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Mallory leaned in towards Lady Rose, her curiosity piqued and eager for more details. She asked, 1

"In love?" 10

A small chuckle escaped Lady Rose's lips, amused by Mallory's suggestion. "When the devil created him and the rest of us," she said, "he ensured that none of us could alter our true nature—least of all, Hadeon. Love is not something Hadeon does." 12

For some reason, Lady Rose's words pinched Mallory, even though she was already aware of Hadeon's nature. This knowledge was also precisely why she maintained her distance from the pot of craziness. 8

Lady Rose continued, "Long ago, Hadeon was captivated by Reagan's blood and took her everywhere. It's not that he lacked other sources before her. In fact, some even suspected that she had changed him. But when she turned into a vampire, she lost her appeal to him since he only kept her around for her blood. I suspect that's why she remains bitter and likely sees you as his

next blood donor." 10

So this vampiress, Reagan, felt jilted by Hadeon's actions. And here Mallory had assumed she was some high-status vampiress, only to discover she was a turned vampire. Shaking her head quietly, Mallory thought Hadeon had likely teased Reagan, who had misunderstood his intentions. Poor woman, she mused. 4

"Did Hadeon speak with her after that?" Mallory asked, her curiosity getting the better of her.

"I believe they did converse once after she turned," Lady Rose replied with a polite smile. "And though I don't know the complete details, I do know that it was quite messy. The discussion, I mean. Don't let her words bother you. However, I would advise you to be cautious. There are many vampiresses vying for his attention who might misinterpret his actions." 6

"Thank you for the warning, Lady Rose," Mallory replied, even though she was already aware of this.

"Wallace, could you check with the tailor to see if the adjustments have been made?" Lady Rose asked her butler. He nodded and departed.

Lady Rose observed Mallory, who was standing



by the railing, her eyes were focused on the ongoing decorations. Noticing the human's scattered thoughts, she asked gently, "Is everything alright?"

Mallory turned to meet the vampiress's gleaming red eyes and replied, "Ah, yes." After a moment's pause, she considered asking for a favour. "Milady, do you by any chance have a spare nightdress?" she asked. 4

Slightly surprised, Lady Rose repeated, "A nightdress? Well, I do believe Wallace packed a few. You're welcome to borrow one, although I doubt it would be to your liking, and it might be a bit larger in size. Did you forget to pack them?" 4

"I did, but I couldn't carry it with me," Mallory replied, skirting around the details of the nightdress Hadeon had chosen for her. "That's fine, I'll manage," she added. "I'll continue my stroll," she said, offering a bow before walking away from the corridor. 3

Though Mallory didn't voice her thoughts, Lady Rose subtly raised an eyebrow, her curiosity piqued. "What is Hadeon up to?" she murmured softly to herself. 8



Mallory didn't venture far, wary of running into another vampiress who had a history with Hadeon. However, as she tried to locate the room she'd been assigned earlier, she found herself disoriented.

Just before she could ask a servant for assistance, her eyes fell upon Lord Salvador. He wasn't alone. Standing beside him was a well-dressed young boy with neatly combed hair, mirroring the lord's expressions as he greeted the guests who approached them. **14**

"I wonder if that's his son," Mallory murmured to herself.

With the help of a maid passing by, Mallory managed to find her way back to her room. However, upon arrival, she noticed that Hadeon was not there.

Meanwhile, in a distant part of the garden, Hadeon encountered Lady Rose, who was seated on a bench beneath the shade of a tree. "Well, well, well, if it isn't the flower of the garden," he remarked, a playful glint in his eye as he approached the vampiress.

"Where is your butler?" he inquired, taking a seat on the opposite end of the bench.



Lady Rose gave him a quiet, contemplative look before answering, "He's gone to fetch his clothes for tomorrow. I heard you weren't planning to attend the Hallow Ball that Vlad is hosting. What made you change your mind?"

"Certain circumstances. I have business here with him and thought, why pass up this lovely opportunity?" Hadeon replied brightly. Sensing her inquisitive stare, he added with a teasing tone, "Looking for another answer, are we?" 5

Lady Rose smiled, a hint of amusement in her eyes. "Were you supposed to give another answer?" she countered.

A wicked grin spread across Hadeon's lips, while Lady Rose's smile softened slightly. "I met Mallory on my way. It seems like you've worn her out," she observed. 1

Hadeon hummed in response, murmuring, "Worn out does ignite the imagination, Rose. Besides, the woman is a magnet for trouble." 5

Wonder why," Lady Rose commented, her gaze shifting to some of the guests who were now looking their way. "I thought I should give you a heads-up—Reagan is here and had some words with Mallory. Some rather childish ones."



"Mallory will be fine. She knows how to hold her ground, at least until I arrive," Hadeon replied, grinning confidently. "She's not just a pretty face. She has a good bite." 6

Rose Chevalier was taken aback by Hadeon's praise, especially since it concerned a human, prompting her to wonder about his intentions. "She's different, I can tell that much. Considering how her head is still intact with her body."

A hearty chuckle escaped Hadeon's lips before a darker expression clouded his face. "You should know that the brainless don't deserve to keep their heads. It's pointless."

"Or you could let people be. Just because we've existed in the living realm for so long doesn't mean change isn't possible. Embracing peace is an option," Lady Rose countered. Although she was created by the Devil like Hadeon, she harboured hope that their kind could evolve for the better. The world now reeked of death, swept beneath the carpet, but the difference with Hadeon was his tendency to leave such macabre details out in the open, as if they were decorations.

"If everyone became boring, who would bring the fun to the table?" Hadeon clicked his tongue



dismissively, as if that were an absurd notion. Lady Rose rolled her eyes in response.

When Wallace returned, Hadeon noticed how it eased Rose's features. It was evident that she was in love with her butler. **12**

Back in her room, Mallory flopped onto the bed, her arms spread wide as if to claim the space for herself. A content sigh escaped her lips as she closed her eyes.

"This feels nice," she murmured to herself. Yet, her mind couldn't help but drift to Hadeon—why had he chosen to stay here instead of continuing their journey? He had mentioned something earlier to Lord Salvador about needing to discuss matters. **2**

But as Mallory revelled in the comforting silence that enveloped the room with her eyes closed, something dark began to creep from one corner. A shadow flickered on the wall, moving as if someone were present, even though there was clearly no one else in the room. **7**

The shadow slithered towards the bed, crawling across the surface before hovering ominously before her. Mallory felt a chill run down her body, not realising the shadowy hands reaching

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out for her neck, long, sharp nails glinting menacingly. 20

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