

# Awakening Love: Reborn to Be His Duchess Novel

Chapter 181 A Bitter Thought That possibility unsettled Alaric more than he expected. Finished Elowen had liked him since childhood, almost as if she had been born with her heart set on him. She had always found ways to stay close, to please him. No matter how cold he was, no matter how often he pushed her away or humiliated her, she never changed. He used to say it was annoying. Even disgusting. Yet there were moments when knowing someone loved him without reservation, without conditions, felt like the purest kind of indulgence. So when had that changed?

When had Elowen started keeping her distance? "Your Highness," Daphne said softly as she walked up to him, her tone gentle and sweet, "the autumn hunt is about to begin. Her Majesty said I should sit beside you." A faint blush rested perfectly on her cheeks as she lifted her eyes shyly toward him. Most men would have been moved by that look. Alaric did not even glance at her. His mind was still on Elowen. His expression remained distant as he replied. "Suit yourself." Daphne felt a flicker of frustration and bit her lip, looking at him with wounded eyes. Am I really so lacking in charm?

Following his gaze, she saw Elowen in the distance. Her fingers tightened. Could it be... that he likes Elowen? No. That's impossible. Daphne gathered her thoughts, then said lightly, as if puzzled, "How strange. The Duchess of Duskmoor should have entered from the south gate of the grounds. Why would she head over there instead? That's near the stables, and it's fairly secluded. Surely she's not meeting someone." Alaric's brows drew together. Daphne curved her lips faintly. "I've heard that every year during the autumn hunt, young couples sneak off near the stables. Things can get rather..."

heated." A dull thud sounded nearby as a cup struck the table. Maerwyn had failed to steady her hand in time. Daphne's heart stirred. Maerwyn had always disliked Elowen and never feared offending her. Surely she would not miss this chance to add a cutting remark. 1/3 2:41 pm ppp. Chapter 181 A Bitter Thought Turning toward her. Daphne asked with faint excitement. "Your Highness, don't you think so too?" Just then, Elowen approached and happened to catch that line. "Your Highness, don't you think so too?" She slowed her steps and asked lightly. "What are you all discussing?"

Let me hear it too, and I'll see whether I agree." Daphne smiled gently. "Your Grace may not know, but we were just saying that the stables are quite secluded, and that couples often meet there in secret." "Oh? Is that so?" Elowen glanced at Maerwyn. "So that's what Her Highness is discussing?" Maerwyn stiffened, about to respond. 040 Finished Daphne spoke first. "Some of them aren't even unmarried. There are married women who slip away while their husbands are occupied, unable to bear their loneliness, and meet other men in private." The implication hung clearly in the air.

Daphne cast Maerwyn another look. She had gone this far. Surely Maerwyn would seize the moment. As expected. Maerwyn frowned deeply, her expression turning dark. Daphne felt triumphant. Then Maerwyn shot her a fierce glare. "Daphne, do you have any idea how vulgar that sounds?" Daphne froze. Vulgar? Am I being criticized? In front of my brother, you're talking about secret meetings and loneliness? Is that all you think about? And you're meant to become Crown Princess." Daphne was completely stunned. What's happening? Why is Maerwyn not mocking Elowen?

"Her Highness seems to understand propriety better," Elowen said mildly, a faint smile playing at her lips as she moved toward the upper seats. Behind her, the three of them were left with different thoughts. Maerwyn replayed the exchange in her mind, wondering whether she had said anything that might anger Elowen. Daphne could hardly believe it. Maerwyn had actually sided with Elowen. Alaric felt increasingly restless. From beginning to end, Elowen had not spared him even a single glance. Theodric and Isla sat at the head of the gathering.

Elowen stepped forward and bowed respectfully to 2/3 2:41 pm ppp. Chapter 181 A Bitter Thought 0440 Finished them. Her seat was beside Elspeth. Not long after she sat down, Elspeth arrived, slightly late. Elowen asked quietly. "Aunt, why are you just arriving?" Elspeth answered casually. "A small matter at home. I handled it before coming." Before Elowen could ask more, a rhythmic roll of drums echoed across the grounds. The autumn hunt had officially begun. Before the hunting itself, there was a customary display. In Avenlor, it was tradition to demonstrate horsemanship.

After all, during the hunt, control over one's mount was fundamental. As in the previous year of Elowen's memory, an elderly stable hand with a white beard led out a striking stallion. Ember. As the organizer of the event, Galen stood with his hands clasped and looked around before calling out, "Who would like to try taming this horse first?" 1.7K 3/3 2:41 pm ppp. Awakening Love Reborn to Be His Duchess Finished admin

Chapter 182 The Challenge No one moved at once. Instead, murmurs spread through the crowd. That's a Tynelle bloodline. Look at that coat. You might see one like that in ten thousand." "It's notoriously hard to handle. The trainers can manage it on a lead, but the moment someone tries to mount it, they're thrown or kicked clear off." Why don't you give it a try?" And get trampled?

No, thank you." Someone sighed. "If Hale family still had someone here, this wouldn't be a question." "In past years it was always someone from Hale family, or Duke of Duskmoor. This year is unfortunate.

Hale family has no riders left, and Duke of Duskmoor is absent." "Who says Hale family has no one? Isn't there still..." The moment those words were left hanging, attention shifted almost at once. Many eyes turned toward Elowen. She continued eating her cakes calmly, hearing fragments of the whispers. "In the past, perhaps. I heard the Duchess of Duskmoor once had real skill with horses." "Her knee was injured years ago. She hasn't ridden in a long time." "She's probably forgotten how." Elowen did not lift her head. Nearby, Daphne listened with growing satisfaction.

This was exactly what she wanted. Amid the murmurs. Daphne lifted her gaze toward Galen. He gave her a slight nod. Everything was ready. Daphne rose to her feet and, under everyone's watchful eyes, bowed respectfully toward Theodric. "Your Majesty. I request permission to tame this horse before the court." Silence fell. Daphne volunteering was the last thing anyone expected. She stood there, slender and graceful, as though a strong wind might sway her. And she intended to tame Ember. Even Theodric looked doubtful. "You?" "Yes, Your Majesty." Theodric turned to Galen.

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"Your daughter has a gift for verse. But this is no small matter. She is not built for rough sport.

One bad fall could lay her up for weeks." 1/3 2:41 pm P P p Chapter 182 The Challenge Finished

Galen only smiled. "Your Majesty, Daphne has more to her than people realize. She is more capable than she seems." He had already arranged for the horse to be given a measured dose of poison. The timing had been calculated carefully. The pain would weaken it just enough. Even

the fiercest stallion could not lash out properly while wracked with pain. Daphne did have some riding skill.

Mounting would not be difficult. It was a calculated risk, but it would elevate both Daphne and the Garrett family's standing in Vanelle. Many still said she had married above her station by entering the Crown Prince's Wing, and compared the Garrett family unfavorably to Hale family.

After today, no one would dare make that comparison. "Are you certain?" Theodric asked again.

"Absolutely, Your Majesty," Galen replied firmly. Theodric was not one to dwell too long.

Seeing both father and daughter confident, he laughed and said, "Very well. Let me see it."

Daphne's eyes brightened.

"Yes, Your Majesty." Before stepping forward, she cast a proud glance at Elowen. Once she succeeded, who would still remember how formidable Elowen once was? Amid renewed murmurs of anticipation, Daphne walked toward the field. 'I didn't expect Miss Garrett to have this kind of skill.' "No wonder she's to be Crown Princess." Under the sunlight, Ember stood powerful and vibrant, every strand of its reddish coat gleaming. As Daphne approached, her thoughts drifted back many years. On Elowen's seventh birthday, Daphne had followed Galen to Hale Manor.

At that time, Hale family was at the height of its glory, and Elowen was cherished beyond measure. She had worn an exquisite gown that day, her hair styled with delicate ornaments that shimmered in the sunlight. Any single gem in her hair had likely cost more than everything Daphne owned at present. Elowen had stood in the center, smiling sweetly, accepting gift after gift with grace. Her manners were flawless, almost regal. Daphne had stood at the far edge of the crowd, watching with envy. On her own birthday, no one in her family remembered.

When she timidly brought it up, her parents had 217 2:41 pm ppp. Chapter 182 The Challenge simply ordered a small honey cake from the kitchen. The cook had even placed a bit of sugared fruit on top for her. 1.7K <sup>Ⓜ</sup>) Finished admin

Chapter 183 Ember Returns Finished When it was brought out, Cedric had reached across the table and taken the sugared fruit straight off Daphne's plate. Daphne had frowned. Cedric had only grinned. "What, I can't have a bite? I'm the only son in this family. Besides, you don't do a thing around here. I'm the one who has lessons every day. I'm exhausted." He had taken a big bite. Daphne's eyes had burned red with humiliation. Seline had stood nearby, utterly indifferent. "You were barely seven. It wasn't even a milestone year. Why make such a fuss?

What child that age needed a grand celebration?" But Elowen is seven too, isn't she? Her gifts are piled high. And among them all, the one that had drawn every eye had been a red pony. The moment Elowen saw it, she cried out, "Wow!" Her face shone with excitement and love.

"Beautiful, right?" Julian stood beside her, smiling. "Though she's got a temper. I went up earlier and she kicked me. Good thing she's still small. Didn't hurt." He coaxed gently, "Easy. Just take a look today.

In a few days, Father will have her trained, then you can ride." Elowen tilted her head, studying the pony carefully. The pony tilted its head back at her. "But Julian," she said suddenly, "I think she likes me. She won't kick me." Julian raised a brow. "Oh? You think so?" Elowen nodded and stood, walking straight toward the pony. Someone quickly urged, "Lieutenant Hale, stop Miss Hale. If she gets hurt, your mom will definitely come after you." Julian crossed his arms and smiled lazily. "Relax. The kick doesn't hurt." The man persisted, "But your mom does." Julian went silent.

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Watching from the side, Daphne suddenly had a strange thought. What if that pony kicked Elowen hard? Under everyone's gaze, Elowen approached the pony. Someone was still urging Julian to stop her. A few timid onlookers had already closed their eyes, unwilling to witness what they assumed would be a painful scene, Daphne stared without blinking, chanting silently in her heart. Kick her. Kick her. Elurry up and kick her But instead of lashing out, the pony faced Elowen and lowered its head. Elowen smiled sweetly and stroked its mane. "You're so pretty. I'll call you Ember, okay?" 2:41 pmp pp.

Chapter 183 Ember Returns The pony bent both front legs toward her. A clear gesture of submission. 0471 Finished Daphne's eyes flew wide in shock. The crowd burst into astonished murmurs. "Just like that? No effort at all?" "Maybe she saw a pretty little girl and couldn't bring herself to kick." "As expected of Mr. Hale's daughter." Amid the admiring praise, Elowen climbed onto the pony's back. The round-cheeked little girl sat atop the spirited red horse and trotted steadily around the yard. It looked like a scene straight out of a storybook.

Daphne stood in the shadows, wildly imagining that it was her in the saddle, that all the admiration and envy belonged to her. Later, she copied Elowen and tried to stroke the pony's mane. But the moment she stepped close, the pony suddenly lashed out with its hind legs and kicked her hard. Daphne cried for a long time that day. Elowen ran over to comfort her and brought her plenty of candy. She even led Ember over and pointed at Daphne. "Ember, this is Daphne. She's my good friend. No kicking her anymore, okay?" She smiled sweetly at Daphne. "Ember understands people. I told her.

She won't kick you again. Don't worry." But Daphne was not happy at all. Elowen's kindness felt like alms tossed her way. She did not want it. Now, Daphne stood beside the red steed once

more. The horse looked at her as if trying to recognize something. Daphne suddenly remembered Elowen's words and, for no clear reason, muttered a threat. "If you want to live, you'd better behave and let me ride." After saying it, she almost felt ridiculous. The poison had already been administered. The horse was bound to die. It would not have the strength to kick her anyway.

Sure enough, Daphne mounted smoothly. She gripped the reins, her fingers trembling with excitement. Lifting her chin, she broke into a brilliant smile and waved at the crowd. Elowen, your glory has faded. Now it's finally my turn. "Miss Garrett actually got on!" "She tamed a horse that fierce?" 2/3 Chapter 183 Ember Returns 044 Finished Seeing Daphne seated on the horse, the crowd gasped and praised her loudly. Elowen remained calm, still eating her pastry at an unhurried pace. Alaric suddenly spoke, "Aunt." Elowen cast him a cool glance. "That horse looks familiar.

Isn't it the one you loved most as a child? Ember?" At once, countless gazes shifted toward her. a 1.7K (1. admin

Chapter 184 The Red Steed Elowen was still chewing her pastry. Alaric continued, "It must be. I wouldn't mistake it." Finished A mocking smile tugged at his lips. "Aunt, the horse you raised as a child, how did it end up over there? Looks like it doesn't recognize you at all. Miss Garrett has already tamed it. Seems your horse is about to become hers." Those who understood the tangled grievances dared not speak, but inwardly found the moment thrilling. Alaric did not sound like he was talking about a horse. He sounded like he was talking about a man. Elowen's horse would belong to Daphne.

Just as the man had. After all, Alaric and Daphne were already betrothed. A formal wedding would not be far off. Alaric stared at Elowen, enunciating each word. "Aunt, you're truly

magnanimous." At the head of the gathering, Theodric frowned. Beside him, Elspeth clicked her tongue and was just about to speak. Suddenly, a sharp neigh tore through the air outside. It was the red steed. Everyone turned in alarm. The horse reared high, lifting both front hooves into the air. Daphne nearly lost her seat and hurriedly tightened her grip on the reins.

But the horse began bucking violently, twisting and jolting. Daphne's face turned deathly pale as she screamed. "Stop! Stop!" The horse ignored her, bucking even harder. In an instant, no one paid attention to Elowen and Alaric anymore. Theodric demanded, "What is happening?" Galen was flustered beyond measure. "Your Majesty, I... I truly don't know." He had clearly ordered his most capable servant to administer the poison. The servant had reported back that the red steed had taken it and that nothing would go wrong. So why is this happening?

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Compared to Galen's panic, Theodric remained composed. He scanned the area immediately. "Is there a skilled trainer here? Someone capable. Quickly, get Miss Garrett down." Daphne was soon to become crown princess. More importantly, today's autumn hunt was an auspicious event. If blood was spilled, people would take it as a bad sign. Yet no one dared step forward. That red steed had a vicious temper. Now it looked downright mad. Who would risk their life? Just as despair spread, a gentle, steady female voice sounded. Your Majesty.

"I'll go." All eyes converged on Elowen. She stood gracefully in her pale blue riding attire, her features composed and refined. Theodric rejected the idea without hesitation. "No." Finished Elowen was the woman Cassian had loved devotedly for years, finally married and brought home as Duchess of Duskmoor. He would not even want her to lose a single strand of hair. How could she be allowed to approach a wild horse? If she were injured, how could Theodric explain

it to Cassian? Elowen had anticipated the refusal and smiled faintly. "Your Majesty must have heard His Highness just now.

"That red steed was a birthday gift from my grandfather when I turned seven." Theodric's brows knit together. "That was many years ago. You think a horse would still remember you?"

"Sometimes." Elowen replied softly. "a horse values loyalty more than people do. My father sent Ember away not for any other reason. but because I injured my knee and could no longer ride."

The word knee struck Alaric sharply, and his brow furrowed in irritation. "My father had intended to keep her elsewhere and bring her back once my knee improved. But Ember disappeared. Soon after, too many things happened.

I had no time or strength to search. Today, we meet again. Some people forget what others sacrificed for them. A horse does not." In truth, she had not been certain whether Ember still remembered her. But just earlier, she had gone to the stables. When Ember saw her, the horse froze. Then it lowered its head and bent both front legs, just as it had done in childhood. When Elowen stroked its mane, she saw its eyes glistening with moisture. That sight had made her heart ache. All these years, it must have missed her. Now she lifted her chin and looked firmly at Theodric.

"Your Majesty, if we wait any longer. Miss Garrett may be thrown and trampled. Hearing this, Galen's eyes filled with tears. He dropped to his knees before Theodric "Your Majesty, please save Daphne. His family had finally produced a future crown princess. If Daphne were gone, what would become of his career? Theodric's face remained stern. "No." 217 2:42 pm ppp

Chapter 184 The Red Steed Finished If Daphne were trampled, that was tragic. If Elowen were

injured and Cassian's heart broke, that would be disastrous. "Your Majesty can rest assured," Elowen said calmly.

"His Grace left guards with me. I will bring them along. I only need to speak to Ember and calm her. I will not go too close, and I will not be harmed." 1.7K B 2:42 pm admin

Chapter 185 A Single Call Theodric looked at the two towering shadow guards standing behind Elowen. Finished If he remembered correctly, both were men from Cassian's ranks. They had earned their place in real campaigns, veterans who had taken more lives on the battlefield than most people had ever taken livestock to the butcher. He considered it for a moment, then met Elowen's hopeful gaze. She truly wanted to go. That much was obvious. Theodric let out a slow breath and relented. "You are not to get too close. Not one step closer than necessary.

If anything looks wrong, you pull back immediately. Do you understand?" He had finally agreed. Elowen smiled brightly. "Thank you, Your Majesty." She turned and walked out. At that moment, Daphne was sprawled across the horse's back, clinging desperately to its neck, crying and screaming. "What are you all staring at? Save me. Save me. "I am the future Crown Princess. "If anything happens to me, you'll all answer for it." The grooms and trainers tried again and again to get near, but the blood-bred stallion kicked them away each time. Daphne was on the verge of despair. You wretched beast.

Why weren't you poisoned earlier?" Her voice was hoarse as she hurled vicious curses. Her strength was almost gone. A bitter thought rose in her mind. Am I really going to die here today? And in such a humiliating way? Just then, a clear female voice rang out, calm and steady. "Ember." The sound cut cleanly through the chaos, and Ember, which had been thrashing seconds earlier, went still The trainer reacted quickly and rushed forward, helping the limp

Daphne down from the horse. Daphne was dizzy, her head spinning, her legs completely weak. One thought echoed in her mind.

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1/1 Chapter 185 A Single Call She's safe. Who saves her? She forced herself to turn around. And froze. Finisher Elowen stood there with a faint smile, reaching out to stroke Ember's mane, speaking to it softly. The scene slowly overlapped with a memory from years ago, when Daphne had been kicked aside and cried, and Elowen had come over to comfort her in that same quiet way. Something fierce and endless burst from Daphne's heart. Today is supposed to be my moment. How does it turn into this? It's Elowen. It's always Elowen. She's nothing but bad luck for me.


Sensing the stare, Elowen tilted her head and looked at Daphne. She gave a small smile. "You're welcome." Daphne wanted to rush over and tear that hypocritical smile off her face. But the moment she stepped forward, Ember stepped forward as well, blocking her path with clear warning. Remembering what had just happened, Daphne's legs trembled. She could only retreat silently. The matter of taming the horse finally came to an end. After all that chaos, Ember was tired too. Elowen led it back to the stable to rest.

She set out water and fresh hay carefully, and she deliberately left one shadow guard stationed nearby to ensure no more accidents would happen. Just as she was about to leave, Ember bit down on the hem of her skirt. Elowen turned back. The horse tugged her gently toward itself. Elowen laughed and patted its head. "I still have things to take care of. Be good. When I'm done. I'll come back for you." Ember looked at her as if asking, "Really?" Elowen leaned her forehead against its face, serious and sincere. "Really. Trust me." Daphne was helped away to rest.

Theodric ordered Alaric to go check on her. He had originally intended to make a brief appearance and leave after a quick glance. Today had already been embarrassing enough.

Unexpectedly, Daphne's maid, Iris dropped straight down and cried out, "Your Highness, my lady was cruelly set up by the Duchess of Duskmoor today. You must stand up for her. 283 2:42 pm ppp. Chapter 185 A Single Call That single sentence made Alaric stop. He frowned and looked over. "What do you mean by that?" Iris lowered her head slightly, exposing the smooth line of her neck.

"Your Highness..." "Your Highness." Before Iris could finish, Daphne spoke in a fragile voice, cutting her off. She had already tidied her hair and stepped closer, her eyes reddened. Finished "Today at the autumn hunt, I prepared carefully. But who would have guessed that the fierce horse had been raised by the Duchess of Duskmoor when she was young? She clearly recognized it, yet she refused to say so. She watched me make a fool of myself before stepping in slowly to save me." She looked at Alaric, eyes brimming. "Your Highness, she planned this. She did it on purpose.

She wanted me to lose face. She wanted to outshine me." Alaric did not show the displeasure she expected. Instead, he narrowed his eyes. "If I recall correctly, that horse was found by your father, Galen." Daphne froze. If your father happened to choose that horse, how exactly did she arrange this against you?" "But my father didn't know," Daphne insisted stubbornly. "You were the one who swore you could tame it," Alaric said with a cold smile. "His Majesty advised caution. You and Galen refused to listen." 1.7K  2 L admin

Awakening Love Reborn to Be His Duchess Chapter 186 Stirring Words Daphne's face turned pale. Finished "You fail and then blame others for scheming," Alaric said mockingly. "The

Garrett family truly excels at that." Daphne's lips trembled, but no words came out. "Your Highness, please forgive her," Iris said softly. "My lady was simply too anxious." Alaric glanced at her. "She only wished to bring honor to the Crown Prince's Wing and to you. Your Highness." Iris continued. "The Duchess of Duskmooor grew up alongside Your Highness. She also shared childhood years with my lady.

But ever since Her Grace married into Duskmooor Manor she has grown distant from you both. It is even said that she has publicly corrected Your Highness more than once, speaking as your aunt by marriage, causing His Majesty and the Duke of Duskmooor to reprimand you several times. My lady truly felt for you. That is why she wished to tame the horse today, to win some glory for you and for the Crown Prince's Wing." Alaric's brows tightened. "It is true the horse was found by Mr. Garrett." Iris said carefully. "But how would Mr. Garrett know whose horse it once was?

Only the Duchess recognized it. If she were still the young lady she used to be, she would have warned my lady that it had been hers in childhood. If she had done so, my lady would not have been humiliated today. Yet she said nothing. If that is not intentional, what is?" Iris took a breath. "All of this is merely my humble opinion Your Highness is wise and will judge fairly." She lowered her head deeply at the end. Alaric's expression darkened bit by bit. With just a few words from a maid, he suddenly understood the source of his recent irritation. He had thought he liked Elowen.

He had thought he was unhappy because she married someone else. That was not it. What bothered him was that Elowen relied on power to suppress him. Since marrying Cassian, she had shown him attitude, encouraged Theodric and Cassian to discipline him, and even dared to kick his knee at the engagement banquet. She's leaning on Duskmooor Manor. Does she really think

Uncle Cassian loves her? After turning the thought over several times, Alaric felt restless and uneasy. He looked at Iris. "Then what do you think I should do?" Iris was about to answer? 173  
2:42 pm ppp.

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Chapter 186 Stirring Words Finished Daphne suddenly spoke first. "Your Highness must establish your authority as soon as possible." Alaric glanced sideways. "What do you mean?" Today the Duke of Duskmoor is absent. Her Grace is alone. Soon His Majesty will head out to hunt. Her Grace's knee is injured and she cannot go along. Would that not be the perfect opportunity for Your Highness to assert yourself?" Alaric frowned. "Marchioness of Havenstead is still here. She is my grandaunt. She will protect her." Daphne smiled faintly. "Your Highness may rest assured.

I have already made arrangements regarding Marchioness of Havenstead." After speaking, she leaned close to Alaric's ear and whispered a few sentences. Not long after Elowen returned from the stables, banners were raised high and drums rolled across the grounds. The autumn hunt officially began. Elspeth looked eager. She genuinely enjoyed riding and archery. A memory from her past life surfaced abruptly in Elowen's mind. She lowered her voice. "Aunt... could you maybe sit this one out?" Elspeth looked puzzled.

"Why?" Because last time, not long after you rode out, your horse bolted and threw you hard to the ground. The gravel tore your cheek open. It left an ugly scar that took forever to fade. But she could not possibly say something like that. It sounded unhinged. She lowered her eyes instead and spoke softly. "There are so many people here I barely know. His Grace isn't here. I can't ride with my knee like this. If you go too, I'll just be sitting here alone and I..." Elspeth blinked, then

laughed lightly. "You want me to stay with you." Elowen gave a small nod and looked at her timidly.

"But if you really want to go, Aunt, that's fine too. I can manage on my own. I've been on my own for years anyway." Elspeth's heart softened instantly. "Oh, Ella, what are you thinking? It's just a hunt. We do this every year. I'm bored of it. I was already planning to stay behind with you." Elowen quietly let out the breath she had been holding. She smiled, obedient and sweet. "Thank you, Aunt You're always so good to me." Elspeth reached out and touched her cheek affectionately. "Wait, you said His Grace isn't here... She leaned in slightly, her smile turning teasing.

"Ella, do you miss him?" Elowen froze, then her face flushed all at once. 2/3 2:42 pm ppp.

Chapter 186 Stirring Words Finished Elspeth burst into laughter. "Don't worry. When that boy gets back, I'll make sure to tell him you've been missing him terribly while he's away." Elowen's face turned even redder, heat spreading all the way to her ears. "Aunt, Elowen." Theodric approached in full riding attire, smiling as he spoke. "Care to join us?" "Ella's knee is acting up," Elspeth replied calmly. "And I've had my fill of hunting.

I'll stay and keep her company, Your Majesty." 1.7K 3:3 W 2:42 pm admin

Chapter 187 Lonely Ride Finished Theodric looked disappointed. "If that's the case, then I'm riding out by myself. That sounds painfully dull." Maerwyn, standing off to the side, immediately raised her hand. She wanted to say, "Father, I'm here." Before she could speak, Elspeth considered it and said, "Your Majesty could ask the Crown Prince to ride with you." Theodric shook his head. "Alaric said he's staying behind with Daphne. He won't be going either." He sighed heavily. "What does it mean to stand alone?"

This is what it means." As if remembering something, he suddenly said, "Right." Maerwyn's face lit up. Father, you finally think of me. Theodric went on with emotion, "If Cassian were here, he wouldn't hesitate. He'd ride with me." Maerwyn froze. The light drained from her face, her whole expression dimming. Elspeth let out a faint scoff. "Cassian is still in a wheelchair. How is he supposed to hunt with you? Besides, he's married now. Naturally, everything comes after his duchess." Theodric looked at her, then at Elowen beside her.

Truthfully, if Cassian were present, he likely would stay behind with his duchess. Theodric sighed again, repeating under his breath that he stood alone, yet he was surrounded by a large group of royal relatives and high-ranking ministers, all enthusiastically escorting him as he grandly set off for the hunt. Maerwyn wiped her tears and stubbornly followed behind. They would be gone for several hours. Inside the hall, only a scattered few people remained, not many, not few. Elowen's gaze drifted toward Alaric and Daphne not far away.

As memories of what happened during the latter half of the Autumn Hunt in her previous life surfaced, her thoughts grew tangled and heavy. She unconsciously tightened her fingers. "Ella, what is it?" Elspeth noticed her change. "Something on your mind?" Elowen returned to herself and turned toward Elspeth. She gave a light shake of her head and smiled. I'm fine." Elspeth studied her expression. "No one can fool me." 1/3 2:42 pm Chapter 187 Lonely Ride Elowen's eyes flickered. Elspeth narrowed her gaze. "Ella, you..." Finished Elowen felt a sudden nervousness.

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Elspeth curled her lips into a smile. "You miss Cassian, don't you?" Elowen paused, then gave two dry laughs. "I... yes." Elspeth beamed. "Don't worry. When he returns, I'll definitely tell him you missed him so much you were distracted." Elowen fell silent. She did miss Cassian

sometimes. But distracted to that extent seemed exaggerated. She neither admitted nor denied it. At moments like this, she simply needed to smile sweetly, as she had done since childhood.

"My lady." A young attendant hurried in from outside and bent close to Elspeth, whispering two sentences into her ear. The voice was not especially low. Elowen caught a few words, something about the Marquess of Havenstead and Lydia. After listening, Elspeth's brows pressed down, anger rising in her eyes. She muttered, "That idiot." Elowen was weighing whether to ask what had happened when Elspeth turned to her. "Ella, something's come up at home. I need to go back and handle it myself." Elowen blinked.

Elspeth stood and warned Alaric, "While I'm gone, if anyone dares bully Ella, and I find out afterward, I won't let it go." She added word by word, "That includes you." Alaric looked helpless. "Aunt, I wouldn't. She's my aunt by marriage. Why would I bully her for no reason?" "You'd better not." Elspeth still looked unconvinced. She turned back to Elowen. "Stay well. I'll come back as soon as I'm done." Elowen nodded. "Go ahead. I'll be fine." She had kept Elspeth close only to prevent her from being injured. She could not keep her by force just to have someone on her side.

After Elspeth left, the hall became quiet. Elowen slowly sipped her wine, recalling her previous life Daphne had tamed" Ember and enjoyed everyone's praise and admiration. Besides hunting, there had been a polo match at the grounds. The so-called grand prize had been her Ferghana horse, Ember. 2 2:42 pm ppp. Chapter 187 Lonely Ride 0:00 Finished At that time, Elowen had not known Ember had been poisoned. She only saw that the horse was in terrible. condition, clearly in pain. She immediately went to Alaric. "Your Highness, you remember that horse, don't you? Its name is Ember.

I raised her when I was little." Alaric had been expressionless. "And?" Elowen pleaded gently, "Your Highness, could you give that horse to me?" Alaric frowned. "Elowen, that's the polo prize. If I give it to you, how is the match supposed to go on?" Elowen had wanted to say something more, but Alaric cut her off. "Don't be unreasonable." He added coldly, "If you really want it, then go play polo. If you win, the prize is yours." But Elowen's knee had been injured. How could she play polo? Yet she did not know many people there, and no one would risk offending the Crown Prince to help her.

For Ember's sake, she forced herself onto the saddle. 1.7K 3/3 2:42 pm admin

Chapter 188 Stolen Ember Finished Her opponents were Daphne and supporters of the Garrett family. They surrounded and blocked her relentlessly. Elowen had to control her horse, strike the ball, and guard against their deliberate attacks. After half the match, her whole body trembled in pain. She could barely hold the reins. Daphne appeared from nowhere and slammed hard into Elowen's shoulder. Elowen was knocked off the saddle, landing in a humiliating sprawl. She lost the match completely and could only watch as Daphne led Ember away. Her entire body hurt. Her heart hurt even more.

Tears streamed down her face. She lifted her hand to wipe them, but they would not stop.

Daphne sighed, putting on a sympathetic expression. "Should we just give the horse to her? She's crying like this. It makes people uncomfortable." Alaric responded firmly, "The horse belongs to you." He glanced at Elowen with disgust. "You lost the match. What right do you have to cry? Elowen, besides crying, what else can you do? If you want to cry so badly, go back to Hale Manor and cry." Perhaps time had passed. Or perhaps she had grown stronger. Now, remembering it, Elowen felt little emotion.

She only thought that Alaric had been truly, truly vile. "Your Highness," Daphne said softly, "I feel a connection with that Ferghana horse. Could you decide to gift her to me?" Elowen raised her eyes. "Daphne, that's my horse." Daphne blinked. "But wasn't she sold years ago by General Hale? How can she still count as yours? My father paid a great sum to purchase her. She belongs to the Crown now. If His Highness gifts her to me, why wouldn't that be allowed?" Elowen lifted a brow. "Then tell me why you want her.

Did being tossed around feel that good?" Embarrassment flashed across Daphne's face. "I... I did tame her." "So that counts as taming," Elowen said in mock surprise. "Then the horse His Majesty rode earlier must not be tamed at all. It didn't throw him even once. When His Majesty returns from hunting, perhaps you can help tame that one too." Daphne flushed red. "It's just a horse," Alaric said suddenly, his tone neither warm nor cold. Elowen frowned. 2:42 pm PP P Chapter 188 Stolen Ember Finished Alaric looked indifferent, as if discussing something trivial.

"If Daphne likes her, then I'll make the decision. The horse will be given to Daphne." At those words, Daphne's lips curled in satisfaction. Earlier, she had leaned close to Alaric and whispered, "If Your Highness wants to establish authority, today is the perfect chance. His Majesty is riding out soon. The Duchess of Duskmoor has an injured knee and cannot go. If His Majesty says he'll stay with me, he won't be here either. With His Majesty and the Marchioness gone, won't Your Highness's word be final?

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"Then I'll say I want the Ferghana horse, and Your Highness can generously declare it mine. The Duchess of Duskmoor will definitely object and try to take it back, but today the Duke of Duskmoor isn't here, His Majesty isn't here, and the Marchioness isn't here. She has no one to rely on. Everything depends on Your Highness. She's only a duchess, an outsider in the royal

family. Would she dare contradict you?" Alaric had frowned at the time. "Even if she doesn't dare today, she'll complain to Uncle Cassian. afterward." Daphne had smiled. "Of course she will. But it's only a horse.

Is that worth more than the bond between uncle and nephew? When the Duke of Duskmoor or even His Majesty hears about it, they'll only think the duchess made a fuss over nothing." Alaric had considered it, then nodded. Now, everything was unfolding according to Daphne's plan.

"No." Elowen's brows knit tightly as she refused without hesitation. Alaric looked at her, displeasure evident. Elowen's expression was cool. "First, Daphne did not tame Ember. Second, you say Ember belongs to the Crown. But you have not yet ascended the throne. This realm still belongs to His Majesty.

The horse naturally belongs to His Majesty as well. If it is to be gifted, His Majesty must agree." Alaric's face darkened slightly, impatience flashing between his brows. "Your Grace, what are you saying," Daphne sighed softly. "Are you implying that His Highness has so hule authority that he cannot even decide over a single horse?" The words were clearly meant to drive a wedge. And Alaric was most susceptible to such provocation. His gaze grew even colder. Daphne continued in a pitiful tone, "Your Grace, I truly like that Ferghana horse.

You live at Duskmoor Manor, where there are so many fine horses. You won't miss this one. But our Garrett family is modest We don't even keep more than three horses at home." 2/1 2:42 pmp pp. Awakening Love Reborn to Be His Duchess Chapter 189 No Backing Down Finished Tears pooling in her eyes, Daphne looked at Elowen. "I know, Your Grace won't give me the horse because you dislike me. If that's the case, I'll bow to you. I'll press my forehead to the floor if I

have to. Please, Your Grace, let me have that horse." As she spoke, she truly started lowering herself toward the ground.

Alaric's face turned dark. He grabbed her arm and yanked her upright. "What are you doing? She's the Duchess of Duskmoor. And you're about to become Crown Princess. Are you saying you're beneath her?" He looked at Elowen, eyes narrowing. "I am the Crown Prince, heir to the throne. When His Majesty is absent, I am the highest authority. It's just a horse. I can decide who gets it." He turned sharply and signaled a page. "Go. Bring that horse out. Miss Garrett will take it back. I am gifting that horse to Miss Garrett." The page answered and was about to move.

"Crack!" The sharp sound of cup shattering exploded through the hall. Elowen had smashed the cup still half full in her hand. She remained seated, her expression colder than ever before. "I already said it. That horse is mine." Her gaze shifted to Daphne, her voice icy. "Daphne, I do dislike you. But even if you bow until your forehead splits open and blood runs down your face, I will never give you that horse." Daphne's lips went pale. She was so startled she could not speak for a moment. Even Alaric was caught off guard, but he recovered quickly, teeth clenched.

"I told you to go," he snapped again at the page. Elowen shot him a sharp look. "You dare." The page broke into a cold sweat, torn between them. He dropped flat to the floor. "Your Highness, Your Grace, please spare me..." "Spineless fool," Alaric cursed. He raised his voice toward the hall. "Whoever brings that horse out will receive a hundred gold pieces." At those words, several people shifted, tempted. Elowen's face remained expressionless. "Anyone who dares touch that horse offends Duskmoor Manor Take a hundred gold pieces if you want.

You may not live long enough to spend it." The hall fell silent. People looked at one another, hesitation rising. Alaric swept his gaze across them, his face extremely unpleasant. 1/3 admin

Chapter 189 No Backing Down Finished His dark stare finally settled on Elowen. "So today, no matter what, you're going against me?" Elowen answered without hesitation. "You're the Crown Prince. You can have anything else. But Ember is mine. I will not step back." "Is that so?" Alaric narrowed his eyes dangerously. "What if I insist?" Elowen did not flinch. She met his gaze head-on. "Then do not fault me if I forget the courtesy you are owed." Hearing that, Alaric grew even more enraged. "You keep throwing that title in my face.

Elowen, do you think marrying Uncle Cassian makes me regret anything?" Elowen frowned. "Why are you so full of yourself? I married His Grace for reasons that have nothing to do with you." It was for her own future. And to repay Cassian. "You absolutely did!" Alaric cut her off angrily. "You resented that I wouldn't marry you. To get back at me, you married Uncle Cassian. And now you keep showing up in front of me just to disgust me." Elowen's brows knit together. "Have you lost your mind?" "I haven't!" All the emotions he had suppressed for so long finally burst out.

"Elowen, you married Uncle Cassian, fine. But you will never be happy. He will never love you. To him, you're nothing more than a pastime. "You think I'll regret not marrying you? Let me tell you, Elowen. Even if every woman in this world dropped dead and only you were left, I would never marry you. I would never touch you. I feel sick just looking at you. "The one who will become my Crown Princess is Daphne. She is Azure. Her books are unrivaled across the realm. That's something you'll never catch up to." Elowen was certain. Alaric had gone mad.

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Or perhaps he had always been unbalanced, and today it simply surfaced. She refused to waste another word. She did not even want to stay in the same room. She stood up "Mira. we're leaving. "You're not going anywhere." Alaric abruptly stood and strode toward her. Mira stepped

in to block him, but Alaric shoved her hard. She slammed against the table. "Alaric!" Elowen shouted sharply. 2:42 pm P Pp. Chapter 189 No Backing Down Finished She moved to help Mira, but Alaric grabbed her wrist and dragged her back. "We're not finished, Aunt." His eyes locked on hers, voice vicious.

"You won't give the horse to Daphne? Fine. I'll kill it. You said it's yours. Then you can stand there and watch it die." Elowen's eyes flew wide. "Alaric, are you out of your mind?" 1.7K 𐀀 2:42 pm ppp. Awakening Love Reborn to Be His Duchess Chapter 190 Unrestrained "Why wouldn't I?" Finished Alaric's lips curled into a faint smile. "You just said I was insane. If I'm insane, I might as well do something worthy of it." Elowen had never seen him like this. In her past life, he had always been cold and distant. She never imagined he could look this unhinged. She tried to pull her hand back.

Sensing it, Alaric tightened his grip instead. Pain shot through her wrist. "Guards!" she called. Today, Cassian had left her two shadow guards. One she had stationed at the stables to protect Ember. The other had remained by her side. At her call, the guard appeared swiftly and stepped forward. "If you dare interfere," Alaric warned coldly, "you will learn what regret means." The guard's steps slowed, hesitation on his face. "She's just a duchess," Alaric sneered. "A duchess with no family left behind her.

"Do you really think she matters more to His Grace than I do?" He let out a mocking laugh. "One day, the throne will be mine. Do you think the realm will belong to Duke of Duskmoor? When that day comes, even he will have to rely on me to keep his status." Those words made the situation painfully clear. The guard stopped. He gave Elowen an apologetic look. Elowen knew

then that today, she truly had no one to rely on. Alaric seemed satisfied. He gestured again to a nearby attendant. "What are you waiting for? Bring the horse." Elowen struggled desperately.

"No!" Alaric added in a low voice, "If you refuse to listen to me, the one who dies later won't just be that horse. It could be you as well." The attendant hurried off. Elowen's breathing grew uneven as she glared at him. "When His Grace returns, he won't let you get away with this."

Alaric laughed instead. "Aunt, you think batting your eyes at Uncle Cassian a few times makes him 1/3 admin

Chapter 190 Unrestrained Finisher hopelessly in love with you? He has someone in his heart.

And you've only been married a short while. I'm his blood nephew. Do you really think he would fall out with me over a horse. Over you?" His gaze dropped to her. From struggling, a fine sheen of sweat covered her skin. Her eyes were red. Strands of hair had come loose, falling near her brows and eyes. Yet her gaze was fierce, hatred burning within it, stubborn and unyielding.

Alaric's heartbeat skipped. Without thinking, he reached out to touch her cheek. Disgust flashed across Elowen's face.

She turned her head sharply away. His hand froze in midair. Anger flickered across his face, then twisted into a cruel smile. "You'd better stay this stubborn." He forcefully dragged her toward the exit. Those left inside watched the shocking scene unfold, not daring to breathe. Only after Alaric left did they finally exhale. Daphne, however, was radiant with excitement. All she had done was make a small suggestion, yet the effect was enormous. She had never truly wanted the horse. It was only a pretext. Alaric saying he would kill it felt like repayment for the humiliation earlier.

It was incredibly satisfying. And he had even said he would make Elowen watch. That would be a ruthless blow to Elowen's pride. Daphne could not stop smiling. It felt wonderful. "Miss Garrett, you should try to persuade His Highness," Iris suddenly said. Daphne frowned. "Persuade him about what?" "Persuade His Highness not to kill that blood-sweating horse," Iris said anxiously. "This truly goes too far." "What's too far about it?" Daphne scoffed. "Didn't you see how arrogant the Duchess was? She smashed a cup and declared in front of everyone that she disliked me.

Killing one horse is just putting her in her place. Iris looked worried. "But if Duke of Duskmoor returns and learns of this, he will surely take it out on His Highness." Daphne let out a light laugh. Then you're worrying for nothing. Didn't you hear what His Highness said! The realm will be his one day. Even Duke of Duskmoor will have to look to him "But- Iris tried again. You're getting more and more talkative. Daphne said suddenly, her gaze turning sharp. "Back there. I hadn't even spoken yet and you were already speaking up in front of His Highness. What's that supposed to be?" 2/3 2:42 pm ppp.

Chapter 190 Unrestrained to mean? Once I become Crown Princess, are you planning to aim higher?" Finished Iris froze, then immediately lowered herself fully to the floor. "I would never dare. I spoke only for your sake." Daphne let out a cold laugh. "You'd better mean that." She withdrew her gaze and smiled brightly again. "Today really is a good day." 1.7K 2:42 pm ppp. admin