

Chapter 181

In Chapter 181 of "All the Colors of the Dark," Sister Cecile engages with Saint over a set of rosary beads, showcasing their exquisite craftsmanship—cedar wood with black glass, crafted by Sister Agnes, featuring a medal of Mary Magdalene. Sister Cecile, acknowledging the beads' spiritual significance, reflects on the nature of sin and forgiveness. Saint's mind drifts to Marty Tooms as she reveals photographs of Eli Aaron, prompting Sister Cecile to recall Robert Peter Frederick, an altar boy who had gone missing and likely died.

Despite the somber news of his disappearance, Sister Cecile remains composed. When Saint mentions the rosary beads found with the boy, Sister Cecile hints at Robert's challenging nature and the weight of the teachings he received. Saint questions the circumstances surrounding Robert's behavior after overhearing a confession of an unmarried pregnant woman. Sister Cecile reassures her that no harm came to the woman, who chose not to file a complaint, ultimately leading to Robert's exit from the community.

Saint connects Robert to Eli Aaron, a figure from the Old Testament known for his downfalls as a parent. Sister Cecile elucidates Eli's legacy of judgment and neglect, explaining that he faced God's wrath for his leniency with his children. Saint surmises there are likely many more missing individuals associated with Eli Aaron, prompting her thoughts deeper into the past.

As Saint prepares to leave with the rosary beads, she is intercepted by Sister Isabelle, who casually reveals that a man recently purchased a second set of similar beads. Saint, taken aback by the mention of a man, instinctively questions the details, only to be further unsettled by the revelation that this man had died in a horrific incident: "I set him on fire," Saint confesses, realizing the connections between the past and present are hauntingly close. The atmosphere thickens as both women grapple with the implications of the moment, culminating in a shared understanding of loss and confrontation with the spectral memories of those long gone.