

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Volume 2: NEOMA SUPREMACY

Chapter 176 – AND THE HAWK HAS FALLEN

HANNA was thankful for the distraction that came along in the form of a uniformed Black Hawk Knight that approached her mother.

The knight politely greeted them, then he leaned down and whispered something in her mother who suddenly looked nervous. But her mother caught herself immediately, then she dismissed the knight calmly before she turned to them with a smile.

‘I’m sorry, girls. I have to step out for a while,’ her mother said with an apologetic smile on her face. ‘Please continue your talk, ladies.’

‘Mother, is everything alright?’ Hanna asked worriedly. The Black Hawk Knight might have said some urgent news to her mother earlier. ‘Is Father alright?’

‘Don’t worry, sweetheart,’ her mother assured her. ‘Your father just needs my ability to get his job done early. I’ll return with your father so don’t worry too much.’

It looked she couldn’t stop her mother anymore so she just smiled and nodded. As a proper lady, she should listen to her parents well. ‘I understand, Mother,’ she said. ‘Please take care.’

‘Take care, Duchess Quinzel,’ Regina Crowell said, acting like she was seriously worried for her mother.

‘Thank you, ladies,’ her mother said with a smile, then she stood up and nodded at them. ‘Enjoy your time together.’

After that, her mother left the café.

She watched from the window as her mother was escorted by several knights from their army to a rental carriage. That made her worry even more.

‘Don’t worry, Hanna,’ Regina Crowell comforted her with a ‘warm’ smile. ‘Duchess Quinzal will definitely return.’

She smiled and nodded. ‘I know. Thank you, Regina.’

‘You’re welcome, Hanna,’ the crow said. ‘By the way, I thought you couldn’t come to Gonora anymore. I was so relieved when Her Grace Duchess Quinzal sent me a letter and said that you finally got the permission from His Majesty to go to Gonora.’

To be honest, she felt uncomfortable hearing that.

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But then again, her mother didn’t know that Regina Crowell was an enemy.

‘Thankfully, His Majesty realized that it will benefit House Quinzal in the future if I further my studies abroad,’ she said, then she changed the topic. ‘I heard from Mother that you were accepted in a private academy in Gonora as a scholar. That’s great, Regina. Congratulations.’

The crow suddenly looked like she was worried about something.

Neoma, now I understand how Regina Crowell managed to fool you in your first life. She’s really good at acting. Thank you for telling me the truth or else, I would have fallen into her trap this early.

‘Regina!’

She flinched when she heard the familiar male voice.

To her surprise, Rubin Drayton suddenly approached their table. Then, he angrily grabbed Regina Crowell by the arm and forced the crow to stand up.

The table shook and their drinks spilled as a result.

Thankfully, the tea was no longer hot and she managed to avoid being soaked by the liquid by using her shadow as a barrier.

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After all, the young lord was usually meek especially next to his father.

‘Rubin, let go,’ Regina Crowell said firmly. ‘It hurts.’

She almost raised a brow at that.

How come she addresses a young lord like Rubin Drayton by his first name?

She, even as a daughter of a duke, was still obliged to address Rubin Drayton by his title. In the public, at least. If they were close enough, only then it would be acceptable for her to call the young lord by his name in private.

That means Regina Crowell and Sir Drayton are really close.

She wanted to punish these two for betraying and hurting Neoma in her first life.

‘You didn’t tell me that my father forced you to accept a scholarship in a school in Gonora,’ Rubin Drayton said, his face still red with anger. ‘Let’s talk.’

‘No,’ Regina Crowell said. ‘I have nothing to say to you, Rubin.’

I guess it’s time for me to step up.

The staff and the other customers looked too scared to meddle.

After all, in that café, she and Rubin Drayton were the most powerful nobles. Their fellow nobles probably didn’t want to offend the (unofficial) heiress and the heir to House Quinzel and House Drayton respectively.

She cleared her throat, making Regina Crowell and Rubin Drayton turn to her at the same time. 'Greetings, Sir Drayton,' she said politely, then she stood up and bowed to him.

Rubin Drayton returned her greetings, but he didn't let go of Regina's arm. 'I apologize if I startled you, Young Lady Quinzel,' he said. 'Please excuse us. Regina and I have something important to discuss.'

'But it seems like Regina doesn't want to talk to you, Sir Drayton,' she said, acting the part of a good friend to Regina Crowell. 'If you don't let go of Regina's arm, I will call the Black Hawk Knights to deal with you.'

Her personal guards were just right outside the café.

The young lord seemed to have been shaken up by her threat.

It was a known fact that House Quinzel was greater than House Drayton when it comes to power, wealth, and influence after all. She may not be the official heiress to House Quinzel because of her gender, but everyone in the empire knew how much her parents doted on her.

Her parents' love and affection for her makes her more powerful than official heirs like Rubin Drayton.

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Rubin glared at her but he eventually let go of Regina Crowell's hand, then he turned to the crow. 'We need to talk, Regina. I won't stop until you leave this café with me.'

'I heard you,' Regina Crowell said in a frustrated voice, then the crow turned to her with an apologetic look on her face. 'I'm sorry, Hanna. I'll just talk to Rubin outside. I promise I'll return as soon as possible.'

She smiled and nodded. 'I'll wait for you, Regina,' she said, then she handed a handkerchief to her. That hankie had the crest of House Quinzel.

‘If you need help, just approach any of the Black Hawk Knights guarding outside the café and show them that handkerchief. They will know that you’re a friend of mine.’

Regina Crowell looked relieved.

Then, the crow and the aggressive young lord finally left the café.

She was finally able to relax.

When she sat down, the manager of the café approached her nervously. The old man asked her if she needed anything, and she politely asked for another tea and set of pastries.

Finally, some peace and quiet.

She was staring outside the window when all of a sudden, she felt a strong and hostile bloodlust directed at her.

Although she considered the fact that she would be attacked once she met with Regina Crowell, she didn’t expect it to happen this soon. She didn’t have time to worry about that though. As soon as she felt the danger coming towards her, she stood up and summoned her Shadow Puppet.

The reason why she chose the table beside the window was because of the sunlight. After all, the brighter it was, the stronger her shadow would be.

But much to her shock, the whole café was suddenly enveloped in darkness.

Thus, her Shadow Puppet became powerless.

No!

Before Hanna could even grab her Flame Stone embedded on the ring on her pinky to create light, a strong explosion suddenly hit her in the face.

‘DARLING, what’s wrong?’ Amber asked worriedly when she arrived at the Central Plaza. ‘Your men told me you need my help...’

She trailed off as soon as she saw the horrendous scene behind her husband.

Now she understood why Rufus covered the entire Central Plaza with his Shadow Veil. Her husband probably didn’t want the people to see that scene.

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She covered her mouth with her hands when she gasped.

‘I’m sorry for calling you here, darling,’ Rufus said as he wrapped her around his arms, effectively blocking her view of the awful scene behind him. ‘My men failed to capture the rebels’ leader. Can you lend us your ability to trace the residue of one’s Mana? I already sent my men to hunt them down. But for some reason, I feel uneasy. I want to catch them as soon as possible, Amber.’

She gulped hard, then she nodded.

If the person they’re hunting has Mana, then the chance that they’re from nobility is high.

Did the Anti-Royal Faction make their move again?

This isn’t the right time to think about it.

‘Darling, I need an item from the leader to track them down,’ she said, then she gently pulled away from her husband’s hug to look at him in the eye. ‘I will lend you my power anytime, darling.’

Her husband smiled, then he gently touched her face. ‘Thank you, darling.’

Their moment was interrupted when all of a sudden, they heard a loud and literally earth-shaking explosion near them. She almost fell on the ground but thankfully, her husband pulled her closer to him and hugged her tight.

They were lucky they were inside her husband's Shadow Veil. It absorbed the impact of the explosion and thus, they weren't that affected.

'No...!' Rufus whispered in a weak, devastated voice. 'No, it can't be...'

She looked up at her husband and noticed that he was pale. When she followed his gaze, she realized why her husband suddenly looked like his strength left him.

The direction of the center of the explosion was familiar to them.

Amber screamed agonizingly. 'Hanna!'

HANNA was still alive, but she didn't know how long she'd last.

She didn't even know if her body was still intact.

After all, she couldn't feel the lower part of her body as if something heavy was crushing it. Unfortunately, she couldn't open her eyes to check if her legs were still there.

She tried to move her hands but every part of her hurt right now. Her face also felt hot as if it was burned. Upon realizing the extent of her awful state, she suddenly felt scared. It was as if death was already breathing at the back of her neck.

Mother, Father, it hurts...

Even crying made her physical pain worse.

Neoma, I'm sorry, Hanna thought to herself while using what left of her Mana to talk to Neoma, hoping that the royal princess would receive her

message. She wasn't sure if it would work. But she remembered a story that her father told her before. Apparently, once they were on the brink of death, their ability would allow them to 'whisper' their final message to the people that they wanted to say goodbye to. Please say goodbye to Nero for me. She paused to take a deep breath, her chest tightening painfully as minutes passed by. Please don't blame yourself for any of this. I don't regret being close to you in this lifetime, Neoma. Thank you for everything.

And after leaving her message for Neoma, she used her remaining life force to create light that would awaken her Shadow Puppet.

Hanna could only pray that her parents would see her final message.

Mother, Father, I love you...

REGINA CROWELL looked around the unconscious and bleeding people on the ground.

Since the explosion from the café was strong, the people near the establishment were blown away by the blast. Of course, she and Rubin were among those people.

But that was a part of the plan.

Rubin Drayton was an important pawn to them so she protected him during the explosion. But it wouldn't be realistic if he was unscathed so she let him get hit by the impact a little bit. And now, he was one of the 'half-dead' victims on the ground.

She would act like one of them later.

['The hawk has fallen,'] said the metallic voice in her head. ['You may now proceed to the next plan: replace Hanna Quinzel.']

Regina smiled and curtsied. 'I received your order, Your Excellency.'

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