

# Chapter 6

The chapter begins with the narrator, now calmer, revealing Sophie's deviation to Rosalind and others, who react with shock and skepticism. Despite the narrator's attempts to explain that Sophie's small deviation doesn't make her monstrous, the group struggles to reconcile this with their ingrained beliefs. The narrator senses their discomfort and eventual withdrawal, leaving them alone with their thoughts. They lie awake, tormented by guilt over Sophie's fate and her family's flight to the Fringes, haunted by vivid dreams of past events and a distant, soothing city by the sea.

The next morning, the narrator is confined to bed by Mary's orders to heal their injured back. During this forced rest, they contemplate escaping to the Fringes, even devising a plan to steal a horse. The inspector visits in the afternoon, offering sweets while probing the narrator's knowledge of Sophie's deviation. He lectures on the importance of reporting deviations as blasphemies, framing them as threats to racial purity. The narrator, however, remains conflicted, unable to see Sophie as evil and defending their loyalty to her as a friend.

The inspector's interrogation grows more intense, emphasizing the narrator's wrongdoing in concealing Sophie's deviation. He warns of the Devil's role in creating deviations and stresses the need for unwavering loyalty to racial purity. The narrator's resistance falters under his authority, but they still cannot accept Sophie as a threat. The tension escalates when the narrator's father arrives, announcing that Sophie and her family have been captured, plunging the narrator into despair and self-reproach.

The chapter ends with the narrator overwhelmed by guilt and grief, physically shaking and weeping uncontrollably. The emotional pain eclipses their physical injuries, leaving them in a state of anguish. The abrupt interruption of the door opening again hints at further confrontation or revelation, leaving the narrator's fate—and Sophie's—uncertain. The chapter underscores themes of loyalty, guilt, and the clash

between personal bonds and rigid societal norms.

