

Chapter IV

On a late July evening in New York City, Addie awakens in a subway car, comforted by Henry beside her. They've just returned from a day out and decide to spend their few remaining hours together, hesitantly clinging to each other amidst Addie's deeper anxieties of waiting for someone she yearns for from her past. Despite Henry preparing to leave for the night, Addie convinces him to stay, leading them to visit a local bar named the Merchant to extend their seamless day into the night.

At the Merchant, they playfully declare they're celebrating their "three hundred" anniversary, indulging in the disoriented, dreamlike state brought on by their long day in the sun. The emphasis on their shared new experiences, like dancing and enjoying the night, underscores both the beauty and the transient nature of their connection. However, this seamless evening takes a dramatic turn when an unexpected gift – a glass of Champagne intended for Addie, accompanied by a note in French – signals the intrusion of someone from Addie's distant past.

Panic ensues as the bar halts to a surreal standstill, with every patron frozen in time except for Addie, Henry, and the arrival of Luc, a figure from Addie's past who appears unaffected by the passage of decades. Luc's casual demeanor and his cryptic remarks hint at a complex and tragic history with Addie, suggesting a supernatural influence over her life and her connections with others, including Henry. As Luc's attention turns to Henry, the interaction suggests a tense triangle fraught with deals made, desires manipulated, and time itself being a weapon of control and conflict.

This chapter combines elements of romance, mystery, and the supernatural, setting the stage for a narrative deeply rooted in personal history, timeless connections, and the struggles of maintaining agency over one's fate and relationships. The serene, ephemeral quality of Addie's time with Henry contrasts sharply with the dark, looming presence of Luc, encapsulating a moment that blurs the lines between day and night, past and present, freedom and fate.