

Chapter 173

In Chapter 173 of "All the Colors of the Dark," the narrative unfolds over a month of preparation undertaken by Patch, who meticulously pins photographs to a board, organizing names and locations. This effort is a reflection of his father's madness, though Patch's approach is more systematic and structured. The chapter is set against the backdrop of a sweltering July in Monta Clare, where Patch, after more than a decade, takes up his paintbrush again. He establishes a routine that balances his artistic pursuits and family life, ensuring that he spends quality time with his daughter while also encouraging her to practice on their baby grand piano.

His daughter Sammy observes the changes in her father, noting the vibrant paint staining his jeans and the remnants of color under his nails. She silently appreciates his rekindled passion for painting, feeling a sense of relief as if they both have regained something previously lost. Over the course of six months, Patch engages with the parents of three girls featured in his art during late-night calls, gaining insights into their lives and hopes. This understanding helps him portray their essence more accurately on canvas.

As winter approaches, Patch and Sammy share moments watching films like "Toy Story," where they connect over themes of identity and nostalgia. Charlotte, presumably another character in their lives, humorously comments on the return of the seventies fashion, to which Patch jests about finally being in style again, only to be playfully dismissed by Charlotte. In a cozy moment by the fire, Charlotte engages with old correspondence while Patch prepares to unveil his latest work to Sammy, intensifying the familial bond and the artistry that has woven them together amidst the chaos of their past. The chapter encapsulates themes of creativity, family, and the passage of time, highlighting a poignant exploration of identity both in art and within their lives.