

The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 5 - Tips

MIRA

I have packed only a few things I need for life on the road plus my jewellery and some gold and silver coins. That should be enough to survive. The less is with me – the better.

I feel guilty for lying to Derek since he obviously only wants to help me. But I cannot let him risk this much. If anything goes wrong – their lives would be at stake and their families may suffer the consequences too. Nobody jokes with the Gerdian Empire. And the brides are part of the Tribute after all.

I'd have to leave my friends soon. And hopefully, they will get over it quickly. I write a letter to each of the boys and to Tessa as well and put it in a bag that I want to leave behind. They should find them when I am gone.

Yes. This is the right thing to do.

And it's going to be fine...

Yes, I've been learning magic for just 2 years instead of the 5 I intended. But I am not bad. I am going to be fine... I know enough!

My mirror blinks with golden flames, meaning that someone wants to speak to me. I come up to it and swipe my hand, letting the signal into the room, and immediately see my parents. My heart sinks. This is probably the last time I am going to see them whatever happens.

"Sweetheart!", mother smiles at me happily, "Is that true? Why haven't you called us? We just received your expulsion papers!"

She shines. She radiates. This all she ever wanted! She never wanted me to become a mage in the first place, she was against me getting into the Academy and she was against me fighting... She just wished I got married to Tristan, that indifferent fiancé of mine and have many children with him.

And now she gets even more than that. Now she thinks that I am going to marry one of the lords of the Gerdian Empire! And this is higher in status than marrying a duke from our kingdom. The families of gerdian wives are treated with utmost respect... She wins, I lose... Or at least that's what she thinks.

Father, however... He doesn't look happy at all. He knows. He knows that I would never submit, he knows that this goes against everything I believe and he knows that it means trouble.

"Sparkle", he uses my nickname, "Are you alright?"

"Yeah", I try to fake a smile, "I am fine, daddy. Or at least I am going to be."

"So it's true!", mother interrupts, "You've got the dark mark! Show it to us! I don't think I can believe this before I see it with my own eyes!"

"This dress wouldn't let me show it without taking it off completely", I shrug, "So, you'll just have to believe me."

"But honey...", my tries to insist.

"Leave it", father interrupts her coldly. They love each other, but they never agreed on ways to handle me, "When do you leave, Mira?"

"Tomorrow morning, at least that's what the dark lord who is going to escort me have said."

"They send one of their lords to escort you?", mum flatters her thick eyelashes, "I've never heard that such an honour would be shown to anyone else! Gods, Mira, this is huge!"

Fantastic...

"Be careful, daughter", Dad says and I see the worry in his eyes. As always, he knows more than he tells.

"I am always careful, father", I smile. Genuinely this time. "I love you both so much. And I am going to miss you. Please, do not worry about me. I can take care of myself. And say the same to Colton when you see him. And tell him to watch out for himself. "

"Oh, your brother is going to be just fine!", mum flatters, "Tell me about the dark lord who came for you! How does he look like? What is his name? Tell me everything!"

"He is dark, mum, in every sense of the word. Dark hair, dark eyes, dark magic, dark clothes. Everything you expect about a gerdian," I shrug remembering the humiliation of this morning, "I am sorry, I must go now."

“But dear”, mum obviously wants to know more.

“That’s enough”, Dad stops her, “Mira, we love you always. Whatever happens. You know that, right?”

“Of course I do”, I nod. I didn’t expect anything less from the patriarch of our clan. He knows. Or at least he feels what I am planning to do. And he lets me do it.

“Thank you, dad”, I whisper and swipe my hand, breaking the flow of magic and ending the call.

Good. It’s so much easier when I get a blessing from my clan. I would hate to go against them. But I would still do it.

In about an hour, when everybody is at the dining hall, busy with their food, I sneak out to the back garden, where Derek, Norton, and Rick are already waiting. They are all wearing their travel outfits and brown cloaks. And I am wearing a similar outfit – brown boots and pants, leather walstcoat that fits me like a glove, white chintz shirt with long puffy sleeves and embroidery at the cuffs, as well as a green cloak, covering my red locks.

“Great!”, Derek smiles as if we are not about to risk all of our lives for a very mediocre plan of ours...” Here you go!”

He throws a small glass jar into my hands. Like the ones we use for lipstick. And I look questioningly at him.

“It’s the cream you should apply to your mark to mask it. I have paid to a herbalist good money yesterday to create it. Should work.”

“Let’s hope so”, I take some of the ointment on my fingers, smell it and then quickly unbutton my blouse and rub it in. Boys delicately turned away, making me chuckle. True gentlemen.

When I am done, Derek takes my bags and we quickly walk to the stables, where our horses are kept. But before we even manage to reach it a familiar cold voice appears behind our backs, “Going somewhere?”