

Book 2 Dragon King's Forbidden Love Chapter 26 - Tips

Book 2 Dragon King's Forbidden Love Chapter 26

LARA

I paced around the room, thinking of the many ways one can kill a person and dispose of the body. Back at the Glowing Citadel, they taught us that Light can dissolve the darkness. Gerdians were the dark ones, so in theory, that should work, right? Right?!

Although that hunk of a man could be too big to do it. It wasn't fair that such an arrogant piece of a gerdian was so tall... and muscly... and handso... No, I refused to go there.

It was dark already when I decided to explore the chambers he appointed to me. I had to admit that it turned out to be rather spacious. And also, surprisingly luxurious. On the other hand, if he was planning to marry me off to that old Emperor of his then maybe that was the expectation.

The walls were decorated with dark silver tapestries with some patterns on them resembling the dragons and fire. Typical. But when I looked closer it seemed that the embroidery on it was telling some kind of story about a girl and a dragon. I couldn't help but look more into it. If I got that correctly, the dragon had many women to choose from but he only saw that one. But there were two others who wanted the same girl... The tapestry ended by a castle on fire and a roaming dragon, while the girl was in the hands of others... The whole story made me shudder.

The bed that I was given was a four-poster one, made out of dark wood by some skillful crafter, judging by the intricate carvings on it, with a white and gold canopy covering soft silk sheets and pillows. There was a small white and gold sofa in front of it with a little table and armchairs matching it. And a little dark wood desk in the corner.

But it was the huge passage leading to the balcony that interested me the most, so I went to it immediately to look around. There were no houses without balconies on the White Archipelago. It was considered bad luck, so I was happy to still have access to one here.

The night already cloaked the Gerdian Empire in darkness but the view still took my breath away. The castle I was in, stood on top of a huge hill, and below it spread a city bigger than any other that I had seen before. Myriads of tiny lights let me see how vast the territory was. I had no idea how many people lived there. But there could be no mistake, there were no cities like that back at the White Archipelago. The realization made me feel so small and I hugged myself with my arms. How would I ever get out of here? I didn't know if Demir was lying to me or not... If I was to win that stupid bet – would he really let me go? Or maybe that girl would bring me my wings and help me escape? Would it be possible for me to fly such a long distance? I couldn't even see the mountains that were covering the Empire from the borders...

The chill created goosebumps on my skin and at the same moment I felt like someone was watching me, so I hurried inside.

I checked two other doors in my room, finding out that one of them was a wardrobe room with empty shelves and a huge mirror right in the middle, and a dressing table to the side. Also empty. Nobody was waiting for me to arrive here. It was done on a whim. Updated by Jobnib.com

I couldn't help myself and came to look at myself in the mirror, gasping at the side. There were circles under my eyes, my hair was a mess and the dress was hopelessly ruined. I sighed looking at what everybody here saw today. Not that I cared about them and their opinions. But it was a humiliating experience.

I clenched my fists and walked out of the wardrobe room, trying the next door without prior hesitation. Luckily, it was a bathroom and everything was working in it. The bath itself was huge but not as huge as the one I saw Demir in while we were in those dreams. The memory heated my cheeks and I ran to the sink to get some cold water on the face. I washed away the dirt only to realize that it wasn't enough. I needed a bath so badly...

But the thought of somebody walking in was stopping me from actually doing it. I raced to the main door and put a chair to it in hopes that it would give me some privacy. After looking at it some more, I added an armchair and a desk to it. That should do it.

Back at the bathroom, I found some soaps and even a hair essence. Not much, but enough to clean me. There was no way I could relax in here, so I just quickly poured enough water from the tap and jumped in, disposing of my ruined dress. I scrubbed myself vigorously, not wasting any time, and rinsed

the soap off within seconds. A few minutes and I was done! I didn't find any towels in here, so I had to use Air element to dry my body quickly. And then another dilemma occurred to me. There was nothing for me to wear here.

I soaked my dirty dress in soapy water and washed it to the best of my abilities in hopes of it looking somewhat presentable tomorrow. I had never washed anything in my life before, so I had no idea if I was doing it correctly. But when I dried it with my Air, I knew that something was wrong. Very wrong. The fabric of the dress crinkled, and it looked much smaller than before. More beads fell off and the whole thing was looking like a rag... Damn it!

I covered myself with it when I returned to the room and then took one of the sheets to wrap it around me. Putting the dress aside, I fell to the bed... I didn't even realise how and when the darkness consumed me.

Tingles erupted through my body when someone was caressing the skin on my abdomen. So pleasant and so sweet. The movement went up and down, brushing the side of my thigh and waist... When the fingers pressed harder into my flesh, grasping my bottom, a moan escaped me... And with that came the realization of what is going on. I opened my eyes and saw a huge figure lying in bed right next to me. I knew at once who that was and there was only one thing that I could do to him. I swung my hand and gave him the most resounding slap.

"How dare you?!" I growled and prepared to hit him again when he caught my hand and suddenly rolled on top of me. The thin silk sheet was separating us now when I realized that he was naked. Naked and in my bed.

"You know, Angel," Demir smirked, "If that's how you are going to react then maybe don't call for me!"

"What do you mean call for you?!" I gaped at him, "I didn't call you!"

"Yes you did," he looked so happy and full of himself that I kicked him somewhere in his abdomen... or maybe lower. Wherever it was, it felt as hard as a stone. He groaned and I used the moment to get out from the damn bed, not forgetting to pull that sheet with me to cover myself. But when I turned in rage to scold him some more, I froze. As he lay there, watching me clenching to the thin fabric with a grin on his face. And not even bothering to cover himself since I got the sheet off him.

“What?” he chuckled following my gaze around his perfect muscles. In our house back at the White Archipelago there were antique paintings of ancient masters with n.aked warriors on it. Well, those warriors of the past had nothing on that man!

I gulped and he stood up from the bed. It wasn't the first time he revealed himself like that before me, but I still felt my cheek flushed and turned away from him.

“I like that you are so naughty and so shy at the same time!” he gave out a little laugh, “Our women are usually much bolder.”

“I am sure of that!” I rolled my eyes and physically felt the heat coming from his body right next to me.

However, I soon regained myself and demanded, “But it's great that you are here now!”

“Oh?” I heard amus.ement in his voice, “How so?”

“You...,” I was slightly nervous, “Now you have to take me home! You said that you wouldn't touch me before I asked you and I didn't ask for... for whatever you were doing to me in that bed!”

His hands lay on my shoulders and I flinched at the touch as his warm breath tickled my ear.

“That depends on how we look at it,” he chuckled, “You called for me and here I am.”

“What do you mean,” I tried to shake off his hands, but he turned me to face him instead.

“Because this is a dream, Lara,” he smiled, tracing my chin with his fingers, “And I am here, looking like...that... only because of your call.”

“You are lying!” I gritted my teeth and he burst out laughing.

“On the contrary,” he shrugged his shoulders, “As far as I remember, I am back in my office right now. Fully dressed. If you replied my call, that's where we would have been. But yet here we are...”

“What are you trying to say?” I felt how my whole face turned red.

“I am not trying, I am saying it bluntly,” Demir torn off the canopy from the bed as I gasped and wrapped it around himself, “You wanted to see me and you wanted to see me without my clothes.”

“Ridiculous!” I protested and he smiled at me in a way you smile at a silly child.

“So, technically, I won the bet,” he nodded his hand and shook his shoulders as I felt rage washing over me. He couldn’t be serious! “But!” he made a significant pause, “I am gracious and I realize that all this is very new to you. So, I wouldn’t be counting our dreams as you asking me to touch you. Dreams are off-limits. Fine?”

I clenched my lips not to provoke him more. I did know that we already saw each other in the dreams multiple times and denying it would be stupid. So, I nodded and a huge smirk spread over his lips.

“Good,” he said and came way too close to me the very moment, leaning and whispering into my ear, “This rule applies to both of us!”

I woke up with a gasp, panting and feeling my heart racing. It was much lighter in the room already and I heard birds singing outside. The first thing that I checked was the canopy on the bed. And yes, it was intact. Signaling to me that the demon gardian did not lie...

At that moment, a huge cloud of dark smoke appeared just before me...

Book 2 Dragon King's Forbidden Love Chapter 27 - Tips

LARA

I was about to scream when an older woman appeared from the smoke and right behind her two more dark clouds brought two younger women. They all bowed before me and I remembered that Demir transported us in a similar way once. Only that he used dark flames instead. Interesting... Did it mean something or was it just a personal preference?

“My lady,” the older woman spoke, “My name is Lucille Richmond, I am the Head of Maids in the Palace and I was ordered by the Emperor to take great care of you.”

My face must have twitched unpleasantly as the woman looked at me with shocked eyes.

I really hoped that their Emperor had no idea that I was here. Or even better, I didn't want him to know who I was or that I even existed. But Demir probably already told everything to his master! That... that... I had no words to name this scheming man!

"These are the maids I personally chose for you," the woman continued, gesturing at the younger girls, "Lisa and Sandra. They will be helping you every day from now on. If you need anything, just let them know."

"Oh," I smiled sweetly, "Could you bring me back my wings? I think I lost them when I arrived here. And haven't seen them since."

They all looked startled and gave each other strange glances. They probably thought that I was some kind of an i***t, but I didn't care as long as I there was at least a little chance of getting my wings back.

"I am not sure I am aware what you are talking about, my lady," Lucille shook her head.

"Wings," I almost snapped, "Big, white, feathers. Wings!"

"I'll make sure that someone will look for them for you, lady Lara," the woman replied and at that moment I knew that there wasn't a chance in the chaos that my wings would be found! I bet that awful man hidden them where no one could ever find them!

"Thanks," I mumbled, trying to hide my face.

"If you don't mind, my lady," the head maid suggested, "The girls will start working. We have a lot to do today."

She looked me up and down and I knew that she meant that they had a lot of work to make me look decent. I just nodded. Not that I had anything better to do here anyway.

"If you don't mind," the girl with light brown hair and blue eyes spoke finally, who was introduced to me as Sandra, "We need to clear that."

She pointed at the pile of furniture at the door that I brought yesterday in an attempt to protect myself from people entering the room. Well, if they didn't think that I was a lunatic before, they definitely were thinking that now. How could I forget that gerdians could transport themselves anywhere with the help of their magic?! They didn't need doors!

"Yes, that's fine," I replied meekly and while Sandra started to deal with the furniture, Lisa disappeared in the dark smoke, only to reappear in a moment with a basket full of little bottles. She then went to the bathroom and I realized that these were the proper shampoos and essences.

Not wasting any time, Lisa prepared a bath for me and escorted me there, not saying anything about me being wrapped in a sheet. While she was bathing me properly, I heard more and more voices in the bedroom.

"What is going on there?" I asked.

"I think they are bringing everything that you might need here," the girl smiled while massaging my sculp, "Don't worry, you will have everything the best."

Oh, Lisa, that was the last thing that I worried about.

She scrubbed me so well and then kept adding oil after oil on my every part of my body and then hair. She gave me a silk robe to wear and I was happy about that. At least something to cover myself.

Lisa also brought me silk slippers with little heels and bows on the front that were soft and comfortable.

When we were out of the bathroom, I gasped at the sight that I saw. The room definitely changed a lot in the forty minutes that we were gone.

The sheets were changed and more cushions were added to the bed. Vases with freshly cut flowers were standing everywhere. A tall shelf filled with books that definitely wasn't there before appeared in the corner. Overall, the room now looked like somebody really lived there.

"Please, hurry, my lady," Sandra took my hand and motioned me to follow her to the wardrobe room. And that was the biggest shock for me as she shelves and racks that were empty before now were full of beautiful and exquisite dresses.

I checked just a few of them and had to admit that gerdian masters were very talented and only worked with the best fabrics and gems. The shades were darker than the ones I was used to. But there were a couple of lighter dresses as well.

The maids made me sit at the dressing table and Sandra started to braid my hair, drying them on the go with her magic. While Lisa was showing me outfit options for today.

Another thing that I noticed was that a lot of these garments were very revealing. Surprisingly, it made me think of Demir again. I still couldn't believe that I summoned him mentally to my bed and the thoughts of it made me flush again.

"Maybe something crimson?" Lisa suddenly suggested and the two maids shared a laugh.

"Pick something light," I told them harshly and they both got quiet quickly. I didn't want to be mean to them. Even though they both were gerdians, it still wasn't their fault that I was brought here. I felt a prick of guilt and tried to smile softly at the two of them, "I prefer lighter colours. That's what we wear back in my Homeland."

"Of course, my lady," Lisa ran back to the racks and came back with a very delicate white dress with lace and golden embroidery on the corsage, "What about this one?"

"It's perfect," I decided not to test them more.

But then they produced something before me that was probably supposed to be some kind of underwear. However, when I looked at it, sinful thoughts visited my mind again.

"No," I declined the garment at once, "Something simple, please. Nothing out of the ordinary."

"But that's the simplest one we've got," the maid hiccuped, "We were told that you wouldn't like anything... playful."

Was that simple for them? I opened and closed my mouth several times before giving up. They helped me into the strange underwear bodice, that was revealing more than it was hiding. White strings were holding it in place on me

and it definitely made my waist thinner, my breasts higher and my bottom... Well, my bottom was on display. So, I hurried to pull on a dress on top of that monstrosity.

"The Emperor is going to love it!" Lisa giggled and Sandra shushed her at once.

I decided to ignore that.

When I was ready, they brought me a necklace consisting of many strands of white pearls, that reminded me of home so much. It was going from my neck to my shoulders and below breasts, complimenting the whole look.

"Perfect," Lucille came back and looked me up and down, "Now follow me! You will have breakfast with the Emperor."

I gulped. I did not want that. I didn't want to meet him, I didn't want to see him, I didn't want anything to do with him!

But it wasn't like I could do anything about it, so I followed lady Lucille when she led me through the corridors. There was light at the end of it and I realised that there was another balcony there. From the looks of it it was much bigger than the one in my room.

"Just go there," the woman smiled at me, "I am sure he is already waiting for you."

On wobbling feet I walked to the appointed place, holding the fabric of my dress not to fall down. The light blinded me at first but my eyes adjusted quickly.

There was a lavishly decorated golden table and two chairs. And a man in black suit was sitting at one of the places with his back towards me.

I took a step forward and said, "Your Majesty!"

The man stood up and turned to see me with a smirk on his face.

As soon as I recognised him, I clenched my fists and came closer to look him in the eyes.

"What are you doing here?" I demanded, "I thought I was to have breakfast with the Emperor!"

“Oh, you are so eager to meet him already?” he snorted in his usual way, “I have to say I am a little disappointed. You didn’t look like a woman who desires power so much!”

“Power-shmower!” I gave him an eye roll, “I hoped that he would be wiser than you and I could reason with him!”

“Why the chaos would you think that?” he let out a laugh, “Didn’t you think that he was a terrible ancient monster?!”

“Well,” I coughed, clearing my throat, “Haven’t you hear that the hope dies last? Besides, there couldn’t be anyone worse than you! That’s for sure!”

“Oh,” he gave me a strange smile and started moving in my direction, backing me into a corner. Right until I was trapped between him and the rail of the balcony. He placed his hands at both sides of me, leaning so low that our lips almost touched, “Why did you call for me then if I am so despicable?”

“I didn’t,” I shook my head, feeling his hot breath on my lips.

“Liar,” he whispered in a very husky tone, “You were thinking of me... And you were thinking of me naked next to you.”

“I was thinking about how outrageous and disgusting that bathroom episode was!” I finally found what to answer, “It’s not my fault! I have no idea how those geriatric things work!”

He suddenly let go of me and stepped away with his hands behind his back.

“So,” I decided to change the subject quickly, “Where is this Emperor of yours?”

“He is busy and sends his apologies,” Demir replied dryly, “He sent me to keep you company.”

“Has he met you?!” I let out a loud snort and he turned to me with his eyes flashing dark magic.

“I am his closest friend and advisor,” he gritted through teeth.

“That is sad,” I sighed, “Anyway, I don’t feel that hungry! I’d better return to that room of mine.”

“Wait,” he stopped me when I was already almost at the exit, “Stay...”

“What for?”

“I’ll... grant you a wish,” he said quickly and I suddenly got interested...

Book 2 Dragon King's Forbidden Love Chapter 28 - Tips

LARA

We were sitting there and staring at each other. Saying nothing as the servants were changing dishes before us. I took several bites of something, feeling extremely uncomfortable under his gaze. He was watching my every movement and it was annoying, considering he was doing it for someone else. So, every time I was starting to feel special, I had to kill that feeling because deep inside I knew that he is doing all that not for me but for his Emperor.

The annoyance got to me as I stabbed the tomato on my plate.

“Easy!” Demir chuckled, “You defeated him, and he begs for easy death!”

“Is everything a joke to you?” I snapped, sighing mentally. That was not the way of the people of the White Archipelago. We were supposed to be calm and reserved in any kind of situation. However, if I was honest with myself, people there never accepted me. So maybe they were right all this time when they felt that I could never be one of them?

“Of course not,” he replied with a serious face, “Lara, if anything is bothering you...”

“You must be kidding!” I put the knife and fork down with a clank, “Yes, Demir. A lot of things are bothering me! Starting from you abducting me to...”

“I already told you that it wasn’t an abduction... In the full sense of the word,” he cleared his throat, “You can go home as soon as the time of our bet runs out.”

“And your Emperor would let me go just like that?” I crossed my arms on my chest, looking at him with a challenge in my eyes.

“Yes, the Emperor would let you go if you would still want it then,” he said with a strange smile.

"Then we are just wasting our time here," I assured him, "You can just let me go now and be done with it."

"Nice try," he smirked, "But I still want to try and..."

"What?" I raised my brow, "Seduce me? You must be crazy thinking that it's still possible after you are trying to sell me to another man. At the moment, Demir, you are the last person in this world that I would be attracted to in any way."

"Then you have nothing to worry about," he smiled brightly, "Right?"

I didn't like the feeling in my chest that prickled me when he said that. He was so sure of himself as if he knew something that I didn't. On the other hand, he was right. I just had to stay low for a month and then go home. Hopefully, he didn't lie to me. And at least, I was promised peace and quiet during this month. No weddings or anything else. Just the company of Demir. And I could handle him. Of course, I could. Besides, it would give me time to find my wings or to wait for Gideon to come for help. One thing for sure, my brother would never leave me here alone.

"Right," I stretched my lips into a smile. Staying civil might be a good idea after all.

"Great," Demir decided to change the subject at once, "Then how about a little walk to the capital today?"

I almost spat my tea out when he said that. Was he seriously going to let me out of the castle?

"Aren't you afraid that I could escape?" I raised my brow at him.

"In my city, I will always find you, Angel," he said calmly, "I grew up here, Lara."

"Don't underestimate me," I warned him and wiped my lips with a napkin.

"Why would you run?" the gerdian leans to the back of his seat, "It would take you months to get back home on your feet. And that's without the consideration of the mountains and the sea... When in just one month a dragon would get you home within a couple of hours."

“Ah,” I overexaggerated my sigh, “If only I was trusting you!”

“Like it or not but it’s the best option,” he shrugged his shoulders, “If you are done, let’s get going. And one more thing...”

I looked at him through my lashes and I could swear his lips trembled for a second when he caught my gaze.

“What is it?” I taunted him.

“You...,” he cleared his throat, “You can go and write a letter to your brother. It would be delivered. I promise.”

That was an unexpected development, so I let out a little gasp and he smiled. This smile was different. Not his usual smirk but something...sincere. And my heart skipped a bit. But then it remembered why we were here and successfully shut up.

“And you would read everything I write there, of course,” I couldn’t help but take a jab at him.

Demir looked at me for a few seconds and burst out laughing. Then, after he was done and I was annoyed once again, he managed to say, “I think there is no need for that. I can guess pretty clearly what you are going to write to him. I have no illusions on that part. So, do as you like, my lady. No one is going to read it. I give you my word.”

Back in my room, I pace for quite some time while my maids are looking for a suitable dress for the trip to the capital of the Gerdian Empire. I still couldn’t believe that I was here. In all honesty, I always wanted to travel. But with the rules of the White Archipelago travels were only possible for warriors on a mission. Maybe that was why I tried to train so hard all the time. It was this little opportunity to try something new...

I sat at my tiny desk in an unexpectedly good mood and got paper and an ink pen out. I contemplated for a while on what to write to my brother who was probably getting crazy this whole time. A part of me wanted to tell him a pitiful story of me being kidnapped by a cruel dragon and brought to the Emperor against my will... But then again, that wasn’t exactly what happened. I had been here for almost a day and didn’t even see the ruler of the Empire. No one forced me to do anything and they treated me in the best way possible.

So, this was what I decided to put on paper after all.

“Dear Gideon, I am writing to you from the main palace of the Gerdian Empire. I am fine and the gerdians are treating me nicely. There are no dangers to my health and safety so I beg you not to worry about me. They promise to bring me back home within one month, so, please, wait for me. Your loving sister, Lara.”

I folded the letter and put it inside the envelope that I found in one of the drawers.

The maids picked a beautiful navy dress for me. It wasn't too opulent but you could tell that a true master created it. A thin line of gold was decorating the navy bodice. And looking at the whole thing, I knew that I would be comfortable in it. They paired it with elegant comfortable boots and a dark silver cape.

Sandra started to braid my hair without even asking me what I wanted first.

“What are you doing?” I glared at her.

“Lady... It would be best if we hide your hair,” the girl mumbled, and I felt rage inside of me.

“Why?” I asked spitefully, regretting how I displayed my emotions.

“The colour, my lady,” the poor maid curtsied although it wasn't necessary, “It's just...”

This again. What was so wrong with my hair colour?! Why was it so important anywhere that I went? Even here nobody seemed happy about it...

“Leave it as it is,” I commanded her, without sparing her another glance.

When I was ready, I grabbed my letter to Gideon and Lisa escorted me to the exit, where Demir was already waiting for me on his horse.

Surprisingly, there were no other horses in the view.

“Is the trip cancelled?” I looked up at him and he looked at me, puzzled.

“Why would you think that?”

“There is only one horse,” I pointed out but in the next moment, he leaned down and grabbed me by my waist, placing me right next to him in one swift move.

“That’s because we only need one horse,” he chuckled and the gates before us opened...

Book 2 Dragon King's Forbidden Love Chapter 29 - Tips

LARA

He was doing that on purpose and I knew that! That brute! There wasn't an honest bone in his body! And if he thought that it would somehow help to make me ask him to touch me, he was wrong!

Demir really took his time going from the palace to the city, although it wasn't a long road. But he was making stops every few seconds to point somewhere and name it. Like I was going to remember any of that! We arrived in the centre of the capital of the Gerdian Empire Deverand within half an hour. Demir dismounted from the horse first and then helped me do the same.

I hated to admit it but the city looked impressive. All I knew about it before was that it was shaped like a ring around the palace and that gerdians lived there. But I couldn't even imagine that one day I'd be able to see it with my own eyes.

And it was so different from what I saw back at home on the White Archipelago. We had limited land so our buildings were tall and our cities grew so that they could touch the skies. Here, however, the gerdian didn't have such a trouble and the houses were two-three stories at most. The roofs were black, and the stone was any shade of grey from light to almost black one, creating an atmosphere worth the gerdian capital.

Nevertheless, however much I wanted to hate it, I just found myself unable to. It was... elegant. And beautiful. Ladies were strolling down the street in beautiful gowns, men's dark coats were decorated with gold and silver thread and looked lavish yet tasteful. The streets were surprisingly clean and people looked generally happy with their lives. This didn't fit well into the picture I had in my brain.

From the corner of my eye I notice that Demir is watching my every move and when our eyes met, a smile grew on his face. I wanted to ignore it but he didn't let me.

"It's all right to like what you see, Lara," he said, "Our people don't bite!"

"The fact that they look civil doesn't mean that..."

"What?" he gave out a loud laugh, "That they are not monsters? Seriously, what they teach you back at home about us?"

Well, they taught us that gerdians were heartless monsters oppressed by their awful Emperor that dwell in the darkness with rotten souls, who live only to destroy other nations...

Yet somehow I decided not to tell him that.

"You know," I cleared my throat, "The usual..."

"Uh-huh," he chuckled as he tied his horse to a special place designated for them next to a well for animals.

I took a step back when he looked at me and my heel got in between two stones of the pavement, twisting my leg so that I fall down. I did not reach the ground as two strong hands caught me at once while the hood of my cape fell off my hand, letting my golden hair out in the wind.

Neither of us moved, just looking at each other for a while. I saw how one by one sparks of dark magic appear in his blue eyes, dancing wildly... as if they were trying to tell me what he felt. And when the glow became too obvious, he blinked his eyes forcefully a few times to get them back to normal and helped me up. Wind was still wh!pping my loose hair when he suddenly grasped my hood and pulled it over my head, tucking my locks inside.

"What are you doing?" I asked, slightly shocked by his actions, "I thought we agreed on not touching each other."

"It was a different kind of touching that we discussed," he smirked, "You know it very well. And this... This is needed for your safety."

"Nobody knows me here," I retorted with a raised brow.

“That’s not the point,” he said, sighing heavily, “It’s best if no one sees your hair.”

My hair. Again. From my early years, I heard that almost every day! And I was sick of it!

“I honestly don’t see how my hair can influence my safety!” I snorted, waving my hand around, “There are other blondes on the street. Why are you not running after them telling them to hide their locks?!”

He leaned to me so that his hot breath kissed my sensitive skin, “Because I don’t care about everyone else, Lara. The hood stays on!”

I hated the moment I realized that a part of me liked what he said. I knew that it was bad and I needed to get rid of that silly infatuation.

So, I did the only thing I saw fit. Looking into his eyes, I slowly but firmly removed my hood and made sure that all my hair fell freely down my back, lifting up my chin high at the same time.

“Angel!” the man gritted through his teeth, “That’s very naughty of you.”

“That’s my hair and my safety! So it’s my decision!” I insisted and this time his eyes lit up with dark magic for a very different reason. The anger was so obvious, especially when a small vein protruded on his perfect forehead.

“Fine!” he said after a while and grabbed my hand, “Let’s go!”

“Where?” I tried to catch up with his big steps.

“To explore the beauty of the capital!” he said, looking somewhere behind me when he turned. His face changes and I also turned to see what attracted his attention.

But there was nothing special except for a man in a wine red cloak with a huge scar on his face.

“Do you know him?” I asked and he flinched.

“No. Don’t look there,” Demir continued dragging me down the street, “It’s impolite.”

I decided to obey him this once and followed him to a shop with the most beautiful windows. Inside were standing illusions of beautiful ladies in gorgeous dresses. They were twirling and curtsying, smiling and waving. And the whole sight was so alluring that I found myself staring with an open mouth.

We walked inside and immediately all eyes were on us. Four painfully beautiful girls surrounded us.

“My Lord, how can we help you?” they ignored me and went straight for Demir, “At Lady Ria Solveigh shop we can fulfill every dream of yours.”

Not wasting time, the gerdian turned to me and wriggle his eyebrows as if to tell me, “Look, everybody wants a piece of me. Join in!”

I rolled my eyes and turned away, pretending to look at the dresses and then really starting to check dress after dress. These were the most intricate and extraordinary garments I ever saw! And even some of the fabrics were unfamiliar to me. There were light dresses as if they were made out of rose petals and some were heavy, lavishly decorated with precious gems. All of them were in darker shades yet even I couldn't deny that they were simply pieces of art.

“I need you to help my fiancée,” Demir said and I almost choked on his words, sending him a furious glare. What a liar!

“Oh,” one of the assistants didn't even try to hide her disappointment.

“What does your fiancée need?” another one still tried to stay professional.

“Everything!” Demir winked at me, “From undergarment to her taste to outerwear. Whatever she likes!”

“There is no need,” I interjected and the four girls looked at me with a mixture of anger, disappointment, and curiosity.

“Of course there is,” he smiled, “What we have back at home was bought without you taking part in it. I want you to be comfortable in the castle.”

“Awww,” one of the girls sighed with admiration.

“Oh, you know I am not staying there for long,” I sneered at him but it only made him chuckle.

“Either you pick items, or I will,” he grinned, “And since I have a very particular taste, you might not enjoy it too much! Trust me!”

“Fine!” I snapped as he was eyeing one of the nightgowns that definitely wouldn’t cover too much of one’s flesh. This man was brazen enough to buy that and leave it as the only option for me to wear here.

At that moment, I noticed that he was looking nervously outside of the window.

The girls took me to the next rooms and brought tea in. And without even saying goodbye, Demir left the shop...

Book 2 Dragon King's Forbidden Love Chapter 30 - Tips

LARA

Did he just leave me here alone? This easy? I could literally walk out of here right now and he’d never find me. Or would he? Maybe it was some kind of test that I wasn’t getting?

The shop assistants were bringing me dresses after dresses. And I wasn’t paying attention. In the end, I ended up asking them to find me everything they have in lighter tones. And however much they insisted that the dark shades were the current trend, I still chose what was closer to my heart. Another thing that I ordered were silk shawls to cover all that revealing monstrosity. The four of them were busy with matching accessories and shoes when I was left completely alone with a fresh cup of tea.

It was now or never, and I decided to go for it! Not thinking twice, I pulled my hood back on and stepped outside of the shop.

I felt like every passer-by was watching me. As if they knew that I was trying to escape my captor and they all were against me. I was imagining that if I make a step, they all would attack me, catch me and bring me back to Demir. Or worse – the Emperor himself.

Yet when I made that first step, nothing happened. Life in the Gerdian Empire continued and absolutely no one was paying me attention.

I quickly looked around and found a dark lane behind one of the shops. It could be a perfect place to hide. I walked and I walked, looking back from time

to time. But no one was following me. Could everything really be so simple?! It was shocking. And a bit appalling. There was so much talk from Demir about how he'd make me want him yet in the end he didn't even care enough to look after me for a day. Not that I cared! Of course, I didn't! It was my luck that all gerdians were overconfident, impudent, careless creatures with enormous egos! Did he really think that I'd stay there and wait for him? Ridiculous!

Suddenly, I could sense some movement behind me. I carefully looked back but no one was there. However, I was trained well enough to know that when the sound repeated, I had to admit that I was being followed. Was it Demir finally realizing he forgot about me?

They thought unexpectedly made me smile. And I was embarrassed that it affected me in that way. However, when I heard several footsteps, I had to come to the conclusion that I was followed by several people. Men. And by the sound of it, they were huge, tall, and heavy.

This was the last thing that I needed! Gerdians were known to be stronger than most people. Their dark magic was suffocating for most. As an almost warrior of light I probably had a better chance to stand against them than most. Light destroyed darkness.

But I never tried it. Counting the few times I stroke Demir with my a light would be wrong. Especially considering that most of them happened in our shared dreams and not in reality.

Not to risk it, I decided to hide. I sped up my pace as I walked through a narrow passage and then jumped off using my Air element to get onto someone's balcony. Unfortunately for me, it was closed, and the steps were getting closer. Between the balconies, there was a carved statue of a dragon with spread wings. It was the best place that I could find at such short notice, and I jumped there and hid behind the wings. I made sure to tuck in my golden hair and my white dress under the black cape so that I wouldn't be attracting any attention from the ground in case my followers happened to look up. I even took my breath just like Gideon taught me to but cooling down my heart was much harder. Finally, there they were. Three men wearing dark red cloaks with some kind of dark armour. I recognized one of them – it was the man with the scar from before. The one Demir looked at when we came here. Suddenly, I felt bad for the guardian who escorted me today. What if something really happened to him?

"I'm sure she went this way," one of my followers said and I shuddered slightly. So, they were after me after all!

"Well, she is not here is she?" The one with the scar said and judging by the way everyone else looked at him, he was their leader.

"We need to continue searching," another one suggested, "she was on foot and couldn't walk too far."

The leader slowly traveled with his eyes around the tight space, and I stopped breathing. If they found me now I'd be doomed. Who knew what they wanted to do with me? I for sure wasn't keen on finding that out!

"Go," the man commanded to the others and I heard their receding footsteps. I wasn't too naïve to jump down at once and decided to wait some more in case they return, thinking of what to do next. I couldn't fly without wings but my Air Element could support me a bit if I needed to jump. So, the roofs seemed like a good place to go. I was about to move when something struck the dragon statue I was on, breaking it to pieces. I didn't even realize how I started to fall down rapidly but managed to summon Air in time to land gracefully on my feet.

Two amber eyes were watching me with an ugly smirk on the scarred face. Now that I looked at him closer, I saw that he had several scars close to each other, but the one that went from his forehead to under his eye through the cheek to his left ear seemed the biggest. It was fiery red and reminded me of lightning with several branches which seemed to be heating like lava in a volcano as he was looking at me. His gaze was greedy and it felt...dirty. The Light inside of me was twitching and curling, willing to get out. But I hold it back. Because I knew nothing about this man and my secret weapon should remain hidden.

"I have to give it to Demir," the man spoke not taking his eyes off me, "He always had good taste in women!"

"Oh, I highly doubt that!" I couldn't help myself and snorted, making my opponent look at me with newly found amusement.

"There's no need to struggle," he said unexpectedly calmly, "I don't want to hurt you unless I absolutely have to."

"But if you absolutely have to you will?" I ask him with a challenge in my voice.

"I wouldn't choose this option if I were you," he warned me.

"But you are not me, are you?" I chuckled even though I wasn't too sure of myself on the inside. I needed more information. "And to whom do I owe the pleasure?"

"Captain Sean Sarn," he confessed easily.

"What army do you serve, Captain?" I raised my brow at him and he looked slightly taken aback. Was I supposed to know that?

"The one that is going to win the war," he smirked, "So, why don't you join us while you still can. At least it will be wise."

"Uhm," I mumbled, "Somehow an army whose Captain is following a weak and lonely girl in the dark alley to force her to do something doesn't look too serious to me!"

He clenched his lips until they formed a thin white line and took off his hood. Short red hair, trimmed the way only soldiers do. So, he was a part of the army. And he was about to attack me.

Not thinking twice, I pulled the string on my cape and let it fall to my feet. Sean Sarn gave out a little growl seeing that and I felt a wave of his energy. Surprisingly, it didn't feel dark. Wasn't he a gerdian?

He emitted zero darkness yet I felt overbearing heat. That signaled me that the man must be a fire mage. And when a fireball appeared on his hand, he confirmed my suspicions.

I dodged his first attack but judging by the smile on his face, he was just testing me.

"Last chance to change your mind and just go with me," he offered to give up again.

"Go where?" I decide to get that last bit of information out of him.

"Nice try!" he smirked and I saw that his two friends returned, slowly walking to the sides to block my way out. Now there were three of them and my chances to escape were diminishing by the minute.

A new fireball appeared on Captain's hand. Bigger this time, more powerful.

“I’ll try not to touch your face,” he said with some kind of sadness in his eyes.

“I can’t promise the same!” I summoned Light to the tips of my fingers, ready for the defense. There was no chance to weave something elaborate but I would be able to protect myself with simpler means.

“Feisty!” one of the other men snorted, “Maybe Xander will give her to us as an award!”

I gritted my teeth, fearing that today could be the day when I had to kill for the first time. True Warriors of Light always tried to avoid death when it was possible. But in this kind of situation, I had no choice...

“For that, you’d need to stay alive!” dark flames appeared right behind both newcomers and for the first time ever I was glad to see Demir. But what happened next I did not expect! He stroked his hand at the back of one of the red capes and I saw it poking out of his stomach. The guy fell dead on the spot and I didn’t even have time to gasp when he broke the neck of the second one.

I turned to see a fireball flying right at me and all I heard was the gerdian screaming my name, “Lara!”

Light came easy to protect me. As always. However, I didn’t know what happened exactly but there was too much of it. So much that even I could see nothing! And when it started to die down, I saw Captain Sarn standing up next to the wall he had been thrown to, looking at me in shock.

“Lara!” Demir ran up to me and wrapped me in his arms. Black flames surrounded us and I knew that he was going to take us back to the castle we came from. My escape plan just went to waste!

I closed my eyes but when I opened them we were in the middle of a forest. Dark trees dangled their bushy branches over our heads as if they were threatening to capture us. The sky got gloomier and it was definitely darker than before. No one came to places like this to hide. This was the kind of place to go when you needed to bury a corpse!

“What the chaos?!” Demir looked as stunned as I was...