

Chapter XXXV

In Chapter XXXV, the tension and emotional atmosphere rise as the Beaumont family arrives at Salina Hope Hospital's critical care unit. Momma embraces her children—Rocket, Fish, Samson, and me—while expressing her worries about Poppa. As she holds us close, Rocket inquires about my recent birthday, not truly seeking details about celebrations, but perhaps trying to gauge how I am coping with my newfound savvy.

Momma's concern is palpable as she seeks to learn about my experiences since we were last together, especially regarding my savvy. When Samson mentions Poppa, Momma's smile betrays her sadness, her eyes filling with tears as she nods in acknowledgment of their father's situation. The family approaches the nurses' station with heavy hearts, and the nurses' sympathetic expressions reflect their understanding of their distress.

A nurse in cheerful blue scrubs addresses Momma, who introduces her children as "delinquents—my wandering adventurers." I plead for the chance to see Poppa, and Momma emphasizes how much we need to see him soon. The nurse allows us into the room.

As we move past a maintenance man and toward Poppa's room, emotions run high. Fish's question about whether Poppa has woken up reveals the tension and fear inherent in the situation. Momma gently informs us that Poppa hasn't awakened and that the doctors indicate he might not wake at all. This news strikes like a blow, leaving me feeling unsteady, but Fish surprisingly maintains his composure.

Rocket, desperate not to be left out, insists on entering Poppa's room, saying it would be worse to stay outside. Momma, torn yet committed to keeping her family united, reluctantly agrees. When she turns to me for reassurance, I feel powerless and helpless, knowing I lack control over my savvy and its potential to help Poppa.

Ultimately, Momma pushes open the door to Poppa's room, and the family enters quietly, prepared to face the reality of his condition, where he lies without the vitality of Sleeping Beauty, evoking deep feelings of vulnerability and hope amidst the uncertainty.