

## **Beauty and the Immortal: It started with a dig Chapter 11 - Time to fly!**

### **Chapter 11: Time to fly!**

What a peculiar man this Hadeon or Hades was with his unusual name, Mallory thought. It dawned on her how his name Had-eon equaled him having spent several years, but she doubted that was the meaning of it. He was obviously an antique item that needed to be stored away. Preferably in a coffin box. She quietly laughed at her own joke until his eyes landed on her and she quickly fixed her expression.

"We are almost there, milord," Barnby informed, against the sound of the carriage wheels and the hooves of the horses.

Mallory took herself to look outside the elongated windows of the carriage, when her mouth dropped open at the sight. Not far from them, stood a castle on top of a rugged cliff against the canvas of the mountain. The walls of the castle were as dark as coal and there were spires, towers and windows which were aglow with golden light, as if the castle was waiting for its owner to return.

"I feel like Hallow has come quite early this year," Mallory murmured with dread, as the carriage pulled closer to the castle.

"One of the most anticipated days," Hadeon's voice chimed, a lopsided smile appearing on his lips. He let the side of his head rest against his knuckles. "It is always the best part of the year. The masquerade ball, dance and unlimited blood to drink."

"Blood?" Mallory asked in unease.

"It is what people like me thrive on. Delicious and warm. Nothing like ripened blood to revive the hollow soul," Hadeon's voice came out as a velvety whisper. When she saw him lick his lips, her back pressed further into the seat with a wary expression.

What was it, an apple to ripen? Mallory's eyebrows furrowed as the carriage was now passing over the bridge. She then said, "I have a question."

"Speak."

"If blood is what you thrive on, you didn't have any blood to drink for years as you were buried. How were you able to get out of the coffin?" Mallory curiously asked him. She hadn't eaten for a whole day and was tired, wouldn't years with lack of blood in his case mean he would be weak and unconscious? She had to figure him out if she was going to put him back in a coffin.

Hadeon's grin broadened, similar to a cheshire cat's smile in the half dark carriage. He stated, "Because someone who opened my coffin fed me with their blood."

It took a second for his words to sink into Mallory's mind, and she shook her head, "I did not—would not—couldn't—." At the same time, the carriage finally came to a stop in front of the entrance of the castle.

"Are you certain about it?" Hadeon pressed, leaning forward in his seat and Mallory's heart shuddered at his closeness.

As the coachman graciously opened the carriage door for his Lord, Mallory found herself reflecting on the events of the previous night. Her thoughts came to a halt as she realised the source of the blood. Her attention shifted to Hattie's handkerchief on her arm.

No....! Mallory shrieked in her mind as her eyes popped wide. She had not only opened his coffin but had also offered him a little welcome snack!

Climbing out of the carriage, Mallory trailed behind Hadeon, spooked by the eerie garden that was left untamed. The fountains were filled with the recent downpours and dried leaves.

As they stepped into the castle, a grand passage stretched before them, lit by flickering torches on the deep maroon walls. The golden ceiling had intricate paintings. She finally stepped into the hall with Hadeon before her, who had stopped walking.

When Mallory was looking around the place, her eyes fell on a large mirror that started from the ground to extend up to the ceiling. She caught a glimpse of her reflection, noticing she looked nothing like the self she had known until now. A woman with dirt clinging to her clothes and skin, staring back at her. Her hair, though loosely tied, was all over the place. She bore a wound on her cheek, inflicted by none other than the useless George.

Her eyes moved to look next to her reflection, when she caught Hadeon's reflection missing in the mirror. Her heart stumbled in her chest.

Mallory realised that Hadeon and the castle didn't need a servant. They needed an exorcist! Only ghosts didn't have reflections! Or did they? How would she know when she hadn't met one before, she thought to herself. Grandmother, if you are following me, it is time to come out to explain what is going on here!

As Mallory tiptoed away from Hadeon, her expression holding anxiousness, she heard him murmur, "And here I was hoping for a peaceful night."

Hm? Mallory saw Hadeon's eyes slightly narrow with a wisp of annoyance lingering in them. Then she suddenly heard a voice boom through the castle,

"Who dares disturb me in my slumber?! I will send you to hell for entering my castle!"

"Did we steal this castle too—" Mallory asked him in a whisper, and upon Hadeon's quiet glare, she added, "—Master Hadeon?"

Maybe the other person was similar to Hadeon, and the two men were going to fight each other! Perfect opportunity to escape from the dead when they would be busy!

Mallory heard the footsteps, and not one but two men appeared at the top of the stairs. One of them looked like a beaver with his unshaven face, while the second person, who held the lantern up in his hand, reminded Mallory of a squirrel. Compared to them, Hadeon looked like a dragon.

The squirrel-like man uttered quietly with a cackle, "Look we finally have a maid. We only need to take the money and off that man."

"How brave of you to step foot in My castle?" The beaver-like man demanded as he climbed down with loud thumps and followed by his lackey. "I am the most powerful person on this land. I am Hey Don Van Darn!"

Mallory turned to the side to stifle her laugh behind a cough.

"The man does look wealthy," the one holding the lantern hushed softly. "They must be lost, Igor. Time to trap them!"

"It is 'Hey Don', you fool! How many times should I tell you?!" The person named Igor whispered back to the man behind him as they arrived at the foot of the stairs. He stared hard at Hadeon even though he was many inches shorter than the latter. He then questioned Hadeon, "Are you here to sell your maid?"

"You are indeed correct," Hadeon responded with a smile, having heard her snicker. "The man who owns this castle must have her as his personal servant, so that she can be punished."

"What?!" Mallory asked in a hushed voice.

"Amazing!! I will give you a silver for her," the beaver-like man placed a price on Mallory. "You can stay the night here in the castle!"

Hadeon put up a worried look before he informed, "I would love to, but you see, I have left the boat at the shore, and I left my valuables in it. It would be very kind if you could arrange someone to get it here."

The men, blinded with greed, shared a look, before the beaver-like man asked, "Where is it again?"

"We should be able to see it right from here," Hadeon suggested, leading them to the already open window, which they were quick to look outside.

The beaver-like man said, "I don't think I got your name," before looking outside the window.

"Ah, yes." Hadeon slapped his hand on Igor's back with a friendly smile and said, "Hadeon Van Doren."

"Oh, it sounds similar to my name!" The beaver-like man laughed, and Hadeon's lips twitched. "I can't see the boat. Where is it?"

"Let me help," Hadeon offered politely, before grasping the man's neck and flinging him out of the window.

Both Mallory and the other man's eyes grew wide, hearing the person flying outside the castle scream before they heard a thud. She saw how Hadeon's expression had turned from a calm one to a sinister one.

A grin formed on Hadeon's lips, and he clicked his tongue.

The lanky man's legs started to shake out of pure terror and he tried to walk backwards.

"All I wanted to do was get back to my room, run a nice cold bath, and relax to sleep. It vexes me when my civility is interrupted. I am trying to be a good man here," Hadeon sighed as he advanced towards the trembling, lanky figure, his footsteps deliberate, echoing ominously in the corridor. His voice held a menace, "But fear not. I am generous, and I will give you options. A hole where your heart is, or perhaps a twist of the neck?"

The man looked in terror and begged, "I—I, for—forgi—"

"What? You want option three? Silly me," Hadeon remarked with a mock apology, before grabbing the man's neck and throwing him out of the open window. Leaning over the window, he said, "Would you look at that? He flew better than the last one."