

16; Melodie d'Aurore.

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Chapter Sixteen- "Melodie d'Aurore".

Isabella Montague.

I stepped into the art gallery with my overcoat now slung on my arm, revealing the inner black dress I have on. Soft, classic music plays in the background, as the guests already there take strolls around, observing and admiring the exclusive artworks on display.

There weren't a lot of people there, only a selected exclusive in the society that got invited to this special exhibition, people willing to splurge thousand...no, millions just to get a particular artwork. And I just happen to be that kind of person as well, because there's a particular piece that's the reason why I'm here.

Everything about the gallery screams sophistication, from the soft, ambient lights to the glided frame houses that create an opulent air—a testament and a reflection of the owners of the gallery.

And as I strolled around as well, my gaze lingering on each of the artworks, as I surveyed for that specific one I was there for, rich, mahogany floors lead me through the curated collections. There

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were intricate flower decorations, giving the place a more inviting air with a touch of nature. Hushed murmurs accompanied the soft music, as words were exchanged between the other guests there with partners.

My steps were slow, curated, as my gaze moved from one artwork to another, with not much of interest. Everything I came across despite its inner beauty and artistic expertise seems to be missing something I couldn't exactly point a finger at.

A few more minutes of strolling around later, as I slanted my gaze away from the current artwork that somehow stole my attention longer than I intended, my gaze fell on a particular artwork I was there for initially.

My lips parted slightly, as my legs carried me in the direction of the artwork. Upon reaching where it is, I allowed my eyes to wander, taking in every detail of the flick and flip of the artist's brush across the canvas, leading to this...beautiful, yet somehow tragic artwork that conveys a sense of longing, and sadness even. It's hard to explain.

I have no idea how long I stood there staring at it, unmoving, but at one point, in the back of my mind, I heard soft click of heels approaching, before coming to stand beside me. Then, a voice, a soft one to match the footsteps came, slicing through my train of thoughts. "Aurora Melody." The



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feminine voice vocalized. "That's the name of the artwork."

I didn't reply with much, other than a hum for that's all I could muster. I wasn't trying to be rude or anything, rather, I was simply trying to enjoy a peaceful moment, admiring a certain artwork without being intruded by anyone.

But, it doesn't seem this woman took the hint, because her voice came yet again. "You're just like your reputation says—reserved, and closed off." I heard her let out a soft laugh, a short one. "Reminds me of this girl I knew, an old friend I had back in middle school."

I didn't respond, nor did I turn around to spare the woman any glance, hoping she'll take that as a hint that I am not interested in her story about her and whatever friend she had. I'm simply trying to relish in the feeling of an artwork, I didn't ask for much, did I? Still, I didn't want to sound rude, so I let out another uninterested hum.

"A certain brooding English girl that everyone was somehow afraid of. And when I tried to become her friend by striking up a conversation, she broke my nose with a basketball." She then chuckled. "Had to follow me to the sick bay all the way apologizing."

My brows drew in, a particular memory suddenly clicking in, like puzzles falling back into place. My

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gaze then dropped to the woman's feet, surprised to see a familiar pair of shoes that's the exact same pair I'm wearing at the moment. But, that wasn't the reason I was surprised. Rather, it was when I lifted my gaze, my head turned around to face the woman standing beside me...my lips parted, realization clicking in.

"Zara!" Her name left past my lips without much of a thought, recognition filling my being as a whole.

Her own face broke into a familiar grin I hadn't seen in what felt like forever. "Hey, Isa." Zara Rutherford, an old friend of mine from middle school whom I haven't seen since joining high school stared right back at me, now a woman, befitting of the image I'd always thought she'd have.

My lips slanted upwards into a smile, as I leaned forward for an embrace which she returned. I pulled back after a few seconds now staring at her completely. "It's been a while. I haven't seen you in forever." It's been over ten years really. Reason being, I switched schools in high school and since then, our paths never crossed again.

I thought we'd meet two years ago at the Karl & Rose ball, but before we could have the chance to meet, I heard she had an emergency to tend to so she left. And well, we haven't had another

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encounter since then.

With the amount of time that has passed, I can surely see the growth in her. Zara was no longer the girl I knew back in middle school, the same girl with a sunshine attitude, with her glasses perched up right on her nose and her hair always

Ads-free >

pulled back into a ponytail.

Now, she's a woman that's known all over in the business world, the perfect image of a boss lady. With brunette hair that was made into a straight lob cut, styled to perfection with not a single strand out and a confident aura surrounding her, she's a force to be reckoned with no doubt. Even



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her two-piece lavender suit gives the aura of so.

"I can say the same about you." She commented, her warm smile still the same one I knew back then. "I mean, you swept the business world in just two years. Girl, you're awesome. No one can do it better." Her eyes dilated, as if suddenly remembering something. "Oh, and I heard you made it to Forbes. Congratulations."

"Thank you." I was quick to wave it off. "You made it three years ago, you can say I'm following your footsteps." She chuckled, shaking her head. My gaze flicked down to her shoes for a split second, before I met her gaze again. "Oh, and we're matching shoes weirdly."

She glanced down at it as well, then nodded. "Yeah..." She met my gaze again, her grin widening, and I could swear I saw a hint of adoration in her eyes. "...I got it as a gift."

"From a boyfriend?" I teased, because something about the way she said it makes it sound like so.

She covered her mouth, as if shy, then nodded. "Hopefully, so." She didn't get to add anything on that, because someone seemed to have caught her attention.

And as I turned around to follow her line of sight, another stunning woman comes into a sight, dressed in a beautiful green halter neck gown that

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dropped a few inches below her knees, with matching emerald high heels that added to her height despite being tall already. Her hair, a beautiful dirty blonde was pulled into a low, tight bun.

As she approached us, her nude lipstick covered lips were set into a warm smile, the corners of her eyes crinkling into a smile line. The minute she was close enough, Zara covered the distance between them, and the two exchanged a small hug while I stood by the side, holding my overcoat close while sporting a small smile.

Then, Zara turned around to look at me, "Isabella, this is the owner of the Gallery, and a good friend of mine, Grace." Then she slanted her gaze in the direction of the woman. "And Grace, this is an old, but very good and close friend of mine, Isabella Vivien."

I could tell something flicked in Grace's eyes, but it disappeared as soon as it came, Then, she took a step closer, her smile widening as she extended her hand out. "Hi, Isabella. I'm Grace." She introduced, her tone as elegant as she looks. "Grace Kingston."

At the mention of a familiar last name, I found myself swallowing thickly. Still, I pushed past my uneasy feeling and plastered a smile on my face, taking her hand and shaking it. "Isabella." I

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introduced, glad my voice didn't waver. "I'm Isabella Vivien Montague."

She then gave me a look I couldn't quite decipher. "I know." She chuckled. "Pleasure to meet you at long last, Isabella. I've heard quite a bit about you."

I chuckled nervously, not knowing what to say. Is this what Amy was warning me about? Damn I should've listened to her for once.



Mia Jay.

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