

The Selection: Bride Of The Dark Dragon Chapter 2 -

MIRA

The loud knock on the door of my room wakes me up. Looking at the clock I see that it's half past midnight and yet hurry to open as my mind is still a bit blurry.

"Hello...", Derek's eyes travel up and down before I realize that I am only wearing my silk lacy nightgown, "If that's how you are waiting for me then I definitely should visit you much more often!"

"My eyes are up here, you know", I quickly retreat to the back of the room and throw on a matching robe to cover myself, "Come in!"

My battle partner squeezes in and, gosh, the room is far too small for this tall and muscly guy. He scratches his brown locks and looks around the place with his green eyes, clearly puzzled at what he sees.

"Your chambers are smaller than I expected", he finally admits.

"Well, I am not a daughter of a marquis unlike some people", I roll my eyes.

"Neither am I", he chuckles, "Just a son of one..."

True, his father is a Marquis and about the third most influential person in our kingdom. Distant relative of the royal family even. But somehow Derek never behaved like the spoiled child of aristocrats he should be. Unlike others. Especially the one that cringes me the most...

"So..", my friend signs.

"So", I mimic him, even though I know it annoys the hell out of him.

"Mira, I've been doing research for the whole day and I think I have a plan now. But before that, I will ask you again. Are you sure you don't want to be a part of the Selection of the Dark Ones? You know, most girls are thrilled to get this kind of opportunity..."

"Well, Der, you know that I am not like most girls", I retort, "So, no. I am pretty sure I want nothing to do with the dark ones. "

“Ok then. I found a masking spell, it will help to hide your mark at least temporarily. I don’t think they will come for you in the next few days anyway. You know that usually, brides run to register themselves and come to the registration fully ready and all.”

“Yeah”, I snort, “I’ve heard.”

“So, we will help you hide your mark, and tomorrow right after the classes we will get you out of the Academy. Nort, Rick, and I will get you to your fiancé’s house in a day or...”

“Noooo!”, I stop him, “Not him!”

Well, we will have to have this awkward conversation after all judging by the very surprised expression on Dereck’s face.

“W-why?”, the guy gulps, “I thought you would want to go to him. He is the Sapphire Knight of the Empire and for sure would be able to protect you the best...”

I swallow, “Der, we are not that kind of couple...”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean that it was an arranged engagement”, I sign, “I was 15, he was already the great knight. Our fathers are friends and that’s the only reason why that happened in the first place. I’ve seen him just a bunch of times and we haven’t been talking much. He probably only knows my name, my age, and that I am a student here since it was a perfect delay for both of us. I am sure he has many women on the side and a perfect excuse not to get married to any of them. But I don’t think that he was going to get through with our wedding in the first place. And neither was I... I was going to propose to break our engagement before I graduate from here... And I am pretty sure he would have agreed... So, yeah, he is not the person I’d go for help to... If anything it would be a perfect excuse for him. His bride was selected by the Dark Ones and no one can disagree with that! His reputation would survive that for sure! If we come to him, he’ll probably alert everyone himself just to get rid of me...”

My battle partner doesn’t say anything, a mixture of emotion is on his face...

“You can go to my castle then!”, he says firmly after a while.

“Der, no! This is too dangerous!”, I close my eyes with my hands and feel him pull me into a h.ug.

“Mira, I promised to protect you. My castle has one of the most powerful shields in the kingdom, you would be safe there!”

“Oh, Der, I can’t put you under such risk! Think of your parents... and your little sister... If the Dark Ones decide to take me by force, they could hurt them. They would be in their right and wouldn’t care about anything or anyone else... You know how they are!”

“Then we’ll get another castle! I have enough money to buy a new one! And we’ll create a shield on our own! Nort, Rick, and I are graduating this year, we have all the knowledge we need! No one would find us!”

I hesitate, that might work... But it is still not perfect. And if we are found... I just don’t think I would be able to handle the consequences...

“It’s either that, or we are fighting the Dark Ones that come after you in a combat!”, Dereck adds, changing everything with his words. The Dark Ones are very powerful, even the person of the lowest rank can win over our best knights. We have checked that plenty of times already... No, I can’t let my friends to do something this stupid. For me, the best thing would be to escape together with them and then leave them and run away on my own. My future life would be in hiding, but at least I would be free...

“Alright,” I nod and receive another h.ug.

“Great!”, Der beams at me, “Then pack your things! We are leaving tomorrow!”

After a sleepless night, I put on my favourite dress and Academy’s uniform robe and drag myself to my first class of the day – Demonology. I glance at my bags – standing next to my bed and all ready for my escape... I can’t believe I even don’t get to graduate.

I walk into the auditorium and slide right next to my friend Tessa – she is from the faculty of Artefactorics, but we bonded nicely during our first year.

“You look like a ghost,” she notices calmly.

“I feel like one too”, I shrug my shoulders.

Professor Szwarten commands some students to help him hang images of today's subjects – some really ugly species of demons when our headmaster's assistant – lady Evelyn walks in. She scans the room with her indifferent face and her eyes stop at me.

"Adept Miradora Freyn!" her voice is screeching through my ears, "The headmaster wants to see you!"

Damn it! This does not sound good!

"I'll come straight after class", I smile my most polite smile. But it only makes the woman angry.

"Now, adept!", she almost screams, "Do not disobey the headmaster himself! He is waiting for you this very moment!"

Slowly, I gather my things and follow the annoying secretary to the office. We stop at the massive wooden doors and she knocks, announcing my arrival.

But I feel strange. Suddenly it's getting too hard to even breathe...

I don't even realize when Lady Evelyn pushes me into the room and I suddenly find myself in front of the headmaster's desk. And the first thing I notice is a man sitting in one of the guest's chairs. He doesn't turn to look at me and all I see is his black as night hair, slightly wavy and falling to his shoulders... The atmosphere is so heavy – it weighs on me drastically... And that's how I realize that the mysterious man is one of the Dark Lords...