

## CHAPTER 8

## THE MYSTERIOUS MRS LANDSMAN

Mr Hillman introduced the teenagers to Mrs Landsman. She seemed very weak and not very interested in talking to them. “Hello, I’m Florence Landsman, it’s nice to meet you,” she said in a quiet voice. “Now where are the papers I must sign, Mr Hillman?”

Mrs Landsman was evidently **impatient** to sign the documents quickly. Mr Hillman gave her the papers, and explained exactly what they were. “You know you’re giving your sister a lot of control over your money,” he said. “Once you sign these documents you won’t be able to make any legal decisions without Julia’s signature.”

“Yes, yes, I know that,” said Mrs Landsman, impatiently. “That’s not a problem for me, she’s my sister. Now where do I have to sign?”

Mr Hillman showed her the places to sign and then Florence asked Cindy to take her to her bedroom. Before leaving the room, Mrs Landsman apologised for leaving them alone and explained that Julia had been **delayed** on the road, but was on her way to the mansion. She would be there to sign the papers very soon.

Five minutes later, Julia hurried into the room. She was out of breath. “I’m sorry I’m late,” she said. “I was delayed by the terrible traffic.”

Julia was also impatient to sign the documents quickly and picked up the contracts from the table where Mrs Landsman had left them. Linda noticed that she didn’t check any of the documents, but signed in all the correct places.

Julia was so different to Florence, it was hard to believe that they were sisters. She was wearing a very tight red shirt and elegant black trousers, and lots of jewellery. Linda noticed there was some white **fluff** on her trousers. After signing everything, Julia was ready to entertain her guests and soon began talking about herself and her films again. She seemed ready to talk

all evening. Mr Hillman made an excuse to leave before Julia started showing them all her career photos.

Linda, Mark and his father walked home together and Linda was happy when Mark’s father invited her to have dinner with them. She accepted the invitation immediately.

While Mark’s father was busy preparing their dinner, Mark and Linda talked about their visit to the mansion. “Well, I noticed that the two sisters were never present at the same time,” said Mark. “Do you think Julia is acting both parts?”

“Yes, I do. Why was Florence Landsman wearing dark glasses inside the house? The study was very dark, so she didn’t need them,” said Linda. “Obviously, we weren’t supposed to see her face, or eyes, very clearly.”

“Yes, there was no reason to wear dark glasses in the house,” agreed Mark.

“There was something else – did you see the white fluff on Julia’s black trousers?” asked Linda, with a smile. “It was the fluff from Florence’s white sweater. That’s evidence, isn’t it?”

“Not really,” answered Mark. “Julia could have got that fluff on her trousers by helping Florence earlier in the day. Sorry Detective Linda, but that doesn’t really prove anything.”

“Not if what she said was true. Julia told us she had been out and had only just come into the house a few seconds before coming into the room to sign the papers,” said Linda. “But what else did you notice about Julia, apart from her being out of breath?”

Mark answered that she had been very quick when she signed the papers.

“Yes,” Linda said, “and she knew exactly where, and what, to sign.”

“It seemed like she had done it before,” said Mark.

“Yes, just a few moments before!” said Linda, triumphantly. “She’s a good actress!”

After some wonderful fish and a delicious salad prepared