

## The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 41 - Tips

MIRA

“Hide!”, he commands me and I snort at that.

“In your dreams!”, I roll my eyes, “Finally, something interesting happening!”

The dark lord of Gerdian Empire does not look impressed at all. If anything, he looks annoyed.

“Stupid girl!”, he swears under his breath, and flames of dark magic appear around me. Gods, no! That’s not fair! He can’t just teleport me out of this battle!

However, the flames disappear and I am still here, looking questioningly at my companion, who is as surprised as I am.

I try to summon fire magic to the tips of my fingers and feel a very slight tingling sensation. The magic is there, but most of it is blocked, suppressed, not able to emerge at its full force.

I hope all my nannies and mentors would forgive me, but I have to say at least in my mind that we are in very deep sh!t!

“Well, at least now we know what this barrier was doing”, Derrien smirks, face calm as ever. Just how is he doing it?

“How bad is it with your magic?”, I ask.

“I’ll survive”, he says coldly, “But you’d better run!”

“I highly doubt that separating in such circumstances is a good idea!”, I turn my back to his back, “I am pretty sure we are surrounded! And I can hardly use a third of my abilities!”

“Then stay close!”, he agrees and then mutters, “Should have taken my sword at least!”

Yeah, I should have taken my daggers as well. But they are left in my bag at the carriage with griffins.

I see dark figures emerging at different sides around us. One, two, seven, twelve...fifteen. Fifteen. That's a lot for the two of us. Even considering that he is a gerdian. If his magic is suppressed, how many can he take? Because my maximum would be around five, depending on my luck and how they will attack.

I need to think logically here. No weak attacks, nothing risky. Only the ones I am sure of, only my strongest points. Because even they will be working at half force, if not less.

Fire, fire is my best chance. It never failed me before, it's the one I am most comfortable with out of all the elements...

I even my breathing and look at my targets. Three are heading towards me, another three are staying behind. Others are concentrated on Derrien. Gods, I hope he is as good as legends about gerdians are! Otherwise, I'd be dead today!

Three pulsars are thrown at me, but I put a quick shield blocking them and sit down to throw a fireball at one of my attacker's legs. I hit the target and he is thrown back, his legs on fire. Damn, that's bad. That attack should have killed him. It was prohibited to use it in the academy unless under a teacher's supervision because of how dangerous it is. And now it just barely scratched this person.

Another four pulsars land onto my shield and I feel it almost c\*\*\*k at the pressure. I don't know how much longer I'd be able to hold it for.

One of them is close to me now and attacks me with two daggers at the same time, I block both of them and twist his wrists with a trick Dereck and I practiced multiple times at the Academy. Finally, all that hard work pays off! I feel his accomplices' pulsars flying at me again and turn him, to use his back as a temporary shield. He falls dead to my feet and I form a new shield, putting one of the daggers behind my belt and holding another ready for an attack.

Our executioners and I can't call them anything else in my mind, are all wearing black from head to toes. Black capes, jackets, pants, boots... Gerdians would approve. Only these are definitely humans. I don't feel an inch of dark magic in them. I am going to be killed by my own people! How ironic!

Another two bodies fall next to me, but this time it's Derrien's work. I turn to look for just a second and see him break someone's neck. Well, I can't blame him now, considering we are on the same team.

Several pulsars and fireballs at one break my shield and I feel a shard of it scratch over my face. A warm trickle of blood slides down my cheek. This is it, I don't have enough strength to form another one and even if I do, it wouldn't last long. So now my only chance is to attack.

I charge at them, sliding in between two pulsars, and get the second dagger out of my belt, putting it into one of the men's heart. I flinch. I've never killed anyone before. He is my first. The one before was killed by his own "friends". But this one is on me. A human mage at that.

Thinking about him was a big mistake, though, as I missed a pulsar made of lightning and it got straight into me, throwing me away to a huge piece of rock nearby.

"Mira!", I hear Derrien shout and try to sit up, holding by the rock I just met with my face. With a corner of my eyes, I see another two pulsars heading right at me. This is going to be the end of me... I close my eyes, to meet my end as a warrior, not crying, and not running away! But I feel a shadow hang over me. And then... nothing happens.

I open my eyes and see Derrien! I need another few seconds looking at his shuddering frame to realize what is going on. He is covering me with his body!

"No!", I gasp, trying to push him away.

"Stupid!", he blurts, spitting blood.

He turns back to the people who try to kill us and something like a growl comes out of his mouth. The sound is inhuman! But this is the least of my troubles. I stand up and notice a dagger in Derrien's back, almost fully in! My fault! All my fault! But again, not the time now.

I stand up and quickly tear the skirt of my dress with magic until the middle of my thigh. This dress was not made for combat and I have to survive first and think about decency later!

I charge at the man, who is closest to me and grab his hand, before he manages to form another pulsar, and break it mercilessly, also grabbing a knife out of his scabbard and put it into his neck, moving forward.

I catch Derrien's look on me, but this time don't stop and attack the next person, pushing him to the rock I just personally got acquainted with. He, however, hits me on the stomach, throwing me back a few steps, and then slams me against the bloody rock again.

I see his wrist just for a mere second as he tugs my hair with it but this is enough to recognize the tattoo on it.

"The Invisibles!", I gasp in shock.

"Clever girl", the man smirks, his face is covered in the darkness of his hood, "Such a shame!"

"Yeah", I agree, as I put his own dagger up to the hilt into his side. At that moment, he is thrown away from me and I see a furious gerdian lord.

He breathes heavily. Clearly tired. Of course, the Invisibles are a group of the best assassins in the Kingdom. Specially selected. The best of the best. Even a gerdian at full power would have troubles standing against a group of them... Once, I dreamed of joining them... But that dream is over today.

Derrien is looking at the bloody blade in my hands and grasping the situation slowly.

"You are full of surprises, lady Mira," he chuckles, wiping blood out of my cheek. I look behind him and see that everyone else is dead. "Are you hurt?", he asks.

"No, not badly," I say quickly, "But you are! Oh, gods, Derrien, you have a dagger in your back! Let me..."

"Not now!", he groans and tenses at once, looking up. I follow his gaze and my heart sinks. On the heights around us, there are people. People in black. The Invisibles. Many of them. More than we can take now!

"Gods, help us!", I whisper in horror. For the first time ever I realize that I really don't want to die. Not the slightest desire in my heart. I want to live!

“Mira,” Derrien says calmly, “Listen to me very carefully. Right now I want you to fully trust me and do whatever I tell you to however crazy it sounds. Then I promise you, you will survive. Can you do that for me?”

I just nod. Right now, I am ready to do anything he says. Because I for sure do not have any ideas that can save us.

“Mira”, he speaks with me as if I am a child again, “Give me your hand!”

I put my hand into his and he squeezes it tightly.

“What now?”, I ask him, no hope in my voice.

“Now, Mira, run!”, he says and starts pulling me behind me, as he is much faster.

I look back and the Invisibles are following us. They do not hurry too much. Probably sure that we are going to die anyway.

I run and I run until I realize that we are putting ourselves in a corner. There is only the edge of a cliff before us, nothing else. And it’s high, too high. But Derrien continues to run there, dragging me with him.

“No, it’s the end!”, I try to explain to him.

“Trust me, Mira! Jump with me!”, he shouts.

And I jump...

## **The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 42 - Tips**

MIRA

Flight... air in the face and the feeling of fatality of what I am doing. I can’t believe I loved flying just a few hours ago! I try summoning the air magic, but it’s still too weak to help me levitate... Not to mention that I was never capable of it in the first place, as air is my weakest element. So it only slows down the inevitable. Death. Maybe Derrien was right and we are better to die like this. On our own terms... He lets go of my hand and I turn in surprise but I do not see him anymore, flying with my back to the ground now? Did he manage to

transport alone? Did he just leave me here after he made me jump off the cliff?

Hurt. That would be my last feeling... ever...

I see a black dot covering the sun. What could that be? A loud growl... No roar even. What is going on? Doesn't matter... I close my eyes, it would be easier not to see...

Suddenly, I feel a dark shadow cover me and something hard and warm clutches me from every side and suddenly I feel my flight change direction, almost snapping my neck with pressure. But I hold on, air magic cushions my body weakly and softly, but enough to protect me in this situation.

What is this? I open my eyes and gasp in shock...

I am trapped in the claws of an enormous scaly flying beast! Dark scales, black even... And that beast stinks of dark magic. The purest and primal one. Gods! It's a dragon! A real dragon! I am in the claws of a real alive dragon! And a dark one at that! And those are the most powerful creatures that ever lived!

But to know that one of them really existed! And I am in his hands! Why? Why would...

The dragon flies higher and higher and we are now above the cliff I jumped off with Derrien a minute or so ago! Higher again and then it just hangs in the air, looking at the men who attacked us. Gods, tell me they are not together! Tell me the Invisibles do not control this beast!

But looking at how they start running away I guess they do not! They run as fast as they can, but on the top of a snowy mountain, those black dots are very clearly visible! Such irony really – visible Invisibles!

I almost snort, but then I remember that my position now is not where I should be laughing at all!

The dragon flies after my attackers. I wonder why. But when he gets to them, he opens his mouth and dark fire emerges! The flames burn the people to ashes. And I mean that literary! Just messy piles of ashes are left in the places where the fire caught the assassins. I want to close my eyes every time, but I can't...

Dark flames... I've seen those before. They look exactly like the ones that Derrien uses.... No! No, not possible! He can't be... It's... It's... It's physically impossible!

Can I be in Derrien's hands? Or could he be the one controlling the dragon?

I look around and don't see the gerdian anywhere.

And what if it all just a coincidence and he is long dead? And the beast has nothing to do with him and I am just his pray? What if I never see that smug, annoying, arrogant man ever again...

Pain in my heart makes my eyes tear a bit. It's all too much!

Meanwhile, the dragon burns the last of the Invisibles. No one escaped him!

I hear a loud and ear-splitting roar again and then he takes off. He flies off the mountain and down to the woods surrounding it. Lower and lower... So low that I notice a little house hidden deep in the forest and then a small meadow... And that's where the dragon circles, flapping his humongous wings and carefully landing on his three legs. And then carefully putting me down and unclenching his fourth.

Soft grass accepts my tired body and I still can't believe that all of this is really happening. The dragon growls... and sounds tired as well...

I stand up and take in the beast in front of me. It's scary and beautiful at the same time. Magnificent.

Taking a few steps back, I don't know what to do now... Do I run? Will it burn me the same way it did the Invisibles if I do?

The dragon is watching my every move. I take another step and it spreads its wings, covering the sun away from me completely. Terrifying! And yet still amazing at the same time!

And then the beast falls to the ground and dark flames consume him, getting smaller and smaller... Until only a figure of a man is left lying on the ground and my heart sinks when I realize that it's Derrien Derwood himself.

He is on his fours, surprising wearing all of his clothes... But looking weak, very weak!

“Derrien!”, I run up to him and land on my knees, helping him to hold on. I see that the dagger from before is still inside of him.

But he suddenly wraps his hands around me and presses me against his body, covering my lips with his and making me breathless.

“Are you alright? Did they hurt you?”, his voice is breaking and hoarse as he pulls me into another hug.

“I am fine!”, I muffle into his neck, “Better than you for sure!”

“Good!”, he says and falls on top of me, heavy like a rock.

“Derrien?”, I call him, but he doesn’t reply, “Gods, Derrien! Say something!”

But he can’t, he is completely unconscious...

Oh, my gods, what do I do with him now?

Slowly, very slowly I crawl away from under him and inspect his body for wounds. Except for the dagger inside, everything else looks fine. He does have a few bad burns, but they do not take too much space in his body, so he should survive those.

There are legends about how fast gerdians recuperate. I hope those are not tales. Because right now I know only one thing. I want this man to stay alive. I want Derrien Derwood to live!

## **The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 43 - Tips**

MIRA

I check the levels of my magic and it’s all back. We left the dome suppressing our powers. That’s why he flew us away from the mountain!

I look at Derrien’s pale face. He saved me today and I owe him to at least try to save his own life! With one hand on his body, using my water element, I take the blood flow under my control. With my second hand, I pull out the dagger. It’s longer than I hoped, so this is bad probably. I bring it to my nose and cringe in disappointment as I realize that it was also poisoned. Well, the



Invisibles do not leave traces. Well, usually. So, it's only natural they make sure to do everything to kill their goal.

I wonder what poison it is. Can I detoxify it? Gods, I wish I had my equipment with me, I could test the dagger and find out.

"It's going to be alright!", I say, looking at Derrien, but I know I address myself, "Everything is going to be great!"

Can I summon someone? Would that be safe considering we were just attacked by my own people? Probably not...

I could call for Dereck and the guys from the Academy... But what if we are under attack again? Besides, I see no reason for them to help a gerdian... Not to mention the way we all parted last time. They wouldn't understand my desire to save him...

Damn it! I am on my own here!

House! There was a house in the woods! Not too far from here! If I get him there... But how? He is so heavy! I can hardly lift him up... But I have to find a way! I just have to!

I seal his wound with the water element magic so that he doesn't lose any. I also stop the flow to try and avoid the poison spreading.

"Air, please", I beg the element that is my weakest, "Please, I need you now! Help me save him! I owe him my life! Help me to move him to the house in the woods! Please!"

The air comes to my prayer, but as always, not too much and not too strong... I try to lift Derrien up and it gathers under him, lifting the rest of him up in, well, air.

Gods, it's still far too heavy! But I have no choice! At least now it doable!

I drag him in the direction of the woods. There, it will be easier... Just a bit more...

As soon as we reach the first tree in the woods, I touch its rough bark and call to my Earth element for help. Vines and branches stretch to my overwhelming gerdian load. And then they pass his body from one to another,

moving us very slowly in the direction of our goal. After a while, we reach the house and I realize that it's more of a hut than an actual house. Leaving Derrien with my woody helpers, I go to it and knock on the door. After nobody replies, I open the lock with my magic and enter. It's very small – just a stone stove, a fireplace, a too big for this room wooden table and a bed at the back with a fireplace around it. All seems clean at first, but a level of dust on the table tells me that no one was here for a while. I summon water from a nearby lake and clean whatever I can quickly, summoning then fire to dry things up, paying special attention to the bed. Then I summon fire and dry things up carefully. The room gets hot and steamy, but I guess it's not bad since it'll get dark soon.

I run back to Derrien and for a second he opens his eyes, but then closes them again to my disappointment. The vines can't stretch further to the house and I have to summon water again. Luckily the lake is within the walking distance and I feel it. Water catches Derrien softly and helps me to get him inside. I place him on the table. Because first I need to clean him up and try and detox the poison out of his body.

I don't have any herbs with me and don't have time to go and look for it now. I just have to do the extra first help they taught us at the academy.

First thing first! I need to undress him! Well, easy! I can do that! Nothing to be embarrassed about. I pull off his leather boots first. There! Half job done!

It's worse with his jacket, the fabric is heavy and too strong to pull it off a lifeless body. After about 5 unlucky attempts I give up and just cut it to take it off. And then repeat the same with his shirt which is already soaked with his blood.

I gulp when I see his naked torso, exactly as in my dreams. And next, I pull off his pants.

Oh, gods! I am so happy that no one is watching me now! Especially my mother! Lady Freyn pulling pants off a half-dead man in some hut in the woods. I feel ashamed. But not too much. I am a battlemage and should be ready for anything. Right? Right!

I try not to look... but gerdian male underwear still catches my eye. Black, of course, no surprises there. It's some kind of very tight-fitting shorts? And when I say very tight-fitting, I mean VERY TIGHT-FITTING!

Gods, Mira, go back to the wound.

I summon air again to help me lift him as the wound is on his back. Air helps, but not a lot, of course. It is known to be the naughtiest and least obedient element for a reason! But we manage to do it. And we it's done, I freeze because there is something I did not expect to see. And it's not the wound from the dagger of the Invisibles. It's the tattoo I saw in my dreams! Exactly the same! Black dragon in a circle shape with only wings protruding out of it!

Wait, it makes sense now because he is a dragon himself... Or at least can shift into one...

Gods, so much to think about, but now is not the time!

I disinfect the wound with my fire and water elements to the best of my abilities. And then try to get the poison out of the bloodstream with the help of water once again. I definitely get out some but have no idea if this is it. A black drop lands on a white plate I've prepared. I'll examine it and try to find out what kind of poison it is later. If it will still be needed then.

The wound requires sewing, but however much I try to look – a sewing kit is just not here. Bad, this is bad. That leaves me with only one option – seal it with my fire magic. And that hurts like hell...

I look at Derrien's perfect face and decide that it's for the best that he is unconscious. And then just do it. Seal the wound, leaving a burn mark on him. Gods, I hope this will help. I am so not great at healing! I barely passed my healing exam back at the academy...

When all is done, I clean him up and summon water again to help me transport the gerdian lord to the bed. I cover him with a clean sheet so that nothing distracts me anymore. And then I look around. There is absolutely no food in here, but bows, crossbows, axes, and daggers are attached to one of the walls. Something tells me that it's someone's hunting hut. I find some old clothes in one of the chests, all for males. Then I summon water once again and boil it in one of the pots, then cool it down. At least now we have drinking water. I probably need to go out and look for something suitable to eat, but the sun is almost down. It'll have to wait until morning now.

I check Derrien and nothing has changed. He isn't awake, although he is definitely alive. I put my hand to his forehead and it's hot, so hot. For a human

that would be bad. But he is a gerdian. And a dragon. Of sorts. He should pull through. He should...

For a second I want to cry... But I shrug that feeling away. I am not a cryer!

I take some of the water I've prepared and decide to clean myself as well. Shame they don't have a bath here! That's something I could really use now!

I pull a muslin curtain that separates "the bedroom" from everything else and pull off my dress through my shoulders, staying in just my underwear – a b.ra and lacy shorts. Also gerdian presents, but I am used to all of that now. I unhook the b.ra and put it aside. Calling water to wash the dirt of today away. I have a few cuts and bruises and keep the cool liquid longer in those places to soothe the pain. I only start feeling it now. While I was taking care of Derrien I haven't even realized how much I am hurting myself. I lift up my hair, so that water can wash my back and sense some movement behind me. But when I look back at Derrien he is still in the same position, eyes closed.

I finish off my hygiene procedures faster and clean all the clothes that survived today – my dress and underwear, Derrien's pants, the clothes that I found in the c.hest. I pick a white shirt, which probably belongs to one hunk of a man because when I put it on, it almost reaches my knees. I giggle as I remember the time when I was three and tried to put on one of my mum's beautiful gowns... The sensations are similar now as I roll the way too long sleeves.

Coming back to Derrien, I put some wood into the fireplace and light it up. Then create a barrier around the hut. This is human territory and this should be enough to protect us for now.

I sit in a chair next to the bed and feel again how exhausted I am. My magic is almost drained, I can barely lift a finger in this state. I wouldn't be able to do anything else today... However, I lift the chair closer to the gerdian, so that I could check his temperature just by stretching my hand to him. Which I do and, to my disappointment, he is still way too hot...

"What do I do with you, Derrien Derwood?", I sign, taking the hair away from his forehead, "I really need you to live. Can you do that for me?"

I don't notice how I fall asleep in that position – curled in an armchair with my hand against his cheek...

And I see a dream again... A dream where he touches my face, and strokes my hair and then takes me in his arms and brings me to the bed right next to him...

"Rien", I smile...

## **The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 44 - Tips**

MIRA

"Rien", I smile and my head falls onto his chest, hard and still way too hot. Minty scent surrounding me, "Don't die, please..."

"I was not planning to", he chuckles as his lips cover mine and his fingers run through my hair gently, "You did a good job, little mage."

"Ah", I sigh as he starts kissing my neck bringing all kinds of sensations, "So did you. You saved me there..."

"I will always save you, Mira," he whispers in my ear and then bites my earlobe, "After all, you are mine..."

"No", I giggle weakly and hear a sound resembling a growl.

"Yes, Mira, yes", he unbuttons my shirt slowly, while continuing showering me with kisses, "Say it, Mira, I need you to say it!"

"Rien", I gasp as I feel cold air touch my delicate skin. The flames in the fireplace are long gone...

"Gods, you are so beautiful, Mira", he says with a voice deeper than usual, "Say what I want to hear. Say it now, please..."

I look up at him. In the dreams he never asks me anything, he just does as he pleases... And I... I have no control over my body and now... I lift up my hand to touch his face and feel his light stubble prick my fingers... Oh, gods, this is really happening! I am in bed with him, naked and...

"Mira", he whispers, "I am not made of stone... I can't do this anymore. I want you to be mine. I want you to be mine now. Say that you agree."

“W-why?”, I stutter, “Why do you need me to say it so badly?”

“Because you told me that I need to ask you first,” he admits, “This is me asking. Please, Mira, be mine.”

“This is not a dream...”, I say out loud and he flinches.

“No, Mira, not a dream...”

“And you really are alive!”, I brush both my hands over his face, neck, chest, making sure that I am not in a daze anymore. He catches one of them and makes a trail of kisses from my wrist back to my breasts, making me arch my back. Gods, what am I doing?!

But I feel so happy! And also so good. It feels so undeniably good to be in his strong arms, coated in his scent... If I have to end up with a gerdian, I want it to be him...

Who am I lying to, I simply want to be with him... gerdian or no gerdian, dragon or no dragon, I want to be with him. I can't imagine being with anyone else anymore... I think I fell for him... badly and irrevocably.

“Mira”, he whispers in my ear, “I can't...anymore...”

“I want it”, I whisper in his and he freezes, “I want to be yours... Now...”

“Thank gods!”, he mutters before slamming into my lips for a greedy possessive kiss to which I respond with all that I have. His hands are sliding up and down my body, making me experience all kinds of emotions.

His fingers brush over my inner thighs higher and higher, until they stop in my most sensitive spot, making a moan escape my lips. He caresses me gently, studies my folds and my reactions to his touch, giving me pleasure and enjoying the process himself, while teasing me with kisses well. His circular motions become faster and I feel overwhelming tension build-up where his hand is. I dig my nails into his flesh and he groans in pleasure, “Let it go, Mira! Release yourself!”

And I obey his words, already familiar waves of pleasure circling through me, making me forget how to breathe, making me see stars, making me almost scream and bite my lips till they bleed...

I come to my senses after a while and see Rien looking at me with eyes full of his dark magic dancing madly around his irises ... His underwear burns on him, sparks of magic taking it all away, and for the first time, I see him completely n.aked, only the moonlight breaking through the window. For a second there I feel scared, the realization of what's about to happen sinks into my mind, making me shudder with fear...

“Shhh”, he leans back down to me and places a soft k!ss on my l!ps, “There is nothing to be afraid of, Mira...”

And somehow I believe him, closing my eyes and sensing him leaving a trail of k!sses down my neck, my b.reasts, my belly, and then even lower... He carefully parts my legs, k!ssing each th!gh as if he marks it as his, and then I feel his hot l!ps and tongue on my center, testing and probing it.

“Gods, Mira, you are the sweetest thing I've ever tasted... just divine”, he mutters in between the caresses and I blush at his words. Somehow it all still seems surreal to me!

I gasp when his fingers enter me. First one, then another, and then one more... The thrusts, together with his tongue k!ssing a bundle of nerves just above, bring me to my second c\*\*\*\*x of the night as m0an after m0an escapes me. I don't even realize how my own fingers entangle in the gerdian's hair and how tears of joy stream down my face. I am not able to hold myself anymore, right now I am absolutely in his power...

I shudder in his arms once again and he is back at my face, showering me with k!sses, l!cking away my tears with his tongue.

I feel his hardness pressing against my we.tness. So h.uge... Everything about him is so h.uge, there is no way he can fit inside the tiny me...

“It's alright, Mira,” he bites my lower l!p gently, “You are ready for me. It'll hurt, but not for long...”

I nod weakly and feel him entering slowly... His body is shaking and the sparks in his eyes look like they are going to explode any minute. I know that he is holding himself back for my sake... but as he reaches my maidenhead I give out a small whimper and tears roll down my cheeks again. Sharp pain and he is all inside of me, breathing heavily, but waiting for me to adjust.

The pain goes away and I look into his eyes again, the dark magic in them mesmerizes me...

"I wanted you to be mine from the moment I laid my eyes on you!", he says in a husky voice, bringing my body closer to him, "You are like a priceless gem to me and I wanted to possess you for too long now, Mira. From this day forward you are mine!"

I want to say something, but he starts to move, making me forget whatever I was going to say... First slowly, holding one of my legs under the knee, then faster and faster... soon he is not able to control himself anymore, loud growls escaping him as he takes me again and again...

"Mine!", he gr0ans into my hair and stills and I feel something warm spreading inside of me as his body lowers onto mine, breathing heavily and covered with crystals of sweat, "You are mine now, Mira!"

## **The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 45 - Tips**

MIRA

I wake feeling like someone is stroking my hair. Cheekily opening just one eye, I see Derrien playing with my red locks, looking mesmerized. And all I want is to... giggle. Seriously, holding back a laugh is a real struggle for me at the moment.

"Someone's in a good mood", the gerdian smiles at me and pulls me closer, covering my lips with his.

"I am sorry, you looked so... busy!", I burst out laughing but it doesn't last long as he pins both my hands at both sides of me.

"Oh really?", he smirks, "I am actually planning to be busy all day today, little mage."

His words and the way he looks at me make me blush, "Well, you seem much better now and full of strength! Then it's time for us to go and do what we came here to do in the first place!"

"I really do not think so," he shakes his head sarcastically, letting go of my hands and brushes his thumb over my lower lip, "My back still hurts after I



caught that dagger for you, you know...deep into my flesh... I think I need to bedrest at least for one more day.”

“Oh, poor you... Well, good luck then!”, I tap him on the shoulder and try to slide away from under him, “I am starving and need some...”

He catches me just in time and brings me back in place, flickers of magic dance madly in his eyes.

“No, little mage, I AM starving!”, he slams into my lips and enters me at the same time, muffling my moans with his kiss. He moves slowly at first, but soon picks up the pace and I forget how to breathe again. The sensations are overwhelming and soon I give in to waves of pleasure once more...

I lie on his chest, completely exhausted even though it's still morning. I feel his fingers drawing circles on my shoulder and close my eyes in delight. His every touch sends tingles over my body, the nice kind...

“So,” I sigh after a while, “You are a dragon...”

“Yes,” he says simply and I feel a soft kiss on the tip of my head.

And then he says nothing! Really? Isn't it pretty clear that I want to know more? Do I have to beg him for the information? Or is that exactly what he wants me to do – beg?

“Your thinking is getting too loud!”, he chuckles.

“Wh-what?”, I lift up my head and look at him, “You can read my mind?”

“No”, he snorts, “But your breathing is so fast and hard that I can come to these kinds of conclusions.”

“So...,” I start again.

“So...,” he mimics me, clearly mocking.

“Rien!”, I slap his chest angrily.

“Ouch!”, he exaggerates, “What kind of mean woman would hit a wounded person like that?!”

"The kind who saw his back and noticed that there is no trace on it," I roll my eyes, "You regenerate very fast! Is that a dragon feature or a gerdian one?"

"Both," he signs and brings me closer to him once again, "Gerdians heal pretty fast, but dragons even faster. Combined together I am quite lucky in that field."

"I thought dragons left our world a while ago", I admit.

"They did... My father was the last one known. And now I am."

"Your father was..."

"The one my mother really loved. So much that she didn't get rid of me when she found out that she was pregnant. Even though she knew exactly how much trouble this would cause her. She was a brave woman..."

"Was?", I look up into his eyes but he is deliberately staring at the ceiling.

"Yes... My stepfather killed her..."

"And that's why you killed him...", the pieces of the puzzle fall together.

"I should have done it earlier," he closes his eyes, "I should have..."

"You couldn't have known what was going to happen," I brush my palm over his cheek and make him look at me, "Nothing is ever this simple, Rien."

"Never mind", he sighs and kisses my forehead, "It was a long time ago."

"Have you ever seen your father?"

"No, he disappeared before I was born. Maybe someone slew him in his dragon form... and now his skull is a decoration in somebody's house... Who knows.."

"And how did you learn all those dragon tricks if you didn't have another dragon around to teach you?", I ask the most logical question.

"Well, I learned by trying and failing", he chuckles, "My old castle had a hard time during my teen years."

"I can imagine", I bury my face in his chest trying to hold a laugh.

“Some of the things came thanks to the instincts”, he continues, “Some I had to learn from books. Although books are not helpful, most of the stuff there sounds like a fairy tale!”

“I bet they do! Dragons themselves sound like they came from a fairy tale!”, I snort and get a little slap on my... Well, let’s call it almost th!gh.

“Naughty, little mage”, Derrien raises his brow at me, “You just want me to punish you all over again!”

“Gods, no!”, I almost scream and he looks at me, clearly shocked, “Derrien, please, no offense, but if we do it one more time I will literary have no force to stand up from this bed!”

“Are you scaring me off or inviting me in?”, he chuckles, his sarcasm is not lost on me. But then he puts his hand on my stomach and I feel how warm it gets, the warmth bringing me to relief.

“What is this?”, I ask, surprised.

“I am sharing some of my dragon magic with you, it’ll help you heal in no time,” he smiles.

“You are SHARING dragon magic with me? Is that even possible?! Will I turn into a dragon now? Could I fly?”

“Nothing like that,” he rolls his eyes, “But you will be able to walk in no time and we can...”

“Rien, please!”, I stop him from finishing this sentence by covering his lips with my fingers, but he bites them, “Ouch!”

“Never put a finger into a dragon’s mouth. Unless you WANT to be eaten,” he smirks lustfully.

“Gods, Derrien! Have you forgotten why we came here in the first place? We still haven’t found out anything...”

“On the contrary, little mage”, he sits up and I see the tattoo on his back once again, “We found out plenty! This was clearly a trap. Now we just need to find out who set it up and we’ll find the murderer. So, I’ll take you back to the Selection and...”

“Oh, so you don’t want to know the name of the group that attacked us then?”, I say nonchalantly and he freezes.

“Mira, if you know you should tell me at once,” he warns me, pulling on his pants.

“Should I? Really?”, I shake my shoulders, “You seem like you got all this on your own...”

“Mira,” he growls and steps closer, while I innocently pull the sheets to wrap myself in them and looking for my dress and underwear.

“Yes, lord Derwood,” I smile politely and sparks of dark magic appear in his brown eyes with a red tint.

“Tell me everything you know. Now.”

“On one condition, ” I smirk.

“And that would be?”

“You take me with you!”

“No!”

“Yes!”

“No!”

“Yes!”

“Mira, you almost died yesterday!”

“No, Derrien, YOU almost died yesterday!”

“Because I was protecting you!”

“Well, thanks, but I was managing just fine on my own!”

“Oh, gods! What did I do to deserve it?”, he looks at the ceiling again and covers his eyes with his palm.

“My guess would be – a lot!”, I snort and he pulls me into his arms.

“Alright, little mage,” he gives up and bends down to kiss me, “You win just this once. And now tell me everything.”

“Of course I will”, I nod my head and smirk, “On our way back to the top of the mountain!”

“You little...”

“Mage?”, I giggle.

“Not the word that I had in mind”, Derrien chuckles, “Alright, get dressed, and let’s go back. We’ll find plenty of food in our carriage.”

“I will be ready in a second!”, I smile and drop the sheets to put my clothes on.

“Mira!”, he growls, eyes full of magic.

When we finally get back to the top of the mountain with the help of flames of dark magic, the dome is already gone. While our carriage is still where we left it.

Thank gods, because I am really starving!

But before we reach it, the door opens and a familiar voice breaks from inside, “And I thought you would never come back!”