While everyone was preparing for dinner, Wyonna saw Earle walking to the kitchen and said, ”Earle, I want to show you around.”

Earle looked at Denise and Mable and quickly turned his head and saw Dan and Peter watching him.

He saw the plates that Thomas was preparing.

Earle wanted to say something about the plates.

Thomas looked up at Earle.

Wyonna and Danielle held their breathes.

Everyone knew Thomas was worst than Jose about his food.

Earle slowed by Thomas, but he continued to walk to Wyonna.

Thomas looked at Earle then Dan and Peter.

Dan said, “Stanley said, William already told him this is America and everybody pull their own weight even those damn horses.”

Everybody laughed.

Thomas raised his eyebrows and turned back to his food.

Wyonna said, “Let’s start with the storage area. We cleared an area for your boxes and crates to be placed.”

Earle looked and said, “Large space.”

Wyonna said,   
They were planning on breaking this area into two family suites. I think they have decided to leave it for storage. You saw the billiards room.”

Earle said, “It’s very nice.”

Wyonna pointed and said, “The music room and Mrs. Simons is deciding what to do with those other rooms. I know she and her mother loves to paint.”

Earle said, “I did not know. How lovely.”

He was thinking he had to tell the count, “Because the count was wondering about what type of gifts to give them when he left for New York.”

Wyonna said, “The washers are down here, the hot water area is next to it and the staff has a private room to wash and bathe in this area.”

They walked down the hall and turned left.

The workers were doing the wash.

Eleanor had the room decorated and had new washers brought two days before the count arrived.

The servants were thrilled at the updated washers and the room.

Eleanor had selected tables, chairs, pictures and rugs brought from the storage and decorated the washroom.

Wyonna and Alice were pleased with their decorating of the room.

Earle walked in behind Wyonna and said, “My goodness.”

Wyonna thought that would make him whistle.

Wyonna said, “These are the workers that do the laundry Steve, Max, Phyllis and Margaret.”

Earle smiled and bowed his head.

Wyonna said, “This is Earle the count’s valet. Please show him around when he needs to take care of their clothes. We will do the regular washing. He will be taking care of the count’s personal things.”

Earle looked at Wyonna and said, “Thank you Wyonna. William taught you well.”

Wyonna said, “William hell. I learned after years of being a maid.”

Earle said, “Hello Steve, Max, Phyllis and Margaret. I am Earle and when I come to do our wash I will ask for help.”

Margaret said, “That’s the way to go Earle.”

Margaret pulled a rack with the clothes dripping dry over a floor trench so the water could run out the house.

Earle smiled.

He walked through the washroom and saw the new sinks to hand wash clothes.

He looked at Wyonna and said, “Nice.”

Earle looked at the shelves that had the soap and cleansers.

He saw the chair and table for polishing boots and shoes.

He thought, ”Eleanor has more finesse than I thought being a plain American.”

Wyonna stood and looked at Steve and smirked.

Steve looked at Earle and grinned and continued to work.

Earle turned and looked at Wyonna who was standing by the door but looking over the room.

Earle said, “Very nice. What else were you to show me?”

Wyonna said, “See you later.”

Earle looked at the workers and said, “Nice meeting you.”

He lustfully looked at Margaret.

Margaret grinned and cut her eyes at Earle.

Steve looked at Earle and then Margaret.

He said, “You know Stanley will kick both of your asses if you try it.”

Margaret said, “Dear brother you better not open your mouth. Ever.”

She held back and nodded and said, “Think about that.”

Steve said, “Blackmail?”

Margaret put her hands on her hips and squinted her eyes and said, “Of course!”

Steve walked away and back to his load of sheets.

Because he had so much stuff he was hiding that he did not know what she knew about.

Wyonna and Earle walked to the servants wash closet.

Wyonna said, “I’ll stay out here and you can go in and look around.”

Wyonna heard Earle saying, “Hello.”

Earle walked out and said, “Two fellows are in there.”

Wyonna said, “Bishop and Willie they keep that area clean. Women go in at a certain time and the men go in at another.

Wyonna saw Mable and Denise leaving for the day.

Earle saw Wyonna looking at someone he turned and saw Mable and Denise and said, “They do not stay in the house?”

Wyonna looked at him and said, “No.”

Earle looked at Wyonna and said, “Why?”

Wyonna said, “It’s called seniority. The Stiths remodeled the old supply shed. It is what you call very nice. You want to see it?’

Wyonna walked out the door and Earle followed he looked around how the back of the house was lighted.

Wyonna smirked.

Earle loved the glass back of the house and how the torch lights glowed on the glass windows.

Wyonna said, “Hey Denise and Mabel. I am showing Earle around do you mind if he sees your quarters?”

Mable was walking worst that day and turned her head sideways and said, “Why he wants to see it?”

Earle stopped and was pointing back to the house.

Wyonna said shook her head and said, “Missy to show him how fancy it is.”

Denise looked at them and kept on walking.

They reached the new residences and Mable unlocked the door.

Eleanor was standing in her bedroom window watching them.

She saw Mable dragging her leg and foot with her tongue hanging out.

Eleanor stood and watched the former slaves and cried at a life she could not imagine nor could she see Brenda raped, beaten, scarred and lynched.

Eleanor thought, “Incredible people. I have some of that blood flowing through my veins.”

Gary had completed his bath and walked outside and saw Earle, Wyonna, and the two slaves.

He looked around and ran across the yard to follow.

Denise and Mable had entered the remodeled supply shed and Wyonna looked back to see who was running and she saw Eleanor standing watching them.

Earle looked at Wyonna and said, “What?”

He turned and saw Eleanor standing in her window watching them.

Gary ran to them.

He said, “What you looking at? That’s not my best. I can run faster than that.”

Earle said, “Eleanor.”

Gary looked around and then back at the mansion and saw Eleanor watching them.

Gary waved.

Eleanor waved.

Gary said, “See she’s fine with this. If she had a problem she would had come to the balcony and cursed us.”

Wyonna and Earle shook their heads in agreement.

Wyonna said, “Why are these lights not on?”

Denise said, “They never be on.”

Mable’s speech was slurred and said, “We don’t mind.”

Wyonna closed her eyes.

Earle and Gary saw the look on Wyonna’s face and knew that was a problem.

William and Stanley were in the new supply shed putting up the winter supply of food.

Stanley saw Wyonna and the guests.

He said, “William those lights are not on.”

William looked around the yard.

Earle, Gary and Wyonna looked back at Eleanor and did not see her.

Eleanor walked to the boys’ rooms to make sure they were dressing in the clothes she laid out for them to wear to dinner.

William said, “Stanley don’t say anything to them. I am going to see if they don’t light them tomorrow night.”

Gary stepped back and looked around and lit the outside torch lights.

Ben looked at Gary and kept on walking.

William and Stanley saw Ben’s reaction.

Mable had invented a way to light their torches.

And had them lined against the walls so she and Denise could see at night.

Earle walked into the foyer and said, “This is very…”

He quickly looked back at Wyonna who said, “Nice.”

He said wrong, “Lovely.”

They laughed.

Gary walked in and whistled at how lovely the re-modeled supply shed was.

He said, “Can I move out here?”

Wyonna said, “No.”

Gary said, “Why not?”

Wyonna said, “Just no. It won’t look right for a man to be out here with two women.”

Gary said, “Who do I talk to?”

They heard William and Stanley talking outside about the supplies.

Gary plunder out the door.

Stanley and William looked at him.

William said, “Smelly.”

Stanley giggle.

Gary said, “Sir.”

He looked at Stanley and said, “Can I move into that lovely residence back there?”

William said, “No.”

Gary put his hand on his hip and said, “Why not?”

William said, “It’s improper or do you have that back home.”

Gary said, “But it is lovely. And I will light the torches.”

Stanley looked at William who had tired of Gary and his comical attitude and giggle.

Wyonna walked out the residence with Earle as they saw Gary stumping back to the mansion like a spoiled child.

William looked at Gary.

Stanley laughed.

Wyonna laughed.

She and Earle walked back to the house.

William said to Stanley, “Even he noticed the lights were not lit.”

Stanley said, “I notice. Mrs. Stith hired an extra person to help light the torches when Wallace and Jerry complained about it.”

William said, “It takes them two hours per day to light the torches because they are riding in a wagon and not walking. They are being paid each week a good salary for that chore.”

Stanley said, “You think a few of us can take that chore and get their money?”

William said, “It may come to that if they do it tomorrow.”

Stanley said, “I was not going to say anything, but last week at the weekly poker game we were rowdy and Mable came over to the barn to join in the laughter and fun. She pulled up a bale of hay and was trying to sit when the three of them begin to holler at her…”

William stood and listened and was appalled.

He could not believe Stanley was a part of this atrocity.

Stanley saw William’s facial expression and said, “Don’t like at me differently. We had just got paid and I wanted to win some of my money back room them.”

William did not care about Stanley at point he said, “What happened? Were there any other women there?”

Stanley said, “Now you hate me. Rebecca, Glenda and Sue. The three of them were about to punch Mable who started covering her head. Denise ran in before they could hit Mable and said, ‘you bastards better not put your hands on her.’ She grabbed a screaming Mable and ran out the barn back to the new residence with her.”

William said, “Were you going to let them beat Mable.”

Stanley stood for a minute and said, “Yes.”

William stood frozen.

Stanley took the rolling cart from William and walked away.

He went to the barn that was his residence with Travis, Sam and Walley, who kept the coal and wood for the fires.

Brenda had touched up the barn where the four men slept.

She added a sitting room and table and chairs.

Eleanor sent several rugs and pictures out to the barn by Wyonna and Alice.

They decorated the barn very nicely.

The washers were leaving for the night.

Margaret slowed behind and winked at Earle as she walked out the door with Phyllis, Steve and Max.

Steve and Phyllis wanted to marry but they did not want to be poor and live a poor life.

It was only Steve and Margaret left.

Their mother and father died several years ago and their three brothers died in the civil war.

Brenda told them to look and see if they had any benefits they could claim.

Steve and Margaret were too hurt to start that process.

Phyllis lived with her parents in their one bedroom house.

Max was married and his wife was in school to be a teacher. He had three boys and they lived in a shabby house and on the bad side of town.

Steve told Max he had to move because the bad life could claim his boys at an early age.

Max did not want to listen to Steve, but his wife told him she caught the middle boy, who was ten, hanging with the gamblers.

Steve and Margaret rented separate rooms in the same house.

Patrick gave them Bruce, Percy and Thomas horses to them.

He gave Max a horse, and Steve and Margaret one horse and a horse to Phyllis.

The workers feed their horses at the mansion and have the stablemen to groom their horses once per week.

Patrick hated an un-groomed horse and it was part of the stablemen duties to groom the servants’ horses if requested.

Patrick told the servants if they use the stablemen they need to tip them.

The stablemen had a board grooming appointments and their tip cans ready.

William was still in the yard, when the washing crew was leaving and the night dishwashers were coming to work.

Steve said, “William don’t look good.”

Margaret said, “I know what it is about.”

She said, “Did you’ll see all of that stuff Brenda has in the storage area. You’ll think she would give us some if we ask her?”

Max just kept his head down and said see you’ll Wednesday.”

Phyllis said, “I hope they give us a turkey for Thanksgiving.”

Max thought, “He better come to work Wednesday and get leftovers for his family’s Thanksgiving dinner.”

No one answered Margaret.

They all left and said, “Good night William.”

William turned around and waved at the washers and he saw the night dishwashers and waved at them.

Charlotte was in school to become a teacher. She and Rebecca rotated the day and night shifts with Denise and Mable.

Everyone was in place for the evening.

William walked through the kitchen and the billiards room and music room.

He walked to the family dining room.

Eleanor wanted it to be casual for that evening because the holidays will start the next day.

Shirley was angry and Dr. Ralph and Dr. Greene could not help her.

She wanted to leave and go and spend the holidays with her family and not Nurse Sharon.

That morning Michael was sitting in his chair at the new house eating breakfast.

Nurse Sharon moved in and was sitting across from Michael.

Michael did not look at Nurse Sharon, because he did not want her in their new house and Bruce would not let his children stay in his new house.

Nurse Sharon heard Bruce come downstairs and she wanted him to think she and Michael were friends.

Lorraine and Meredith were watching her.

Robert were watching her and reporting everything to William.

Bruce walked into his office to write a letter and he noticed a sheet of his signed stationery paper was missing.

He was very particular about his signature.

Nurse Sharon was watching Bruce.

Bruce walked into the dining room and looked at Michael and said, “Michael had you been in daddy’s office?’

Michael did not look at Bruce and said, “No.”

He continued to eat his breakfast.

Nurse Sharon said, “Yes you were Michael. The other day.”

Lorraine and Meredith stepped forward.

Michael slowly looked at Nurse Sharon.

Bruce saw Lorraine and Meredith he knew they would not have Nurse Sharon calling Michael a liar and planting that seed in him and Bruce.

Michael said, “I am not lying. You are the liar.”

He got out of his seat and walked upstairs to his room.

He made eye contact with Nurse Sharon and rolled his eyes at her and Bruce all the way upstairs.

All of Bruce’s servants looked at Nurse Sharon, who smiled at Bruce.

She sat there like she did not created this big situation.

Michael went upstairs and got his coat, hat, scarf and gloves and walked to the front door.

Robert saw him.

Bruce looked and said,” Michael you have not eaten.”

Michael looked at Nurse Sharon, “I lost my appetite.”

Robert said, “I’ll be right out Michael.

Bruce saw Michael turn his head not to look at Bruce.

Nurse Sharon grabbed Bruce’s face and turned it from his child to her.

Nurse Brown told Meredith and Lorretta how Nurse Sharon’s parents came to the hospital to get her for lunch and they heard her tell her parents they could move into the new house with she and Bruce.

Her parents were delighted.

Shirley was laying in bed and heard them.

Nurse Sharon pointed and said “This is his daughter and tried to go in Shirley’s room. Until Nurse Alice blocked her.

Nurse Sharon said,”Move or I will have Bruce fire you.”

Shirley said, “Nurse Alice let them in.”

Dr. Ralph and Dr. Woodson walked to the nurses’ desk and heard Shirley.

Nurse Sharon rolled her eyes at Nurse Alice and her parents turned their noses up at Nurse Alice.

Shirley sat up in bed and was reading papers.

Nurse Sharon walked in along with her parents.

Shirley was looking over some papers.

Nurse Sharon cleared her throat for Shirley to look at them.

Dr. Ralph and Dr. Woodson walked to Shirley’s door.

Vince walked to the nurses’ desk so he could hear.

Shirley was writing something as she flipped through the pages of a book.

Nurse Sharon’s father looked at Nurse Sharon like how dare she ignore us.

Nurse Sharon’s mother looked at Shirley and said, “Young lady you have guests and should acknowledge your quests.”

Shirley did not look up but continued to write.

Robert and Michael had arrived at the hospital and saw everyone watching Shirley’s room.

Dr. Ralph put up his finger for Michael and Robert to be quiet.

Everyone was listening.

Shirley tore out a paper pay from her book.

She looked up at Nurse Sharon and reached her the paper.

Nurse Sharon reached for the paper and looked at it and said, “This is my pay for the week.”

Nurse Sharon’s mother said, “You still have not address us. Young lady.”

Nurse Sharon’s father looked at her pay and said, “It’s little but you can buy our lunch.”

Nurse Sharon was trying to figure out why Shirley gave her the week’s pay.

She said, “My mother addressed you and have disrespected my mother and not answered her.”

Shirley said, “First Nurse Sharon, you and your parents disrespected me by coming into my room like you had parental authority. And Nurse Sharon just because you are committing adultery with Bruce Simons does not give you the authority to overstep your legal contract of being employed at this hospital as a nurse to threatening to fire another employee with termination. That decision is made by the hospital administrator, who is me.”

Nurse Sharon’s father said, “Young lady!”

Shirley cut him off and said, “You think you can bully and threaten me because my mother is in Europe. Make no mistake I can contact Patrick and Brenda Stith and they will come here sir and ma ma and bring the full scope of the law against all three of you beggars.”

Shirley was angry and screaming at them as they were bad servants.

Dr. Ralph was angry.

Lorretta and Meredith walked in the hospital and saw everyone frozen.

Nurse Sharon’s mother said, “You cannot speak to us like this.”

Shirley said, “I have a mother who has raised me to a blue blood proper young lady. There is nothing you beggars can ever teach me. Because my blood line will not allow vile and filth. My God has taught me that I am better than an adulteress.”

Nurse Sharon ran to slap Shirley, but Dr. Ralph caught Nurse Sharon.

Shirley said, “Interesting that Bruce does not discuss his business with you. I bought this hospital from Bruce. I terminate you Nurse Sharon. Never come back and never ask for a recommendation.”

Nurse Sharon said, “I won’t need one.”

Shirley said, “I am going to inform my grandparents and I will notify my mother. You vile and filthy scum get out.”

Vince walked over and grabbed Nurse Sharon and escorted her and her parents out the hospital.

Lorraine and Meredith were ready to fight them.

Michael and Lorretta ran to Shirley.

Shirley was so angry she began to cry and held both her hands to her face and covered her eyes and cried.

She said, “Michael send a telegram to Patrick and Brenda and then one to Eleanor tell them about Nurse Sharon.”

Michael turn and ran to the hospital administrator’s office and closed and locked the door.

He ran into the other office and wrote the telegrams and sent them.

Dr. Ralph and Woodson said, “You did great Shirley. Your mother taught you well.”

Dr. Woodson said, “I am proud of you.”

No one said anything to Bruce.

Patrick and Brenda were angry and showed the telegram to Gen and Ben.

Gen said, “We knew she was going after Bruce. We tried to get her to date Ryan, a doctor and spoiled only child. His parents owned several hospitals.”

Ben said, “He is gorgeous.”

Gen looked at Ben and slapped his thigh and turned to Patrick and Brenda said, “He is gorgeous.”

Brenda stopped she and Patrick’s financial support for the symphony.

The symphony let Nurse Sharon’s mother go because they did not have the funds to pay her.

Percy read the telegram and then gave it to Eleanor.

Eleanor started working to have Nurse Sharon’s nursing license revoked.

The hospitals in the city would not hire Nurse Sharon.

She tried to get private duty work for the rich but no one would hire her.

She went to Bruce and said she could not find work.

Bruce paid for her rent and gave her a monthly allowance for nearly a year.

Michael waited at the door for Robert.

Robert took Michael to the hospital with Shirley.

Michael ran to the hospital administrator’s office and sent a telegram to the buggy company for their favorite driver to come immediately and carry them shopping.

He took the telegrams that came in and took them to Shirley.

Michael had the telegrams and the staff was use to seeing him getting all the telegrams.

He ran to Shirley and closed the door.

Shirley was mad and kicked at Michael and said, “Go away.”

Michael looked at Shirley and said, “She has done something with Bruce’s signed paper and told, pointing at himself” That I went into Bruce’s office and got his paper.”

Shirley hollered at Michael and said, “What you telling me for?’

Dr. Ralph opened the door said, “Shirley why are hollering?”

Shirley did not say anything.

Michael stood and looked at her.

Dr. Ralph walked out and left the door open.

Michael said, “Look fool, I am leaving. I sent for our favorite buggy driver to take us or me to the train station. He should be here in an hour. I am going to spend Thanksgiving with Eleanor. You write these workers their pay for this week and next. I am going to order everyone a turkey for Thanksgiving. You have enough time to go that and get dressed.”

Shirley said, “You know Bruce got everyone watching us since last week.”

Michael said, “If they tell him, then fire them.”

Michael ran to the door and peeped.

He said, “Dr. Ralph and Dr. Greene are on the other side.”

Shirley said, “How am I going to get to the buggy?”

Michael said, “He can pick you up and carry you to the buggy.”

Shirley said, “I have no clothes.”

Michael said, “We are going to be on the train for three days. You are not going anywhere. When we get home momma will take care of you, but first pay our friends for this week and next and leave their checks on your table so Bruce won’t see them. Am going to order the turkeys. The train leaves in two hours. Shirley I will leave you.”

Michael ran to the hospital administrator’s office and to telegram the poultry house to deliver the turkeys and he ran out of the office and said, “Nurse Wilson I am ordering turkeys for Thanksgiving how many?”

Nurse Wilson said, “Twenty five. None for me. I don’t eat turkey.”

Michael said, “Thanksgiving is important this year.”

Nurse Wilson said, “How so Michael?”

Michael said, “GOD gave us our country back.”

Everyone turned and looked at Michael.

Dr. Greene and Dr. Ralph and Ryan.

Ryan said, well Nurse Alice will be busy with Shirley but will have dinner with me and my parents. So don’t count us.”

Michael said, “Give your turkeys to the poor.”

Nurse Wilson looked at Michael and said, “Can I have a duck?”

Michael said, “If they have them yes.”

Dr. Greene said, “That sounds good. Michael?”

Michael was swinging on the door waiting for the answers and said, “Duck for you.”

He turned and ran back into the hospital administrator’s office and sent the telegram.

He waited for his response and heard a buggy.

He looked out the window and saw his favorite buggy driver.

Michael opened the window and told him to pull up so no one could see him.

The man shook his head for yes.

Michael closed the window.

Took the telegrams.

He sent Percy a telegram that he and Shirley were sneaking away and not to tell any one and he told Percy which train they would be leaving on and have Eleanor to make sure the train does not stop.

Dr. Ralph was walking across the lobby and saw the buggy.

Michael said, “Nurse Wilson you and Dr. Greene get ducks. Everyone else turkeys. They are to be delivered Wednesday.”

Shirley wrote the pay papers for the two weeks and she got out bed and went to the window and got the attention of the buggy driver for him to come and get her.

He nodded his head and looked around.

Shirley looked out her door and saw Nurse Alice watching her.

She held onto everything and walked to the door.

Nurse Alice stood and walked to Shirley.

She said, “Great Shirley. Do you need something or you just walking and need me to help you?’

Shirley said, “I really want some hot tea.”

Nurse Alice said, “Tea? I have not seen tea on your chart I have to ask Dr. Woodson.”

Nurse Alice was walking across the lobby the buggy driver ducked and peep.

Michael saw Nurse Alice and he walked to the lobby and looked aback and up and down the hall and beckoned for the driver he ran into the hospital.

Michael pointed and he saw Shirley sticking her head out the room.

He ran and grabbed Shirley and the three ran to the buggy and took off fast to the train station.

They arrived at the train station.

Michael said, “We have to run.”

The buggy driver pulled all the way up to the platform. He grabbed Shirley and he ran behind Michael.

The porter and the train conductor looked and said, “Where are you going and where are your tickets?”

The buggy driver was holding Shirley with her nightgown on.

Michael said, “Sir. Our mother owns this train.”

The porter and train conductor looked at each other.

The porter bent down and said, “Who is your mother?”

Michael said, “Eleanor Stith Simons.”

The train conductor and porter bucked their eyes.

Shirley had grabbed her purse and asked the buggy driver how much she owed him and gave him double.

The train conductor said, “We have to contact Mr. Simons.”

Michael said, “For what?”

The porter said, “To let him know his children are on the train.”

Shirley said, “We are going to our mother. We have telegrammed them. If you don’t put us in the owner suite, which I have the key.”

Shirley dangled the key and said, “I will request my grandfather Patrick Stith to fire both of you. Mother gave me the key last week.”

The porter said, “What are we to see to your father?”

Michael said, “He does not care about us only his girlfriend who is a liar.”

The train conductor who knew Patrick personally did not say anything because he saw it was about neglect.

Shirley said, “If Bruce ask you did you see us. Tell him no. Don’t put anything down about the owner’s suite being occupied.”

The porter grabbed Shirley out of the buggy driver’s arms and said, “Come on boy we have to disappear quick.”

Shirley waved at the buggy driver.

She said, “Michael did you throw that telegram away for the buggy ride? Because if Bruce sees it he will fire that man.”

Michael said, “I put all those telegrams in the pile I gave you. Let Eleanor fight with Bruce. I am a kid.”

They made it to the owners’ suite.

The porter looked both ways and only saw the train conductor watching them.

The train conductor shook his head.

Shirley and Michael went to the window and looked out.

He porter said, “I’ll come back a little later to take your orders for dinner.”

The train whistle blew.

The porter closed and locked the door.

The buggy driver stood and was watching.

They waved at him.

He waved back and pulled away and drove home.

He thought, “I may lose my job.”

Shirley and Michael had a good time the first night.

Shirley was not sick and had her therapy for the day.

Bruce left work and made it to the hospital late.

Nurse Alice ran back and told Dr. Woodson the two were gone.

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Greene were giving the patients’ their therapy.

He exhaled and said, “Telegram Eleanor.”

Dr. Greene walked away.

Nurse Wilson was stunned and said, “That’s why Michael wanted to be precise with his poultry order. That little stinker.”

Dr. Woodson said, “This is terrible.”

Robert came back and brought Lorretta to stay with Shirley.

Meredith was walking into the hospital and heard Nurse Alice say the two were gone.

Robert said, “What are you two going to do?”

Meredith and Lorretta looked at Robert.

Lorraine said, “I am going to give the nurses their bath orders.”

Meredith said, “Telegram Eleanor.”

Dr. Woodson said, “I can’t do both.”

Lorraine said, “I’ll send her a telegram after I finish my business.”

Once Shirley bought the hospital from Bruce, she allowed Lorraine to back selling her bath goods.

Once Lorraine finished selling her goods.

She went into Shirley’s room and searched it.

They saw Michael’s coat, scarf and gloves.

They saw the pay papers for the employees.

Robert said, “They have gone to Eleanor.”

Nurse Alice stood in the room.

She told Ryan the two were gone.

Ryan said, “So what? You will be my wife in thirty days and won’t need this job and then you will be with me on our honeymoon for a year or two. Eleanor will beat Bruce down over her children.”

Lorraine Nurse Alice can you give me fresh sheets for Shirley’s bed?”

Nurse Alice looked and went and got clean sheets. She helped Lorraine to freshen up Shirley’s bed.

Lorraine said, “Nurse Alice Shirley is not on medication, just therapy?”

Nurse Alice said, “She gets a liquid pain reliever if she is in pain.”

She turned to check the medicine cabinets.

Robert sat on Shirley’s dresser by the window.

He thought and said, “I will go to Bruce’s office downtown and tell him Shirley and Michael are missing.”

Meredith said, “Can he stop the train?”

Robert shook his head and said, “No. That train does not stop today at all. It will stop tomorrow evening and pick up passengers and re-load. Bruce won’t have time to stop the train.”

Lorraine said, “Robert you are pretty calm.”

Robert said, “I heard Bruce tell Sharon he was going to the office first thing this morning and leave and take she and her parents to lunch at the club.”

Lorraine said, “Then you go to the club and tell him.”

Meredith and Robert shook their heads for no.

Nurse Alice walked back and said, “Shirley’s pain medicine is here. I hope the ride won’t be rough.”

Everyone said, “No.”

Robert said, “Bruce did not tell me he was leaving work today to dine at the club. I leave downtown and go to the shipyard.”

He looked at Meredith and that’s two hours away. I leave from the shipyard and go to the hotel looking for him. I leave messages at each place he has an urgent situation. You two send telegrams to his offices asking him to come to the hospital. Then I finally come back to the hospital late this evening.”

Meredith said, “After you drop off Bethany from your day out.”

Robert said, “Of course.”

Lorraine said, “How did they leave the hospital?”

Nurse Alice said, “A buggy.”

Lorraine said, “look Meredith and see if there is anything about a buggy in all those papers?”

She and Meredith looked and Meredith pulled it out.

Lorraine took and put it in her pocket.

Meredith and Lorraine sat down.

Nurse Alice said, “Why are you sitting. Aren’t you suppose to be sending Eleanor a telegram?”

Lorraine said, “We are very upset and has to compose ourselves.”

Robert said, “Let me go and get Bethany. To start this foolishness.”

Robert went to downtown first and Bruce was gone.

He left a message with Bruce’s secretary for Bruce to come to the hospital.

Robert left and went to the house and got Bethany.

They enjoyed the two hours ride to the docks and they covered up and sat for a hot liquor drink.

They left and took a two hour ride back into the city and he dropped Bethany back at the house.

Robert went to the hotel and saw Jose and Nancy and told Jose what happened.

While Robert was talking to Jose, Lorraine’s telegram came that Bruce needs to get to the hospital.

Jose left and got back to the house to finish dinner.

Robert left and made it back to the hospital as Bruce buggy was pulling in.

Robert sat and watched and thought, “Let me go back downtown.”

Robert turned the buggy around and whistled and sang all the way back downtown to Bruce’s office.

Everyone at the hospital were nervous.

Meredith and Lorraine and Dr. Ralph enjoyed the left dinner for their lunch.

Lorraine took more bath orders.

In between taking orders and having lunch, she would telegram Bruce’s offices.

She was perfectly timing the telegrams.

Dr. Woodson said, “I don’t want nothing to do with none of this.

Lorraine said, “I’m trying to save all of our asses.”

She felt in her pocket and remembered the telegram. She walked to the furnace and threw the telegram in the fire.

Lorraine was sick and went to the wash closet.

She left and went and laid across Shirley’s bed.

Eleanor, the count, the boys, Brenda and Patrick sat for dinner.

Eleanor had plates set before them.

She told the count, they did not eat much and too much food was thrown out. But the holidays start tomorrow.

They had a meal of Cornish hens, rice, green beans, beets and carrots and different breads.

As they ate dinner, Patrick excused himself and went to the toilet.

He stopped in his office and pull the telegrams and tossed them on his desk.

He stopped and looked back and mumbled.

He walked to his desk and started reading the telegrams.

He thought he saw Shirley and Michael’s names.

He saw the telegram from the train conductor stating Shirley and Michael were on the train.

He then saw the telegram from Lorraine that Shirley and Michael were missing from the hospital.

Patrick leaned back in his chair and thought, “Do I need to tell Eleanor? That train makes one stop tomorrow for an hour. That is not enough time for Bruce to delay it and have the children take off and it will be the same train going back on Thanksgiving day. The children cannot be there without hotel and money and Shirley’s medical needs. Eleanor will have Bruce.”

Patrick saw the telegram from Michael to Percy for him not to tell anyone in case they did not make the train.

Patrick said, “This is a fine mess.”

He stood and took the telegram to Eleanor.

He walked to the dining table and handed Eleanor the telegram and he held both of her shoulders and kissed her on the top of her head.

The count looked at Patrick’s face when he walked back.

Brenda knew something was wrong.

The boys watched their mother.

Thomas held Eleanor’s hand.

Bruce said, “Momma what is it?’

Percy did not say anything.

The count was trying to read Eleanor’s facial expression.

Brenda waited.

Eleanor sat for a few minutes.

Patrick walked and sat next to Brenda.

Eleanor said, “Shirley.”

Brenda’s heart nearly stopped.

Eleanor said, “And Michael are missing.”

Brenda was about to scream.

Percy said, “They are coming here momma. Don’t worry.”

Patrick, took Michael’s telegram to Percy out of his pocket and reached it to Percy.

Percy said, “Yes momma they are on the way for Thanksgiving. And Michael said, he wants two lamb chops.”

Eleanor stood and walked away from the table and ran upstairs to her room.

Bruce ran behind Eleanor.

The count stood to go to Eleanor.

Patrick said, “Count please sit. She will be fine. They are in the owner’s suite. Shirley apparently left the hospital in her night gown. So Eleanor needs to get Shirley’s clothes out for the holidays.”

Percy said, “Count Joseph you will meet Bruce.”

Patrick said to himself, “Thank GOD that boy ain’t slow. He is a thinker.”

The count said, “Percy he is your father.”

Thomas sat and look straight ahead and said, “I’m glad they are coming. I did not want to go to spend the holiay with Bruce.”

Thomas looked at the count.

The count said, “Thomas he is your father too.”

Thomas looked at the count and looked at Percy and said, “We can ride to the train station to get Shirley and Michael.”

Percy was eating his dinner and they were happy.

Percy said, “We did not stop until the next day. Grandpa when will the next train leave Philadelphia to get here. It will be a day and a half and Bruce…”

He and Thomas looked at the count.

The count looked at both of them and raised his eyebrows.

Percy said, “He…”

He and Thomas looked at the count.

The count sat back and watched Percy and Thomas.

Patrick and Brenda watched the count.

Thomas said, “What are saying Percy he can’t catch them before they get here.”

Percy said, “Right.”

Thomas said, “Michael should have two lamb chops.”

Brenda said, “Patrick were you going to tell Eleanor?”

Patrick said, “I was not because there was nothing we could do about it.”

Bruce returned and sat down, “He said momma’s alright. I thought there is no way for Bruce to catch that train.”

Thomas and Percy looked at the count.

Bruce looked at the count.

The count said, “I am going to say the same thing to you that I said to Percy and Thomas. He is your father.”

Bruce shook his head and said, “Bruce is his name.”

Patrick and Brenda watched the count.

Bruce looked at the count with a dare look and picked up his dinner fork and begin to eat it.

Eleanor stayed in her room for a minute and walked in Shirley’s room and opened her closet and saw all the beautiful dresses in Shirley’s closet.

Eleanor walked downstairs and into the family dining room.

The count looked up at Eleanor and attempted to stand.

El that eanor touched the count’s shoulder for him to remain seated.

She sat and they continued their conversation over dessert.

Bruce reached the hospital and was in a good mood.

Everyone looked at Bruce and he knew something was wrong.

He went to Shirley’s room and saw Lorraine laying across Shirley’s bed.

He saw Meredith slouching in the chair.

He did not see Michael.

Meredith was sick because she had an upset stomach.

Nurse Alice returned from getting Meredith something for her stomach.

Bruce stood for a few minutes for someone to tell him where Shirley was.

Lorraine just woke up.

She told Bruce that Shirley and Michael were missing since the morning.

They tried to reach him.

They could not find him and no ne knew where he was.

Lorraine said, “Robert went to his downtown office and the dock and to the hotel. No one at the house knew where you were sir.”

Bruce could not wrap his mind around his children were gone.

He sat on the dresser and thought.

He said, “They had to be going to Eleanor.

Bruce said, “I have to tell Eleanor.”

Lorraine said, “I sent her a telegram. Since she is their mother.”

Bruce shook his head to shake Eleanor out of his mind.

He thought about the train they caught and he knew he could not catch them.

He stood and went home.

Lorraine and Meredith looked at each other and rolled their eyes.

Sharon and her parents were sitting in the stylish house waiting for Bruce so they could be seated for dinner.

Bethany was working in the kitchen and heard Sharon tell her parents she want to go to the mansion for the holidays.

Her father eating an appetizer looked in the kitchen and yelled, “Bring some more cheese.”

Bethany continued her chores in the kitchen.

Sharon, her father and mother looked toward the kitchen because Bethany did not rush out with the cheese for Sharon’s father.

Sharon turned and had a glass of white wine in her right hand said, “Maid bring the cheese.”

Bethany already had the cheese ready and was walking out with the tray.

The three of them tried to look at Bethany with disdain.

Sharon said, “When my father or mother ask for something I want you to get it right at that moment. Do you understand me?”

Sharon’s mother sit straight and pouted her mouth like she was important.

Bethany walked into the kitchen and her luggage was outside her door.

She would have been on the train with Shirley and Michael, but she wanted to get her pay that was on it’s way.

Bethany told Robert she despised Sharon and her parents and she had to go before she lost her job.

Robert reminded Bethany she was Eleanor’s maid, that’s why her pay came from the mansion’s account.

Bethany looked at Robert and said, “I could have left at any time?”

Robert looked hurt and said, “I thought you stayed because of me.”

Bethany said, “Robert I have been with you for six years. It was great. I am getting older. I need to marry and have my own children.”

Sharon told her parents, “I want to move in the mansion.”

Bruce entered the house and went to the bar and poured him tall glass of scotch.

Sharon turned and lifted her head up to Bruce for him to kiss her.

He went to his study and looked at the map of the trains.

He stayed in his office all night and pegging where the train was.

He could not find out any information if Shirley and Michael got on the train until the next morning.

He did not want to think the mob was back.

Eleanor would kill him.

Sharon and her parents were shocked at Bruce.

They sit in the parlor and stared at Bruce.

Loud Lorraine and Meredith entered the house.

Bethany ran to them and said, “Hush.”

She ran back into the kitchen at the door.

Lorraine was looking down at Bethany’s luggage.

Meredith ran into the kitchen and put her ear to the door.

Sharon’s mother said, “How dare Bruce walk into this and not greet us. Sharon you go and tell him to come out here now and proper greet the parents of his fiancé.”

Meredith mouth dropped wide open.

Lorraine saw Meredith and ran into the kitchen to listen.

Sharon sat and looked at her.

Her father said, “You heard your mother.”

He waved his hand for her to go and get Bruce.

Lorraine said, “What are they saying?”

Meredith turned and said, “Bruce did not speak to them when he entered the house and her mother said, for Sharon to go and get Bruce and make him and address them.”

Lorraine said, “I have never seen Bruce address anybody.”

Sharon and walked across the hall to Bruce’s locked study.

Lorraine said, “Bethany is that your luggage?”  
Bethany said, “Yes.”

Meredith said, “Why?”

Bethany said, “Things just did not lead to marriage with Robert and after six years I want to move on and marry someone I can build a life with. I don’t want to be poor anymore and living with rich people.”

Lorraine said, “So you are quiting without money.”

Bethany said, “Robert re-minded me I was Eleanor’s maid. That’s why my pay would come from the mansion’s account. So I am going back to Eleanor, let them fight it out.”

Meredith looked at Lorraine and said, “You know.”

Pointing her finger at Bethany and said, “She has a point. Eleanor sent us here to help out with the kids. The kids are gone, prayer to their mother. There is no need for us to stay. I am packing.”

Meredith broke to run out the kitchen and saw Robert standing by the wall listening.

She could see he was very hurt.

Meredith leaned back and said, “When does the train leave.”

Bethany said, “Monday, Wednesday and Friday.”

Meredith said, “What the…”

Bethany said, “Because of Thanksgiving a train leaves tomorrow at nine am.”

Meredith said, “You got your ticket?”

Bethany said, “I’m not buying a ticket when my boss owns the railroad.”

Meredith cut her eyes at Bethany and then thought, “Did we get our pay today?”

Bethany pointed and said,”In the study with drunk.”

Meredith looked at Lorraine.

Lorraine looked at them and said, “I love him. I don’t want to leave and not know his intentions.”

Meredith said, “Not even for Thanksgiving and see your family and check on your stuff?’

Lorraine said, “I planned to spend the Thanksgiving with him.”

Sharon tried to open Bruce’s locked study door and she could not.

She tried talking to Bruce, but he did not respond.

She stood at the door and pretended she was telling him off.

Jose was drinking and fell asleep.

He walked through the hallway and saw Sharon pretending to be fussing with Bruce.

Jose stood and looked at her.

She turned and saw Jose staring at her and jumped.

Her mother said to her husband, “What she jumped for. Look and see whose out there.”

Jose walked around the corner, as her father was getting up and passed him.

Jose went into the kitchen with a confused look on his face and pointed back.

Lorraine said, “What’s wrong with you?”

Jose said, “That woman was at Bruce’s door acting like she was kicking the door and had her hands on her hips like she was talking to him, but she wasn’t.”

Lorraine said, “She is disturbed.”

Jose saw the luggage in the hall.

He pointed and said, “Whose leaving?”

Bethany said, “I am.”

Jose was washing his hands and looked at Bethany and said, “Seven years and no ring?”

Bethany said, “Six years and no marriage nor children.”

Jose said, “Don’t take this wrong but that is a long time and you are getting older.”

Bethany started sniffing.

Bethany said, “Maybe Jose, you can introduce me to some of your fellows.”

Jose said, “No I won’t because they are just like me. Women, women and more women, liquor and gambling. You need an up standing Christian man who loves God and JESUS and then you. That way you know you won’t go wrong. Not that Robert is bad. He is a good person but he can’t have his cake and eat it to.”

Bethany hung Jose.

Lorraine was quiet. She really wanted Dr. Ralph. They had dated two years. She helped with his finances and decorated his house which was lovely.

Lorraine would take all the material from Bruce’s decorator and instead of throwing it into the trash, she used to decorate Dr. Ralph’s home.

The house came out very nice.

Lorraine wanted to marry him and move into the house but he did not ask her.

Meredith said, “I’m leaving on the train tomorrow morning with Bethany.”

Jose turned and looked at Meredith and said, “Why are you leaving?”

Meredith pointed and said, “I cannot stand those people in there. And I found out I get paid from Eleanor and not Bruce. I do not have to work for him and them. I am a nurse. I am going back to the hospital. I won’t make as much money but I can help more children. And I am not going to pay for my ticket either.”

Jose stopped and looked at Meredith and said, “All of this time we were being paid by Eleanor to be here and help out with her children Bruce took from her?”

Sharon walked back to her mother and father and said, “I gave Bruce an ultimatum. I told him I want that mansion and everybody out and a spring wedding at the cathedral and reception in the backyard. This can be our vacation home. If you and daddy want to live here while we are at the mansion, that would be fine.”

Her mother and lastingly looked around and stood and was walking through the parlor.

And shook her head as it was acceptable.

Jose and Meredith were peeping out the kitchen.

Jose and Meredith ducked back into the kitchen.

Jose said, “I’m going to pack and spend some time with Nancy.”

Bethany said, “You have not heard all of this. Sharon wants to go to the mansion for the holidays. William said, The count was to be there today with his servants.”

Lorraine and Jose were running out the kitchen.

Bethany looked in shock.

Lorraine said, “Hell yeah I am going to see this fight.”

Jose said, “Me to. I will not miss that train in the morning.”

Lorraine pushed Jose and said, “Move out of my way. Because I have to go to Dr. Ralph.”

Jose said, “That would be nice Lorraine. He is a physician and you are a nurse.”

Lorraine held her head down and said, “First the fight.”

Bethany laughed.

Sharon sat there and did not know what to do.

Lorraine and Jose saw Robert standing in the hall and ran passed him to their rooms.

Lorraine said, “I’ll come back for my stuff.”

She took Michael’s coat and scarf and gloves in his bag and put his bag in her room.

Meredith was about to leave the kitchen and Sharon said, “Maid bring more cheese.”

Sharon’s father was eating all the cheese.

Robert walked into the kitchen and wanted to say something to Bethany but he went and got the food to place on the table.

Meredith looked at Robert, as he was about to take the food out to the dining room.

Lorraine began to drag the luggage to the back door.

She knocked on Jose’s door and he ran to the door.

Loraine was out of breath and pointed to the luggage.

Jose said, “Ok.”

Lorraine nodded her head for thank you and walked out the back door and took a buggy and flew to the hospital the evening nurse said, Dr. Ralph had just left.

Lorraine went to Dr. Ralph’s house and sat on his steps until he got home.

Dr. Ralph dismounted his horse and walked and sat next to Lorraine, he stopped by a restaurant for dinner.

He offered her a piece of pie.

Lorraine smile and said, “No. Will you marry me?”

Dr. Ralph was biting a piece of the pie and said, “No.”

Lorraine leaned over and kissed him on his cheek with tears falling down.

She stood up and placed her hand on his shoulder and walked to her buggy and drove back to the house.

Dr. ralph loved Lorraine with all of his heart, but he loved his work above that.

He sat outside the house that Lorraine built and cried most of the night.

Lorraine cried all the way back to the house.

She knew Dr. Ralph loved her but he loved his work to.

She had gone over this in her head for two years, to see how she could show him she was worth it over his work. Not that he should quit his work, because she saw the miracles in Shirley, but to let her have a little bit of his heart and his love.

Lorraine re-turned to the house and took a hot bath and laid out her new outfit she bought to wear at she and Dr. Ralph’s Thanksgiving dinner.

She laid on her bed and turned her back to the door and cried until daybreak.

Meredith, Lorraine and Bethany eased out the backdoor.

Robert was standing at the carriage with the luggage.

Jose was running back with Nancy and had a bag in his hand.

He tossed it the carriage with the rest of the luggage.

Everyone stopped.

Robert said, “I’ll take you all to the train station. Bruce will be on the train with you.”

Everybody said, “Damn.”

Robert said, “I sent Patrick a very long telegram this morning and asked him to let us ride for free in first class.”

Meredith and Lorraine looked at Bethany.

Bethany was trying to figure out us.

Then the shock came over her and her jaws dropped.

Robert ran and grabbed Bethany and kissed her and kissed her and said, “I can’t lose you. I can’t let you go.”

Bethany winked her eyes at Meredith and Lorraine.

They heard the other servants walking in the hallway.

They all ran and jumped in the carriage and drove fast out the yard and to the train station.

Jose and Robert ran to the carriage and helped the women out.

The women ran to the ticket booth and the train conductor just received Patrick’s telegram to put his employees in their own first class car.

The train conductor saw the men getting the bags and said, “Mr. Stith said five but it is six of you. I will tell him later.”

Everyone was excited.

The train conductor was watching out for Bruce and his guests.

The porter was helping with the bags.

He looked and saw Bruce and said, “Here comes Bruce you better pick up these bags and ran to the last train car.

Lorraine picked up Michael’s bag and her makeup bag.

Meredith picked up her books and makeup bag.

Bethany and Nancy ran through all the doors to the last car.

The porter took a lot of their bags and Jose and Robert ran the platform to the last train car.

They got to the last train car and jumped over the rail with the remainder bags.

Meredith unlocked the door.

Robert and Jose fell out on the floor.

The porter ran through the train to the last car.

HE knocked on the door and threw the bags in the last car.

Robert could barely catch his breath and said, “Sir, the carriage.”

The porter waved his hand and greeted Bruce’s guests.

He saw the carriage.

Bruce stopped with Sharon and looked at the carriage.

Bruce said, “That is one of my carriages. What is it doing here?”

The porter saw Bruce and thought, “Damn. The man knows his least little thing. What kind of lie do I have to tell now JESUS.”

Meredith and Lorraine were peeping out the car window and watching Sharon’s parents.

Meredith locked the door.

Lorraine closed the curtains so they would not look at each other for the next two and a half days.

The train whistle blew.

They all ran out the back and stood and waved at the people on the train.

Meredith looked and saw Dr. Ralph.

She ran and grabbed Lorraine and pulled her out to the back porch and pointed at Dr. Ralph.

Dr. Ralph blew kisses at Lorraine.

Lorraine blew kisses at him.

Lorraine ran to the back of the train and smiled until Dr. Ralph was out of sight.

Lorraine said to herself, “This is it Dr. Ralph is out of my sight. I really loved that man.”

Jose and Nancy were hugging.

They had decided to marry and leave Philadelphia and moved back to the town with Eleanor.

But they wanted to do something different with their lives so they can enjoy their time together and if any children came along Jose only wanted one.

Bethany and Robert decided to marry and leave the servants’ business.

Meredith wanted Dr. Woodson, but he was like Dr. Ralph only work minded.

She was going to enjoy the holiday and with her books and start her life in January.

Lorraine became weak and fell onto the porch.

Jose and Nancy lifted Lorraine up and walked her back inside the car.

Robert and Bethany looked.

Meredith went inside the car and got a blanket and came back outside and read one of her novels until dark.

The porter brought them dinner.

Jose said, “What happened to lunch?”

The porter said, “That damn woman up there.”

Jose lifted the top off the dinners.

The porter said, “I brought six different dinners and deserts.

Robert said, “What happened?”

The porter said, “They wanted to ride in the owner’s suite. The owners’ suite is for Patrick and Brenda only. Then Eleanor and her children. I told Mr. Simons ‘You have the key.’ We don’t have the key.”

Lorraine sat up and drank some hot tea.

The porter said, “Ma am you look weak from a fight. Is that a love fight?”

Meredith looked at Lorraine and said, “How did you predict that?’

The porter said, “I did not predict anything I saw when the train turned she was looking at some man and fell on the porch.”

Robert said, “Meredith let him finish. He can’t be back here too long.”

Meredith said, “We no longer work for them and nor do you.”

The porter said, “I told Mr. Simons we could put him in the suite that was available and put his guests in a first class car. I said, I can telegram the office and to tell Mr. Stith you requested the owner’s suite. The woman said, ‘You do that.’ I said, Mrs. Eleanor has taken over and will be sending the telegram to her.”

Lorraine said, “What?”

The porter said, “That’s what Mr. Stith said to tell Mr. Simons and watch his reaction. He looked like this.”

The porter had a look of pure fright on his face.

Everyone laughed.

The porter said, “That woman is kind of crazy. She said she wanted them and her parents to stay in the owners’ suite. Nr. Simons finally said, You have to have the owner’s key and we don’t have it. The old woman said, “Just get it in future. I don’t want to ride first class. The old woman pointed to this car. I said it’s occupied up front please. For some reason they want this car or see who is back here. Keep this door locked and I will bring you an early breakfast.”

Patrick was lying in his bed half sleep when he heard the noise of the telegram machine.

He looked at the time and knew it was important.

He jumped up and ran to his office and closed the door and light a light.

He grabbed the telegram and read it over and over.

Patrick sent a telegram to the train office in Philadelphia to let on his employees.

He sent a telegram to the train that Shirley and Michael were on to check on them and tell them everyone was excited they will be here for the holidays.

Patrick said, “And to never go back. I love that hospital. Eleanor said, Shirley is walking.”

The telegram woke the count.

Brenda was lying on her side praying.

Eleanor was up and was trying to slip to the count’s room.

She peeped down the stairs and middle way she saw the light from her father’s office.

She stopped on the stairs.

Then she thought, “I got two missing children.”

She ran down the stairs to her father’s office and saw him sitting at his desk reading the telegram.

Patrick looked up at his daughter staring at him.

He reached her the telegram from Robert.

Eleanor was nervous and her hands shaking.

Brenda’s hands held Eleanor’s hand and the two read the telegram.

Brenda said, “The hell!”

Patrick said, “This holiday is going to be a mess.”

Brenda said, “I don’ want my boys and all of those damn folks in my house and I will not.”

Brenda started jumping and stomping.

Patrick said, “Bren stop. I am not going to lose you.”

Eleanor said, “Mother stop upsetting yourself. You always told me there would be gold diggers. But the gold diggers don’t know is Bruce has nothing but a salary. He is going to have to sale that house in Philadelphia because he will not be able to keep it up. He sold the hospital to Shirley.”

Patrick said, “That’s my girl.”

Eleanor said, “Bruce sold it so he could finish his house. Therefore, he only has the hotel left. II have been watching his finances over the past two years. No one is going to take my money.”

Brenda said, “That’s my girl.”

Patrick said, “This is testing my faith in God.”

Eleanor said, “What is there is no test. These poor gold diggers that assaulted my child think they are going to push their fake selves under the same roof with my daughter. Let them either go to a hotel or Gen and Ben.”

Brenda said, “I invited Gen and Ben for Saturday brunch.”

Eleanor said, “Mother I don’t care about your friends coming, but they cannot bring any uninvited enemies into our home. I’ll send Gen and Ben a note.”

Patrick said, “No you won’t. I will go and tell them face to face. If that ends our friendship. Well that’s one less Christmas present we have to buy.

Brenda said, “I already bought it.”

Patrick said, “What is it?’

Brenda said, “It’s for a married couple.”

Patrick said, “Well it will be worth falling out over.”

Brenda grinned.

The count had tipped to the door and heard their conversation and he grinned.

Eleanor said, “Daddy and mommy are…”

Patrick said, “Old. That’s what you were about to say>”

Eleanor said, “Yes.”

Brenda said, “What you think happened for two years the house was empty.”

The count fell on the floor.

Eleanor was so shocked her mouth was opened.

Brenda said, “You might as well close your mouth. Where are you going this time of morning with makeup on?”

Patrick and Brenda both said, “The count.”

The count said, “Damn.”

Patrick said, “This is our house. Bruce left this house your mother and I will decide if he can stay at the end bedroom or he goes with those people. I can’t stand free loaders.”

Eleanor said, “What I am to do?”

Patrick said, “Spend my money. You and your mother do good dinners and parties. Get all dolled up and the children and show off your money she will never have. Brenda.

Brenda said, “No. Patrick.”

Patrick said, “Let’s go out with a bang.”

Brenda said, “What bang? I am not going to die and neither are you.”

Patrick said, “I want to take you to Europe for awhile. Eleanor and Shirley can run ever thing over here. We can leave in the spring with good weather.”

Brenda stood for awhile.

Eleanor watched her father and then her mother.

The count was sitting on the floor in awe of this old man.

William was up and started his duties.

He walked to the hall and saw they were up.

He knew he had to tell Mrs. Stith about Wallace and the others.

William exhaled and begin to wall to them.

Eleanor and Brenda looked at William and saw is face.

Brenda said, “Good morning William.”

William said, “Good morning. I will not delay but tell you an incident.”

Patrick was leaning sideways and looked up at William.

Patrick said, “All of you come in and close the door.

The count stood up and cracked his door, because he was praying it was not Earle or Gary.

He listened as William detailed the story Stanley told him about Mable.

The count could hear some of it. He was satisfied when he did not hear Earle and Gary.

Patrick said, “William we will let you know what will be done.”

William walked out Patrick’s office.

Brenda said, “You can control the environment of a man’s activities but you cannot control the contents of his heart.”

The three were silent.

Eleanor said, “Mother who is your doctor. I need him here tomorrow check out Shirley and Michael?”

Brenda said, “O’Neal. I’ll send him a message. Patrick let me sit for a moment.”

Patrick stood up and Brenda sat and wrote for the doctor to come about two pm.

Brenda said, “I am so excited to see Shirley and Michael. It has been over two and a half years.”

She said, “I’ll put this in the messenger pile for Stanley to take it to Dr. O’Neal.”

Eleanor said, “Mommy they are predicting a very cold winter. Can we find some slaves to give some of that stuff to or take it to the orphanage?”

Brenda said, “We got a hot mess going on here that my mind has been on getting through this mess.”

Patrick said, “That’s a good idea. I like that Eleanor you used stuff that was here and made the house look from simple to glamorous.”

The count looked around his room and nodded his approval.

Patrick said, “Eleanor leave a note for William to pack a lite lunch for this afternoon.”

Brenda smiled and stood and walked to Patrick.

Patrick held Brenda around her shoulder.

She held him around his waist.

The telegram machine came back on.

Eleanor stood.

Patrick said, “Eleanor don’t wait on me I sent a telegram this morning that you are now running the railroad.”

Brenda looked up at Patrick and grinned and patted him on his stomach.

He said, “I trust you my love. You took a chance and left everyone you love and wait a long distance and found another part of yourself and had courage to accept it and use it for good. I admire you and of course I love you.”

The count was laughing.

He stopped and said, “What about us? Does this mean she can’t move with me to Austria?”

His heart began to sink.

Eleanor said, “Daddy.”

Her tears flowed.

She walked to the telegram and read it.

She laughed out.

Eleanor was crying and said, “Michael said, he and Shirley are ok. Shirley’s that time of the month and she is not nice. They will see us tomorrow morning.”

Patrick said, “Time of the month.”

Brenda was quiet.

Eleanor said, “Before I left for Europe I had a dream and went and bought her books and items. I know God is healing her body. The doctors said she was fine.”

Brenda said, “It’s mostly men here.”

They all laughed.

Eleanor sat at her father’s desk and looked at him.

She read over the telegrams.

Patrick and Brenda smiled.

Eleanor said, “Six employees not five.”

Patrick said, “That’s fine. Always be gracious. That’s doesn’t have to be reported.”

Eleanor held up the telegram and said looked at Patrick and Brenda, “She demanded to stay in the owner’s suite. I gave my key to Shirley.”

Patrick and Brenda were walking to their suite.

Eleanor said, “Are we going to Shirley and Michael a welcome home lunch or dinner?’

Patrick said, “Both.”

William rolled his eyes.

Eleanor saw him and smirked.

She started thinking about a simple menu because this was one of those life ‘s unexpected pleasures.

Eleanor thought, “Maybe Shirley can help me and mommy get things together for the former slaves or orphanage. I am not going to push her. This plight was a great decision she and Michael made.”

She sat and smile then she thought, “Oh God. I have to find room for workers. I know Lorraine can go home, but she is nosey and want to be here to see and hear everything. Meredith has her own place. I believe the six person is one of Jose’s women. I can put them out with Mable and Denise. I can put Bethany and Robert there also.”

Eleanor leaned back in Patrick’s chair

William passed by Patrick’s office and stopped and said, “Is this now your office Mrs. Simons?”

Eleanor grinned and said, “Yes. William is there enough coal and wood for the winter?”

William said, “More than enough. Ma am.”

Eleanor said, “I’m going to send a lot to the orphanage.”

William said, “Good.”

Eleanor stood and walked to the door and locked it.

She looked up and down the hall and she turned and was running to the count’s room.

He was listening for her and he ran to the door and opened it.

The count was grinning and Eleanor was grinning and she was about to step in his room.

Patrick stepped out his room and said, “Eleanor go to your room.”

The count peeped out his door at Patrick and his grin disappear from his face.

Eleanor stood and looked at Patrick.

Patrick said, “Part of all of this mess is because of your hard headiness.”

Eleanor turned and was walking to the staircase.

She said, “You told me to have fun.”

Patrick stepped out his room and yelled, “You know what I meant not that type of fun.”

Eleanor went stumping and mumbling up the stairs.

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, “Spoiled.”

The count watched Eleanor out of sight.

He felt Patrick staring at him.

He slowly cut his eyes backwards and turned and looked at Patrick who was staring at him.

The count nodded his head and closed his door.

The count was sitting on his bed frustrated and thinking.

Eleanor was thinking then her eyes light up and she grinned.

Patrick and Brenda snickered.

Patrick said, “I will not have that sin under my roof.”

Patrick and Brenda put down their prayer pillows and prayed.

Everyone got up ad started working to get their chores to start.