

There is someone for everyone. At least, that's what I've been told my entire life. How could I think any differently when the evidence is laid out on paper as hard facts? Sure, there isn't much choice, but everything is more convenient this way. Knowing you will never have to struggle to find your own identity creates a lot less stress. By the year 2900, the only people who have to figure out your life are the scientists who were trained to do so. Around the age of ten, you should have enough of a personality to determine your future characteristics. At twenty years old, biological characteristics and other traits even calculate the perfect partner! I'm happy with my life as an artist and even more happy that I get to share my life with my husband, Alden. We get each other and can support one another throughout the rest of our lives, so what else could I really need? Well, other than inspiration.

I have been in somewhat of an artistic block lately and have no idea what to create. The quota I have to meet at the end of the month and the thought that I have to have children by twenty-five have really been stressing me out. I only have three years left of freedom without being responsible for another human and it's creating a mental block. But I have an Idea.

"Alden," I yell into the other room. "can I get your help with something?"

"Sure, what do you need?" he chirps back. This is a benefit to having the perfect spouse. His instinct is to be there for me when I need, even if it's inconvenient.

"So, I was thinking..." I started slowly. "with everything that's been going on, I was hoping you could help me go back?"

"Back where?" he questioned, a confused look on his face.

“Well I was hoping, since you have access through your job, that you could help me go back to 2500 so I can get some inspiration?” I know that as a professional time traveler he could send me back easily, and I have been so desperate for an idea or a theme for my next project that it only feels fitting to go back to my favorite period in art.

“Amelie, I’d be happy to help but when did you need to go?” Despite his words, Alden didn’t look thrilled, but still like he was willing.

“I mean... now?” the quick look of shock on his face as I said that made me laugh, but we both knew I didn’t have a lot of time to play around. The quota was approaching, and this trip could be very important for me to sustain my career.

After a quick discussion, we both agreed I should go. It would be a short trip, but I knew it would be an important one, something inside of me urged that it was.

Within a few hours I was in the past, something that not everyone can say. At first glance it doesn’t seem too different, but the people are a little strange. They’re doing things we really only read about in my time. Holding hands, hugging, and even kissing? I don’t quite understand why people are doing this, but it must be a sign of happiness. I mean, I’ve hugged my husband. But only in our home and only when we are both especially happy. There really isn’t much need for kissing when neither of us have felt the urge and not many couples are known to do it anyway.

Putting my thoughts aside, I head to the closest art gallery I can find. If I am going to create something, it is best to start looking for inspiration as soon as possible.

Inside of the gallery are paintings and photographs of an array of colors and textures, something that is rare to find in the future. Among these images I come across one that sticks out. It is of two people. The image is almost entirely in black and white as the two stare deeply into each other's eyes. Their hands are touching ever so slightly, but what really catches my attention is the amount of color bursting from their chests. I am not entirely sure what the image is portraying, but it feels significant. It's truly something I've never seen before.

"What do you think?" A calm voice appears beside me. As I turn my head, I see a young woman looking straight with a small smile on her face. Her brown hair laid gently down her back and the sparkle in her dark eyes was almost hypnotizing.

"I mean, it's amazing! But I don't really get it..." My response puzzles her. As if what I said doesn't make any sense.

"It's two women in love. A feeling that is bursting between the two of them." Two women in love? I'm still confused. What business do they have feeling this way when only men and women can procreate? There isn't any logic behind it.

"Ah, do you know the painter?" My question returns the smile to her face, indicating that she either knows them or is them.

"Yes, I created it. But it's something I wish I had that I still haven't found." For some reason this response puts me at ease. I'm not quite sure why but maybe because I am not crazy for never experiencing that either. With this new information I squint at the small plaque underneath to find her name.

“Well Eden, I love what you’ve made. Do you think we could talk about it some more?”

My words light up her eyes and I feel a knot in my stomach, something I’ve only ever felt when I’m nervous. I quickly brush the feeling aside as she agrees, and we move our conversation to a nearby park.

When Eden speaks about art and what motivates her, I can’t help but feel excitement in myself. The joy behind her words and focused expression on her face bring me even more happiness. I truly have never felt this way with someone before. I know within myself that Eden is already important to my life and that she will bring a lot to me as a friend.

It’s interesting. The way I have connected with Eden in such a short period of time has made me confused. We talk as though we have known each other forever, and soon enough it’s already dark out, indicating that hours have passed. Within that time, we have learned so much and created a bond that feels almost unbreakable. However, the time also indicates I must leave. I cannot stay in the past forever, no matter how much I enjoy it. I have a life to go back to. A caring husband to create a future with.

As I prepare to leave, I promise Eden I will try to return someday. She leads me to a safe place where I can depart and where we can say are (hopefully not) final goodbyes. As I am about ready to return, she grabs my hand and squeezes it tightly telling me she will miss me. Feeling her hand and looking into her eyes I get a strange new feeling in my chest, one that has never been felt before.

It wasn’t until now that I started to understand this different “love” I have been hearing about in this time period. Uh-oh.