

46 Unexpected box 8

When the tailor was finally done writing down everything that he needed, Mallory couldn't stop staring at the floating parchment and quill.

"The clothes will be delivered by Sienna in a week," River informed with a kind smile before adding, "I hope that is alright, Mallory." Unlike Hadeon, this person had black eyes, and it made Mallory wonder what kind of vampire he was.

"That's more than alright." Mallory offered him a bow. "Thank you, Mr. Atticus."

"Please call me, River," River said. 3

"If that is all, it is time to leave," Hadeon stated, uncrossing his legs and swiftly standing up from the plush couch. 8

"I am guessing I will be seeing you at Orlo's soiree?" River asked with a continued smile and heard Hadeon hum for an answer. "I will send out your clothes along with hers. Also, it was good meeting you, Mallory. I hope you will be alive by our next meeting." 18

The man seemed alright by his appearance and demeanour, except for the talk about if she

would survive next to Hadeon, which greatly worried Mallory. Soon they stepped out of the building, and Mallory couldn't help but ask,

"What is Mr. Atticus?"

"Did his sweet nature catch your interest, monkey?" Hadeon asked in a nonchalant tone as they continued to walk down the street in which they had come. "If I were you, I would keep a good distance from him." 12

"He seemed like a nice person. Why do you say that? Isn't he your friend?" Mallory asked, as she followed him.

"He is an acquaintance, but one you'd best steer away from even if he's your type," Hadeon's lips twisted into a smile. His gaze met her curious blue eyes, his tone tinged with dry humour. "You humans have a knack for falling head over heels for sweetness and charm, don't you? Nice things and words can often be the deadliest traps." 11

Mallory didn't respond to it, as her thoughts went to the man who had once been nice to her. Kaiser. He had stolen her remaining family from her. She then said, 9

"It is because of the parchment and the quill."

"Of course, it is," Hadeon dragged his words and then replied, "He's a ghoul. One that loves eating people. He comes from Ghoulsville." 25

Mallory's eyes widened at the revelation and she felt her heart shudder at the very thought of it. Eating... people? Drinking people's blood? She was surrounded with people with whom she didn't share the same palate! 1

"I thought it was just a funny name for the village..." Mallory murmured.

"You naive monkey," Hadeon began, his voice carrying an air of superiority as they walked along the cobblestone street, the sound of his shoes echoing sharply. "Long ago, before this village even existed, the mountains were inhabited by ghouls. That's how the place got its name. While ghouls are rare these days, they still retain a few abilities. Granted, most are as trivial as the one you witnessed back there." 4

To think that she was worried about vampires, now there were ghouls too! Mallory wondered what other creatures hid among the humans that she wasn't aware of. 11

When they returned to where the carriage awaited them, Mallory caught George peeking

from behind the vehicle as if worried someone was going to recognise him. And seeing them, he looked extremely relieved. Arriving at the castle, she changed her shoes to preserve the beautiful pair she wore, opting for the ones given to her by the shopkeeper.

As night fell upon the land, with clouds thundering and shaking the windows, George came looking for Mallory and asked, "Where is Lord Hadeon?" 5

"In his room or lounging on some side of the castle," Mallory replied, who was in the library as she was bored.

"He's not in the castle!"

"He must have gone out then. He will be back," Mallory replied, noticing George look restless, and she asked, "What's going on?"

"What? What's going on?" George repeated, behaving as if he didn't know what she was talking about. "Nothing is going on." 6

Mallory wondered where Hadeon had gone to. Probably to suck someone's blood or life force, she thought dully in her mind. She then heard him say, "You know, Mallory, I have decided to make peace with you after what you have put me

through. I forgive you." 20

Mallory stared at him and muttered, "You are stealing my lines." 5

"I mean we are both in the same boat, so we should forget what happened," George said making light of the situation. "We are going to be living under the same roof from now." 3

After what he had put her through, Mallory wasn't in the mood to forgive him. Of course, seeing how miserable he was under Hadeon's mercy did ease the pain she had gone through at this man's hands. But then she thought she could milk a few things and said,

"On one condition. Clear my name from the murder that you and the rest of them put on me," Mallory stated, as she crossed her arms. 3

George laughed before saying, "That's not possible. I don't live there, and this is my new home. I think I am suitable in a castle than a manor. And you killed your—" 7

"Say another word, and I will break the rest of your face. Or would you rather want me to tell Hadeon that you were badmouthing him?" Mallory asked in a casual tone. 1

"You wouldn't..." George didn't have a place to go to with the confused situation. "But everyone saw you murder—"

"I did not kill my uncle or aunt," Mallory took a threatening step towards George, who quickly took one step backwards. "I was framed by Kaiser! How many times do I have to say it? I have no reason to lie when we are here." 2

George scratched the back of his neck, contemplating what she just said. He then stated, "I wish I could help, but I am worried that before pulling down your name, I will find my name on the list."

"What for?" Mallory frowned.

"I wish I fucking knew!" George still couldn't digest that his father would send men to kill him. After what happened today, he could only believe that his father had disowned him. He nervously laughed. "Right now is not a good time, and it isn't like you are going to live in Reavermoure ever again. Also, why would the baron kill your family?" 1

"He was looking for something that night. I don't know what," Mallory replied, as anger bubbled at the very thought of the man.

Not too far away from the rooms, above the castle's roof, Hadeon lounged with one leg extended and the other bent, exhaling smoke into the night air. Despite his impassive demeanour, he listened keenly to the conversations echoing from within the castle walls. 10

Hearing footsteps approach him, Hadeon didn't bother to turn. Barnby, who appeared on the rooftop, informed him, "The note has been delivered, Lord Hadeon." 1

Hadeon only took the cigar back to his lips before blowing the smoke out. The servant then added, "I also found out something, milord. About Lady Mallory," and this had the pureblooded vampire turn his head to the side, lightning striking somewhere far. 14

When the day of the soiree arrived, Mallory woke up to Ivy staring at her once again. She just couldn't get used to the servant waking her up like this, and she decided to tell Hadeon so that the maid would refrain from doing it. 9

"Was there something you needed, Ivy?" she asked, sitting upright on her bed.

"Lord Hadeon wanted me to deliver you this," the

maid smiled with her red eyes staring at Mallory. She then picked up a box and placed it on the bed. "Oh! This one too!" She placed a small box on top of the big box.

"Thanks..." Mallory murmured and watched the maid waltz out of there as if she were never here.

She wondered if the big box had a dress that she would be wearing for the soiree as Hadeon had mentioned she would be accompanying him there. She picked up the small one, which was at the top. When she opened it, she noticed a black velvet band that had a hook and a little loop in the middle. The sides of the band had intricate little details. She stared at it hard, putting the hook on, and her eyes then narrowed. 16

"Hadeon..." Mallory gritted her teeth. He must be kidding to give her this! 1

As if having woken up on the wrong side of the bed, Mallory got out of bed and stormed out of her room, clutching the collar tightly in her hand as she hurried towards his room. 5

Mallory barged into the room without knocking, while saying, "Master Hades! What is this—" Only for her words to get caught in her throat upon



46 Unexpected box

discovering Hadeon standing there, with just a bath towel wrapped around his waist and his hand on the end of the towel, as if he were just about to pull it. 30

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2

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