



56 Married couple! 10

"Oh, you two are married?" The owner of the inn asked with a skeptical look, while Mallory felt Hadeon stare at her. "Why don't I see a ring on your finger?" 1

Mallory bit the inside of her cheek for keeping her hands in view of the middle-aged couple. Turning to Hadeon for assistance, she found him barely suppressing a chuckle before he answered, "Ah, that's because Mon-Mon here insisted she didn't need a fancy ring to prove my undying affection for her." 25

Mallory's jaw tightened as she smiled. Mon-Mon? He had abbreviated the monkey nickname. 13

As if on cue, Hadeon slipped an arm around Mallory, drawing her close. Her eyes shot wide in alarm as he continued, "Mon-Mon doesn't care for shallow things like my immense wealth, which is a lot, or my strikingly handsome looks that could make a saint swoon. No, she loves me for the real me, deep down." 16

"Yes," Mallory nodded, her smile strained as she tried to subtly escape Hadeon's clutches, only



for him to tighten his hold. "Like ocean *deep*." 16

"What were you two doing out in the rain?" The inn owner continued, clearly suspicious of their drenched appearance.

"Oh, hush already, dear. They are married. Let's not pry and just get them the keys," the inn owner's wife chided, waving her hand dismissively at her husband. She turned to Mallory and Hadeon with a warm smile. "By the looks of it, you both must be freezing. I assume you might need some fresh clothes?" 1

Not wanting to impose further, Mallory shook her head, "That's fine, thank you."

"True. We plan to sleep naked anyway," Hadeon added with a sly grin, utterly unfazed. 29

Mallory's face flushed a shade deeper, her ears turning a vivid pink as she glared at the pureblooded vampire. She quickly turned to the inn owner's wife, her voice hurried and slightly higher pitched than usual. "My apologies, I think fresh clothes would be lovely, actually."

The innkeeper's wife, not missing a beat, flashed a knowing smile at both Hadeon and Mallory. Mallory wasn't sure if she wanted to kick herself or Hadeon more for the way the conversation



had turned. 4

"There's some warm food left in the kitchen. The room should be prepared by the time you are done eating," the woman offered graciously, further extending their hospitality.

"Thank you very much," Mallory said, giving a polite bow as she watched the woman retreat from the front desk. She then pulled away from Hadeon and asked through gritted teeth, "What was that?!"

"Which part?" Hadeon asked with a bright smile. 8

"All of it!"

"I would like to ask the same question, Mallory Winchester. Married? A little too eager to pin me down, aren't you?" Hadeon feigned worry, while there was clear amusement dancing in his eyes. 7

"Because you were going to kill them!" Mallory replied in a hushed tone. "I know that look in your eyes."

"What an admirable thing to know what I want. As expected of my wife," Hadeon responded with mirth. "You interrupted my meal, I do not see why I should enjoy the situation you yourself created." 9



"How important is you drinking blood right now?" Maybe she should ask if they had beetroot in the kitchen, something for Hadeon to munch on as he had given it to her last time, thought Mallory to herself. 3

"As important as you breathing," Hadeon answered without missing a beat. "Why are you scared? It's not like I'm going to kill them. Or..." he drawled, "Are you hinting that I drink from you, you naughty monkey! But don't worry, I'll behave—for now. Let's not spoil our 'honeymoon.'" 9

"And what is Mon-Mon?!" Mallory asked him. "How come you pick good names for your guns and worse for living beings?" she asked him, baffled. 13

"Mon-Mon also equals money, you silly monkey. The guns are excellent killers. When you kill someone, your nickname will be upgraded. There's no reason for you to be jealous of them," Hadeon remarked, patting her back. 3

This was both of their faults, thought Mallory to herself. They were drenched in the rainwater, and though most of the mud had disappeared because of the rain, there were still smudges on their backs. When a breeze entered through the



cracks in the door, she trembled in cold.

After gulping a few spoons of food quickly, Mallory and Hadeon were led towards their room. The innkeeper gave them the key and informed them, "Don't break anything and don't steal anything. The room will be inspected when you are about to leave." 4

"I have left clothes on the bed and also two towels. Pull the call bell if you need something, okay, dear?" the woman asked them.

"That's kind of you, you remind me of my mother. She was a sweetheart," Hadeon buttered the woman, who beamed at his words. 7

The bowl or the ingredients? Wait, did he mean the smell of her blood? Mallory decided it was time to close the door before Hadeon would sweet talk the woman and turn the nice lady into a full course meal because she didn't trust his vampire instincts!

The innkeeper's wife said, "You let me know if you need something, alright? We shall leave you two to your business now."

"Don't break anything—" 2

Hadeon interrupted the innkeeper with a sly



grin, saying, "I will pay you for any room or bed damage." 11

"Nothing is going to be damaged," she asserted firmly, aiming to squash any implications Hadeon was playfully hinting at. Her voice carried a mix of exasperation and resolve as she added, "Thank you for everything."

"Come, dear," the innkeeper's wife said, dragging her husband from there, who was suspicious of the couple.

With Hadeon who was standing inside the room, Mallory quickly got inside and closed the door before a sigh of relief escaped from her lips. If she were to comb her hair now, she was sure there would be strands of it stuck in the comb. She muttered,

"Do you know how exhausting you can be, Master Hades?" 2

"I have been told that," Hadeon replied, and Mallory felt a brief flicker of relief that he recognised his own exhausting nature. But then he added, with a perfectly straight voice, "Women who have spent their time with me in bed would tell you the same," and he grinned upon noticing her press her forehead against the



surface of the door. 12

Hadeon didn't need his guns. All he needed was to talk to a person to drive them to hit their own heads on the closest surface! Thought Mallory to herself. Pulling away from the door, she turned to see him watching her. She said, 1

"Too much information, Master Hades."

"You are my wife. I thought you would like to know," Hadeon cheekily stated. "And let me just say, you're quite the brave woman for managing to tie me down. Quite sneaky!" His eyes subtly narrowed in a playful way. 7

"It was for the innkeeper and his wife. We don't have to pretend anymore," Mallory explained softly. 1

"And how do you know he is not listening to us by pressing his ear against the door? Besides, I am enjoying this, wifey," Hadeon hummed. 9

Mallory's frustration flickered briefly across her face as she tossed a glance at Hadeon, who was clearly enjoying the discomfort he was provoking. "You should change your clothes too. That side. I will go to the other side. Don't look!" she instructed, pointing emphatically to ensure there was no misunderstanding.



"Says the woman who claimed we are married. Hardly the expected behaviour from a wife," Hadeon teased, his voice laden with mock disapproval as he picked up his set of dry clothes.

"Maybe I should blindfold you," Mallory shot back, her eyes narrowing slightly, half-joking, half-serious. 6

"Planning a surprise attack, mhm?" Hadeon asked, the undertones of his words not going missed by Mallory. 3

Deciding to let Hadeon have the last word and end their banter, Mallory moved behind the wooden divider. She peeled off her wet clothes, which clung uncomfortably to her chilled skin. The quiet rustle of movement from the other side of the room indicated Hadeon's presence, while the little fireplace crackled. She focused on changing quickly into the warm, dry clothes provided by the innkeeper's wife. The cosy fabric was a welcome relief against the cold.

When Mallory finished adjusting the dress she wore, she stepped out of the room and noticed Hadeon had pulled the wooden chair before the fireplace.



His dark hair, freshly cut to the nape, was damp at the ends. He wore off-white loose-fitting trousers and a full-sleeved shirt that hung softly from his shoulders, accentuating the V of his neck. As he gazed intently into the fire, the sharp contours of his side profile were illuminated by the flickering light. 2

Feeling her gaze, Hadeon turned, and his golden eyes caught hers, holding a depth that made her pause. There was a seriousness, that made her wonder if something happened.

He motioned towards the space before him with a gentle firmness, instructing her,

"Come, sit here." 20

