

K Lover 191

Chapter 191: The Real Foe

As she spoke, Rose didn't say anything. There was nothing to say, as what Lily said was the truth. If Edna had not meddled with her, if she had simply left Rose to deal with her problems herself, Edna would have left the castle in a much better situation.

She would still have the favor of the Queen and perhaps receive benefits, especially as she was leaving to get married. Everything Lily said was true, and Rose could only stare solemnly as Lily spoke.

After Lily's outburst, she seemed to have calmed down a bit. Her chest, which had been heaving as she spat words at Rose, slowly returned to normal breathing. Her fists uncurled, and she wrapped her arms around herself.

"Edna didn't want me to tell you," Lily said as she looked at the floor. She still sounded on the verge of tears, her voice cloudy with unshed emotions. However, she held out, and her voice steadily returned to normal. "I thought she should have, and even now I know she is still sparing you. I know you think you have it worse than the rest of us but..." Lily paused, lacking a better way to express herself without dismissing Rose's situation.

She didn't want to do that. She knew how much of a hard time Rose had, but unfortunately, she sympathized with Edna more. It was logical for she had known Edna the longest and she almost didn't have any relationship with Rose. Therefore, she felt it was unfair that Edna would be treated this way when all she did was a good thing—something Lily probably would never have been able to do.

Lily didn't bat an eyelid when Martha bullied Rose. It had nothing to do with her, so she didn't think deeply about it. It wasn't until Edna started to move against Martha that she considered it—and even then, she knew she wouldn't have done a single thing to stop it.

Maybe it was cowardice. No, it wasn't "maybe." Lily was certain it was cowardice. That's why she was here, yelling at Rose—who was simply an ant caught in the midst of it all and practically had no power. All she was was the crown prince's plaything, nothing more.

"I am grateful to Edna," Rose eventually started speaking when Lily stopped. "I do not take her actions for granted. I know she made sacrifices on my behalf, and I am eternally grateful for that." Her experience wasn't as bleak, and she had no one here but Edna to thank for that.

"I didn't know how bad it was," Rose paused. "I wish I knew. I suspected, but you are right—I may 'ave thought I 'ad it worse. But I assure you I am not angry, never was. I 'ave no reason to be. I am just sad. I don't exactly 'ave a lot of supporters 'ere, as you 'ave said. It is sad to lose my only friend."

Rose was surprised she didn't cry. She didn't feel numb, not in the slightest. She could feel her emotions very clearly, and the foremost one was regret. She shouldn't have let how hurt she felt stop her from saying a proper goodbye to Edna. She should have fought for it.

Lily's face softened, and the crushing guilt she felt became even worse. "I shouldn't have said all that—"

"It is fine," Rose gently cut her off. She wasn't angry, and in some ways, she was glad Lily had told her all this in a fit of anger—she might not have been able to see things more clearly otherwise.

"What did Edna say?" Rose asked. She cared more about the message.

Lily unwrapped herself. "It's not long. She simply said she was sorry, and in a way, she felt like she was abandoning you here. She didn't want you to think that."

Rose smiled despite the news she just heard. Edna had nothing to be sorry about. It was she who should be sorry. She did notice Edna was losing weight and getting even busier, but she didn't say anything about it.

Lily had even been kind enough to tell her Edna was leaving—even if it was out of spite—but she never brought it up. She knew the reason why Edna didn't, but what was her own excuse?

"Thank you," Rose simply said. There was nothing else to say. Lily was not the message was meant for, she didn't need to tell her anything.

Lily nodded. There was an unreadable expression on her face as she stared at Rose for a moment, but then she turned around and walked toward the door.

"Will you attend the wedding?" Rose asked.

Lily stopped in her tracks, but almost immediately, she continued, her hand tightly gripping the door handle. "I can't," she said and slipped out the door.

Rose wanted to ask why, but Lily didn't give her the chance. The maid still clearly had a grudge against her about Edna. She doubted it was something she could change—and to be honest, Rose didn't feel a need to. Only Edna mattered, and she knew she had some rectification to do.

Amidst the sad thoughts about Edna, Welma poked her ugly head. Lily's warning about the maid ran across her mind. The news, however, wasn't surprising. The maid's behavior was too unusual to be unsuspecting, almost like she was blatantly telling Rose.

That made her remember her main enemy. The rest were simply pawns in the matter—the Queen was the real foe. Rose almost laughed at the similarities to chess. She hadn't played properly in a while. She almost missed the game. It was not the same to play by oneself.

Mostly, she spent her time playing the flute, and as she thought of it, she walked to the dresser. Picking up the key on top of it, she proceeded to unlock the second drawer. She pulled it open and took out the flute and the swallows. They were a source of comfort, her only physical reminder of home.

Rose examined the swallows on the branch. Using her hand to trace it, she concentrated on the feel of the wood beneath her fingers. Not a single splinter could be felt. It was concise and a proper job—though incomplete, it didn't feel that way in the slightest.

Rose realized that she was bothered by one thing: what did her father intend to do about the swallow facing away? How was he going to correct it? Rose didn't think there was any way he could carve it to face the other direction—there was too little wood.

Rose was still engrossed in this thought when a knock resounded. She jumped, almost launching the swallows across the room. She recovered and quickly returned the item to the drawer and locked it.

It was her lunch—she was sure of it. She got to her feet and walked to the door with brisk steps. Surprisingly, the person on the other side was patient and didn't knock again. She opened the door to see just Welma, holding a huge tray that had to be supported with both hands. She frowned as she wondered how the maid had knocked.

"Can I come in?" Welma asked with a smirk when all Rose did was stare at her.

Rose narrowed her eyes and stepped aside.

"Lily was nice enough to bring water ahead, so I didn't need to bring any more maids," Welma said as she set the tray down on the table.

Rose's gaze darkened. The maid was too suspicious. It was deliberate. Was this her way of saying she knew Lily came by earlier? Was she telling Rose that she was keeping an eye on her? Rose didn't know. So she just stayed quiet.

Welma turned and faced her with a frown. "You always look at me like that."

Rose didn't ask how she looked at Welma. She didn't care for conversations—and certainly not now that she knew Welma was indeed working for the Queen. But what was her aim? She wasn't cruel like Martha was, and it was clear she didn't hate her.

She was rude, obnoxious, and didn't understand privacy, but it was clearly not done with malicious intent. Rose would describe it as closer to amusement. She hated both.

"What did Lily tell you?" Welma asked.

"That I shouldn't trust you," Rose softly said as she walked away from the door. "She said you work for the Queen."

Welma's eyes widened in surprise, but it was brief. Her surprise didn't stem from the fact that Lily told Rose, but rather that Rose had easily brought up the subject.

Welma laughed. "Of course, I work for the Queen. Every maid in the castle does."

Rose was both confused and shocked. It was both an admission and a denial at the same time. However, what shocked her was that she had expected a flat-out denial—but Welma was more or less saying that she was.

She turned to say this, but she heard the sound of the door clicking in place as Welma walked out of the room.