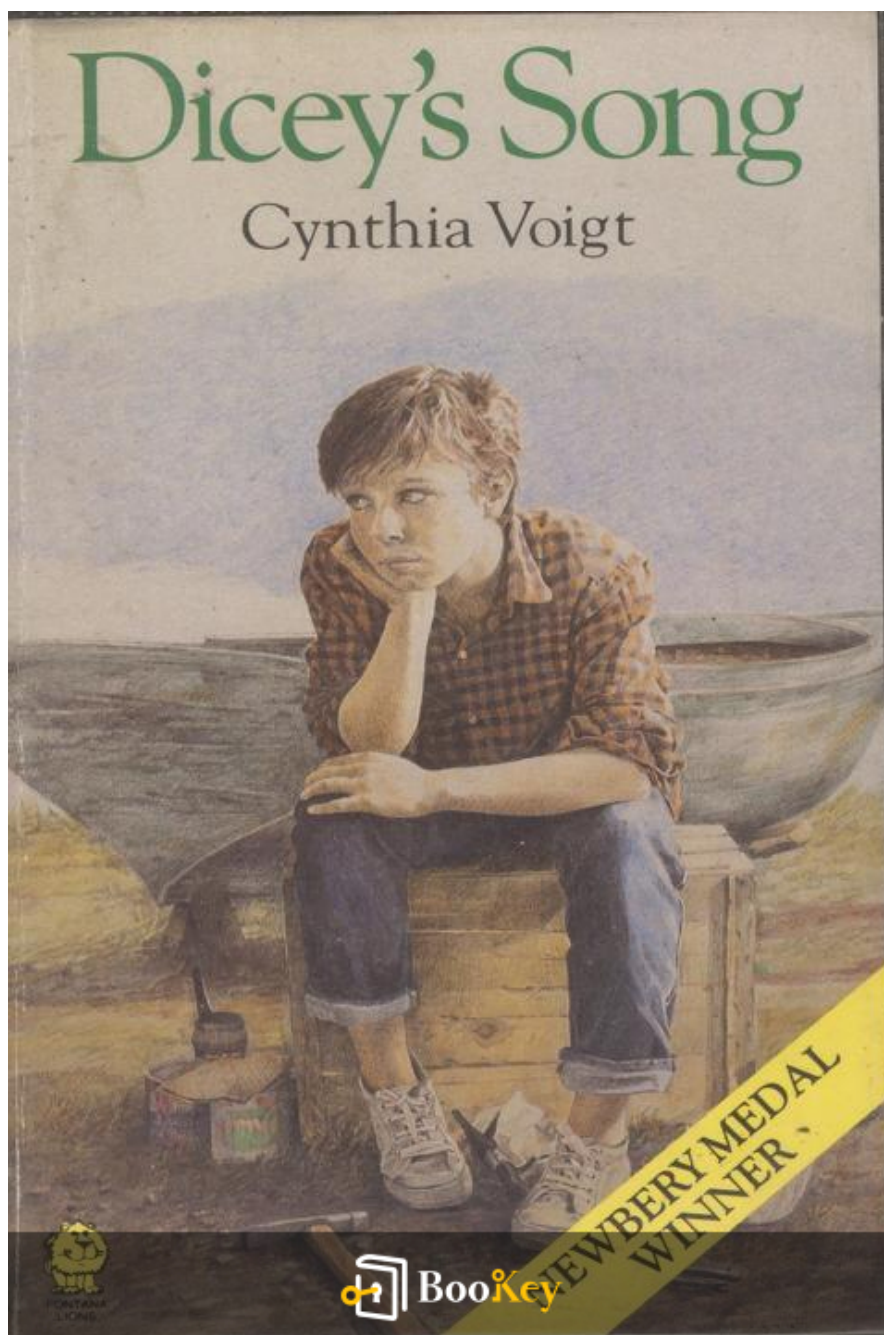


Dicey's Song PDF (Limited Copy)

Cynthia Voigt



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Dicey's Song Summary

A Journey of Healing and Family Resilience

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About the book

In the poignant sequel to "Homecoming," Cynthia Voigt's "Dicey's Song" continues the story of the resilient Tillerman siblings as they navigate the tumultuous waters of adolescence and familial bonds. Set against the backdrop of a small New England town, the narrative delves into themes of identity, belonging, and the profound impact of love and loyalty in the face of adversity. As Dicey struggles to find her place not only in her new school but also within an evolving family dynamic, readers are invited to journey alongside her, experiencing the bittersweet complexities of growing up and the unwavering strength that comes from embracing one's past. With its rich character development and lyrical prose, "Dicey's Song" beckons readers to reflect on their own journeys of self-discovery and the importance of home.

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About the author

Cynthia Voigt is a renowned American author celebrated for her compelling and poignant young adult literature, which often explores themes of family, identity, and resilience. Born on February 26, 1933, in Boston, Massachusetts, Voigt has captivated readers with her richly developed characters and insightful narratives across a career that spans several decades. She gained fame with her critically acclaimed novel "Homecoming," which introduced the Tillerman family, a series that continued to resonate through books like "Dicey's Song," awarded the Newbery Medal in 1983. Voigt's distinctive voice and ability to tackle complex emotional landscapes have made her a prominent figure in children's and young adult literature, inspiring generations of readers and writers alike.

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Summary Content List

Chapter 1: 1

Chapter 2: 2

Chapter 3: 3

Chapter 4: 4

Chapter 5: 5

Chapter 6: 6

Chapter 7: 7

Chapter 8: 8

Chapter 9: 9

Chapter 10: 10

Chapter 11: 11

Chapter 12: 12

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Chapter 1 Summary: 1

In the first chapter of "Dicey's Song" by Cynthia Voigt, we are introduced to Dicey Tillerman, a resilient thirteen-year-old navigating the challenges of her new life with her siblings after their mother's disappearance. The story begins with a reflection on their family's struggles, contrasting a traditional "happily ever after" narrative with the reality faced by the Tillermans. Dicey lies in the shade of a paper mulberry tree, feeling the weight of responsibility as the eldest sibling.

Dicey's life is filled with profound worries, primarily concerning her family's survival and the need to provide for her younger siblings—James, Maybeth, and Sammy. They are staying with their grandmother, Gram, who is trying to adapt to their sudden presence. Each sibling is occupied with their newfound routines: James is researching boat repair for Dicey, who is determined to fix her cherished sailboat that recently sank, Maybeth is struggling with school assignments, and Sammy is tending to their vegetable garden.

The chapter highlights Dicey's strong sense of responsibility and her proactive nature. Determined to contribute financially to their household, she seeks a job at the local grocery store run by Millie Tydings. Dicey's ambitious plan is met with skepticism, but she cleverly persuades Millie to give her a chance based on her ideas to improve the store's appeal.



Reflecting her innate problem-solving skills, Dicey is confident that she can make a difference.

As the chapter unfolds, we see family dynamics at play—Gram’s strict yet caring nature, the children’s varying personalities, and the underlying tension stemming from their mother’s absence. Dicey grapples with feelings of sadness and uncertainty regarding their future, particularly as discussions about possible adoption arise. She is fiercely protective of her siblings and worries about their emotional well-being, especially when it comes to Maybeth, whose struggles with reading fuel Dicey's anxiety about fitting in.

In her interactions with her siblings and grandmother, Dicey reveals her complexity—torn between the need to be a caretaker and her desire to be a typical teenager. Despite her burdens, she finds moments of joy in the little things, such as the beauty of the Chesapeake Bay and the responsibilities she undertakes, which instill a sense of purpose within her.

The chapter concludes with Dicey feeling a mix of hope and apprehension about her new life. She reflects on her family's history and her own identity while embracing the possibility of change and growth. Themes of resilience, family loyalty, and the quest for belonging are woven throughout the narrative, setting the stage for Dicey's journey as she navigates the challenges ahead, striving to secure a stable future for herself and her siblings.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Resilience in adversity

Critical Interpretation: Imagine standing in the shade of a tree, just like Dicey, feeling the weight of the world on your shoulders. In her journey, Dicey embodies the essence of resilience, pushing through the challenges that life throws her way while caring for her siblings. Let her determination inspire you to face your own trials with the same spirit. Rather than succumbing to despair, you can draw strength from your responsibilities, knowing that every effort you make contributes to a better future, not just for yourself but for those you love. Embrace the obstacles as opportunities to grow, just as Dicey does, turning moments of struggle into stepping stones for success.

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Chapter 2 Summary: 2

In Chapter 2 of "Dicey's Song" by Cynthia Voigt, we find Dicey in her classroom, grappling with the oppressive heat of an early afternoon. The setting is a typical school built for older grades, and Dicey feels a mix of boredom and detachment as she observes her surroundings and classmates. The teacher, Mr. Chappelle, introduces the concept of conflict in literature, igniting a thoughtful response from the class. While Dicey prefers the structure and clarity of diagramming sentences, she finds herself absorbed in the discussion about conflict, especially when a lively girl named Wilhemina brings up the idea of societal conflicts.

Dicey feels a connection to Wilhemina, appreciating her depth and insight, though she remains silent about her thoughts. Instead, she muses about her own definitions of conflict, reflecting on personal struggles akin to those faced by her grandmother, Gram. The class ends with a distraction as Dicey notices Gram visiting the school unexpectedly, stirring curiosity about what brought her there.

After school, Dicey heads to her part-time job at a local store, eager to earn money. She finds pleasure in work, dusting shelves and watching Millie, the butcher, at her craft. Dicey's determination to save up for resources to repair a boat she's working on reveals her resourcefulness and desire for independence.



At home, the dynamics shift as she sees her siblings, James and Sammy, delving into their activities. There's a sense of normalcy as they do homework and share conversations, but an undercurrent of Dicey's feelings of isolation emerges. She yearns for acknowledgment yet feels overshadowed by her siblings' achievements.

The chapter culminates in a heartwarming revelation when Gram brings out shirts she altered for Dicey, showcasing her care and nurturing spirit, further solidifying the theme of family support. Dicey feels a mix of gratitude and complicated emotions, grappling with her own insecurities about fitting in. The chapter captures the journey of a young girl navigating school life, family dynamics, and her aspirations, setting the stage for the transformation that her relationships and experiences will induce.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The importance of acknowledging and embracing conflict in personal growth

Critical Interpretation: Imagine standing in a crowded classroom, feeling the weight of silence as you listen to your peers explore the concept of conflict. You may realize, just like Dicey, that conflict isn't merely a plot device in a story; it reflects the struggles and challenges we face in our own lives. The moment you begin to recognize and articulate these conflicts—whether they are familial, societal, or internal—you empower yourself to initiate change. It's a revelation that inspires you to confront your own realities, harnessing the strength found in vulnerability and dialogue. By embracing the conflicts that shape your identity, you can discover deeper connection with others and gain insight into your own journey, just as Dicey does with her thoughts and experiences.



Chapter 3: 3

In Chapter 3 of "Dicey's Song," we follow Dicey Tillerman as she navigates the complexities of her life with her siblings and their grandmother, Gram, while also dealing with the unanswered questions surrounding their mother's health. The chapter opens with Dicey assisting Sammy on his paper route, a routine that provides them comfort and familiarity amid their new life in southern Maryland, far from their earlier home on the Cape.

Dicey discovers a significant letter from the hospital regarding their mother, which reveals that there is "no change" in her condition. This news brings a mix of disappointment and resignation to both Dicey and Gram, who discusses plans for adopting the children now that they know the situation remains stagnant. The conversation is tense, highlighting themes of hardship and resilience as Gram emphasizes the struggles of life, especially regarding their financial situation.

As October progresses, the children adjust to their new environment. Sammy exhibits curiosity about the world, while Maybeth is invited to a birthday

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Chapter 4 Summary: 4

In Chapter 4 of "Dicey's Song," the story unfolds on a day filled with school, family dynamics, and the anticipation of Halloween. It's a significant day for Dicey, as it marks the due date for her English paper, which she plans to surprise her family with. While her siblings have a day off due to Gram going in for conferences, Dicey feels a mix of responsibility and worry about leaving them in James's care, especially after he takes them up to the attic against Gram's rules.

Upon returning home from school, Dicey finds a subdued atmosphere at the dinner table and is intrigued by how Gram handles their minor mischief. As they begin to discuss school conferences, Gram reveals plans for a shopping day with Dicey, indicating that she acknowledges the children's recent behavior but is also keen on addressing their needs during the upcoming winter. The idea of a day away leads to excitement for Dicey, who cherishes bus rides and the chance to spend time with her grandmother.

Their trip to a nearby mall introduces a mix of emotions for Dicey. While Gram seems stern and focused on practical matters, such as getting warm clothing and yarn for sweaters, Dicey grapples with her own identity and role within the family. Gram encourages her to think actively about their family's circumstances after having a long break from worrying.



Throughout their shopping expedition, themes of familial bonding and personal growth emerge. While Gram buys clothes and yarns, she also subtly initiates conversations about each child's needs, particularly highlighting concerns for Maybeth, who struggles in school. This leads Dicey to reflect on her siblings' adjustments and struggles, revealing her deep sense of responsibility for them. They share some humorous moments, like Gram's public insistence on buying Dicey a bra, stirring Dicey's embarrassment but ultimately drawing them closer.

As Gram and Dicey navigate through their day, their discus

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Chapter 5 Summary: 5

In Chapter 5 of "Dicey's Song," Mr. Lingerle spends a cozy evening with Dicey's family, staying later than planned to enjoy the fire and share music. Though Dicey initially appreciates his presence, she soon feels that he should leave as their conversation turns serious, centered around her sister Maybeth's struggles in school. Gram expresses concern that Maybeth is flunking in reading, prompting Mr. Lingerle to contribute his thoughts. This reveals the depth of his understanding—counter to Dicey's initial impression of him as clumsy and dim-witted—highlighting a recurring theme that appearances can be deceiving.

The family grapples with finding ways to help Maybeth. James shows insight into the possible reasons behind Maybeth's poor reading skills, suggesting that her learning style may not align with traditional teaching methods. Though he offers some initial ideas—like using whole words versus breaking them down—his theories are unpolished, and he admits he will need to research further. This sequence emphasizes both the challenges of educational systems and the importance of recognizing individual learning styles, illustrating the deep care the family has for one another.

Dicey helps to reflect on the dichotomy between her family's hopes and realities, especially regarding Maybeth, who should be thriving but continues to struggle. She worries about James following through on his



plans to help Maybeth, revealing her protective nature towards both her sister and brother, showcasing Dicey's maturity and sense of responsibility.

As the chapter progresses, the dynamics among the siblings begin to shift, particularly between Dicey and Sammy. Their interactions reveal a playful sibling camaraderie that is sometimes marred by the weight of their circumstances. Tension builds when they discuss school and expectations, especially Maybeth's anguish after a harsh incident at school where her reading mistakes are ridiculed. This moment underscores the emotional weight that educational struggles can bring, resonating with their collective past of challenges stemming from their mother's absence.

Ultimately, James steps up to take on the role of a teacher for Maybeth, provoking a mixture of optimism and skepticism from Dicey. The chapter closes with a sense of tentative hope as Maybeth's first lesson with James begins, and the family collectively holds their breath to see if this new approach will help their sister unlock her potential. Themes of resilience, understanding, and the importance of family bonds echo throughout the narrative, highlighting their journey toward supporting each other in the face of adversity.



Chapter 6: 6

In Chapter 6 of "Dicey's Song," Dicey is determined to focus on her family and her responsibilities at home, but as the weather turns cold and gray, she finds herself distracted by outside events. The dreary days and the stinging cold make it impossible for her to work on the boat, prompting her to reflect on the impact of the harsh weather on her life.

The chapter takes a significant turn when Dicey receives her report card from school. The anticipation builds as she waits for her turn in homeroom, and when she finally sees her grades, she's shocked and furious to find a failing grade in Home Economics. Though she's not academically inclined like her brother James, she has always done well in her studies and can't understand how she flunked the class. This moment serves as a catalyst for Dicey's anger and frustration over the unfairness of some school systems and her own apparent lack of effort in a subject she dislikes.

Dicey confides in her friend Jeff about her struggles, and he reassures her that a failing grade in a "minor" subject won't matter much. When she

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I've learned. Highly recommend!

Alex Walk

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Chapter 7 Summary: 7

In Chapter 7 of "Dicey's Song" by Cynthia Voigt, Dicey finds herself in a moment of anticipation and anxiety as she waits for her English teacher, Mr. Chappelle, to return their essays. The weather outside is cold, painting her surroundings with a sharp clarity that reflects her mood. She sits in a loose red sweater, reminiscent of her uncle Bullet, who she imagines would approve of its color. As Mr. Chappelle reviews common mistakes in their papers, Dicey grows frustrated. She feels that the emphasis on grades overshadowed any real learning, questioning the value of the comments teachers provide compared to the grades themselves.

The pivotal moment comes when Mr. Chappelle reads aloud two essays, the first of which is written by Mina and astutely describes her lively but complex persona. Dicey recognizes that the girl being described could easily be Mina herself, and she admires the honesty in Mina's work. The class responds with laughter and applause, acknowledging Mina's brilliance.

Then, Mr. Chappelle reads Dicey's essay about her mother, Mrs. Liza, a poignant character sketch. As he reads, Dicey swells with pride, sensing its depth and authenticity. However, she grows anxious when Mr. Chappelle casts doubt on the authenticity of her work, suggesting it might be plagiarized, as it feels too polished for a student. He insists that she did not follow the assignment's guidelines, which required depicting a real person



known to her. The tension escalates as Mr. Chappelle's accusations loom over her.

Unexpectedly, Mina stands up in Dicey's defense, asserting that Dicey wouldn't cheat and expressing her belief in Dicey's integrity. The atmosphere in the classroom shifts as Mina passionately advocates for Dicey, and the classmates look on in solidarity. When the bell rings, signaling the end of class, Mina pushes for more time to uncover the truth about Dicey's essay.

After class, Mr. Chappelle reluctantly changes Dicey's essay grade to an A+ following her defense, but the experience leaves Dicey feeling unsettled. She reflects on her day over dinner, helping Gram in the kitchen and sharing her feelings with her grandmother. Gram engages Dicey in a deeper conversation about mistakes and connections, urging her to continue reaching out despite setbacks. Dicey processes her complex emotions about her essay, the class dynamics, and Mina's support.

The chapter concludes with Dicey making a phone call to Mina, thanking her for her support and further solidifying their budding friendship. This moment encapsulates themes of resilience, the quest for authenticity, and the importance of connections in the face of challenges. The warmth of family and friendship emerges as a counterbalance to the struggles Dicey faces, hinting at her growth and the potential for new relationships in her life.



Chapter 8 Summary: 8

In this chapter of "Dicey's Song," the story focuses on Dicey and her friend Mina as they navigate their school day and the interactions with others. The chapter begins with Dicey feeling the weight of newfound attention after her essay made her somewhat of a local hero. During their walk, Dicey and Mina delve into personal topics, revealing Dicey's family's struggles, including their mother's health issues and their move to live with their grandmother, whom they did not know existed until recently.

As they reach the store where Dicey works, her younger brother Sammy is introduced. He bears bruises from a recent fight, hinting at the tensions Dicey's family faces both emotionally and socially. The chaotic dynamic of family life is explored as they discuss Thanksgiving, a holiday Dicey and her siblings had never celebrated before, thus emphasizing the new experiences and adjustments they are making under their grandmother's care.

Characters reveal their personalities and dynamics through their interactions. Sammy is depicted as eager yet troubled, grappling with peer aggression, while Dicey consistently feels protective and concerned for her family. The name "Gram" for their grandmother resonates with warmth but also underlines the complexities of family history as Gram's past remains shrouded in mystery.



As the Thanksgiving dinner approaches, the mood becomes reflective. Dicey expresses a deep longing for their mother to be present, highlighting the bittersweetness of their new family gatherings despite the joy they bring. Throughout the chapter, themes of family, belonging, and personal identity emerge. Dicey grapples with her role as protector of her siblings while trying to understand the challenges they all face individually, particularly regarding Sammy's conflicts at school.

In the end, a shift occurs as the children and Gram gather for a Thanksgiving meal, marked by laughter and the togetherness that Dicey craves. This shared experience allows them to bond and explore their new family identity while quietly acknowledging their past struggles. The chapter closes with a sense of optimism as they embark on new experiences together, underscored by the warmth of the community around them, including friends like Jeff and Mina who bring music and joy into their lives.

Content Summary

The chapter focuses on Dicey and her friend Mina during their school day. Dicey grapples with newfound attention after her essay gains local recognition. Personal topics arise, revealing Dicey's family struggles, their mother's health issues, and their recent move to live with their unknown grandmother, "Gram." Sammy, Dicey's younger brother, shows signs of distress from peer aggression, indicating family tensions. Thanksgiving looms as a central theme, showcasing the family's new dynamics and experiences. Themes of family, identity, and belonging are prominent as Dicey tries to protect her siblings while dealing with Sammy's school conflicts. The chapter ends on an optimistic note with the family gathering for Thanksgiving dinner, bringing joy and community warmth, including friends like Jeff and Mina.



Chapter 9: 9

In Chapter 9 of "Dicey's Song," we see an engaging slice of life as Dicey interacts with her younger brother, Sammy, whose exuberant recounting of their grandmother's (Gram's) unexpected visit to school brightens her day. Sammy joyfully shares how Gram came to school, played marbles, and won, earning a nickname as the "Lone Marble Ranger." This playful behavior reflects Gram's mischievous spirit and contrasts with Dicey's preoccupations, allowing readers to glimpse the warmth of their family dynamic.

As Dicey engages with her home economics teacher, Miss Eversleigh, she has a moment of introspection, recalling a lesson on the importance of skill. Dicey acknowledges that learning is valuable, even if she hasn't yet committed to applying it. This highlights a theme of growth and the struggle between childhood nonchalance and the responsibility that comes with growing up.

The chapter then shifts into a more somber tone as Gram's mysterious

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Chapter 10 Summary: 10

In the poignant Chapter 10 of "Dicey's Song" by Cynthia Voigt, Dicey faces a heart-wrenching moment as she finds her mother, Momma, lying in a hospital bed, gravely ill. The atmosphere is thick with silence, and both Dicey and her Gram, who has rushed to be by Momma's side, are filled with despair. Gram attempts to comfort Momma by sharing stories about the family, but Dicey is lost in her thoughts, grappling with her emotions. The reality of Momma's deteriorating condition shakes Dicey, who feels a mix of anger and sadness for having held onto a hopeful idea of her mother when the truth is far more painful.

As Gram reflects on the past, recalling happier times and losses, Dicey wrestles with her conflicting feelings—grief for the mother she has lost to mental illness, frustration for the situation, and unresolved anger at Momma for abandoning them. The chapter showcases themes of familial love, the struggle to confront harsh realities, and the pain of letting go.

Dicey leaves the hospital, carrying a pocketful of money given by Gram, and embarks on a journey through the city to find Christmas gifts for her siblings. As she explores various shops, her anger begins to transform into a semblance of purpose as she selects heartfelt presents while also trying to manage her emotions about her mother. The act of gift-giving becomes a way for Dicey to feel connected to her family and to cope with her own hurt.



When she returns to the hospital, she is met with the profound news of Momma's passing. The scene of Dicey and Gram embracing in their shared grief encapsulates the deeply embedded bond between them and the intensity of their loss. The moment serves as a catalyst for Dicey's understanding of strength amidst sorrow, highlighting the inevitability of letting go. Her gesture of buying gloves for Gram symbolizes a reclaiming of love and connection, reinforcing that even in the face of loss, they can carry forward the warmth of their relationships. The chapter closes with a sense of bittersweet resolve as they prepare to leave the hospital, moving towards healing together.

Overall, this chapter blends heartache with resilience, illustrating Dicey’s journey through profound grief while emphasizing the importance of family ties in navigating the difficult path of loss.

Key Elements	Description
Chapter Title	Chapter 10
Main Character	Dicey
Setting	Hospital, Momma's bedside
Emotional Tone	Painful, contemplative, and resilient
Key Event	Dicey's visit to her gravely ill mother, Momma

Key Elements	Description
Supporting Character	Gram
Themes	Familial love, grief, confronting reality, letting go
Dicey's Internal Struggle	Grappling with anger, sadness, and unresolved feelings towards Momma
Gift-Giving Act	Dicey buys Christmas gifts for siblings, seeking purpose
Momma's Fate	Momma passes away during Dicey's absence
Share of Grief	Dicey and Gram embrace in shared sorrow
Symbolism	Buying gloves for Gram represents love and connection
Ending Tone	Bittersweet resolve, moving toward healing

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Chapter 11 Summary: 11

In Chapter 11 of "Dacey's Song," the emotional aftermath of Momma's death unfolds as Dacey, her Gram, Preston, and Dr. Epstein navigate the practicalities of dealing with loss. The chapter opens with a somber encounter in a hospital hallway, where Dr. Epstein informs them about arrangements for Momma. Tensions arise when Gram decides that they want to take Momma's body back to Maryland, and the costs of this plan become apparent—a daunting sum of seven hundred dollars that they simply don't have. In an attempt to find a less costly option, Preston suggests cremation, which leads to some crucial decisions for the family.

Through the uncomfortable visit to the undertaker, Dacey grapples with the concept of letting go. Gram's fierce resolve to honor Momma drives them to seek a more fitting urn, ultimately leading them to a kindhearted woodworker who offers them a beautiful box crafted from various woods as a gift. This act of kindness highlights themes of community and support in the face of tragedy, reminding them that they aren't alone in their grief.

As they move through the day, Dacey reflects on her own feelings of sadness, loss, and acceptance, realizing she has unintentionally begun to let go. The chapter also deepens the bond between Dacey and Gram, who both face their vulnerability yet find strength in each other's presence. Dacey's memories of past summers with her family weave through her thoughts,



underscoring a blend of nostalgia and longing for a simpler time, even amidst their current turmoil.

The scene shifts as they take a train home, and the rhythm of the train becomes a backdrop for Dicey's introspection about family, loss, and identity. She recognizes that while she must let go of Momma, she also needs to hold on to love and memories. The journey becomes symbolic of both physical and emotional movement, contrasting the vibrant past with their uncertain future.

When they finally arrive at their destination, they are met by her siblings, who bring a mix of joy and sadness into the reunion. The chapter concludes with emotional exchanges and realizations as they begin to process Momma's absence and their roles within the family unit moving forward. Dicey's struggle to understand the balance between letting go and holding on is central to the narrative, encapsulating her journey through grief and resilience.



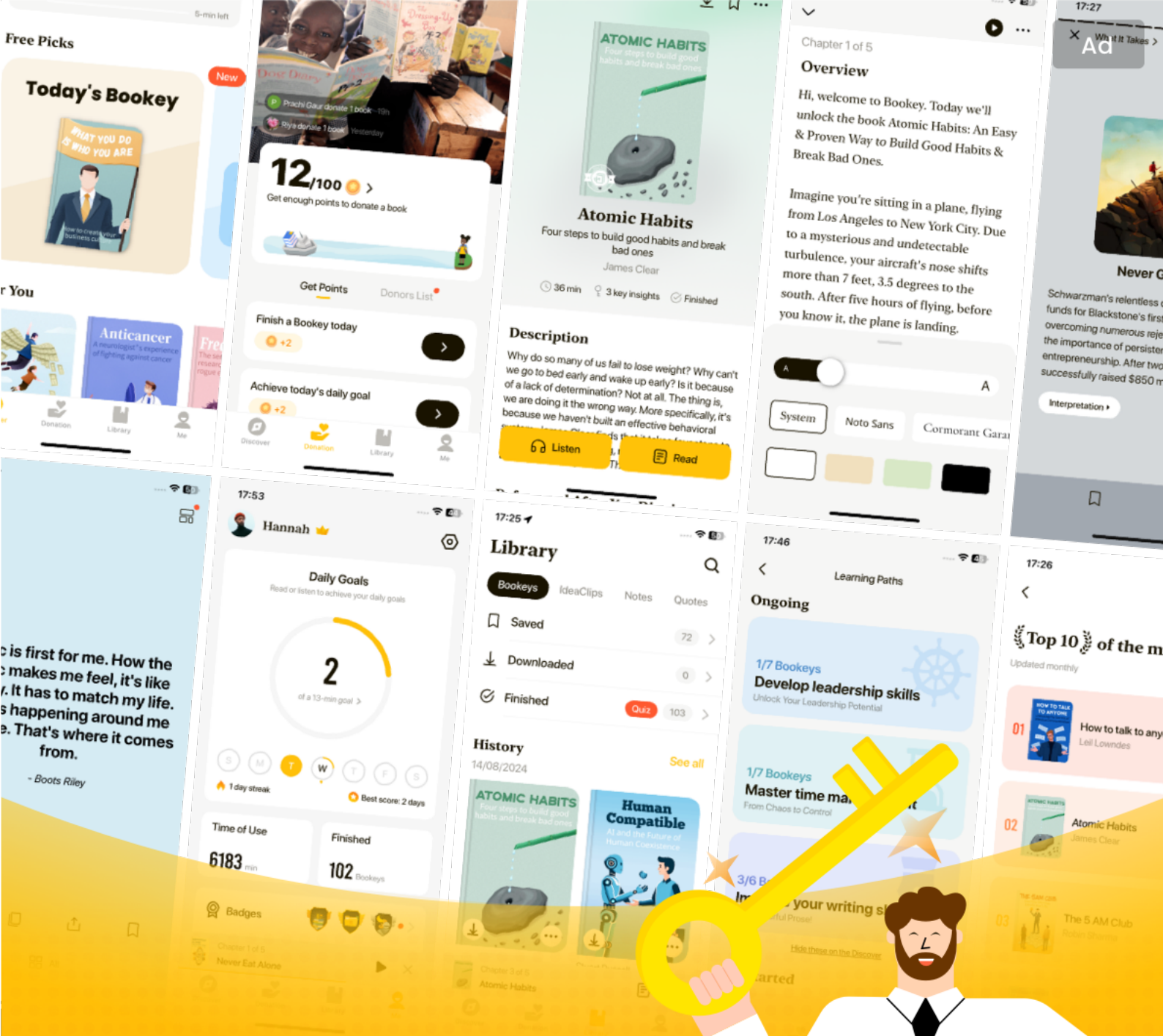
Chapter 12: 12

In Chapter 12 of "Dicey's Song," the family gathers in a somber moment to bury Momma beneath the old paper mulberry tree outside their house. James and Sammy dig the grave while Gram, Dicey, and Maybeth watch solemnly. The setting is beautifully described with the cold wind and the sunset casting vibrant colors on the sky and landscape, which contrasts starkly with the heavy mood of loss. Dicey reflects on the tree, recalling Gram's analogy of the tree resembling families—its wires holding it together just like love holds a family through difficulties.

As they lay Momma to rest, there's a poignant silence, and they contemplate whether to speak or sing in remembrance. Gram breaks the silence by placing dirt into the grave, followed by the children. They scatter the last of the yellow leaves on top, symbolizing their love. After the burial, as the family makes their way back into the house, Dicey feels the duality of Momma being both gone and home, a profound realization that resonates with her.

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