

Midnight 811

Chapter 811

Downing the first glass of beer, it felt like the second and third were inevitable.

Thankfully, Dorothy had the forethought to line her stomach with some food before diving into the drinks, saving herself from the ache of an empty belly.

The vibe was high tonight, and she wasn't about to be the buzzkill.

"Excuse me, I gotta hit the restroom." Feeling slightly tipsy, Dorothy figured a splash of cold water might sober her up.

As she stepped away, Ophelia sidled up to Austin, "Uncle, did you really see Ms. Sanchez and Mr. Lopez... together?"

Austin furrowed his brow, "What are you up to now?"

"What can I be up to? Just asking! Ms. Sanchez has been around the office for a while, but I've never seen her and Mr. Lopez as an item. Plus, let's be real—if Ms. Sanchez were Mr. Lopez's girl, I would've been canned a long time ago, right?"

Austin frowned but didn't respond.

"I saw that Ms. Sanchez seems a bit sloshed today. You might wanna ask if she's got a ride home. If not, maybe you got it all wrong from the start. Mr. Lopez is the big boss of the Lopez Corporation, why would he mix business with pleasure? Or maybe he's just over her and has moved on. So why are you still treating her like royalty?"

Austin shot Ophelia a look, recalling Dorothy's admission that she and Mr. Lopez had split. Still, he put on a stern face and scolded, "Don't be nosy. Get back to your seat."

Ophelia rolled her eyes, "Pfft! I'm just looking out for you.

Returning from the restroom, Dorothy found that almost everyone was full. She barely sat down when Austin offered a smile, "Ms. Sanchez, how about I give you a lift? It's a hassle getting a cab with everyone leaving at once. You could be waiting forever."

"No, it's fine. I'll call a cab after everyone's gone. I'm not in a rush."

"Don't you need to get back to your kids?"

"Nope, they're not staying with me."

Austin's expression faltered for a moment, then he chuckled, "Oh, I see. I thought you'd be eager to get back to them! But hey, my car's empty, and you seem a bit under the weather. I'll drive you home."

"I'm good," Dorothy waved off, a touch unsteady. "Just a bit dizzy; I'll walk it off to clear my head."

"Don't be shy now!"

"Really, I'm okay. No need."

As the others began to don their coats, Austin went to settle the tab.

After paying, he turned to see Dorothy leaning on the restaurant's door handle, her cheeks flushed a deeper shade, clearly hit by the delayed punch of alcohol.

"Ms. Sanchez? Maybe I...I should just take you home after all?"

Perhaps emboldened by Ophelia's words and his own probing, Austin now felt bold enough to reach out and offer support. Otherwise, he wouldn't dare risk it.

"I'm fine, Austin. You go on ahead."

"Don't play the hero. I can't let a colleague go home alone - not on my watch as a manager. As a leader, I've got to ensure you get home safely," Austin said with a probing smile. "Ms. Sanchez, is there someone at home to take care of you?"

"I—"

Before Dorothy could reply, a towering figure approached, casting a large shadow under the ambient lights and enveloping her in darkness.

Her vision, blurred without contact lenses, couldn't make out his features. But the voice was unmistakable.

"Everett?" she called out.

Wasn't he supposed to be on a business trip in Liberty City?

Chapter 812

Austin was kinda gobsmacked when he saw Everett. withdrew his hand from supporting Dorothy.

"Mr. Lopez, I-I'm sorry, I just meant to steady Ms. Sanchez, afraid that she might fall! Now that you're here, I'll be on my way!"

He didn't dare linger another second before he bolted away.

Everett frowned, his thick brows knitting together as he looked down at the woman in his arms.

"How much have you had to drink?"

At that, Dorothy lifted her head, squinted with a smile, and gestured three with her hand, then changed it to five.

"Maybe... five drinks! Or maybe fifty! Everyone was having such a blast, and I... I was too..."

Everett sighed in resignation. Seeing her in this state, he knew walking was not an option, so he bent down and scooped her up in a bridal carry.

The sudden move startled Dorothy! She began to flail desperately, "No, no, let me down! Austin, don't touch me, put me down!"

"...Dorothy, open your eyes and look!"

Just as Everett finished speaking, Dorothy smacked him across the face.

The slap echoed through the room, turning several heads their way.

"Put me down! I want to get down!"

Everett, having received a public slap to the face, his handsome features darkened a shade as his voice grew deeper, “Dorothy! It’s me, Everett!”

“...Everett? Oh, right, Everett’s here.” Dorothy suddenly giggled for no apparent reason and wrapped her arms around his neck, “He always shows up when I need him.”

Everett widened his eyes. He really didn’t know how to deal with a drunk, so he just lengthened his stride and carried her out quickly.

Knowing Dorothy would surely want to see the kids tomorrow, which was the weekend, he hesitated but ultimately decided to take her back to the Bay Residence.

Thinking there were plenty of rooms, he just had to not touch her, he figured.

Besides, if he left her at Karen’s tiny apartment alone, he wouldn’t feel comfortable. He’d end up staying there anyway.

Upon arriving at Bay Residence with Dorothy in his arms, Langston noticed them.

“Whoa? What’s up with Mommy?”

“Yeah, Daddy, is Mommy sleeping?” Abigail sidled up too.

“She had a bit too much to drink. Let’s not disturb her, okay? She’ll play with you when she wakes up tomorrow, all right?”

Abigail and Langston both nodded, giving a thumbs up.

Everett instinctively headed towards the master bedroom, but at the door, he felt it wasn’t quite appropriate. So he turned and laid her down in the guest room.

This room was smaller than the master but still had all the necessary amenities, just never been used.

Everett was a solitary guy and not keen on visitors. Even if the visitor was Jeffrey, he still couldn’t overstay and had to scam by nightfall. So the guest room remained pristine.

“You need some hangover remedy? Are you feeling unwell?” he asked, noticing Dorothy’s furrowed brow and gently smoothing her forehead with his hand.

Dorothy shook her head, half between wakefulness and sleep.

“Then... do you wanna throw up?”

Again, a shake of the head.

Everett let out a deep breath and decided to call Kevin to bring some hangover pills, just in case she got uncomfortable in the middle of the night.

After he hung up, he turned to see Dorothy reaching out into the air from the bed.

“Everett...”

“Yeah, I’m here.”

“Everett, do you miss me?”

Chapter 813

Everett didn't give an immediate reply. He knew full well that Dorothy was tipsy. Otherwise, those words would never have slipped past her lips. But he went back anyway and took her hand in his.

"You should be asking when I don't miss you."

Dorothy on the bed scrunched her brow, unclear if she even heard him. She turned over, pulling her hand away from his grasp.

Everett stood silently by her bed for a long while before he finally switched off the light and left the room.

Outside, Abigail and Langston were wide-eyed with curiosity.

"Why'd you stop playing?" Everett walked over and ruffled their heads affectionately.

"Daddy, did Mommy fall asleep?"

"Yep."

"So where's Mommy taking us to play tomorrow?" That was typical of Abigail, who was always eager for adventure.

"Where do you wanna go, Abigail?"

Everett settled into the couch, naturally lifting his daughter into his arms and gently tousling her curls.

"The candy shop! Mommy promised to buy me a whole bunch of sweets!"

Langston put away his laptop and joined them, "Dream on! Mommy always keeps tabs on your sweets. It's not like you don't know that."

"But what if Mommy says yes?"

Everett couldn't help but give a helpless smile.

His daughter was so easy to please. A few lollipops could lead her anywhere.

"Abigail," Everett's brow furrowing slightly as he thought that over, "if you want something, you come to Daddy. Don't take anything from strangers, okay? You tell them your daddy will buy it for you."

He had to instill this lesson early to prevent his little girl from being lured away by some boy with candy in the future.

Abigail, oblivious to the deeper meaning, clapped her hands in glee. "Okay, okay! I love you, Daddy!" she exclaimed. She hugged his neck and planted several smooches on it.

"Alright, bedtime for you both! It's late." He rose from the couch, one arm holding Abigail, the other scooping up his son.

"Just a little longer!"

"No can do! You need to sleep early tonight. Daddy still has to take care of Mommy. She's alone in her room, and I'm worried."

"Oh, alright then."

...

Whenever Everett had time, he'd be the one to tuck the kids into bed.

But tonight was different. His concern for Dorothy was too strong, so after making sure the children were snug under their covers, he left the nursery.

He gently pushed open the guest bedroom door and peered towards the bed, guided by the faint nightlight.

It was empty!

He immediately strode over, flung back the covers and confirmed it: no Dorothy.

Panic-stricken, he dashed to the bathroom and found her dozing off on the toilet seat. He had no idea how long she'd been there. But seeing that she didn't throw up in the toilet, Everett carefully lifted her, wiped her mouth, and placed her back into bed.

How could he leave her like this?

With a heavy sigh, Everett grabbed his laptop from the master bedroom and set up a makeshift workspace at the desk.

Sleep was out of the question; he might as well tackle the jet lag head-on.

He was grateful to have returned to Eldorria City that day. After settling the kids, he had headed to Dorothy's apartment, hoping to catch a glimpse of her.

The place was dark, and his gut told him something was off.

A call to his company's staff revealed that the fourth project team had a team dinner that day.

Everett shuddered to think what might have happened to Dorothy if he hadn't shown up.

Chapter 814

Would she be dragged back to his place by that Austin? Just the thought alone was enough to make Everett's thick brows furrow into a scowl.

Why were there so many flies buzzing around Dorothy?

"Ugh..." The person on the bed turned restlessly and let out an uncomfortable groan.

Everett approached softly and asked, "You awake? If you can hear me, give me a sign. Drink this hangover cure, it'll make you feel better."

But Dorothy just waved him off, even going as far as to cover her face with the blanket.

"Come on, drink this and then you can get some more sleep."

Knowing she was conscious, Everett picked up the hangover cure and helped her sit up in bed.

"I don't want this..."

The hangover cure smelled awful, almost like some kind of bitter herbal concoction, so Dorothy was resisting by shoving it away firmly.

Luckily, Everett's steady grip prevented a spill.

"Just drink this, and then I'll get you some water. Hang in there."

"I said I don't want it!" Dorothy wasn't just being disobedient, she was also getting feisty, "Why are you so annoying? Get out!"

Everett was at his wits' end.

With the first attempt at administering the medicine failing, Everett had no choice but to let her lie back down and return to his laptop.

But it wasn't more than a few minutes before Dorothy sat straight up in bed with such a jolt that even Everett was taken aback. "What's wrong?"

"Who are you?" Dorothy demanded. She was pointing in random directions with her eyes still closed.

"I'm Everett."

"You're not! Everett's in Liberty City! Don't try to fool me!"

Everett rubbed his temples in frustration. If he could, he would have loved to grab her glasses from her bag and put them on her.

"I don't live in Liberty City permanently. I finished my work and came back."

Hearing this, Dorothy finally opened her eyes and squinted in his direction.

"Hey? Are you really Everett?"

"Yes, I am." He replied, turning to grab the already opened hangover cure, "Now be good and drink this, then you can go back to sleep."

"I won't be good!"

Her response was really quick. She craned her neck and showed her flushed little face, thick with inebriation.

"What will make you listen and take your medicine?"

"Prove... that you're Everett."

Everett had no such experience. He could never imagine that he needed to prove his identity one day.

"How do you want me to prove it? Shall I get your glasses for you?" Everett really did turn to search for Dorothy's bag.

And it turned out that there were no glasses to be found inside; he guessed she must've been wearing contacts today.

"I don't wanna wear glasses; they're uncomfortable!" Dorothy vaguely remembered the discomfort in her eyes from the contacts after drinking too much and had taken them out.

"Then take your medicine."

"Prove you're Everett, and I'll take it. Otherwise, I won't!"

Everett had never realized how troublesome a drunken Dorothy could be. Usually, she'd just throw up and then obediently fall asleep.

Thinking it over, he figured she must be feeling insecure because she didn't know she was back in the country before she got drunk, hence the heavy guard.

Otherwise, she wouldn't have slapped him earlier.

"Fine, how do you want me to prove it?" Everett sat on the edge of the bed and gently massaged her temples, hoping to ease some of her discomfort.

Dorothy scrunched her brows in thought for a long moment before suddenly leaning close to Everett's handsome face.

"Everett would kiss me."

Everett raised his eyebrows.

"You kiss me, and I'll know if it's you."

Everett wasn't the least bit enticed by her words; in fact, his frown deepened.

"Dorothy! You are not allowed to test people taking care of you with a kiss to see if they're Everett!"

Chapter 815

His voice got louder, causing Dorothy's brows to furrow deeply.

"Keep it down, will you?"

Everett took a deep breath, convincing himself not to continue this pointless argument with a drunk.

Patience, he wrapped his arms around her, soothing her like he would his daughter, gently stroking her hair.

"Be a good girl. Drink this hangover cure, and you'll feel much better. Then get some sleep. The kids are looking forward to playing with you tomorrow."

Perhaps it was the tenderness in his voice that did it, but Dorothy suddenly rolled over, pinning Everett to the bed; her arms encircled his neck and she nuzzled him like a kitten.

This gesture conjured a memory.

Back in the days at Swevia Country, Dorothy would always climb into bed and nuzzled him after he finished work and took his evening shower. It seemed like in this moment, she was absolutely certain that the man she was holding was indeed Everett.

"Ready to sleep?"

Everett rested his chin on her forehead, his arm encircling her waist.

"Mhm," her discomfort was still evident through her muffled voice.

Everett turned to place the already open bottle of hangover cure on the nightstand. But as he turned back, the woman in his arms had already begun to tug at her clothes.

"You hot?"

"Help me take this off... Everett... help me... I can't find the buttons..."

Dorothy's voice was a shaky mix of frustration and annoyance, clearly at odds with the elusive buttons.

She was drunk, and her actions needed no reason.

But Everett was just a man! A man who hadn't indulged himself in quite some time.

With each word, Everett's voice grew huskier with a heavy rasp, "Let me go, and I'll help you change into your nightgown."

"I don't want you to go..."

Dorothy's drunken speech was petulant, even her irritation sounding almost like coaxing.

Everett could feel his temples throbbing!

"Okay, I won't go. Just sleep now."

"Then take off my clothes!"

Everett closed his eyes, struggling to suppress the surge of thoughts, "Let me get out of bed, and then I'll help you change."

He knew he couldn't lie in that bed another second!

"Everett, don't you love me anymore?" Dorothy suddenly opened her eyes, her pupils clear yet hazy, "Why... don't you want me?"

He bit his lips and had no answer for that question.

But in the next instant, Dorothy's hand made a bold move toward his lower body!

Everett tensed up and clenched his teeth immediately, "Dorothy, don't mess around!"

Dorothy pouted, her dissatisfaction clear after being scolded, "But you're... you know..."

"Are we really not going to do it today?" she added, moving closer intentionally, her scent nearly driving Everett mad. She made no effort to restrain herself, even trying to reach inside his waistband!

Everett clenched his molars. He grasped her wrist tightly in his hands.

"That's enough. It's time for you to sleep."

Dorothy blinked, and there seemed to be a real chance of tears, "You don't love me anymore..."

"Listen to me, we can't do this now! You're drunk, and you'll hate me when you sober up tomorrow!"

"I won't!"

"You will!"

"Then you just don't love me..." Dorothy's first tear finally fell, "In the past, after cuddling me, you'd undress me, and we'd..."

Everett was at a loss for words. It was true - that had been their way!

But that was in Swevia Country!

Chapter 816

They had been living on the edge for a while there.

"Dorothy, you're hammered."

"I am not! I can still tell you're Everett, can't I?" she slurred.

Everett pressed his lips together in a thin line, his brow furrowing as he began, "Then do you remember my mother—"

He cut himself off, unable to continue. As his thoughts drifted elsewhere, he loosened his hold on her inadvertently.

And that was all the opportunity Dorothy needed. Slipping her hand along the curve of his waist, she found her way in and hit the jackpot!

"Mmm..." Everett couldn't help but let out a muffled moan. His large hand immediately reached for her wrist, trying to pull her hand away.

"Dorothy, let go of me!"

She wasn't intimidated in the slightest; instead, she let out a silly giggle, "Mmm, you're so warm... so hot..."

"Let. Go. Now."

"I won't!"

Far from releasing him, she gripped him even tighter upon sensing his attempt to pull her hand away.

Everett knew he couldn't use force to extract her hand without risking injury to his most sensitive area.

"Dorothy! Be gentle!"

"Then take off your pants... they're chafing my arm. It hurts..."

At that moment, Everett relived every sorrowful memory he had, yet still couldn't suppress the wicked thoughts swirling in his mind. He gazed at Dorothy's face and then steadied her head, tilting his own to plant a kiss.

Not only did Dorothy tremble, but Everett shuddered too as he pushed forward. He truly believed he would never be able to touch Dorothy again...

"It hurts... Everett, it hurts..."

Dorothy's small hands clutched his shirt tightly, her voice barely above a whisper.

"Just a bit longer. I'll be gentler in a moment, okay?"

Right now, he simply couldn't control his strength.

After a passionate and unrestrained encounter, the scent of their intimacy lingered in the air of the guest room.

Dorothy had fallen asleep during their second round, curled up under the covers. From Everett's perspective, the bed seemed to rise in the middle where she lay.

He had already showered, his torso bare, wrapped in a towel, as he fetched a box of cigarettes from the master bedroom and stepped out onto the balcony.

Everett usually didn't smoke because of Abigail and Langston, but now, he needed it to convince himself that what had just happened wasn't a dream.

He finished the cigarette, stubbed it out in the ashtray, washed it in the sink, and put it back in its place.

Returning to the guest room, Everett cleaned Dorothy up with a damp towel and helped her into pajamas.

With a couple of hours left until dawn, he finally slid under the covers and naturally pulled Dorothy into his embrace.

And then he couldn't bear to close his eyes.

He feared sleep, and he feared that these precious hours would pass too quickly.

She was still lying there like a log. Her breath was gentle, and her eyelids were tightly closed.

Everett stroked her hair with his hand, over and over again.

It was only as dawn began to break that he got up and left, closing the bedroom door behind him.

...

Dorothy was truly plastered. She hadn't expected the punch to hit her so hard!

In fact, when she had stumbled to the bathroom earlier, despite feeling dizzy, she wasn't so far gone that she couldn't walk or recognize people!

She slept straight through to noon the next day before she groggily woke up.

She lifted her arm instinctively. "Ugh..."

Her body was sore all over.

Chapter 817

She really wanted to swear off booze for life, but deep down, Dorothy knew that was a no-go. In her line of work, where deals were sealed with a toast rather than a handshake, going teetotal was career suicide.

Rubbing her eyes, Dorothy slowly came to the realization that she wasn't in Karen's apartment at all!

It took a few seconds of squinting through the dim light, filtered by heavy drapes, to realize that the room was oddly familiar, yet she couldn't recall ever staying there.

Sitting up in a daze, she suddenly sprang to her feet—only to find her legs jelly-soft and unable to support her.

Thud.

Dorothy hit the carpet with a graceless flop.

As an adult with, ahem, certain experiences, she was utterly aware of what had transpired the night before. The aching back, the sore legs, and that burning sting somewhere more intimate—if she didn't know any better, she'd be a fool.

Her face drained of color in an instant. The thought was too much to bear.

Thankfully, the sound of her collapse had quickly brought Everett striding into the room through the ajar door.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

Dorothy craned her neck to look at him, her face a tapestry of colors and her expression a mess of emotions.

She narrowed her eyes, scrutinizing him until she was sure it was indeed Everett standing there. Oh...

So it was also Everett last night?

As she gawked at him like a goofy, Everett couldn't pretend he didn't feel a twinge of guilt. Clearing his throat, he bent down to scoop her off the carpet and set her back on the bed.

"You had a bit too much at the team gathering. I happened to be passing by and..."

"And you brought me back to Bay Residence?" Dorothy finished for him.

No wonder the place seemed familiar—it was Bay Residence.

And no wonder she didn't remember staying here—it wasn't the master bedroom.

"Uh, yeah. I thought you'd want to see the kids," Everett said, avoiding eye contact.

Of course, Dorothy's embarrassment was no less than his. Seeing him skirt around the events of the previous night, she certainly wasn't about to bring it up.

"I do miss them. Where are Abigail and Langston?"

"They're in class, should be done in twenty minutes," Everett glanced at the time. "You want to freshen up first?"

Dorothy nodded, grateful the dim room hid her flushed cheeks.

"Then come down to the dining room for breakfast."

She nodded again.

Everett straightened up to leave, pausing at the door and jerking his head a little bit, "Be careful. Don't fall again."

"Okay."

Once the door clicked shut, Dorothy slapped her cheeks, convincing herself she wasn't dreaming.

She and Everett had slept again!

And it happened right after he returned to the country—they were immediately entangled.

What a mess.

Gritting her teeth, Dorothy gingerly got off the bed and shuffled to the bathroom.

The mirror reflected no hickeys on her neck, and lifting her shirt, she found no marks on her skin. Everett had been careful not to leave any evidence.

But the soreness of her body was a clear indicator of his less-than-gentle handling.

Splashing water on her face, Dorothy had a sneaking suspicion.

If she hadn't made a move on Everett, he wouldn't have touched her. The man was, if anything, more stubborn than she was.

Chapter 818

So there was the question: what on earth did I get up to last night? What did I say and what did I do? She mused.

For a fleeting moment, Dorothy truly wished there had been a camera in the guest room, just so she could replay the events.

But then again, maybe not.

Just the thought of last night's wild romp sent her cheeks aflame. And that hotness was soaring right up to her hairline!

Dorothy lingered in the bathroom for ages, and Everett was about to go check on her when she finally emerged, all bashful and hesitant.

Shuffling in the slippers Everett had brought in for her, she tiptoed to the dining room. She had figured Everett would play it cool, pretend like last night never happened, which would make it easy for her to gloss over the whole thing.

But no sooner had Dorothy sat down than Everett pushed a glass of milk toward her and his lips parted slightly, "About last night—"

"I was plastered and totally out of it. Can't remember a thing, really!" Dorothy blurted out, interrupting him so abruptly it was almost suspicious.

Once said, the words couldn't be taken back.

Everett's brow knitted slightly, his hand pausing mid-air. "You were drunk, but I wasn't."

What's his deal? Weren't we on the same page about pretending nothing happened? She was shouting inwardly.

"Dorothy, I'm sorry, I shouldn't have done that without your consent..."

"There's no need for sorry! I'm sure it was me who wouldn't let you leave." Since he insisted on talking about it, Dorothy could just brace herself, "I'm not upset with you, so can we just drop it, please?"

Everett had more to say, but seeing the pleading look in her eyes, he swallowed his words.

"Alright, eat up. I'll go check on the kids."

He left the dining room, and only then did Dorothy allow herself to breathe.

She had been so tense and was on the edge of collapsing. If Everett had persisted any longer, she might have bolted for the door!

Calming herself, Dorothy had lost her appetite and just sipped at the milk.

Soon, the joyful voices of Abigail and Langston came from the nursery.

"Mommy's awake!"

"Mommy, I missed you so much!" Abigail ran towards her with open arms.

Dorothy smiled. She scooped up her daughter, and then raised an eyebrow at Langston, "Aren't you going to hug Mommy?"

Langston grimaced, "I'm not doing your girl stuff!"

"He's definitely taking after Everett," Dorothy mused.

Before long, Everett reappeared from the nursery. He was on the phone, chatting with someone. The call was not work-related apparently, because his tone was kinda casual; he also glanced over at her and took a seat on the couch.

Dorothy showered her daughter with kisses, then pulled her reluctant but eventually cooperative son into a warm embrace, purposely kissing Langston right between his furrowed brows just to tease him, much to Abigail's giggling delight.

"Enough, enough. That's it, Mommy!"

Langston finally wriggled free and darted off to find his computer.

On the couch, Everett ended his call and looked up at Dorothy.

"Jeffrey's booked our tickets to Everglow City."

Ah, that must've been Jeffrey on the phone. That dawned on Dorothy.

"Yeah, he mentioned something about a vacation."

"You agreed?" Everett was clearly skeptical of Jeffrey's claim that Dorothy had consented.

She paused, then nodded, "Sort of."

Chapter 819

In a fleeting moment, a torrent of emotions flickered across Everett's eyes.

He had things he wanted to say. He wanted to ask her why she agreed to join the trip. He also wanted to ask what she thought after last night's debacle.

But Dorothy had already turned to take little Abigail's hand, saying, "Jeffrey booked a separate room just for you and me. Don't worry, there won't be a repeat of last night."

She wasn't going to drink again.

Everett bit his lips. It wasn't last night's events that worried him, though.

...

Ever since the unpleasant fallout with his son, Jonathan Lopez tried calling Everett several times, but all calls went unanswered.

He had completely shut down communication.

His wife had been subpoenaed by the court to testify. Although she was still defiant since that began, she was clearly scared and constantly asking when their son would return.

When indeed?

He wished he knew too.

"If it comes to it, I'll head to Liberty City myself and find him," Jonathan couldn't just sit around waiting.

If Dorothy had irrefutable evidence and they started asking for the suspect to be handed over, it would be too late for everything.

"I'll come with you!" Amanda insisted. She was determined to join him since she worried her son would avoid her.

"I'll go first; you really shouldn't be traveling right now. We don't have a clear picture of how far the case has progressed, and what if you get detained at the airport? You're at least safe here."

Jonathan figured his last resort was to refuse to hand over his wife and keep her hidden at all costs. After all, sending her to prison would be no different from sending her to her death!

"Alright, I'll listen to you," Amanda finally acquiesced.

She even had the servants pack her husband's suitcase, showing uncharacteristic diligence.

Only when Jonathan checked with his contacts in Liberty City did he learn that Everett had already returned to his home country!

It was obvious that it was because of Dorothy.

But what worried Jonathan was the haste in his son's return—had Dorothy come up with new evidence?

He couldn't fully trust his wife's version of events; after all, he had been burned before.

"Jonathan, do you know where Heather is?" Amanda had thought long and hard overnight and finally came up with a potential breakthrough.

"Everett took her away, I'm not sure where he's detaining her. I've checked the routes; it seems to be domestic. But knowing Everett, he wouldn't let me find out so easily."

He knew his son well enough.

"Then... maybe she's in Swevia Country? When you handed Heather over to him, he was still there recovering from his injuries."

"That's unlikely too," Jonathan considered it too obvious and easily guessed. He was forgetting the old adage that the most dangerous place could be the safest.

"What do you need Heather for?" he asked.

Amanda guided her husband to the sofa, "If Heather is willing to take the fall for everything, then I can pull myself out of this mess!"

"But you're the one deciding to carry out the plan in the surveillance footage!"

"But Heather can just say that I didn't know anything, that I was only following her and thus decided that."

Jonathan paused, "Go on."

"That way, at worst, I'll only be charged with negligence. And with a bit of maneuvering, it'll all blow over!"

"Do you think Heather would agree?"

"Let her think about it! Dorothy's plan is to have both Heather and me face the death penalty. Heather can't escape her charge; she knows her motive for the crime is clear. If we can talk, maybe she'll be willing to protect me."

Chapter 820

Dorothy always admired Jeffrey and Karen's go-getter attitude.

Amid the whirlwind of wedding preparations, they had even managed to squeeze in a vacation plan! That must be one of the perks of being flush with cash, she mused.

Jeffrey had even gone so far as to bypass Dorothy and give Austin a heads-up about taking a week off.

Austin just couldn't object. He'd have to bite the bullet and grant the vacation even if it lasted a month, let alone a week's off.

Early in the morning, Karen had roped everyone into a WhatsApp group, whimsically renaming it "A Family Affair."

Langston was the first to voice his opinion.

Langston: [What in the world is this name, Aunt Karen? You might as well have left it alone.]

Karen: [What do you know, kiddo? Being super rustic is the very way to show hipster!]

Dorothy woke up to find the group chat had exploded with 99+ messages, mostly banter between Langston and Karen.

On her second day staying over at the Bay Residence guest room, she returned to her own apartment, but only after the kids were tucked into bed. It was awkward living there after all.

Karen: [Dorothy, you up? Are we meeting at the airport, or should we meet somewhere else first? Are you with Everett?]

Dorothy replied while brushing her teeth.

[Yep, I'm up. Everett and I aren't together.]

Karen: [I'll have Jeffrey call Everett then!]

Setting her phone aside, Dorothy applied a light touch of makeup, packed a few clothes into her suitcase, and by the time she checked her phone again, there was a private message from Karen on WhatsApp.

Karen: [Dorothy, come downstairs when you're ready! Everett's been waiting for a while!]

Everett was downstairs?

She rushed to the window and indeed saw Everett's car parked below. She couldn't spot him, so he might have been waiting inside.

Why hadn't he told her he was coming? She'd been dawdling just then.

She quickly grabbed her suitcase, checked the gas and electricity, and as soon as she opened the apartment door, there he was.

"Why didn't you knock?"

Everett wasn't in the car at all. He was standing right at the door. He reached out and took the suitcase from her hands in one smooth motion, "I just got here."

Dorothy had her doubts about the truth of that statement.

Everett seemed pretty good at waiting for people.

She remembered several instances of him just standing there, waiting. Dorothy, on the other hand, wasn't too fond of waiting, especially when she didn't know when the other person would show up. It made her so anxious.

Downstairs, Everett didn't bother with the trunk. He simply put Dorothy's luggage in the back seat.

That left her no choice but to ride shotgun.

"Get in, we'll pick up Abigail and Langston at Bay Residence, then head to the airport."

He said it so casually with no hint of being contrived that Dorothy couldn't very well make a fuss. She just opened the passenger door.

The drive to Bay Residence was silent, with Dorothy struggling to find a topic of conversation.

It was only at a lengthy red light that Everett suddenly spoke up.

"That night... I didn't use protection. I just remembered to remind you. Sorry about that."

"Huh?" The suddenness of his confession caught Dorothy off guard.

"I mean, the night you were drunk, I couldn't help myself... it went inside..."

Who could think about protection in the heat of the moment? No one had used the guest room before, so it wasn't like the main bedroom, where you could just grab and go from the drawer.

And of course, he had his own ulterior motives.

Dorothy's cheeks flushed crimson, "It's okay... I was in my safe period."