

Awakening Love: Reborn to Be His Duchess Novel

Chapter 501 The Warning : (39) Finished " Your Highness , please ... show mercy . I know I was out of line . I swear I won't say anything like that again . " Wendy could barely stand ; her voice shook apart as she bent low to apologize desperately , tears steaming down her face .

Macrwyn didn't so much as flinch . She turned her head slightly and said , her tone crisp and final , " Someone step in . Make sure she learns exactly where the line is , and how not to cross it again . " The matron , long used to carrying out punishments like this , didn't hesitate for a second .

She answered at once and stepped forward . She moved with practiced efficiency , gripping Wendy by the arm . Her other hand locked firmly around Wendy's jaw , forcing her to face forward , her tear - streaked cheeks already trembling . The sound came sharp and immediate .

Two sharp strikes cracked through the room in quick succession , clean and controlled , without any flourish or hesitation , just raw force . Wendy's head snapped to the side , then back again . Her skin flushed instantly , swelling beneath the impact as the corner of her lip split open .

A thin line of red surfaced , bright against her pale face . The world blurred . A dull ringing filled her ears . Even her sobbing broke apart into shallow , uneven breaths she could barely control .

The girls nearby froze where they stood . They had never witnessed anything like this before . Their usual disagreements lived in quiet rooms , hidden behind polite smiles and measured words . At most , a sharp remark or a cold dismissal . Nothing like this . Nothing so direct . So public .

Now they instinctively drew closer together , faces drained of color , shoulders tense , not one of them daring to step forward or speak . Maerwyn watched Wendy without the slightest trace of sympathy . " Consider yourself fortunate , " she said slowly . " I'm letting this end here out of respect for your grandfather , Edmund , and the reputation he carries . " 1/4 19:15 Thu , Apr 23 M ... Chapter 501 The Warning Her gaze hardened . : 39 Finished " But if I ever hear you , or anyone else , speak a single word about Elowen behind her back ... " Her tone lowered , quiet but unmistakable .

" I won't stop here next time . " The meaning landed heavier than the blows . Wendy trembled all over , the fear settling deeper than the pain ever could . She didn't dare hesitate . " I understand ... I do ... " she stammered , her voice hoarse and broken . " I won't do it again ... " Not far away , Elara finally exhaled . Serves her right . She had taken a risk speaking up . She knew Maerwyn admired Azure's work , but even then , it could have gone either way . She hadn't expected it to work this well . It wasn't that she only cared for storybooks .

She read poetry and formal works too , but they were never meant to compete . They served different purposes , spoke to different parts of a person . Raising one by tearing down the other had always felt narrow and deliberate . And Wendy had been deliberate . Elara wasn't going to let that pass . Maerwyn's attention shifted to her . The sharp edge in her expression softened just slightly . " What's your name ? " Elara straightened and gave a proper court bow . " Elara , Your Highness . " " Elara , " Maerwyn repeated , as if weighing the sound . She gave a small nod .

" You enjoy Azure's writing ? " At once , Elara's eyes lit up . " Yes . I came across Tales of Luminara when I was twelve , and I've loved it ever since . To be honest , I even named a white long - haired cat I raised back home after it . " Maerwyn's brows lifted , a hint of a real smile

forming . " You read it at twelve as well ? That's when I first found it . " 2/4 19:15 Thu , Apr 23

M ... Chapter 501 The Warning : " Really ? " Elara leaned forward slightly , her voice bright with surprise . Maerwyn's smile deepened . " Have you read Ode to Springlight ? " Elara nodded . " Of course .

I read it the moment it was released . " " To be honest , " Maerwyn said , her tone turning more relaxed , " I prefer that one . " 39 Finished Elara's expression grew animated. " So do I. I think it's because the male lead isn't written as heavily as in Tales of Luminara . The focus shifts more to the heroine , how she fights her way out of difficult situations , how she builds her own path and learns what she needs to survive . Watching that growth makes the story feel much more alive ." " Exactly ." Maerwyn's eyes brightened noticeably as she looked at Elara .

Finally , someone who gets it . Without thinking , she stepped forward and took Elara lightly by the arm . " Come on , you don't need to stay here . It's too crowded , and frankly , too noisy . Let's find somewhere quieter to talk . " Elara followed without resistance . " Yes , Your Highness ." Maerwyn waved it off , smiling now with clear ease . " Don't be so formal. Just call me Maerwyn . " Elara adapted instantly , her smile widening . " Then you should call me Elara . " Maerwyn nodded without hesitation . " Alright , Elara .

Let's go ." Elsewhere , Elowen had just finished speaking with Rowena and Sylvia and was walking out with them when Cora stepped forward . She lowered her voice and reported what had happened in the garden . She reported that Elara had gotten into a dispute with someone , it had escalated enough to draw Maerwyn's attention , and the princess had personally struck Edmund's granddaughter . At that , Elowen's steps slowed for just a brief moment . Elowen's

steps paused for the briefest moment . Rowena frowned immediately , irritation rising . " That temper of hers again .

She flares up at the slightest thing and turns it into trouble . When is she ever going to learn to hold herself back ... " Cora added carefully , " I made sure to ask around . It started because Wendy was speaking about you , Your Grace . She said today's gathering was all for appearances , that it was ... dressing things up to look grand . She also dismissed your writing , said it didn't belong among serious works . 3/4 19:15 Thu , Apr 23 M ... Chapter 501 The Warning Miss Wrenner likely couldn't stand hearing it any longer . " 2.8K W 39 Finishe admin

Chapter 502 The Approach Rowena's expression shifted slightly . (39) Finished " ... In that case , Elara wasn't wrong . " A soft laugh slipped from Elowen . Sylvia , however , spoke with measured caution . " Even so , Wendy is Edmund's granddaughter . This happened here , in your residence , during your birthday gathering , and she's clearly been hurt . Edmund is widely respected and well connected . If this isn't handled carefully , it could leave room for criticism or resentment from the Myers family . " Elowen's smile remained calm . " I was planning to speak with Edmund anyway .

I had been considering how to approach him . It seems Maerwyn and Elara have given me a reason . " She turned slightly toward them . " Why don't you both sit and have some coffee . I'll go speak with him . " They both nodded . Elowen didn't head straight toward the front courtyard . Near the study wing , she slowed and looked to Mira . " Did you check the front ? Has the Baker family arrived ? " Mira nodded quickly . " I saw them clearly . All branches are here , especially the fourth and fifth . I've seen those two sons before when I accompanied you . I'm certain .

" Elowen gave a small nod . " Good . " She stepped closer to the study entrance and called , " Josh ." Inside , Josh was speaking with Nikki . He looked up immediately . " I'm here . " Elowen smiled faintly . " I'm heading to the front to speak with Edmund . You studied under him , didn't you ? Come with me ." Josh didn't hesitate . " Of course ." The front courtyard was filled with warm daylight . Under the covered corridor , a high - backed chair had already been set in place as instructed .

Edmund sat there , composed , dressed in a simple blue robe , his white hair and beard lending him a quiet authority . 1/3 19:15 Thu , Apr 23 M Chapter 502 The Approach Finished He had begun his studies at a very young age and rose quickly , earning top honors early in life . Later , he served in prominent academic roles and once taught within the Crown Prince's Wing . After stepping away from official duties , he remained in Vanelle , occasionally taking on a handful of students .

It was widely noted that those who studied under him often performed exceptionally well in the court qualification trials . Some had even counted that in recent years , nearly a third of successful candidates had attended his lectures . With the emperor placing increasing importance on scholarship , families , especially those of status , were eager for their sons to succeed through the examinations . Even without an official position , Edmund's influence remained substantial . In recent years , however , he had grown more selective , rarely appearing in public and taking on fewer students .

Many sought him out , but few found a way in . So his presence at Hale Manor today had taken many by surprise . The moment he appeared , he was quickly surrounded . Questions about studies , invitations to lecture , attempts to make an impression , all pressed in at once until there

was barely space around him . Edmund handled it with ease , answering patiently , his demeanor relaxed . As Elowen approached , a faint crying sound reached her ears . She glanced over .

Wendy stood before Edmund , her face visibly swollen , the marks on her cheeks still stark . "

Grandfather ...

" she said softly , her voice trembling . A ripple of sympathy moved through the crowd .

Edmund's expression darkened as he took in her condition . " What happened ? Who did this ? "

Wendy's voice caught . " It was Maerwyn ... " His brows drew together . He had spent a lifetime teaching countless students , yet his own family line had been thin . 2/3 19:15 Thu , Apr 23 M ...

Chapter 502 The Approach Finished His eldest son had died young . His second son was frail .

Only this granddaughter had remained close to him , bright and promising , the one he cherished most .

He had personally overseen her education from the very beginning , teaching her how to read , write , and think , guiding her through history , philosophy , and the kind of works most girls were never given access to . He had never once held anything back simply because she was a daughter and not a son . In his eyes , Wendy might have a bit of a temper , but her intelligence and talent stood on equal footing with any young man . And honestly , who didn't have a streak of stubbornness now and then ? Over the years , she had become his greatest comfort . More than that , she was family .

His own flesh and blood . So when he saw the state she was in , heard that she had been struck , anger rose in him almost instinctively . Even if the one who had done it was the most favored princess in the court . His tone turned firm . " Even a princess should not act without restraint . "

Wendy nodded quickly , her voice tightening again . " I don't even know what I did wrong . She

just ... struck me like that . Grandfather , you have to stand up for me . " At that moment , Gerda's voice rang out clearly from Elowen's side .

" Lady of the First Rank , Lady of Grace and Virtue , has arrived ." All eyes turned at once . Elowen stepped forward , her smile poised and flawless . For a brief moment , Elowen found herself thinking of Isla . In both her past life and this one , every time she had seen her , Isla had worn that same kind of smile , perfectly composed , never slipping . Elowen hadn't liked her much for a long time , always thinking that smile felt forced , like something carefully put on rather than real . 2.8K 3/3 admin

Chapter 503 Pride and Lines It took Elowen time to understand something subtle but unavoidable . 393 Finished When a person stands in a certain place long enough , even the way they smile begins to settle into habit . What starts as intention eventually becomes instinct . She had become that way too . With that thought lingering , she came to a stop in front of Edmund . She placed a hand lightly at her waist and inclined her head in a refined court greeting . " Mr. Myers , your visit brings great honor to Hale Manor . " Edmund was still holding onto his irritation .

He drew in a breath , steadying himself before rising to his feet . " You are too gracious , Your Grace . Being invited here is already an honor for me . " Elowen's gaze drifted to Wendy , and she gave a soft sigh . " Wendy's face looks quite badly hurt . It would be best to have it treated right away . If it leaves a mark , that would be unfortunate . As it happens , Doctor Dray is here today . I'll have him come over . " She gave a slight glance to Cora , who immediately understood and left to carry out the task . Edmund's tone eased a little .

" That's hardly something I should trouble Your Grace with ." Elowen replied gently , " It's no trouble at all . If anything , I bear some responsibility for what happened . " Edmund frowned , confusion clear on his face . " Your responsibility ? I'm not sure I follow ." Elowen's voice remained calm and measured . " Some time ago , I wrote a couple of storybooks in my spare time . They were never meant to be anything serious , just something to pass the hours . Somehow , those books caught Maerwyn's attention . " She continued , her tone unhurried .

" Today , both Wendy and Maerwyn came to Hale Manor as guests for my birthday . While they were in the garden , they spoke about me , and naturally those books came up as well . To be fair , Wendy wasn't entirely wrong . Stories like those are often seen as light entertainment . Someone well - educated , with a strong literary background , might not think much of them . " She paused slightly before finishing , " But Maerwyn has always been indulged since childhood . Hearing that , she was bound to take offense . That's what led to the servants stepping in .

" Edmund understood immediately , and his expression grew more severe . 1/3 19:15 Thu , Apr 23 M ... Chapter 503 Pride and Lines - 139 Finished After a brief pause , he turned to Wendy . " Did you truly say that those books are nothing but low entertainment ? " Wendy felt a flicker of unease , though she couldn't quite place why . Still , she answered honestly . " I did ... " Edmund's face darkened at once . Wendy noticed his displeasure but misunderstood the reason . She hurried to explain , " Those stories are all about romance .

There's nothing meaningful in them , it's all rather shallow ... " She didn't get to finish . Edmund's voice cut in sharply . " Is this what I taught you , to become arrogant ? " Wendy froze . She had never expected him to speak to her like that . clinging to her lashes hadn't even fallen yet when the sting hit her all at once , her eyes filling instantly . Edmund did not soften . His voice

remained firm . " Whether it's history , philosophy , or storytelling , none of it stands above the rest by nature .

If learning a few books makes you're above others , then everything you've learned has been wasted . " you think He continued , his tone steady but stern . " As for the books written by Her Grace , I've read them myself . Yes , they involve matters of the heart , but they go far beyond that . Ode to Springlight speaks of a woman's independence , her resilience , her strength . It is not some crude or vulgar tale . " His gaze sharpened . " You came here as a guest , to attend someone's birthday , and yet you chose to speak poorly of your host behind her back . Explain that to me .

" Wendy stood there , stunned , tears sliding down her cheeks in silence . " Come here , " Edmund said firmly . " Apologize to Her Grace . " Wendy lifted her head , her vision blurred . I didn't do anything wrong . I'm the one who was humiliated . Why should I apologize ? He's taking her side . She wiped her tears hard , then suddenly turned and pushed through the watching crowd , running off without looking back . Edmund remained where he was , watching her disappear . His aged face flushed slightly , his beard trembling faintly . " She grows more unreasonable with every passing year .

" 2/3 19:15 Thu , Apr 23 M Chapter 503 Pride and Lines 639 Finished Elowen spoke at just the right moment . " Please don't be upset , Mr. Myers . She's still young . Having her own opinions and a bit of temper isn't a bad thing . If young people become too polished too early , they lose their spirit . " She turned slightly . " You two , follow Wendy . Make sure she stays safe . " The two attendants responded at once and hurried off . Edmund bowed deeply to Elowen . " I have failed in guiding her properly . I hope Your Highness will not take her careless words to heart .

" Elowen shook her head . " You're being too serious . It truly isn't anything worth worrying about . She's your only granddaughter , of course you treasure her dearly . And truthfully , this situation began because of me . It wouldn't be right for something so trivial to come between you . " Her tone was sincere and composed , leaving no room for discomfort . Edmund's expression softened noticeably . The earlier commotion had already drawn the attention of nearby guests . Though no one approached , curious glances continued to drift their way . admin

Chapter 504 Subtle Moves Out of the corner of her eye , Elowen noticed two familiar figures . Albert . Liam . Finished She gave no sign of recognition and turned instead . " Josh , please bring Mr. Myers a cup of hot coffee . " Josh stepped forward at once . Edmund looked at him . " I noticed you earlier but didn't get the chance to ask , what brings you here ? " Josh poured a cup of warm coffee and handed it over respectfully .

" Sir , my sister Nikki said the court qualification trials are coming up , and she wanted to save money for my exam expenses , so she took a position here at Hale Manor . There are many guests today and not enough staff , so I came to help out where I can . " Edmund nodded . " That's commendable . " He took a sip , then added , " Helping is fine , but don't neglect your studies . The trials are just around the corner . With your ability , passing on the first attempt is entirely possible . At a time like this , you must not let up . " Josh nodded earnestly . " I understand .

Even while helping out , I still study every morning for a couple of hours and review late into the night . I haven't missed a day . " " That's good . " Edmund nodded repeatedly , clearly pleased . Elowen stood quietly to the side , letting them speak for a while . When the moment felt right , she said , " I need to head to the garden , so I can't stay long . Josh , keep Mr. Myers company a

bit longer . " Josh reminded her , " Your Grace , there's still work unfinished in the study . "

Edmund chuckled softly . " No matter . Once he finishes the trials , we'll have plenty of time to talk .

Let him go . finish his work . It wouldn't be right to take Hale Manor's pay without doing the job . " Josh smiled and nodded . Elowen agreed . " Very well . Work comes first . " She said her farewells and turned to leave , her steps unhurried . Just as expected , she soon heard someone behind her ask , " Mr. Myers , is that young man your student ? What family does he come from ? " Edmund's voice carried a hint of pride . " His name is Josh . I took him on this year . At my age , I only accept two students . One is Kaelan , the son of Lady Aveline .

The other is him . " Another voice asked hesitantly , " But it sounded like he's working here at Hale Manor . That background ... " Edmund replied calmly , " I've always believed learning should be open to all . And his background is not so 11 11:48 Fri , Apr 24 A M Chapter 504 Subtle Moves Finished low . His father once served under General Hale and fell in battle . He is the son of a decorated soldier . The boy is bright . I've hardly needed to teach him much , only guide him from time to time . In my view , his future holds great promise . " Elowen passed by Albert and Liam just then .

She turned slightly toward Josh . " Many sit for the court qualification trials each year , but only a few succeed . I used to wonder whether you would pass , but after hearing Mr. Myers speak so highly of you , I'd say your chances are very strong . Once you finish your work here today , go home and focus on your studies . When you pass , I'll make sure you receive a generous reward . " Josh responded obediently , " Then I won't hold back when the time comes . " As soon as

Elowen walked past , Albert drew in a deep breath . Liam's brows were tightly knit , his expression serious .

" That made me nervous . If we don't pass and someone working odd jobs does instead , our grandfather will make us pay for it . " Albert , however , seemed not to hear him at all . His gaze drifted , and he murmured to himself , " That scent ... A faint , refined fragrance still lingered in the air , something soft and elegant , like fresh blossoms after rain . Liam frowned . " What are you talking about ? " Albert snapped back , quickly shaking his head . " Nothing . Forget it . " He rubbed his nose . " Didn't we already plan this out ? Alaric is overseeing the trials this year .

We'll manage somehow . " Liam didn't look reassured . " I heard from my father that he's taking it seriously this time . He wants real results . He might not go easy on us . " Albert smirked , his usual confidence returning . " So what ? We just need to talk to him , say the right things . He'll soften eventually . He always has . " Liam thought it over and nodded . " That's true . " He glanced around . " Now that I think about it , they said the princess already arrived . If she's here , Alaric should have come with her . So where is he ? Why haven't we seen him ?

" 。 2.8K B 11:49 Fri , Apr 24 M. Awakening Love : Reborn to Be His Duchess admin

Chapter 505 The Visit 32 Finished Outside Stillwater Court , Alaric stood beneath the carved estate crest , hands clasped behind his back as he stared up at it , his expression dark and unreadable . The name was refined , almost poetic , but what truly grated on him was what it implied . A shared home . A shared life . Something intimate , something deliberate . They really went and made this official , didn't they ? He let out a cold , silent laugh . It suggested affection and devotion , the kind that looked effortless on the surface but was carefully held in place underneath .

If he ever took full control of Avenlor , the first thing he would do would be to have that crest taken down . No , not destroyed , that would be too simple . He would have it replaced , rewritten into something that reflected what this place should have been from the start .

Something that bore his name . Alaric's gaze turned colder before he finally looked away and strode forward . The two guards stationed at the entrance immediately tensed when they saw him. As he approached , they stepped forward in unison , blocking his path with clear caution .

" Your Highness , " one of them said carefully . " If you have urgent business , we can announce you first . " Alaric's voice dropped , sharp and controlled . " You do remember that I'm the Crown Prince , right ? Everything in Vanelle answers to the Crown . Is there anywhere I'm not allowed to walk into ? " The guards exchanged a quick glance . He took another step closer , his tone growing more cutting . " And let's not pretend things are what they used to be . There's no Duskmoor Manor anymore . The man you once answered to doesn't hold that title now .

So if you decide to stand in my way , tell me , who exactly is going to back you up ? " The two men looked at each other again . The lady of the house wasn't inside . Only Cassian . If Alaric insisted on entering , stopping him would only cause trouble , and there was little risk in letting him through. They stepped aside . Alaric didn't spare them another glance as he walked in , his posture calm but laced with arrogance . Behind him , Iris spoke up at the right moment . " Your Highness , I'll wait outside . " She had no interest in getting involved in whatever this turned into .

1/3 11:49 Fri , Apr 24 M Chapter 505 The Visit Alaric didn't look at her , only gave a quiet , indifferent response . " Mm ." Iris remained where she was , relieved . Finished Alaric walked straight toward the main residence . The estate was busy today , servants moving about with

tasks , and no one paid him much attention . He circled the main hall once and found no one . A faint crease formed between his brows . Ella is likely in the study . He had been here before . He knew where it was . As he drew closer , he heard the soft , clear sound of porcelain touching wood .

A cup being set down . His expression softened slightly , a trace of anticipation slipping in . She's there . " Ella , " he called gently as he stepped through the doorway , his voice lowering , " it's your birthday today , I- " The words stopped halfway . The smile vanished from his face . A chessboard sat on the table , the game clearly unfinished . Across from Cassian , a cup of coffee still gave off heat , untouched for only a short while . Whoever had been sitting there had just left . Cassian had just taken a sip himself .

He set the cup down slowly , unhurried , then lifted his gaze toward the door . Alaric stood there , meeting his eyes . There had been a time when that gaze alone would have unsettled him , a kind of instinctive fear that ran deep . Now , that feeling had faded . Cassian no longer held power . No longer stood above everyone else . He's just another man . Nothing more . Then Cassian spoke , " Dropped by to pay your respects to your aunt ? " Alaric went silent , ... Not entirely ordinary . At least not that mouth . Alaric let out a soft scoff . " I used to call her that out of respect .

But what happens next is still up in the air . There's a good chance that by this time next year , Ella will be standing beside me as Crown Princess . " Cassian lifted a brow slightly . " You do know my leg's fully healed , right ? " 2/3 11:49 Fri , Apr 24 M Chapter 505 The Visit Alaric frowned faintly . " I know . What of it ? " Finished Cassian rested his chin lightly against his

hand , a faint smile at his lips . " It means if you keep talking like that . and I decide to put you in your place , don't go running to your parents about it . " Alaric stiffened .

Cassian's tone remained calm , almost lazy . " You can try , of course . But once your father hears why , you'll probably end up confined again . At this point , you're already setting records . Most disciplinary orders any Crown Prince in Avenlor has ever received . If things go poorly , even losing your position would still leave you remembered . " Alaric clenched his teeth , anger rising , but for a moment , he found no words to counter . Then something occurred to him , and he let out a short , mocking laugh . " Say whatever you want . It won't change a thing .

Once I prove myself in the upcoming court qualification trials , I'll earn real authority again . From there , everything follows . Power , succession , the throne . And when that happens , Ella will return to me . She will be mine , my Crown Princess , my Queen . " Cassian's eyes dimmed slightly . He had been about to stand , but his gaze flicked briefly past Alaric , and instead , he settled back into his seat again . His voice turned even . " Ella knows her own mind . After what you did , she won't choose you . " Alaric gave a small shrug . " That was the past . I know I was wrong .

And today is her birthday . I prepared something for her . Once she sees it , she'll like it . She'll forgive me . She'll fall for me again . " Cassian replied calmly , " You're underestimating her . And more importantly , she's my wife . " Alaric looked at him , a trace of ridicule in his gaze . " I still call you uncle out of respect . But if we're being honest , you don't hold a title anymore . This isn't Duskmoor Manor . It's Hale Manor now . You're living here because of Ella . " a 2.8K

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Chapter 506 No Turning Back 32 Finished He paused briefly , his tone turning more contemptuous . " When Ella married you , it was because of your status . Your influence . Now that all of that is gone , do you really think she'll stay willingly ? Without power , without rank , how exactly do you expect to compete with me ? What are you using to take her from me ? " Before he could finish , a sharp force struck his leg . Alaric had no time to react . He stumbled forward , nearly losing his balance , barely managing to steady himself before falling .

Anger surged as he turned , ready to demand who dared ... Then he saw her . Elowen stood there , lowering her foot , her brows drawn tightly together . " Finished ? " she said coldly . " If you are , get out . And stop coming in here to push him around . " The word hit him harshly in Alaric's ears . That should have been him . Alaric forced himself to steady his breathing . " Ella ... I came because I have something to say . " Her frown deepened . " You've been crossing the line more and more lately . " Every time he says my name , it's unbearable . She didn't bother hiding her irritation .

" Someone get him out . " The guards stepped forward immediately , restraining him from both sides . Alaric didn't struggle . He simply looked at her without blinking . Her face held nothing but dislike . " At the engagement banquet , " she said flatly , " if I truly cared about rank , why wouldn't I have chosen you ? If I had said I wanted the Crown Prince , do you really think your father would have refused ? " Her gaze was sharp . " I didn't choose you because I don't like you . You irritate me . Seeing you is exhausting . So where exactly is all this confidence coming from ?

" The words struck deep , a dull ache tightening in his chest . , His voice turned hoarse . " Ella ... I made mistakes . I regret them . Today is your birthday . I brought you something . I just want

you to forgive me ." Elowen let out a soft , incredulous laugh . " One gift , and you think I'll forgive everything ? That would take something impossible ." She was about to have him dragged out when she suddenly paused . 11:49 Fri , Apr 24 M Chapter 506 No Turning Back " Oh , wait , " she said . " There is one thing you could give me . That might work ." Alaric's eyes lit up instantly .

" What is it ? Whatever it is , I'll find a way to get it for you ." Elowen stood in the warm sunlight , her figure almost glowing . But her expression was ice - cold , her voice carrying no warmth at all . " Your head . " Alaric froze , his pupils widening in disbelief . Elowen tilted her head slightly . " What , can't do it ? " Her tone turned colder . " Then get out ." At her command , the guards dragged him toward the door . 32 Finished As he was pulled away , he heard her voice soften behind him . " Why were you just sitting there letting him talk like that ?

" She was speaking to Cassian . Alaric paused for a fraction of a second before it clicked . So that's what that was . He saw her coming . That sudden restraint , that silence , it had all been intentional . He had been putting on an act . Then Cassian's low voice followed . " I don't have much left now . I didn't want to cause you trouble . It was just a few words . It didn't matter . " Alaric nearly lost control . " Cassian , you- " The guards dragged him out before he could finish , his voice fading from the room . Inside , Elowen spoke calmly , " Ignore him .

He's just noise ." Cassian nodded easily . Her gaze shifted to the chessboard . " You were playing with Hugh ? " " Mm , " Cassian replied . " Halfway through . You called him away ." Elowen explained , " Something came up . Edmund's granddaughter was speaking badly about my novel behind my back . Maerwyn overheard and slapped her . Her face swelled badly , so as the host , I

had to show some concern . I asked Hugh to take a look . " Cassian's expression softened slightly . " You handled it well . " Then he opened his arms toward her .

" Come here . " Elowen stepped forward , reaching for his hand . 2/3 11:49 Fri , Apr 24 M.

Chapter 506 No Turning Back The moment she touched him , he turned his wrist and gently pulled her closer . 32 Finished The movement was controlled and precise . She came to a stop right in front of him , catching the faint scent on him . Cassian tilted his head up slightly , his voice low . " Before you came back , I already said what needed to be said to him . I only stopped when I saw you . " There was a subtle note of wanting credit in his tone . Elowen blinked , then lowered her voice as well .

" I know . " She did know . They were married . They loved each other . And now , she carried his child . She knew exactly what kind of man he was , cold , sharp , and untouchable to the rest of the world , and yet with her , he was steady , gentle , and unwaveringly devoted . admin

09:06 Tue, Apr 28 EVEA aking Love Reborn to Be HC Du he Chapter 507 A Little Performance

More than anything, he loved putting on a show. It didn't matter where he was, if there was a moment to play it up, he would. Elowen didn't mind that at all. She leaned in just slightly, her tone easy. "I was going to call him out anyway, Someone like Alaric practically asks for it."

Cassian chuckled under his breath. "Sounds like you're doing him a favor." Elowen tipped her head, eyes glinting. "Then maybe I should throw a couple insults your way too.

Keep things fair." Cassian lifted a brow, clearly entertained. "Go on then." She actually paused, thinking it over with mock seriousness. "You're hopeless." Cassian laughed, pulling her in by the waist and drawing her close. Elowen let herself sink against him, relaxed in his arms. "And kind

of unbearable." That only made him laugh harder. They stayed like that for a while, until something crossed Elowen's mind. Her smile softened, a touch of regret slipping in.

"It's a shame my aunt couldn't make it today." The moment Cassian agreed to host the celebration, Elowen had written to Rivenshire, asking Elspeth to bring Nina back to Vanelle. 58 But Elspeth had replied that she hadn't realized the exact date. By the time she found out, she had already promised Nina a trip, everything packed and ready. Now that she treated Nina as her own daughter, she couldn't bring herself to break that promise. Elowen didn't blame her. If my mom made me a promise at that age and then took it back... yeah, I'd hold onto that for a long time.

Cassian's arm rested loosely around her. "She may not be here in person, but her gifts showed up days ago." That drew a laugh from Elowen. For a birthday, Elspeth had sent what could only be described as a small caravan's worth of gifts. Out of curiosity, Elowen had opened a few crates. Inside were neatly stacked gold bars, silver pieces, fine brocades and silks, and even a full chest of tiny garments and delicate ornaments clearly meant for the child she was carrying. Along with the gifts came one of Elspeth's attendants, looking deeply apologetic as she delivered the message.

Chapter 507 A Little Performance +5 Peads "My lady worries the gifts are too modest. She asks Your Grace not to take offense. Once she and Nina return from their travels, they will come to Vanelle to visit in person." Compared to that, the offerings from the other noble houses in Vanelle felt almost insignificant. The manor's storage rooms were already filled to the brim, so the extra chests had been placed in an adjacent courtyard under guard. "Your Grace." Anson's voice came from outside the study door. "Lady Aveline has arrived." Elowen straightened at once, easing out of Cassian's arms.

"I should go greet her." Cassian brushed an imaginary crease from his cuff. "I'll come with you." She glanced at him, faintly surprised. Earlier, when other nobles had arrived, he hadn't gone with her. With the emperor having ordered him to keep a low profile, it wasn't wise for him to be too visible. So his reason now was fairly obvious. He knew Aveline had a son named Kaelan. And Kaelan had feelings for Elowen. They stepped out together, walking through the covered passage toward the front court. By the time they reached the inner gate, Aveline's carriage had just come to a stop.

Kaelan stepped down first. He wore a tailored blue coat, fastened neatly at the front, a matching sash at his waist with a finely crafted ivory pendant hanging from it. Compared to the pale, drawn figure Elowen had seen months ago, he looked far healthier now, his complexion warm, carrying himself like a proper young lord. He didn't move forward right away. Instead, he turned back and offered his hand, helping Aveline down with steady care. Once she was on her feet, she looked toward Elowen and Cassian. They exchanged greetings, polite and measured. Elowen turned to Kaelan.

"The court qualification trials are coming up. That must be a lot to handle. Are you feeling the pressure?" Kaelan inclined his head slightly, a relaxed smile forming. "Of course. But whenever I feel unsettled, I look at the painting you gave me. There's something about it that clears the mind." Cassian spoke from beside her, tone easy but pointed. "We gave it to you." Kaelan paused, then let out a quiet laugh. "Right.

You both did." 213 09:06 Tue, Apr 28 DAM 3 58 Chapter 507 A Little Performance Just then, another set of carriages approached, the sound of wheels rolling over stone echoing faintly. Elowen glanced over, her expression shifting. Two carriages, understated in design but clearly

crafted from the finest materials. From the royal household. They came to a smooth stop, and a servant quickly set down a polished step. The curtain of the first carriage was drawn aside. A pair of well-made black boots appeared, followed by a young man in a deep blue coat patterned with subtle cloud motifs. Caelan.

He stood tall now, caught between youth and full adulthood. From the second carriage, a small hand pushed the curtain aside in a hurry. A young girl peeked out, her hair styled in soft loops.

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Ignoring the attendant reaching out to help her, Lyra gathered her skirts and hopped down on her own. She stole another glance at Elowen, cheeks pink, then hesitated and turned toward her brother. Caelan stepped forward. Elowen hadn't paid him much attention before, but now that she looked closely, she noticed something striking.

His eyes resembled the king's, clear and steady, yet carrying a natural weight that made him seem older than his years. He guided Lyra forward and offered a proper bow. "It's good to see you, Cassian, Elowen." Elowen studied him for a moment. The last time they met, he had been about her height. Now he stood noticeably taller. She smiled. "No need to be so formal. I heard you might not make it today." Caelan straightened. "I caught a chill a couple days ago. My mother was concerned I might pass it along, so she sent word ahead. But I've recovered now.

And Lyra insisted on coming." Behind him, Lyra nearly hid herself completely. Elowen softened her voice. "I'm really glad you did." Lyra's cheeks deepened in color. Elowen gestured toward the inner garden. "It's still a bit brisk out here. Let's head inside." By custom, the gathering was

divided. The men were led toward the front hall, while the women gathered in the garden behind the manor. Cassian guided Carlan and Kaelan away, while Elowen led Aveline and Lyra along a stone path toward the back. Along the way, Lyra kept sneaking glances at her.

Each time, her face grew warmer, like she was working up the courage to say something but couldn't quite manage it. Elowen pretended not to notice. "You look well today, Lyra. How has your mother been?" Lyra answered quickly, "She's doing very well!" Elowen nodded. "I went through the gifts she sent. I loved every one of them. Be sure to thank her for me." Lyra hesitated, then admitted softly, "I helped choose some of them." Elowen's expression lit up. "Then I owe you thanks too. You've got a great eye." That did it.

Lyra's smile spread fully, lighting up her whole face, her mood lifting into something warm and easy, like the cozy comfort of a sunlit kitchen with something sweet baking in the oven. By the time they reached the garden, the sound of live music drifted through the air. The space was wide and elegant, decorated with garlands and banners in festive colors. A raised wooden stage had been set up in the center, where performers were acting out a lively play. Rows of polished tables filled the area below, each arranged with small plates, fruit, pastries, and fine tableware.

Many of the noblewomen had already taken their seats, chatting quietly or watching the performance. With most of the important guests now present, Elowen moved to her place. Her seat was set directly in front of the stage. The arrangement followed strict rank. The seat of highest honor beside her should have belonged to Duchess Roland. Instead, two slightly smaller tables had been squeezed in close, clearly moved there on purpose. Maerwyn and Elara stood behind them, looking at Elowen expectantly. Maerwyn spoke first. "I wanted to sit closer to you, so I moved over here."

And I didn't want to sit alone, so Elara joined me." Elara nodded eagerly. "Exactly!" Elowen's brows drew together slightly as she turned toward Duchess Roland. Duke Roland, the king's fourth brother, was known for his calm, easygoing nature and complete lack of ambition. His wife, born into a distinguished family, had a warm presence, her gentle features and easy smile giving her an air of quiet contentment. She met Elowen's gaze with a gracious smile. "Maerwyn is still young. She enjoys a lively setting. And Elara is such cheerful company. It's nothing more than adding another table.

Please don't trouble yourself over it. Let them stay." Elowen understood immediately. She had no intention of making things difficult, especially where the queen was concerned. Elowen let out a soft sigh. "You're far too indulgent with them." 2/3 09:07 Tue, Apr 28 ICA M Awakening Love: Reborn to Be His Duchess admin

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Duchess Roland covered her smile. "If Leonhart could have even half of Cassian's fortune and ability, I'd consider myself very lucky." On the stage, the performer presented a symbolic blessing, drawing cheerful attention. At that moment, Gerda hurried over and leaned down, speaking quietly into Elowen's ear. "A large carriage just arrived outside the gate. Four tall horses pulling it, heavy enough to leave deep tracks in the dirt.

They say it's a birthday gift from the Crown Prince. It's covered in fine cloth, so no one can see what's inside, but there's movement. It's alive, and it sounds big." Elowen's brows drew together slightly. A gift from Alaric. She remembered what he had said earlier in the study, that he regretted everything, that he had prepared something for her birthday, that he hoped she could forgive him. Recently, she had also heard that the Crown Prince's Wing had sent people far

north, deep into the open plains, searching for something. The effort had been significant, though tightly concealed.

Elowen glanced sideways. "Can you tell what it is?" Gerda hesitated for a long moment, her lips pressing into a thin line. ".It's a horse. A rare warhorse." Elowen's fingers trembled slightly. A sudden wave of nausea rose in her stomach, sharp and overwhelming, rushing up toward her throat. She forced it down, her frown deepening. Her mind pulled her back to last autumn. Ember lying in a pool of blood, those gentle eyes that had always looked at her slowly losing their light, its coat stained dark red. Alaric had killed Ember. And now, he was sending her another horse.

Elowen was so angry she almost laughed. She couldn't understand how Alaric could think that killing Ember and replacing it with another horse would erase everything that had happened. She couldn't understand why he believed such an extravagant gift would make her forgive him. Then again, she did understand. Because it was Alaric. Alaric had always been like this, arrogant and blind. Elowen's expression cooled. "Keep the horse outside.

Do not let it in." 2/3 09:07 Tue, Apr 28 RAM 571 Her gaze flicked briefly toward Maerwyn and Elara, who were both watching her with wide, curious eyes. A thought crossed her mind. "If the Crown Prince's Wing asks," Elowen added calmly, "tell them I was watching the performance and couldn't be interrupted. If he wants an answer, he can come ask me himself." Gerda answered, "Understood," and stepped back. Elowen straightened again in her seat. The performance on stage continued, bright and celebratory.

Elowen spoke softly, "Seeing that offering reminds me of a horse I raised when I was younger. It loved fruit, especially apples. Every time I went to the stables, I would bring a few. It would

nudge my palm with its nose, and when it got impatient, it would tug lightly at my glove."

Maerwyn leaned forward, her eyes shining. "Aunt Elowen, are those horses really that fast? I heard they run like the wind. Is that true?" "It is." Elowen's smile deepened slightly. "My horse was named Ember. When it ran, it was faster than anything you could track with your eyes. And it understood people well.

It would only let me ride it, no one else." 2.8K 3 Awakening Love: Reborn to Be His Duchess
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Chapter 510 Rising Tension Hearing that, Maerwyn suddenly remembered something, and her expression changed. "Ember... was that during last year's royal hunt..." She stopped halfway through her sentence. Elowen's expression dimmed visibly. She turned her head slightly, looking momentarily distant, then forced herself to recover. She let out a quiet breath. "It's alright." She smiled at Maerwyn and Elara, gentle and warm, though her eyes shimmered faintly. "It's all in the past now." Before they could respond, Elowen continued softly, "Oh, right. I meant to tell you earlier.

I know you both like my stories. When I was writing Ode to Springlight, I kept some drafts. I never threw them away. If you'd like, I can give them to you after the banquet." Maerwyn and Elara exchanged a glance, excitement lighting up their faces. Maerwyn nearly jumped in her seat. "Really? Aunt Elowen, that's amazing!" Elowen smiled and nodded. "Really. Thank you for liking my work." Maerwyn looked like she might faint from happiness. Elowen sat back down, resuming her composed posture as she continued watching the performance. But Maerwyn and Elara were no longer paying attention.

Maerwyn leaned in, her voice trembling with excitement. "Do you realize what this means? I already have the manuscript for Tales of Luminara, and now I'll have Ode to Springlight too. I might actually be the happiest girl in Avenlor." Elara smiled brightly. "Azure's a Hale. My mother's a Hale too, and they're close. And now I'm getting a manuscript as well. I think I'm just as lucky as you." Maerwyn grabbed her hand tightly. "Then we both are." "...Wait." Elara lowered her voice. "What were you saying earlier about Ember and the hunt?

She looked really upset when she mentioned it." Maerwyn's smile faded. She glanced toward Elowen and saw that she was focused on the stage, then leaned closer and whispered, her voice very low. 1/3 Chapter 510 Rising Tension "This is actually my brother's fault. He was being cruel. Back then..." She quietly explained everything she knew about what had happened during the hunt. Elara inhaled sharply, her eyes widening. "That's horrible. Elowen... and Ember... that's just awful." "Exactly." Maerwyn frowned deeply. "I didn't even know back then that she was Azure. I was too busy having fun.

If I had known, I would have protected her. Maybe Ember would still be alive." While they were whispering, Gerda returned once more. She walked quickly to Elowen's side, her expression even more serious than before. Gerda said, "The Crown Prince has arrived. He's just outside the inner gate. He says he came specifically to invite you to see the gift." Elowen's voice was calm, but loud enough for those nearby to hear. "The Crown Prince is here? What exactly did he bring me?" Gerda paused briefly, then understood.

"From what I can tell, it is a rare warhorse." Elowen bit her lip lightly, as if hesitating. "I don't think I'll go." Gerda said gently, "But he seems very determined. If you don't go, he likely won't leave. And today is your birthday." Elowen seemed to hesitate for a long moment, then sighed

softly. "Alright." She started to stand. "Aunt Elowen, sit down." Maerwyn stood up abruptly, her face filled with anger. "I won't let anyone bully you. Not even my brother." Elara stood as well. "Exactly. He killed Ember and now brings another horse? That's just insulting." Maerwyn grabbed Elara's hand.

"Come on, let's go deal with him." Elara nodded without hesitation. "Maerwyn, Elara," Elowen called out. The two girls stopped and turned back. Elowen stood there, her expression calm, though her eyes were faintly red. "This is my matter. I shouldn't trouble the two of you with it. He came for me, so I should handle it myself." Before she finished speaking, a tear slid down her cheek. Maerwyn saw it, and her anger flared instantly. She clenched her fists. "Aunt Elowen, don't be upset. I'll stand up for you." 213 Apr Awakening Love: Reborn to Be His Duchess admin

Chapter 511: A Line Drawn

Elara nodded firmly, her voice brimming with conviction. "So what if he's the Crown Prince? If he tries to push you around, I won't allow it." Rowena's face darkened, her voice low but sharp as she interjected, "Elara, that's enough. Come here." Elara had always harbored a healthy fear of her mother. At that tone, her body stiffened, and hesitation flickered across her face as she wavered in place. Maerwyn glanced at her, then at Rowena, and without overthinking, she released Elara's hand. "It's fine. Stay here and wait for me. I've clashed with my mother before; do you think I'm concerned about him?" With that, she spun on her heel and strode away swiftly, her steps purposeful and resolute.

Elowen observed Maerwyn's figure vanish down the path, then quietly raised her hand and wiped away the faint trace of tears on her cheek. Outside the arched courtyard gate, Alaric stood with

his hands clasped behind his back, a rare hint of anticipation on his face. As he heard footsteps approaching from inside, his eyes sparkled, a small smile tugging at the corner of his lips. He was certain it was Elowen emerging.

A horse like that, a rare war-bred stallion with unmatched grace and power, was irresistible to any horse enthusiast. Alaric had gone to great lengths to find it, something even more exceptional than Ember had been. She would eventually comprehend. Adjusting his coat, Alaric stepped forward, lifting his head with quiet expectancy. Instead, he found himself facing a familiar visage filled with anger. "Maerwyn?" He paused, his brows furrowing. "Why are you-" Maerwyn planted her hands on her hips and cut him off without hesitation. "Alaric, seriously? Do you have any shame at all?" He froze for a moment. Then his expression darkened, irritation sharpening his voice. "Maerwyn. Who taught you to speak like that?"

"I should be asking you that!" She didn't back down, her voice bright yet cutting. "You got Ember killed, the horse she loved most, and now you show up with another one like that fixes anything? What is wrong with you? Are you genuinely trying to make amends, or just ensuring she hurts even more?" "You don't understand." Her words struck a nerve, frustration bubbling in his chest. Wasn't he doing this out of regret? Out of a desire to atone for what he had done? "Oh, I understand perfectly." Maerwyn scoffed. "If she wanted another horse, Cassian would have brought her one already, or she would have chosen one herself. She has more than enough money. Why would she need you to show up with one? You're not helping; you're only exacerbating the situation."

Those words hit harder than he anticipated. Alaric's face paled slightly as he stared at her, then emitted a cold, mocking laugh. "Oh really? And what does that make you? You think you can

speak for her now?" Maerwyn lifted her chin, refusing to yield. "At least I'm not like you. We actually get along now. She likes me. She even promised to give me the original manuscript of 'Ode to Springlight.'" She tilted her head, her tone openly challenging. "What about you? Do you have anything like that? After everything you did, she doesn't even want to see you. Do you genuinely believe she will forgive you? That horse isn't a gift; it's an insult."

Alaric's gaze turned cold. "And you think you're blameless? You didn't treat her well before either. If she won't forgive me, why do you think she will forgive you?" "That's entirely different." Maerwyn's voice remained steady. "I only behaved that way because you kept feeding me lies about her. If anyone initiated that, it was you. Yes, I was wrong, but I never did anything irreversible. She's kind. She will forgive me for being young and foolish. But you?" She scoffed dismissively. "She probably can't stand the sight of you."

Alaric's temples throbbed, anger surging as he struggled to contain it. He clenched his jaw and advanced, attempting to bypass her. "Move. I'll ask her myself." Maerwyn stepped directly into his path, blocking him unwaveringly. He let out a brief, disdainful laugh. "You truly think you can stop me?" Just as he was about to push her aside, her expression hardened, her voice dropping into a firm, cutting warning. "Try it. Go ahead, walk in there, and ruin her birthday dinner. I'll return straight to the palace and inform Father of everything. Every detail of what you did today. And I won't hold back. I'll ensure he learns how arrogant you were, how disrespectful you acted, and your true intentions."

Alaric halted in his tracks. If that information reached Father... Maerwyn noticed the flicker of hesitation in his eyes and continued, her confidence mounting. "And when that occurs, who do you think he'll believe? You or me? If he ends up disgusted with you, do you genuinely believe

you'll still oversee the court qualification trials this year? Lose that, and perhaps you'll finally grasp the lesson." The court qualification trials meant everything to Alaric at that moment. He gazed at her for a prolonged moment, his jaw clenched, then exhaled sharply through gritted teeth. With a swift turn, he departed without another word.