

113 After her death ¹⁴

As a couple strolled past the stairs, it was the man who first noticed the figure sprawled unnaturally on the ground. His voice rang out in alarm. "Look there!" ¹

The woman, nestled comfortably in his arm, laughed dismissively. "They must be planning to give us a scare since it's Hallow night. Lord Salvador has placed skeletons all over the mansion. This is probably just another prop." ⁸

"Are you sure?" he replied with a frown. He stepped closer, and stated, "It looks like she's bleeding. Wait—this is the woman who was with Lord Hadeon." ⁴

The woman's light-hearted demeanour faltered as realisation dawned, and her eyes widened in shock. "That's Lady Mallory...!" ⁵

Meanwhile, inside the ballroom, filled with lively chatter and music, Hadeon turned to scan the room for a third time, noticing Mallory hadn't returned. Excusing himself, he pushed through the throng of guests, the sound of laughter and clinking glasses beginning to fade behind him.

Just as he stepped outside, the man who had

witnessed the scene at the bottom of the stairs rushed to find him, visibly shaken.

"L—Lord Hadeon, t—there's something that needs your urgent attention," the man stammered, his voice quivering with fear. 4

It took less than three seconds for Hadeon to pick up as his face turned grim. "Where is she? WHERE?" he demanded, his voice echoing, shaking the glasses in the windows. All attention shifted to the pureblooded vampire standing at the door as the music came to an abrupt halt.

Guests began to murmur amongst themselves, their whispers growing anxious as they tried to pick on what had transpired, sensing the tension in the air.

"Sh—She's at the front stairs, milord," the man replied, his previous nervousness escalating to sheer panic at the look on the pureblooded vampire's face. 3

Without another word, Hadeon rushed past him. When he arrived at the scene, he quickly came to Mallory's side with his expression beginning to shift to a storm—she lay on the ground, her body lifeless, her eyes hollow, and her heart no longer beating. 18



Hadeon's hand reached out to Mallory, the back of his fingers brushing against her cold cheek. He felt the chilling temperature of her body—she was already growing cold, her warmth fading far too quickly. His eyes darkened. 5

A few steps echoed nearby before coming to a halt, followed by the arrival of Lady Rose, Wallace, and Lord Salvador, along with several other curious guests. Their faces were painted with shock as they took in the scene before them.

"What did you see?" Hadeon demanded of the man who had discovered Mallory, his voice darker than the night itself—a low growl laced with an intensity that sent shivers down spines.

She wasn't supposed to die. He had only let her slip from his sight for a few moments. The realisation coiled tightly around him, tightening into a knot of rage. He had taken every precaution to protect her, ensuring that the mansion was salted to ward off any lurking ghouls. His gaze flicked toward the top of the stairs, searching for answers. 6

The couple shook their heads quickly, the woman's voice trembling slightly as she replied, "I swear we don't know what happened, Lord



Hadeon. We were just walking when we found her. There wasn't anyone around!"

"That is correct! When we found her she was already d—" the man stopped talking when Hadeon's red eyes began to shift to black and it had everyone around them turn wary. 1

Leaning forward, Hadeon scooped her frail body into his arms as if she were the most precious treasure, carrying her away from the gaze of the onlookers toward their room.

"What do I do about the guests, Lord Salvador?" the butler asked, his voice steady despite the turmoil, seeking guidance from the lord of Valeria.

"Do not let anyone leave the mansion," Lord Salvador commanded, his tone resolute. "Ensure they remain inside. If you find anyone attempting to exit, bring them to me." The butler bowed swiftly, hurrying off to carry out his orders. 4

As Hadeon disappeared from view, Wallace turned to Lady Rose, his expression clouded with concern. "His eyes..." 8

Lady Rose remained quiet, still grappling with the shock of what they had just witnessed. It was



Lord Salvador who broke the silence, his voice grave. "He is the devil's very first creation. I don't think heartbreak was ever part of his design. At this rate, he might very well turn into a corrupted vampire." 7

In the dim light of the room, Hadeon carefully laid Mallory on the bed, his movements tender. The blood matted the strands of her hair, seeping into the white pillowcase and turning it a deep crimson. He moved his hand to close her eyes before placing it on her chest, to feel the unbeating heart beneath his fingers and his jaw clenched at last night's mistake. 8

Hadeon refused to let Mallory leave his side. But the death reaper had already mentioned that once she died, her soul would cease to exist because her name had probably been erased or was never there since the beginning. Why wasn't her name there? And the thought burned harder in his mind. 3

A heavy silence enveloped him while he continued to sit next to a dead Mallory. If he could turn back time, he would have attached her soul so that he could see her in the afterlife. 5

"Why didn't you use your ability?" Hadeon murmured as he fixed her hair. 16



The silence in the room was quickly shattered by muffled voices echoing from the corridor outside. The door swung open, and Lady Rose stepped into the room, her expression a mix of concern and resolve. She was gripping Lady Reagan's arm tightly. Wallace stood right outside the door. 9

"Let me go!" Lady Reagan snapped, her face flushed with anger as she pulled against Lady Rose's hold.

"In a moment," Lady Rose replied, her grip remaining firm on Lady Reagan as she attempted to maintain control of the escalating situation.

"What is going on, Rose?" Hadeon questioned, his expression stripped of its usual playfulness, impatience edging his voice. "I'm not interested in dealing with her nonsense."

"I think you'd want to know how Mallory fell to her death," Lady Rose began, while Reagan turned nervous. Before the pureblooded vampire even turned to look at the accused, Hadeon's eyes had snapped at her. 2

Reagan stiffened at the accusation, her expression contorted in disbelief. "That's absurd! I didn't do anything!"



"But you did, didn't you?" Lady Rose's tone shifted, heavy with the weight of her insight. "You've been desperate to reclaim Hadeon's favor. With Mallory in the picture, you thought he wouldn't spare a glance for you—and clearly, he hasn't. Your mind is clouded with envy, and in that moment, you pushed her just as she stepped forward." 7

"No! You don't know what you're talking about!" Reagan's voice cracked, panic flaring in her eyes as the reality of the situation sank in. 8

The air in the room grew colder, and Reagan's gaze fled to Hadeon, whose simmering anger had transformed into rage. His eyes were icy, and he rose from the bed that made Reagan stumble backward. 3

"I didn't do it! She's lying!" Reagan protested, her voice desperate as she tried to reclaim control. 3

Before she could utter another word, Hadeon was upon her, his hand shooting out to grab her neck with a fierce grip. "If there's one thing Rose knows, it's that lying to me is a grave mistake. Something you clearly don't understand," he said menacingly. "You haven't crossed the line. You have erased it." 24

