

82 Her right place ¹⁷

Mallory's eyes went as wide as saucers as she found herself sitting on Hadeon's lap, her cheeks glowing bright red. She quickly tried to scramble away, but the carriage encountered a pothole, leaving her even more entangled in the pureblooded vampire's arms than before where he held her this time. ¹

Her heart raced, feeling his face close to hers in the confined space. Despite her flustered state, Hadeon wore a composed expression, staring down at her. Embarrassment covered her face, and as she attempted to get up again, she asked through gritted teeth, "Why did you say right?!"

"It was a random direction I was going. Funny that you weren't paying attention to where you were going," Hadeon clicked his tongue with mock dismay. She doubted it was random; the pureblooded vampire was a calculated schemer, and she scowled at him. ¹³

"I was following your instructions because..." Mallory paused, pursing her lips and fixing her expression. ²

"Because you trust me?" Hadeon asked with a sly



grin. 6

"Yes, because I trusted you. Not anymore," Mallory muttered, and the smile on Hadeon's lips faltered before growing even wider. She looked outside the window, feeling she had done enough practice. Her face remained warm, keenly aware of Hadeon's gaze still fixed on her. "Don't vampires need to catch their beauty sleep in the day?" she asked him. 7

Hadeon's lips twisted into a wry smile before he replied, "Beauty isn't everyone's gift. I, for one, listen to the lullaby of death." After a pause, he asked, "Feeling a bit conscious, are we?" 6

"I have always been self-conscious person," Mallory murmured under her breath.

"You do know being self-conscious is different from being conscious, don't you? Unless you're looking for some practical lessons, which, of course, I'm more than willing to offer," he said with dangerous, inviting undertones that didn't go unnoticed by Mallory. 7

"Thank you for your generosity, Lord Hadeon, but I will survive without it," Mallory replied, letting her chin rest against the back of her hand. She quietly looked back at him before



looking outside the carriage, where the lush trees passed by them.

Mallory didn't know if this was his new way to kill time by staring at her, and she wished he looked somewhere else, which made her shift in her seat. To occupy herself, she picked up the water bottle.

Hadeon softly hummed, and then remarked, "If I didn't know better, I would have thought you to be a coward for stealing gazes from me now." 4

Mallory's eyes were quick to snap in his direction, looking straight into his golden eyes. She responded, "I think we should have gotten a book to keep you occupied, and you can think whatever you want. I don't care what you think about me." The pureblooded vampire was always hellbent on eliciting reactions from her for his personal amusement.

"Really?" Hadeon asked, raising one of his perfectly arched eyebrows as he ran his tongue across one of his fangs, feeling its sharpness.

"Really," Mallory affirmed and she took a sip of water.

"Well, if you don't care, then you should know that lately, I have been finding myself staring at

you," Hadeon confessed in a nonchalant tone. 30

Mallory's mouth was full of water as she blinked at him before she slowly gulped it down. Her eyebrows subtly furrowed and she responded, "Okay..." The staring was no wonder, as she was aware of it since they had gotten inside the carriage. She then asked, "Have you tried not doing it?" 19

"Why would I do that?" Hadeon asked as if she were silly to ask the question. "Cute things need to be looked at." 25

Mallory suddenly felt parched and she shook her head, asking, "W—Why? Why would you do that?" 5

A mischievous smile quirked up on Hadeon's lips as he leaned back against his seat and remarked, "Now that's what you call being conscious." 12

Mallory had suddenly become very aware of Hadeon's presence and she would have glared him for it, but for now she decided to ignore what just happened. As if to rid herself of the awkwardness that only she seemed to feel, she said,

"I saw you before in the castle with a book. Was it the book of memories?"



"Have you never been complimented before, monkey?" Hadeon returned to the earlier subject, ignoring her attempt to change the topic. 15

"Of course I have. I've received plenty of compliments," Mallory replied in one breath.

Hadeon slowly leaned in her direction, a sly smile playing on his lips. "Then is your reaction because I was the one giving it?" 6

Mallory laughed. "You're too full of yourself today." More than usual, she thought, raising her eyebrows internally. She then pursed her lips, adjusting her shoes, and said, "People were usually wary of me, both men and women. When you want different things than others, you end up being the odd one that people begin to distance themselves from." 6

Though she had spent a lot of time in Reavermoure, after her adopted parents died, her friends distanced themselves from her in a span of days. The truth was, she had lived a rather lonely life, if it weren't for her grandmother and her maid. The only person she could call a close friend was Hattie, and now even she was gone. As her eyes began to water, she turned to look out the window and blinked

the tears away. 9

"Good riddance then," Hadeon remarked, making her turn back to look at him. "That you left the place because you belong somewhere else and not with measly people like them. Here with me. I believe the odder a thing, the better." 16

Mallory smiled at the pureblooded vampire's words. "You are an odd one yourself, Hadeon," she pointed out. 3

"And I wouldn't have it any other way," Hadeon responded proudly. 5

Hadeon was the oddest out of everyone she had come across until now. Somehow, he had transformed from being her momentary captor to an acquaintance she relied on. In a way, they were friends, she thought to herself. 2

She returned to her earlier question, "Did you purposely skip my question about the book of memories?"

"Not at all. Hadeon Van Doren doesn't even dodge a bullet," Hadeon huffed with an air of confidence. 8

Because he believed everyone's aim sucked?
Mallory dryly asked herself. He then answered in



a casual tone, "Yes, it is the book of memories. I enjoy saving some of the beautiful moments that I relish rewatching. You know, torturing people, the look of fear on their faces." 9

Mallory gave him a nod before murmuring, "Good to know. I almost thought you were saving details in case you forgot."

"Bold of you to assume that my brain is rotting. Unlike humans, my body is enriched with the pure blood of a vampire. You'd be surprised at the medical benefits it has," Hadeon pulled out a bag of blood, prepared for his travel, and slurped on it. He licked his lips and said, "Even saliva, which you already experienced." 13

Mallory's cheeks reddened slightly at the reminder, but she quickly masked it with a neutral expression. "How convenient for you," she replied.

Hadeon chuckled, his eyes twinkling with amusement. "Indeed, it is." He leaned forward, causing Mallory's heart to tremble with an unsettling mix of anticipation and unease. Just as she was about to react, he suddenly knocked on the window beside her and spoke to Barnby, "Let us take a break here." 16