

Art of the Con – Epilogue

By TheSpiralledEye

'It seems the grand secret to James Dubois mysterious absence from the social scene the last two seasons has finally been revealed! While rumours abounded with the disappearance of his sudden companion Kellie Lake, we here at Social Today have finally confirmed what many suspected. It seems young Dubois has finally found a girl he wants to settle down with as Miss Lake is expecting! Both have denied any comment to the press so we can only speculate that, due to the lack of a ring on Miss Lake's finger, this child was not planned. How this will impact Dubois financially and socially is yet to be determined-'

Kellie flicked off the TV with a huff, vultures. Here they were acting as if they'd made some great journalistic discovery when she was due to pop any day now. Sitting on the couch watching television was about the only thing she could do at the moment, the wonder and magic of pregnancy could only do so much when you were three days overdue and felt like a hippo.

"James!" She whinged, "Tell your kid to quit kicking my bladder and get out here already!"

James continued to read the financial digest spread out across the coffee table, looking up at her briefly with a lazy smile.

"Kid must be comfortable. You heard the doctor; we can only wait."

Kellie flopped back with a dramatic sigh. Secretly, she was glad the baby was staying put, at least for now. Things had been improving with James the last few months, they had no labels as such but he had warmed to her again. They ate together, talked constantly and the sex was fantastic. There was something deeply primal about the way he stared at her when she was riding him, belly bouncing as she rose and fell. The original agreement was that she would leave when the baby was born, sign over her parental rights and disappear back into the crowd of New York as Ken Hurley. Despite their amicable situation now, that agreement had never been rediscussed. Kellie felt nervous bringing it up at all, the idea that anything could break the fragile peace and happiness she had rediscovered terrified her.

Some nights, if James fell asleep in her bed and stayed the whole night, she liked to pretend. Imagine that this was the norm, her perfect life and partner both happily awaiting the third member of their family. The idea of going back to being Ken Hurley made her stomach tie in knots.

She had kept her promise these last few months, no lies, no deception, no clever words to hide her true intent. Kellie was the truest and most honest version of herself she had ever been and that had made her realise just how far down the rabbit hole she'd gone without realising it. Ken had

been just another mask, another character she'd played, the only difference being it was for herself rather than others. She'd been hustling so long she hadn't really ever stopped to think about who she was or what she really wanted outside of money in so long. After months of finding and being herself, she realised that Kellie Lake was a happier, more real person than Ken ever had been, despite her hardships.

"Hey, James?"

"Mhm?"

"Can we talk for a second?"

He put down the paper and turned to give her his full attention. She could see the intensity shining in those dark eyes and it bought a small smile to her face.

"Is everything okay? Are you worried about the baby?"

"No, it's not that." She bit her lip, "I was wondering, after the baby is born when I leave...I know the deal was that I would give up the Bimbathryone and become a man again so nobody would ever find me and make trouble for you."

"Yeah." His voice was thick and she watched as his adam's apple bobbed.

"Would it be okay...if I kept being a woman?" She asked before hurriedly adding, "I'll choose a different name and dye my hair and all that! I'll still be a totally different person just female."

He shuffled a bit closer on the couch, looking at her with an unreadable expression.

"Why?"

The words tumbled from her mouth; explaining her journey of self-discovery, how Kellie was more home than Ken, all of it.

“Maybe it’s the drug, I don’t know.” She admitted, “But I want to stay this way. I was never uncomfortable in my old skin but this feels...better. Right, in a way my old body never did. I just didn’t realise it because I didn’t know any different.”

Kellie stared down at her belly, hands clenched in what remained of her lap. Baring your soul to someone was never going to be easy, baring it to somebody who held not only your heart but your very fate in their palm was even more daunting. A warm hand cupped her cheek and she looked up to meet James’ gaze, it was warm and full of love; a tiny spark of hope flared to life in her chest despite her attempts to quash it.

“You really mean it.” He whispered. It was not a question.

“Yes.”

“Of course, Kellie. Stay who you are.” He licked his lips nervously, “You can stay...here. If you want. With me. And the baby.”

“And be a family?” That spark was beginning to grow.

“The three of us.” He nodded, “I know we didn’t have the most honest start but these last few months have been...good.”

“The best of my life.” Tears of happiness were beginning to prick at the corner of her eyes.

“So stay. I will have doubts, now and then.” He added seriously, “You betrayed my trust in a major way and maybe that suspicion will never fully go away, I don’t know. But I know you’ve been trying, so maybe one day it will.”

“I’ll work hard to make sure it does.”

She reached up, holding his face in her own hands and pulling him into a gentle kiss.

“I love you, James.”

“...I love you too.”

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Not once, in her entire life, did Kellie ever dream she would find herself here. She paced nervously back and forth, waiting for the music to signal her entrance. That was easier said than done though as her white gown was a constant tripping hazard. At first, she'd been hesitant to go with something so stereotypical for her wedding dress but James had convinced her.

“When else will you wear anything that extravagant?” He'd insisted, as usual he was right.

The dress she'd picked out really was something; the shimmering ballgown and tight laced bodice looked like something out of a fairy-tale, but the lowcut neckline and bare shoulders added a level of maturity and sophistication no Disney princess could hope to compare with. She couldn't wait to see his reaction, now if they'd just start-

The music!

The quiet tinkling of piano keys filtered through the door and Kellie gripped her bouquet of purple roses tightly. It was now or never. Full of nervous excitement she stepped forward as the door opened and a quiet hush fell over the crowd of socialites and friends that had gathered in the penthouse garden. Already she could see James at the other end of the red aisle and it took all her self control not to run straight for him; whoever decided walking down the aisle should be done so slowly was insane.

He looked handsome as always in his dark formal suit, their son Charlie stood beside his father in a little suit of his own waving happily. Kellie felt tears of joy misting her eyes looking at them, her two special guys. Charlie would be three soon, they planned on taking him to Paris, Kellie had insisted they needed a redo of their first trip.

“Mama!”

The crowd laughed as Charlie broke away from his father, running down the aisle to her. She laughed, throwing the bouquet into the crowd where a gaggle of ladies fought over it and scooped up her little boy. He giggled, playing with one of the diamonds hanging from her ear as she finally finished her procession. James chuckled, kissing them both on the cheek before being admonished by the celebrant.

“I haven’t said you may kiss the bride yet!”

“Can you blame me?” James teased, “Look at her.”

Kellie rolled her eyes and grinned, gently placing Charlie down to stand at her side while the celebrant cleared their throat.

“Right then. Dearly beloved we are gathered here today-“

Kellie stopped listening. Yes, this was her wedding but she knew when she had to speak, instead she focused on James’ face, the warmth of his hand in hers and the tug of her little boy’s hand on her skirt. Those were the most important things to her world now, and she had the rest of her life as Kellie Dubois, to cherish them.