

THE INFAMOUS FRANKIE LORDE

by Brittany Geragotelis

EXCERPT

Let me draw you a picture of my life with Dad. This is what happened during our last daddy/daughter outing:

Dad and I were in Paris, hanging out at a hip local spot, drinking café crèmes—a fancy term for milky coffee, in case you didn’t know—and people-watching. It’s one of our favorite things to do. We take turns coming up with backgrounds and stories for strangers who walk by.

Trust me, it’s a lot more entertaining than it sounds. I’d just dug into the most delicious chocolate croissant when Dad discreetly pointed to a lady crossing the street. She was wearing a smart-looking trench coat and sporting a short, boyish haircut.

“So, Frankie, what’s her deal?” Dad asked me.

I studied her like she was a work of art, noting her appearance and the way she moved and then taking in any other details she was giving away. If you know what to look for, it’s easy to tell exactly who a person is within the first fifteen seconds of meeting them.

And who taught me this cool superpower? My dad. See, I told you he’s awesome.

“She’s American. That’s obvious. Look at her shoes,” I said, gesturing at the boringly practical black flats the woman was wearing. “She’s trying to act like she’s not in a rush, but she is. And she’s nervous about something. Maybe she’s meeting someone for the first time? Her trench coat isn’t a fashion statement. It’s there to hide what’s underneath, which appears to be . . .”

I squinted in the midmorning sun in an attempt to see better.

“ . . . very unstylish and poorly fitting pants,” I finished. “She’s a professional of some kind, though her appearance doesn’t seem to be a concern of hers, so I’d guess she’s not in media or entertainment, or any field where she has to sell things to people, for that matter.”