

# Chapter Thirty-four

In Chapter Thirty-Four of "The Chocolate War," Jerry experiences a haunting sense of invisibility among his peers at school. The chapter begins with Jerry noticing that he is being avoided, treated as if he carries a contagious disease. On the bus and once he arrives at school, he feels completely isolated as classmates and even friends, like Tony Santucci, look right through him. This extreme sense of alienation is deepened when he discovers that his locker has been stripped of its contents, further emphasizing his invisibility. In his mind, Jerry ponders whether he's becoming paranoid as he reflects on the absence of his belongings.

Throughout the day, his teachers appear to ignore him as well, contributing to his feeling of being an outcast. Initially, the invisibility unsettles him, but as time passes, he starts to embrace it; being invisible means no more fear of confrontation or violence. However, this temporary comfort shatters when he is jostled by another student, leading him to realize he is no longer invisible.

In a parallel narrative, Brother Leon learns from Brian Cochran about the completion of the chocolate sale, which surprisingly shows a perfect total, except for the fifty boxes that Jerry didn't sell. Leon dismisses concerns about Jerry and insists on focusing on the sale's success and school spirit. Leon's insistence on the importance of the collective over individuals resonates with Brian, who struggles with this mindset, particularly regarding Jerry's plight.

The chapter concludes with Archie engaging Obie about a special assembly set for the following evening, wherein they plan to feature Jerry and his unsold chocolates. This hints at the sinister plans Archie has in mind for Jerry, framing a festering conflict that awaits resolution.

Overall, the chapter expertly captures Jerry's emotional turmoil and the societal pressures of conformity and individuality in a high school setting, leaving readers to ponder the implications of peer dynamics and authority figures.