

FRIENDS & FAMILY

◆ As the night started prancing over the horizon and the eyes of Willows around started growing sleepier and sleepier, Willow and Spoon were somehow still out and about exploring what the town market had to offer. Surprisingly, there were tellers still strung about enticing those night walkers to buy their last impulse, but nothing convinced Spoon, oh no. They'd have her pockets empty in the next hour.

Her expression was dim, despite keeping her smile across her face, subtly shrinking into Willow's hand as he drove her along with him. Scarf had long ragdolled against her neck, giving into his sleepiness, and even Willow had to start carrying little Tiger around.

"We tried the apple bobbing, the relay racing... Willow, it's almost midnight, what more is there to see?" Spoon began dragging her feet along once again, looking up towards the sky, "We'll barely see the path home."

Willow turned his head back to face her, stopping in his tracks. "Oh, Spoon, are you getting sleepy? We came here late... I wouldn't want to keep you from your sleep."

Spoon blushed a bit, feeling like some elder Willow that *needed* a bedtime. She's an *adult* and makes *adult* decisions and does *adult* things, and she didn't need to prove that to anyone.

She waved her hand around slightly, hiding her ego behind a smirk, "Absolutely not. I'm just making sure you get your *bedtime story*."

Willow wasn't convinced, narrowing his eyes at her, "Why don't we just take the rural route through the town and then we can head right home, okay?"

Spoon simply nodded, and the duo set out on their track.

By this time of day, the cobblestone was cooled to a dim feel; the only thing illuminating the wood's backdrop was the slight flash of lanternlight bouncing against the trunks. Willow was amazed, of course, seeing the string lights through the scenic path, and felt the romantic atmosphere.

The streets, once filled with almost every neighbor, was now close to empty, the clicks of their footsteps clinging against the tree's walls.

"You could get married in a place like this, Spoon." He said suddenly, looking up towards her with doe-eyes once again. Spoon's ears pinned back to her head, almost taken aback.

“**Married?** Out in public?” She scoffed, “No-no, Willow. You should be thinking about a calm venue out by our stick of the woods with little people and less annoying houseguests. And the largest perk: **less** cleanup.”

Willow chuckled at her proposal, finding a bench to sit on, and patted the seat right beside him. Spoon looked at him in question before plopping a seat next to him, setting Scarf down to curl around Tiger as per praxis.

“I don’t know, I feel like with all the pretty lights and the stones, it would be nice in a place like this.” Willow leaned his head up to her shoulder, taking in her fur and sinking right through. Admittedly, he had the sleep bug too...

“... I can get lights.” Spoon blushed once again, turning her body slightly for him to get himself more comfortable, “Yeah, lights are easy. It’s just the *volume* that’s the problem.”

“Wouldn’t it be nice to invite all our friends?”

“Ah,” Spoon obviously took that as a trick question, and she took the bait, “I can see... my wedding with friends...”

Willow touched their snouts together, dawning that goofy but soft smile he usually has, “Right. **Your** wedding. Would I be invited?”

Spoon snickered, “I see what you’re doing now. You’re *evil*.”

“Haha, and so what if I’m curious?” Willow tilted his head away, looking towards the woods, “Oh, look Spoon! The fireflies are out.”

And he was right. Fireflies just at that time started gathering around unpopulated places, making themselves back at home. They lit the ground up like stars fallen straight from the heavens themselves, and let out a slight buzz that gave the humid atmosphere an almost sweet smell... or maybe it’s the feeling...

“Much prettier than back home, don’t you agree Spoon?”

Spoon took a breath in, “It’s like this night is ours.”

