

bad thoughts about authority

In this chapter, the narrator and Sol find themselves anchored on a canal, where they appreciate the tranquil surroundings, including orchards and fields. Sol, initially energetic and larger than life, appears to shrink into herself under a blanket while sleeping, prompting the narrator to reflect on her vulnerability and the dire circumstances they face. As the night passes, he wishes for his bass guitar to calm her with music but struggles to recall a comforting melody.

With dawn, the scene brightens as children fly a kite nearby. Sol expresses concern, mistaking the kite for something sinister, which she refers to as a "death angel." She recounts a troubling belief imparted by someone named Richard, suggesting that there are celestial beings watching over them, eager to monitor their thoughts about authority. This moment highlights Sol's whimsical yet dark worldview.

Their morning shifts focus to pancakes, which Sol suggests, and they enjoy a meal under the sun, leaving behind the notions of death angels. Sol develops a fascination with the kite, wanting to fly it herself. During this time, the narrator reminisces about his own kite-flying experiences, portraying it as a joyful pursuit akin to catching a fish in the sky.

Their peaceful morning is disrupted by a group of local boys, who initially appear innocent but soon cause chaos by shooting at the narrator with air rifles and rutabagas, leaving him amused and exasperated. When Sol appears with a spear, the boys retreat, intimidated by her presence.

As they navigate through the canal, they observe stark contrasts between the lively mainland and the deteriorating island, where despair permeates amidst neglected homes and landscapes. The chapter also explores the growing tension between islanders and mainlanders, highlighting the bitterness of envy and resentment that has taken root among the island's inhabitants.

Seeking supplies and fuel, they visit a rundown gas station where they encounter Douglas, a peculiar and chatty man who provides insight into the local dynamics and invites them to partake in a monthly communal vigil against perceived local evils. Despite the unsettling atmosphere, they manage to gather their groceries and necessary items.

Ultimately, they leave with some supplies, but not without noticing the absence of a supposed bulldog from earlier—a detail that raises questions about Sol's mysterious acquisition of cash to support their provisions, setting the stage for deeper explorations of her character in the narrative to come.