

## K Lover 69

### Chapter 69: Martha's Lie

"Do you think there is a chance that this isn't a coincidence and that she is hiding?"

Henry didn't want to say "run away" because he was worried that might be the case. If she was hiding, at least they could find her, like last time. If she was gone, that was a completely different situation, and by the sound of it, she had been gone for a while.

Edna thought about the question. She couldn't outright deny it, but she had a feeling this wasn't the case. She slowly shook her head. "I don't think so," she replied.

"Are you sure?" Mister Henry asked. He stopped walking and turned around so their eyes met. "It wouldn't be the first time."

"I don't know," she admitted, bending her head forward.

Mister Henry sighed and mopped his forehead. He could feel years deducting from his lifespan. The crown prince wouldn't like any of this one bit. He continued on the walk and soon came upon his niece's room.

Edna knocked twice as a loud sound of clear irritation came from the room, followed by the stomping of feet, and then the door was opened.

"I already told you, Edna, I don't—Uncle!" Martha called. "What are you doing here?" she asked with an exaggerated smile.

Mister Henry frowned as he met eyes with her. "Where is Rose?" He cut straight to the question, bypassing hers.

Martha's expression fell. "I already told Edna everything I know. Why don't you believe me?"

"It's not a matter of belief, Martha. Rose is still missing," Edna replied.

"Did she return to the room last night?" Mister Henry asked.

Martha frowned and looked up as if trying to recall events from the night. "I think so."

"You need to be certain, Martha!" Mister Henry said, clearly agitated.

"I don't know, Uncle. I slept really early last night. After we sent her to the crown prince's wing, I went to sleep. Edna was the one who followed her."

Mister Henry turned to Edna, his expression demanding more explanation.

"I didn't follow her all the way. I stopped her in front of the crown prince's wing as usual, then I didn't see her until the next morning. Even if I knew she returned, I like to let her have some time alone, but last night, I didn't know when she came back, and none of the maids did either. When I came to check this morning, she was nowhere to be found."

Mister Henry turned to Martha. "I need you to tell me exactly what you can remember," he said.

"Well," Martha said, her eyes darting from side to side. "I don't know when she came in, but when I opened my eyes..." She paused. "I saw her sneaking out of the room."

"What?" Mister Henry and Edna said in unison.

"Yes, she opened the door quietly and was tiptoeing out of the room. I didn't think much about it, so I just went back to sleep, but when Edna asked this morning, I thought more about it and noticed her belongings weren't in the room."

"What?! W-why didn't you say anything?" Edna asked. "I asked you several times."

"It's not my business what she does," Martha simply said.

Mister Henry took a deep breath. "Are you sure about this?" he asked slowly.

"I don't know, but I am sure I saw her leave the room. She couldn't have left if she didn't return, right? And it looked like she was trying to leave without waking me up. Also, her things are missing."

"Why didn't you say anything before now?" Mister Henry asked.

"I was sleepy, and I wasn't sure about what I saw until Edna started going on about Rose being missing."

Mister Henry mopped some sweat away. "When was this?"

"It was still dark. The candle was almost dead, but there was still enough light for me to see. I think she ran away. It would explain why no one has seen her since."

"No," Edna said, shaking her head.

Mister Henry turned to her and frowned. "What do you mean, no? Is there something you're not saying too?"

"No, but I don't think she ran away. If she was planning to do that, she wouldn't have given me the wooden pieces—something she fought with Martha about. She told me to keep them safe because she was worried Martha might try something again."

"I told you I didn't steal it," Martha snapped.

"Shut up!" Mister Henry said. "I will ask the guards to look around. Edna and Martha"—he looked eyes with his niece as he called her—"the both of you will search for Rose."

"Huh! Why do I have to do that? I'm not the one that told her to run away!" she yelled loudly.

"Who cares?" He turned to Edna. "Ask the maids if they saw something, anything."

She nodded. "I will do that, Mister Henry."

He nodded. "I will go to report to the crown prince," he said, his head bowed and a dejected look on his face.

"I don't think she ran away, Mister Henry," Edna said. "She wouldn't leave them behind. She would have at least taken them back before she left. Why would she give them to me when she was planning to leave so soon?"

"Maybe she did that so you'd say that," Martha chipped in.

Edna shot her a dark look. She didn't believe a single word that came out of Martha, but she also didn't believe there was any way Martha could make Rose disappear. Still, she couldn't help feeling she might have something to do with it.

If she knew something, why didn't she say anything? Edna had asked her multiple times. Why did she wait until her uncle showed up before she said anything useful? These were the thoughts spinning in Edna's mind.

"Just do your best to find her," Mister Henry said. "And let me know as soon as you find anything."

"Yes, Mister Henry," Edna said with a curtsy.

The old man gave them one last look before he scampered away, handkerchief to his face as he vigorously wiped the sweat that continually dripped.

"Let's go," Edna said to Martha.

"No," she said and retreated into her room. "I will join you later," followed by a loud bang as the door shut in front of Edna.

Edna sighed and started walking away. She could get a few people to help her search, but the problem was—where would they look?