

# Monday

In the chapter titled "Monday," we follow Cyrus Shams, who regains consciousness on the landing of a staircase, surrounded by concerned museum employees, including a familiar docent named Prateek. He struggles with disorientation and a sense of loss as he contemplates Orkideh, a woman who has passed away and whom he admired. The facade of composure wavers as he accepts water and food, trying to downplay his fainting episode by attributing it to skipping breakfast. Despite the staff's insistence on contacting medical help, Cyrus insists he is fine.

As they help him to a bench to rest, Prateek, displaying sympathy and curiosity, inquires about Orkideh. Cyrus slyly claims not to know her well, just being a fan. Prateek begins to share his own painful memories of losing his aunt to cancer, describing the struggles she faced during her illness, which resonates deeply with Cyrus. He reflects on the nature of their conversations, particularly a poignant exchange he recalls with Orkideh regarding their ability to communicate about life and loss.

This discussion cascades into reflections on grief and the sense of community established through shared experiences. Despite the growing emotional weight, Cyrus attempts to restore a sense of normalcy by engaging with Prateek, offering a Snickers bar, highlighting the human need for connection even amidst sorrow.

As Prateek departs, Cyrus, still wrapped in his own grief, contemplates the presence of others who support him through his distress. He feels a heaviness, reminiscent of the character Hamlet, struggling with the weight of his surroundings and his emotions. Stepping back into the cold from the museum's confines, he confronts the chaotic world outside and notices missed calls on his phone. The chapter concludes with a voicemail from Sang Linh, a representative of Orkideh, hinting at unresolved connections and the potential for deeper engagements regarding the artist's legacy, stirring a mix of hope and anticipation within Cyrus.