



## 91 Healing <sup>15</sup>

Mallory's eyes swept over the four figures looming above her, quickly discerning that they were not town guards. One of them smiled at her, a cold and unkind gesture. Her heart raced once more, and as she parted her lips to speak, the men swiftly tossed a handful of dust at her. <sup>1</sup>

Her body weakened instantly, collapsing to the ground, much to the men's satisfaction. One of them gestured to the others, who then lifted the unconscious Mallory, ready to make their escape. <sup>1</sup>

"HADES!" <sup>4</sup>

"What the hell?!" The man who had grabbed Mallory's arm was startled by her sudden scream. <sup>8</sup>

Mallory forcefully kicked one man's foot while jabbing her elbow into the ribs of the one who had exclaimed beside her, causing him to choke momentarily. Before the dust was thrown at her, she had taken a deep breath, holding it for a few crucial seconds. <sup>9</sup>

Though she managed to outsmart the vampires momentarily, one of them seized her by the



neck, gripping it tightly. He leaned in close, his voice a menacing whisper,

"Move, and I'll tear your pretty little head from your shoulders."

"As lovely as Mallory's head is, I doubt it would look good on your body when I tear it off," came the sharp click of shoes against the ground. Hadeon had arrived, standing just outside the building. He then turned to Mallory and feigned mock disappointment, "Running into another man's arms?" 20

Mallory shot Hadeon a fierce glare as she faced him, the vampire still looming behind her. 4

"Hadeon Van Doren, we finally meet again," said the vampire behind her. Of course, they knew Hadeon. These weren't just random vampires looking for midnight snacks, Mallory thought to herself. "You must be shocked to see me."

"Who are you?" Hadeon replied flatly, causing the vampires to momentarily falter. "Also, why don't you let her go? She looks better on my side than as your shield." 10

"I am Devin Troy, the vampire you defanged, bastard!" Devin's anger flared at Hadeon's slight provocation. "And if you think I'll let her go,



you've got another thing coming," he threatened. "Don't try any tricks, because I know you don't want anything to happen to her. You care for her dearly, so why don't you listen to what I say, or I'll snap your wife's neck." 18

"Wife?" Mallory frowned before her eyes widened. She would have spoken, if it didn't feel like her airways could be squeezed for good. 7

"Never thought the great Hadeon would ever take a wife, considering the selfish and cunning bastard you are," Devin spat. 6

Hadeon ran his fingers through his hair and remarked, "It's always nice to meet admirers who acknowledge my greatness. However, your flattery won't erase the mistakes you've made." 6

Mallory noticed the other vampires around her looked baffled, as if they had forgotten the pureblood vampire's narcissism. Devin quickly grew annoyed and said, "I thought of torturing her before letting you know, but she turned out as cunning as you. You stole what was important to me, so I will steal what is important to you. Right before your very eyes," he cackled. 10

Suddenly, Mallory couldn't breathe as Devin tightened his grip around her neck. Her vision

blurred, and she struggled to break free. Then, the sharp echo of gunshots rang out, making her ears ring.

Hadeon had drawn his guns, shooting the four vampires to the ground. Their bodies quickly turned ashen before disintegrating into heaps of dust.

"Ack! Ack!" Mallory coughed, touching her neck as she tried to breathe in and out. "How many people did you offend?" 8

"Weak people get offended even at the slightest things," Hadeon put his guns away and walked to her. Before they could be found by someone, he pulled her back inside the library and closed the doors. "Let me take a look."

"I am fine," Mallory murmured, rubbing her neck before dropping her hand. But Hadeon then remarked, "I am not." 18

The words sent a shiver down her spine, momentarily freezing her in place. In the next second, Hadeon was standing right in front of her. With one hand, he gently pushed her chin to the side, his golden eyes raking over her slender neck and the other hand tracing the evident fingerprints to which she flinched.



Mallory hadn't forgotten the kiss he had stolen from her and still felt embarrassed about it. She moved her head away, causing his hand to drop as she avoided meeting his gaze.

"It's not a big deal. Really," Mallory began, the pain in her neck fading, replaced by flustered thoughts. She continued to babble, "You remember the first time we met. I was covered with way more bruises than this. It will disappear by the time we arrive in Woville." 6

The sound of the townsfolk outside the library, roused by the earlier gunshots, reached her ears. She was about to walk further inside when Hadeon caught her wrist.

"Let go of my wrist, Hadeon," Mallory stated firmly, goosebumps forming on her arms.

But Hadeon blatantly ignored her.

"Do you remember calling my name earlier, Mal doll?" he asked, turning to meet her gaze. 17

"I've been running into extra trouble ever since I met you and all the misunderstandings," Mallory replied, her eyebrows furrowing.

"Only when you run away from me," Hadeon countered with a sly smile. 10





"It's not funny." Mallory felt a tickle in her stomach.

"Never said it was."

"Let go of my hand. I want to rest," Mallory said, noticing Hadeon take a step closer.

"What did I say about running? Someone's not used to affection, are they?" Hadeon replied, finally releasing her wrist. But he then offered his own wrist to her. When she gave him a questioning look, he brought his hand to his lips, bit into it, and extended it back to her. "You aren't a vampire, but your neck looks a little too appetising for me. So why don't you do me a favour and take a sip? It will heal your skin. Perks of my blood." 10

"I don't think I'm going to like the taste of blood," Mallory replied, and she noted how their surroundings had turned quiet. 2

"You're wasting my blood," Hadeon stated with patience, his gaze almost overbearing as he towered above her. "I'm not giving you human blood. Drink." His tone was firm, and his eyes locked onto hers.

When he brought his wrist to her lips, Mallory reluctantly decided to take a sip. She hesitantly



parted her lips, covering the cut he had made on his skin with her mouth. The taste was strange, reminiscent of the metallic tang she had experienced during a nosebleed. 2

Mallory made the mistake of looking up at Hadeon, who was intently watching her with a pleased yet calm expression. Her nervousness caused her to suck on his skin harder before she realised it and quickly let go, embarrassed by her reaction. 13

Her lips were stained with Hadeon's blood, and the pureblooded vampire couldn't help but think that it suited her. Before she could wipe his blood away, he used his thumb to gently swipe it from her lips and then brought his thumb to his own mouth. He remarked, 14

"It is quite precious... to waste it." 13

