

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Volume 2: NEOMA SUPREMACY

Chapter 165 – RUTO'S SURPRISING REQUEST

'I DON'T want to see Ruto,' Neoma said to Stephanie. Well, more like she can't see the Royal Chef out of fear of not being able to resist the young chef's food. 'Send him back to my father's palace.'

Stephanie looked shocked by her order. 'But Your Royal Highness, Chef Ruston Stroganoff has a letter from His Majesty. According to that letter, His Majesty is allowing the young Royal Chef to do what he must to bring back your appetite.'

Argh, she didn't expect that from her Papa Boss.

Was her father worried about her?

Nah. He just probably wants me to eat so that I'll stop rebelling against his tyranny. Sending Ruto here is foul though.

After all, she knew deep in her heart that she couldn't refuse the young chef's yummy food.

But since Ruto went through all the troubles to visit me, I must send him away personally.

'Bring the Royal Chef to the royal parlor,' she said to the head maid. 'I will meet him after I freshened up.'

'Shall I help you, Your Royal Highness?'

'Nah, I'm good,' she said. 'Just serve Ruto well, Stephanie.'

'As you wish, Your Royal Highness,' Stephanie said, then she bowed politely before leaving her office quietly.

She turned to Lewis as soon as the head maid was gone. 'Lewis, you won't believe this. But the Chef Stroganoff that actually makes my meal is only a year older than you.'

Lewis looked surprised by what she said. 'But I met him in the kitchen once,' he said. 'He's an old man with blonde hair and green eyes.'

'Apparently, the one you saw is Morton Stroganoff— Ruto's father.'

'Father?'

'I know, right?' she said. After all, she could relate to Lewis's confusion. 'Ruto probably inherited his looks from his mother.'

Her son just remained silent.

'Anyway, do I look okay?' she asked her son. 'Do I look handsome?'

He shook his head. 'Pretty.'

She laughed softly while shaking her head. Then, she touched the choker around her neck. It was a magical device that changes her voice so that he'd sound like a 'boy.' 'Lewis, Ruto has face blindness,' she informed her son. 'He met me when I was disguised as 'Miss Ramsay.' He won't recognize me as the little girl that she met in the streets because of this choker, but he might recognize my scent.'

Lewis's brows furrowed. 'How?'

She pointed at her hair. 'He sniffed my hair like a dog.'

He scowled upon hearing that.

'But he's not a pervert,' she said defensively. 'He can't help it since he can't remember faces. He has to remember me using other ways.' She stood up and stretched her arms. 'Can I borrow your perfume, Lewis? I want to change my scent.'

She had her own perfumes, of course.

But Ruto might recognize that. After all, she wore it when she was disguised as 'Miss Ramsay.' She didn't want to underestimate the young chef's senses.

'I don't use perfume, Princess Neoma.'

'Really?' she asked, surprised. 'You always smell cool and refreshing so I thought you wear perfume. So that's your natural scent, huh?'

Lewis looked clueless by what she was talking about.

'I'll just borrow perfume from Alphen,' Neoma said, then she began to walk towards the door. 'Let's go, Lewis.'

NEOMA didn't know why but she felt a little nervous when she arrived at the tea room.

Ruto was indeed there.

Wow, he's wearing noble clothes this time.

She thought he went to her palace in his usual chef's uniform.

Ruto looked pretty neat. He liked his black suit adorned with gold rivet tassels shoulder epaulets. His shoes and the accessories that covered his body looked simple yet elegant. He was like a rich celebrity with chill vibes that made him appear approachable.

But like the first time that she met him, he still had no presence in terms of Mana. She barely noticed him even though he was just sitting on the sofa while having tea...

Wait, that's not tea.

Ruto had a glass in his hand with a metallic straw so she could clearly see what kind of drink he was having at the moment.

‘Bubble tea!’ Neoma exclaimed as soon as she recognized the drink. ‘You managed to make black tapioca pearls from scratch, Chef Stroganoff.’

Ruto stood up and bowed to her. ‘Greetings to the First Star of the Great Moonasterion Empire,’ he said in his usually chill yet polite voice. ‘My name is Ruston Stroganoff, one of the Royal Chefs serving the Royal Family.’

Ah, right.

She almost forgot that she was acting as the Crown Prince and this was their ‘first’ meeting.

I can’t call him ‘Ruto’ unless he tells me his nickname.

‘You may raise your head now,’ she told him.

Ruto did as he was told, and he remained standing.

She knew that he would remain that way unless she sat first. So she walked towards the opposite sofa and sat on it as Lewis stood behind her. ‘You may take a sit now, Chef.’

The young chef nodded politely before he sat on the sofa from across her.

She noticed that on the table between her and Ruto, there were two glasses of green tea with black pearls.

‘Chef Stroganoff, are you the one who prepared your own drink?’ she asked worriedly. ‘You’re a guest.’

‘I’m just like any servant of the Royal Palace, Your Royal Highness,’ Ruto reminded her politely. ‘You don’t have to treat me differently. Moreover, I’m here to serve you. I was shocked when the meals that I prepared for your dinner and breakfast were returned to my kitchen. May I know if there’s something wrong with the food that I prepared for you?’

Ah, he doesn’t beat around the bush, huh?

Ruto's straightforward personality didn't shock her anymore since this was the same person who bluntly compared her to a (cute) baby white radish.

He's really bad for my ego.

'I'm on a hunger strike,' she said while eyeing the bubble tea on the tall glass in front of her. It looked like the matcha tea that she used to drink back in her second life. She couldn't help but gulp while wondering if it would taste the same. 'I know that you diligently prepare my meals, Chef Stroganoff. But I can't eat right now. Not even a sip of that yummy-looking bubble tea with black tapioca pearls...'

'Your Royal Highness.'

She raised her head to meet Ruto's gaze. 'Yes?'

'Please eat,' he said in a polite yet firm voice. 'I prepared some of the food that you requested to me before. For today, I made the thing you call 'pizza' for you, Your Royal Highness.'

Her eyes widened in shock. 'P-Pizza?'

He nodded, then he continued. 'I also made 'mojos,' 'buffalo wings,' and 'mozzarella sticks' for you, Your Royal Highness.'

She almost drooled upon hearing that.

'They're quite a challenge to make. But I'm grateful for being given the chance to make foreign dishes,' the young chef said. 'To be honest, I didn't know that chicken meat could be that delicious. After all, we mostly only cook beef and venison in the Royal Kitchen.' He paused to sip his bubble tea. And he sipped it in a way as if he was tempting her to try it. 'I've also made several dishes out of a simple potato, and it's all thanks to you, Your Royal Highness.'

She bit her lower lip, suppressing her cravings for the bubble tea.

‘For this dish called ‘pizza,’ I’ve asked the artisans of the Royal Palace to make a tool similar to the ‘old type of oven’ that you mentioned in your letter. It’s quite similar to a furnace,’ Ruto explained to her. ‘Thanks to that thing called ‘oven,’ I think I perfectly made the pizza that you want, Your Royal Highness.’

‘I-Is it delicious?’ she asked, then she gulped again. ‘Did you make the pizza exactly like how I wrote it in the recipe?’

‘Yes, Your Royal Highness,’ he said confidently. ‘But only you can judge if it suits your taste.’

‘But as I said, I’m on a hunger strike...’

‘Then, I have no choice but to throw them all away,’ he said bluntly. ‘I hate wasting food. But the food that is made for a member of the Royal Family couldn’t be handed to other people.’ He còcked his head at one side. ‘Don’t you think it would be waste to throw the food away, Your Royal Highness? I understand that you’re probably on a hunger strike for standing up for something that you truly believe in. But is it worth the food that is being wasted?’

Argh, Ruto’s words hurt her conscience.

Yet, she couldn’t give up on her hunger strike.

‘I’m not starving myself just to guilt-trip my father,’ she said seriously. ‘I’m showing him my resolve. I know that it may look stupid for someone who values food over almost anything. But Chef Stroganoff, I’m doing this to save a life.’

She was hoping that her Papa Boss would give in first.

Even if her hunger strike would lead to food waste, she would have to turn a blind eye. After all, Hanna’s life was more important to her.

‘I understand, Your Royal Highness. I won’t force you to eat anymore,’ the young chef said. ‘I will just wait for you to summon me.’

She smiled, relieved that Ruto wasn’t being pushy.

‘I have a request, Your Royal Highness.’

‘What is it?’

‘Can I meet your lady-in-waiting trainee called ‘Miss Ramsay?’” Ruto asked without missing a heartbeat. ‘The one that looks like a baby white radish.’

She almost choked on her saliva. ‘W-What do you need Miss Ramsay for?’

‘I want to feed her.’

‘And why would you want to do that?’

‘Just because.’

Huh?

What kind of reason was that?

‘Can I meet Miss Ramsay?’

It was easy to refuse that kind of request.

But for some reason, she couldn’t.

‘I can’t stay longer because I have a job to attend to,’ Neoma said, then she stood up. ‘If you wait here, I’ll send Miss Ramsay here.’

Ruto’s face lit up, then he stood up and bowed to her. ‘I’m much obliged, Your Royal Highness.’

‘YOUR MAJESTY, I received a report from Miss Stephanie,’ Glenn reported to him during his break. ‘Princess Neoma refused to eat the food that Chef Ruto prepared for her.’

Nikolai sipped his tea before he spoke. ‘How stubborn.’

Glenn laughed softly. ‘Aren’t you stubborn as well, Your Majesty? You’ve been drinking tea all day because you don’t want to eat while Her Royal Highness is still on a hunger strike.’

‘Glenn, do you want to die?’

‘Please reconsider your decision, Your Majesty,’ his personal knight said seriously. ‘Aside from the fact that I’m worried about Princess Neoma, I also agree with her. The young lady Hanna Quinzel is going to be an important figure in the future as the sole heiress of House Quinzel. Most of all, she might be the future Crown Princess of the empire. It would be a shame if she dies early because of a sickness that we can fix.’

It wasn’t like Neoma and Glenn’s reasoning was wrong.

In fact, he knew that they were right.

Rufus didn’t even need to beg him.

But he let his personal feelings cloud his judgment. And now, it caused an uproar among the people around him. He even hurt Rufus who just wanted to save his only daughter.

If he doesn’t get himself together, Neoma will call him a scumbag again.

‘Glenn.’

‘Yes, Your Majesty?’

‘Send a word to Neoma’s palace,’ Nikolai said, then he put his teacup down on the table. ‘Tell my rogue of a daughter that I will allow Rufus to send

Hanna to Gonora to study under Garrett Quinzel.' He paused before he continued. 'Lastly, tell Neoma that I will go to her residence later for the apology that she wants.'

Glenn smiled and nodded eagerly. 'As you wish, Your Majesty.'

HANNA was shocked while standing outside her parents' room.

For the first time in her life, she heard them fight. Since her mother and her father were talking in loud voices, she could hear them from where she stood.

'Amber, do you hear yourself?'

'I'm just telling the truth, Rufus,' her mother said in a frustrated voice.

'Because of His Majesty and the 'Crown Prince,' you've been getting hurt recently!'

She gasped when she heard that. Mother, what are you saying about the Royal Family?

'We are nobles and it's our duty to serve the Royal Family,' her father said firmly. 'And His Majesty is my cousin. Therefore, the 'Crown Prince' is also my family. Please don't blame this on them.'

Her mother's response came in the form of a loud sob.

'Amber, I'm sorry,' her father said in a gentle voice this time. 'Please don't cry.'

Hanna left because she couldn't listen to her parents' argument any longer.

Just what is happening to my mother for her to hate on the Royal Family?

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