

Chapter 118

In Chapter 118 of "All the Colors of the Dark," Saint drives eighty-five miles along Highway 177, aiming for the Chase County Courthouse. Upon arrival, she parks in front of the First Kansas Bank, attracting the attention of locals in Cottonwood Falls. Inside, she meets a young woman named Dawn, who is unwrapping a sandwich while they converse. Dawn, with a bright smile and vivid red nails and lips, jokes about her lunch sticking to the roof of her mouth, adding a sense of lightness to their meeting.

Their interaction quickly shifts to serious matters. A tall man enters, hands a tape to Saint, and leaves, prompting Dawn to share a personal anecdote about a boy who had previously attempted to rob the bank. Dawn describes him intimately, revealing her infatuation despite the circumstance. She recounts the experience of his arrival on a quiet Wednesday, where he approached her at the counter. His charming smile captivated her, and he confessed he intended to rob the bank. Unlike typical robbers, he displayed no aggression and simply showed her a beautiful gun hidden in his jacket.

They engaged in conversation about the bank's struggle to survive in a declining farming economy, with Dawn conveying her family's history tied to the institution. She noticed how attentively he listened—not in the objectifying way many boys did—making her feel valued. In a surprising turn, he left the cash on the counter and walked out without taking anything, leaving behind both the money and Dawn, who felt a strange connection despite the circumstance.

As the chapter progresses, Dawn reveals she didn't intend to report the robbery until the surveillance tapes mandated it. Together with Saint, she moves to a back office where the tape is reviewed. Upon viewing the footage, Saint is struck with a mix of surprise and realization, confronting memories of the boy who had impacted Dawn's life. The moment brings a heavy heart to Saint as she questions the boy's actions quietly to herself, indicating the beginning of a deeper narrative intertwined with unexpected connections and emotions.