

# Chapter VIII

In Chapter VIII, Mibs expresses her urgent need to reach Salina and insists on leaving the church where she has just fainted. Despite Will Junior's concern, she is steadfast in her determination to go alone. The church party continues without her, as she steps outside, ready to run the ninety miles if necessary. Spotting the Heartland Bible Supply bus, she feels a surge of hope, believing that if the bus came from Salina, it might be heading back there. Ignoring her mother's warnings about riding with strangers, she feels compelled to board the bus.

As Mibs prepares to climb onboard, she encounters Bobbi, who mocks her but is quickly defended by Will Junior. Their exchange hints at tension between Bobbi and Will, suggesting familial rivalry and rebellion. Despite Bobbi's dismissive attitude toward the idea of Mibs's journey, Will Junior remains resolute, insisting they can make it to Salina together. However, their plans are challenged when Fish appears, angry about their intentions.

Climbing into the bus, Mibs sees its cluttered interior filled with crates and boxes, and she decides to hide in the back. Bobbi, fueled by determination to avoid being responsible for her brother and Mibs getting into trouble, joins them, asserting her role as a caretaker. A sense of urgency escalates as the deliveryman approaches, prompting a panicked scramble to conceal themselves from Miss Rosemary, who is surveying the parking lot. Their hiding place proves cramped, revealing more surprises, including Samson, who had been reading quietly in a corner.

As the bus begins to move, the siblings and Bobbi cling to their seats, tensions rising as the bus turns away from the desired direction toward Kansas. Mibs's entire plan hangs in the balance as she grapples with the uncertainty of their journey, underscoring the themes of youthful rebellion, familial bonds, and the quest for self-discovery. The chapter closes with a cliffhanger, questioning the fate of their adventure as they head in the wrong direction.