

## 27. The Finger

In Chapter 27, titled "The Finger," Dodo awakens in his crib to see his friend, Monkey Pants, trying to communicate. Recent experiences weigh heavily on Dodo; he has just come out of a hospital cast and struggled to adapt to the overwhelming and isolating environment of the ward filled with various patients. The lonely desperation of his new surroundings deeply affects him, as he observes how the more capable patients dominate those who are less so. The energetic environment, full of chaos and confusion, leaves him feeling trapped and distressed.

Dodo grapples with feelings of guilt related to his past actions, acknowledging that he is in this dire situation because of his wrongdoings, including stealing and violence. His inner turmoil intensifies as he reflects on his treatment of people like Miss Chona and realizes that his aggressive actions led to devastating consequences. Despite his guilt, he finds brief solace in his friendship with Monkey Pants. They engage in a playful challenge, attempting to hold their fingers together through the bars of their cribs. This light-hearted game provides a much-needed distraction from their grim reality and allows Dodo to momentarily forget his pain.

However, their fun is abruptly interrupted when the intimidating figure, Son of Man, arrives. He swiftly isolates Dodo from Monkey Pants, creating a terrifying atmosphere as he makes threatening movements toward Dodo. The preceding sense of friendship is replaced with fear and dread as Son of Man aggressively attacks Dodo, inciting chaos when Monkey Pants has a seizure. This alarming turn of events heightens Dodo's anxiety, and he struggles to comprehend the violence of this world, leading him back to feelings of guilt and terror.

As the chapter closes, Dodo finds comfort in grasping Monkey Pants's finger in solidarity, untangling themselves from the darkness enveloping them. The simple act of holding hands symbolizes their bond amidst the trauma they endure together in the ward, underscoring the power of friendship even in the bleakest situations.