

# Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

## Volume 2: NEOMA SUPREMACY

### Chapter 148 - THE BEGINNING OF GOODBYES

‘THAT’S going to be a problem because I’m bad with faces,’ Ruto told her with the same carefree attitude that he had shown her from the start. ‘I’ll try my best though.’

‘Don’t worry. You don’t need to try your best,’ Neoma assured him while waving her hand. ‘I’m pretty sure that my face is unforgettable anyway.’

It looked like he was about to say something but they were interrupted again.

This time, three grown men approached the stall.

They looked sketchy though.

The men wore a hooded black cloak that almost covered their faces. They also talked in a foreign, unfamiliar language...

... while looking at her.

She didn’t know if Ruto noticed that but he stood in front of her as if he was hiding her from the obviously dangerous strangers.

‘Hello, gentlemen,’ Ruto greeted his customers. ‘Would you like some corndogs? I’m about to go home now so you can take everything.’

‘We’re not interested in your products,’ one of the men said in a hoarse voice and thick accent as if they weren’t locals. Then, he pointed a finger at Ruto (but he was definitely aiming at her). ‘How much? That little girl?’

She rolled her eyes because she already expected that as soon as the men looked at her.

Okay, it's time for me to shine.

Svu daralvut vuz hmzrtme gudmzu lvu lommt pn frt—

'I only sell corndogs here,' Ruto said a little firmer than his usual laid-back voice. 'Please leave if you're looking for something else.'

As a response, the bad guy threw the basket and even kicked the food stall. He must have been physically strong because his kick made a hole in the kiosk. That seemed to agitate Ruto because she saw him clench his fists.

Ohh...

She clasped her hands together while waiting for something exciting to happen.

Is he going to fight those bad guys to protect me?

'Don't act violently in front of a child,' Ruto said in a rather cold voice while opening a drawer on the counter. Then, he pulled out several pouches and put them on the table. 'These are bags of gold coins. Take them and leave this plaza now.'

Her jaw dropped.

What? Just like that?!

The three shady men talked among themselves in a different language, then the leader took the bags of gold coins. Then, they left just like that. After blending with the crowd, they completely disappeared.

'I guess it's time to close the shop now,' Ruto said, then he turned around to face her. 'Miss Ramsay, do you want me to walk you back...' He trailed off and tilted his head at one side. 'Are you pouting?'

‘You shouldn’t have tolerated those bad guys,’ she said firmly. ‘I also want to avoid violence as much as possible but those people are obviously human traffickers. There are a lot of children here— especially commoners that don’t have money or the ability to protect themselves. What if they find another victim in my place?’

‘I know,’ he said. ‘That’s why I’m going to close my shop and report it to a Black Hawk Knight stationed at this plaza. And if you have time, can you come with me and describe those men to the knights? I’m not good at—’

‘I’m sorry but I don’t have time to waste here,’ she said while cracking her knuckles. ‘If we report it first, it might be too late. So I’ll just catch them.’

‘Miss Ramsay—’

‘Don’t stop me.’

‘Okay,’ he said, giving up so easily. Gosh, the young chef was so laid-back! ‘I have one request though. Can you deliver a message to the Crown Prince for me?’

‘Sure,’ she said, intrigued with what the Royal Chef had to say to her. ‘What is it?’

‘I don’t mind if he keeps on asking me to make foreign dishes for him. In fact, I like being tested that way,’ Ruto said seriously. ‘But could you please tell him that I also won’t stop making him eat healthy food? One day, I’m going to feed him pickles and he wouldn’t know it.’

Neoma laughed, then she gave Ruto a thumbs up. ‘Sure.’

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NEOMA was serious about chasing the possible human/child traffickers.

But all of a sudden, she felt someone grab her by the collar. It shocked her because she didn't feel any presence behind her. Though she should have known who it was when the Soul Beasts following her didn't react.

'Papa Boss,' Neoma complained when her father lifted her, then he draped her over his arm. 'I thought you already know how to properly carry a child?'

'This is your punishment for running off like that,' Emperor Nikolai said while walking in the crowded street. It was amazing how his father navigated through the crowd because aside from moving swiftly, it seemed like there was a thin layer of barrier on his body. After all, despite how packed the street was, none of the people around them had directly touched her Papa Boss yet. 'If you do that one more time, your playtime is over.'

'Papa Boss, I'm really busy right now,' she insisted. 'There's a group of bad guys that I need to catch.'

He let out a deep sigh. 'I know. I've been watching you from afar. I already sent a message to Rufus. I'm pretty sure that by now, they have already caught the human traffickers.'

'How did you know that, Papa Boss?'

'My Soul Beasts served as my eyes and my ears,' he explained. 'They shared with me what they saw and heard while guarding you.'

Ah, that made sense.

'Then, was that really Chef Stroganoff?'

'Chef Stroganoff junior, yes.'

'His father is also a Royal Chef?'

'Ruston Stroganoff's father is the current Head Chef of the Royal Kitchen,' he explained. If he could talk freely like that, then there was definitely a

spell around them that would prevent them from getting eavesdropped on.  
'Morton Stroganoff, his father, is also my Exclusive Chef.'

'How does Chef Morton Stroganoff look, Papa Boss?'

'Blonde with green eyes.'

Ohh.

So, the Chef Stroganoff that Lewis had seen was the senior.

'Is it safe to assume that Ruto is my Exclusive Chef, Papa Boss?'

'You can say that,' he said. 'Originally, Morton Stroganoff was the one in charge of your meals as well. It just changed when you began sending the Royal Kitchen food requests. The one who successfully made the food that passed your standards was Ruston Stroganoff. Thus, I put him in charge of your meals.'

She gave her father a thumbs up. 'Good job, Papa Boss.'

He just ignored her.

She was about to tell him to put her down when she saw a very interesting establishment. 'Papa Boss, I see a bookstore,' she said excitedly. 'Please put me down and give me money. I'm just going to buy some books.'

He scoffed. 'What do you need to buy in a rundown bookstore like that when you already have a Royal Library?'

'That's Nero's library and not mine.'

Plus, the library was so huge but it didn't contain a single romance novel in it.

He didn't give a response to her. Instead, he just walked towards the bookstore, put her down, and gave her a bag of gold coins. 'Be quick.'

‘You got it, Papa Boss,’ she said, then she ran to the bookstore with the Soul Beasts (in their ball of energy forms) following her.

As expected of a rundown shop, it was unkempt inside. But the old shelves were filled with books. Most of it was still in pristine condition.

Not bad.

Since she didn’t have time to roam around, she went straight to the counter where a short, old woman was sitting while reading and book. Ah, she was also smoking tobacco even though it was bad for her health, especially at that age.

But she wasn’t gonna lie— the granny looked like a badass.

‘Granny, please give me the newest romance novels that you have,’ she said with a bright smile on her face. She was an adult inside so reading romance books weren’t bad. Plus, she already ran out of something interesting to read after she finished reading the manuscripts of the children under the Sword Lily Foundation. ‘The more passionate the story is, the better.’

The old woman gave her a quick once-over before she returned to her book. ‘If you think I’m going to hand such scandalous books to a child like you, then you must be crazy,’ she said, then she puffed out smoke from her mouth before she continued. ‘I may not have lived an honest life. But I’m not that cruel to ruin a child’s innocence this early.’

I’m touched, Granny.

‘Oh, Granny, I like you already,’ she said, amazed by how the old woman who didn’t even know her wanted to protect her ‘innocence.’ ‘Don’t worry because I’m not going to read them,’ she lied, then she pointed at her Papa Boss whose back could be seen from the shop’s window. ‘The books are for my Papa.’ She activated her ‘actress mode,’ then she pretended to be on the verge of crying. ‘My mother died giving birth to me, Granny. Ever since that

day, my poor Papa has been a single father. But I don't want him to live alone forever. I want to help him regain his interest in love.' She covered her hands and pretended to cry. 'I thought giving my father romance novels to read would reawaken his passion for love.'

Hehe. Sorry, Papa Boss.

It seemed like her story and her fake crying worked because the old woman suddenly began comforting her by gently patting her head.

'Don't cry, child,' Granny said in a gentle voice. 'Granny is sorry, okay? Let me make it up to you by giving you the best romance novels that will definitely reawaken your father's passion for love.'

Neoma smiled but when she raised her head to look at the old woman, her big, fake tears rolled down her cheeks. 'Thank you, Granny.'

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NEOMA smiled smugly as soon as she got out of the bookstore with five precious érótiċa – er, romance books in her arms. The granny carefully wrapped the books for her and put them in a brown paper bag. 'Let's go, Papa Boss.'

Emperor Nikolai looked at her with an irritated look on his face. 'South, burn those indecent books.'

She gasped when she remembered that the Soul Beasts were with her.

Before she could even appeal to her father, the paper bag and the books in her arms turned into ashes in just a few seconds. The amazing thing was she didn't get burnt. Plus, the ashes also disappeared before they touched her skin.

Amazing control of power...

‘Papa Boss, if you don’t replace those books now, I’m going to cry here so loud your eardrums would burst,’ she warned him. ‘Or maybe I’ll just set you up with all the women staring at you right at this moment.’

Her father took a deep breath, then he walked past her and entered the bookstore.

She instantly smiled and waited for her Papa Boss happily. When she looked at the window to take a peek inside, she saw the old woman almost drool while looking the emperor and putting some books inside a brown paper bag.

Gosh, Papa Boss’s face could even charm an old woman.

When her father went out of the store, she immediately ran towards him with open arms.

Papa Boss sighed before he handed the paper bag to her.

She excitedly pulled out the books to check and as soon as she read the titles, her beautiful smile vanished.

‘How to Fulfill Your Filial Duties.’

‘Children of Today, Respect Your Parents.’

‘Before You Become a Proper Lady, Be a Good Daughter First.’

Emperor Nikolai crossed his arms over his chest, his smile smug for some reason. ‘Those books are the suitable ones for your age, you little rogue.’

‘Tteokbokki,’ Neoma said coldly. ‘Burn these horrible books.’

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NERO dismissed Alphen and Stephanie after the two delivered the items that he had been waiting for the whole week.



Then, he sat on the sofa and admired the two elegant wooden boxes with pretty satin bows on top. The one with the green ribbon was for Hanna. While the one with the pink ribbon was for Neoma. He was glad that the jewelry that he wanted to give the two precious ladies in his life arrived in time.

The artisans working directly for His Majesty are really good in their craft.

‘These presents will serve as my farewell gift to Neoma and Hanna,’ Nero whispered to himself while gently running his fingers over the pink satin bow. ‘I hope they like it.’

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‘PRINCESS BRIGITTE, it seems like we have to leave the empire now.’

Brigitte, seated on the windowsill of her room while drinking tea, turned to Nowell Elwood with a surprised look on her face. ‘Why though? I thought Father gave us the permission to stay here until the Moon Festival is over.’

‘It seems like it has to do with the second prince,’ Nowell said with a scowl on his face. If her cousin couldn’t hide such expression from her, then it must mean that the gravity of the situation in their kingdom couldn’t be ignored. ‘I think we should go home now, Princess Brigitte.’

She was ready to leave especially if it was for the sake of their kingdom.

But she was saddened by one thing.

‘I heard that the Crown Prince is attending an official business with His Majesty,’ Brigitte said sadly, then she sipped her tea before she continued. ‘It’s a shame that I won’t even be able to properly say goodbye to my bestie.’

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‘LEAVE the empire and study abroad?’ Hanna, now alone with her mother in her room (guarded by Lewis Crevan outside), asked in surprise. She was glad that her mother returned and visited her earlier than she expected. After all, she was excited to dance with her parents later. And to watch her mother and father have each other’s last dance. But the news that she heard from her mother shocked her. ‘Why do I have to study abroad, Mother?’

‘Hanna, your father and I decided that it would be best for you if you learn to use your power correctly from now on,’ her mother, seated beside her on the bed, said seriously. ‘That’s why we decided to send you to a country where your Great Uncle Garrett is.’

She gasped when she heard that.

As far as she knew, her Great Uncle Garrett was banished from the empire for helping Commander Gavin Quinzel escape with Lady Mona Roseheart. Although his sin was heavy, the emperor couldn’t punish him with a death sentence because of his great contribution to the war that saved the empire in the past.

Thus, her great uncle was the only person who survived among the people who helped her Uncle Gavin before.

‘I know what you’re thinking, Hanna,’ her mother said. ‘Don’t worry about it. Your father said he’d talk to His Majesty about it. For now, consider our decision, daughter. This is for you.’

She knew that it was for her and thus, she couldn’t turn it down easily.

‘Ah, I met a nice little girl when I returned to the Royal Capital,’ her mother said, her face instantly lighting up. ‘I think she’s also headed to the country where we want to send you. Do you want to meet her?’

‘Who is she, Mother?’ she asked curiously. ‘Do I know her?’

After all, this was the first time that her mother talked about someone else's daughter with such enthusiasm.

'She's from a poor noble household so you may not know her,' her mother said with a hint of sympathy in her voice. 'Her name is Regina Crowell.'

Hanna, for some reason, suddenly felt uncomfortable when she heard that name. 'Regina... Crowell?'

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'CHILD, do you want me to read your fortune?'

Neoma, standing in front of the rundown bookstore while waiting for her Papa Boss to return with the correct books that she wanted to read, didn't even bother to turn to the shady, cloaked woman who silently stood beside her. She had to say that the sketchy woman smelled like flowers though. 'Nah, I'm good,' she said. 'I already know that my life is filled with love and luck, thank you very much.'

She knew that she was being rude.

But she felt uncomfortable around the woman beside her and she trusted her instinct. Thus, she put her guard up and told Tteokbokki internally to stay alert as well.

The woman, who was probably in her late twenties or early thirties based on her voice, laughed softly. 'Your future looks grim, child,' she said. 'The God of Misfortune seems to be plucking your friends and allies one by one as if they were petals from a dying rose.'

The fortune-teller didn't need to elaborate.

She was obviously the 'dying rose' in the woman's depressing 'vision.'

Neoma laughed sarcastically, then she raised her head to see the mysterious 'fortune teller.' But since the woman wore a dark, hooded cloak, she

couldn't really see her face. But she could feel that she was looking at her face intently. 'Then, tell that god to sleep with one eye open,' she said in a threatening voice. 'Because if I lose even one friend and ally in the future, I will make the heavens regret allowing a child like me to be born here.'

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

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