

Royal Secret: I'm A Princess!

Chapter 42 - QUEEN OF PROVOCATION

[THE first rule for kids to be liked by a.d.u.l.ts is to be polite.]

As a former child star during her second life, that was one of the things that Neoma learned. Thanks to that, she was able to charm a.d.u.l.ts and children alike. If she was able to convince 9,999,999 million people to follow her on her social media platform, using her charisma to a duke shouldn't be that hard.

"Greetings, Lord Sloane," Neoma greeted the duke politely. "I apologize for the commotion that you unfortunately witnessed."

Sir Glenn, Byron, and Harry all bowed to Duke Sloane as a greeting.

On the other hand, she had to discreetly nudge Lewis before he bowed his head.

[Gosh, my son can sometimes be a handful.]

"I'm glad that I ran into you today, Your Royal Highness," Duke Sloane said but his eyes were fixed on Lewis. "I see that you're playing with your friends." He finally turned to her again. "But can I have a few minutes of your time, Your Royal Highness?"

"I think you've misunderstood something, Your Grace," she said with a smile. "We're not playing around. We are members of the Book Reading Club that I organized and we seriously discuss books during our time."

[Well, discussing anime and comic series is serious for weeps.]

"I apologize if my careless words offended you, Your Royal Highness," the duke said in a very casual manner that obviously lacked sincerity.

[The second rule for kids to be liked by a.d.u.l.ts is to be humble.]

"It's fine as long as you understand, Your Grace," she said, then she turned to her companions. "Brother Byron, Brother Harry, please go back to our library without me." When the two boys nodded, she smiled and turned to Lewis. "Please escort the young lords, Lewis."

As expected, Lewis had a look of protest on his face.

"Lewis," she said sternly.

Lewis bowed to her, then he awkwardly escorted Byron and Harry back to the library.

She turned to Sir Glenn to tell him to leave but his smile told her that there was no way he'd leave her alone with the duke.

[Fine.]

She faced the duke with a bright smile. "Your Grace, would you like to have tea with me?"

"No," Duke Sloane said with a big, arrogant smirk. "But I'd like to talk with you in private, Your Royal Highness."

[What a rude f*ckface.]

But she was glad that the duke chose his own "death."

[Papa Boss is probably aware of this so let me teach you a lesson today, Duke Sloane— my true character comes out when I'm alone with my target.]

Neoma let out a soft laugh while thinking of different ways to "kill" the arrogant duke. "As you wish, Your Grace."

NEOMA brought Duke Sloane in the grand pavilion in the middle of a pond. It was located just across the Sapphire Palace aka Nero's royal library.

And it was the perfect location for her plan.

[I heard that the pond is magical. It appears to be shallow, but it's actually deep. And the fish living in her actually eat human flesh. Kind of like piranhas.]

Gosh, sometimes even her was surprised at how creative she was.

[I'm glad Sir Glenn didn't insist to stay near us.]

Instead, the knight was guarding in the entrance of the pavilion. It was far enough for him to not hear her conversation with the duke, but she was certain Sir Glenn could close the distance easily if something bad happened to her.

[Oh, let me correct myself.]

When something bad happened to her would be more correct.

[Tteokbokki, do you hear me?] Neoma called her Soul Beast in her mind. [If you don't answer in five seconds, I'll break your horn and turn you into a donkey.]

[How violent!] Tteokbokki complained in her mind. [What do you need now, thug princess?]

[Be on stand-by and save me when you need to], she told him.
[That's all. Bye.]

And then, she cut off the link in her mind connecting to her Soul Beast.

"Prince Nero, did you send the fox boy away on purpose?" Duke Sloane asked while he leaned against the lion statue in the middle of

the pavilion. "Why do I have a feeling that you already know what I'm here for?"

["Prince Nero," huh?]

It was a casual way to call her (or Nero, for that matter). She allowed her closest servants to call her that way. But the duke was practically a stranger to her so she was offended (for Nero).

"Of course," Neoma said, completely dropping the formalities. The sudden change in her tone seemed to surprise the duke. She couldn't help but smirk at his reaction. "Oh, I thought we're dropping the formalities, Your Grace. After all, you've been talking down to me from the very beginning."

The duke laughed after he gained his composure. "You're really His Majesty's son."

"I'll take that as a compliment," she said. After all, she had a deal with her Papa Boss that they would make the people around them believe that they were close. "Anyway, to answer your doubts, yes— I heard that you want to take Lewis away from me, Your Grace."

"I'm only taking back what's rightfully mine, Your Royal Highness."

"How did Lewis and the Silver Fox Clan belong to House Sloane?"

"Ah, you didn't know," the duke said with a smirk. "When the previous emperor— your grandfather— chose my sister to be the then-crown prince's betrothed, he promised my family that he'd give us the Silver Fox Clan as House Sloane's private army. But unfortunately, when the previous emperor got a taste of how a Silver Fox can make a human stronger, he lost his mind. Still, the royal family must keep their words. That's why when I heard that there's a survivor of the Silver Fox Clan, I came here to ask His Majesty to hand over the fox boy to my family." He leaned forward to meet her eye level. "I heard that you're smart, Prince Nero. I'm sure you know what I'm talking about."

"I understand what you're saying, Your Grace," she said with a

bright smile. "But so what?"

The duke's arrogant smile finally vanished. "Excuse me?"

"The previous emperor and the late empress..." It was her turn to give the duke her own arrogant smile. "They're both dead, aren't they?"

Duke Sloane looked so shocked by her words that he subconsciously stood straight and moved a step backwards.

"Why are you using dead people to make yourself relevant again?" she continued in the most mocking tone that a five-year old child could muster. "So what if the previous emperor promised to hand over the Silver Fox Clan to your family? The late empress is no longer here so that promise is void now." She clicked her tongue while shaking her head. "Stop using your sister and let her rest in peace, Duke Sloane."

"Prince Nero!" the duke yelled angrily.

From the corner of her eye, she saw Sir Glenn entering the pavilion. She raised her hand to stop the knight. Thankfully, he followed her silent order.

[I got this, Sir Glenn.]

"Don't be too arrogant," the duke snarled.

[Gosh, the f*ckface looks very angry.]

"You're just the son of a lowly mistress," Duke Sloane said with a bitter smirk. "You don't deserve to be the empire's crown prince."

"Well, blame your sister for not fulfilling her royal duty as the empress," she said coldly. As a woman, it hurt her to say these words but she had to act like a calloused crown prince in that s.e.xist society. "The former empress failed to give the emperor a royal heir. Had she given birth to a prince when she was still alive, then a mistress's son like me couldn't have been placed in this position."

Nero wasn't the official crown prince yet but whatever. "Ah, I should thank you the late empress, shouldn't I? If it wasn't for her failure, I wouldn't have been His Majesty's only heir."

As expected, the duke exploded in anger.

When he screamed, he also released a very violent aura that broke the pillars and the railings of the pavilion...

... plus, it sent her flying.

She could have protected herself using Tteokbokki's power. But she didn't. Instead, she allowed herself to be pushed by the duke's violent aura until she fell in the pond.

Gosh, the pond was truly magical.

She felt a sinister force pull her deeper in the water while several strange fish started to feast on her flesh. Since she already expected that, she didn't panic. Instead, she held her breath and called her Soul Beast.

[Tteokbokki!]

Her Soul Beast appeared in the form of a small red dragon this time. Tteokbokki's roar was enough to push the strange fish away from her. But the dark force pulling him in the depths of the pond didn't stop.

Tteokbokki coiled his dragon tail around her small waist and tried to pull her up. But the force was stronger. This time, the Soul Beast was being pulled down with her. She tried to move her arms to swim but to no avail.

Neoma couldn't hold her breath any longer.

Then, she started to drown.

Just when she thought she was going to lose consciousness, she saw a giant black tortoise swimming towards her. The black serpent riding on the back of the tortoise separated itself from the turtle.

Then, the snake wrapped itself around her and pulled her up until she was clinging to the back of the black tortoise.

Obviously, they were ordinary reptiles.

Knowing that she was already safe, she asked Tteokbokki to return to her soul so his weight wouldn't be an additional burden to the Black Tortoise.

Neoma wouldn't lie— she felt relieved. [Ah, they must be his Soul Beasts.]

NEOMA caught her breath as soon as she came back up to the water's surface, thanks to the Black Tortoise and the black serpent that saved her from drowning. Her breath was just starting to return to normal when she suddenly found herself floating in the air.

She stopped panicking when she saw her Papa Boss looking up at her with a raised brow.

[He's really here.]

Much to her shock, she was dropped in Emperor Nikolai's waiting arms.

She didn't have the chance to react because she realized that they were surrounded by several royal knights. When she turned to the pavilion, she was surprised to see Duke Sloane being apprehended by Sir Glenn and two more royal knights.

By that, she meant Sir Glenn and the others were pointing their swords at the duke who seemed to be frozen in his place. Duke Sloane probably knew that if he moved an inch, Sir Glenn wouldn't hesitate to attack him.

[Heh.]

She had to bite her lower lip to stop herself from laughing.

"Duke Sloane, you're under arrest for trying to kill the royal prince," Emperor Nikolai said in a cold voice. But even though his voice sounded like his usual sc*mbag self, she could clearly see the glint of "evil joy" in his eyes. "From now on, you're banned from stepping foot inside the royal palace."

Neoma couldn't hide her smirk when she met the duke's glare.

[You're dead, Duke Sloane.]

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