

# **Honor's Splendour Study Guide**

## **Honor's Splendour by Julie Garwood**

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## Plot Summary

Madelyn is living under the cruel tyranny of her brother, Baron Louddon, when Baron Duncan Wexton makes an appearance under a flag of truce. The two men have been feuding, but the truce lasts only a short time. Duncan is taken captive, undressed and tied to a post in the courtyard where the soldiers plan to let him freeze to death. They soon bore of the waiting and go inside where it's warmer. Madelyne slips out to Duncan, cuts him free and takes him to the visiting priests' room where she puts his cold feet to her bare belly in an attempt to warm him. Duncan will say later that it's the most unselfish act he'd ever seen and that he'd begun falling in love with Madelyn from that moment.

In actuality, Duncan is out to exact revenge on Louddon for raping Adela, Duncan's younger sister. He plans to kidnap Madelyne as part of that revenge - an eye for an eye, as Duncan says. The problem is that Madelyne desperately wants to leave Louddon's house and had already planned to run away. She doesn't put up a huge argument when Duncan takes her from Louddon's home. On their way to Duncan's castle, Louddon's men attack. Though Madelyne is on a horse, the battle eventually moves to her hiding place and envelopes her. When she sees Duncan's younger brother, Gilard, about to be attacked from behind, she intervenes by killing the attacker. She's injured and when they reach the castle, Edmond sews up Madelyn's leg.

Adela swears that she hates Madelyne and Madelyne eventually has enough of the abuse. She forces Adela to bathe, put on clean clothes and she brushes the girl's hair. Madelyne knows that Louddon raped Adela, but she insists that Adela tell her about it in an effort to begin healing. Adela admits that Louddon didn't commit the rape, but stood by as his friend Morcar raped Adela. Madelyne and Adela become close friends. Adela eventually accepts that Gerald, her betrothed, is not put off by the rape, that he loves her and wants to marry her anyway. Adela takes some time, but finally agrees.

Madelyne and Duncan are married by a priest who turns out to be an imposter sent by Louddon. When they discover they aren't truly married, they are married again by Madelyne's Uncle Berton who is a priest. Berton will eventually go to live with Madelyne and Duncan.

Though Madelyne and Duncan fight it, they fall deeply in love. When Louddon tries to tear them apart by insisting that Madelyne be returned to his house, Madelyne and Duncan stand before the king and tell him of Louddon's treachery - including his attack on Duncan who entered under the flag of a truce.



# Chapters 1, 2 and 3

## Chapters 1, 2 and 3 Summary

In 1099 in England, Madelyne gets a look at her brother's captive. Louddon has ignored a flag of truce, captured Duncan Wexton, and ordered his soldiers to freeze the man to death. The plan is to then dump his body so that Duncan's death can't be traced. When Louddon's soldiers tire of watching Duncan - who isn't acting very cold at all - they go inside. Madelyne uses the opportunity to cut Duncan's ropes and to help him inside. There, she helps him dress and holds his cold feet to her bare belly in order to warm them. She then offers to help him escape through a secret passageway.

What Madelyne hasn't seen is Duncan's men coming over the castle wall to invade Louddon's household. Within minutes, there's a battle raging and Madelyne can do nothing but watch. As it seems one of the household servants will be struck down, Madelyne steps forward, demanding that the servants not be harmed. Duncan agrees, saying that he and his men are not like Louddon who had killed innocent women and children during one of his own raids. An old servant named Simon wants to try to save Madelyne, but she encourages him to leave saying that Duncan would hunt her down putting Simon in danger. When the battle is done, all of Louddon's soldiers are dead and Duncan's men suffer no casualties.

Duncan tells Madelyne that he's taking her with him. She asks to retrieve her satchel from the priests' room, and Duncan is amazed that she is actually packed and had been planning to flee her brother's cruelty. Madelyne meets Duncan's younger brother, Gilard. Gilard dislikes Madelyne because she's Louddon's brother and isn't willing to give her a chance at all. Duncan announces that Madelyne belongs to him and isn't to be harmed and Gilard agrees.

As they prepare to leave, Duncan tells Madelyne to mount his stallion. Madelyne is terrified of horses. As a child, Madelyne had received no formal training in the ways of horsemanship. Instead, Louddon realized that she was nervous and would send her mount galloping wildly until she begged for mercy. The result was that Madelyne never learned to ride and remains afraid. In this case, Madelyne looks over the giant stallion and decides that she'll simply refuse to go with Duncan, and that he can kill her if he must but she's not getting on that giant horse. While Madelyne is making up her mind on these points, Duncan tires of waiting. He mounts himself and scoops Madelyne into his lap. Madelyne has her own cloak and Duncan wraps her in his as well. Nestled against Duncan, Madelyne is comfortably warm and gives in to Duncan's insistence that she go with him.

They ride hard over the next days. Duncan's squire, Ansel, has the job of caring for Madelyne's needs and he hates the task. Madelyne sleeps in the tent beside Duncan when they finally stop for the night. Duncan makes a bed by lying on Madelyne's cloak and covering them with his own. Suddenly, Duncan jumps up, yelling. He has



discovered the knife Madelyne secreted in the hem of her cloak. She doesn't admit to him that she had forgotten the weapon because she felt it would make her look foolish.

## Chapters 1, 2 and 3 Analysis

Madelyne is certain that Duncan is going to die at the hands of Louddon's soldiers. After she's helped him warm in the priests' room, Duncan heads outside. Madelyne believes it's suicide until she sees more than one hundred of Duncan's soldiers gathered in the courtyard. Because Louddon has already left the castle, Madelyne expects that Duncan will simply leave. The problem is that Madelyne doesn't believe that she's worth anything to Louddon, least of all the trouble of a fight against Duncan. Duncan, who values his own sister, can't imagine that Louddon won't try to rescue his sister.

Madelyne has had a rough life at the hands of her brother, Louddon. However, her life hasn't been all bad, and it will soon be revealed that she spent much of her childhood with an uncle who is also a priest. Both her time with Louddon and her time with the priest take her to be calm and to often hide her true feelings.

Madelyne doesn't understand why Duncan is kidnapping her other than the fact that there's a feud going on between Duncan and Louddon. Duncan says only that it's revenge - "and eye for an eye." When Madelyne learns that Louddon caused the rape of Duncan's sister, she's sickened.

As the party travels, Madelyne is certain that she should try to escape but is too tired to make the effort. She'd planned to run away from Louddon to Scotland where she hoped to stay with a cousin, Edwythe. As she faces the grueling trip safely inside two cloaks with Duncan's powerful steed carrying them, she knows that she'd have never survived on the only horse in Louddon's stables she felt she could handle - a sway-backed old mare.



# Chapters 4, 5 and 6

## Chapters 4, 5 and 6 Summary

A servant chases Louddon and tells him that Duncan and his soldiers attacked the castle, burning everything that would burn and taking Madelyne. When the soldiers return to the castle, they are angry, overlooking the fact that they acted dishonorably toward Duncan by taking him prisoner when he entered the castle under a flag of truce.

Louddon is important in the king's court. He serves as a "secretary of sorts," deciding who will have an audience with the king though his decisions are often based on whether that person offers a sufficient bribe. Now Louddon knows that if his attempt to kill Duncan were discovered, his position in the court would be jeopardized. Louddon doesn't join the battle, but sends his men to attack Duncan and his troops, returning Madelyne to Louddon's castle.

As Duncan and his soldiers prepare again to ride on, Madelyne is still washing herself, changing clothes and combing her hair. Gilard finds her before she's finished her hair and commands that she go with him. She says she'll be there as soon as she finishes braiding her hair, prompting Gilard to yell at her, reminding her that she's the captive. Madelyne admits that she'd "surmised as much," but says that being a captive shouldn't mean that she couldn't finish braiding her hair. Madelyne realizes that Gilard might tell her about the feud. Gilard says that Louddon's men attacked two of Duncan's holdings, killing everyone down to the women and children. He then tells her that Louddon raped their sister, Adela.

Duncan orders Madelyne to mount his giant stallion and she's terrified but dares not disobey. She walks to the horse and talks to him. She tells him that she intends to call him "Silenus," that she's afraid of him and asks that he please stand still. She mounts from the wrong side but the horse stands patiently. Ansel makes fun of her but, when Duncan is about to reprimand the boy, Madelyne stands up for him, saying that he'd just offered instruction.

When the group stops later in the day, Madelyne goes off by herself to tend her personal needs. She sees "lights" that she soon discovers are shields and coats of armor. She rushes back to tell Duncan, hoping that he and his men can get away before there's more bloodshed. Duncan says that he knew they were being followed but had hoped to meet for the battle closer to home. Instead, they prepare now. Madelyne is told to mount Silenus and to wait at a particular place. As Duncan leaves, Madelyne tells him that she won't cry if he dies. Duncan answers, "Yes you would," and leaves her there.

The battle is fierce though Louddon isn't present. Gilard and Duncan are fighting alongside their men. The battle soon edges toward Madelyne and she realizes that she's going to be in the midst of the fighting. She tries to urge Silenus away but the horse doesn't understand her commands. Duncan whistles, hoping the horse will plunge



through the middle of the battle and emerge on the opposite side near his position. Madelyne is knocked from the horse by one of Louddon's men. She is just a few feet from Gilard when she realizes that he's about to be attacked from the rear. She grabs a "mace," a weapon a soldier has dropped nearby, and rushes to Gilard's back. The soldier charges and at the last possible second, Madelyne swings the mace, killing the attacker. Gilard and Duncan witness the deed. Duncan's men then chase the surviving Louddon soldiers away and they resume their trip toward home.

After a time, Madelyne insists that Duncan stop, saying she's going to be sick. It's only then that Duncan realizes that she's been injured - a serious knife wound to the leg. Duncan says that they're almost home and that they'll tend the wound then. Gilard is suddenly unsure how to act with Madelyne. He is anxious for her and is concerned but hasn't quite given up his anger because she's Louddon's sister.

When they reach the drawbridge, Duncan pulls aside and allows all of his men to cross into the sanctuary of the castle walls before he enters himself. It's a tradition that proves to the men that they serve him as their lord, but that they have his protection as lord as well.

At the castle, Gilard rushes to open the doors while Duncan carries Madelyne inside. Madelyne notes that the stairs are on the left rather than the right and Duncan will later point out that it's because he is left-handed - the stairs would give him the advantage in a battle. Duncan sends for Edmond to sew up Madelyne's leg.

Edmond is angry that he didn't know Duncan intended to bring Madelyne back with him. He is also prepared to dislike Madelyne but is almost immediately caught up in her manner. She tells him first that she would rather be left alone. When she realizes that they intend to wash the wound and to sew her up, she says for him to begin. Edmond calls her a "bossy bit of goods," and asks Duncan to hold her down. Madelyne says she doesn't need to be held down and lies quietly until she passes out from the pain. Later, Duncan returns to her room. When she begins shivering, he crawls into bed with her and they sleep.

## Chapters 4, 5 and 6 Analysis

It's said that Louddon has a sexual relationship with the king, and that it's that relationship that keeps him near the king rather than his valuable secretarial skills. Louddon had thought Madelyne's mother attractive. Madelyne was sent away as a child and when Louddon had her returned, he discovered that she looked very much like her mother. Louddon notes that she is the first woman to cause a physical reaction in years. Now he's torn. He wants the money his friend Morcar would pay for Madelyne but he wants Madelyne for his own.

Though Madelyne is being held captive, she realizes that she's less afraid as Duncan's captive than she had been at Louddon's home. She's about to learn that her own childhood and her family aren't typical. Gilard tells her that the brothers seek revenge on



Louddon because he raped their sister, Adela. Madelyne wants to know if Gilard is angry because Louddon sullied the family name or if the brothers actually care for their sister. Gilard says the reason they kidnapped Madelyne was to take what Louddon most valued. Madelyne says that she is completely insignificant in Louddon's eyes and that he won't try to rescue her. Later, Gilard tells Duncan that Madelyne acts innocent. In truth, his feelings toward Madelyne have already begun to change and he'll soon accept her as his friend.

As the men are preparing to go into battle, Madelyne and Gilard again face off. Gilard accuses Madelyne of searching for a time to help Louddon's men and Madelyne insists that she doesn't hate Gilard. When he asks why she says that it's because he loves his sister. She's accepted that he truly does love her and she greatly admires that in him. Their conversation is interrupted by the battle.

After the battle, Madelyne cries. Duncan thinks that it's because she was frightened but she tells him that she's angry with him. Madelyne points out that she wouldn't have been in the position to need to save Gilard if Duncan hadn't kidnapped her, and that she's condemned to hell now that she's taken a life. Duncan points out that he's killed but Madelyne says that he has no soul so it doesn't count. It's noteworthy that Gilard - rather than being embarrassed that a woman saved his life - tells everyone the story and recounts it so often that Edmond says he's sick of hearing it.

Before Edmond arrives to sew up Madelyne's leg, a servant named Gerty brings food and drink. She's obviously nervous because she's afraid of Duncan but Madelyne sets her at ease by asking her name and thanking her. It's typical of Madelyne's constant effort to be kind to those around her, even the servants.





# Chapters 7, 8 and 9

## Chapters 7, 8 and 9 Summary

Over the next three days, Madelyne has raging fever that prompts dreams and nightmares. She often dreams of Odysseus and at one point boasts that she has Duncan as her protector and that he'd do whatever she wants. She also becomes quite ardent with Duncan and he's reluctant to leave her side at all, lest she offer up kisses to one or the other of his brothers. During one of the dreams, she fights the Cyclops - a one-eyed monster who eats Odysseus' soldiers - and strikes Edmond on the cheek, giving him a black eye.

When Madelyne is feeling better, a servant named Maude enters her room. She seems frightened until she discovers that Madelyne's screams over the previous days were the result of fever - not a "simple mind." Maude and Gerty are amazed that Madelyne wants a bath but have been instructed to do whatever Madelyne asks.

For the next couple of days, Madelyne doesn't mind that she's staying in her room and seldom sees anyone. After two more days, Madelyne is "bored enough to throw herself out the window just to diversify her routine." Duncan and Edmond arrive and Edmond removes the stitches, declaring that the wound is healing well. Madelyne thanks Edmond for his attention and he asks her, "Who is Polyphemus?" Madelyne explains that Polyphemus is the leader of the Cyclops. Edmond says, "For God's sake," and leaves the room without explaining the Madelyne had hit him while fighting the Cyclops, Polyphemus.

Madelyne asks Duncan when she'll be released from the tower room and he says that the door hasn't been locked during her stay - that he'd assumed she wasn't feeling well enough to venture out. Madelyne wants to believe that he's lying, but actually seems to think that it's true and that she's a fool for not having tried the door.

Gilard escorts Madelyne to dinner that evening. The hall is a gigantic room and everyone sits around a huge table. Duncan is not in attendance and in fact never eats with the family. There are soldiers present and they all fall upon the food. Madelyne calls it "feeding," as animals would do, complete with grunts but with no conversation. Bones are thrown over the shoulder to the dogs, which are attentive from the moment everyone takes a seat. Madelyne says that the dogs are probably better behaved than the men are for they don't belch.

As Madelyne is leaving the hall without eating anything, she encounters Adela. No introduction is necessary for Adela looks like Gilard. The woman is covered in filthy and has obviously not bathed in ages. Adela shouts, "I'll kill her," at Duncan. While Edmond takes it as a sign that Madelyne's presence would further harm Adela, Duncan points out that those are the first words spoken by Adela since she returned home after the



rape. Duncan continues to say that he believes Madelyne can help Adela, though he can't really say why he is so certain.

Duncan then says to Edmond that Madelyne will not be leaving the castle, and asks Edmond to back him on that decision. Edmond realizes that Duncan has fallen in love with Madelyne though Duncan himself hasn't yet decided his feelings are anything other than lust. Duncan plans for the two women to meet each night at dinner. Gilard will escort Madelyne and Edmond will escort Adela. Duncan's orders are that both women will attend dinner, even if the men have to drag them to the table.

That night, Madelyne watches from her window as Duncan dives into the frosty waters of the nearby lake. It's also on that night that she first sees a large wolf on the hill near the castle. She dismisses it, saying that it was probably only a large dog. When Madelyne awakes during the night, shivering, Duncan pulls her close. Madelyne believes she's dreaming and still hasn't realized that Duncan comes to her bed every night after she's asleep and leaves before she wakes.

## Chapters 7, 8 and 9 Analysis

Madelyne has learned the story of Odysseus from her uncle and has always clung to the idea that the hero would protect her from Louddon. In her dreams, Odysseus has been replaced by Duncan - a sign that Madelyne feels safe with him though he is her captor.

Duncan is known as "the Wolf," and Madelyne has begun to think of him as a wolf-like protector. When Madelyne sees the real wolf on the hill outside the castle wall, she's enamored with the idea of the creature. He represents the feeling she has for Duncan and she's soon to be caught up in a plan to feed the animal throughout the cold winter months when food is bound to be scarce. She'll only see it again on occasion, but the wolf will eventually save her life.

When Madelyne sees Adela, she's overwhelmed with pity for the girl. While her initial reaction was to the girl's appearance, that is quickly replaced by sadness for the girl's condition. Madelyne realizes that Louddon caused it and that he should burn in hell for his crimes. After their first encounter, Madelyne goes to her room where she cries for more than an hour. She feels sorry for Adela, but she also knows what it's like to be under the control of a cruel person. Madelyne's understanding of how to get past that control will eventually be Adela's salvation.



# Chapters 10, 11 and 12

## Chapters 10, 11 and 12 Summary

A soldier named Anthony is assigned the task of protecting Madelyne. She calls him her "shadow," and he accompanies her whenever she's outside. Madelyne asks Duncan if she can "feed the animals" and he agrees. She promptly begins taking a bag of meat scraps and bones to the hill where she'd seen the wolf. When Duncan finds that she was outside the castle, he's angry but both Madelyne and Anthony remind him that he gave her permission. Madelyne tells him that she's feeding "my wolf," though she admits that it might be a very large dog.

Madelyne also begins making regular trips to the stables. The stable master is James, Maude's husband. Their four-year-old son, William, is always anxious for Madelyne's attention. James loudly objects to Madelyne's visits but she wins him over in a short period. James suggests she could learn to ride on a "gentle mare," but Madelyne says she doesn't think Silenus would like it and vows to get Duncan's permission to ride the stallion. She often takes him sugar and soon has the horse begging for her attention.

Madelyne's days are happy but dinner times are stressful. One night, Madelyne is too tired to hear Adela's insults and heads out of the dining room. Adela swings to hit Madelyne but strikes little William instead. Madelyne comforts the child then turns on Adela. She grabs the girl by the hair and orders two tubs of water for a bath. When Edmond tries to interfere, Madelyne orders him out of the way as well. Madelyne succeeds in getting Adela bathed and into clean clothes, though they struggle when Adela first gets in the tub. By the time it's finished, Adela is calm and says she didn't mean to hit the boy.

Madelyne sits and stares at Adela for an hour before Adela is willing to talk. Madelyne says that the only way Adela will begin to truly heal is to talk over the events of the rape so that she can move on. Madelyne vows that she has no loyalty to her brother and that she won't tell anyone what Adela says. Adela finally admits that it wasn't Louddon who raped her. Louddon only watched while Morcar raped her. She says that she was in London and that she was angry because her betrothed, Gerald, hadn't had time to visit her there. She began meeting Louddon and one night they arranged to meet. Instead of the romantic rendezvous Adela expected, Morcar raped her.

Adela is concerned that she might be pregnant. Madelyne says they'll worry about that when and if it's confirmed. During their talk, Adela says that Duncan is expected to wed Lady Eleanor, but that he doesn't look at Eleanor as he looks at Madelyne.

After Adela is asleep, Madelyne goes outside to be alone and cries. Duncan finds her and she tells him that it's too cold for him to be outside barefoot. She says she won't warm his feet again. Madelyne tells Duncan that she plans to kill a man but won't tell him anything of Adela's confession. She does tell Duncan that he should spend more



time with his siblings - that families do that, though she has no first-hand knowledge of that closeness.

Adela sleeps in Madelyne's bed because her room is filthy. Duncan carries Madelyne to his room. She thinks he's leaving her there but he remains with her. Madelyne exacts a promise that Adela can live at Duncan's castle for as long as she wants and that he won't force her into a marriage. Madelyne falls asleep in Duncan's bed but he finds that he can't sleep and leaves during the night.

Madelyne and Adela are talking like old friends when Duncan arrives at the doorway. Neither sees him at first and the talk turns to sex. Madelyne says that she imagines Lady Eleanor will prefer a dark room if she has sex with Duncan, then apologizes for teasing Adela about her brother. It's then that Duncan makes his presence known, prompting Madelyne to bump her head.

## Chapters 10, 11 and 12 Analysis

Madelyne works her magic on everyone she meets. Anthony, a seasoned warrior, defends her to Duncan. James, the stable master, is vocal on his opinion that Madelyne doesn't belong in the stables. However, after a short time, he's offering to help her with riding lessons. The children - including James' son - are as anxious for her attention as Silenus, who Madelyne has also won over completely.

Adela is a different matter. It takes time before Madelyne is ready to confront Adela. Madelyne feels at least some sense of responsibility for her brother's actions but she has also recognized that Adela is not the quivering simpleton her brothers make her out to be. The brothers have been unable to deal with Adela adequately. They feel sorry for her to the point that they aren't making her do anything - even bathe. Madelyne realizes that Adela is hiding behind that façade of near-insanity, but that it isn't real. In truth, Adela is feeling an array of emotions. She's humiliated because so many people know what happened to her. She's also afraid that she's pregnant and believes that the child will have it's father's black heart. Meanwhile, she's living with the lie that she told in the hours after the attack - that it was Louddon who raped her when it was actually Morcar. Madelyne believes that offering Adela security will work wonders and she urges Duncan to find a way to communicate with his sister so that she's no longer so afraid of him.



# Chapters 13, 14 and 15

## Chapters 13, 14 and 15 Summary

Duncan has ordered Madelyne to her room, and has told Madelyne that she's not to be his captive much longer, but hasn't explained what he meant. As Madelyne works on a tapestry, she considers the remark. Adela tells Madelyne that Louddon has sent soldiers to retrieve Madelyne. She says the messenger told Duncan that Madelyne is to go to London where she's to marry Morcar. Madelyne considers the matter for some moments, then rushes downstairs where she plans to tell Duncan that he's to be her champion and that she wants Louddon's men set away. Adela is frightened of Duncan, but determined to stand at Madelyne's side when she makes her demand. Madelyne tells Duncan that she's been caught and, "I'm staying caught." Edmond and Gilard laugh at Madelyne's tirade. She throws a jug at Gilard and shoves Edmond onto his backside.

Duncan admits that he doesn't like change, which Madelyne has brought to his household. He says that more will come as long as she stays. He still decides that marrying her is the answer. Gilard steps up, saying that he'll "sacrifice" himself by marrying Madelyne. Madelyne takes exception to the word "sacrifice." Duncan says that he will marry Madelyne and that the matter is settled.

The newly assigned priest, Father Laurence, appears in the hall and haltingly performs the ceremony. Madelyne puts his stammering down to nervousness in front of Duncan. When she hesitates over saying, "I do," Gilard takes a step forward and Madelyne agrees in an effort to prevent the brothers from fighting. After the ceremony, Gilard complains that he could have made Madelyne happy. Edmond says that the two love each other, but haven't realized it.

Madelyne locks herself in her room but Duncan breaks down the door. Madelyne asks why he doesn't just leave her alone and Duncan admits that he's tried. Duncan holds to his promise that he'd never force her to make love to him and he doesn't now. Instead, he takes the time to seduce her slowly. They make love and Duncan comes to the realization that he's in love with Madelyne.

Madelyne sets about making some changes in the home. She tears down the pedestal in the hall, eliminates the huge ugly table and has the carpenter make a smaller table for the family dinners. She has fresh rushes brought in for the floor in order to make the room cleaner and then sets to work on the dogs. She eventually determines which is the leader and feeds him only downstairs until the dogs learn that's the only place they'll get to eat. Under her tutelage, even the soldiers wipe their feet before they enter the castle.

Soon after their marriage, Madelyne heads to the stables. Silenus has broken the door of his stall and is racing away from James, directly toward Madelyne. Anthony, James and Duncan see the stallion racing toward Madelyne but none is able to reach her ahead of the horse. In a flurry of dust, Silenus stops just short of Madelyne, nudging her



hand for a taste of sugar. Madelyne asks James if "my little lamb" managed to tear down the door. Anthony and James lean on each other for support, and Madelyne curiously asks James if his old battle injury is bothering him.

Duncan yells at Anthony that he plans to kill Madelyne for frightening him so. Anthony laughs at Duncan and points out that the duty of guarding Madelyne is dangerous in itself. Duncan proclaims that he's too old for the chaos and admits that it will likely settle down when Madelyne is "too old to get out of bed."

Duncan is on his way to confront Madelyne when Baron Gerald - Adela's betrothed - arrives. Adela exacts a promise from Madelyne to stay beside her for the evening, and only then agrees to go downstairs to greet Gerald.

## Chapters 13, 14 and 15 Analysis

As Madelyne is contemplating the fact that she might be sent to London and forced to marry, she thinks of Duncan. She considers that she's consumed with the desire to "straighten out" his life.

One day, Madelyne talks to Duncan about the king and his brothers. William has two brothers and Madelyne has overheard enough talk of the politics of the family that she believes Henry is becoming restless. She says that William never gives Henry any responsibility and the result is going to be that Henry eventually tries to overthrow William to gain the power that his brother deprives him of. Madelyne says she fears the same situation is brewing between Duncan and his brothers. She urges Duncan to consider their feelings and to find things that they can do on their own. Duncan will soon take Madelyne's advice and offer Edmond some property to work as his own. Edmond will ask if Madelyne wants him out of the house and Duncan says that Madelyne will likely be upset that Edmond will be so far away that she can't look over him.

Duncan is growing more accustomed to the idea that he loves Madelyne. When Gerald arrives, Duncan asks Madelyne to "please" go tell Adela that Gerald has arrived. Madelyne worries about Duncan because he's acting so strangely. She says that she might be concerned about heat stroke, but that it's January so she feels that's unlikely.

Adela first believes that Duncan sent for Gerald. Once she's certain that's not the case and that Duncan won't go back on his promise that she can remain in his house as long as she wants, she agrees to join Madelyne in greeting Gerald.



# Chapters 16, 17 and 18

## Chapters 16, 17 and 18 Summary

Adela isn't the only woman in the house who is nervous about Gerald's visit. Madelyne wonders what her own reception will be considering that her brother raped Gerald's betrothed.

Madelyne believes that Duncan has made a sacrifice in marrying her and tells Adela that she wishes only that Duncan could be happy. Madelyne is convinced that the king will call for their marriage to be annulled as they married without his consent. Adela says that Madelyne must surely realize that she's become important to all of them. Adela says that Maude saw Duncan kissing Madelyne outside for everyone to see and that it surely proves that Madelyne is truly Duncan's wife. While Adela doesn't address the issue of the king's blessing, she does say that Madelyne is valued in the Wexton family.

There is much good-humored banter throughout the evening. Edmond says that Gerald has grown uglier and they each talk of the lack of skills possessed by the others. Madelyne realizes that their fast friends. In addition, Gerald doesn't seem to blame Madelyne at all for her brother's actions.

After dinner, Gerald asks - and receives - permission to take Adela for a walk. He then says that he brought her a gift - a psaltry. The psaltry is a stringed instrument that Madeline knows how to play. Adela accepts the gift then asks Madelyne to play for them. She plays and sings the song of Odysseus, the great warrior. After she's done, those gathered to listen talk at length about their favorite parts of the story. Madelyne listens to the talk around her and realizes that her childhood dreams have come true. She's in love with a mighty warrior, a hero like Odysseus. Duncan had become her protector as well as her lover and friend.

After everyone else leaves the room, Duncan sits with Madelyne on his lap. He informs her that he's quite furious about the way she's treated Silenus - that she's ruined him as a stallion for battle. He says that he's decided to give her the horse and is amazed when he gets no reaction. Then he realizes she's asleep. When Edmond enters the room and asks if Madelyne is asleep. Duncan laughingly says that his lecture frightened her into a faint.

Edmond and Duncan sit for several minutes, talking of the ongoing war with Louddon and the roles they'll each play. Then Duncan tells Edmond that he'd like Edmond to take over a parcel of land known as the Falcon holding. Duncan says that Madelyne suggested that Edmond and Gilard could grow bored living under Duncan's complete control and that he wants to grant Edmond the room to spread his wings and grow himself.





When Adela returns inside, she tells Madelyne - now awake - that Gerald insists the marriage contract is still binding. She asks Madelyne what to do. Duncan says that Adela should be talking to him on this matter rather than Madelyne. Duncan orders Madelyne upstairs but stops to tell Gerald that he's promised Adela she can stay at home as long as she wants. He tells Gerald that it's up to him to woo Adela to his way of thinking. Gerald says that he has the patience to do just that.

Upstairs, Madelyne discovers that all her possessions from the tower room have been moved to Duncan's bedroom. Madelyne has a bath and the two make love. When it's done, Duncan tells Madelyne that he loves her. Madelyne says that she's afraid the king will nullify their marriage, and that Duncan will only get hurt by loving her. Duncan assures Madelyne that the king will not ignore Duncan's past service and that she has nothing to worry about. He then says that he's told her he loves her and that she should have something to say back to him. She says, "Thank you." She then tells him that it's the most wonderful gift and that he's the only man to ever say those words. They banter for a while longer, and Duncan admits that he'd only that day discovered that he loved her. Madelyne says that she also loves Duncan and they make love again.

Both Edmond and Gilard are assigned to forty days duty with their overlord and Madelyne is upset. Duncan points out that it was Madelyne who suggested that both have more responsibility but Madelyne knows only that she wants the Wexton men near so that she can mother over them. Adela and Gerald continue meeting though Adela is not giving in on her decision to stay with Duncan and Madelyne.

In June, Gerald returns for another visit and brings the news that he's recently talked to Henry, the king's brother, who asked many questions about Duncan and his loyalties. Gerald says he didn't really understand all the questions but it will later be evident that Henry wants to know whether Duncan will swear allegiance to him if he were ever crowned king. Duncan has been summoned to London, though he's not certain the orders come from the king. He says that Anthony will remain behind to care for Madelyne. Duncan and Gerald agree that Gerald will have the opportunity to kill Morcar and Duncan will have Louddon, if they ever meet.

Madelyne goes to the priests' room to invite Father Laurence to dinner, though the man has seldom ventured out of his room and has never accepted an invitation. After she's gone a short time, the youngster named William goes to Duncan and says that the priest is hurting Madelyne. Duncan rushes to the priest's quarters to find that the man had a knife to Madelyne's throat. He's not actually a priest, but was sent by Louddon to kill Madelyne. Duncan finds an opportunity and kills the man.

## Chapters 16, 17 and 18 Analysis

Madelyne's first opportunity to entertain as Duncan's wife comes when Gerald arrives. She does all the wifely things - ensuring that a good meal is being prepared and that she is dressed appropriately. Then she worries that Gerald will hate her because she is Louddon's sister.





Gerald knows that Adela has been raped but is intent on making her love him, as he loves her. Immediately after dinner, Gerald asks if Adela would like to go for a walk. Before she can answer, Duncan says grants permission. Madelyne asks if she and Duncan can go along but Duncan says that he doesn't want to go. Madelyne sees no way to help Adela out of the predicament though she's tried to do so. This is typical of Madelyne's attempts to care for everyone and everything around her.

After Madelyne's brush with death at the hands of the impostor priest, Duncan asks if she were afraid. She says that she had every faith that Duncan would rescue her and was not afraid that she would die before Duncan discovered what was happening and came to her rescue. Duncan is amazed at the faith this woman has in him and is humbled again by her love and trust.

When the ordeal is over, Madelyne wants Duncan to make love to her. She says that with Duncan's loving hands on her body, she's able to wash away the unclean feel the impostor priest had left.



# Chapters 19, 20 and 21

## Chapters 19, 20 and 21 Summary

When Madelyne goes downstairs later for dinner, Adela is concerned about her injuries. Then Gerald offers Adela a compliment and she is rude to him. Duncan then says that he wants to talk to them both. He informs Adela that she's to allow Gerald to kiss her. He says that Madelyne had turned to Duncan after the imposter priest attacked her in order to wipe his memory from her mind and body. He now wants Adela to allow Gerald the opportunity to wipe the memories of the rape away. Their kiss is tentative at first, then becomes lingering while Madelyne tries not to look at them.

Adela then says she's sorry to them all, asks Madelyne to tell the story of what really happened to her, and rushes from the room. Madelyne relates the story, including that Morcar was the rapist while Louddon watched. Duncan now understands that Madelyne had once told him there was a man she planned to kill, and that it was Morcar for what he'd done to Adela. Duncan now says he'll take care of Morcar and Gerald bellows that it's his right. Adela predicts Gerald will now leave her but again, he stands firm and professes his love for her.

Madelyne and Duncan go upstairs and talk about Duncan's upcoming trip - he's to leave for the king's court the following day. Then Madelyne and Duncan go to the lake where they swim for an hour before they make love in the water.

Duncan reads a missive from the monastery and discovers that Father Laurence was indeed an imposter. Duncan immediately realizes that this means he and Madelyne aren't properly married and that he must leave immediately for London - meaning they can't marry until his return. Duncan says that Madelyne will "have a fit," and that he doesn't intend to tell her until he returns with a priest and can marry her again.

As Duncan is preparing to leave, Madelyne suggests that she could go with him if she knew how to defend herself. After she presses him, Duncan agrees that he'll instruct her on the ways of defense when he returns. As soon as he's gone, Madelyne tells Anthony that Duncan plans to start teaching her defense as soon as he's home but that she'd like to get a head start. Anthony, having been led to believe it was Duncan's idea, agrees to serve as teacher until Duncan's return. Anthony knows this means that he's now got to protect Madelyne, but also has to protect others from Madelyne. He considers that everyone may be wearing arrows on their backsides by the end of the week.

Duncan and Gerald are barely away from the castle when Duncan senses that something isn't right. They pause and soldiers fan out, quickly discovering that they were about to walk into an ambush. Gerald spots Morcar and crazed to reach him, ignoring all other dangers around him. When that battle is finished, Gerald is the winner but owes his life to Duncan.



Later, Duncan and Gerald speak of their love for the two women. Gerald tells Duncan that Adela has agreed to marry him but had a condition - that Gerald would not "bed her." Duncan asks Gerald if he intends to keep that promise. Gerald says that he has, but that he's taken a lesson from Duncan. He says that he plans to make Adela fall in love with him so that she'll be willing to do the seducing.

Back at the castle, no one ventures out of doors during the early hours - until Madelyne has finished her target practice for the day. No matter how hard she tries, Madelyne can't master the bow and arrow. She's consistently some three feet over her mark. At first, her arrows all went over the wall. Later she got to the point that at least they could retrieve the arrows so that she could reuse them. Madelyne is frustrated but won't give up. She wants to make Duncan proud of her and fears he'll be disappointed that she can't master this skill.

A message arrives for Duncan and Madelyne reveals to Anthony that she can read and write. She reads the letter, discovering that the king is sending for her and that Adela's presence will be commanded as well. It seems that Louddon is making the demands. While she's reading, she discovers the letter from the monastery and knows that she and Duncan aren't legally married. That night, Madelyne again sees her wolf, though she says that Duncan is her wolf.

When Duncan arrives home, he finds that Madelyne has been taken to London and that Anthony has accompanied her with a small contingent of soldiers. As he and Gerald prepare to ride back out, Adela begs to go along. Gerald swears "on his mother's grave," that he'll return - a fact Duncan finds amusing since Gerald's mother is alive and well. As the two men ride, Duncan is hell-bent to reach the destination and shows the same recklessness Gerald exhibited during his fight with Morcar. Gerald points this out to Duncan who swears he'll regain control the minute he lays eyes on Madelyne. Gerald tells Duncan that Madelyne knows the priest was an imposter and that she and Duncan aren't legally married. While Duncan is concerned, he's glad that she discovered the truth before Louddon had the opportunity to tell her. With that behind them, they agree that the moon is bright enough to ride through the night.

Madelyne is locked in her room and can overhear a heated conversation between her sister, Clarissa, and her brother, Louddon. Madelyne learns that her mother had been pregnant when she married Louddon's father, meaning that Madelyne is not Louddon's sister. She's elated over that fact and can't wait to share the news with Duncan. She also learns that Louddon was chasing Rachel when she fell down the steps and that he'd been greatly enamored with his stepmother. Louddon reveals that he plans to marry Madelyne himself. Madelyne forms a plan and decides that she'll do nothing until Adela is safely married to Gerald. She convinced Louddon to return her to her Uncle Berton's house under threat of what she'll tell the king if she's questioned.

As Madelyne is preparing to leave town, she encounters Lady Eleanor. The woman is everything Madelyne wishes she were - sophisticated and polished. When the woman says that she blames Madelyne for the current situation and that she knows Duncan isn't to blame, Madelyne is furious but controls her temper. Then Eleanor says that she



has a question. She asks Madelyne if Duncan is kind. Madelyne says that if the woman has to ask, she obviously doesn't know Duncan, and then hurries her horse away, almost trampling Eleanor.

## Chapters 19, 20 and 21 Analysis

Duncan splashes Madelyne while they are in the lake and she's immediately indignant. She doesn't understand that it's to be a game and Duncan has to tell her that she's supposed to splash him back. Madelyne has been deprived of those kinds of games and pranks throughout her childhood. Though Duncan's father was aloof from his children, it seems that Duncan and his siblings may have had at least some time for this kind of fun.

It's Gerald's love for Adela that makes him crazed with hatred for Morcar. When Duncan wonders where Gerald has left his sword, he soon discovers it in Morcar's groin.

When Madelyne is being taken to London to see the king, she doesn't ride Silenus, as Duncan would have expected. Madelyne says that if Louddon discovers that the horse is important to Duncan, he'd torture and kill the animal. These are the depths of Louddon's hatred for those he believed have wronged him. Though Louddon has done damage to others, he continues to seek revenge in any form that happens to arrive.

Madelyne is elated to learn that her mother had been pregnant before she married Louddon's father. There no explanation of how she came to that decision or why she didn't marry the man who's child she carried - Lord Rhinehold. Madelyne doesn't condemn Rhinehold for not marrying her mother but is just thankful that she doesn't share blood with Louddon and Clarissa - who she considers evil.

The day after Madelyne learns that she was an illegitimate child, Louddon is taking to Madelyne to see the king. He tells her that he'll kill her Uncle Berton if she implies that Louddon is in the wrong. Madelyne vows that she's simply not say anything and Louddon loses his temper, hitting her hard across the face. Anthony is immediately between the two, protecting Madelyne from another attack. Madelyne is glad of the blow because it now means that Louddon won't dare take her before the king. Louddon takes her back to her quarters and Madelyne insists that she go to Uncle Berton's to live. She tells him that's the only way she'll remain silent about Louddon's attempt to kill Duncan when he arrived at the castle under the flag of truce. Louddon sends her away to Uncle Berton's and Anthony follows with a select group of soldiers, leaving someone behind to deliver a message to Duncan.

Though Madelyne has bouts of insecurity, she's growing more self-confident. Her encounter with Lady Eleanor is proof of that. Madelyne tells the woman that she is not important. Madelyne says that she's now Duncan's treasure and that he'll be retrieving her. Though in the coming days, Madelyne will sometimes have cause to worry, she truly believes that Duncan will come for her and that he'll make everything right.



# Chapters 22, 23 and 24

## Chapters 22, 23 and 24 Summary

When Madelyne arrives at her Uncle Berton's house, she tells him everything. It takes two days to do the telling and Berton questions her about the details. She puts it down to the fact that he's a storyteller and wants to know the entire history of her ordeal. By the third day, Madelyne is concerned about Duncan. She'd expected him to arrive before then. Berton hears "thunder" and steps to the door to find more than a hundred soldiers. He knows this must be Duncan but takes his seat without saying so to Madelyne. He then tells her that he thinks they have company and she goes to the door to find Duncan and the soldiers. Duncan says simply that he's come for her.

Duncan says to Uncle Berton, "I'm Baron Wexton" and the priest says, "I certainly hope so." Duncan plans for them to be wed again the next day and Uncle Berton says if they wait, they'll not sleep together. Duncan agrees to marry Madelyne that night. Uncle Berton performs the ceremony and Anthony serves as witness. When Madelyne joins Duncan in bed, he's already snoring and she spends her true wedding night on the floor so as not to disturb him. They make love the next morning while Uncle Berton is away.

They learn that Uncle Berton's overlord, the Earl of Grinstead, is near death and invite him to join them at Duncan's castle when his duties are complete. He will eventually take them up on that offer.

Two days later, Duncan and Madelyne arrive in London. They're greeted by Gilard and Edmond, and then by King William's brother, Henry. Henry wants to take Madelyne with him but Duncan objects, saying that Madelyne had been abused by her brother the last time she was in London and that he's distrustful of anyone taking care of her. Henry objects that William didn't even know Madelyne had been there and talks privately with Duncan for a moment before Duncan agrees to send Madelyne with Henry. Anthony goes along though Duncan warns him to be careful lest Henry think he's not trusted. Edmond goes along as well and only a short time later, Gilard follows.

Louddon arrives at Madelyne's room but Henry orders him away and slams the door in his face. Henry tells Madelyne that he has a plan and asks if she will do whatever is asked of her if she knows it will save her husband's life. Henry says that it will mean she and Duncan are exiled, but repeats that Duncan's life will be spared. Madelyne agrees.

In the king's court, Madelyne and Duncan are not standing together - part of Henry's plan. She is confronted first by Louddon and then Clarissa, but stands her ground with both. Louddon then tells the king his version of events and provides three witnesses who back Louddon's stories with lies of their own. Duncan tells the king of Louddon's own treachery but provides no witnesses. The king then recognizes Madelyne but tells her that he understands from Louddon that she's been stressed by the events and is in no condition to talk about it. Madelyne objects, saying that she wants to tell her version.



The king is very kind and offers to clear the court, an offer Madelyne declines. She tells him of Louddon's attempt on Duncan's life when Duncan had approached under a flag of truce and the cruelty she suffered at Louddon's hands. She then caused a stir when she told King William that Duncan hadn't seduced her during her time with him, but that she'd seduced him. When the king asks if Madelyne realizes what she's saying, she says that she loves Duncan and that she hadn't been able to seduce him until after they were married.

Louddon declares that Madelyne has "boldly" lied but the king seems to believe her. At Henry's suggestion, Duncan is exiled to Scotland for one month - a time to cool his anger. At the end of that time, he has the option to return to England and challenge Louddon, which Duncan pledges to do. They leave immediately and spend the next month with Duncan's sister, Catherine.

When Madelyne and Duncan return to Wexton fortress, they learn that King William II was killed in a tragic hunting accident and that Henry is now king. Duncan is almost immediately summoned to pledge fealty to the new king.

Madelyne is pregnant though she doesn't immediately realize it. Duncan finally breaks the news to her and she promises that she'll stop "feeding the animals" outside the castle walls after one more trip to the place. She's just dumping the bones when Anthony is struck by an arrow. With help minutes away, Madelyne draws an arrow and shoots one of the attackers dead. Louddon is among them and he grabs Madelyne. He knows that Duncan will kill him but he vows that he'll also kill Madelyne. Madelyne passes out before help arrives and Louddon might have managed to kill her but he's interrupted by a ferocious growl. He looks up in time to see the huge wolf. The animal jumps onto Louddon, ripping his throat out. The wolf then sniffs at Madelyne but apparently recognizes her scent - the person who'd left food for him all those months. He picks up a bone and walks away.

When Madelyne awakes, Duncan tells her of the wolf but she believes he's making fun of her. She continues to believe that though he swears that there truly was a wolf - an animal - and that the beast saved her life. Finally, he gives up and instead says that she'll never have to feed the beast again because he'll be sure it's done - that the wolf deserves it. They walk home together and Madelyne knows that her husband is not a wolf, "only a man, yet a man more powerful than the magical Odysseus." Duncan knows that he's accomplished a "daring feat," for he'd captured an angel.

## Chapters 22, 23 and 24 Analysis

Madelyne has begun to doubt that Duncan will come for her. Uncle Berton has her repeat the part of her story of her encounter with Eleanor several times. Madelyne told Eleanor that Duncan would come for her, "Because I am his greatest treasure." She notes that Duncan is not a fool and only a fool would allow such a treasure to escape. Madelyne may have given those words much thought as she waited three days for Duncan to arrive. When he does show up, it's with a full contingency of soldiers. The



fact that Duncan gathered so many soldiers proved his love and loyalty. The soldiers also saluted, providing her proof of their own loyalty to her as well. Madelyne notes that she'd never felt as cherished as she did at that moment.

The king's court is, predictably, filled with intrigue. There are those who are fighting for position and it almost seems that Henry, the king's brother, is one of those. Henry has questioned Gerald at length about Duncan's loyalty and what would happen if another were crowned king. It's also Henry who suggests to William that Duncan be exiled for thirty days - time to allow his temper to cool. William notes that it's also a thirty-day head start for Louddon who'll surely hide. When Madelyne and Duncan discover that William has been killed, Madelyne is relieved that they missed it and Duncan is angry that he didn't have the chance to save his king. Though witnesses put it down to a tragic accident, Duncan and Madelyne believe Henry arranged his brother's death so that he could take over the throne. Duncan doesn't stand against Henry but agrees to stand loyal to his new leader - a point Henry had apparently been concerned about.

Madelyne briefly met her biological father before leaving England for Spain. Baron Rhinehold says that Madelyne looks like her mother. Madelyne invites him to visit once they've returned, and he agrees to do to. Madelyne and Duncan have constantly been at odds over the feeding of the wolf. Once Madelyne learns that she is pregnant, she agrees that she'll remain inside the castle walls but wants to feed the wolf one final time.





# Characters

## Madelyne

Madelyne is the sister of a baron, Duncan's wife and champion of anyone she feels is being treated unfairly. She's honest to a fault, claiming to have never lied. Upon her mother's death, Madelyne was at the mercy of her cruel stepfather and half-brother. It's not until years later that she discovers that neither are blood kin. After a period of time, she was sent to live with an elderly uncle, a priest, and it's there that Madelyne learned to read and write and became familiar with dozens of old stories. Those tales came to her aid again and again, providing comfort when she is anxious or frightened.

Madelyne is newly returned to Louddon, her half-brother, when Duncan puts in his appearance. The first Madelyne sees of Duncan, he's been stripped of most of his clothing, including his shoes, tied to a post and left to freeze to death. When the soldiers guarding Duncan go inside to escape the freezing temperatures, Madelyne cuts him free without realizing that Duncan's soldiers are already climbing the wall. Madelyne knows little of the feud between Duncan and Louddon and only wants to save Duncan's life. With that in mind, she warms his feet and Duncan begins to fall in love with her for her kindness.

Madelyne is taking "captive," though Duncan has no way of knowing that she'd already planned to escape from Louddon's cruelty. When Duncan says that she's leaving with him, she quickly grabs a bag, already packed in preparation of her own journey. Along the way, Madelyne saves the life of Gilard, Duncan's younger brother, earning her Gilard's admiration and a serious crush from the younger man.

Madelyne has spent her life withholding her feelings and it takes some time for her to leave those ways behind. Soon, she learns that she can yell at the Waxton family and that they'll yell back. She also learns that yelling doesn't always mean anger.

She marries Duncan, learns it's a sham and agrees to marry him again with a real priest. She's courageous and brave, willing to take on any situation that she feels requires her attention. She quietly takes over Duncan's home, his sister's friendship and the total loyalty of his soldiers.

## Duncan

The first time Baron Duncan Wexton sees Madelyne, he's tied to a post in the courtyard of Louddon's home. Louddon is Madelyne's half brother (though it's later revealed that there are no blood ties) and Duncan's enemy. Though Duncan is strong and could easily have overpowered Madelyne, he allows her to cut him free and to help him inside a room where she begins helping him grow warm. When Madelyne holds Duncan's feet to her bare stomach in order to help him warm them, Duncan is touched. He's never been the recipient of that type of kindness.





Duncan's sister has told Duncan that Louddon raped her. As it turns out, it was Louddon's best friend who did the deed, but Louddon was largely responsible. Duncan and his brothers are set on revenge and believe that holding Madelyne captive will hurt Louddon, as they've been hurt to see their sister in pain. Duncan loves his family but tries to keep tight control over outward displays of emotion. He tells Madelyne that he is, first and foremost, lord over everyone on his land. He is head of his household second. It takes Madelyne some time to argue him into reconciling the two but he finally realizes that his brothers have opinions that are valuable to their cause and that being close to his family is positive.

Duncan is called "the Wolf," but Madelyne realizes that he's actually very fair and kind. She brings that kindness out in ways that Duncan doesn't expect. When Duncan realizes that he's fallen in love with Madelyne, he's taken aback.

Duncan is always in the midst of any battle that involves his soldiers. Unlike his adversary, Louddon, Duncan never backs down and fights side-by-side with his men. On the battlefield, he is honorable but ruthless. In one battle against Louddon's men, he takes no hostages though the soldiers don't kill women and children as Louddon had done to Duncan's men. Because of his honor, Duncan has the support of other barons in the region and when it's time to fight against Louddon, he easily rounds up sufficient troops. Duncan's own training program is so admired that he trains knights bound to other rulers.

As the story draws to a climax, Duncan and Madelyne are caught up in the drama of a king's court with Louddon creating problems that seem destined to tear the two apart. Duncan never gives up on his plan to have Madelyne for his own and is always seeking how to better care for and protect her.

## Louddon

Madelyn was raised to believe she was Louddon's half sister though she'll eventually discover that it's not true. Louddon is a cruel man, interested only in what will make life better for himself. It's said that Louddon and King William II are lovers, and Madelyn believes that it explains why Louddon has never married. Louddon had apparently cared deeply for Madelyne's mother, Rachel, and feels the same attraction for Madelyne once she's grown up. He plans to keep Madelyne for himself though his best friend has begged for her.

Louddon is actually a coward and admits that if it comes to a fair fight against Duncan, that Duncan will win. With that in mind, he seeks to fight unfairly, ambushing Duncan on several occasions and looking for ways to win the feud without meeting the superior warrior on the battlefield.



## Adela

Adela is Duncan's sister. When she and Madelyne meet, Adela is little more than a walking zombie. She speaks to no one and never bathes. She does, however, yell at Madelyne. One day, Madelyne has all she can stand and pushes Adela into a bath, combs her hair and forces her to talk. Adela becomes devoted to Madelyne after that, and the two are close friends.

Adela says that she had been betrothed to Gerald while she was in London but Gerald was unable to be present. Adela met secretly with Louddon, mostly because of her sadness over Gerald's absence. Louddon asks her to meet him at a particular time and place, and Adela complies. Morcar, Louddon's best friend, rapes her while Louddon watches. When Adela returns to her brothers, she tells them that Louddon had done the deed, starting a feud between the two families. Adela tells Madelyne the truth, and Madelyne eventually tells the family. Though Morcar was the rapist, they agree that Louddon was equally responsible as he arranged it. Adela eventually agrees to marry Gerald, who loves her very much.

## Gilard

Duncan's youngest brother, Gilard is with Duncan when he takes Madelyne hostage. Duncan immediately makes it clear that Madelyne belongs to him, a fact that Gilard seems to honor. As Duncan's soldiers return to their own home, Louddon's soldiers - without Louddon - catch up. Madelyne is suddenly in the thick of the battle and sees that Gilard is about to be struck from behind. Grabbing the weapon of a downed soldier, she kills the attacker. Gilard is taken with her after that and spends quite a lot of time with Madelyne. When Madelyne and Duncan are marrying for the first time, Madelyne hesitates to say, "I do." Gilard rushes to her defense, and Madelyne agrees to the marriage to avoid a conflict between the brothers. Gilard later says that he could have made Madelyne happy but Edmond, the middle brother, has already seen that Duncan loves her.

## Edmond

Edmond is Duncan's middle brother and is initially quite angry that Duncan brought Madelyne into their household. Edmond is called to sew up Madelyne's leg soon after Duncan's party arrive home. During her delirium, Madelyne thinks Edmond is a Cyclops and strikes him. As Gilard is so enamored with Madelyne, Edmond reluctantly accepts her presence though he worries that Madelyne will have a detrimental effect on Adela. Duncan insists that Madelyne will be good for Adela, and Edmond becomes Madelyne's firm supporter as soon as that happens.



## Gerald

Gerald is the baron of a neighboring holding near Duncan's land and is betrothed to Adela. Adela assumes that Gerald will no longer want her once he discovers that she's been raped. Then the day comes when Gerald arrives at Duncan's home, and Adela is frantic. With Madelyne as her support, she greets the man but is aloof with him. Gerald vows that he loves Adela and that he will work as long as it takes to win her love in return. He eventually does convince Adela to marry him but has to promise that he won't seduce her. He later tells Gerald that he's certain the day will come when Adela will seduce him.

## Anthony

Anthony is one of Duncan's most trusted soldiers. When Duncan needs someone to look after Madelyne, he chooses Anthony. Madelyne questions him about his feelings - whether he's disappointed to be stuck watching over her. He says that he was injured, and Madelyne's concern seems to have struck a cord of respect in the soldier. Over the months that follow, Anthony comes to care greatly for Madelyne and even agrees to take on the task of teaching her to defend herself. It's Anthony who steps into the picture when Louddon strikes Madelyne, and Anthony who vows to follow Madelyne as she's taken to her uncle's home.

## Uncle Berton

Uncle Berton is a priest who is Madelyne's mother's brother. Madelyne is sent to stay with Uncle Berton for several years during her childhood. During that time, she learns to read, write and hears many historical stories. It's Uncle Berton who marries Duncan and Madelyne for the second time. He moves to Duncan's household after the death of his own lord, soon after the second ceremony.

## Rachel

Rachel is Madelyne's mother. It was said that she slipped, falling on the stairs to her death. However, it's later revealed that Louddon was chasing her at the time.

## Baron Rhinehold

Rhinehold is the man Rachel was expected to marry. Loudon and Clarissa say that Baron Rhinehold was actually Madelyne's father.

## William

William is the child who tells Duncan that Madelyne is being attacked by the priest.



## Father Laurence

Father Laurence is the man sent by Louddon to kill Madelyne. He poses as a priest and is pressed into service to marry Madelyne and Duncan. He eventually tries to kill Madelyne but is fatally stabbed by Duncan. When they learn that Father Laurence wasn't a priest at all, Duncan and Madelyne realize that they aren't actually married.



# Objects/Places

## Silenus

Silenus is the stallion Duncan rides when he captures Madelyne. When Duncan orders Madelyne to mount, she doesn't want to confess that she doesn't know how to ride. Instead, she talks to the horse at first, explaining that she's terribly afraid. The horse allows her to mount - even though she climbs up from the wrong side. She later takes him sugar cubes and calls him her "lamb," prompting Duncan to say that she'd ruined the stallion and to give the horse to Madelyne as a gift.

## The Priests' Quarters, Louddon's Castle

The priest's quarters is a small, windowless room that was part of Louddon's castle. In this room, Madelyne warmed Duncan's feet by putting them against her bare belly - a kindness that earned her the love of the soldier.

## Wexton Fortress

Wexton is the name of Duncan's castle where he and Madelyne live with Duncan's siblings. There are some peculiarities to the building, such as the fact that the stairwell is on the left, rather than the right as is the case in most castles. The stairs were built so that the left-handed Wexton's would have the advantage in case of a fight.

## Scotland

Scotland is where Duncan's sister lives and where Duncan and Madelyne go for a one-month exile after the king becomes involved with the feud between Duncan and Louddon.

## Grinsteade

Grainsteade is where Madelyne lives with her Uncle, Father Burton, as a child.

## The Tower Room

The tower room is located in Duncan's house. It's where Madelyne is held. She believes that she's locked in and is just about to go crazy when Duncan informs her that the door has not been locked over the course of her stay.



## **Psaltry**

The Psaltry is a stringed musical instrument. Gerald presents one to Adela as a gift. Madelyn can play and enralls the family with her telling of the poem, "Odysseus."

## **The Lake**

The lake is a body of water near Duncan's castle where Duncan swims nightly - regardless of the weather. He says that enduring the harsh cold strengthens his mind and body. It's also where Duncan and Madelyne make love soon after they are married.

## **Creek's Crossing**

Creek's Crossing is a place near Duncan's castle where he had hoped to face Louddon's men soon after kidnapping Madelyne. The soldiers wind up meeting before that, though Duncan's soldiers earned another stunning victory.

## **The Lower Bailey**

The lower bailey is the first courtyard upon entering the castle fortress belonging to Duncan. "The lower bailey" and "upper bailey" are generic terms used to describe specific places within a castle.

## **London**

London is where the king hold court and where Duncan and later Madelyne are summoned to settle the feud with Louddon.



# Themes

## Love

Love in various forms is an overriding theme in this book. The most common is romantic love though there's also family love and loyalty love expressed throughout the story.

Duncan begins to fall in love with Madelyne almost immediately, though he doesn't at first recognize it for what it is. In Duncan's case, the fact that Madelyne helped warm his feet at her own expense was "the most unselfish act" he'd ever witnessed. With that picture of the young woman stamped indelibly on his mind, Duncan is enamored with Madelyne from their first moments together. Madelyne at first feels sorry for Duncan until she realizes that allowing himself to be captured was part of a plan. She's angry with him on many points, but taking her from her cruel brother's household isn't one of those. Instead, Madelyne sees him first only as a soldier but gradually sees the honor and loyalty that are important traits for Duncan. It takes only a short period for Madelyne to realize that she returns Duncan's love.

Adela believes that Gerald will break their betrothal when he learns that she was raped. What Adela doesn't count on is Gerald's love. There's no real indication how and why this love developed. Gerald and Adela have been together little over the years of their betrothal. With the option to simply cast Adela aside, Gerald sets about the business of winning her love in return. It takes time, but he eventually does win her.

Duncan is a baron, therefore rules over the people on his land - including his brothers and sister. Though it's evident that he cares for his siblings, he doesn't know how to be their friends while still being their lord. He's taken his cue from his father who kept everyone at a distance. When Madelyne arrives, that changes and Duncan soon finds himself truly expressing his love to his family members.

Edmond, Gilard and Duncan each love their younger sister in their own ways. For Duncan, the most obvious action in the world is to exact revenge on those responsible for harming her. The brothers have also babied Adela to the extreme, which has made her less able to recover than might ordinarily have happened. Madelyne doesn't understand this love for their sister and actually believes that the brothers are lying in the beginning. She herself has never been valued by her siblings and believes that is the norm.

## Loyalty

Loyalty is a big part of this story line - loyalty between rulers and their people and between families. In fact, it's that loyalty between siblings that prompts Duncan to attack Louddon's castle to capture Madelyne. Duncan wants to exact revenge on Louddon for harming Adela and expects that taking Madelyne will hurt Louddon - an eye for an eye,



as Duncan says. That family loyalty is strong among the Wextons but nonexistent between Madelyne and her siblings.

Duncan is absolutely loyal to his king. He is upset when he learns that William II has died in an accident. Duncan may have his doubts that it is an accident, but pledges his loyalty to the next king. Duncan encourages that kind of loyalty among his men as well. Those soldiers who are members of his region pledge their loyalty to Duncan and are willing to follow his orders - even into battle. One reason Duncan inspires that level of loyalty is that he trains with the men and he leads them as they go into battle when he could remove himself from the danger instead. As Duncan returns home after capturing Madelyne, he waits outside the gate of his castle while all his men enter ahead of him. He's showing them by his action that he is guarding the rear. Not only are they duty-bound to Duncan, he offers his protection as well.

There is also a strong loyalty among friends. Though not all barons are united, many are willing to stand with their fellow landowners to face the various threats. When Duncan is expecting to fight against Louddon, Gerald offers his own troops and says that other barons will also muster men to stand with Duncan. Gerald himself joins Duncan and the two men pledge to watch over each other as they face their individual battles.

## Pride

Madelyne and Duncan each have their fair share of pride. Though pride can sometimes be a downfall, it is also sometimes a positive point to one's character.

When Duncan is being held in the courtyard of Louddon's castle, Louddon's soldiers have removed most of his clothing and his boots. The soldiers plan to allow Duncan to freeze to death. Despite the harsh temperatures, Duncan stands firm and strong and the soldiers soon decide that he's not going to freeze to death quickly enough. Duncan's pride makes him appear invincible. Had he appeared weak and near death, Louddon's soldiers might have remained outside to watch. While Duncan's men would likely have won in the end, it would have been difficult for his men to free him quickly had the soldiers remained on duty.

Madelyne herself shows pride on several occasions though pride is a somewhat foreign emotion to the young woman. Madelyne was raised to believe that she was worthless. With the exception of her half brother's lust and his friend's desire to own her, Madelyne was worthless to Louddon. It takes her some time to get past the idea that she's worth nothing to anyone but when she does grasp the idea, her pride is more often seen.

One of the earliest instances of Madelyne's pride showing through happens when Duncan tells her to mount his horse. Madelyne is afraid of horses and has had no constructive riding lessons. Louddon sometimes put her on a horse, urging it to run wild in an effort to frighten Madelyn, but those were the only times she's been on a horse's back. When Duncan orders her to mount, she is determined to show him that she can.





She begins by talking to the horse - which amuses Duncan greatly. She admits to the horse that she's very afraid but that she's going to climb into the saddle anyway. With Duncan and others watching, Madelyne does just that.



# Style

## Point of View

The book is written in third person from a semi-omniscient point of view. The majority of the novel is written from Madelyne's point of view, Duncan's point of view, or both, though there are occasional lapses to other characters. It's vital to have that complete look for the full understanding of the story line. For example, after Madelyne and Duncan are married, Gilard tells Edmond that he would have made Madelyne happy and that she deserves that. Edmond responds that Duncan and Madelyne love each other, but haven't yet realized that fact. Knowing Gilard's feelings for Madelyne is necessary when Gilard later joins Anthony outside Madelyne's room to stand guard.

## Setting

The story is set in England, beginning in 1099 and stretching for the following year. The majority of the story occurs in and around Duncan's castle. It's a large castle with an extended household and several servants. Inside the walls, there's actually a small city, filled with people who work with and for Duncan, who is a baron. The castles were built largely of stone and the descriptions of the buildings and landscapes seem true. That fact makes the story more believable and arguably draws the reader in more quickly and easily than if the land was fictional.

The Wexton Fortress is described in great detail. The castle was built with the left-handed Wexton's in mind. In the event of an attack, the men would descend the staircase fighting. For that reason, the staircase was built to the left, rather than the right, as was the case in most other castles. The tower room where Madelyne stays at first seems a beautiful place. She finds ways to make it more appealing and soon begins working on a tapestry of her own to further claim the room as her own. The hall where the meals are had undergoes a dramatic transformation after Madelyne marries Duncan. She orders the rushes - designed to absorb the dampness prevalent on the stone floors - be changed regularly and bans the dogs. She also creates a sitting area in the room. Duncan notes that no one would want to remain in the room at any time other than mealtime, but is soon among those who linger there after dinner for conversation with the family.

## Language and Meaning

The story is written in English and is very readable. Most readers will find that the story moves quickly, adequately drawing in the reader so that it's easy to imagine the events and people being described. There is no foul language though there are occasional love scenes that are likely not suitable for young readers. The love scenes are described in graphic detail and there are several throughout the novel.



The book is adequately divided between exposition and quotations. Both exposition and quotations contain a few words that are likely specific to the time and the region. On several occasions, characters say, "aye," instead of "yes," and begin sentences with the word "aye," which really means, "yes, and ...". There are a few words that may not be familiar to the average reader. Some events happen in the castle "bailey," for example. While the details of those words are not typically necessary for general understanding of the story, it's usually easy to discern the meaning based on the context.

Humor is important in this story. Madelyne and Duncan verbally spar often, and there is an ongoing debate over whether her hair is brown or red. Their teasing occasionally extends to other characters, as well.

## Structure

The book is divided into twenty-four chapters of greatly varying lengths. Each is numbered only with no chapter titles. Each chapter is preceded by a quotation from several sources. Many of them are Biblical, coming from both the Old and New Testaments. These quotations are a foreshadowing of what's to come in that particular chapter. For example, "We walk by faith, not by sight," from II Corinthians, is the opening for Chapter Twenty-Two. The first line of that chapter reads, "She told him everything." The chapter is about Madelyne telling Father Berton all that's happened to her and the long wait for Duncan to turn up at Father Berton's home. That wait is grueling for Madelyne as she deals with her faith in Duncan, but he does arrive.

Though many of the quotations are from the Bible, some come from other sources. "Evil is the man who had known honor and discarded it," sounds like a Chinese proverb, though its source is not identified. "To do injustice is more disgraceful than to suffer it," comes from Plato. The quotations, if the reader takes time to consider them, are an appropriate addition to the text of this story.



## Quotes

"And then the captive slowly lowered his gaze. His eyes met those of his enemy. What the leader saw there caused him to swallow loudly. He turned away in fright. He made the sign of the cross, a puny effort to ward off the dark promise he'd read in the warrior's gray eyes, muttering to himself that he was only doing the bidding of the overlord. And then he ran toward the safety of the castle."

Chapter 1, Page 4

"Her shoulders began to tremble and the warrior felt it was as if she were drawing all the cold from his body and taking it into her own. It was the most unselfish act he had ever witnessed."

Chapter 1, Page 8

"There was much to reevaluate now. Though he knew Madelyne wasn't aware of it, she had certainly complicated the issues. He'd have to sort it all out, he told himself. The plan was changed now, whether he liked it or not, for he knew with a certainty that both amazed and infuriated him, that he'd never let Madelyne go."

Chapter 2, Page 27

"Lady Madelyne had sealed her own fate. She'd warmed his feet."

Chapter 2, Page 28

"Lord she was exhausted. She couldn't worry about him now. When she was rested, she'd find a way to escape. It was the duty of a captive, wasn't it?"

Chapter 2, Page 31

"That would have been undignified, crying like an infant, and bother her dignity and her pride were cherished cloaks she always wore. It would have been humiliating to lose either."

Chapter 6, Page 82

"Not a decent word was exchanged throughout the meal; only obscene grunts from men thoroughly enjoying their food could be heard over the snapping of the dogs at her backside."

Chapter 8, Page 117

"The dogs also retreated, lazily making their way back to form a new pyramid in front of the fireplace. Madelyne decided the animals were better disciplined than their masters."



None of them belched their farewell."  
Chapter 8, Page 118

"'You're going to freeze to death walking around half naked,' she told him between sobs. 'And I'll not warm your feet this time.'"  
- Madelyne, Chapter 11, Page 150

"Her eyes widened in astonishment. She was locked inside the bedroom, but the true problem, as she viewed it, was that Duncan was on the wrong side of the door. And not even a sweet, gentle lady of breeding could misinterpret the meaning of that action."  
Chapter 11, Page 156

"The admission staggered him. The disrespectful, unpredictable woman weeping loud enough to wake the dead had tripped her way right into his heart. He suddenly felt as vulnerable as this Achilles warrior Madelyne told him about. Aye, Achilles couldn't have been too pleased to find out his heels were vulnerable. He'd probably been infuriated, as infuriated as Duncan suddenly was."  
Chapter 15, Page 203

"Duncan understood Madelyne better than she understood herself. She appeared clumsy, but the simple truth was that she was in such a hurry to catch up with life, to savor each experience, she didn't have time for caution. That duty felt to her husband. Madelyne was like a young filly just testing her legs. She was a joy to watch, a nightmare to protect."  
Chapter 15, Page 211

"Yet in this precious moment, while she stared at her husband, she realized that her dream had come true. Duncan was her Odysseus. He was her lover, her protector, her savior from her brother. Dear God, she was in love with the man."  
Chapter 16, Page 240

"'Whenever I become frightened, or begin to fret about the future, I remember that I'm bound to you.' Duncan smiled. She didn't look frightened any longer. 'If you get yourself killed, I'll find your grave and spit on it,' she threatened."  
Chapter 19, Page 293

"Anthony had a new problem to consider. His primary duty was to keep Duncan's wife safe. Now another duty had been thrust upon him. He was going to have to protect his men from Madelyne. His sense of humor saved him from despair, however. By the time he reached the smith's hut, he was laughing. Heaven help them all. By week's end



they'd probably all be wearing arrows in their backsides."

- Anthony upon commencing archery lessons with Madelyne, Chapter 19, Page 298

"The courtyard was always deserted in the morning hours now. Though the heat should have beckoned the staff out into the upper bailey to do their daily chores of washing the linens, and braiding fresh rushes, everyone preferred to work indoors. They waited until later afternoon to go outside and gain a few minutes of fresh, cooling air. More specifically, they waited for Madelyne to finish her target practice."

Chapter 20, Page 306

"And then she played the same pretense she used to play when she was a little girl. Whenever she was frightened that Louddon was going to take her back home, she'd pretend Odysseus was standing over her, guarding her. The pretense changed, however. It was not Odysseus but Duncan standing guard now. Aye, she'd found someone more powerful than Odysseus. She had her wolf to protect her now."

Chapter 21, Page 319

"When he noticed the tears streaming down Madelyne's face, he finally gave her the words he thought she need to hear. 'I've come for you Madelyne.'"

- Duncan, Chapter 22, Page 330

"Both men turned to stare at Madelyne. They looked quite astonished. Madelyne was a little irritated by their lack of faith in her ability. For a fleeting second, she though she just might keep silent. The truth, however, won out. 'I was aiming for his foot.'"

Chapter 24, Page 373

## Topics for Discussion

How do Duncan and Madelyne meet? What action does she take during that first meeting? What actions does Duncan take? What do they think of each other?

Who is Gilard? How does Madelyne help him during a battle? What is Gilard's reaction? What is Duncan's reaction? What is Madelyn's reaction?

Who is Edmond? How is Madelyne introduced to Edmond? What is Edmond's concern about Madelyne's presence in the house? Is he right?

Who is Adela? What is her connection to Madelyne? What are her first words to Madelyne? What does Duncan say about those words? How do the two women come to be friends?

What is Anthony's job? What are some of the problems he encounters doing that job? Do you think he longs to leave that post and return to the battlefield? Why or why not? What are his feelings for Madelyne? Madelyne's for him?

Why does Duncan strike at Louddon? Why does Madelyne say it's a waste of time? Compare Madelyne's childhood with that of Adela. How do those differences mold the two women?

Soon after Madelyne is attacked by the priest, she begs Duncan to make love to her. Why? What does Duncan then say to Adela? Is he correct?

What promise does Gerald have to make in order to win Adela's hand in marriage? Does he intend to keep that promise? How does his promise compare to the early days of the relationship between Madelyne and Duncan?

Describe the version of events Louddon presents to the king. How does his description vary from Duncan's? Who calls witnesses? Why? Does it work? What did Louddon tell the king about Madelyne and her ability to testify?