

Chapter 166

In Chapter 166 of "All the Colors of the Dark," the narrative revolves around Patch and his efforts to care for a young girl, likely his daughter. The chapter begins with a rather awkward dinner where he prepares pizza himself, concerned about the salt content in takeout. However, she dismisses his cooking, comparing it unfavorably to her mother's. Patch tries to cater to her tastes by offering sweet treats like banana splits, but she rebuffs his efforts, which leads to humorous exchanges between them.

After dinner, Patch runs a bath for her and finds himself unsure about bedtime routines, leading him to consult a friend named Sammy on the matter. Sammy informs him that she usually goes to bed around midnight, prompting Patch to reflect on the appropriate parenting practices as he struggles with his new role. When she bypasses the offer of watching TV, she heads straight to her bedroom, leaving Patch to wonder about her sleep patterns.

Patch attempts to connect with her by telling a story of his past travels, filled with nostalgia for adventures he took and memories inspired by a girl from his history. This provides insight into Patch's character and hints at his longing for connection, not just with the girl but with his own past.

Later, Sammy arrives, and their conversation shifts towards deeper topics, including Patch's responsibilities and moral dilemmas. Sammy pours a drink and broaches the subject of a new governor and the impending turmoil. They also address the darker aspects of justice and retribution, particularly referencing a character named Marty Tooms. Sammy's questions challenge Patch to consider his choices and feelings about parenting and artistry.

As the chapter closes, Patch enters his daughter's room, where she sleeps soundly, holding the TV remote. While contemplating her safety, the news of a tragic shooting incident weighing heavily on his mind, he grapples with the harsh realities and responsibilities of keeping someone safe in a volatile world. This moment encapsulates Patch's internal struggle with the vulnerabilities that accompany fatherhood and the unpredictable nature of life.