

Chapter Twenty-Five

In Chapter Twenty-Five of *If These Wings Could Fly*, the narrator reflects on the complexities of family dynamics, particularly the emotional turbulence stemming from a father's unpredictable anger. The chapter opens with a metaphor comparing the house to a healed bone—something once broken that has now mended, yet still carries the scars of its past.

Recalling a specific snow day from her childhood, the narrator describes a scene when she was eight years old. Her mother, pregnant with Juniper and working as a waitress, leaves for work, while her father, exhausted from labor, struggles with the overflow of trash that had been ignored. Upon seeing the mess, he erupts in anger, violently throwing the trash and breaking a cabinet door in the process. This overwhelming anger reverberates within the narrator, resulting in her and her brother Campbell fleeing to hide in a closet.

When their mother eventually finds them, they return to a scene that remains chaotic; their father is asleep on the couch, and the cabinet door, contrary to the narrator's memory of its destruction, appears unbroken. The moment exemplifies a child's confusion and the blend of reality with the surreal, leading her to doubt her perception. Campbell's whisper that it was "magic" indicates a shared recognition of the unusual.

As time passes, these violent outbursts become more frequent, and the narrator gains insight into the cyclical nature of her father's behavior. Despite repeated promises that he will change, the pattern of anger persists. She understands now that love alone does not prevent these episodes; instead, it complicates the situation, creating a painful bond that makes leaving feel impossible.

In retrospect, the narrator recalls how the physical damage to their home often gets repaired magically, reflecting the denial they've learned to adopt in response to their father's volatility. This chapter encapsulates the struggle of children trying to make sense of an erratic home life, the changes they witness, and the emotional resilience they cultivate amidst chaos.