

76 On the rooftop ¹⁰

Mallory chose not to stay in her room. Instead, she wandered around the castle until she found the stairs leading to the roof. Feeling as if Ivy was spying on her, she thought being away from prying eyes would do her some good. ¹

Pulling a cigar from her pocket, she placed it between her lips. Click! The lighter appeared out of nowhere, casting a flickering flame that danced at the end of the cigar. ³

"A little too addicted to the taste of smoke, aren't we?" Hadeon's voice cut through the silence, startling Mallory slightly. She hadn't expected him to appear beside her, his golden eyes now dark red, staring back at her with a wicked smile. ⁶

"Your heart is going to darken sooner than I expected. Or the lungs," he said as the cigar burned, flicking the lighter closed. "What are you doing up here all alone, like a ghost?" ⁷

"Enjoying the view and some quiet time," Mallory replied after taking the cigar between her fingers. She then asked, "How many people did you kill tonight?"

"The view is indeed breathtaking," Hadeon's smile widened. He raised his hand and then answered to her question, "A handful of them. Do you want to join me?" 10

"I am not a vampire. I don't share the same interests as you," Mallory replied, turning away from his gaze to look back at the scenery. Before he could respond, she added, "I don't want to be a vampire."

"Tch, what a pity," Hadeon clicked his tongue. "You would make a good asset." 9

Which only strengthened her resolve not to transform, Mallory thought to herself. She liked the way she was right now. She then asked, "Is there a way to resurrect the book of memories? Or any book with the help of the witch?"

Hadeon's head tilted, and he remarked, "You burned the book."

"It was by mistake... I got distracted." 6

"Maybe if it were a regular book, it would be possible, but the book of memories is constructed to be extremely delicate. It's designed so that you can erase those memories during a dire situation before anyone finds them," Hadeon explained. 2

A sigh escaped from Mallory's lips. She couldn't believe she couldn't see her mother or grandmother again. "I found wax writing in there from Grandma."

Seeing that Mallory hadn't started to smoke, he took the cigar from her hand and took a drag himself. The smoke disappeared with the breeze around them. "And what did she have to say?" he asked. 6

"She said to find the book of prophecy and burn it," Mallory replied and saw a glimmer of something in the pureblooded vampire's eyes. "Have you heard about it?" 3

"Every supernatural being who isn't human has heard about it. The book of prophecy that fell from heaven but couldn't enter hell and stayed in the realm of the living. Here," Hadeon remarked in a calm yet nonchalant tone. 8

"You never sought it?" Mallory asked with a tinge of surprise in her voice.

"I guess it never interested me. Especially when I write my own fate and destiny," Hadeon shrugged. "Though I do wonder what Elisa found during my absence. She must have had her hands full. How rude, when I thought she was



going to be bored with nothing to do. Is that all she said?" 4

"And that rumour had it that the Winchester family had it," Mallory responded, but the truth was that the Winchester family didn't have anything with them. "She mentioned someone named Brielle."

"Must be another name of your fake mother," Hadeon replied, a hint of amusement in his tone. "But if it's important, as Elisa says, then perhaps the third body you saw when your adopted parents burned was indeed sent by a higher-up. Which is why the body was never reported. Everything just happens to circle around the royal family. You, your mother, and the book that is being looked for. It makes you the most appealing person now. Let us hope I find the book before you do." 7

"Why so?" Mallory asked him with a frown.

"Because you have the habit of skipping pages and reading a book. Don't need you burning it," Hadeon replied, bringing the cigar back to his lips for a drag. 7

"You know I was going to use that. Also..." Mallory murmured, feeling him lean towards her,

and his upper body turned in her direction. "Can you keep some distance... There's plenty of space."

"Would you like to have your cigar back then?" Hadeon asked, his eyes still a deep red, a teasing glint in them. 6

Mallory saw him not just look at her but also observe, noting every blink of her eyes and when her lips parted. Bracing herself, she replied, "I think you should keep it, as you have already touched it." 7

But Hadeon didn't make an attempt to move, his body still leaning in as Mallory subtly leaned back. He then said, "But the smoke is untouched. You wouldn't mind it, would you?"

When the pureblooded vampire's face came to be right in front of hers, Mallory felt her soul almost ready to pass out from her parted lips. W-what was he doing?! He took a breath before blowing the smoke onto her pale lips. She felt the spicyness on her tongue. 17

Mallory's eyes widened at the intimate act, her cheeks flushing beet red. She quickly scrambled away from him and stood up.

"Master Hadeon, I mean Hadeon! You can't be

doing those things! This isn't funny anymore!" Mallory exclaimed, her expression flustered. 5

"I never thought it was funny," Hadeon replied with a calm expression, watching her hands clench and hearing her heart skip a beat. "Unlike someone, I thought it would be rude not to share the smoke. Also, what are you fretting about? As if I stole your modesty," and the undertone of his tease in the last words didn't go unnoticed by her. 1

"Just... stay away from me. One arm's distance, please," Mallory replied, glancing in the direction she had come from, hoping no one had seen them. At the same time, Hadeon got up from where he was seated. Instead of listening to her, he walked towards her.

"I always love a challenge, wanting to break it..." Hadeon murmured, the cigar between his lips and one of his hands in his trouser pocket. His hair ruffled because of the wind and so did hers. "Not to mention, it isn't every day a woman goes running away from me unless I am planning to drink her dry." 7

Mallory shivered at the cold wind, her blue eyes filled with suspicion as she took a step back for every step Hadeon took forward. She neared the

edge of the roof, but he reached her in an instant, his long legs closing the distance effortlessly. His presence was overwhelming, and his intent was unclear. 4

"If this is your way of intimidation, I am not scared," Mallory declared.

Hadeon chuckled, a low, dark sound that sent shivers down her spine. A sly smile curled on his lips as he held the cigar between his fingers.

"I was merely thinking about sharing another smoke," he said, his eyes gleaming with mischief. 1

Before Mallory could feel the spicy breath on her lips, she instinctively took another step backward. But this time, she found herself on the edge. Her foot missed its footing, and she plummeted backward, gravity pulling her down. Time seemed to slow as she saw Hadeon step forward, his gaze steady and unmoving. He blew a cloud of smoke through his lips, the swirling tendrils of it hanging in the air above her as she fell. 20