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Mallory stared at the slave with a baffled expression, while the vampiress named Violet wore a smug expression. 1

"Mallory," Hadeon's voice reached her, commanding her attention. She turned to see him looking at her. "Come here." 8

Her hands clenched, realising resistance was futile when the slave didn't wish to be defended. She gingerly approached where Hadeon sat, his demeanour pleasant but his presence undeniably intimidating. He patted the seat next to him.

"Sit," he ordered, the command clear despite the pleasant expression on his handsome face. 10

Orlo, the vampire, rose with a mischievous smile, signalling Mallory's impending punishment, and left the area, leaving her alone with Hadeon. She sat down stiffly as Hadeon turned to the maid with a tray of drinks, raising his hand to beckon her.

"What would you like to drink?" he inquired, his gaze fixed on Mallory. 3

"I'm fine," Mallory whispered, avoiding his gaze.

"Clearly, you're not. Perhaps a drink will make you feel better," Hadeon insisted, not bothering to ask again. He surveyed the tray of drinks before selecting a glass and offering it to her.

"Take it," he ordered, dismissing the maid with a wave of his hand. 2

Mallory eyed the glass suspiciously, its contents a deep blue hue. She took it from him, hesitating to drink. Hadeon spoke again, his tone firm. "It's made of butterfly pea flowers. Suitable for humans." Mallory took a tentative sip, hearing his subtle quip, "If not, you'll know within five minutes of drinking." 11

True enough, she thought to herself, familiar with the taste of alcohol. Just as she was about to turn her attention back to Violet and the slave, Hadeon's voice cut through the air.

"Having trouble minding your own business?" he noticed her hand grip the glass that she held. 10

"Why?" Mallory asked in a low voice.

"Why you can't poke your nose where it doesn't belong, or why did the slave refuse your help?" Hadeon tilted his head, his curious gaze set on her. "But isn't it simple? The slave belongs to the

vampiress."

"Does a human's life not count?" Mallory asked, turning to see him pick up a marble from the bowl of marbles that was kept as decoration.

"Barely," Hadeon replied truthfully. "And if you want to blame someone, you should blame the slave's family, who sold her in the first place for money." 10

"They would have had some grievance, due to which they were compelled..." Mallory's voice drawled when she saw him smile. 1

"You don't sell things that are dear to you. Besides, once a person gets into the slave contract, you cannot get out of it unless the master or mistress releases you or dies," Hadeon stated, while noticing the conflict taking place in her mind. "You should already know what happens when a slave fails to meet the contract rules." 9

"That's not fair..." Mallory said. Because even though she came from a high class background, she knew how to treat people with kindness and not like dirt.

"All the slaves here have inked contracts with their own blood. You can't take the goodness the

devil gives you and not expect him to take your soul in return," Hadeon mused. Just then, a servant appeared beside him, bearing a glass of wine that was dark red in appearance. He took a sip from it and hummed in appreciation. 5

Mallory's eyes fell upon another slave, who kissed his mistress's foot as if he were a dog and her heart clenched. She knew slavery still existed, but never had she sit still, watching people being mistreated. Then again, she was no longer a lady but a lower being among the vampires. 10

The sight before her only made her hate vampires and she pursed her lips. 3

"Also, I think you should be aware of a rule among us pureblooded vampires about slaves or servants," Hadeon remarked in a casual tone. She held her breath, waiting for his next words.

"Don't help another slave in distress, and the same rule applies for the vampire and vampiress. Don't harm or punish them. Meddling will only cost equal damage, and we expect everyone to comply."

"Does the rule apply to you too?" Mallory asked because he had said he didn't follow any rules. Not to mention, he liked defanging and killing

people left and right. 4

A grin cracked upon Hadeon's lips, while he didn't bother to answer her question. He had never bothered to have a servant bound to him, which was why he had never cared about stealing for a drink or killing them in the past. 7

Mallory asked him then, "Why did you bring me here?"

"So that you know the world you have stepped into, and they have their own rules. It is better to be aware than to take the wrong step. You can't go rescue a puppy at the mere sight of it,"

Hadeon said, his eyes not leaving hers as he took another sip of wine from his glass. 8

She brought her own glass to her lips and took a couple of sips of the cold drink. It was sweet and refreshing in taste.

Her eyes moved through the room, barely registering two servants sitting next to their master or mistress, and one of them was Lady Rose, while the others stood. When she was almost done drinking her glass, she heard the earlier vampiress's voice from the back, shout at her slave,

"I told you to fucking move!" and a loud slap was

heard, which had Mallory close her eyes as the grip on her glass tightened. "You wastrel, can't even do one thing right! I should just drain you." 2

"Monkey," Hadeon called her and instructed her, "Get me the appetiser from the table." 1

She opened her eyes and met his eyes, who looked eager to eat. "Hurry now. Don't keep me waiting." If this was his way to keep her mind occupied, it was a terrible idea, she thought to herself. 9

Mallory had to walk past the vampiress as if she couldn't see what was going on. She looked at all the fancy food placed on the table and picked one of the trays.

But just as she turned, a marble swiftly moved towards her and it wasn't long before one of her foot rolled above it, making her miss her balance. The tray fell from her hand, but she had managed to catch her balance after a little imbalance. 13

"How pathetic, people don't even know how to walk," the vampiress named Violet remarked.

Mallory wondered what went under her shoe, and she raised the back of her foot, which also revealed her new shoes to people near her. Lady

Rose upon noticing them, remarked,

"Those are some good shoes, Mallory. They look lovely on you." 4

But before Mallory could thank her, Violet's eyes fell on the shoes and her eyes widened in realisation. She demanded, 11

"Where did you get those shoes?! Those are mine!" 12

Mallory, who was already a practiced dodger because of the history she had, stepped aside when the vampiress tried to grab her. Offering a tight smile, she said, "Pardon me, vampiress. But they belong to me."

"Like hell, they do!" Violet looked furious. Two days ago, when she sent her servant to fetch the shoes, she was informed that they had been bought. "I cannot believe a slave is wearing such expensive shoes." 11

At the same time, Mallory noticed a marble roll to the side and her eyes narrowed, as she now knew how she had almost tripped. She heard the vampiress threaten. 2

"Remove them this instant, you mutt! Or do you want me to get them removed for you?" Violet

turned to one of the vampires nearby and ordered, "Remove them from her!" 2

"Touch her, and I will blow your brains, such that it will turn into a masterpiece on the wall," Hadeon had already begun walking to where they were. With a twisted smile, he addressed the vampiress, "I have been told I am quite an artist." 17

Violet pointed at him and said, "You are the one who bought the shoes!" 1

"I don't recall seeing your name on the box or the shoes. Maybe it evaporated the moment I stepped into the shop," Hadeon remarked with a smirk. He cast a disdainful glance at the vampiress's footwear and clicked his tongue disapprovingly. "You must be mistaking these shoes for yours, because they don't match," this only irked Violet even more. 9

"You have made an enemy," Violet's threat was as empty as Hadeon's lack of care for her. 10

"Don't feel so entitled. You are just one of many in line. Better get to the line where shoes are sold. Also," Hadeon's voice drawled as his expression turned serious, 7

"Who do you think you are to speak to me with



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such familiarity?" He glowered, causing the woman's arrogant demeanour to crumble into one of apprehension as his eyes darkened. "You are ruining the atmosphere in the lair. Now, get the fuck out of here." 36

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