

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 opens with Evelyn preparing for a dinner with Ronnie Beelman and suggesting that the work they've been doing can continue the following day. The narrator, in the process of packing up their things, pauses for a moment to exchange a brief but meaningful conversation with Evelyn. Evelyn, who is known for her confident demeanor, reassures the narrator that their progress together has been solid, showing her trust in the narrator's abilities and setting a foundation of mutual respect that will likely grow as their professional collaboration deepens.

The scene transitions to a phone conversation between the narrator and their mother. As soon as the call starts, the mother immediately brings up the topic of the narrator's life after David, demonstrating her ongoing concern about the narrator's past relationship. From the beginning, it's clear that the mother had never fully approved of the relationship, which adds an undercurrent of tension to their conversation. The mother's doubts about the depth of the narrator's connection with David are clear, as she questions whether the engagement was the right decision. The narrator, feeling defensive, still seems to have some lingering doubts about the choice to get engaged to David, and these doubts feel validated by the way things have turned out. The mother's early caution about David stands in stark contrast to the narrator's current emotional struggle, making the conversation uncomfortable yet revealing.

As the conversation with the mother continues, the tone shifts to a more lighthearted direction. The mother mentions that she's planning a visit, a prospect that fills the narrator with both apprehension and curiosity. While there is a sense of reluctance to have the visit, the narrator acknowledges that perhaps it might be beneficial. There's an underlying understanding that, while the visit might not be the most fun, it could still offer some value in terms of emotional clarity. The narrator agrees to the visit, albeit reluctantly, knowing that it might provide some sense of closure or guidance.

amid the turmoil they are currently facing. This moment is significant because it speaks to the complex relationship between the narrator and their mother, a dynamic that will likely evolve as the story progresses.

Next, the narrator brings up the package sent by their mother, which has yet to arrive. This leads into a discussion about Evelyn Hugo, and how the narrator's professional relationship with her has deepened. The narrator reveals that Evelyn has suggested a change in their professional path—recommending that the narrator write a book instead of sticking with the planned article for *Vivant*. This revelation raises a few suspicions, as the narrator starts to wonder whether Evelyn has a hidden agenda or if she is strategically positioning the narrator for a bigger opportunity. The narrator, while intrigued by the idea, becomes increasingly aware of the possibility that Evelyn's motives might not be entirely pure, hinting at a more complicated relationship than originally thought.

As the chapter unfolds, it becomes clear that the narrator is caught in the midst of several personal and professional dilemmas. The complicated dynamics with their mother and Evelyn bring to the surface a mix of emotions—doubt, curiosity, and suspicion—that the narrator must navigate. Meanwhile, Evelyn's actions continue to raise questions about her true intentions and how much influence she really has over the narrator's career. This chapter hints at the larger themes of power, manipulation, and ambition that will likely play a significant role in the unfolding story. As the narrator's relationship with Evelyn grows, so does the tension, making it clear that both their personal and professional lives are intertwined in ways that the narrator may not fully understand yet.