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In this chapter, Jim Nightshade and his friend Will find themselves at a pivotal moment on the corner of Hickory and Main. Jim is pleading with Will to visit a mysterious house just down the street, hinting at something extraordinary waiting for them. The boys reminisce about how Hickory Street, once a place where they indulged in stealing fruit, has transformed since a significant event that occurred in late August. This event altered not only the houses but also the very air and atmosphere around them.

Will is hesitant, feeling a deep conflict as he recalls the eerie nature of that particular house—a space that Jim describes as a stage where enigmatic actors engage in strange performances. Caught in his emotions, Jim implores Will to join him for just one last moment, but Will responds with frustration, aware that this encounter may not be the last. Jim's fervor is tangible; he recounts a night spent picking apples where Will felt a rush of excitement upon witnessing the bizarre spectacle through the window.

As Will grapples with his decision, he feels a mixture of fear and curiosity, leading him to wish for the light to disappear—an instinctive response to the discomfort he feels at the spectacle unfolding before him. Yet, he remains unable to detach himself from the scene, eventually feeling overwhelmed by the emotions swirling within him.

When Jim asks Will to carry his library books, Will reluctantly agrees, with Jim teasingly calling him a "darn old dimwit Episcopal Baptist" before disappearing into the night. Alone, Will clutches the wet books tightly, struggling with his thoughts as he resolves to look neither backward nor sideways, fixating instead on the path home. The chapter captures the profound mix of childhood innocence, exploration of fear, and the allure of the unknown as the boys hover on the brink of a significant transformation in their lives.