

# Chapter 243

In Chapter 243 of "All the Colors of the Dark," Patch approaches an abandoned house, filled with an eerie sense of nostalgia and contemplation. He waits for five minutes, knocks repeatedly on the door, and ultimately peers through a window obscured by years of neglect and algae, revealing a glimpse of the interior. Inside, he observes barren floors and a spacious reception room adorned only by wildflowers in empty milk bottles, the sole indication of warmth amidst the coldness that the wooden shutters and tall windows suggest.

Patch's exploration extends as he catches sight of wallpaper that has been neglected for so long that it has begun to yellow in the sunlight. Traversing through the lifeless environment, he moves around sunken beds, devoid of both flowers and weeds, and cups his hands against the glass, noticing even further decayed rooms. Among these rooms is one that contains paint cans beside an old wooden ladder, emphasizing the sense of abandonment.

Outside, he finds stone jardinières, patches of purple wildflowers, and a small water feature that has run dry, symbolizing the lack of care this place has endured. Although the grass has been mowed, the sheer expanse of the grounds overwhelms him. He spots two distant barns and rolling hills that form a wide arc around the property, contributing to the house's isolation.

After attempting to access the back door and discovering it locked, he peers through a cracked glass pane and glimpses a kitchen counter lined with jars and pots filled with homemade jams and preserves, alongside a stove—a sign that life once thrived here. Just as he prepares to circle the house for another approach, he hears faint thunder, drawing his attention upward as the storm rolls in, darkening the atmosphere and adding an element of foreboding to the scene.