

# Chapter 43

In the chapter, the protagonist finds solace in the park, sleeping in various spots such as the buffalo shed, benches, or the pavilion, as the warm nights of June approach. He sustains himself by scavenging for food—apples, carrots, and day-old hamburger buns found in the deer and buffalo pens, as well as free samples from the newly opened Acme bakery. His hunger seems to amplify the reach of Mrs. Pickwell's dinner whistle, drawing him to her meals from various locations in town.

Amidst his transient lifestyle, he frequents the library and participates in pick-up games of baseball and basketball. With the school year ending, the park becomes busier with children. Mornings hold a special significance for him; he rises before the sun to embrace a tranquil hour he cherishes, exploring the town with an intimate familiarity. Every street, alley, or backyard holds significance, reflecting the lives of the townspeople he observes, even without knowing them by name.

He becomes acquainted with the town through its landscapes—neighborhoods with distinct backyards full of flowers, weeds, and unique items, characterized by their individuality, much like faces. Interestingly, the divisions of East End and West End, as well as the distinctions between black and white, dissolve in the early hours. In these moments, he feels a sense of belonging, viewing Two Mills as his town, just as much as any of its residents.

Despite knowing he could find comfort sleeping in homes like the Beales' or the McNabs', he indulges in the enchantment of mornings, believing that any house in Two Mills would welcome him. This feeling drives him to explore, leading him to a backyard on Hamilton Street one night, where, after observing the growth of a leaf lettuce, he finds a white wicker loveseat on the back porch and rests. Thereafter, he continues his routine, sleeping in different backyards or porches each night, occasionally even finding unlocked doors that allow him to sleep inside homes.