

Chapter Ten

In Chapter Ten of *If These Wings Could Fly*, the protagonist is surrounded by an overwhelming presence of crows in Auburn, which seem to multiply each day, adding an unsettling yet fascinating dimension to her routine. While the townspeople express annoyance at the birds, she finds comfort in their presence, as it parallels her own experiences and observations of life in Auburn. The chapter nostalgically reflects on her childhood, especially with her late Grandpa, who provided a sanctuary from her father's anger. Following his death, there was a stark shift in her family's dynamics, especially with her grandmother Nana, who has also faced declines in health since losing Grandpa.

The protagonist often visits Nana in an assisted living apartment in Lincoln, yet she lies to her mother about her whereabouts, reinforcing a secretive distress in her family life. The visits to Nana are intimate but tinged with sadness, as they both understand the unspoken challenges they face. Their conversations reveal warmth and connection amidst the backdrop of family struggles; Nana's memory remains strong, but each visit brings a reminder of the family fractures caused by grief and unresolved issues rooted in their past.

As Leighton takes care of Nana during her visit, she reflects on the comforting and familiar sensations of her grandmother's apartment, even as they discuss their family troubles. The chapter concludes with Leighton returning to Auburn, still seeking a sign of reassurance from Grandpa that everything will be okay, but instead, she is greeted only by the crows, symbolizing the weight of her unresolved fears and the ongoing turbulence in her life. The crows embody a haunting presence, mirroring the emotional turmoil she carries in her heart.