

# The bloom after the storm - Chapter 6 Chapter 5

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Monday was usually the same for Aurora. She would get to school, meet Maya by the school gate, whine about homework and then spend the rest of the school day fighting the urge to sleep in class. However, this Monday was different. She stepped into the classroom and immediately sensed some hush hush going on.

"Is there a fire or something?" Aurora asked while making her way towards her seat and sitting beside Maya.

"New student," Maya beamed.

Aurora frowned. "What's the fuss about?"

"You've never seen him."

As Aurora tried to respond, their homeroom teacher entered the room. Immediately, everyone went silent.

"Good morning class," she announced.

"Good morning, ma'am," everyone replied.

"Before we begin today, I would like to introduce a new student." The teacher opened the classroom door and the boy walked inside.

Noah had been an instant hit with the girls in the class. However, the moment he set eyes on the class, he seemed to shrink in on himself. There was something different about him.

His uniform was spotless, though he did seem to wear an older uniform compared to everyone else in his grade. His backpack looked as if it'd been passed down and then passed on for several generations and yet, he still felt calm.

As soon as the teacher left the room, they made their way into the classroom.

"I am Noah Carter," he started. His voice wasn't loud, but he wasn't stuttering. "I've just transferred to this school."

The teacher smiled. "Let's all give him a warm welcome."

"Welcome," a few students greeted him.

Others just stared.

The homeroom teacher walked around the room before pointing towards a spot. "You can sit in there."

The empty spot was located a few rows above where Aurora sat.

Noah nodded and sat down.

The lessons went on and Aurora didn't think about it.

Until lunch.

"Have you seen him yet?"

"Oh, yes! He's so cute," one of the boys gushed.

"Do you know where he transferred from?"

"No idea."

"No idea?" Aurora turned towards Maya. "You all really work fast, don't you?"

Maya giggled. "Don't act like you haven't noticed."

Aurora shrugged her shoulders. "I've noticed there's a new student."

"Sure," Maya responded with a giggle.

Just as Maya was about to say something, the bell rang and everyone went back to their seats.

The next few days seemed quiet, as though there was nothing else happening. Noah kept himself mostly to himself. He'd arrived on time every day and left on time every day. He spoke only when spoken to.

As the weeks passed, Noah began to fade from the minds of most students. While everyone was busy trying to get people to notice them, Noah couldn't care less.

This surprised Aurora. Most transfers spent weeks trying to make themselves liked. Noah didn't seem to care.

On Thursday evening, there was a heavy storm. When school finished that day, students crowded beneath the roof, waiting for the storm to let up.

Aurora joined the crowd outside, which was a bit odd because she'd forgotten her umbrella.

"Great," she muttered. "It's not going to get any better today."

As students made their way home, only the few of us remained.

Looks like I'll be here for a while then.

Then she saw a boy walk outside with no umbrella and he didn't look like he was in a rush.

Noah.

No umbrella. No hesitation. Just walking.

Aurora frowned.

He turned around when he had stopped a few seconds later.

He stopped when he noticed her, and for several seconds, neither of them moved.

Then he turned and walked back to where Aurora was standing.

"Um..." Aurora was confused as she watched Noah.

When he had reached her, he held an umbrella out.

"No need to stand out here," Noah offered. "Why don't you use this."

"Um... What?" Aurora asked.

"The rain isn't stopping."

Aurora looked at him. "Then what about you?"

He shrugged. "I don't live far."

"No, you're not...," Aurora said as he placed the umbrella in her hands. "That's..."

She stared at the umbrella.

Then at Noah.

Then back at the umbrella.

"Thank you," Aurora muttered.

"No problem," Noah responded with a small smile.

"Bye, then," Noah said as he left.

Aurora stood watching him until he turned a corner and was out of sight. She wasn't sure why she couldn't help but grin.

It wasn't a romantic gesture. It wasn't grand.

It was kind.

Aurora sat at her desk that night. She opened her notebook and the umbrella that sat by her side caught her eye.

Tonight was a night for journaling. She had intended to spend the night thinking about her future and writing it all down. She had written everything from her dreams to her aspirations and then she started thinking about the new kid. Not that he'd caught her attention. That would be ridiculous. She'd barely even gotten his name. She just wondered who in the world gives away their umbrella in this weather. It made her chuckle under her breath as she wrote down her thoughts. Today I met someone different. Aurora stared down at the sentence for a few moments. Then, she crossed it out. "That was ridiculous." She shook her head and shut her notebook. Outside, rain tapped against the window pane. For the first time in weeks, Aurora felt lighter. Little did she know, the boy who had handed her an umbrella was about to become something much more important to her than she'd ever realized.