

## Royal Contract 78

### Chapter 78 - Private Conversation

They traveled almost an hour from the airport to the massive gates of the palace. She could not take her eyes away from the scenery they just passed through along the way.

Unlike the busy streets of New York, the outskirts of their city were quiet and free from traffic. Then, the majestic view of the countryside was quite breathtaking. She could almost smell the fresh air from the inside of a fully air-conditioned car.

It was very refreshing to see nature after living in the city for so long. She had wanted to take some long vacation before, but law school, then internship, eventually landing a job prevented her from doing so. She suddenly missed the times that her family went on vacations when she was still young.

"How do you like where I grew up?" Alex asked her, observing the fascination in her eyes.

Many had been captivated by the beauty of this place. Alex also did once find himself entranced by what the land offered. But he eventually outgrew it. He suddenly wanted more that this place was not able to provide.

"You have a lovely place." She admitted as she looked at the bright blue sky, a few fluffy clouds, imposing mountains that served as the backdrop of the large trees around them.

"It had been a nice place to grow up, but eventually, its charms lost their meaning to me. Then, all I wanted to do was escape." He was not sure why he was admitting that to her.

But telling her something about him would surely help them gain some trust. It could help them get along more during the time they were together.

Before she could respond to his revelation, their convoy slowed down in front of the massive gates that enclosed the palace. They proceeded on the long driveway until they stopped in front of the front side of the enormous structure.

"Welcome to my home." He still considered this his home because this place was where he had grown up and where his ancestors had built their family.

He could not see himself living in this part of the world anymore as he now considered New York his other home.

"This is relatively different compared to what I have imagined." She started laughing at what she thought of earlier.

"What were you expecting to see?" He was curious about what she was thinking. Smiling at her as he found her laugh intoxicating.

"Honestly, I was thinking of the kind of palace that had high towers and dungeons underneath its basements." She tried to explain.

She thought she would see an old castle with massive iron chains that pulled out a wooden draw bridge that protected the place from intruders. Water would be surrounding the entire perimeter to protect it from people who wished to invade its walls.

"Well, my ancestors used to live in such structures, but with modernization, we too upgraded our lifestyle. But I could show you around the old castles that had towers and dungeons in them." He offered to show her around one of these days.

"I would love that. I can use some adventure in my life." She informed him that she was looking forward to a few days of exploration in his country.

"Then, make sure that you are ready for some heavy walking. Because there are so many things that I would like to show you."

He promised her.

"I am looking forward to it." She answered him as excitement went through her, forgetting temporarily the dilemma they were about to face.

"Are you ready?" He asked, preparing her to meet his parents. "Just relax and take a deep breath." He told her. However, it would seem that she did not need his help as she looked confident and ready to meet his parents.

He saw his parents already waiting for them. So, he helped her out of the car and guided her towards them.

"Mom and Dad, I want you to meet Daniella Hamilton." He presented her to his parents as soon as they were standing in front of them. "Dani, these are my parents, Duke Frederick and Duchess Katherine."

"It is a pleasure to meet you, Your highness." She curtsied at the duke, and then, she also acknowledged the duchess with another bow.

She was not sure if she made the correct bow or said the right words. All she could think about was the start of their charade.

She also wondered if her parents had already arrived in the palace. The last thing she heard from them was during lunch yesterday. That was when her father called to offer her to fly with them. But she refused since she already committed to Alex about their flight itinerary.

"It is our pleasure to meet you, Daniella." The duke told her as he placed a kiss on her knuckles. "But call us Fred and Katherine. Your highness is too formal. Besides, we are about to become family soon anyway."

Both Alex and Dani were not shocked anymore about his statement. They both knew that this was what his parents were expecting when he brought her home with him today.

The birthday party was just a formality to introduce them to the world as a couple. Everybody concerned already knew that they were about to get engaged formally in front of everyone, their family and friends.

"Then, you can also call me Dani." She offered as they gave her a friendly smile.

"You both remember, Marcus." Alex reminded them about his bestfriend, who they met a long time ago. "And his girlfriend, Jacky." Marcus would have to settle with his introduction since he had no time to explain what kind of complicated relationship they had.

The two could not complain about the introduction, not in front of other people, especially not in the presence of his parents.

"It was nice to see you again, Marcus, and nice to meet you, Jacky." Both his mother and father welcomed their guests with a wide smile.

"Shall we proceed inside?" The duke asked them to follow him to his study where they could have a more private conversation.