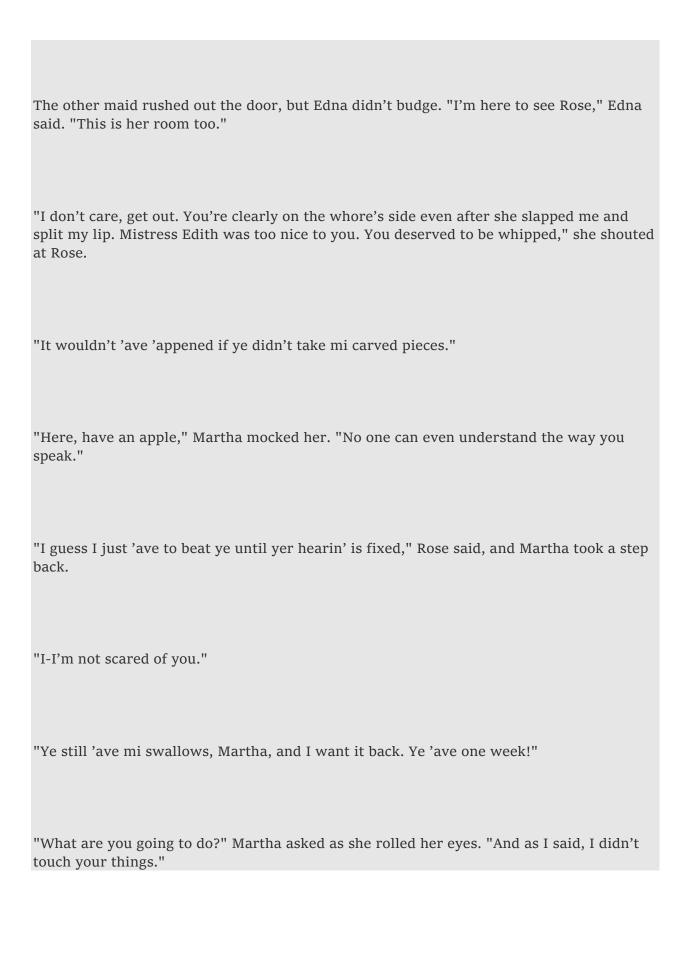
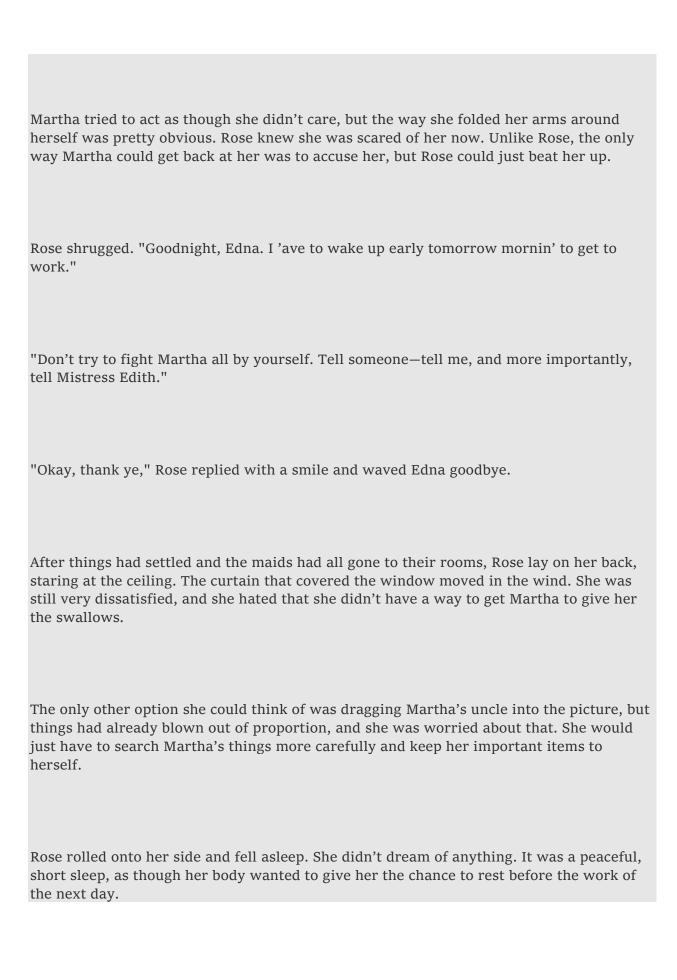
THE KING'S LOVER

Chapter 41: Have An Apple

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It was clear to anyone that there were some untruths to what Martha was saying, but Rose didn't exactly have a lot of supporters, and she was new. She was sure Edna had risked herself by supporting her, but Edna didn't seem bothered by this.
Rose was relieved to have at least one person who would speak on her behalf. It would have gone completely differently without Edna. At least, she just had to clean some rooms, maybe wash some curtains and rugs. It was nothing different from what she was already doing.
"'Ow big is the sout' wing?" Rose suddenly blurted. She might as well know what she was getting into.
Whispers came from outside. "Very big. It's the third biggest wing, but it's rarely in use."
"Shoo, all of you," Martha suddenly said, standing to her feet. She was annoyed. She walked to the door and shut it, then she turned to Edna and the second girl. "You two, out, now!"





Rose woke up early the next morning, before dawn. She stretched, feeling the stiffness in her muscles from the activities of the day before. The room was quiet; Martha was still asleep, her soft snores drifting to Rose.
She got out of bed and dressed quickly, pulling on her plain dress and tying her hair back with a simple scarf. She wore the apron around her. The thought of the south wing loomed in her mind, but she pushed it aside, focusing instead on the tasks at hand. She would deal with Martha and the missing carved piece later. For now, she had work to do, and the faster she could start on it, the better.
As she stepped out into the hallway, she noticed Edna already up and about, carrying a basket of linens and holding a lamp. Edna gave her a small smile and walked up to her. Rose returned her smile. It was comforting to know she had at least one ally in this place
"I was just about to come wake you up. You have to get started on this early."
Rose nodded as she listened to her. "I'm ready."
"Good. I just need to clean these clothes, and I'll come join you. There's no way you'll be able to make any progress all by yourself—trust me. I also found some maids who said they'd help. Thank the goddess the mistress said you could get help."
"You did?" Rose asked.

