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Upon returning to her room, Mallory instructed the maid to draw a warm bath. She hastily slipped into the white porcelain bathtub, the soothing warmth enveloping her. Though the bath felt heavenly against her skin, she didn't linger too long. Because this room was not her own. 1

With no other attire to wear for the night, she reached for the nightgown that had been packed in her trunk earlier that afternoon at Hadeon's instruction. After wearing it, she padded across the soft carpet to the other side of the room to retrieve one of the pureblooded vampire's shirts, as she draped it over her head. 7

"All better," Mallory murmured to herself, a satisfied smile creeping across her lips as the shirt enveloped her. Hadeon's shirt consumed her, swallowing her small frame and enveloping her hands in its soft material. 13

"A little too comfortable in a man's shirt, aren't we?" Hadeon's voice cut through the air, startling her as she turned to face him. His golden eyes regarded her with an intensity that felt predatory, like a cat toying with its prey. "I

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don't know if you're aware, but a woman wearing a man's shirt usually signifies something more. Is there something I'm missing, Mal doll?" 20

Mallory had barely noticed him slip into the room and shut the door behind him while she busied herself with the buttons of the shirt. Trying to mask her surprise, she steadied her voice. "It hasn't been worn by you yet so I thought I could borrow it... I was feeling cold." 3

"It looks like you need something more than the blankets of this mansion," Hadeon hummed, his gaze leisurely sweeping over the sight of his shirt adorning her frame, appreciation flickering in his eyes. 12

Mallory hurried to the bed, choosing a side with urgency before slipping beneath the blanket, cocooning herself in its warmth. The sooner she fell asleep, the sooner morning would arrive! 12

Despite her efforts to hide beneath the covers, the rustling sounds from the other side of the room seeped through the fabric. Calm down, she whispered to herself. There was no reason for her heart to race when the ghoul wasn't here to take her soul. Yet it wasn't the ghoul but the pureblooded vampire in the room that had her emotions out of focus. 2

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"How thoughtful," she heard Hadeon remark, and turning to a curious beaver, she pulled the blanket down to see him sipping a glass of blood.

He had changed into silken black trousers, and Mallory caught sight of him making his way towards the bed without a shirt. She found herself asking, "Are you feeling hot?" 15

A sly smile curled at Hadeon's lips, his gaze playful. "Why? Are you?" 8

Sometimes, Mallory forgot how frustrating it could be to converse with Hadeon, a master of twisting words like a jester on the court. Yet, it was in those moments that she realised it was better to be direct. "Where is your shirt?" she asked him. 5

"On you, my dear," Hadeon replied, his words smooth and teasing, leaving Mallory momentarily speechless, as though her lips were glued together. "I thought it would be rude to ask for it back. That was the only nightdress packed in the trunk." 7

For a brief second, they locked eyes in the silence. "Sorry about that..." she finally managed to say, her cheeks warming in embarrassment. 2



"Don't be. I think it looks rather lovely on you. You should try my other shirts in due time. I'm sure they will suit you well," Hadeon remarked, his gaze unwavering as he stood next to the bed, drawing closer, the distance between them fraught with tension she could both feel and fear. 6

She became more aware of his shirtless self than she had ever been before. His broad shoulders were sculpted with defined muscles, the soft play of light and shadow accentuating every contour. In the dimness of the room, his physique appeared chiselled, with his waist tapering elegantly into the fit of his trousers. 13

Mallory's heartbeat wavered like the flickering flame of a candle caught in the mercy of the wind. Her pulse quickened, and she shot him a questioning look. "Thank you for your kind consideration, but I have a collection of clothes already waiting for me back at your mansion. All thanks to you." 2

At her words, Hadeon clicked his tongue, a playful glint dancing in his eyes. He then placed one knee on the bed, leaning forward slightly, a movement that sent her heart catching in her throat. He murmured, "That is to be seen, isn't

It?" 5

She had brushed his words, but she couldn't look away anymore at the game this man was playing. She asked him, "Is there something you wanted to tell me, Hadeon?" 2

Hadeon tilted his head and asked thoughtfully, "Do I?" 4

Surely she wasn't imagining the actions and those subtle words, was she? Things had changed rapidly since he had stolen a kiss from her and he looked like he was ready to be a thief again. Her lips set themselves in a thin line before she said, "Don't have any funny thoughts..."

Hadeon had already slipped beneath the same blanket as her, causing Mallory to softly gulp, her pulse quickening with the unexpected closeness. He met her gaze with a mischievous glint in his eyes as he nonchalantly replied, "I have very serious thoughts." The look in his eyes turned serious and he asked her, "Do you think I am here for the kicks? Which I am, but what could be the other reasons now?" 9

With a casual wave of his hand, a gust of wind swept through the room, strong enough to snuff



out the flames of the candles. Darkness enveloped them, wrapping the space in a velvety shroud that heightened her senses.

Unlike Mallory, Hadeon could see clearly in the dark. His eyes adjusted to the shadows like a predator in its element. He turned to his side, his gaze fixed intently on her. Her eyes darted around the room, avoiding his piercing stare as if it were a flame she dared not approach.

Mallory bit her lip, while feeling a shiver run down her spine at the thought that he was probably looking at her. The vampire wasn't sleeping... What else would he find to kill time, no? She asked herself nervously. 2

It struck her as strange that Hadeon's interest had shifted so suddenly. Curiosity gnawed at her, prompting her to wonder what had triggered this unexpected change. 4

"I was wondering..." Mallory's voice trailed off, uncertainty wrapping around her words.

"About me?" Hadeon asked, his tone playful and tinged with the arrogance. Yet, despite the narcissism in his response, a small smile found its way to her lips, lightening the tension that hung between them. 3




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"No, about me," Mallory retorted, her fingers fidgeting nervously, intertwining and pulling against one another in a restless dance. After a brief pause, she continued, "With the whole ghoul situation and my life in danger, plus the idea of soul attachment... I was thinking of another solution to protect me."

"Let me hear it," Hadeon encouraged, his voice steady and patient.

Mallory took a deep breath before saying, "Turning me into a vampire." 

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