

# Chapter XXXIII

In Chapter XXXIII, the narrative begins with the protagonist, Mibs, overwhelmed by her emotions as she sits on the floor, separated from her family, particularly her father, who is in the hospital. She is comforted by her brother Will and a caseworker, Bill, who recognizes her distress. Bill gently engages with Mibs, validating her feelings and suggesting that they should go to the hospital to find their father, eliciting surprise from those present.

As they share their story, Mibs and her siblings recount the chaotic events they've experienced recently. Bill listens empathetically and then delivers somber news about their father's condition, emphasizing the need for family during difficult times. Mibs's brother, Fish, acknowledges the gravity of the situation, suggesting they all need to be strong.

Bill addresses the group about the troubles they've caused, reflecting on how their actions have led to concern among their families. He reassures them about the lack of legal repercussions for their guardians, Lester and Lill, who had taken care of them during their crisis, and notes that he needs their help in transporting the children to Salina.

Relieved by this news, Mibs silently thanks Bill for his kindness, wishing her feelings could be conveyed without words. After a brief discussion, it's decided that the journey will involve an armed officer for safety, to accompany the children back to their father. Lill comforts Lester as they embark on this journey, continually encouraging him.

As they prepare to leave, Bill offers Will the chance to ride in the patrol car, a tempting offer that fills Will with conflict. Ultimately, he chooses to stay with his siblings, revealing the depth of family loyalty amidst uncertainty. The chapter closes with Mibs reflecting on the intertwining nature of good and bad experiences, pondering the unpredictability of life and its lessons.