

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Chapter 78 - STORY OF MY LIFE

"IS IT really okay to let Princess Neoma deal with the matter regarding Duke Drayton's arrest, Your Majesty?"

"It's Neoma that we're talking about here," Nikolai said without looking up at Glenn. He still had a lot of work that he needed to finish for the upcoming coronation. "I'll meet the duke once the royal princess is done talking to him."

"I'm wondering why Duke Drayton is silent," Glenn wondered aloud. "I heard from the witnesses that the duke didn't resist when Lewis apprehended him. He didn't even demand for the "crown prince" to explain why he was imprisoned."

"Duke Drayton is angry."

"Your Majesty?"

"He is angry," he said, then he looked up at his knight. "He's quiet because he's planning a grand revenge for the humiliation that the "crown prince" made him go through."

The knight suddenly looked concerned. "Then, shouldn't you deal with His Grace instead of leaving the matter to Princess Neoma, Your Majesty?"

"That was my plan. The duke is a cunning man and I thought not even Neoma could handle him," he admitted. "But Neoma declared that she's going to clean up after the mess that she created. I'd like to see how she'll get the job done."

"Aren't you overestimating Her Royal Highness, Your Majesty?" Glenn asked worriedly. "Although Princess Neoma is the cutest,

smartest, bravest, and the most charming girl in the whole empire, she's still a child."

"Neoma is also the rudest, the most sarcastic, and the most arrogant girl in the whole empire," he said bluntly. "She's not a child— she's a little devil. And why are you showering her with praises?"

He chuckled while scratching his cheek. "I lost in a bet with Princess Neoma a few years ago, Your Majesty. As punishment, I had to say that she's the cutest, smartest, bravest, and the most charming girl in the whole empire for one hundred times. From then on, the phrase was stuck in my head."

He shook his head at that stupid reasoning. "You're so gullible when it comes to Neoma."

"She's your daughter, Your Majesty," the knight said with that annoying bright smile of his. "That's more than enough reason for me to treat her well. And it's not that hard to get fond of Her Royal Highness. She's like an enigma."

"An enigma?"

He nodded. "Princess Neoma sometimes talk like—"

"Like she's not from this world?"

Glenn's face lit up. "You noticed too, Your Majesty?"

"Of course," he said seriously. "Even though the de Moonasterio children are born more mature mentally than average children, Neoma is still different."

"Aren't you curious why the royal princess is different, Your Majesty?"

"I am," he admitted. "That's why I'm keeping a close eye on Neoma."

"Do you have any idea as to why Princess Neoma is special, Your

Majesty?"

"For now, I think it has something to do with her blood as a Roseheart," Nikolai said. "If Neoma inherited the "duty" of her clan, then it will suffice as an explanation as to why she shines brightly despite being a mere Second Star."

"I hope Princess Neoma didn't inherit the duty of the Rosehearts," Glenn said with a sad smile. "I don't want our royal princess to end up like a withered rose, Your Majesty."

"AND THAT'S the story of my first life," Neoma ended her story about her first life. "I ended up getting killed by Nero because of my greediness."

Lewis looked pale after hearing her story.

She felt bad that she gave her son a huge shock by revealing her big secret to him. But to be honest, she felt relieved. At least now, she felt a little less lonely.

"It's okay if you don't believe me yet, Lewis," she told him. "I know that it's hard to believe that I was reborn into this lifetime."

"No, I believe you," Lewis said in a firm voice. "You're the only person that I trust with everything I have, Princess Neoma."

She smiled at that. "Thank you, Lewis."

He just nodded. And then, after a few seconds of silence, he spoke again. "Princess Neoma, let me see if I get it right: you were kicked out of the palace, adopted by House Quinzel where the duchess made you live like Lady Hanna Quinzel, then you got engaged with Rubin Drayton and..." His golden eyes glowed in anger, but she knew that his anger wasn't directed at her. "He cheated on you with a lower noble called Regina Crowell."

"Yep, those little b*tches cheated on me," she confirmed with a nod.

"Rubin Drayton and Regina Crowell were supposed to kill me a month after getting officially married to Rubin. They planned to make it look like an accident. During that time, they were only waiting for Regina Crowell to be officially adopted by Duchess Amber Quinzel. Unfortunately, the duchess was brainwashed by Regina Crowell to believe that Hanna's soul entered her body. The duchess also did everything to block me from sending a message to Duke Quinzel. And so, I was forced to find a way to survive."

He let out a deep sigh as if he was trying to calm down. "By seeking the help of a Black Witch called Dahlia. You tried to bind your life force with Prince Nero so that he and His Majesty would be forced to protect you. But unfortunately, Regina tipped the crown prince about your plan. And so, Prince Nero killed you before you could even find the Black Witch."

"Uh-huh," she said. "That's the story of my pitiful first life."

"What was my role in your life back then, Princess Neoma?"

"Nothing," she said with a shrug. "I don't even know if you were aware of my existence back then. The only thing I remember about you back then is you were Nero's loyal but crazy right-hand man."

His shoulders suddenly slumped in obvious disappointment. "I was stuck with the crown prince while you were suffering alone," He looked devastated all of a sudden. "I'm sorry I failed to protect you back then, Princess Neoma."

She laughed softly at her reaction. "It's okay, Lewis. We didn't meet back then for us to have a connection like we do now. I don't blame you for failing to protect me."

He still looked like he hated himself. "But if Rubin Drayton hurt you that way in the past, why are you still kind to him?" he asked, then he scowled. "You should have let him get beaten to death by his father, Princess Neoma. He doesn't deserve your mercy."

"I know, right?" she agreed with an awkward life. "I told myself that I shouldn't get involved in Rubin's personal life. But I can't just sit

and watch a child get beaten up like that. He's not the man who hurt me in the past. In this lifetime, he's just a poor abused boy."

"But what if fate pushes Rubin Drayton to be your fiancé again in this lifetime, Princess Neoma?" he insisted. "I'm sure he'd do the same thing he did back in your first life."

"Then, should I also expect you to abandon me for Nero once he wakes up because it was your fate to be his loyal knight in the past?"

He didn't have a retort to that.

She smiled at him as consolation. "Lewis, I am only helping an abused child because my conscience will not let me sleep at night if I turn a blind eye to that matter. But I assure you, I won't fall in love with Rubin Drayton in this lifetime. I have already changed my supposed fate and I intend to continue doing so." She stood up and stretched her arms. "Don't worry about it too much, Lewis. I have learned a lot of things from my second life."

"Your second life?" Lewis asked when he stood up. "You had a second life, Princess Neoma?"

"Yeah. I was born in a modern world in my second life. I'll tell you about it some other time," Neoma said as she began walking out of the pavilion. "For now, I have to meet Duke Drayton first."

"LORD DRAYTON, you were surprised, weren't you?" Neoma asked the duke with a (fake) apologetic smile. After freeing the duke from jail, she brought him to the tearoom of her palace. "First of all, I'd like to apologize for getting you arrested, Your Grace."

Duke Drayton's face remained blank. He looked calm but she could clearly see in his eyes that he was seething. "May I know the reason for my arrest, Your Royal Highness?"

"Your "official" offense is the fact that you gave commands to my servants in my very own palace while I was unconscious," she said,

then she put her teacup down on the table. "Not even my Papa, the emperor, does that without my permission. Here in Blanco Palace, my power is absolute. If I let you go unpunished, I'm afraid that my servants will forget who their master is."

She would like to thank the heavens for her wit.

And her mother, of course. She read in a book in her second life that a child's intelligence was inherited from their mother.

I just know that my good genes came from my mommy and not my Papa Boss.

"That's... acceptable," Duke Drayton said, the anger on his face starting to melt away. "I acknowledge that it was wrong of me to order your servants around, Your Royal Highness. But don't you think that getting me arrested is a little excessive?"

"I had to put a good show in front of Rubin, Your Grace," she lied. Yes, she had come up with another lie. After all, the duke spoke the truth when he said that getting him arrested for a small offense was a bit extreme. In the empire, people with a high status like Duke Drayton couldn't be easily arrested or put in a trial without solid evidence of a grave crime. "I wanted Rubin to see me as an ally. As of now, he's still aloof. I thought that if I take his side, he'd realize that I'm a friend that he can trust."

The duke raised a brow at that. "Is there a reason why you want to get my son to open up to you, Your Royal Highness?"

"What's wrong with befriending the son of House Drayton?" she asked with her usual business smile. If she could lie to Emperor Nikola's face, then she could do that to anyone else. "My coronation is already next month, Your Grace. It's my debut in high society. I want to show off my friends by then."

He let out a small smile as if he was satisfied with her reasoning. "Are you saying that you need my son, Your Royal Highness?"

"No, it's the other way around," she said with a bigger smile this

time, making the duke go rigid once again. "Rubin is the heir apparent of House Drayton. But his reputation as a frail boy is too widely spread that everyone doubts if he truly deserves to lead your family in the future. But if Rubin, the apparently meek heir of House Drayton, shows up beside the newly crowned prince, don't you think that other people's opinion of him will change?"

"What will you gain from that, Your Royal Highness?"

"We will have a mutual benefit from my friendship with Rubin," she said. "You know that other higher nobles look down on me because of my mother, don't you? I need to have good friends that will also serve as strong allies to me. But of course..." She sipped her tea before she continued. "Rubin isn't the only option that I have for a friend, Your Grace. I am simply offering a friendship to your family because your son was almost engaged to my twin sister."

She had to say that Rubin wasn't the only choice that she had so that Duke Drayton wouldn't think that she needed his son more than Rubin needed her. After all, she had to have the upperhand in that conversation.

And yes, even choosing your friends in this empire is politics.

"I don't mean to be rude but may I know if there's a better candidate other than my son to be your friend and ally, Your Royal Highness?" he asked. Of course, his pride as a Drayton wouldn't bend easily. "I heard that you are in good terms with the daughter of House Quinzal. But although the Quinzals are arguably equal to our family, having your cousin stand beside you during your coronation wouldn't be that impressive. After all, she's your family so it's only natural for the daughter of House Quinzal to be your female companion."

Well, that was true and she already expected that kind of retort.

Thankfully, she had already cleared her mind a while ago. Plus, she wouldn't be having that kind of conversation with the duke if she wasn't prepared.

"Lord Jasper Hawthorne."

Duke Drayton's eyes widened in shock. "Lord Hawthorne is the youngest duke in the empire. But he's also known as the most elusive noble of all, Your Royal Highness. Don't tell me..."

Neoma smiled confidently although she had never had any kind of connection to Jasper Hawthorne— now and then. "Between Rubin and Lord Hawthorne, I guess you already know who'd be a better ally to me, Duke Drayton."

"LORD HAWTHORNE officially inherited his father's title when he was only ten years old. He was that young when he lost both of his parents," Neoma said while walking back to the pond with Lewis half a step behind her. "But even though he was only that young back then, he was still able to protect his title from his greedy relatives. He is known as a genius after all. But he's also known for being elusive. I heard he hates the high society. So for the past three years since he became a duke, he still hasn't gone out of his estate to mingle with his fellow nobles."

"Is he the noble that you mentioned a while ago, Princess Neoma?" Lewis asked. "The one that created the law that will protect the children from abuse?"

"Yes," she confirmed with a nod. She remembered Duke Hawthorne because of his achievements despite his young age. "During my first life, when I was fifteen, Papa Boss signed the law that Lord Hawthorne proposed. But that would be seven years from now. That's why I'm not sure if my plan will work." In this lifetime, Duke Hawthorne was only thirteen years old. "But despite that, I still intend to reach out to him." She stopped walking when she reached the pavilion, then she turned around to face her son. "You'll help me, don't you?"

"Of course, Princess Neoma."

She smiled at Lewis's quick and firm answer. "Thank you, Lewis."

He just looked at her blankly.

And then, much to her surprise, he drew his sword from the sheath.

She wasn't threatened because she knew that Lewis could never hurt her. Instead, she just admired his beautiful sword. The blade was sharp and the symbol of the White Lion Knights was engraved in it. Plus, the hilt of the sword was white with gold ornaments.

"Your Royal Highness," Lewis said seriously, then he got down on one knee while ramming the blade of the sword into the floor. Then, he bowed his head low. "My loyalty doesn't lie with the throne or Prince Nero. I swear on my life that the only master I will serve is you." He raised his head and looked at her straight in the eye. His golden orbs were glowing. But this time, they were glowing because of something akin to admiration. "From this moment on, I, Lewis Crevan of the Silver Fox Clan, will only be Princess Neoma de Moonasterio's sword and shield."

Neoma covered her mouth with her hands when she gasped in surprise. That was the knight's oath!

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