

Under The Oak Tree

Under the Oak Tree, Chapter 7 – Insecurities and Misunderstandings (1)

With Riftan's fiery cry, Max raised her head in a hurry. The man at the receiving end of his anger looked perplexed by his overbearing demeanor. He frowned and yelled back,

"How would I know someone was doing that inside the drawing room! I just didn't feel the need to knock, as I usually do, because the leader would notice me right away!"

"Get the f**k out of here!"

She turned pale at her husband's cry. If he goes out, then... what happens next? Max entreated the man with a look begging him not to leave from behind her husband's back. But the man merely gritted his teeth and muttered something harsh under his breath before turning away.

"I have got a carriage waiting outside. You said you weren't here to ogle Cross castle!"

Riftan replied without missing a beat, "Tell him to wait."

The man gave a long, weary sigh, finding the situation helpless. "Don't drag for long."

He cast a disapproving glance at Max and shut the door behind him loudly and went away. Max gaze drifted towards Riftan, roughly scratching his back and eyeing her with an intense look. His severe gaze made Max curl up and Riftan laughed sardonically at the sight.

"Don't shiver, I'm not going to rush at you again." Then he added after some pause, "S**t... I had no intention to attack here from the start."

She didn't dare lift her head to look at him, but merely fixed her gaze on her fingers clasped together. He rose to his feet and straightened up his disheveled clothes.

"You heard that too, didn't you? There's a carriage waiting outside. We'll have to leave right away."

She felt her skin cool, all the blood drained from her face. He was leaving her as quick as he came, she hadn't yet to say a word of persuasion, nor a coherent sentence.

"Ha, but..." The panic-stricken Max couldn't even think of fixing her loose attire, rather, she grabbed the hem of his clothes in anguish.

"W-wait a minute, let's talk—"

Riftan cut her off abruptly, "We need to leave in a hurry. Have your maid get your luggage ready first. I'll hear what you have to say when we're in the carriage."

Max, who was frightened to the point she trembled again, paused for a moment, confusion evident in her orbs. She asked him again with a puzzled look.

“M-my baggage?”

””” ”

“Yes. Your things. Pack the things you need to bring,” He spoke now in a soft tone, quite a difference from the bitter shouting from before.

Still, Max felt his words were incomprehensible. She owlshly blinked at him of which made him heave a great sigh. With quick hand gestures, he promptly arranged her unkempt dress and raised her from the sofa. He then called for a maid standing outside the door, ordering for Max’s luggage. Only when she heard that did it dawn on Max—he was taking her with him.

She was struck with incredulity.

“Only get what you need. We can’t be delayed further.”

Max bit out a reply immediately, “Y-yes, I won’t pack anything else, maybe rice, b-but there’s not much, only a few...”

“Good. Then let’s go. I’ll provide the things you need upon arrival at my estate.”

The man called for the maid back with Max’s luggage and had her lead them out of the drawing room. His long, hurried strides made Max almost run just to keep up with him. Meanwhile, Max was still with a befuddled mind, the situation was going to the outcome she had least unexpected.

“U-uhm, y-your estate...?”

“Why?” He glared from over his shoulder and sarcastically said, “Is it strange that a poor, low-ranking knight would have his own territory?”

He added further, “I was knighted, consecrated by King Ruben himself. With my last name as yours, you should have lived there after our marriage.”

Her puzzlement grew with every passing information. A house I should have been living in? Her thoughts unheard, he strode down the stairs in rapid steps and out into the wide garden, unwilling to explain further. Next to the Cross’ huge fountain, a luxurious carriage led by four horses was parked where a few knights gathered.

As soon as they came up to them, the noise from the men clamored down. Some of the knights glanced at Max standing behind Riftan, their curious gazes almost leaving a hole on her face.

At Max remaining still behind him, Riftan turned back. “What are you still doing? Quickly get inside the carriage.”

“Ah, but... oh, my father should be waiting for me. Uh, I-let's first—”

Riftan's face suddenly hardened. He grabbed her by the arm and dragged her all the way to the front of the carriage.

“You're my wife. I'm taking my wife with me and whose permission should I head? Even your father has no power to interfere.”

With such decisive words, he lifted her inside with his robust arms and made her sit on the carriage seat. The mystified look from Max face wouldn't leave. ‘My wife’, he said... and here she thought he was going to proceed with the divorce. Her thoughts were spiraling out of control inside her head.

Rate this Chapter