

Awakening Love: Reborn to Be His Duchess Novel

10:58 am ppp Awakening Love: Reborn to Be His Duchess Chapter 711 You Accept Scarlet? nished Roger glanced at his son, then at Maud, seemingly sensing the shift by the air, but he chose to keep quiet as well. The atmosphere at the table grew subiter and more strained by the minute, though everyone protended otherwise. Dinner dragged on and finally came to a slow end. Roger and Maud rose to take their leave and headed toward the exit. Draven trailed behind them, his slow steps suggesting he still had something left to say.

Just as they reached the doors of the Great Hall, Maud suddenly stopped. She turned around, her gaze lingering on Scarlet for a brief moment before she reached out and took the girl's hand. Scarlet froze slightly in surprise. Maud's hand was small but firm, its warmth enveloping Scarlet's hand in a steady, reassuring grip. Looking Scarlet dead in the eye, she spoke softly. "Good girl. Come over to our house for dinner sometime when you're free." A sudden hush fell over the Great Hall. Flattered and deeply moved, Scarlet nodded vigorously. "I'd love to," she replied.

Standing a few paces away, Draven stared at the scene, utterly stunned for a long moment. "Mother..." Draven's throat tightened as he swallowed hard. "Does this mean... You accept Scarlet?" Maud turned her head and looked at him, arching an eyebrow as she offered a casual, "Mm." That single grunt was as light as a feather drifting onto water, but to Draven's ears, it sounded like a mountain crashing down. He wanted to laugh, but at the same time, tears pricked his eyes.

He felt a sudden urge to throw his arms around Maud, but knowing it was inappropriate, he just paced in a frantic little circle, rubbing his hands together with a massive grin split across his face. "Then I'll come to Duskmoor Manor to propose tomorrow! First thing tomorrow morning!" Maud rolled her eyes and snapped, "You fool, keep dreaming!" Draven blinked, his smile freezing instantly. He genuinely couldn't understand. "Why? Didn't you just say you accepted Scarlet...?" Maud gave Scarlet a gentle smile and let go of her hand.

Refusing to waste her breath on her idiot son, she turned and walked out. Roger hurried after her. "Wait for me, Mrs. Hall..." Elowen looked at Draven. Being the kind soul she was, she smiled and explained. "Your mother means a proposal is a major milestone between you and Scarlet. You can't just rush into it. You need to pick an auspicious date, sort out all the wedding details, and draw up a guest list-nothing can be skipped. Tomorrow is far too hasty." Chapter 714 You Accept Scarlet? Finished From the sidelines, Cassian added with a playful stairk, "You've already waited this long.

A few more days won't kill you." Draven scratched his head and offered a sheepish grin, but the sheer joy radiating from his face was impossible to hide. After the Hall family left,

Elowen was in high spirits and planned to play with the children for a bit before heading to bed. "Your Grace." Scarlet walked in. Elowen looked up and noticed that Scarlet's eyes were slightly red, though she could hardly hide the joy on her face. Approaching Elowen, she gave a respectful curtsy. "There is something I wish to speak with you about, Your Grace." "Of course, go ahead," Elowen said warmly.

Taking a deep breath, Scarlet said softly, "I am so happy today. If it weren't for you, my marriage to Draven likely never would have happened. I can never repay your kindness, Your Grace." Elowen smiled. "I really didn't do much when it comes to your marriage. You see, Mrs. Hall never disliked you. She kept holding Draven back from proposing because she genuinely treasures you and wanted to look out for your best interests." Scarlet blinked in surprise. Elowen then relayed her entire conversation with Maud. Scarlet was deeply moved.

"So, you don't need to carry any weight on your shoulders," Elowen reassured her. "Your marriage to Draven is purely a matter of time." Scarlet glanced at her, looking slightly troubled. "Actually, I do have one concern." r Elowen looked over. "Oh?" Frowning slightly, Scarlet said in a quiet voice, "The Silverloom Exchange is incredibly busy right now. and I'm working from morning until night. I really can't pull myself away. If we start preparing for a wedding, I'm worried I won't have the time to manage it all.

The Exchange is just getting off the ground, and I can't just abandon it." Hearing this, Elowen couldn't help but laugh. Her laughter left Scarlet completely bewildered and a little self-conscious. "What is it, Your Grace?" "You silly girl," Elowen said, her laughter fading into a gentle, affectionate scold. "What do you think the entirety of Duskmoor Manor is here for? Naturally, there will be people to manage your wedding for you. 10:58 am pp Chapter 711 *ou Acccpt Scarlet? Finished You just focus on your work at the Silverloofn Exchange and leave everything else to me.

You don't have to worry about a thing. Scarlet froze, and a moment later, her eyes welled with tears again. "Your Grace, your kindness... I truly don't know how I can ever repay you." Elowen reached out to brush away a tear sliding down Scarlet's cheek. "If you want to repay me, then run the Silverloom Exchange well, and grow old together with Draven." Scarlet sniffled and nodded vigorously. A few days later, having made all the necessary preparations, Maud formally brought Draven along to present their marriage proposal. Maud was taking the occasion incredibly seriously.

She had changed into a brand-new, deep maroon robe, her hair styled immaculately. Roger wore his finest dark cyan robe, keeping his back rigidly straight. Trailing behind them, Draven was dressed in a pristine, ink-black robe, completely unable to mask the nervous excitement gleaming in his eyes. Scarlet was still tied up at the Silverloom Exchange and couldn't break away, so it was Elowen who received the family. 13.6K Awakening Love: Rebom to Be His Duchess

Chapter 712 Evelyn Didn't Stay Because of You Fasted Maud got straight to the point, explaining the purpose of their visit and presenting the betrothal gift list to Elowen for her review. Elowen took the list, reading through it carefully before nodding with a smile. "You've put a great deal of thought into this, Mrs. Hall. These betrothal gifts are exceptionally generous." Maud smiled warmly. "As long as you don't find them lacking, Your Grace.

Scarlet is one of yours, so we naturally cannot allow her to be slighted." With that, everyone sat down in the Great Hall to hash out the wedding details. From picking an auspicious date and arranging the banquet to drawing up the guest list and preparing the couple's new home, every single detail required thorough discussion. Elowen had personally put together a lavish wedding gift for Scarlet. It was entirely comprehensive, spanning fine fabrics, gold and silver jewelry, elegant furniture, and a substantial sum of personal funds.

When Maud looked over the dowry list, she couldn't help but gasp in surprise. "Your Grace, this is far too generous," she insisted. "Scarlet started out as a maid, but these wedding gifts are grander than what many noble ladies receive." Elowen chuckled. "Scarlet is the manager of the Silverloom Exchange, not just an ordinary maid. She is the reason the Exchange is thriving as it is today. She has earned every bit of this." After discussing the marriage for most of the day, the general blueprint for the wedding was finally set.

With the engagement officially locked in, Draven headed home with Maud. He hesitated the entire way back, clutching a question that had been eating at him for days, until he finally couldn't hold it in any longer. "Mother, if you've already accepted Scarlet, why is Evelyn still staying at our house?" It wasn't that he was worried about anything happening, but Evelyn was an unmarried woman. As a man who was about to be wed, he felt it was a matter of basic propriety. Maud stopped in her tracks and said evenly, "Evelyn didn't stay because of you." Draven blinked.

"Then why?" "She wants to find work at the Silverloom Exchange," Maud explained. "She heard about its reputation and knows they specifically hire women. She used your aunt's connections to secure a place to stay with us for a few days, and only recently asked me how she might get an introduction to Scarlet." Draven stood frozen on the spot, taking a long moment to process the words. As it turned out, Evelyn hadn't been after him at all; she was after the Silverloom Exchange.

He had spent all this time agonizing and treating her like a rival for his mother's approval, when in reality, she was practically his rival for Scarlet's attention. Over the following weeks, Duskmoor Manor became a whirlwind of activity. Scarlet and Draven's wedding was finally set for the eighth day of September, a highly auspicious date for marriage. Everything from the Chapter 712 Evelyn Didn't Stay Because of You Finished gifts and banquet preparations to the guest list was moving along smoothly.

Elowen put Gerda and Edith in charge of the planning, with Cora stepping in to assist, leaving Scarlet free to focus entirely on running the Silverloom Exchange only checking in on the details from time to time. Days bled into weeks, and before long, June arrived. The weather grew steadily warmer, but Cassian had already anticipated the heat. He ordered blocks of ice to be brought up from the cellars and placed around the rooms, keeping the house pleasantly cool. Meanwhile, Caius and Emily were growing by the day and becoming more entertaining. Emily was the first to learn how to roll over.

In the blink of an eye, she could tumble from one end of the bed to the other, often disappearing from sight the moment her wet nurse looked away. Ever since his severe fever, Caius rarely cried anymore. He was a much quieter baby now, perfectly content to lie on his back and suck on his own fists, happily leaving them covered in drool. Leaning against each other at the edge of the bed, Elowen and Cassian watched as Caius slept soundly, while Emily enthusiastically crawled from one side of the mattress to the other, spun around, and crawled right back.

"Doesn't she ever get tired?" Elowen mused. Cassian smiled. "With that much energy, she can go riding with you when she's older." Elowen turned her head toward him. "Why don't you teach her some martial arts?" "Alright, whatever you want," Cassian murmured, leaning in to kiss her. Elowen pushed his face away. "Emily is looking right at s..." "She doesn't mind," Cassian whispered softly, trying to coax her. Just then, the sound of hurried footsteps echoed outside. Mira came running into the room, beaming with excitement. "Your Grace, Your Grace!

Word has just come from the palace!" Elowen hurriedly shoved Cassian's face aside and turned around. "What news?" Mira stepped into the room, entirely oblivious to the atmosphere. Her eyes sparkled as she spoke cheerfully, "It's wonderful news from Iris!" r Caelan and Iris had wed just last month. Caelan held Iris in exceptionally high regard; though she was a secondary consort and custom didn't dictate a grand wedding, he had insisted on holding a palace ceremony anyway. While it wasn't overly lavish, Caelan had overseen every detail personally to ensure everything was handled perfectly.

Ruunor had it that Elira hadn't been pleased with the arrangement, but she dropped the matter when Caelan stood his ground. Hearing Mira mention good news, Elowen smiled. "Tell me." Mira's face flushed with excitement. "Iris is pregnant!" Elowen blinked in surprise, then a warm smile broke across her face. "Ah, the benefits of youth," she murmured softly. "They've barely been married at all, and Iris is already expecting." M P Awakening+ve Reborn to Be His Duchess Chapter 718 Are You Upset? This baby would secure Iris's position in the palace.

Even as a secondary consort, a mother's status rose with her child. If she gave birth to a prince, she would be the mother of a royal heir, and no one would dare look down on her. Cassian remained silent, casting a deeply resentful glance at Elowen. But her mind was completely occupied with Iris and the pregnancy, and she didn't even notice. After savoring the good news for a moment, Elowen turned back to him. "Cassian, now that

Iris is pregnant, I really think I should visit her. Custom dictates that when a palace consort expects, her family should visit.

Iris has no one, but I don't want her to feel lonely and isolated. The palace is a cruel place to navigate without anyone backing you up." Cassian seemed a bit distracted. "Alright, whatever you think is best." Elowen gave him a searching look. Before she could question him, Mira spoke up, unable to hide her excitement. "Your Grace, may I please come with you to see Iris?" Forgetting about Cassian for the moment, Elowen turned to Mira and smiled. "Of course you can." Mira nearly jumped for joy. "Then I'll go get some gifts ready!" She turned to leave.

"Close the door behind you," Cassian added curtly. Mira dutifully obeyed. Once she was gone, Elowen finally turned her head and looked at Cassian with a mischievous grin. "What's wrong with you? Are you upset?" Cassian gave a sullen grunt but said nothing. Elowen thought about it for a second, and when the realization hit her, she leaned in closer. "Is it because I said Caelan was young and capable of getting her pregnant so quickly?" Cassian grunted in affirmation again. [Elowen laughed even harder, wrapping her arms around his waist as her voice softened playfully.

"My dear husband, I didn't mean to imply you're old. Besides, we conceived quite quickly after we were together, didn't we?" She lifted her chin, leaning in to kiss him. Cassian tilted his head away slightly, mimicking her earlier tone. "Emily is looking right at us.. Emily, who had been crawling all over the place, had finally worn herself out. She was now fast asleep in the middle of the massive bed, her little bottom sticking up in the air. Laughing, Elowen pressed her lips straight against his. Cassian slipped his hand around her lower back. pulling her tighter against his chest.

After a long, breathless kiss, Elowen pulled back slightly, resting her forehead against his. "Feeling any Sara Lili Sara Lili is a daring

Chapter 713 Are You Upset? better?" Finished Cassian kept his arm firmly around her waist, his dark eyes locked onto her, reflecting only her image. "Tomorrow, let's have them move the children to the nursery next door," he said, his voice deep and serious. Elowen stared at him in disbelief before bursting into laughter, giving his chest a playful swat. But she didn't disagree. Finally, a faint smile tugged at the corners of Cassian's lips. The next day was bright and clear. Elowen took Mira with her to visit Iris.

Since Caelan had not yet been granted his own title and estate, he still resided in the palace as a prince, his quarters situated to the east of Elira's chambers. As Caelan's secondary consort, Iris shared those quarters with him. However, when Elowen arrived, neither Iris nor Caelan was anywhere to be seen. A lady-in-waiting stepped forward, bowing respectfully. "Your Grace, please forgive us. Lady Iris went to Lady Elira's palace to pay her respects and has not yet returned." Elowen's brow furrowed slightly.

She understood the custom of daily morning visits, but it was now nearly noon, almost lunchtime. Was Iris still paying her respects? Sensing that something was amiss but keeping her expression neutral, Elowen said calmly, "That works out well, then. I was planning to visit Lady Elira anyway." Elowen turned and headed toward Elira's chambers. Following closely behind, Mira whispered, "Your Grace, do you think Iris is alright?" "I can't say for sure," Elowen replied, a frown deepening on her face. Both women sighed softly, sharing a quiet, mutual anxiety.

Meanwhile, Elira sat gracefully at the head of the room, holding a cup of water with impeccable elegance. She looked down upon Iris, eyeing her like an unsatisfactory piece of property. Yet, when she spoke, her voice was slow and deceptively gentle. "Iris, now that you are Caelan's secondary consort. I naturally want the best for you. However, you must remain self-aware. You come from humble beginnings; marrying Caclan is a significant step up for you.

Caelan dotes on you out of the goodness of his heart, but you must not let that make you forget your place." Iris stood below, looking delicate and frail, yet her back remained perfectly straight. Having stood for so long, her face had grown pale. She pressed her lips together tightly, offering no defense, choosing instead to listen in silence. 10:58 am pp. Chapter 713 Are You Upset? "Have you taken everything I just said to heart?" Elira asked, setting her cup down. Iris bowed slightly, her voice a bit dry. "I have." Elira nodded.

"I know you are clever, but that cleverness needs to be directed properly. Caelan is young and easily blinded by sweet words, but I am not. It would be best if you put away those little schemes in my presence." Iris's eyelashes fluttered, and her body swayed slightly. Elira raised an eyebrow. "What is it? Can you not even stand?" \$ 13.6K MODUIT to Be His Duchess Sara

Chapter 714 Your Protector Has Arrived Iris took a deep breath to suppress a sudden wave of nausea. Forcing her voice to remain steady, she said, "Your Highness, I will remember every word of your guidance. However, I have recently discovered I am pregnant, and my body is still quite weak. I ask for your understanding." She mentioned this to remind Elira that, in her condition, she could not withstand such prolonged lectures. The child she carried would be Caelan's firstborn, a fact she hoped Elira would consider carefully. But her words clearly failed to move Elira.

"How foolish of me, I almost forgot," Elira said with a warm smile, her tone remaining gentle. "You are carrying royal blood now, which makes you precious indeed. Attendants, bring a chair for Iris. She still needs to hear the rest of what I have to say." A servant brought over a chair and placed it at the foot of the dais. Left with no other choice, Iris sat down. The chair was hard and un-cushioned. It wasn't comfortable by

any means, but it was still better than standing. Iris sat there, keeping her eyes cast down toward her lap.

In truth, from the moment she resolved to marry Caelan as his secondary consort, she had expected her future to be full of hardships. Setting aside the reality of being a prince's secondary consort in the palace, very few daughters-in-law anywhere in the world escaped the cruelty of a mother-in-law. Iris had endured days like this before, but she had always assumed things would improve once she became pregnant. Clearly, she had been too optimistic. Elira spoke again, her tone as unhurried as before. "I actually quite like you, Iris. My only worry is your humble background.

You won't be able to offer Caelan any leverage in the future. Since I have no other choice, I must instruct you thoroughly in proper etiquette. That way, even if you cannot be of help later on, at least you won't make any mistakes. Don't you agree?" Iris didn't argue. She knew it was pointless. Elira wasn't looking for an explanation; she wanted submission. She wanted Iris to know her place and to remember that, in this palace, she would always be inferior. Ever since Iris had married Caelan, Elira had constantly repeated these kinds of remarks.

It wasn't that Caelan hadn't stood up for her, or that he hadn't argued back with Elira. But given Caelan's position, his interference only ever made things worse. Iris had always considered herself quite clever, but in this situation, she realized she was utterly powerless. Her only option was to endure the misery. Just then, a maid hastened into the room to report, "Your Highness, Lady Elowen has arrived." Iris's heart leaped.. Inside the hall, Elira paused slightly at the maid's words and glanced over at Iris. She had known all along that Elowen would come to the palace eventually.

Back when Iris was still staying in the Crown Prince's Wing, Elowen had carefully weighed Iris's situation and her options for a retreat, even going so far as to plead with Elira to intervene. Elowen and Elira weren't particularly close; they were merely partners. For Elira to help meant Elowen had to call in a significant favor. Yet, Elowen had done it anyway. Now that Iris was pregnant, there was no way Elowen wouldn't be concerned upon hearing the news. Her visit to the palace had only ever been a matter of time. * Elira just hadn't expected Elowen to hurry here so quickly.

"Iris, it seems your protector has arrived," Elira said, keeping a pleasant smile on her face and her voice perfectly amiable. Iris kept her head bowed respectfully. "You jest, Your Highness. As His Highness's secondary consort, I am naturally cherished by both you and His Highness. I have never been mistreated, so there is no reason for Her Grace to protect me from anything." Elira gave her a long, hard look but said nothing more. Just then, Elowen stepped into the hall.

Her gaze swept over Elira before shifting to Iris, lingering for a fraction of a second on the girl's pale face before drifting away as if she hadn't noticed a thing. "Greetings, Lady

Elira." Elowen curtsied gracefully, her posture flawless and beyond reproach. Elira rose quickly to welcome her, beaming with warmth. "Your Grace, what a pleasant surprise! You should have sent word ahead so I could prepare for your arrival. Please, sit. Someone bring out the coffee." Elowen accepted the invitation without pretense and offered a compliment.

"I've heard Your Highness serves the finest coffee-the very first batch of this year's special roast from Rivenshire. I understand your brother went to great lengths to have it shipped here from the region. It is my good fortune to try it today." Elira froze for a moment, uncharacteristically silent. Standing to the side, Iris immediately caught the hidden meaning. Elira's brother, Sebastian, was the governor of Rivenshire, an area known for producing coffee beans reserved exclusively for the royal family.

By law, the first harvest had to be sent straight to the palace for the Emperor to taste. Eager to please his sister, however, Sebastian had pulled strings to smuggle the beans directly to her quarters first. Under normal circumstances, sending a batch of coffee wouldn't be a massive issue. The problem was that even His Majesty hadn't tasted this harvest yet. The Emperor went without, while a mere consort was already enjoying it. Such an act openly challenged the Emperor's supremacy-a grave offense that risked incurring his wrath.

Fortunately, the matter had been handled discreetly, known only to a selective few.

10:52 am P p pp Awakening Love Reborn to Be His Dupbears Emished Chapter 715 I Am Absolutely Delighted Iris knew about it because Calan had complained to her. He had been furious, arguing that his uncle's recklessness would ruin both his mother and himself. Iris had advised him to send someone to Rivenshire to reprimand and scare Sebastian in the Emperor's name, followed by a reassuring letter from Caelan implying that they, too, were feeling the pressure in the palace. The letter would serve as a warning to Sebastian to tread carefully for the sake of the entire Jones family.

Caelan had been thrilled with the plan and had held her close, kissing her for a long time. Beyond them, very few people knew of the incident, and even those who had heard whispers would never dare bring it up to Elira's face. But Elowen was different. Backed by her high status and protected by Cassian and her two children, she could say whatever she pleased. No one else had the courage or the standing to look Elira in the eye and make such a statement. And Iris knew exactly why Elowen had brought it up. It was a warning to Elira to back off.

The next moment, Elowen looked over at Iris, as if only just noticing her presence. "Oh, Iris, you're here too!" Her expression softened, a genuine smile lighting up her face. "I heard you're expecting. How are you holding up? Is everything going well with the pregnancy?" Elira found herself unable to cut in. Iris met Elowen's gaze and answered softly, "Thank you for asking, Your Grace. I'm doing very well." Elowen smiled warmly.

"Among the royal lineage, the late Crown Prince Alaric met an untimely end before he could father any children.

Caelan has proven to be the most accomplished of the remaining brothers, and the child you carry will be his firstborn. I imagine Caelan must be thrilled, and Lady Elira even more so." With that, she turned her eyes back to Elira. There was nothing Elira could say to contradict her; she certainly couldn't claim she was unhappy about it. Forcing her lips into a smile, she nodded along. "Yes, of course. I am absolutely delighted." "Come to think of it, no one in the palace will be happier than His Majesty," Elowen mused. "The Emperor truly adores children.

You saw it yourself, Your Highness, how ecstatic he was when he met my two children with Cassian. I actually paid my respects to His Majesty earlier today when I entered the palace. When I mentioned Iris's pregnancy, he was absolutely overjoyed-he couldn't even hide his smile." Elira's smile grew a bit rigid. Elowen then turned back to Iris, sounding puzzled. "Why are you still sitting here at this hour?" Iris hesitated, offering no answer. Elowen chuckled knowingly. "I know this is your first pregnancy, so it's only natural to be excited.

But since 10:52 am P ppp Chapter 715 Am Absolutely Delighted Finished it's still early, the pregnancy is likely unstable. You shouldn't be sitting or standing for long stretches; you need proper rest She turned to Elira again, her tone carrying a hint of playful reproach "Your Highness, you have the most experience when it comes to raising children. Iris is young and doesn't know any better, so she's bound to be reckless. As her elder, you really must guide her and look after her carefully.

After all, if anything were to happen to this first child, it would break Caclan's heart- and His Majesty's as well." Elowen knew perfectly well that Elira was deliberately making things difficult for the girl, yet she chose not to expose her directly. Instead, she framed the situation as Iris being young and naive, while simultaneously urging Elira to take good care of her. Her words were beyond reproach, leaving Elira's dignity intact while effectively backing trer into a corner. Unable to deny or refuse the responsibility, Elira could only force a smile and agree.

"Yes, quite right." After a brief conversation, a maid brought out the coffee. It wasn't the Rivenshire roast Elowen had mentioned earlier. Elowen glanced at it, noting the slight tension. in Elira's expression. Not minding the change, Elowen picked up her cup, took a polite sip, and offered her thoughts. "It's nice, though it doesn't quite compare to the coffee Iris brews." She then turned to Elira, her face filled with genuine envy. "Iris may come from a humble background, but she makes a spectacular cup of coffee. Sometimes I think she is sharper than most men.

To be honest, Your Highness, if Caelan hadn't beat me to it and asked the Emperor for her hand first, I absolutely would have requested His Majesty's permission to bring Iris

to Duskmoor Manor." Elira stiffened. The implication was clear: Iris might lack a prestigious family line, but she possessed immense capability. If Elira and Caelan failed to cherish her, Elowen wouldn't hesitate to take her away to Duskmoor Manor. Iris was not isolated or helpless; she had powerful backing, a safety net, and an excellent way out. Elira understood the underlying threat perfectly.

Feeling a sudden chill but widening her smile to appear even warmer, Elira replied, "You shouldn't say such things, Your Grace. Both Caelan and I care deeply for Iris I'm afraid you won't ever get the chance to take her away to Duskmoor Manor." It was a sharp enough retort, at least keeping up appearances for the time being. p Elowen smiled, set her cup down, and spoke softly. "Speaking of home, I have a few matters waiting for my attention back at Duskmoor Manor. Your Highness, I will take my leave now." Elira offered a polite courtesy. "It must be close to noon by now.

Why don't you stay for a casual lunch before you go, Your Grace?" 13.7K 10.52 am P P P P Awakening Ove Reborn to By His Duchess

Chapter 716 You Shouldn't Be Doing That! Finiched Elowen shook her head with a laugh. "No, thank you. Cassian cooked for me at home today. If I don't show up, he'll be terribly disappointed." Elira gave a helpless smile. "In that case, you must come visit me again soon, Your Grace." "I certainly will," Elowen said. "Safe travels, Your Grace," Elira added. "Since you arrived so suddenly, I didn't have the chance to host you properly. Next time, I will make sure everything is prepared." Exchanging polite pleasantries, Elowen stood up and made her way out.

Once Elowen had disappeared through the door, Iris seized her moment to rise. "Your Highness, I'm feeling rather fatigued. If I may, I would like to return to my quarters and rest." Elira looked at her, her expression unreadable. She didn't object, however, and nodded with a gentle smile. "Go on, then. Get some proper rest, and don't overexert yourself." Iris bowed. "Thank you, Your Highness." Elira watched her walk out of the hall. The smile on her face faded bit by bit until it was replaced by a cold, distant calm.

She picked up her coffee, took a slow sip, and remained silent for a long time. Meanwhile, Iris hurried out of the hall, her frantic steps betraying her eagerness to catch up with Elowen. "Iris!" It wasn't until she heard Mira's cheerful voice that Iris finally stopped and turned around. There, by a small, rugged rockery, she saw Elowen. Elowen had found a relatively flat rock to sit on and was looking back at her with a warm smile. Iris rushed forward, immediately preparing to drop to her knees and kowtow. "Mira!" Elowen called out.

Taking the cue, Mira hurried over in a few quick strides and caught Iris before she could hit the ground. "You're pregnant! You really shouldn't be doing that!" Iris had paused mid-kneel, but she still tried to press downward, determined to show her respect. "I must thank you, Your Grace, for coming to my rescue today." Elowen's smile remained

gentle. "You are carrying a child; there is no need for such grand gestures. Besides, you are Caelan's secondary consort now. You are part of the imperial family." Iris shook her head.

"Your Grace, if it hadn't been for you today, I don't know how much longer Your Highness would have kept me standing there. I don't even know if my baby could have taken the strain. I can never repay your kindness. I know full well that every word you spoke today was meant to defend me. Standing to the side, Mira tilted her head, looking back and forth between Elowen and Iris in complete confusion. 10:52 am P p pp. Chapter 716 You Shouldn't Be Doing That! Finished confusion.

After holding it in for a moment, she couldn't help but ask, "Iris, you're clearly very smart, so how come you're completely helpless when Elira bullies you?" Iris found herself at a loss for words. Elowen answered for her. "Because Iris is the one caught in the middle. It's not that people in her position don't know how to break free; it's just that doing so is incredibly difficult. She can't simply clash with Elira. Elira is the mother-in-law, and Iris is the daughter-in-law; if she talks back, she'll be branded as unfilial.

And if she goes complaining to Caelan, he might protect her out of pity once or twice, but do it too often, and he'll eventually just see her as difficult. For now, she has no choice but to endure it." Mira let out a soft "oh," only half-understanding. Listening to them, Iris felt her eyes welling up with tears. Noticing her distress, Elowen decided to change the subject, offering a bright smile. "Oh, that reminds me -when Mira and I were passing through the market, we picked up some treats for you. We left them in your chambers.

There are cakes and dried fruits; they're actually favorites of mine and Mira's, so I wasn't sure if they'd be to your liking. But I figured most young women share similar tastes. They should still be warm when you get back. You can share them with Caelan." Iris's eyes lit up slightly as something crossed her mind. "Has Caelan finished his work for the day?" Mentioning Caelan brought back memories of Elowen's visit to the Emperor's study earlier that morning, where she had run into him. Ah, Caelan... Her smile grew a fraction more knowing.

She simply nodded and replied, "Yes, he's all done." Pausing for a moment, she lowered her voice. "No matter what brought the two of you together initially, or what circumstances you had to weigh, I heard about everything he did for you while I was at Duskmoor Manor. Even as an outsider, I found myself deeply moved. Caelan truly views you as his wife, not just a secondary consort. Now that you are carrying his child, you are, for all intents and purposes, a real married couple. Remember to give him your whole heart. Between husband and wife, nothing matters more than sincerity.

After all, it's the two of you who will be walking hand-in-hand for the decades to come." Iris took the words to heart. "I'll remember that." Elowen waved her hand dismissively.

"Alright, go on back." "Yes, Your Grace." Iris curtsied respectfully. Mira chimed in with a quiet reminder, "The cake I brought you is the absolute best, so make sure to eat plenty of it!" Iris smiled warmly. "I will, I promise." With that, she turned and left. Elowen remained perched lazily on the rockery, watching Iris's figure fade behind the palace walls. She couldn't help but let out a soft sigh.

Chapter 717 Pleee in Her Heart Lowering her gaze, Iris pushed down the unnameable emotion and walked in, her face carefully expressionless. Finished Lila noticed her first. Her smile vanished instantly as she bowed respectfully. "Your Highness" Keeping her head down, she quickly scurried out of the room Caelan turned around. His smile didn't fade as his eyes found Iris, and his voice was gentle. "You're back. My mother didn't give you too hard a time today, did she?" Iris looked up at his perfectly relaxed face, and that bitter, unnameable feeling surged even stronger inside her.

Elowen's words by the rockery echoed in her mind. Between husband and wife, nothing matters more than sincerity. She had truly taken those words to heart just moments ago. But now, she couldn't erase the image of Caelan and Lila laughing together. A sudden, humorless smile touched her lips. "Not at all." she said, her voice entirely flat. "It is only right that I listen to Her Highness's guidance." Caelan opened his mouth to speak. Iris cut him off before he could get a word out, her tone remaining cool and detached. "Your Highness, I ran into Lady Elowen on my way back.

Her Grace mentioned she brought some cakes for us, and they should still be warm. You should try some, Your Highness." Without waiting for a response, she turned on her heel and walked into the inner chamber. Caelan stood there watching her disappear behind the curtain, frozen in place for a brief moment before a slow smile spread across his face. Standing nearby, Cedar had witnessed the entire exchange. Totally bewildered, he asked, "Your Highness, Her Highness clearly seems upset. Why are you smiling?" Caelan glanced at him, his voice bright with amusement.

"You don't understand, Cedar She's upset because she saw me talking to another woman. She never used to care about things like that. Back at my mother's palace, I could talk to as many maids as I wanted, and she would always remain perfectly detached and polite, never offering a second glance or asking a single question. Do you know what this change means?" Cedar shook his head. "I really don't, sir." "It means I've found a place in her heart," Caelan said, unable to hide the sheer joy in his voice.

"She's finally starting to care about me." Cedar blinked in surprise, then slapped his thigh as realization dawned on him. "Of course! So Her Highness is jealous!" Caelan glared at him. "It's not jealousy. It's called caring." 10:52 am P ppp Chapter 732 Place in the thart & Finished Cedar lowered his voice further. "In that case, Your Highness, shouldn't you tell her about the special favor you fought so hard to get from the

Emperor? I'm sure it would make her incredibly happy? Caelan waved his hand dismissively, still beaming. "No rush.

I'll tell her once she cools down" 13.7K xx 10:52 am Pppp Awakening Love Reborn to Be His Duchess

Chapter 718 Care about Me With a broad grin. He clasp his hands behind his back and strolled leisurely toward the inner chamber. Watching Caelan's retreating figure, Cedar couldn't help but think that Caelan wasn't holding back out of patience at all. He was simply enjoying every second of her jealousy. Caelan stepped into the inner chamber to find Iris carefully arranging the pastries from the food box onto individual plates. Chocolate cupcakes, lemon bars, cinnamon rolls, and almond cookies were meticulously lined up across the table, creating a colorful and fragrant spread of sweet aromas.

Watching Iris lean over to meticulously adjust the alignment of each plate, Caelan walked over and took a seat. He glanced at the desserts, then up at her, a teasing smile playing on his lips. "So neatly arranged. You really are a model wife, Iris." Iris looked up at him briefly before lowering her eyes again. "Men the world over prefer compliant, dutiful women. Being a man yourself, Your Highness, I suppose you're no exception." Her tone was casual, but the underlying sting was undeniable. Far from being annoyed, Caelan's smile only widened.

"Speaking of which, men the world over also tend to take multiple wives and concubines." Iris's hand froze. She snapped her head up, staring directly at him. Caelan waited patiently for her response. Instead of speaking, Iris simply held his gaze for a few seconds before pressing her lips together. She looked back down, nudged a plate of cupcakes a little closer to him, and said in a muffled voice, "You should eat, Your Highness. Have a few more pieces." Caelan remained perfectly relaxed. Complying without protest, he picked up a chocolate cupcake.

Watching his unbothered, leisurely demeanor only fanned the flames of Iris's growing frustration. She opened her mouth to say something, but swallowed the words before they could escape. She didn't even know what she wanted to say, let alone what she was expecting from him. It was just infuriating how he clearly understood everything, yet chose to play completely innocent. Could he really not see that she was angry? Or did he simply not care? As night fell, the palace lanterns were lit one by one. Caelan was still tied up with work in the study.

Having nothing else to do, Iris washed up, changed into clean nightclothes, and crawled into bed early. She lay on her side with her eyes closed, facing the wall and turning her back to the door, but the day's events kept replaying in her mind. She thought of Elira's

words, the fierce tone in Elowen's voice when she stood up for her, and that earnest warning by the rockery about true sincerity. Finally, her thoughts drifted to the way Caelan had laughed and chatted with Lila, the young maid. Chapter 718 there about Ma She tossed and turned, utterly unable to sleep.

Back when she was living the Crown Prince's Wing, she had never been like this. In those days, she had only one goal in mind: survival. She had kept her heart under tight lock and key, wrapping it in a shell so thick and hardened that no one could break through. But now, a crack seemed to have formed in that armor. Light was filtering through, leaving her restless and unsettled. Deep down, Iris had a pretty good idea of what was happening to her. It was just that her instinct was always to flee from such situations; she instinctively sensed danger and naturally sought safety.

Yet because this involved her feelings, she had no idea where she could possibly run to escape it. She felt as though she were falling, completely out of control. Frustrated, Iris pulled the blanket over her head and curled herself into a tight ball. After what felt like an eternity, familiar footsteps approached outside the door—steady, measured, and neither too heavy nor too light. Iris recognized them almost instantly as Caelan's. Her body stiffened slightly. Acting on instinct, she squeezed her eyes shut and pretended to be fast asleep.

The footsteps paused at the door for a moment before stepping softly into the room. A few candles were blown out, throwing the room into dim shadow. Iris heard, the faint rustle of fabric as Caelan washed up and changed his clothes. He moved quietly, clearly trying not to wake her. A moment later, a faint, cool draft of moisture approached from behind as Caelan lifted the blanket and settled into bed beside her. Iris kept her eyes closed, trying her best to keep her breathing steady. But she knew she wasn't putting up a very convincing act—she could feel her own eyelashes/trembling.

In the quiet of the night, Caelan's voice drifted over, low and laced with a hint of playfulness. "Still angry? You're not asleep, are you?" Iris remained silent. Caelan reached out and wrapped an arm around her waist. Iris tensed instantly, but she didn't pull away. Through the thin fabric of her nightclothes, his palm felt warm against her stomach. He didn't move any further, keeping his hand resting gently there as if trying to sense her mood. "Iris..." His voice was low, slow, and tender.

"Are you upset because you saw me laughing and talking with Lila?" Iris still didn't answer, but her breathing quickened slightly. Caelan let out a soft sigh. "To be honest, I'm glad. Before, you never would have been upset by something like this. You were always so polite and respectful around me, treating me like someone you just had to deal with. But today, you're upset. And you're upset because you finally care about me." Awakening 1tre Reborn to Be His to bless

Chapter 719 I Am Your Husband Iris froze Finishert "I was actually waiting for you to laring it up and call me out on it, which is why I didn't rush to explain myself. But I waited and waited, and you never said a word. I realized that maybe you're just not good at expressing these kinds of things. It could take days, months... You might never say it in your whole life. So, I couldn't help but speak up first. I'm just too happy to keep it to myself, and I can't bear to see you sad" Iris balled her hands into fists, biting her lip hard.

"When you came back today," Caelan continued, "I was telling Lila to prepare a surprise for you. She's young, and she was so genuinely happy for you that she couldn't help but laugh." He paused for a moment, then asked, "Can you guess what the surprise is?" Still keeping her back to him, Iris swallowed down a couple of muffled chokes, trying her best to sound casual. "If I guess it, it won't be a surprise anymore." Caelan let out a low laugh. "True.

I was so excited I completely forgot about that." He coaxed gently, "Turn around first." After a brief silence, Iris complied, slowly turning over to face him. The moonlight filtering through the window lattices mingled with the dim candlelight, casting a clear glow over Iris's face and revealing the faint redness around her eyes. Caelan gazed at her. "I knew it. You really were hurting I'm sorry, Iris. I should have explained sooner." Iris felt a sudden ache in her chest. She had never expected Caelan to say something like that to her.

Suddenly, Lady Elowen's words by the rockery echoed in her mind again. Between a husband and wife, nothing matters more than sincerity. and Caelan reached out, tenderly cupping her face in his hands, and gently brushed away the stray tears at the corners of her eyes with his thumbs. "I'll never let this happen again," he murmured as he wiped them away. Once her tears had dried, he continued, "I also know you've endured a great deal of hardship from my mother since marrying me. She looks down on you because of your humble background and has constantly humiliated you.

Even now, while you're carrying my child, you still have to endure endless lectures from her. I know you've suffered, but as her son, it's truly difficult for me to reproach her." Iris wasn't surprised by his words. She knew Caelan was a deeply filial son. Besides, he had been a sickly child; back then, people in the palace used to whisper behind his back, wondering if he would even survive to adulthood.

Despite facing intense pressure from the late Empress, Elira had protected Caelan and raised him into the tall, handsome man he was today, which had undoubtedly taken an immense amount of effort. From Caelan's perspective, it made no sense to ruin his relationship with his mother over a newlywed secondary consort. In the future, when Caelan became Crown Prince and eventually Emperor, he would still need Elira-and the backing of the Jones family. So, while Iris felt a twinge of disappointment hearing this, she merely nodded obediently.

"I understand." Chapter 7191Am Your 1 Husband Seeing her reaction, a smile actually tugged at the corners of Caclan's mouth. "However, I went to the study today to petition Father. Since you are already pregnant, you can be elevated to primary consort." Iris had still been dwelling on his comment about not being able to criticize his mother, so the sudden revelation caught her completely off guard. It took a moment for the words to sink in. Her eyes widened in utter disbelief as she stared at Caelan. "Bu... but my background is so humble.

And I'm only pregnant; I haven't even given birth to a legitimate heir yet..." How could she possibly become his primary consort? She already considered herself incredibly lucky just to be secondary consort. a "What does background matter? Since the founding of Avenlor, we've had high-ranking finisters who started out as butchers, and these days the imperial court frequently promotes scholars from modest families.

If anything, your background makes you a better fit." Caefan smiled down into her not have given birth to a legitimate son yet, but I wanted nothing more than to show you the honor and eyes. "You may love you deserve, so I begged Father in his study for a long time. Father is soft-hearted, especially after everything that happened between Cassian and Elowen. It's made him much more lenient when it comes to arranged marriages and matters of the heart. Because of that, he has already given his consent. It won't be long before the imperial decree for your promotion is issued.

Once you are the primary consort, and with Elowen backing you up, even my mother will have to think twice before trying to lecture you." Iris's head spun. In that moment, a profound sense of unreality washed over her. Her lips parted slightly. "You've already done so much for me. You gave me a proper wedding, and now you're making me your primary consort... I don't know..." She wanted to say she didn't know how she could ever/repay him. Caelan stroked her cheek. "Iris, we are husband and wife. Supporting each other is exactly what we're supposed to do.

I'm not doing any of this because I expect something in return. I just want to treat you well, purely from the bottom of my heart." Looking at her, a smile tugged at his lips again. "If you really want to repay me, then just remember this: if something upsets you in the future, you have to tell me. If you're jealous, go ahead and give me the cold shoulder. Get mad at me, pick a fight, throw a temper tantrum whatever you want. I don't want you to keep treating me like an outsider.

Iris, you need to remember that I am your husband." Γ 13.7K Awakening Love Reborn to Be His Duchess

Chapter 720 Hale Is an Excellent Surname For a long time, Irisquldn't find her voice. Her eyes stung as they slowly filled with tears. Caelan smiled gently. "Why are you crying now?" Iris bit her lip. "I'm not..." * Overjoyed, he leaned in and pressed a tender kiss to her lips. Iris stared at him for a moment before wrapping her arms around his

waist of her own accord. It wasn't that she had never done this before, but in the past, it had always been an act, a piece of seduction. Tonight, it came entirely from the heart.

Figh Caelan held her close, holding her naturally as he whispered, "All right, let's get some sleep." Iris murmured an agreement and closed her eyes in his embrace. The moonlight drifted through the window lattices, draping over them like a thin veil. Wrapped in his warmth, Iris let down her guard and stripped away her armor for the first time in her life, drifting into a deep, peaceful sleep. A few days later, an imperial decree sent shockwaves through all of Vanelle. The Emperor had ordered that Caelan's secondary consort, Iris, be elevated to primary consort.

She was to be granted the surname "Hale," entered into the royal registry, and afforded all the rights and privileges of her new rank. The sudden announcement set off a flurry of gossip throughout the court. Some praised Caelan's devotion, while others murmured that it breached protocol, but with the decree already issued, no one dared speak out openly. Yet, few knew that it was actually Elowen who had suggested granting Iris the name, Hale. That day, Elowen had gone to the palace to pay her respects to the Emperor.

Upon entering the study, she happened across Caelan kneeling on the floor, earnestly pleading with his majesty to appoint Iris as his primary consort. The Emperor had pondered in silence for a long time, his eyes searching Caelan's face, before finally relenting. "Her birth is too low; making her a primary consort goes against protocol. I will grant your request, but she has been a servant for many years and has a given name but no family name. I must bestow a surname upon her to elevate her status." Overjoyed, Caelan bowed repeatedly in gratitude.

The Emperor tossed out a few names, but none seemed quite right. Watching from the side, Elowen smiled warmly. "Your Majesty, why not let her take my name, Hale? I may not amount to much myself, but my father and brother have certainly proven their merit on the battlefield. Besides, Hale has a nice ring to it." The Emperor caught himself, then smiled. He looked at Elowen for a poignant moment before nodding. Chapter 726 frole is an Excellent Surname Fry well. Fris Hale. It has a good ring to it. I approve" Once everything was sertesd, Elowerrand Caclan walked out of the study together.

Caelan turned to her, his voice low. "Elowen, I know you came to the palare today mostly because of Iris's pregnancy, but I have a favor to ask. When you see her later, please don't mention the decree just yet? Elowen arched an eyebrow. "You want to surprise her?" With the tips of his ears turning a faint pink, Caclan nodded. He paused for a moment before adding quietly, "It's just that... even though Iris married me and is always sweet and gentle, I still feel like there's a thin weil between us. I can reach out and touch her, but I can't quite see her true feelings.

I keep hoping that if I treat her well-if I'm just a little better to her-I'll finally be able to understand her completely. Elowen fell silent for a moment, then patted the back of his hand."Of course I won't say anything: you have my word. But if you want my advice on the matter, I'll tell you this: between husband and wife, sincerity is what matters most. Give her your whole heart, and it will be returned to you." Caelan bowed. "Thank you. I'll keep that in mind." True to her promise, Elowen didn't say a word about the decree when she saw Iris later.

She knew, however, that the news would bring Iris immense joy. Happiness had a way of melting the coldest armor, and she was sure Iris would gradually open her heart and let Caelan in. By the time the official announcement of Iris's elevation swept through the city, Elowen was in the back room of the Silverloom Exchange, reviewing the ledgers with Scarlet and Finn at her side. Scarlet couldn't hide the grin tugging at her lips. "Well, Your Grace, it looks like you'll have even more influential people in your corner now." Elowen smiled and nodded.

Scarlet stole a glance at her, then murmured, "Come to think of it, Your Grace, I don't have a surname either." Elowen tilted her head, looking at her. Without beating around the bush, Scarlet said bluntly, "Back at the Stargazer Pavilion, the boss just tossed the name Scarlet at me. No family name, and no one ever bothered to ask." Setting her ledger down, Elowen laughed. "If you'd like, you can take my name too. Scarlet Hale has a wonderful ring to it." Looking into Elowen's warm, smiling eyes, Scarlet was visibly moved. "Alright...

I'll be a Hale from now on." "Then it's settled," Elowen said warmly. "Starting today, your name is Scarlet Hale. If anyone asks for your surname in the future, you tell them proudly that you are a Hale of Duskmoor Manor." Scarlet nodded eagerly. From the side, Finn grumbled, "If I weren't stuck keeping the Carter name for the sake of my old man and our ancestors, I'd jump ship and become a Hale too." 10.53 am p p pp Chapter 720 take t Finished Elowen rested her chin in her hand, considering it. "Finite Hale does sound pretty good, actually: She couldn't help but chuckle at her own thoughts.

"Hale really is an excellent surname. It goes with absolutely anything." 1 "