

EXCERPT from WIDOWER'S AURA by AJ Renee

Noah felt the hair on the back of his neck rise before he even saw her. Her skin shimmered with sweat. A bright blue tank top hugged her breasts, short black athletic shorts clung to her curves, and bright blue sneakers covered her feet. The woman's legs went on forever. He indulged in a brief fantasy of running his hands up those tan legs, hips, and up to her ample breasts. As his pants got tighter with a growing erection, he forced himself to turn and grab a drink of water.

For his sanity, Noah wanted to ignore her presence. Too bad he needed to speak to her. He couldn't ignore what she was doing for Lexi. "Excuse me, Sofia?"

"Hello, Noah." She smiled and continued to the bottom step of the house's porch.

Noah walked toward her. "Can I talk to you?"

Her eyes locked on his with discomfort, "Yes?"

When they were a few feet apart, her smell hit him hard. Her sweat had yet to mask the sweet smell of peaches. She wasn't covered in the strong perfume smell so many women seemed to bathe in. He noticed she wore no makeup either. The woman was truly stunning. He placed his hands in his pockets and rocked back on his heels.

"I wanted to thank you for what you're doing for Lexi. You had every right to press charges, but I'm very grateful you didn't. She's a good kid..." He looked up at the second floor of his house, almost expecting to see Lexi standing at her window. "She's just had a rough time, and I can't snap her out it. I hope this close call does it." He found himself wanting to tell Sofia more, but there was no point. Lexi would do her time with Sofia, and he would walk away with as little contact as possible.

Her head tilted to the side, Sofia's knowing eyes pierced him. "Sounds like you both have been having a rough time."

Her comment took him off guard. "Yes. No. Yes." Noah struggled to breathe at the thought of how rough these last two years had been. When he looked at Sofia, he expected a confused look or even pity but not compassion. Yet her eyes sparkled when she gave him a small smile. Why did he always feel as if she was looking through him or reading his mind?