

Beauty and the Immortal: It started with a dig Chapter 9 - Cross Soul

"Excuse me?" Mallory questioned as the person's words sunk further into her mind.

"How about no?" Hadeon leaned closer, his mouth slightly open, revealing his sharp fangs.

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Mallory swiftly dropped herself to the ground before he would suck her dry to a corpse. Crawling away on all fours, she straightened up after reaching a safe distance away from him. That was close! She thought to herself. She laughed nervously,

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"I believe there has been a misunderstanding. You see, I am not your servant. I am Mallory Winchester, the daughter of Lord Ezikel and Lady Leora Winchester. Not a servant, but a lady of high society."

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Her attempt to clarify was met with Hadeon's low chuckle, a sound that turned her uneasy, and her stomach twisted when she caught the sly smile appearing on his lips. He stared at her unblinkingly, which made her skin crawl. She then saw him raise his finger and remark,

"I believe what you meant to say is 'the lady who almost died'? Because, from my view, you were about two seconds away from a public beheading, just like a chicken. What landed you there? Dug their families' graves too? What a naughty woman," he clicked his tongue.

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Mallory's cheeks burned, and she shot back, "For your information, I was wrongfully accused of murder!"

"A servant who can kill. Excellent qualification," Hadeon clapped, his hands echoing morbid enthusiasm. "You'll fit right in—assuming you're more

competent than my last few disappointments. They're now part of the garden decoration, you see. Sometimes for Hallow. Aren't I generous?"

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"It wasn't me! It was the Baron!" Mallory protested, her voice tinged with exasperation. "And I—I don't need your employment." Firstly, she was not a servant. Secondly, considering the short conversation they shared, she believed she would be discussing him with his previous servants in the afterlife!

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"There's no need to feel inadequate, because you are already hired." Hadeon waved her off.

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"No." This crazy dead person! Mallory shouted at him in her head.

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Hadeon feigned a gasp, placing his hand on his chest and said, as if deeply hurt,

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"You wound me, truly. And it hurts more than when I discovered that garlic merely adds flavour to my meals, not demise. That was a true betrayal. But don't fret, my dear. The position is yours, much like a coffin that has a person's fate written on it. Now, how about we have your job orientation? Over a cup of blood tea sounds wonderful."

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"I haven't quite reached my daily iron overdose. Thanks, though," Mallory mentioned, while feeling like she had hit her head somewhere after sharing a few words with him.

"Good to hear that I will have convenient access to refreshments," Hadeon mused silkily, his tongue running over his sharp canine.

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Cursing her luck, Mallory squared her shoulders under the man's predatory eyes. She asked,

"I put the mud back on and covered the coffin. How did you come out of the grave?! You were dead! Are you a ghost...?"

"Who said I was dead?" Hadeon tilted his head. "I was merely taking a nap in my coffin. You know, beauty sleep and all that."

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"What are you?" Mallory braced herself, feeling her heart race in fear.

A devilish smile flickered over his lips, his golden eyes flickering to a colour of stormy dark red. He responded with a sly voice, "My servant is so eager to know me. I love your enthusiasm on the first day of your job! Rest assured, I'll bear it in mind when it's time for your performance review. Wouldn't want your...dedication to go unrewarded."

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But she didn't want to do anything with him! Right now, all Mallory wanted to do was bang her head against the wall. She started,

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"Okay, Mr. Not-so-dead-but-dead-person. This necklace? It was a gift given by my grandmother, and she didn't come from a line of servant families. Not even close. Even if she were your supposed servant, it has been a few years since she passed away. Maybe if you hopped back into the coffin, you would find her."

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A laugh escaped from Hadeon's lips, one that was dark and rich, that filled the air around them. Mallory shifted her legs.

"Let me tell you a little story, you foolish servant," Hadeon tried to enlighten her with a serious tone, and Mallory gritted her teeth. He continued, "In an age forgotten, rare stones were found amidst fire and ash, crafted from unusual elements. Those stones were given to certain people to serve ancient families, which were then handed down to the next generation. Of course,

some tried to steal them but eventually met with their deaths. The stones came to be called Cross Souls."

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Hadeon then leaned closer, his voice a velvet caress of menace and mirth, "Now, your dear grandmother or her grandmother might not have been my employee, but the fact that you have that pendant around your neck means only one thing: you come from the server's bloodline. Welcome to the club, my loyal subject of torment. No money is needed for the membership... aside from your eternal soul, naturally."

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"No," Mallory shook her head. She held up her pendant that was around her neck and said, "This is not some family heirloom. This is just a regular pendant, and it might look similar to what you think it is. You have been sleeping in the coffin, you have just got your head—"

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Hadeon's eyes narrowed, and he raised his hand to snap his fingers.

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For a moment, Mallory wondered if he was going to summon something from thin air. Was that even possible? But then she saw him stare at her pendant. When she looked down, the stone at the heart of her necklace began to glow ominously.

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"Oh...my... God," Mallory whispered, feeling dizzy.

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"Finally, you recognise me," Hadeon said, looking at her with a pleased expression, while Mallory looked like she was losing her mind at the turn of events. "Come, now. You have a house to clean."

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