

Book 2 Dragon King's Forbidden Love Chapter 1 - Tips

LARA

“Test the new wings, they said! It’s going to be fun, they said!” I grit through my teeth as one of the shiny wings that’s holding me afloat gives out a screeching noise once again.

Since air is my main element, I am not too worried – I will always be able to land safely. But I flew too far away into the enemy territory. It was supposed to be a short scouting trip to the border of the Gerdian Empire, but the curious me didn’t stop in time. I can already see my brother Gideon rolling his eyes and telling me that there will be no new missions for me in the foreseeable future.

In all honesty, I should already turn back to the White Archipelago, but I want to be the first who brings some useful information to the leader of the Order. As soon as I crossed the border, I felt like something is pulling me deeper and deeper. I’ve never felt anything like that before! And I am used to trusting my gut! It never failed me before. I am being pulled here for a reason.

Too bad that one of the wings is about to malfunction. But as long as I bring in anything of value to our cause, then it will be all worth it.

I am hiding in the clouds, really hoping to avoid the beasts that the Gerdian Empire is known for! The reason why my people are now preparing for the war.

Luckily, I am wearing an artifact necklace that makes me blend with the environment. My hair is tucked neatly into a helmet, so it must practically be next to impossible to see me from the ground.

Suddenly, the weather changes, and I hear sounds of emerging thunder. That’s bad. Flying in bad weather is definitely not a good idea when there is a problem with my wings. However, I am trained too well to panic. Maybe I need to find a place to land safely, hide from the upcoming rain, and try to fix my wings.

The clouds get darker rapidly and I hectically try to look for a spot where I can land. Unfortunately, the border of the Gerdian Empire is all covered with sharp cliffs but I am still sure I’ll be able to find something suitable.

It all happens so fast... Before I even realize it... At full speed, I crash into something huge and firm. The blow is so hard that my wings are broken at the impact, and I can hardly keep myself aware. It feels like I am in the middle of a hurricane, dark and suffocating. My face is pressed against something extremely hot and smooth... like a rock... We fall down together and instinctively I grasp to the rock.

“What a silly death!” I think right before something dark and leathery closes around me. Holy Goddess of Light, what could it be?

The second impact comes so fast that it kicks the breath out of me. Losing consciousness, my body slides down from the strange rock and I fall to the ground. Surprisingly soft... I take my last breath and feel the scent of the forest after the storm... How strange...

Dull pain in my head makes me wake up with a groan. I will definitely thank Gideon for making me wear the helmet for the flight when I get back to the Citadel!

Slowly picking myself up from the floor piece by piece I look around. Where the chaos am I? Looks like a cave... dark and gloomy, with water dripping from somewhere at the top.

Lifting up my head, I see the now clear sky. But it's too far away. How deep into that mountain did I fall? And how the chaos did I survive that fall?!

I look at my broken wings and swear under my breath, although I am sure that the goddess of Light will not be happy with me! But my wings are ruined! And as far as I remember I am deep, deep, deeeeeep into the enemy's territory.

How do I get out of here without wings?! I check my artifact and swear again. As loud as I only can! The artifact on my neck is broken! And that means that I will not be able to contact my brother or anyone at the White Archipelago! No one will come to help me and get me out!

“Damn it!” I shout in frustration wanting to kick something.

And I do! I hit the wall next to me as hard as I can! First with my bloodied fists and then I start kicking it with my foot. That's how I find out that my right leg is seriously injured and start whining in pain, falling back to my bottom.

And that's when I hear a growl. A growl! A loud and clear one! Somewhere right next to me!

The wall right in front moves and I choke on my own breath when I see a huge purple and yellow eye looking at me! I recognize the dark magic at once!

The scream comes naturally. Loud and piercing. So loud that small rocks start falling from the top of the cave.

Rustles in the darkness and I am swept off by something black and leathery. I squeak and find myself buried with my face in the carcass of some kind of animal. Huge and mighty, it keeps me in place... But when it finally relaxes and lets me go, I crawl carefully out of its grasp... The eye opens up again and I would be a fool not to realize that the animal is watching me.

Swallowing hard, I do the only thing that I can in the given situation – raising my index finger to the sky, I summon light to the tip of it. The soft glow fills the space and caresses my skin. And I freeze when I see what's right in front of me!

I must have hit my head hard if I have forgotten the main secret of the Gerdian Empire! Because right now in front of me lies a real live full-size dragon!

DEMIR

Ryker goes on and on about the Red Rogue dragons attacking one of the villages at the border. The warriors I sent last time did not return and that's a bad sign indeed.

"Let's send the third squad," my right hand suggests and I sigh. The third squad dragons are my best warriors. But they had too many fights lately and deserve at least a week's rest before I send them to action again.

"No," I shake my head, "I'll check this area myself."

"My king!" Ryker uses an official tone, knowing pretty well how much I hate it, "That's not...wise."

"They call me the strongest king, not the wisest," I chuckle at that and can see that my advisor doesn't appreciate the joke.

“Then I will go with you,” he suggests, putting the scroll he was holding on the desk.

“No, you won’t,” I arch my brow, “I need you to stay in the capital and take care of official affairs. You know how much I hate to deal with all that. And I need a good stretch anyway.”

“You are the king,” Ryker sighs in frustration, “You need to realize that we can’t risk your life like that!”

“Risk my life?” I snort loudly, “You know very well the prophecy about me, Ryke. My end will come from a maiden with golden hair and no one else. So unless the Red Rogues have one, I am good. But as far as I remember – they don’t!”

“You don’t even believe in that prophecy yourself!” my friend rolls his eyes.

“Not really,” I admit with a grin. I had my fair share of golden-haired maidens back in my younger days until my parents made me swear to them to never go anywhere near golden hair. I did it out of respect to both of them. And also because I didn’t care much. I’ve never been the kind of man to fall head over heels for a girl... But all of that is not important now.

The Red Rogue Dragons are overstepping their boundaries! They wanted to live a separate life from us and that is absolutely fine by me. But attacking my territories is punishable! And that’s something I want them to remember.

“At least take someone!” Ryker does not give up. That’s one of the reasons he is who he is to me. No one dares to argue with me or even say a word against what I have already said. But Ryker dares. And that’s exactly what I need. Someone who is able to tell me the truth at all times regardless of the consequences.

“Fine!” I groan, knowing that he is right, “I’ll take a couple of new warriors. It’s time to test them in battle anyway.”

We fly out early at dawn. This is the time when according to reports the Red Rogues attack the villages in the hills. Three other dragons are by my side. I don’t even bother to remember their names. I’ll remember when they prove their worth to the Empire.

Nothing is going on for a while as we circle over the villages. Feeling bored, I make the decision to go closer to the borders. If they hide nearby, it must be somewhere inside the Thorny Cliffs area.

They appear out of nowhere, a red cloud moving our way. I can feel the tension in my three companions and feel a bit sorry for them. It's going to be bloodshed and so not what I expected to see here. There are too many reds. The reports told us that they usually attack in packs of threes or fours. But right now at least a couple of dozens flies my way.

However, red dragons are no match for the dark ones. I summon a storm, the gift of gods to me. Within dark clouds and covered by the sounds of thunder I can hide and reappear when I want. All my warriors have trained accordingly, so they don't hesitate and use all the tactics that I invented over the years.

And although the reds know what to expect, they still die one after another...

Nevertheless, I can tell that all this was a carefully crafted plan to kill me. As most reds are after me. Their fire doesn't bring much damage. But their claws and teeth do. They don't try to survive, they just throw themselves at me, tearing pieces of my flesh away... All they do is try to kill me, not thinking or caring how many of them will die in the process...

I break neck after neck, burn their bodies to the bones... I have to give it to them, they manage to do harm to me! One of the dragons that came with me falls down. Hope the kid is still alive and can restore in a couple of hours...

Two more rogues throw themselves at one of my wings, digging their claws in it and breaking it. With a mighty roar, I burn them to dust with my dark fire.

But what happens next is something I couldn't predict. One of the two remaining dark dragons by my side suddenly attacks me in the back. His claws dig deep. Reds are not too dangerous for me. But my own kind is hundreds of times worse! I decide to lay it on heavy this time and shuffle in the air, striking him right into the heart. The traitor is young and cannot be compared to my power. Whoever talked him into this, was sending the boy to die... Yet he did his job and my wing fails me. I start losing height and fall down, looking for a suitable place to land.

From the corner of my eyes, I see the third guard of mine still fighting the remaining two red dragons. The rogues have no chance and I think to myself that I need to find out the names of this one... When something bumps

painfully right into my wounded chest. I don't even know what that is at first... Then I feel something warm and nice smelling clenching to me... A scent of sea breeze and some kind of flower... A woman... But not a dragon... What the chaos is she doing here?!

I cover her with my healthy wing and make sure that the impact from the fall is on me. After all I can take it... I direct us into one of the openings in the nearby cliffs. As far as I remember a lot of them are hollow and it's best to be covered until I restore...

The woman fainted but I can still hear her heartbeat. Good. I carefully place her into the far corner and try to have a look. Light clothes, a helmet on her head, strange-looking white wings... mechanical...broken... She is definitely not one of the Red Rogues. Then who is she exactly?! And what is this strange girl doing here? Little angel in the middle of my dark lands...

The pain in my own wing lets me know that it's still injured heavily, and I close my eyes, trying to concentrate on restoring myself. A few hours and I will get both of us out of here. Then I'll find out who this nice smelling female is... and everything else I need to know...

I wake up because something tickles me. And swearings. Loads of those. This girl, and now I am sure that she is pretty young, has one dirty mouth on her. And also – she is tickling my eye... Only in a minute or two, I realize that she is trying to kick me. I snort at the audacity and open my eyes to have a better look at the insolent little creature who dared...

Her scream reminds me more of a shriek of a wounded bird. It's so loud that rocks start falling and I am afraid that the whole mountain will collapse on our heads if she doesn't shut up this very moment. Not thinking twice, I brush her under my wing and squeeze tight. Anything to make her stop. And luckily, she does. But when I let go of her, she crawls as far away from me as possible.

Even I have to admit that this is funny. Hasn't she seen a dragon before?

But then something out of the ordinary happens. The scared little creature in front of me lifts up her finger and light appears on its tip, illuminating all the space between us.

Every mage, good or bad, can create light in one form or another. But this one is different. It's pure white and... suffocating. And only mages born and bred in one place in the world can create something like that. The little angel with

broken wings that smells of sea breeze and jasmine is from the White Archipelago!