

Chapter Three

In Chapter Three of "If These Wings Could Fly," the protagonist Leighton reflects on the end of summer, a time that brings freedom for many, but not for her. As she returns to Auburn High, she finds solace in the predictable routine of school, relieved that her friends Campbell and Juniper are safe in their classes. Stepping off the bus, she is in tune with the thought that her peers are relieved the summer break is over.

Leighton reconnects with her friend Sofia in the hallway, who greets her with excitement, highlighting the lack of communication over the past week. Despite Leighton's difficulties at home that she refers to as a "domestic nightmare," Sofia's infectious positivity shines through. Their friendly banter continues as they navigate through the bustling hall, filled with fresh-faced freshmen. Sofia shares that she has Physical Education as her first class, which prompts light-hearted teasing from Leighton about the challenges of showering again afterward and dealing with wet hair all day.

Leighton checks her own schedule and finds she has AP English, which leads Sofia to joke about the morbid subject matter they will be exploring. Though disappointed that their schedules won't overlap this semester, they find excitement in planning articles for the school newspaper, wishing to cover sports.

As they pass a large window overlooking the soccer field, they notice an unusual sight: a massive gathering of crows. The field is almost entirely filled with these birds, creating a vibrant yet eerie scene. Both girls are unsettled by the sheer number of crows, which Leighton notes is a striking and odd feature for Auburn. They pause to take in the scene, witnessing the crows flying in chaotic patterns over the field, leaving Leighton to wonder what could draw such a multitude to their school, especially creatures capable of flight who would presumably choose to be anywhere but there.