3.

Meoro stands in the shadow of his family, the weight of a name pressing against his chest, a weight that never lets him breathe. He is the heir—the one who will carry the history, the legacy, the burden. But what is his life beyond this? A series of obligations, choices made for him before he could speak. And yet, there is something in him that stirs, a whisper, a longing for something else. He is caught, always, between two worlds: the one that is expected of him, and the one he dares to imagine. It is a war, fought silently, within. He dreams of freedom, of stepping away from the lineage that defines him. But freedom, for him, is not the absence of constraint—it is the possibility of choosing himself, of being more than just the heir, of being Meoro.

And there is July—so far, so near. She is a life he cannot quite touch, a world he cannot quite enter, but in her, he sees something that has eluded him: a kind of simplicity. She is free, in ways he can never be. Her love is not tainted by the weight of tradition, by the burden of history. She exists in the quiet spaces between survival and dreams. And yet, even her love comes with a cost. Her desires—her yearning for a life beyond the one she was born into—are suffocated by the world’s demands. She knows that love, for her, is a dangerous thing. To love Meoro is to risk everything, to tear apart the delicate thread that holds her world together. Her family’s survival, her future, her very existence, are tied to the rules she cannot break. And yet, love calls to her.

For her, freedom is not a choice—it is a luxury, a thing beyond reach. What she wants, what she dreams of, could unravel everything. Each step she takes is calculated, each thought bound by the knowledge that to move too far, to wish too much, is to invite destruction. Meoro, with his noble birth, has the luxury of imagining a different life. But for July, there is no such space. Her world is too fragile, her reality too brittle to break. She cannot afford to hope for something better, for a life where love does not come with a price. And yet, she does. She dreams of it, of a world where she could love without fear, without consequence. But the world she lives in tells her that this dream is a lie. Her love for Meoro, then, is not just an act of desire—it is a rebellion, a risk that shatters the rules that bind her.

Meoro and July both long for something more, something beyond the walls they’ve been given, but each must navigate a path that is narrower than the last. Their love is not just love—it is the collision of two worlds, two sets of rules, two futures that cannot exist side by side. In choosing each other, they are choosing the impossible. Meoro risks everything he has known. July risks everything she has fought for. Their freedom is not something they can simply reach for—it is something they must risk losing to gain.

And in this, they are bound. Not just by love, but by the world’s refusal to let them be anything other than what they were born to be.

2.

Meoro’s life is a finely cut suit, tailored to perfection, but suffocating in its precision. Every move he makes is bound by an invisible thread, pulling him in directions he never chose, reminding him that his identity is not his own. From the moment he was born, the weight of his family’s legacy was stitched into him, a heavy cloak of expectation that he can never shrug off. His decisions are not his decisions—they’re the family’s decisions, the ancestors’ decisions, choices made for him before he could even speak. The nobility, the power, the grandeur that surrounds him come with a price: his own happiness, his own dreams, his own desires.

And then there’s Althior, the embodiment of the very thing that traps Meoro in his gilded cage. Althior, cold and distant, a man whose heart was sacrificed long ago at the altar of duty, is the model of what Meoro fears he could become. Althior’s life is a cautionary tale—a life reduced to nothing but the preservation of lineage, a man who has buried everything that makes him human beneath layers of responsibility. He’s no longer a person; he’s a tool, an instrument of a legacy he serves without question, without hesitation. Meoro sees him and knows: This is what happens when duty becomes everything. Althior is a warning, a shadow of what might be his future if he allows the weight of his name to crush him.

Then, there’s July, who stands at the opposite end of the spectrum, but is just as bound by duty. For her, it’s not a matter of family honor or legacy—it’s survival. She doesn’t have the luxury of a noble title, of riches or power to shield her. Her duty is simple: to keep her family afloat in a world that constantly seeks to push them down. Every day is a balancing act between staying true to herself and doing whatever is necessary to ensure that tomorrow doesn’t bring disaster. Her world is one where every choice, no matter how small, carries the weight of consequence. She cannot afford to dream, to wish for a life where she can simply exist for herself. Every decision she makes must be carefully weighed, because straying even a little from the path could mean losing everything.

The demands placed on her are no less oppressive than those that weigh on Meoro. The only difference is that her duty isn’t about maintaining a family legacy—it’s about holding on to the fragile thread of survival. Her desires, her hopes, her very identity are swallowed by the unrelenting tide of survival. There is no space for her to dream of a future that isn’t shaped by the hard edges of class and circumstance. And in that, her struggle mirrors Meoro’s. Both are forced to bury their true selves to conform to a world that demands more of them than they ever asked for.

Duty, for both of them, is a cage. It shapes their choices, distorts their sense of self, and leaves them questioning whether they are even the ones making decisions at all. Meoro may have a title, a name, a history—but even that does not make him free. July may have nothing but the barest of means, but even she is not free. Both are tied to the expectations of the world around them, trapped by the invisible forces of duty that shape their identities without asking them what they want or who they are.

In the end, it’s clear that personal fulfillment, true happiness, and the freedom to choose are luxuries neither of them can afford. They are caught in the same web of societal pressures, just different strands of it—one bound by the weight of legacy, the other by the crushing demands of survival. Neither can fully embrace their desires, their passions, their humanity, because every move they make is dictated by something greater than themselves. And as they struggle to maintain who they are beneath it all, they are forced to ask: Who are they, really? Or have they already become the very roles that society carved for them?

1.

Meoro's world is one of heavy silks and even heavier expectations. Every thread of his life is woven into the fabric of his family's legacy, a tapestry of power and status that he’s been told to wear like armor. But it’s not armor that shields him; it suffocates him. Beneath the polished surfaces and the glittering balls he attends, beneath the perfect façade of his name and title, there’s a heart that aches for something different—something that isn’t tethered to the rigid demands of tradition. But who would he be if he stepped outside? If he dared to dream something other than what was carved into him since birth? He looks out over his grand estate and wonders: What if his life were his own?

But the world doesn’t care about his what-ifs. His family, the history that stretches back through centuries, doesn’t care about the kind of love he dreams of, the kind of freedom he yearns for. Every moment he breathes is a reminder that his desires are secondary to the weight of legacy. He can’t run from it—not really. His choices, his movements, even his thoughts, are watched, scrutinized, controlled. The life he wants to live—a life where he’s free, where he chooses—fades further with every passing day.

Then there’s July. She wakes up each day to a world where survival is the goal, and survival means conforming. There’s no room for mistakes, no room for deviation. Each day is just another line in a story she never chose to write. Every word she speaks is measured, every step calculated, because to make even the smallest misstep could undo everything. Her family depends on her, as does the fragile world they’ve built for themselves in the shadows of the grand mansions and the looming towers of wealth.

Her dreams aren’t grand like Meoro’s. She doesn’t fantasize about castles or riches. She only dreams of a life where her choices belong to her, where love isn’t a privilege of the wealthy but a simple act of being human. She wants the space to breathe without fear of being crushed under the weight of expectations. But in her world, dreams like that are dangerous. They’re risky. A misstep, a spark of rebellion, and everything could come crashing down—her family, her safety, her sense of self. There’s no room to reach for the stars, not when every step is taken with trembling caution, praying to stay unnoticed.

And yet, they both want more. Meoro wants to escape the prison of his title, his name, to chase the faintest glimmer of something real. But even in his dreams, he knows the chains are there, heavy and unyielding. Every step toward freedom feels like a step toward destruction. His love would be a scandal, his desires a betrayal. His world would fall apart before he could even take the first breath of a life unchosen for him.

And July—her heart quietly rebels, aching for something beyond mere survival. She dreams of a future where she can choose for herself, where the act of loving someone isn’t a transgression but a celebration. She imagines a life where she doesn’t have to fit into the narrow, suffocating molds the world has created for her. But those dreams, like the ones Meoro harbors, are destined to wither. Her world, too, is built on foundations that crumble at the first whisper of rebellion.

They both want the same thing. Freedom. The right to be who they are, not who the world insists they must be. But the chasm between them is wider than any love could bridge. It’s not just the gulf of class that keeps them apart—it’s the sheer weight of everything they’ve been told they must be, everything they’ve been taught they cannot break free from. Their hearts may beat in the same rhythm, but their worlds are galaxies apart.

In the end, their love, if it could ever bloom, would be a quiet, aching thing, a flicker in the dark. It would never know the fullness of its potential, never be able to exist without the suffocating knowledge that the world around them won’t allow it to thrive. The tragedy is that it’s not the lack of love that keeps them apart—it’s the forces that shape their every step, forces beyond their control, beyond their desires. And as much as they dream, as much as they long, the cruel truth is that dreams have no place in a world so defined by power and expectation.

Their story isn’t just about love. It’s about the way the world bends us, shapes us, takes the very things that make us human—our dreams, our desires, our hopes—and tells us that they don’t matter, that we don’t matter.

Discussions for week 1 reading

Sure! Here are some discussion post ideas based on the reading:

### \*\*Discussion Post #1: The Theme of Social Divide\*\*

The chapter highlights the stark contrast between Meoro and July’s lives—one of privilege and restriction, the other of struggle and resilience. How do you think their different upbringings shape their perspectives on love and freedom?

Do you think their worlds will ever truly intersect, or are they doomed to remain apart?

### \*\*Discussion Post #2: Freedom vs. Fate\*\*

Meoro longs for the freedom to choose his own path, while July feels bound by the limitations of her class. Do you believe people are truly free to shape their destinies, or are we all, in some way, controlled by the circumstances of our birth?

### \*\*Discussion Post #3: The Role of Hope in Hardship\*\*

Despite her tough life, July holds on to a quiet hope that there is more to life than what she knows. How important do you think hope is in difficult circumstances? Can hope alone be enough to change a person’s fate?

### \*\*Discussion Post #4: Love Against All Odds\*\*

The story hints at a possible love between Meoro and July, but society stands in their way. In literature and history, many love stories challenge social norms. Do you think love has the power to overcome societal boundaries, or are those boundaries too strong to break?

Can you think of any real or fictional examples of love defying societal expectations?

Sure! If you're looking for \*\*naïve findings\*\*, here are some surface-level observations that someone unfamiliar with deeper themes might notice:

1. \*\*Contrast of Worlds\*\* – The story clearly sets up two very different lives: Meoro’s world of wealth and luxury versus July’s life of hardship. It makes their eventual connection feel impossible from the start.

2. \*\*Trapped by Society\*\* – Both characters seem to feel trapped, despite being in opposite circumstances. Meoro is rich but lacks freedom, while July is poor and also lacks choices.

3. \*\*Dramatic Foreshadowing\*\* – The narration hints heavily that these two will meet and fall in love, but their relationship is doomed from the start because of societal expectations.

4. \*\*Emotional Loneliness\*\* – Even though Meoro has everything, he still feels incomplete, and July, despite her struggles, holds on to hope. Both characters seem emotionally isolated in their own way.

5. \*\*Classic Romantic Trope\*\* – The "forbidden love across social classes" theme is a common one in romance stories. It sets up an expected conflict between love and societal rules.

6. \*\*Scenic Imagery\*\* – The opening uses strong visual contrasts: the quiet, cold luxury of Meoro’s balcony versus the warm, noisy, cramped world of July’s home. It makes their separation feel even more extreme.

7. \*\*Unspoken Connection\*\* – Even though they haven’t met yet, the story suggests they are already tied together by fate or a shared feeling of longing.

Would you like a deeper analysis or a different angle on this?