The Ballad of a Dying Man

by INCLINEDROOK

Summary

Lord Melbourne was a man of rationality as he decided to live in forlorn reality he endured as the ancient story of having a soulmate approached him like an old friend.
There was an ancient story that forbids the chosen people to love the people they love.

**The Ballad of a Dying Man**

Victoria doesn't belong to me thus the story has an inaccuracy history.

Setting in Alternate Universe where only few people have soulmate and people who have soulmate consider as Deviant

This is only a work of fiction, solely a not profit fan work.

Written by Oulamorts.

There’s an ancient story with no reliable source that has been spread among people since the beginning of human existence in the Earth.

Some say that God has created this story to make people afraid of loving someone without God’s consent. It is not written in the Bible or an authentic proof of that story however some people believe this story, some of it choose to ignore and some of it refuse to believe the story. They called the story as Soulmate myth. They have spoken that not everyone has a soulmate because not everyone has God’s consent to love someone. People have called this concept of loving someone who’s a completely stranger as a burden from God because He forces a person to love someone He
has chosen, commanding them to be together without thinking the consequences they’d receive such as different opinions, falling marriage, can’t stand each other because they basically don’t suit together but meant to be together, even the worse: abuse that would come later in the marriage.

A person who has their soulmate’s name upon their body when they reach age eighteen couldn’t escape their fate of not able to be with someone else who’s not clearly their soulmate. They have to be with their soulmate or their soul will not rest in peace as they would repeat their life numerous time until they have decided to become as one. If they can’t be together in that timeline, they’d be born as babies again in another lifetime and have to meet and be together so they could stop this God’s punishment.

It is an unfortunate thing that people call a person who has a name written on their body as a deviant because they’re different than everybody, they are not capable of establish their life by themselves because God has a plan for them. People who have their soulmate’s name on their body sometime despise themselves and people who don’t have this ‘mark’ are happy because God has abandon them and they could do everything they want without thinking the plan the God has created for them because they are just additionals for the special people.

However, some people really want to have a soulmate; they tend to romanticize because they believe having a soulmate is a gift itself from God. Having someone who’s destined for you, some people couldn’t resist the fact that they want that certainty of having someone who would be there for you because their purpose of existence is to be with you, in no matter what condition is; they’re your companion throughout the time. People envy of the special people because they have the stability in love, they don’t have to worry if their partner would cheat or leave their soulmate because once they have together, nothing could separate them until death does its job to take their soulmate away therefore they’d be re-join in another place, rest in peace eventually.

It is a matter of perspective, some people loath the concept of having a soulmate and some people are jealous of that concept thus the story has become a mere legend among people because no one really talks about it anymore; it is a personal thing and unbelievably a taboo thing, like talking a sexual activity to the public.

A person who has a soulmate cannot escape their reality therefore they have to accept it.

Hence this is the story about a person who didn’t accept their reality because duty comes first for him above this silliness.
Nothing Good ever Happens

Chapter Summary

The first time he discovered he’s one of deviant people, he couldn’t believe himself.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

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Chapter One;

Nothing Good ever Happens

The first time he discovered he’s one of deviant people, he couldn’t believe himself.
William Lamb 2nd Viscount Melbourne remembered that his mother used to tell him the Soulmate story as one of his bedtime story whenever she got the chance to be with him; exchanging their goodnight kisses and hugs before the boy fell asleep. He was still mesmerized by the way his mother told the story; there was passion laced on her voice, irises glimmering in the darkness engulfed them and the caress of her thumbs soothing his anxiety about the creatures of night that would come to his bedchamber.

William was irrefutable that his mother wasn't one of the deviant because he had seen his mother's bare body when he accidentally came to her bedchamber, saw the glimpse of sexual activity she had with her companion and ran afterwards, mortified because seeing her mother; a paradigm in his life had an intimate activity with someone he never know. There was no burden for her to wait for her soulmate thus resulting the inevitable marriage with her suitor, his father. Even though people have speculated that he wasn't actually his father's son. his mother didn't say anything to rebuke the rumors yet she taught him the valuable thing formal education never taught him to do; ignore the rumors. He had been taught to dismiss gossips among people because people don't really know who they are and they only justify, stigmatize them by the observations and whispers yet often he wondered if the speculation was true but he won't minded if he was a bastard as long as he got the respect he deserved. His mother loved him nonetheless because he was her son. Rumors couldn't affect the man's life because he had the support from everyone he loved.

He believed on the inane story when the name appeared upon his left rib as he saw his reflection on the mirror after he celebrated his eighteen birthday party with his colleagues from school. He was changing his clothes when he caught something peculiar appeared upon his body, he was certain it wasn't there this morning but there that was; a name, a woman's name. Unfortunately, he couldn't read it because the lights were too dim, the mirror reflected the name backwards, and the size of the name is relatively small. Never thought in his entire lifetime he'd experience this kind of degradation, and he knew the speculation of him not being his father's legitimate son was an insult for him however this, this was a degradation for him. God has arranged something for him, and he was never a man of religious. The only person who could control his life was his father, and sometimes his mother but there was a third person that'd interfere his wilful, charming life and it was the Man he never thought exists before. Perhaps because he had expressed hatred towards his creator or had done something terribly wrong and sinful, He had given him a soulmate. Someone who could control him as God had condemned it to him. William was anxious to think about it, as he ran his fingers to the name and thinking that God had created someone for him so He could keep an eye on him by using this person.

He was aware of the story, if he declines his destiny as a deviant, even declines his soulmate; he would repeat his life in another lifetime. He had this kind of temptation to refuse his soulmate because he was the man on his own, only his parents could control him and God didn’t have his permission to control him, nonetheless the thing is inevitable. William would surrender to what He wanted in another lifetime, but in this lifetime? He would not follow and he would abase in this lifetime.

William was a deviant but he never told anyone about this, even to his mother because he didn’t want people to differentiate him. The paragon himself refused to acknowledge his soulmate’s name and he had neglected about it until he was married to Caroline Ponsonby. Charming young woman
she was. Albeit their meeting was arranged by William's mother, he knew that his love was real. He thought she was his soulmate because their love was real, it was not an occasional dalliance. That's how you supposed to feel when you meet your soulmate, isn't?

William knew she wasn’t his soulmate when the first time they experienced their intimate activity, she read the name and was startled by it.

He had been dishonest with her. Their marriage was an excuse for him to avoid the inevitable fate he’d encounter in the future. However, their marriage didn’t crumble because this mere woman's name. In fact, Caroline kept trying to erase his soulmate’s name with her hands; rubbing it against her petite fingers however it never disappears. She never said the woman's name and they chose to ignore it, it was the last thing they can do for their marriage.

For years, Caroline was still mesmerized by the name, it haunted her because she knew she wasn’t meant to be with him and he wasn’t meant to be with her. But their love was real, not like the love William would get with his soulmate in another lifetime; no one force them to love each other, their love was pure. Their serene marriage had resulted a son and a daughter.

Unfortunately, their marriage was a tarnish one. His son had a disease and his daughter didn’t even last for two days, and Caroline fathomed that they couldn’t be together because God had created someone for him and their marriage was just an obstacle for Him to establish His plan for William Lamb.

Their creator was a despot.

Caroline chose to run, had an affair with Lord Byron but William thought her love for Lord Byron was an infatuation; it short-lived yet passionate. He couldn't actually blame Caroline, he lied to her and the misfortunes events they had were results of him neglecting his fate. People didn’t know that William was a deviant because he chose not to speak about it. It was a lucid thing that people tend to talk speak ill about their marriage but he never listen to it; he was impervious, just like his mother taught him to be, especially he never heard someone gossip about him being a deviant.

They always assume that their marriage falling because of their children, sometimes because William’s aberrant diversion on sexual activity but they never talked about him being a deviant. Truth to be told, he was grateful they never deduce that he was a deviant but he despised the fact that they use his children as an excuse for Caroline’s affair with Lord Byron. Their children had no sin yet they were the people to be blamed.

His soulmate was the one to be blamed, not his innocent children with no sins. If only he never had
a soulmate, his marriage with Caroline would be successful one. Their children would get the respect and honor they deserve yet because of his selfishness to neglect his soulmate, his children were people's excuse his wife's despicable affair.

William had never told a story about soulmate with his son, the story is long forgotten and should not be told to his heir because he knew his son probably would ask if he was one of them.

And he couldn't lie to him.

He could not tell his son he had never actually read his soulmate's name. He never asked Caroline about the name that's written on him. He never told his son anything about what's happening in their lives. So when his son asked him about Caroline, William would answer it with a smile in tranquility yet full of regrets,

He would always said, “I’m sorry.”

William Lamb always thought his marriage was over because of him. If only he never had a love to the woman who was apparently not his soulmate, none of their misery would happen in the first place however if he never married to Caroline, he would never experience the heartbreak, the loss of his daughter, his wife and his son. He would never experience the series of unfortunate events that would shape him as a man who he was.

He thought his creator had belittle him because he always demanded solace however he only received the deafening endless destruction within him. He thought there was no point of living anymore, it had become a mundane for him every day to think that his existence had no purpose yet he was still alive. Should he wait or should he end it? He thought he should end it slowly, and nothing could change his decision for having a slow yet not painful death; he let himself to be eradicated by his sanity.

Whilst he endure his iniquitous reality his creator had given to him, he had several encounter with prostitutes to accompany him in the night as a distraction to forget the sorrow he felt after not being able to held his son's hand again in the night, like he used to do whenever the child inquired his presence within his bedchamber. Augustus had invigorated him to continue in politics and when he died, he could only succumbed himself with the endless works he had in the ministry. No matter how harrowing the reality he was in, he could only felt estranged to the humanity.

One night, a blonde prostitute he didn't catch the name saw his soulmate's name and somehow she knew that person was the reason of his distress, she knew he couldn't love someone else freely besides his soulmate. Her service only a gateway for him to forget his anxiety and depression for
couple of hours and he would return to this hellhole eventually. After minuets of their intense sex, the woman asked William,

“Have you met her?” She was on the top of him, caressing the broad chest beneath her; listening to his heartbeats. This heartbeats were beating for someone else but she was the one to listen to it now.

William arched an eyebrow upon her question, confused and was still exhausted by the earlier activity that had consumed him for a moment. He look down to see her optics; demanding the answer of her curiosity. He didn’t know to answer thus he remained silence as she rubbed his soulmate’s name. She was referring to his soulmate. He felt uneasiness within him as he tried to move a tad, to lose the contact betwixt them. However, she didn’t give up thus she asked another question, didn’t care about the man's uncomfortable caused by her,

“Have you met her, your soulmate?”

“No. I don't even know her name is.” Upon his statement, the woman raised her head and trying to read the man's expression. He was telling her the truth. As she caressed his side, the man emitted a sigh from his lips and she placed the head on his chest again,

“I could tell you the name, if you want.”

“No.” Another reluctant answer from him. She didn't know why he was being reluctant to accept his fate for having a soulmate yet they were completely strangers; she was paid for her service and must not talk about their private lives however she broke this rule tonight because she never had a pleasure of having sex with someone who had a soulmate.

“Does it even bother you that she is waiting for you to acknowledge and accept them?” Her whisper was audible enough, a mockery in her tone.

“I might be the selfish person you ever encounter however I’m saving them. I don’t want them to be stuck with this abysmal person.”

She understood the meaning; he thought by declining his fate with his soulmate would help them, even saving them for their inevitable destiny. However, she was aware that the deviants couldn't save themselves because they were their creator's puppets; they have no free will or freedom for themselves. The pain he had was excruciating and he was the damsel of the distress, he was saving
the person he never had pleasure to know because he chose to ignore them.

Alas, he had forgotten that he wasn’t saving them from him, they don’t need a save because if keep to ignore his soulmate, they’d meet in another life time.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading, I’m still in need for beta because I feel there's some mistakes especially in grammar so I'm anxious to post this tbh. I hope you enjoy this chapter so far and we will see Victoria in the next chapter as it follows according to the series with additional changes! peace! x
Chapter Summary

He was someone who's clever of stealing hearts and she was young, impressionable woman

Chapter Notes

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Chapter Two;

Two Wildly Different Perspectives

The King had died when his Prime Minister was sleeping soundly on the seat in his residence. He
had been awakened by abrupt noise calling his name softly and a calloused hand on his shoulder, he was startled by the man's voice that awakened him. Something must have gone terribly wrong if his servant had an audacity to wake him up when the previous night he told them not to intrude his private session with his alcohol to cease his fatigue.

"The King?" He asked, yet he knew the answer was. His quick assumption was correct when he saw his servants averted their glances upon the ground; bobbed their heads in unison. He dispelled a weary exhalation and ordered a coffee for his breakfast, he would need something to start his unpredictable day ahead, especially the first meeting with his new sovereign. He could only assume the worse, his new sovereign probably as apprehensive as he was; he wished his new Queen would dismiss his presence and he would retire to his dear Brocket Hall and continue his life with another amiable living creature that could not berate him. Hence his new Queen would need him, his party would need him thus he must wait for few years before retired from politics and governing.

When the Baroness told him Her Majesty was ready to see him, he expected a naive little girl who didn't know anything however when he entered the room, he saw a eighteen years old woman who had an amiable smile with apprehension laced upon her bright optics. He took her hand and placed a kiss upon her knuckles as form of his respect of her title and there that was; a peculiar feeling twisted in his stomach and she probably felt that too because their expressions suddenly changed as if they have felt something connect them however they chose to ignore it. They consider that feeling as their anxiety or the lack of their breakfast because their meeting was a matter of urgency. A monarch had to see their prime minister to establish their longing partnership in the future and the first meeting made the impression of it.

“May I offer my condolences on the death of your uncle, Your Majesty.” He bowed his head, looking at the monarch, her hands were clasped yet fidgeting. His voice was soft yet hoarse; she couldn’t tame the heartbeats that beat rapidly like she had been running, chasing her dog, Dash. She avoided the man's contact as she took several steps away from him, commenting the man's articulation regarding her uncle's suggestion for her husband, "A prince with a head the size of pumpkin." Without hesitation she uttered her opinion regarding their colleagues' appearance and Lord Melbourne scoffed under his breath; this meeting would begin their new fruitful friendship as he liked her within several seconds. Let alone the strange feeling he had when they spoke.

Moments later, his attention was averted on her dolls; seating quietly on the seat she had positioned and particularly took the doll with a crown. She was embarrassed, he probably thought that she was a mere child who couldn’t escape her destiny to become a queen because her childhood had been bombardier by endless lessons but it seem not enough because she didn’t know anything yet. He asked for the name, and she answered she doesn’t have a name. He asked the small crown on her doll, and she answered she gave to her when she realized she’d become a queen in the future. He was smiling at the thought of her innocence; she chose to accept her destiny in very young age as he listened to answer. She was no coward and Lord Melbourne had great admire on her about that because truthfully, he couldn’t even accept himself as a deviant yet this young, small and inexperienced woman chose to accept her destiny as the ruler of enormous people across the sea.
From that moment, he knew that she was the catalyst of his existence. He was born to help this petite Queen appeared before him but she refused to justify her height as a reason to underestimate her. She was young, inexperienced and needed someone who’d guider her by someone she trusts. Obviously, she would have things on her way, damned the people who saw her audacity as an ignorance because she was an ignorant child who had a displeasing childhood at Kensington.

God Save the Queen, indeed.

He offered himself to become Her Private Secretary within seconds when she talked she doesn't want Sir John Conroy control her life just like he controlled her mother's life. Without thinking what was he doing, he offered himself because he believed his existence was meant to help her as she refuses someone to control her life, just like him. How different yet same person they are, Lord Melbourne had to chuckle on that.

However he didn't expect her rejection so bluntly as he talked about the Privy Council. Perhaps he had underestimate the woman's knowledge to govern or perhaps the woman misinterpret his intention to help her therefore he couldn't help but retreat himself, a peculiar feeling obviously.

Somehow, he had a purpose to continue his existence as he stood beside her, uttering the names of her subjects who want to welcome their new monarch. Lord Cumberland exclaimed his inability to hear the woman’s speech regarding the pass of the recent King. He had degraded the woman; belittling her in front of people she never met before. She didn’t say anything for a brief moment, taken back by a criticism of her inarticulate speech. Her eyes were trying to find something, someone who could probably ease her anxiety; trying to build her confidence back and she met his serene glance. He watched her and a nonchalant smile beamed yet that was a reason for her to continue. He knew she was capable of welcoming the attendants as her subjects. She was resilient and continue her speech, with sarcasm on the men's opinion regarding her sex and inexperience

“Lord Ilchester.”

He whispered to her yet people still could hear his voice nonetheless. The man who knelt in front of her waiting his monarch to speak and she did. Several people come to her afterwards, kiss her knuckles and Lord Melbourne murmured their name, little certainty he’d be there for her, her visage softened, a simper graced upon her lips and he noticed there was uneasiness on her but it had been docile. When Lord Cumberland knelt, he took several steps back and he said,

“I believe you know this one.”
Lord Cumberland’s gaze upon him was a benign one however he knew he couldn’t retract his intention to return to Brocket Hall anytime soon because he had duties and he wanted to help her. It might be obtuse for her to get accustomed by the world she had to carry on her shoulder; cumbersome for a petite girl who only reached her adult time for a year thus she couldn’t complain because her reign is impending. She was strong, ambitious, courteous, an equal for Lord Melbourne but she couldn’t reign alone. She needed a companion, and for a moment she considers Lord Melbourne as her companion and prime minister.

The first time he heard his soulmate’s name, he was facing the woman, who was silently turning away from him to approach her subjects beneath her balcony. His monarch wished to be called as Queen Victoria, as she didn’t like to be called as Alexandrina.

Her implausible misery changed when she announced her wish to be called as Queen Victoria to him. How strong the name is, even it can change someone’s opinion on her; it reflected her ambition to welcome her destiny and embrace it like a dear old friend of hers.

“They don’t believe me capable of being a queen.” She murmured under her breath, her eyes fixated upon the floor as she avoided his eye contact. Either she expressed her disappointment on her mother’s doubts about her capability or she was afraid that she would see Lord Melbourne agreed on public's opinion, she could only deduce the worse but he was better than that. It was doleful enough for her, she hadn’t started yet and people have doubted her capability. She would always hear the scornful laughs they would share whenever she was around and Victoria had had enough of it. Lord Melbourne waited for a punch-line she would probably give to him like the other articulations she had said since the first time he arrived, such as “A prince with a head size of a pumpkin!” or “I remember thinking my uncle’s crown would be too big for me.” All of them had made his lips twitched, wanted to chuckle audibly however he couldn’t because she would think he was ridicule her, especially he was certain her mother and her companion had enough made fun of her today. He didn’t want to offend his sovereign.

“I think they’re mistaken, Ma’am. And anyone who dares to comment on your stature should be sent straight to the tower.” Now, he was the one who joked so he could banish the wary lines on her façade. As the result, she chortled and he joined afterwards, veritable she would remember his articulation and she’d consider his suggestion, she would send everyone who makes a comment about her height. After all, it was Lord Melbourne’s idea and he was going to be her private secretary. Her emotions were fickle; she laughed before and then stern but she looked more
hopeful than before. She had placed her faith upon him.

“You don’t think I’m too short to be dignified?”

He wanted to say that size doesn’t matter to rule a kingdom, he wanted to say that no one cares about her height because really, she was young and of course she hadn’t grown considerably she was merely eighteen. Thus he concluded his thought,

“For me Ma’am, you are every inch a Queen.”

She asked him to become her private secretary; without hesitation and consideration from everyone that warned her about him, disreputable as they told her however she would not have everyone breathing on her neck. Only her corset can make her uncomfortable but people’s opinions toward her only friend is unacceptable. If they had known why she chose him, they’d trying to banish him to somewhere else, securing the life of this newly Queen.

Because if they knew she was his soulmate, they would not hesitate but to eradicate the man’s life and made her suffer, ghastly.

People had dramatized the concept of soulmate, for Victoria; she had gotten along with her soulmate, trying to compromise and learning the bits of him. She thought, him being a Private Secretary and a Prime Minister for her would help her understand the lack of knowledge she hadn't learn because the sudden pass of her poor uncle. She couldn’t tell the man yet about him being her soulmate, it would startle him and he would disappear when she hadn’t gotten the opportunity to know him better.

“Lord M.” She beamed a simper confidently as her artlessness taking over her rational mind. There was this kind of closeness he never experience before, even though they had their clothes on but somehow he felt naked when she flustered, he knew something wasn’t right therefore he still chose to ignore the sensation on his mark; Victoria is not the name of his soulmate.

Isn’t it?
He defended his Queen's reputation in the unbridled court as Lord Hastings made a tirade regarding her ability to reign. He lampooned on her talent on drawing that's well known is the only forte she had and Lord Melbourne rebuke it with the same sarcasm about Lord Hastings' inability to become the leader of his house as a prime minister in such prominent young age just like his friend did in the age of twenty-four. So much to defends the woman's reputation that hadn't been shaped; she's only eighteen and people thought she was impressionable and amenable when the truth was Queen Victoria was nothing like the way people describe to him. For him, she was every inch of queen; regal and no one can control her. Even the God itself couldn't control her but when it comes to certain matter like the plan He had made for her, she would probably choose to follow it because its better to be together with her soulmate rather than foreign princes that she has nothing in common.

At least she found Lord Melbourne tolerable, his presence had bring her joy in the midst of chaos she had to face when people make judgements on their Queen. Only few days after their beginning of their friendship, people had assumed that the older man, Lord Melbourne had manipulated and docile Victoria for his own advantages. Their friendly banter would always be seen as tantrum thrown at her so she could be easily persuaded to become his puppet. Therefore, only them knew that their friendship is merely a very friendly one, perhaps with little bit flirtations conversed but truly, Lord Melbourne's intention was to make his monarch happy because he had seen the woman's visage; she was condemned by people around her and she needs something to cease the burden. However, he never knew or fathom his monarch's intention on him.

Perhaps she seen him as a father figure she never had.

Perhaps that's why he had this feeling of having someone for him to be protected. It felt like he was a father again, a father figure for the young woman. If she seen him as a father figure. Perhaps it would explain the feeling he experience since the first time he met her. Perhaps it is the explanation he needs; a feeling of being a father again.

If only he hadn't been wronged about that, he'd be grateful. Unfortunately, perhaps she hadn't seen her just like the way he assumed to be.

"That must explains why I love dancing so much!" She exclaimed with happiness whenever someone mentioned the late father of hers. Victoria never had the pleasure of understanding his father and she could only hear from people's words regarding him. She casted a glance on Lord Melbourne and he merely graced a simper on that. Lady Emma Portman surely knows how to steal the young woman's heart by complementing her late father, and noted the daughter had the same common with the father; dancing, "Of course there can be no dancing until coronation." Victoria articulated whilst Lady Portman's glanced upon the Queen's partner for today, and was surprised
when she talked about dancing after coronation.

"Is there to be a coronation ball, Ma'am?" Lady Portman inquired,

Victoria answered immediately, "Yes, Indeed! That is if not too expensive, Lord M?" Once again, she looked at the man and Lady Portman noted her Queen had made a nickname for her Prime Minister after few days of their first meeting. She was happy that someone else, beside her finally befriended with her lone-wolf friend, Lord Melbourne. Through her syllables, he could sense the woman's euphoria on dance and he could not refuse, surely not decline Her Majesty's first ball in the Palace. Therefore Lord Melbourne used his witted sense of humour,

"Well, I'm hoping you'll only have one coronation so I think a little extravagance is permitted." He smirked, the woman's predilection on balls was predicted and could be used as an excuse to gather people and see the woman who really was; a monarch with a great taste of music and dance reflected on how she hosted her balls in the Palace. She replied his statement with her usual beam with adoration to the man and they continue to greet her subject as Lord Melbourne informed the names of their guests, just like what he did before but fortunately there was no interruption from someone that insult the woman.

"I feel like I should tell you, Ma'am, that at the Holland House, they call you Mrs. Melbourne."

Her attention was on her mother that made a comment about Harriet Sutherland, her new Mistress of the Robes and connect it to Lord Melbourne. Indeed it was Lord Melbourne's suggestion to make the young Duchess as her Mistress of the Robes however she chose her because she wanted her to be her Mistress of the Robes, apart of Lord's Melbourne's suggestion. Harriet Sutherland was a very well-respected woman and she adored the way she looked; very charming and alluring. When her mother mentioned Harriet's spouse was Lord Melbourne's friend and told her it's not good to be one Lord Melbourne's hands; she scoffed. Is that the way their relatives see their friendship? Obviously, his ubiquitous presence was felt by her family but it didn't mean he could easily persuade her and manipulate her for his own advantages. She gave the woman a tenacious grip on her papers she held and a challenging gaze to the Duchess. When Lady Flora told her the gossip she never heard before, her eyes widened and swallowed her saliva; she was insinuating that people are mocking her friendship with her Prime Minister.

Their friendship was a harmless, but inexorable one. They want to make the Queen abash on their friendship by calling her as Mrs. Melbourne but truthfully, she never minded to be called as Mrs. Melbourne, in fact she was delighted. Her foolish mind thought they wouldn't minded if both of them are married and make the name official. However she was aware of the obstacles but her
naive mind could live for several moments, living in the dream she'd build tonight as she dreamed the man as her husband. Fortunately, she couldn't refuse her fate, she was meant to be together with the man if only she had told the man. Perhaps later.

Perhaps when she had understood the doleful look when she wasn't around.

"Well, I feel like I should tell you that Mama and Sir John are known as the Conroyals." The Duchess snorted when she heard the same sarcasm Lady Flora given to the Queen.

"Sir John, at least, has never been involved in a case of criminal conversation with a married woman."

"Lord Melbourne was acquitted." She rebuke within seconds, there was no timorous voice the Duchess expected. Her daughter was trying to save the man's reputation, just like the man did in the Privy Council hence both of them never know they both were trying to save each other's reputations.

"Please, Victoria. He is someone who is clever at stealing hearts. He must not take yours." Oh, he hadn't. He hadn't start steal her heart, he only make her comfortable with the position she had during that time. He had no intention to steal the woman's heart, he was trying to make herself comfortable because her reign is probably going to be the longest one ever and he had to make sure she feels comfortable with it.

She told Lord Melbourne that her mother expressed a concern about their friendship, just like Sir John reminded the Prime Minister in behalf of The Duchess’ concern. He didn't want to talk about it but since the Queen wanted to talk about it, he had to be pensive about their friendship, people would continue to talk about it until he decided that his service is no longer to be needed. He had to take a step back on their close friendship as he uttered with an exhalation,

"Perhaps she is right."

"What do you mean?" The Queen questioned him, with a disapproving voice rather than questioning voice.
"I should not be your only advisor."

"But why not?" She inquired again as she conducted her horse to be beside on his, following his horse' steps. She attentively waiting for the man's articulation and clearly, he was in deep thought; choosing his words carefully so the woman didn't think he doesn't want to be her friend. It's rather a sensitive topic and she would become livid, indubitably.

"We are...-- so often in each other's company. We ride out most days. I dine at the palace nearly every night. It could be....--- misconstrued."

Misconstrued. He used the world misconstrued. That means Lord Melbourne had known about people's nickname on his Queen. Their friendship was seen as an affair. She remembered the previous meeting with her mother this morning, Lady Flora informed her that people call her as Mrs. Melbourne and it reminded her about the question that had been bothering her since. Why he never re-married again? Is it because he didn't want to get marry again, enjoying his status as a widower or perhaps because he was waiting for the arrival of his soulmate. If indeed he was a deviant and has a soulmate. Perhaps her soulmate's name, 'William' belongs to someone else and certainly not him. She wondered where her name appear on his body, if indeed he was a deviant.

"I wonder that you have not married again, Lord M." Her glance was nowhere, but not directed to the man. Avoid his suspicion he might have. His smile was a poignant one when he talked about is late wife, perhaps he didn't want to replace the woman, he loved Caroline.

"My wife died a few years ago and I've...--," Lord Melbourne hesitated, the woman stared the man; more and more despondent than before, perhaps she was right, "...-- never been able to replace her." There, Queen Victoria was right. Perhaps he couldn't replace the woman that probably haunt his sleep with dubious affection. Their love was real but why Caroline had an affair with Lord Byron? Why Lord Melbourne involved in criminal talk with a married woman? Was it because he was lonely? Was it because he is not a perfect husband like Queen Victoria knew, a honest and decent gentleman? She wondered, and always wonder. Perhaps she should believe on the gossips about the man before she fathom the man, perhaps she should another approach so he could talk about his feelings freely, as a woman and a man, as a friend to their friend.

"You did not mind she ran away with Lord Byron?" She asked again, glance always fixated upon him when he was trying to steer clear of her intense look. She was judging him.

"Of course I minded."

"But you did not disown her? I think I would find such behaviour hard to forgive." She feigned
lived, Victoria could only think if she had caught her future spouse has a mistress; she would disown him but Lord Melbourne's mind is a complicated one; she couldn't conclude everything by the articulations he deliberated, he was very careful with his words and he thought so much so she could not think the way he thinks. Indeed she was a mere child and he was an old man but they have same mind yet so many differences.

"Perhaps you are too young to understand."

Perhaps he couldn't let go the memories of his wife, she thought.

He watched The Queen dancing with the Imperial Highness, Grand Duke Alexander of Russia whom intrepid to put his hand slowly to the lower parts of her petite body. Barbaric and debilitate the woman, she never had encounter someone who was had the audacity to wander his hands to her lower parts. Alcohol made her oblivious, he thought, clenching his jaws in disgust, watching the tall man lowered his head to meet her gaze as Sir Alfred approached Lord Melbourne; he commanded him to steal the Grand Duke's dancing partner to save her dignity and artlessness. When Sir Alfred made a preposterous excuse for the Queen so she could escape, she caught another champagne to ease her anxiety, to calm her for a moment as Lord Melbourne approached her, ask for her permission to have the honor for dancing with her.

Their skins contacted again after the absence for a day, felt a little tingle on their fingertips as they placed them to each other's bodies; her optics were fixated upon his and she emitted an immediate response of his late arrival, "I thought you weren't going to come."

"I had a matter to attend to."

"I thought perhaps you were cross with me." Their previous conversation proven that he had avoided her. Perhaps because he needed a time to conceal his world from the sudden attack from her, her invasion to his private matter. She could only blame herself because she had made the man uncomfortable when what she intended was Lord Melbourne told her the reason of his forlorn life, in his perspective. Not people's perspectives.

"You? Never." If she could sense his honesty, she would believe on that. They continue to dance in unison, her eyes wandered to his weary jaded irises when they gazed at hers. His answer was very convincing and it made her believe he'd never cross with her. He would never abandon her. She complimented him about their dance and he brought the matter of age, once again. She should
put a rule betwixt them; never talk about each other's age.

"I am eighteen! Old enough to be queen!" Old enough to discover her soulmate's name. Old enough to encounter her soulmate and talk the way out with him. Old enough to say that she was a *deviant* and God has chosen her dancing partner as her soulmate. She scoffed at the thought of their age differences, public would speak ill about age differences yet God created her as his soulmate. God perhaps has no moral, "You are not old, Lord M."

"If only that were true,"

"I want to dance with you." She was in the state of drunkenness, the way she gripped his clothes was purely accidental and gratuitous however when she felt the rough fabric against her gloves; she could feel the heartbeat on her hands and the sensation within her were drumming. Her attentive gaze was locked on the defensive one, to her consternation he would let go of her physical contact she longed to be happen.

He rejected her, bluntly and she swallowed hardly, words that she wanted to utter stuck on her throat. She had prepared to do this but she didn't mean the alcohol taking toll on her, it was supposed to be an escape from her anxiety within her. Her hands were on his rib and he hesitate, maneuvering her hands away from that sacred place. And he knew, she had known his soulmate's name appeared on his rib. Victoria took several steps back, eyes were beginning to glimmer as she silently murmured whilst putting her hands on her left rib,

"It's true."

And she was gone.

Chapter End Notes

I tend to follow the story based on the series therefore I will write several scenes from the series. There's some major changes in this chapter and I do hope you will like it. This is a short chapter however I can assure you the next one is going to be a long chapter. I will try to post every Friday/Weekend but I am a new Law student in University and I will enter the univ several weeks again I do hope it will not mess up my schedule. Anyway, I do hope you like this chapter and please do comment below
about your opinion. See you! x
He caught himself staring at his own reflection at the Dover House. It was late in the night and most of his servants had gone to bed, unlike him who was still awake because the consternation of proving the woman's articulation several days ago. He saw her ran from him, as if he'd do anything harm; as if he was the hunter and she was his prey. He didn't know what she meant by the
confirmation she uttered softly whilst emotion erupted without permission.

However, when the glimpse of her running away from him whilst placing her hands on her left rib, he experienced an epiphany that she was also a *deviant* and she might realize that the name that was written on her body was his name. That elucidate why she avoided him for the most of the time as she made the very first scandal, accusing Lady Flora is with a child. They went for ride like usual but there was some distance that Lord Melbourne couldn't speak but the truth. He told her indirectly that a scandal could cause an excruciating heartbreak for both of parties, he was speaking of himself and the possibility that her assumption for Lady Flora's swelling abdomen could cause heartache for Lady Flora and her.

If she had been right, she would prided herself like a champion, giving a reason for her mother to dismiss Sir John Conroy for the criminal activity behind her back but she had been wrong. Lady Flora wasn't with a child and Queen Victoria was devastated, she was the reason that Lady Flora humiliated.

This morning, she was nowhere to be seen. She was very clever of running away and play a hide and seek in this humongous residence but Lord Melbourne found her, at last when people had sought for her. Perhaps it was because they have this kind of invisible bond as soulmate that they could sense and locate their soulmate's whereabouts therefore he was the one who found her. She was sitting on the grand piano's seat, was indignant at being the object of thrown tantrums from her mother. If she had listened to Lord Melbourne, she would not be ashamed that she hadn't killed the poor woman by humiliation. Thus she could only blame herself because she was being self-centrist, ingrown woman.

When he saw her, he looked at her with a sombre expression and approached her slowly, took a seat beside her and she didn't take a second to see her solace's intruder; she knew it was him. He didn't know what should he do or what should he says because he felt some kind of distance grown within them and they didn't recognize each other. She felt alienated and he couldn't make himself to be alienated in that situation because he had warned the scandal would only bring heartache for her. He had a premonition of the imminent disaster she would encounter thus he could only speak about the peculiar feelings within him every time he was with her. He broke the steel facade of his and talked about his son, the memories of how he was there when his son couldn't asleep and murmured the reason of his existence,

"Through you I've been given a reason to continue. And you must do the same." Her sorrowful eyes softened on his when she heard the man's comfort, listening that he had accepted her as a soulmate, indirectly. She didn't say anything, only nodding and try to graced her simper just like Lord Melbourne suggested. She would follow his suggestion for now, she'd smile and wave to the crowd even though she was having self-loath on herself. The country must not suffer because of her.
And there he was, staring on his mirror as he undressing himself, placing a hand on his left rib for the dramatic revelation and he sighed,

The name's begin with V and he knows the rest. He didn't move his hand for a bit as his greatest fear has come true; he was Victoria's soulmate. They were meant to be together when God created them but would he make another mistake by telling the whole world that he was a deviant and his monarch is his soulmate. Would he sacrifice himself as another reason for people to abdicate her besides her inability to reign and assumptions that Lord Melbourne has made her as a Whig puppet so they could be together and rest in peace in afterlife?

He needed a large of brandy for that

The Queen remains oblivious as if nothing had changed betwixt them but they are aware they had acknowledge the inevitable fate bestowed upon them. As The Queen remain oblivious, her Prime Minister shall remain the same; they wouldn't discuss the matter alound even in their private meetings. Their gaze still lingers yet there's no physical contact unless the usual greeting Lord Melbourne would give to her, the kiss on her knuckles but it only ghosted for seconds; she missed the tender kiss he'd give before, the serene gaze of embrace had changed to hollow one.

He had gotten more colder than usual and she noticed the changes, especially today. His attention was elsewhere yet his body was beside her, following her instruction as she inspected the servants that had waited for her arrival. He looked at his pocket watch, its the second time since she had arrived but she hadn't brought the subject before they got their private room to talk about it. She articulated her thought about her observation on her servants and that was the third time he had seen his pocket watch whilst his back on her, she had to eat a grape to ease her anxiety; it wasn't him, he would always be attentive to her, albeit something has changed within them but they always remain the same as before however his shoulders were shaking, his mind occupied by something else and hands were clenching-unclenching, he has a pressing matter than their something in common matter.

Since the death of Lady Flora, the confidence the people had once upon their Queen had changed, even the Parliament had seen that Lord Melbourne's party grows weaker day by day but he cannot give up now. He had known the purpose of his existence and he couldn't simply let the things go before they talk about it, as a man and a woman. He had been called to the House and he knew the outcome of the vote, it was wayward to convince the other party to abolish the slavery therefore he had come to a conclusion, he had to forsake the woman.

He chose to run away again, before the hunters circling him and harm the people he loved. Albeit it was hard to inform the Queen, he was going to take a Prime Minister with a lot of gravitas to lead this misconstrued fiasco within his parliament to the Queen. He would speak as a Prime Minister to
their Monarch, not as a man and a woman. He has never left her alone at a public engagement before and he realized he would make some changes yet again.

Victoria had waited for his arrival, eschew wariness upon her visage as she talked to her friends, and averted her optics to the windows again; and clutching to her gown. When she saw his carriage, she was relief; she had prepared to talk about their matter in private later in the evening. If they have the time to be alone.

He was walking abruptly through the halls, his visage shown a stern yet menacing expression to everyone that passed through and they assumed he was exhausted by the Queen's play to keep him in the Palace. He was rather be elsewhere than to meet his Queen with a disappointing news and depression follow each time he took a time of what he had to say towards the woman. He saw his reflection once again, feeling he had been done that few nights ago and reminded himself, it's for the best.

She got up from her seat when she saw him, uttered and cherished the nickname she had given to him for a months but there'll be no Lord M after this meeting, he was irrefutable this perhaps the last time people in the Palace would see his sight wander with the Queen as they share jokes and stories and momentums together in that gigantic house. She was telling him about her dog, Dash but he didn't actually listen to it attentively, his gaze lingered on her body and the beauty itself that so alluring on her facade. He wished he could reach her, comfort her before he exclaimed the intention of leaving her in the storm. He might be selfish but it was the wisest decision he had made. He was reticent to see her but they had to departed. Alas, something beautiful had to come to an end.

"I'd rather leave now." Her vibrant beam shrinking each time when he talked in so immediate and no hesitate, she was bewildered by his articulation so she had to refrain herself; commanding an explanation within her optics as she watched him, avoiding her stare so he could not feel guilty of his decision. Her voice was trembling yet she had to become regal so people surround them see her not favoring one party. Disbelief laced and anger lashed, her voice cracked as she shook her head,

"How can I...? How will I...?" She turned her head away, searching for the right words to describe the feelings within her; the feeling of the emptiness and cogent explanation of her hollow, she swallowed hard,

"Do you really mean to forsake me ?" She couldn't believe herself she would say something as despicable as it is to the man, he was going to leave her and abandon her just because of his political principle and dignity.

She had to listened to his conclusion to put an end to their formality and professionalism, even their impending discussion they had to talk about tonight. She had prepared everything but something
always come to interrupt her intention. Perhaps she wouldn't get everything she always wanted, some certainty in her future.

He didn't reply her as fast as his usual sarcasm, he was rather deliberate and took a time to reflect on himself. As debacle as it is, he had to endure it and she must understand the hidden meaning of his resignation, his impasse presence in the Parliament and he didn't mean to lacerate sensitive heart. She had to see beyond than formality, she had to see his heart is also aching for her as he observe the woman's disheartened scrutiny. He was struggling, just like Victoria,

"I have no choice, Ma'am." She was walking away from him, once again.

It was expected that his meetings with The Queen has been ceased since his resignation yesterday. Lord Melbourne hadn't come to the Palace, rather avoided the location as he reluctantly accepted the invitation at the Holland House as an excuse of not attending dinner at the Palace, evasive as he can be to make the resignation official. Even though what he wanted is to come and meet the woman, confront the unviable woman and comfort her excruciating pain she has endured by herself.

He was not a cruel man but the situation has made him as one in the eyes of the woman. Lord Melbourne's gentle smile and the convincing yet humorous voice was gone, replaced by the unfamiliar cruelty figure he never wanted to be. He had to disingenuous his own emotions for the sake of the Queen, she has to reveal the brave lion heart she has to the next Prime Minister and accept them just like the way she did accept him as her Prime Minister. His attendance to Holland House was merely hours but his mind was still preoccupied by the event last night. His mind keep replaying the clear blue optics widened, pupils dilated, her voice cracked and she spoke inarticulate; she couldn't believe their time has to abruptly ended with an opaque matter in their hands. He had to enjoy himself, blended with the euphoria around him therefore he couldn't bring himself the joyous feeling he should've gotten.

He resigned, for Christ's sake! That was all he wanted before, he wanted to resign and retire to Brocket Hall; away from the politics that had eradicated his senses after the loss of his son. He wanted to watch the rooks, peacefully living the rest of his life as a gardener in his glasshouse he had re-opened after the death of Caroline, to send a reminder to his last love that he would plant the seeds of beautiful and alluring flowers and watch them grow, send them to his monarch as a compliment and accolade of her young, enchanting beauty. He remembered he encountered Emma Portman in the street before he goes to kiss his new monarch, he had proudly spoken he would retire because he was exhausted. He was exhausted by all the things in the city and wanted to lock himself up in humongous yet empty house, listening to the whispers of his lost past as a family man.
However, it changed suddenly as he kissed his monarch, locking his gaze upon hers and convinced himself he had known the purpose of his existence, he had to protect the woman just like what he did to his dearest son, just like a father to his daughter.

Alas, how wrong he was when the realization of having a daughter changed into a partner in life.

Lord Melbourne drunk couple of brandy to ease his consciousness as he commanded the coachman to take a detour through Piccadilly, rather than passing the Palace. She might hope his carriage would pass in front of the yard and he couldn't bring himself to approach Victoria until the matter has settled, she needs a new prime minster and they would come back as acquaintances with a past and a future together.

He wanted to retreat himself to the library tonight, sleep among written papers and literature with alcohol as his trusted company. However, the coldness of a night changed; the coldness of a night changed as memories of last night surfaced to his mind, he needed more than strong liquid that would warm his throat and abdomen yet desire tingles. He decided brandy would be not his only company in this certain night as he informed he'd go to the place in Mayfair.

He had been visited Ma Fletcher's nunnery for a year, since the King had fallen ill and his leisure time had been given for the new queen. His presence was unexpected and it cause a flurry excitement among the ladies whom greeted the man with such hospitality they had. He reminded himself he had missed the sight of appeasing bodies that would obey his words, even the diversion he has in the sexual activity. Perhaps he's bleak but he would enjoy himself tonight. Half of dozen women had been undressed as the owner of the place show him the women she has under her fingers but none of them has the captivating and alluring appearance he sought for tonight, he needs someone that would not reminds him of his Victoria.

However, his thought seemed to betray his heart as he pointed to a young woman with an eager expression, reminds him of someone he knew. The obstinate facade with puerile beauty, he never thought he would bring himself to point at her and spend the rest of the night with her. She beamed a triumph smile to the rest of the women that hissed, she surely reminds him of his Victoria. Ma Fletcher exclaimed proudly as she presents herself one of her 'student' to Lord Melbourne and introduced her, her name was Lydia and she's one of men' favourite. The elder woman complimented his taste on women when all he could think of is his Victoria.

Her hands were on his coat, leading them to the large bedroom on the first floor. The door was open and he started to undress himself; his coat, loosened his necktie as he sat on the armchair near the fireplace, his desire was overwhelming and his desire lightened like the fire behind him as he peered at Lydia, approaching like a vindictive as she loosened her robe, revealing the alluring body he ought to consume tonight.
The young woman sat upon his lap, a husky moan suppressed on him as his hands wandered to her lean legs, squirming at his touch and his kisses were centered upon her neck, tasting the saltiness on her and inhaling the scent she has. It's different than hers but he could only wonder if the person sat on his lap was his soulmate. She chuckled as he bit on her flesh, hands grasping her buttocks and she busied herself to play with his breeches.

It's been awhile since he felt the solicitous feelings within because he felt more younger, especially because he used the woman on his lap as a projector of what he could do with his soulmate. His artlessness, petite soulmate. Untouched and unbiased. He wonders if she would squirm if he puts his hand on the intimate place, he wonders if she would place her head on his shoulder as her nails gripping on his bare chest, pleads for some pleasure within her with his fingers. She was warm, he sought the warm intimacy as his kisses were on her chest, burning sensation taking toll on him when he has the truculence the desire because of her moan, her voice is not Victoria's and it brought himself to reality.

Eyes fluttered and he watches her, her fingers were on his fly, making it hard and the groan emitted. His Victoria doesn't know how to pleasure a man, she never understands how to do a sexual activity. she never knows how and only could follow her companion's instruction. It feels wrong yet right at the same time.

He positioned his mouth on her neck again, his vibrant voice echoed in the thin wall, "How old are you?"

His company smiled wickedly as she teases the man's tip with her fingers, another audible groan escaped before she answered, "Nineteen next month, Sir."

She was still eighteen, just like Victoria but she already knows how to pleasure a man. Therefore his Victoria was eighteen but she doesn't know how to make him groan loudly with her fingers on his length. Victoria doesn't know how to please him but he never expects her to please her. She's his Queen and he was the one who supposedly please her. Lord Melbourne grasped her hands and there was a perplexed look on her, he saw her body trembles and he distanced himself; attention drawn unto her neck, there's something on her and he knows what,

"You're a deviant," It was not a question, it was a statement. He caught her expression, startled that he noticed a name written on her. No one dares to brought this subject with her because it doesn't matter, a satisfying look is all matter in the house. She resists his hands on her wrists, avoiding his eye contact because she's petrified. He sensed her tense body upon him hence he soothed, emitted he wouldn't harm her. He backs down slowly as he reveals his soulmate's name to her; Victoria, she learnt his soulmate's name.
"Victoria," She murmured the name, astounded as her thumb caresses the name and Lord Melbourne flinched, the name has come out aloud and he could not unheard it, "Like our Queen. Queen Victoria."

"Yes. She's my soulmate," She gasped, her hands covered her mouth instantly and eyes searching for his honesty; there was no lies reflected on his jaded irises. Lydia took a moment to compose herself, awkwardly stands as his frustration erupted, "She is my soulmate and I am hers. I am old and she is young. We are not meant to be together as she is a Queen and I am merely a peasant who seeks comfort from anyone who's willing for money because I know our inclinations but we supposed to be together to break this damn curse."

"Y-y-you're not old, My Lord." Her head shook vigorously as her hands reached for his as she sat on the ground, lashes fluttering to regain her confidence back, "People won't minded your age differences as long as they fathom both of you are soulmates."

"Of course they will! She's a queen and I am her ex-prime minister! A Whig politician who helps her governing! People would think I have manipulated the woman and they wouldn't believe we're soulmates because the Privy Council cannot see her soulmate's name because it's on her ribs! The only who can see her soulmate's name is her husband and I will not be her husband." He stroked his dark tresses in frustration, the woman tries to calm the man's nerves with her touch on his knees. There was uncomfortable silence between them as Lord Melbourne's face was still on his hands and Lydia still trying to touch the man, tries to calm the man with her story,

"My soulmate's name is Ferdinand and I have met him. He was one of my customers. As he's already with a wife and children, we decided to become friends and talk everything through, Sir. We talked that we will not be together in this lifetime but the next life? Oh, yes sir. We will do everything we can to become as one, marry and have children on our own so we can have peace in that place afterwards." She smiled as she stared the wall, fingers were caressing her 'Ferdinand' on her neck.

Lord Melbourne moved his hands away from his sight and caught her smile, she was smiling in triumph like before. She was eighteen and she had met her soulmate and has talked a way out with her soulmate. Meanwhile, he hasn't embraced the fact that he's a deviant and Victoria is his soulmate. He's far wiser and old than she is but she's more wise than he is in this matter. Age is just a number but act depended on rationality. He envies her, she's far ready for her next life where she could be together with her soulmate and rest in peace eventually meanwhile everything he does is run.

"You see, My Lord. I ain't no expert on your situation because I ain't politician and surely not a queen but we can't escape this curse He has put on us. This is something we can't prevent but embrace it. I may sound like judging you or something but My Lord, the last and the best thing we can do is accept them and talk about it through. If you cannot be together in this lifetime, you can
be together with Her Majesty in the next lifetime. You should talk about it with Her Majesty, My Lord."

She was right, Lord Melbourne was captivated due to her strength. She's surely like Victoria but she's not Victoria. Victoria is still waiting for him to tell her that he's her soulmate meanwhile Lydia has talked to it with her Ferdinand.

"Lydia, are you sure you're eighteen? You sound more wiser than I am therefore Her Majesty thinks I am the only one who's wise!" He chortled, soon she follows his laughter. The weary smiles ceased as he reaches for her robe, dressing the woman meanwhile she dressing the man. They wouldn't have an intimate activity tonight but they would talk, like a deviant to another deviant.

The last time he received an invitation from the Palace to dine with her, he sends her a message and she receives it, rejoice it that her friend had decided to contact with her again. How she missed him, it's like part of her has gone and he's the part of her. When she read the message, she tries so hard not to smile in the end of message.

Her Baroness only could wonder what Lord Melbourne had written on his massage that could make her queen smiling helplessly and the forlorn expression she has for days had gone, long forgotten as if Lord Melbourne has come back to them. The ingenuous had forgotten her sorrow in the rain as she throws tantrums to everything as she walks in the garden, sobbing with the rain and her ladies could only watch her trembles in cold. Her mother saw her denigrate action in the garden and if someone who's not loyal to her catches her crying uncontrollably like a child, the public's view on her would change. The Duchess embraced the woman as she cries on her shoulders, muttering he's the only one who understands and he's the only one who belongs to her.

That night, she sent someone to inform the Duke of Wellington to meet her in the next day and now she lies on the bed, hands clutching on the piece of a paper and places it to her heart. Finally she has some peace for now as his words repeating over and over again, imagining him uttering those words.

"I strongly suggest, Ma'am, that you ask the Duke of Wellington to form a government. He is, of course, a Tory, but better the devil you know. And, your Majesty, I strongly suggest that we talk about our share in common together later so we will not torment ourselves in this inevitable destinies between you and I."
She cannot wait until the day arrives.

"This is a battle you cannot... win." The legend himself has refused her offer to form a government and now she's come backs to a helpless little girl with no direction. It had never crossed to her mind last night that he would refuse her, especially that Lord Melbourne has a confidence on him that the Duke of Wellington would continue Lord Melbourne's legacy as becomes a Prime Minister.

He refused because his age, and surely Victoria understands that he refuses her because he wants this unknown and unpleasant man named Sir Robert Peel as her Prime Minister. Robert Peel has no confidence from Lord Melbourne and surely Victoria would not follow the legend's suggestion. She needs Lord Melbourne's advice beforehand because she will not let the same regret and mistake like she did with Lady Flora comes bestowed upon her;

the Duke Wellington saw this matter as a battle, surely he indicates that she's a soldier with no commander beside her. She cannot win unless she has her commander.

Her mother came to see her when she heard that the Duke of Wellington has refused her offer to form a government. Her gaze was attentive to her daughter and when she equivocated that she has a plan with Sir John to win the confidence of the House, Victoria reject it bluntly; disgusted that her mother was one step ahead of her whilst her mind still thinking of how she should handle it. When her Lord Melbourne told her that they would talk later, perhaps later means later after her meeting with the Duke of Wellington. Perhaps he means they would talk about it after this matter has settled thus his words playing on her mind as Victoria boldly spoke,

"I'm going to Dover House to see Lord M." Her mother rebuked,

"Queens do not chase after their prime ministers."

Surely not but they're not ordinary Queen and Prime Minister. They are different and special.
She took Lehzen as her chaperone as Lady Portman offered her carriage to go to the Dover House.

She would repay Lady Portman's kindness later.

His restive figure hadn't reached its pinnacle of productivity yet his book didn't interest him as much as the upcoming conversation he will have with his Queen much later after she had form a ministry under the Duke of Wellington as her prime minister, a Tory Prime Minister. He surely didn't want to know what happened in the meeting today unless she send her a reply of his massage with a letter that has explained the Duke of Wellington has decide to form a ministry. Unfortunately, doubts clouded his mind; what if the Duke of Wellington refused. Surely he would write the draft of his upcoming conversation much later because of this doubt thus his acrimony hadn't disappear yet. He remembers the previous engage with Lydia, the other deviant that was open to her; telling all stories and things he should say when Victoria and him talk about their destiny.

For instance, he has to assure her that they cannot be together in this life time as she was a Queen and he was a politician; the Privy Council would not let their monarch marry to common one with no Royal family blood within him. That was the most important thing beside telling her that they would become together in another life time. It seems like forever but forever is not long at all. They would have their own forever in the next life hence they have to wait until they have become the ashes itself in the ground. The second most important thing they have to talk is do they need to inform people that they're deviants; would they consider how the people would react if they know they're deviants and they're soulmates.

Would Privy Council change their minds if they perform an examination of their soulmate's name and approve their marriage since their fates are entwined together. There's no rule that condemns a royal should marry their soulmate if they're indeed a deviant but would they accept their monarch as a deviant? That what scares him the most of her future. He was aware that people treated the deviant different than the others; they seem to ridicule and mock them, especially if they're cynicist like himself. They ought to be alienated, someone like with a disease and not sane enough. He was petrified of her future if they decided to tell the world they're deviant than his because surely, he wouldn't live long enough to see another new monarch replacing the old monarch.

His thoughts of this matter were inexorable and he was irked when his servant came to his room when he had commanded he will not accept anyone today, but he will lick his own words later as he turned his body and saw the woman that had occupied his mind for days. He exclaimed and stood abruptly whilst she graced a triumph simper as she caught him with little diffident. She asked for the Baroness to leave them alone and he saw the glint of hatred on her stare as she unexpectedly saw his disarray, if only she could understand that the Dover House is his residence and he has his
own will to do anything he likes because he's the current resident.

"As you would not visit me, I decided to visit you!" She raised her voice, mercurial when she saw him for the first time after few suffering days, There was a mockery of his rejection to visit her in the Palace twinged in her articulation and he couldn't help but look around, his office is mess. Just like him. His clothes is a mess but a beautiful mess in her eyes. He vocalized his untidiness and she chuckled confidently, he snickered as he saw her smiling again. At last he could make her smile again.

He lead them to the comfortable seat behind her and told her to sit, ignoring the fixation gaze she given to him at the broad chest that she could see betwixt them and simply declare her intention of meeting him without a warning. She informed him that she had met the Duke of Wellington and the doubt he had before was confirmed by her statement. Lord Melbourne was practically dissipated a heavy exhalation and his optics were everywhere but not her. Victoria continue, she doesn't want Sir Robert Peel as her prime minister but the last line caught him startled,

"Lord M, how can you leave me face this alone?" She was merely asking but he knew she refused to face the reality, she always have her head on the clouds. His expression stiffened, he hates to talk about feelings,

"Do you imagine that I want to leave you, Ma'am?" He was asking for her opinion, does she think he always want to leave her? Upon this, she was smiling again, she knew her doubt was wrong but he kept continue to make her attention go to the another point he wants to talk, "There is something more important here than my feelings, or even yours. You are the Queen of the greatest nation on Earth. One that elects its government and abides by the rule of law."

Now, it was her expression that stiffened as he continues to lecture her how to form the ministry, surely she knows this however can she make some changes as she's all above of the law?

"I don't believe in much, as you know, but I do believe in the British constitution in all its tattered glory and nothing, not even my devotion to you, will stop me for upholding it." The word devotion surpassed without he thinks the consequences therefore when he lifted his head to see her, her expression had softened and the unseen tears were about to come from her eyes.

She understands it now, even if he's loyal to her; he will be loyal to its written rules abide him. He didn't want to see her discomfort of talking with her and then he tries to comfort her, with an assurance that Sir Robert Peel is not that bad as she thought and suggests that if she doesn't like Peel's suggestions, she would say she needs a time to consider; more like avoiding from his suggestion. She has come to the term that she compromised that she will accept Robert Peel with Lord Melbourne's advice on how to handle him thus she asked his presence tonight in the Palace and he refused. She had had enough of declines today. He added he couldn't be at the Palace as
often as he was been therefore it leads to one verdict; they will not talk about their matter.

"I think if you're not my Prime Minister, you are still my friend? Even if you're not my prime minister, you are still my soulmate and we must become friends." Her voice cracked, he thinks she already knows they cannot be together in this lifetime and shall remain as friends. His expression fell,

"I think you must know why." Because people would get suspicious. People would draw a conclusion and there'll be an inevitable chaos if they discover. Hence he continues with the reason of political matter to avoid further questions about their bond. He wasn't ready yet. He mentioned there'll be some changes in the Royal Household and tell her he would do the same if he wants to have the confidence of his monarch

"I cannot have everyone as much as I please, doesn't it?" Her eyes were fighting the urge of crying but she knows her own limits however she cannot be fragile in front of him; he was too kind to be a reason of her cry, it was her fate that makes her upset.

"People might think being a monarch can do everything as they please but apparently, they also abide to the law itself. That makes us equal, Ma'am."

Sir Robert Peel came to the Palace at the exact moment of her annoyance at the design of the new coins. Her ladies confirmed their opinions about the new coins however she would not have it; she feels the image doesn't reflect her own personality and her truly likeness to her face. She was upset, everything seems to unable to capture her image and then create their own images of the Queen. It is unfortunate thing that her ladies was uncomfortable as she aimed her livid to them, if only they know how to ease the storm yet it increase by the time Victoria asked his opinion about the coins.

Obviously he would say the 'excellent likeness', their ladies sighed heavily as Victoria challenged him, her livid now directed to the man who doesn't fathom anything than his purpose to the Palace. This individual was different than her Lord M; agitate and impolite. And she was refractory

He lectured her about how the constitution works, a well handled approach to convinced the Queen. Surely she had been taught about it since she was merely a child and now did he really still consider her as a child that knows nothing of it? Did he really think it would be a good idea to make her look stupid in front of him? How gruesome it is if all the Tories are like this man, she thought. If he really wants to talk about how she arrange her household, he should've told him in the very first place rather than belittling her.
She rejected it, of course. He should've expected it. She would not have it.

Victoria had summoned him to the Palace when Lady Portman and her husband were on the Dover House, had a conversation about Her Majesty's boldness on having Lord Melbourne as her prime minister once again. She came to confirmed his fears that aimed on Queen's resist on having a new Prime Minister, even though it is not her decision to make. She waited, impatiently and whilst thinking how should she tell him about her plans. When he walked to the door, she stood, approaching the man she hadn't seen for a day, she truly had missed his presence within the Palace. She couldn't help to pretend she's not delighted to see him.

He kissed her knuckles once again with affection as he venerate his Queen and soulmate. She called him, "Dear Lord M." and it was apparent that she had learnt how to care the man by telling him 'dear' followed by her own pet name for him. She asked for his opinion about her plan, how things have arranged marvelously according to her wits. He complimented her, obviously as it was part of formality even though he disapprove her method to win him back. He defended Sir Robert Peel for a moment because it was perfectly Sir Robert Peel's rights to make some changes in Royal Household therefore he bitterly attack Peel's sexism.

"I've missed you," Her voice was veracious, her mannerism changed from professionalism to favoritism; she cannot pretend that the feelings within her that says she needs to see her soulmate.

He attempted to chuckles, carelessly and made his laughter like an attempt to composure his professionalism back. He also had missed her but he couldn't be vaguely equivocate that. Lord Melbourne emitted if he were return as her prime minister, it would not be because of her interests. Therefore she competed him, it was all what she wanted, everything she desired. It is also what he desire in the world, to see her to come to no harm therefore his return would not certainly achieve it. People would do anything do discard his presence beside her for their own advantages. He had to reason her, he must to. He would not allow to put herself in danger just for his sake.

"I cannot allow you to jeopardize the position of the crown on my account." She stood, irritated by his articulation; she does this so she could have him again however as it seems the man doesn't want to claim the prize she would give to him. She scold him harshly when he brought the subject of Peel's demands on changing her royal household. She knew he fathom her loneliness and emptiness just like she experienced in Kensington if she had agreed therefore he kept pushing her, trying to make her mind change and actually accept the inevitable change in the Royal Household.
She objected, she compared the other man to him but he encourage her to accept Peel's terms as if he becomes the Prime Minister. She dashed around the room and he remained stood still whilst expressing his irk on her stubbornness. She brought affection to the matter once again, trying to make him see that she desired the man but it wasn't the right time or term to talk about it. Lord Melbourne quipped people's judgements on their friendship that seems for them rather intimate thus she combust,

"I am not a piece of clay to be moulded by any hand!"

"No, Indeed!, but you must understand that it doesn't matter who you like or do not like!" He raised his voice as she raised hers,

"How can you say that? Surely my inclinations are paramount!"

"Your Majesty, surely you understand what the stake here?"

She could lose him forever, she could lose him if she keeps doing this but she hadn't seen the possibilities; she keeps optimist. She exclaimed he had forgotten his manner as her affection for calling him, "Dear Lord M" had changed to formality, "Lord Melbourne" and it made him realize he had gone too far in their banter.

They had gone desperate for each other and she feared she would regret for asking if he doesn't want the position; she's afraid she might lose him now.

"Not in these circumstances. The relationship between crown and Parliament is a sacred one, and I will not allow you put it in danger."

I will not allow you to put yourself in danger.

He escaped, no turning his back to see her coping. He didn't want to see her expression; it only make it worse, realizing that he had hurt her once again. For first time, it was him who ran.

Victoria received a telescope from Lord Melbourne in her birthday. Children singing in the
background, her servants standing beside the cake and she was amazed by the cake. She complimented the creator of her cake and her mother arrived.

Her present from Lord Melbourne was inside the finely crafted wood box. When she opened the box, she only received a telescope. Disappointed perhaps, she hoped he would give her something pretty and her written note is as cold as he could be; it was short and with no affection,

"Your Majesty, I do hope my present will benefit you to study heavens." He didn't believe in anything but he believed in her definition of heaven, something they could not reach yet.

Her mother insisted Victoria to open her present, it's a Shakespeare' book and there was a quote that was highlighted; she was livid when her mother smiled knowingly.

Victoria turned and her livid reach its pinnacle as she was screaming uncontrollably seeing little creatures on her cake; rats were eating her magnificent cake and she lost her appetite. She screamed, she couldn't control herself in front of people and Sir John' grips were hurting her.

The unfortunate event reaches to everyone's ears and they began to questioning Her Majesty's sanity. She received the Duke of Wellington again and asked for a confirmation of this event. Eventually, he brought a conversation about her ministry, she was confident enough to use metaphor war to the legend itself. He expressed his unawareness of her choice of words, she called her Ladies as allies.

She smirked. "Because you are not a young woman, Duke and no-one, I suspect, tells you what to do." She had had enough of sexist commentary of her capability.

"Cumberland thinks the little Queen listens to voices in her head, like her grandfather." the Duke of Wellington stood in front of Lord Melbourne that feels outcasted that afternoon as his colleagues seemed occupied with their own acquaintances. Lord Melbourne; furrowed in disbelief as the other man continue to speak Her Majesty's uncle intention to abdicate the woman.

"You cannot mean that Sir." He knows his soulmate is not inanimately insane, Victoria is the most
"Perhaps not, but I am not the man to put those rumours to rest... Melbourne." the Duke of Wellington knows Cumberland has targeted Victoria as his new prey if Lord Melbourne continues to deny Her Majesty' request to become her prime minister.

He thought if he refuses the position would help her however he was wrong, he had put her in danger. He had made a decision within that moment.

Victoria entered the room gracefully and regally as her ladies followed her from behind, people glance at them at irritation and she walked straight, without seeing everyone's stares especially his. He stared at her blankly as his mind trying to process of what he should do.

The portrait needed to be revealed by her and she tugged at the rope.

One tug, two tugs, three tugs. People bewildered because she couldn't do this simple task. She was embarrassed, surely her ancestors never experienced this kind of degradation. She took a brief seconds to composure herself as she heard several steps approaching her. She never thought someone would come near her because of her helpness however when she heard his whisper, she sighed a relief exhalation.

He inquired if she needed help to unaided the portrait and she merely answered it with no choice, she hoped it would make their friendship less awkward as he replied,

"It will be my pleasure to serve you, Ma'am." He indicated something else, he was also talking about serving her as a Prime Minister. Her eyes locked within his as she searched for his intention and honesty. His whisper could be heard by anyone in the room but they felt perfectly alone and people could learnt its intimacy between them. She was grateful they could forget its stiffness in their friendship as he answered,

"If you would do me the honor of asking me to form a ministry, Ma'am, I would accept." She was smiling and Lord Melbourne share the same happiness. At last, they've decided they would make this friendship works as Lord Melbourne feared someone would try to make them separate.

At least they're together for now.
The portrait was revealed as they both unaided. The portrait didn't catch her passion and bravery however it could reflected her clear irises. Lord Melbourne and Queen Victoria smiling and laughing together as their familiarity and burning sensation within them comfort their absence touch for few days.

There's so much to learn but so much little time as they dined together in the Palace, she playing cards with her ladies and him drinking the alcohol in his hand. She looked so young, vibrant and precious as he studied her.

"So young, and with such responsibilities. She should not have to bear them alone." He murmured to the Duke of Sutherland that stood beside him, pitying Lord Melbourne as he reminded him that the Queen must marry soon.

And it would not be him in this lifetime.

"Then she will look to her husband, not to me."

He feared it would happen and he wouldn't haven't gotten the chance to speak about it with her. He must speak to her tonight.

Chapter End Notes

New chapter with additional changes. I'm sorry for the delay as the orientation week would begin next week but I've written future chapters. Please let me know if you like the story in the comment section, thank you for the support!

P.S: I'm still looking for beta for a better version of my story!!
Fare Thee Well

Chapter Summary

She was grateful that God had made him as her mate like a rook that mate for another

The Ballad of a Dying Man

Victoria doesn't belong to me thus the story has an inaccuracy history.

Setting in Alternate Universe where only few people have soulmate and people who have soulmate consider as Deviant

This is only a work of fiction, solely a not profit fan work.

Written by Oulamorts.

Chapter Four;

Fare Thee Well

She has played the cards for hours now and they've gotten weary due to the excessive hours they've spent to beat Queen Victoria, however they couldn't achieve it because as it seems today is her lucky day.

Her boastful laughter filled the room, her attitude had gone to a child-like therefore Lord
Melbourne whom watched it could only smile at the precious sight. Victoria had never been so peaceful as today, he thought. Surely, her personality that always tries to enlighten him when they do the boxes can be counted as her happy days, but she seems more relax and playful than the other days.

His acceptance really affects to her well-being. Her figure seems to spark in the midst of gloom and tiredness and façade glowing in almost burnt out candle and her smile mesmerized him every time. Lord Melbourne aware that Victoria caught him staring but he didn't look away, thus it brought a rose tint upon her convivial visage.

Her ladies wanted to retreat to their places and Lord Melbourne caught himself in the situation where the Baroness waiting for Victoria to call a night however their on going placid evening would be replaced by his disturbance as he asked for a moment to steal the Queen away from the Baroness. She objected, of course because Lord Melbourne would see her tomorrow morning but Victoria insisted to have a conversation with him, because it seems so important for them as she knows Lord Melbourne wanted to talk about their share common fate. The Baroness reluctantly left the room and waiting for her in Victoria's bed chamber.

Her indelible flustered face hadn't gone yet when Lord Melbourne standing awkwardly in front of her whom sit comfortably on the chair as her hands were fidgeting on its armchair, her gaze averted to the ground as he was trying to find the best explanation for their situation. He cleared his throat and it brought attention to her as she looked at his face; stern yet soft.

She studied her lethargic lines upon his eyes, the sharp cheekbones he had that makes him so mature beyond his age yet there's a boyish spirit within his jaded irises. Lord Melbourne decided to sit in front of her as he murmured something under his breath, afraid he might desecrate his intention to do this,

"As you can see, Ma'am, I----" He began, eyes flickered to somewhere else as he avoids to see her reaction; she might think he doubted her but obviously it is not his fault to doubt it because their situation is hardly acceptable among people. First because their age differences, second the disreputable past he had, third their status as a monarch and a prime minister; people would not accept their fate that has been tainted to them since they've become adults in the age of eighteen.

He sighed, it's rather hard to talk about it albeit he had consulted with a prostitute that had the same condition as he did. He shook his head as he brought his hands to his face; frustrated by this yet it brought a chuckle to her, she enjoyed seeing him frustrated. He snorted as she interrupted his thoughts,

"Dear Lord M, please try to make yourself comfortable. We've got plenty of time to talk about it."
She assured him as she clutched on the fabric on her left rib, beamed warmly in hoping it could ease his anxiety. Instead of answering it, Lord Melbourne's teeth gritted; he couldn't be honest to her that he never wanted to see his soulmate's name on his rib as he tend to neglect its presence upon his body.

He couldn't simply say that he didn't want to have a soulmate because it might hurts her feelings, especially not after she was delighted to have him as her prime minister again. It took several minutes for him to utter his thought after the silence consumed her curiosity of his mind; why it took him so long to say that Victoria is his soulmate? She wondered.

"Your Majesty, forgive me if I may sound uncourteous however I noticed that you're a deviant, correct me if I'm wrong, Ma'am." He may sounded like interrogate a culprit however he didn't know where to begin. All he wanted to do is prove that his assumption is correct so they could move on to the other question he has prepared before. The questions may all directed to her personal life and thoughts but he wouldn't hesitate if Victoria ask the same things to him. He would oblige her with honest answers as they've decided they won't to lie to themselves. He saw Victoria startled by the question, he merely shrugged because he only wanted to confirm his observation. Her brows furrowed and a dry chuckle escaped from her tainted lips,

"I thought you've already known about it, Lord M." She answered with confusion laced on its words, arms folding and sounded defensive. Lord Melbourne exhaled an heavy breath as he shrugged, once again.

"Well, I'm afraid I cannot conclude my assumption if I don't have a satisfied answer since I couldn't see a soulmate's name on your body, except it is on your secretive places." He didn't look her face, his voice smoothed as he articulated the word 'secretive' because there's no visible soulmate's name like Lydia's in her neck. Perhaps it is only could be seen if she was bare without clothes. She cleared her throat and she made herself relax, not showing any indication of apprehension.

"Yes, Lord M. I am a deviant and my soulmate's name appeared on my left rib." Her voice stitched, fingers playing mindlessly as Lord Melbourne nodded his head several times; It is appeared on the same place as his. Uncanny enough because their soulmate marks appeared on their rib like the story of Adam and Eve. He remembered that the story began with God created the first human named Adam who was lonely because he doesn't have a companion in his life thus He created Eve by using his rib and make them as partners in life. He didn't believe in God however some force as made them like Adam and Eve. They would fallen into its sin just like Adam and Eve that were driven by its temptation given the Devil and live in the midst of their self-destruction. He would make sure they wouldn't fallen into the temptation of becoming as one. Not in this life.

"May I ask about your soulmate's name, Ma'am?" He inquired once again, hoping that it is not his name because it will ease his burden for a little. However part of wished it is his name so he would have an explanation of his existence albeit he had proclaimed she is the reason of his existence in this life. Victoria bent forward, searching for his hands and took it; affection could be seen in her
eyes as her thumbs caressing his palm, comforting his anxiety and confusion, she replied it with a sincere and some of tranquility answer,

"It is William and I do believe it is your name," Her eyes fixated upon his palm; callous yet so soft for her, she was mesmerized, "I have never encounter a man named William until I met you, Lord M."

He swallowed hard, mind was focusing on her statements rather than the psychical contact betwixt them as she took his hands and kiss his palms. He jolted, unfamiliar with its tenderness and he abruptly took his hands away from her and he received a bewildered expression from her and he coughed audibly, he felt awkward all of sudden.

"I did not mean to offend you, Your Majesty. It's just...---- I need some time to process it, Ma'am."

He needed to fathom why he acting like an adolescent again, he had known she was his soulmate therefore the news shouldn't startle him as he have known they were born to complete each other. Victoria merely giving a nod upon his articulation and there was this uncomfortable silence hung on the air. She had told him that she never had met a William before she met him and he never met a Victoria before, however he realized it was his fault that he never learn his soulmate's name. Apprehensively, he stood and knelt in front of her; shed some of tears that have fallen from her eyes, murmuring his apologies because of his earlier behaviour to her. Victoria didn't flinch under his touch, rather took his affection to her heart as her small smile appeared, he kissed her hands and it lingered; none of them say anything as they lied there, hands intertwined as silent coos comforted her.

Months have passed by therefore he still visited the Palace as often as he could because he would not waste its opportunity to know her better because he knows his days were counted by the other matters that would require voting among the House of Lords and there's a possibility that it would not pass and he has to given his duty as a Prime Minister to Sir Robert Peel. She had enjoyed his company most of the time, they would ride in serene silence in the midst of familiarity, they would do small talks with such light-heated comments regarding the dispatches and usually followed by her chuckle and his attempt not to snort. They behaved like adolescent that have learnt they were in love however they keep its respectable distance between them as he sits across her yet they could stare into their souls more easily.

Sometimes there are intentionally light touches on her part as she incidentally brushed her fingers to his to make their feelings within them stirred. Victoria smiled upon this action as she watched his expression that was stiff and then softened, she wished this moment would never end therefore she intended not to finish all the dispatches within an afternoon and they would work longer than people expected. She would work on its time efficiency but she would not waste its moment with him, even though she would most likely feel his presence in everyday dinner but couple of eyes would stare at them and he'd be uncomfortable by the tranquility glance she given to him. They
remained oblivious when people talk about their friendship but they remain courteous when they start to converse about her future-marriage with a foreign prince.

Surely they would not compromise her togetherness with her Prime Minister, especially a disreputable Prime Minister.

Today was no different as they walked next to each other, stroll around the Palace as she found that she had no desire to ride this morning. He had been a superfluous partner to share opinions and laughter hence she had decided if she'd spend another lifetime with him, she would not find an objection for this. He told her stories of her ancestors that were being displayed on the walls of a long way hall and they stumbled upon an image of Elizabeth the First, they stopped as she began to talk,

"I am so plagued by uncles," He knew something was wrong because he had seen her chest that heaved when she starts to talk about yesterday's encounter with Lord Cumberland in the House of Lords as she given a speech that traditionally given when the monarch opens the Parliament, the people of London had greeted her with cries of 'God Save the Queen' and they've seen the Queen have grown with its tattered glory follows her as the people haven't forgotten the Lady Flora Hastings scandal and the Bedchamber crises which lead people think that their Queen have known her duty as a queen and shouting God Save the Queen with its excitement as they welcomed her outside of the House of Lords.

"My mother's brother, Leopold, has written to say that he's coming to visit." There was such despise laced in her voice as he had assumed that the King of Belgium would arrive with a prominent threat to ask her to marry. He couldn't help but articulate his temptation to tease her like it is the most regular thing to do with her in every meeting he has with her.

"And how delighted you look at the prospect." She gave him an amused look that was resulted because of his easy-liking humor and her attention was on the portrait once again as she explained her uncle's purpose of visit, "He wants to lecture me on how it is my duty to get married."

So soon, he thought. His body tensed at the thought of giving her to a foreign prince she'd most likely married in this lifetime. The sudden, uncertainty protectiveness had consumed him as he rebuked, "Not all queens marry, Ma'am." They both observed the portrait as his words have its own room in her mind, she shall bear that thought of reign alone.

"Do you think she was lonely?"

"I believe she found companions." Whether she understood the meaning of his word, he had to
quipped it; she clearly knows nothing about intimate activity shared by a woman and a man but she might misinterpret its meaning.

"Do you think she was one of us?" The word 'us' stung on them painfully, thinking that the previous Queen in front of them was one of a deviant. He shrugged, he had heard the gossips therefore he shall not think that it is the reason why she remained alone.

"Some people hearsay she was. Therefore you understand I'm not particularly fond of gossips, let alone scandals but I've heard she was one of us."

"Then I am not the first queen that hide such information to people." Her smile brighten his sorrowful day, therefore he returned the same, "Well, I have no intention of marrying at present." She casted a glance on him with certainty on her voice and Lord Melbourne wanted to confront her with affection he would give because he was grateful she'd utter it; his soulmate still wants to spend a time with him.

"I have not seen so many happy marriages. Whether it is because of love or their obligations to please certain people," She continued as she clasped her hands in front of her, "Well, some of them marry because they could not escape it."

He dissipated an heavy exhalation because she tended to dwell on its topic but he knew she would be upset nonetheless, "Marriage is such a complicated issue to talk about it out loud and I believe you have no desire to talk about it further, Ma'am."

"At the moment but we shall talk about this in the future. I don't want to see our mutual obligations as a burden for us, Lord M." She brushed her fingers to his and she received another ambivalent simper of his.

"Neither am I, Ma'am, Neither am I." They shared a complementary look as the Baroness came to them, announced that Lord Melbourne is needed at the House. He left, vanishing to the crowd of respectable men that are equivocate their concern about a new uprising, called themselves as Chartists meanwhile her mind and life was troubled by Kind Leopold's constant belittle comments to her

He arrived at the Palace the next morning with a thoughtful mind regarding the recent event
happened that resulted deaths to commoners. Lord Melbourne was greeted by not only his monarch, but also with her faithful companion. They conversed about how brusquely her uncle talk about her foreseeable marriage with her cousin, Albert. He noted she was not in mood for peep talk therefore he shall enlighten her mood whilst trying to control his own emotions to not reacting badly of the topic. He had not claimed her however he felt he should be concern about this Albert that people want to be her husband in this lifetime.

"I do not think marriage between first cousins is wise, Ma'am." He deadpanned, she look at him with such unpredictable expression yet he knew she knows his sudden protectiveness, she shortled upon this

"There is no need to look so worried, Lord M! I told him it would never do." There was uneasiness within him but he believed her today. Beside his intention to see her coping with Leopold's presence in the Palace, he also wanted to inform his concern regarding a group that would most likely could endanger his monarch. Her laughter ceased as he talked about this uprising and he noted she could differentiate their previous banter and the issue; she had grown for better. They talked about the movement for couple of minuets as he do the most of talking to make her fathom the situation their country currently face and its effect to their government, they talked in seriousness but sometimes he would bluntly articulate something that would make her snort coyly.

When they stopped talking about the uprising, she changed the subject to her activities she will do in the evening to honour King of Belegium's visit. She asked him if he'd come tonight with her to the opera but he reminded him that the Grand Duke of Russia will also present this evening. It will be unwise for her to be impartial this evening but she needed him, at least for some curtsy. They made comments regarding the Russian's capability to please her with his company as well dance therefore she disapproved, saying that he's no substitute for Lord Melbourne. He was flattered, she was flirting with him and something within him clutching in anticipation. He shall not waste the moment before the foreign prince would steal her time.

If an opera could reflect her emotions tonight, that would be the opera that tells you a story about a girl that had gone mad because she couldn't marry as she pleases and is being forced to marry someone else in an arranged marriage. She could tell that her emotions overwhelmed her as she makes a scene in her mind if she was being forced to marry Albert. Would she gone mad? Would she be lost? Her tears fallen and there's no one to shed it but only could be a subject to stare by the Grand Duke. He seemed understand the situation as he also being forced to marry immediately.

"The mad scene always makes me cry." She told the Russian that attentively watching her rather than the stage and she could feel Lord Melbourne's eyes find hers as they share a lingered looks; Would I be gone mad if Uncle Leopold keep forcing me to marry Albert? Her blue eyes told him
During the intermission, Lord Melbourne excused himself to greet some of companies he had seen in the lobby whilst Victoria talking with the Grand Duke of Russia; they talk about the soulmate subject which brought an attention for the Grand Duke himself,

"Do you believe in the soulmate story, Imperial Highness?" She inquired as she took a champagne and sipped it quietly as she observed his reaction; he perked an eyebrow,

"I have no reason to believe it. However I do believe that we share the same thing with that story---we cannot marry people as we please." He put his hands behind his back and smiled attentively hence the queen smiled upon the articulation; he was right. After few minuets, Prince George of Cambridge that seemed rushed to be with her; interrupting her time with a person that could fathom her condition very well. She was aware that the man was not fond of opera hence she asked if he enjoyed the previous scene. Obviously, he lied and she knew he didn't enjoy it, rather bore him however he couldn't vocalize it. The music was playing again and it brought attention for them, she was anxious to see the next part as she quickly sit upon the seat and the Russian besides her. Lord Melbourne joined them afterwards but his eyes only locked upon the woman's figure; he was watching how much she looked dashing and relaxed when she was watching an opera.

It is different than the Victoria he knew; she looks bluntly different tonight yet has the same persona, he couldn't help to stare her back when she glanced from her shoulders to see him. She felt secure when she caught him staring at her, smiling charmingly.

If only a person could watch their affection empowering them, it is King of Belgium. They hadn't known they were being watch however he brought that conversation on their way home to the Palace. King Leopold and the Queen were on the same carriage, she couldn't escape but to entertain her uncle however fortunately she had Dash on her lap that could be an excuse of her misplaced attention; she knew King Leopold would press her to marriage her cousin, Albert nevertheless she didn't expect he would bring Lord Melbourne to their conversation; how dare he?

She wasn't prepared to answer questions regarding her relationship with Lord Melbourne. The only thing she learnt about them was their mutual obligation and the serene affection she couldn't quietly comprehend.

"You do not, I hope, imagine that your Lord M could ever be more than your prime minister?"

He used her petname for Lord Melbourne. No one has ever called him that besides her, it is an insult for her to have something precious she could cherish be jeopardized by her Uncle.
"I will not dignify that suggestion with an answer." Her voice vaguely raised hence he sensed her defensive to the man they talked about.

"Then as one sovereign to another, I would advise you to be careful." He articulated and demonstrated her reign so far by a candle; he lit a fire to a candle, reflecting the fire within her that waiting to be shunned by the mere wind blows that could easily shake her. Unfortunately, she's not a candle, she's a woman and a queen who understands her obligations and duty; she's not a mere uncontrollable fire that waiting to be lighted off. Her emotions might be fickle but she has someone who willingly to advise her.

It had been few days since the last time they had gone out for the usual ride after their disposal of taking care the boxes, she had missed the amiable atmosphere of being outside since the Chartists had taken the best interest of their daily conversation hence they've doubled the security for the Queen which made no room for the soulmates to talk freely or do whatever they wished because there's always someone following them behind. For instance, today Lord Alfred and several men followed their ride; Lord Alfred exhorted the Queen not to ride however Victoria rejected bluntly.

The exquisite view consumed her needs to see the outside world beside the Palace and she was glad that her prime minister would accompany her that sunny afternoon in the large landscape garden surrounded by tall trees that could make their presence so little because sometimes the view could be eerie in the evening however could be friendly in afternoon. Several people passed with their horses and made Victoria acknowledge the public would see their routine of having little talk whilst riding therefore she began the conversation with the first thing that had come to her mind, she would mention the opera they had seen last night in order to amuse their guest, King Leopold and the Grand Duke and ask his comfortably last night. She peered at his face when her hands tighten unto the lease of her horse as she quipped,

"Did you enjoy Lucia last night?" She inquired, her gaze fallen to his visage that has somehow an amusing yet peculiar smile appeared upon his lips as he replied rather quickly and frank; she loves how much he would vocalize the first thing that would come to his mind rather than taking a certain amount of silence due to apprehension,

"It's not Mozart, Ma'am." That received a small yet irrefutable snort from her as she tried to ignore his infamous argument regarding the things she loved after Dash, drawing and dancing, he noticed about that thus he was the one who asked a question about her enjoyment last night, "And you? You seemed well attended." Obviously she was, he had observed her throughout the evening but he would occasionally caught her slyly glance cast to him to check his presence, which was comforting because Victoria also want to see if Lord Melbourne was also entertained by the opera just like the Grand Duke and the King.
"The Grand Duke is amusing. It is refreshing to have someone who understands the cares of my position. But he's too foreign to be entirely comfortable," Too foreign to be entirely comfortable because his presence was a mere threat for his uncles, Leopold and Cumberland. They wanted their proteges to be Victoria's husband and he acknowledge their intention so he asked about Prince George whom attended their box last night, intrude her conversation with the Grand Duke.

"He's so pleased with himself." He heard irritation in evasive way within her tone as the man they currently converse seemed to be self-assured hubris therefore he couldn't blame her if it does irk her and it brought laughter to him as his cackles dissipated,

"I think he'd like to be a candidate for your hand. An English marriage would be very popular." He articulated his observation regarding the apparent rivalries among the Grand Duke, Prince George and perhaps Albert soon in the future. He tried so hard not to think the time would come sooner than he expected and he shall enjoy the last bit of their moment together hence he wanted to avoid to bring the marriage subject to the conversation however it seemed to be inevitable. As she listened to his last remark, it piqued her attention as her gaze locked upon his,

"An English marriage?"

"Would go down very well." Lord Melbourne answered and try not to retract as he saw her funny-looking smile beamed.

They rode in quietly couple minuets later as both of them shared the meaningful yet lingering look and they noticed they'd be fine in another lifetime.

If they could not be together in this lifetime.

Which Victoria doubted because an idea popped to her mind.

She had doubted if her feelings for her prime minister was an admiration for him, a feeling she supposed to feel to her soulmate but she tried to fathom if her love for the man was a real one, and she had concluded that perhaps it is real. Perhaps it is not created by God that they should've liked each other, perhaps it is within her that built the admiration to love; perhaps it is created by her, not by the God. Victoria would love to know if she could differentiate it but it is mixed, it cannot be described with mere words but she fathom it was real for her.
Victoria glanced to her back and she saw Lord Alfred and his men were following them behind with certain gap so they couldn't hear them clearly as she hoped to be therefore she whispered, in a very low and thoughtful voice,

"Do you remember when we argued, I told you that we are soulmates and we should become friends?"

He raised his eyebrows upon the query as she confidently searching for his eyes; looking for the memories that laced in his eyes as he remembered their bicker, her emotions still mesmerized him because he knew she was talking about their obligation, once again. He merely nodded, swallowed as his mind trying to decipher her enigma, what's she trying to say, what does she want, what does she want to say about it. They continued to walked as uncertainty silence made him uncomfortable, as it seemed the queen was trying to make an absolute endearing sentence and when she spoke, it startled him,

"I wouldn't mind to become your friend in this lifetime, or another lifetime. I would cherish our friendship because apparently, I rather grateful that God had made you as my companion. Imagine if Prince George is my soulmate, I rather be sent to the tower than be stuck with him in so many lifetime because I know, I wouldn't accept my fate that so easy!" She chortled, her laughter was an easy lighthearted as her statement included jokes in it.

She was grateful that she'd be stuck with him in so many lifetimes and it startled him, because he also would enjoy her company in so many lifetime.

"You flatter me, Ma'am. Certainly you wouldn't forget that men are so easy to be flattered, especially if it is come from a young woman such as you."

"Now you make yourself sound like an old man again! I forbid you to talk in that way, Lord M."

"I found that hard to accept because I do feel like an old man but I will try."

"Good, I don't want you to remind me how much old you are."

"Ouch, that hurts, Ma'am."

Their banter resulted laughter from both of person as they realized they'd cherish their obligation,
their identity as deviants rather than see it as people would see it as burden and alienated them.

The day was very windy when they had gone from the Palace to the place that she would dedicate a monument for her father's memories albeit she never had a pleasure to know him better than most of people would say every time she'd ask about her father. She hadn't gotten the opportunity to know him in person hence she could only live in memories that don't have her existence on it.

The crowd surrounded them, joining them as they watched their young queen vaguely standing beside her prime minister whilst her eyes scanning through the crowd; noticing the amount of soldiers present in the area and made an apparent space to differentiate the Royalties and the Commoners. She found it odd because the security is quiet unusual and allude something unpleasant would be fallen to her. Victoria moved a tad to her prime minister and murmured softly so she couldn't be heard by the soldiers; she didn't want to offend the soldiers who were doing their duty to protect their Queen even though she feels it little be extravagant. She was wearing blue dress and unmistakably her prime minister also wear the same colour therefore the women started to chatter about it.

"I am afraid there may be some disturbance from the Chartists, Ma'am. Since Newport, the movement has grown in strength."

She perked her eyebrows as she was startled by his articulation whilst her eyes peering upon the women who probably converse about their queen who appeared matched her prime minister, she gripped her dress due to her speculation, "Do Chartists wear bonnet?" Her voice was serene but there was unpleasant tone laced as she continued to articulate her observation therefore Lord Melbourne gazed at the women his queen mentioned and commented playful,

"Some Chartists do believe that women should have the vote, Ma'am." He graced a simper and Victoria noticed it, she returned the smile with the same movement as rebuked, her statement was also quick witted as his. They stood in silence as they waited for the perfect moment to present the monument Victoria dedicated to the late Duke of Kent, they spend most of brief seconds watching the crowd that started to go restless, hence Lord Melbourne stared at his queen blankly; cherish the moment he could share with her because perhaps it would not last that long before she goes. He had realized the woman had grown, beside number but also maturity. She continually surprising with her unpredictable action however he had grown to it.

He had grown with her as she had grown with him too.
Her figure was idyllic as she speak, giving a speech about her father with fondness and sadness as she mentioned she had never gotten a chance to know her father personally but she knew he'd be grateful people would remember him as he should be remembered. There was love, familial bond love she never experienced however she was swiftly articulate with great admiration. Victoria smiled, trying to recreate an image of her father painting as he'd smile upon her as she turned around, two men abruptly approaching her as if there was a competition going on therefore makes the scene looks ridiculous and embarrassing. She rather walk alone, with each steps remembering the possible smile her father would cast for her as she turned them both, awkwardly they retreated. Lord Melbourne snorted upon the view as he tried to hide his smile, compassing his stature and walked near the monument.

Her gloves delicately touch the blue silk as her eyes fixated upon the crowd with the sweetest smile she could ever beam and her assumptions were come in reality.

Men and women were shouting, the soldiers commanded the men to stand back with their weapon and there was perplexed feelings reflected on her eyes as she watched the scene; she couldn't comprehend why would they insult her father's memories with unpleasant violence shouts, she was petrified. Her hand was reaching for some kind assurance that she was alright as her mind was still mesmerized however as the familiar voice woken her, she realized she was perfectly fine but bewildered. Her breaths were short, her hands were sweating through the gloves as warm hands took hers. Lord Alfred was escorting her out but her eyes were fixated upon his, she needed him.

He remain stiff beside the monument as he watched the event took place, his queen was carried out and the people still shouting freedom for the traitors. He wanted to know if violence would erupt, take a note that Chartists is a threat for the country however his attention was intrude by King Leopold's voice, wishing if he could talk to him right now. Lord Melbourne rejected however the King insisted, the matter could not wait any longer therefore his attention was broken; he wanted to learn about the Chartists but so it seemed the urgency of his Majesty's marriage is more important than threat to the monarchy itself.

He bluntly uttered her reign was troubled and Lord Melbourne was irritated by it. The arrival of the King was unpleasant for both of them as he continued to talk about marriage would steady her reign.

He wished the King would stop making comments based on unreliable observations.

"It is more important, I think, that she chooses wisely."

They were talking about her future, the future she'd build without the God's consent as the story recited that no one can interrupt the God's plan as they've bounded to them by the mark that appeared on their body. He wanted to inform him that he could not establish the plan for her to
marry Albert due to the fact Victoria was a deviant that has met her soulmate whom apparently her prime minister. He wanted to say it however he acknowledge he would deny it, as he supposed to be because he would never believe a disreputable man's words. the King would throw accusations that could make her reign more troubled and Lord Melbourne does not want that to happen to her.

the King indirectly hinted his unlikeness to the man as he spoke about age.

If God could make them as soulmates even though their age differences is unwavering, people should've rationalized it. Lord Melbourne dismissed the statement completely as he continued to speak in his point of view that lead to the King pleaded the Viscount to persuade the young woman to marry her cousin.

the Viscount believed the King may have exaggerate his influence to the Queen but he muttered, "I have seen the way my niece looks at you."

He realized the world has known their feelings better than them.

She couldn't sleep that night because her mind was still occupied by the previous event that taken place this noon as she unveiling her father's memorial. Her body was less trembled but her mind was still troubled. Their shouts were more like lampoon to her ears as she remembered her fear made their demands obfuscate. As far as she could recollected, they demanded freedom for the Chartists, their shoutings were inarticulate as her attention was driven from the man's assurance tainted in his green-eyes to warmth on her body as she felt Lord Alfred escorted her from the inevitable riot. She was confused by the fact she glanced over her shoulder, he hadn't followed her lead to disappear from the demonstration. He remained and she was petrified, that fool was staying behind to assure the queen the traitors would not harm him. The situation was dangerous for her however it was not dangerous for him, she wondered if he was afraid if she decided to stay with him; watching the uprising throwing tantrums to them, demanding the impossible and use violence to put a pinnacle on the event.

Hours after hours, she waited impatiently for his arrival in the palace to assure her that he was perfectly alright with no harm befallen to him however it never came. She was irrefutable she started to anxiously pacing in the room as her ladies watching her movements, pitying the woman because her mind was clouded by fear of losing the man for the second time, however much worse than resign. They tried to appease their queen whom expressed her disapproval on her prime minister's message that came minuets ago to inform her that the rioters had been disbanded, the provokers were arrested, the women whom had nothing to do with the event had been escorted home and reported there was no injured civilians. He informed he could not attend the dinner tonight because he had some matters to do with the rioters as he would questioning them, talk senses to them and conclude the punishment they'd receive for treaty and interrupting an official
event. She wanted to contact him however her ladies made sure that she'd see him after, couple
days from now because it does take a long time to investigate that kind of organization.

At least she knew he was perfectly sound and safe, she reminded herself. Her fingers were ghosting
on the telescope he had given to her in her last birthday, she remembered he'd love to see her to
study heaven. Fathom the definition of heaven she created in her mind as they both looking,
searching for that place in the sky. The stars were burned out, they were sparkling in the midst of
darkness and her eye searching for the brightest one so she could say, "That's our heaven." to the
air as if she was talking to him.

She put the telescope near to her heart as she felt there was an invisible string connected to his heart
as her eyes caught glimpses of the man's features that night. She was startled, she let out a small
yelp. She saw him, uneasy and restless. His mind seemed to be troubled as she was and his papers
don't intrigue him that much. She reached out, her fingers reaching to caress the man's visage and
when she reached out to the air, the view changed to darkness engulfed her. Victoria was startled,
she closed her eyes and when she opened it; he wasn't there anymore but she felt his presence
beside her.

As peculiar as unexpected it was, she was certain she could sleep that night as the familiarity
accompany her to sleep.

Her ladies were worried about their queen's well being as she was rather quiet than usual. She
sipped the tea quietly, didn't say anything that could humour them as the usual days so Harriet
exclaimed something that could bring their queen's mind present to them, "I trust you've recovered
from yesterday, Ma'am. The impudence of the Chartists." Hatred and dislike could be heard
therefore Victoria commented which startled them because of her observation,

"I thought they looked hungry, rather than dangerous." The images of people screaming in high
tone, the disheveled visages she saw yesterday; there was rage but weak, they were hungry and
starving rather than planning to harm them. She realized her fear was misplaced, it wasn't fear for
the wrath of her subjects, it was fear to not fathom of what they want from her. She was shocked,
obviously and blamed everything to the rioters when she was apprehensively couldn't please her
subjects with their demands. it also mixed with fear of seeing her soulmate for the last time
because apparently, he hadn't come today nor try to contact her. Does he really need the solitude of
not seeing her even though she knew, he also could see the glimpses of her last night. This
morning, she woken up with heavy eyes as she tried so hard to project what she saw last night; the
man's appearance but it didn't come.
She desperate for his presence, she stood and went to the windows; searching for the glimpses, "Where's Lord M? I thought he should be here by now. Is he indisposed?"

Harriet answered her quickly and she inquired once again however it was Emma that answered the queen's query, "He has gone to Brocket Hall."

Brocket Hall, he wasn't at the Dover House but had gone to Brocket Hall. She remembered vividly he had mentioned Brocket Hall several occasion and she had articulate her wish to see the country home of Lamb family but he replied it with a mere joke, "I think it would be unwise for you to visit me, it could be misconstrued and I have nothing to offer you in Brocket Hall beside empty, hallowing halls."

He had nothing to offer to her in Brocket Hall but she has one to offer in Brocket Hall.

A large English manor come to her sight as the blasting street of London have gone from her view; it was serene and peaceful. It reminded her of Kensington, no, it is different because the atmosphere is so different; it is more welcoming than the excruciating, lonely memories of the infamous childhood of hers. When they arrived in front of the building, she exited the first and then Lady Portman. The butler was confused by their arrival as his employer had instructed he'd not receive any guest that day because he doesn't tell anyone. Emma spoke with the butler whilst Victoria was pacing, thinking and half-planning what she should say, what should do, how should she express her feelings and vision that came to her last night. The butler directed them to the path where the Viscount currently hiding from the rest of the world and Lady Portman gave her queen a meaningful and confident look, Victoria realized she was part of her little rendezvous and she might get trouble from it however she remain royal to her. Victoria casted a small, apprehensive smile to her as she continues without her guidance.

The trees were hallow but comforting, it is uncanny that she felt safe surrounded by unfamiliarity but her steps were incessant. She took bold steps, tugging to the fabric of her dress close to her rib as she felt burned passion written on her, convincing she'd be fine and could articulate everything she had felt about him; it is unexpected but beautiful. The scenery was affable as it gave compassion to her. It was a long walk but she spotted him, resting on the monument as his gaze fixated upon the sky. As it seemed, he also study the definition of heaven they'd receive one day just like what she did last night, star-gazing and searching for their heaven in the night.

He must've heard her steps as he turned his head from the sky to see her figure. Lord Melbourne was startled because the glimpses of her figure came to reality as he abruptly stand up, trying to regain his composure and welcoming the unexpected.
She raised her veil that covered most of her visage, an artlessness smile appeared upon her brims as mellifluous voice she missed greeted her, "Oh, It is you, Ma'am. I couldn't tell." He must've forgotten his manners to welcoming an unexpected guest that apparently a monarch however she was here incognito and she expected she'd not be treated as a sovereign today, especially when she wanted to say she comes to Brocket Hall as a woman whom had a humane feelings. He acknowledge he should've told her he would not come to her, after King Leopold's statement echoing, interrupting and questioning his sanity. He hadn't gotten proper sleep last night as he wondered, could he differentiate the real feelings of love for her and the feelings that God created for him because she's his soulmate. He couldn't fathom how, but he was aware the obligation was not a reason for his feelings and the unexplained event that occurs this morning as he woke up in his seat with feeling of warmth and someone searching for him, it was unexpected just like her presence today.

They talked a bit about the reason he had gone to Brocket Hall as their eyes caught dark, menacing yet amiable birds perched high on the hallowing trees as he compared human beings to their little friends that let out remorseful voice which reassuring them they're not dreaming. She smiled, her attention diverted from the rooks to him; Victoria noticed he didn't wear cravat beneath his colourful big coat, he loosened his shirt as there was no necktie to glamoured his appearance, he seemed to appear relax and unprepared but she loved this sight: she learnt she'd spend eternity with a man that tries to be relax as he could be in his own house. She was silent for a moment as she remembered what she was trying to say and vaguely speaks, "I'm sorry to disturb you, Lord M. But I had to talk to you,"

She took big, bold steps as she approaching him even closer, he replied with confirmation of his comfort, "Brocket Hall is honoured, Ma'am."

"I've come here incognito, of course,"

"Of course. But your presence cannot entirely disguised." He moved, following her steps to be closer with a sly smile that relaxing her hesitancy. They stared each other for a moment, she fathom she supposed to speak something but she wanted to remember this sight of him forever, probably in next lifetime he'd not appeared untidy and unprepared and the familiar sensation burning within them.

"Yesterday, I realized something."

His hands were in front of him, approaching and wanting to reach out for her hands to assure her he'd not turn away from her and he'd listen to her. He was in peak of tumult within him however he try to be acceptable in the outside as he tried to forget that he was also anxious about everything.
"I think perhaps now... I'm speaking as a woman, and not as a queen." He swallowed hard, her mind was wondering how he'd react about her next articulation however she remained to calm and regal as she taught to be by so many people; she has the courage and the regal composure no one actually has, "At the beginning, I thought you were the father I never had."

He wanted to chuckled on that, he also felt he was a father of a daughter he never experienced as his little daughter gone from his arms that quick but she continued to speak, "But now, I feel--- I know, you are the only companion I could ever desire."

The only companion she could ever desire.

She had never experienced what love truly is but she was certain, he was the only companion she could ever desire. She had accepted their fate to be together, she had accepted the terms that would come to them in so many lifetimes if he decided to put his duty beside their mutual feelings that built by this unfortunate circumstances of them being a queen and a prime minister. She was certain that she had foreseen the future they'd have together.

He could fathom the difference of his true feelings for her to the uncanny euphoria within him. He wanted to cherish her, honour her, respect her and become someone that she desired to be. He wouldn't change unless she wanted him to be because she was his soulmate, he'd do anything to make her comfortable by the inevitable fate they shared together.

They couldn't run away but accept their fate as Victoria had accepted him as her soulmate whilst he was still trying to learn to accept his identity. Perhaps with her guidance, he could embrace it with open arms.

How ironic the table had turned, she was his advisor in this certain matter whilst he was more experienced than she is in love matter but due to her artlessness and inexperienced; they believed it is pure and hadn't been tainted by forlorn reality.

However, reality succumb his rational mind and he set aside the little fantasy that had taken tool on his kind for couple of minuets as they stood in silence, admiring each other courage to be blunt about their feelings, her eyes searching for his but he avoided to see the future he'd have that reflected in her eyes, he couldn't see it and deny the all possibilities they could have in this lifetime. Hope is merely an imagination created by those who believe in society would change rapidly according to their wishes because they're only additional for their theatrical however the situation was different, as the deviants are scared to be alienated by those who aren't deviants--- they will have another secret. They couldn't.
Not in this circumstances.

Lord Melbourne held Victoria's hands that were being covered by gloves rather delicately, fingertips stroking her wrist bone and searching for her pulse underneath the silk fabric of hers, he counted how many time her pulse beating under his fingers as his beating for hers. His gaze was serene and doleful, her eyes searching for clarity he often offer to her however it wasn't there thus she realized he was reassuring her; everything will be alright however you wouldn't. In that moment, you'd acknowledge the pain you shouldn't never received and experienced but I couldn't let you be blinded by it. There are duties and desires, we should put duty first as we must serve our country. I never wanted any of this however my heart was not following my rationality, it does beating for you but we couldn't, we shan't follow our desire in this lifetime.

His eyes were telling her that, her emotions was implacable and she could feel her eyes starting to wet and she felt rather dull and empty within her. He shouldn't say anything that would make her feel the excruciating pain however she couldn't read his mind, even though she fathom he'd reject her politely in this lifetime.

She couldn't bear to hear it. He opened his mouth to speak, his voice was rough as if he was betraying himself to articulate the words; it didn't soothe her fear, "Did you know that... that rooks mate for life? Every year, they build their nest together, renew all those little civilities that... make marriage sparkle. I think we could learn much from them."

They could learn much from little creatures that become a symbol of their love. Their love; they mated for life, in this lifetime.

She wanted to reach out for his face, placing her hands on his face to comfort him; she knew it was impossible to refuse but he tried, he tries so bad to convince her. Their feelings is mutual but he tries to hide it. She feels like a fool and he feels like a fool, they both are fools.

"If I had just spent more time watching the rooks my wife would feel more attended to." His voice, hurt indirectly verbalized. If he had been able to accept his fate, he'd not torment Caroline, their children. If he had acknowledge it, he'd not give heartache for them however if he hadn't, he'd not feel guilty. Guilty for everything. He felt guilty for make Caroline and their children suffer because God condemn their relationship and he felt guilty because he couldn't articulate that he never had accept his fate to be with her. If he could only be honest for her, this time.

Her mouth trembles, her grip more stronger than his as she tried to intertwined their fingers, she wanted to comfort him just like he did to her years, months ago, "She should never left you, I would never do such thing."
She wouldn't, he knew she would never leave him brokenhearted; he was aware she's not capable of doing so. His little queen, as lovely as she is, she couldn't give her heart to him in this lifetime. She deserved better and perhaps in another lifetime, he'd be a better person and he would be worthy to deserve her.

"I believe when you give your heart, it will be without hesitation. But you cannot give it to me."

I'm not worthy for your love.

"I think you have it already."

You deserve my love.

"No, you must keep intact for someone else. I have no use for it, you see, like a rook; I mate for life."

He let go of her hands that intertwined to his, his face was sombre and hers was forlorn. She could see the pain reflected within his eyes; memories of brokenhearted soul, the pains he had to endure for years before she came to his life; she fathom he had experienced so much tragedy and he let himself become one of it. Victoria took several steps back, hands were still trembling and her eyes couldn't contain the teardrops that wanted to fall from her eyes, she had to accept his decision.

It took a brief moment for them to stare, observe each other pain that written on their visages. They've lied to themselves. They've betrayed themselves. She swallowed hard, she wanted to say something that'd change their lives for the second time,

"Lord Melbourne, would you have the honour of becoming my husband, in another lifetime?" She inquired, her voice cracked even though she tried to remain calm.

He didn't reply, but she knew the answer.

He would.

Because it is his pledge.
The Measure of Things

Chapter Summary

She was his Elizabeth and he was her Leicester

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The Ballad of a Dying Man

Victoria doesn't belong to me thus the story has an inaccuracy history.

Setting in Alternate Universe where only few people have soulmate and people who have soulmate consider as Deviant

This is only a work of fiction, solely a not profit fan work.

Written by Oulamorts.

Chapter Five;

The Measure of Things

Lord Melbourne didn't have to answer the question because she already knew what he would say if he had gotten an opportunity to utter it before mistakenly, disappeared to the uncomfortable thin air that had hyperventilating both of them. Their silence was already an answer of the unanswered query she had inquired before and it was excruciating as it was doleful because she couldn't bear to have the thoughts that slowly killing her. She knew his answer, she knew he didn't have to utter it
because they both know it is their obligation and nature to marry in order to book a safe, serene life in that place which belongs to them only if they decided to marry. She wondered, will they ever reach that place?

But she already knew they would, however; when will it be happened, that's the question she meant to ask. That's why she asked that silly question. Stupid, stupid Victoria! She mumbled to herself as each steps she took to run from the man were painful because it feels like she had been forsake him, forsake everything they had built before by a mere question that would swift everything they've established before. Once again, she felt little, belittled by the tall, hallowing trees that shunned her from the place. She hoped Brocket Hall would welcome her when she came to the place with such determination and passion however as it seems she's forbidden to visit the place in the first place because the beautiful, alluring place had been tainted by her mistake and memories that she could not simply forget nor neglect.

She could be silent, or even pretends as if it never happens in the first place, the question was never been inquired or been heard however it was real and it could alter their relationship in the future. If only she had been more deliberate, if only she had been considered the possibilities she'd endure, if only she had never been to Brocket Hall, if only she had never been thought of having him as a husband in this lifetime; none of this would happen and now she regrets everything. She regrets she ever detrimental to their impending relationship. Silly, stupid Victoria.

To marry her in another lifetime, it is his pledge and obligation to do so to break the curse that had befallen to them. To make them become as one in holy spirits, in front of God's eyes and surrender themselves to their creator's plan that He had designed once they were born into the world that full of forlorn people who couldn't accept their existence because they see it as a threat to humanity. Everything that's not logical or scientific has always been a threat to the humanity, religion has always been a reason for people to create chaos even though the intention of it was to make humans more civilized however, ironically it has become a threat for humanity and got institutionalized.

God has always been a threat to humanity, and every chosen people are also threats for them.

Her tears had fallen as she turned away from him, leaving him succumbing to his own sorrow and his little rooks that witnessed the most unfortunate couple that God ever created. Brocket Hall has always been a solitude for Lord Melbourne as it has solitary memories that destruct him piece by piece. The hallowing halls of an empty English manor, a residence of painful memories and reminder of his past mistakes. It always reminds of him people once he loved that had been eradicated by their creator because He had seen them as obstacles to establish his plan. It reminds him of Caroline, Augustus and his little daughter. Their lively, perennial memories of laughter echoing throughout the walls were replaced by an alacritous series of misfortunes; the silent cry that he never heard again after his daughter sleeps, his little boy gasping for the air for the last time as he clutched to his father's hands, his discovery of a lifeless body on the cold floor with colour red that decayed her beauty and vivacious soul.
They had gone for years and the residence had grown colder without their presences.

And it grows colder than before as the place has become a reminder of his last, long, lost love.

The place once again torment him again with a newfound painful memory, deride his purpose of continuing his life. Call him as a masochist if you would but he knew he could endure the pain once again. He had been there before and he expected the pain was less excruciating than before because he'd see her, he would see her buoyant, enchanting figure the next time he sees her because she's not dead yet, she's still alive and has a bright future ahead with his help until she decided she no longer needed his assistance or her future husband has to put an end to their relationship. However, it feels worse than he imagined to be. He thought could endure the pain of having a failing love although he hadn't never been able to vocalize out loud to his queen because his rationality always reminds him of his duty as a subject, not as a man.

The rooks now is all he has in Brocket Hall besides memories, they never judged nor shunned him for being a fool. They have become a reason for him to return, no matter how excruciating it is; the rooks never failed to comfort him.

She was suffering.

Victoria constantly reminds herself that she knew the answer of the question she asked in Brocket Hall, his answer is yes. Yes, I would have the honor of becoming your husband in the next life, I would become your husband no matter what the circumstance is because we are supposed to be together, we are belong to each other and love does not define our marriage; it's simply conventional if we have mutual feelings for each other because we both aware that love always grows afterwards, it always has.

She convinced to herself that her feelings for Lord Melbourne was real, and pure as it can be because she never had experienced such thing as vital as this but later on, she often lurking in the back of her mind if he doesn't feel the same way as she does. Her Lord M does not return her feelings back, her love was platonic. Obviously he's more experienced that she was in this matter because he had married before, his marriage was simply created because of his love with Caroline was real, his affair with several women were also love but short-lived, and surely he can differentiate real love, flings and obligation. He sees his love for the queen as an obligation, something he has to handle because he has to fulfill whatever their creator wants their relationship.
She shouldn't have worried much because having a soulmate was supposed to be a certainty in life and after life however she couldn't help but to think if he never actually feels the same.

Lord Melbourne has always been a man of rationality, duty and honor. He'd put his duty first than frivolous feelings, he will marry her in another lifetime because he couldn't see her suffering, couldn't see how many Victorias he will see in another lifetimes because of his selfishness; he couldn't see she has to suffer alone in darkness whilst he neglect her. No, Lord Melbourne is a good man, a good friend of Victoria and he will not let her succumb on her own. And that frightens her, what if he also seen his obligation as a burden just like the other sees it? Her nightmare of watching him sees her pure love as a burden; he will marry her because he was bounded by the unwritten law, not because of his desire to seek a sanctuary in afterlife with her. What if their definition of heaven is merely a metaphor of her unrequited love?

She cannot bear to think but her mind still mesmerized by the little ghost of hers that had said those sins to her ears. How dare she, doubting the love he has for her. If only she had stayed, listen to the answer he'd given to her in his own words; she'd not suffering as much as she currently was. However she just knew, he'd marry her in another lifetime because he was a man of his words, man of such compassion because he couldn't see her suffering. He could not see her suffering for eternity, because he was a good man, a kindhearted soul that'd do anything to make her happy. She was fortunate, she thought; she had him as her soulmate. He would not torture her, he wouldn't dare.

But he did, with a metaphor of his rooks that indicated her that he's still mated for his late wife, Caroline. Whether it is his intention or not, she felt insulted. If only he had waited for his Victoria, he'd not suffer that long for the falseness of his decision. If only he had accepted his fate, he'd not torment himself over and over again.

Her fool, she loves him that much to see his face betraying his mind as she saw him, losing his sanity in the darkness of memories. Perhaps it is her salvation to see him also suffering because of it. She tugged the pillow hard and the glimpses of her salvation disappeared as footsteps could be heard entered the room she currently in.

She wished she could be alone, just like her soulmate.

She had informed him the costume she would wear this evening days ago after she decided she'd held a costume ball in honor of the Grand Duke and King Leopold's visits. She showed her interest of seeing herself in reflecting as the first deviant queen, the late Queen Elizabeth and he reluctantly emphasizes the idea because he was afraid of what people might think of its uncanny parallel that
somehow answer the public's question whether they will celebrate a royal wedding or not. But his words didn't mean to be hurtful as it supposed to be because he told her she'd look dashing, as she always be.

Now, when she looks in the prospect of becoming the second Virgin Queen, she wished she could cancel the idea of dressing up as her however she could not retract it so easily.

He was right, she looks dashing and alluring with her Elizabeth costume and blonde wig but she felt she couldn't entertain the idea of being alone, just like the first deviant queen. She sees through her reflection; loneliness and despondency because she was irrefutable she would not marry anyone else besides her soulmate, she wouldn't. As uncivilized her decision is, she will not marry anyone else. She will reign alone, with companions that will comfort her in bed if she needs but she will not be comforted in emotional and supportive way. She will not marry, she won't. She will make sure she won't.

Lord Melbourne hadn't arrived to the Palace but his beautiful tropical flowers have arrived in her place. They are delicate, tiny and weak but surely have beauty within it, his little creatures have always its meaning and she never wants to know the meaning of the beautiful flowers. Rooks reminds him of Caroline, and she didn't want to indulge in the idea of acknowledge these beautiful flowers are also a reminder of his love to Caroline. These flowers deserve better than to be forgotten in corner of her eyes because she was tormenting herself and doesn't want to have a contact with her soulmate for the rest of the evening, if he would dare to come even though he has an invitation but she just knew, they both need to be alone by themselves for awhile. She doesn't need another reminder of her unrequited love.

She felt numb as she studies her appearance with a thought of how she'd manage alone tonight without her Lord Melbourne. She didn't notice her alluring appearance as her mind was pretty occupied with the future she will have alone and when Lady Portman caught her standing in front of her mirror, she was ghastly enchanted, "How spendid you look, Ma'am.”

She doesn't feel beautiful at the moment, inside her, "Do you really think so ?"

Victoria saw Lady Portman didn't hear her question as those beautiful flowers caught her attention; she knew Lady Portman remembers something about those beautiful flowers because she's an old friend of Lord Melbourne and she's aware she might know some histories regarding the late Viscountess that accompany those flowers.

"What beautiful flowers! They are orchids! Where did they come from?” She asked, intrigued by the source of those beautiful flowers as she predicted she would ask about it.
"Brocket Hall," She was turning away, running away from the memories that corrupted such beautiful place, it feels sour to speak about Brocket Hall audibly.

"But I thought William had closed the greenhouses after Caro..." Lady Portman paused, obviously reading Victoria's mind because she was hesitated to speak about the dead wife of Lord Melbourne's; she fathom he was struggling about the death of his once loved wife and any reminder of his late wife simply eradicated because he doesn't need any reminder of his lovely memories about her, it will lives in his mind forever, "He must have opened again for you."

"I do not think he would do anything for me."

He would not do anything such to remind himself that orchids is a symbol of his another lost love.

Lady Portman's face softened upon her artlessness and impulsiveness; it's true what she had talked with Lord Melbourne about her at the Coronation Ball, she's impulsive and artless but she has a life ahead, "Do you know hard it is too grow orchids? You misjudged him, Ma'am."

Her demeanor was cold and harsh, the stigmatize of regal personality she carried in her voice, "He cares only for the memory of his wife."

"Is that what he told you?" Lady Portman rebuked, should be consider as a treaty to doubt her Queen's opinion but she continued, "Then that is what he wants you to believe."

Perhaps there's much more meaning of those beautiful flowers. After all, not everything is about Caroline and not everything is about Victoria too. Perhaps orchids have its hidden meaning she couldn't decipher or comprehend tonight,

Perhaps in the future. Her gaze fell to the ground, not everything has an explicit meaning.

He took the liberty of dressing as a lover of Queen Elizabeth which she currently wears tonight. If people fathom his costume, they will look scandalize and assume everything bad that would make her reputation decreased however for tonight, he doesn't care about hearsay that would fill their heads and call out names to the public. Lord Melbourne wants to make her understand why they can't be together, why they can't be as one in this lifetime like Elizabeth and her soulmate, Leicester. He came to the palace purposely late to make people's attention divert to anything beside
their choice of costumes and eventually, it does work because every men that want to be a
candidate of her suitor had round up in the corner, coincidentally he also standing close to the wall
as his eyes watching her dancing so gracefully with the Grand Duke; so regal and beautiful, his
Elizabeth today. Even though he had rejected her so bluntly, she still could smile and wave and
follows his previous advice: whenever there's something has irritates or had make her despair, she
shouldn't show it to the public, she must smile and wave. With his help or without his help.

He felt a presence beside him as his eyes still watching her movement and when the person spoke,
he averted his gaze to the person, "I hope the Queen has saved a dance for you." It was Emma, of
course, he always knows that his friend would learn everything so easily because she's his dear,
long friend. She knew everything is off tonight.

"She's busy tonight." He rebuked, not admitting their relationship had altered into something worse
than before. Lady Portman dryly scoffed on that, she had known him for a long time and she could
read that he was lying.

"She will have to marry one day, William." Her words had stung his heart, yes; Victoria will have
to marry one day and she will be married to someone else. The words shouldn't have hurt him but it
did nonetheless. He couldn't control his own feelings because it was planted and it had grown to
something beautiful yet fragile, just like orchids.

"Yes, she will. I just hope her husband will appreciate her."

He could not rest in peace knowing he had made a wrong decision to refuse her in this lifetime if
she gets someone who doesn't appreciate her as she deserves to be. His poor darling, she deserves
better than an ungrateful fool who refused her.

Lady Portman glanced to the dance players as the music stopped, the dance has finished but she
hasn't finished yet; she would lecture him because she never gets an opportunity to do so beside
pitying and accompany him while he was grieving about Augustus and Caroline, "Will you?"

Lord Melbourne's eyebrow arched in perplexed manner; of course he will, he will appreciate her,
cherish her even makes her as his own personal goddess however she caught him off-guard; his
mouth slightly agape in bewildered due to the fact she suggested he will become a husband for her
in this lifetime. He wanted to answer, he wanted to deny her however once again, he let silence
approval as an answer of the question. He will appreciate her as a wife, mother of their children, her
soulmate in another lifetime. His expression stiffened as Lady Portman gone from his view as he
searching for his Queen that had gone as music died with audacity and boldness.
He wanted to have the last dance because he owed her dance and an explanation.

"May I have the pleasure, Ma'am?"

She wasn't looking for him, she wasn't looking for him; her mind chanted those words for a brief moment however when the timbre voice broke her concentration to not be irritated by Prince George's comment about her height, she told herself not to be anxious and thrown her hands to his because she had missed him. She had missed their interaction and small gestures of affection. She will become an actress tonight and she will not entertain him, she will entertain herself by thinking she could live without him for the next decade; she could live alone. Her jaw tightened as she purposely looking for dance card, Prince George's name written on that but she knew this dance would be his.

"I think this one is free." Her voice, as leery as she pretended to be, her mind told her nothing harm could be inflicted by a mere dance, albeit they fathom it is more than a regular dance. It's a waltz, a romantic dance for a couple. He took her hands and standing so close to her and she was hypnotized by the feelings within her still purring even though a rejection was painful to make her forget the existence of that feelings. Her eyes avoiding his gaze, she feels like a fool to act like the way she never finds her prime minister attractive. Whilst she was still trying to ignore him, his gaze has its own way to hypnotize her. Those serene, unpredictable eyes that could express everything he thought. Their dance is so impede for her and she secretly wish it could last forever.

"Have you danced with George yet?"

Oh, her fool always knows this dance was supposed to be for George and yet he intrude in.

"He wants to dance with the Queen, not necessarily with me."

"Then he's more of a fool than I suspected." There was an anger, had he confessed to Lady Portman that he wants her future husband to appreciate her although she may not be perfect but she must be respected as a woman and a wife and a queen. His articulation caught her off guard, she finds it peculiar for her because he speaks as if only George that is a fool, he is also a fool to reject her.

You are also a fool, Lord M. She wanted to exclaim audibly so it could be heard by people surrounding them in this dim lighted ballroom but she chose another topic that had been bothering
her mind the rest of the evening, "I wasn't sure I would dance with you tonight,"

Whatever the reasons of him not attending tonight, she would find it reasonable however he appears and he's standing so close to her with hands clutching hers as if they were telling he would not turn her away. Did he regret of rejecting her, she wondered. It would make her less extenuating of offering an proposal that shouldn't be proposed in the first place. His amiable smile that encourage her to continue, she wished she could stare it as long as she needs to.

"It would be unkind for Elizabeth to refuse her Leicester."

Her obliviousness was telltale as she raised her eyebrows unknowingly regarding the information she received seconds ago. His voice wasn't cold as she was: there was affection and warmth, her usual Lord M doesn't get affected by their previous meeting. Victoria now doubted her vision about him staring to his rooks in anguish way, perhaps her eyes playing little tricks on her as she sees what she wanted to see, him suffering alone like her. Her mind was currently in such chaos as she was trying to decipher his words. Rooks, Orchids and now Leicester. He's somehow become an enigma for her.

"Leicester was her companion?" She inquired for confirmation. They swiftly dance as they stare each other with stolid displayed on their visages.

"He was," His voice has become more deeper than it was, "He did have a wife, but then she died."

Their parallel, it is so uncanny and she couldn't fathom why the first deviant queen also shared the same experience just like she currently in.

"But even though he was free, they never married."

His emotions have vanquish his plan to appear not as horrible as he is within him as his serene eyes shown her despondency and loneliness she once seen after she had arrived in the palace and crying in her room alone. He is also suffering like her, her heart instantly softened as she fathom he never wanted to say those metaphor that had betrayed his own feelings. If only he could be truthful, if only he could be frank as he wanted him to be but there was always an obstacle to do so. His heart shatters just like hers as he whispered with such sorrow tingled,

"I think both he and the Queen understood that they were not in a position to marry, whatever their inclinations."
They both slowed their movements as it reached its pinnacle to stop as an abrupt realization greeted her that desecrate her opinion before. His figure, she watches his figure disappearing from her as she endured her own agony alone without him. She couldn't take her eyes away from him whilst his couldn't but alas, she had let go of him to mourn their fate in this lifetime in his own solitude.

He stayed longer than he should.

He wanted to retreat to his own solace once he had explained why he must reject her but he remained, he wanted to see for the last time as they both announced their feelings is mutual but they couldn't express it. He didn't want to meet or converse with anyone else tonight however as it seems King Leopold has always recognized his presence as he murmured, "I believe my niece made an impromptu visit to Brocket Hall."

Leopold seems to hear anything and make a conclusion. He despises him for noticing everything beside his friend, Lady Portman.

"You are very well informed, Sir."

"It seemed to leave her in low spirits. Perhaps she did not get what she wanted."

Perhaps, he couldn't say if a misunderstanding could leave her in such low spirits albeit she had followed her advice to smile and wave, don't let them know that you're suffering. She did get what she wanted, a question she meant to ask for ages since she learnt everything about him. Will he take the honour of becoming her husband in another lifetime, he had answered that with another metaphor of Queen Elizabeth and her Leicester. They believed that Queen Elizabeth and her Leicester are having a full life in somewhere without beyond their reach to consult, they must have been incarnated to someone else with the same name and fulfill their obligation. He wished he could meet them and confirm people's suspicions about them as deviants.

"I couldn't say."

King Leopold does not need a confirmation of his observation, he always observe and make conclusion and no one can interfere him. He choose to take another approach to bring his intention
of his visit, "You should know that I have sent for my nephew, Albert."

Oh, no. Not that fast.

Not when she's suffering and couldn't be charmed by someone as dull as Victoria spoke highly about him. It sickening him, how much the table has turned without his ability to control. He had forsake their relationship due to the fact she has to marry someone else in this lifetime and their relationship had changed and now an impending arrival of her cousin would eradicate her time to spend with him because she'd have to entertain her guests more than being stuck with dispatches and secret conversation. He doesn't like the idea of having her cousin in such time as now.

"Without the Queen's permission?" He rebuttal to defends his queen's honor in front of the King. Surely she had instructed she has no intention to marry anyone by now but people, always people think the otherwise. He loath the fact he couldn't anything but participate in their rendezvous.

"The sooner he comes, the better. A young girl's head can be turned so easily."

He doubted she could that easily just like what Leopold said to him. His little queen does not change her mind that easily, people acknowledge that several times and consider her determination as ignorance however as it seems the King refuse to acknowledge the fact.

She walks, and she noticed the stiffness on his face as he will in deep thought.

Something is not right and her inquisitive reach its paramount. She would seek for him again to pry some information.

Each by each, people have bowed to retreat to their respective home and the party slowly dies with each hours passes. Young night has gone and it changed to slow, long hours of slumber. Only few people remain in the place with alcohol and laughter to entertain them beside the music. He had stayed long that he should have been as Lady Portman insisted to accompany her because apparently her husband was conversing with someone else. They talked in the corner, telling stories what had gone wrong about the Queen's visit in Brocket Hall as he was being honest to her, he couldn't keep a secret long enough as it feels like an eternity.

He eventually whispers to her ear that he's a deviant and their queen is also a deviant. And both
them incidentally are soulmates. He expected her expression would alter as he resonated their little secret that they've kept to them only however Lady Portman always startled him with such unpredictable thoughts and manner. Her gaze was soft and knowing, absolutely she had thought of them being as soulmates and the myth wasn't a mere ancient story that long forgotten. She didn't say anything that could offend him due to the fact he had rejected her for the sake of monarchy and her reputation. She was one of those women who fathom everything as she tries to place herself in their shoes. They went silent for a moment as their gaze were searching for their queen and once they spotted her standing, chatting with another Lord and Lady that haven't gone to their home, Lady Portman was the one who broke the silence,

"Will you promise me something, William?"

"Anything for our friendship." Confidence, he always have confidence on their friendship. She took one of his hand and clutch it, he was confused by what she meant to ask from him.

"Try to find me in another lifetime because I don't want you to endure this kind of pain alone, if something should happen that separate you from Your Majesty, I want to be there and comfort you in any way I can." Her intention was clear, she wanted to become his friend in so many lifetimes as she was aware she plays an act as his friend. Should everything crumbles in his another lifetime, she'd be there to assure him he has a purpose of living. His smile was genuine and truthful, it is a rare thing to have someone who would stick in your life long enough to see that their past lives would change them slowly.

"I appreciate our friendship, Emma. It is the most valuable thing I shall treasure in my entire life."

"Well, you should also treasure Victoria above all because she's undoubtedly your soulmate." She winked on him, he laughed. The day is almost over and he could smile and laugh again with the help of his friend.

Victoria noticed her Lord Melbourne had not indulge in despair again. It's good, she thought that he had moved that quick as she was trying to be tonight even though she had to lied to herself. Her corner of her eyes caught him laughing with Lady Portman, she wondered what she had said had eased her soulmate's burden tonight. She has a lot of questions and she pry to ask one of them which made her approaching them and their expression become cautious and not as amiable as it was before. They bowed and imitate her convivial smile, "Good evening, Ma'am. William and I were talking about his little secret."

His little secret, she wondered what that might be as she indulged into their conversation and looks at apprehension written on his face; something crucial had been talked and it might involved her. She placed her hands on her lap as she mumbled with her attention fixated upon Lady Portman's face, "Indeed?"
"It was nothing, Ma'am. I can assure you it won't depri----"

"Do you know that us, ordinary people would also repeat our life over and over again until the chosen people have become as one because us are additional in their lives." Lady Portman spoke so vaguely and Lord Melbourne wished she would retract her statement although she had utter the truth.

He was aware of the story as he remembered the way his mother had talked the story so convincing and heartfelt but he hadn't realize he would feel the same excruciating feeling of having someone he once loved gone from his arms. He hadn't realized he would have Caroline, if he could find her in another lifetime. And apparently, the Queen didn't know the story as her eyes flickers with confusion and surprise. She probably had been told by Lehzen that soulmate needs to be married with their soulmate or their lives would repeat over and over again until they've become as one.

She didn't know anything about this and once again, she never knows anything beside the formal education she had in Kensington

"Do you mean, we will see each other again in another lifetime?" She directly asked the question that had been clouded her mind after Lady Portman declared her statement. Lord Melbourne didn't say anything as his gaze locked to the ground and him clearing his throat had intrude Victoria's mind.

"It is most likely happens, Ma'am. The tale explains that the ordinary people will also repeat their lives again because they're additional for the chosen people's lives." Her prime minister explained with uneasiness within him because she'd figure out the reason the ordinary people tend to alienate and differentiate them. If only he could undo Emma's articulation because he wanted to protect her from the blatant, harrowing truth of this ancient story.

"We are responsible for their lives, Lord M."

The way she uttered it, it hurt him to see her acknowledge the truth he had been trying to avoid from her. It feels like setting a gasoline to uncontrollable flame that makes the fire flames to eternity. He swallowed hard as her eyes didn't leave her or move as if they had ignored Lady Portman's presence beside them. He wished he could debunk the myth but it had been proven true by some experts that study this matter. Now she fathom the relevance of soulmate's unity because they also carry other people's lives in their shoulders. As bias as it is, they've to accept their forlorn reality that had been created by their creator.
"If you put that way, Ma'am; yes, we're responsible for their lives." He answered, rather quietly so they couldn't be heard by anyone that passes the group. Lady Portman sensed their uncomfortable situation and she beg differ to intrude,

"This is why people despise the deviants, Ma'am. People see the soulmate concept as a burden because they must wait until the soulmates in their lives become as one or they would not rest peacefully. The deviants don't want to speak their identity out loud because they will force them to marry and outcasted them."

Her eyes widened in surprise after listening to Lady Portman's explanation. As horrible as it sounded, she didn't expect to be that horrible. She fathom now why she never seen someone so proudly speaks about their fate as a deviant as they'd adjudicate the deviants. She was bewildered, upset and mad about how the ordinary people treated the deviants with such hatred and loath where the concept for her does make her relief that she'd have Lord Melbourne as her soulmate hence she couldn't help but exclaimed, "Surely there's something we can do about that, don't we Lord M?"

However she didn't get the answer she wanted to hear as he merely shook his head in the most agonizing way as he accepted the fact that there's nothing they can do about it. It would make people think that their Queen is a deviant which she most certainly is and the possibilities of abdicate their queen become apparent reason because they wouldn't have a deviant queen, especially knowing that their queen's soulmate is a mere viscount and her prime minister. It will eradicate the tradition that had been built upon centuries if she takes a bold action to give an opportunity for their God to establish His plan. He was aware that marry your soulmate is easy if you've discovered your soulmate however given to their circumstances; they'd ruin their future together. Victoria's jaw clenched and her fists curled; her anger today has reach its pinnacle as she wished she could hex everyone that sees the myth as a burden when it supposed to be a beautiful thing that ever happens in her life. If only the most beautiful thing doesn't get followed by sins and depression of forcing someone to be together for the sake of people's lives, she wished she could alter everything but she remembers she's not a God.

She couldn't anything about it.

Even though she's a Queen.

This is why Elizabeth and her Leicester never speak about their identity.

After she acknowledged flagrant truth regarding the myth, she realized her responsibility is more
greater than become a symbol for people that under her rule, she was the reason of everyone's existence in her life and the reason why the exists in the first place. Another responsible she has to acute in her shoulders, she never thought she'd be able to carry all of them within her embrace; everyone's lives depends on her hands and her Lord Melbourne.

They've decided she will not marry him in this lifetime thus making countless of people's lives will be repeated in another lifetime, she hopes they'd not remember of their past lives therefore they would not rally and force them to marry and then banish them for the sake of humanity. She couldn't be entertained by the idea of marrying Lord Melbourne with such hurry as they both fathom that she has a lot to see in this world and she'd be bounded by people due to the fact that she's a deviant.

Her obligation to marry has become another sensitive theme to converse because she will have marry someone else who's not a soulmate in this lifetime and she will probably be guilty by the lie she had to hide from her future husband because he'll be married to a woman that belongs to someone else, and will be witnessed Lord Melbourne's name glimmering in darkness as sweats shimmering her body and the name.

She tried not to think about it in such afflicting way but she couldn't help but to cry in her sleep as her dreams shown her people with their displeased visages; she couldn't please herself as she was bounded by her subjects and people who take a part in her life. Victoria wanted to apologize but these people don't know the truth, beside her Lord Melbourne and Lady Portman. Only three of them that know the misery they have to live in.

The Grand Duke had returned to his homeland, her Uncle Leopold has a mischievous plan he wanted to quartered her as he had sent Albert to visit them and the Newport Chartists will be executioned within several days. Everything happened so fast and she couldn't remember the last time she had dissipated a heavy exhalation due to her weariness. Today, she had to witnessed her dresser collapsed to the floor after hearing a shot fired outside of the Palace. She found it odd because somehow the shot affected in such way to her dresser thus she asked Skerret what happened to Mrs. Jenkins which she answered truthfully regarding the Chartists and why it affected her dresser in that way. Every decision she makes always make such an impact for people as she tries to repay her sins of not marrying her Lord M in this lifetime.

She sent for him, and he always came.

Their meetings lately have involved too much sentiment than it should be as Victoria realized not everything is about her, she was more focus on the dispatches although she'd constantly catches his gaze and took his hand for some kind of assurance of the life they both needed to live in. They both have grown for the better than capitulate in their own despondency due to their situation; they're adults and they've decided what's the best for their future in the most civilized way they could ever
think of: talk and understanding.

So when he arrived with such elegance that always makes her laughs, he noticed she didn't chuckle on that thus he knew that she was asking for her prime minister, not her Lord M. He took her hand and kiss it, so much for affection and protocol, "When are the Newport Chartists to be executed?"

Her expression was stern and there was all seriousness in her voice and he was grateful, she was aware that everything is not always centered on her just like planets follows the sun. He put his hands on his back as he answered, "Next Friday, Ma'am."

And she nodded in understanding however what made him startled is the next question as she described what the prisoners would receive after they've done a treason to monarchy. He replied with awareness and informed her that some bishops are organizing a petition for clemency which intrigued and change her expression to such vibrant smile and clear eyes, he had missed this version of his Queen,

"Then I should like to sign it. Such a punishment is not civilized."

His little queen had almost be harmed by these people yet she's forgiving and merciful to them; he knew she had grown for better and she wouldn't needed him in the future.

"I fear you do not understand the severity of the crime, Ma'am." He challenged her, spoke in concerns as he cue his defeat to her determination,

"Indeed, I do, but I think you do not understand the severity of the punishment. Such things may have been necessary in the reign of Elizabeth, but I would like my reign to be a merciful one." He was impressed by her manner of speaking as she rebuttal his statement which made an apparent simper appeared upon his lips as he was indulge in the idea of having a merciful reign under her fingertips.

Even though she and Elizabeth had share some uncanny parallels and similarities, she's still Queen Victoria and her soulmate that will be not be compared by the dead who had such mellifluous reign. He wished he could see more of that in the future but his time is slowly counts.

Thus he suggested she'd sent the prisoners to Australia, the land that has minimum population and interesting landscapes. She accepted so boldly and determined she had done the right thing to do.
So much for paying her debts for the people she had to owe to.

"May I express my astonishment by the decision you made, Ma'am. It is a rare thing to see a monarch lessen the punishment for such treason. I am most fortunate as grateful that your reign has made such an impressive progress as it is different than the others." He spoke evasively as his smile didn't leave his face thus making her flustered because he spoke highly about her and she felt arrogant by the attention she gets from him. She smiles cooly and mutters attentively,

"You will see more of it in the future, Lord M. My reign is probably going to be the longest one and I want to be remembered as the most merciful and amiable one." Those words make him more proud each day that he will have a wife like her in the next lifetime.

How merry he looks at the prospect.

Chapter End Notes

You thought I've forgotten about this,,, however I came back. Still need a beta that could perfect my writing, see you in the next chapter when I have an opportunity to write it!!

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