

Chapter 4

Yaz kept glancing at the large clock in Frances's fitting room as her impatience grew. The dress she had designed for Frances while on vacation was ready for the first fitting. Designed especially for her film premiere, Yaz was honored to have the privilege of creating it. It was a step up from her regular job and a step closer to realizing her dream. She was grateful for the trust and opportunity Frances had given her and hoped she would not be disappointed. With the premiere now just days away, she had a tight schedule to finish it on time.

Yaz stood nervously inside the room, her hands trembling slightly as she clutched her notebook. She took a deep breath, trying to steady herself. Today was the day Frances would see the dress Yaz had poured her heart and soul into.

The room was bathed in soft, ambient light, casting a warm glow over the garment draped elegantly over the mannequin.

With a tentative knock, Frances opened the door. She stepped inside, her presence like a burst of sunlight, her anticipation barely contained

"Hello darling" she smiled softly

"Hii" Yaz smiled nervously

Frances rushed to embrace her in a soft hug, her eyes widened as she took in the sight of the dress hanging on the mannequin.

The gown was a stunning mermaid design, its fabric a cascade of shimmering ivory silk that caught the light with every angle. Intricate beadwork traced delicate patterns across the bodice and flowed seamlessly into the skirt.

Frances's breath caught in her throat. "Oh my God, Yaz... This is stunning."

Yaz watched, holding her breath, as Frances's fingers reached out to touch the gown. The smooth texture of the fabric and the meticulous beadwork seemed to mesmerize her. She turned to Yaz, her eyes wide with awe.

"This is just breathtakingly beautiful. It's even more exquisite than I imagined. You've truly outdone yourself."

Her nerves melted away at Frances's reaction. "I'm so relieved you like it," she said, trying to hide her smile. "I was so nervous"

"It's perfect darling. I told you won't disappoint me. You've captured everything I wanted and more. I'm honored to wear this at the premiere."

Frances moved to the fitting area, her excitement palpable. "Shall we try it on?"

"Of course," she smiled

With careful hands, Yaz held the gown as the other woman began to slip into it, her movements graceful and deliberate.

The soft rustle of fabric filled the room as Frances adjusted the fabric, intricate beadwork glistening with each subtle movement.

Yaz's eyes followed her every motion, her heart racing with a mix of pride and nervousness as she was closing the small buttons on the back.

As Frances adjusted a final detail, Yaz's hand reached out to steady the fabric, their fingers brushing lightly.

Frances stepped in front of the full-length mirror, and Yaz watched as she took in her reflection. The dress was a perfect fit, hugging her curves and flowing elegantly around her. The shimmer of the fabric played against the light, creating a breathtaking effect.

Frances turned slightly, examining herself from different angles. She caught Yaz's gaze in the mirror and they smiled at each other softly.

"This... this is incredible," she said softly, her voice tinged with awe.

Yaz smiled back, her eyes reflecting the warmth and affection she felt. "You look stunning,"

Frances leaned in giving her another soft hug "Thank you for making this so special for me darling"

"Always" Yaz murmured softly her eyes closing as she held her tight

.....

Yaz came home late that day. Final dress adjustments and other work for the current project took longer than expected. She still didn't have a car, so the bus ride from work to home also took a long time and added to her working hours. She walked down the small path to the house, the warm lights in the living room still on, and Susan faithfully waiting for her, making sure she got home safely.

She always had dinner ready by the time Yaz arrived. As she walked through the door, the aroma of the meal enveloped her. The small, cozy kitchen was softly lit, creating a

warm and inviting atmosphere. Susan, with her hair pinned back and her eyes bright with affection, stood by the stove, stirring a pot.

"Evening, dear," she said with a warm smile, her voice filled with a gentle kindness that always touched Yaz deeply. "I've made your favorite, roast chicken and vegetables."

Yaz's heart swelled with gratitude. "Thank you, you're always too good to me," she replied, taking in the comforting sight of the neatly arranged table set for two.

Susan nodded, her eyes crinkling at the corners. "It's nothing. It's just nice to have you here. It's been so quiet since..." She trailed off, her gaze drifting to the small, framed photographs on the wall of her late husband and a little girl...

Yaz stepped forward and gave her a heartfelt hug. "You make everything better dear. I always look forward to these evenings."

Susan's smile returned, and she gestured for Yaz to sit. "Well, let's not keep the food waiting."

They settled at the table, and the conversation flowed easily. Yaz listened as Susan spoke about her day at the bakery, where she crafted beautiful, intricate cakes for children's birthdays.

Susan had no family, her husband and a little girl died in a car accident several years into their marriage and she stayed widowed and childless. Yaz always felt that her presence in Susan's house filled the loneliness in her life. Always so welcoming and warm.

For Yaz, these dinners were more than just a meal, they were a cherished escape from her often hectic life. Susan's unwavering kindness and the simple pleasure of shared meals was a reminder of the beauty of human connection in a world that sometimes felt indifferent.

"I made some lemonade we could sit on a porch" Susan suggested as they were clearing out the table

"Yeah, why not. I can't get used to the weather. I mean it's October and it feels like summer" she laughed

"It was the same for me when moved. Christmas just seemed off"

"Oh my god yes!" Yaz's eyes widened, "You know what, that didn't even cross my mind. That's gonna be strange" she put away the last plate into the cupboard and reached for the cold lemonade

They sat on the porch, the old wooden swing chair creaking gently as it swayed beneath them. The evening air was cool and refreshing, carrying the fragrant scent of local plants from the hills. They sipped their cold drinks, savoring the peaceful ambiance and the view of the sky gradually darkening

"Are you excited about the premiere?" Susan asked, her eyes sparkling with genuine interest.

"Oh my god, yes!" she smiled brightly, "It still seems so unreal."

Susan's gaze softened, and she studied Yaz with a knowing smile. "You two seem to be getting very close."

Yaz's smile faltered slightly, her emotions a tangled mess, her tone casual but her mind far from at ease. "We are," she trailed off.

As Susan continued to speak about mundane things, Yaz's thoughts drifted inward. The emotions she felt for Frances were increasingly confusing. What began as admiration and friendship had subtly transformed into something deeper, something she was reluctant to confront. Every laugh, every touch from Frances seemed to fan the flames of a feeling she tried to ignore.

Yaz looked out at the darkening sky, her heart heavy with unspoken words. In a world where social norms were rigid and expectations clear, her emotions seemed not only confusing but potentially dangerous. The idea of falling for someone who seemed to be just a friend was unsettling, adding the layer of societal judgment only made it more so.

"Everything okay?" Susan's voice broke through

Yaz forced a smile, turning to meet Susan's gaze. "Yeah, everything's fine. Just a lot on my mind."

Susan gave her a gentle, reassuring pat on the knee. "If you ever need to talk, you know I'm here."

Yaz nodded, appreciating the offer but feeling more comfortable to keep her feelings to herself "Thanks" she smiled gently

.....

It was a whirlwind in the studio. Yaz darted through the bustling hallways, carrying a garment over her arm. With the project nearing its completion, everyone was working at full speed to ensure every costume was ready in time. She sped towards the Wardrobe Department. As she entered the workshop, she was met with familiar chaos, the noise of sewing machines, bustling people, the hiss of steam from irons and loud chatter creating a symphony of sounds.

She spotted Ellen, a seamstress, and hurried over to her.

"What's up, hun?" Ellen looked up from her work with a smile.

"I'm so sorry to bother you, but I have an emergency," she said, her voice tight

Ellen's smile faded slightly. "What's wrong?"

Yaz unfurled a period gown, revealing a massive tear at the bottom hem. Her frustration was palpable. "This," she said, her tone unimpressed. "The director is having a fit. I need it done in half an hour."

"Half an hour?" Ellen's eyes widened in disbelief. "Jesus... how the hell..."

"Don't ask," she shook her head. "They seem to think we can just wave a magic wand around here. If you have a free machine, I'll get to it."

"We don't, honey... I'm sorry," she glanced at the jam-packed room.

Yaz exhaled, her gaze darting around the workshop for a solution. Her shoulders slumped slightly in frustration.

"I tell you what," Ellen said, her tone shifting. "Give it here. I'll just finish this tomorrow... I'll think of something."

"Oh my god, thank you so much...I owe you one."

As Yaz was about to leave Laura, the head of the department greeted someone at the door.

"Morning, Miss Frances."

"Morning," she smiled, her voice travelled through the room catching Yaz's attention and she lifted her gaze

Frances's gaze caught Yaz's across the room. A gentle smile spread across her face as their eyes met. She then turned her attention back to Laura.

"How can I help you?"

"I don't need any help, thank you" Frances said, glancing quickly back at Yaz. "I just came to leave these for the staff." She handed over a stack of pink boxes, "Yaz told me you all worked really hard on my dress, and I just wanted to say thank you with some cakes."

"Oh, my goodness. That's so kind of you, Miss Louise," her eyes lighting up.

"I won't hold you up, I can see you're quite busy.... I just need to borrow Yaz for a moment if that's ok?."

"Of course," Laura replied, directing her attention towards Yaz. "Yaz... Miss Frances needs to speak to you."

"Sure, just a second," her eyes returning to Ellen and the gown.

"It'll be done... go,"

"Thank yooooou, you're a star" she said relieved then quickly crossed the room towards Frances. She waited, her eyes following Yaz as she approached with a wide, bright smile.

"Hiii,"

"Do you have a moment?"

"Sure," she replied, her smile never fading.

They walked towards Frances's fitting room, their usual place for private chats. Frances opened the door, and they stepped inside.

"Sorry... I can see it's hectic out there. I won't be long," Frances said, giving Yaz a quick hug before walking to her makeup table and sitting down.

"I don't mind," she leaned on the table next to her. "You just missed me, or?" she asked with a cheeky grin.

"I always miss you," she looked up, her eyes sparkling. "It's about tomorrow. I just wanted to explain the protocol. I don't want you to be confused or worried."

"I appreciate that," Yaz said, her excitement and anxiety blending together.

"So, the driver will pick you up at two and bring you to my house."

"The driver?" her eyebrows raised.

"Yes, darling. You didn't think you were going to take a cab, did you?" she said, touching up her lipstick.

"I did," she laughed, a bit embarrassed.

Frances turned the chair to face her and laughed. "Nooo, silly. I would never expect that."

"I didn't think much of it, to be honest."

She shook her head, still laughing. "Anyway, so he will take you to my house, and then we will go over there together."

"Okay," she nodded, her feelings a mix of excitement and nervousness.

"When we arrive, I will get out of the car, and you'll stay with the driver. He will then take you to the separate entrance for guests and family members, where you will be escorted to the foyer. You will be offered a drink, take it and just wait for me. I won't be long, and I will find you as soon as I come inside"

"Alright," Yaz said, her eyes showing a hint of panic.

Frances noticed the fear in her eyes. "Don't worry, darling," she said softly, taking Yaz's hand gently. "I won't leave you alone for a moment." her fingers laced with Yaz's.

"And where will I sit? I know it's a stupid question, but..."

"I arranged for you to sit next to me," Frances said, her smile warm and reassuring.

"Waaw... So exciting," her eyes sparkled. "How did you even pull this off?"

"We always get a certain number of seats for family members and close friends. I have no family, but I have you," she grinned happily shaking her hand excited

"Blimey...this is it then...I won't sleep tonight you do know that?" She giggled "I'm so nervous."

"Don't be. It's no different than going to the theater, just a bit more exciting." Frances's gaze lingered, their eyes locking in a moment of shared silence. Yaz looked at the clock and suddenly pushed herself off the table.

"I'm sorry... I need to go. I have a dress emergency I need to sort out."

"No worries, darling. You get along with your work. I'm off to a rehearsal,"

"Alright hun, give us a hug" Yaz leaned over embracing her gently. "See you tomorrow" she murmured

"Alright darling, go now" she pulled away slowly "I don't want you getting in trouble" she said, watching Yaz with a warm smile as she headed out.

....

Frances stood in the center of the rehearsal space, her presence commanding the room. The set was simple, just a sparsely decorated living room scene, but her performance was anything but ordinary. She was in the middle of a dramatic scene, her character, Grace, grappling financial difficulties and a violent husband.

Her face was pale, her eyes glistening with tears that seemed to come from a deep, personal place. She flinched as the actor's hand passed close to her face in a carefully choreographed strike, her reaction perfecting the illusion of the blow. Her body sagged in response, a pained cry escaping her lips as she staggered back.

The room fell silent, every eye on her as she poured her soul into the scene. The director, who had previously been inappropriate on their first meeting, watched with a new intensity, his expression shifting from stern to deeply moved.

When she finished the scene, there was a moment of stillness. Frances, catching her breath, wiped her tears with the back of her hand. The director approached her, his face softened and respectful. The change in his demeanor was palpable.

"That was... exceptional," he said, his tone genuine and appreciative. "You brought such depth to that scene. I was genuinely moved."

Frances, still catching her breath, looked at him with surprise. "Thank you," she said quietly, a hint of relief in her voice. "I wanted to give Grace the emotion she deserved."

The director nodded. "You did that and more. Your performance was powerful. I can see now why they chose you for this role." He shifted closer, his tone almost a whisper "Listen, I apologize if I came off as too forward before. It's clear you're dedicated and incredibly talented."

Frances managed a small smile, his comment almost insulative. As if a potential lack of talent could justify his previous behavior "I appreciate that." she said shortly, still apprehensive around him. "If you'll excuse me. It's late, I should be getting home"

"Of course, well.... Let's make sure we continue to give it our all."

"Absolutely"

"Have a nice weekend"

"You too" she walked over to the chair and picked up her bag and the cardigan. She felt a tiny bit lighter, hopeful her efforts to be taken seriously are at least starting to pay off.

....

Frances came home well past midnight, her footsteps heavy as she entered her house. She tossed her keys onto the kitchen counter with a clatter, the noise echoing in the quiet of the late hour. Glancing briefly at a note from her cleaner, she quickly read the message before heading towards her bedroom.

Her bedroom was simple but cozy, pastel blue walls and the large bed dominated the room, its headboard upholstered in a soft cream fabric that complemented the room's gentle color scheme. The little lamp on the side table casting a soft light, next to it an open book and several others stacked up on the floor.

She walked up to a small makeup table in the corner casually leaving her bag amongst the clutter, remnants of her morning routine.

She moved through the room with a weary grace, her mind still replaying the day's rehearsal. The emotional weight of the scenes she had performed earlier that day seemed to linger, triggering deeply buried emotions from her past.

Frances took off her shirt tossing it on the bed, stepped out of her skirt leaving it on the floor and reached out for a bottle of pills from the side table drawer. Her eyes lingering for a while over the tablet in her hand. She inhaled deeply and put it back in the draw then made her way into the bathroom.

The heat of the water soothed her aching feet. She sank into the tub with grateful moan. As she leaned back, her mind drifted. Her emotions in a mess. After all these years it still took so little to tip her over the edge and she wondered if she will ever heal. She took a dip breath and submerged herself.

.....

With a deep breath, Yaz pulled open the drawer and reached for a pastel peach sari that her mother had lovingly crafted for her. The fabric, soft and shimmering with intricate embroidery, felt like a comforting embrace in her hands. Her fingers traced the delicate patterns that spoke of family traditions and cherished memories.

With practiced movements, Yaz wrapped it around her body, tucking and adjusting it to create an elegant evening gown effect. The fabric swirled gracefully as she moved, the color catching the light and enhancing her natural glow. She adjusted the drape, making sure it was both stylish and respectful.

As she gazed at her reflection in the full-length mirror, Yaz's heart fluttered with a blend of excitement and apprehension. The sari made her feel connected to her mother and her heritage, but she was also acutely aware of the societal norms that dictated more contemporary fashion choices for such an event.

She took a deep breath, tonight was about honoring Frances, celebrating her success, and staying true to herself. With that thought in her mind she realized that wearing the sari was not just about following tradition but also about asserting her own unique style and identity equally staying true to herself.

She made her way to the living room where Sophie waited for her.

"Oh my god" she gasped

"So, what do you think. Do I look stylish enough?" She twirled cheerfully

"You look a picture honey" she hugged her carefully "Uuu I think that's your driver"

She huffed nervously and smiled widely "Wish me luck"

"You're gonna knock them off their feet " she smiled

....

The car pulled up to the gates of Frances's house, and her heart quickened as she took in the sight before her. It was a small, beautifully maintained residence with a gracefully sloping roof and white stucco walls. The lush garden was meticulously landscaped, with vibrant flowers and manicured shrubs that framed the entrance.

As the car came to a stop, Yaz stepped out, adjusting her sari one last time. The afternoon sun bathed the house in a golden glow, highlighting the shimmering pool that lay just beyond the entrance. It was surrounded by a decorative stone patio and bordered by elegant wrought-iron railings. The water sparkled reflecting the warm sun.

Yaz walked up the stone path towards the front door, her heels clicking softly on the cobblestones. The scent of blooming jasmine and fresh greenery filled the air. As she approached the entrance, she admired arched windows with shutters, a small balcony with wrought-iron railings, and a charming front porch adorned with potted plants.

She rang the doorbell, her heart fluttering with anticipation. The door opened to reveal Frances's smiling housekeeper, who greeted her warmly and led her inside. Yaz stepped into the cool, elegantly decorated foyer, her gaze immediately drawn to the decor. The interior was a blend of vintage and sophisticated modern taste, with plush furnishings, rich fabrics, and tasteful art deco accents.

The housekeeper led her further into the house, where the living room opened up to reveal a spacious, light-filled area. The room was decorated with mid-century modern furnishings, including a sleek, low-profile sofa and armchairs arranged around a chic coffee table. Immediately Yaz noticed the amount of books on the shelves. Floor-to-ceiling windows offered a view of the garden and the sparkling pool beyond.

Frances sat in the middle of the room, her makeup artist working meticulously on her face, the soft hum of the brushes and tools blending with the background chatter of the two women.

“Yaz!” Frances’s voice was a burst of excitement, her eyes lighting up with a surprise. She turned to greet her, her gaze softening as she took in Yaz’s appearance. “Oh my good!...”

“Hii,” Yaz replied shyly, her smile warm and genuine.

Frances rose from her chair, taking a few steps forward. Her eyes locked onto Yaz’s with an intensity that spoke of deeper emotions she struggled to keep at bay. “You... you look absolutely beautiful.”

Yaz’s smile grew, her cheeks flushing slightly. “Thank yooooou,” she said as Frances pulled her into a warm embrace. The touch electric, a gentle brush of closeness that made Frances’s heart skip a beat.

“Did you make this?” she asked mesmerized, her fingers lightly tracing the delicate fabric of Yaz’s sari.

“No, not this one. My mother made it for me. I thought I’d honor her by wearing it today.”

“You definitely will...You look gorgeous darling,” she murmured, her voice almost a whisper

“Thank you,” her eyes meeting Frances’s with a shyness that only heightened the intensity of their connection.

Frances’s smile was radiant as she grabbed Yaz’s hand, guiding her into the living room. “Come...let me introduce you.” She led her with an almost possessive gentleness, her fingers intertwined with Yaz’s a moment longer than necessary. “This is Rose, my makeup artist. Rose, Yasmin Khan, my designer.” she gushed

“Nice to meet you,” Rose said, looking up from her work with a smile.

“Nice to meet you too”

“Frances has shown me the dress you made for her. It’s gorgeous,” Rose said

“Thank you so much,” she replied, her eyes flickering.

“Make yourself comfortable, darling. Champagne?” Frances offered, her eyes never leaving Yaz.

“Oh, I don’t drink alcohol, remember.”

"Oh, yes...silly me" She giggled

“What else could I offer you, ma’am?” Betty, the housekeeper, asked politely.

“Just some juice would be nice, thank you”

“Right away, ma’am,” Betty said, heading off to get the drink.

Frances flopped back into her chair, her excitement palpable. “Alright, darling?... I’m so excited.”

“Me too. I hardly slept last night,” she admitted, her nerves evident but calmed by Frances’s presence.

“It was like that for me the first time around. You get used to it,” Frances said, her voice soothing, her gaze never straying from Yaz.

Yaz took a seat on the sofa, her eyes drifting around the room. The walls were adorned with framed movie posters and awards, while photos and personal mementos added a touch of intimacy to the space. It was a simple but elegant room, a reflection of Frances’s character.

“So, how do you like LA, Yasmin?” Rose asked as she continued working on Frances’s makeup.

“Oh, Yaz, please,” she laughed, “I love it. It’s very different from London... especially the weather.” She smiled gratefully at Betty, who had returned with her juice. "Thank you"

“Is it really raining all the time?” Frances asked curiously

“Not all the time, just most of the time,” Yaz laughed. “But it definitely doesn’t get as hot as here.”

“Do you like your job?” Rose asked.

“I love my job. It’s very exciting, and the studio is so different from the theatre,” Yaz said.

“Yaz has worked on most of the big theatre productions in London,” Frances said proudly, her gaze full of admiration.

“Some of them,” Yaz smiled modestly.

“Quite a lot of them,” Frances insisted, “and she already designed one dress for the red carpet.”

“Oh, did you? How nice!” Rose’s interest was piqued.

“Well, at the time I didn’t know it would be for that purpose,” Yaz said.

“Oh, it was so stunning,” Frances gushed.

“Who was it for?” Rose asked intrigued

“Miss Charlotte Clark, the production manager,” Yaz replied.

“I haven’t heard of her,” Rose frowned

“You wouldn’t. She works for the Royal Opera House,” Yaz explained “She was there accompanying her husband, who worked as a composer for the film.”

“But she looked like a movie star,” Frances continued to praise her, her eyes glancing back at Yaz filled with deep affection.

“Thank you, hun,” Yaz said, her cheeks flushing.

“You’ll see, Yaz will go far. She’s so talented, she just needs to be put in front of the right people,”

“And I have no doubt you will do that,” Rose said cheekily, her eyes glancing between them.

“Of course,” Frances said, her eyes crinkling into a smile

“Here we go, you’re ready to go.” Rose smiled putting her brush away

"Thank you," she said as she inspected herself in the mirror "You always manage to make me look good. Why can't I do this myself"

"Thank god, or you wouldn't need me then" Rose laughed

"You look stunning" Yaz’s eyes twinkled lovingly

"Thanks darling...I'll get dressed and we can go. Wanna help me?"

"Of course," Yaz accepted thrilled

As Rose left Frances took her hand leading the way to the bedroom. She chatted animatedly about the evening's plans, her hand not leaving Yaz's until they entered. Inside, the dress was propped on a mannequin, waiting to be worn.

"I'll just take a quick shower. Make yourself at home, darling," she said as she headed towards the bathroom.

"Alright," she replied, glancing around the room. "I love your bedroom. It's very elegant. I didn't expect it to look like this."

"What did you expect?" Frances's voice came from behind the bathroom door, a playful note in her tone.

"Dunno... Some opulent boudoir I suppose," she laughed, picking up a book from the floor.

Frances burst out laughing. "Not my style. I've seen some seriously tacky houses since I moved here."

"Really?"

"Oh god, yes. Talking about overdoing it, desperately trying to flash the cash."

"Dostoevsky?" Yaz asked, holding up the book she had picked up.

"Pardon?" she asked louder over the sound of running water.

"You're reading Dostoevsky?"

"Oh yes, just finished that one. Have you read it?"

"No," Yaz replied.

"You can have it if you want. It's really good."

"I'd love to. Is it a love story? I love love stories."

"It is, but with him, it always ends up tragic."

"Oh, I love happy endings," she said disappointed

A few minutes later Frances emerged from the bathroom wrapped in a towel, reaching for another book on the chest of drawers.

"Read this," she said, handing the book to Yaz. "You're going to love it."

“Thank you. But I can’t take it now. Nowhere to put it,” Yaz laughed.

“I hadn’t thought of that,” she laughed as she retreated to the bathroom again. “Well, you can take it tomorrow. I thought we could have breakfast together?”

“Really?”

“Yeah,” Frances’s voice came through the open bathroom door. “I’ll send a cab for you. Bring a swimsuit.”

“I thought we were having breakfast?” Yaz laughed.

“We are,” she walked out of the bathroom, now dressed in her underwear. “By the swimming pool,” she winked cheekily. “Right, let’s put this on.”

Once both women were dressed and ready, they had one final drink in the living room, enjoying the last moments of calm before the excitement of the evening. Frances, unable to contain her enthusiasm, constantly peeked through the curtains.

“You look like a curtain twicer” Yaz laughed

“Aaaaa...That’s it, darling. The car is here.” she beamed excitedly and picked up her bag, her eyes sparkling.

Betty, the housekeeper, was already at the door. “Is there anything else you need, ma’am?”

“Nothing else, thank you, Betty. You can leave early today no need to wait for me.”

“Thank you, Miss. Have a nice evening.”

“We definitely will,” she turned to Yaz with a radiant smile. “Let’s shine, darling.”

As they stepped out of the house, Yaz’s eyes widened in amazement. “That’s not a car... That’s a limo?”

Frances’s smile grew cheeky. “You didn’t expect anything less, now did you, darling?”

Yaz shook her head, laughing. The driver, impeccably dressed, helped them both into the sleek, polished vehicle.

For Yaz it all felt like a dream. Frances’s hand lightly squeezed hers and she realized this was a dream she was reluctant to wake from.

.....