

TANITA ROSE

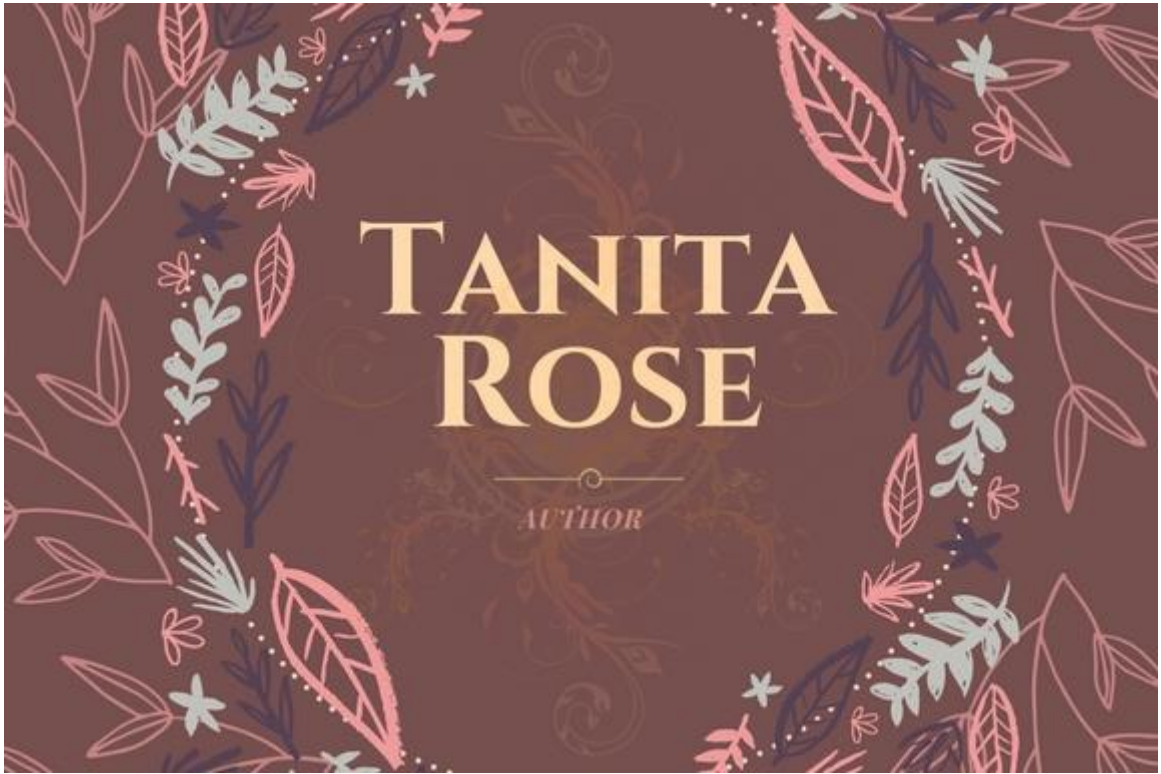
*Desire &  
Passion  
know no  
Bounds*

*Sweet*  
**DESIRE**



part 2





***TANITA ROSE***

*Sweet DESIRE*

*part 2*

*When You Awaken*

*Within Your Embrace series*

*Book 1*

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*For my family.*

*For my awesome grandma.*

*For always believing. Always encouraging.*

*And for all of you dreamers out there;*

*Fairytales do come true.*

*Believe, and yours will too.*

## *Description*

### ***HER CHOICE. HIS RULES.***

Sophie Archer has lived in the shadows for far too long. Being in love with a man who was forbidden in more ways than one.

The time has come to be reckless, to be bold and decisive, to stand up and go after what she desired. *Win or lose.*

Noah craved control in every aspect of his life, but Sophie wanted freedom, to make her own choices, follow her own dreams. Not be dependent on someone else's rules as she was forced to do her whole life.

Will Sophie submit to the desires of a man who doesn't believe in forever, or will her need for independence overrule the love she's harbored for Noah all these years...

In part 2 of Sweet DESIRE Sophie and Noah explore the newfound passion they found in each other. But just when things start heating up, their little secret is threatened when an unexpected visitor catches them off guard...

## *Chapter 9*

### I Remember

The car stopped and before Sophie could regain her senses a hand was helping her out of the back seat, steadying her on her feet. Her chauffeur escorted her inside and told the maître d' who she was with. He then left with a silent goodbye and a nod. She was led to the table at the far end of the restaurant where they would be afforded some privacy.

She looked around at the dark wood of the partitions that separated the individual tables, the black and white tablecloth covering the tables, giving them that modern, elegant look. And the complementing dark wood of the chairs and the partitions, all carved with a swirling design, alongside the dim lighting of the chandeliers hanging over the tables. It brought everything into an overall comfortable atmosphere that made the diners aware of their posh environment, but at the same time made them feel at ease.

To her surprise she saw Noah already waiting for her.

She smiled as she approached the table and he stood up, greeting her with a kiss on her cheek and pulling her chair out. She sat and waited for him to take his, while admiring his dark grey, almost completely black suit, paired with a soft baby blue shirt with thin stripes of a slightly darker blue that complemented his strikingly brilliant blue eyes and a navy blue tie that he loosened slightly so he could undo the top button of his shirt, making him look a bit more casual and not so much business like, which in her opinion made him even more handsome.

Sophie almost sighed at how hot he looked, honestly, the man was beyond attractive. Too much for his own good, since every woman in the restaurant couldn't keep her eyes off him, or maybe that was just her and her overstimulated senses combined with her raging hormones. She felt like she was in heat and had to literally stop from fanning herself. She was burning up, her face felt as if it would burst into flames at any moment. *Talk about embarrassing.*

Sophie looked at him, trying to compose herself and think of what to say.

"You're here early." She commented.

"Well, I had to correct my previous error. Couldn't very well leave you waiting for me twice, now could I?" He smirked and a little dimple appeared on the right side of his cheek, just above his mouth. She was tempted to kiss it, and blushed even more at her ridiculous thoughts.

She lowered her head in embarrassment, hiding behind her hair and pulling one strand of curls separate to twirl it between her fingers. She felt his hand on hers, stopping her nervous actions and intertwining their fingers. He held her hand lightly on top of the table, stroking the inside of her hand with his thumb, effectively calming her unsettled nerves.

Noah always had that effect on her, like a calming balm, his soothing presence made all her troubles just drift away. He didn't even have to say anything, him just being there was enough.

The waiter arrived to get their order and interrupted their staring contest. She heard Noah grumble something underneath his breath, but couldn't ascertain what, she figured it was something rude aimed at the waiter since his eyes flashed with annoyance. Her mouth twitched with amusement, biting her lip to prevent herself from laughing out loud.

She was so focused on Noah she didn't even notice the waiter hadn't said anything, he just stood there. She looked up and noticed he was staring at her, which made her eyes widen in confusion and her forehead wrinkling slightly between the eyes from uncertainty.

She looked at Noah for an explanation and saw his narrowed eyes staring daggers in to the waiter, who, foolishly she might add, hadn't noticed Noah getting more pissed off every second that ticked by.

That vein on his forehead pulsing rapidly was a clear sign he was about to explode, and if that happened, you wanted to be as far away from the debris as possible, because Noah that mad was a sight to behold.

She wasn't sure what caused his anger, but she needed to calm him down before he completely lost it, and the death stare he was giving the waiter was a ticking time bomb.

She looked at the waiter and tried to defuse the situation.

"Um. Hi. Eric. I think we'll order now." She smiled at the waiter looking at his nametag and then turned to Noah. "Do you know what you want?"

Before he could answer her question Eric the waiter interrupted. "Why don't I tell you the specials for today and then you can look at the menus if you want something different. We have salmon on tartar sauce with garlic and steamed vegetables with baked potatoes on the side and then we have chicken with rosemary..." He was talking really slowly and in a weird tone of voice that, truth be told, kind of unnerved her.

She leaned back slightly to create some distance between them, because he was standing so close he was looming over her. He was practically staring right at her cleavage. Sophie was so embarrassed she wanted to take the napkin resting on her thighs and cover herself up, before he took an even bigger peek of her flushed chest.

\*\*\*

"Do you God damn mind!" Noah exclaimed angrily with hardened steel commanding his voice. He barely restrained himself from jumping up and punching him in the face.

Normally he wouldn't care if a waiter or anyone else ogled his date, but this was Sophie and for some reason he wanted to pummel every single man who dared to look at her for more than a second, Hell, even a second was too long in his mind. Everyone should just keep their eyes off her and pretend she didn't exist.

*Yeah, that suited him just fine.*

"Keep your eyes to yourself and get us another waiter." He demanded with such fury coloring his words, the waiter visibly shrunk in front of him and took a step back.

"Um, um... Excuse me? I... I... I didn't..." Noah interrupted him before he could utter another word.

"Yes, you did. Now leave." He commanded forcefully.

The waiter stammered an apology and left quickly with his head dropped low, so he could avoid the staring eyes.

Sophie looked up at him, blushing profusely with a flaming rage in her eyes.

"What the Hell are you doing?" She asked furiously.

"You're making a scene, and everyone is looking at us." She accused him in a whisper filled with anger and shame.

"He came to this table and stared at you like I wasn't sitting here, holding your hand, then when he finally came out of his delusional fantasy he proceeded to flirt with you like the next fucking Don Juan. And you're saying I shouldn't be pissed off?" He took a deep breath, trying to calm himself.

"Sophie, you better know from the start I'm not the kind of man who will allow that. Ever. He's lucky I didn't kick his ass. The little punk." He muttered the latter in a barely discernible growl.

She looked down at her trembling hands, taking little shallow breaths and he realized she was shaking. He reached over to take her hands in his but she moved away, just enough so he couldn't reach her. He was taken aback by her attitude, narrowing his eyes to observe her more closely.

He noticed she was visibly shaking and he cursed underneath his breath.

"Sophie." He tried.

"Baby. Talk to me." He whispered softly.

"Everyone is staring." She spoke softly in a barely discernible whisper.

"I can't believe... you made such a scene." Her voice broke.

He sighed deeply, realizing the mistake he made and how much it affected her.

"Sophie, I was angry and I know that is not an excuse, but I just lost it." He reached for her again.

"Sophie, please look at me." He pleaded gently.

It took quite a few seconds, but she finally looked up and what he saw nearly broke him. Her eyes were filled with tears of shame and embarrassment.

"Oh, baby." He said tenderly.

"That was exactly what my parents used to do, Hell, still do, and I'm sick and tired of it. I thought you of all people would understand or did you forget already?" She questioned brokenly.

He looked at her, studying her face. "Our talks at the pool. I remember." He said quietly, understanding coloring his voice. The red haze of unexpected jealousy slowly dissipating from his mind, letting reason return in its place and the memories of a time past, a time of innocence and of childhood dreams, take him back to a time and place he thought he'd long forgotten.

"You were always so sad. You hid behind those smiles that everyone thought were real." He shook his head in remembrance.

"But I knew what you hid underneath. And at night, at the pool, when everyone else was sleeping, you let your guard down, and you let me see the real you. I remember the talks we had, your parents, how they treated you, how you suffered in silence." Noah opened his hand that lay on top of the table, palm up, waiting for her to reach over and place hers in his. To trust him enough to comfort her once more.

He waited and she looked at him, searching his eyes, what for, he didn't know, but whatever it was she seemed to have found it and she slowly placed her small, delicate hand in his bigger, rougher one.

And Noah knew it meant so much more, it wasn't just her hand, it was her trust, her faith in him, her belief that he would not fail her if she trusted him, that he would not betray her or harm her in any way.

That he would always protect her, no matter what. That he would cherish and appreciate her, that he would not forsake her, but stood by her, no matter the cost. At least that is what it meant to him.

"I remember your tears." He said after a moment.

"I remember holding you in my arms while you cried for hours. I remember thinking how a little bit of a girl could hold so much tears inside her, so much grief and not break into a million pieces. How that girl could be so brave and strong in spite of all that life had thrown at her. The constant disapproval of her parents, the arguing, the yelling, their viciousness towards each other and anyone who would oppose them, the all-out madness that surrounded her every waking moment." He held her hand tightly in his, caressing the underside of her palm, feeling her rapid heartbeat slowing, even if just slightly.

"I remember those big grey eyes of yours shining with tears while you looked at me so trustingly, like I had the answer to everything."

"You did. Even just listening to me was enough. To tell *someone* the truth, someone who wouldn't judge me or condemn me, who wouldn't think he knows best and tell me what I'm supposed to do, how I'm supposed to change things, when I knew deep down I couldn't really do or change anything. I was stuck where I was, with parents that I had and no amount of wishing and hoping would change that." She squeezed his hand in thanks.

"You understood and I was grateful for that. You listened and let me vent, you held me and let me cry, you wiped my tears and said nothing, you let me be. You were what I needed, *who* I needed during the worst moments of my life. You may not have thought so and you may not think it now, but you, Noah, were my *saving grace*. When I needed you the most, you were always there. In small gestures you made my world better, brighter, even if it was just for a little while, when we sat at the pool, soaking our feet in the water, staring at the stars and the moon."

He smiled at her description of their time together and it warmed his heart that she thought so highly of him. But most of all, he was honored that he helped bring a tiny amount of peace in her time of turmoil, that he made her pain and anguished thoughts disappear for a little bit, for those few brief hours they spent together at the pool, gazing at the stars, smiling, laughing and letting the world around them disappear into obscurity.

"Hey." He whispered, softly smiling at her. "Are you terribly hungry?"

"No, not really. I kind of lost my appetite." She shrugged nonchalantly.

"How about we go for a walk alongside the river. Would you like that?"

Sophie smiled at him and he saw the first bit of melancholy and the residual sadness leave her eyes.

"I would love that." She said.

"Good. Then let's go." He stood, still holding her hand, tugging her upward to follow him. He texted his driver to let him know they were on foot and that he would let him know



when he needed him to come pick them up since Sophie was wearing high heels. He smiled at her in appreciation and guided her out of the restaurant.

\*\*\*

They walked silently for a few minutes, holding hands as if it were an everyday occurrence for them, as if they were a real couple out on a stroll. She smiled at the thought. She liked that idea. She used to pretend their friendship when they were younger would lead to this.

Them becoming something else. Something more. Something wonderful.

She just needed to be strong enough, and open enough to accept whatever he was expecting of her. She wasn't a naïve little girl and he wasn't a fumbling boy, clueless of what to do with his first girl.

He was a man who knew his desires, who had certain expectations of his lovers, certain needs he required to be met and she was more than willing to try anything that appealed to him, and everything he craved for.

All she needed to do was put her big girl panties on and get along for the ride, for an adventure of a lifetime, a *sweet desire* finally coming true, after six years of yearning for his attention and longing for his touch, secretly aching in her need, her time had finally arrived.

And she for one would not waste a moment of it. No matter how scared she was and insecure about her inexperience and lack of knowledge on how to please him, she would not be discouraged nor deterred on her way to win his heart.

Sophie shook her head at her ridiculous thoughts. She had no influence over his heart or his mind for that matter. Noah was his own man. Stubborn, with ingrained ideas of how every relationship he ever had would progress before it even started.

She learned that from what Andrea had told her and from her own observations through the years.

You know, when she was silently stalking him.

*Hey, a girl needs hobbies.*

Sophie tried to stay focused on the here and now and not let her wandering mind drift any further into a fantasyland of her own creation.

Where Noah starred as the main character, *obviously*.

Her personal prince charming.

Only a lot less Disney and a lot more darker.

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