

Chapter 135

In Chapter 135 of "All the Colors of the Dark," Patch navigates the quiet town, now shrouded in a solid snowfall, with a sense of urgency and reflection. He avoids Main Street, keeping his head down while breathing deeply, feeling the chill sting his chest. Recently released from a lengthy prison sentence, Patch reflects on his preparations for reintegration into society, particularly his conversations with a fellow inmate, Terrence Roots. Roots had facilitated Patch's understanding of mentorship, building relationships, seeking resources, and the importance of routine. Despite nodding along, Patch harbors an inner turmoil, haunted by the memory of a lost love, which had left a deep void that he could not articulate to others.

Although he maintains a facade of stability by engaging in daily activities, like clearing ice from the driveway and preparing meals, he carries the weight of his past. His friend Saint had been a source of support, stocking his freezer with cooked meals, while the camaraderie with Sammy provided temporary relief. Sammy, inebriated, brings over expensive bottles of cognac, and together they indulge, culminating in Patch's first venture onto Main Street since his release. There, he notices the changes and feels a mix of familiarity and alienation.

Inside Sammy's gallery, Patch is taken aback by art pieces featuring girls he recognizes from his past. Each painting evokes memories and emotions, and as he moves from one to another—Anna May, Lucy Williams, Ellen Hernandez—he experiences a deep connection to the women depicted, particularly Eloise Strike, whose gaze prompts painful memories of Grace, his lost love. After two hours of contemplation among the prints, Patch finds a sack of mail from the desperate parents of missing women, yearning for closure or answers.

He tenderly drapes a silk blanket over Sammy, who has succumbed to sleep, and reflects on the weight of their shared history. Patch acknowledges Sammy's contributions but recognizes that the past cannot be changed, encapsulating his need to move forward. This chapter illustrates Patch's internal conflict, the echoes of his past life, and his struggle to find solace in the present while confronting haunting memories.