

TOLYN TO BE SYNOPSIS

By NOVI YAYA

PRINCE TOLYN AUGUSTINE (age 16), Haverly's monarch-to-be, has an outward appearance of the stereotypical medieval teen lad, yet there is more than meets the eye. In the wake of the recent death of the queen, Prince Tolyn holds an exorbitant amount of anger, and struggles internally due to learning the queen's secret shortly before her passing. This grand secret is the first in the history of the kingdom of Haverly.

After an argument with the prince, KING BARTOS, with flushed cheeks from rage, barrels down the castle hallway. He shoos ELRIC (age 16), Tolyn's jealous, obnoxious cousin, out of his way. Barging into the prince's room, he is face to face with the queen's secret. King Bartos glares with utter shock, seeing Prince Tolyn in the late queen's dress. A horrified Tolyn shrinks to the floor. With a wavering, vulnerable voice, Prince Tolyn states their newly discovered truth, "I am a girl. This was all Mother's doing." Despite desperate pleas for sympathy and guidance, the king refuses to acknowledge the situation and storms out, leaving Tolyn devastated.

A deafening scream echoes down the hall, sending Tolyn racing out of their bedroom. Looking at the bottom of the royal staircase, there lies a lifeless King Bartos. Standing beside the king is a suspicious Elric, who averts his evil gaze and shares a sympathetic moment with Tolyn. Guilt over the king's death devours a very emotional Tolyn. Life for the prince quickly becomes even more complicated.

Self-doubt overwhelms Prince Tolyn, believing they are unworthy of the throne. Tolyn leaves the castle of feelings, looking for clarity. Fortunately, with the support of friends, Tolyn desires to be king, believing they would be better than Elric. Pursing the throne, Tolyn realizes they need to keep the queen's secret alive and stay pretending to be a boy. Yet SIGEN, Tolyn's narcissistic uncle, shines as the master manipulator upping his selfish game to ensure his son, Elric, will be coronated. Wasting no time, Sigen gathers the Great Council and insinuates Prince Tolyn is responsible for the king's death. The Great Council believes Prince Tolyn's alibi. This ignites Elric's evil ways. He divulges the queen's secret to impress his father and ensure he takes the throne. A debate ensues, and Tolyn, unable to lie, shares their truth. Lacking compassion, The Great Council expresses feeling deceived and disgusted. They banish Tolyn from Haverly forever with the consequence of death if Tolyn does not comply.

Tolyn's resilience is put to the test. The banishment begins with shame, an identity crisis, and extreme loneliness. Arriving at the Three Corners, Tolyn debates what town they will call home. Gracefully dancing on the side of Castine Tolyn embodies their feminine side. Curious about how they would feel in Bershire, they bow, stab, and jab with their sword, getting in touch with their masculine side. Frustration envelops Tolyn, wanting to know who they are, feeling they need to choose one or the other.

Tolyn spiraling eats mushrooms and falls into a deep sleep. The queen's spirit visits in a dream, sharing the secret had stemmed from her unhappiness with herself, wanting more for Tolyn, and just how much Tolyn was so deeply loved. Awaking Tolyn feels empowered and has the clarity that they have what truly matters: a pure, caring heart with good intentions.

Despite the threat of death, Tolyn faces their fears and heads to Haverly to speak their truth to The Great Council. They listen to Tolyn and vote to hold The Coronation Games. Wanting to make Sigen proud, a confident Elric jumps at the chance of beating a "despicable girl." Tolyn does not double down and instead seizes the opportunity to show everyone what makes a true monarch.

Knowing death and the crown are on the line, Tolyn stands their sacred ground, bringing their heart and sportsmanship. An unprovoked Sigen interrupts the joust, attacking Tolyn, allowing the villagers to see their truth. An injured Tolyn wins, holding their hand out to Elric with sympathy. For the first time, Tolyn understands Elric.

The heart of Haverly wins The Coronation Games in the form of Tolyn To BE, who realizes they had what it takes to own the throne. Acknowledging Elric's internal struggles, Tolyn believes with compassion, growth is possible. Tolyn spares Elric and Sigen from death and graces them with unique and individual consequences. Finding internal peace and acceptance, Tolyn celebrates, "I fell in love with Tolyn To Be, who is unapologetically me!"