

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 51 – Erroneous Expectations (1)

“Madam.”

She tore herself away from her thoughts and turned her head to see Rudis standing quietly in front of the door.

“The lord is back. He is going to have dinner with the knights at the dining hall. Would you like to go down, too?”

She hesitated for a moment, then nodded. She was uncomfortable around the knights, but she still wanted to dine with him. At the very least, she should maintain a modicum of amiableness with them as madam Calypse.

“Then, I’ll style your hair again.”

The maid brought a comb and a hairpin and neatly curled up her hair. She sat in front of the vanity, scrutinizing her dress and hairstyle, and then left the room.

In the hallway, servants flitted about, lighting up the lamps. She was passing them all as she moved down the stairs when Max heard the sound of a heated argument drift into her ears.

She paused and began to slowly move towards the clamor. Taking a look between the partially opened door of the dining hall, she saw Riftan and three other knights following him while arguing with one another.

“We must leave for the royal road by tomorrow, at the least!”

“Don’t make me repeat myself. We’re leaving in three days.”

“You have to attend the ceremony! How far do you intend to ignore the Majesty’s sincerity!”

“I have to agree with Ricardo this time. The rain has died down, so there won’t be any trouble leaving soon.”

Max, who didn’t know if she should intrude and was waiting behind the door, stiffened up.

Come to think of it, he had mentioned it during their trip. He was the top contributor in the war and should have headed to the royal road as soon as the battle ended. Max then estimated the distance between the royal highway and Anatol. It should take around 15 days if they traveled fast; if not, it would usually take about a month.

"I've already sent a pigeon to the capital. I finally came home after three years; King Ruben will understand."

"I know you want to distance yourself from King Ruben. But if you go too far, your influence might disappear."

At the words of the knight, standing at the very end, Ricardo quickly turned his head towards him.

"" "

"Distance himself?"

"Elnuma Ruben III is getting impatient because he can't summon you to the royal road. You are wary that you might get tied to the royal family due to your contribution to the battle, right?"

" .. "

" .. "

"It's not just a case between you and Agnes; it seems like the king wants to keep you on a tight leash. I also understand that you are wary. But you must avoid going too far as you might end up antagonizing them. He's already very cautious of his vassals."

"Eliot's right. If the Remdragon Knights are absent during the celebration, he will surely think he is being humiliated in front of his people. We never know what kind of retribution he will come back with later. You know he's someone who holds a long grudge."

"Hebaron Nirta! Your words go too far!"

At hearing the raised voices, Max began to turn back. The atmosphere between them wasn't conducive to her appetite.

"Ju-just bri-bring my me-meal to my ro-room," she told Rudis as soon as she climbed back up the stairs and went back to her room.

Max couldn't get rid of the heaviness she was feeling as she was returning to her room, and even when she pitifully ate her dinner alone.

Will she truly be fine alone while Riftan is away from the castle? Everyone was genial towards Max now, but she worried that maybe it was because the lord of the castle was around. She felt uneasy as if she was a child who had lost sight of her guardian.

"Madam... is the meal not to your taste?" Rudis, who had been patiently waiting on the side, asked carefully.

A grimace must have been visible on her face. Max quickly shook her head.

"Oh, no. It-it's delicious. Well, I just... it's just I don't have an appetite," she weakly excused.

"Are you perhaps uncomfortable anywhere?"

"I think, I think it's because I'm tired... I'd like to rest."

"Should I take your plate away?" When she nodded, the maid retrieved the platter from her, a sizeable portion of the food still left uneaten on the porcelain.

Max sat at the table and absentmindedly gazed into the figure that Aderon left behind. Just a moment ago, the small sculptures that looked lovely like toys now looked insignificant.

*Why am I acting like a child? Nothing is wrong with being alone.*

She had always lived in isolated, what difference would it make if Riftan left? For twenty years, she suffered under a cruel father, shunned by her cold-hearted half-sister, and even disrespected by the rude servants. There was no reason to feel hopeless by Riftan's month-long absence.

"Why in the blazes are you staring at it intently?" A confused, familiar voice brought her out from her own musings.

She looked back at the hand that suddenly came into view, surprised. Without her noticing him coming in, Riftan was holding a marble sculpture in his hand and looking at it with an expression that showed he thought it was random and strange.

"It-it's a model... I-I was picking out the de-decorations for the banquet ha-hall."

"The banquet hall?"

Max's heart plummeted when she saw a frown appear on Riftan's face upon the mention of it.

"You, you asked m-me to decorate the ca-castle, so..." her voice trailed off.

"No, I'm not saying no to it." He hurriedly corrected himself, "I just forgot that there was such a place. I see. The banquet hall... I guess we'll have to plan a party or a ball soon, right?"

She gulped. Her throat went dry as she saw Riftan's eyes of anticipation directed at her. Just the thought of hosting a ball or banquet made her dizzy with apprehension.

"If-if you don't want to..."

"It's not like I don't want to. I'm just not used to loud spaces with strangers."

He then bent over, leaning towards her, and pulled the pin out of her hair. Max's braided hair fell, tumbling slowly on the back of her neck. A smile languidly spread across Riftan's face as he tenderly untangled her locks with his hands.

"But, I do want to see you beautifully dressed and dancing at the ball."

Max felt the word 'beautiful' never suited her, and it was so that she had never stepped a foot at a banquet before. Whenever she saw the gap between Riftan's expectations and her true nature stray far, she felt as if an invisible claw suffocate her heart from the inside.

It was too cruel.

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 52 – Erroneous Expectations (2) | 19

"W-well, come to think of it, I-I didn't even have a ch-chance to thank you." She began, "Th-thank you for hi-hiring a tailor f-for m-me."

"You don't have to thank me for anything." The man replied dryly, putting the piece of marble he was holding back on the table.

"I know it's severely lacking compared to your previous lifestyle. Even if it takes time, I'll get you everything you want, so just hang in there for a bit," he murmured. He then put his arm around her shoulder and lowered his head, pressing a chaste kiss on her earlobes.

She shrank back as his arms wrapped around her, encasing her petite frame. He was far from being lacking, instead he was giving her more than she could ever ask for.

She wanted to say that he didn't have to overwork himself for her so badly, but she just couldn't do it. Even if it was an erroneous expectation, she felt strangely relieved that he thought of her as someone... precious.

"I'm going to the royal road in a few days. I'll come back with a wagon full of presents."

Her eyes widened at this. "Ye-yes..."

“I’ll be back as soon as I can. I’m just going to attend the ceremony and soon...”

He mumbled his last words under his breath, making them almost undecipherable. And then a soft, moist, warmth gently prodded into her mouth.

Her eyes widened lightly. The tip of his tongue tasted faintly of strong wine. His slightly coarse stubble gently rubbed against her own chin, his tall straight nose over her nose, and a warm, soothing palm gently caressed her cheek.

There was something unique about the way he enveloped her.

He was frighteningly persistent and aggressive, yet there beyond this animalistic side, he was also so cautious, holding her as if she was something sacred. When his caresses felt minute, almost fluttering on her skin, she felt as if she were a wildflower.

A delicate flower ferociously yanked away and dearly held in his grasp...

“D\*\*n... I really don’t want to go.” He mumbled harshly, his warm breath warming her lips.

There was a slight trace of saliva when their lips parted.

Max looked up at him with trembling eyes. He cupped his hand over one of her b\*\*\*\*\*s over her clothes as he pulled her closer by the waist.

“I want to do nothing and just stay locked up in my bedroom for months—perhaps years, and just rest.” She sensed a lot of fatigue in his heated voice.

””” ”

He was exhausted. Max could only imagine how hard it must have been for the past three years. Guilt and compassion sprang up inside her. She hesitated slightly, before she gently moved her hand to stroke his head. The man who had been pouring kisses on her décolletage looked up at her in surprise.

She managed to say in a trembling voice,

“Che-cheer up.”

A strange expression crossed his onyx eyes. She had glimpsed a solemn look of heartbreak. He was staring down at her blankly with glistening eyes, when suddenly, he surged towards her, violently locking his lips against hers. She felt goosebumps dance towards the back of her neck at the feel of their moist breaths locked in a battle together.

“To be so willing to fire me up—don’t complain to me when you regret it.” He roughly murmured as he gathered her up in his arms from the chair she was sitting on.

A sharp shudder roughly scraped the inside of her stomach. She wasn’t scared. Even when he said something like that... Even when he was doing something like this... she wasn’t scared at all. She could see vaguely what kind of person he was becoming to her and that was the only thing she was really afraid of.

\*

“Sto-stop...” Max’s voice came out in a soft whimper as her stomach laid on the bed.

From the windows, bright light poured out from the striking blue sky covered only with sparse clouds. It was quite a sunny day. She crawled towards the blanket to escape, but her arms and legs, which had undergone too much of a rigorous exercise throughout the night, lacked the strength to even tear apart a flower, much less break free from a man’s insistent grip.

“Ri-riftan...please, please.”

“Just a little more...”

At the breath that came in between her legs, she hid her face deeply into the sheets. The light from the dying fireplace flickered over their wet skin soaked with sweat and wetness from their lovemaking. Even the feel of the faint heat was like torture to Max.

“It’s incredible. That you have something that can accept me... and I have something that can connect with you...” He muttered like a drunken man as he touched her between her legs.

Her hips raised in the air shook with his every caress, her already fatigued thighs were shaking. Her soaked petals had long throbbled from his stimulation, blooming a pinkish red. She choked back a sob from the ecstasy and the e\*\*\*\*c quality of it all.

The fact that she was baring him her most private part was agonizingly strange to Max. Her heart felt as if it could burst out from her ribcage any moment.

“Do you know how beautiful you are?” She felt his warm, husky voice over her moist womanhood.

And his fingers gently prodded in, parting her secret doors to stroke it within. Max immediately found herself biting the pillow to restrain her lewd mewls.

She was going mad. It felt as if her whole body had melted and only the part under his hold was alive. As tears ran down her face from the intense climax that broke like a dam inside, he gently ran his hand across her back and whispered,

“Really, maddeningly beautiful.” His deep, muffled voice clawed at her ears like a siren’s bewitching call. Her body, no longer her own, succumbed to the wild sensation. Max unconsciously pulled on Riftan’s hair.

His breath heated up her soft skin and his teeth softly bit her parts that had long gone sensitive from his never-ending touches. She felt like all the nerves in her body were splitting into tiny pieces, tearing her apart from the inside to a delicious heap.

“N-no... ah!”

Her words not corresponding with her actions, her back arched higher, her folds stretching as they anticipated for him. Riftan clasped her hips tightly so that she wouldn’t be able to escape, and after he persistently tasted her juices, he positioned his throbbing member against her tunnel and slowly pushed inside, making her feel him to the tip.

Max no longer had enough strength to lift even a single finger. As his thick, massive body crashed into her, she shook like a leaf. His manhood pressed inside her, demanding as he filled her deeply to her core and with every thrust, his member growing with his ragged breaths. As his movements picked up, she could hear their slick skin against another; her body that had become almost unbearably sensitive and heated, was roughly swept by a strong current.

At the height of her senses, Max finally felt her vision fade, the sounds around her slowly vanishing with her consciousness.

[◀ Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter ▶](#)

[Share With Friends](#)

**Note:** Daily latest chapters updates only on our website so **BOOKMARK** The Website to Get The Latest Chapters and New Novels.

Rate this Chapter

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 53 – Take Me Closer (1) | 19

Max was seized by the feeling as if she were plummeting into a cliff in her slumber. Slowly stirring into consciousness, she hears the sound of rain, pounding hard against the windows as if to wake her up from her reverie. The man laid calmly behind her back, their slick bodies plastered to one another. Her eyelids fluttered open as she lay in his arms.

Just how long have they been losing their minds with one another?

The chest on her back gently shook with the man's steady breathing. "Even if I'm almost crushing you by being so close like this... I don't want to part our bodies at all."

He gathered her closer—as if it were any possible—inside his arms, facing him. Skin created friction as they rubbed against another, the tips of her peaks having long gone sore from his constant teases. The man released a satisfied groan, tilting the woman's head underneath him to meet his lips. He sucked on them, devouring and rolling her soft flesh between his teeth.

Max looked up at him with swollen eyes. He looked as messy as she was; his usually cold, stern face like a polished blade was flushed with sweat, his eyes clouded with a heated gaze. His hair was disheveled as if it had gone through a storm, and his skin was laced with half-moon crescents...

Riftan faintly smiled, seeing the light wounds on his body. "I didn't even have a scratch on my body when I was fighting a basilisk..."

"I-I'm s-sorry."

A terrible sound came out from her throat like a strangled cry. And his head dipped down again to capture her lips, sealing the voice inside. Max was quite frightened of his onyx eyes, looking at her with an indecipherable expression.

"You're a frightening enchantress."

She had wanted to implore him what he meant, but her voice could no longer come out as he kissed her flush against him again. Their slick tongues slowly intertwined with another in a slow, lazy dance.

"I think I've known since the first day. That you would... scar me."

His last words were so faint against her lips that she could hardly understand them. She soon sank into a deep sleep as if she were melting into warm water.

\*

It was raining harder outside as if nature was deviously trying to make up for yesterday's harmless drizzle. This prompted Riftan and his soldiers to delay their travel to the capital. And as he wasn't even able to trudge across the village for inspection under the blanket of heavy rain, he spent his whole day lounging around their room for the first time ever since he moved into the castle.

The two laid in bed stark naked, merely listening to the rhythm of the rain against the window. Most of the time, they were engaged in a passionate embrace between each



other, leaving no inch of skin as they shared their warmth. They made love intensely, making Max worry if such a level of intimacy was even allowed. When they were not locked with one another, they gulped down the food and wine the servants delivered to them.

He placed her on his lap as he fed her himself. Feeling sluggish, Max wasn't able to feel the familiar embarrassment creep in, and instead, rested her head on his chest as she nibbled on the pieces of sweet fruit and bread with cream he brought to her mouth. At the heart-warming sight, a smile blossomed across Riftan's mouth.

"You're like a little bird."

"" "

He gave her a sip of wine and pressed his lips gently on her bulging cheeks, feeling her flesh soft against his muscles. Riftan wouldn't let her go even for a split second; he was like an animal devotedly taking care of its own baby. He washed her and showered her with kisses. And Max was utterly captivated by his passionate and persistent love, never having experienced anything like it before.

She suddenly had the outlandish urge to hug him tightly with her soft arms and to rub her face against his broad and muscular chest like a child. If she wasn't so exhausted, she knew she would have indulged in that fleeting impulse.

Not even her mother had held her this close before.

"These grapes are delicious," he mumbled as he pushed the fruit through her lips. Max took the grape in her mouth and popped it between her teeth, savoring the sweet juice. As some of the liquid trickled down the sides of her mouth, Riftan tasted it with his lips. His hand brushing against her cheek was gentle, but his caresses were stirring her. Soon, the thought of his damp lips delicately trailing golden kisses on her skin came to mind. Their barely parted bodies heated in tandem with the warm current inside the room.

"Crush me with your teeth and take me in." He stuck his tongue out long as if it wanted to fall into a pit that was her throat.

There was some kind of language clearer than words that came and went through their interlocked lips.

Max could feel her throat chocking up, but she wasn't complaining—didn't want to. Now engulfed with a craze that ate all her reason, she lifted her trembling arms and wrapped them around his neck. At the next moment, her body fell back towards the familiar soft sheet again.

As they stumbled on one another, the plate placed on the bed was knocked over to the side, the pieces of fruit spilling carelessly over the bed. Riftan continued to lick all traces of the sweet juice staining her skin as his thick chest compressed her smooth mounds. Their sweat-laced skin had long tangled with the damp bed sheets.

◀ Previous Chapter  
Next Chapter ▶  
Share With Friends

**Note:** Daily latest chapters updates only on our website so **BOOKMARK** The Website to Get The Latest Chapters and New Novels.

Rate this Chapter

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 54 – Take Me Closer (2) | 19

The sound of her moaning and his grunting filled the room. Their lips were interwoven as their bodies rolled about in the bed in an intimate dance. To her, his breath smelled like nectar—as they shared their bodies, their breathing also mingled, one breathing the other's exhalation.

Max could feel something warm and overwhelming slowly grow from the center of her heart.

As he made eye contact with her, he demanded in a desperate whisper, "Say my name."

"R-Riftan..." she breathed.

"Again..."

"R-Riftan..."

"Again. Say it again..."

She called his name until she lost her voice. At that moment, she felt as if she were existing to quench the heat within, to satisfy both his and her body's demands... In that desperateness, there was no space for lectures on the manners of a virtuous woman. She was clinging onto him like an animal, digging her nails on his skin as hard as they could.

He s\*\*\*\*\*s her, and she rises back to the living. The cycle and his extreme need for her were driving Max insane.

“R-Riftan...”

Max looked up at him through hooded eyes. Mystified, she called his name, as if she were in a dream, and his name was the only one existing in the world.

\*

Unfortunately, the rain dwindled away late in the afternoon and wholly halted around dawn. Max opened her bleary eyes at the mild morning sun she hadn't seen for a long time. She wanted to lift herself up, but her limbs were too weak. As she faintly moaned at the dull pain, a hand stroked her naked back to soothe her.

“Go back to sleep.”

She gaped at his face shading her from the bright morning sun. He had woken up far before her, already wearing crisp clothing and armor. Her heart sank at the sight of this.

“Y-you're l-leaving today...”

“I'll be leaving later at noon. We have to get the weapons and food ready first.”

””” ”

He reached for her chin and kissed her swollen lips and then slipped his hands into a white iron glove.

“I'll come back to see you before I leave, so don't worry and go back to sleep,” he said as he pulled another piece of armor up to his elbows and took his sword before leaving the room. Max stared at the door from where he had departed and blinked. An empty feeling swept through her heart, unconsciously.

She finally stood up and walked on her trembling legs and asked the maids for a bath. Although he had told her to get more sleep, she found herself no longer requiring rest.

“Madam, your bath is here.”

Rudis and three other servants fetched a tub filled with warm water. She weakly stepped into the water with the help of her servants. Rudis quickly washed her hair and cleaned her body with a soft sponge, and even if she were extremely embarrassed, she didn't have any energy left to clean herself. Max kindly took Rudis's help and sat still in the water.

“Will you excuse me for a moment, madam? I’ll go and prepare a dress with a high neck.”

A servant wiping off the moisture from her body after she stepped out of the bath asked her carefully. Max immediately flushed when she noticed the blotchy red patches on her body.

“Y-yes, please.”

When the servants left, Max cautiously stood in front of the mirror and spread open the towel around her body. Her collar bones had marks on them, and her b\*\*\*\*s were larger than usual... also covered in pink blooms. She touched her b\*\*\*\*s with her shaky hands, finding Riftan’s touch was clearly different from hers.

His touch felt as if he were a sculptor’s hand, and she was the clay being molded.

She wondered if the woman with littered with love marks on her skin and bright eyes in the mirror was the same person to the woman she was used to seeing; a pale and depressed girl with droopy shoulders and a hunched back. Max slowly slid her hands down her slender waist, her flat stomach, and lastly, between her thighs. Her skin felt warm to the touch, smooth and soft.

It didn’t feel as if it were her own.

“Madam, your dress is here.”

Max took her hand off her body with surprise. Although they were still behind the door, waiting for their permission to enter, she flushed as if she was caught red-handed. She stuttered in embarrassment.

“C-c-come in.”

The servants entered the room and proficiently dressed her. She wore a fancy dress with waves of green and gold with a golden belt looped around her waist. Then, she hurried out the door with her hair roughly tied with a ribbon, still wet.

Through the open windows, the fresh sunshine gently kissed her face. She breathed in the scent of the air still moist from the rain and hurried down the stairs. He promised to come to find her before he left, but she was still anxious he had forgotten and had gone already.

“Good morning, madam.”

She walked into a large hall where the servants were sweeping the floors with the windows open wide to let the fresh air in. Supervising them with a sharp eye, Rodrigo respectfully lowered his head when he spotted Max.

“Breakfast is ready. Would you like to have it in the dining hall?”

“N-no, b-before that, I-I need to see R-Riftan, I mean L-lord Calypse...”

“Lord Calypse is in the field with the knights, ma’am.”

She was about to leave through the door when she paused. What was she going to do? She wondered if she would only disturb him. As she was hesitating in front of the door, Rodrigo carefully opened his lips.

◀ Previous Chapter

Next Chapter ▶

Share With Friends

**Note:** Daily latest chapters updates only on our website so **BOOKMARK** The Website to Get The Latest Chapters and New Novels.

Rate this Chapter

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 55 – His Departure to the Capital (1)

“Uhm... madam, if you don’t mind me asking...”

The servant let out a couple of dry coughs before continuing awkwardly.

“Would you please tell the lord that the meal is ready? I thought he should eat before he leaves for the trip, so I’ve been preparing in the kitchen since early morning.”

“I-I’ll t-tell him!”

She replied in a loud, exhilarated voice. The old man’s face, which was full of anxiety for asking a possibly presumptuous question, now showed relief. He swiftly expressed his gratitude.

“Tha-thank you madam, so...uhm, I’ll leave it to you.”

She was just glad to have an excuse to go to him and rushed out the door without a proper response. The dainty autumn breeze gently swept down on her dreary body. She took a moment to look up towards the sky, the pale autumn sun was gradually brightening the day and reflecting over the shiny puddles of water formed throughout the garden. With tiny skips and hops, she waded across the puddles and made it towards the stairs.

As she crossed the vast garden, she neared the inner gate. Carefully holding up her skirt to avoid getting it wet, she nimbly went down eight steps of stairs. She passed a guard who bowed his head in haste at their madam's unexpected arrival.

She drew closer and closer to the doors to the hall. Surrounded by a high, thick outer wall and held by the sturdy pillar, this full hall presented a lofty image amidst the faint glimmer of the morning sun. And the knights donning silver armor lined up in an orderly fashion before the ever imposing Riftan, made for a breathtaking view.

As she entered the hall, Max halted in her steps. Without a sound, she slowly took in her surroundings. He seemed to be talking about something serious, so Max felt it was not appropriate to approach him right now. She decided to wait for the opportune moment while the voices in the hall steadily rose.

"Leader, if you are worried about Anatol that much, I'll stay."

Gabel, a young knight who'd shown off his brilliant rhetoric at the dinner party, took a step forward and said, "You wouldn't have to worry if just a single Remdragon Knight stays put, right?"

"That's not possible. Every single knight who participated in the battle must attend the celebration. Recognition for service should be divided fairly among us all."

"I'm not interested in the titles or rewards from the king. My reputation as a knight is good enough, and I've already received more than enough praise. It's better to stay in the castle and train with my sword than waste my time attending a boring celebration."

"Are you serious?"

With his arms crossed across his chest, Hebaron shook his head in disbelief. He seemed to think his companion, Gabel, didn't mean what he said and decided to call him out.

"It's not like you're a monk. If all the ladies in the Imperial City piled up at your feet, are you going to refuse? With your flamboyant flair for words, you could swoon around any lady no matter how haughty!"

"" "

"You superficial man! Is that all you can think of with that big head of yours?"

"What did you say?!"

Looking at Hebaron and Gabel glaring daggers at each other, Ruth, who was standing by Riftan's side, let out a deep sigh.

“You two must be under a curse where if you don’t growl at each other for a day, you will catch a deadly infection.”

He clicked his tongue as if he was tired of all the arguing, and went on with his words.

“As Sir Calypse said, all the knights who participated in the battle must go to the royal castle. Sir Ovaron, Sir Sebrick, and the guards are enough to protect Anatol. Besides, I’m also thinking of staying back.”

“What are you talking about? You have to go! You played a huge role in the battle.”

“I am not someone who cares for fame or honor. Furthermore, if I go, there is bound to be friction with the palace wizards. I’m basically being treated as a traitor by the wizards because I left the World Tower without permission.”

As the wizard shrugged as if it were no big deal, the knights rolled their eyes. Riftan, who had been silent for a long time, decided to open his mouth.

“... I will also feel relieved if you were to stay.”

“I was planning on doing that from the beginning.” Ruth shrugged as if it were no big deal.

With that, Riftan took a step forward, pushing the hall into pin-drop silence. He ran an authoritative gaze along the line-up before him and spoke solemnly.

“Then it’s decided. We leave as soon as we’re ready. The route will be the same one I explained before.”

The knights clenched their fists on their chests and briskly put them down. It seemed to be their own way of courtesy.

Max, who had been hanging around for a long time in the back, sneaked up on Riftan as the briefing drew to a close. He turned back and looked puzzled at her visit.

“I told you, you could take a little more rest. Is there a problem?”

“Oh, no... Well, I fe-felt like I had to get u-up, t-too.”

She ignored the gazes of the knights as she was approaching him. Riftan looked down at her with worried eyes. Feeling her heart tightening at his gaze, she continued shyly.

“They to-told m-me that the me-meals are re-ready, so... I-I’m here to te-tell you...”

He looked up at the sky, measured the slope of the sun, and said to the knights.

“Let’s fill our stomachs first.”

The knights quickly dispersed. Riftan walked with an arm around Max’s shoulders, holding it as if he were protecting her. Max peeked at his dashing figure under the bright sunlight. Dressed in silver armor atop a thick blue tunic, he was as resplendent as if he had just walked out of a temple mural. She could feel why the commoners would look at him and shout,

‘The wise man of Uigru!’ ... the legendary knight who ascended to the heavens.

◀ Previous Chapter

Next Chapter ▶

Share With Friends

**Note:** Daily latest chapters updates only on our website so **BOOKMARK** The Website to Get The Latest Chapters and New Novels.

Rate this Chapter

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 56 – His Departure to the Capital (2)

“... Are you feeling any better?”

At the abrupt question, she looked down in a hurry, trying to mask her earlier thoughts.

“I-I’m all right.”

“You were in pain the last time we did it.”

Her face flushed carmine, feeling as if it was on fire.

“T-truly, I-I’m fine...”

“I wish you would say that when we’re in bed.” He grimaced and asked perversely, “So that if I ask you ‘Can I do it more?’ you would tell me ‘It’s fine’.”

“Tha-that, that kind of talk...”

She looked around in panic. Seeing that the knights were already far ahead, she looked at him with a timid look and stiffly continued.

“Tha-that kind of talk, you, you can’t talk about those things, if someone hears....”



“So, what if they hear?”

They may find fault with them for being lewd and unprincipled—the sordid almost rose from her throat. So she kept her mouth tightly shut like a honey-fed mute. Over the past few days, only their e\*\*\*c nights finding their way to mornings filled her memories. When she couldn’t speak and started tearing up, Riftan, who was looking down at her with an impassive face, suddenly burst into laughter.

“My innocent, naive lady!”

Then he hugged her by her waist and gently interlocked their lips. Max slightly shuddered at the cold touch of hard armor she felt over her clothes. Her pulse beat erratically against her chest that she could almost hear it in her ears.

“Don’t make it too hard to stay apart from you.”

Max looked up at him with trembling eyes. She wanted to ask if it was truly difficult to be separated from her. The words, “Can I come with you?” soared from her heart to the tip of her tongue, but couldn’t make past her lips. She might have hung from his neck and begged, had it not been for the fear that his sweet moment would be ruined, and he would be irked. She suppressed the first reckless emotions she had ever felt and tried to sound calm.

“We, we n-need t-to go... we have a meal, we have to...”

””” ”

“We should.”

He put her down as if his excitement waned as her words brought him to reality. Max restrained her urge to stick to his side, and calmly walked on.

After the meal, all the knights mounted their chargers. Max came out to the courtyard with a train of servants to see him off. Elegantly balanced atop of a giant black steed, Riftan slowly turned his head and looked down at her.

“I’ll be back soon.”

“Be, be careful... come back soon.”

He somehow managed to understand her small murmuring and slightly smiled. He leaned down almost to the point of falling off his horse and clasped her face. She couldn’t reject him even though all the servants were watching.

She tiptoed and reciprocated his kiss. Their lips that had been just slightly overlapping were now clasped together wholly. The man, who was gently pushing his tongue down

her mouth, abruptly straightened up and calmly led the horse to the front as if nothing had happened. The knights, mouths wide open and awe-filled faces, followed with a sigh. Max saw them off with a bright red face.

As the knights passed the gate and in a long straight line crossed the moat, the guards on the wall blew their copels with full might. The sound of the dull noise intermingled with the trotting hooves.

For a long time, Max stood rooted to the spot, even after their figures had long disappeared from her sight.

After he left, she fell sick for two whole days. The accumulated fatigue from the myriad of happenings the past few days inundated. It had hit her body as if an embankment had collapsed.

She was suffering from a severe cold, so the maids boiled herbal soups and tried to cool her fever down with some wet towels.

Thanks to their careful tending, she was able to open her eyes feeling better than the previous day. She asked Rudis to prepare a bath, thinking she would feel much better after she'd washed her sweat-soaked body.

"Is it really okay if I don't call the healer?" Rudis, who brought a hot bathtub with the maids, said.

As she took off her pajamas, Max shook her head in negation and pushed herself into the bathtub.

"Now, now I am... f-feeling better."

"I don't know if the medicinal herbs from the wizard are enough. It's not too late to call a therapist..." Ruth continued worriedly, trying to dissuade her.

"I'm, I'm really fine. It-It's just a bad cold." She deliberately smiled.

Though she had not fully recovered, the fever had, fortunately, come down. If she ate well today and didn't move around too much, she would regain her strength and perhaps would feel a tad better tomorrow.

She came out into the garden with a thick shawl and in a dress newly made by the seamstress. Temperatures had dropped noticeably in just the past few days.

"After the fall rains pass, they say the temperature drops like this," Rudis explained, smiling gently at the woman she accompanied, who was astonished by the cold wind.

"I think, soon—I think winter is coming soon..." Max mumbled.

“The winter in Anatol is not that cold compared to other regions. It rarely snows even in the middle of winter, maybe because we are close to the South Sea. Even when it snows, it stops at the point of sleet.”

Max was a little disappointed. She had never seen snow piled up as her father’s estate was located in the warm southeast region. She heard that it snowed so much in the capital city of Drakium that they could blanket the whole world and still have snow left over...

Will it start snowing by the time he arrives there?

◀ Previous Chapter  
Next Chapter ▶  
Share With Friends

**Note:** Daily latest chapters updates only on our website so **BOOKMARK** The Website to Get The Latest Chapters and New Novels.

Rate this Chapter

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 57 – Max’s Resolve (1)

“You’ve only just recovered, so don’t stay outdoors for too long.”

“I-it’ll just be a short walk.” She smiled at Rudis and walked away.

The quiet and calm maid, who rarely talked unless necessary, one day slowly began to fuss over her like a sister would. All she did was say a word or two out of concern without crossing the line, but that was enough to warm Max’s heart.

Is this really... my house... home?

Her eyes glazed around castle Calypse, the notion bringing to mind her life back in castle Croix. She had spent her whole life there, yet she had nothing she was emotional about. No people, place or anything for that matter, that could remotely make her miss the place. A cold castle that had once sheltered her for so long but she couldn’t bring herself to call ‘home’ – for it never felt like one.

She hoped that she just might be able to fill her life with new things completely different from that of her past. She hoped she would grow fond of this castle and its people, and hoped she would find love here and make this place her home. The pitiful, smidgen of hope that had erupted within made her heart tighten.

Is it really possible?

Leaving Croix didn't mean she had become a completely different person. She was still that stutterer they had labelled dumb and inconsequential. Someday he'd also realize that I'm useless. Then everything might change. She felt her blood chill with the thoughts of losing his amorous, affectionate touch or burning gaze. What if he suddenly turns into my father and...?!

"Madam? I think you are still sick...."

She must have looked anxious as Rudis gave her a look. Max shook her head, as if the action was enough to dismiss the negative thoughts plaguing her. "I'm oh-okay. I would li-like a war-warm cup of t-tea."

"I'll prepare one right away."

Max took this moment to gather herself. She had a decision to make. If she wanted her fears to never see the light of the day, she had to trudge far across the great unknown, beyond the haunting past of the halls of castle Croix, the reproached Maximilian and unfamiliar future. A resolve, a patient, but rather steely one was burning inside her heart.

I can change. I must start acting like a lady. I'll become a dependable landlady for him.

By the next day, Max had fully recovered. Although she was yet to regain her full strength, she felt enervated.

This day, she had a visitor—Merchant Aderon. Had it been the usual timid Max, she would have avoided the meeting, but today she had an intent to fulfill.

Without hesitation, she met with the merchant and discussed the plans for the Great Hall. She carefully listened to his explanations without interrupting, before launching into a few questions of her own. After much consideration, she decided to lay faintly jade-toned, white marbles on the floor of the banquet hall in the Great Hall and have all windows furnished into exquisite glass. Before he took his leave, the merchant assured he would bring in workers from the guild and commence the work the very next day.

With that settled, she made a beeline for the library with the transaction statement she'd just received from Aderon. She skimmed through several, heavy tomes, and worked on recording it in the account books as how Rodrigo did it. By the time she had finished writing the items with her clumsy, almost non-descript, handwriting, the sun had sunk low into the horizon.

”””” ”

This hectic and busy schedule continued for days as there were many places in need of repair and there seemed to be no end to things she had to purchase. Each day she met with Aderon early in the morning to be guided on areas that needed fixture and flair. After buying more auxiliary landscaping, she would check to see if the workers were working properly.

In the afternoon, she met with the landscaper Aderon had arranged to garnish the dreary garden, and then the engineers to confer on the patterns to be engraved on the railings and window frames. Her day exhausted by a flurry of work, Max would then wrestle late into the night with a mishmash of item statements. Her anxiety piled up with the lack of guidance and uncertainty for her endeavors.

A worried Rudis would cajole her, "Madam, you look very tired. You should take some rest..."

"I-I'm all right," she would say immediately.

Max checked the banquet hall where the crew was dutifully removing the stone plates and then went straight down to the first floor to rein in items coming in from the upper branch. As if on cue, Aderon and his workers pulled in a large carriage into the castle. The servants of the castle unloaded the luggages inside the carriage and carefully carried it into the castle.

"They're some marble plates and tools required for the process."

"Wh-what about the wi-windows...?"

"The upper branch in Anatol doesn't have that much glass. We have to order it from the capital or from Libadon to get decent quality glass. For now, I'll send a telegram to see if we can purchase in bulk quantities of glass from a nearby branch."

She almost replied with her thanks at the words that seemed like they were out of kindness.

Then, Max took him to the living room, swallowing a sigh on her own. She was acting like a deep-rooted servile person as the zealous merchant began to explain the time and cost of the refurnishings before the maid could even bring him a cup of tea.

Max tried to be attentive to every detail, grasping every inch of what he was saying without missing anything. However, as soon as Aderon began to use a mixture of unfamiliar currency names, her head became more and more of a convoluted mess. She sweated hard as she tried to catch up with all the calculations. One Soldem is 20 Lilams, 20 Lilams equals 240 Derhams, 240 Derhams equal 12 Denars, and 30 Denars equal....

"Oh my, I was too excited just now. Please forgive me!"

The merchant ceased his rambles just when she felt her head was about to explode. She flashed him a narrow smile.

“N-No, it’s all right.”

“I guess I can’t help but feel enthused at the thought of contributing to the redecoration of the great Lord Calypse’s castle.”

“Th-thank you, For think-thinking like that...”

◀ Previous Chapter

Next Chapter ▶

Share With Friends

**Note:** Daily latest chapters updates only on our website so **BOOKMARK** The Website to Get The Latest Chapters and New Novels.

Rate this Chapter

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 58 – Max’s Resolve (2)

Aderon rose from his seat with an awkward face, leaving behind the parchment paper with several explanations written down. As soon as he left, Max bolted for the library in haste. It took her several hours just to record the cost of the marbles and the wages for the workers. She heaved a weary sigh at her pathetic accomplishment when she suddenly heard something behind her back. She looked back in surprise and was greeted by the sight of a man looming from behind in the far corner of the library, enclosed in a pile of books.

“Ru-Ruth...”

The man looked back at her with his sullen eyes while scratching his light gray hair. Max didn’t know how to react, so she replied with a blank stare in turn. He was now sitting on top of the precious ledgers. How long has he been lying there?

“Why are you so noisy these days?”

The wizard suddenly frowned and complained, seemingly feeling no embarrassment encountering the lady of the estate while sleeping on the library floor. Max stuttered back, bewildered by his imposing manner.

“Ca-Castle—I’m re-redecorating the castle...”

“The castle is the castle, but what I’m asking about is madam Calypse’s business.”

“M-me...?”

“Who else? You’ve been whining in the library for the last few days. Did you know you have been greatly disturbing my sleep?”

Her mouth hung agape, ashamed over the fact that someone had been watching her piteous acts of groaning, sighing and tearing at her hair. She instantly felt furious with him for not telling her his presence had been nearby in her times of anguish... and stupefied that she was being reproached instead of getting an apology.

She didn’t know which of the three emotions she should react to. While she stood there astonished and unable to respond, the man rose from his makeshift comfort and went right before her.

“Are you... a bookkeeper?”

She hurriedly snatched up the sheets of paper on her desk, bleakly hiding them from his sight. However, the man just ignored her effort to conceal the papers and nimbly picked them up from her evasive hands to scrutinize the incorrigible handwriting. The next moment, the wizard’s eyebrows quivered.

“... just how many miscalculations do you even have?”

“Gi-Give it...!”

He turned around to keep the paper away from her outstretched arm and kept looking over the contents in sheer horror. He blurted out a low groan.

“Why is one marble plate twenty Liam? I’m sure you just wrote the wrong units, right? Please tell me you merely mixed up units.”

””” ”

“Ju-just right now... I-I was in the m-middle of fixing it...!”

Max desperately explained herself to Ruth, who was on the verge of foaming at the mouth in anger. He, who was glaring at her with squinted eyes, instantly went for the books she was hiding behind her back.

She was flabbergasted at his straightforward behavior. A gentleman should never touch a lady’s things without permission, or so she had always been told. The act of forcefully snatching away a lady’s belongings without permission was something only a ruffian would do.

Max pulled on the hem of her dress with a red face. “Gi-give it back! Ho-how, how could you, dd-do, do something so, so, rude...!”

“... Just how much have you spent in the last few days?”

She flinched and carefully looked up at him. The wizard’s face was horribly distorted and her heart sank at the sight of it. Was something wrong?

Ruth clenched his teeth and slowly gathered the strength to ask.

“How much?”

“We-well, that’s...”

Cold sweat trickled down her body as she tried to think of an answer.

“Ri-Riftan... said not to worry about money.”

“But you should at least know how much you spent, no?”

The reproach made her face burn with discomfiture. She shrank away and couldn’t look straight, akin to when her private tutor had admonished her for her pronunciations.

“I-I-I don’t know the exact, exact number..”

“Do you know the approximate amount?”

As soon as she slowly shook her head, the wizard rubbed his temples violently, attempting to regulate his annoyance. For a moment, she wondered why she was being scolded by him, but then the fear of having done something terribly wrong gnawed at her. So, Max confessed after a long hesitation.

“A-a-actually... I-I-I’m not familiar w-with this kind of work, so...”

“If you aren’t familiar you should at least ask for help!”

His words uttered in frustration were too right that she couldn’t say a word in response. Max trembled in horror, feeling like the biggest fool in the world.

“Is-is it really that... wro-wro-wrong?”

“First of all, the ledger is a mess. Some items are ridiculously cheap, some ridiculously expensive... the calculations don’t match at all. Also, these item purchases—there are too many unnecessary purchases! While it’s true that Lord Calypse made a ridiculous amount of money from the battle against the dragon, you can’t just spend it without thought! There are numerous knights and guards in Anatol and we are responsible for



their upkeep. Most importantly, we are planning on building a big road that will connect the port to the village next year. To add, winter is approaching so our tax revenues will take a hit. We have to try and cut back on any kind of possible waste!”

Max shrank her neck in like a turtle at the relentless onslaught of censure.

“I-I didn’t, know... I-I didn’t hear anything about that. He-he just said to do whatever I want.”

Ruth let out a deep sigh after he heard her mumblings. As if he had lost all his energy, he drooped his shoulders and continued.

“I’m not saying redecorating the castle itself is wrong. It’s true we have become like a military factory that doesn’t care about anything but defense. But it’s too much. If you keep spending money like this, it will be just a couple years before Lord Calypse has to go rob another Dragon Lair.”

“Th-that...”

Max reeled back about to collapse and gripped the chair firmly. She was trying to give the castle a massive facelift to make Riftan glad... after all, it was the responsibility of the mistress of the house to keep things beautiful too. She felt all the blood in her body leave as she thought of how her husband might go berserk for her misguided actions like the man in front of her. Max looked up at him with tears in her eyes.

“If-if you te-teach me what I did wrong, I-I will fix it...”

[◀ Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter ▶](#)

[Share With Friends](#)

**Note:** Daily latest chapters updates only on our website so **BOOKMARK** The Website to Get The Latest Chapters and New Novels.

[Rate this Chapter](#)

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 59 – Her Blatant Ignorance (1)

In the quiet study, the air stood still. Except for the ruffling of pages, there was nary a sound. There were only two people in the study, yet it was more suffocating than a crowded room full of clamour.

As he flicked through the pages of the ledger, every now and then, Ruth pressed the middle of his forehead with his forefinger as if trying to pin down his emotions. As he went through line after line, word after word, his thoughts dared not reflect on his face.

Nearby, a sullen Max stood still, like a child who had been reprimanded for wrongdoings. Her gaze was fixed on the ledger as well as if it held authoritarian power over her future. Every time a page turned, her heart paused. Every fleeting second, she'd steal a glimpse of the vacant visage before her, trying to gauge the other's mood.

She could, however, glean nothing and could only go back to feeling more sullen.

After what felt like forever, his wordless audit had finally drawn to a close. The party in charge of the rising tension in the room, let out a deep sigh and roughly rubbed his face out of habit. Then, he turned to the only other person in the room, and without preamble, looked her straight in the eyes.

"I don't know what to talk about first," he said impassively.

Max, who was by now a bundle of nerves, felt like crawling into a hole. She had little courage to face what was to come.

"Are you sure you have all the purchase bills in here?" His face did not betray his thoughts even now.

"Y-yes! The b-bundle of p-papers there..."

He narrowed his eyes at the pile of parchment paper she was referring to, then closed the ledger with a smack that reverberated in the silent room. Max quivered ever so slightly.

"We can start tomorrow as it's quite late already." He solemnly suggested.

"Yo-you ca-can t-tell me no-now..." She had been on the edge for far too long, the sooner she was done with the better it would be. If she had to go through this for a minute longer, she was afraid of an imminent nervous breakdown. However...

"This ledger isn't something that we can fix in a couple of days."

Max immediately pursed her lips, silenced by the sharp words. What did she have to say? Ultimately, all she could do was quietly nod, burning in silent shame.

???

"You're early!"

The next morning saw Max rushing to the library as soon as she woke up. She didn't want to delay even a moment more than necessary to set right the ledger. Her entire night had been spent in jitters, the bags under the eyes serving as proof.

””” ”

When he saw the dainty figure scurrying into the room, Ruth greeted her with a lazy, unimpressive yawn. He was sleeping in a corner, dressed in his usual, tattered apparel from before. It seemed like it took him great effort to straighten himself up, and the look he shot her all along was of someone who had been disturbed in the midst of something very important.

Max narrowed her eyes, clearly aware of what the gaze on her meant. She had snuck out of her room shortly after sunrise. Before leaving, she'd wiped her face with a wet towel, not wanting to bump into any servants looking unkempt. By the time she made it here, she was panting and a thin layer of sweat had made its way on her flushed face.

And was this man, living free and easy, silently accusing her of invading his privacy while she had spent the night on pins and needles? If anyone knew that he was the one Max feared, they would scoff it off calling it absurd.

“Let's look at the purchase records first. We should cancel any unnecessary orders before it's too late.”

Without wasting a moment, he pulled out a chair from the desk, made himself comfortable, and got straight to the point. Surprised by the sudden change in demeanor, Max tucked her uncombed, messy hair behind her ear in a bid to hide her unease and quietly took the seat opposite him.

She attempted to break the terse silence. “The me-merchant wi-wi-will be co-coming th-this af-af-afternoon. I can can-cancel a-any orders to-today.”

“Very well.” He simply answered.

He deftly organized the parchment papers by date and started to go through each of them in detail. As he looked through the records, she gripped onto her skirt nervously and waited with bated breath, not daring to utter a peep lest he is irked.

“Firstly,” he finally said, “20 liram for a marble tile... you wrote it down incorrectly. A marble tile 1 cubet by 1 cubet for 20 derhams is not a ridiculously expensive price. No, it's actually quite cheap.”

Just when Max sighed in relief, she discovered she had celebrated too soon. Ruth tapped the desk with his fingers and continued in the same detached tone.

“But I’m not certain if switching the floors of both the hall and banquet room into marble tiles is necessary. It’s not long since they’ve been changed into stone tiles,” he said and sighed. “I reckon there’s nothing we can do since construction has already begun. Nevertheless, Lord Calypse deserves this kind of luxury so it should be fine.”

“B-but they ha-haven’t sta-started wi-with the ha-hall so w-we can can-cancel...”

“That would be great, thank you.” He replied dryly and went onto the other sections.

“Everything else looks fine. Stair handrails, balcony banisters, windowsill, curtains and carpets, wall decorations, furniture, chandeliers and statues, fount... fountains?!”

His flat voice screeched when he reached the end of the list. Max flinched like someone had slapped her on the back. He whipped his head around and glared at her with narrow eyes, tacitly demanding an explanation. Unable to dare to look straight at him, she looked away and started spurring excuses.

“The me-merchant sa-said it’ll lo-look goo-good in th-the ga-garden...”

“Do you know how much money goes into maintaining a fountain? Drawing water is a huge construction in itself! And what’s more, it’s made of marbles and crystals? This b\*\*\*\*\*d is trying to rip you off!”

At his angry cry, Max dropped her head. It looked like she’d shrank in size. No matter how pitiful she appeared, his caustic remarks didn’t meet their end.

“And where did the idea of changing every single window in the castle with high-quality glass come from? This is a kind of luxury the emperor during the Roem Dynasty would’ve had! Do you know how expensive glass is?”

“Cro-croix Castle has gla-glass win-windows...”

“That’s because it’s owned by the Croix family! Madam, your father is one of the richest people in all Seven Kingdoms!” He couldn’t believe she was comparing such polar opposites! If Lord Calypse was rich, then the Duke of Croix’s wealth could only be described as exorbitant.

Even the commoners were aware of this fact, how could his own daughter be oblivious?!

[◀ Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter ▶](#)

[Share With Friends](#)

**Note:** Daily latest chapters updates only on our website so **BOOKMARK** The Website to Get The Latest Chapters and New Novels.

Rate this Chapter

## Under The Oak Tree

### Chapter 60 – Her Blatant Ignorance (2)

Ruth thumped his chest with frustration. He was trying in vain to quell his agitation, knowing well he was speaking to the lady of the house. But his emotions couldn't be pacified with her preposterous plans. Even so, he explained as calmly as he could.

“Glass is not practical at all. Insulation of glass is extremely poor that it will be no different to living with the windows open. Moreover, knights often train in the backyard and it will be only a matter of time when such expensive windows shatter to pieces from swinging swords. Another thing, it scratches easily so it'll be challenging to manage them. Servants will be spending most of their time polishing them and soon, you'll be short-handed.”

When he picked the points Max had never thought of, she quietened even further. He looked through to the very last bill and only then did his face softened a little. It was unknown if it was the realization of his brusqueness up until now or the mere content of the bill, even so, the ensuing words had a hint of softness.

“Fortunately, not everything has been ordered. Why don't we agree to change the windows of the main hall, banquet room, and some of the guest rooms into glass, and the remaining rooms can either be converted to balt glass or have double covering for insulation? It'll be very useful in the winter if you add an outer door and have them partially ajar to let fresh air in. That will be enough to show off your wealth to the guests without burning a hole in your pocket.”

He pulled out a new piece of parchment paper and drew a blueprint of the castle as he explained. Max blankly looked at the drawing and nodded.

“A-all r-right. I-I'll t-tell him th-that.”

“The crystal fountain is not worth anything.”

He tossed the parchment paper in his other hand over his shoulders and dipped the quill into the inkwell as he set a new piece of paper in front of her.

“Let's get rid of the garish ones and one by one note down those absolutely necessary,” he said, seemingly taking the reins in his hand.

A nonplussed Max simply stared at the quill in horror. She was expecting him to rewrite the ledger for her, but here he was just enlisting things and handing over the vital aspect to her. She certainly didn't want a rerun of the rebuking session!

"W-what if I-I make a mi-mistake ag-again..." She tried to hint that he must draft it.

"You'll be taking care of this in the future. I'll guide you in the right direction, so don't worry." He had made his stand crystal clear.

She looked down at the ledger, feeling lost. Her head was as blank as the paper in front of her. Panicking, Max sifted through the bills and searched for something to write. She tried to calm herself and looked for the oldest purchase record and wrote down the items purchased and the details with it. She followed it with the number of people hired, their wages and contract period, and then... things began to get complicated with only her meager knowledge in work.

Max scrunched numbers, scribbling down numbers as sweat laced her temples. How much was each currency worth? How should I calculate? She turned bemused by the second. Her fingers tightly clenched the quill as if to squeeze out the answers.

Upon noticing how flustered a mere ledger had made her, Ruth furrowed his brows. He seemed to have an inclination as to what was going on in her mind, but he still opened his mouth in order not to assume.

"Just to be sure, you do know the currency units, right?"

"I-I k-know them!"

"" "

She anxiously denied, horror creeping within at the possibility of her secret being discovered. However, the wizard looked at her narrowly with suspicion. Under the intense scrutiny she was being subjected to, Max held her breath and managed to add...

"I-I'm just... I ne-never u-used mo-money before, I..."

Without another beat, Ruth launched a question. "How much is 60 lirams in soldems?"

"I-I, um, fo-four?"

She folded and straightened all of her ten fingers and blurted out an answer she fervently hoped was right. But at his resulting glare, she quickly took her answer back.

"Thr-three!"

“How much soldems do you get from 24 denars in soldems?”

“I-I...”

“What about 10 liram in derhams?”

Almost in tears, Max’s face flushed with shame and humiliation. Yet the sharp pair of eyes were still intently staring at her, unfazed by her crumbling emotions.

It’s all over! He must have figured out I’m a halfwit. He’s going to think that I’m a stutterer, a mere idiot. Will he tell Riftan?

She dropped her head in trepidation, any lower and it would have touched the floor. After a silence that seemed to stretch on forever, she heard a weary sigh.

“Even Princess Agnes wasn’t this ignorant of the world! How sheltered did you grow up?”

Unable to give any excuse, she bit her lip. Her mortification was for everyone to see. Ruth was silent for a long moment and exhaled loudly as he went through the inner pocket of his robe, fishing out a small pouch.

“Listen closely,” he said as he picked two silver coins. One was thick and wide as his middle finger, and the other was thin and wide... two-thirds of a pinky. Ruth tapped on the large coin bearing the insignia of a bird with its wings spread.

“This is a liram. It’s a silver coin the Roem Empire created and spread all across the continent. It is worth twelve times this smaller coin, the derham,” he said pointing at the smaller coin.

“Derhams are from Rakasim in the Southern continent. It has been used widely since the trade with this continent has grown these few years ago. It’s small but carries a high credit.”

She looked at the small silver he’s placed on his palm, concealing her fascination. It was her first time seeing a coin this close. Ruth let her observe for a bit and continued explaining.

“Lirams are exactly twelve times heavier than derhams. That’s why twelve derhams are exchanged for one liram.”

He then pulled out two gold coins. One was big as a liram and the other as a derham.

“This big one is a soldem, created by the Roem Empire, just like lirams. This small one is a denar, also from Rakasim. Likewise, soldems are twelve times heavier than denars.

“Wh-why does th-the So-southern co-continent make s-such s-small coins?”

“Business in the Southern continent is far more developed than where we are. If a coin is too large, trade between individuals cannot be possible.” He answered as if her question was bothersome. She couldn’t fully understand him, but Max didn’t ask more questions. Ruth put the coins down and continued talking more about money.

“Gold coins are worth 20 times more than silver coins. A single soldem is exchanged for 20 lirams and a single denar is exchanged for 20 derhams.”

[◀ Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter ▶](#)

[Share With Friends](#)

**Note:** Daily latest chapters updates only on our website so **BOOKMARK** The Website to Get The Latest Chapters and New Novels.

[Rate this Chapter](#)