

## 105 I can hear, but I can't see 4

Mallory's heart skipped a beat as she was pulled back to Hadeon's side, her eyes widening in startled surprise. The room buzzed with laughter and lively conversation, yet a silent tension coiled between them, an invisible thread tethering her to him. 1

She stole a quick glance at the pureblooded vampire, noting how he hadn't released her hand. When she subtly attempted to pull away, his grip shifted—firm yet gentle—holding her in place, igniting an unexpected warmth that radiated across her cheeks. 7

To prevent people from noticing his hand around her, she moved closer to him.

"Lady Mallory, are you alright?" inquired a middle-aged woman, her voice rich with concern. 2

Feeling as though she were a thief caught in the act, Mallory quickly replied, "I am, Milady. Why do you ask?" She forced a bright smile, though a flutter danced in her chest, like leaves caught in an autumn wind.

"You look like you are catching a fever," the



woman remarked, and Mallory suddenly realised she hadn't schooled her expression to mask her turmoil. 5

"Hm?" Hadeon turned his gaze towards Mallory, his attention sharp. In the next heartbeat, his other hand moved to her forehead, cool against her skin—an unexpected gesture that only had her heartbeat race as he subtly leaned in towards her, while staring into her sterling blue eyes, and murmuring, "Looks like she is catching. Are you...?" Those last words were only for her to hear and she was ready to burst into a heap of ashes on the ground. 16

Mallory was accustomed to Hadeon's teasing remarks and playful actions, always delivered with a mischievous glint that could unsettle even the steadiest heart—like placing a fragile nerve under a tin box, ready to shake it awake. Which was also why she was aware of the difference in the way he touched and spoke to her, and it frightened her heart. 3

When Hadeon finally loosened his hold on her hand, Mallory swiftly withdrew it to her side, unable to meet his gaze. Thankfully, the people around them were so involved in the conversation about the king that nobody paid



attention to her. Except for the one standing next to her.

"Lady Mallory, would you like to have a drink with me here?" It was Lady Rose with her butler, Wallace, looming silently behind her like a watchful shadow. **4**

"Of course," Mallory replied, relief washing over her as she accepted the invitation with a bright smile. Offering a polite bow to everyone, she felt Hadeon's intense gaze on her, who didn't utter a word.

"What would you like to drink?" Lady Rose asked, her gaze fixed on Mallory as she gestured to Wallace, who signalled a nearby servant to bring over a tray of drinks. "Personally, I think you might enjoy beets, but I'm guessing you're in the mood for something stronger?" **6**

As Lady Rose spoke, Mallory couldn't shake the feeling that the vampress had noticed the brief moment that had transpired between her and Hadeon. **5**

"Maybe something that will allow me to keep my head." Mallory smiled out of nervousness and Lady Rose softly chuckled. When the servant came by, she picked up a glass of water to calm



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down her nerves.

"Are you enjoying Valeria?" Lady Rose asked. 12

"It is beautiful and peaceful," Mallory replied. She only wished she was in a better place to be able to enjoy it like the rest of them here. Knowing she was the prophecy bearer and now knowing there was a ghoul after her life, it was a little more stressful than she could usually handle.

"How about yourself?" she returned the question. 2

"I've enjoyed it since I arrived, but it feels like this is going to be the last time I get to savour its beauty in the future," Lady Rose said unexpectedly, capturing Mallory's full attention with her words. 3

"What do you mean?" Mallory asked, a flutter of nerves tightening in her stomach.

Lady Rose lifted her glass, taking a delicate sip of wine before continuing, "You must already know that we original pureblooded vampires are gifted," she said, casting a knowing glance towards Hadeon, who was engrossed in conversation with one of the men. "In my case, I possess the gift of clairvoyance. While I cannot see the future directly, I can sense and feel the currents of fate. Also... hear very loudly." 10

17:04

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Wasn't everyone able to hear? Mallory asked in her mind, not completely understanding what the vampiress meant. Unable to resist, she asked, "Can you feel my fate too?" 5

The vampiress placed her hand gently over Mallory's, her touch cooler than ice in winter. Closing her eyes for a fleeting second, her brows furrowed, as if she were tuning into an unseen melody that resonated just beyond her reach. When she opened her eyes again, she met the young human's eyes and she replied,

"A challenge was placed before you long ago, and the path isn't easy. But maybe this is the path," Lady Rose softly smiled at her.

Maybe she was in the right place then, Mallory thought to herself, a flicker of hope igniting within her. With a smile, she turned to Lady Rose and asked, "Thank you, Lady Rose. Did you read Hadeon too?"

"Unfortunately, I haven't been able to," Lady Rose replied, a hint of wistfulness in her voice. "It's likely due to the fact that his path is relative to his name," she said, tilting her head, which made her appear a few years younger than she was with that action.



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After spending some more time with Lady Rose, Mallory finally left her side to join Hadeon again. Wallace watched the young human before he asked with a blank face, "You didn't see her future, did you?" **4**

Lady Rose stayed quiet for a few seconds. She then replied, "Hadeon is a blank wall that doesn't show anything, but Mallory... there was darkness in there. Makes me wonder where it is from." Though what she said to the human wasn't a lie, she was simply talking about the present. **11**

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