

Love's Unexpected Awakening: Elowen's Choice Novel Chapter 21: Chapter 21 - Read Free English Romance Novel

Chapter 21 A Visit Long Overdue Even though she had done nothing wrong , Elowen still felt uneasy . +20 Free Coins Instinctively , she glanced toward Cassian . In the dim light , all she could see was the sharp line of his jaw , subtly tensing . " Just the other day , she came to confront me , " Marwen was saying , voice filled with indignation . " Accusing Lucien of trying to harm His Grace . But Lucien has always respected his cousin more than anyone ! You know this , Your Grace ! He would never dare offend you .

It was that girl - Elowen - spouting lies , stealing my access sigil , playing her little mind games ... " She narrowed her eyes . " I wouldn't be surprised if all of this was planned from the start . She's scheming to seize Duskmoor's household authority for herself ! " Elowen was stunned . The audacity - Marwen was turning the truth on its head . Granted , the claim that Lucien had tried to assassinate Cassian ... might have been something Elowen had exaggerated just a little . Her confidence wavered . She glanced again at Cassian . After all , Lucien was his cousin . Marwen was his aunt .

Of course , he'd lean toward ... Cassian tapped a long , elegant finger against the armrest . His voice came , even and cool . " Take her away . " Marwen lifted her chin , triumphant . " You heard His Grace ! What are you waiting for ? Drag this shameless harlot out of here ! " But the guards behind Cassian didn't move toward Elowen . Instead , they stepped forward and seized Marwen by the arms . Marwen stared in disbelief . " What ... what is the meaning of this ?! " Cassian's expression remained calm . " Lucien did , in fact , attempt to assassinate me . " Marwen froze . Her eyes widened .

" What ?! " Cassian continued , " I knew ahead of time that the Duchess would be visiting the stables today . " Marwen's breath caught . He knew ? Bran , standing behind him , added , " Her Grace told me before leaving that she planned to inspect the horses and stablehands . If she were truly meeting someone in secret , why would she inform me beforehand ? " Marwen's face went pale , then flushed with anger and disbelief . She gritted her teeth . " But ...

but she clearly slipped away alone to meet with that stable boy- " Elowen let out a sigh and spoke with resignation , " This sort of matter ... the fewer people who know , the better . " The moment she said it , Marwen's alarm bells went off . Elowen turned to the boy . " You not only ruined Lucien's brushes , but also poisoned a warhorse . You've cost Duskmoor a great deal of money . How do you intend to repay it ? " The boy was speechless . Elowen's tone remained kind and composed . " If you tell me who sent you , I'll forget the debt . " The boy stiffened and shook his head . " I ...

I wasn't sent by anyone ! " 1/2 12:06 pm ppp . Chapter 21 A Visit Long Overdue +20 Free Coins Elowen replied , " You bear some resemblance to His Highness the Crown Prince . How could there be no one behind this ? You entered the manor intentionally , perhaps to provoke discord between His Highness and His Grace , to drag this household into ruin . Whoever sent you clearly had

malicious intentions . " Marwen began to panic . And Elowen looked at her again . " That's why I brought him somewhere private to question him .

A matter this sensitive - if it got out , the entire household could be in danger . " Marwen's face turned ashen . She tried to smile , but it came out stiff and dry . Cassian's lips curled ever so slightly . Elowen looked at the boy again . " If you insist on keeping silent , there's little I can do . " She shrugged helplessly . " I suppose I'll have to sell you to the Velvet Lantern . Twenty clients a night should clear your debt in about six months . Thirty a night , and you could be done even faster . " The boy stared at her , a look of horror on his face . " What ?!

" Elowen tilted her head . " Didn't you say you were good at serving people ? Twenty or thirty shouldn't be so hard , should it ? " The boy turned ghostly pale . " No ... no way ... " He was getting older . Lately , even just two visits from Vivian in one day left him completely drained . Twenty or thirty ? Every night ? He'd be dead within a week ! Elowen caught the terror in his eyes and lifted a brow . " So ? Are you ready to tell me who sent you ? " The boy clenched his sleeves tightly , his brow furrowed , as he struggled with the decision .

Just as he was about to speak , Marwen suddenly cried out , " Ah ! " She collapsed to the ground , arms and legs sprawled . " Lady Marwen has fainted ! " The boy blinked , as if waking from a trance , and clamped his mouth shut . Elowen didn't seem disappointed . She already had a good idea who was behind it either Marwen or Vivian . The maids and attendants scrambled to help Marwen up . Cassian spoke again , slow and measured . " In the past , I was too busy to oversee the estate , and so all responsibilities were temporarily handed to my aunt .

But now that I have taken a wife , the duties of this household shall be transferred to the Duchess . Starting tomorrow . " Elowen's heart gave a small flutter . He was giving her control of the household . Marwen gave a final twitch on the ground and passed out completely . 2/2 12:06 pm PPP . Chapter 22 Wolves in the Courtyard Cedella Cedella is a passionate storyteller known for her bold romantic and spicy novels that keep readers hooked from the very first chapter.

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Love's Unexpected Awakening: Elowen's Choice Novel Chapter 22: Chapter 22 - Read Free English Romance Novel

Chapter 22 Wolves in the Courtyard Chapter 22 Wolves in the Courtyard +20 Free Coins Elowen was watching the scene unfold with interest when Cassian's voice broke in . " Would you like a chair , so you can enjoy the show properly ? " There was a teasing note in his voice . Elowen flushed and smiled awkwardly . " It's not that entertaining ... " Cassian raised a brow but didn't press her . Elowen offered quickly , " Shall we go back , Your Grace ? " Cassian gave a soft hum of agreement . Bran remained behind to deal with the boy . Marwen was carried off to Rose Hall .

Elowen stepped forward to push Cassian's wheelchair . They walked in silence . Back at the manor , Elowen suddenly heard a restrained cough . She looked down - and to her shock , noticed that Cassian's lips had turned completely bloodless . Sweat dotted his forehead . " I'll call for the physician ! " She turned to leave . Cassian caught her wrist . " Wait . " Elowen looked at him anxiously . " Your health- " " I forced myself to wake , " Cassian said plainly . " I can stay conscious for a while ... but not long . " Elowen nodded , worry in her eyes . Suddenly , a thought struck her .

She hesitated , then asked , " Your Grace , when you were unconscious ... could you hear what people were saying around you ? " Night after night , she had laid beside him , murmuring all sorts of things about her family , her past ... even crying once or twice . She'd thought he would be comatose for a long time , so she hadn't held back . But now , with Cassian waking more and more frequently ... it hit her . His body seemed much better . Even if he couldn't open his eyes , maybe his mind had been aware all along . What if he'd heard everything ? That would be mortifying .

Cassian didn't open his eyes . " No. I couldn't hear anything . " Elowen wasn't entirely convinced . " Really ... ? " Cassian suddenly lifted a brow . " Did you say something to me ? " Elowen choked and quickly looked away . " No ... not really ... " Cassian's expression remained unreadable . " Help me to the bed . " Elowen supported him gently , helping him to sit on the edge of the bed . Then Cassian said , " You'll be managing the household starting tomorrow . Don't ruin my estate . " Elowen straightened at once . " I won't ! I promise ! " Cassian said nothing more .

He let go of her and lay back down . But Elowen could still feel the heat of his grip on her wrist . She looked down at the spot where he had touched her . Then looked toward the bed . Cassian had passed out again . From the exertion earlier , his collar had loosened slightly , exposing the smooth , firm line of his chest . He'd broken a sweat . His skin gleamed faintly . " Your Grace ! " 1/2 12:06 pm Ppp . Chapter 22 Wolves in the Courtyard Bran hadn't entered the room yet , but his voice called out first , " How is His Grace ?

" +20 Free Coins Startled , Elowen jumped , yanking her gaze away . She'd been staring so intently she hadn't noticed anything else . Embarrassed , her ears turned bright red . Without turning around , she replied , forcing herself to sound calm , " He's ... fallen asleep again . " Thankfully , Bran was too focused on Cassian to notice her flustered state . He sighed , full of sorrow . " I thought His Grace was recovering ... " Elowen managed to pull herself together . " This means he is getting better . He's been waking more often .

If we continue caring for him properly , he might fully recover someday . " Bran nodded , visibly encouraged . " You're right , Your Grace !" He noticed the sweat on Cassian's face and rolled up his sleeves . " You've worked hard enough today . Go rest . I'll clean him up and take care of the rest . " Elowen nodded . She glanced at Cassian one last time , then left for the next room . While washing up , Elowen recalled that in her previous life , it had taken Cassian years to regain consciousness . This time , he'd already woken twice - and it hadn't even been half a month since she arrived .

Why ? Had he also woken briefly in the past life , but the news never left Duskmoor Manor ? No. That wasn't it . She remembered visiting the manor in the past . Cassian had been in a wheelchair , his face far more gaunt and deathly pale than it was now . If he had regained consciousness earlier , he wouldn't have looked like that , which meant that this time ... something had changed . The variable was her . A small frown tugged at Elowen's brow . Cassian must've wanted the title of Duchess to go to the woman he truly loved .

But fate had led Elowen into the manor , shocking him so deeply that it brought him back from the brink . And because her father and brothers had once fought beside him ... because he pitied her as an orphan ... Cassian had softened , unwilling to ask for a divorce . Elowen felt a pang of guilt . She let out a soft sigh . If that was how it was , then the next time Cassian woke , she would have a proper talk with him . She could step aside anytime . The title of Duchess didn't have to belong to her . The next morning , Elowen rose early .

Last night , Cassian had told her he was handing over the management of the entire Duskmoor estate to her . Elowen believed that Marwen was not someone with a steady or honest heart . If the estate remained in her hands , it would only be a matter of time before everything fell apart . 2/2 12:06 pm Ppp . Chapter 23 The Weight of a Title Chapter 23 The Weight of a Title +20 Free Coins After all , she was eager to take charge and see if she could manage the estate herself . Step one was to head to Rose Hall and collect all the manor's keys , ledgers , and records .

Elowen brought Mira and Cora along , had Bran accompany them , and summoned both Gerda and Edith for good measure . Still feeling that wasn't enough , she added two brawny guards from the house staff . With such a large entourage behind her , she felt much more confident . Marching boldly with full force , Elowen led the group straight to Rose Hall . Mira stepped forward first to state their purpose . " By order of His Grace himself , Her Grace the Duchess will now take over the entire estate . We ask that Lady Marwen come forth and hand over all the keys and ledgers .

" They were received by a maid - Agnes - the same one who had come after Elowen on her wedding night to urge her to pay respects to Marwen . Agnes tilted her eyes and wouldn't even look Mira directly in the face . " Lady Marwen has managed the manor for many years . Suddenly appointing a duchess , barely of age , to take charge ? I fear the estate will fall into disarray . " Mira straightened . " This is His Grace's direct order . " Agnes gave a lazy shrug , smug and stubborn . " Of course , we know it's His Grace's command . However , we all care about him and want what's best for him .

If the estate crumbles under new hands , who bears that blame ? Better to wait until His Grace awakens and discuss it properly . " Mira froze . Young and inexperienced , she hadn't dealt with this kind of scene before and didn't know how to respond . Elowen turned to look at the two older women standing beside her . Gerda said nothing . But Edith stepped forward without a word , raised her hand , and delivered two loud slaps across Agnes's face . Elowen was stunned . Mira was stunned . Agnes certainly hadn't seen that coming . Dizzy from the blows , she staggered back .

Edith's voice was like a whip . " Matters of His Grace and Her Grace are not for a mere servant to speak on . " Her brow arched coldly . " Well ? What are you waiting for ? Invite the Duchess in ! " Her authority was overwhelming . Agnes , who clearly preferred bullying the meek , was immediately cowed . She clutched her face and couldn't say a word . Elowen's eyes lit with quiet admiration . A woman from the royal palace indeed - decisive and efficient . Mira looked positively inspired . Her eyes sparkled as she clenched her fists in her sleeves . So that's how it's done . She got it now .

She understood . " Who's here ? Is it Elowen ? " A soft female voice called from inside . A young woman stepped gracefully through the doorway , eyes curving with a smile . " I've heard my cousin married a beauty . Seeing you today , I must say the rumors were true . " It was Vivian Ashcroft . Before Elowen could respond , Vivian continued . " You're here for my mother , aren't you ? " 1/2 12:06 pm ppp . Chapter 23 The Weight of a Title +20 Free Coins Elowen nodded . Vivian sighed . " Something must have shaken her last night . She's been sleeping ever since she returned .

" " She hasn't woken up at all ? " " Not once ." Elowen asked , " Did you send for a physician ? " " We did . But he said he couldn't find anything wrong and just prescribed rest . " Anyone with sense could see right through this . Mimicking Cassian's coma ? Really ? She couldn't even be original . Elowen played along . " Then , about the keys and ledgers - who should I ask ? " Vivian sighed helplessly . " No one else knows the details . We'll have to wait until Mother wakes up . " Elowen nodded sympathetically . " What a shame . " Vivian followed with a sigh of her own .

" But since it's Aunt Marwen , and she hasn't stirred , I ought to see her for myself , " Elowen said , her tone suddenly shifting . " ... What ? " Vivian blinked . Elowen was already walking inside . Vivian tried to stop her , but Mira , finally awakened , pounced . She grabbed Vivian in a firm hug before she could move . " Hey , you - what are you- " Vivian yelled . By the time she shouted , Elowen had already reached the bedside . Marwen lay still under the covers . Her face was pale and utterly devoid of color .

Elowen stared down at her for a moment , then turned to the side table , picked up the still - warm cup , and returned to the bed . And poured it over Marwen's head . The hot drink splashed all over her face , up her nose , into her eyes - Marwen shrieked and sat bolt upright in shock . Elowen stood there holding the cup , face serene , tone polite . " No need to be so formal , Aunt Marwen . " Marwen was speechless . She flushed with fury . " You drenched me with drink and expect me to thank you ?! " The drink had washed off much of her makeup , revealing perfectly healthy skin underneath .

She looked nothing like a sick woman . Elowen gazed at her and answered sweetly , " Vivian said you'd fallen into a mysterious sleep , and not even the doctors knew what to do . But all it took was a little water , and now you're cured . Shouldn't you be thanking me ? " D Marwen choked on her words . She had no comeback . Elowen handed the cup to Gerda . " Now that you're awake , please hand over the estate keys and ledgers . " Marwen had expected this , of course . She gave a cold chuckle and rolled out the excuse she'd prepared long ago . " There are far too many ledgers .

You'll never be able to carry them all . Why don't I just keep holding onto them for now ... " 2/2
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Chapter 24 Eyes That Begin to Open Chapter 24 Eyes That Begin to Open +20 Free Coins " No trouble at all , " Elowen cut in , smiling . " I brought Bran - and two guards . Both served under His Grace on the battlefield . They've carried broadswords heavier than this . A few ledgers will be no problem . " Marwen's face went pale . It wasn't subtle . Elowen was threatening her . The trouble was , Rose Hall had only a few maids and matrons - none of them a match for soldiers trained in war . Swallowing her anger , Marwen forced herself to nod .

Elowen watched as Marwen rose , pulled a small key from beneath her pillow , opened a small wooden chest under the bed , and retrieved a larger key . Then she walked to the bookcase against the west wall of the adjoining study , unlocked the hidden cabinet inside , and revealed the ledgers and master keys of Duskmoor Manor . Elowen took the keys herself and had Bran and the guards carry out the ledgers . They were moved to the estate's main study , where Elowen promptly began inspecting them . She hadn't read more than a few pages before letting out a soft , disbelieving laugh .

" That woman . She's so petty . The wages she gave the manor's maids were disgracefully low . Mira's monthly pay equals six months ' wages for the personal maids at Rose Hall . " She flipped through another . Then another . Her brows drew together in a frown . " There aren't even that

many people living in the manor , " she murmured , rubbing her temples . " Yet somehow Marwen managed to spend a fortune every day on wine and food . " Which meant only one thing - Marwen had been pocketing the money . And pocketing a lot of it . But how ? Cora , setting aside the ink block , chimed in .

" Your Grace may not know , but the supplier who sells vegetables to the manor is one of her cousins . And the wine ? From a tavern she owns - just hidden behind a steward . " Elowen's eyes narrowed . So nearly all the funds were being funneled back to Marwen . Cora continued , " Since His Grace fell ill and handed her the keys , things have only gotten worse . The food's been terrible . Rotten meat . Mushy greens . Watered - down wine . " That part , Elowen had noticed . Since the wedding , the food had felt increasingly hard to swallow . She'd thought the cooks were simply unskilled.

Now she knew the truth lay in the ingredients . " We'll need new suppliers , " she said , already planning . " No use sticking with thieves . " She also needed to select a birthday gift for Maerwyn . She had the perfect idea . Calling for a carriage , Elowen left Mira behind to continue learning from Edith and took Cora along , with the usual pair of guards . Their destination was Cloudmere Lane , the most bustling market street in all of Vanelle . The district boasted clothiers and jewelers finer than anything even the palace could offer .

1/2 12:06 pm P p p Chapter 24 Eyes That Begin to Open +20 Free Coins In her past life , Elowen had spent days searching before finally choosing a pair of Greenstone Bangles - translucent , smooth , and rare Yet when she had presented them , in full view of Alaric and a hall full of courtiers , Maerwyn had pretended to sneer . She called them hideous . Claimed Elowen had no taste . Elowen had nearly lost face . But months later , she'd overheard a palace maid gossiping - Maerwyn had kept the bangles and wore them often . She had liked them . She just wanted to humiliate Elowen .

The princess had never liked her . Elowen didn't know why . All she knew was that the scorn and ridicule from Maerwyn had caused her pain , shame , and bitterness for years . In this life , she wasn't marrying Alaric - but she still had to prepare a gift , not for the princess herself , but for her title . She was the King's daughter and Cassian's niece . Elowen's gift was not meant to earn the princess's approval . It was to please the King and give honor to Cassian and all of Duskmoor Manor . She would still gift the same bangles .

Following her memory , she arrived early at the shop on Cloudmere Lane . The bangles were still being carved . " These , " Elowen said , pointing to the half - finished pair . She didn't wait for the final polish before paying in full . The shopkeeper beamed . " A fine eye , My lady . You'll not find better . " " I'll be next door , " Elowen replied . " Have them boxed properly for me when they're done . " " Of course ! " The shop next door was a small tavern .

Most places in Vanelle had long switched to hiring musicians and dancers to lure patrons , copying the style of the city's more notorious pleasure halls . But this one still clung to old - fashioned oral storytelling , drawing crowds with spoken tales rather than spectacle . Which meant it rarely had business . Elowen came often . This place belonged to her aunt Isobel . Hale Manor's first great loss had been her uncle . He had been twenty - seven . Her aunt , pregnant at the time , had miscarried when she heard the news . Her father had vowed to support Isobel for the rest of her life .

2/2 12:06 pm ppp . Chapter 25 The Tavern on Cloudmere Lane Cedella Cedella is a passionate storyteller known for her bold romantic and spicy novels that keep readers hooked from the very

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Chapter 25 The Tavern on Cloudmere Lane Chapter 25 The Tavern on Cloudmere Lane But her aunt's mother had refused . First , she had said , " How can a woman survive in this world without a husband by her side ? " +20 Free Coins Then she added , " Your Hale family does nothing but train for war . Today , one of your sons dies in battle , tomorrow another . What happens when you're all dead ? Who will provide for my daughter then ? " At the time , her words had been vicious . But in hindsight , they turned out to be prophetic .

She had threatened to take her own life , forcing the aunt to relent and return home to remarry . Rumor had it that the second husband was an abusive brute . Eventually , the man died . Her mother passed not long after . Now , the aunt lived alone , quietly supporting herself through the properties she had inherited . This tavern was one of them . Elowen often visited when she had time , but she never went to see her aunt directly . She would simply book a private room , order a selection of pastries , listen to the storyteller , and leave when the session concluded . Today was no different .

But she had barely reached the halfway point of a new tale when the door to her private booth was knocked . The same young clerk from the jeweler's shop entered , bowing deeply . " My lady , I'm afraid we cannot sell you the bangle after all . " Elowen frowned . " Why ? " " A gentleman has expressed interest in it and ... he offered a higher price . " Her tone sharpened . " You run a business , don't you ? I reserved that bangle . I even paid . And now you're telling me you've gone back on your word ? " The clerk smiled apologetically . " The gentleman offered quite a generous sum .

And , well ... " He hesitated . " Would you perhaps come and speak with him directly ? " Annoyed but composed , Elowen left Sera at the tavern and followed the clerk back to the shop . She had only just stepped inside when a familiar figure entered her field of vision . Her steps faltered . Her face went pale in an instant . It's Alaric . He sat at the table , lifting a cup of warm brew with visible displeasure , his brow creasing at the thin , bitter taste . The shop called it it was little more than watered swill .

their finest ale , but to a prince accustomed to excess , Hearing footsteps , Alaric set the cup down and lazily lifted his eyes . And there she was , radiant and composed . His instinctive reaction was " You're following me ? " Elowen blinked . " I beg your pardon ? " She gave a soft , unimpressed hum . " I have far better things to do than follow you . I reserved a bangle here earlier today . I was told someone tried to outbid me for it . That someone , I assume , is you ? " 1/2 12:06 pm Ppp . Chapter 25 The Tavern on Cloudmere Lane +20 Free Coins Alaric frowned .

He hadn't known the bangle had been hers . In truth , he didn't know why he had come to the shop at all . Or why he had insisted on that particular piece . But in some distant corner of his dream - filled memory , the bangle had felt ... important . The clerk looked between the two , unsure what to do . They seemed to know each other . " Perhaps , " he offered cautiously , " since the two of you are ... acquainted , you could discuss it amongst yourselves . We only have the one pair , and perhaps one of you needs it more than the other . We also have many other fine pieces ...

" But Alaric ignored him completely . His gaze stayed on Elowen . " If I recall correctly , you don't even like wearing jewelry . Were you planning to give it to Maerwyn ? " " She's my niece , " Etowen replied coolly . " A gift from her aunt on her name day is only proper . " Her tone shifted . " But you - knowing the bangle had already been reserved - still chose to force the shopkeeper's hand by offering more . What , exactly , do you think gives you that right ? " Alaric bristled . It was just a bangle . He hadn't cared that much .

But her current posture - cold , unyielding , righteous - it grated . She used to trail after him , all sweetness and wide eyes . She would fetch anything he wanted , go anywhere he led . When had that changed ? Now she stood before him , fighting him over a trinket ? His gaze darkened . " Things I want , " he said softly , " I always get . " Elowen narrowed her eyes . So he had no intention of backing down . She turned to the clerk . " How much did he offer ? " " Thirty ... thirty , " the clerk stammered . Elowen didn't hesitate . " Fifty . " The clerk gawked . " F - Fifty ?

" " A hundred , " Alaric said , calm as a frozen lake . Now the clerk was nearly gasping . In Avenlor , a hundred could buy a cottage and a plot of land . And the gentleman tossed it out as if it were nothing , Elowen clenched her fingers inside her sleeve . She didn't back down . " One hundred twenty . " "One hundred fifty . " Her eyes flared . But before she could continue ... " Two hundred , " Alaric said flatly . Elowen burned . " I didn't raise the bid ! " He shrugged . " It is just a number .

" And for the crown prince , who would one day own the realm itself , what did a mere two hundred mean ? 2/2 12:06 pm PPP . Chapter 26 Old Debts , New Faces Cedella Cedella is a passionate storyteller known for her bold romantic and spicy novels that keep readers hooked from the very first chapter. With a flair for crafting emotionally intense plots and unforgettable characters, she blends love, desire, and drama into every story she writes. Cedella's storytelling style is immersive and addictive-perfect for fans of heated romances and heart-pounding twists.

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Love's Unexpected Awakening: Elowen's Choice Novel Chapter 26: Chapter 26 - Read Free English Romance Novel

Chapter 26 Old Debts , New Faces The clerk looked nervously between them . " My lady ... will you be raising your offer ? " Alaric's eyes glittered . " Yes , tell us - are you going to raise it again ? " +20 Free Coins His tone was biting , mocking . Elowen hesitated , her lips pressed tight . She had only brought a little more than two hundred with her today . She was just about to offer it all - damn the expense - when Alaric , clearly enjoying himself , cut her off . " Doesn't matter what you offer , " he said , languidly smug . " I'll always outbid you .

Add fifty more to whatever she says . " Elowen stared . He was doing this on purpose . Just to spite her . Alaric met her gaze squarely. " I did say ... things I want , I always get . " Her chest rose and fell sharply with anger . The clerk turned to her , hopeful . " So ... are you withdrawing ? Shall we sell the bangle to this gentleman ? " Elowen , suddenly thoughtful , didn't answer right away . Her expression shifted . She smiled sweetly . " Are you really that determined to take something from me ? " Alaric inclined his head . That was all she needed .

She beckoned the clerk with a finger . The man leaned in , puzzled , as Elowen whispered something in his ear . His brows rose . He hesitated . Then he nodded . Elowen turned back with a satisfied smile . " Honestly , the bangle isn't even that special . You want it for two hundred ? Fine . It's yours . I'll take that hairpin instead . " She pointed to another item . " Ten ? " The clerk nodded . " I'll take it . " Alaric sneered . " Sixty . As I said whatever she wants , I'll add fifty . " But Elowen didn't look the slightest bit upset . She simply nodded , then pointed to another piece .

Another and another . Each time , Alaric added fifty . By the end , she let out a happy sigh and glanced at him with a half - laugh . " Well then ... shall we tally up ? " The clerk , already prepared , stepped forward with a ledger in hand . " Sir , you've purchased thirty - eight items in total . That comes to one thousand and eighty . " Alaric blinked . " ... That much ? " The clerk beamed . " Yes . "

1/2 12:07 pm Ppp . Chapter 26 Old Debts , New Faces +20 Free Coins Alaric hadn't brought nearly that much . He had come light , unaccompanied . He forced a composed expression .

" I'll have someone deliver it this evening . " " Of course ! " The clerk practically bowed . " We'll prepare everything for delivery . May I ask where to send it ? " " ... They'll know where , " Alaric muttered vaguely . " Very good , my lord . " The clerk handed him a slip . " I'll need your seal or signature here . " Alaric looked down at the number , felt the color drain from his face . He signed anyway , lips pressed tight . If his mother found out - he shuddered to imagine it . Still , in front of everyone , he could only keep up appearances .

He reached for the now - cold drink - but his hand trembled , spilling a few drops . Then the clerk turned to Elowen with a grin . " My lady , shall we prepare your share ? " Alaric stiffened . " Her share ? " Elowen gave him a radiant little smile . " Cash , if you please , " she told the clerk . She turned back to Alaric , her tone honeyed . " I made a little deal . " His pupils dilated . " You- " " I told him , " Elowen went on , " if he let me pick some pieces and you agreed to buy them all , I'd split the difference . He makes a profit , and I get twenty per item .

" Alaric nearly choked . The clerk returned with a neat bundle of money . " Here you are , my lady . Please count . " Elowen checked them quickly , then nodded . " All in order . " She turned to leave , her steps light and easy . " Stop ! " Alaric surged forward , grabbing her wrist . She spun , eyes flashing . " Have you lost all sense of decorum ? " He didn't let go . His voice was low , seething . " You think you can trick me and just walk away ? " " Trick ? " she echoed , incredulous .

" I reserved the bangle , paid for it , and you forced your way in , talking about how money means nothing to you that you always get what you want . And now I'm the one who caused a scene ? "

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Love's Unexpected Awakening: Elowen's Choice Novel Chapter 27: Chapter 27 - Read Free English Romance Novel

Chapter 27 What Belongs to the Duchess Chapter 27 What Belongs to the Duchess +20 Free Coins Alaric stared at her , cold fury flickering in his eyes . " You never used to act like this , " he said . " But today , you've set me up on purpose . Why ? Because I refused to marry you ? " The shop boy , who had originally wanted to step forward and break up their argument , froze in place . After hearing that bombshell , he instinctively backed away , as if he'd just stumbled into the middle of a royal scandal . Elowen's eyes widened in shock . Alaric sneered . " Am I wrong ?

" Anger surged in her gaze . " You are ! " He gave a bitter , icy laugh . " Then who was the one always trailing after me ? Every time you made a tart or sweet cake , you'd find a way to bring it to me . Who kept pestering Maerwyn , asking what I liked , what I wanted , racking her brain just to make me happy ? Elowen , have you already forgotten how shameless and clingy you used to be- " Smack ! A loud slap cut him off mid - sentence , silencing the words that had been about to turn nastier . His head snapped to the side . He froze for several seconds . He was the Crown Prince .

Since childhood , he had never once suffered this kind of humiliation . Stunned , Alaric looked back at her , utterly disbelieving . Elowen's voice trembled . " If I'd known this day would come , I wouldn't have pushed you out of the way when that carriage charged at us ! " " I hit the ground hard , " she went on . " My knee was badly injured , and I've never been able to ride a horse since . All I ever wanted was to ride into battle alongside my father and brothers , but that dream ended the day my knee gave out . Now , if I stay on my feet too long , it starts to ache .

If I push myself past my limit , the pain flares . On rainy nights , it keeps me awake until dawn . " Alaric's expression faltered . For a moment , even the sting on his cheek faded from his mind . He hadn't known . In either this life or the last , Elowen had never said a word about it . She had believed he would see her worth on his own . How could someone look at another's sacrifices and remain blind ? How could he watch her suffer and still say she deserved it ? Her eyes turned red around the edges . She clenched her teeth . " You have no heart . You take no responsibility .

I ruined my knee just from not marrying you - can you imagine what would've happened if I had ? I don't hate you because you refused to marry me . I thank the gods I married your uncle instead . " Alaric froze . His chest tightened so suddenly he felt breathless . For the first time , he realized - truly realized that something vital , something he had taken for granted , was slipping away from him . And there was nothing he could do to stop it . Elowen yanked her hand from his and turned to leave , her steps swift and unhesitating . Back at the tavern , the storyteller was just finishing .

Cheers and chatter filled the air as the tale came to a close . Elowen pulled out the money she had earned earlier , counted half of it , and handed it to Cora . " Here , take this down and reward them . " 1/2 12:07 pm Ppp . Chapter 27 What Belongs to the Duchess +20 Free Coins Patrons at taverns often slipped a few coins to the performer . The entertainer kept a share , and the rest went to the

tavern , an unspoken custom that rewarded the act and kept business lively . Cora was stunned . " My lady , where did all this money come from ? " Elowen brushed it off . " Just a deal I struck .

Now go . " Cora still looked confused , but accepted the money and hurried off . Elowen sat alone in her private room , lowering her gaze to her injured knee . A quiet heaviness settled in her chest . The drinks had gone lukewarm , but she picked up the cup anyway and took a small sip . Then she broke off a piece of pastry and took a careful bite . It was delicious . Her aunt's baking never failed . " My lady , " Cora said as she returned . Elowen was just about to stand when another voice called out - soft , warm . " Is this the Duchess of Duskmooor ?

" Elowen froze , too nervous to turn her head . That voice - it was her aunt . What was she doing here ? Why now ? " Of all our patrons today , " her aunt said gently , " Your Grace's reward was the most generous . I simply had to come up and thank you in person . " Elowen still didn't turn around . She prayed her aunt wouldn't recognize her back , then waved her hand dismissively and lowered her voice . " It's nothing . You've been paid , so go on back to your work . " But her aunt added , " I brought a few pastries . Would Your Grace take them home ? " Still , Elowen didn't move .

"Just give them to my maid , " she said casually . There was a long pause behind her . Elowen's heart thudded wildly in her chest . Then she heard a soft sigh . " Don't tell me ... You don't want to acknowledge me anymore , Elowen ? " This time , the voice trembled with barely suppressed tears . Elowen froze . Her heart squeezed tight . Slowly , she turned around - and met her aunt's warm , familiar gaze . Her throat bobbed . " Aunt Isobel ... " Isobel's eyes were misty , but her smile was gentle . " Yes , I'm here . " She held out a plate of delicate pastries , her tone sweet .

" These are my newest recipes . Won't you try one ? " Elowen wiped her eyes and managed a small nod , swallowing the lump in her throat . Isobel stepped inside and sat beside her . The scent of her perfume , soft and clean , washed over Elowen . It brought her back to her childhood days in Hale Manor , where she used to follow her aunt around , tiptoeing to see how the dough was kneaded .
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Love's Unexpected Awakening: Elowen's Choice Novel Chapter 28: Chapter 28 - Read Free English Romance Novel

Chapter 28 A Quiet Line in the Sand Chapter 28 A Quiet Line in the Sand She used to watch , wide - eyed with wonder , as strange ingredients were transformed into warm , fragrant pastries . " Wow ... " she would whisper in awe . Those memories now felt like a distant past . " Aunt , " Elowen said quietly , " Do you think ... maybe I'm just not someone worth loving ? " +20 Free Coins Isobel

gently took her hand . " Elowen , " she said , " You're more than worth it . You're young , bright , confident , and kind . Anyone who's ever met you can't help but like you .

If someone doesn't , then the problem isn't you . It's them . They're petty , or jealous , or both . But you ? You're the kind of girl anyone would be lucky to love . " Warmth blossomed in Elowen's chest . She nodded . " No point feeling sad over Alaric , " she murmured . " Just like there's no point feeling happy because of him . " If she no longer cared about him , he couldn't affect her anymore . She took a bite of her aunt's new pastry , and her eyes lit up . " This is incredible ! Teach me how to make it ! " Isobel smiled . " Of course . I'll show you . " Elowen jumped to her feet .

" Let's go to the kitchen ! " Her aunt chuckled and followed . Together , they headed to the back . Elowen's eyes widened at the sight of all the fresh produce . " Where do you buy all these ? " she asked . " An old farmer lives near the southern end of Cloudmere Lane , " Isobel said . " He's been growing vegetables for decades . My father used to buy from him , and I still do . He even brings in goods from neighboring villages . " Elowen nodded thoughtfully . " What about wine ? Where do you get the best ? " " From the Windmill Tavern , of course , " her aunt said . " Don't you remember ?

Back at Hale Manor , we always- " She trailed off . It had been years since she'd been part of the manor . Elowen tilted her head with a smile . " Once my aunt , always my aunt . I wasn't wrong . " Isobel's gaze softened with affection . She smiled back . They spent the afternoon baking pastries and packing them neatly into boxes . Once everything was loaded into the carriage , Elowen gave her aunt a tight farewell hug and left to place orders for vegetables and wine . The payments were agreed upon , but the contracts still needed to be signed .

Her sister - in - law had drilled it into her early that nothing counted until it was written down and sealed . Without that , anything could still be undone . By the time Elowen returned to the manor , it was nearly dusk . She handed the pastry boxes to Mira . " Distribute these to everyone in the manor . " 1/2 12:07 pm Ppp . Chapter 28 A Quiet Line in the Sand Alaric returned to the Crown Prince's Wing only to be met with a fierce scolding from Queen Isla .

+20 Free Coins She berated him over the palace's ongoing financial troubles - saying that though she held the royal seal , even she was constantly scrambling to make ends meet . And yet here he was , her grown son , throwing around money as if it were nothing . This time , Isla was truly furious . She didn't even wait for the attendants to leave before lashing into him , not sparing him an ounce of dignity in front of the servants . Humiliated and cornered , Alaric clenched his jaw and muttered , " ... It was because of Elowen . " The moment the name left his lips , Isla paused .

He seized the chance to tell her about Elowen's supposed scheme - though , of course , he conveniently left out the part where he had added fifty to the price himself . By the time he finished , Isla's fury exploded . She hurled a cup to the floor , shattering it . " I knew it ! That wretched girl is nothing but bad luck. Nothing good ever happens when you cross paths with her ! We're already scraping by in the palace , and now this- another absurd expense ! " Alaric let out a breath of relief . At least she had stopped blaming him .

Isla took a moment to calm herself , though her tone was still sharp . " ... Did you know Cassian has awakened ? " Alaric looked surprised . " Uncle Cassian woke up ? " " It was only briefly , from what I've heard . The details are still unclear . But your father wants you to visit Duskmoor Manor and check on him . The trouble is , Elowen's there . Today , she tricked you into spending all that

money , and I suspect it's because she still hasn't let you go . If you go to the manor now , she'll likely think you're doing it for her . " A slow smile tugged at the corner of Alaric's mouth .

The Queen was right . Elowen probably did still have feelings for him . That would explain all her games and petty schemes . He considered for a moment , then said , " Mother , if it's Father's command , I can't exactly refuse . But I don't have to give Elowen the time of day . " Isla sighed . " There's no helping it then . You'll just have to endure the discomfort . " After all , her son was simply too outstanding . Handsome , capable , and the heir to the throne - how could a little enchantress like Elowen possibly forget him ?

Back at Duskmoor Manor , that evening , Elowen washed her hair . She dried it for a while , but didn't bother to get it completely dry . She was simply too tired today . She missed the days when she was little , when she could just throw herself onto the bed , lay her head off the edge , and let her hair fall freely . So that's what she did now - sprawled across the mattress , head tilted back toward the edge , her damp hair cascading in waves toward the floor .

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Love's Unexpected Awakening: Elowen's Choice Novel Chapter 29: Chapter 29 - Read Free English Romance Novel

Chapter 29 The Night Does Not End Kindly Chapter 29 The Night Does Not End Kindly Cassian was lying straight on the bed , so when Elowen lay down beside him , a bit of physical contact was unavoidable . But they were married now , weren't they ? Sharing a bed or leaning on one another shouldn't matter . With that thought in mind , she eased herself down , letting her legs rest loosely across his thighs . If her hearing had been sharper , she might have caught the sudden quickening of his heartbeat . But Elowen was entirely unaware . She simply felt comfortable .

No wonder , she thought , recalling how her mother used to drape her legs across her father at night . This was just nice . Gazing up at the gauzy canopy overhead , she began to murmur about the day's events , " ... I can't outbid him , not with my money or my status . After all , Alaric has a throne to inherit . " Cassian remained silent . Two hundred ? That was nothing more than pocket change to him . And as for lineage , Alaric wasn't even the most capable of the King's sons . His claim wasn't as secure as he believed .

" But , " Elowen's voice shifted , gaining a light , amused tone , " I came up with a little business venture with the shopkeeper ... " She described it in detail . By the end , she chuckled softly . " It was just a bangle . It wasn't worth more than thirty , fifty at most if someone's feeling generous . Two hundred ? Three hundred ? That's just idiotic . Money doesn't grow on trees . " Cassian smiled

to himself in the dark . She hated being cheated . After she finished , she lay quietly for a while , then reached up to feel her hair - mostly dry now .

She sat up and , as usual , started to move to the inner side of the bed to sleep . As she passed Cassian , her loose hair brushed lightly across his face . Soft and scented , it tickled his skin - and , somehow , his chest . His breath hitched . Elowen lay down again , but something felt unusually warm . " Did the temperature rise ? " she mumbled . She sat up , glancing over . Cassian lay under a thin brocade coverlet . The weather had indeed warmed , and she thought perhaps it was better to pull the blanket down a bit , so he wouldn't sweat too much and develop a rash .

With that in mind, she gently tugged the quilt down to his waist . And then , her gaze dropped . Under the soft glow of moonlight and candlelight , a noticeable bulge was very ... apparent . She blinked . " What's that ? A rash ? A really big bump ? " 3 Cassian was speechless . What kind of military household doesn't teach basic anatomy ? 1/2 12:07 pm ppp . Chapter 29 The Night Does Not End Kindly Elowen , curious , poked it twice . +20 Free Coins Cassian was about to lose it . Still unaware , she tugged the blanket a bit farther , pulling open his tunic . A loud gasp tore through the room .

As if she'd stumbled upon a viper or some feral beast . Flustered , Elowen scrambled to pull the blanket back over him . Her cheeks flushed crimson , heart pounding in her chest . She sat frozen for several moments , unable to move or look at Cassian - or at that spot . The image , unfortunately , was now etched deeply into her memory . Eventually , she lay back down , but this time far from him , facing away , her back rigid . Cassian found the whole thing equal parts amusing and exasperating . Was it really that shocking ? Didn't all men have one ?

When he recovered fully , someone ought to teach her properly . No. He would teach her . Elowen had a nightmare that night . In it , she happily went to the market , only to find all the stalls filled with massive , monstrous mushrooms . Towering , grotesque , absolutely terrifying . She turned and ran , but she tripped . Looked down - another mushroom . When she woke the next morning and looked in the mirror , there were two dark circles under her eyes . Mira came in to help with her hair , chattering as always . " Your Grace , the old man from the village brought vegetables this morning .

I heard the mushrooms are especially fresh . Some of them are huge ! Shall I have the kitchen cook some for lunch ? " Mira loved mushrooms . Elowen used to like them , too , but after last night , she realized maybe not so much anymore . Elowen didn't even hesitate . " No ! " Mira blinked . " Why not ? " Elowen pinched her fingers together , frowning . " I hate mushrooms . Especially the big ones . " Mira replied , " ... eh ? " Since when ? Just then , Bran called from outside the room , " Your Grace . The palace sent someone . " Elowen looked toward the door . " Who ? " " His Highness .

" She froze . Bran added , " Word reached the palace that His Grace stirred . His Majesty is concerned , so he sent His Highness to check on him . " Elowen nodded slowly . In her past life , when Cassian had awakened , Alaric had come to Duskmoor Manor , too . 2/2 Cedella Cedella is a passionate storyteller known for her bold romantic and spicy novels that keep readers hooked from the very first chapter. With a flair for crafting emotionally intense plots and unforgettable characters, she blends love, desire, and drama into every story she writes.

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Love's Unexpected Awakening: Elowen's Choice Novel Chapter 30: Chapter 30 - Read Free English Romance Novel

Chapter 30 The Duke Wakes +20 Free Coins Although Cassian hadn't fully regained consciousness this time , the palace always had ways of knowing . Whatever needed to be known , His Majesty would know first . It was natural that Alaric had been sent . " Have His Highness received in the front hall ? " Elowen said . " Yes , Your Grace . " She turned to Mira . " Let's finish dressing . " Mira hesitated . She'd grown up beside Elowen and knew all about her past with Alaric . Tentatively , she asked , " Your Grace ... maybe skip the lip color today ?

It might look like you're trying to impress His Highness ... " Elowen smiled . " Silly Mira . Avoiding something just to prove I'm not trying to impress him is still a form of catering to him . We don't owe His Highness anything . However , we normally dress , that's how we'll dress today . Let's make it beautiful . " Mira wasn't quite sure she understood , but nodded anyway . Half an hour later , they reached the front hall . Alaric had been waiting for some time . He sat perfectly composed in his chair , a cup of water at his side , mostly gone cold .

When he looked up and saw her , his eyes flickered with unmistakable admiration . Elowen wore a deep red gown of fine fabric , its lines simple and restrained . Her hair was set in a neat coiled twist , her neckline modestly cut and edged with subtle embroidery . She looked composed and refined , her beauty quiet rather than bold . Alaric narrowed his eyes , a slow , mocking smile tugging at his lips . " Married to my uncle now , and still playing games . Dressing like this - trying to make Duskmoor Manor a laughingstock ? " Elowen raised an eyebrow .

" Your Highness , what do you mean by that ? " He snorted . " I came to see my uncle , not you . There was no need for you to dress up . " " You think I dressed like this for you ? " " Didn't you ? " Her gaze cooled . " No wonder Her Majesty is in such a rush to find you a wife . You're sorely lacking in manners . " Alaric's brow furrowed . " You're lecturing me now ? " " I am the Duchess of Duskmoor . I represent this household . Whether you visit or not , I present myself accordingly . Don't say things like this in front of others . It only reflects poorly on Her Majesty's guidance .

" For a moment , Alaric genuinely felt as if he were the one being scolded by an elder . And Elowen was younger than him ! He clenched his jaw , about to retort , but she had already moved on . " Your uncle woke briefly . He is not fully recovered . " Still fuming , Alaric's tone was sharp . " And you're sure ? " She replied calmly , " We share a bed . Why wouldn't I be sure ? " 1/2 12:07 pm Ppp . Chapter 30 The Duke Wakes +20 Free Coins Alaric froze . " You sleep beside him ? Even while he's unconscious ? " Elowen looked puzzled . " He's my husband . Why wouldn't I ?

" He was silent for a moment . Then relaxed . She was bluffing . She liked him too much to really share a bed with another man . She was just trying to provoke him . Well , he wasn't going to let her get away with it . " I want to see him , " he said deliberately . Elowen frowned slightly . " He's resting . It would be rude to disturb him . " Cassian , once so proud and untouchable , now pale and

thin . She imagined he wouldn't want others to see him in this state . That was her reasoning . But in Alaric's ears , it sounded like an excuse . Proof that she was lying about sharing his bed .

" His Majesty sent me , " Alaric said flatly . " If you stop me , you're stopping His Majesty . Are you hiding something ? " After a moment of consideration , Elowen relented . " If it's His Majesty's will ... then let's go pay our respects . " They walked to the courtyard . As soon as they entered , Alaric's sharp eyes spotted the vanity and side bed tucked into the antechamber . He paused . Elowen turned , following his gaze . That had been arranged on their wedding night . She hadn't had time to take it down . Before she could explain , Alaric chuckled coldly .

" Fooling others is one thing . But don't fool yourself . " " I've never slept there , " she said quickly . He didn't believe her . " Since you married my uncle , live like his wife , " he said with disdain . " I wouldn't have married you before , and I certainly won't now . Even if you never lie with him , even if you're still pure - it doesn't matter . You belong to him now . " His words were cruel , but oddly satisfying to him . Elowen still cared . She had married Cassian , but she was still trying to keep herself for Alaric . That pleased him more than he cared to admit .

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