

(When he's calm he looks at her.)

(New determination. Almost scary.)

MASTIFF. I won't let it happen.

MOOR-HEN. What?

MASTIFF. I won't let you drift away from me.

Huldey
+
Agatha

14.

(The Great Hall...which looks the same as the parlor. Late that same night. AGATHA is alone, waiting for EMILIE to return from the attic. Perhaps she paces. Perhaps she sits.)

(HULDEY enters. She's dressed unusually well. She carries a small axe behind her back. She keeps it out of sight of AGATHA at all times.)

HULDEY. There you are!

AGATHA. You.

HULDEY. I've been looking for you. And here you are, in the Great Hall.

AGATHA. I should think you would be asleep.

HULDEY. I should think *you* would be asleep.

(Beat.)

Where have you been all evening?

AGATHA. I was feeling...unwell.

HULDEY. And where has Emilie been?

AGATHA. I imagine Miss Vandergaard was also feeling... unwell.

(Beat.)

Were you playing dress-up?

HULDEY. Why can't you just say that I look nice?

AGATHA. If I meant to say that you looked nice, I would have said that you looked nice.

(Beat.)

HULDEY. One of my diaries has gone missing tonight.

AGATHA. Oh?

HULDEY. I looked for it everywhere, I couldn't find it.

AGATHA. You must have misplaced it.

(HULDEY watches her, clutching her axe.)

HULDEY. Sister.

START

AGATHA. Yes, sister.

HULDEY. I am very. very. unhappy.

AGATHA. Is that so.

HULDEY. Yes it is, it is so now, and it has always been so.

AGATHA. That doesn't make you special.

HULDEY. ...What?

AGATHA. Everybody is very very unhappy, Huldey. It is simply what things are. The land is bleak and the house is large and there is no language for all the things lurking within us, no matter how much we write in our diaries, and we are all quite unhappy. So what.

(Beat. HULDEY didn't expect this.)

(She might lower or put down the axe, which

AGATHA still has not seen.)

HULDEY. Are you...unhappy?

AGATHA. I have achieved balance.

HULDEY. Balance?

AGATHA. I do not strive for happiness. Which has made me less unhappy.

I set goals for myself, and I achieve those goals.

You might try it, if you weren't scribbling in your diary all the time.

HULDEY. But what if... I mean. Aren't there. Other ways?

AGATHA. And what would those "other ways" be?

HULDEY. If something amazing happened. Something wild or spectacular or completely unexpected. Don't you think it would make us happy?

(The briefest of beats. And then:)

AGATHA. No.

HULDEY. Why not?

AGATHA. Because then that event would be over. The wild, spectacular – whatever it was. And then you would be alone again, only this time you would not

Finish

have achieved balance, you would have achieved expectation. You would want to feel that way again and again, more and more, and you would *not* feel that way again and again more and more, and so you would be. even. more. unhappy.

(Now the axe has definitely been put down.)

HULDEY. *(But not meanly – almost searchingly.)* I think I hate you.

AGATHA. I know that.

HULDEY. You do?

AGATHA. I read your diary.

HULDEY. *(A little delighted.)* You did?

AGATHA. I did.

HULDEY. And what did you think of it?

AGATHA. I thought it was of very poor quality.

(HULDEY is crushed.)

HULDEY. You...did?

AGATHA. I am sorry to say that I did.

HULDEY. And...why? Why did you feel that way?

AGATHA. There was monotony, repetition, poor attention to detail, a plaintive narrator's voice that did little to endear itself with the reader, your spelling could improve immensely – to be honest I'm shocked that it hasn't – but mostly, to be candid, it was boring.

HULDEY. *(White-faced.)* Boring?

AGATHA. Quite quite boring.

(A beat.)

(And then HULDEY launches herself at AGATHA.)

(This was entirely unplanned.)

(She is fueled by sheer rage and hurt.)

(She hits AGATHA in the head with a heavy object. Perhaps a vase? Not the axe.)