

The Unwanted Bride Of Atticus Fawn Book 3: Chapter 11 - Tips

0 4 minutes read

~DANTE~

The screams erupted around me the second that I stepped into the ring. It helps cancel out the pain inside my heart. Images of Anya in front of me distract me for a second, but when my opponent takes his first swing at me, I'm back to defend myself.

I duck from his second attack and let him try again. My technique was to let them fight first, get them tired, and then hit them with most of my strength. So far, I've never met an opponent with whom I had to use every method I knew. None of them were stronger than me.

Maybe it was my emotional pain fueling my determination to win the matches. However, it wasn't even about winning; it was mostly about forgetting the grief inside of my heart, even if it was only for a few minutes.

I let my opponent get another punch at me; I ignore the pain in my jaw. I allowed him to hit me because I needed the pain.

After a few more punches, I finally begin my counterattack.

I can hear the applause get louder as I begin winning the fight, a mixture of males and females cheering me on.

I use the sound to bury the pain. I wish it lasted longer.

No one understood me. My family. Friends. Enemies.

No one could understand why I was still in love with Anya. They expected me to let go of her after her death. They expected me to forget about her.

I didn't know how to explain it to anyone. Anya never treated me well enough for me to love her this deeply. But loving her had nothing to do with what she did or didn't do. The love in my heart was true and pure.

I loved her with my whole heart. When she died, I lost a part of me. A portion of me that would never return.

Outsiders didn't know the truth about Anya. They didn't know the things she'd done.

I've done my best to keep it that way.

I didn't want her reputation to be ruined after her death. I knew my family disagreed with me, partly because this made Willow's life more difficult. Everyone saw her as a thief, someone who'd stolen her sister's mate.

Anya was famous, and many liked her despite the wrongs she's done. They liked her more after her death.

The bell rings suddenly, breaking me out of my thoughts. I hadn't even realized I'd won the fight already. The cheers are louder than before. The referee grabbed my arm and lifted it to signal that I was the winner. I look around the stadium and all I can see are excited faces. I'm gaining their trust after each fight that I won.

Jaguar shakes my hand as I exit the ring. "Always a pleasure watching you fight. Hope we get to see you again soon."

I nod, "I will be back before the end of the week."

Or maybe sooner. There's no telling what else I'll do that would bring me straight back here to fix it.

"Dante!" the woman next to me, screamed my name.

One of them walks over to me. She's dressed in a mini skirt and a white b*a. That was a casual outfit in here. She purposefully pushed herself closer so I could get a good view of her b.reasts.

My jaw clenches.

"Can I have your number?" She asks seductively.

"I'm married," I answer her.

She looks surprised, "I don't see a ring."

Even if she couldn't see a ring, I'm positive that she knew I was married. I haven't met anyone unaware of my marriage to Willow. However, it's never enough to stop women from approaching me. Even if I weren't married to Willow, I wouldn't be interested in them.

"Then will you take my number?" She asks desperately. "You can call me whenever you need someone to talk to or do other things."

"Let the man pass," Jaguar tells her. "This part of the ring is not for spectators."

She angrily folds her arms as she walks away.

“Thanks.”

“Anytime!” He grins. “I can’t have my best fighter harassed just after a fight. Call me if you ever need anything!”

I nod and walk away before someone else tries talking to me.

I didn’t want to go home, but there wasn’t anything else left for me to do here.

“Congratulations!” The receptionist shouts as I walk towards my jeep.

I wave at her before getting into the vehicle and driving away. I knew my family would freak out when they saw more bruises on my body, but I would be prepared for their reactions.

No matter what they said to me, I wouldn’t stop fighting. This was a part of me now. I wasn’t going to let go of it that easily.

It doesn’t take me long to reach home, and when I do, I stay in my Jeep for over an hour. I wanted to ensure Willow was asleep when I returned to the room.

I didn’t want to be asked any more questions. I didn’t have the answers she was seeking.

After finally convincing myself that it was time to leave the garage, I moved towards the house. I walk up the stairs and straight into my room.

The lights are off, and she’s in the bed with the sheets around her.

She must be asleep.

I breathe a sigh of relief. I quietly walked into the bathroom and got rid of my b****y clothes. After taking a shower, I changed into shorts and a T-shirt.

I was still trying my hardest to be as quiet as possible. I didn’t want to do anything to wake her.

However, the second I step out of the bathroom, the lights are on, and she’s standing right before me.

Ah fvck.

Why was she still waking? She should have been asleep.

Her eyes widen when she spots the bruises on my face.

“You did it again.” She whispers in horror.

My hand tightened into a fist.

“Why are you waking at this time, Willow?”

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0 5 minutes read

~Willow~

He had bruises on his face again. These were fresh bruises. It meant that he'd only just gotten them.

“Why did you do this to yourself?” I demand from him. “Was kissing me so bad that you must hurt yourself to forget about it?”

His jaw clenches, and the muscles in his arms pulse almost angrily, “why are you still awake?”

He ignored my question about kissing me. I couldn't believe this. Dante must truly hate being married to me.

It all made sense now. Those fights were helping him stay married to me. It was the only thing that kept him sane.

He looks over his shoulder when I don't respond to his question.

I don't say anything as I walk out of the room. He doesn't follow me either, not that I was expecting him to.

I walk toward the medicine cabinet. Autumn told me about it. She mentioned that it might be a good idea to help take care of Dante's wounds whenever he returned home like this.

I knew that Dante was protecting me only because of Anya, but I wanted to protect him in return still.

I grab one of the kits and walk up the stairs back to his room. He doesn't even look up at the door when I return.

He is lying on his tummy with his face turned to the side. His eyes are closed, and he's breathing heavily. He must be tired from the fight.

I quietly walked over to his side and sat on the edge of the bed. His entire body tensed when he realized how close I was to him.

"What are you doing?" He asks without opening his eyes.

"Taking care of my husband," I answer without a second thought.

His jaw clenches at hearing me refer to him as my husband. Was it, not the truth? I don't understand why that should bother him.

"I don't need you to take care of me." He tells me.

I ignore him and dab the cotton on the medicine. Without waiting for his permission, I press the soaked cotton against the bruise on his forehead.

He winced at the pain, and I leaned down to blow on it. I wanted to make it better. I knew he would heal eventually, but right now, he was still in pain.

"I told you I was okay." He snaps angrily.

"And I told you I'm going to care for you, just like you do for me." I insist.

He doesn't seem happy with my response, but he doesn't stop me again.

"Turn over," I order him.

He slowly turned around so that he was facing me.

"Can you remove your shirt?" I ask him.

He frowns, "why?"

"Because I can see a bruise on your chest," I answer him.

His tongue is against his cheek as he lifts the shirt off his body.

I gasped when I saw the deep wound in his chest.

"Does pain make everything better for you?" I demand.

"I don't want to answer any of your questions." He growls. "If you must ask me questions, you can leave the medicine here; I'll put it myself."

I press my lips tightly together. Why wasn't he willing to get help? Why was he purposefully putting himself in situations to get hurt?

I was also in pain after losing my sister and the only family I had left, but I'm not letting it affect me the way that it's doing to him. I share his pain. If he'd open up to me, maybe we could help each other.

I sigh and press the cotton against the wound on his chest. His forehead creased, and I could sense how much pain he was in.

I leaned forward and lightly blew on his chest.

I gasp when he grabs my hand.

I look up at him, and his eyes are dangerously dark.

"That's enough."

"But I'm not finished." I try to disagree.

"It will heal." He cuts me off. "Thank you."

Why was he so cold towards me? He didn't treat me horribly, but he didn't treat me like I was his wife either.

I thought things were finally changing between us when he moved me to his room, but not much had changed. Everything was still the same. We were still strangers living in the same house. I knew more about Clarissa and Autumn than I knew about Dante.

He's secretive about his past and present. He doesn't even try to let me in.

What kind of marriage was this?

I angrily grabbed the medicine kit and dropped it on the desk beside me.

Then I walk over to my side of the bed and bury myself under the sheets.

I hug them closer to me. It wasn't like Dante would willingly embrace me; these sheets were all I had to keep me warm on days like this. I didn't even have my sister any longer. She would often take me in her arms and hold me close to her. She was no longer here to do that for me.

I don't think Anya knew what she was doing when she asked Dante to marry me. She was desperate to save me, but in doing so, she made my life miserable.

Being in a loveless marriage was not an easy thing to deal with daily, especially when feelings were utterly one-sided.

I closed my eyes and fvckngd myself to go to sleep. It was the one time that I could forget about all of my problems. Of course, there were days that I dreamt of Dante. I hoped that tonight wouldn't be one of those days. I didn't want to dream of a man that could never give me his heart, even if he was my husband.

Dante was the last thing on my mind before I finally fell asleep.

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I can feel the sunlight on my face, begging me to wake up and face another day. I stretched and felt a hand over my chest.

I froze at the contact.

I slowly opened my eyes to find Dante's arm on top of me. What was it doing there? I could hear his uneven breathing. He was definitely in a deep sleep.

I slightly turn my face and see his lips only inches away from mine. I can't look away even if I wanted to.

I can't stop myself as I lift my hand to trace his bottom lip with my finger lightly.

It's just as soft as I remembered. A part of me, a big part, wants to press my lips against them.

I gasped when his eyes flashed open without any warning. I can't move. Not even an inch.

Dante is staring at me, and my finger is still on his lip.

This isn't happening to me!

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04 minutes read

~WILLOW~

He doesn't say anything. All he does is watch me like I was a ticking time bomb. Did I make him that uncomfortable?

I still can't move my finger. I'm numb after being caught.

"What are you doing?" he finally asks, breaking the silence.

I flushed under his piercing gaze, "I was just about to wake you." I lie. "Your arm, it's um—"

Right above my breast. I don't finish my sentence. When he realizes what I'm trying to say, he moves his arm from on top of me.

"I'm sorry," he apologizes. "I'm not used to having company in my bed. It may take some time for me to get accustomed to it. If you want, I can separate us with some pillows or even get another bed for the room."

Of course, he would suggest something like this just because he'd touched me in his sleep.

"It's okay," I assure him. "It doesn't bother me."

He nods and walks into the bathroom. I bury my head against the pillow.

While he's showering, I pull my diary out from under the mattress.

My dearest husband,

You kissed me for the first time. You've done the one thing I've been dreaming about since I married you. However, I felt hurt when you said my sister's name. You were thinking of her the entire time. I do not blame you; I know you love her, and I know our marriage was fucking onto you. Still, my heart doesn't know how to forget your lips on mine. And I don't think it's possible to ever forget.

I quickly placed it back under the mattress when I heard the shower turn off.

It was my turn to get dressed for the academy. I pass him as soon as he's getting out. I held my breath as his scent hit my nose. It's comforting and intoxicating all at once.

I cover my mouth and nose, trying to cancel it out.

"Are you sick?" Dante asks me, noticing my strange actions.

I shook my head. I don't wait for him to ask any more questions as I shut the bathroom door. I quickly showered and got out a few minutes later.

When I walk outside, Dante is already dressed while I'm still in my towel.

He looked up at my entrance, and his eyes immediately turned a darker shade. I didn't think it was possible for eyes as bright as his to get that much darker during the day.

I cleared my throat and walked over to the closet. It took me a while to remember that Autumn and Clarissa had removed my old clothes. These were all outfits chosen by them.

I take leather pants out and match them with a white crop top.

"I'll leave you to get dressed," Dante informs me. "I'll be waiting in the jeep."

I don't say anything as I watch him leave. When alone, I drop the towel onto the ground and quickly get dressed.

When I walked down the stairs, I could hear someone whistling. When I look to my left, it's Clarissa. Both she and Autumn are happy to see my outfit.

"I knew it would fit you amazing!" Autumn exclaims. "Let's see what those awful girls at the academy have to say now."

They've had plenty to say about my outfits in the past. They claimed that Anya had a much better style than I did.

"We don't care about their opinion." Clarissa snapped. "What did Dante say when he saw this on you?"

"He hasn't seen it," I answer her. "He's already in his vehicle."

"Well, let's get you outside," Autumn says as she hooks her arm in mine.

Dante doesn't even look up at me when I step into the jeep. His eyes are on his phone. After I buckle myself in, he starts the Jeep and pulls out of the garage.

That was disappointing.

Neither of us says a word for the entire drive to the academy. When we arrived, I silently exited and reunited with Clarissa and Autumn. They'd arrived at the same time as us.

"Did he have anything to say about your outfit?" Autumn asks me.

I shook my head, "No. He didn't even look at me, not once."

Clarissa looks annoyed, "I can't believe him. You look amazing. Look at the many guys already staring at you."

Clarissa looks annoyed, "I can't believe him. You look amazing. Look at the many guys already staring at you."

I followed her gaze and realized that she was right.

Men weren't the only ones staring at me; so were the girls.

"I think I know what's going on," Autumn says suddenly. "Isn't today their anniversary?"

"What?" I ask, surprised.

"You're right," Clarissa whispers. "It's on this day that Dante asked Anya to be his girlfriend. It's the same for Damon and Atticus."

Oh.

I didn't know how to feel about this.

"He's going to be in a worse mood today." Autumn sighs. "I think it's best to avoid him for the rest of the day."

She was right. He was already in a bad mood because of last night. He must hate himself for kissing me in his sleep.

"Look who's finally made it," Sharon says as we bounce into her.

"What does she want?" Clarissa mumbles.

"We were waiting for you." She announces. "Everyone has prepared a surprise for you inside."

What could she be talking about? A surprise? I'm sure it wouldn't be a good one.

"We have nothing to say to you, Sharon." Clarissa snaps as we pass her.

"Of course, the girl who slept with her brother will have nothing to say to me." She retorts.

Clarissa stiffens, and Autumn grabs her arm to stop her from doing anything. I touched her other arm; I didn't want to see Clarissa get in trouble because of that woman.

We finally succeeded in calming Clarissa down and walking into the school. However, the second we entered the hall, I understood what Sharon meant.

“What the hell is this?” Clarissa demands.

On both sides of the walls were pictures of Anya and Dante kissing. There were hundreds of flyers everywhere, wishing them a happy anniversary.

I felt a sharp pain my chest.

How could people be this cruel?

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0 4 minutes read

~WILLOW~

They were everywhere. My sister and my husband. They must have taken a million pictures together for there to be this many. How many times did he kiss her? How many times have they done even more?

My stomach churned at just the thought of it.

Why would anyone choose to play such a foolish prank on us? I was still heartbroken from Anya's death. None of these people actually loved her, yet they seemed to believe otherwise. Rather than comfort me after losing my sister, these people preferred to scar me emotionally.

I was still trying to gain the affection of Dante. With all of these pictures, his emotion for Anya would only resurface.

“We need to get these pictures down,” Autumn tells Clarissa. “Immediately.”

They were thinking the same thing that I was. However, I knew nothing could get rid of those pictures fast enough. Dante was only a few feet away from us.

“I wish I could have burnt them to the ground.” Clarissa hissed. “However, I have no choice but to hide my power.”

When Dante finally looks up from his phone, he sees me staring at him wide-eyed.

He looks confused at first until his eyes fall on the pictures right before him. I watch as realization quickly dampens his mood.

His lips parted, and his forehead creased. I watch as the phone from his hand drops onto the ground.

"I'm so sorry, Dante." Autumn apologizes. "I don't know who's responsible for this, but we will get rid of every one of these pictures."

Dante looks at her then, "Get rid of them? They are pictures of Anya. I don't want you to destroy them. Take them down but don't destroy them. You can give them to me."

I try not to take his words to heart. I tried my best; however, I failed miserably.

Was he planning on staring at those pictures every chance that he got? The fact that he didn't want Autumn to destroy them and instead give them to him told me all that I needed to know.

I watch with horror as he takes one of the pictures, walking past me.

I see the smirks on everyone's faces. It's almost like they enjoyed hurting me.

"Don't let them know how much it's hurting you," Clarissa whispers. "Don't give them the satisfaction that their plan has worked. Instead, lift your head and keep on fighting back. You have us by your side, and I promise Dante will soon be on your side as well. All he needs is some time to heal."

I truly wanted to believe her, but I didn't think that it was possible for Dante to ever heal from Anya's death. She was his true love, even if she didn't see it that way.

Seeing my face every day must make everything much more difficult for him.

"What the hell is all of this?" Atticus demands as he takes a look around us. He'd just entered.

"Someone decided to play a little prank on Willow," Autumn answers. "A sick, twisted joke."

Atticus narrows his eyes, "I'll get to the bottom of this."

Clarissa and Autumn take both of my arms and walk with me to class.

"Good morning, class," the professor greets everyone just after we've taken our seats. "Today, we're discussing ideas for our new fundraiser. It's almost that time when we accept someone that can't afford to attend this academy. This fundraiser will go towards that scholarship just like it always does."

I was learning new things about the academy every day.

I looked around the room for Dante; he wasn't there. Did he lock himself in somewhere with that picture of Anya? I tried to get images of that thought out of my head.

"We want fresh new ideas this year." The professor announces. "Whoever has one can raise their hands, and I'll give you a chance to speak."

I was not used to things like these and decided not to take part. Everyone already hated me; I didn't want to give them more reasons to do so.

"We can sell jackets for the event." Someone offers, and the professor seems to like the idea. "My father is a designer. He can help us out."

"Anyone else?"

"What about a kissing booth?" Sharon offers. "But only with guys. Every guy from our class must take part in it. However, no one can know who they're kissing until they enter the booth. It will be private. With no one to make anyone feel uncomfortable."

She looked at me when she said the last line.

"That's not a good idea." Autumn disagrees. "The guys should have a choice. They shouldn't be fucking to take part in this."

I knew that she and Clarissa would be pissed if Damon and Atticus were fucking to kiss other women because of Sharon's idea.

"I understand your concern Autumn but Sharon has a good idea. Our aim for the fundraiser is to make just enough to cover the scholarship. It will allow someone to improve their life, someone who deserves it."

Autumn doesn't say anything at that. Atticus and Damon, along with Dante, were not in class. I'm not sure where they were. I'm sure if Atticus and Damon were here, they would also protest. Dante, on the other hand, I'm not sure what his reaction would have been like. He's hard to read at times.

The thought of Dante kissing another woman in the kissing booth bothered me. However, I knew that it was for a good cause. It's not like I had a say in any of this.

Dante would never know that I had feelings for him. If he thought that I would be okay with this kissing booth idea, he would go along with it.

"I swear girls from this academy would use any excuse to kiss already-taken guys." Clarissa mumbles. "Can't I just burn their hair just once?"

Autumn sighs, "As much as I would love to see that, you know that you can't reveal the truth to anyone. People are keeping an eye on us. We can't give them any reason to suspect you."

"I guess we must find a way to live with this," Clarissa says as she crosses her hand over her chest angrily.

I felt the same as she did, but I tried to bury those feelings.

I had to find a way to get rid of them before I got hurt. I had to. If I kept these feelings in my heart, I would surely get my heart broken soon.

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0 4 minutes read

~DANTE~

"A kissing booth?" I ask Damon, surprised at what I'd just learned.

Why on earth did they come up with that idea? That sounds like trouble.

"It's not a booth," Damon answers me. "It's a private room where any girl could come in and make out with guys from the academy."

"And you're telling me there's no way we could get out of this?" I demand. "There should be a f*g rule that excludes married men, at least."

"If there was a rule like that, what the hell am I supposed to do?" Damon demands. "I'm not married to Clarissa. Not yet."

This was the first discussion we'd had like this in a while. It felt good but still strained.

"Does the girl have a say on who she's getting to kiss?" I ask him.

He shook his head, "she doesn't know. It's a surprise. To make things fair, they won't know until they enter the room."

"Autumn and Clarissa are probably losing their f*g minds," I mutter.

"And what about Willow?" Atticus asks as he sneaks up behind us.

"Fvck." I growl. "Why do you always show up in time to be a pain in my a*s?"

He shrugs, "Someone needs to be here to guide you along the right path."

I ignore him, "why did you mention Willow?" I ask. "What about her?"

He quirks a brow, "Don't you think that she would also be upset that you'll be kissing another woman?"

I frown, "Autumn is in love with you. With Willow, it's different; she doesn't love me. It wouldn't affect her as badly. Not that I even want to kiss anyone. I'd rather find a way to get out of it."

The word kiss reminds me of the one I shared with Willow in bed.

I inwardly groaned at the reminder. What was so special about that kiss? Why can't I forget it? I was half asleep when that kiss happened. It shouldn't be this hard to forget about it.

"She's still your wife." Atticus says suddenly as he taps my shoulder, "I've made similar mistakes in the past. I don't want to see you doing the same."

My jaw clenches. He'd made mistakes; I'm aware of that. However, he was never actually in love with Anya.

I was the only one that loved her; even Damon didn't love her. They both had women that they truly loved, and both of them had their mates.

I was not the same. Anya must have been my mate. I may never know the truth, the spell died with her, and with her death, I couldn't tell genuinely. However, the pain I felt may be all I needed to confirm that Anya was my mate. But if she was, wouldn't she have had some feelings for me as well? Or did she bury those feelings for her revenge on my family?

"I'm sure we can find a way to get out of this kissing booth nonsense," Atticus tells us.

"I don't mind it at all," Griffin announces. "I think it might be fun."

Of course, he would think that way. He wasn't in love with anyone, as far as we all knew.

"If you want to take part, you can," Atticus tells him. "However, for the three of us, we need to find a way to make sure that the only woman kissing us is the one that we love."

I think he meant to say the two of them. The woman I love is no longer here with us.

"All we need is to find a way to let Autumn know who's entering the room," Atticus says. "She can warn Clarissa and Willow so they don't kiss random strangers."

I stiffen at the thought of Willow kissing a stranger. I know that it shouldn't bother me, but it did. It bothers me because I know Anya wouldn't want her sister kissing any strange man.

That's the only reason I could think of. For that reason, I had to find a way to ensure that she didn't take part in this.

We had no choice but to take part, but there wasn't a rule that fucking the women to participate.

"I'm heading to my room," I tell my brothers.

"Already?" Atticus asks. "I thought we were going to drink some beers and play some game?"

I shook my head, "I'm exhausted. What those assholes did today still has me f*g pissed."

"You mean the pictures with you and Anya?" Atticus asks. "I think a girl was responsible for that. Or possibly more than one girl. They're crushing on you and think there's a chance to have you since Anya is gone."

"That's insane," I growl. "I'm married."

"You don't even have a wedding ring." Atticus points out.

I swallow. I got a ring for Willow, but I never thought about getting one for myself. And I wasn't planning on doing it either. I didn't need a constant reminder that I was married to Anya's younger sister.

"I'll see you guys in the morning." I dismiss them.

I climbed the stairs two at a time, moving quickly toward my room.

I knew Willow was already in bed. I hadn't seen her since I returned home. When I opened the door, I felt relief flood my body when I saw her tucked under my sheets. I don't know why I felt so relieved to see her in my room, lying in my bed. It's almost like I was looking forward to seeing her.

I shook that thought out of my head.

She looks up at me when I close the door and walk over to my side of the bed.

I remove my watch and place it on the bedside table.

"There's something I want to talk to you about," I say suddenly before I can talk some sense into myself.

"What's that?" She asks nervously.

Did I make her nervous?

"It's about the kissing booth." I blurt out. "Can you not take part in it?"