Eleanor and Brenda confirmed the number of guests for their Christmas dinner.

Patrick and Brenda had not celebrated Christmas over the past few years because their family was gone.

Genevia had traveled to spend the past few years with Danielle, Richard and Sharon.

She was so relieved and knew that will never happen again.

She and Ben decided to stay home for the holidays.

The mayor’s wife was very busy planning their annual brunch.

She was excited the Stiths and Simons would be attending along with the count.

The governor’s wife was planning his last ball in office.

The governor was glad to be leaving office.

He hoped the good he did the next governor would not be afraid of the mob but work to build a stronger defense against the mob taking control of the businesses and communities.

The poorer communities were fighting against the planting of the mob in their neighbors.

The governor sent a large number of soldiers into these poorer communities throughout the state.

He gave them power to execute their judgement whether dead or alive.

These governor’s forces were heavy in the farming communities that were far away from the cities.

The mob tried burning down the farms of many people throughout the state.

Some of the governor’s forces caught the ones responsible and the people of the community that helped the mob. There were farmers who wanted to be the only farm that produced certain crops.

Some farmers jealous of the farms that hired former slaves. The ‘Freedmen‘ were working on some of the farms and helping the farmers to grow more crop.

When the former soldiers caught the mob and the farmers working with them. They made them re-plant the farmers farms and re-build their barns and houses.

Once the former soldiers had completed that task, they took the mob and their accomplices to jail.

They were tried and given the mandatory twenty five year sentences and the farmers lands were confiscated and sold.

Some of the soldiers bought the farms and settled into the areas and worked the land and produced crops for that region of the state.

The governor also fortified the orphanages and would send workers each month to the orphanages to check on the welfare of the children and make sure the children were going to school.

Each year the governor’s wife would hold a fund raiser to help send the children to local colleges.

Many of the children became teachers, nurses and social workers for the orphanages.

The governor’s wife was very proud of the work she did for the orphanages.

The incoming governor signed an agreement he would not change those two programs, especially since they were self-sustaining.

The outgoing governor wrote in his speech he was only disappointed that no one wanted to be a physician.

Brenda and Patrick planned a large party for the governor, his wife and their staff at the mansion in the spring.

Patrick and Brenda were planning to go to Europe with Eleanor and the boys.

Especially when Shirley said she will go back to the hospital only to come back and go to Europe.

Brenda and Patrick talked secretly to Gen and Ben about checking on their mansion.

Genevia and Ben looked at Brenda and Patrick.

Brenda and Patrick looked at them and wanted to know why they were looking at them.

Genevia looked at Ben.

Brenda was about to get upset.

Patrick looked at Brenda then Gen and Ben.

Ben said, “We want to go.”

Brenda held her chest because she already had started crying.

Genevia ran and sat next to Bren and held her.

Ben said, “We need to find out the cost but we want to go. Genevia and her late ambassador husband travelled to India and other lands. But I want to take her to Europe.”

Patrick laughed and said, “You and Gen scared me for a minute.”

Brenda said, “We still need somebody to check on our property?”

William and Wyonna were lurking in the formal dining room so they could hear.

Brenda knew they were in there and said, “William and Wyonna came out of there and come to me.”

William and Wyonna were scared and slowly walked out the formal dining room.

Patrick, Brenda, Genevia and Ben watched William and Wyonna as they emerged from their hiding place in the formal dining room.

Brenda looked at them and said, “I better not hear one word. Or think either of you said anything. I am taking Lorraine with us to take care of Shirley. I will Robert to be our butler, probably Thomas to be our cook and two maids.”

Patrick said, “It’s going to be all of us. Four maids. We have to have someone do our laundry.”

Patrick was very conscious of clean clothes and linens.

Wyonna elbowed William.

Gen saw Wyonna and smirked.

Brenda saw Wyonna and heard Gen smirked.

Brenda said, “Margaret. But that maybe too much laundry for her to do by herself. We have to think.”

Gen touched Brenda’s arm and said, “We may want to take empty bags. My God the shopping.”

Brenda started laughing and said, “Eleanor sent all this s\*\*t here for two years. We gave it away.”

They laughed.

Brenda said, “You see how I included the we and not the me.”

Ben said, “I caught that.”

Brenda said, “William and Wyonna you can leave but I will fire you if you open your big mouths.”

William and Wyonna waked out.

Gen and Ben watched William and Wyonna leave the parlor.

Gen was stirring her tea.

She had the teacup to her mouth and whispered to Brenda and said, “Bren watch them.”

They could hear them in the formal dining room fussing.

Brenda said, “They want to go, but I am not going to be bothered with them doing more sightseeing than me.”

Patrick and Ben hollered.

Gen nearly choked and had to cough.

Ben said, “We won’t be able to stay…”

He stopped talking because William and Wyonna had walked back into the parlor.

William said, “Excuse me Mr. and Mrs. Stith, can you consider me and Wyonna as the butler and one of the maids?”

Brenda said, “We will consider it and let you know later.”

A smile came over their faces and turned and left the parlor.

Patrick shook his head and looked back at Ben.

Ben was grinning and said, “…We have a few months to pull our finances together. We won’t be staying at the same hotels as you, but I think we can manage about six months over there and leave and come back for the holidays.”

Gen slightly elbowed Brenda.

Ben said, “I saw that Gen. I am still learning all of yall’s different relations and what all of those hidden things mean.”

Gen said, “When you get to Europe you gonna find some more money from somewhere so we can stay a little bit longer.”

Patrick said, “Ben that’s not a bad idea. But I kind of wanted to visit the Christmas markets over there and go to the symphony with Percy.”

Gen yelled, “Percy!”

Brenda and Patrick looked at Gen.

Ben looked at Gen.

Percy heard Gen and thought she was calling him slow.

Gen said, ”He is more than people give him credit for.”

Percy nodded his head for yes and elbowed Bruce as they were eavesdropping on the conversation.

Gen said, “I see in Percy some of the qualities of being a great leader. With the properly guidance he could become the president.”

Percy and Bruce dropped their mouths opened.

Gen said, “You hear me Percy?”
Patrick and Brenda looked at Gen.

Percy and Bruce stepped into the parlor door.

Patrick and Brenda looked at them, because they did not know they were downstairs and eavesdropping.

Gen turned her head and looked at the two and sipped her tea.

She said, “No more liquor, then you will have no more boots.”

Percy bowed and he and Bruce ran upstairs.

Gen said, “I think those two can do a lot of good. But you have to put structure to them. I now they came home at the holidays and did not go to school. If we leave in March is Eleanor taking teachers with her or putting them in school over there?”

Brenda said, “Once we get all of our plans worked out, then we will talk to Eleanor.”

Gen was grinning and put her teacup back in the saucer and looked at Ben and said, “This is exciting. I haven’t traveled in about twenty five years. I can’t wait to leave.”

Ben said, “But first the holidays!!”

They all laughed.