

DAY 4 DRAMA

Characters: Jess Turner, Casey McDonald, Dresden Kohl (voice only) Inspector Noclue, Flora Potts, Chancellor Max Devlin

(Theme music)

(FLORA enters from the side of the auditorium and proceeds to the flower shop. She's returning from the International City Historical Museum after showing JESS and DRESDEN where Sarah Edward's painting was on display. Meanwhile, CASEY has been "minding the store" for FLORA.)

FLORA: Okay, I'm back! Everything go okay?

CASEY: Sure did. I used to do retail, so it was kinda fun. Thanks for helping us out.

FLORA: Oh, you're welcome...but I didn't do that much. Just got 'em in and showed 'em where the painting was, that's all. *(worried)* I jus' hope nothin' happens to it.

CASEY: Don't worry. Jess will take good care of it. He knows what he's doing.

FLORA: I hope you're right. *(then looks around and lowers her voice)* It was kind of excitin', though. I felt like I was in a real spy movie or somethin'!

CASEY: Yeah . . . I know what you mean. *(pause)* Hey, this is off the subject, but I was wondering about that cross you have by the register. It's really neat. Did you make it?

FLORA: Yes, ma'am . . . it's a Vacation Bible School craft I made when I was 10. It's special to me 'cause I made it the same day I asked Jesus to be my Savior.

CASEY: Wow! So you became a Christian at VBS? So did I!

FLORA: Yep . . . and I've never gotten over it! Imagine . . . "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlastin' life." Now, if that ain't good news, I don't know what is!

CASEY: I know!

FLORA: An' I used to think that you just had to be a good person to go to heaven, but, honey . . . that's man's idea. God NEVER said that.

CASEY: And, yet, that's what most people think. They don't understand there's only one way. And that's to

turn away from your sins and trust in Jesus—and ONLY Jesus—to save you . . . NOT your good works.

FLORA: And, so we just have to keep tellin' people. That's all there is to it!

CASEY: Amen. *(pause as she checks her watch)* Well, I better check in with Jess and see what's going on.

FLORA: Oh, and uh . . . if you don't mind . . . just ask him if the painting's okay.

(As CASEY steps away to radio JESS, the CHANCELLOR enters from the side of the auditorium and proceeds toward the flower shop. [JESS and DRESDEN read from scripts backstage. The "walkie-talkie voice" effect is produced from the sound board.]

CASEY: *(to JESS via watch/transmitter)* How's it going over there?

JESS: *(walkie-talkie voice)* Well . . . I've got the painting, and Dresden's standing guard in the hallway with a mop and bucket.

CASEY: Any clues at all?

(While CASEY continues to talk to JESS, the CHANCELLOR speaks with FLORA, who then goes inside the flower shop to get his bouquet order.)

JESS: *(walkie-talkie voice)* No . . . not yet. I'm gonna flip it over and check the back.

DRESDEN: *(walkie-talkie voice, to JESS)* Uh, oh . . . we've got company.

JESS: *(walkie-talkie voice, to DRESDEN)* You've got to hold 'em off. I need more time.

DRESDEN: *(walkie-talkie voice, to JESS)* Okay. I'll try to lose him. *(pause, then speaks to museum employee)* Uh . . . sorry, sir . . . this room won't be ready for a while. We just got started in here. Sorry for the inconvenience. *(pause as she waits for employee to get out of earshot)* Whee-www!! That was a close one. We've got to wrap this up!

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(CASEY turns and sees the CHANCELLOR waiting outside the flower shop.)

CASEY: (to JESS) Hey, I gotta go. The Chancellor is here. Could be a problem.

(CASEY approaches the CHANCELLOR.)

CASEY: Good evening, sir. Can I help you with something?

CHANCELLOR: No, thanks. I'm already being helped.

(FLORA emerges from inside the flower shop holding a bouquet of flowers.)

CASEY: (to FLORA) Wow! Those are beautiful! But, uh . . . before you give those to him, I just need to double check the order (as she takes the bouquet out of FLORA'S hands).

FLORA: (surprised and puzzled) What?

CASEY: (to the CHANCELLOR) Do you mind? It'll only take a moment.

CHANCELLOR: That's fine. Go ahead. (as he looks at his watch)

CASEY: (to FLORA) I'll need your help.

(CASEY leads FLORA a few steps away, out of earshot of the CHANCELLOR.)

FLORA: What's the trouble?

CASEY: Shhhhhhhh . . .

FLORA: But, I don't understand.

CASEY: What's he doing here?

FLORA: He's jus' pickin' up an order of flowers. Why?

CASEY: We've got to be careful, Flo. Things are critical right now, and the forces of evil are poised and ready. Did he ask any unusual questions?

FLORA: No.

CASEY: Has he ordered flowers before?

FLORA: Sure . . . lots of times. He usually sends his page, but sometimes he comes over himself. He just really likes flowers, that's all. Nothin' wrong with that.

CASEY: Well . . . okay, then (as she hands the bouquet back to FLORA) . . . Maybe it's nothing. (then she gets an idea) Wait . . . before you give those to him. (as she reaches into her pocket and pulls out a small listening device)

FLORA: (curious) What are you fixin' to do?

CASEY: (as she "plants" the bug) Shhhhhhhh . . . it's a bug. It'll allow us to hear what's being said over there.

FLORA: Wow . . . a real spy gadget. Ya'll are so cool!

CASEY: Okay, go ahead.

FLORA: (to herself) Well, Mr. Chancellor . . . I reckon you'd better be on your best behavior!

(FLORA takes the flowers and gives them to the CHANCELLOR.)

FLORA: Sorry about the wait. Here you go.

CHANCELLOR: Thank you.

FLORA: Oh, you're welcome.

(The CHANCELLOR leaves with the flowers.)

FLORA: And come back real soon now . . . ya here?! (pause) Hmmm . . . seems like a nice man.

CASEY: Don't be fooled by appearances.

(JESS arrives back at the flower shop having passed the CHANCELLOR.)

JESS: (to CASEY) What was he doing here?

CASEY: Just picking up some flowers.

JESS: You sure that's all it was?

CASEY: I think so.

FLORA: Yes . . . I guarantee there was nothin' else to it.

JESS: I hope you're right.

CASEY: We bugged the bouquet.

JESS: Good . . . that could give us some valuable information. Okay, now . . . we've got work to do (as he pulls out a small piece of paper). Here's what I found.

FLORA: (a bit anxious) Wait . . . before you get started. Jus' tell me how the painting is. That's all I want to know.

JESS: The painting is fine . . . no worries.

FLORA: (relieved) Wheewww . . . that's a relief!

JESS: All I did was open . . . (FLORA interrupts)

FLORA: (troubled) Open?! What do you mean, "open?!"

JESS: Uh . . . well . . . I just opened a small slit.

FLORA: (panic-stricken) SLIT?! You cut the painting?! Oh, my . . . oh, my . . . oh, my . . . there goes the membership . . . I jus' know it! Twenty-two years right down the drain!

JESS: (*tries to calm her down*) Relax, Flo! I didn't even touch the painting. On the back of the frame I noticed a tiny slit in the brown paper that had been glued shut. That's what I opened.

FLORA: That's all? Jus' the brown paper?

JESS: Just the brown paper. Believe me . . . no one will ever notice a thing.

FLORA: Are you sure?

JESS: Yes, I'm quite sure.

FLORA: (*a deep exhale*) Well . . . all right. If you're sure.

CASEY: Sorry...we didn't mean to upset you.

FLORA: It's okay, honey . . . jus' gotta catch my breath.

JESS: Okay, so behind the brown paper, I found this note. It's a riddle of some sort . . . and it's a hard one . . . so listen carefully . . . "Moses Kenton . . . and the archive . . . where the walls meet 305 (*"three-zero-five"*)."

CASEY: Whoa! One more time.

JESS: (*slower*) "Moses Kenton—and the archive—where the walls meet 305." (*pause*) Any thoughts?

CASEY: Yeah . . . sure seems like Simon could've made it a tad bit easier.

JESS: No doubt, it was designed to protect the document.

FLORA: Well . . . I don't know who MOSES Kenton was, but these buildings (*pointing to her store*) were once known as "Kenton Row" . . . all the way up to the park where the archives building used to be.

JESS: And that's what concerns me . . . the archives building. Do you have any idea what the address was? Could it possibly have been 305?

FLORA: Well . . . the flower shop is 379 and over yonder is the "200 block."

CASEY: (*concerned*) Wait . . . are you suggesting that Simon may have hidden the document in the archives building?

JESS: Well . . . when you take "Kenton," "archive," and "305" . . . you see what I mean? They seem to go together.

CASEY: (*discouraged*) Hmm . . . so the document may no longer exist?

JESS: It sure looks that way.

BEGINNING OF PRE-RECORDED AUDIO SEGMENT

BAELOCH (flashback): Ha, Ha, Ha, . . . There's nothing you can do now. Everything's in place. You're just too late this time . . . too late this time . . . too late this time . . .

END OF PRE-RECORDED AUDIO SEGMENT

JESS: Did you hear that?

CASEY: Yeah . . . it was that guy from EVN Must have planted a discouraging thought somehow.

FLORA: What are you talkin' about? I didn't hear anything.

JESS: It's okay, Flo. It was for us, not you.

FLORA: Well . . . all I can say is, if the document WAS destroyed, then why is the Truth Force here? No . . . I believe God brought you here to save International City! And, as my daddy used to say, "God never makes mistakes!"

JESS: You're right. We can't let ourselves get discouraged. C'mon . . . we've got to get to the safe house right away and dissect this riddle!

FLORA: And I'll be prayin' from here. You can count on that!

JESS: Thanks, Flo . . . that's the best thing you can do!

(*Transition Music [sfx] plays as JESS and CASEY exit stealthily and in different directions. FLORA, watching them go, mimics their stealthy walk as she goes back inside the flower shop. Then the Screen Message appears.*)

SCREEN MESSAGE:
"Two hours later"

(*The scene begins with the INSPECTOR backstage not knowing that his mic is on. He's heard humming a song, talking to himself, and munching on potato chips. Then he opens a can of pop, drinks loudly, and follows it up with a big burp.*)

INSPECTOR: (*to someone backstage*) What? What do you mean my mic is on? It is not! See the green light? . . . Oops.

(*An embarrassed INSPECTOR slowly emerges from backstage. Then he grabs a lightweight podium nearby and proceeds to front and center stage. He pulls out his notes, clears his throat, and begins his speech.*)

INSPECTOR: (*reading from his notes*) Citizens and visitors of International City, my name is Inspector Noclue, and I come to you today to discuss a very serious matter—the

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theft of our monument. Please rest assured that we are doing everything we possibly can to find it . . . using the latest science, technology, biology, zoology, (*not recognizing the next word ["psychology"], he tries to sound it out*) Puh...Puh-Seye...Cho...Cho-Low-Gee...and, uh . . . (*clears his throat*) ahem...other big words like that. (*short pause as he re-focuses*) Now, what do we know at this point? Number 1 . . . a statue has been stolen. Number 2 . . . someone has stolen it . . . and Number 3 . . . we do not know who it is. Cases of this sort can be extremely challenging; however . . . (*proudly*) because of my unique skills, training, and experience, I have often failed where others have not. So, as you can see, you should have complete confidence that this case is in good hands. (*pause as he focuses his attention on an adult leader in the audience*) Why are you looking at me that way? (*steps away from the podium and toward the person*) What is your name? (*person tells name*) Hmm . . . your voice . . . it sounds familiar. Do not leave the city! . . . (*focuses attention on another leader*) And where were you on that fateful night? . . . Hmm? (*person speaks*) . . . likely story. Do not leave the city! (*turns back to the audience then speaks loudly and forcefully*) IN FACT . . . NO ONE LEAVE THE CITY!! YOU ARE ALL UNDER SUSPICION!! (*returns to the podium to retrieve his notes, then relaxes his tone*) Thank you very much and have a nice day.

(*The INSPECTOR leaves the stage. Then Transition Music [sfx] plays as day becomes night [house lights low] and the Screen Message appears.*)

SCREEN MESSAGE:
"Later that evening"

(*The CHANCELLOR enters and approaches International City Park while talking to the Commissioner on his cell phone.*)

CHANCELLOR: You've got to be kidding. You mean to tell me that because of a police convention, No clue is the only inspector we've got right now? This is unbelievable! (*pause*) I hate to ask, but, uh . . . how long is this convention? (*pause*) A WEEK? So I have to put up with

his nonsense for an entire week?! I might as well do the investigation myself! (*as he abruptly ends the call, then thinks to himself*) You know . . . that's not such a bad idea.

(*The CHANCELLOR pulls a flashlight out of his pocket and turns it on. Then he opens the gate just wide enough to walk through and begins his "investigation." Soon the INSPECTOR enters from the pastry café finishing a donut. Then he suddenly notices flashes of light near the monument and sees that the gate is ajar.*)

INSPECTOR: (*talking to himself in a soft voice*) . . . Aha! . . . what do we have here? It is a well-known fact that a thief will often return to the scene of the crime . . . (*pause*) . . . at least I think I heard that somewhere . . . (*pause*) Oh, well . . . now, mystery person, whoever you are . . . you will not get the better of me this time!

(*The INSPECTOR quickly exits for a brief moment and returns with a very large cloth sack and a roll of duct tape. He opens the gate further, pulls out a length of duct tape from the roll and then disappears backstage.*)

INSPECTOR: (*from backstage*) Aha! There you are!

(*Hits and Punches [sfx] are heard as he apprehends the "criminal." Then he "bags" his victim and drags him out onto the stage.*)

INSPECTOR: (*proudly standing over his victim, holding him down with one foot*) Well, my little thieving friend. What do you have to say for yourself?!

CHANCELLOR: (*as his mouth is supposedly covered with duct tape, he mumbles frantically*)
MMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!

INSPECTOR: Do not use that tone of voice with me, Monsieur! You are only getting a taste of your own medicine. Now you know how it feels to have your mouth taped shut!

CHANCELLOR: MMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!

INSPECTOR: (*with a smile*) Just wait 'til they take it off!

(*Theme music*)