

A high-angle view of a stone courtyard. In the center is a rectangular pool of water. A person is sitting on the edge of the pool. The courtyard is paved with stone tiles and has several potted plants and small trees. There are stone walls and arches in the background.

VICTORY!


CHAPTER 18

LATER THAT DAY...



GASP


**BE QUIET,
SAPPHIE!**



DO YOU
HAVE ANY IDEA
HOW MUCH
TROUBLE
YOU'RE IN?!


YOU'RE
PICTURE IS ALL
OVER THE NEWS!
EVERYONE'S
LOOKING FOR
YOU!

I KNOW.
I'M LEAVING...
AND I WANT YOU
TO COME WITH
ME.



I CAN'T COME WITH YOU! DO YOU WANT ME TO BE A FUGITIVE TOO?!

WE LOVE EACH OTHER, SAPPHIE. WHERE I GO, YOU GO TOO, RIGHT?



PAUL, I'M NOT
EVEN SURE WHO YOU
ARE ANYMORE. WHY WON'T
YOU JUST LET ALL THIS
CRAZY STUFF GO AND
ENJOY THIS NEW WORLD
WE HAVE?

PAUL, WE
COULD HAVE SUCH A
BEAUTIFUL LIFE
TOGETHER. WHY DO
YOU WANT TO RUIN
IT?!

I JUST NEED TO
FIND OUT A FEW
THINGS. I NEED TO GET
ALL THIS STUFF STRAIGHT
BUT...I CAN'T BELIEVE SOME
OF THE THINGS I'VE SEEN! I
SAW SOMEONE'S CHILD DIE
TODAY AND I'M STILL
TRYING TO MAKE SENSE
OF IT.





SOMEONE'S CHILD DIE? IS THAT THE LADY THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT ON THE NEWS?!

WHAT LADY?

THEY SAID HER NAME WAS LOIS. SHE SHOT HER DAUGHTER IN THE HEAD! SHE WAS ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALISTS. A POLICE OFFICER TRIED TO STOP HER BUT HE WAS TOO LATE.



WHAT?!!

**SEE, PAUL,
THEY'RE ALL NUTS!
SHE WAS PROBABLY
SACRIFICING HER DAUGHTER
TO HER GOD OR SOMETHING!
THEY'RE ALL PSYCHOS! THIS
IS WHY I WAS BEGGING
YOU TO STAY AWAY
FROM THEM!**

**YOU WERE
WITH *HER*
TOO?!?**

A 3D rendered character with short, bright red hair and large, vibrant green eyes. The character has a pale complexion and is wearing a dark, possibly black, jacket with a red collar. Their right hand is pressed against their forehead, suggesting a state of shock or distress. The background consists of a grey stone wall with some green foliage visible in the lower-left corner. A white speech bubble with a black outline is positioned in the lower-left area of the frame, containing the text: "I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT'S GOING ON! I GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE!!".

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
WHAT'S GOING
ON! I GOTTA
GET OUTTA
HERE!!



COME ON,
SAPPHIE, WE
GOTTA GO!

I TOLD YOU,
I'M NOT GOING
ANYWHERE!



TIM?
WHERE IS
HE?

WE NEED TO
TALK TO TIM.
HE'S BEEN TRYING
TO FIGURE ALL
THIS STUFF OUT
TOO.

HE...HE'S
SAFE.
BUT I'VE GOTTA
GET TO HIM!



OK. I'LL GO WITH YOU. MAYBE I CAN TALK SOME SENSE INTO HIM TOO. MAYBE THERE'S STILL A CHANCE THAT BOTH OF YOU CAN SNAP OUT OF THIS!




BACK IN OROS...



PAUL!
SAPPHIE!

TIM!





HEY, MAN,
HOW ARE
YA?!


I'M GREAT,
PAUL! WAIT 'TILL
I TELL YOU WHAT
HAPPENED!

OH, NO.
WHAT ELSE
COULD GO
WRONG?!



HEY,
SAPPHIE!
HOW ARE
YOU?

WELL, I'M
OBVIOUSLY **NUTS** IF
I'M OUT HERE IN THE
DESERT WITH A
COUPLE OF WANTED
CRIMINALS!



OF
COURSE! WHY
AM I NOT
SURPRISED YOU'RE
HERE! YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO STARTED
ALL THIS
TROUBLE!

STILL
HAVEN'T
REPENTED AND
BELIEVED YET,
SAPPHIE?


A 3D animated scene featuring two characters standing on a sandy beach. The character on the left has bright red hair and green eyes, wearing a black jacket with red flame patterns. The character on the right has purple hair and green eyes, wearing a brown sweater. A speech bubble is positioned between them, containing text. In the foreground, the back of a person's head with long grey hair is visible.

OH, YOU
WISH! GIVE UP
TRYING TO
CONVERT ME. IT
WON'T WORK
ANYWAY! I STILL
HAVE MY SANITY...
UNLIKE MY
FRIENDS.



WHERE'S
ALEX?






HE'S DEAD,
PAUL. HE HUNG
HIMSELF.




WHAT?!?!

GASP



I'M
SORRY, PAUL.
WE WERE
TALKING ABOUT
GOD...AND HE GOT
MAD AND...
I FOUND HIM
LATER THAT
NIGHT.

IT'S NOT YOUR
FAULT, TIM. ALEX
REJECTED GOD'S
MERCY. SOME PEOPLE
DO IT IN DRAMATIC
WAYS...OTHERS, MORE
QUIETLY, BUT IT'S
STILL REJECTING
GOD.



NO, IT'S NOT
TIM'S FAULT, IT'S
YOUR FAULT! YOU
AND YOUR CRAZY
GOD! CAN'T YOU SEE
ALL THE TROUBLE HE
CAUSES? CAN'T YOU
SEE THAT THE
WORLD IS BETTER
OFF WITHOUT
HIM?!



**NO IT ISN'T!
HE SAVED ME!!!**



HE WHAT?




HE SAVED ME,
PAUL.
HE SAVED ME!

HE...
BUT...HOW?


I JUST
GAVE UP, PAUL.
I JUST GOT TIRED
OF FIGHTING HIM.
NOAH WAS RIGHT...
IT'S JUST BETTER
NOT TO FIGHT
HIM.

OH!
AND I LEARNED A
NEW BIBLE VERSE.
YOU WANNA HEAR IT?



YEAH, TIM.
I'D LIKE
THAT.

OK, HERE
GOES...



"IF ANYONE BE IN
CHRIST, HE IS A NEW
CREATION. THE OLD
THINGS ARE PASSED
AWAY. BEHOLD, ALL
THINGS ARE BECOME
NEW."



IS THAT
RIGHT?

VERY GOOD,
TIM.




IT'S ALL TRUE,
PAUL.
IT'S ALL TRUE!!










DO YOU MIND IF
I SIT DOWN?

NO, GO
AHEAD.



YOU KNOW
LOIS, RIGHT?
AND...AND
SAMANTHA...

YES, I
TALKED TO
THEM SEVERAL
TIMES IN THE
CITY. I
BROUGHT
THEM A
BIBLE.



SAMANTHA
IS...SHE'S...
DEAD.

WHAT?!

A POLICE
OFFICER SHOT
HER IN THE HEAD!
BUT HE WAS
LOOKING FOR ME.
THEY WOULDN'T TELL
HIM THAT I WAS IN
THE HOUSE HIDING.
I HAD GONE THERE
TO ASK LOIS HOW
SHE GOT
SAVED.




GOD USED THEM TO GIVE YOU ANOTHER CHANCE.

BECAUSE, PAUL, THAT'S HOW MUCH GOD CHANGES US. WE CARE MORE ABOUT THE THINGS ABOVE THAN THE THINGS ON THIS EARTH.



LOIS SAID THEY WOULDN'T TELL THE OFFICER ABOUT ME... BECAUSE I WASN'T SAVED YET. THEY DIDN'T WANT ME TO DIE WITHOUT KNOWING JESUS.

I DON'T KNOW WHY THEY DID THAT.

A 3D rendered scene featuring a character with bright red hair and green eyes sitting on the ground. The character is wearing a black, form-fitting suit with red flame-like patterns on the chest and dark blue pants. To the left, the lower legs and feet of another character in black clothing are visible. A speech bubble points from the standing character towards the sitting one. The background is a plain, light-colored wall with shadows cast on it.

WHAT
ARE YOU
GOING TO DO
WITH YOUR
CHANCE,
PAUL?





I DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO...

WHY WOULD YOU
SAVE SOMEONE LIKE
ME? I HAVEN'T CARED A
THING ABOUT YOU MY
ENTIRE LIFE. WHY WOULD
YOU WANT TO DO THIS
FOR ME?



I DON'T WANT
TO DO THESE
THINGS ANYMORE! I
CAN'T BELIEVE ALL
THE THINGS I'VE
DONE!!

HOW COULD YOU
FORGIVE ME FOR ALL
OF THOSE THINGS?!



BUT YOU SAID
YOU WOULD,
RIGHT? YOU'D EVEN
FORGIVE SOMEONE
LIKE ME?!

COULD YOU
REALLY DO
THAT?



COULD YOU
PLEASE DO
THAT?



**COULD YOU
FORGIVE ME?!
PLEASE!!**

**PLEASE
HELP ME!
PLEASE SAVE
ME!!!**

**PLEASE
SAVE ME!!!**



PLEASE.