



57 Spending night at the Inn 14

Music Recommendation: Glance out a Casement Window - Janet Redger 1

With the soft flickering light that came from the fireplace, Mallory couldn't see Hadeon's expression clearly as it covered itself in shadow. Feeling a mix of nervousness and curiosity about his late-night invitation, she ventured a question to lighten the mood,

"Do you want me to bring you a chicken or rabbit from the kitchen?" 8

Hadeon's smile grew mischievous in the dim light, his eyes glinting with a playful darkness. He responded, his voice carrying a hint of teasing, "While the image of you chasing rabbits at midnight is quite delightful, I must confess, you're the more intriguing prey tonight, far surpassing any feathered or furry creature." 13

"..." He was going to turn her into his dinner tonight! Mallory screamed in her mind. Her eyes quickly shot to the door. Trying to get out of the situation, she nervously smiled and said, "Master Hades, I was thinking th—"



"Don't keep me waiting, wifey," Hadeon teased, his voice carrying a sly huskiness that sent an involuntary shiver down Mallory's spine. 16

She pressed her lips together, hesitating only briefly before her bare feet padded softly across the wooden floor towards him. Though she felt the instinct to flee, she chose instead to confront him head-on. Stepping into the circle of light cast by the fireplace, she declared with a steady voice, "I am here." 2

"Took you long enough," Hadeon observed, his golden eyes gleaming as they fixed intently on her. The playful smirk on his lips had softened into a more contemplative smile. 1

He motioned gracefully to the space beside him. "Sit." 1

Mallory's gaze flickered to the solitary chair, then back to Hadeon, her mind racing as she pondered his intentions. Her eyes inadvertently drifted towards his lap, and seeing this, Hadeon chuckled softly. "Do you prefer to sit on my lap, perhaps? I could even feed you grapes," he quipped, the amusement clear in his voice. 12

She scowled, not missing a beat. "No, thank you. I think the floor will do."



"That's precisely where I was suggesting," Hadeon said smoothly, extending a hand to indicate the space directly at his feet. "Right here, with your back to me." 8

Mallory stared at Hadeon for a second, before she sat down between his legs, and it was stranger than she could explain now, not knowing what the pureblooded vampire had on his mind. Then suddenly something covered her vision, and her head started to shake, as Hadeon began towelling her rain-soaked hair. 17

"Master Hades, what are you doing?" Mallory asked, her voice tinged with both surprise and a faint trace of alarm.

"This is called towelling, monkey. Clearly you haven't heard about it," came Hadeon's sarcastic words.

Mallory rolled her eyes, and she replied, "I know what it means. I can do that myself." When her hand touched the towel, her hands were gently swatted away. 1

"Be a good girl and let me do the husband's duties," Hadeon admonished her in a nonchalant tone, and Mallory's head was about to turn, which was stopped by him with both his hands. 12



"Master Hades, we don't have to act as a married couple. There's no one here," Mallory reminded him, and she could tell that the pureblooded vampire was having too much fun with it. 1

"I know, but I am still in character, and I wanted to see what the hype was all about. I see humans doing that," Hadeon replied, his voice low and somewhat soothing. His hands were surprisingly gentle as they moved carefully, the towel softly brushing against her scalp. The movements almost made her purr, and her eyes widened. "I did not hear it," his lips curled. 7

Mallory closed her eyes while biting her lower lip. This was awkward, she thought to herself. As if to change the atmosphere that had begun to feel like her bones were melting, she asked him, "Have human relationships interested you?"

"Not really. Though I have always wondered how they turned out to be that stupid with no common sense and no manners," Hadeon clicked his tongue in disdain. Hearing Mallory clear her throat, he rolled his eyes and said, "You would be surprised that I am full of manners. Even when I am going to kill someone, I let them know." 6

"How very kind of you, Master Hades. What



would we do without you?" Mallory muttered. 5

"Probably drown in misery," Hadeon replied in a matter-of-fact tone. "Humans are chicken." 4

One would think Master Hadeon was a simpleton if they heard it, Mallory thought dryly. She asked him, "But what made you want to try towelling my hair?"

"Why? Isn't it obvious?" Hadeon's response hung in the air for two seconds, and his hands stopped moving. The towel hid the upper half of her face, leaving her eyes just visible beneath its edge. His next words fell next to her head as he leaned forward from his seat, "It is so that you don't fall sick." 6

Though Mallory knew Hadeon was only being dramatic as she had called them to be married and was teasing her now, this was the version she had never seen from him, and it was strange. 2

"Master Hades, you are worrying me," she mumbled, her gaze fixed on the dancing flames, not quite ready to meet his eyes directly.

"Hm?" Hadeon's response was typical—nonchalant yet curious.



Sometimes, Mallory thought, interacting with Hadeon was similar to a wall. In the end, he did what he wanted. "Nothing," she replied quickly, then, attempting to lighten the mood, she joked, "I was just thinking you could be a masseur."

As the ends of the towel fell away, and his hands threaded through her damp locks, she felt her heart shudder. She quickly added, "I don't think any master or mistress towels their servant's hair."

"You are right," Hadeon agreed, his voice smooth and he noticed her hair had parted to expose her soft nape. "I suppose then it's your turn so that I don't catch a cold. Unless you want to feed me some blood-thickened soup." His words hinted at a playful role reversal, he then feigned a cough, "Oh, dear!" 7

At the words of blood, Mallory was up on her feet with the towel in her hands. She very well knew that Hadeon didn't have the nature of being sick, and if he did, it would be his dramatic ruse to feed his amusement.

"You had all these years to play a couple with the vampires, why didn't you feed your curiosity then?" Mallory asked him. 3



"That's because I didn't find you until now, wifey," Hadeon said with a straight face before a grin cracked on his lips and Mallory threw the towel on his face as a payback before she began to dry his head. 10

As Hadeon sat with his back resting against the seat, Mallory decided to walk behind him and finish the task, as she had to stretch right now. But the moment she tugged the towel away, his reflexes snapped into action. His hand shot out, catching her wrist in a firm, though not painful, grip. The suddenness of his movement startled Mallory, causing her heart to leap into her throat.

"Where are you going?" Hadeon questioned her with his eyes, holding a subtle glare which disappeared in the next second.

"I thought I should stand behind," Mallory's eyes were slightly wide and he stared at her for a good two seconds without any response.

"I think this is just fine," Hadeon remarked. "Go on." This scary and unexpected vampire, Mallory said to herself.

When Mallory started with the sides again and moved up, the towel raised itself too and she



was met with Hadeon's calm eyes. Unnerved, she asked him, "Was there something you needed, Master Hades?"

"I was wondering what comes next after this," and a slow, sly smile appeared on Hadeon's lips. "I am thinking about bed." 13

Mallory's face turned flush by Haedon's insinuation and she quickly pulled away from him with narrowed eyes, "W—What bed?"

"You know, I was thinking..." Hadeon tortured her with a drawl in his words, "There's only one bed and—" 6

"Master Hades, I think you should sleep on the bed, and I will take the floor," Mallory said in one breath before Hadeon would decide something absurd on his own. "I love wooden floors and how flat they are. You should take the plush bed." 7

"What a thoughtful monkey you are," Hadeon praised her, his eyes lighting up with mirth. "What Christmas gift would you like?"

"I would like it for you to go to bed and sleep now." 10

After a few minutes, Mallory, nestled on her



makeshift bed, shifted slightly to find a comfortable spot, her body relaxing as sleep beckoned. Eyes closed and breaths deepening, she drifted into a dreamless slumber.

Across from her, the wooden floor creaked.

Hadeon lay down on the floor, mirroring her position, with only the faint glow of the dying fire separating them. His eyes, luminous in the dim light, remained fixed on Mallory's peaceful face. He watched her with a quiet intensity. 2

"It was a fun night, wasn't it?" Hadeon whispered, his voice barely more than a breath. 26

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