

Chapter Fifty-Six

In Chapter Fifty-Six of **If These Wings Could Fly**, the protagonist experiences a moment of deep emotional turmoil when they find the parking lot empty, realizing someone significant has left. Overwhelmed, they sit on the cold ground, struggling to breathe due to the weight in their chest. Sofia, an unwavering friend, finds them and sits down beside them in the freezing mud, showing concern for their well-being. Despite the ongoing halftime festivities at the game, Sofia prioritizes her friend's feelings over her cheerleading responsibilities.

As they sit together, Sofia's comforting presence helps the protagonist regain composure. The conversation shifts to the problems at home, which Sofia has long sensed but respected her friend's desire to keep it private. Their bond is evident as Sofia offers refuge at her home, emphasizing her support with a playful invitation for a slumber party with their pets. This light-hearted moment momentarily alleviates the protagonist's heaviness.

Once ready, they return to the stadium, where the protagonist embraces their mother, thankful that she stayed despite the turbulence at home. They discuss logistics for getting home, with the protagonist suggesting a bus route that runs by their grandmother's place, indicating a desire to escape to a familiar and safe haven. The notion of home hangs in the air, prompting an internal reflection as the protagonist fears fading into memory, like snowflakes melting upon contact.

The metaphor of seasons emerges powerfully, with the protagonist likening herself not to delicate spring blooms or soft summer days, but to a fierce winter storm—the season of crows and mourning. This self-realization leads to a hopeful yet dark desire for transformation, echoing a yearning for personal miracles amidst chaos. The chapter concludes with the acknowledgment that Auburn no longer feels like home but hints at the possibility of finding a personal miracle despite overwhelming odds.