

Awakening Love: Reborn to Be His Duchess Novel

We Had Something Real But Didn't Handle It Right

692

Chapter 692 Unwelcome Arrangements

Maud let out a cold-laugh.

Really

Earlier that day outside Silverloom Exchange, both his parents had been standing right there in plain sight, and yet he had failed to notice either of them because his eyes had been fixed entirely on Scarlet from beginning to end.

Roger narrowed his eyes slightly.

“You seem awfully cheerful lately,” he observed. “Something good happen?”

Draven genuinely had not seen his parents earlier outside Silverloom Exchange, so now he truly had no idea where this conversation was headed.

But after the argument weeks ago, when he admitted he wanted to marry Scarlet and ended up getting beaten for it, he had already learned one lesson very clearly.

There was absolutely no chance he was bringing her up again tonight.

Not because he feared another beating.

Honestly, with his build, bruises barely counted as pain.

But Scarlet had been right when she reminded him those two were still his parents, and as their son he could not simply disregard filial duty and drive them into heartbreak and fury forever.

More importantly, if he ended up injured again, that would already be troublesome enough for his palace duties, but if Scarlet found out and worried herself sick over him, that would be far worse. She had already been overwhelmed handling matters at Silverloom Exchange lately, and the last thing he wanted was to become another burden she had to carry.

So Draven lowered his head obediently.

“Nothing special happened,” he answered honestly.

Roger gave a skeptical snort.

“If nothing happened, then why do you look like a man who just inherited a fortune?”

Fortunately, inspiration struck Draven almost immediately.

“Because today I witnessed the Duke of Duskinoor finalize the peace treaty with Northa, he explained earnestly. “I kept thinking about how people on both sides of the border might finally get to live without war hanging over them anymore, and honestly, it made me happy.”

Maud suddenly laughed quietly beside him.

Draven’s stomach tightened immediately.

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PPP

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Is there something wrong with my answer?

Personally, he thought the speech about peace and national duty sounded extremely convincing.

But he did not dare ask why she was laughing.

So he simply lowered his head again and waited nervously.

FINISH

After a long silence, Roger still looked ready to continue questioning him, but Maud spoke first instead.

“Fine. We understand.”

Only then did Draven cautiously relax.

But immediately afterward, Maud continued.

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“You mentioned wanting a wife before. Your father and I discussed it, and at your age, it’s perfectly reasonable for you to start a family.”

Draven froze before abruptly looking up.

“Mother... does that mean you’re agreeing to Scarlet?”

Maud’s expression remained completely indifferent.

“I don’t know anyone named Scarlet. But yesterday your uncle sent a letter. Your aunt’s family knows a young woman, nineteen years old, graceful and well-bred. She’d make an excellent match for you.”

Draven stared at her blankly.

“But Mother...”

“There is no but.”

Maud cut him off immediately.

“She’ll arrive in Vanelle near the end of the month. You’ll personally go receive her.”

Every instinct in Draven rebelled against the idea.

“This month the Nordanian delegation is leaving Vanelle,” he said carefully. “His Majesty already assigned me. to escort them part of the journey. I truly won’t be available to receive anyone. I hope Father and Mother can understand.”

Maud merely nodded calmly.

“Then I’ll send another letter and ask her to arrive at the beginning of next month instead.”

Draven clenched his jaw.

“I’ll still be occupied next month.”

This time Maud’s expression darkened completely.

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Finished.

“Draven,” she said coldly, “are you planning to defy your own frother now?”

Draven immediately lowered his head again

“I would never.”

Maud’s voice turned even colder.

“You will receive this girl whether you want to or not. And if you refuse, then you may as well sever ties with your father and me altogether.”

Draven looked up in stunned disbelief.

But Maud had already risen to her feet expressionlessly and swept from the courtyard without another glance at him.

Roger lingered only long enough to give his son one complicated look before quickly following after her.

Draven remained standing there alone for a very long time, his thoughts in complete chaos.

Meanwhile, back at Duskmoor Manor, Caius’s fever finally broke completely sometime after midnight.

After crying himself exhausted and drinking his fill of milk, he had fallen into a deep sleep.

Even so, Elowen still insisted the nurses carry Caius into her chambers so he could sleep beside Emily.

Compared to a fever, she honestly felt a little crying in the middle of the night barely counted as trouble at

all.

The next morning, Cassian left early to handle the remaining matters surrounding the treaty negotiations, and knowing him, Elowen was fairly certain he would take the opportunity to complain dramatically to Theodric about Caius's illness while pretending to suffer terribly himself.

After waking, Elowen summoned Hugh to examine Caius once more, and only after confirming there was no real danger did she finally sit down for breakfast.

She had barely taken her seat when Anson entered quietly and lowered his voice.

"Your Grace, there's news from Commander Hall."

Elowen glanced toward him.

"What did he say?"

Anson lowered his voice even further.

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"There was trouble at Silverloom Exchange yesterday. Commander Hall arrested the man responsible and questioned him personally. He finally got him talking. Everything that happened yesterday really was arranged by the Jones family. They assured him beforehand that Your Grace would absolutely never appear at Silverloom Exchange yesterday, so he had nothing to worry about."

Elowen's expression darkened immediately.

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Fathed

For the Jones family to say with such certainty that she would not go there meant they had already known something would happen inside Duskmoor Manor.

Which meant they had anticipated Caius developing the fever.

Even though Elowen had already suspected as much, hearing it confirmed outright still sent a cold wave of anger through her chest.

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