

Chapter XXVII

In Chapter XXVII, the group arrives in Wymore just as the morning church service concludes. Lester parks the bus in front of the church, preparing to deliver pink Bibles, which Lill believes will be better received by the minister's wife. She encourages Lester with supportive words and a kiss for good luck, which leaves him blushing but proud as he steps out to make the delivery. Lill has been coaching him on how to present himself confidently, which visibly influences his demeanor.

As Lester walks away, Lill anxiously observes him from the bus, displaying her affection for him. Meanwhile, Fish and Will engage playfully, disrupting the atmosphere until Lester returns with exuberance. He announces that not only did the minister accept the Bibles, but the Wymore Women's Guild also ordered three additional cases, relieving Lester of previous worries regarding unsold inventory.

With newfound confidence, Lester recruits Fish and Will to help carry in the boxes. They attempt to hide their identities, wary of being recognized from news reports, but they emerge with cash and donuts after the delivery. Despite the sugary treats, a shadow of unease lingers over Fish, who grows increasingly troubled as Lester reveals they will make a detour before heading to Salina. The uncertainty of the journey begins to weigh on their spirits, especially for Mibs and the others awaiting their father's return.

As Mibs navigates these mixed emotions, she finds herself transfixed by a crumpled magazine cover depicting a heart, contemplating its fragility. This reflection sparks a personal moment with Will, who she confesses her feelings to. Mibs admits she likes him but isn't ready for a romantic relationship. This important conversation evolves into a pivotal moment of vulnerability and growth as Mibs hands her cherished birthday pen back to Will, feeling a mix of disappointment and growth. As Will promises to wait for her, Mibs internalizes her feelings while observing the world outside the bus window, signifying a transitional phase in her journey of self-discovery and emotional maturity.