

Chapter 45

Chapter 45 captures a pivotal moment in Evelyn's career and her personal life, as she navigates the challenges of shooting *Three A.M. in New York*, a film that demands more of her than she initially anticipated. The long days on set take their toll, with Connor being cared for by Luisa, Celia, and Harry while Evelyn is consumed by her work. As the days stretch on, the emotional weight of her role as Patricia, a woman caught in a destructive relationship with Mark, portrayed by Don Adler, intensifies. Evelyn observes that Don, once charming but increasingly distant, is no longer the man she knew. His performance, however, is powerful and raw, a reflection of his own personal struggles. It's clear that Don is no longer simply acting; he's drawing deeply from his own life, which makes the scenes all the more electric and heartbreaking.

Despite the mounting pressures, Evelyn senses that *Three A.M.* has the potential to be something truly special. She feels an intuitive connection to the project, believing it could not only shift public perception of her but also change lives. Her belief in the film's power drives her to make sacrifices in her personal life. She gives up time with Connor and Celia, apologizing frequently for her absences. It's clear that while Celia supports her, there's a growing tension beneath the surface. Celia's support is often silent but unwavering, though Evelyn knows deep down that her partner may regret encouraging her to take on the film. Evelyn, despite the pain of neglecting her loved ones, feels this is a project worth the cost, a project that could redefine her.

The turning point comes when Max Girard, the director, approaches Evelyn with an idea that shakes her to her core. He wants to create a love scene that pushes the boundaries of what has been shown before. His suggestion to depict a woman enjoying sex not out of obligation or love, but for her own pleasure, is revolutionary. Evelyn feels a mixture of shock and exhilaration at the thought of portraying a woman who is not just sexually liberated but truly in control of her desires. As Max proposes the idea,

Evelyn's initial hesitation gives way to curiosity. She agrees to do the scene, but in doing so, she fails to consider the ramifications it will have on her relationship with Celia. She doesn't consult Celia beforehand, nor does she give her partner a chance to voice her concerns. Instead, she goes ahead, motivated by the desire to push artistic boundaries, without fully understanding the emotional cost it will incur.

Later, when Evelyn returns home, she struggles with guilt and the weight of her decision. She buys flowers for Celia, hoping to soften the blow of what she's about to reveal. When she confesses the details of the scene to Celia, the reaction is a mixture of hurt and resignation. Celia, though understanding of Evelyn's professional commitment, cannot reconcile with the fact that Evelyn is so willing to expose herself so intimately with someone else. Evelyn, caught between her passion for the project and her commitment to Celia, tries to explain, but the tension is palpable. The scene they shoot becomes more than just a cinematic moment; it is the catalyst for a deeper rift in their relationship. Evelyn's guilt compounds as she realizes that in her pursuit of artistic integrity and fame, she has once again neglected the emotional needs of the woman she loves. Despite Celia's attempt to be understanding, it becomes clear that this decision is one that will haunt their relationship, pushing Celia to the brink.

As the emotional fallout from the scene and Evelyn's lack of communication continues, their bond starts to unravel. Celia's pain reaches a breaking point, leading her to make the difficult decision to leave. She cannot bear to live in a relationship where Evelyn's professional choices overshadow their personal connection. Evelyn, in a desperate attempt to salvage the relationship, rushes to Los Angeles to find Celia, confronting her in a moment of raw emotion. But when she reaches Celia's door, the silence that follows speaks volumes. Celia, though still in love with Evelyn, cannot continue to live with the pain of sharing her with the world in such an intimate and public way. Evelyn's world, once so sure and full of promise, now crumbles beneath the weight of her own choices.