

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Volume 3: ROYAL PAIN IN THE NECK

Chapter 301 - [Bonus Chapter] ESTRANGED TWINS

[First life...]

NEOMA Quinzel was quite nervous.

She gathered all the courage that she had in her to visit an infamous information guild on her own. The guild was disguised as a pub located at the commoner's area called Hyperion Street. Most of the guests tonight were men who looked like ruffians. They were also loud while talking and drinking beer as if there was no tomorrow.

It was a good thing that she went there in a disguise. As Neoma Quinzel, she already had to change her hair and eye color that would hide the fact that she was actually the hidden twin sister of the crazy Crown Prince.

But this time, she had to hide the fact that she was the daughter of Duke Rufus and Duchess Amber Quinzel. To do so, she changed her hair and eye color. She now had light brown hair and deep brown eyes.

She considered wearing a mask but she knew that it would only attract more attention, so in the end, she didn't.

'You want me to find a Black Witch for you, Miss?'

Her thoughts were interrupted when she heard the informant's question. She was instantly brought back to reality where she was on

the third floor of the pub. Unlike the noisy first floor where the guests were having a good time, the entire third floor was quiet.

To be precise, she was in the office of the head of the information guild.

The man behind the desk was wearing a butterfly-shaped mask that covered half of his face. His black hair and black eyes seemed to be dyed with magic. She could tell that those weren't his natural hair and eye color because living in disguise all her life made her an expert when it comes to dyeing magic.

But she could tell that the man's bronze skin was natural.

'Yes, I need you to find me a Black Witch,' Neoma said coldly. 'Money isn't and will never be an issue.'

The Quinzels were believed to be richer than the Royal Family. Thus, even though she suffered in the hands of her mother who treated her like Hanna Quinzel's replacement, she still enjoyed the luxury of being a wealthy higher noble.

'Oho,' the masked said, impressed. 'I like clients who don't hesitate to throw away money like it's not a big deal.'

[He's Duke Jasper Hawthorne, isn't he?]

It wasn't his skin color that gave it away, especially not his voice that was obviously altered to protect his identity. The collar around the man's neck seemed like an expensive magic device to her. She had a feeling that it was the item that changed his voice.

But she was pretty sure that this man was Duke Jasper Hawthorne.

[It's the translucent butterfly on his shoulder. I've seen Duke Hawthorne in several banquets in the past. I'm pretty sure that it's the same butterfly.]

She could tell that the translucent butterfly was using an invisibility spell to hide. But for some reason, she could see and hear Spirits. She didn't get the chance to polish that ability of hers since she was mostly locked up in the Quinzel Estate. And whenever she and Rubin Drayton were on a date, they would just usually go to the Royal Capital where there were no Spirits.

'Miss, I'll be honest,' the man, whom she believed was Duke Hawthorne, said bluntly. 'It will be hard to find a Black Witch since they've been banished from the empire a long time ago. I would usually reject this kind of request...'

She clasped her hands together. [Please don't reject my request.]

After she discovered Rubin Drayton and Regina Crowell's affair, along with their evil plan to dispose of her, she decided to ensure her survival by tying her soul with her estranged twin brother's. If she succeeded, the crazy Crown Prince would have no choice but to protect her.

And she needed to find a Black Witch for the job.

'But let's give a try,' the disguised duke said. 'I like challenging my guild's limits anyway.'

She was relieved to hear that.

After all, she was very desperate. She didn't want to lose Rubin Drayton even though he betrayed her. Moreover, she wanted to have her revenge against Regina Crowell. She wanted to achieve both while lessening her chance of dying.

‘Miss, may I know why you need a Black Witch?’ the duke asked, then he put his elbows on the table with his hands clasped together. Then, he put his chin on top. ‘I hope you’re aware that the Black Witches are treated as criminals in the empire. Since my guild’s life is on the line, I believe I have the right to know.’

‘I need to live,’ she said bluntly. It wasn’t like she needed to be specific. Even though the duke had a higher rank than hers (since he had a title while she was raised as a duke’s daughter), in this place, both of them were equal. She didn’t have to indulge him. ‘I will literally die if I don’t find a Black Witch.’ She paused when she realized why the duke must have asked about her reason for finding a Black Witch. ‘Don’t worry. I intend to use the Black Witch for myself and not to harm the empire.’

‘I’m not worried about that,’ he said casually. ‘I don’t care if the empire gets destroyed or whatnot.’

She was astonished.

[Your Grace, you’re a duke. You’re supposed to be one of the foundations of the empire. Are you sure it’s okay for you to say that?]

But that was none of her business.

‘Did I satisfy your curiosity?’ she asked instead of commenting on the duke’s vicious remark earlier. ‘Just so you know, if you don’t find me a Black Witch, I’ll die and my blood will be on your hands. Then, my Spirit will haunt you forever.’

The duke looked aghast by her declaration.

Then, the unthinkable happened: Duke Jasper Hawthorne laughed. He laughed so hard that he had to clutch his stomach with his hands.

Huh ?

Was this really the duke?

[The Duke Hawthorne I know is sophisticated and aloof. He even ignores the call of His Majesty sometimes. But the way he laughed just now doesn't fit his image.]

'Miss, you're funny.'

She frowned at that. 'I'm not trying to be funny.'

'I know, and that's why it's funnier.'

She just stared at him blankly.

Duke Hawthorne seemed to be embarrassed as he let out a fake laugh. 'I will contact you as soon as I find a Black Witch,' he said, then he handed her a brooch with a ruby. 'If this brooch breaks, please be here as soon as you can.'

She accepted the brooch and hid it immediately in the pocket of her pants. 'I understand.'

Yes, she was wearing a shirt and a pair of trousers under her hooded robe instead of a dress. Her mother, Duchess Amber Quinzel, would scold her if she found out that she went out of the estate in her equestrienne uniform. It was only her set of clothes with trousers so she had no choice but to use it.

She needed to wear pants to be able to move fast if she needed to fight. The pub was a dangerous place so she prepared that much.

'Miss, next time, at least bring someone with you,' the duke warned her lightly. 'It's dangerous for a lady like you to come to a place like this alone.'

'I can protect myself,' she said, then she put five bags full of gold coins on the table. She put a little strength in it, causing the table to

break into two. She smirked when she saw the duke's shocked face.
'I'm strong.'

Even though she wasn't acknowledged by her real father as a de Moonasterio, she still inherited the natural physical strength that members of the Royal Family were blessed with. Moreover, her adoptive father was Duke Rufus Quinzel— one of the strongest knights in the empire. She learned a thing or two from watching her father train the ducal's knights.

'Wow,' Duke Jasper Hawthorne said, then he clapped his hands.
'You're impressive, Miss.'

Neoma just frowned as a response. 'I'll pay for the broken table.'

[AM I really born unlucky?]

Neoma couldn't believe her bad luck.

[I knew that something bad will happen when I saw a black crow when I went out of the pub earlier...]

When she returned to the secluded area where the rental carriage and the coachman she hired was waiting, a disastrous scene greeted her. The rental carriage was destroyed as if something heavy was dropped on top of it that caused the crater on the ground. And the coachman was dead.

But it wasn't because of whatever accident that caused the carriage to end up that way.

'What a fucking eyesore!'

A crazy man was laughing like a lunatic while stabbing the coachman to death with a cheap-looking sword. It didn't suit the man who gave off a royal vibe.

Ah, no.

Hu jfl tudaraouiw f zmwfi.

[What is that crazy Crown Prince doing here?]

The lunatic prince dyed his hair and eyes with magic. But why did he have to choose light brown for his hair and deep brown for his eyes?

[Those are the same colors that I dyed my hair and eyes with!]

Because of the same hair and eye color that they had right now, anyone who would see them together would realize right away that they were twins.

[We... really look alike.]

She had seen the Crown Prince in the few banquets that she attended in the past. But she didn't really get the chance to properly look at him because she had a bad habit of lowering her head to hide her face. Moreover, she was always behind Rubin Drayton anyway.

But now that she had seen the lunatic prince up close, she realized that they were really twins.

[And the rumor about him being a bloodthirsty freak is true.]

Only a lunatic would laugh like that while murdering a person.

[How am I supposed to go home now? I already ran out of teleportation scrolls. And if I contact the mansion, Mother will know that I sneaked out...]

‘Who.’

She flinched when she heard the cold voice of a man behind her. The question he asked didn't sound like a question when it was supposed

to be one. It sounded like a demand— like she had to state who she was or else, she'd be dead.

'I didn't see anything,' Neoma said as quietly as she could. 'Let me go home...'

She stopped talking mid-sentence when the crazy Crown Prince turned to her.

Their eyes met.

[I hope he doesn't see my face—]

Her thoughts were interrupted when the man behind her suddenly pulled her hood down.

'Tsk,' the crazy Crown Prince, Nero de Moonasterio, clicked his tongue after staring at her face for almost a minute. He frowned when recognition crossed his eyes. 'You're still alive?'

She felt a painful squeeze in her heart, but she ignored it.

'I don't know you, sir,' she said, acting dumb. 'I didn't see anything either. Can I go home now?'

'Hah,' the Crown Prince said in disbelief, then he threw the bloody sword on the ground. 'When we were kids, you pretended that you didn't know I was being poisoned. And now you're pretending that you don't know me? Crazy bitch.'

[Excuse me? You're the crazy one here.]

But she couldn't say it because even up until now, she still felt guilty for pretending that she didn't know the Crown Prince was being poisoned in the past.

[Should I apologize? But it's already long overdue. Still...]

‘I...’ she started hesitantly when she noticed that the Crown Prince was waiting for a response from her. ‘This person I know has a similar story. She only watched while her twin brother was being poisoned.’ She instantly lowered her gaze when her twin brother frowned. ‘But in her defense, even though both she and her twin brother were neglected, at least their servants treated her brother better. She was abused and malnourished. It wasn’t an excuse but she must have lost her mind back then.’ She raised her head to see the Crown Prince looking at her with a blank look on his face. ‘She already paid the price for almost letting her twin brother die. She was thrown away, adopted into a family that suffocates her every single day, and is currently engaged with a man who cheated on her with a lowly—’ She stopped mid-sentence when she realized that she was venting now. ‘Her life is hellish. She thinks it’s enough punishment for the sin that she committed when she was a child. If her twin brother isn’t satisfied with that, she’ll kneel and beg in front of him—’

‘Shut up,’ the Crown Prince cut her off rudely. ‘You talk too much.’

She was annoyed but she didn’t want to die so she just bit her lower lip.

‘Get out of my sight,’ the lunatic prince said, then he threw something at her.

She closed her eyes thinking that she would get hurt. But after a couple of seconds passed and nothing hit her yet, she slowly opened her eyes.

[Oh, my...]

She was shocked when a very handsome man greeted her.

Handsome, but scary.

His silver hair had turned dark red not because of dyeing magic. It was blood, and it didn't seem like his own blood either. This scary man with pretty golden eyes could only be Lewis— the crazy Crown Prince's equally crazy personal knight.

'Here,' Sir Lewis said indifferently as he handed her a scroll. 'Leave.'

She immediately accepted the scroll out of fear. But she was secretly relieved when she realized that it was a teleportation scroll. And much to her surprise, the Quinzel Estate was written as the destination as if the teleportation scroll was prepared in advance.

'Why...?' She raised her head to ask the Crown Prince. But when she met Lewis's cold gaze, she lowered her head and spoke quietly.

'Thank you.'

'What the hell are you doing there, Lu?' Prince Nero complained.

'Come here and clean this mess, slow bastard.'

She raised her head to see how Sir Lewis would react with how the Crown Prince talked to him.

[Sir Lewis is so unnecessarily handsome...]

'Bye,' Sir Lewis said in a low yet gentle voice. 'Princess.'

Neoma was surprised to be addressed as a princess again after a long time. She almost forgot that she was a princess, and Sir Lewis reminding her of her status touched her deeply. But when her stupid twin brother yelled and cursed at the poor knight, she immediately ripped the scroll. 'I apologize on behalf of my twin brother's rudeness,' she whispered to the knight, then she smiled warmly at him. 'Thank you for making me remember that I'm a princess, Sir Lewis.'

‘WHAT a funny bastard,’ Nero said coldly while watching Rubin Drayton enjoy lunch with an ugly woman whose cheap dress didn’t match the fancy atmosphere of the restaurant. ‘How dare him bring a lowly noblewoman here?’

He went to a famous restaurant after his classes at the Royal Moon Academy.

As the Crown Prince of the empire, he was naturally ushered to the second floor where the VIP area was. But it wasn’t exclusive to the members of the Royal Family. The VIP area was also open to higher nobles like Rubin Drayton, the only son of Duke Drayton– the third richest family in the empire.

‘Lu.’

‘Prince.’

He let out an annoyed sigh before he turned to Lewis who stood behind him. ‘Will it kill you if you address me by my formal title? It should be ‘Your Royal Highness’ and not ‘Prince.’”

As usual, Lewis just stared at him blankly.

[This stoic bastard...]

He just let out a frustrated sigh. Then, he pointed at the two Green Archer Knights behind Rubin Drayton. That bastard was the captain of the Green Archer Knights– the private troop that served House Drayton.

‘Take care of those bastards,’ he said, then he got up with a glass of red wine in his hand. ‘I’ll deal with their captain.’

‘Okay, Prince.’

He clicked his tongue at how casual Lewis talked to him.

But he didn't have the chance to complain because he instantly disappeared by his side. The next thing he knew, Lewis was already mauling the two Green Archer Knights.

Rubin Drayton immediately stood up but not to help his knights. That son of a bitch stood up to protect the wench he was with. He even created a barrier that was sturdy enough to protect the whole restaurant from a small explosion.

Hah!

He never saw that bastard treat his fiancée that kindly.

'Oi, Drayton,' he said, then he kicked the barrier.

The bastard was shocked when his weak-ass shield was broken into pieces like it was some fragile glass.

'Y-Your Royal Highness,' Rubin Drayton greeted him in shock, then he bowed to him and said his stiff proper greetings.

The ugly woman with the cheating bastard immediately stood up and bowed to him. 'Greetings to the Little Moon of the Great Moonasterion Empire.'

'So fućking annoying,' he said while looking at the woman in disgust.

'This restaurant is supposed to be for the royal family members and the higher nobles.' He turned to Rubin who had a stiff expression on his face. 'It makes me lose my appetite when I see an eyesore who doesn't deserve to be in the same place as I do.'

Rubin Drayton flinched.

The woman beside the bastard turned red after being humiliated.

[She should be.]

The staff, the other customers, and even the owner of the restaurant could only watch and listen to the conversation. Not even the stationed guards could approach them because Lewis was preventing them from doing so. And yes, that slowpoke bastard was already done dealing with the two weak-ass Green Archer Knights.

‘This is your punishment for making me lose my appetite,’ he said, then he turned to the woman again and poured the red wine on the top of her head. ‘Don’t ever show your ugly face in front of me again.’

‘Prince Nero!’

He turned to the bastard with a smirk. ‘What?’

‘You’re really crazy,’ Rubin Drayton said, his voice full of anger.

‘How can someone like you lead the empire in the future?’

‘Worry about your future and not about the empire’s future, Rubin Drayton,’ Nero said coldly. ‘If I see you again with that wench, I’ll freeze both of you to death for making me look at your disgusting affair.’

NEOMA was shocked when she heard from the people running out of the restaurant that the crazy Crown Prince made a scene. Apparently, his victims this time were Rubin Drayton and his ‘female companion.’

[It’s Regina Crowell, isn’t it?]

She clenched her hands tight.

To be honest, she went to that restaurant to catch Rubin Drayton and Regina Crowell together. But she was consoled by the fact that the two were suffering at the hands of the crazy Crown Prince.

[Prince Nero, I don't know what Rubin Drayton did to piss you off but thank you.]

'Commander, His Royal Highness and Sir Lewis are currently having a fight with Captain Rubin Drayton and his Green Archer Knights!'

Commander?

As in the young commander of the White Lion Knights?

[What is an important person doing here?]

'Commander, what should we do?'

'Hmm... let's just let His Royal Highness beat Captain Drayton to a pulp.'

Huh?

She was curious so she turned around to see if the person who said that the crazy Crown Prince should just beat Rubin Drayton up to a pulp was really the commander of the White Lion Knights.

A tall man dressed in a fancy white and gold uniform stood out among the crowd. He had dark purple hair and deep violet eyes. His aura screamed of power, and the air around him was so dignified everyone would know right away that he was a leader of a respectable troop.

[His face is pretty average in my opinion, though...]

Not that it mattered.

'C-Commander, p-please don't say something like that!'

'It's true though,' the Commander said with a shrug, then he slowly turned in her direction. 'Captain Rubin Drayton deserves to be beaten up.'

Neoma flinched, and her heart began to thump hard and fast against her chest thinking that the commander was directly talking to her. But it was impossible, right? She thought she was only imagining things so she tore her gaze away from the commander, then she looked up at the second floor of the restaurant where the crazy Crown Prince must be.

[Prince Nero, please don't kill Rubin...]
