

HIDE AND SEEK  
(Men of Honor Book, 2)  
Rhonda Lott

CHAPTER ONE  
DAWN

Dawn Collins inhaled the sweet aroma of Peruvian lilies. They were a beautiful violet flower with flecks of black throughout its petals. The lilies were deceptive in their delicate appearance, but Dawn knew they were hearty and would last well into the frost of winter. *Yeah, but will you?* She asked herself.

Dawn leaned back in a private little alcove, taking in the array of vibrant colors and pleasing fragrances of the Atlanta Botanical Garden. Sitting on an intricately designed black iron bench with a high back, Dawn made sure to keep her body as far back as she could, avoiding the eyes of the people strolling around enjoying the garden.

It was late November in Georgia and the weather was turning cooler, however, people still strolled down the brightly colored paths. One person in particular rounded the corner and Dawn dropped her head, scrunching back into the alcove's bench until her back felt the pinch of the cold iron biting into it.

"Big Idiot." Dawn muttered to herself. Kane McAdams, all six foot two of him stomped down the path like some dark warrior in search of something to destroy or kill. He had the body of a linebacker with the face of an angel, a clenched jaw, scowling angel.

"You look lovely here among the blooms." He said with a sneer. "A perfect final resting place. Tell me now, do you have a death wish woman?" Kane came to stand over her, chest heaving, eyes narrowing into slate blue slits.

Yep, he was pissed. She knew once he found out she was gone from the condo, he would freak out. Dawn simply shrugged her shoulders, holding his blazing blue stare. Kane was an impressive man, big and heavily muscled, well big and beautiful all over.

"No, no death wish. Asshole." Dawn said.

"There she is, the sweet young lady we know and love. Do you kiss your mama with that dirty mouth?"

"I wouldn't kiss my mama with your mouth." She rolled her eyes, childish she knew, but she couldn't seem to help herself.

Kane bent forward. "Why did you leave the condo? You were protected there. Here, you're out in the open. What's so important to make you take such a risk as this?"

A mud encrusted boot was thrust upon her bench, thermal encased arms gripped the back of it. Dawn stiffened, he was so close she could smell the clean fresh scent of him. Long dark brown hair, so dark it was almost black, was tied back off his face. Oh lord, what a face. The combination of slate blue eyes with flakes of violet in the iris, a slightly crooked nose that had obviously been broken at some point, with full lickable lips made Kane handsome beyond compare.

"Dawn answer the question." Kane demanded.

"I don't answer to you." Dawn tucked her dark hair behind her ears, then not so politely shoved his foot off the bench with her knee.

"Our lives have been threatened. Esteban Blanco wants revenge for the death of his son. He doesn't care that his son brought it on himself by kidnapping you and Ann, or that I killed the bastard because he

was about to kill my brother. He will send everyone he's got after us, and you come to a public garden of all places."

Dawn sighed deeply, turned her head to stare past him.

"Shit girl, I don't get you."

"You don't have to get me." Dawn snapped back.

Why didn't they understand? She was tired. After two long years on the run, she was plain tired and needed a break from worrying when the next life threatening event was going to happen. She needed to get away to a place that reminded her of happier times.

"Oh, I could shake you sometimes." Kane said through clenched teeth.

Dawn kept her gaze fixed on the flowers. The breeze lifted her hair, she closed her eyes and listened to the whisper of the wind. She could almost hear her father's voice calling to her on the softly flowing breeze.

"Dawn, we are family, kinda." He shrugged. "I will keep us both alive. Can you trust me enough to do that?" Kane asked.

Dawn stood up, slowly turning to face Kane.

"I trust no man. I never will." She brushed past him towards the entrance. Kane was her self-appointed protector, but Dawn would never let her guard down. She knew men were deceivers. No way in hell would she allow herself to trust Kane. No way in hell.

#### KANE

The woman was a cold hearted, frustrating, filthy mouth, pain in the ass. Kane thought watching the sway of her gorgeous hips as she walked away. Her body was perfection, generous breast, tiny waist, and long shapely legs. Kane loved her caramel skin tone, she got from her African American dad and those slightly tilted brown eyes of hers, a gift from her Asian mother. Dawn reminded him of these exotic flowers at the gardens. She was so damn beautiful it was almost unreal, every man's wet dream come true. The perfect woman.

Until she opened her mouth.

"Crazy woman." Kane murmured, then sprinted off to catch her. "Dawn slow down, girl."

"No, You X-games poser. Catch up." She threw over her shoulder.

Kane caught her arm and spun her around.

"What the fuck did I ever do to make you hate me so much?" He asked.

"You were born with a dick." She stated flatly, turned and continued walking.

Kane ran a hand down his face. He looked heavenward for divine intervention. Nothing.

"I didn't think so." He said to himself. Kane caught up to Dawn again in the parking lot.

"How did you know where to find me anyway?"

"Alex thought you might be here."

"She would know. When we were kids my dad would take us to a garden similar to this in Miami." She focused on the cars behind him, avoiding his eyes. "He was ex-army also, big and intimidating. He loved to garden and knew every flower by name."

"Where is he now, your dad?" Kane asked.

Dawn wrapped her arms around her middle, closing her eyes for a second. "He's dead, thank God." She said.

"What the hell." Kane's brows shot so far up his face they almost touched his hairline.

"He's finally free of that bitch, my mother. He's at peace at last." Dawn's face reflected nothing. She started walking again.

"Damn beauty, I'm sorry."

Dawn scrunched her face at the use of the nickname. Kane grinned. He knew she hated it when he called her beauty. For some reason she hated to be called beautiful, even though she was the most beautiful woman he had ever laid eyes on. Dawn fascinated him. She carried herself with a grace that at times seemed regal. She was often quiet, shying away from people. But when she got mad, holy hell could she bust a man's balls.

She dressed in black all the time and never wore makeup. Down playing her uncommon good looks was impossible, no matter what. An angry or disinterested expression was on her face normally unless she was with Alex and Alex's nephew Jordan.

Kane wanted to see her carefree and happy. She had such an infectious laugh and smile the rare times he had a chance to hear or see them. He couldn't help but tease her. Kane wanted to bring her some measure of joy. She deserved that. One day he would make her smile.

"Come on let me take you home."

"I don't have a home Kane, never did." She kept walking, never looking back.

#### DAWN

Dawn dumbered her fingers on her thigh, shifting around in her seat. An earthy, spicy aroma filled the cab of Kane's Tahoe. Kane's scent. It wasn't fair Dawn thought as she peeked at him. He was knock your panties off handsome. He spoke with the sexiest southern drawl that Dawn secretly loved. On top of all that, his scent made her crave to lick him everywhere to see if he tasted as good as he smelled. Oh, who was she kidding, she wanted to lick him like an ice cream cone.

Dawn had been wanting him for a while now, ever since Kane and his brother rescued her family three months ago. Dawn thought about the first time she laid eyes on Kane. She and her best friend, Alex were escaping their rental home in Decatur. Mac Blanco, her former kidnapper and Cartel drug lord, had sent men to track her down. Fortunately, Alex happened to meet David, Kane's brother at a charity gala where she was performing that night. David, with the help of Kane rescued them. Kane even put a bullet in Mac's head while he was attempting to kill David. Her tormentor was gone and she should be safe. She wasn't, Mac's father Esteban Blanco wanted retribution.

"I'm going to have to charge ya, beauty." Kane's voice broke through her thoughts.

"For what?"

"For the view, you've been ogling me for the last ten minutes." He grinned.

There it was, the reason she couldn't take much to do with the man. Jokes upon jokes was all he knew. Esteban wanted to kill them and he wasn't worried at all. Life was one big comedy to Kane.

"Ha, Ha. Are you ever serious?" She asked, frowning.

"Do you ever smile?"

"Of course I do." Her frown deepened. "It wouldn't kill you to play grown up and be serious for one day."

"I leave that for my bro. He's serious enough for the both of us."

“Yeah, that’s very true. But life isn’t all fun and games you know.”

Kane’s eyes found hers. “Life, is an assassin beauty, waiting to take you out with a million different mundane bullets.” He turned back to the road. “Life won’t snuff me out, suffocate me. If I go, no when I go, I will go free, fast, and laughing my ass off.”

“And young,” Dawn whispered under her breath.

She gazed at the towering evergreen trees that stood sentinel along the highway, a few trees dotted the landscape with fiery reds, bright oranges and shocking yellows. Hazy sunlight filtered through their branches. Kane was wrong, life was not an assassin. Life was a serial killer. It traps you, beats you down, and then leaves you in a ditch to die slowly. That was exactly what Mac had done to her. She might be alive and out of that ditch, but she was still cut wide open and bleeding out.

## KANE

The black SUV moved in behind his truck with every lane change. Kane knew he was being tailed. That fucking Esteban. Kane felt a knot in his stomach at the thought of the man. He must have men everywhere, damn it.

Dawn was concentrating on nothing in particular, staring out the window. Her ebony hair, thick and straight, fell forward blocking his view of that lovely face. Kane debated whether to tell her they had someone following them or not. She needed a break, he understood that. The tension in the condo was stifling and downright depressing. But now they had company and he was certain that they were geared up with weapons. He had to ditch these fuckers.

“Beauty-”

“Don’t call me that.” Dawn said, never turning from the window. “It’s getting on my last nerve.”

“You are beautiful you know, I call um how I see um.” Kane joked, watching his rear view.

“Yeah, right. I don’t like being called that, ok?”

Kane respected Dawn more than she knew. She was damaged that was a given. After being kidnapped, beaten, and almost sold into the sex trade by a fucked up animal pretending to be a human, Dawn still held her head high and battled her demons with determination daily.

“Dawn then, don’t freak out, but there’s someone following us.” Kane told her.

Dawn whipped her head around as Kane pulled out his cell, he texted Ace, then maneuvered the truck onto the next off ramp. Ace was a Dekalb County Cop and his best friend, as much a brother to him as his own blood brother. Right now, he needed back up and Ace was the man for the job.

“Are they from Blanco?”

“Yeah, more than likely they are.” Kane answered, taking a hard left onto a side street. “You have no idea how sick and tired I am of hearing that fucking name.”

“Ha, welcome to my nightmare.” Dawn scoffed, sliding this way and that with the movements of the truck. “What will we do?” she braced her arms on the dash.

Kane took every side street he could trying to stay away from highly populated areas. The car stuck with them. He just needed to keep them busy chasing him for a little while longer. A shot rang out hitting the back fender.

“Get down D.” Kane shoved her into the space between the seat and floor. He executed three sharp turns, avoiding cars and bullets. His blood pumping, Kane floored it. Those dudes didn’t know who they were fucking with. Driving fast was his drug. Hell yeah, he loved this shit. If only the beauty wasn’t there.

“I can’t fit down here, dumbass. You’re killing me with the turns.” Dawn complained as more shots hit the back of the truck.

Kane ignored her as he concentrated on keeping far enough ahead of the SUV that the bullets didn’t hit his back window or the gas tank. He hit the gas, turning onto a two lane street, swerving onto the side of the road, narrowly missing a huge tree.

Ace had the street blocked with three squad cars. The police officers were out of their cars, weapons drawn. They had laid spike strips down. Kane knew to avoid them, but the other car didn’t. The car hit the metal strips with a gigantic popping sound, instantly followed by the sound of frantic squealing tires, and finally the unnatural explosive bang of car meeting nature. The car careened into the tree line, plowing head first into a huge pine tree.

#### From the Author

Thank you for taking the time to read this sample chapter of Hide and Seek (Men of Honor book 2). I hope that you enjoyed a taste of Dawn and Kane's tale. I sure did enjoy writing their story. As always, if you liked this book or any of my other books please leave a review. It would be a great help for a small fish in such a big pond. Thanks once again and happy reading friend.

[Pick it up here:](#)

My Author Page: [Amazon.com/author/rhondalott](https://www.amazon.com/author/rhondalott)

#### Rhonda's Other Books: The Men of Honor Series

[On The Run \(Men of Honor book 1\)](#)

[Hide and Seek \(Men of Honor book 2\)](#)

[On Borrowed Time \(Men of Honor book 3\)](#)

#### The West Haven Series

[Killer among Us \(West Haven book 1\)](#)

[Haunted \(West Haven book 2\)](#)

[Past Sins \(West Haven book 3\)](#)