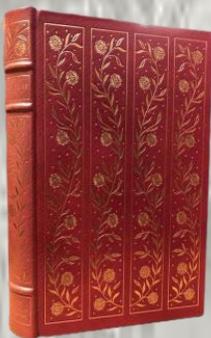


Patricia M. Muhammad  
presents

# Stolen Grace

Getting to Know Some of the Characters:

Penelope Moreau is a Creole aristocrat of the Versailles king's court. She is the eldest child of the House of Moreau. Penelope has dainty ears and hazel eyes with green undertones and is considered a rare beauty. She is only slightly taller than her fellow maidens. Her hair is dark with a slight auburn tint depending at which angle many a potential suitor may gaze from. The aristocrat has a tendency to crinkle her keen nose when she takes offense. She maintains her daily ablution and presentation routine as part of her aristocratic heritage. She and her ancestral House boast of a noble heritage that could be traced back to Ethiopia. Due to the ancient relationship between the two nations, the French court easily recognized them as one of their own. However, amongst the ennobled, the members of this house would always be considered mulâtres first and patricians in the second. She is a resilient, strong-willed noble woman who does not enjoy interference with a matter she decides to focus on. Yet, when she encounters a fine French courtier, Pierre LeMercier, who finds her intriguing and quite formal.



Armand Moreau is Penelope's younger brother. He is intelligent, somewhat of a philosopher and inclines to reading the works of great laureates. Armand is handsome with plenty of maidens to confirm this. He has a romantic heart, but his sister considers this a distraction from his immediate woes that could have devastating consequences to the entire House of Moreau if not resolved soon. Armand is protective of his family, but sometimes doubt Penelope's aptitude or perception when dealing with a problem. Penelope's brother is a traditionalist at heart. He is quite protective of his family though his relationship with his sister is that of mutual defiance and resistance. Yet he must find the strength throughout the ordeal of having his name marred as well as a physical injury he sustains as an intended target while attending a ball at the king's court.

Count Alexandre Montegeau is the family friend of the House of Moreau. He accepts Penelope's plea for his assistance in resolving the matter involving her brother, Armand. The lord of the Moreau manor extended invitations to Count Montegeau to attend several stately affairs that he and his wife hosted. Yet even he was still fascinated by the extraordinary décor and history of the Moreau mansion. The Count considers providing his assistance as an obligation as if he were caring for his own children. He demonstrates concern for Armand's consideration of accepting a man of different status, practically a stranger—especially given the recent turmoil his name has become embroiled in. He knows of a trustworthy investigator by the name of Gustav whom he hires to investigate the rumours surrounding Armand Moreau. Count Montegeau is met with misfortune when it becomes known he is assisting the House of Moreau.



Duke Pierre LeMercier is a tall, handsome gentleman of the king's court. He has medium-length, soft dark hair. His countenance, eyes and hair enthralls Penelope. Monsieur LeMercier refuses to conceal his under a traditional wig unlike most of his gentleman contemporaries. Penelope finds comfort in tugging, smelling and examining the gentleman's coif as if it contained an intangible elixir. He also has broad shoulders and a soothing baritone voice which enthralls Penelope. Pierre speaks with an impeccable French accent, and noticeable authority which he uses to counter his Penelope's stubbornness. Penelope tries not to notice his muscular physique, barely hidden under his finely tailored shirt, pantaloons and overjacket. He is quite patient, which is mostly exhibited in his relationship with Penelope Moreau. It is this trait that causes her to expose her heart to he who would become her fiancé, because he already had hold of it in his gentle, but capable hands.

Gustav is the investigator that Count Alexandre Montegeau hired for the benefit of the House of Moreau. He is also a courtier, but is similar to his long-time friend, the count, and views the resolution of matters in the most practical sense. He has traveled before throughout France and his new assignment leads him to Paris. His dedication to his work and to keep his word to the count nearly costs him his life. Yet, he is able to transmit what information he has learned considered the rumours surrounding the royal theft and Armand.





Guinevere LeMercier is Pierre LeMercier's younger sister. Though she is near of age, she is naïve. Guinevere is first introduced to Penelope Moreau after her and other courtiers' encounter with a vagabond in the park. Guinevere is quickly captivated with Penelope's younger brother when he presents himself at their estate seeking to retrieve his sister. Armand is polite despite Pierre's noticeable embarrassment of his younger sister's conduct. She is accosted and falsely imprisoned unjustly at the grand ball, but manages to escape from her confinement with the help of another member of the king's court.

François is a maiden whose linguistics in her native French is nearly unparalleled with exquisite manners that many could not contend with. This patrician is highly skilled in playing the violin. She is one of the highest ranking courtiers within the king's court and possessed multiple regal titles, a secret she withholds to serve her sinister intent. Though she has only known Penelope's brother Armand briefly, she has been able to become his sole focus.

