



27 Chapter TWENTY SEVEN

Theme: A guilty conscience 1

ANDERSON'S MANSION

"Why is Ace not here yet?" Camilla asked with a nervous look on her face.

She kept looking at her phone expecting a call from Ace Clark. "Did he forget about the party?" Camilla asked.

"No I reminded him about the party after we left the photo studio." Mrs Clark replied.

"Then he ought to be here since eight. Everyone is asking of my husband! What's happening?" Camilla heaved a sigh of frustration.

"Calm down honey, maybe he is stuck in traffic." Mrs Anderson tried to calm her daughter down.

Camilla raised her eyebrows. "Traffic? The time is nine..I expect that the road should be free now."

"Why don't you give him a call?" Mrs Anderson suggested.

Camilla rolled her eyes. "I have tried calling Ace, but he isn't picking up." She replied.



"Let me try to call him too." Mrs Clark moved away from Mrs Anderson and Camilla.

IVY RIVERA'S APARTMENT

The driver to Ivy's house seemed to take forever. Even the call he had gotten from his father, reminding him of tonight's party added to his nervousness. How could he possibly explain this whole situation to his parents in a way that would appease them? The moment he had laid his eyes on the boy, from the moment he had realized that Ivy had given birth to his child, every brain cell he possessed had been thinking on overdrive, struggling to find the right words to say to Ivy and when he finally get the chance to have a chat with the little boy.

The shock of seeing him, of knowing that his child had been alive and growing for nine years added to his nervousness. Why did he just meet her now? Why did he just find her now? And not few years back when he had looked for her and when he had been willing to do everything for her.

She had lied to him - about her name. And who know? She might have lied about so many things she told him that night. And no wonder it



was impossible to find her.

Everything was complicated now. He was getting married soon to a woman he doesn't love and the wedding was just few weeks away. Honestly, he didn't know what else he was going to do. How he should react to the knowledge that he now has a kid.

Guilt twisted at the back of his consciousness for taking advantage of Ivy's situation back then. How he had let his old self take over, how he had managed to cajole her to wait when she wanted to leave and for leaving that morning without waking her to tell her he would be back. Ace remembered that he had promise to buy her a post pill but he didn't so he figured she didn't buy it either. How could she have known when she was so innocent at that age? He recalled how she had looked at him with an extremely innocent face when he uttered profanity for taking her without wearing protection. That look had haunted him for years.

Ace imagined how she would have suffered when she found about she was pregnant. But all through these she had never bothered to look for him even though she knew his name. He felt guilt for not been there on his kid's first or second birthday and everything.

By the time he pulled up in front of the



house, he was determined to settle things. One way or the other, they are going to figure things out tonight. Ace bounded up the steps to the porch where a dim light provided brightness and he prepared to knock on the door.

"That knock would be hard enough to wake the dead." Ivy's words were so low.

Her voice was a little deeper and richer than the one he had heard few years ago. He cast the shadow by the single, yellow porch light until he found her, sitting on a chair, glass of wine dangling in one hand and cellphone on the other.

Ivy was dressed in a black crop top with a crazy black jeans. Ace turned away from the door and sank on the chair across from her. Ace didn't say anything at first, he just simply looked at her, noting all the changes and all the things that had stayed the same on her.

"Do you want a glass of wine?" Ivy asked and her voice sweet it sent shivers down his spine.

"No, I quit drinking." Ace replied.

"Alright but I only have wine to give you." Ivy's phone beeped.

She checked the caller's identity, it was Arthur Young. She looked at Ace before picking up.



"Hello Arthur." She mumbled.

Ace shifted in his chair uncomfortably.

"Good evening Ivy, how are you doing?"
Arthur Young asked.

"Yeah I am fine. Thanks for your concern."
Ivy replied.

"Ivy, I already texted the address of the party to you and it is about to start." Arthur picked on his choice of words carefully in order not to offend Ivy.

"Well I thought the party was supposed to start by eight." Ivy replied.

She had forgotten about Ace's engagement party when she had picked the time for them to meet. She only considered that her son would be asleep by this time.

"Oh yes the party was scheduled for eight but my cousin isn't here yet." Arthur Young replied.

Ivy looked up at Ace Clark and their eyes met. "Arthur, it's pretty late. I don't think I can drive at this time of the night." Ivy mumbled in an apologetic tone.

"Ivy, if you don't mind I can come around to pick you up. Just text me your address." Arthur offered.



"No. No. No you can't come over to my place. I am a bit exhausted right now to attend a party and I can't leave Leroy behind, his nanny isn't around to take care of him." Ivy's response was sharp and immediate.

Arthur wasn't happy he got rejected again but he had to let things slide. He didn't want to be the one to pester Ivy Rivera to do what he wanted. "Okay." He mumbled.

"I am sorry, Arthur. Don't worry I will make things up to you." Ivy apologized.

"If you want to make things up to me then have dinner with me whenever you are free." Arthur chuckled.

"I will think about it." Ivy responded with a smile on her face.

Alright, bye Ivy." Arthur disconnected the call.

"Aren't you suppose to be at your engagement party? Everyone especially your bride will be -"

"You look good." Ace cut in trying to ignore the question.

"Yeah I guess this place agrees with me than my home town ever did." Ivy replied and then silence fell between them.

