

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Volume 3: ROYAL PAIN IN THE NECK

Chapter 275 – I'VE MISSED YOU

‘I HAVE bad news for you, Princess Neoma.’

‘Great,’ Neoma, seated on the couch of the fancy royal carriage headed to the Red Sky Tower, said sarcastically. She was already in a bad mood because she hasn’t had breakfast yet. Plus, she was sulking because Ruto already left and therefore, he was no longer the one who was in charge of her meals. She already missed the warm and yummy food that he would make for her. ‘I eat bad news for breakfast.’

Dion Skelton, seated across from her, remained pokerfaced. He was the one who fetched her from her palace and apparently, he was the one in charge of her protection while Lewis was locked up in the tower. ‘My source informed me that some of the nobles from the Noble Faction have already finished their investigation regarding of what happened in the Death Camp,’ the Paladin reported to her. ‘Apparently, they managed to gather pieces of evidence that a demon opened a Hellgate and fetched the souls of those who perished in the camp. Fortunately, His Majesty erased the traces that point to you as the one who really opened the Hellgate.’

‘I hear a ’but,’ Dion.’

‘But those nobles are suspecting you, Your Royal Highness,’ the Paladin said. ‘They believe that you were the one who summoned the demon to aide you with the mass murder that took place in the camp. I also heard that those nobles already sent the report to His Excellency, High Priest Wellington.’ He bowed his head in apology.

‘My deepest apology for failing to block the communication between the High Priest and the Noble Faction, Princess Neoma.’

‘How bad will it turn out to be if the temple and the nobles find out that I have affinity to the Devil?’ she asked curiously. ‘To be honest, I’m thinking of just revealing that I have demonic powers in me. Can’t I just convince them that I’m only using demons like Trevor for the sake of the empire?’

The Paladin raised his head, his face still void of emotions. ‘May I share my honest thoughts, Your Royal Highness?’

‘Of course.’

‘Then, I believe that Your Royal Highness must not reveal your affinity to the Devil, and the fact that you have demonic power in you,’ he said bluntly. ‘The Astello Temple has a huge following from commoners to the royal families all over the continent, Princess Neoma. Even in our empire, the majority of our citizens have faith in the temple. I trust that Your Royal Highness is aware of the influence of the Astello Temple on our people.’

‘Uh-huh,’ she said. ‘I also remember from my Theology class that apparently, the temple gained more devotees and followers thanks to Saint Zavaroni– the most loved saint in history.’

‘That’s true,’ he said while nodding his head. ‘Thus, the disappearance of His Holiness will definitely create an uproar. If the High Priest believed the information sent to him by the Noble Faction, then they must have already deemed you guilty. During the upcoming meeting with them, I believe that His Excellency would blame Your Royal Highness for what happened to the saint. If our people hear his accusation against you, they would probably side with the High Priest out of anger.’ He paused before speaking again. ‘If His Excellency

demanded that the Crown Prince get dethroned and the public supported him, then I believe that His Majesty would find it difficult to ignore their clamor.'

She let out a frustrated sigh.

[Even in this world, the church has power over politics, huh?]

'I bet Papa Boss has already seen this coming,' she said. 'What's my father's plan?'

'I believe His Majesty has already orderd Geoffrey Kinsley to find the High Priest's weakness,' the Paladin said. 'Saint Zavaroni is an honest man. But the temple isn't free of corruption and His Majesty knows that.'

'Are you saying that the High Priest is involved with the corruption happening in the temple?'

'His Majesty is hoping that it's the case, Your Royal Highness.'

'Ah, I see.'

[Papa Boss said that he'd let me take care of the matters with the temple. But it turns out that he's secretly looking after me, huh? Is it his way of saying that he got my back?]

The feeling of being taken care of her father wasn't bad.

But it wasn't enough to sway her.

'Princess Neoma, I don't recommend revealing your affinity to the Devil,' Dion said carefully. 'The temple won't accept a Crown Prince that has any kind of relation to the Demon Clan. Especially since the de Moonasterios, descendants of Lord Yule, are from the Divine Clan. Moreover, our empire are once attacked by demons. I don't think our people have already forgotten their fear of the demons and the Devil

himself. If you lose the trust of our own citizens, it will be easier for the people that hate the Royal Family to ask for your dethronement.'

Well, there goes her *désiré* to reveal the truth.

'Thank you for your honesty, Dion,' she said after deciding to give up on her earlier plan. 'But why do I feel like you know a lot about the temple than one should be? Were you a Holy Knight or something before you became my father's Paladin?'

For the first time in a while, Dion's pokerfaced cracked a little.

The sadness in the Paladin's eyes told her that he had a heartbreaking story that was related to the temple.

[Come to think of it, I heard from Sir Glenn that Dion's eye color is fake.]

Was the reason why the Paladin was hiding his real eye color related to his seemingly connection to the temple? She was curious as hell to know Dion's backstory. But the sadness in his eyes held her back.

'You don't have to answer my question,' she said. 'I apologize for crossing my boundary, Dion.'

'Not at all, Your Royal Highness,' Dion said, then he bowed. 'My utmost gratitude for your generosity.'

Generosity?

Ah, maybe it was because she didn't pry into his personal life.

[Anyway, it's time for my big brain to work again since I don't want Nero to be dethroned because of my carelessness.]

It seemed like it would be hard to convince the High Priest that Saint Zavaroni literally followed her Aunt Nichole to hell on his own. And

she also had to prove her 'innocence,' which was nearly impossible since she was guilty as hell.

But like what Dion said, it wouldn't be wise to let her enemies know that she had affinity to the Devil.

[And the people of our empire are traumatized by the Demon Clan.]

If she couldn't take responsibility of what happened to the camp, then...

'I need a scapegoat,' she said after a deep consideration. 'I need someone who will take all the blame for the Hellgate and the traces of demonic power left in the camp.'

'That would be wise, Princess Neoma,' Dion said in an impressed tone. 'However, where could we find a person who'd qualify to be our scapegoat?'

'I have a reliable demon chingu,' Neoma said, then she smiled and gave Dion a thumbs up. 'I will convince him to become my scapegoat.'

'KIDS, your pretty mother is here,' Neoma announced as she entered the parlor room where Jeanne Audley escorted her to. It was weird that she called herself a 'mother,' and even weirder to do so because she was dressed like a boy. Nevertheless, she was free to say that because everyone in the room knew her real identity. Plus, only Dion and Jeanne were there to serve as her guards and temporary servants since the tower was emptied to protect her royal secret. 'How have you been?'

Lewis, Greko, Jasper Oppa, Jenno Dankworth, and Juri Wisteria all stood up when she arrived. Judging by the way their faces lit up, it

was safe to assume that they were all doing good. And they seemed happy to see her.

Yes, even Juri.

To be honest, she was scared to face her 'daughter' after what happened to Madam Hammock. Plus, she also felt guilty. Because even though she knew that Juri was hurt by what happened to her grandmother, she still couldn't bring herself to hate her Aunt Nichole.

'I'm relieved to see all of you...' She trailed off when all of a sudden, she found Lewis standing right in front of her. When she looked up to see his face, only then did she realize that he already towered over her despite the fact that he was only twelve years old. Gosh, it was as if it was only yesterday when they were almost the same height. 'Lewis, how have you been?' she asked her son. 'Was it hard to be separated from me for a few days?'

'It was hell,' Lewis said softly. Then, much to her shock, he leaned down and gently pressed his forehead against hers. 'I almost destroyed the tower just to hurry back to you, Princess Neoma.'

Okay, she was confused.

When did Lewis become this 'touchy'? And where did he learn to talk that way? He was supposed to be a little cinnamon roll that she loved to dote on...

[Whatever. Lewis is still Lewis.]

'You've worked hard, Lewis,' Neoma said while gently patting his back. 'I've missed you, too, my son.'

'I'm not your son, Princess Neoma.'

[Yep, he's still Lewis.]

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