been following you on a few occasions. Corey and I agree that she may have a vendetta against you. We're concerned for your safety."

I send for my bodyguards, with the exception of the new guy Miguel, Corey and Jesse. I don't want Jesse near Julia right now because he's been screwing up a lot more. He's been coming to his shifts late and giving the others attitude, but I'm not ready to cut ties with him yet. I feel like there is something going on in his personal life that he has yet to work through. He's awkward when he's around me, but he's attentive otherwise. I feel like I should keep my eye on him.

The guys all file in and stand at attention like soldiers. "Gentlemen. I've asked you all up here because Julia will be selecting her body guards. Once she chooses four of you, I will fill you in on why she is in need of your protection." I sit at my desk and nod at her to make her choices.

"Wow, thanks Fredrick. You really put me on the spot here. It's like picking teams in middle school." The guys all laugh. Not one of them has a problem with her, they all like her. "Well first, Kyle you already have something going on, so I'm not going to keep you from it." I nod to Kyle and he exits. Julia stands up. "Any volunteers?" She asks timidly. "Guys, please relax, I can't handle the whole drill sergeant vibe I'm getting right now." They all laugh, but relax.

James steps forward. "Ms. Jules, I volunteer as tribute." Julia laughs, but I have no idea why it's so funny. Two of the guys hold up three fingers and I am lost, while they are all cracking up.

"Alright, James you got it. And you're Ivan and... Anthony, right? Okay one more. James is there anyone you work the best with?"

He shakes his head. "No, Ms. Jules. My partner was already dismissed."

I raise my eyebrow. I thought there was something going on between him and Kyle.

She continues. "What about you two? I need one more guy. Anthony tilts his chin toward Li and he steps up. "I work with Anthony a lot, Ms. Jules. We can read each other pretty well." He's not kidding. Those two are a lethal team. I'm very relieved by her choices, not that any of them are bad choices.

I kiss Julia and let her get back to work. I then excuse the guards that were not chosen. "Guys please have a seat while I fill you in." I retrieve a file and pass it around. It contains the information retrieved by Kyle about Shelby Cavanagh and the people she has been dealing with. The men quickly understand the seriousness of their assignment. "On top of this, Julia is pregnant. That information does not leave this room." They each nod their understanding. "Work with Corey in setting up shifts. He is already privy to this information and Julia is comfortable with him." We go over some details then I dismiss them before I get back to work.

Julia's POV

The gala is next week and I am so excited! Shannon and I are trying to find the perfect gowns and accessories. Corey drives while James rides shotgun. I like James. He's really funny and laid back. His gray eyes offset high cheekbones and full, pouty lips. His chocolate skin is dark and creamy, but not as dark as Darius. He likes to crack dad jokes at random times.

We've been inside three stores already and nothing has really stood out for either of us. I take a break at a nearby bench in front of a display window when James stops us. "Ms. Shannon, I believe I found the one for you. Corey you stay here. Don't ruin the surprise." Corey rolls his eyes, but takes position at the doorway. James leads us to the back of the store to the most beautiful dress. It's an Andrea and Leo strapless tulle ball gown in a light sage color. I must say, it is gorgeous. Shannon tries it on and it's a perfect fit. The flowers and leaves make her look like an elf queen, especially with her sharp features. Her red locks partner with the color of the gown perfectly.

We look around at three more stores before I decide I'm done. There were some beautiful gowns, but nothing seemed right. We find a pair of silver shoes and accessories to go with Shannon's dress and call it a night. I am exhausted. I hug her and Corey goodnight and have James drive me home. "Mrs. Bailey, where is Fredrick?"

She smiles and welcomes me home. "Good evening, miss. Sir is in the garage." I thank her and head downstairs.

Fredrick has the radio playing alternative rock music as I enter. He's leaning over the side of my Bel-air. He's in a pair of faded jeans and an old t-shirt, and he is looking hot! I take a minute to enjoy the view before walking up next to him to see what he's working on. He's holding the water pump in place as he tightens the bolts. I can see new hoses connecting to the pump as well. "How did shopping go?"

I lean over the side of the car and kiss his cheek. "Shannon found a beautiful gown, but I didn't have any luck. I guess I could try to find something online."

He tightens the last bolt and stands up. "You couldn't find anything?"

I shake my head. "There were some really pretty gowns, but I didn't find the one."

He wipes his hands on a towel, then pulls me in for a greasy hug. "Leave it to me. I'll take care of it. Did you have fun at least?"

I smile. "Yeah. It was great being with Shan. I really miss hanging out with her."

Fredrick makes good on his word, as always. Friday night I come home from work to a giant box with a red ribbon bow on the bed. He leans against the doorway as I open the box. My breath catches as I pull out the most perfect gown. It's a luxurious trumpet V-neck in a navy color. It has flowery beading all over the bodice and the top of the skirt. But my favorite part is the back. It cinches up like a corset with a thick ribbon. Also in the box is a set of matching elbow gloves OMG! It's so perfect. "Fredrick! It's amazing! I even have shoes to match it." I lay the gown back in its box then turn around to him, but he's already right behind me. I wrap my arms around him and kiss his perfect lips. "Thank you so much! I absolutely love it."

Fredrick's warm eyes look deep into mine. "Tell me you love me."

I almost do, but I stop myself before saying; "you first." He smiles then kisses me before pulling me onto the bed.