

Chapter XXX

Chapter XXX begins with the group caught in a frantic search for Samson, who has been unexpectedly left behind at the Tuttle Terrace Trailer Park. The mood is heavy with worry and urgency as the group realizes, despite their thorough search, that Samson is missing and not on the bus. As panic spreads among the group, Lill, Fish, and the others strongly insist that they need to turn back and search for him, no matter the risks. Lester, however, feels cornered by the situation, fearing that their actions could lead to serious legal consequences for him and his role in taking care of the children. Despite the dread that weighs on him, Lester finally acquiesces, and the group begins the tense journey back to the trailer park.

Lill, ever the level-headed figure in moments of crisis, takes on a maternal role, urging everyone to remain calm and focus on their task of retrieving Samson. She confronts Lester, challenging his reluctance to return to the scene, especially after learning that the police had been called in response to the escalating situation. Lill's calm, determined demeanor convinces Lester, and with pressure mounting from the urgency of the moment, he finally agrees to turn the bus around and head back. The sky outside darkens ominously, and the weather shifts as dark clouds gather, foreshadowing the storm that is not only brewing in the sky but also within the group. The sense of unease is palpable, as the trailer park now seems like a place filled with unknown dangers, and the group is unsure of what they will face when they arrive.

Upon reaching the trailer park, the family quickly disembarks and heads toward Carlene's trailer. Carlene, standing defiantly in the doorway, greets them with a smug expression, informing them that the police are on their way and that Samson is locked up inside. Her cruel satisfaction at their distress is evident, and she revels in the group's desperation, which only escalates the tension in the air. Lill, along with the others, demands that Carlene release Samson, but she only intensifies the situation,

taunting them with hints about Samson's ability to hide well. Carlene's obstinate demeanor becomes an obstacle, and with each passing moment, the group's patience wears thinner, as they are left with no choice but to confront her to get to Samson.

In an emotional surge, Fish, driven by his protective instincts and anger, uses his powers to forcefully push Carlene aside, allowing the group to enter the trailer. This moment of raw emotion is a physical manifestation of the urgency and desperation felt by the family, as they move forward to find Samson. Once inside the trailer, the group begins to search every possible hiding place, scouring under beds, behind furniture, inside closets, and even the oven, yet Samson is nowhere to be found. The rising distress among the group is amplified by the ticking clock, knowing that the police could arrive at any moment, and time is running out. Fish's emotional state only seems to worsen the situation, his fury seeming to stir the wind outside, adding to the feeling of chaos that permeates their frantic search.

As the tension continues to rise, the narrator has a sudden realization—a possible way to extract the necessary information from Carlene. They believe that by using a pen, they can get her to reveal where Samson is hiding, a plan that offers a glimmer of hope in the midst of the uncertainty. The chapter ends on this critical note, with the group facing both the imminent arrival of the authorities and the daunting task of finding Samson. The uncertainty surrounding Samson's fate and the potential consequences of their actions leaves readers hanging in suspense, eagerly awaiting what will happen next. The anticipation builds, as the group must find a way to outsmart Carlene, navigate the impending confrontation with the police, and ultimately reunite with Samson before it's too late.