

1. **skiff**: a small boat propelled by oars or by sails or by a motor

*Cole Matthews knelt defiantly in the bow of the aluminum **skiff** as he faced forward into a cold September wind.*

2. **brandish**: exhibit aggressively

*This far away, they couldn't see the extended middle finger he **brandished** at them.*

3. **meek**: evidencing little spirit or courage

Cole wanted to say, "'Cause if you don't, I'll knock your fat heads off." Instead, he meekly said, "You shouldn't," keeping his face as serious as he could.

4. **sullenly**: in a manner showing a brooding ill humor

*Cole purposely isolated himself in his room, sitting **sullenly**.*

5. **barrage**: the rapid and continuous delivery of communication

*Spewing a **barrage** of venomous curses, he took the blanket Garvey had given him and flung it to the ground.*

6. **ricochet**: spring back; spring away from an impact

*Cursing, he swept his arm across the table and sent the baking ingredients flying. Eggs smashed. Wrappings broke open. Plastic containers **ricocheted** off the wall.*

7. **scoff**: laugh at with contempt and derision

*"My parents—that's a joke," Cole **scoffed**. "They don't care if I'm dead or alive."*

8. **arraignment**: a document calling someone to court to answer an indictment

*The last time Cole had seen him, the judge had been wearing a black robe at the **arraignment** hearing in juvenile court when Cole first pleaded guilty.*

9. **flail**: thrash about

*He had to make it back to land. Any land. Frantically he **flailed** at the water.*

10. **fitful**: occurring in spells and often abruptly

Sometime during the night, Cole drifted into a **fitful** sleep.

11. **kindling**: material for starting a fire

Each word spoken in the Circle was like **kindling** added to his smoldering anger.

12. **coax**: influence or urge by gentle urging, caressing, or flattering

Steady blowing soon **coaxed** a weak flame to life.

13. **welt**: a raised mark on the skin

After being strapped until his skin was raw with **welts**, he watched in horror as his dad paused and turned the belt around with his big knuckled hands.

14. **roil**: be agitated

For two hours his mind **roiled** with turbulent thoughts before he fell into a restless, tortured sleep.

15. **strut**: walk with a lofty proud gait

He rushed toward the gulls, hollering and swinging his arms until the **strutting** scavengers abandoned their find.

16. **rivulet**: a small stream

Raindrops beaded on its white bushy hair and dripped off in miniature **rivulets**.