

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Volume 3: ROYAL PAIN IN THE NECK

Chapter 211 - THE NEW SHIELD OF THE EMPIRE

‘JEANNE, I heard you were hurt recently,’ Neoma said worriedly while looking up at Jeanne, the only woman in her Papa Boss’s group of Paladins. She addressed the lady Paladin casually because Jeanne insisted to be called by her name without any honorific, and so did the other Paladins except for Sir Glenn. After all, Sir Glenn was like an uncle to her now. ‘Is it already okay for you to work now?’

‘Yes, Your Royal Highness. Madam Hammock did a good job treating my injury,’ Jeanne said with a smile. ‘Thank you for worrying about me.’

She just smiled as a response.

Right now, they were in the vast yet unused courtyard in her father’s residence. And they had an audience.

Count Sean Dankworth, her sparring partner, had already arrived and was now sleeping while standing. The count was able to remain standing thanks to Marquis Lawford Gibson who had his arm wrapped around Count Sean Dankworth’s waist.

On the other hand, Viscount Austin Morrisey, the shy nobleman, was standing next to the ‘couple.’

[Ah. I know this is bad but looking at Count Dankworth and Marquis Gibson is inspiring me to write a BL novel. Maybe Viscount Austin Morrisey could be a second male lead or something. Forgive me for my dirty mind, gentlemen.]

Anyway, she was pissed when she saw Marquis Russell Spencer there.

Plus, Marquis Vincent Lennox had also graced them with his presence.

[Lord Lennox is kind of making me feel nervous. After all, he's the one that I must impress the most. He hasn't summoned me yet but for the past year, he's been observing me closely.]

'His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Nikolai has arrived!'

Her thoughts were distracted when her Papa Boss finally arrived.

[Oh. He's accompanied by Sir Glenn and Geoffrey.]

'I didn't expect that some of the most important figures of the empire would be here to watch the Crown Prince's training,' Emperor Nikolai said in his usual condescending voice after the exchange of formal greetings earlier.

'Anyway, I'm busy so let's get this done and over with.'

Her Papa Boss, as well as every single person in the courtyard, turned to Count Sean Dankworth.

The count was still asleep and snoring a little loudly.

She wasn't offended though. Aside from the fact that she knew that Count Dankworth had some kind of disease that makes him sleepy all the time, she also finds his character interesting for some reason.

'My deepest apology, Your Majesty,' Marquis Lawford Gibson said, then he turned to Count Sean Dankworth (that was leaning against the marquis).

After that, the marquis gently patted the sleeping count's cheek. 'Lord Dankworth, wake up. His Majesty is waiting.'

[Just kiss the sleeping beauty, Marquis Gibson,] Neoma's dirty mind said.

[Gosh, these two are turning me into a sinner.]

'Sean, if you don't wake up...' Marquis Gibson said, now speaking casually to Count Dankworth. 'I will never make apple pies for you again.'

Much to Neoma's surprise, Count Sean Dankworth immediately woke up and stood straight.

But it seemed like she was the only one surprised by what happened. Well, Lewis obviously didn't care so he remained poker-faced. But Juri looked like she was used to that scene.

[Even Papa Boss looked unfazed.]

'Is it normal?' she asked, then she turned to Jeanne and Dion. 'Is it normal for Marquis Gibson and Count Dankworth to act that way?'

Dion just nodded politely.

Jeanne smiled and provided an explanation. 'Marquis Gibson and Count Dankworth have been that way ever since they were kids, Your Royal Highness.'

'Oh, I see,' she said, then she turned to the two nobles again. 'Thanks for telling me.'

[How does childhood friends to lovers BL sound?]

Count Sean Dankworth, who still looked very sleepy, bowed to the emperor. 'Greetings... to the...'

'Forget the formalities,' her Papa Boss said in an impatient voice. 'Let's begin.'

The count bowed, then he paused before he spoke again. 'Your Majesty, am I going to get punished if I accidentally hurt His Royal Highness? I mean, I was summoned to test the durability of the Crown Prince's barrier. But if it isn't durable enough for my attacks...'

Of course, her father already prepared something as a counter-measure.

Dion and Jeanne were standing behind her so they could protect her if her Dome collapsed. On the other hand, Lewis was away from her because he was the one assigned to physically strain Count Sean Dankworth to stop his attack if needed.

She understood that as a Crown Prince, they had to protect her and it had nothing to do with their faith in their ability.

Still...

[My pride is hurt a little.]

‘I won’t punish you if you accidentally hurt the Crown Prince,’ her Papa Boss said to Count Dankworth bluntly. ‘I will directly kill you if that happens, Count Sean Dankworth.’

She almost choked on her saliva when she heard that. [Papa Boss!]

Now everyone felt awkward!

Count Sean Dankworth got scared and hid behind Marquis Lawford Gibson even though the count was taller than the marquis.

‘It’s okay, Lord Dankworth,’ she said cheerfully to clean up after her Papa Boss’s mess. ‘My father only said that because he knows that my Dome won’t collapse even under your attack. His remark was a testament of how much faith he has in me and my ability.’ She turned to her father with an overly sweet smile on her face. ‘Isn’t that right, Papa?’

Her Papa Boss just avoided her gaze, then he cleared his throat. ‘As I said earlier, I’m busy,’ he said sternly, then he turned to the count. ‘Count Sean Dankworth, get ready.’ After saying that, her father turned to her. ‘Make your Dome now.’

She was quite surprised.

The fact that her father wasn't calling the Crown Prince by 'his' first name may sound distant to other people.

But Neoma actually appreciated that.

In fact, she was quite touched by her father's effort to protect her feelings. It was so different from how he treated her in the past.

[Papa Boss is trying hard not to call me by Nero's name.]

[SAINT MACARONI, I will make you proud today.]

Neoma knew that her mentor was watching her somewhere.

Saint Zavaroni was still the saint that lived in the Holy Land. The fact that His Holiness had been going to the empire just to train her was a secret. After all, the saint wasn't supposed to be 'serving' the Royal Family. The only reason that Saint Zavaroni had a friendly relationship with the de Moonasterios was because of their inherited blood from Yule.

But that didn't mean that His Holiness was the Royal Family's servant.

Thus, to avoid complaints from the devoted followers of Saint Zavaroni, her training under the saint was kept a secret.

This was also her final test as a student of His Holiness.

She remembered what Saint Zavaroni told her when her Papa Boss announced that he chose Count Sean Dankworth to test the durability of her Dome.

['Show us something interesting, Princess Neoma.']

Sarhu Dmqu jfl ovu lozmreulo gfzzauz md fii, mrhu ao jfl fgiu om jaovlofrt ovu foofhc dzmq lmqumru fl lozmre fl ovu hmpro, ovur ao qufro ovfo vuz

Cmfo frt Wfii jmpit gu daru fl juui. Tvpl, ovuw tuhatut om plu ovu Dmqu dmz oval oulo.

Summoning the Dome was easy for her.

After all, her Mana was overflowing according to the saint. All she had to do was to imagine herself and her companions inside a huge dome—

Her thoughts were interrupted when all of a sudden, the sky seemed to fall on them.

Well, to be precise, the cotton candy-looking clouds above them suddenly turned into stone and began to fall from the sky. Fortunately, the manifestation of the Dome begins with an ‘umbrella’ shaped barrier above their head. That meant they weren’t hurt even though the rock-like clouds unexpectedly poured like hard snowballs.

Count Sean Dankworth’s glowing dark brown eyes were proof that he was the one behind it.

[Cloud Solidification, right? Papa Boss told me a while ago that Count Dankworth could manipulate clouds. The count could also use clouds in many different ways.]

What a badass ability.

[Tteokbokki, I would trade you for the ability to manipulate clouds,] she teased her Soul Beast.

Her tsundere Soul Beats just gave her a loud ‘hmph!’ sound as a response.

Neoma just smirked at Tteokbokki’s response, but then, she suddenly locked gaze with Count Dankworth. ‘I was quite surprised by your determination, Lord Dankworth,’ she said with a polite smile. ‘Thank you for taking this seriously.’

‘I’m sorry but I just want to get back to sleep as soon as possible, Your Royal Highness,’ Count Dankworth said in a blunt yet sleepy voice. ‘Moreover, the enemies won’t wait for you to complete your barrier before they attack you.’

That was true.

Hence, she wasn’t mad when Count Dankworth attacked her even though her Dome wasn’t completed yet. Even Papa Boss, Lewis, and the Paladins knew that so they didn’t say or do anything to the count.

Neoma smiled and nodded, her Dome now complete. ‘Count Dankworth, you know that the best defense is a good offense, don’t you?’

‘THE LITTLE rogue is up to no good again,’ Nikolai commented while watching Neoma’s face. There was a glint of ‘evilness’ in her big, round eyes at the moment. ‘Those eyes are the eyes of a predator about to devour their prey.’

Seeing that spark in Neoma’s eyes put him at ease.

Moreover, despite the hundreds of rocks falling from the sky and hitting the Dome, his daughter’s barrier remained unbreakable. Every single person who was watching the scene before him looked impressed.

Even Marquis Vincent Lennox looked satisfied.

It was a huge feat because he knew that the leader of the Royal Faction wasn’t fond of his child. After all, Marquis Vincent Lennox was Juliet’s grandfather.

[Well, Neoma is really doing a good job right now.]

The Dome wasn’t just durable.

His daughter also managed to create a Dome that size in just a few seconds. Since Neoma's Mana was overflowing, it was easy for her to create a barrier that big and that strong. No wonder Saint Zavaroni was delighted by Neoma's progress.

[I don't want to compare but Neoma is probably better than Nichole as a shield creator.]

'Look at that little rogue,' he said while watching his daughter do a strange hand gesture. 'That child is doing something weird again.'

Glenn, standing beside him, laughed softly and nodded. 'I agree with you, Your Majesty. I hope Lord Dankworth is prepared for what's about to come his way.'

Standing on his other side, Geoffrey appeared to be oblivious despite knowing Neoma for a year now. 'What's going to happen, Your Majesty?'

'Just watch,' Nikolai said with a smirk. 'That child will definitely show us something interesting.'

[WATCH carefully, Saint Macaroni,] Neoma said while making an 'apple' using her hands. All she had to do was make a 'C' shape in each hand, then put them together. [This is a technique that I practiced secretly to surprise you.]

'Are you saying that you're going to attack, Your Royal Highness?' Count Dankworth asked. This time, he looked a little more awake than usual. 'I've never heard of a shield creator who's capable of attacking while inside their barrier before.'

'Well, now you have,' she said cheerfully, then she 'bit' the 'apple' and turned it into a 'heart.' In Korea, the trend was called an 'apple heart.' She

wanted a hand gesture for her original move so she chose that. Of course, she also came up with a name for her technique. 'Let's get it, Pudding!'

Yes, she named her new technique 'Pudding' and it would get activated as soon as she yelled that phrase.

The shape of her Dome didn't change, but its 'material' did.

A Dome was like an unbreakable glass. On the other hand, 'Pudding' was jelly-like. Its purpose was to let whatever hit it bounce and return to the attacker like a boomerang.

[Are you proud, Saint Zavaroni?]

Thus, the rock-like clouds that hit her Pudding all bounced back and were sent flying in different directions.

[Oops.]

But she didn't have to worry about it anyway.

Her Papa Boss, Lewis, and the rest of the nobles around them were more than capable of protecting themselves.

'Ah, I'm tired,' Count Sean Dankworth declared, then he fell on his knees while catching his breath. As soon as he hit the ground, the rock-like clouds around them evaporated into thin air. It vanished just like that. 'Your control over your barrier is good, Your Royal Highness,' he said in a tired voice, then he raised his head to smile lazily at her. 'Good night.'

And then, the count fell asleep.

Marquis Lawford Gibson immediately ran to Count Sean Dankworth's side.

Neoma covered her nose with her hand in fear of getting a nosebleed while watching the marquis take care of the sleeping count. [I am so going to hell for this.]

‘VERY GOOD, Princess Neoma,’ Dominic Zavaroni said to himself while watching the royal princess use a technique that he had never seen before. ‘The new shield of the empire has been born.’

Since he wasn’t allowed to be seen by other people, he had no choice but to watch Princess Neoma from afar. He hid in one of the guest rooms of His Majesty’s palace. Then, using his own shield, he hid his presence so not even the higher nobles could sense him.

He knew he wasn’t supposed to be there in the first place but he wouldn’t miss that moment for the world.

[I’m so proud of you, Princess Neoma.]

In just one year, the royal princess managed to master all of his techniques. She even came up with her own twist. As a mentor, he was very happy and satisfied with his protégée’s result.

‘Ah, I misspoke earlier. You shouldn’t become the new shield of the empire, Princess Neoma,’ Dominic Zavaroni whispered to himself, suddenly remembering the moment that Princess Nichole created the barrier around the Royal Palace in the past. The previous Princess Royal was so happy to be ‘useful’ to the empire. But in the end, the empire that she loved with her whole heart didn’t do anything to protect her. ‘Princess Neoma, please use that shield to protect yourself and only yourself.’

‘JURI, my dear daughter, please eat your lunch comfortably,’ Princess Neoma told her in a hurry. The royal princess had changed her clothes and was now back as the ‘Rara’ that she met before. ‘Lewis, be a good boy and accompany your sister while I’m away. Bye!’

Juri blinked in surprise when Princess Neoma left the dining hall so fast that Sir Glenn had to run after the royal princess.

Now, she was left alone at the dining table with Lewis Crevan standing behind her.

[I don't see the other Paladins that are supposed to guard Princess Neoma as well. And why does His Majesty's personal knight have to personally go with Her Royal Highness?]

'What's going on, Lewis?' Juri asked, confused. Then, she turned to Lewis Crevan behind her. 'Where is 'Rara' going to hurriedly?'

'Rara' is going to have lunch with him today,' Lewis said in a bitter voice. But his frown turned to some sort of a smirk right away. 'Well, she's going to say goodbye to the young chef this time.'

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