

PARAGON CONVENT SCHOOL, SECTOR 24B, CHANDIGARH

CLASS: V (NOVEL)

SUMMARY- CHAPTER- 21

CHAPTER-21

After returning Wilbur to his pen, everyone goes off to find Fern, and Charlotte and Wilbur are left alone. Wilbur is happy and proud of the medal around his neck, but Charlotte is silent. When Wilbur asks her why she's being so quiet, she tells him that she feels tired—but peaceful, and grateful for Wilbur's success (which she sees, in part, as her success, too.) Charlotte is grateful that she has assured Wilbur's security and happiness—no one will harm him now, and he will “live to enjoy the beauty of the frozen world,” and even the seasons to come. At Charlotte's beautiful description of the seasons and their changing, Wilbur becomes tearful and emotional. He asks what he ever did to deserve all of her help—he feels he hasn't done enough for her in return. Charlotte assures Wilbur, though, that his just being her friend is more than enough. In helping Wilbur, she has “lifted up her life a trifle.”

Wilbur begins talking about how wonderful it will be for them to all return home to the farm together, but Charlotte announces that she will not be going back to the barn—in just a day or two, she'll be dead. She doesn't even have enough strength, she says, to climb down into the crate. Wilbur throws himself onto the ground in a fit of “pain and sorrow,” and he sobs over the loss of his only “true friend.” Charlotte, though, insists Wilbur stop making such a scene. Wilbur is struck by an idea—if Charlotte can't bring her egg sac back to the barn, he will do it for her. He calls for Templeton and informs the rat of the situation. Charlotte is very sick, he says, and needs for Templeton to fetch her egg sac from the rafters of the shed. Templeton complains that the other animals are always calling upon him to do their dirty work, but Wilbur is desperate to secure his help before the Arables and Zuckermans return and prepare to drive back to the farm. Wilbur makes Templeton a deal: he promises that at every single meal, he will let Templeton have his fill of the slop before he himself even touches it. The greedy Templeton, excited, agrees to the deal and clambers up to the ceiling, where he detaches the egg sac and carries it back down between his teeth. Templeton creeps down and puts the egg sac at Wilbur's feet, complaining about the sticky feeling in his mouth. He climbs into Wilbur's crate just as Lurvy, Mr. Arable, and Homer Zuckerman return, followed by all the rest of the humans. Wilbur carefully takes the egg sac into his mouth and gently holds it on top of his tongue. As he is loaded into the crate, he looks up at Charlotte and gives her a wink—the only goodbye he can manage. Summoning the last of her strength, Charlotte waves goodbye to Wilbur with one of her legs. Charlotte never moves again—

the next day, as the fairgrounds clear out, Charlotte dies peacefully. No one is with her when she passes—and no one knows that in all the goings-on at the fair, “a grey spider had played the most important part of all.”

NOTEBOOK WORK

CHAPTER-21

Q1. Explain why Charlotte would not be going back to the barn.

A1. Charlotte would not be going back to the barn because in a day or two she would be dead.

Q2. Describe how Wilbur reacted to Charlotte's news.

A2. Wilbur did not handle Charlotte's news well. He threw himself to the ground in agony and in pain. Wilbur didn't want to leave Charlotte and he was crying, racing around his pen in a panic.

Q3. What did Wilbur promise Templeton in order to get him to help?

A3. Wilbur promised that he will let him eat first in order to get him to help.

Q4. What is Wilbur's great idea?

A4. Wilbur's idea was to take Charlotte's egg back to the fern.