

Emilie + Agatha

EMILIE. Miss Agatha.

AGATHA. Yes.

EMILIE. In the past few hours since my arrival, have I given you any particular reason to dislike me?

(A real beat.)

AGATHA. Huldey. Would you be so kind.

HULDEY. What.

AGATHA. *(Indicating she should leave.)* Would you. Be. So kind.

(HULDEY feels this rejection deeply.)

(She looks to EMILIE for help.)

(EMILIE doesn't say anything.)

(HULDEY feels the betrayal.)

HULDEY. I had somewhere else to be anyway.

(HULDEY leaves.)

(A moment.)

AGATHA. Master Branwell is dead.

EMILIE. That is not possible.

AGATHA. Of course it is *possible*, child.

All things here are *possible*.

EMILIE. But I – From his very hand, I received –

AGATHA. Master Branwell suffered greatly from the typhus.

And then he passed.

EMILIE. But – the letter. All the letters.

AGATHA. Did you like them?

EMILIE. Did I...?

AGATHA. Did you enjoy them. Did you feel...generously toward their author.

EMILIE. They were very...affectionate letters.

AGATHA. They coaxed from you a warmth. Did they not. You responded in kind. Your affection grew.

EMILIE. When did Master Branwell pass?

AGATHA. Three months ago, give or take.

EMILIE. But...that cannot be possible, you see, for the letters –

AGATHA. They were by my hand.

(A beat.)

EMILIE. I don't believe you.

AGATHA. You think I cannot write...affectionately, when I choose?

EMILIE. That was not a woman's hand. A woman would not be capable of such letters.

AGATHA. I think, Miss Vandergaard, you know very little about women and what they are capable of. That is not your fault. You have been handed limitations, which you accepted. Perhaps accepting them *was* your fault. Either way, in your time here on the moors, perhaps you will become more knowledgeable.

(A beat.)

EMILIE. What am I doing here?

AGATHA. Pardon?

EMILIE. I came at the request of Master Branwell – yet I find he is dead. I'm here to look after a child – that I have not met, and that you seem in no hurry to have me meet. If I am not here for Master Branwell, or for the child, then what precisely is it for?

AGATHA. Do you wish to leave?

EMILIE. It was a question.

AGATHA. No one is a prisoner here, Emilie. If you are eager to return to London and seek yet another poorly paid position in yet another syphilitic household, you have only to repack your trunk.

EMILIE. It was only a question.

AGATHA. I didn't quite hear you.

EMILIE. I am not...eager.

AGATHA. Well then. More tea?

EMILIE. *Excuse* me?

AGATHA. Would you enjoy more tea?

Mallory!

Finish