

Under The Oak Tree

Under the Oak Tree, Chapter 8 – Insecurities and Misunderstandings (2)

“Go, go, go!” He sat opposite of her, shouting at the people outside of the carriage and a moment later the wagon began to rattle.

Max looked towards castle Cross in bewilderment. She had imagined countless of times the different ways her reunion with her husband would have gone. However, this current development was far from the premediated scenes in her anxious mind.

Why... why are you taking me with you? Max could only muse internally the question, looking at her husband with wide eyes like a doe.

Riftan was looking out at the landscape with his arm over the window, looking remarkably calm, as if he had never dragged her out in a thunderbolt after he suddenly rained kisses on her.

“King Ruben has urged him to an engagement with his royal daughter. He won’t miss this chance!”

The Duke of Cross was like the devil on her shoulder, repeating the d****g words to her ear. But it was not only the duke who thought so, even she believed in it.

Princess Agnes, who was the royalty to be engaged to him, was a reputable magician. And one of the heroes who played a part in the excursion for the Red Dragon.

The romantic story of the two similar souls who were fighting together on the battlefield and turning into lovers blew like a gentle wind throughout the city. Those who had caught whiff of this tale expected a grand wedding upon their return.

The famous warrior, Riftan and the gifted magician, Princess Agnes!

An in her thoughts, she thought a divorce was imminent, spiraling down her like an unstoppable avalanche. Even the priest who had presided over their wedding would have thought so. Not a soul was unaware of how Duke Cross tyranny was the reason for their marriage. He had a legitimate cause and justification for demanding a divorce.

But why did you...?’

She stole a glance towards Riftan’s side profile. The breeze that drifted into their carriage played with his locks, swaying them gently. His frosty countenance, one he must have developed after the severe expedition, served to create an unapproachable atmosphere. His untidy hair was even cluttered like a bird’s nest on his forehead, and his burnt, golden skin gave his handsome appearance an even more exotic atmosphere.

Max had never seen Princess Agnes in person, but she did hear tales of her great beauty. Brilliant, blond locks and deep blue eyes like the ocean. She had no doubt that if she were to stand next to him, they would look like people from a beautiful painting.

Thinking so, she took a cautious peek at her reflection on the carriage window. The sight of a wide forehead, the small, low bridge of her nose, and a face that to her, looked weird because of her large eyes, greeted her. Brown freckles rested on the top of the nose like drizzled dirt, and her hair, which had been braided to control her rebellious curls, still had wayward hairs sticking out like straw.

Only terrible thoughts were present inside her head. She was convinced he didn't want her to be his wife. There must be something else, what do you want me to do? she thought, at the receiving end of her fears.

As if noticing her scrutinizing him, and the doubtful gaze from her eyes, he finally glanced back at her. Caught by his piercing eyes, Max quickly lowered her head. The man found her action disconcerting and spat out a small curse.

"Even though it feels terrible to be with me, try to hide your repulsion. I have no intention of leaving this carriage because of a faint-hearted wife!"

"" "

With his ever-increasing agitation, Max hurriedly said, "Oh, no, no! It's not terrible. No, I never said that..."

"In that case, what's with that look of disgust!" he venomously spat out a second later.

In impulse, Max hurriedly raised her hands to cover her face. While it was true that confusion made her scared and jittery, she was belatedly mindful of how she must have looked to him with her depressing emotions on display. It must have made him feel unpleasant.

"I know you are well aware how our situation," he gestured to both of them, "is not... ordinary."

The man sighed at her stubborn silence. Only unbeknownst to him, Max was sweating profusely in anxiety.

He continued, more levelheadedly this time, "I don't know much about you. I'm sure it's the same for you. But you're my wife now, and I must take you with me throughout my days, as the vows declare. But how can I regard you as my wife if you shiver so much just by being next to me?"

"A-all your life... Y-you are taking me?"

Her astonished look made his face distort, in fury or of something else, Max was already lost.

“We got married three years ago. Isn’t it the heaven’s will for a married couple to live together forever?”

She looked at him as if a second head had sprouted from his wide neck. She couldn’t believe it; such a person truly had no intention of breaking off their marriage?

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Perhaps he is lying for some reason, maybe his words are to mock me because he thinks I haven’t heard of his engagement to the princess. Despite his words, the thoughts in Max’s head only proceeded to an abysmal path.

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