

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Chapter 71 - LEMME TRY TALK-NO-JUTSU

"AFTER YOU, Princess Neoma," Gina said while politely gesturing the stone pavement that the black cat man created a while ago. "Or would you rather walk behind me? I understand if you can't trust your back on me, Your Royal Highness."

"Nah, it's fine," Neoma said as she walked past the butler. "It's not that I trust you, Gin. I just have faith in my Tteokbokki."

Upon mentioning her Soul Beast, Tteokbokki released an enormous amount of bloodlust directed at Gin. It was a warning that her Soul Beast was keeping an eye on the black cat man. Usually, she would tease Tteokbokki for suddenly acting "cool." But she knew that it wasn't the right time and place to tease the donkey-sized unicorn—uhm, red dragon.

"I can see why you're confident and relaxed even if you're in an unknown territory, Princess Neoma," Gin commented later. "Aside from your naturally strong Mana, your Soul Beast is also very strong."

She just shrugged.

Gin mentioned a while ago that he had enchantment in his voice. Even though she was confident that she wasn't easy to manipulate, she didn't want to be complacent. What if his power was the kind of ability that would get stronger the more she talked to him?

Nope, not gonna happen.

Her thoughts were cut-off when she saw Rubin in the short bridge over a dry river. The young lord had his face buried in his arms placed on the railing.

"Gin, give us privacy," she ordered the black cat man. Well, she didn't really like giving orders using a commanding voice. But she wanted to establish to the devil's butler that she wasn't a mere proxy for her twin brother. "I'd like to talk to my friend alone."

"Of course, Your Royal Highness," Gin said politely. And even though she wasn't looking at him, she knew that he bowed to her. "Please just call my name when you're ready to leave. I will be opening a safe gate so that you and your friend can return to the Royal Palace safely."

She just nodded.

And then, the butler's presence disappeared.

But of course, she still had her guard up. Now that Tteokbokki had fully recovered, her Soul Beast was on high-alert.

"Rubin, running off like that was very dangerous," Neoma scolded him when she stood beside the young lord. She noticed that the dry ground below had murky puddles where fish-shaped little demons swam. Well, she was sure that those weren't real fish and since they were in hell, she assumed they were demons. "What would you do if you encountered a demon?"

"How did you know that I was back as Rubin, Your Royal Highness?"

She let out a deep sigh.

Rubin is only ten years old but it seems like he has already completely believed Regina Crowell's b*llshit. I can't believe that b*tch started to manipulate Rubin this early. No wonder this dude didn't hesitate to make me suffer when we were engaged in the past.

To be honest, she wanted to punch Rubin to knock some sense into him.

But like she said to herself a while ago, this kind of problem wouldn't be resolved with violence. This time, she had to act her (real) age and be the bigger person. She would just remind herself again and again that Rubin couldn't hurt her the way that he did in the past.

Anyway, since violence wouldn't work on Rubin, she decided to use an alternative.

Let's use the famous 'talk-no-jutsu.'

No hate or disrespect to N*ruto but it was pretty ridiculous how he could convince some of the supposedly twisted people in the series to change for the better in a matter of minutes. But she was okay with that. If she could avoid violence, she would.

If N*ruto could do it, maybe I can make it work on Rubin, too.

"You are Rubin," Neoma said firmly. "There's nobody else inside you."

Rubin raised his head and turned to her. Based on the redness of his eyes and nose, he obviously cried a while ago. Aww, he was still a child after all. "You don't believe me, do you?" he accused her in a hurt tone. "Do you think I'm crazy, Your Royal Highness?"

"No," she denied right away. "I believe that you lack confidence in yourself, Rubin. You created a persona that gives you the courage to stand up to people who hurt you. But you know what? You don't need another persona to be brave."

"I need Gavin," he said in a shaking voice. "Gavin is stronger than me. He can protect Regina. And she also thinks the same."

Ah, so it was for Regina again— the root of all evil inside poor Rubin.

"Then, doesn't it mean that Regina only likes the 'Gavin' that she created and not you?" she asked coldly. "Wake up, bruh. She doesn't like you— she likes the part of you that she could use for her own

benefit."

As expected, the young lord got angry. "Regina isn't that kind of person! She's the only person who understands me and my struggle."

"She doesn't," she said bluntly. "If she truly understands you, she will help you love yourself instead of asking you to create a stronger persona to cover up your insecurity."

He looked too shocked to respond.

"Regina doesn't genuinely like you, Rubin," she continued being savage on him. "Do you know why I can tell even if I haven't met her yet?" Well, not in this lifetime. "It's simple: how can other people like you if you hate yourself enough to create another persona that you think is "likeable?""

This time, he looked like he was about to cry.

It didn't help that Rubin had a very pretty and innocent face. She felt like she was the most horrible person in the world. But still, she didn't hold back.

"I know that it's hard to love yourself when you're surrounded by people who don't see your worth," she said, now speaking from experience. If she could turn back time, she'd say those words to her old self, too. "But that's all the more reason to try and like yourself little by little every day. The way you see yourself is more important than how other people view you, Rubin. Let's try to be more comfortable in our skin, hmm?"

Rubin didn't respond but at least, he no longer looked like he wanted to cry.

"When you wake up in the morning, face the mirror and say the things that you like about yourself."

His shoulders slumped. "I can't think of anything that I like about myself..."

"Then, I'll say the things that I like about you," she said. She was trying to see Rubin as an innocent child that needed help instead of the Rubin that hurt her in the past. "First, I like your face. You look like a flower boy."

He blushed at her praise.

Gosh, why does he have to be that pretty?

"Second, I like that you're polite," she continued. Of course, by polite, she didn't mean his rudeness as 'Gavin.' "I also like how you fulfill your noble duty by being attentive to me." Well, she knew it was only because of her "status" as the "crown prince." Still, she wanted him to know that she appreciated that. "Most of all, I like how you recognize your weakness. People who know their strength and weaknesses have potential to improve themselves. I may not agree with the method you chose to cope with your insecurity, but your desire to change is already a good step." She gently patted his shoulder. "Rubin, I hope you find a better way to make yourself stronger. I'll wait for the day that you'd stand up for yourself without relying on a persona that doesn't exist."

"C-Can I do that, Your Royal Highness?"

"That's up to you, Rubin," she said. "But I'm rooting for you."

He lowered his gaze. "My f-father is really scary though..."

"If you feel like your father is being too harsh on you and you can't protect yourself from him, then come to me," she said. Like she said, she was trying to see Rubin as a mere child and a victim of domestic abuse. It wouldn't hurt to offer a hand to a needing child. "I'll help you."

He raised his head and when he met her gaze, she noticed that his pretty pale blue eyes were beaming with joy. "R-Really, Your Royal Highness?"

"Really."

Rubin smiled bashfully at her.

Neoma was about to say something when all of a sudden, the ground shook. It was followed by the burst of a familiar Mana that she wouldn't mistake for someone else. She smiled in relief. "Lewis is here," she said, then she offered her hand to Rubin. "Let's go, Rubin."

"LEWIS!" Neoma called her son excitedly when she saw him. How could she not notice Lewis when he was surrounded with a bright silver-ish aura that lit up that dark, gloomy area? "Welcome— oh."

She was surprised when all of a sudden, Lewis was already standing in front of her while looking at her from head to toe. It was obvious that he was checking if she had injuries. When he realized that she was totally fine, she noticed his little sigh of relief...

... until Lewis's gaze landed on her hand holding Rubin's hand.

"Prince Nero," Lewis said, then he extended his hand to her.

Oh, this is new. Lewis initiating physical contact is rare.

She was about to hand him her other free hand. But when he gave her a cold look, she realized what he wanted. And so, she let go of Rubin's hand to hold Lewis's.

Lewis probably doesn't want me to adopt Rubin as my second child.

Anyway, her thoughts were cut-off when suddenly, Lewis wiped her hand with his white handkerchief. Before she could ask what was that for, her son gently pulled her beside him and then glared at the person who showed up in front of them.

"Greetings, White Lion Knight," Gin greeted Lewis. "Don't worry, I'm not here to fight. Not yet, at least."

"Get away from His Royal Highness," Lewis said coldly to the

butler. "You stink of blood and human flesh."

She let out a little gasp at that.

Even Rubin shuddered from that revelation.

I know that Gin is sketchy, but I didn't realize that it's what Tteokbokki meant when he said that Gin stinks.

Gin just smiled, ignoring Lewis's claim. Then, he turned to her. "Your Royal Highness, are you ready to return to the Royal Capital?"

"Yes," Neoma said firmly. "Return us safely to the Royal Capital or else, I'll blow up this place until the Devil loses their home."

"PRINCESS Neoma is very, very interesting," Gin said to the Devil while holding a pocket watch close to his face. The screen in the pocket watch showed the Devil's face covered with white bandage. "I understand why you want to put her on the throne instead of Prince Nero."

After sending back Her Royal Highness and her company to the Royal Palace, he went up to the highest dead tree in his territory to report to the Devil. He sat on the thin branch while swinging his feet in the air.

"I didn't manage to influence her but it's okay," he continued brightly. He wasn't expecting the Devil to give him a response because they were far from full recovery yet. After all, it wasn't easy to recuperate after literally being roasted by the Moon God himself. Anyway, he knew that the Devil was listening intently so he didn't stop giving his report. "Our second goal is a success."

He told Princess Neoma about his ability to enchant humans using his voice to distract her from the true nature of his power.

To be honest, the royal princess kept quiet after he revealed that. He

had a feeling that she sensed that talking to him was dangerous for her. It was too late when she realized that though. After spending enough time talking to her, he managed to "hear" the "voice" of her heart.

And that was exactly what he needed from her.

"Master, I found out Princess Neoma's greatest fear," Gin said cheerfully. "And I just know exactly how to use it to make her succ.u.mb to you."

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