

Chapter 53

Chapter 53 of *All the Colors of the Dark* presents Saint as a devoted and unwavering figure, committed to standing by a loved one in the hospital during a time of crisis. She spends her days and nights in a chair by his bedside, sharing meals with the night porters and junior doctors, with her grandmother, Norma, occasionally joining her. Despite Norma's concern for her well-being and her gentle attempts to encourage Saint to take a break, Saint remains determined to stay by her loved one's side. Her commitment is palpable, as she repeatedly whispers, "I won't take my eyes off of you," a mantra that signifies her dedication and emotional connection to him. This repetition symbolizes not only her love and devotion but also her refusal to let go of hope, even in the face of uncertainty. The weight of this promise is felt throughout the chapter, as Saint clings to it while enduring the exhausting emotional toll of the situation.

Saint endures six long days and nights in the hospital, only leaving when urged by medical staff. Her loved one is kept alive by mechanical ventilation, and the coldness of his skin and the tranquility of his closed eyes stand in stark contrast to the turmoil she feels. The emotional distance between her and the person she loves seems vast, yet her commitment to him remains unshaken. Norma attempts to provide some comfort by bringing Saint fresh clothes, hoping to give her a small sense of relief, but Saint resists, feeling as though changing her appearance would distance her from the last meaningful moment she had with him. This act of resistance highlights the depth of her emotional attachment and her need to preserve the connection she feels with him, even in the face of overwhelming grief. She feels that she must remain as she was in those final moments, holding on to the memory of that time as a lifeline.

A pivotal moment occurs on the second night, when a sudden code is called, throwing the hospital room into chaos. Medical personnel rush in, forcing Saint to step outside

while they attend to her loved one. In her desperation and fear, Saint cries out, “He can’t die now,” refusing to accept the possibility of losing him. Her emotions are raw, and the realization that she may not be able to protect him from death shakes her to the core. Norma, seeing her distress, tries to guide her to the prayer room, suggesting that prayer might offer comfort and strength during this difficult time. However, Saint is unable to reconcile her emotions with the idea of divine intervention, openly questioning the role of God in the events that have unfolded. “God started the fire. And now he wants the credit for putting it out,” she says, illustrating her frustration and disillusionment. This moment encapsulates the inner conflict Saint faces—caught between grief, hopelessness, and the desire to believe that something greater can intervene.

The chapter’s emotional core centers around Saint’s inner turmoil and her struggle to balance grief and hope while maintaining her unwavering loyalty to the person she loves. Her devotion and determination are put to the test as she grapples with the harsh realities of the situation. The chapter masterfully conveys the complexities of love and loss, showing how Saint’s fierce dedication is both her strength and her burden. Through her struggle, the reader is given an intimate portrait of a young woman wrestling with the harshest emotions, trying to hold on to the person she loves in a world that feels like it’s slipping away. Her emotional journey serves as a powerful exploration of the fragility of life, the resilience of the human spirit, and the enduring power of love, even in the face of overwhelming despair.