

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-United States, 2021-May-02— /ToStories/-Fiction author Patricia M. Muhammad discusses her romance novel, *Stolen Grace* and a bit of French history.

The ennobled of 18th century France experienced a period of extravagance like that of their European counterparts. Château Versailles, the royal palace of the king remained the seat of the French Crown until it was eventually removed to Paris. Until then, the courtiers could witness the head of the monarchy depart from his private chambers and engage in his daily activities. It would also be the place in which the Crown would secure the royal jewels. This royal treasure reflected the king's penchant for diamonds. For if they needed not many, only the larger and those of the most exquisite cut were to be accepted by the king. The architects of Château Versailles built vaults, corridors, chambers and smaller quarters throughout this grand palace. But most had not known where the king safeguarded the royal jewels except for a trusted few. The king had his favourite jewel of course, only disclosed to those nearest to him. Thus, many were baffled when his prized gem disappeared. Someone had stolen it. Rumour circulated that the theft had to be committed by someone unscrupulous and hard-hearted as much as they perceived the king himself. Many a courtier entered Château Versailles on different occasions. Royal guards were always present and then there was of course the king's family. Yet, several aristocrats and commoners lay blame for the royal theft easily on shoulders of one courtier, a marquis named Armand. He was of a known house within the king's court, more than he or his sister, Penelope, had ever wished for. Armand was of the House of Moreau. He and his family were of the rare Creole aristocrats. An honest lineage compared to some of the others whose lust for fame and insatiable greed only reinforced stereotypes against this few. They were also an easy target for those who hid their prejudices behind splayed silk fans and the finest French accents. Yet, the members of the House of Moreau understood. Though it was a false accusation against Armand, it may easily ruin the Moreau legacy beyond wealth. It could forever mar the Moreau name.

Remember Château Versailles? It was not only where the French king sat upon his throne. This was the palace where he would host many of the grandest soirees, of course only for esteemed courtiers to attend. It is here, where the identity of the thief would be revealed. So maybe we should explain from the beginning.

Penelope Moreau is Armand's older sister. She is a Creole courtier on a quest to exonerate her brother and clear her family's name. The only clue she has is a paper given to her with the name "Phillipe J." She believes it is he who committed the royal theft. Pierre LeMercier is also an aristocrat of the king's court and is fascinated by Penelope's rare beauty. Though she is initially resistant to his interest in her, she eventually allows for Pierre to become her suitor. One day while Penelope and Pierre are at a park, they as well as a few other courtiers are attacked. Pierre takes Penelope to his manor to care for her until Armand is sent word. Upon arrival, Armand is eagerly greeted by Pierre's younger sister, Guinevere. Pierre vowed, as well as Count Alexandre Montegeau a friend of Penelope and Armand's parents, to help with her investigation. He hires another man to search for information by the name of Gustav. Count Montegeau is murdered while in the peculiar company of mademoiselle Charlotte of whom Armand has only met once. Penelope's brother feels the pressure of a royal sentence to be declared against him. Guinevere debuts as a lady in waiting accompanied by Pierre and Penelope as they arrive

at the masquerade ball at the king's court. Drinks are served, idle talk is the norm and robust activity including dance continue with a rehearsed fervor. A strange man approaches Guinevere and kidnaps her into private chambers. She barely escapes. The chandeliers are bright, blinding others to the machinations that some of the other courtiers continue to engage in. The festivities are set to continue throughout the night. Servants interweave themselves amongst the crowd to execute their duties. Others stand near columns in the exterior corridors, hoping to get a glimpse of scandal outside the sand-coloured castle. Charlotte displays her jealousy of Armand and François' relationship and confronts François. While outside Château Versailles, Armand is struck in the foot with an arrow from a longbow. The night seems to have an unending spin of madness. Penelope wonders if they will find more evidence in time. All that they have discovered thus far leads to the royal palace. Only someone close to the king could have committed the theft. Pierre knows that he and Penelope cannot have the life they wish for until the thief is revealed. But who is the culprit and will they be caught in time?

Stolen Grace may be purchased as an ebook from these online retailers:

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