

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Volume 3: ROYAL PAIN IN THE NECK

Chapter 214 – APPA...?

‘LEWIS, can I touch your face?’ Neoma asked her son seriously. ‘Just for a few minutes.’

Lewis looked surprised by her sudden request. Then, his face turned red as he nodded slowly. ‘Okay, Princess Neoma.’

‘Thanks,’ she said, then she cupped his face between her hands. It was kind of annoying that she had to stand on her toes because of her son’s sudden growth spurt. Lewis was only twelve years old but he could already pass as a teenager. ‘Lewis, you’re not just my favorite person in this world— you’re also the most precious to me. You’re my son, my best friend, and my confidant. Obviously, I need and I want you beside me.’

His face instantly lit up. He didn’t need to talk for her to know that her words made him happy.

But she wasn’t finished yet.

‘Having said that, I don’t want a world where only you and I exist,’ she said firmly. ‘I need other people, Lewis. Sure, we can face this world head-on with just the two of us. But I don’t want us to be lonely. Especially you.’ She gently rubbed his cheeks with her thumbs. ‘Lewis, I don’t want you to be alone again.’

‘I only need you, Princess Neoma.’

‘But I can’t always be with you,’ she said truthfully. ‘That’s why I want you to learn to have a life of your own. You already befriended Hanna. That’s a

good start, Lewis. The more people we meet, the more friends you can make. Wouldn't that be better than to have a world where it's just the two of us?'

He remained pokerfaced.

But she knew her son well to know that it was his 'pouty' face.

'Lewis, I want you to have healthy relationships not just with me but with other people as well,' she said gently. 'I know that I'm special to you because I was the first person to offer you kindness. But the world is big. I'm sure that you'll meet more good people in the future. And once you do, I hope you treasure them as much as you treasure me.' She gently squeezed Lewis's cheeks before she let go. 'Do you understand, Lulu?'

Lewis's face returned to its natural blankness, then he nodded slowly. 'I understand, Princess Neoma.'

Neoma smiled at Lewis. 'Good boy.'

'GLENN, the Hazelden Kingdom just granted your request to visit their domain,' Kyle said to him as the count handed the documents to him. 'As you requested, you're going to visit Hazelden Kingdom as a private citizen and not as an envoy for His Majesty. Is that correct?'

'Yes, that's correct. Thank you, Kyle,' Glenn said as he received the documents from the count. 'Now I can finally see Princess Bridgette.'

Right now, he was in the administrative building to get the necessary travel documents that he needed. Even though he wanted to go to Hazelden Kingdom as soon as possible, he couldn't do that without permission from the Royal Family of the said kingdom. After all, he was going to visit as a guest of Princess Bridgette and not as a knight of His Majesty.

He had to follow the rules but of course, as the emperor's most trusted knight, he got to enjoy the privilege of getting his documents processed fast. Others had to wait for at least a month just to send a visitation request to the neighboring kingdoms or countries.

'I thought you were going to stay as a bachelor for the rest of your life, Glenn,' Kyle, seated behind his desk, said with a faint smile on his face. 'After all, everyone knows how loyal you are to His Majesty.'

It was common for the emperor's right-hand man or personal knight to stay a bachelor for the rest of their lives. Even he thought that he would have the same fate as his predecessors in that line of job.

'I thought I was ready to stay single forever because I couldn't imagine leaving His Majesty's side before just to get married and have my own family,' he confessed with a shy smile on his face. 'But I realized that I can still be His Majesty's right-hand man even when I'm already married. His Majesty also gave me his blessing so I made this choice.'

'I'm happy for you, Glenn,' the count said. 'I mean it.'

He was touched but since he would often bicker with Kyle, he refused to act sentimental in front of him. Thus, he teased the count instead. 'We're the same age, Kyle,' he said. 'What's stopping you from trying to find a spouse?'

'If I have the time to go on a date, I'd rather sleep,' Kyle said, then he stretched his arms. 'I'll probably think about marriage once I quit as His Majesty's secretary.'

[If His Majesty would let you quit your job, Kyle.]

But he didn't want to burst the count's bubble so instead of voicing out his thoughts, he just said his goodbye to Kyle.

Hu jfl mr val jfw mpo md ovu gpaitare jvur vu hzmlut nfovl jaov Rpom.

[Ah, right. He's probably here to get some documents regarding his enrollment to a foreign school.]

'Good day, Ruto,' he said to the young chef. 'It's me, Glenn.'

'Good day, Sir Glenn,' Ruto said, then he sighed loudly.

That surprised him.

After all, the young chef rarely expressed his emotions.

'What's wrong, Ruto?' he asked carefully. 'If you're comfortable sharing your worries with me, then I'll gladly lend you an ear.'

'She doesn't understand,' the young chef said while looking at the floor. 'It's not that I don't want to express how I feel whenever we're together.' He paused before he spoke again and this time, he sounded bitter. 'It's just that... I can't and I shouldn't.'

He scratched his cheek. 'May I know who you are talking about, Ruto?'

'Never mind,' Ruto said when he raised his head. 'You wouldn't understand even if I tell you, Sir Glenn.'

Adouz Ifware ovfo, ovu wmpre hvud gmjut frt ukhplut vaqluid.

[Was Ruto talking about Princess Neoma? As far as I know, Princess Neoma is the only girl that Ruto likes spending time with. What does he mean by he can't and shouldn't express his feelings?]

He stopped walking when he realized something.

'Ah, is it because of their age gap?' he whispered to himself. 'After all, Ruto is already thirteen years old.'

And their Princess Neoma was only nine.

[Instead of their age gap, Ruto should be more worried about 'Miss Ramsay's' father. I don't know what happened to His Majesty but he's acting overprotective of Princess Neoma these days.]

He chuckled at that thought. 'Well, it's a good thing.'

'Why are you talking to yourself, Sir Glenn?'

He turned around in surprise, then he smiled when he realized who greeted him. 'Lewis, I didn't feel your presence,' he said cheerfully. 'You've improved.'

He had an appointment with Lewis Crevan for their last lesson. Come to think of it, he was running late. The fox boy probably looked for him.

'Am I running late?' he asked Lewis. 'Sorry about that. I just retrieved some documents that I needed in the administrative building.'

Lewis Crevan just gave him a blank stare, then he sighed.

'What's wrong, Lewis?'

'She doesn't understand.'

'Huh?' he asked, confused. [Wait, I just heard that line a while ago...]

'She doesn't understand that sometimes, someone only needs one person to complete their world.'

He còcked his head at one side. 'Lewis, are you talking about 'Rara?'

The fox boy just gave him a look that said he didn't want to answer his question. 'You wouldn't understand because you're in a happy relationship, Sir Glenn.'

[I don't understand kids these days...]

Glenn froze when he realized something. 'Lewis, why are you alone?' he asked nervously. As far as he knew, Dion and Jeanne were dispatched by His Majesty to assist the Fletcher Twins in the latter's mission. Lewis was Princess Neoma's only guard for today but the fox boy was alone. 'Where is the 'Crown Prince?'

Lewis quickly averted his gaze. 'Uh...'

NEOMA was fangirling.

She knew that this Author Sola's signing event was only organized by Geoffrey for the sake of luring out Jenó Dankworth.

But it was still a real signing event!

Right now, she was the last person in the long line of people who wanted a sign from Author Sola. Even though it was short notice, around fifty ladies still showed up. Most of them were nobles dressing up as commoners.

[Like me.]

Geoffrey (disguised as the manager of Author Sola), closed the bookstore after she arrived.

[I'm so glad that I managed to protect the three volumes of Mommy Villainess from Papa Boss's 'purging.']

Her father, for some reason, became overprotective of her recently.

One of the orders of the emperor was to make sure that there was no 'indecent' book in her library. Because of that order, her servants would always check her library and bedroom for her hidden treasure. She managed to save Author Sola's book by wrapping them in a cover that said 'My Diary.'

Thus, the servants didn't dare to touch her 'diaries.'

[Oh, my turn is near!]

She got excited when she finally got to see Author Sola closer.

[Ohh... she looks mysterious!]

Author Sola had a fancy floral face mask that matched her simple yet elegant-looking peach dress. The author's face mask reminded her of the fancy face masks back in the modern world. Well, back in Korea, it was pretty normal for them to wear face masks.

[Is face mask a thing in some other parts of the empire?]

Well, that was none of her business.

Anyway, Author Sola had hair as dark as the night. Her eyes were a deep color of caramel that reminded her of C*ke.

[I miss drinking soft drinks.]

'Ah, I believe you're my youngest reader yet.'

Neoma smiled widely when Author Sola said that as soon as it was her turn to get her autograph. Gosh, she was so close to her idol. There was only a table between them after all. 'Greetings, Author Sola,' she said shyly. 'I skipped the sèxy parts of your novels,' she lied, her fingers crossed behind her back. 'Please don't think that you're a bad influence on young people. It's not like you have the power to check the age of people buying your books.'

Author Sola laughed softly, then she leaned forward to whisper. 'It's okay. I can tell that your soul doesn't belong to a child.'

Her eyes widened in shock.

‘Don’t worry, I don’t know anything else other than this isn’t your first life,’ the author assured her. ‘Why do you think I write stories with a female lead having multiple past lives?’

She gasped softly. ‘This isn’t your first life as well?’

Author Sola smiled and gently. ‘However, I’m not that special. The only unique ability I have is the ability to see if a soul is ‘old’ or ‘new.’ I don’t have the power to see their past lives. I have a creative mind though. I often wonder what kind of past life a stranger had. Thus, I ended up writing stories.’ She scratched her cheek as if she was suddenly shy. ‘My imagination runs wild though so I also ended up writing sexy scenes.’

She gave her a thumbs up. ‘And you’re so good at it. Keep that up, Author Sola.’

‘Thank you,’ the author said. ‘I’m thinking about writing wholesome books for now though.’

She clenched her tiny fists. [Papa Boss, you’ll pay for this.]

‘I don’t know if you’ve heard it but I was actually arrested and was locked up in a temple for writing ‘indecent’ books,’ Author Sola said. ‘I heard a nobleman in power asked for my arrest because his young daughter reads my novels.’

Ah, it seemed like it was a made-up story to cover the fact the emperor himself requested for the author’s arrest.

‘They gave me a chance to escape but I decided to cooperate peacefully because I know that I did nothing wrong. I don’t regret my decision,’ the author continued. ‘The guards and the priestess in the temple treated me well. I promised them that I will write a wholesome book for them to read. Thus, in the meantime, I will only write inspirational books to pay them back for

taking care of me. Young lady, would you still read my novels even if I change genre?’

[Ohh... that means her ‘wholesome mode’ is only temporary.]

She gave her favorite writer a double thumbs up. ‘I will support you forever, Author Sola.’

‘Thank you,’ the author said, then she picked up her pen and opened the first volume of Mommy Villainess. ‘What’s your name, child?’

‘It’s ‘Rara,’ she said hesitantly.

To be honest, she wanted to say ‘Neoma.’

But she promised herself before that she wouldn’t carelessly mention her name outside the palace. Especially not now that she had a stalker to deal with.

‘You have a nice name,’ her favorite writer said. ‘But I hope someday, I get to hear your real name, ‘Rara.’

Ah, Author Sola noticed that she didn’t give her real name. But thankfully, she didn’t ask why. ‘Thank you.’

‘I have a favor to ask, Rara.’

‘I’ll help if I could.’

‘It’s just a small favor. Since I decided to write for a different genre, I’m thinking of changing my name,’ Author Sola said. ‘Would you like to help me think of a new pen name for my new book?’

Neoma fell silent for a while, drowned in Author Sola’s deep caramel eyes that made her crave for soft drinks earlier. ‘Ah. I just thought of something good, Author Sola,’ she said. ‘How about ‘Cola’ for your new pen name?’

And that was how Author ‘sola_cola’ was born.

[FINALLY!]

After stepping out of the bookstore, Neoma raised her signed copies of Mommy Villainess as if she was Rafiki raising Baby Simba on a cliff.

[Ah, my precious babies. I will protect you from Papa Boss.]

And right after saying that, a running teenage boy suddenly snatched her beloved signed books. Then, the thief took a turn in a shady dark alley.

[Oh, right. This is scripted. I'm supposed to follow the 'thief' to lure out the stalker.]

Thus, she ran like crazy. Hah, she was a former child actress in her second life. She missed acting so she took it seriously.

When she arrived at the dark alley, she saw about eight young men that looked like they were up to no good. One of them had her signed books. She was supposed to be a damsel-in-distress so she acted like she was afraid.

First, she took a step backward and pretended like her body was trembling by discreetly shaking her hands.

'P-Please r-return my b-books to me,' she said in a cracked voice. Heh, this was easy for her. Most of her roles back when she was a child actress were roles of a kidnapped victim. 'A-And p-please d-don't hurt me...'

For more desired effect, she even began to shed tears on the spot.

[If Lewis saw me crying now, he would kill those poor young men.]

The hired actors laughed at her.

Then, they began to approach her as if they were predators ganging up on their poor prey.

She was getting tired of waiting for something to happen when all of a sudden, she heard gunshots. The next thing she knew, the paid actors were already on the ground while groaning in pain. She was a little relieved to see that they were only hit in the shoulders and legs.

Well, it was still bad that they got shot. She didn't consider that possibility and now, she felt awful for letting innocent people get hurt.

[Geoffrey, you...]

'A-Are you alright?'

She flinched when she heard a voice behind her.

When she turned around, she was surprised at what greeted her: a young man with familiar features.

Messy light gray hair with long bangs that almost covered his pale blue eyes. His porcelain skin was highlighted by his dark hooded cloak. He still carried a rifle just like he did the first time she saw him fighting against Juri.

She just noticed something a little different on him.

[The stalker's arms and neck were covered with bandages. Is it because of the injuries he got from fighting Juri? He recovered quite fast, huh?]

Her thoughts were distracted when suddenly, a huge shadow hovered over her.

'Child, run away!' the stalker, Jeno Dankworth, yelled in panic while running towards her with his gun pointed at something behind her. 'No!'

The next thing Neoma knew, a pair of arms were already wrapped around her waist.

Then, she was pulled into the darkness that seemed to have swallowed her.

Was she kidnapped?

[Shit, here we go again.]

‘RARA!’

Geoffrey cursed under his breath while watching Juri Wisteria and Jenno Dankworth work together. The two were trying to break the black glass cube where Princess Neoma was entrapped into. Sadly, to no avail.

Juri Wisteria was hitting the black glass cube with her sledgehammer nonstop while Jenno Dankworth was shooting it endlessly.

But the black glass cube wasn’t even scratched.

[If I use my ability here, the civilians will get hurt...]

‘Don’t even think about using your ability here, Geoffrey Kinsley.’

His eyes widened when he heard the familiar voice.

He was even more shocked to see the former Princess Nichole sitting on the building’s balcony railing when he looked up.

Of course, he had been informed before that the late Princess Royal was now the Devil.

Still, seeing it in person is a different matter.

‘Don’t worry too much,’ Princess Nichole said, her body now translucent.

‘I’m just here to say ‘hi’ to my adorable niece.’

And after saying that, the late Princess Royal vanished.

‘Shit,’ Geoffrey muttered with clenched fists. ‘His Majesty will kill me.’

‘YOUR MAJESTY!’

‘What?’ Nikolai complained when Glenn entered his office while yelling.
‘What did Neoma do this time?’

Over the years, only Neoma could make Glenn panic like that.

Come to think of it, he hadn’t seen his little rogue of a daughter yet for today.

‘I just received a report from Geoffrey, Your Majesty,’ Glenn said in a worried voice. ‘Apparently, Princess Neoma was kidnapped by Princess Nichole.’

‘What?!’ Nikolai yelled angrily, then he stood up and grabbed his suit that was draped over his chair. ‘Lead the way,’ he ordered Glenn who looked surprised by his order. Even without speaking, he could tell what his personal knight was thinking. ‘Yes, Glenn,’ he answered Glenn’s unspoken question while wearing his suit. ‘I’m going to rescue my daughter myself.’

NEOMA woke up in a familiar room.

Although her mind was still disoriented, she could tell that she might have been trapped in an illusion.

How else would she wake up in her old room in Korea if not?

‘This is not funny,’ Neoma whispered to herself. ‘If the enemy could give me this kind of illusion, then it only means they know about my second life.’

Dammit, this would be a huge problem.

But to be honest, it was nice to be back there even though it was just an illusion. She felt nostalgic while looking at her family picture on the bedside table. But seeing her appa/daddy in the picture made her anxious because she hadn’t figured out yet how he became her father in that world when her mother from her first and second life was the same person.

Even though she tells herself that she didn't have time to uncover the truth behind her birth in her second life because she was busy surviving, she knew in her heart that it wasn't the only reason why she kept on delaying her 'investigation.'

The real reason was plain and simple: she was afraid of the truth.

'Neoma...?'

She flinched when she heard the familiar voice behind her.

[No, it can't be...]

But when she slowly turned around, she was greeted by one of the people that she missed the most.

Neoma's tears rolled down her cheeks. Illusion or not, she didn't care anymore. She just wanted to see that person again after a long time.

'Appa...'

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