

## Beauty and the Immortal: It started with a dig Chapter 14 - Flight of the monkey

**Music Recommendation: The Norwegian Ridgeback and a Change of season - John Williams**

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Mallory and Hadeon's breakfast arrived with speed—thanks to the now empty tea house. Hungry, Mallory devoured her food, and each bite was tastier than the previous one. Meanwhile, Hadeon took his time to savour each dish by taking no more than a bite.

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When Mallory's mouth was full and busy, Hadeon stood up from his seat and instructed her, "Continue eating, monkey. I will be back after inquiring about my main course."

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She saw him make his way to the back door of the room they were seated in before disappearing behind it.

Mallory's fork paused mid-air in realisation. He wanted blood. He was going to kill someone! And as relieved as Mallory was that he hadn't pounced on her, she didn't trust him enough to keep her alive for long on his kitchen shelf. Especially after hearing his nightmare stories, which he would possibly call bedtime stories.

1

Mallory's eyes darted between the wide-open entrance door of the tea house and then at the door behind which Hadeon had vanished.

Was this an opportunity for her to escape? Did God make Hadeon thirsty so that she could get the time to run? Say no more, God! Mallory Winchester doesn't need another sign! She said it in her mind.

26

Stabbing the pancake in front of her, she quickly put it in her mouth.

6

She then got up from her chair, carefully making her way to the main door while keeping an eye on the back door. Taking a peek outside the street, instead of looking at the people, her eyes moved up at the rooftops before making a run without looking behind her again.

Mallory's heart raced as her steps echoed softly on the streets. Spotting a carriage ahead, she quickened her pace.

"Wraithwood! Reavermoure! Hemlock! Ghoulsville!" The coachman shouted to pick up passengers for the last time. Seeing Mallory, he asked, "Where to, young miss?"

2

"Wraithwood!" Mallory blurted out, trying to avoid the one place Hadeon might expect her to seek shelter.

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"Five shillings," the coachman stated matter-of-factly.

But Mallory's pockets were as empty as her hopes. With a quick glance over her shoulder, she knew she had to think fast. "How about my earring?" she proposed, while moving her hair away from her ear to show the sparkly gem.

1

"Works for me. Hop on!" the coachman said, and Mallory climbed inside where three passengers were already sitting. The women in there gave her a disapproving look, while the male passenger had his eyes fall on her shoulder when her sleeve slipped.

10

Soon the carriage left town, and it reached Wraithwood in less than ten minutes. Mallory removed her chain and hid it in the corner of the seat before climbing out of the vehicle. She handed one of her earrings to the coachman and slipped out of there.

11

"How am I going to find Hattie?" Mallory asked herself as she walked in the alleys while keeping her eyes wide open to make sure there was no crow around.

2

On the other hand, Hadeon stepped back into the room only to find the place empty. His red eyes narrowed, and he licked the corner of his lips to remove the remnants of blood he had just drank.

2

"Stupid monkey," Hadeon murmured with a hint of irritation. "Ready to leap at the first opportunity, aren't you? But how far do you think you'll get before being caught?" His words dripped with dark amusement.

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Back in Wraithwood, Mallory took refuge inside the church as if it were going to protect her from the dead man from the grave, who might try to find her. Every footstep in the church sent her head spinning to look over her shoulder. But, much to her surprise, Hadeon was nowhere in sight, and the longer she was alone, the more relieved she felt, as if her trick had worked.

1

In the evening, once she deemed it safe enough, she hitched a ride on the last carriage out of town, bound for Reavermoure. She didn't know if she would find Hattie, but there was some money in the manor's garden that she had buried two years ago. She recalled a memory.

*"What are you doing, Grandmother?" A curious young Mallory came to see her grandmother, who had dug the ground.*

*"Burying money, Mal," her grandmother replied casually, as she closed the lid of a box.*

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*Her grandmother's words brought a little giggle out of her, and she said, "You don't bury money in the ground, Grandmother. It is only for seeds and plants."*

*"The ground is one of the safest places. One where no one will know what lies beneath it," her grandmother stated, dropping the box and putting the mud back. "And besides, a little stash of coins can come in handy when you least expect it."*

13

Arriving at Reavermoure, Mallory hid the lower half of her face as she walked with quick footsteps. When she reached the Winchester Manor which was locked, she noticed it was left in the dark because no one lived there except for the memories. It felt as if she had fallen into an abyss, where there was no returning.

1

Finding the specific plant in the back garden, Mallory dug it out and pulled out a box, which softly jingled with coins. At least this would help her survive for some time, she thought to herself.

2

Mallory decided to leave Reavermoure and made her way through the alleys of Reavermoure as people didn't walk often there.

"As weird as Grandmother's ways of life were, something came to be useful," Mallory said to herself. She promised to visit the manor again once the crazy person would stop hounding her. Under her breath, she muttered, "Crazy dead man from the grave."

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"Whom are you calling crazy, monkey?"

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Mallory's heart almost paused at the voice and her footsteps froze on the ground. Kill me! She looked around and then behind her, but he was nowhere to be seen. Don't tell me he is... invisible. Because she had cursed him more than a couple of times since she had run away from him.

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She then heard a little creak above, and finally her eyes caught Hadeon sitting on the edge of the roof of a building with one of his legs pulled up and the other dangling as he ate something that she believed to be an apple.

11

"Did you enjoy your little day out?" Hadeon drawled, his voice dripping with sarcasm. His eyes glinted ominously against the backdrop of the evening sky. His voice then changed to a dramatic one, "I was heartbroken when I saw you had left without a word and even shed a tear. I mean, we spent such good moments sharing our love for the ground. You know, you digging and me burying people. You wound me."

19

Mallory could hear her heart ringing as loud as the tower bells in her ears now. "I think you are delusional to think that," she retorted, trying to keep her tone steady despite her unease.

Hadeon clicked his tongue disapprovingly. "Now now," he chided with his eyes gleaming with mischief, "I am sure we can work it out with discussions you might find very enlightening. Also, it isn't good to badmouth your employer unless you are looking for trouble. Especially after the little stunt you pulled today. Not even twenty-four hours have passed, and you have tried to escape twice. Such reckless courage deserves an award. What do you think?"

11

"I think a smart person would be understanding and relieve their employee from all the duties," Mallory explained to him.

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She saw him nonchalantly toss the apple behind him, the sound of it hitting the roof echoing through the place. He then jumped on the ground, facing her, and it spiked her heart rate. Hadeon's grin widened, his eyes glittering with dark amusement.

"Speaking of smartness. I believe you left something behind," Hadeon remarked, before throwing an object in Mallory's direction.

As Mallory caught it, she felt the chill of metal in her hand. Slowly unfurling her fingers, she saw the chain with the cross pendant that she had abandoned. "I was right," she whispered.

5

"You know," Hadeon remarked in a nonchalant tone, "at first, I was annoyed. But then I decided to be generous and let you have a head start to finish your day out. So I did some shopping, some drinking, and then some more shopping. Managed a little nap too with a little extra activity."

2

Leaning in closer, he lowered his voice, "And when I finally decided to look for you, guess what I found?" He paused for effect before revealing, "You left the pendant behind in the carriage, as if to give me the impression that you were on the move. I'll give you an apple for that," he chuckled, "but you were rather silly to think you could escape."

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"Lord Hadeon," Mallory began hesitantly. Upon noticing his narrowed gaze, she fixed her previous words, "Master Hades, you might consider finding another snake."

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Hadeon corrected her, "You mean Serphant." As he started to advance towards her, Mallory nervously stepped back. "Do you know," he continued, "that it takes only a second to snap a person's neck? And your neck seems rather delicate."

Mallory continued to step backwards and nervously said, "My neck is indeed pretty. It is my best feature so let us not do that..."

9

Before she knew it, he was standing before her, and she cursed his long legs. Hadeon leaned in, his expression positively wicked, and he asked, "Want to hear what else I did today?"

"I think I'll pass," Mallory replied, inching away from him.

"Oh, but you're going to love this," Hadeon chirped. "Yesterday, when you were asleep, you were sleep talking and muttered names in your sleep, so I decided to check it because I need to take care of my employee. Found this person named Hattie."

12

Mallory's eyes hardened, and she warned, "Don't you dare hurt her."

"Hurt? Don't put such evil ideas in my untainted mind!" If it was possible, Hadeon's smile only broadened, and he remarked, "Now how about we return to the castle, hm?"

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"Where is Hattie?" Mallory pressed.

"If you are asking her status, she's alive and breathing," Hadeon replied in a nonchalant tone. "But let's be real here. Did you really think you could skip town and build a mansion with the pocket change you've got?" He chuckled darkly. "That's barely enough for a quarter of the foundation."

7

If only Mallory could wring his neck like a wet towel, she would now. He had a way of getting under her skin. As she took a deep breath and tore her gaze away from him, she spotted something on the wall.

"Crap..." Mallory whispered with her eyes wide.

"Oh, won't you look at that!" Hadeon exclaimed in an excited voice upon seeing Mallory's picture there with the caption below, 'Dead or Alive'.

17

Mallory couldn't believe she had turned into a wanted criminal poster in Reavermoure. This only meant she could never return here. She clenched her hands, when she noticed another poster nearby.

There, depicted with hair like a bird's nest in a windstorm, was a man who looked nothing like the person beside her now. By now, even Hadeon had caught his supposed poster, and his eyes narrowed in annoyance.

12

Above the 'Dead or Alive' of the poster read— Gideon Vand.

22