

Chapter Twenty-four

In Chapter Twenty-Four of "The Chocolate War," Brother Leon urgently contacts Archie regarding the failing chocolate sale, expressing his anxiety over the situation. Despite Archie's initial instinct to respond defensively, he cautiously questions Leon about the extent of the problem, which Leon describes as dire. The sale is more than halfway over, yet half of the chocolates remain unsold, results indicating a significant drop in momentum. Leon accuses Archie of not being effective, although Archie admires his relentless demeanor under pressure.

Earlier that day, Archie had received concerning information from Brian Cochran, Leon's bookkeeper, who revealed that Leon was in a precarious position regarding the school's finances. Cochran had listened in on a tense discussion between Leon and Brother Jacques, where Jacques accused Leon of misusing school funds and being "overextended" financially. The mention of twenty thousand boxes of chocolates paid for with questionable funds raised alarms about Leon's mismanagement.

Leon resumes the conversation by reminding Archie of the influence he supposedly has over his peers, suggesting that Archie's miscalculations have led to this debacle, particularly referencing Renault's refusal to participate in the sale. Archie reflects on this challenge but then attempts to shift focus away from blame. He highlights the broader problem—students are fatigued by recurring sales efforts, referencing ineffective strategies from the previous year's sale.

When Leon's frustration peaks, he underscores the urgency by demanding that Archie get Renault to comply with selling the chocolates. He warns that if the sale fails, Archie and the Vigils will also face consequences. This revelation emphasizes the high stakes of the situation, igniting Archie's inner conflict. Ultimately, Leon's threat hangs heavy as he abruptly ends the call, leaving Archie confronted with both the urgency and complexity of the impending crisis.