

The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 26 - Tips

MIRA

Is he kidding me? Did I miss him? He just left, why is he back so soon?!

“Yes”, I reply, my body is not mine again. Just what is going on in those dreams? I never had dreams where I was not deciding anything!

Derrien sits back on the edge of my bath and trails my neck and chin with his fingers. Just like he did a few minutes ago. And I tremble under his touch somehow leaning forward and wanting more. The lord, however, takes his hand away and stands up, making me sigh sadly at the feeling of emptiness that I suddenly felt. He chuckles lowly and I see him unbuttoning his shirt. I gulp at the idea of seeing his naked muscular torso again. The last time was not leaving my mind... He sits back next to me and bends down, caging me between his two arms that are now at both sides of me.

“Mira”, he whispers and I get my hand out of the water and touch his cheek. A short stubble he has prickles my fingers and I smile at the feeling, sliding my hand down his neck and all the way to his chest. His hot breath warms up my face as he pulls me into another kiss, tugging me by my hair at the back of my head. The bun I’ve made for the bath is undone and my ginger hair falls to my shoulders and into the water, making Derrien groan into my mouth.

I feel his hand cupping one of my breasts and although I want to scream, “NOOOO!”, the me in the dream just arches her back letting him make trail of kisses down her neck and then even lower.

I seriously want to close my eyes, but I can’t. The sensations are so real as if I am really in his hands, letting him shamelessly caress my body, devour me...

“Derrien”, I mumble.

“Rien”, he corrects me in between kisses.

I feel one of his hands sliding lower and lower, below my belly button and right down my...

“Oh, Gods!”, I jump up in the bath, splashing water around me. I am alone. Breathing heavily, I remember what I just saw and how it felt... My cheeks flush and I notice that my hair is already undone as well. Without thinking twice, I dive into the water with my head to help cool myself down.

Just what is going on with me?!

After the bath, I put on my silk robe and go to the door to check on my barrier and try and make it stronger. I haven't even felt Derrien breaking it... and yet he did. I come to my door and change to the magical vision. And gasp. There is a barrier on my door, but it's not mine! It's the one that I had before – Derrien's! I try to touch it just to be sure and, surprisingly, this time my hand goes straight through it. This time he made it so that I could leave the room!

Closing the door and getting back to bed, I change into fresh underwear and the lacy nightgown. Somehow I already got used to the way it all looks and it doesn't bother me anymore. Putting the light down in the lamps with a wave of my hand, I get into the bed and make myself comfortable there.

A smile forms on my face... I will have a peaceful night today. At last!

The next day goes as if in a blur. The lessons are short as we are sent back to our rooms to get ready for the ball. Morgan, Xia, Fawn, and Desirae come to me to get ready as, let's be honest, my rooms are the biggest and most comfortable ones.

Before breakfast, when the girls came for me, I was surprised that they can go through the barrier as well and realized that Derrien tuned it in a way that I decide who can come in. Or maybe that's just a very poorly made barrier and I am kidding myself. But I feel so much power from it so that I doubt that. And also I already got to know that lord Derwood's magic is simply superb.

I am braiding Fawn's hair as she asked me what was my hairstyle when I was wearing the dress she is going to be in today and I promised to do the same for her. It's a bit complicated, but I am done first as I am not wearing too much make-up and my hairdo is simple as well with just some of my hair up and the rest falling in waves to my shoulders and below.

Morgan is helping Desirae with her make-up and Xia is taking care of herself. Speaking of her, she is wearing a very beautiful gown in blue and gold – the colours of her tribe. The dress has a very unusual design and would be exotic even for the gerdians. She is also doing traditional make-up, which also looks

unusual for our lands. If someone would be attracting a lot of attention today – it most definitely would be her.

“I can’t believe that in just less than an hour we would already be dancing with the lords!”, Desirae smiles.

“They said there wouldn’t be much dancing today. That’s a smaller event”, Morgan reminds everyone.

“If I learned anything in the last few days”, Xia chimes, “There will be whatever the dark lords desire. If we make them want to dance – then there will be plenty of dancing!”

I snort at that. But honestly, Xia grasped the situation faster than anybody else.

“Mira, you have more experience than any of us with the lords”, Morgan says, “Any advice?”

“Be very careful at all times”, I say bluntly and smiles are fading on their faces, “There are some of them who better be avoided at all costs. Look for decent ones, if there are any, of course... And be careful what you do and say. They are very... temperamental.”

“On that incredibly inspiring note, we’d better change the subject!”, Fawn giggles suddenly.

“I am sorry I asked!”, Morgan rolls her eyes, “I always forget that you are not a big fan of theirs...”

“I am not, but, trust me that’s not bad advice”, I clench my lips.

We come to the ballroom without talking much to each other. Everyone is nervous for their own reasons. But as soon as we walk in we become truly speechless.

The huge hall we are in is decorated with flowers and golden ornaments making the usually dark and gloomy space look stylishly expensive and festive. Long lavishly decorated tables are covered with food and drinks to suit any taste. Stars created with magic are shining above our heads right at the ceiling, creating an incredible atmosphere.

“Not bad!”, Morgan signs.

“Ladies, I love you all, but starting now and until the rest of the ball every woman is for herself”, Xia smiles politely and walks away from us, “Good luck!”

A group of other commoner girls start waving at Desirae and Fawn, clearly asking them to join. They look hesitantly at me and Morgan.

“Oh, don’t mind us!”, Morgan giggles, “Have fun!”

“Go”, I smile at them and turn to the last friend standing as they leave, “Listen, I have a bit of a plan for tonight. Not the good kind.”

“Oh my!”, the brunette looks at me suspiciously, “Mira, don’t do anything stupid...”

“I can’t promise anything,” I press my lips apologetically, “Maybe it would be best when I am alone when I do it. I am really not sure what reactions there will be.”

“Say no more!”, my friend nods, “Be careful, Mira. And...good luck.”

“Good luck to you too, Morgan. I hope this evening plays out the way you want it to.”

She walks away and I move to the table with drinks. I am afraid I am going to need all the liquid courage I can get, considering what I am about to do...

The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 27 - Tips

MIRA

I move to the table with the beverages and slowly walk along it pretending that I am choosing, but in reality, I am checking the room and people inside of it. Lord Derwood is nowhere to be seen. Lord Dargen is not here as well. Which is probably for the best.

I notice that the lords are standing in groups and no girls are yet next to them. Lady Cecilia did tell us not to initiate contact because they hate this kind of behavior. I can’t hide the grin that’s forming on my face however much I try to.

“Something funny, lady Mira?”, familiar voice breaks into my mind and I see Derrien pouring wine at the opposite end of the table.

“Nothing funny, lord Derwood”, I curtsy and almost snort. Gods, I need to learn to lie better.

“Oh really?”, he raises his brow at me and smirks, “And you are not planning anything for tonight?”

“I didn’t say that”, I chuckle and put a grape into my mouth. For a second there it seems like he can’t take his eyes off my lips, but then she just takes a gulp of his wine and offers the second goblet to me.

“Thank you, my lord”, I smile, “And now I am afraid I have to leave you and go and introduce myself to... well, everybody!”

“Haven’t you learned the rules yet, little mage?”, he asks casually.

“I have”, I raise my glass at him and smirk. The change in his facial expression at that was worth all the effort even if all of this doesn’t work.

“Good evening, dark lords”, I curtsy briefly adding absolutely no respect to that movement.

The three lords I came up to stopped talking, looking at me in surprise. One of them seems particularly angry with my behaviour. One is still standing with his mouth open and only the third one smiles politely, although he looks at me as if he is going to strangle me.

“Lady, have you decided to come to us and speak to us freely just because our status here is lower than everybody else’s?”, he lifts up his chin as if I have insulted them gravely. Good. Very good.

“I am sorry”, I make a shocked expression, “I knew at once that you were just mere commoners, I wouldn’t have come up to talk to you. Would you maybe be so kind as to tell me which group of lords here are actually lords? As in with high titles and all?”

“How dare you?!”, the other man almost shouts at me.

“Oh, no offense!”, I flap my eyelashes, “There are plenty of commoner girls here and I am sure you would be happy together if...”

“What did you just say, spoilt wench?”, the same man takes a step in my direction, but his friends hold him.

“You’d better leave, lady, or this is going to end badly for you”, the third one says coldly.

“As in the empty jewellery box badly? Can you afford that?”, I stare at them innocently.

“Go and wait for your boxes!”, one of them shouts and I quickly retreat to the table with snacks.

Well, this was easy. And I was sure that the commoners would be the hard ones since they have the lowest chance of obtaining a wife for themselves. But I guess, sometimes it’s a matter of principle.

“That was brutal”, Derrien comments as he is still at the same place where I left him. There are some girls nearby, but after my show just now they don’t dare to come closer to him and just pretend that they are choosing their beverages.

“Three down, forty-six to go!”, I smile at him and hear Isidore’s voice right behind me.

“She has absolutely no shame! And no manners!”, the blonde says so that everybody can hear her. And she probably expecting some kind of reaction from me, but I am way too busy choosing my next victim.

The next group of lords is much bigger – around 10 gerdians and they all turn out to be nobles. They accept me into the conversation leniently, most of them eyeing my body up and down. The way you would check out a new dress in a shop window and decide if it’s good enough for you. But when I c***k a joke about their little problem of not being capable to produce female offspring, the mood changes rapidly. Yes, Gerdian Empire is a man’s world and they cannot admit that there is something they cannot do. A glass breaks into a hand of one of them and another is stretching his hand to my throat when...

“Would you forgive me, lords,” Tristan appears out of nowhere, “I need to urgently discuss something with Lady Miradora.”

They don't reply and he takes it as a yes, pulling me away by my hand.

"How could you do this, Mira?", he grits through his teeth and I prepare myself for a long and boring lecture of how a lady should behave. Especially in front of the gerdians.

However, to my surprise, he points at Fawn, who jumps up at that and turns away quickly.

"Did you do this on purpose?!", he asks me again firmly.

"Do what?", I raise my brow, "Speak clearly for I do not understand what you want from me, sir Tristan!"

"Mira", he is holding me by my shoulders, grasping them tightly, "Did you dress that girl into your engagement dress and did the same hair you had on the day to stab me?"

He looks at me strangely. He never used to look at me like that. And it makes me shrug.

"Let go of me", I say quietly, "People are watching."

My words have an effect on him and it's just as if he woke up from a dream now.

"Mira...", he says quietly.

"Sir Tristan, there was no special reason for lady Fawn to wear my dress. She didn't have any and I let her choose one of mine. And the hair is just a coincidence. And, honestly, I am surprised you even remembered how I looked on that day. You haven't bothered to have a decent conversation with me back then and..."

"I need to go," he interrupts me and bows politely, "Please, excuse me."

And that's pretty much how every our conversation was finished back in the day. And no surprises now. For a second I am even happy that my old life is gone...

I turn around to look for my next victim but suddenly my eyes fall on Derrien. He is standing at the back of the hall with his friend Brandon, surrounded by

Isidore and her two minions – Ariadna and Alexandra. And something strangely prickles in my heart...

The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 28 - Tips

MIRA

As if knowing that I look at him, Derrien meets my gaze. And smirks, offering his hand to Alexandra of all the people, yet not breaking eye contact with me. He leads the girl right to the middle of the hall and positions himself for a dace. Other couples join swiftly around them and the lighting in the room changes to highlight the dancers.

Alexandra looks like she has just won the biggest prize at the summer fair and I roll my eyes, noticing that lord Brandon-something invited Ariadna, leaving Isidore all alone and furious. I chuckle when I see how pissed she is. Of course, her minions got to dance with the lords first and not her. Good luck to them, she is going to make their life hell tomorrow.

Meanwhile, I notice how happy Alexandra is in Derrien's arms and how he is not looking at me anymore...

Calm down, Mira, that doesn't matter. I am leaving as soon as possible anyway... That's what important. Nothing else!

I take a huge gulp of wine and put my goblet away. But when I turn to leave, I almost bump into a broad chest of an unfamiliar gerdian lord. He stretches his hand to invite me for a dance. One thing lady Cecilia told us is that we should never refuse them when they are offering anything in public. Because this is considered the worst possible insult. My face stretches in an unhealthy grin and I say casually, "Excuse me, my lord, I am afraid I have to decline. I am not feeling great and..."

"That's not of interest to me", he says and grabs me by my arm, pulling me to the dance floor by force. He grasps me by my waist, and presses me tight into his body, starting the dance and making me move in the same way as if I am a rag doll.

"You are hurting me!", I yell at him but the sound is muffled by the loud music. I look around in an empty attempt to look for lord Derrien and curse myself

inside for that. Why would I look for him? Why would he help me? What am I counting for?! How stupid! He is enjoying himself with Alexandra... I am on my own and he doesn't owe me anything...

"I thought you like it rough. And this is exactly what you are going to get!", the lord I am dancing with chuckles, pressing his fingers stronger into my body. It would definitely leave bruises.

Brace yourself, Mira, you are on your own here. You are a battlemage and can protect yourself!

Without thinking, I grasp his shoulder firmly and send a magical impulse setting his beautiful military suit on fire.

"I don't like it rough", I smirk, "I like it hot!"

The fire seizes him quickly and I try to step away, but he grabs me by my arm.

"Not so fast, wench!", he is furious, eyes as black as coal, "You are going to pay for it!"

He puts down the fire with the black smoke of his dark magic and lifts up his hand clearly to slap it across my face. I would dodge, of course, but it's what would follow that is frightening me at this point. I am afraid I overdid it. Damn!

"Don't you dare touch what's mine!", a roar breaks out and the man freezes. I look around to see who has said that and a tiny part of me wants to see Derrien. But it's not him. Lord Ryden Dargen walks into the hall with firm quick steps and the man who was about to hit me kneels before him and bows his head. Now I am pretty sure he is a Dark Knight of the Empire – an elite warrior. We've been told that a few of them are also here. The lights are on and all the dancing stops, people are around us in a circle.

"I apologize, my lord", the knight says, still on the floor "I had no idea."

Lord Dargen smirks and something menacing sparks in his eyes, "Should I inform a dog like you of anything, sir Roderick?"

"Of course not, my lord", Roderick replies obviously ready for his punishment. But what follows next makes everyone gasp in shock. Dargen raises his hand and dark smoke surrounds the man, concentrating around his neck and..

breaking it with a loud cracking noise. Lifeless body falls to my feet and I just look at it, not being able to comprehend what is going on.

Then the dark smoke consumes the body and in just a few seconds it disappears completely.

“Let it be a lesson to all of you!”, Ryden smirks looking around, “No one touches her! She is mine!” He points his finger at me and I look around. All the faces are so tense. I guess I would receive loads of empty boxes without even working hard. No one would oppose this psycho.

For a second there my eyes meet with Derriens and his lips are clenched, but he is still holding Alexandra’s hand in his. For some reason, it makes my blood boil.

“Lady Mira”, Ryden takes my hand and kisses it, dark smoke appears in the place where his lips touched my skin and when it disappears I see a ring with a huge black diamond on it. “Accept this as a sign of my serious intentions towards you,” Dargen smirks and then pulls me closer, now addressing everyone else, “As for you all – remember! No one dares to touch or even speak to her! She is wearing my gift now!”

I see the dark lords bow their heads in agreement. All but one... However, I don’t want to look at him anymore and turn away, gathering what’s left of my dignity and self-respect.

“Shall we dance?”, Dargen pulls me to the dance floor without waiting for a reply, standing in the position for a dance and holding me by my waist. Deja vu...

The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 27 “Not so fast!”, Derrien’s voice sounds like a thunderstorm in the hall where everyone is quiet.

The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 29 - Tips

MIRA

Derrien’s voice echoes around the huge hall and I see some of the girls gasp in shock while men politely step away.

“What is wrong, cousin?” Ryden smirks, pressing me into his body tighter. This is nowhere near the etiquette requirements, but I guess he doesn’t care about something like that, “You are interrupting this very wonderful moment between my woman and me. Mind your own business!”

Lord Derwood steps forward, his fists clenched and almost white from the pressure, “She is not your woman!”

“This says otherwise!”, Dargen lifts up my hand with the ring he just put on me and shakes it. And for the second time during the evening, I feel like a rag doll without her own will, emotions, speech...

“This says nothing!”, Derrien smirks and dark flames appear around my body. I flinch, but they do not hurt me one bit. However lord Dargen steps away from me quickly and I see him rubbing his hand, noticing there is a burn on it.

“You... bastard!”, he grits through his teeth and somehow the silence in the room becomes heavier.

Although other girls flap their lashes at the scene, looking at Derrien’s face and noticing tiny flashes of dark magic in his eyes, I see that the words hit the goal. So, he is a bastard... I wonder what is the story there and who are his parents.

“Come up with something new already, Dargen”, Derrien smirks and the flames around me die down, leaving a long chain with a round gold pendant on my neck.

A wave of whispers fills the room, “He gave her a gift too! What now? Who has more rights for her?”

I look at the pendant and somehow it seems familiar... Black diamonds and rubies are matching each other perfectly in a complicated pattern.

“You cannot do that!”, Ryden is furious and moves back to me with clear intention to tear it off my neck! But Derrien takes a step forward and his cousin stops.

“Of course I can”, he chuckles darkly, “I can do whatever the hell I want and you know it!”

“You are not the crown prince!”, Dargen’s face is almost red.

“Neither are you”, Derwood replies, “You are a duke. And I am the archduke and the general in command of our army. I outrank you by a mile and that means that if there is a dispute of any sort between the two of us, you have to step away. So, off you go!”

“Not for long!”, the duke starts to move, but lord Brandon quickly runs up to him in an attempt to distract him.

“Come on, Dargen! It’s just a girl!”, he says jolly, “Look around you, here are plenty of others to suit any taste! Just choose someone else!”

Ryden looks at me and for a second I feel so cold that shivers go down my spine. His look is so...menacing... This kind of man would better break his toy than let anyone else have it...

“This is not over!”, he throws at his cousin, and, taking another look at me, he disappears in the dark smoke. The moment he does makes it easier for me to breathe.

The silence is still hanging in the room like an axe over the head of a sentenced to death convict...

“Lords and ladies”, Brandon says in his usual playful voice, “The evening continues! Forget what you just saw and have fun!”

With that, he moves towards Morgan, making Ariadna, who he danced with before, frown, “Lady, would you be so kind as to gift me this dance?”

“Why, yes, my lord!”, my friend curtsies and he leads her to the middle of the dancing floor. Other couples follow them quickly and I just stand there not even knowing what to do now. It’s all a bit of a shock to me.

So, when Derrien grabs my hand and forcefully takes Dargen’s ring off my finger, I gasp in shock.

“You are not going to be needing this!”, he says and the ring blazes with dark fire, which destroys it in seconds, turning it into ashes... I didn’t know that something like this is even possible. “It would only bring you trouble if I let it exist,” the lord says, “Dargen charmed it especially for your aura. To make you more...willing. If you know what I mean.”

My cheeks flush as I know exactly what he means. What is wrong with those gerdians?! Who does something like that?! But I also remember something else...

“Oh, you are worried for me now?”, I stress out the last word.

“You are speaking about that knight?”, he smirks, “I thought you could handle him on your own.”

“You know very well that I wouldn’t be able to handle any gerdian on my own!”, I roll my eyes, “Your magic is much stronger than ours!”

“But you still manage to keep us on our toes”, he chuckles and then adds, “I wouldn’t have let him hurt you... Him or anyone else.”

My cheeks suddenly feel so hot that I briefly touch one with my hand and Derrien catches it in the air.

“Dance with me, Mira”, his voice sounds even more husky than usual as he lifts my fingers to his lips and kisses them gently.

So gently... He had never kissed me like that before. Possessively yes, passionately yes, roughly even... but not like this...

I just nod and he takes me by my waist, taking the lead.

I danced many times in my life. Most of them with Tristan and, if anything, my ex-fiancé has been the perfect partner – skillful and thoughtful, elegant and helpful in case I made a mistake... And yet it has never felt like that! It never felt like I am flying next to him.

Step, step, and Derrien makes me arch my back, step, step, and he pulls me so close that our faces almost touch. His firm grip on my waist makes me shiver as he leads me circle after circle. For a moment there I forgot where I am... Nothing else exists – just me and him... The next move – and he puts my hand on his shoulder, bringing me so close that I feel his hot breath right on my neck...

And that’s when flames of dark magic consume us...

The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 30 - Tips

MIRA

He brought us to my room and this time I didn't jump away from him the second the flames disappeared. We are both slightly out of breath after the dance and he is still holding me close while my hand is wrapped around his neck. I look into his eyes and see sparks of dark magic going mad there.

I know this is bad but I still don't find the strength to get away from him. Although I most definitely should.

Suddenly, he looks at me with suspicion on his perfect manly face.

"Mira," he asks, "How much wine did you drink today?"

"Huh?", I look at him in a daze. Why is he asking?

"How much wine did you drink tonight?", he repeats the question.

"I..I am not sure", I try to remember, but my memory is a bit blurry, "Three or four goblets I think..."

He swears under his breath and steps away from me. Suddenly it feels so much colder and lonely. I realize I want him back close to me...

"I will leave you for tonight, lady Mira!", he says abruptly and I already see flames of dark magic arising, "Sweet dreams!"

"No!", I gasp and immediately cover my mouth with my hand. Did I really just say that? This is so not me!

"No?", he hesitates, looking at me once again, "Are you sure you drunk four goblets?"

"No", I say honestly, "Maybe it was five. It was a long night, you know. But what exactly are you implying? I am a battlemage, we have incredible alcohol tolerance!"

"Chaos, Mira", he swears again, "That was a special wine! Five goblets... how are you even standing?"

"Absolutely fine!", I feel angry, "I know very well when to stop and don't appreciate your comments!"

“And yet you don’t want me to go?”

“No, I don’t...”, I say it out loud and can’t believe my own words. What the chaos is wrong with me?

Derrien walks around the room at a fast pace and then stops and looks me up and down again, “You need to go to sleep!”

“I don’t want to!”, I stomp my feet, “Don’t tell me what to do! You are not my father and even he never tells me!”

“Gods forbid”, Derwood chuckles, “And yet you need to sleep so that the wine leaves your system!”

“But why?”, I come close to him and put both my hands on his chest. Gods, it’s firm! So firm... like a rock... or...or the Akyrian steel!

“Akyrian steel is not that great!”, he snorts.

“Wait, did I just tell this out loud?”

“Yes, you did!”, he smiles and I notice that this whole time I am rubbing circles on his chest. Oh, gods... what is wrong with me? I absolutely don’t know what is wrong with me, but I am still keeping my hands on him.

“You seriously need to stop that, Mira”, he says, “I might feel like stone, but I am most definitely not made of one, little mage.”

“I really hate it when you call me that, do you know that?”, I ask, trying to take my eyes off his chest. Unsuccessfully.

“I know”, he sighs and suddenly lifts me up onto his hands, “That’s why I keep calling you that!”

“Woow”, is all I say because now as my head starts to spin and so is the world around me. He takes me to my bedroom and carefully places me on the bed, leaning slightly to look into my face. And I look into his... straight lines, perfect features, strong chin and cheekbones, and eyes.. brown with a reddish tint to them. I don’t even notice that this whole time I am touching his face, brushing my fingers lightly over his skin.

“Mira!”, he growls and I feel his grip on me tighten.

“You are handsome!”, I say suddenly and he looks at me surprised, “Very handsome!”

He looks at me so intensely at that moment that I am pretty sure that he is about to kiss me... But he burst out laughing instead!

He laughs and he laughs until he buries his head in my neck and hair and I feel his whole body shaking with laughter.

“What do I do with you, Mira?!” he muffles into me, sounding ... despairingly. I turn my head and his minty scent hits my nostrils as I am practically sniffing his black as night hair.

“You smell delicious”, I say, taking a lock of his hair away from his face when he turns to look at me again, “Like peppermint candy, they sell for the Winter Gods’ celebration...”

“To chaos with this!”, he mutters and slams his lips into mine. He kisses me greedily, madly even, one hand in my hair and another lifting up my skirt, brushing over my stocking and straight to its ties... One swift movement and a few sparks of dark magic and the dress leave my body, leaving me in just a lacy wine bodysuit and my black stockings attached to it.

“Gods, Mira..”, he rubs his chin as he looks at me and takes it in, “You are so beautiful...”

My breathing becomes faster as I take him by his suit jacket and pull towards me again. When his face is close, I lean and kiss him. For the first time... Actually, this is the first time I kiss anyone by myself... And somehow it just feels right that it's him... He breaks the kiss and then starts showering me with those. My face, my neck, my breast... but then he freezes.

I open my eyes again to have a look at what is going on and catch him staring at my Dark Mark. It's shining with dark magic and he brushes his fingers softly over it, making me moan in his hands.

“This is fvcking*g wrong!”, he swears again and gets my nightgown from under my pillow, lifting me up and pulling it onto me through my head.

“What are you doing?!”, I yell at him. Is he serious?

“It’s time for little mages to go back to bed,” he says and slides his hand over me, creating flames of his dark magic when I realize he is destroying the bodysuit and stockings.

“Hey!”, I protest, “These were mine!”

“I’ll buy you new ones!”, he chuckles adjusting my sleepwear on me, “sh!t, Mira, why is this so transparent?!”

“I don’t know, you brought it!”, I shrug my shoulders, still in his hands...

“Oh, yes”, he remembers, “But back then I thought I’d be taking it off, not putting it on!”

“You really haven’t thought this through, have you?”, I giggle and wrap my hands around his neck.

“No, I haven’t”, he answers, sounding so serious and looking at me somehow differently... He lifts up his hand and a small bottle appears in it from dark flames.

“No!”, I say recognizing the bottle. Somnium Nox! The potion that can put down a horse. The one he has used on me once already.

“It’s for the best, Mira, trust me!”, he signs, while forcing me to lie down and securing my hands and legs. He pours the liquid into my mouth.

“Don’t live me alone”, I suddenly say as my eyes close, “I don’t want to be alone here...”

“I’ll stay...”