

Tonight was the night.

The Floor of Amalgamation fell into a cozy lull. Nearly all its denizens attended the festival within the Common Hub. It was comforting and oddly nostalgic. It hadn't been that long since the Floor of Amalgamation was opened. Yet it felt like it had been years since it was this vacant.

A befuddled sigh left the lips of a certain Amalgam. Deep within the manor was a conflicted Frost who held two separate sets of articles in both hands. She hovered the beautiful, silk celebratory robes over her body as she posed sheepishly in front of a standing mirror.

She, Ber and Nav found themselves inside Ber's dedicated changing suite. It was a room transformed into a massive walk-in cabinet where swaths of mesmerizing custom order dresses hung on both sides. At the furthest end was a changing area where many mirrors and royal-colored cushioned benches resided.

"This is too blue for my liking. I'm going to look like a Herald out there." Frost complained as set aside a blue kebaya known to be worn by Demi-Humans from North-East Emvita. "And this is way too short. Ber. If this is short on me, then how are you able to wear this?"

Nav took the other kebaya-like dress which barely reached her thighs. It was a scandalous outfit that made her overly self-conscious as she took another set from a nearby Ber.

"Because this is a top! Also stop being so picky with what you wear. What happened to the old Frost that went around wearing rags?" Ber teased. "You'll like that one. Straight from Eastern Emvita!"

It was an elegant celebratory dress that reached far past her ankles. Golden feathers decorated the black dress as a white ribbon wrapped around the waist area. Out of all the sets she had skimmed through for the past hour, this was the one that stuck out to her the most.

"You're going to keep Jury waiting if you're this stubborn." Nav jabbed, causing Frost to wear a disgruntled look as she stared at herself in the mirror. "Pickers can't be choosers."

"Sorry. It's not like I have any knowledge about what I should wear in these kinds of occasions. This is different from putting myself up on pedestal. But you're right. Tonight's too special to let myself get embarrassed like this." Frost stroked the fabric of the dress, satisfied by its softness. "I just want to look good in front of Jury. I don't want to wear pants or a heavy coat or anything too boyish. You know Jury always wants me to wear clothes like this."

Nav shook her head, "This is too tame for what Jury wants. She'd never make you wear something you didn't like."

"But it's because she likes this that I *want* to wear it if that makes sense." Frost gave Ber a nod. The woman's eyes brimmed with delight as she took the long, thick-clothed dress from Frost.

"Arms out~"

Frost held out both hands, allowing Ber to slip her arms into each long, loose sleeve.

"I know it's not me to be embarrassed like this. It's just clothing. So why the hell am I getting so worked up about it?" Frost mumbled to herself.

"Frost, did falling in love make you stupid?" Nav leaned in as if to take a closer look into her mind.

"I think it did." Frost laughed as Ber wrapped the cloth around her body. "I know the answer to that too. It's because I'm falling in love with her all over again. Pair that with the special occasion and you get a wreck like me. But it's not like I'm going to fall flat on my face anyway. I just thought telling you guys would help me sort things out up here."

It didn't seem like the two were listening at all. It was too endearing for them to hear Frost muse so cutely. A picture told a thousand words and Frost's love for Jury was as clear as day. Her blushed cheeks and half-lidded eyes spelt her thoughts out loud.

"Well let me sort you out down here while you do that. Arms up." Ber was overjoyed to have someone to share her dresses with. Strangely enough, this dress was a perfect fit for Frost as if Ber had custom made or ordered this for her. "I don't get you sometimes. One second you're like an untouchable Goddess, the next you're a smooth talker. And now this? Was Frost always so damn over the place?"

Nav stepped back as she idly stood there with both hands folded over one another by her thighs.

"Always. Frost has the tendency to mull over the situation before mustering the courage to move forward. Ever since the start."

Ber finally tightened the thick cloth belt around her waist, tying the dress together as Frost stared at herself in the mirror again. Her movement was severely restricted due to the length and tightness of the dress. But it was beautiful. Her eyes glistened momentarily as she fiddled with her messy cowlicks.

"... Think you can help me up here too?"

"Finally giving in to your hidden desires? Don't worry, your secret is safe with me! Believe it or not but I'm the most trustworthy out of my sisters! But you knew that from the start!" Ber laughed as she began styling Frost's hair from behind.

"That little runt that played along with Cer's antics? Ber, you realize you were just as much of a gremlin as her." Frost jabbed, causing Ber to hold her hair up like the horns of a Demon.

"Hah. If you miss her that much then I can bring her back right now."

"But I prefer the Ber in front of me." Nav said as if Ber really was going to go through with it.

She dropped Frost's hair and started again with a motherly smile.

"That's because I'm the Ber that made it. The old Ber wouldn't have talked this much, let alone to a sapient machine. Not that I think you're one Nav. I don't see you as one either.

Your temperature might be a little below normal, but I'm betting a hundred moons that you can feel more!" Ber realized her slip up and tried to comfort Nav who only blankly stared at Ber.

Then, a sudden smile formed on Nav's face.

"I believe you are correct." Her hand clutched the other tightly.

Ber eventually tied Frost's hair into a short ponytail. Her bangs were moved to the side to reveal as much of her golden eyes as possible, leaving two flanking bangs that ran down her cheeks like silky daggers.

"Heh. You're speechless huh? Exactly what I was going for! You don't realize just how much of a diamond in the rough you are." No one else had the right to say this other than Ber.

"... that's me...?" Frost couldn't believe her eyes. A simple change in hairstyles had completely transformed her.

The messy cowlicks that plagued her hair were pet down by some miracle. All forms of common sense were robbed along with her breath as Ber placed a hair ornament to complete her outfit.

It was a giant, beautiful golden marigold.

Frost reached up to touch her face to confirm that this wasn't just a dream. Once again, she was reminded that she was a woman through and through.

"Don't fall in love with yourself just yet. Imagine what Jury has prepared for you." Ber winked, brushing Frost's clothes with her tail like a fluffy broom.

"Too late. Haaaaaah." Frost deeply sigh. "Thanks. Your sisters and Ignis are helping out Jury too, right?"

"They have to. I tried helping Jury myself, but her proportions didn't make it easy." Ber shrugged.

"I'm talking about picking out clothes." Frost said in a deadpan voice.

"That too!"

"You're not even gonna deny it? Haaah. Alright..." She twirled around to face the two, and before they knew it, Frost embraced them both. "Happy new years, guys. Have fun in the Common Hub."

"I've never heard someone say 'happy new years'. It's happy birthday for us~ And for you too, Frost. Since you're practically family you're basically a Demi-Human too."

*I don't know about that.*

She let Ber savor her semantics before Nav returned her cold embrace, placing her head against Frost's.

“Good luck Frost. Have a good new year. I hope the fireworks down there will be as bright as the ones we’ve prepared in the Common Hub.”

“Yeah. You too Nav. I hope you’ll remember tonight.”

Nav wanted to say something, but she immediately sealed her lips shut. A look of unease washed over her. But it all disappeared when Frost spoke her name.

“Nav?”

Nav drilled her eyes into Frost’s as if to confirm something. When satisfied she reached out to touch Frost’s hair. But rather than her usual childish curiosity –

“Likewise. Please never forget these precious moments.”

– Her touch was warmly nostalgic like that of a mother.