

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Volume 2: NEOMA SUPREMACY

Chapter 127 - JUST SHAKE IT OFF

NIKOLAI felt irritated as soon as he saw Lewis Crevan and the demon boy in front of Neoma's room while fighting over his daughter.

He didn't mean to eavesdrop but Trevor's voice was loud enough for him to hear even without his sharp senses. And although the foxy boy's voice was calmer and lower than the demon boy's, he spoke clear enough.

That was quite interesting.

Lewis Crevan almost never talks to other people. And even if he does talk, he purposely uses broken speech. But he's speaking normally to Trevor.

'You're Princess Neoma's most favorite person?' Trevor, who crossed his arms over his chest as if to assert dominance, asked the foxy boy. Although it didn't look convincing at all since Lewis was grabbing the demon boy's hair. 'So what? You can have the title as my Moon Princess's 'most favorite person.' But I'd take the title of her husband.'

Lewis Crevan remained pokerfaced. But he pulled the demon boy's hair, pissed.

Of course, Trevor yelled in an exaggerated 'agonizing' voice.

‘Glenn,’ Nikolai called his knight who stood behind him. ‘Get rid of those two insects before I step on them.’

‘Your Majesty, you can step on Trevor but don’t even think about hurting Lewis Crevan if you don’t want to earn Princess Neoma’s wrath,’ Glenn said playfully. When he glared at the knight, he avoided his gaze and walked towards the little insects. ‘Trevor, Lewis Crevan, play with me.’

‘No,’ Trevor and Lewis Crevan said at the same time.

Nevertheless, Glenn put his arms around the children and cheerfully dragged the two away from Neoma’s room.

He could tell that Trevor and Lewis Crevan tried to get away from Glenn’s firm hold. But of course, the knight didn’t budge. But even if the children seriously fight their way out of Glenn’s hold, they couldn’t.

Unless they wanted a serious fight.

Trevor and Lewis Crevan seemed to know that. Thus, despite their complaints (Trevor talked a lot while Lewis Crevan just scowled as protest), the two boys didn’t seriously try to shake Glenn off.

Now, some peace and quiet.

Knowing that Neoma was alone in the room (since he sent Alphen and Stephanie to serve Nero), he knocked before he announced himself. Since Glenn wasn’t there to announce his arrival, he had no choice but to do it.

‘Neoma, it’s me.’

‘Gah.’

‘Gah?’

He didn’t understand what it meant. But it was obviously a sound of complaint.

That little girl is full of grievances as usual.

‘Come in, Papa Boss,’ Neoma said in a loud voice for him to hear. Although that was necessary since he had sharp senses anyway. ‘But don’t get mad, okay?’

What did she do now?

As soon as he entered her room, he realized why his daughter asked him not to get mad.

Neoma, seated on the sofa while holding an empty vial, was wearing a lavender dress. It was also noticeable that her long and wavy hair wasn’t a wig. It was real, even the red strands.

He almost forgot that Neoma’s hair had pink strands after she awakened. It wasn’t quite obvious when her hair was cut short. But now that it grew longer due to Madam Hammock’s potion, he was reminded of one of Mona’s physical traits that Neoma inherited from her mother.

‘You really look like Mona,’ he blurted out without thinking.

‘Of course, Papa Boss,’ Neoma deadpanned. ‘You should be surprised if I look like a random woman instead of Lady Mona Roseheart.’

He rolled his eyes at his daughter's sarcasm that she probably inherited from her mother as well. 'What are you doing in that appearance?'

He didn't need to ask how Neoma got the potion or where she got the dress. He was aware of how close his daughter was to Madam Hammock and Hanna Quinzel. Thus, he was no longer surprised at how she was able to get help from the people around her.

'I'm taking selfies— I mean pictures,' she said, then she pointed at the spirit stones placed on top of the table. 'I'd like to commemorate the day I turned prettier.'

'Of course,' he said, already used at his daughter's excess love for her beauty. Then, he sat on the sofa across from her. 'How long will the potion last? We need to greet the commoners tomorrow morning.'

'Don't call them 'commoners,' Papa Boss,' she scolded him. Her voice was playful, but her eyes were serious. 'Even those people who don't have noble titles are still citizens of our empire. As their ruler, you shouldn't discriminate against your people based on social status. After all, it's your failure as the emperor if the rich get richer while the poor become poorer.'

She even talks like Mona.

'And how would that be my failure?' he asked. Neoma's words affected him because he already heard them from Mona. Of course, the way the two phrased it was different from one another. But the point was the same. 'I'm aware that I'm not a good person. But I take

pride in making the empire flourish after my father almost ruined it. I know that poverty still exists. But the situation is a lot better now than how it was during my father's reign.'

'Papa Boss, your father set the bar in hell during his reign,' she said, obviously not impressed with his boasting a while ago. 'Even a child like me would have done a good job running this empire compared to my grandfather's previous administration.'

'Neoma,' he said sternly. 'Didn't I already warn you not to say things that would imply that you're interested in ruling the empire?'

'Didn't I already say that I will never take the throne even if it kills me, Papa Boss?'

'I'm saying this for your own sake.'

His daughter pouted as if she was imitating a duck's long beak.

'Gosh. Are the bigots and misogynists in the empire going to combust and drop dead if a woman rules over them? You're so adamant about hating on women, huh? If y'all use the kind of energy on things that matter like fighting poverty, then maybe no one would get hungry in this empire anymore.'

He got his daughter's point but her accent and the words that she used were really strange.

What does 'y'all' even mean?

'You don't have to lecture me because I know what to do as the emperor,' he said. 'And what do you know about poverty anyway?'

Although I admit that I didn't pay attention to you and Nero when you were born, you still grew up in luxury.'

'Do I have to be born in poverty to understand that the poor will remain poor as long as the ruling class is the nobility? People who are out of touch with reality live in a bubble that prevents them from seeing the core problem with poverty, Papa Boss,' she said while shaking her head. 'I know that because I'm Neoma.'

Did his daughter learn that from her Economy class?

'Are you done with your lecture?' he asked. 'I didn't come here to hear your opinion about how I should run the empire.'

'I'm done, Papa Boss,' she said with her usual 'business smile.' 'I feel refreshed after nagging you.'

He just shook his head at that remark.

To be honest, even if Neoma's words were considered rude, he didn't feel like she was disrespecting him. When she wasn't irked by him, at least.

'I came here to talk about our activity tomorrow,' he said. 'As you already know, it's our empire's tradition to have the members of the royal family greet its people in The Balcony of what we call as 'People's Palace.' You've never been into that palace yet, but I guess you've already heard about it from your History teacher.'

His daughter nodded. 'It's the first palace that people will see once they went past the Royal Gate. According to history, it was purposely built so that the royal family could greet its people without actually showing their private residence. The inside of People's Palace is like

a museum that preserves the history of the royal family, and the citizens are allowed to visit it during the Moon Festival. Hence, the name.'

'That's right,' he said. 'Aside from the palace built to receive the citizens, the area around People's Palace also resembles the plaza in the Royal Capital. The one inside the Royal Palace is called Illumina. On normal days, it's nothing but a huge empty space in front of People's Palace. But during a Moon Festival, it transforms into a lively street filled with food carts and games that commoners enjoy.'

'Now that sounds like a real festival,' his daughter said excitedly. 'Are you here to tell me that I can enjoy the festival?'

'No,' he said sternly. 'I'm here to tell you to prepare because both the nobility and the general public haven't accepted you yet as this empire's Crown Prince. Thus, you might receive a cold welcome from both sides tomorrow.'

'I understand why the nobility doesn't want to accept me,' Neoma said, confused. 'But why does the general public hate me, Papa Boss?'

'It's because you are Mona's child.'

That seemed to surprise his daughter. 'Was Mama hated by the people?'

'It's not that they hated Mona,' he said. 'They just loved Juliet a little too much.'

'Oh.'

He raised his brow at her reaction. ‘Why does it seem like you easily accepted that reason? Don’t you find it shallow?’

She shook her head. ‘I’ve only heard good things about the late empress. Of course, I don’t envision her as someone that was perfect and 100% innocent. No one like that exists. But if people loved the late empress even after her death, then it only means that she lived an honest life. It’s easy to fake being nice— but being kind is not something that you can fake. That’s why I can tell that Empress Juliet was a kind person. And perhaps, a good ruler as well.’

He was impressed by Neoma’s mind.

It was true that Juliet was a good person, but that didn’t mean she was kind all the time. There were circumstances that had forced her to be cruel in order to fulfill her duty as a royal. But he understood because just like the late empress, he also had to sacrifice a part of his humanity in order to sit on the throne.

‘I know that Mama didn’t steal you from the late empress,’ Neoma continued carefully. ‘The late empress was already gone before you and Mama had us.’ She paused, then she gave him a suspicious look. ‘Right, Papa Boss?’

It sounded like a threat.

To be honest, his relationship with Mona began when he was still a Crown Prince.

But due to several tragic events that happened between them, they were forced to separate. And after that separation, he was put in a tight situation where the only way to get out of it was to marry Juliet.

‘Mona and I were separated for a few years after we met,’ he said. He didn’t want to tell his past to Neoma, but he wanted to assure her that her mother didn’t steal him from Juliet as most people think. ‘Juliet was already gone when we met again. That was when we had you and Nero. But of course, not everyone could accept that. Rumors began to spread that Mona was behind Juliet’s death. It spread like wildfire until the general public eventually believed it.’

And that was only one of the many reasons why a lot of people opposed his relationship with Mona.

‘I guess that’s politics for you,’ Neoma said in an indifferent tone. However, her eyes still looked sad. She probably felt bad for her mother. ‘People who don’t like my mother refuse to believe the truth because they wanted it to be true to suit their narrative. If they hate my mother that much, then I won’t be surprised if they hate me because they see me as Mama’s extension.’

Again, Neoma got it correct.

The reason why most people in the past didn’t approve of Mona was because of politics. The majority of noble households didn’t want House Roseheart to reclaim its former prestige. And so, the nobility put Mona in a bad light to make the commoners hate her.

Those bastards used Juliet’s death to smear Mona’s reputation to the mass.

‘Oh, well. It can’t be helped,’ Neoma said with a shrug, her voice more cheerful now. Then, she began ‘talking’ in a beat that made it sound like she was singing. But it was the first time that he heard

that kind of tune. ‘The haters gonna hate, hate, hate, hate, hate. Baby, I’m just gonna shake, shake, shake, shake, shake. I shake it off, I shake it off.’

Mona, you gave birth to a weird child.

But still, he was relieved that she already anticipated what kind of reception she might receive tomorrow.

He had power over the nobility because he had great support from old families like House Quinzel. But he couldn’t control how the commoners might perceive the ‘Crown Prince.’ He knew that even until now, the general public still missed Juliet.

Having said that...

‘Mona wasn’t hated by the entire population,’ he said. ‘The hate on your mother only seemed huge because it was spread by loud people. But Mona was also a loved person by many people who know her. I’m certain that even until now, there are still people who admire your mother in silence. It’s your job to find your people now, Neoma.’

‘No problem, Papa Boss. Charming people is my specialty,’ Neoma said with a smile, then she gave him a hand gesture that she referred to as ‘thumbs up.’ He knew because Glenn always blabbered about Neoma’s ‘quirks.’ ‘Because I’m Neoma.’

Nikolai could only sigh and shake his head at that kind of response.

Neoma is really a strange child.

‘I CAN see Mona’s face in Princess Neoma because of her feminine feature. Moreover, the royal princess inherited my master’s gentle eyes and kind smile,’ Gale thought to herself aloud while watching Prince Nero pour some tea for himself. ‘But you, on the other hand, look like a child version of little Nikolai, Prince Nero.’

‘I apologize for looking like my father.’

To say that Gale was shocked when Prince Nero turned to her after responding to her would be an understatement.

Prince Nero can hear me when he hasn’t awakened his Roseheart blood yet?!

Hi. You may now send GIFTS to our Neoma. Thank you~
