

*Sleepless Nights in the Hills*  
a novel by  
Austin G. Mitchell

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## Chapter One

*Leta Dodd was driving her small Suzuki Swift motor car when she saw a man standing near a Suzuki Vitara jeep. She recognized him instantly. He was Mark Reid. She remembered what had happened to her more than ten years ago. It was a Saturday morning and she was going to the market in Linstead. Her three children were in the car with her. She waved to him and he waved back.*

*“Mummy, who’s that man?” her eldest and Mark’s daughter, Debra asked.*

*“He’s a friend of your father and mine,” she told her.*

*“He’s the man, who’s building that big house up the road,” Debra stated.*

*Her three children were Debra at ten years, Trecia at seven and Paul at five years. He had gone to the United States on the eve of their wedding. It was not only that, but she was pregnant with Debra. Now he was back home, a commercial farmer and divorced. He was living in Keswick and building a house after tearing down his late parents’ old one. She understood that he had already built two rooms. Girls in the village were lining up to live with him. In the meantime, a woman, Hazel, came to live with him.*

*“Mark is my man and I’ll fight any girl for him,” she told a group of village girls one day.*

*She was a copper-colored woman. She was about five feet seven inches tall, with big, but firm breasts, a tiny waist and wide hips. Most times she was dressed either in shorts or jeans. She was in her middle twenties and the mother of two children, two girls. She was a teacher at the local primary school. Leta’s husband, David ran the local hardware. She knew that Mark would like to reclaim Debra. At thirty years old, he claimed that he was still a virile man.*

*“I want to start all over with you, Leta,” he told her when they met a year ago.*

*She knew that David was ten years his senior.*

*“It was David who rescued me. Debra calls him daddy. I don’t want anything to change.”*

*“It was a business marriage I did to get my papers. My aunt, Wendy, arranged everything. I didn’t want to tell you because you would have taken it badly.”*

*“I took it badly when I heard. I have to thank David again. As I said before, he rescued me.”*

*“When Aunt Wendy was returning home, I gave her a letter to give you. My mother told me about you and David.”*

*“I never received any letter from Miss Wendy.”*

*“I stayed the stipulated time in the marriage, then got my divorce, but by that time you had married David. I just got married to another woman. We have two children but are divorced.”*

*“What about Hazel?”*

*“She’s my live-in lover. If we get back together, I’ll tell her to leave.”*

*“Just like that, I wouldn’t like any man to do me that. I heard that you have other women besides her. I heard about a woman called Rhea. Are you as wild as in your younger days?”*

*“Obviously not, I would have fathered a lot of children if I was still like that. She’s a friend of mine. Hazel believes I’m sleeping with her, but that’s not so. You don’t go to parties or dances again?”*

*“I don’t want to leave the children at home alone.”*

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*Hazel and Rhea were quarrelling over Mark. Hazel was from Keswick while Rhea lived in Norris. Mark stayed alone at the house. Rhea has one son and a daughter. She was twenty-four years old while Hazel was two years older. Rhea was a nursing assistant at the local health center. The two women were quarrelling in the Keswick village square.*

*“Hazel, you’re going on as if you own him.”*

*“I don’t know where you came from, Rhea. He has been out here for more than a year now and it’s me he’s been dealing with the whole time.”*

*“You’re not the only woman, he’s been sleeping with. I know what he does with me, and he always leaves my house satisfied. So much so, that he keeps coming back for more.”*

*“He keeps coming back to me for more. We’ll see who he moves into that house when it’s finished.”*

*“I have one foot in the door already.”*

*Hazel laughed and said.*

*“I know my position with him. So, you can go on talking,” she said as the latter woman got into a route taxi going to Norris.*

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*Mark decided to go into farming on forty acres of land in St. Mary. He farmed mostly cash crops, but some tree crops and tubers. He had also found another woman, Tena Davis. She was living in St. Mary. She was a pharmacy assistant over there. She was a tall girl with small breasts, a narrow waist and hips. She was in her early twenties. Sometimes he told Rhea and Hazel that he was staying with relatives while he was in fact with her.*

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*As Leta prepared for bed that night, she remembered the argument she had with David.*

*“So, Mark is back home, are you returning to him? I suppose you’ll want to take Debra with you?”*

*“Are you crazy? He hasn’t done anything for me except give me a heart ache. He has children with his wife in the States. If he wants more children he can go to Rhea and Hazel.”*

*“Are you going to tell Debra?”*

*“No, she will have to find that out for herself. What he did was a selfish act. I can never forgive him. Somebody whispered to me that he has another woman in St. Mary. Before he went away Nadene, Madge and I used to fight over him. I don’t even know where*

*those two girls are now. I must ask him about Nadene. She claimed to have been pregnant just before he went away.”*

## Chapter Two

*Friday night Mark attended a party in St. Mary with Tena. It was being kept at a friend's house. They were dancing together.*

*"I want to come and spend a weekend with you."*

*"I told you that I live with a woman."*

*"So, what am I to you, some side chick?"*

*"I thought you said that your mother quarrels when you sleep out."*

*"You're just trying to find excuses. She knows that I'm seeing you, so why would she quarrel if I told her I was going to spend a weekend with you?"*

*"That woman just stays with me sometimes. I'll tell her to stay at her house any weekend you want to come."*

*They left and went to the Excell hotel to sleep before he took her home. He came home Saturday afternoon. He was surprised to find it raining in that part of St. Catherine as he hadn't seen any in St. Mary.*

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*"Mark, do you have a woman in St. Mary?" Hazel asked.*

*They were on the veranda sitting in some plastic chairs.*

*"I told you that whenever I stay over there it's my relatives I'm staying with."*

*"You can go on talking. I wasn't born yesterday. Why were my calls all going to voice mail?"*

*"My phone needed charging, that's why."*

*"Your woman, Rhea and I just finished quarrelling."*

*"You two are always at each other."*

*"I want to know what has she got that I don't have, that you can't let her go?"*

*"She's just a good friend of mine. Sure, I sleep with her sometimes, but you are my woman."*

*"She says that she's your real woman. She told me about some of the things you did with her."*

*"Don't believe everything that she tells you."*

*That night Mark and Hazel attended a party being kept in Keswick. He was surprised when Rhea turned up with Jake Eason. He and Hazel were dancing when she saw him looking in their direction.*

*"Why are you looking like that? I told you that he was her man."*

*"I told you that I'm not in a relationship with her."*

*"You told me that you were sleeping with her, and she admitted to sleeping with you."*

*They continued dancing together to several genres of music. He bought food and drinks and they sat and had it.*

*"I know that Jake is her man. She was just sleeping with you to see what she could get."*

*"I'm not paying her to sleep with me."*

*“She has a lot of money. Both he and you are paying her for services rendered.”*  
*They resumed dancing again. Later they went home to sleep.*

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*David and Leta were also at the party and were dancing together.*

*“Everywhere we go and you see Mark it’s like you can’t stop staring at him. I think you want to return to him.”*

*“You know that’s not true. I’m not in love with him. Ever since he returned, I’ve told you that I don’t want him back.”*

*She knew that David had other women. One of his women, Gail Dyer, was at the party, but he hadn’t danced with her. She would have prevented that from happening. She remembered when he got Lovette pregnant three years ago. It caused a scandal in the community as she was married to sand miner, Val Elliot. They continued dancing together. He went and bought food and drinks and they sat and consumed it. As she sat eating and drinking, she knew she was caught in a trap. If she left him and went to Mark, it would be like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. She would be fighting Hazel and Rhea plus the woman he had in St. Mary for him. She knew that David had other women besides Lovett and Gail. She dreaded the thought that sooner or later she would have to choose between these two men. They resumed dancing. With all David talking about going back to Mark he knew their secret and that there was no return. At thirty years of age, she was still a beautiful woman. She was of brown complexion. She was tall, with a narrow waist and wide hips. Many of her and Mark’s mutual friends had struggled to understand why he had left his beauty queen fiance to do a business marriage in America.*

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*Sunday afternoon, Mark called Rhea.*

*“What were you doing at the party last night with Jake?”*

*“I was only there with him because he invited me.”*

*“What kind of foolishness is that? You just turned up at a party because he invited you. So, you would have gone with any man under the same pretext?”*

*“You were gone out with Hazel. You didn’t even ask me if I wanted to go out too.”*

*“Does he and you have something going on?”*

*“No, we’re just good friends.”*

*“If I ever suspect that you’re seeing him, I’ll just stop talking to you,” he said and ended the call.*

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*In the evening he went over to Rhea’s house in Norris, two miles away. He was still not satisfied about her explanation as to why she came to the party with Jake. They were sitting on her veranda in some plastic chairs.*

*“I’m asking you again, are you sleeping with him?”*

*“Of course not, I told you that I was at home, bored as hell. He asked me to go with him and I did.”*

*“Did you sleep with him last night?”*

*“You asked me already and I told you no. I don’t know why you’re asking me all these questions. It’s Hazel who is spreading rumors about me. What about Leta? I heard on the grapevine that you’re going back to her.”*

*“She and David seem to be happily married although he’s keeping other women with her, but she doesn’t want to admit it. I’ve made attempts to help her with my daughter, Debbie, but she has rejected them.”*

*“I know about him and Lovett and Gail, but I’ve seen him driving around the village with other women in his car.”*

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*Monday afternoon, Leta was about to leave school when her cell phone rang. Hazel was on the line.*

*“Is it true that you want to leave David for Mark?”*

*“I don’t know what you’re talking about. I don’t want him back. You and Rhea are fighting over him, but you can keep him,” she said and ended the call.*

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*Half an hour later, Rhea called her.*

*“Leta, why don’t you give Mark a break? From he returned home you’ve been after him to come back to you. You had him ten years ago and lost him. He’s mine now, so please leave him alone and stay with your husband. You had better think twice before you look in his direction.”*

*“I’m not looking him again. I had him once and you should ask him why he left me? So why should I go back to him? You should be concerning yourself with Hazel. You and she are engaged in a battle royal over him. Why should I get involved?”*

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*Leta had just finished quarrelling with Rhea when Lovette called her.*

*“Why don’t you leave David and go back to Mark like you’ve always wanted? I know what you were trying to do. You were trying to prevent David from dancing with me. I’m along with him and you can’t stop that again.”*

*“It’s not only him you’re sleeping with, but every available man in Keswick and surrounding communities.”*

*“Yes, I’m sleeping with every man that I can find. But you behave like an angel in front of David, but behind him you’re sleeping around.”*

*“Lovette, name one man apart from Mark and David with whom I’ve been associated.”*

*“I know what I’m talking about. What about you and Carl Dacres? Even now David still believes that you gave him a jacket.”*

*“Carl can’t tell you anything about me because we were only good friends.”*

*“One day the truth will come out. I just hope the shock won’t be too much for him.”*



*“Lovett, I wasn’t part of the agreement for you to leave your husband for David and I was to leave him for Mark. I didn’t know a thing about it until I heard that you were pregnant for him so don’t blame me for what is happening to you now.”*

*“Nothing is happening to me now. I live somewhere and I’m working. I drive my own car and my husband, Val, supports his children.”*

*“Well, you won’t get me to leave David, so that you can have him, goodbye,” Leta told her and ended the call.*

### Chapter Three

Mark was at his house when Leta called him. It was raining very heavily.

*"Mark, where are Nadene and Madge? Have you spoken to them since you've been back?"*

*"They're still around. I haven't spoken to either of them since I returned home. I'm not dealing with them."*

*"But you're still supporting Nadene's child, though?"*

*"Yes, I claimed the child. He's about ten years now."*

*"Well at least you're acting responsibly. I registered Debra in David's name. Would you like me to do a deed poll to change it to your surname?"*

*"No, that's all right. I don't think he would be all that pleased if we did something like that. I know that she regards him as her real father, so why change that? It might even affect her too."*

*"Okay, have it your way," she said and ended the call.*

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Leta wasn't off the phone ten minutes before Madge called him.

*"I heard that you're back on the island again. Is it for good or are you going away again?"*

*"You can call me a returning resident. I've returned to stay. So how are you doing?"*

*"I'm okay, and my little girl is doing fine. She's four years old and attending basic school. Her father and I are no longer in a relationship. We broke up about six months ago. You should see me now. It's now, I look fat and sexy."*

*"Gosh, I can just imagine how you look. Send me a picture of yourself."*

*"I'll do that. I'm living in Portmore and working at a pharmacy over there. If you stay away too long another man might get it all. Is it true that two women are fighting over you?"*

*"That's just a rumor. I'm seeing them, but they're not fighting over me."*

*"Is it true that Leta has left David and is seeing you again?"*

*"That's another wild rumor. As far as I know she's still along with him. I'll come and look for you one day next week and we can talk some more."*

*"You make sure you come to look for me. Do you remember the sexy weekends we used to spend between the Hill View and the River Road hotels. I'm ready to start that again."*

He burst out laughing.

*"Look out for me then," he told her and ended the call.*

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The next day, Nadene called him.

*"I'm glad for the money you're giving me for Chad. Did you see the pictures of me and him that I sent you?"*

*"Yes, I got them, he's a very handsome youth and he resembles me very much. You look so hot I have to come and look for you."*

*"I hope you do it very soon. My latest boyfriend and I broke up three months now, so there is nobody standing in your way."*

*"I didn't know that. I'll be there very soon then."*

*"I can't forget those sexy weekends at the Hill View and the River Road hotels. Oh, I wish for them again."*

*"We can make them happen again. I'm still a young man and very virile."*

*"You must be, if those two women are fighting over you."*

*"They can't stop anything between us."*

*"I just hope so, I don't want to be in any fuss with any girls over you," she told him and ended the call.*

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*On Thursday, Mark went to look for Nadene at her house in Bog Walk. He had sent money to her through his bank account. Chad was inside watching television. She was a medium sized girl. She was copper coloured and in her late twenties.*

*"You don't have to worry about me going out with you. My next-door neighbour, Miss Vanny, will keep Chad for me."*

*"You look even better than in the photographs."*

*She laughed.*

*"And you are looking so handsome and well groomed."*

*It was his turn to laugh.*

*"I'm not really interested in Hazel or Rhea. I just go out with them."*

*"Don't tell me that you don't go to bed with them."*

*"We do go to bed, but it's nothing like what we had."*

*"What about Leta?"*

*"I stood by what I told you over the phone. She and David are having a happy marriage compared to a lot of people. She even asked me if I wanted to change Debra's name and I told her to let it stay as it is."*

*"So have you heard from Madge?"*

*"Since I returned, I must have spoken to her once, but that was all."*

*They went out that night and ended up at the Links hotel.*

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*The next night he was at Madge's house in Bridgeport, Portmore. He was surprised at the transformation in her body. She had put on a few pounds, but all in the right places. She was a tall, brown complexioned woman, with medium sized breasts, a thin waist and broad hips. She was in her late twenties. They shared a short embrace before pulling apart.*

*"Madge, you're looking so good. You've gained weight, but all in the right places. You're really looking good, girl."*

*"Mark, it's so good to see you again. I've heard so many things about you. I won't bother going into some of them. If you want to take me out, my daughter can stay with my aunt, who lives next door. Whenever I'm going out, I always let her stay with Aunt Mona."*

*So, they went to the Bamboo night club in Linstead before going to Jack's hotel in that town. He dropped her home in the early hours of the morning.*

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*Hazel was ready to explode. She hadn't seen him for two days now.*

*"Rhea, what do you have keeping him at your house for so long?"*

*"I was about to call you. All my calls to him are just going to his voice mail. I think he's with you, but you're hiding it."*

*"Go to hell and leave me alone, Rhea. Why would I be hiding him from you?"*

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*Friday, Mark returned to his house.*

*"Mark, where were you yesterday and the day before that?"*

*"I've told you before that I'm a big man and I'm free to do as I please."*

*"Rhea said you were at her house the whole time, making love to her."*

*"I wasn't at her house."*

*"I know she was lying because friends of mine told me that they saw you coming out of Jack's and the Links hotels in the late hours of the morning with two different women."*

*"I took those two women dining and dancing. They were friends of mine before I went away. We just renewed our acquaintance, but that was all."*

*"You can save your explanations. I wasn't born yesterday. You went to the hotels to sleep with those women."*

*He shrugged his shoulders, then got into his vehicle and drove away.*

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*Later, he was driving to the country when Rhea called him.*

*"I knew that the other day when you went missing in action it wasn't because of Hazel, but two women, Madge and Nadene. I know that Nadene has a son for you. I want to know if you're rekindling your relationship with both of them."*

*"What I do with those two girls shouldn't worry you. I don't have a serious relationship with either of them. My relationship with Hazel despite her living with me sometimes isn't a serious one either. The only woman I'm serious about is you."*

*"If you mean what you just said, she should soon be out of our lives then."*

*"It might happen sooner than you think," he told her and ended the call.*

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*Nadene was at her house when Hazel called her.*

*"Is it true that you're seeing Mark again?"*

*"Yes, Hazel, if you must know, I'm seeing my baby father again. It was he who requested that we start over again."*

*"I want you to leave him alone. During the whole time he was abroad what were you doing? Now he comes out and you run into his arms. You can't fool me, you might fool him. I think you're looking money from him. The money he had, he used it to build his house."*

*"You should tell him to leave me alone. I'm not looking any money from him. I work my own money. It was because he missed me and the good stuff, he knew he could get from me."*

*"He doesn't need you. I give him everything he would ever need from a woman and he has never complained."*

*"The fact that he had to come to me meant that he isn't getting it right from you."*

*"I practically live with him. He's just using you."*

*"You got it all wrong. I'm back in his life again," Nadene said and ended the call.*

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*Nadene was there thirty minutes later when Rhea called her. It had started drizzling now.*

*"Nadene, are you seeing Mark again?"*

*"It's none of your business, Rhea. I'm returning to my baby father because he has been very good to me."*

*"He's only using you. Whenever Hazel or I are vexed with him, he seeks you out."*

*"You have to be fighting Hazel for him. He's using both of you. He came back to me because I can give him the good loving that he's not getting from either of you."*

*"You can go to hell," Rhea told her and ended the call.*

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*Madge was home when Hazel called her.*

*"Madge, this is Hazel, is Mark with you?"*

*"He has finished whatever business he had with me and has gone back home. I'm surprised that you should be asking me for him."*

*“I’m along with him. I want to know what business he was transacting with you.”*

*“Don’t tell me that you don’t know what business men and women do?”*

*“Can I call you a call girl or a prostitute?”*

*“Go to hell, Hazel,” she told her and cut off the call.*

## Chapter Four

*That Friday night there was a party being kept in Keswick. At about ten o'clock that night when it was in full swing, Gail went over to where David was dancing with Lovett. She was drinking a sorrel beer.*

*"Lovett, David doesn't want you. He's just using you. Why don't you go back to your husband?"*

*"Val, is all right, he has found another woman and doesn't need me again."*

*"He has a right not to want you again, after what you did to him with David and with other men."*

*Lovett pulled out of David's arms and came to face her.*

*"Come out of my business, Gail. And please to leave me alone."*

*"You won't get rid of me until you leave David alone."*

*He had to forcibly take her home. He returned and started dancing with Lovett.*

*"You encouraged me to leave Val and I did. Now that I have done so, why are you refusing to leave Leta? I thought the plan was for her to return to Mark and you to me."*

*"He's proving to be very wild, and she's refusing to leave me."*

*"I heard that all of his women are returning to him. Is that true?"*

*"That's the big rumor doing the rounds."*

*"If Leta comes to the party and see us dancing together, she might try to pull us apart."*

*"She can't do that."*

*"I will continue to go out with you. I will also continue sleeping with you. She has to make up her mind as to what to do, but she can't stop me again."*

*Mark was also at the party with Hazel. He was surprised to see David there with Lovett and he had to take another woman, Gail, out of the party and take her home. He knew that the man was a womanizer and probably had women that Leta didn't even know about. He and Hazel were dancing. He had told Nadene, Madge and Rhea that he would take Hazel to the party. He wondered what had happened to girls like Yasmin and Corine. He would look them up one of these days. Rhea was at the party dancing with the same man she had always gone partying with, Jake. He and Hazel went to his house at about two o'clock that morning. He dropped her home at around eight o'clock as her mother was now staying with her.*

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*That morning he called Corine.*

*"Hey Corine, what's going on?"*

*"Mark, is that really you? I heard that you had returned home, so you finally decided to call me. I'm living in Old Harbour now. I have two children. I heard that women were fighting over you. Is it true that Leta has left her husband and you're going back to her?"*

*"Nothing like that has happened."*

*"I'm tempted to start over with you, but I just don't want to be in any fights over you."*

*"I'll keep calling," he told her and ended the call.*

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*When he called Yasmin, she didn't sound all that happy to hear his voice again.*

*"Mark, it's good to hear from you. Where are you calling me from?"*

*"From out here, I've returned home nearly a year ago."*

*"Well, I'm married. My husband and I have three children. He's a lawyer and I work in his office."*

*"You've really made a lot of progress."*

*"Yes, and thanks for calling me," she said and ended the call.*

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*Saturday afternoon, David and Leta were having it out.*

*"You slept with Lovett last night. Do you want me to go over to her house and fight her over you?"*

*"I was out with her, and I slept at her house. But that doesn't mean anything."*

*"It means something to me and I'm sure it does to her. Do you want me to start going out and sleeping around?"*

*"Mark is full up, because of the amount of women running him down."*

*"I look better than all of them. I look better than both Gail and Lovett. I also look better than both Hazel and Rhea."*

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*Saturday night, David turned up at the party with Gail.*

*"David, it's time you choose between me and Lovett."*

*"Gail, you will just have to accept things as they are. Leta and I just live together, but there is nothing going on between us. I want to be along with both you and Lovett."*

*"Why does it have to be that way? Why don't you let her return to her husband and Leta to Mark?"*

*"You're a very stubborn girl. Val now lives with another woman. You know about Mark and the whole heap of women running him down. I will give you and her money each month, but I don't want any fighting between the two of you and with you and Leta."*

*He drank some more of his rum and boom before continuing.*

*"I'm almost certain that Leta will return to Mark. Lovett has agreed to the arrangement. At forty years of age, I'm still a very virile man, but I don't want any more children."*

*They continued dancing together.*

*"Gail, I'm telling you and I've told Lovett the same thing. If you find a man who's willing to offer you a better deal, you can always back out of the one, I'm offering you."*

*"I wanted both Leta and Lovett to leave you so that I can have you for myself, but that doesn't seem to be happening."*

*"You just have to have patience. Everything will be sorted out soon. You don't have to worry."*

*At about one o'clock they left for her house.*

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*Mark was at the party and was surprised to see David there with Gail. He was dancing with Rhea.*

*"I've heard that Leta wants you back. Is any of that true?"*

*"It seems as if David is leaving her for either Lovett or Gail. But she's certainly not on her way back to me. I certainly didn't return home to be along with her."*

*"Well, I suppose she has always fancied herself as a beauty queen. She should have no problems finding a new man if he really leaves her."*

*They continued dancing.*

*"It's time you choose between me and Hazel."*

*"Rhea, you know it's you I want. You already know the answer."*

*"I want to know what are you doing with Madge and Nadene?"*

*"Nadene is my baby mother and Madge is a former girlfriend of mine. I just talk to them, but there's nothing going on between me and them."*

*They left the party at two o'clock that morning and went to his house to sleep.*

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*David and Leta were quarrelling that Sunday morning. Outside, light rain was falling.  
“You’re sleeping with both Lovett and Gail. Those two women are always quarrelling with me whenever they see me. By sleeping and going on with them, you’re giving them more ammunition to fight me. Even the children are asking me about what is going on.”*

*“Neither of them means anything to me.”*

*“I know that Lovett wants you. She wants me to leave you so that she can have you. She told me that there was an agreement where she would leave Val, for you and you would leave me for her.”*

*“I wasn’t part of that agreement.”*

*“Just who made it though? She couldn’t have made it alone.”*

*He shrugged his shoulders, went to his vehicle and drove away*

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*He shrugged his shoulders, went to his vehicle and drove away.*



## Chapter Five

*That afternoon Mark called Leta. She was in her living room relaxing when he called her.*

*“Leta, what’s really going on? There are all kinds of stories swirling about the place. I saw David out with Lovett and then Gail.”*

*“I don’t know what’s happening. I spoke to him about those two girls, but he refuses to listen to me. Lovett told me that there was an agreement for him to leave me for her and she would leave Val, for him.”*

*“Well, something happened because she actually left Val and had a child for David. He apparently didn’t carry out his part of the bargain,” he stated.*

*“I heard that I was supposed to have left him for you as soon as you came out. I wouldn’t budge because I don’t think you’d want me back.”*

*“At the moment my life is too complicated and you would have to fight too many women to get me back.”*

*“I’m not going to give up and make Gail or Lovett move in and take over what I’ve worked so hard to build up. As a matter of fact, I’m going to fight them all the way.”*

*“You have a tough fight on your hands. Both of them are two tough women and won’t give up that easily.”*

*“A friend told me that he has two more baby mothers. I don’t know how true that is.”*

*“How come he didn’t tell you those things about himself?”*

*“You know, I don’t care what you want to say. But I blame you for what is happening to me. You made me run to him without checking him out properly.”*

*“Did you ask anybody about him?”*

*“Most persons didn’t know more than I did. He told me that he had two children with Grace Raymore. I know them, they used to do holiday jobs at the hardware. About two years ago, she went to the States and took them with her.”*

*“Ever since I’ve been back, I’ve heard stories about him and other women.”*

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*Mark was hardly off the phone with Leta when Lovett called her.*

*“I want to know when you’re moving out so that I can move in?”*

*“I’m not going anywhere. I helped him build this house and the business. Neither he, you, or Gail can get me out of here.”*

*“I think you want me to come down there and give you a beating to leave him alone.”*

*“You’re just bluffing. I’m planning to go out with him tonight. You can come and we’ll see how bad you really are.”*

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*Lovett was hardly off the phone when a woman called.*

*“My name is Angela James. Has David ever told you anything about me?”*

*“I can’t remember him mentioning your name or anything about you.”*

*“I have been to the hardware many times to collect money for my son. Many of the workers know me. My son, Kyle, is now four years old. I don’t know why he never let you know anything about him.”*

*“I will have to talk to him about you and your son,” Leta told her and ended the call.*

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*Monday, Lovett called Gail.*

*“I want you to back off and leave David alone.”*

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