

Chapter 154

In Chapter 154 of "All the Colors of the Dark," Patch undertakes a monumental task of clearing out his mother's belongings from their home as summer reaches its peak. Stripping off his shirt, he methodically brings furniture—sofa, bookcases, dining table, and sideboard—out to the front yard, each object imbued with memories and scents of his mother's presence. He boxes kitchen utensils and drags the refrigerator outside, feeling the weight of the memories tied to each item.

Upstairs, he continues the emotional purge by bagging bedding, clothes, and various personal items. An accidental crash of a bottle sends a wave of recollection, filling him with bittersweet nostalgia. In the midst of boxing up childhood memorabilia, particularly pirate-themed items, Patch reflects on his identity, acknowledging the complexity of being a thirty-year-old with a criminal record, yet still harboring childlike connections to his past.

During lunchtime, he fetches Saint's grandmother, Norma, who stands by as a van collects what can still be used. Their conversation drifts towards housing projects and charities, with Norma lighting a cigarette while observing Patch's intense labor. Patch returns home, armed with a sledgehammer, and unleashes his pent-up frustration on the house, violently tearing it apart. He demolishes doors, rips out baseboards, and shreds carpets, fueled by a chaotic mix of anger and grief, his muscles aching as he becomes enveloped in dust. An errant nail injures him, yet he persists, returning for another round.

That night, the old Macauley house becomes engulfed in flames as Patch sits on the remnants of the porch, witnessing the remnants of his past turn to ash. Misty and Charlotte, joined by Sammy with a drink in hand, watch from a distance. Although Sammy offers slugs of wine, Misty intervenes, insisting on the need to protect Charlotte. As flames consume the structure, Patch's gaze drifts to his daughter, recognizing that the warmth he feels is not just from the fire, but from the deeper connection and resolve within himself. The chapter encapsulates the raw and cathartic experience of destruction intertwined with memories and family dynamics.