

# Chapter Thirty-One

**\*\*Chapter Thirty-One Summary: The Rest of the Weekend Passes\*\***

The weekend unfolds like a dream, a welcomed reprieve from the chaos that usually blankets life. Saturday night is spent with the girls, engrossed in their reading while I grapple with *\*Portrait of an Old Crow\**. This lull gives me a rare sense of normalcy, and I revel in the calmness that permeates our home; after living amidst chaos, a little boredom feels magnificent.

However, by Sunday, optimism makes me reckless. Dad returns early from a construction job cut short by rain, and as we come together for dinner, he proposes a game night, reminiscent of fun times spent at our grandparents' house. Campbell and I share a knowing look, unsure yet hopeful that perhaps the storm has passed. I silently wish for a narrator to warn me whenever I feel a fleeting sense of happiness that it's often followed by trouble.

After dinner, Dad searches for his wallet, his growing frustration evident as he realizes it's missing. Mom suggests checking the truck, and while they explore outside, Campbell and I comb the house. Despite our searches, the wallet eludes us, making Dad's return more irritable. Just as tensions rise, Juniper finds the wallet near the front door, claiming it must have fallen out of Dad's jacket. Relief washes over us, but dessert remains forgotten as we dive into *\*Apples to Apples\**.

However, the initial sense of joy dissipates. It feels as though we are precariously traversing a rickety bridge, each step a reminder that we must keep moving forward without looking back. When Dad pauses during the game, his apology for losing the cash in his wallet plunges the atmosphere back into seriousness. The customary apologies have become part of our family dynamic, though his ability to apologize so rapidly is a flicker of hope.

Mom tries to steer us back toward joy, but the unspoken tension continues to simmer. The unaddressed fears and struggles—especially those of my father, marked by scars from his upbringing—loom over us, shaping the fears we inherit. In our home, inherited anger takes tangible form, and the desire to break the cycle contrasts sharply with our reality. While trying to enjoy game night, it's evident that the physical and emotional scars still dictate our relationships, holding us captive in a legacy of pain.