

Chapter 72

In Chapter 72 of *We Solve Murders*, Eddie Flood finds himself at a crossroads, mentally preparing for the next phase of his mission. After successfully bribing someone at the airfield, he confirms that Amy, Rosie, and Steve have landed in England and are making their way toward the New Forest. With their movements now traceable, Eddie studies a detailed map, taking note of the thickly wooded terrain that surrounds their destination. The vastness of the landscape offers both an opportunity and a challenge—perfect for evasion, but also for ambush. Instead of immediately following them, he decides to exercise caution, knowing that patience is often the key to success. He also resolves not to inform Rob Kenna about Amy's presence; after all, that is someone else's problem. His focus remains locked on his primary objective, one that he knows will require precision and careful execution.

After pocketing the majority of the £15,000 Rob had given him, Eddie chooses to settle into an upscale country hotel known as The Pig. Tucked away in an idyllic countryside setting, the hotel is renowned for its fresh, locally-sourced cuisine, impeccable service, and a charming yet discreet atmosphere—a perfect place to regroup while keeping a close watch on events. His room overlooks a picturesque view of rolling green fields, where red deer can be seen grazing just beyond the tree line. To an ordinary guest, this peaceful scene would inspire relaxation, but for Eddie, it serves as a stark contrast to the turmoil brewing in his mind. The hotel's cozy decor, rustic elegance, and scent of freshly baked bread make it almost impossible to believe he is here to orchestrate something far more sinister. Yet, despite the serenity of the setting, his mind remains tangled in calculations, probabilities, and contingencies—all crucial elements of what lies ahead.

As Eddie tries to settle in, he contemplates the mechanics of his potential attack, running through different scenarios. A seemingly minor but crucial question gnaws at

him: if he were to fire a shot through a window, would the glass deflect the bullet? If the angle is wrong, if the glass shatters unpredictably, or if the resistance is higher than expected, it could alter his trajectory completely. He cannot afford miscalculations. He mulls over these technicalities while pacing near his window, his fingers brushing over the sleek surface of his carefully concealed weapon. He assures himself that he has only one opportunity to act, and any error could cost him more than just money—it could cost him his life.

With his nerves on edge, Eddie decides to head downstairs for a meal, hoping that a good plate of food might provide a momentary distraction from the weight of his mission. The dining room, with its warm lighting and soft murmur of conversations, presents an almost surreal scene of normalcy—couples enjoying wine, families sharing stories, and businessmen lost in their screens. He scans the menu, eventually settling on a classic fish and chips, though his mind remains preoccupied. As the waiter takes his order, Eddie catches a glint of something striking in the dim light—a ruby-and-emerald brooch adorning the shoulder of a woman seated near the window. His pulse quickens when he realizes who it belongs to: Rosie D’Antonio.

Rosie is deep in conversation with an older gentleman, dressed in an understated but elegant countryside ensemble, exuding an air of quiet confidence. Eddie clenches his jaw, knowing her presence here changes everything. If Rosie is in the hotel, it means she is likely staying nearby, which poses both a risk and an opportunity. He must reassess his strategy carefully; too much movement or attention drawn toward himself could alert her, and the last thing he needs is for Rosie to become suspicious of his presence. This new variable forces Eddie to reconsider his next move.

Instead of lingering in the dining area, Eddie makes a calculated decision to return to his room. His steps are steady, but his mind is racing with possibilities. Could Rosie be involved in something larger than he anticipated? Has she already sensed his presence, or is this purely a coincidence? He knows he cannot afford to make assumptions, and from this point forward, every choice he makes must be measured and precise. As he closes his door behind him, Eddie takes a deep breath, steadies his

hands, and begins preparing for what comes next.

