

Arnaud was articulate, inquisitive, and one hundred per cent on fire. When he emphasized a point, his broad forehead bulged out as if synapses firing inside his brain were trying to punch their way through to the outside. I couldn't decide which I was more attracted to—his brain or the way he looked when he was using it.

Our drinks finished, we strolled out onto Rue de la Roquette, Bastille's most fashionable thoroughfare, taking in the sights and smells of early evening. Young, stylish Parisians and less-well-dressed tourists filled its sidewalks, a heady excitement in the air at the onset of a summer weekend.

We turned down another side street. In a minute, we came upon a small restaurant, the name *Agadir* hand painted over its entryway. Exotic smells drifted from its interior along with a slim, olive-skinned man with a full head of dark, wiry hair. He ushered us inside and out a side door to a table in the garden. Amber light streamed from lanterns, bathing the diners in a golden glow.

Arnaud sat next to me, instead of across the table. It was a very European thing to do. We'd be able to breathe each other in as we took each other's measure.

He ordered a carafe of sangria. Then, we sat back and surveyed the passersby. Be here now, he'd suggested. It was exactly the reason I'd left New York for Paris. Being here now never seemed quite enough in New York. In Paris, it did.