

Dizzy

Dizzy's world is plunged into chaos as she and her mother arrive at Paradise Springs Hospital in the dead of night, grappling with the terrifying news of Wynton's grave injuries following a hit-and-run accident. The hospital, more akin to a small, rural clinic than a fully equipped medical facility, exudes an eerie and cold atmosphere, where bustling activity contrasts with the emotional desolation surrounding them. Nurse Cynthia informs them of Wynton's critical condition, describing multiple fractures, a severely crushed hand, and the possibility that he may remain in a coma. Dizzy's heart sinks further as she thinks of Wynton, a gifted violinist, potentially losing the ability to play forever. The very hands that had created beautiful music for years are now the center of her grief, and she is consumed with the fear that his identity, so intricately tied to his music, may be permanently altered.

As Dizzy's emotions spiral into a mix of desperation and sorrow, she finds herself seeking solace in prayer, although she admits to her mother that she doesn't know how to truly pray. The idea of speaking to God feels foreign, yet Dizzy clings to it, hoping for some form of comfort or guidance. In an attempt to regain control over her overwhelming emotions, she turns to meditation under Cynthia's guidance. However, despite her efforts to focus, Dizzy struggles to quiet the storm of thoughts that overwhelm her mind. She is acutely aware of her isolation and longs for her older brother, Miles, to be there with her. In that moment, Dizzy comes to a quiet realization: even the presence of strangers might offer some comfort, as the shared human connection could alleviate the unbearable weight of anxiety and fear that has taken over her life.

As the long, agonizing hours drag on, Dizzy's emotional turmoil deepens, leading her to make desperate promises in an attempt to find any semblance of control. Her thoughts are consumed by the idea of drastic changes she would make in her life if

Wynton were to survive, including contemplating a vow of devotion to become a nun. This extreme promise stems from her profound sense of helplessness and emotional exhaustion, as she seeks to negotiate with a higher power for her brother's life. In the midst of this turmoil, however, a surprising moment of levity arises when Dizzy's mother bursts into laughter, recalling a childhood rhyme, "Ms. Mary Mack." This brief outburst offers a fleeting but much-needed release from the tension that hangs heavily in the air, allowing both mother and daughter to share a rare, tender moment. For just a moment, their laughter creates a bond of lightness amidst the otherwise overwhelming darkness surrounding them.

The situation takes another turn when Sheriff Ortiz arrives with the unexpected news of Cassidy, the young woman who had intervened and performed CPR on Wynton. Dizzy immediately recognizes her as the girl she encountered earlier, and her mind races with a thousand thoughts. Cassidy, once a mere stranger, is now elevated in Dizzy's eyes as an angelic figure, someone who might have helped to save her brother's life. However, Dizzy's conflicting emotions surface as she grapples with feelings of guilt. She cannot help but reflect on Wynton's actions that led to the accident, and the burden of those choices weighs heavily on her. Dizzy feels torn between the relief that Wynton might survive, the gratitude toward Cassidy, and the underlying anger she feels for her brother's past decisions. As the chapter draws to a close, Dizzy and her mother are overcome with emotion, both in tears as they confront the magnitude of their circumstances. Cassidy's role in their lives has now become more significant than ever, and her unexpected presence brings a glimmer of hope in a world that feels uncertain and filled with despair.