

Chapter XXV

In Chapter XXV, the scene is set at a pool where two girls, Mibs and Bobbi, prepare to change into their swimsuits. Mibs struggles with her swimsuit fitting poorly, feeling vulnerable and self-conscious, a stark contrast to her previous confidence. Bobbi, who appears grown-up in her cherry red bikini, helps Mibs adjust the straps of her purple one-piece, positively influencing Mibs's confidence.

Once dressed, they join the boys, Will and Fish, near the pool. The description of the pool area is vivid, revealing both its charm and the chaos that unfolds as the boys begin to play. Will is already swimming, while Fish, a bit more reserved, prepares to engage with his brother. The atmosphere lightens when a water fight breaks out, playful banter exchanged between the boys. Will's unexpected kiss for Mibs adds a layer of complexity to their interactions, leaving her both flustered and confused, especially when Fish warns Will about behaving around Mibs.

As the boys engage in more water play, Mibs finds herself caught in a whirlwind of emotions, contemplating her feelings for Will. Bobbi notices the dynamic and teases Mibs about Will's affections, prompting Mibs to reflect on her own feelings—her responses fluctuate between shyness and curiosity.

Bobbi reveals her own struggles as the preacher's daughter, hinting at an ongoing desire for freedom and normalcy amidst societal expectations. Their candid conversation allows them both to connect on a deeper level, discussing their identities and aspirations. The chapter powerfully juxtaposes the innocence of childhood against the burgeoning complexities of adolescence, leaving Mibs questioning her role and feelings as she experiences life's fleeting moments.

In a concluding exchange, Mibs and Bobbi float together, contemplating the notion that life can feel surreal, echoing a shared sentiment that perhaps they are navigating a strange dreamscape as maturity approaches. This chapter illustrates their transformation as they grapple with their evolving identities in the context of friendship and familial responsibilities.