

The Pieces of the Rainbow

By: Maggie Ray

Chapter One: The Name, Theo

It was midday when I browsed the small bookstore, scanning through the fiction section not looking for anything in particular. I was tired and the smart thing to do would have been to go straight home after work but something was telling me that I should stop by the shop. I was friendly with the owners, Grace, and Walter, they were an old couple, with a passion for literature. The shop was a little more crowded and louder than usual, maybe it was because it was a Friday, or maybe it just felt that way. In any case, it was good for business. I picked up a book I had studied many times before but never taken home. It was always the title that attracted me to the book again and again, *Have You Dreamt in Colour Recently?* I paused for a moment trying to think of an answer but I couldn't remember the last time I had dreamt in colour, or if I had ever, *do people even have colourful dreams?* I wondered to myself. I placed the book gently back in its spot. Right before I had heard someone excitedly shout my name and spin me around so I was facing them.

“Theo!”

I came face to face with a girl I was sure I had never seen before. I looked at her puzzled but by the excitement expressed on her face, I thought maybe *I* was the mistaken one. I didn't have the best memory and at that moment I cursed my hippocampus for failing me in a time of need. “I'm sorry, have we met before?” I asked politely.

I couldn't help but notice she had called me, ‘Theo.’ A nickname only the closest people in my life called me. Not that I mind, in all honesty, I think Theo suits me better than my full name, Theodore. I once told my mother I would officially go by the name Theodore when I was old and wrinkly, Theodore always sounded like an older person's name to me. But I also liked the fact that only my immediate circle called me Theo, it made my nickname feel more exclusive. But now I was second-guessing myself even more, the girl in front of me that I presumed to be a stranger just called me ‘Theo,’ so we must know one another, right? “Oh,” she breathed as the panic started rising on her face. “Oh no, no, no no, no, I'm in the wrong dimension.” The girl whispered to herself.

Now, usually in moments like those, I would second-guess myself on what I thought I had heard but at that moment I *knew* I heard her correctly. “Dimension? What do you mean by dimension?” Any normal person would have probably labeled this girl as crazy and went on with their day but curiosity got the better of me *and* the fact that girl didn't look the part of a crazy person. I took this moment to really study her features, just to be sure. She had hair that was long and silver but with a dash of purple in it, almost a lavender colour. Her eyes were slightly too far apart but it made her features all the more softer. Her defined cupid's bow stuck out to me when she first smiled and said my name. In a way, she reminded me of “*Bambi*.”

I watched as her eyes moved frantically before landing on my own. Her voice was laced with panic and trembled slightly, “store. I meant, store. I'm in the wrong store.” She then turned around while mumbling a small apology about disrupting my day and began walking away.

“I heard what you said,” I said seriously and loudly, luckily not loud enough to catch the attention of any nearby book shoppers but loud enough that the girl stopped in her tracks. “And

you know my name,” I continued with a now lowered voice when she turned back around and faced me. “And for some reason, I feel like I know you, although, I’m almost certain I don’t.” I didn’t want to admit this feeling that I was having but it felt important that I shared it with her. By the look she had on her face when I said that, I knew it struck a chord with her but she didn’t verbally acknowledge my statement, instead, she revealed a feeling of her own.

“I shouldn’t stay here any longer.” She said as she looked around the bookshop and peered through the larger windows. Her body was tense and her eyes captivated fear.

“Where? In the bookshop?” I paused looking around the store, everyone was older and not paying a single mind to us. I couldn’t sense any real threat but I still asked, “are you in some sort of danger?”

“No.” She said sharply and from her tone, I believed her. “But I’ve done too much. I’ve said too much already. And I have definitely caused some sort of permanent damage to the balance.”

“The balance of what?” I questioned slowly.

“The universe.” She answered with not the slightest bit of humour in her voice. *Now* I wanted to label her as lunatic but that wouldn’t help me get to the bottom of whatever this situation was. So I inhaled a deep breath and asked one more time.

“You know my name?” It came out more like a statement rather than a question.

“I do.”

“Do I know you?”

“No. Not necessarily.”

“But something tells me you know a lot more about me than just my name.”

“I do.” I could feel myself becoming disoriented. My whole body felt lighter except for my feet, they felt like they were weighing me down, keeping me grounded. “Can we please go somewhere more private, and I’ll try to explain myself?” She asked. I should have just walked away, told the girl she was crazy and that I didn’t believe her. But I did, a big part of me felt something towards her, a feeling of trust. So for the second time in that last hour, I trusted that feeling inside me and decided to unplant my feet and follow the lavender-haired girl.

Chapter Two: The Name, Indigo

“What’s your name?” I asked.

“Indigo, Indigo Eden.”

“Indigo...the second last colour in the rainbow.” With a slight smile on her face, she mouthed in a mimicking way what I had just said to her, back to me, as if she’s heard that phrase from people a million times. I just chuckled in response asking, “why the colour Indigo? Why not...violet?”

“Well, I actually know the answer to that question, thanks to my parents who love to tell the story over and over.” She laughed softly.

“Go on.” I smiled curiously. I was creating a short diversion from the main conversation we needed to have but I figured if we knew each other a little more we’d be able to communicate better, or maybe I just subconsciously wanted to get to know more about Indigo. We were seated outdoors in patio chairs, soft music could be heard coming from the cafe that we sat outside of. The cafe wasn’t busy, in fact, it was quite peaceful, an environment that was very much needed.

“Well, my mother wasn’t supposed to be able to have children, something about a lazy ovary. But she always felt like she was meant to be a mother so she never gave up, and although it seemed medically impossible for her, a miracle happened and she had one anyway!” She laughed lightly at her story and continued, “and well my father, he’s an artist, water painter to be specific, and one day he told my mother a story about how the colour indigo was never meant to be in the rainbow, but Sir Issac Newton wanted seven colours in the rainbow so he added indigo. And that’s when they decided to name me after the colour indigo. To, you know, metaphorically symbolize what was never meant to be but happened anyways.”

“I like it, your name,” I clarified, “and I like it even more with the backstory.”

“You better, I’ve been hearing it my whole life.” She joked playfully. We fell silent for a minute. I wondered if I had the mental capacity to handle this whole situation, and from a quick glance at Indigo, her face read that she was just as stressed as I was. Easily being the more confident one, she spoke up first, “Promise you’ll listen. Just let me tell the whole story before you make any sort of decision or storm off.”

“I’m not going to storm off.” I tried to joke but Indigo wasn’t having it.

“Promise me.”

“Okay.” I said looking up at her but I could tell that wasn’t the answer she was looking for, “I promise.” I said sincerely. Indigo visibly relaxed and then spoke, beginning her story. “I’m not from here.” Indigo said earnestly. “I’m from another dimension.”