

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 of *The Chocolate War* opens with a pivotal moment where Archie is thrust into a tense discussion with Brother Leon regarding the ambitious chocolate sale that is meant to deliver twenty thousand boxes to Trinity School. The sheer magnitude of the goal initially shocks Archie, but as he listens carefully, he quickly picks up on the undercurrent of vulnerability in Leon's demeanor. This is not the same confident, imposing figure of authority that Archie is used to. Leon is visibly nervous, sweating, and struggling to maintain his usual commanding presence. As the conversation unfolds, Leon explains that the chocolate sale is essential to the school's financial stability, as the funds raised from this sale, especially from the exclusive Mother's Day chocolates, will help keep the school afloat. However, this revelation seems to expose Leon's desperation, and it does not escape Archie's notice that the assistant headmaster is subtly attempting to pull him into this complex situation to ensure the success of the sale.

Archie listens intently as Leon tries to justify the ambitious goal, explaining that the school is in dire need of revenue, given its increasing operating costs and the lack of support from wealthy alumni. Leon emphasizes that this sale is not just a tradition but a necessity, something that the survival of the school now depends on. Despite this explanation, Archie begins to see through the façade. Leon's usual confident persona has cracked, revealing a much more desperate figure trying to control the situation by leaning on the students. Archie, ever perceptive, questions the feasibility of the target, pointing out that it would require an inflated number of boxes sold by each student compared to previous years. This logical questioning is not just a challenge but an opportunity for Archie to assess Leon's true motives and test how far the assistant headmaster will go to secure his support. It becomes increasingly clear that Leon is attempting to manipulate the situation by drawing Archie into the fold and convincing

him to lend his influence to the sale, which only strengthens Archie's growing sense of control.

As the tension escalates, Archie becomes aware that Leon is effectively trying to enlist the help of The Vigils, the secret student organization that Archie is part of. The assistant headmaster carefully tries to appeal to Archie's sense of loyalty and influence, but Archie is already several steps ahead. He pretends to be caught off guard by the request, all while enjoying the subtle shift in the power dynamic between them. Leon, who once seemed like a towering figure in the school, is now the one in need, and Archie, despite being the student, finds himself in a position of power. The realization of this power shift excites Archie as he begins to enjoy the game of manipulation and control that he has begun to play. However, Leon's dependence on The Vigils, a group of students he cannot directly control, highlights the vulnerability of his position, and the assistant headmaster's desperation is laid bare.

Despite the challenges the school faces, Leon's reliance on external help becomes even more apparent as the conversation progresses. Archie, still playing the role of a willing participant, assures Leon that The Vigils will lend their support, but not without recognizing the underlying tensions in the room. The stakes are raised higher as the conversation grows more intense, with both parties fully aware that the success of the sale depends on manipulating the student body into action. Archie, with his unique understanding of the school's power structure, confirms his involvement, knowing full well that his influence within The Vigils could determine the success or failure of the chocolate sale. This exchange not only reveals the financial troubles of the school but also underscores the psychological games that both Archie and Leon are playing with each other. As the conversation comes to an end, Archie leaves Leon's office, having manipulated the situation to his advantage without needing explicit permission from the assistant headmaster. His departure signals the growing power dynamics at play within the school, and the realization that Archie is no longer just a participant in the school's social hierarchy—he is becoming a key player in shaping its outcomes.