

1407 CA3

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<1407/c>	same lightly amused way, as if he found her mildly diverting - the way he might feel, perhaps, about a pretty child. Somehow she did not find the comparison flattering, and with two spots of sudden colour in her cheeks she drew herself upright and thrust out her firm but fine-boned chin. 'Dr Greene must be busy, Dr Russell. I think if I can look at these notes until tomorrow,' she looked questioningly at Dr Greene, who nodded, 'I needn't take up any more of his time now.' 'That's very good, Belinda,' Tom Russell answered mildly, 'but I have a couple of other matters to discuss with him, concerning another diabetic patient. I'll only be five minutes. Would you mind waiting outside?' 'Of course not,' she said quickly, already on her way out of the room and feeling that her attempt at asserting herself had not been a success. Probably it had been foolish to try to do so. As Faye's private nurse, she would be filling an important position, and her professionalism or lack of it could make the difference between a healthy baby and another tragic loss. Still, these men held the lives of mothers and unborn babies in their hands like this every day. Perched on the edge of an upholstered beige chair outside Dr Greene's office, she felt small and insignificant and extremely chastened. It must have showed - or else Tom Russell was already far too skilled at reading her emotions - because his first words to her when they were seated in his red sports car were, 'Cat got your tongue?' 'No,' she answered in a small voice. 'I just ... don't have anything to say.' 'Really? And for that reason you're actually not saying it. What delightfully rare discrimination!' 'Oh!' she bleated, her voice high and rather indignant. 'What do you ...?' He laughed. 'Do I seem to be teasing? Perhaps I do. But I'm serious. With so many of the women I know - and the men, for that matter - the less they have to say, the more they talk. I find it maddening.' 'Yes, I suppose it must be,' she agreed. They had left the hospital grounds now, and she thought about the two suitcases in the back of the car. It hadn't taken her long to clear out her room at the nurses' home this morning, and her father had come over at lunch to take
<div data-bbox="239 683 319 840"> </div> <p>Key:</p> <p>Footprint</p> <p>ConEn1</p> <p>Footprint</p> <p>ConEn2</p> <p>Footprint</p> <p>ConEn3</p>	<p>several boxes of things</p> <p>back to his suburban home for storage. The two suitcases represented everything she thought she would need for the next seven months at the Hamiltons', and it seemed like an odd way to be taking what might be a big step in her life. She was taking eight months' leave without pay from Coronation, but in the back of her mind was the odd feeling that she wouldn't be going back, and she didn't quite know what it meant. She was still pondering this, as well as thinking about Faye Hamilton and the long difficult journey through pregnancy that lay ahead, when she became aware that Dr Russell was laughing to himself - just a quiet chuckle at first, but as he realised she was watching him and saw her bemused expression the sound grew to a full-throated and resonant guffaw. 'What is it?' she squeaked. 'You,' he managed, drawing breath with difficulty. 'Me?' 'Yes! I just gave you an extremely provocative conversational opening, and you murmured a polite nothing and let it lapse.' 'Oh, I'm sorry. Did you want to ... to discuss it?' He was still laughing.</p>

	<p>‘Actually, I thought I didn’t. I thought I’d be relieved that you didn’t have to pick my comment apart and use it as an opening for deep amateur psychoanalysis of myself, yourself, and half a dozen other people as well! But then, when you didn’t say anything at all, I found I was disappointed.’ ‘So you’ve learnt something, haven’t you?’ she retorted, daring to put some spice into it, since she felt somewhat persecuted by his teasing manner. Again, she felt she was only entertaining him as he might have been entertained by a clever child. ‘Have I?’ he asked now. ‘And what’s that?’ ‘That you’re thoroughly contrary!’ ‘Hmm ... So this is turning into amateur analysis, is it?’ ‘Only because you steered it that way,’ Belinda said crossly. ‘True,’ he mused. ‘Perhaps we were better off with silence.’ ‘I think we were!’ And then he discomfited her utterly by keeping that silence until he had turned into the Hamiltons’ driveway, switched off the engine, and opened the boot to retrieve her luggage. ‘Now,’ he said at last, hefting a suitcase in each hand without apparent effort, ‘can I leave you to unpack while I talk to Faye?’ ‘Of course. Dr Greene said you’ll</p>
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