

K Lover 182

Chapter 182: Not A Trick

"Where are you going? At this point, we might reach the forest," he said, his eyes narrowing as he stared at both of them suspiciously.

There was a nasty glare in his eyes. Thomas was irked that he was letting a bunch of peasants string him along, but there was still the undeniable fact that he couldn't do anything to stop it. However, that didn't mean he shouldn't remind them who was in charge.

Furthermore, this arrangement was already pretty fishy. He never would have agreed to it if Rose had not mentioned the crown prince. The crown prince had told him to do exactly what she wanted and to take her wherever she wanted to go.

He already thought this was too much for a peasant. Thomas could not figure out why the crown prince was adhering to the wants of this peasant wench.

Regardless, they were leading him to the forest. He doubted the crown prince would approve of this.

If he stopped this now, he would have a good enough reason. The wench had tried to escape already. He wouldn't be surprised if this were another attempt to get away. He couldn't let that happen. He also felt slightly insulted that the women would try to do that on his watch.

"We won't go into the forest, but the place is at the side of the forest. I'm afraid, Lord Thomas, that we will have to get even closer to it," Edna replied.

"No," Thomas said stubbornly.

Rose was sick of his tantrums at this point. "Why?" she asked immediately. "We are already 'ere. There is no point coming all the way 'ere then going back."

"All you two have said is 'the place.' I have no idea what this place is or where you plan to go. For all I know, this could be some kind of trick for you to try something."

Rose's eyes widened a little as she realized what Thomas meant. "This isn't a trick," she said. "Edna really is the only one to take me there. We are not planning to ambush you or—"

Thomas threw his head back and laughed. "Ambush me? Don't be ridiculous. The two of you couldn't even touch me if you tried anything. I'd strike you down before you got within a foot of me."

"Then you 'ave nothing to worry about," Rose sneered. "If Lord Thomas is so strong and 'as skills we peasants 'ave never seen before, surely, he can step into the forest with us."

It was hard not to react when she spoke in that tone. It was even more annoying that he couldn't decline, because it would imply he wasn't as strong as he claimed. However, the last thing he would allow was being strung along any further.

"We are not going into the forest, Lord Thomas," Edna said softly.

Thomas and Rose turned their attention to her. "Then why are we here?" Thomas asked.

"Can you hear that?" she asked.

"'Ear what?" Rose asked, looking around. She could hear a few things—the sounds of birds, the rustling of leaves, and something else. "Flowing water!" she yelled, eyes wide.

"Yes," Edna replied in delight.

"Is it a river?" Rose asked, walking forward, not caring if Thomas agreed to go with them or not.

"Well, more like a stream. Even smaller. Now that it's fall, the water has reduced significantly. It was never much to begin with, but it is a cozy place to sit and enjoy the fresh air."

"There is no stream of water in the castle," Thomas said with finality.

"There is," Edna said with confidence. "It's on the other side of the castle compound, and as I said, it isn't a great source of water, so most people don't come around here, and as you can see it is quite the distance from the castle. It is best to use the wells."

Thomas didn't look like he believed a word of what the woman said. He still seemed convinced they were plotting against him and would attack as soon as they reached their destination.

"Can you not 'ear the running water, Lord T'omas?" Rose asked.

The dialect was back again. Thomas was now certain she did it to annoy him when she called his name sometimes.

"We are only a few yards away, Lord Thomas," Edna whispered, trying to convince him. "I promise this is not a trick or any kind of funny business."

"Okay," Thomas said.

Rose was pleasantly surprised. She had been certain he would keep refusing.

"But Rose walks beside me while you lead the way."

Rose's expression fell, but it was still better than nothing. "Okay," she said but didn't move.

"Come here," he said with a glare.

"I am not about to repeat the steps I just took, Lord Thomas. Edna will walk ahead."

Thomas looked like he was about to have a convulsion. There should be a limit to how much the wench spoke to him like this—refusing his orders. If things were different, he would have dragged her to the castle and made sure she was whipped at least a hundred times.

"Lord Thomas," she said, standing next to him.

Thomas blinked. She was right next to him, though he hadn't moved an inch. He narrowed his eyes. He didn't forget her words even though she had eventually obeyed his command.

"Edna will leave us behind," Rose added when he wasn't responding.

Thomas looked ahead and, sure enough, Edna was a few feet in front, her body turned to the side as she looked back at them in worry.

"Let's go," he said.

Rose let out the breath she was holding. She was worried that she might have pushed Thomas too far and would be punished this time. No matter how she felt about him, she had to remember that not only was he a knight, but he was also a lord.

There would still be consequences if she made him angry. She knew the lord didn't like her, so it was best not to get on his bad side—it would definitely not be good for her.

The ground crunched under her shoes as Rose followed after Edna. She didn't lead them into the forest; rather, she led them to the side of it. The sound of the running water grew louder, the closer they got. Rose could feel her excitement building as they approached.

The grass under her feet had a brown hue to it. This wasn't unexpected—it was fall. There were a lot of fallen leaves floating in the wind and scattered across the ground. The brown color of the dead leaves covered the floor. Rose could see a few heaps under the trees.

The forest was huge and even though she had gone round it, Rose couldn't guess how big it was or how dense the trees were, the deeper one went.

"This is it," Edna said as she came to a stop.

Rose drew her attention from the trees to Edna. She was standing at the edge of a stream, not too close, underneath a sycamore tree. It was the only tree in the huge space between the forest and the stream.

Rose was rushing toward the tree before she even thought about it. It was massive, its branches spreading wide across the space. Rose didn't think she had ever seen a sycamore tree this big before. She would need at least two more people to be able to wrap her arms around the trunk.

Rose raised her head to stare up from beneath the tree. How old was it? She knew it had to be at least a few decades old—maybe half a century, or even more.

"It's enormous!" she yelled, turning from Edna to Thomas. Thomas looked shocked, but he didn't have as much of a reaction as she would have liked.

"I know," Edna said with a smile and grabbed the swing.

Rose realized she had been too distracted by the massive sycamore tree to notice the swing. There was a makeshift swing hanging from a sturdy branch.

Two ropes were tied in several knots around the branch. The ropes were joined at the other end by a piece of wood. It didn't look like decent work, but Edna sat on it with no fear and started to swing.

"Whoo!" she yelled, her head leaning backward.

"Would you like me to push you?" Rose offered, even though she feared the ropes might snap at any moment.

"Yes!" Edna cried, her hair blowing in the wind.

Rose walked to her and stood behind Edna, lightly pushing her. Her feet lifted off the ground, and Edna let out an excited scream. She came back, and Rose was quick to give her another push.

She could hear the leaves rustling in the autumn wind, and hear the water rushing through its path. The stream wasn't big. There were small stacks of rocks around it, and the water was clear. Except for a few leaves, there was almost no dirt.

The stream flowed from one side of the castle wall to the other, forming the shape of a crescent moon around the corner of the castle walls. Rose thought the sight before her was pretty.