



86 The Sleeping Princess (Ch.86)

The sun had slowly begun its descent beyond the horizon and in a few hours, it would set and the night would come to take its place. 1

The forest of the unclaimed lands was cast in the hues of the sun rays and the sounds of life could be heard, a distant growl echoed through the quiet forest ever so often and squirrels scampered about in search of nuts.

The unclaimed lands were the borders that marked the division of territories and these parts of the unclaimed lands were especially vast and far reaching, stretching beyond the border of the Eclipse Domain.

In a clearing right beside a quietly flowing stream, a party of five was seated at different points, four of these were muscular built men layered in different styles of leather clothing and the fifth was a female, sound asleep.

The party was originally made up of seven, but two out of them stood guard at a short distance away from the rest.

"It is already past noon and we have travelled



beyond the entire Eclipse Domain, how long will the Eclipse Princess sleep for?" Kirgan asked in a low whisper as he wiped his short sword with a rag.

There was a baffled expression on his face as he passed a glance over at Lord Xenon who sat leaned against a tree, detached from everyone else with the Eclipse Princess asleep in his lap.

"Perhaps she is unconscious from terror, it cannot be easy to be faced with Lord Xenon." Noel, another dragon shifter replied with a shrug, ensuring to speak in a low tone to avoid incurring Xenon's wrath. 1

"Even so, it is over half a day already, if she does not awaken soon...we cannot continue traveling in this form." Kirgan murmured before passing a glance to a brooding Xenon again.

But of course, Lord Xenon the Black Scaled was always brooding and so this was not much of a surprise to the dragon shifters,

What was surprising was the sight of the small form of the golden haired princess curled up and sound asleep in his lap whilst he just sat stiffly as though he had forgotten how to move. 3

For the past half a day of their trip, Xenon had carried the Eclipse Princess, not handing her to



anyone else for even a moment and despite the great distance they had travelled,

And the discomfort of being cradled in Xenon's arms, the Eclipse Princess was still fast asleep... Xenon had adjusted her position from dangling over his shoulder halfway through the trip and cradled her close to himself for the rest of the way.

And through all these changes and movement, the Eclipse Princess had slept soundly through it all, not even twitching for a moment as though she had been knocked unconscious.

The Eclipse Princess sleeping like one who was dead was already astonishing enough to the dragon shifters,

However what was even more astonishing was the sight of Xenon the Black Scaled, the most feared dragon shifter cuddling a woman with such tender care, it was a sight none of the dragon shifters had ever expected they would witness in all their existence. 2

There were a thousand ways to seek certain death when faced with Xenon, however the surest ways were getting too close to him or touching him.

It was one thing for a male but even more so a



female, Xenon was repulsed by the mere sight of the fairer gender and would not even tolerate the presence of a woman around him without tossing her across the room, 2

Yet here he was, seated with his usual blank expression, staring straight ahead and in a daze like he always was, yet his hand rested protectively around the slumbering Eclipse Princess, an action he did unconsciously. 1

Just how many times had they offered to help carry the Eclipse Princess in his stead but all they had received was a deadly glare in return if they were not completely ignored.

Now, no one dared comment on it for fear of incurring Xenon's wrath, they could only be astonished in their hearts as they sat quietly.

Meanwhile, King Jian who stood off to the side, also away from the rest of the party. He was leaned against a tree with his eyes closed in meditation as he often was when he did not wish to speak or be disturbed.

It had been over an hour since he had stood there and it was already time for the party to resume their journey after a three hour rest stop and King Jian knew it too.

His eyes fluttered open as he pushed off the



tree and headed over to Xenon with slow strides.

Usually, whoever wished to give a report to Lord Xenon had to keep a great distance away from him and even then, if he did not wish to hear it out, he would respond with a brutal attack.

However King Jian was the only exception who could so casually walk all the way over to Xenon without triggering his wrath.

"We must continue our trip in dragon form, rouse your price." King Jian said to Xenon. 2

Xenon grunted beneath his breath and stared down at the Eclipse Princess before his gaze moved back to King Jian and he shook his head.

There was a tacit understanding between King Jian and Xenon and so from Xenon's look, King Jian could already understand his thoughts.

"Very well." King Jian said as he crouched down and reached a hand out, intending to rouse the Eclipse Princess however just as his hand moved closer, a hand shot up to grasp his wrist and the eyes of the Eclipse Princess snapped open.



Neveah's senses alerted her to a foreign presence and her hand shot up on instinct to grasp the hand approaching her and her eyes snapped open. 1

Neveah immediately took notice of the familiar mismatched orbs of the dragon king and her eyes widened slightly as she immediately let go of his hands and made to jump to her feet but was pulled right back down by a hand wrapping securely around her waist.

Only then did Neveah take note of the fact that she was seated in someone's arms and that scent of ash and embers that was strange yet oddly pleasant made it clear to Neveah who that someone is.

Caught between the Dragon King who just stared down at her with a blank expression and the Black Scaled Dragon Shifter whose low, warning growl resounded right in her ears, Neveah felt her heart stop beating completely as she froze up. 1

Neveah had awakened in many worrisome situations across two lifetimes, was it that one time she had awakened in the depths of a lake when Alpha Queen Vilma had tried to drown her after drugging her to sleep? 1



Or was it when she had awakened to realize she had been hung from the roof by Alessio with her head mere inches away from a coal pot with red hot coal? 4

There were many of such events to recount, but Neveah could swear she had never been more terrified than she was in this moment.

And so Neveah just remained frozen there, unable to move a inch and not even daring to, even her breath had cut short all on it's own and she just stared as though she had been petrified.

It took a short moment, but King Jian broke the haze first as he rose up to his feet and out of Neveah's line of sight.

"She lives... good. Come, Xenon...we leave at once." King Jian murmured in a blank tone before he turned and strode away. 2

The Black Scaled Dragon who Neveah only realized at this point was called Xenon rose to his feet, lifting Neveah along with him.

"I can walk by myself." Neveah said through gritted teeth but was completely ignored by Xenon who trailed after King Jian.

"Can you at least tell me where I am?" Neveah



asked again as she glanced around her, again she was ignored and she did not exactly blame Xenon since she knew he could hardly speak words.

"The outskirts of the Eclipse Domain. You have been asleep for almost a day." A voice Neveah did not recognize said from behind Xenon and Neveah raised a brow as the words she had just heard sent her to silence.

The outskirts of the Eclipse Domain, he said. Just like that, she was out of the Eclipse Domain she had been dying to leave all her life... just like that she had finally broken away from the shackles of the Eclipse royals.

Just like that, she had left her father's grasp and the suffocating walls of the Eclipse Palace without having to plot anything by herself.

Just like that, all her carefully planned efforts, all her hopes that she was not even certain she could achieve...in the blink of an eye, she was out here and the Eclipse Palace...no, the Eclipse Domain itself was far behind her.

For the first time in so long, regardless of the situation she was currently in...a genuine smile stretched across Neveah's lips. 1

