

CECILIA

~~-- I suppose. Meet me down in the garden later?~~

JOHN

~~Anything for you. I'll only be a while on other cases -- you're blessed to know that it's not so severe.~~

CECILIA

Thank you, dear.

*It is when JOHN leaves that she begins to look around more for herself.*

CECILIA

I wish you saw me like a real person.

NARRATOR

Ancestral homes and old tidings live to make such lives uneasy. But it is the tales of new that often bring such dread. There is a hollowness to joy that cannot be explained.

It is a fault of her own, and no one else's.

It's written into the walls. Long gone are the days that voices scream into nothing, but it's still too close. Too familiar. I did not want to recollect this story, but it would be foolish of me to neglect it for any longer.

CECILIA

I haven't felt so well in a while. I don't know what it is. It is of my temperament as the doctor says - he, my husband, so wise and understanding. A --

*(repeating, in paraphrase)*

Touch of nervousness is all, as one tends to feel as a new mother, a wife, a wandering existence. But I have enough to keep me company. I can look out into the garden and watch the flowers bloom, and the trees grow. It's familiar, and it is the only spring I need. I -- don't need to work. To think too hard. I only need to rest, get fresh air-- eat well -- and everything will be alright.

*She stands from the bed and slowly moves to the window, hand pressed up against it.*

Everything's in bloom. It's nice.

*But she looks back, and glances at the wallpaper. Her expression turns more sour.*

My word, that's awfully foul. Look at that -- the tears in the wallpaper, the color -- what is that pattern? I think I might recognize it from school days. Not even my own, but -- portraits of John's. Pictures. It--

*She scrunches her nose, as  
she walks towards a wall. Her palm presses  
flat against it.*

-- the whole room breathes like it's on its last limbs, that's so strange. The color is awful, and it smells even without scent. Like it was made to rot. Surely this is just a mild encumbrance, even if a bit appalling. Maybe some flowers will do the room some good. Maybe flowers. Maybe it will absolve the room of its sins. But what have I ever known of altars?

*She walks to the door, and  
then hesitates to move.*

-- I have been told not to work. Not to worry. Not even - to write, if I fancied a letter or a diary. My imagination surely must be a part of my undoing. It's fine, it should be alright. He is right, I am unwell. I have known too much sorrow, and I can feel it.

#### NARRATOR

She was a writer. A gardener, a daydreamer of her time. She rides horses, and reads romance novels. The nursery is supposed to be a cradle for her -- fancies. Fanciful. It's a shame.

#### CECILIA

-- you're such a ***bastard!***

*Turns to the door. She goes  
to pound on the door, and leans her head on  
it.*

How ***dare*** you -- have you ever *known* a single day that isn't up to your design? I cannot be with our child - it is a miracle that we have kindness around us, because *you* will never step up to play your role. Facetious, *foul* man. I am *sick and tired*, and I would like to ring your -- *throat* with the *vines in our old garden*--

*Pauses.*

Ah. Ah, I see. The nervousness.

*She backs away.*

This is the part where I must consider it, more than I have been able to before. It will be alright. My cousins will be here soon enough, once I am well. And we will all have a nice time. A lovely time. All will be well, *I* will be well. Yellow is the color of beginnings, of starting over. It -- matters little how much I do not like it, or the way the pattern -- seems to shift the longer I stare. It's almost as if there are -- eyes. Frames that are not my own.

*Nervously laughs, and holds*

*herself.*

It must be my own head again.

NARRATOR

The ivy grows outside the walls of the house, as if to protect those left inside. There is no prince to climb up for her, nor any probable means to climb down. She could try, but she would fall.

CECILIA

He loves me. He -- *loves me.*

*She goes to sit on her bed,  
then lies down as the lights shift to  
almost-total darkness.*

*The spotlight on the NARRATOR is  
reminiscent of a moon.*

NARRATOR

The first night is one of the hardest. There are many restless ones. She turns and she wakes up, falls asleep again. The physician has advised her to rest, so she must rest. The walls breathe out of time with her, as she does not know how to sit still.

~~*CECILIA sits up, and looks at  
the wall across from her.*~~

~~*This is the first time CECILIA and the  
NARRATOR engage.*~~

CECILIA

It's so strange.

NARRATOR

Strange?

CECILIA

~~The moonlight proves itself to be so deceptive. Funny how that is. The walls look different.~~

NARRATOR

~~In what way?~~