

The bloom after the storm

Bab 4: Chapter 3

You couldn't really ignore it any more. Aurora looked down at her plate while her parents chatted as they were eating their meal in the morning. Only a few months ago, she had been the center of their attention. Now, they barely even noticed her. "Ethan, got another goal, yesterday," their mother said, proudly. "Good going, son." Their father replied. Ethan smiled. Aurora smiled in return. "Nice going." "Thanks." They talked, and Aurora was not involved at all. Aurora turned back to the paper in front of her. It could just be that she was reading too much into it. Maybe she was the over-reacting one. Regardless of her opinion on that one, though, the feeling persisted. There was something wrong. Aurora didn't know what. However, it all felt different at school. "Aurora, excellent work on that presentation." "Thank you, Miss." Her teacher passed back the paper. 98. The highest mark in the class. Her friends were all telling her well done. Maya was acting like she was the winner of a prize. "Now you're making the rest of us look bad." Aurora chuckled. "I'm sorry." "I know you are, so why don't you get big someday." "I shall endeavor to." Aurora felt like her old self again. Confident. Excited. Alive. But Aurora knew when she returned home, everything would be different once more. The smile on Aurora's face faded as she went home from school that day. Aurora carried a certificate of excellence home that afternoon. It all made Aurora excited. Not because of the certificate itself. Aurora hoped her parents would be proud of her again. This was how everything had to happen. When she walked into the house, her mother was in the living room. "Mom, look." Her mother picked up the certificate, and looked at it. "Oh." Aurora waited for more of a reaction. A smile, a hug, anything. Instead, she got an "oh" in return. Aurora felt like she had been punched. "I'm the best in the class." "That's good, sweetie." That's it? Aurora gave a smile back. "That is so good." Aurora put the paper back down on the table. Aurora felt a small pain. That night, Aurora sat all alone in her room, the certificate sitting in front of her on the desk. Just months ago, her parents would have framed it. Now they were ignoring it completely. Aurora looked from the certificate at her notebook. Aurora then looked back at the certificate. Aurora realized her parents had been distancing themselves from her for a reason. Was she living her own life, so much so that she was now an unrecognizable person? This thought nauseated Aurora. How bad could it be? If having a life made the people she loved the most not be with her? Aurora was brought out of her thoughts when she heard her bedroom door begin to creak open. "Come in." Her younger brother Ethan walked in. He walked up to Aurora, then sat down on the edge of Aurora's bed. "Aurora, what is wrong with you?" Aurora looked up, and gave a smile. "What are you talking about?" Ethan shook his head. "You're acting depressed." Aurora wasn't really sure of a good reply. "So, you think Mom and Dad are mad at me?" "No, they're not." "Then why are they acting like this?" Ethan said nothing. He looked at the carpet on the floor, for a while. Aurora got more and more anxious. "Ethan, answer me!" "I heard Mom and Dad talking." Aurora sat back up. "What were they saying?" "They said you have changed." Aurora could feel like someone had just kicked her in the face. "Changed how?" "I don't really know." "They keep saying that you're someone else, that they don't even recognize." Aurora's brother didn't say a thing. Aurora looked straight at him. Aurora didn't know if she should start crying or laughing. How bad is it to just try to have a life? When the sun started setting the next night, and Aurora was the only one left in the house, Aurora sat at her desk and just looked at her notebook. Aurora had actually considered just ripping it up. If Aurora didn't have any dreams. If Aurora had no aspirations. If Aurora could just pretend to be herself once more. Aurora reached out her hand, and went to reach for the paper. Aurora stopped. Then Aurora put the notebook back together. Aurora didn't have to

do this. These dreams were part of Aurora. You don't just throw those away. Should Aurora even pretend to be someone else, in order to make her parents happy? Aurora felt something grow deep inside her chest. It was small. Faint almost. But it started growing. Aurora then put the notebook in the desk drawer. Aurora could hear the light rain hitting her window. The storm wasn't there yet. Aurora, though, knew it was going to be here soon enough. Aurora knew it would be a matter of time before Aurora had to choose between her parents life and hers.