

My Husband Cheated with My Bully (Book 2) Chapter 1

Pain

That's all Willow could feel right now was pain.

Willow ignored the constant buzzing of conversation and everyone trying to talk to her. She didn't want to talk to anyone or be a good host. Willow sat in the front pew next to her children staring at nothing.

Pain like she had never felt filled her as she stared at the American flag. The room was filled with people but Willow had never felt so alone. Her children were nestled against her on both sides.

People she had never met before had tried to give her comfort, but she just shied away. Her uncle had managed to usher them away from them. Willow didn't want that from

people she either didn't know or hadn't seen in years.

Those people had no interest in their life. She didn't want to be around them now or hear how they were sorry.

Willow had never been more happy to have her uncle James than she had been the last week. He and his girlfriend Julia had taken care of every detail. She told them what she wanted and they took care of it.

Willow stared at the pictures of her husband that were blown up around the room. One was of his days in the military when he graduated boot camp, one was from their wedding, three from when each of the kids was born, and the last was when he made detective. They were the most important days of his life, Tate always told her and his family how much these days were the most precious moments of his life. Our life. Now it's gone. Because Tate is gone. He was never coming back. Back to them. His family.

It was starting; people were taking their seats and then she heard it. Metallica's "Enter Sandman" came blasting through the church speakers. Tate loved Metallica, they rocked out to the band every time the metal band came on the radio. The kids would always headbang along with their father and she would sing along with the lyrics. Willow quirked a smile as James Hetfield's voice came out the speakers. It wasn't a joyous occasion today in comparison to every time they normally sang along.

Willow looked at her kids Nine year old Aspen was clinging to her father Knox for support for dear life. Seven year old Aiden was on her left crying and their baby five year Arianna was on her right. Ari was having the hardest time with their fathers death as she didn't understand why their father wasn't coming back. Willow didn't understand either.

Life never works the way you expect it to. Willow learned that lesson a long time ago. She looked at her ex-husband.

They were supposed to have their happily ever after, but he cheated on her with a woman who made her life miserable.

A curveball and if she wasn't thrown that curveball she wouldn't have met Tate and fell in love with him. She looked at the picture from her wedding day. Willow was having a hard time understanding this curveball.

Tate was dead. Murdered on the job. Protecting a child Everyone told her that she should feel proud. Willow didn't feel proud. She felt empty. Her kids were going to grow up without a father. What was there to be proud of?

Willow was only thirty one years old and already a widow.

Her and Tate only had nine years together. Nine years as a couple. Nine. It was supposed to be forever, they were supposed to grow old together. Raise their children together. He was gone. Laying dead in a coffin that she couldn't face herself to look at.

The song faded away until a rendition of "Hallelujah" came on that Tate had always liked. Willow braved a look at her husband and she saw his profile which cause tears in her eyes. He looked the same as when he left for work that day.

She turned to look at her son Aiden who was having a hard time with his fathers death. Aiden knew was death was and knew his father was in heaven. He was crying silently. She rubbed her sons shoulders.

The service had started and several people got up and spoke. Willow had there be a cap at five otherwise they would be here all day.

Johnson and Garcia talked about how he was a hero who saved their life's in the military.

Ryan got up and talked about how he was a dedicated police detective who gave his life to the city and to saving a child. Willow listened totally numb.

It was Isiah's and her Uncle James words that absolutely wrecked her.

“While Tate was a hero, who served his country honorably ! got to know him as a man. He was my neighbor for the past several years. I watched as he built his life with his family. He was a good father, a faithful and dedicated husband. Tate Walker was a good man. I was lucky to call him a friend, he would give the shirt of his back to help you and he helped me and my family many times throughout the years.” Isiah left the pulpit and Willow had a few tears running down her eyes. Her uncle James got up to talk and she knew it was going to be

bad. Her uncle always had a way with words.

“Tate Walker had a hard life and yes he was a hero, but that isn’t what he would want us to remember him for.” Her uncle paused and looked down at them in the front row.

Willow pulled her kids close and made sure to include Aspen. “He was a father and a husband first. He loved his family fiercely as it was all he wanted in his life. Tate was a man who went to all of his sons soccer games, his daughter ballet practices. His oldest daughters math competitions. He was there for every nightmare, every birthday party, and every milestone. That is who Tate Walker was a man we can all look up to. He will be missed by every life he touched, we can see that by the fact it is standing room only.” Willow didn’t even bother to look around and see how many people were here. She didn’t care. “Tate will especially be

missed by his wife and children.” James said emphatically and Willow had

broken down into silent sobs. She pulled her kids close as the service closed and people started to file out of the church.

Willow moved her kids into the limo her uncle hired. She couldn’t watch her husband being loaded up into the hearse. She just couldn’t. Knox rode with them to the cemetery. The ride was long and uncomfortable, which was made even worse when Knox took a phone call from his current wife. His wife hated her. Willow didn’t care as long as Roxy treated her daughter well. Roxy did until this past year and the two of them had another child of their own.

That changed everything, Knox came around less, the visits were less, and so were the phone calls. Aspen was devastated. Tate always made up for Knox’s absence.

Willow didn't know what she would do now. She had no idea how she was going to function in general without Tate. She needed him. He was her whole world. Well her kids were her whole world.

Willow was so lost in her thoughts that she didn't realize they had arrived at the cemetery. The door was opened and she was ushered to the front row of seats. Willow got her kids settled down in their seats and her uncle sat next to them. Her husband's casket was placed front and center.

The American flag still draped over it.

Willow sat in her chair with the kids surrounding her, the priest said his final words and then she heard it. "Taps" began to play and then the soldiers gave the orders and she squeezed the kids' arms to let them know it was coming. Three quick shots were fired from three different weapons were let off. Giving Tate his final salute goodbye and Willow closed her eyes as tears started to

pour down her eyes. When she opened her eyes the flag was being folded up and Willow shut her eyes again. She was steeling herself, bracing for what was coming next.

She felt a presence in front of her and Willow opened her eyes to see a soldier offering a flag to her.

“For your husbands service to his country.” Willow made no move to untangle her arms from her children who were crying, so the soldier set it gently on her lap. Willow stared at the flag as the priest closed out the service. He was gone. Tate was gone. He was never coming back to her.

She didn't want the damn flag, she wanted her husband and so Willow did the only thing she could possibly do; she cried. Willow sat there as everyone left as she watched her husband being lowered into the ground. She finally got up and turned around to see her uncle waiting for her. Willow left

her husband there at that place, leaving with only an American flag for compensation.

The after party was at her uncle James house for two reasons. Their home wasn't big enough and Willow couldn't have all of these people in her house.

There was so much food and people milling around her uncle's house Willow wanted to scream. So many people she never knew or met, Willow hated funerals they were all so fake.

Willow was walking around trying to get some food for her kids when she heard it.

"Aunt Willow!" A voice she knew all too well came barreling at her with no warning. Her fourteen year old nephew wrapped her in a barrel hug and Willow returned the hug from her now six foot tall nephew. She couldn't believe how grown up the boy was sometimes. Jax didn't say anything, which she appreciated, he just offered comfort.

Jax had taken a liking to the south and was a frequent visitor in their home during the summers. She missed those times and was sad to know those times wouldn't happen again.

Willow looked past Jackson to see Jim and Memphis standing behind him. She hadn't seen Memphis in over ten years. Minus the funeral of his mother, Willow didn't see him up close. She just came to pay her respects and left shortly afterwards. He looked the exact same, maybe a few more tattoos dotted his arms, a few wrinkles around the edge of his eyes. Overall the same man since she last saw him. He was still a devastatingly handsome man.

Fourteen year old Jackson continued to wrap her in a hug.

She hasn't seen him in a few months and she knew he was going through a rough time since his mom had left.

“Jackson,” Memphis’s voice pierced through the two of them. Jackson tried to pull away, but Willow kept him close.

“It’s okay.”

“Jackson!!” Arianna yelled came barreling up to Jackson who broke away from Willow and picked up Arianna with a smile on his face. She tried to smile at seeing the kids together, but there was no smiles today

Jim gave her a smile and a hug

“I’m sorry for your loss.” Willow nodded and walked away before anyone else could give her more condolences. It took her ten minutes to get her composure back and she walked back into the lions den hoping this would be over soon.

Willow finally managed to make it home after leaving the kids asleep in their rooms at her uncles house. She was thankful her uncle James offered to take the kids for the night. Willow just needed some time for

herself. She looked around the home she had shared with Tate for the past decade. The pictures all over the wall and she just lost it.

“Why? Why did you leave me?!” Willow hurled the vase that was sitting on the bedside stand and tossed it at a framed photo. It shattered and fell to the floor.

“I told you I didn’t want you to do this!” She screamed at the ghost of Tate, referring to him becoming a cop. Willow found something else, a toy of the kids and threw it into the tv. It partly shattered, wobbled but remained intact.

“I hate you!” Willow threw something else. “You left me here! All alone!” She ripped a picture of the wall. “I have to raise our children without you!” She picked up the next throwable thing and it landed in the wall making a dent and Willow just screamed out her rage.

Without warning she felt some one bear hug her from behind.

“Willow it’s okay,” Memphis’s soothing voice filled her ears.

She rebelled against him and started thrashing for all she was worth.

“No! It will never be okay! He left me here and hes never coming back! It will never be okay! I have to do this all alone!” Willow started screaming. “I’m all alone! I don’t know how to do this without him!!”

“Willow hush,” Memphis tried to soothe her but all she wanted to do was scream and cry at the injustice of it all.

“No! No! It’s not okay! I’m alone! He left me here alone! I’m so tired of being alone!”