

CHAPTER TWELVE

In Chapter Twelve, titled "Cry of the Hunters," Ralph finds himself alone and deeply wounded, contemplating his injuries and the perilous state of his existence. He reflects on the hunters' savage transformation, recalling their descent into brutality, as he listens intently for any signs of pursuit. Initially, he believes he has evaded them, noting their hesitance in the forest, but he is profoundly aware of the threat they pose. The afternoon fades, and Ralph, now hungry and distressed, witnesses a feast at Castle Rock while grappling with the reality that he is considered an outlaw among the others.

As Ralph navigates through the fruit trees, conflicting thoughts arise — he hopes to avoid confrontation, but the grim truth weighs heavily upon him. Haunted by memories of Piggy and Simon, their deaths signify the end of civility as Ralph realizes he cannot escape Jack's relentless pursuit. His desperation culminates in a poignant moment of fear where he affirms his belief that the violence was accidental, but doubts plague his mind.

Venturing out towards the familiar beach, Ralph encounters the remnants of a pig's skull mounted as an offering, a chilling reminder of their descent into savagery. In this isolated place, he is again confronted with existential dread and begins to sense the approaching night as an omen of doom. Hearing the tribal chants in the background serves as a stark reminder of his precarious position.

Later, as darkness envelops the island, Ralph attempts to connect with Samneric, who have aligned themselves with Jack's tribe. The twins warn him of the imminent danger he faces, informing him about the tribe's plans to hunt him down. This conversation reveals their unwilling complicity and fear, further isolating Ralph. He deeply regrets the loss of his friends and the innocence they once shared.

As Ralph's situation deteriorates, the chapter builds to a climax. The hunt intensifies with the tribe attempting to smoke him out. In a frenzied escape, Ralph grapples with the fear of being caught, reflecting his ultimate fight for survival against overwhelming odds. The tumultuous ending sees Ralph narrowly escape as the island burns behind him, leading to a climactic encounter with a naval officer who abruptly ends the savage nightmare. This encounter brings a mix of relief and sorrow, as Ralph's traumatic journey culminates in recognition of lost innocence and the brutality of human nature, leaving him overwhelmed with grief over the past.