

time 21

Hester, Jane, and Peregrine sit together and knit.

JANE

[John told me about this book he read that inspired him to write. Something about lovers. Something about morality. Something about politics. But what he told me was that the woman dies at the end for love, and it was one of the most beautiful things he ever read. Is that all that's there for us? Do we live and love and die? Will I be able to feel other things? Other than love and pain? Is there comfort? Is there health? Is there inspiration? Is there mystery? Is there excitement? Is there peace? Is there good silence? Is there anything else we can do that's beautiful? I think I could write. I think Peregrine could sing. She has such a beautiful voice. And Hester? I think Hester could do so much more. I bet she can paint. I bet that she can paint better than anything that's ever blessed these walls. I think we can be beautiful. I think we are so beautiful. I think...

I have nightmares. I have nightmares of doing it. These feel like fate, premonitions. Like it has already happened. I'm just standing in a line of moments leading up to it. I stab Hester. I stab her right in the stomach. The knife slides right through her dress and glides through her skin. I don't feel any resistance at all. A red patch blooms on the fabric like I've finally let something out. Hester holds my hand as I do it. Something about it. She smiles. I smile. Something gets released, some sort of pain. Is that a good thing? Is it a good thing? She wants it. Do I give it to her? Would it be bad of me not to?

I wish I could do something else -]