

# Chapter 4

The chapter marks a shift in the narrator's life, transitioning from a quiet phase to one filled with significant events. The first notable incident is meeting Sophie, followed by Uncle Axel discovering the narrator's secret communication with his half-cousin, Rosalind. Uncle Axel stumbles upon the narrator seemingly talking to himself behind a rick, prompting a cautious yet curious interrogation. The narrator, trusting Uncle Axel, reveals he was communicating with Rosalind, who was physically elsewhere, hinting at an unusual mental connection between them.

Uncle Axel's initial confusion gives way to grave concern as he grasps the reality of the narrator's ability. He questions the narrator intently, trying to understand the nature of this communication, which the narrator describes as involving "shapes" clarified by words. Recognizing the potential danger, Uncle Axel insists on secrecy, extracting a solemn promise from the narrator to never reveal this ability to others. His seriousness underscores the perceived threat, though its exact nature remains unclear to the narrator.

The narrator, sensing the urgency, extends Uncle Axel's warnings to Rosalind and others with similar abilities. This shared secret had previously been guarded individually, but Uncle Axel's intervention crystallizes a collective awareness of the need for caution. The narrator's attempt to convey the gravity of the situation stirs unease among the group, reinforcing their instinctive secrecy. The chapter highlights the growing tension between their unique abilities and the unknown risks of exposure.

Uncle Axel's protective role is emphasized as he advises the narrator to avoid vocalizing the communication, further minimizing risks. His insistence on secrecy and the narrator's compliance suggest a deeper, unspoken threat lurking in their society. The chapter ends with the group's heightened awareness of their vulnerability, setting the stage for future conflicts. The narrative maintains a tone of suspense, blending

innocence with an undercurrent of danger.

