

Mr. Richard's installment #5 of 'Counting by 7's'

My last installment ended with Chapter 25. In the next chapter Willow has gone missing and Dell has been recruited to help find her. He is elated with the idea that he could be of some help. This excitement speaks to me as the 2nd theme of the book. **We all want to be needed; helpful.**

Quickly Dell gets Mai out of class to help with the search. She knows exactly where to look - the library. Almost immediately they find Willow hiding among the books.

By the way - the dialogue on p.160 is what makes Willow so attractive to me as a character. She speaks so very well....

"I don't say anything about the long-term health issues associated with potato consumption, which has a link to juvenile weight gain." Just so matter of fact!

The next adventure is about what to do with Willow.
Did you guess that Patti would come to the rescue?

There is a whole lot of "temporary" in much of the next 100 pages.

p.166 - Temporary. Brief. Not permanent. Provisional.
Passing. Short-term. Interim!

The author continues to use words that are not the most familiar.

p. 168 Carcinogenic

car·cin·o·gen·ic

ˌkɑːrs(ə)nəˈdʒenɪk/

adjective

1. having the potential to cause cancer.

Need some help with this? On p.174 - Willow observes the following in the computer room of the library. “I’m surprised, but a lot of the people who I think are homeless go online. I can see that they check their Facebook pages.” Why would this be? What are they checking for?

Also on p.174 it is clear that Willow finds the library to be a comforting place to be, especially to escape the craziness and sadness. I, for one, have always found the library to be a great place to hide away with a bunch of books, and make believe no one knows I am there. Same in a bookstore - I love to find the quietest spot and hide away for a few hours exploring unknown books. You?

I am sure you have found some great quotes in this book that speak right to you. One of my favorites is on p 175. Though very sad it provokes thought and reflection, “And that is why the deepest form of pain comes out as silence.” Maybe the next time someone is unusually quiet in my presence I will be a bit more understanding as to the reason.

This is my second read of this book and I can speak with experience that for me this quote represents the low point for our main character Willow- “Meaning has been drained from my life.....Because in this new world I don’t count.”

The description of the garage that Mai and her family live in is hard to get my head around. We are all so fortunate to live in the places we do. I must say there are many folks in our country that live in even worse conditions. And not just adults, but whole families, who have not had the good fortune that you and I have had to live in such comfort. This makes me stop and consider what I have done, or not done, for those less fortunate than I. You?

The story now moves to Dell’s apartment and the transformation of his messy world to a neat apartment where Patti’s family will take up residence.

Dells’s apartment reminds me of a few lockers I have seen over the last few years at LMS. Don’t let this happen YOU!

NO

NO

NO

NO

NO

Like some 5th and 6th graders I know - “Dell Duke is obviously one of those people who has issues throwing things away.”

I won't begin to mention Dell's closet that is full of used underwear - OH MY

The author uses the literary device **personification** many times in the book:

Personification Definition

Personification is a figure of speech in which a thing, an idea or an animal is given human attributes. The non-human objects are portrayed in such a way that we feel they have the ability to act like human beings. For example, when we say, “The sky weeps” we are giving the sky the ability to cry, which is a human quality. Thus, we can say that the sky has been personified in the given sentence.

“I find myself next to an outdoor umbrella still encased in cloudy plastic. It is propped up against the wall. I FEEL ITS SADNESS.”

On p.194 the author paints another picture:

“...we form a human chain. There are only four of us, but using this ANCIENT MEANS OF TRANSPORT, months of trash LEAVES the building.”

P.197 & 198 - Willow does it again when she describes the life cycle of the rose. (Now some of your teachers might want you to consider a deeper meaning when it comes this description. I guess there maybe some metaphor for life but I am a simple fellow and see the surface meanings first.)

“What was a rose before it was a rose? It was the soil and the sky and the rain and the sun. And where was the rose once it was gone?”

I will pick up on chapter 34 next time.

Happy reading!