

so young to be in jail

In this chapter, the protagonist reflects on the hazy aftermath of a recent traumatic event, likening their escape to being swallowed by fog while aboard a boat named Flower. With minimal supplies—just a toy compass, an incomplete chart book, and a headache from coffee withdrawal—they are aware that the world they knew is behind them, yet they feel lost in this new reality. As memories of Lark, a significant figure in their life, surface, the internal struggle weighs heavily on them.

Despite the circumstances, the protagonist tries to find solace in small acts of self-care, such as preparing sardines on crackers that somewhat lift their spirits. They take stock of the limited books on board, including navigation guides and a poignant collection by Molly Thorn, which stirs up mixed feelings of dread and affection. The critique of the previous events in their life is clear; they acknowledge a lack of preparedness for the journey they are forced to undertake.

As they navigate the fog, the protagonist recalls Lark's compassion, especially toward a young man named William, who attempted to bomb her bookstore. While Lark expressed empathy and wished for a better life for him despite his destructive actions, the protagonist harbors resentment towards those who have inflicted pain upon them and questions the value of mercy towards their enemies.

Caught between fear, anger, and a nostalgia for Lark's understanding, the protagonist seeks to calm themselves through music but instead finds a flock of gulls has occupied the deck, reminding them of fleeting moments of peace amidst the turmoil. The chapter masterfully portrays the tension between the beauty of nature and the weight of personal grief, leaving the reader with a poignant sense of emotional struggle as the protagonist continues on their uncertain journey.