

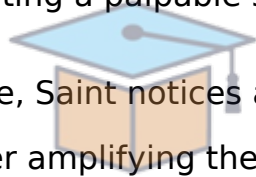
# Chapter 94

Chapter 94 begins with the Tooms house engulfed in darkness, illuminated only by the faint light of a crescent moon. Saint, dressed in her prom gown, stands before the house, having recently visited the salon where her hair now falls in chestnut waves, framing her face. She carefully applies makeup and slips into her Mary Janes, embodying the image of a young woman prepared for a special night. Norma, her companion, admires her appearance, noting the attention to detail Saint has put into her look, yet their playful exchange hints at an underlying tension between them. Saint's nervous energy is palpable, reflecting her internal turmoil despite her outward appearance of confidence. As she stands before the house, her thoughts shift to Jimmy Walters, who is set to arrive soon, further emphasizing the emotional complexity of the evening.

Amidst the preparations, Saint's mind drifts to Grace, a girl who might be lost or hidden away in the vastness of the wilderness. The uncertainty surrounding Grace's fate looms large in her thoughts, casting a shadow over the excitement of the prom. As she gazes out over the sprawling landscape, Saint wrestles with her concern for Grace, torn between the joy of a night meant to celebrate youth and the deep worry that consumes her heart. The tension between these conflicting emotions underscores the chapter's theme of lost innocence and the burdens of unresolved mysteries. Saint's contemplation reflects the complexity of her inner world, where happiness and sorrow often coexist, and where the weight of one's responsibilities can overshadow personal milestones. Despite the allure of the night, Saint finds herself grappling with the haunting uncertainty of Grace's disappearance, unable to fully escape the darker elements of her life.

Compelled by an urge to explore the Tooms farmhouse, Saint quietly climbs through a window, her dress trailing behind her as she navigates the dimly lit interiors. The

house feels abandoned, yet there are signs of life in the form of canned goods neatly arranged in the kitchen, a testament to their enduring presence. These preserved items stand as a stark reminder that while some things remain untouched by time, the people and memories tied to them fade away. The contrast between the items that endure and the ghostly remnants of those who once lived there deepens the eerie atmosphere of the house. Saint's careful exploration leads her deeper into the space, where each step echoes the weight of the past. As she moves through the house, the tension builds, creating a palpable sense of unease that lingers in the air.



Summary

From the farmhouse, Saint notices a flickering light from her grandmother's house in the distance, further amplifying the ominous atmosphere that surrounds her. The quiet of the night is broken by the sound of creaking floorboards beneath her feet as she ascends to the attic. Each step heightens the sense of foreboding, adding to the unease that has settled in her chest. The attic, with its dim light and dusty air, feels like a place where secrets are hidden, waiting to be uncovered. As Saint moves deeper into the space, her heart races, and an unsettling noise causes her to freeze in place. Panic sets in as the sound seems to follow her, and the realization that she is not alone becomes undeniable. Summoning every ounce of courage, she calls out, hoping to confront whatever might be lurking in the shadows. Her knees shake with fear, but the tension builds as she prepares to face whatever unknown entity threatens to overwhelm her.

Saint's internal struggle intensifies as she grapples with the overwhelming sense of dread that fills the attic. Every creak of the floorboards and every flicker of movement adds to her mounting anxiety. The fear of being followed consumes her as the darkness grows heavier around her, leaving her feeling more vulnerable with each passing second. The air is thick with tension, and the slightest sound seems amplified in the oppressive silence. As Saint stands on the edge of terror, her body betrays her with a tremor that threatens to undo her composure. The chapter culminates in a moment of high suspense, where Saint must confront her fears and summon the strength to face the unknown, even as the darkness seems to close in around her. The chilling atmosphere and the uncertainty of what lies ahead keep readers on edge,

adding a layer of intensity that drives the narrative forward.

