

The Unwanted Bride Of Atticus Fawn Book 3: Chapter 37 - Tips

~WILLOW~

When Dante returns, he's dressed in a white unbuttoned shirt and he looks handsome as ever.

"Now that our son is here and we are on our way to our destination, we have a little activity. We've hired the best romantic painter in the world and he's going to paint this lovely couple for us today." Dante's father announces.

Did I hear them correctly? Was someone going to paint us?

"Sit on top of Dante." His mother tells me.

I'm nervous to comply, but when I see the many eyes on us, I do as she says. Dante's body is immovable as stone under mine.

"Put your arms around his neck." The painter orders me. I follow his instructions without saying a word.

"Put one hand around her waist." He orders Dante. He also follows his instructions without interrupting him.

It felt weird with everyone staring at us, but it felt good to be in his arms again, even if it was just for a painting.

Dante's parents were determined to do everything in their power to make everyone believe that we were in love; they wanted the word to spread that we were in a happy marriage.

Now that I was sitting on his lap, I felt this strange feeling in my chest, like I'd done this before.

But when?

Because of our pose, I'm already looking into Dante's eyes, and he's also gazing into mine. I want to ask him if anything happened in the jeep after I got drunk, but we're not allowed to move or speak.

How much longer must we stay this way? I try not to blush under Dante's piercing gaze but it was hard.

'Please repeat it, Dante. Tell me that I'm your wife. I want to hear you say it. Please.'

I freeze. That memory. It was all slowly coming back to me.

Why now? Why in front of everyone while someone painted us?

Everything that happened that night was rushing back to me.

I could feel all the blood draining from my face.

Dante's hand on my breast. Begging him to call me his wife, asking him to touch me, and straddling him while driving.

I gasp and bury my face against his neck in embarrassment. I could hear the whispers again, but I was too embarrassed to show my face or look into his eyes.

What the hell was wrong with me? I was never drinking again!

The intoxicated side of me did embarrassing things.

This was what Dante was asking me yesterday morning. He was referring to everything that happened in the jeep. That's why he looked so confused when I mentioned what Sharon had said. He wasn't speaking about that incident; he was talking about what I'd done while drunk.

Dante gently touches my back, and I know he's shocked at my sudden weird behavior.

"What's wrong?" He asks me gently. "Is your body becoming cold again? Do we need to call a doctor?"

I wish it were. That would be less embarrassing than what I was experiencing right now.

I don't answer him. I don't know how even to bring up the things I'd done in a conversation.

I shivered as both his hands wrapped around me protectively. He stands with me still in his arms and, without saying anything to anyone, walks with me back to one of the rooms in the yacht.

Even after we're safely locked inside, I still don't move my face from his neck.

"Are you going to tell me what's wrong, Willow?" He asks again. "I need to know. That's the only way I can help you."

"I'm sorry." I finally force myself to say.

He stops moving when he hears me.

"You're sorry?" He asks for confirmation. "For what exactly?"

I don't answer him. I'm too embarrassed to say anything else.

He gently moves my legs from around his waist and puts me to sit down on the edge of the bed. He now has a clear view of my face, but I'm refusing to look him directly in his eyes.

"I'm the one that should be apologizing for showing up so late tonight." He says. "Why are you the one apologizing when you've done nothing wrong?"

My cheeks turn red at his question. How could he pretend like nothing had happened? He remembered all along. Was he never going to tell me about the things I'd done?

"I remember." I finally answer him.

He looks confused, but I see when he realizes what I'm trying to say.

His brow raises slightly, "You remember what happened after we left the pool party?"

I slowly nod and hide my face behind the palm of my hands.

He's quiet as he waits for me to say something. I can't. Not with the way I felt right now.

I made Dante touch my breasts! I grabbed his hand and placed it over them! I asked him to touch me.

I kept wishing it was all just some nightmare, but I knew it was true; I knew it did happen.

“Willow,” he whispers. His voice is soft, making me feel all kinds of things in my stomach. It surprised me that a man who enjoyed fighting that much could have a gentle side like this.

I slowly lift my gaze to look at him.

“You don’t need to apologize for what happened.” He tells me. “I should apologize.”

I frown, “you didn’t do anything wrong. I was the one who acted. . .”

I can’t say it.

“You had plenty of drinks. I know that wasn’t what you truly wanted.” He assured me.

He’s wrong, though. That’s exactly what I wanted, but I never wanted it to happen that way. I wanted to be aware of everything, and I wanted him to be the one to do it of his own free will. I didn’t want to have to beg him to call me his wife.

I wished he would touch me on his own without my interference.

That night, he’d also done something else. He’d beat up those men who were commenting on my body.

Why would he do that for me? He told me that he wouldn’t let another man disrespect his wife in front of him.

I placed a hand over my chest at the intense emotions I felt there.

What was this feeling? Why was I so giddy with happiness from that memory?

Dante follows the movement of my hand, and his eyes zero in on my breasts. His face gets a little flushed, and he moves away from me.

There is a knock on the door just then. When Dante unlocks it, his mother walks in.

“We’ve arrived. It’s time.” She announces.

We're here?

Already?