On the night of her younger sister’s coming-out party, Aurelia almost died. Of boredom.

Her ankle itched as though an ant was casually creeping over her single pale skin. She squirmed and stared blankly at the floor. If only she had not refused the violet silk with the stiff ruffle on the bottom. She longed reach down and scratch, but years royal training had not been entirely killed. She could not afford such a movement while her father was speaking.

The king stood at the head of the table, his pale eyes staring at the foreheads. His gold crown flattened his gray hair beneath its weight, and his slate-gray mustache moved as he slept, “Loyalty and respect are the highest attributes of a young woman.”

Please. Aurelia her eyes to the fresco on the.

The back of her gilt chair into her shoulder blades, and the generated by close bodies made the of face paint on her cheeks. Her lady’s maid had dared her wear the paint, and Aurelia had refused a dare in her seventeen.

Thinking was becoming a trial in stifling atmosphere. Must nearly
every lord ____________ lady in the kingdom attend Melony’s ____________ party?
       but  know  and                     coming-out  dinner  late

Where was the appeal in ____________ Aurelia’s younger sister dance with every
       seeing  smelling  that

__________ man in the room? And why ____________ all the dull society members
       pretty  titled  promise             not  kill  must

insist ____________ participating in the celebration?
       upon  beautiful  inside

Aurelia reached toward her dessert plate and crushed the remaining cake crumbs beneath
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