

Chapter 137

In Chapter 137 of *All the Colors of the Dark*, Saint returns to Monta Clare, bringing along a sense of nostalgic routine as she interacts with her grandmother on the porch. The old woman alternates between playing the harmonica and smoking a cigarette, creating a mix of humor and annoyance, drawing a swift reprimand from Saint when their noise disrupts the neighbor's new baby. During this time, Monta Clare feels most alive when he listens to Saint play the piano, a brief respite from his otherwise monotonous life.

As the first month goes by, Monta Clare's existence hums along, kept vibrant by the companionship of Saint and Sammy. The relentless snow hints at an impending record-breaking winter, with local children pressing their faces to windows in anticipation of school closures. With his parole conditions hinging on finding work, Monta Clare settles into a gallery job. Although his prospects dim, curious visitors occasionally stop to admire his art, leading to awkward exchanges where he redirects them to galleries with better offerings. Sammy peppers their interactions with humor, teasing Monta Clare about the growing tally of his mounting financial debt, now humorously estimated at two hundred and forty-seven thousand dollars.

Amidst the gallery's atmosphere, Monta Clare watches the arrival of spring through the thawing landscape. On a visit to Green's Convenience Store, he observes a young girl attempting to steal a candy bar, sharing a moment of mischief when he cautions her against being caught. Their playful exchange leads him to demonstrate a stealthy technique, fostering an unexpected connection.

As he reflects, Monta Clare's memories are stirred by a moment in the alley, particularly when he spots spring flowers breaking through the concrete. His attention shifts to a nearby dressmaker's shop, where his gaze falls upon Misty Meyer, standing with her mother. Despite her hat concealing much of her features, the sight of her delicate neck and slender waist captivates him. When she turns to face him, he finds himself momentarily enchanted, recalling the way her smile has the power to suspend time and alter his reality.