

# The Healer Bride: Awakening the Ruined Dragon King

## Chapter 3

Aspen POV:

After Deena fled in hysterical terror, a heavy, cold stillness settled over the bedchamber.

The lingering scent of her cloying perfume mixed with the sharp odor of fear.

I walked over to the stone casement, watching her scurry across the torchlit courtyard below, clutching her bruised neck while her maids scrambled behind her.

My hands were still steady-not a single tremor of hesitation, only the cold adrenaline of calculated retribution.

I closed my eyes, and the bitter memories of the past flooded into my mind.

I remembered my mother, Elara Beaumont.

She had been the most brilliant apothecary in the realm, gifted with an unparalleled understanding of biological chemistry and medicinal flora.

But because she was a No-Dragon, high society viewed her as little more than an outcast.

When she met my father, Fredrick Reynolds, he was nothing more than an ambitious merchant upstart who had bought a petty noble title, plagued by a latent, crippling bloodline disease.

It was my mother who spent sleepless nights formulating rare tinctures to purge his condition, single-handedly curing him and paving his ascension to the Council of Elders.

Yet the moment Fredrick secured his wealth and power, he discarded her like an old shoe.

He married Eleanor for her supposedly pure dragon lineage-a glorified half-blood pedigree he foolishly believed would elevate him-banishing my mother to a dilapidated pavilion on the outskirts of the estate to cough up blood until she died of a broken heart.

Her dying words to me had been, "Aspen, never trust a Reynolds."

For years, I had been a blind fool, pouring my entire heart into Prince Krishna in a desperate search for love and belonging-only to walk the exact same tragic path as my mother.

Three days ago, when Fredrick Reynolds marched into this room at Eleanor's urging, coldly commanding me to yield my betrothal and status to Deena and submit to being sold off to the ruined, paralyzed Boyce Carlisle, the final pillar of my sanity collapsed.

Consumed by grief, betrayal, and unbearable despair, I tied a silk cord around the rafters and hung myself.

Everyone in the manor believed it was a sheer miracle that I opened my eyes three days later.

They had no idea that during those three days of comatose darkness, my soul had crossed the dimensional void into a parallel, hyper-advanced civilization known as the Modern World.

In that world, I grew up as a penniless orphan.

But in a society governed by merit, knowledge, and modern science, I rose through sheer grit, graduating at the absolute top of the nation's premier medical academy.

I devoted that entire lifetime to clinical surgery, neurotrauma, and advanced pharmacology-saving countless lives and pioneering revolutionary neural regeneration techniques that earned me the legendary title of The Peerless Healer.

I lived that second life to a peaceful old age, closing my eyes on my deathbed-only to wake up in a sudden gasp back in my twenty-year-old body, precisely two days after my suicide.

The weak, weeping girl who begged for Prince Krishna's scraps of affection died on that cord.

I had returned as a master surgeon and biochemical genius, armed with centuries of cutting-edge clinical mastery that this primitive world of swords and dragons could never comprehend.

I opened my eyes.

Every trace of sorrow was gone, replaced by absolute, glacial resolve.

Walking back to the table, I set down the crystal jar of royal beautifying balm I had taken from Deena.

From the hidden compartment in my mother's wooden chest, I pulled out a small packet wrapped in oiled paper: Dragon's Shade powder.

On its own, the crushed herb was harmless.

But when combined with the lunar pearl extract used exclusively in royal court cosmetics and activated by body heat, it triggered a violent, delayed biochemical reaction twelve hours later.

The symptoms were horrifying: an angry, weeping scarlet rash covering the entire face and chest, paired with unbearable agony and itching.

It mimicked a disgusting, incurable pestilence, yet after twelve hours, the compound would metabolize completely and vanish without a trace, leaving no evidence for any physician to find.

Using a fine silver needle, I stirred a precise pinch of the powder into Deena's cream until the paste was seamlessly smooth.

I knew Deena's vanity.

With her engagement banquet only three days away, she would order her servants to sneak back and retrieve her prized cream, and she would slather it on religiously.

I could already picture it: Prince Krishna lifting his radiant bride's veil on their wedding night, only to recoil in sheer revulsion at the hideous, festering rash covering her face.

A razor-thin smile touched my lips.

Consider this the first installment of your debt, little sister.

I set the doctored jar in a visible shadow near the door.

A gentle knock broke the silence, and Penny, my personal handmaiden, slipped into the room carrying a bowl of hot broth.

Her eyes were red and puffy from crying.

"My lady..." Penny's voice trembled with grief. "The entire manor is whispering. They say... they say the Elder is exiling you to the frozen wasteland of Blackwood Keep. Lord Boyce is a shattered, dying man... it's too cruel!"

I took the warm bowl and looked into her tear-streaked face.

Penny had been with me since childhood, the only person in this venomous household genuinely loyal to me.

"Penny," I said softly, my voice firm and reassuring. "I leave for Blackwood Keep at dawn. It is a dangerous, frozen ruin, and you are not obligated to follow me."

Penny didn't hesitate.

She dropped to her knees, grasping my hand tightly.

"Wherever you go, my lady, Penny will go. Even if Blackwood Keep is a dragon's tomb, I will never leave your side."

Warmth spread through my chest.

"Pack our warmest cloaks and every medical ledger in this room, Penny. We aren't going there to die. We are going there to take command."

After Penny left to prepare our trunks, I looked out toward the distant northern mountains.

My next moves were clear: First, give Deena and Krishna an unforgettable wedding catastrophe. Second, establish absolute control over Blackwood Keep. Third, heal Boyce Carlisle.

To the world, he was a living corpse with a shattered Dragon Core.

To the greatest surgeon of two worlds, he was the ultimate clinical challenge-and the sharpest, most terrifying weapon I would ever forge.

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