

trouble me no more

In this chapter, Kellan continues to play an integral role in the lives of the narrator and Lark as he undertakes various tasks around their home, hiking up a memory of happier times when they had chickens. However, Kellan struggles with severe panic attacks, which culminated in a frightening episode where he fell asleep with the gas running. This moment showcases not only Kellan's fragile state of mind but also the narrator's determination to support him through these challenges.

As spring brings new possibilities, Lark and the narrator discuss a book cache in the city, hinting at their shared passion for unique finds. Lark reveals the treasure trove of books she has found to help keep her shop thriving, emphasizing that their shared pursuits bring some joy amidst their personal struggles. Although the narrator wishes to accompany Lark, he becomes increasingly worried about her safety as she decides to go on her own.

They share a concerning anecdote about a friend who encountered danger during a similar nighttime trip, heightening the sense of unease and foreshadowing the night's unpredictable outcomes. Kellan insists on joining Lark for what begins as a harmless outing but raises questions over whether the risks might compromise their safety further.

Later in the chapter, the narrative shifts to a vivid visit the narrator takes to Jack Labrino, who appears in an unexpectedly upbeat state and reveals he's ready to embrace change in his life. In a heartwarming yet poignant exchange, he recalls memories of his past, placing emphasis on optimism despite his struggles. The chapter deepens as Labrino confides his intentions to pass on his home and bar to his family, asserting peace with his decisions.

The tone shifts dramatically when Labrino consumes a drug that brings about his passing, leading the narrator to face an overwhelming sense of loss. Labrino's death leaves the narrator reeling as he processes the gravity of the moment while simultaneously reflecting on the memories shared with him.

In the aftermath, Lark returns with Kellan, buoyant from their successful book find. Their excitement contrasts starkly with the narrator's sorrow, culminating in a yearning for both closure and the need to realize that celebration may be essential even in times of grief. Ultimately, the chapter closes with a delicate balance of loss and hope for healing within their bonds.