

Chapter 12: Twelve

The chapter begins with Kathy reflecting on the Norfolk trip, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of the concept of "possibles." She recalls a conversation with Ruth, who mentions that their friends Chrissie and Rodney claim to have spotted Ruth's "possible" in a town called Cromer. This sparks Kathy's skepticism, as she questions the motives behind Chrissie and Rodney's story. The idea of "possibles"—individuals who might be the original models from whom they were cloned—is introduced, revealing its taboo yet fascinating nature among the students at Hailsham and later at the Cottages.

The chapter delves into the students' theories about "possibles," highlighting the lack of consensus on how to identify them. Some believe models would be older, resembling parental figures, while others argue age is irrelevant. The debate often fizzles out as it veers into uncomfortable territory. The underlying belief is that finding one's model could offer insight into their identity and future, though this is more symbolic than literal. Despite some dismissing the idea as irrelevant, the fascination with "possibles" persists, and reported sightings often come in waves, stirring curiosity and speculation.

Kathy recounts Ruth's detailed account of Rodney's alleged sighting of her possible in an office with a glass front. Ruth is torn about whether to investigate further, while Kathy remains doubtful, suspecting Chrissie and Rodney of fabricating the story. Kathy's skepticism stems from her observations of Chrissie's manipulative behavior, such as her tendency to separate the group and her excessive interest in their Hailsham past. Rodney, though likable, is portrayed as overly influenced by Chrissie, further casting doubt on their credibility.

The chapter concludes with Kathy questioning the validity of the sighting, emphasizing her distrust of Chrissie and Rodney's intentions. She reflects on their personalities,

noting Chrissie's odd demeanor and Rodney's subservience, which reinforce her belief that the story might be a ploy. This skepticism sets the tone for the upcoming Norfolk trip, hinting at underlying tensions and the emotional complexity surrounding the search for "possibles." The chapter masterfully blends personal dynamics with the broader existential themes of identity and destiny.

