

Chapter 15

The chapter opens with a chilling description of a fog settling over French Landing, transforming the familiar into something eerie and unsettling. The fog, carrying a pungent, ancient odor, evokes a sense of dread, as if awakening primal fears of monsters lurking in the mist. The atmosphere is tense, with characters like Debbi Anderson and Bobby Dulac discussing horror films, drawing parallels to the unsettling events unfolding around them. Mr. Patel, standing near the 7-Eleven, ominously remarks that the fog provides cover for unseen threats, hinting at the looming danger in the town.

Debbi Anderson and Dale Gilbertson's wife, Sarah, both exhibit unease as they observe the fog, their shared frowns reflecting the town's collective anxiety. Dale, despite his efforts to maintain normalcy with a family dinner, is preoccupied with the day's events, including the suspension of Officer Arnold Hrabowski. The fog exacerbates the tension, with residents keeping their children indoors, fearing the unknown. Dale's intuition tells him something is amiss, and his wife's loyalty underscores the emotional strain on the family as they grapple with the town's unraveling safety.

The tension peaks when Dale discovers his son, David, missing from the kitchen, the back door left open. A paralyzing fear grips him as he imagines the worst—the Fisherman, a sinister figure haunting the town, has taken his child. The fog becomes a metaphor for the loss of control and the fragility of safety, as Dale's worst fears seem to materialize. His frantic search ends in relief when David reappears, having been innocently playing in the fog, unaware of the danger. Dale's overwhelming urge to punish his son for the scare quickly turns into a protective embrace, highlighting the vulnerability of parenthood in such uncertain times.

The chapter closes with Dale's sobering realization that the fog—and the threat it represents—cannot be ignored. His son's innocent joy contrasts sharply with the underlying terror, emphasizing how the ordinary has become fraught with peril. The unresolved tension lingers, leaving readers with a sense of impending doom as the town remains shrouded in fog, both literal and metaphorical. The Fisherman's presence looms large, and the characters' fears suggest that the worst may yet be to come.

