

Beauty and the Immortal: It started with a dig Chapter 16 - Haircut By Yours Truly

Music Recommendation: Gilderoy Lockhart - John Williams

In Kingsley Manor, George now stood with the town guards and impatiently demanded, "Is it done? I want their faces plastered in every town!"

"We have covered Reavermoure, Sire. However, we have run out of posters for the other towns," one of the guards informed. He continued, "The artist's apprentices have returned to their homes. Mr. Muriel claims exhaustion."

"Exhaustion? It appears Mr. Muriel underestimates the seriousness of my order," George said with disdain, his frail ego threatening to break. "Bring my carriage! I will see him right now!"

As the lone heir to the Kingsley bloodline, George's upbringing was soaked in privilege and entitlement, which developed his arrogance—a trait not uncommon among the elite. After being publicly humiliated repeatedly, he had decided to restore his image by spreading wanted posters of Mallory Winchester and the unfamiliar man.

When he came to the carriage, he was about to climb when he heard a loud caw. Startled, he stepped away from the door and caught a crow sitting on top of the vehicle.

"What's a damn crow doing here? Shoo!" Irritated, George waved his hand, and it flew away.

In an annoyed voice, he ordered the coachman, "Go to the artist's house!" and climbed inside the carriage.

"*Of course,*" came a voice from the coachman's seat, whose face was veiled in shadow by the hat worn. An eerie smile crept on the person's face, while George failed to notice that this was not his usual coachman.

Once the carriage left the manor, George wore a triumphant look as his eyes fell on the posters stuck on one of the walls in the town. He was going to make Mallory's life miserable! But when his eyes looked outside, he realised the carriage was moving in a different direction.

This dumb coachman! George cursed and pushed open the little window in front of him, when suddenly a white dust was blown right at his face, making him cough, "What the fuck?! What is w... wrong with the..." he fell unconscious.

When George regained consciousness, his eyes felt slightly heavy until he noticed the unfamiliar surroundings, and his eyes popped open. What happened? Where was he?! He tried to move, but he was tied to a chair. His eyes scanned the room, and they fell on Mallory.

Mallory stood in the corner of the hall, where George was tied to the chair with ropes. It had been an hour since he was brought here. When Hadeon had mentioned paying a visit to the Kingsley's manor, she hadn't expected for the count's son to be kidnapped and brought here. From Mr. Muriel's house, she had been sent back in a locked carriage to the castle with Barnby, while Hadeon had disappeared to meet George Kingsley.

She now saw George vigorously move his body, but to no avail.

"You! How dare you attempt to kidnap me?! Untie me this instant, you damn witch!" George demanded from her. "My father will know it was you! Your face is all over the town!"

Mallory walked up to George, she saw a mixture of relief and arrogance in his smile. She raised her hand, but not to untie him.

CRACK! Her fist connected to his already damaged nose, as if wanting to make sure it wouldn't exist.

"ARGH! My nose!!" George yelled in pain, gritting his teeth. If he wasn't fully awake before, he was now. "What is wrong with you?!"

"I should have broken it a long time ago," Mallory said lowly, her hand shaking in anger.

Had he not pushed her remaining patience, she might have found someone decent and not that baron. Her uncle and aunt would have still been alive... She wouldn't have dug up the grave and opened Hadeon's grave, who was now calling her monkey and had turned her into his servant! This was all this egoistic man's fault!

Mallory was tempted to strike George again, but her hand was hurt from their last encounter. The moment, however, was interrupted by the sound of cards being shuffled, a noise almost as ominous as the approach of Hadeon's shoes against the cold stone floor of the hall.

When George's eyes fell on Hadeon, they widened as big as saucers. "YOU!" he blurted out in accusation. "You were the one who brought me here! You both are working together!!"

Hadeon clutched his chest in mock horror, his eyes darting to Mallory. "Oh, no! He's onto us," he gasped dramatically. "What are we going to do?"

What do you mean 'we'?? Mallory bit back the retort that begged to leap from her tongue. She had nothing to do with the kidnapping and was one of the kidnappees! Hadeon should have been in theatres for his love for drama... She quietly edged away from George, not knowing what Hadeon had in his mind.

Hadeon's voice then fell flat, "I suppose it's time for our little Georgie to embrace the coffin, wouldn't you agree?"

"You can't possibly mean that!" George's protest echoed off the stone walls, his gaze darting around the hall as if looking for an escape.

"Oh, Georgie. When you invite yourself to dance with the devil, you don't get to complain about the music," Hadeon tutted softly, and he drew a card from the deck of cards. "Looks like fate's got a dark sense of humor, eh?" He turned the card to show a picture of a coffin on it.

Mallory eyed the strange deck of cards in Hadeon's hands. Sensing her gaze, his eyes shifted to meet hers and he suggested,

"Want to have a go, monkey? Fortune-telling with these could be quite enlightening," he teased, his eyes gleaming with dark amusement. "Who knows? It might just reveal the when and how of your tragic end."

Mallory's face stiffened, and she retorted, "I think some mysteries are better left untouched."

George, unhappy with his current situation, tried to threaten, "You don't know who I am!"

"Literally, I don't care," Hadeon drawled with a dismissive air, putting the card back on the deck and shuffling it. He looked up to meet the captive's fearful gaze and continued, "Though, I must confess. Your descriptive fan art has already won me over. Such dedication to detail—it's flattering, really."

"You broke my hand...!" George complained with a bewildered look.

With a tsk, Hadeon's amusement was clear. He questioned, "Are you quite certain, Georgie? I am a reasonable man, and I will give you time to reflect on what you did last night. Your time starts...now."

"Get me out of here! Somebody help me! HELP!!" George's desperate cries echoed through the vast emptiness of the hall. It would be a lie if Mallory said she wasn't enjoying his situation right now.

Hadeon, ever the instigator, leaned in with a sardonic tilt of his head and asked, "Is that the best you can do? Come now, I'm sure you can scream louder than that." His eyes sparkled with mischief as he observed George's pitiful attempts at escape.

George shouted, "HELP!! You will be paid handsomely! Let me out!" He struggled in his seat, rocking the chair, which fell to the ground, breaking the old furniture's armrests and legs.

"Looks like we are in need of new furniture," Hadeon murmured.

But as George made a break for the door, Hadeon's hand flicked, sending a playing card spinning through the air with lethal precision. It sliced past George, forcing him to a stunned stop.

"You know I am a firm believer that motivation can bring in the best results," Hadeon mused as he threw another card. This time, the card moved closely to shave the center of George's head.

Mallory gasped, both horrified and impressed by Hadeon's deadly accuracy.

Feeling the coolness on his scalp, George's hand shot up to his head and frantically touched the centre of his head. Horror fell on his face. He was sporting a bald patch at the crown of his head!

"AAHHHHHHH!!!!!" George screamed in distress as he mourned the loss of his once flawless hair.

Hadeon closed his eyes, and the corners of his lips curled with a contented sigh. He murmured, "Ah, the music. It would have warmed my heart, had I one to warm," he sighed in feigned disappointment.

He opened his eyes to look at George, who was losing his mind over his lost hair and plight. He set aside the cards on the table, before lovingly caressing a hammer that was lying nearby.

"W—What—Yo—" George could barely form a sentence, unable to comprehend how a card could give him a new haircut.

"Well, what are you waiting for?" Hadeon whispered in a menacing voice that dropped the room's temperature, and he picked up the hammer in his hand.
"*Run, human.*"