

# Chapter 62

Chapter 62 of *All the Colors of the Dark* begins with Patch sitting alone at lunch, absorbed in studying a map. His solitude is interrupted when Misty Meyer approaches him, dressed in a navy jumper and a white turtleneck. She carries with her a large cake, an awkward creation adorned with a skull and crossbones, meant to celebrate his missed birthday. Despite the cake's unappealing appearance, Misty eagerly shares her excitement about her progress in cake decoration, a skill learned in her culinary classes. Patch, however, finds it difficult to muster any enthusiasm, his thoughts distracted by his own inner turmoil and the weight of the day's events. This moment of awkwardness sets the tone for the subtle disconnect between them, as Misty's bright demeanor contrasts sharply with Patch's detached response.

As Patch tries to sample the cake, he is immediately struck by its salty flavor but remains polite, not wanting to offend Misty. The conversation between them shifts to more personal topics, with Misty sharing an anecdote about her uncle's work with pirates, only to clarify that he actually works in copyright law. Despite her attempt to lighten the mood with this story, Patch remains uninterested, his mind elsewhere. When Misty notices his sparse lunch—just buttered bread and an apple—she assumes he might be on a diet and, in a lighthearted gesture, offers him pills from their mutual acquaintance, Christy Dalton, as a possible solution. This brief exchange highlights the awkwardness of their connection and Patch's growing detachment from the world around him, as he struggles to engage with Misty or her attempts at conversation.

After lunch, Patch takes a more decisive action, pilfering paper from the school's supply closet to create posters for a missing girl named Grace, though the details surrounding her disappearance remain vague. Saint joins him as he works, and together they share a quiet, almost wordless walk to the school gates, eventually boarding a bus together. As the bus ride begins, Patch finds himself drifting off to

sleep, feeling a strange sense of comfort in Saint's presence as she watches over him with a protective gaze. In this moment of calm, Saint contemplates the idea of holding his hand but decides against it when she notices her grandmother's disapproving gaze. This internal conflict between her desires and her external influences reveals the complexity of their relationship, with Saint's quiet care for Patch standing in contrast to the constraints of societal expectations.

The bus journey continues through various towns, and Patch begins reflecting on Grace, piecing together the fragments of her life that only he seems to understand. He contemplates her age and the stories he holds in his memory, feeling a strange connection to her that seems to exist only in the space between his thoughts. The ambiguity surrounding Grace's story allows Patch to make imaginative connections, weaving her presence into his own narrative in a way that feels both intimate and distant. His mind drifts as he constructs an imaginary bond with Grace, the only person who seems to understand him, despite the lack of clarity surrounding her life and disappearance.

At a bus station, their journey takes an unexpected turn when they encounter a noticeboard displaying a photo of Callie Montrose, a girl who has gone missing under mysterious circumstances, despite her father being a police officer. The sight of Callie's photo strikes a chord in Patch, prompting him to draw unsettling parallels to his own experience of being lost. This moment of recognition deepens his connection to the missing girl, as he contemplates his own sense of dislocation and the confusion that surrounds his life. Saint, sensing his emotional shift, reaches for his hand, but Patch instinctively flinches, a reaction that reveals the layers of his internal struggles. Despite the brief tension, the moment encapsulates their bond, highlighting the complexity of their relationship amid the uncertainty of their shared pasts. This gesture, though small, symbolizes the unspoken connection between them, hinting at the emotional depth that continues to develop as they face their respective challenges together.

The chapter delves into the complexities of Patch and Saint's relationship, as both characters navigate the weight of their respective pasts. Their quiet moments together, from the bus ride to the encounter at the station, highlight the tension between their desires for connection and the emotional barriers they continue to face. Patch's preoccupation with Grace and the missing girl's photograph adds layers to his character, showcasing his internal conflict and the way he processes his emotions. Saint's protective nature and her internal struggle with societal pressures create a poignant contrast, illustrating the tension between personal desires and external expectations. The chapter captures the emotional intricacies of both characters, as they continue to grapple with their past experiences while forming a bond that is slowly evolving amid the uncertainty of their circumstances.

