

Chapter 29

The chapter begins with Theo awakening to Julian's urgent news that Rolf has disappeared. Despite Theo's initial attempts to rationalize Rolf's absence as a temporary need for solitude, Julian insists he has betrayed them. Miriam, now awake, acknowledges the inevitability of Rolf's departure, dismissing Theo's suggestion that they could have restrained him with the gun. The group speculates that Rolf has defected to the Warden, drawn by power, and plans to deliver the critical news of Julian's pregnancy in person. This betrayal leaves them with a narrow window to act before their secret is exposed.

Theo grapples with despair but quickly regains focus, analyzing Rolf's likely actions. He deduces that Rolf will avoid risks and travel cautiously to London to ensure the news reaches the Warden directly. The stakes are high: if Rolf succeeds, authorities will descend on them with helicopters and medical teams, turning Julian's pregnancy into a public spectacle. Theo's thoughts underscore the fragility of their situation and the looming threat of capture, emphasizing the need for swift action to secure their safety before Rolf's betrayal unfolds.

Theo proposes a revised plan to seek refuge in a secluded woodland cottage, abandoning their original route to Wales in favor of the Forest of Dean. He resolves to steal a car under cover of darkness to gather essential supplies, despite Julian's plea to leave the gun behind. His frustration surfaces as he rebukes her, questioning her commitment to their survival. The tension between Theo's pragmatism and Julian's fear highlights the group's strained dynamics under pressure, as they brace for the next critical phase of their flight.

As darkness falls, Theo departs alone, driven by urgency and a grim determination to secure transportation. Julian and Miriam watch him leave, their silent farewell tinged with uncertainty. Theo's journey begins with a mix of running and walking, his path

guided by distant village lights. The chapter closes on an ominous note, with Theo's fleeting fear that this might be their last encounter, underscoring the perilous uncertainty of their future and the race against time to evade capture.

