

Too Lazy to be a Villainess

Chapter 13

Papa held me securely in his arms, his grip firm yet gentle, as my eyes sparkled with uncontainable excitement. GIFTS! Oh, glorious, shiny, extravagant gifts! And we all know—no matter who we are, where we come from, or how young we might be—everyone loves gifts.

And since I was an Imperial Princess, I could only imagine the treasures that awaited me.

I wiggled eagerly in Papa's arms, my eyes sparkling with anticipation. Come on, hurry up! I was ready to be showered in riches!

Theon, ever the dramatic announcer, raised his hand with a flourish. "The gifting ceremony shall commence!"

The nobles and officials, lined up like an army of peacocks, straightened their backs. Servants rushed forward, presenting lavishly adorned boxes and velvet-draped trays.

Oh, it will take forever.

But I grinned. Yes, yes, bring me my riches!

The grand hall buzzed with anticipation, the air thick with reverence and awe as the first noble stepped forward. He bowed so low I genuinely feared he might snap in half.

"I greet Your Majesty and Your Highness," he spoke with utmost reverence. "It is my greatest honor to present this humble gift to the Imperial Princess."

At his signal, a servant stepped forward, lifting the lid of an exquisite velvet box with the utmost care. My tiny eyes widened in fascination. Nestled inside was a golden rattle, encrusted with tiny rubies that sparkled under the grand chandeliers.

Oh. That's fancy. I definitely want that.

Without hesitation, I reached forward, my tiny fingers wiggled towards the beautiful, glittering object. What else was I supposed to do? It was shiny! I must have it!

Papa, ever the all-powerful Emperor, didn't even need to say a word. With a mere flick of his hand, a servant immediately stepped forward, bowing deeply before presenting the golden rattle to me with both hands—like it was some kind of sacred treasure.

I grabbed it instantly, shaking it with pure delight. Mine.

The moment my fingers wrapped around the rattle, the entire court collectively gasped.

"Look! The princess has accepted it!" someone whispered in awe.

"Her Highness has chosen her first gift!"

"How wise! How refined!"

...Wait. What?

I blinked, staring at the crowd with mild disbelief. Excuse me? I agree it's beautiful, but I just grabbed a shiny thing! Let's not overanalyse this, people!

Papa, however, merely smiled, the expression soft and—dare I say—pleased. "It seems my daughter has taken a liking to your gift."

The noble trembled with joy, his face almost glowing with pride. "I-I am honored beyond words, Your Majesty!"

Before I could process the sheer level of dramatic reactions happening around me, another noble stepped forward. I wiggled excitedly, eager to see what awaited me next.

This time, the noble carried an even grander box, opening it with a flourish. My tiny jaw nearly dropped.

Inside, lying atop luxurious silk, was a tiny jeweled dagger.

What?! Excuse me?! A dagger?!

I gawked at the blade, its hilt embedded with gleaming emeralds, its craftsmanship flawless and intricate.

"Her Highness must have a weapon fit for a ruler!" the noble declared proudly, as if bestowing upon me the most obvious and necessary item for a three-month-old baby.

Slowly—very slowly—I turned my head towards Papa, my crimson eyes silently questioning his sanity.

Papa. Is this normal?! Why are they giving a three-month-old a dagger?!

Papa simply hummed, his expression utterly unfazed, as if this were the most natural thing in the world. "She may not need it now, but one day she will."

One day?!

Papa, I can barely hold my own head up sometimes!

And yet, the entire court nodded in agreement, murmuring their approval.

"Such foresight! His Majesty has thought of everything!"

"As expected of the Emperor's daughter—she shall be a warrior one day!"

"Truly fitting for a princess of Elarion!"

I stared at them, my tiny fingers still clutching the golden rattle in one hand while the other remained frozen in disbelief. My people were insane. Absolutely insane.

But... you know what? Fine. If they want to believe I'm a baby prodigy, I'm not going to stop them. I puffed up my tiny chest, looking as regal as I could.

Papa chuckled, ruffling my golden curls with his long fingers before placing a soft kiss on my forehead. "My daughter is truly remarkable."

I grinned. Of course I am. But let's not forget—I'm also fabulous.

Now then. On to the next gift!

One by one, nobles stepped forward, each presenting extravagant gifts: silk blankets embroidered with golden threads, tiny jewel-encrusted shoes, even a ridiculously tiny crown. Oh yes, shower me with riches!

And then...

Marquis Everette strutted forward, his chest puffed out like a peacock in full display. His expression was polite—too polite. His beady eyes flickered over me, his lips twitching as if he'd swallowed something sour.

Oh? What's this? Suspicion? Disdain? Do I sense him questioning my greatness?

A servant stepped forward, revealing his gift—a silver bracelet with delicate engravings of the imperial crest.

The hall went silent.

I...whipped my head to the side. Dramatically.

A loud gasp echoed through the hall.

"Her Highness turned away!" someone whispered in horror.

"The princess... rejected the gift?!"

Marquis Everette stiffened, his face going ghostly pale.

I blinked. That's right. I rejected him not because of his gift. It's because I just don't like that man's face!

He gets on my nerves! what can I do? I can't help!

A nervous murmur spread among the nobles. Papa's crimson eyes flicked toward him, and the temperature in the room dropped.

Marquis Everette quickly bowed so low I thought he might snap in half. "Y-Your Majesty, I... I think the princess didn't look at the gift properly."

Papa's eyes flickered toward him, cold and sharp, like a blade pressing against his throat. "Are you questioning my daughter's choice, Marquis?"

The marquis' breath hitched. "N-No... no... no, I dare not, Your Majesty."

Papa didn't say anything. Just silence. Heavy. Pressing. Then, without even sparing the marquis another glance, he ordered, "Present the next gift."

The marquis' face became as pale as a ghost. He swallowed thickly, bowed one last time, and quickly shuffled away—but not before sending me a sharp glare.

Oh? Oh?! I squinted at him, my tiny fists clenching. You old man! I hate you with my full heart too!

But before I could start plotting my three-month-old vengeance, something unexpected happened.

The next person stepped forward.

And it was not some frail, beady-eyed noble who can be ignored.

It was a man. Tall, broad-shouldered, and exuding a powerful aura—like my father, yet entirely different. Where Papa was the embodiment of a cold-blooded emperor, this man radiated warmth. His presence was commanding, but not in a way that froze the air around him—instead, it drew people in, steady and unwavering.

His deep brown eyes, warm yet piercing, held a quiet intensity, reflecting both wisdom and something else—something unreadable. His flowing red hair cascaded in rich waves, catching the golden light that filtered through the grand palace hall. The fiery strands contrasted beautifully with his fair skin, giving him an almost otherworldly nobility.

He bowed smoothly. "Greetings, Your Majesty the Emperor and Your Highness the Princess."

Papa, to my utter shock, nodded. Not his usual dismissive, half-interested nod, but one that carried something close to respect.

"It is good to see you, Grand Duke Regis."

I blinked.

Wait. What?

Grand Duke Regis?

Hold on, hold on, hold on.

Don't tell me, he is... he is Regis Valerius Everhart?!

The father of the main lead?!

I stared at him, my brain short-circuiting. Wow... he looks so handsome.

But—not as handsome as my papa, of course. Let's not get ahead of ourselves.

Grand Duke Regis placed a hand over his chest and bowed gracefully. "I congratulate the Emperor on the arrival of the beautiful little princess, Your Majesty."

Papa glanced down at me, his gaze softening ever so slightly before he turned back to the Grand Duke.

"Thank you."

And just like that, the entire court held its breath. Then Grand Duke Regis smiled—a warm, genuine smile—and glanced down toward his legs.

"Osric, you should greet the Emperor and the Imperial Princess too."

Osric?

You mean, the maid lead?

And that's when I saw him.

A small boy stood stiffly at his father's side, his six-year-old frame straight as a board.

Osric Valerius Everhart.

A miniature version of Grand Duke Regis. Same fiery hair. Same noble features. But his eyes—his eyes were different.

Unlike his father's, which held wisdom and experience, Osric's were wide with innocence. A boy who had just stepped into the grand imperial hall, standing before the Emperor and the Imperial Princess for the first time.

I squinted at him.

So, he is the male lead of this novel.

Lavinia... I mean, my future fiancé.

The boy who would banish me from my own palace? From my father?

The boy who would one day abandon me for the heroine of this novel.

Osric Valerius Everhart.

so... he's finally appeared, huh.