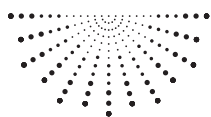


UNSTOPPABLE

A STEALTH OPS EPISODE



BRITTNEY SAHIN

Unstoppable: A Stealth Ops Episode

NOT FOR SALE

Scenes have not been professionally proofread. For enjoyment.

By: Brittney Sahin

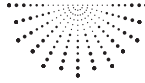
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CHAPTER ONE



***SCENES HAVE NOT BEEN PROFESSIONALLY PROOFREAD.
For enjoyment.**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – MAY 2023

Emily drowsily turned her head and snuggled her cheek against the cool pillowcase. She slowly opened her eyes to the early morning sunlight filtering in through the partially open wooden blinds. As soon as spring had arrived, Emily made a habit of leaving the blinds open a crack when she realized the sun was ahead of her alarm clock by a good ten minutes. Ten glorious minutes during which she and her handsome husband often enjoyed a hot morning quickie before they woke the kids.

So the strange aching sensation still lingering in her gut was worrisome. It had grabbed hold of her last night as she cleared the dinner table, right after Liam received orders he and Bravo Team would be spinning up today.

“Do you ever think about that day?” she whispered,

unsure if he was awake, even though they were usually on the same pre-alarm-schedule.

“Which day?” Liam’s voice was naturally husky and deep, but his morning voice inspired a whole new level of fill-me-up-buttercup and bang . . .

Fill me up buttercup? What-the-what?

Emily blinked and redirected her attention to her husband. His short dark blond hair was messy in a sexy way, and his lids were still shut, hiding his ocean blue eyes. “Hmm. Right. We’ve had quite a few of those kinds of days, haven’t we?” She forced a smile, hoping it would hide her worry lines so he didn’t see them when he did open his eyes.

Was she always nervous right before Liam operated? Absolutely. Emily had good reason to worry—he was a Navy SEAL. Add to that, he was an “off-the-books” elite operator. As Bravo Four, Liam, and the rest of Bravo Team, technically didn’t exist. They answered only to the President and were sent on missions that were not only considered extremely dangerous, but almost impossible as well. Though one of those missions led to them adopting their daughter Elaina a few years ago and . . .

“I’m talking about the day you made me promise to—”

“Find love again if I bite the dust?”

“Not funny,” she scolded, slapping the back of her hand against his broad naked chest. Eyes still closed, he snatched her wrist like a cobra striking its prey . . . such a hotshot. An easy smirk cut across his lips as he angled his head and finally parted his lids then brought her palm to his mouth and pressed a soft kiss there, his tongue darting out to teasingly touch her skin.

“Why, my love, are you thinking about that day? You find some other charming Aussie slash American you want to trade me in for?”

Damn that sexy wink of yours. He might have been one of the world's best snipers, but he'd also nearly died on her once. Screw that promise—she'd never move on from him. Never. *But no, nothing will happen to you. It can't. But . . . shit.*

Liam frowned and slowly lowered her hand as she rolled to her side. “What’s wrong?” His tone inched deeper into more serious territory this time.

“I have a bad feeling about something. I-I don’t know why.” She abruptly shifted upright and snatched the covers to her chest as she rested her back against the headboard.

Liam followed suit then turned a little and reached for her legs beneath the covers to drape them across his body, situating her to face him. Well, this conversation had yet to “down boy” his morning wood. He was hard as a rock beneath her legs.

“So, no before-I-spin-up sex, huh?” He cocked his head and palmed her cheek, smoothing his thumb in small circles there.

“I mean . . .” She wanted to. But her stomach was killing her.

A sharp line cut between his brows as worry grabbed hold of him now. “Fuck, babe. What’s going on?” He paused for a second, analyzing her like he was outside the wire, downrange and searching for tangos in his line of sight.

Focused. Intense.

And while he was acting nervous at the moment, she knew her man wouldn’t have anything but a steady hand and mind when on an op.

“I’ll be back next week, whether the op is complete or not. You know I wouldn’t miss Elaina’s doctor appointment. And no fucking way some bad guy is gonna keep me from being there for our family. Okay?”

“You promise?” Maybe he was right. It was Elaina’s appointment she was panicking about, and she was misplacing her worries, focusing on his impending mission because that was familiar. That was a “normal” fear she knew how to navigate. Worrying about the results of her daughter’s MRI . . . no, not so much.

“She’s going to be okay. If anyone would know if something is wrong, it’d be Elaina, right?” Liam captured both her cheeks between his big palms this time and tears filled her eyes.

Their 12-year-old daughter’s biological parents were super geniuses, and hell, Elaina was even smarter than them. But Liam and Emily had quickly learned Elaina was gifted in other ways. She somehow just knew things. Saw things before they happened.

“These headaches though.” Emily closed her eyes, her stomach banding uncomfortably tight. “What if that’s why . . .” She couldn’t finish that line of thought.

“The doctor just wants to rule everything out. She’ll be fine. She’s our Elaina. Unstoppable. Like me.” Emily heard the smile in his voice, so she opened her eyes to verify it was there. Adorable and a little crooked. Her Chris Hemsworth look alike hubby always knew how to calm her racing heart whenever her lawyer-brain took over and she began overthinking.

“Mommy! Mommy!”

Before Emily had a chance to say more, their almost two-year-old son Jackson flung open their bedroom door.

“Hey sweet pea.” She quickly erased the tears and shifted her legs free from her husband’s lap when she spied Elaina out in the hall hovering near the door.

Jackson threw himself onto the bed, nearly tackling Liam, who played along and let himself be pinned down.

“I tried to stop him in case you two were getting in some of your early morning, um, cardio, but he beat me to your room,” Elaina said, hanging back in the doorway.

Liam froze and pivoted his focus to Emily, his eyes wide.

Morning cardio, huh? Well, that’s great. My daughter knows we have morning sex. Splendid.

Liam’s cheeks stained red with embarrassment before Jackson began squeezing his face, smushing his mouth to make “kissy lips” as he liked to call them.

Chills scattered across Emily’s arms as she got out of bed. “How are you feeling today? Any headache? Up for school today?”

Elaina had been missing school on and off since the severe headaches had begun about two weeks ago.

“I’m okay.” Elaina shifted around Emily to peer at Liam lifting Jackson up and flying him through the air like he was Superman.

Well, Liam looked like Thor, the God of Thunder, so maybe Jackson was Thor, Junior. Liam’s teammate, A.J. from Echo Team, even had a miniature Thor hammer made with Jackson’s initials on it as a birthday gift last year.

“Good, good. But if anything changes at school, go to the nurse. Have her call me.”

“You have court today.”

“I don’t care.” Emily tucked Elaina’s dark hair behind one ear, revealing one of her diamond studs. Elaina had bought them with the check her biological dad had sent her for her birthday in January. Elaina’s mother had been killed years ago, but her father had chosen not to raise Elaina, which was his loss. Emily and Liam’s gain.

Speaking of a check, that reminded her . . .

“Babe, can you do me a favor on your way out today?” Emily massaged the knot of tension at the back of her neck

and turned to eye her husband now standing in only his boxers by the bed with Jackson clinging to his back, legs wrapped around his muscular abdomen.

“The check.” Liam snapped his fingers. “Right. Yeah, I can deposit it on the way.”

“The scanner thingy still isn’t working on the app, and it’s kind of a big check to leave sitting around.” The most recent check Elaina’s biological father had sent. This one had been for Easter, and she kept forgetting to deposit it into Elaina’s account.

“Scanner thingy?” Liam laughed, and that sexy laugh of his had her regretting they didn’t have time for a pre spin-up quickie.

As if on cue, the alarm on her phone sounded. Liam shut it off and hoisted Jackson up and onto his shoulders. Super dad. “Let’s get you kids fed and dressed, shall we?” He set a quick kiss to Emily’s cheek as he walked past her but halted in his tracks when Elaina shifted before him and slapped a hand to her forehead. “Elaina, sweetheart?” He quickly set Jackson down then braced both her arms, but Elaina immediately jerked back as if he’d literally shocked her, so he let her go.

Jackson rushed to Emily’s side, obviously sensing something was wrong so she lifted him into her arms. “Your head?”

Elaina held both palms in the air, breathing hard as she stared at Liam. Her lips parted but . . . nothing came out. “Pancakes,” she whispered, slowly looking Emily’s way as if she’d just made the hardest decision of her life. “How about pancakes for breakfast?” And then she abruptly turned and left.

“What just happened?” Liam turned to Emily, gripping

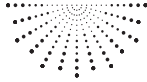
the back of his neck, a puzzled look crossing his face. “Now I’m worried. Maybe I shouldn’t go. Tell the President I—”

“You have to go.” Elaina reappeared in the doorway, eyes dead set on Liam. “Well, to the bank. You need to go there. The one with the glass walls. It has lots of glass. Um, it’s the one near the White House.” She nodded. “Yeah, that’s the one where you should deposit the check. I like that one.” And then their daughter was gone again.

Emily blinked as her squirmy son began to slip from her arms.

Liam stroked his jaw, eyes contemplative. “Well fu . . .” He let go of the curse at the realization that their son was still there. “I guess I’m needed at the bank today.”

CHAPTER TWO



“THEY’RE TALKING ABOUT MAKING A MOVIE OUT OF MY life.” Knox tossed a hand in the air from behind the wheel of his new GMC Yukon Denali. “Well, about my pops. But by association . . .”

Liam smirked, tucking away his worries from this morning to focus on Bravo Five who’d picked him up from the house a few minutes ago. Liam needed to give him a heads up about Elaina’s mention of the bank before they arrived there.

“Is that legal? Can they make a movie about your family while your dad is still in office?” Hell if Liam knew. But Knox’s dad was the President of the United States and shouldn’t he be entitled to some privacy? Or well, maybe that meant the opposite? He wasn’t sure, but he wasn’t thinking all that straight right now.

Liam had hated leaving Emily this morning, knowing she was a mess about Elaina’s appointment, especially after Elaina’s random bank comment, which of course, wasn’t actually random at all.

“I’m not sure to be honest, but so help me, they better cast a good actor to play me.” Knox lightly laughed and turned on the radio.

“We all know who will get the role of your old man.” Liam shifted in his seat to better look at his buddy while they were stopped at a red light. “You think we can meet him?”

“Ha. You mean, if they hire my dad’s doppelganger to play him? Denzel? That’d be about the only good thing to come from a movie about my family, I suppose.”

Liam grunted at the thought of the actor who would most likely be cast to play the role of his “character.” That was, if he made it to the big screen. He was one of Knox’s best friends, so maybe. “Just don’t let them hire *my* doppelganger. Don’t need my wife fawning all over that man.”

“Nah, brother, he’s got nothing on you.”

“Yeah, yeah. Sure.” Liam set his fisted hands on his jean covered thighs, trying to rally his thoughts. Would he be able to operate while worried about Elaina? Would he miss a shot? Get one of his brothers killed? *Shit*. “Eva’s family,” Liam blurted a moment later when the thought struck him. “If a movie is going to happen regardless, why not go to someone we can trust? You know, control the narrative.”

Their team leader, Luke Scott, was married to a screenplay writer whose family was basically Hollywood royalty, and they directed and produced many of the major movies on the big screen.

“Good point. I’ll mention something to my dad. And well, ask Luke to talk to Eva.” Knox turned down the radio and quickly glanced at Liam. “You think Charlie Team is ready to operate without their training wheels?” he asked, quickly changing the subject. Charlie Team was a relatively new addition, established when it was clear that Bravo and Echo

Teams were no longer enough to handle all the bad shit swirling around out there in the world. Plus, the new team would also be able to step in and give the others a break. “I sure hope Luke and Jessica can let go of their type A personalities long enough to allow the newbies off the bench and in the game.”

Jessica, a former CIA officer, had been the driving force behind the creation of the off-the-books Teams back in 2013. She and her brother Luke Scott, who also served as Bravo One, had assembled the best of the best when it came to men and women who knew the intricacies of stealth operations. “Charlie Team is pretty green. I don’t know if they should roll out without one or two of us on an op anytime soon.”

“They were all Tier One guys before we poached them to our side. Maybe they can hang with the big boys. Or, even on their own without us.”

“Glad you’re confident because I may need one of them to swap places with me today. I don’t think I ought to spin up.” There was no choice really. His head would be elsewhere and that endangered the lives of his teammates.

Knox let up off the gas pedal for a moment. “What’s wrong? Need me to turn around?”

Liam swiped both palms through his hair and shook his head. “Elaina’s headaches are getting worse. She’s got an MRI appointment next week, and Emily is nervous. *But* no, we can’t turn around.”

“Shit man, I’m sorry. You know she’ll be okay though. No other option.” Knox jerked a thumb over his shoulder. “So, why am I not turning around?”

Liam caught Knox’s brown eyes for a beat. “Because Elaina said I need to go to the bank today. And she insisted it be this particular branch.”

Knox's brows slanted inward. "That's pretty specific, even for her."

"Yeah, she doesn't normally, well, see things that aren't clearly connected to us in such detail. I'm not sure what to make of it. But she said I had to go before we spin up." Liam thought back to Elaina's words this morning and the desperate look on her face. "There are metal detectors at this bank, so we'll be rolling in unarmed."

"I can't see Elaina placing you in harm's way without good reason. I guess I should let my dad know we'll be running late?" Knox grabbed his phone from his pocket and tossed it to Liam. "Can you send him a text? Just say we're in heavy traffic."

Liam scrolled through his phone and found his dad listed as "Pops" and then sent him the message.

"We're here," Knox announced, pulling into a parking space in front of the bank a few minutes later. Damn, Liam hated walking into an unknown situation armed with only a check in his back pocket from Elaina's biological father rather than his rifle. Or at the very least, a knife.

"Why don't you stay out here?" Liam suggested. "Elaina didn't say you needed to come. Just me." What if something went sideways and he placed Knox in danger? No, he couldn't take that risk.

Knox scoffed. "Since when do we ride solo? Last time one of us went alone into something . . ."

Right. Nothing good ever came from solo ops. He was right. But that didn't make *this* decision the right call.

"We're headed into a bank, so I'm guessing we're going to be dealing with a robbery," Knox went on as though it'd be a walk in the park. "That's the only thing I can think of, and I'm pretty sure you and I can handle some bank robbers. Even unarmed."

“It’s your decision man. But I don’t need your parents or especially your wife kicking my ass if you get a scratch on that handsome face of yours.” Liam winked, trying to dispel the shit feeling in his gut that had been there since Emily had cried that morning.

“It’s okay. Both my left and right sides are equally camera ready. I can turn a cheek if needed.” Knox grinned, flashing his white teeth then they hopped out of the SUV as if it were a regular Monday. “Head on a swivel brother.”

Yeah, the last thing he wanted was for Emily to actually have to make good on the promise of marrying someone else if he bit the dust.

“This is definitely the place,” Liam said, glancing at the walls of reflective glass after they’d passed through security. All that glass would be a nightmare for a sniper on overwatch if they needed an extraction.

“Looks okay so far. Do we hang around until some bad shit happens?” Knox asked in a low voice as they approached one of the lines to deposit the check.

“I guess so.” This was the first time Elaina had ever sent him on an assignment based on her visions. Normally she only issued vague warnings or predicted if one of the teammates would be having a baby.

“Twelve innocents in my view here. Two kids. I don’t like this,” Knox added. “Maybe I pull the fire alarm and get them out of here before—”

“Too late,” Liam said, as he caught sight of an armed man raising a weapon. One shot shattered the wall of glass at his right and caused the place to erupt in terrified screams.

“Six,” Knox said under his breath, confirming Liam’s nightmare. “Six armed tangos and pretty sure one is packing explosives.”

“Everyone on the ground!” The masked man who’d just

barked out the order had to be the leader of this pack of fuckers, and Liam wanted nothing more than to defy him and engage in a face-off. Instead, he gritted his teeth and took a knee but stopped when he saw that Knox remained standing. “You got a problem following orders?” the man growled out as he slowly approached Knox.

These assholes had to know a silent alarm had been tripped, and help would be on the way as they quickly fanned out, secured the entrances, tied up the two guards, and forced everyone face down on the ground.

This was a hostage situation, one these guys had anticipated while they robbed the bank.

“You’re going to let all of these people go,” Knox stated in a matter-of-fact tone. “You only need me.”

“What are you doing?” Liam hissed, looking up at his best friend.

“Him too. He needs to go.” Knox tipped his head, angling it toward Liam, who huffed out a breath and stood up again despite the M4 aimed his way.

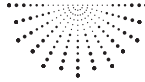
“Damnit, I know what you’re doing, and hell no,” Liam said under his breath as the armed man came closer. The whimpers of fear died down and silence surrounded them as everyone pinned their eyes on Knox in anticipation. There was a good chance a few people also recognized him. “Elaina wants me here,” Liam reminded him.

“Who the fuck are you and what makes you so damn special?” The mask covered all but the man’s dark eyes that held more than a hint of crazy. Liam wasn’t so sure the guy would even believe the truth when Knox revealed it. His best friend wasn’t accompanied by Secret Service or an entourage of security, as per his request. Knox wasn’t a typical President’s son.

Knox lifted his chin, his jaw tightening as he held his

arms out to the side. “Just getting my ID for you,” he said as he slowly reached around to his back pocket, retrieved his wallet and casually tossed it at the robber’s feet. No fear in Bravo Five. Typical. “I’m the son of the President of the United States. I’m Charlie Bennett.” He paused to let the information sink in. “So, like I said, you only need me.”

CHAPTER THREE



EMILY STARED AT THE VENDING MACHINE IN THE HALLWAY AT the Attorney General's office where she worked. *Oreos? Probably not the best nine a.m. snack but . . .*

She inserted the money, then closed her eyes and waited for the Oreos to fall free from the metal clip. Elaina and Liam loved Oreos. They'd spin the tops and predict which side the cream would wind up on, and now, well, she wanted to cry again.

Her hands went to the glass as she tried not to have a total meltdown for everyone to see.

Don't worry, love. Everything will be okay, Liam had whispered in her ear before kissing her goodbye that morning.

No, not goodbye. Never "goodbye." Goodbyes felt permanent. It was always a "See you soon" kiss.

Emily opened her eyes, and her stomach dropped when she caught sight of a familiar face in the glass behind her. "Owen." She spun around to face one of Liam's teammates. Bravo Two. Second in command to Luke Scott. A former pilot before becoming a SEAL.

“The bank?” she asked, knowing that if any recognition flashed in Owen’s eyes, then that was why he was at her office right now.

Owen nodded, but his gaze quickly shifted and Emily followed his focus to her admin exiting her office, her face pale. “Emily, it’s all over the news. The President’s son has been taken hostage at the bank right down the street.”

Emily’s knees went weak and Owen was at her nine o’clock within a second, assisting her to remain upright. She shouldn’t have been surprised given Elaina’s words that morning though.

“President Bennett’s son negotiated with the robbers to release all hostages except for him and his friend,” her admin went on. “Why doesn’t he have Secret Service . . . and oh God, don’t tell me his friend is your—”

“Liam,” Emily confirmed.

“Come on, my team is outside the bank already. Luke sent me to get you,” Owen said near her ear to keep from being overheard. “We need to go.”

Did that mean Bravo Team planned to intervene? But how? They worked in the shadows. Never visible to the public eye. They wouldn’t be sent into a bank with cameras all over them.

Emily snatched her phone from her office and they hurried out of the building.

“We need to go by foot. Traffic is at a standstill because of the hostage situation,” Owen explained while on the move.

Before she could make sense of how fast everything was happening, her phone began ringing. “It’s Elaina’s school.” She kept up her pace with Owen and answered, “This is Mrs. Evans.”

“Hi Mrs. Evans, we’re calling to let you know that Elaina walked out of her first period class this morning. Quite

abruptly and with no explanation. We tried to stop her, but she took off out of the building, and our security guard lost track of her.”

Emily halted on the sidewalk and ended the call without a response. Elaina’s school was only two blocks away, so she most likely had high-tailed it on foot from school to the bank.

Owen pivoted at the realization she’d stopped in her tracks. “Elaina took off from school.” She closed her eyes, trying to think, ignoring the surrounding foot traffic. “She has to be on the way to the bank. She knew Liam needed to be there this morning, but I don’t know why she’d go,” Emily quickly told him, opening her eyes, and Owen reached for her elbow.

“Only our guys would wind up in the middle of a bank robbery on their way to spin up,” Owen grumbled, encouraging her to move again.

“I asked him to deposit a check, and Elaina insisted he go to that bank. She somehow knew he was needed, but there’s no way Elaina would place Liam in danger if she thought something would happen to him.” Although, Elaina’s visions weren’t always very clear, so she wasn’t sure what to think. But like hell would she let Elaina blame herself if anything were to go wrong.

No, everything will be fine.

“Let’s just say these bank robbers fucked with the wrong people,” Owen bit out, his deep tone ringing clear despite the sounds of the city surrounding them.

The bank down the street was hard to miss with the flashing lights and media vans scattered everywhere.

Owen grabbed hold of her hand and as he guided her through the crowd, she searched for Elaina. Her hair was down today, right?

“Have you seen Elaina?” Emily rushed out as soon as she

spotted Luke's sister, Jessica, standing next to the open door of a black van. Jessica nodded and tipped her head toward the interior.

"She just got here. Pretty shaken up," Jessica said as Owen let go of Emily so she could climb inside the van.

Tears filled her eyes at the sight of her frightened daughter, and the fact that her husband was currently being held hostage inside a bank not even a hundred feet away. But Liam had been in much worse situations and he always pulled through.

Elaina had her feet up on the seat and her arms wrapped around them.

"Sweetheart." Emily scooted next to her and pulled her into her arms. "It was dangerous taking off from school like that."

Elaina lifted her chin and swept her dark hair away from her face to peer at Emily. "I had to come. I realized while in class that I-I needed to be here." She lifted her hand and pressed it to her forehead as if another headache was stirring. "I couldn't tell Dad. I'm sorry," she sputtered. "I couldn't tell him anything else because if I did he would've died."

"Wait, what?" Emily whispered, her body tensing.

"He had to come though, or a girl and her mom would've died. But if I told Dad those details, for some reason that would have changed something . . . and *he'd* die instead." Elaina swiped a tear from beneath her eye. "I don't know how to explain it, but I could see multiple outcomes."

Oh my God. Elaina had never had such specific visions before, and she wasn't quite sure what to make of it. "Well, you didn't tell him specifics, so does that mean Liam will be okay?"

"I think so." She nodded. "But I didn't know Uncle Knox was with him. I didn't see that. I don't know why, so . . ."

Emily did her best to hide her fears, hating that she was sitting outside the bank helpless. “It’s okay. Everything will be okay. They’re unstoppable. You know that.”

“Hey.”

Emily turned to see Luke outside the open door. “The President can’t negotiate,” he began in a low voice. “It’d set a dangerous precedent, and Knox would have known that. *But* he is going to let us join SWAT and go in and extract our guys. We’ll be masked and suited up. No one will know it’s us. There’s no way we’re letting anyone else take point on this.”

Before Emily had a chance to respond, Elaina suddenly sat taller and announced, “Tell everyone to back up from the bank.” She held her forehead and groaned. “The left side. Now,” she rushed out. “Now!” she damn near screamed.

Luke didn’t hesitate. He knew Elaina was special, that she possessed unexplainable abilities. But this was off-the-charts “special” compared to what they’d all been privy to before now.

“It’s . . .” Elaina’s voice trailed off when a blast erupted nearby, rocking the van and prompting Emily to hold onto her daughter until the van settled.

“I guess they don’t need us after all,” Owen said a minute or two later, though Emily wasn’t really sure how much time had passed since the blast, but . . .

“What?” Emily peered out of the open door to see Owen smiling.

A smile? Her heart leaped.

Elaina bolted out of the van before anyone could stop her, and Emily quickly followed her, praying Owen’s smile meant Liam and Knox were out of the bank.

“Be careful,” Owen called out after them, but all Emily could focus on was the sight of Liam and Knox.

They were advancing down the front steps of the bank, hands in the air.

Blocked by the wall of police officers, Elaina jumped up and down, hands in the air, waving to Liam to try and get his attention. “Dad!” she cried. Smoke from the explosion still hung in the air, and Emily doubted Liam could hear her over the noise of emergency vehicles and news crews.

“Liam,” Emily couldn’t help but call out, and she stood behind Elaina, wrapping her arms around her as they both impatiently waited for the police to let Liam and Knox come their way.

“Elaina. Emily.” Liam pulled them both into his arms the second he was able to get to them. “I’m okay,” he said into Emily’s ear, a reminder of their conversation in bed that morning.

“What in the hell happened?” Asher, Bravo Three and Jessica’s husband, appeared a few seconds later as Knox joined them, dismissing Secret Service and other officers clamoring for his attention. Questions and medical help weren’t important to either Liam or Knox at the moment. But they both appeared to be uninjured aside from a few scrapes.

“There were only six guys. We managed to overtake them, but one of them had explosives on him and well, you can see how that went,” Knox said while searching the crowd, probably looking for his wife Adriana, who had surely been notified. Hell, Knox’s wife was Secret Service.

Liam dropped to a knee before Elaina. “You saved some people today, so it seems.”

“But I could’ve got you and Uncle Knox killed,” Elaina said, her tone solemn. “I’m sorry I couldn’t tell you more, but if I did . . .” She let her words trail off.

“You two just had to go and be heroes, huh?” Asher teased, trying to lighten the mood.

The crowd of officers and agents kept pushing closer, but Bravo Team kept them at bay, allowing Liam a moment with his daughter.

“Yeah, yeah,” Knox said. “Six to two. Easy odds once civilians were out of there.”

“Well,” Asher responded as Knox’s wife finally reached them and flung herself into her husband’s arms. “Well, I was planning on doing some Spiderman shit and scaling that building to help ya out,” Asher added after Knox finished making out with his wife.

“Spiderman?” Elaina’s soft laugh was music to Emily’s ears and it placed a smile on Liam’s face as he rose to his full height. “Aquaman, sure. You’re way too muscular to be Spiderman, Uncle Asher.”

Liam pulled Emily to his side, and the world around them, and all the insanity seemed to fade away in that moment. “I guess we know who will play him in your movie,” he said to Knox and despite the small cut above his eye, he casually winked.

Emily wasn’t sure what that was all about, but the fact these two men just took down six bank robbers and were outside joking right now, proved one thing.

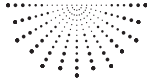
They really were unstoppable, weren’t they? And maybe she didn’t have anything to worry about.

Elaina’s headaches though . . . “We’re not out of the woods yet.”

Liam must’ve managed to overhear her, because he tightened his grip and kissed the top of her head.

“I’ll get us out of anything,” he responded, and she lifted her chin to set eyes on her husband. “You can trust me. I’ll protect our family.” He nodded. “And I’m not going on the op today. I’m right where I’m needed the most.”

CHAPTER FOUR



“MOM, I’M FIIINE.” ELAINA WINKED AT EMILY, COPYING Liam’s signature move, from across the dinner table. “My MRI results are perfect. Blood work is great. Doctor can’t find anything wrong with me.”

Of course Emily was relieved her results were clean. But her daughter was still in pain, and that was hell.

Liam reached for Emily’s hand and squeezed it. “She’s okay.”

“But the headaches are—”

“Because of my visions,” Elaina interrupted Emily and stood from the table and helped Jackson out of his seat. “My visions are more intense. More specific. And they hurt my head.” She shrugged as if it were no big deal. “I’m working through this in my own way. My body will adjust to the changes. When I was younger and my mom was putting me through those, um, tests . . . I got the headaches too.”

What? This was news to Emily.

“They went away once my body got used to them.” Elaina circled the table and patted Emily on the shoulder, acting like

the parent right now. And well, she was wise beyond her years, that was for sure.

“What can we do to help?” Emily asked softly as she stood, carried her plate to the sink, and scooped Jackson into her arms.

“Nothing.” Elaina offered her a reassuring nod. “I don’t know why I see what I see. I don’t understand it. But maybe it’s not so bad? Two innocent people didn’t die in that bank that day because of my head, right?”

“That’s a burden. Too big of a burden for you to carry,” Liam said while pushing away from the table. “You need to be a twelve-year-old.”

“I can be both.” Elaina’s smile was infectious, but Emily was still struggling to wrap her head around everything. “Let me give Jackson his bath. You two haven’t gotten your cardio in for a while since you were stressed about me.”

“Elaina,” Liam rasped, his cheeks going red.

“What? I saw a video that said cardio is good for the heart.” Another wink from their wise-beyond-her-years daughter as she carried a squirming Jackson out of the room.

Liam scratched his jaw, eyeing Emily for a moment. “She’s one of a kind, huh? Just like her mother.” He reached out and settled his hands on Emily’s waist and brought his mouth near hers.

“More like her dad,” she whispered right before Liam set her on fire with a searing kiss.

His hand traveled to her ass, and he squeezed tight, which had him swallowing her murmur with his mouth. “How about that cardio? Good for the heart and all.”

With the news about Elaina, and Bravo Team back home from their operation as of this morning, Liam lost five years in age from his face. And it had been forever since they’d made love, so maybe . . .

“If it’s good for the heart, who am I to deny my husband?”

Liam grabbed hold of her hand and guided her to their bedroom. His firm grip somehow soothed her. Calmed her mind. But the mere thought of sex with her husband had her heart racing.

Once alone in their room with the door locked, Liam quickly discarded his clothes and helped Emily peel hers free.

“I’ll never get tired of this,” Emily said around a hard swallow, her gazing cutting over her husband’s toned, muscular body. He stood a few feet away, stroking his cock from root to tip while studying her.

“You better not. And don’t trade me in for my doppelganger if there’s ever a movie.”

“What is this movie talk?” she asked with a laugh before he released his hard length and hoisted her into his arms only to toss her onto their bed.

Liam climbed on top of her and braced himself over her. The man was an expert at exciting positions. Great with angles.

But she loved nothing more than for him to be on top. Looking right into her eyes. And filling her deep.

“Knox says they want to make a movie about his family.” He positioned himself onto his forearms and placed his tip at her soaked center.

“Oh really?” She lifted her brows and teased her tongue between her lips. “So, um, you thinking Chris Hemsworth is going to play you in this movie?”

“Don’t even think about it,” he returned with a growl and lightly nipped her lip. “You’re mine. I don’t share.”

“I mean, he’s basically your twin, so . . .”

“Ohhh,” he responded with a low but dark laugh. “You want that kind of cardio-sex, do you? Because woman, you

talk about me sharing you, and your ass is gonna wind up red, I promise you that.”

“Mmm.” She tucked her lip between her teeth and gave him her best seductive stare. “You’re irreplaceable. I thought I made myself clear. And you’re never leaving me.”

“Good answer,” he rasped.

“The only answer,” she whispered before her husband plunged deep inside her and her hips bucked to join him. “*But* . . . I wouldn’t be opposed to that kind of cardio-sex.”

*WANT MORE ELAINA? WHEN A VISION STRIKES ... SHE’LL join the cast in *The Guarded One*, part of the Falcon Falls Series.

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