

The Unwanted Bride Of Atticus Fawn Book 3: Chapter 24 - Tips

~WILLOW~

My hands are over my ear. I couldn't listen to any more of this. I was right; he did hate me.

How could someone being perfect be a problem? And I was far from perfect. Why did he even think that I was perfect? What did I ever do to make him think that way about me?

"You're nothing like Anya, and maybe that's the problem, Willow." He whispers more to himself than me.

It was the first time I regretted asking him a question. I wasn't prepared for a response such as this one. I was not ready for the uncomfortable sensation in my heart.

"I asked you to stop." I snap.

He tries to take my hand and I pull away from him.

"Let me help you out of the jeep." He offers.

I narrow my eyes. "I don't need your help, Dante."

"Let me help you, Willow." He growls.

"I'm tired of you doing things for me because my sister asked you to do it!" I hiss. "If you're only going to help me because of her, don't. I can take care of myself. I may look helpless, but I can assure you that I am not. So please, move aside so that I can pass."

His eyes are dark as he watches me for a few more seconds. The muscle in his jaw ticks, but he finally does as I ask.

I fought back the tears as I walked away from him. Why was I stuck in this loveless marriage? Why couldn't Dante at least try to open his heart to me? This marriage had already joined us; why couldn't we work together to make it work?

I couldn't believe that he still had a picture of my sister in his wallet. I was grateful he loved her so much, but we were married now. Wasn't that disrespectful towards me?

If word got out that he still had a picture of my sister in his wallet, the rumors about our marriage would spread even more.

Why did he agree to marry me if he knew the only person he could ever love was Anya?

He should have found a way to stop the wedding instead of ruining our lives. A part of me wanted to stay married to him; it was a big part of me. But the part of me that was hurting right now felt like it would be better if we stayed apart.

"Willow!" Autumn shouts my name before I can run up the stairs.

I turn to look at her, and she immediately realizes that something is wrong.

"Are you okay?" she demands. "Do you still feel unwell?"

I bit my lip and tried not to cry. "I don't feel good at all. Emotionally. My heart hurts."

Her eyes widen. "Is it Anya? Do you miss your sister?"

I shook my head. I did miss her, but to my horror, this pain in my chest was for a completely different reason.

"Then what's wrong?" she demands.

"Dante said some words that hurt me," I confess.

She looks shocked and slowly guides me into the family room. When she has me seated, she gives me her full attention, "What did he say?"

"I asked him if I did anything wrong for him to react so badly every time he got a little closer to me. After spending time with me, he always goes to that fighting ring and gets beaten up. I know that our marriage is doing this to him."

“Don’t say that,” Autumn whispers. “Dante is this way because he’s grieving. I’m sure you’re not the reason for any of this.”

“He dislikes me because of how perfect I am.” I disagree. “That’s what he told me. He said that because I’m not flawed, he cannot find a single reason to end our marriage. He’s upset because he’s trapped in our marriage, and there is nothing he can do about it.”

Autumn looks appalled by this new information.

“Dante said this to you?” she asks. I can see the disbelief in her eyes.

I nod.

She squeezes my hand. “I don’t think he meant it, Willow. I think he’s just frustrated with himself. I think he’s just trying to push you away because he’s scared that he might be developing feelings for you.”

I wish that were the case, but I knew that the only person Dante had feelings for was Anya.

“I think that you should know what happened after you fainted.” She says suddenly. “I know you think that Dante doesn’t care for you. I know you believe that he only protects you because of Anya. However, what I saw today proved that he doesn’t just care for you because of your sister.”

“I don’t understand what you’re saying,” I admit. “Why do you think otherwise?”

“When Dante saw you faint, he lost all control. We don’t know why he wanted to lose the match, to begin with, but the second he saw you lose consciousness, none of that mattered to him. He was able to win that match within seconds just so that he could get to you.”

“But that could mean he was trying to protect me because of Anya. That’s what he promised her. To protect me. That was all he was doing. Everything he does is because she asked him to do it.” I try to show her.

“I can see why you would think that way, but if it were because of Anya, he wouldn’t have told the security to let go of his wife.” She informs me.

My lips part in surprise. She must have misheard him.

“Did he say that?” I ask. “Are you sure that’s what he said?”

She nods. “I wouldn’t tell you if I wasn’t positive that’s what he said to the security. I believe that even Dante doesn’t realize what he truly feels. I do believe that he loved Anya, but I also believe that he has feelings for you that have nothing to do with your sister.”

Autumn’s words have managed to give me some hope. Maybe there was a chance to save my marriage.