

# Chapter 80

Chapter 80 of *All the Colors of the Dark* unfolds with a quiet intensity, as Sammy brings Patch's striking painting, *Grace Number One*, to Nix's desk at the police station. Sammy asks Nix to make copies of the artwork, which immediately captivates Nix. The painting stands out for its haunting realism, appearing so lifelike that it almost seems photographic. Nix is drawn to the image, unable to ignore the unsettling aura surrounding it. Upon closer inspection, he realizes that the painting depicts a girl—likely the same girl Patch has been searching for, Grace. Nix, intrigued by the significance of the piece, seeks confirmation from Patch, who proudly reveals that the painting represents his artistic interpretation of Grace. Patch stands by as Nix carefully reproduces the work, ensuring that the delicate image is handled with the utmost care. Nix's role in this process goes beyond the technical task of making copies; he recognizes the emotional weight this piece carries and the larger implications it might have for the investigation.

Once Nix finishes creating fifty copies of *Grace Number One*, the paintings are distributed across various police departments, a tactical move to raise awareness about Grace's disappearance. Meanwhile, Patch, finding solace in the quiet of his gallery, stands before the original painting, tracing the contours of the image with his eyes. His fascination with his work deepens as he considers how much of himself he poured into the painting. The arrival of Misty interrupts his solitude, her perfume filling the room and breaking his concentration. She comments on the beauty of the girl in the painting, suggesting that *Grace Number One* deserves a more prominent display in an actual gallery, its significance deserving of more recognition. Her words resonate with Patch, though he remains introspective, absorbed in the layers of meaning behind his work. As Misty explores the other pieces, Patch reflects on the years he's spent developing his artistic skills. His paintings have become an emotional outlet, an

expression of his innermost feelings, with Grace's image now permanently captured in his art. The connection between Patch and Misty deepens in these moments, yet Patch remains acutely aware of the gap between his desire to express his emotions through art and the limitations of those expressions.

The conversation between Patch and Misty continues as she hands him an envelope, the contents of which remain unclear, adding an air of mystery to the exchange. As she leaves the gallery, Patch stands in the doorway, the weight of his feelings for her settling heavily on his shoulders. He is deeply attached to Misty, and his thoughts revolve around how she seems to slip in and out of his life, never fully staying. Despite the emotional pull he feels towards her, Patch knows he can't fully express his love for her through his paintings. His attempts to capture her beauty and essence in art always feel incomplete, like the brushstrokes can never do justice to the depth of his feelings. This realization weighs on him as he contemplates the futility of using art to convey something as elusive as love. No matter how many different approaches he takes, no matter how many different colors he mixes, the true essence of Misty remains beyond his grasp. The chapter is underscored by Patch's growing understanding that while his paintings may capture moments or glimpses of his emotions, they can never fully encompass the complexities of the people or experiences that inspire them. It is a poignant reflection on the limitations of art, as well as the complexity of human emotions, which can never be entirely captured, only interpreted and expressed in different ways.