

# Chapter XIV

Chapter XIV begins with the narrator reflecting deeply on the Beaumont family's unique traits, which have become an essential part of their identity. These special gifts, known as "savvies," are passed down through generations and shape their lives in ways that set them apart from others. The narrator recalls a conversation with Grandpa, who shared the family's history of extraordinary abilities, especially after Grandma Dollop's passing. In the comforting presence of Grandpa, the narrator learns that these savvies, much like physical traits, are inherited, and each generation's abilities are influenced by the ones before. Grandpa regales stories about various relatives, some of whom used their talents for good, while others, like Grandma Dollop's sister Jubilee, misused her abilities for selfish purposes, like stealing.

Grandpa emphasized that a savvy is not a supernatural power but rather a natural, innate gift that becomes a part of the family dynamic. According to the narrator's recollection, their mother, Momma, firmly believed that everyone possessed their own unique savvy, even though many people failed to recognize it. She often pointed out how people might not realize that their talents, such as making excellent homemade jam or being able to avoid mosquito bites, were part of their innate savvy. Over time, the Beaumonts began to see these abilities for what they truly were: a distinct type of knowledge or ability that added depth to their experiences, making them different from others but also providing a way to navigate the world. Momma's belief in the potential for everyone to have their own gift helped the children embrace their own abilities, as it allowed them to see their talents not as burdens but as special advantages.

As the narrator continues to grapple with the weight of being part of a family so uniquely gifted, they share a moment with Will Junior, explaining how the Beaumonts' savvies make their lives different but not necessarily better than other families. While the children's experiences may be shaped by their abilities, they are still just like everyone else, navigating similar challenges. However, when the narrator is pressed to share their own savvy, they hesitate, reminding themselves of the family's rules about discretion. These unspoken rules dictate that abilities should only be shared with those who have earned the trust of the family, maintaining a sense of privacy and safety around their extraordinary gifts. This rule creates an internal conflict for the narrator, as they both want to be open about their powers but also understand the importance of safeguarding the family's secrets. The chapter shifts as the narrator recalls the story of how Momma and Poppa first met during a carnival. Momma, with her natural talent for tossing rings onto hooks, caught Poppa's attention, leading to a humorous exchange that highlighted the Beaumont family's quirky and charming use of their savvies. This playful moment between Momma and Poppa further illustrates the fun and ease with which the Beaumonts integrate their abilities into their everyday lives, making the family's unique gifts feel like a natural part of their existence.

The story of how Momma and Poppa met at the carnival adds depth to the idea that these talents, while extraordinary, are part of the family's normal interactions. It was a moment where their unique skills led to a meaningful connection, and it was a reminder that these abilities were never meant to isolate or cause trouble, but to enhance their lives. As the narrator reflects on this, they begin to appreciate the balance between their family's gifts and the need to navigate the world like everyone else. The chapter then transitions to the present as the bus ride continues, with tensions beginning to rise among the boys. The narrator observes the boys' growing frustration, hinting that the journey ahead may not be as smooth as expected. Despite the fun and lighthearted moments that define the Beaumont family's interactions, there are still underlying struggles that need to be addressed. This sense of uncertainty about what lies ahead is amplified as the bus moves forward, and the narrator begins to feel the weight of their family legacy and the complexities that come with it. The chapter ends with a sense of anticipation, as the Beaumont family continues their journey, grappling with the dynamics of their extraordinary gifts and the challenges that lie ahead.