



HIS
CHANCE

Hamilton Investigation & Security

HIS Series, Book Four

(Three Chapter Excerpt)

Devon & Rylee

Sheila Kell

*Cunningham
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HIS CHANCE

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Prologue

FOGGINESS ATTEMPTED TO lift itself from her thoughts but failed miserably. Rylee's head throbbed and her stomach roiled. Her eyes fought to open, then after the success of only a small slit, the blinding light of the day urged them closed. Her waking mind attempted to process what her eyes weren't seeing. Not an easy task when it was ready to explode from pain.

Lying on her right side in a soft bed, Rylee Hawkins tried again and blinked slowly, opening her eyes a fraction more with each painful blink. The wall in front of her was actually a wall of glass supporting a set of patio doors with golden handles in the middle. Long, thick, navy blue curtains with thin cream inserts hung aside to display a balcony that housed a small wrought-iron table, two chairs, and two empty wine glasses. Tall buildings stood in view with the sun shining behind them, which increased the beating tempo in her head. Beside the comfortable bed, a solitary lamp sat upon a light-colored wood nightstand.

Nothing was familiar. Her gut told her it was a hotel room. She just had no idea which or where. Rylee was mildly aware that this was the point when most would panic. Instead, she could barely muster confusion. She squinted and ignored the shot of agony behind her eyes to read a sign flashing in the distance. The Las Vegas strip.

Closing her eyes, Rylee groaned. She and her FBI teammates had taken a long weekend break after closing a major case and thought this would be a great place to visit since Sara and Zack, two fellow agents, wanted to marry right away.

She searched her mind and came up mostly blank of the prior evening's events. They'd made it to the chapel, and an Elvis impersonator had married the two. While it wasn't how she'd want to be married, to each his own. Zack was a huge Elvis fan and Sara loved Zack. So, Elvis it was.

Thinking back, she remembered them going to a casino bar to celebrate. Then... nothing. With the monster hangover she had, she must've had way, and she meant *way* too much to drink. That wasn't like her.

Rylee considered it pretty fucked up she couldn't remember most of the night. She hoped she hadn't made a sloppy mess of herself. That type of embarrassment she didn't need with the other agents.

Swallowing past what felt like a wad of cotton lodged in her throat, she decided it was too early to deal with anything. Her flight wasn't until close to noon. First, she'd get up, relieve her full bladder, take several aspirin and close the damn drapes. Then she'd set her alarm and slip back into la-la-land. Maybe she'd wake refreshed and remember the evening. She just couldn't believe she'd been stupid enough to drink to excess like that.

"Good morning, beautiful," a gravelly, male voice said from behind her.

Her eyes flew open and she stiffened. Holy shit! A man was in her bed. How had she not realized that? Panic and shame flushed through her, washing away any discomfort from her hangover. What the hell had she done?

Without moving her head, she glanced around for a weapon and noticed the lamp was white. *Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.* She wasn't even in her room. The bedside lamps in her room were baby blue.

Rylee squeezed her eyes shut. She couldn't face what she'd done. Getting out of this room and away from this man was imperative.

She spotted clothing tossed haphazardly in front of the patio doors, like the owners had been unable to get them off fast enough when they'd come in from the balcony. She couldn't get to them without exposing herself to her bed partner. That she didn't want to do. At least not again... knowingly.

Since she never had a one-night stand before, she didn't know how to properly extricate herself. Did he expect her to roll over and continue what had obviously occurred the night before? Sexy as that voice sounded, it wouldn't happen.

When a hand touched her arm, she reacted and launched herself from the bed and to her clothing. Screw him seeing her naked body again. "I... need to... go-o," she stammered as she pulled her black dress over her head. Fuck it. She'd carry her undergarments. She'd just have to experience the walk of shame.

Rustling sheets and a slight squeak of the mattress alerted her to his exiting the bed. "Rylee, what's the matter?"

Crap. He knew her name, and she had no idea who he was. She couldn't even bring herself to look at him. "Look, last night was fun and all"—she snagged her black stilettos—"but that's all it was. I'll see you around." Or at least she assumed it had been. Her memory was still misbehaving.

He stood behind her. His close presence had her breathing heavily and trembling with need. Christ, had he slipped her a roofie or something? That could be why everything was blank. She hadn't had a drunken blackout since one stupid night when she'd been eighteen. After that, she'd learned to limit the amount of alcohol she consumed. She liked being in control too much.

She reached the desk to grab her purse, and he touched her arm again. Her heart hammering, she reacted in a flight-or-fight mode. Actually, she did both. She snatched the only weapon she saw—the large, ceramic desk lamp—and swung it at the man's head.

He staggered a moment, then collapsed to the floor.

She picked up her purse and rushed to the door only to stop for a moment as her conscience pricked her. Shit. Quickly, she moved back to the man, knelt down and checked his pulse. Steady. Good. No blood. Good. *Now, get the hell out of here, Rylee*, she told herself.

Yet, she had to take a good look at him. She didn't want to walk up to him one day, and find out later he happened to be the man she'd been so drunk she forgot she'd fucked.

Handsome. Sexy. Dark hair, albeit a bit longer than she'd usually choose. Toned body. She hadn't chosen a slouch, that was for sure. His face would not easily be forgotten. His strong jaw teased her memory. It seemed familiar, yet she couldn't recall ever seeing this man before. Maybe it was just teasing her memory from the evening before. Or, he could just look similar to someone she knew. She told herself to leave before he woke because he might want to kick the shit out of her for hitting him.

A niggling feeling told her that he wouldn't be that way, but she didn't plan to stick around and find out if her instincts were on target or not. Standing, she saw his wallet on the desk and reached for it. She wanted to know who he was. When he moaned, she snatched her empty hand back.

Her blood gushed through her veins, and her pulse skipped erratically. She had to escape. Back at the door, she opened it and peeked outside. Seeing no one in the hallway, she slipped through the opening and a sense of panic hit her full force, almost knocking her back into the room. *Please God, let this*

at least be my hotel, she pleaded. She peeked at the room number and exhaled loudly to see it was in the same design as hers. Shoulders sagging, she turned to the elevator.

Back in her room, four floors up, she stripped the dress over her head on her walk to the shower. She had to get clean. She'd fucking had a one-night stand with a stranger and didn't remember a moment of it. How did she wash away the dirt and disgust she felt worming their way around her insides?

The thought of his waking right away and seeking her out pushed her into action. He knew her name. At least her first name. She didn't plan to see if he knew more.

After a hot shower, she glanced at the time and rushed to pack her bag. Not realizing it had been so late in the morning, she'd taken a leisurely shower. If she took a taxi rather than relying on the courtesy transport, she hoped to make her flight check-in time.

She wanted nothing else to do with this city and doubted she'd ever return. Rylee just hoped she hadn't told the man in the bed too much about herself because she didn't wish for him to just show up out of the blue wanting more of whatever she'd given him.

With that thought, Rylee wanted to smack herself on the forehead and shout, "Stupid. Stupid. Stupid." But, her head still hurt too much for that abuse.

Once in the cab on the way to the airport, she remained rankled that the desk agent at the hotel hadn't given her the stranger's name, even after she'd flashed her badge. Admittedly, she knew they were following protocol, but she was hardly in the right mind for sane decisions, as made evident from the previous night. She sighed as she stared out of the vehicle's window. It had been her last chance to find out who he was without asking him directly, and since she'd knocked him unconscious, she couldn't do that.

Before long, she'd made it to the airport, in just enough time to check in and grab herself a coffee. Settling into her seat on the flight back to Baltimore, she took a deep breath and heaved a sigh of relief for being rid of the city. Finally, her body began to settle. The reaction to what she'd done—sleeping with the stranger and hitting him on the head for no reason—had sent an adrenaline rush spiraling through her to get the hell out of Vegas. Her trembling hands on her lap grabbed her attention. *Oh shit*. She couldn't get away fast enough.

One

Ten months later

RYLEE HAWKINS JUMPED at the sound of her name and looked around to the door. Dammit. She'd been thinking of her Vegas trip again. Most days she tried to pretend it was only a dream. Only, it'd been real as hell, and she couldn't forget it... or him.

Eight months later when she'd returned home from one of the worst ops in her life, she'd finally read his messages. He'd attempted to reach out to her a month after Vegas, and tried consecutively for a few months before he'd finally given up. The kicker was, she wasn't quite sure how she'd felt about that at the time. The fact he'd attempted to pursue her had done all sorts of things to her heart and libido, but so much time had passed since Vegas, she'd had no intention of reaching out to him. Plus, she had still been embarrassed about her drunken behavior.

Yet, Devon Hamilton—a man she'd never met before Vegas—discovered she was back on the grid and had managed to make one last attempt at contacting her. It was a call that she pushed fiercely to the back of her mind and buried as deeply as possible.

Only anger, confusion, and disappointment were attached to any memory and link to Vegas. It was best off forgotten and left in the past.

“Rylee,” an insistent voice called, breaching the bubble of her wayward thoughts.

She looked at the man attempting to gain her attention.

God, she was exhausted. It had been a shitty night. No longer an FBI agent, as co-owner and acting manager of Pynk Nightclub, she dealt with women who liked to let loose. That evening it'd been a woman who kept groping a waiter, a jealous customer's fiancé who just knew she was having an affair with the bartender, said bartender who made a pass at a different bride-to-be, and two women who passed out in the bathroom. She hated bachelorette party nights. They drew a crowd, but the headache wasn't necessarily worth the revenue. She'd have to speak with her stepsister and business partner, Madison Maxwell, about it when they saw each other next.

Who knew when that would be? As a supermodel, Madison traveled extensively. She'd purchased the club a year ago and had convinced Rylee to buy in with her so they'd have something to rely on after they were done with their current careers. It had only taken Rylee a few months and her growing frustration with the restraints enforced by the FBI to convince her to make the change sooner rather than later. While a club was a far cry from her experience and knowledge, she had known staying in the FBI would have eventually broken her. That had been about the time the club manager they'd hired had walked away without a word—with one of the bartenders. Now, to keep herself busy, and paid, she ran the business. At least she'd finally been able to put her business degree to use.

The male voice repeated her name.

She smiled at him. Brent Fuller. Not the man in her dream, but a damn fine guy. He'd stayed over from a get-together with his buddies to walk her to her car. He was a blond-headed, fun-loving Immigration and Customs Agent she'd met while they were both undercover on her last job with the bureau, and he'd clung to her ever since. Yet, he'd never been pushy. In fact, she wasn't sure if he truly wanted her, or if it was just fun play for him to try to win the one who wouldn't drool at his feet.

She stood from the leather chair in the manager's office and walked around the wooden desk to where he'd been waiting to escort her out of the building.

“Are you sure you won't marry me?” A glint of humor laced Brent's voice.

She smiled at his persistence. “Yes, I'm sure. You know as well as I do that it wouldn't last. We'd end up hating each other.” Without a spark, and there was none, which she admitted was a shame because he was handsome and kind and would be a great Prince Charming, she couldn't do it without something holding them together. Besides—

He placed a hand on her arm, then lifted his other hand to lightly stroke her face.

A ripple of unease infiltrated her body.

“You know that won't happen to us. I won't allow it to happen.” His mouth turned up into a sweet, yet determined smile.

She shook her head. Had he stopped joking? “Brent, we don't love each other. I told you I'd only marry for love.”

“Ah, that's where you're wrong. I love you, Rylee.”

Stunned, she swallowed hard and with her heart pounding, she could only stare. Could that be true? Good grief. What had she done to lead him on so? She'd never even allowed him to kiss or hold her. Well, he had held her when she'd cried over losing track of the girls during their joint mission. But, that hadn't been intimate. At least, not to her. She had to stop this now because she couldn't tell if he was still having fun or being dead serious.

Brent placed his index finger over her lips, effectively silencing her. "Don't say anything now. Just think about it. I mean it. I want to marry you because I love you."

Without giving her a chance to respond, he swooped down and kissed her, a mere touch of the lips. He pulled back before she could push him away. "Now, let's get you home to that ice cream you've been craving."

Rylee stood, bewildered at this change of atmosphere for them.

He laughed and reached his hand out for the keys to lock the front door of the club. Pynk had been a refuge of sorts after she'd left the FBI. While she'd come out of her last op without injury, they'd lost track of some of the young girls Keith Westbrook had sold into sexual slavery. Her gut clenched at what the girls must be enduring.

Hired as a maid for that creep Westbrook, she'd kept a close eye on the girls he had kidnapped. When the time finally came, as a housekeeper, she'd snuck into their room to prepare the girls for their rescue by the bureau that evening. They had been so scared, and she couldn't blame them for their fear. The fear of knowing something was going to happen... but not knowing what, had to be turmoil. But, Rylee knew the plan for the girls. That night, the girls were scheduled to be sold to the highest bidder. The FBI would get both sides of the sick equation and save the girls in the process.

Only, two of the seven girls had not been there that morning. According to the remaining victims, the two had been taken during the night. They hadn't seen who had snatched them since their room was kept dark.

The FBI made the raid as planned and saved the remaining five girls, plus they arrested the sickos who'd sought to purchase them. But they couldn't find anything about where the missing two girls were located. Misty and Mandy—identical twins—had vanished.

She'd failed them. Sure, she wasn't the only person who'd worked the case, but she'd held a certain personal responsibility for them.

"Rylee?"

Placing a smile on her face, she willed the memory to vanish and brought herself back to answering Brent. "I'll think about it." She hated giving him hope, but after the night she'd had... the daydream of Devon... and thinking of how she'd failed the girls, this discussion was the last thing she wanted to deal with.

In a synchronous manner that suggested they'd done this quite frequently together, he switched the lights off while she set the alarm. Amidst the beeps of the security system, they exited through the heavy wooden door. As Brent locked it, Rylee glanced around the parking lot with only their two cars in attendance.

Pynk was an exclusive nightclub. She'd originally scoffed at the idea of her managing a bar. How would she handle the rowdiness that was always there—even if exclusive? Thankfully, the bouncers kept everyone in check. And, they had plenty of the burly men watching over the place because partying men and women could definitely be a handful. Especially when they were drunk.

She snorted. She knew what could happen when one drank too much. Her Vegas experience was a prime example.

Brent turned to her and raised his eyebrows with a big smile on his face. "What's so funny?"

She hadn't told him about what had occurred on that trip. She couldn't. She didn't need anyone else knowing about her shame of not remembering. Sometimes she wished she could remember her night with Devon. From what she'd learned, he was a good man. And he was damn fine to boot. It didn't matter how close they were as friends, she wouldn't speak the words. "Just thinking of the Lawson bachelorette party tonight. I think the bride may feel worse than the groom tomorrow."

He laughed and shook his head a fraction. "You may be right. I saw the women leave. Her friends tried to support her, but they all fell. The bouncer helped them into the limo. It's a smart idea to have car service as part of those packages."

"That was Madison's idea." She turned with Brent in the direction of the parking lot. Several lights were busted out in the parking lot, so she picked up her step, hurrying to her car. Even with Brent, a little

apprehension hit her with the near darkness. “She’s been a stickler about the rules for the club. Number one was no drinking and driving.” Club membership, or party packages, included a ride home by taxi or car service for anyone who had any alcoholic beverage. Oddly enough, most were always agreeable on that front.

A noise reached her ears and she looked around nervously, stepping closer to Brent.

“Lookie who we have here.” A deep voice reached out from the shadows as a tall man stepped into the dim light.

Rylee froze, trying her hardest to calm her pounding heart. She’d stepped away from the agency, having had enough of dealing with thugs. Wanting out of the situation as quickly as possible, she surreptitiously looked around for the best way to escape.

Brent stiffened beside her.

She turned her head and almost cried out at the sight of a second man, with arms the size of tree trunks, holding a gun to Brent’s temple. *Holy fuck!* These men had slipped up on them almost noiselessly.

Adrenaline and fear struck their way through her bloodstream, the mixture confusing her system.

“You can have my wallet. It’s in my right back pocket.” Brent’s calm voice surprised her. Trained agent or not, a gun to one’s head could change one’s reaction. Yet, his demeanor ratcheted down her nerves, enough to think clearly. To work out how they could get out of this mess.

“I don’t give a shit about your wallet, pretty boy.” The thug who’d first spoken pulled back his jacket to display his weapon in a shoulder holster.

Shock reverberated in her mind at learning this wasn’t a robbery. She had to do something, but had no idea what. Fear held her immobile. While it hadn’t been long since she’d left the agency, her reactions were no longer the same. She wished she knew how to read Brent’s thoughts.

“Rylee, run,” the man who’d just poured his heart out and admitted to love her whispered.

No way in hell would she leave him to deal with this alone. Unfortunately, she and Brent were without weapons. At least she was. As a civilian, she didn’t carry anymore, and she cursed herself for not doing so. Brent might be armed, but she couldn’t quite reach inside his jacket without notice.

The sound of an engine had her looking away from the men. A black limousine pulled up and stopped beside them. Her eyes darted from it to the figure who’d spoken as he strode into the light,

walking to the car. With each step, a crunch echoed around the dimly lit lot. Following the man's progress, she assumed it was broken glass from the security bulb under his feet. Immediately, her thoughts went to the camera. She hoped it wasn't broken and was recording.

"What do you want?" She forced anger into her words, pleased that no syllable quivered.

Her stomach soured when the man holding the weapon to Brent laughed.

Brent's voice stood strong in his demand, "Rylee, when we're out of this, we'll sit down to peach cobbler."

She stiffened. That was a code for them that things were not going to go their way, and he wanted her to leave him. He thought he might die. *Bullshit! She wouldn't leave him to that fate. They'd find a way to escape.*

A grunt sounded from the goon holding the limo door open. "Get in the car, bitch, and we leave him alone. Our boss wants to talk with you."

"Boss? Who the hell are you people?" she questioned.

"Rylee honey, come here and see me." The voice that drifted from the vehicle sent a chill scraping its way up her spine. *No. Not him.*

Dave Westbrook was Keith Westbrook's son. He'd been cleared in the investigation of his father's sex slave business, since he'd been clueless of what Keith had been involved in, or so it had seemed. His presence sent her senses reeling more than she thought possible.

What could he want? He'd been ecstatic when they'd arrested his father. There'd been no love lost between them. Yet, it was his father. His meal ticket. Did he blame her for it all? She'd only been one of many agents involved. Shit. Brent had been another.

"I have information for you on those two missing girls."

Dave's admission from the vehicle's interior darkness caught her attention. Misty and Mandy. Would he really help them? She had been searching for the two girls since she'd left the FBI, but she'd hit nothing but dead ends. According to her FBI friends, she was doing more than the bureau to find them.

Her heartbeat raced at the thought of finally finding the twins. She had to know what the man knew, but she wouldn't leave Brent to these men. "I'll go, but only if Brent is released."

"Get in the damn car." Tall, dark, and menacing, the guy by the car door made his order and frustration clear.

Brent bit out through clenched teeth, “Rylee, they’re going to kill me no matter what you do. You run and save yourself.” He no longer held back by talking in code, and there was no way she would be able to outrun a gun.

The man holding the weapon laughed again. *Fucking asshole. I’ll remember that snub-nosed face for after this is over.*

She turned back to the man holding the limo door open since he appeared to be the leader of the two thugs and narrowed her eyes. “I promise to come quietly if you let him go.”

“Or,” the man replied in a slow, calculating voice, “I can kill him now and toss your ass in the car.”

“Just put them both in the damn car, Chuck,” Dave snapped.

Chuck—thug by the car door—shrugged at her. “Sure, whatever. Just get the fuck in the car, or I’ll put you in it.”

“Rylee, save yourself,” Brent pleaded, his eyes sincere and desperate.

She touched his forearm like he’d touched hers earlier, tender and loving. “It’s the only option. I won’t chance them shooting you.” She dropped her voice so only he could hear. “Besides, we’re stronger together, and he might know where the girls are.”

The man holding the weapon to Brent’s head laughed again, letting her know she hadn’t been quiet enough.

It was that possibility that had her turning and entering the limo, keeping as far away from Dave as possible. His smile sickened her, but for the moment, she had to trust him. When Brent slid in beside her, she breathed a short sigh of relief.

Dave, sitting on the side bench seat, poured himself a drink as the limo moved forward. “I’m starting Dad’s business over again.”

That statement and the determination resounding behind it stunned her to silence. He’d always turned a blind eye to how his father made money. He just went about his playboy life, spending like he had a bottomless pit of funds at his disposal. She’d always wondered if he secretly knew what was happening. Now, he wanted to start the disgusting business again? She couldn’t picture Dave being that ruthless. It must boil down to money. Since they’d taken his father’s funds, he’d been left broke and in need of an income source.

“I thought you had no idea what your father was doing?” She studied his reaction to see if they’d got it all wrong when they’d cleared him.

His laugh set her nerves on edge. “I knew. I didn’t participate, but I knew. And, he didn’t let me forget that I was a disappointment for not being part of his enterprise.” He gave an insolent shrug. “Do you think he’d turn in his own son? The one he asked to keep the good name going?”

“So, you have no problem doing this? Kidnapping and selling young girls?” Anger boiled in Brent’s words.

Settling back in his seat, Dave tossed his arm across the top of the seat and crossed a leg over a thigh. “I have a partner who knows exactly what to do.” He sipped his drink, but his eyes didn’t leave hers.

She wanted to slap the smugness from his voice. “If they know what to do, what do they need you for?” Rylee clasped and squeezed Brent’s hand before releasing it. They would find out what they needed to save the girls, but they had to think of how to get out of this mess. Why would Dave tell them and then release them? She cursed her delayed instincts. Something definitely wasn’t right.

“Because, I have my dad’s contacts, the ones the FBI never found. And, since my dad didn’t turn the buyers in, I have the family name to trade on.” He shot her a menacing smile. “And, the twins will be the first to go.”

“What—” She cleared her throat and started again, “What do you mean?” It appeared that the information he had for her about the girls hadn’t been to help her find them, but to brag that he had them and planned to profit from them. Her muscles tightened as she restrained herself from leaping across the car’s interior and punching the bastard in the nose.

“They’ll be glad to see you again. I’m tired of hearing their whining and crying all the time.”

Her spine stiffened and she sat straighter. See each other? Why would he take her to them? *Oh no. Brent.* This shit just got worse. *What will they do with him?* She took a deep breath and held it. *Settle down and think. There has to be a way to get out of this... for all of us. Keep him talking until you figure it out or Brent acts.* “How did you find the girls?”

“Don’t you know?” He laughed at her apparent bewilderment. “Good ole Dad gave me the twins in hopes that my tastes would change,” he spat out with bitterness.

Dave liked men, and it rankled his father to no end, especially considering his father's line of business.

"Where are they?" Her pulse pounded, awaiting his slow response. They'd find out this information then prepare to escape.

"I have a friend keeping them safe for me." He saluted them with the glass in his hand. "Untouched."

She released the breath she'd been holding. Her temper flared at the thought of how afraid they must be. "Why are you taking me to see them?" *Which means I won't be allowed to leave, nor will Brent.* She prayed Brent had figured out what they would need to do to remain alive because she couldn't.

"Two reasons really. I need someone to take care of them and the ones we add. Plus"—he drilled his stare into her as her heart plummeted—"you will pay for sending my father away and making me have to work. I have a client Dad lined up who wants *you*. Consider it his revenge from behind bars."

"Like hell—" Brent's angry words were cut off by a jolt.

A loud crunching sound of metal against metal from a car hitting them preceded the jar from behind that sent Rylee flying forward into the barrier that separated the passengers from the driver before she slid to the floor. Pain radiated through her head, and she could do nothing more than lie there, cradling it between her palms. A warm liquid slid over her hands. It hurt so much that she couldn't bring herself to open her eyes. But, she had to move. She and Brent needed to escape. She'd try something else to find the girls.

A heavy weight of a full body pinned her to the spot. Her vision began to tunnel, zooming in and out of focus as she fought it with her will to remain conscious. She couldn't pass out. She had to be in control. It was their only chance.

The sound of fabric swishing across leather alerted her that one of the men had returned to a seat. The body on top of her groaned but didn't move.

"Rylee?" Brent whispered. His voice was close to her ear.

He was the man who covered her, and thank God he was alive. For her, at least nothing hurt severe enough to prevent her from escape. "I can't breathe. You're too heavy."

He grunted and shifted, and then she felt his arm move between them. A sigh escaped her at the sound of a gun being slipped from its holster.

As he began lifting his body from hers, the car door flew open. Rylee's view, still blocked by Brent, meant she wasn't able to see who'd opened it. She assumed it was whoever had hit them.

"No!" The panic lacing Dave's words sent fear pulsing through her.

Before she had time to speak, three shots rang out. She cringed at the loudness and then barely bit back her scream as Brent slumped back on her. Holding her breath, the sobs threatening to escape, Rylee then heard the door being slammed closed.

Fuck! She opened her eyes, not wanting to turn and look at Brent. But she had to know. Angling her head, her gaze connected with Brent's lifeless eyes. *God no!*

Trying to keep it together, if only for a few more moments, she peeked around him as best as she could without moving. She saw Dave. Bile rose in her throat when she zoned in on his blood and brain matter on the seat.

Trying to get her brain to work before her emotions took over she realized two things. Brent hadn't gotten off a shot and the person who had killed both men was still out there.

Rylee looked back to Brent and squeezed her eyes shut as a tear rolled down her cheek, followed by another. He'd blocked her from the shooter's vision. If he hadn't, she knew she'd also be dead. It was her fault he'd been here instead of back at the club. And he'd paid with his life.

She fought the racking sob welling inside her at the painful loss of her friend and attempted a few calming breaths. She couldn't lose it; she had to move. Closing her eyes, ignoring the tears and what she assumed was blood staining her cheeks, she knew moving put her at risk. It might shift the limo and alert the killer to her presence. They'd left an unexpected witness. It didn't matter that she hadn't actually witnessed anything.

More gunshots broke the silence. She had a sinking feeling that the driver had been murdered too. What happened to Dave's goons? They must not have followed. Unless that had been them. No, it couldn't be because they knew she was here. So where were they?

What the hell did she do now? Obviously no one was riding to their rescue. She had no idea who had killed the men, and she'd be damned if she even attempted to chase them. She was a civilian, alone,

and with a bleeding head. She released a deep, shuddering sigh. Without Dave, she had nothing to give the FBI about the girls except hearsay. Hell, they wouldn't believe her that he was involved. Not after they'd cleared him.

The squeal of tires, a vehicle racing away broke the silence, yet she waited. With all quiet for minutes, she knew it was time. Rylee pushed aside the agonizing pain and crawled from beneath her friend. She said a short prayer and kissed Brent on the forehead before closing his eyes. Then, she emptied both men's pockets.

When she found what she needed, Rylee ran.

Two

DEVON HAMILTON STARED at the document in his hands and called himself every form of fool possible. All he had to do was sign his name. It wasn't a difficult task. It was just a damn signature. He'd done it hundreds of times in his life. Yet, he couldn't bring himself to pick up a pen. He wasn't a quitter and signing this document would shout, "I quit."

The whole situation didn't seem real. How could it? To him, it truly wasn't. Yet, here in black and white, it was about as real as it got.

Fuck. He'd thought once he'd stepped back and waited, that things would've turned in his favor. But life had a way of surprising the hell out of you.

If only he could remember....

The sound of shuffling feet and men's voices entering the room interrupted his thoughts. He slid the paper into his desk in the HIS war room for safekeeping. This document contained his problem... his decision... his secret. He'd have to deal with it later. Right now, he had a job to do.

The room filled and he confirmed all necessary personnel was in attendance. Well, all except Trent McKenzie, their half brother. Trent had another skin graft surgery two days prior. His physical healing was progressing well, but he'd forever be scarred. His emotional healing was another story. He'd sacrificed a lot to save Amber, their niece's life from a terrorist bomber.

Dealing with his near fatal injury, and learning he was a Hamilton, the family had agreed to give Trent the time and space he'd requested to figure out what he planned to do with his life. No way though would Devon allow him to slip away and disappear like he feared the man planned.

The eldest Hamilton brother, Jesse, brought the meeting to order. Hamilton Investigation & Security, or HIS, had been Jesse's idea. He'd wanted a family business that utilized each member of the family's skills. Jesse had built his as a U.S. Army Ranger and FBI agent. After Devon, the second eldest left the CIA, his brother approached him with the idea, but he'd scoffed at it thinking his brothers would never leave their alphabet agencies, even to work with family. His younger brothers had wanted those

jobs since they were boys. That was his thought... until Matt left the Navy SEALs. The three banded together and created HIS and waited patiently for the rest of the family to join them.

Devon smiled to himself. After a while, each family member had left his or her employ, and it became the business Jesse had planned with only one holdout for partnership—Trent. He'd been happy as a team member even after being shot to protect Megan, AJ's wife, and almost killed saving Amber, Em and Jake's daughter. But, he wouldn't commit to joining the family owning the company. Hell, he'd been a surprise addition to the family and dealing with it had been hard on Trent.

A busy business it was. They had a team of eleven men, mostly from law enforcement and government agencies, and two K-9s, but they needed to add talented people to the team. He didn't care as long as the brilliant men and women added value in the field. Value he couldn't add.

He glanced at the pile of requests for their immediate services. These potential clients were damn lucky the planned assignment canceled at the last moment. Otherwise, HIS wouldn't be available. Why the hell couldn't people plan ahead? Most knew their boss's travel schedule and knew he or she wanted a protection detail.

Devon worked hard to schedule jobs for the team to ensure each member had time to work with time to relax and play. Hell, it seemed that lately, half of the slotted time off had been used to protect his brothers' new wives. He wasn't complaining about that. He was glad they'd taken those steps or Jesse, AJ, and Jake wouldn't be married to great women... and happy. Christ, Jake might not even be home.

He wanted to slam his hand on the desk and shout in anger. It had almost taken too long to find their foster brother. And the FBI delay in retrieving Jake had cut it down to the wire. By not finding him until he did, Devon had almost failed the family in the worst way possible.

“Dev?” Jesse questioned.

Catching the raised eyebrows of his older brother, Devon put an abrupt halt to that train of thought and joined in the conversation. He recounted the information the family needed to make their decisions. “As for priority, I suggest we accept the top two jobs. They're both simple security details and won't screw with future job timelines.” He shrugged and shook his head in exasperation at the potential clients piss-poor planning. “Last-minute travel plans for each. Taking these options would leave the team with a short break before we send them on their next scheduled assignment. We know the investigation

requests could take longer than we have open on the schedule.” He waited to speak again until after the group looked over the material. “Now, the third job is interesting.”

Em perked up. “That one is mine while you’re away.”

As one of the newest partners, their baby sister, Emily Hamilton, or more recently Emily Cavanaugh, definitely hadn’t allowed her brothers to dictate to her. And they wouldn’t in this case either. As an accountant, it was right up her alley. A possible embezzling of funds.

She rolled her chair closer to him and elbowed him in the ribs. “Dev already agreed we could do it.”

Quite a few eyebrows were raised at him in question. Damn her impatience. He’d told her that he’d get the group to agree to allow her to run the case, but it would be done his way. He’d managed them long enough to know what would sway their minds to his way of thinking. Turning his attention to Jesse, he smiled. “Well, it makes sense if the team takes the top two jobs. Em and I won’t really be needed.”

“You could come with us this time,” Jesse suggested with a pointed look at Devon.

Panic clawed at him. Go out in the field? He hadn’t held a weapon other than at the range in what, four years? He almost snorted aloud in disgust. Like he didn’t remember the date Greg Donovan, a fellow CIA agent, had been killed.

“Nah.” Matt shook his head while he spoke, saving Devon from blundering through a response. “He might mess up those pretty hands.” His playful wink scoffed at Devon’s pride. “And then where would we be when we need that computer magic shit?”

Jesse narrowed his eyes at Devon.

The assessment by his brother ripped into him. Sometimes he wondered if his brothers knew what had happened... why Devon had left the CIA. Yet, they’d never asked him to go out in the field with them... before today.

He’d made a deal with Jesse when they’d started the business that he would be the logistics behind the operation, but he wouldn’t brandish a weapon with them. Sure, he’d ensure they had the latest in weaponry and security, but he participated from behind his computer. It made sense. They needed someone to take care of the administrative junk and find any information they could to be successful in each case. He’d been doing just that, and he knew he was damn good at it. The CIA had taught him well.

But, he'd also given in and still went to the shooting range with them regularly. It had been important to his brothers that he at least knew how to use a weapon to their satisfaction and they thought to teach him.

Jesse eventually shrugged. "Okay. Let's talk through these two jobs and get on the move."

Devon released a sigh of relief. The burden he carried became heavier every time the team went out on assignment, and he stayed back. He worked hard on his end to overcome it, but it always remained in the background.

Kate, Jesse's wife and an ex-FBI agent, cleared her throat from beside her husband.

Devon didn't know why he'd purchased chairs for their war room. No one except he and Em sat and that was because they were in front of computers. The group stood, crowded close around an oval oak meeting table in the middle of the room. They left an opening to be able to view where he and his sister sat. No one appeared to notice the smart boards and screens on the walls. They wouldn't look at them until their mission planning began. They preferred to review the potential jobs on paper. He went to a great deal of work to make the room interactive. He'd bring them to the twenty-first century if it killed him. Hell, wait until they saw the new meeting table he'd ordered with a touch-screen in it. Giddiness bubbled inside him just thinking about it.

When no one acknowledged her, Kate cleared her throat again. "I want us to take a case. It's not in the pile. It's for an old FBI friend of mine."

"What type of case is it?" Matt, the peacemaker brother, glanced up from the papers in his hand. "Do we have time?"

"I'm not quite sure."

Heads bobbed up from reading and turned to her in curiosity.

"Thing is," she paused and bit her bottom lip, "she hasn't said she needs help."

Matt shook his head. "Then why are you asking?"

"Yeah. I remember how it went when another FBI agent I know didn't feel she needed help." Jesse waggled his eyebrows at his wife suggestively, obviously reminding her of their time together.

Devon smiled at the two of them, remembering the hell of a ride Kate had given his older brother when her life had been in danger, and Jesse had felt the need to step in as her protector when she'd told

him she didn't need it. That'd been right after Devon had returned from Las Vegas. His smile faltered, and he closed his eyes for a moment. *Vegas. It's been eleven months. You need to fix this, Devon.* He had to push that away for the time being. He needed to focus on this meeting and getting the team squared away. They counted on him for that. Then, he could deal with that issue. "What's going on that you think she needs our help?"

"Well, she called to tell me she was going off the grid but wanted someone to know where she was... just in case. I couldn't get her to tell me why." She shuddered a bit too dramatically. "It kind of freaked me out."

"Maybe she just wanted to be alone." Matt shrugged. "Doesn't mean we need to ride to her rescue."

The men wouldn't brush off Kate. "Well, there's more. About a month ago, an ICE agent—someone people thought she might be dating—was shot and killed." She glanced around the group. "*With* someone linked to her last FBI case. She's no longer in the bureau and is wanted for questioning. She and her stepsister, Madison, own a nightclub in Baltimore. Even Madison pleads not knowing where she is. This is the first time anyone has heard from her since the incident."

Devon's blood pressure began to spike. *It can't be.* The notion of this woman, an ex-FBI agent at that, and her sister named Madison owning a club rang serious alarm bells in his mind. He wanted to whirl around and pound on his keyboard to find out everything the cyber-world had on the case. The urge almost overpowered him. *And what the hell was this dating?*

Tamping down that urge, he attempted to act nonchalant, as if it were just another potential client case. "Do you think she killed him and is on the run?"

Kate shook her head. "Not possible." Looking to her husband, her voice turned pleading. "I really think she's in trouble."

Devon wanted to ask more, but his tongue was tied. If she was really in trouble....

"I get that you have that feeling, sweetheart, but these people"—Jesse waved the printouts in his hand to emphasize his point—"are definitely in need of us and have requested our services."

"I know that, but I want to go see her. I need to see for myself that she's okay. Something doesn't feel right to me. She's not someone who runs and hides."

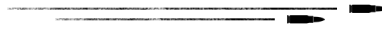
Jesse, the final decision maker of the group, dropped the papers to the table and placed his hands on her arms. “I’ll tell you what. These are short, simple jobs that won’t require everyone. While we’re on assignment, you can stay behind and visit her to set your mind at ease, and Dev and Em can look into the murders. It shouldn’t keep them away from the third assignment.” He turned and smirked at Em, but love and pride shown in his eyes. Focusing again on his wife, he continued, “Will that work?” He cocked his head questioningly. “By the way, which friend is it? Do I know her?”

“Of course you do.”

Devon’s heart beat double-time in anticipation.

“Her name is Rylee Hawkins. She’s—”

Devon surged from his chair. “I’ll go with you,” he blurted, stunning the room’s occupants to silence.



“JESSE will have your ass for booking us into first class for this trip,” Kate told Devon as he drove them in a rental car through the mountains of Colorado.

He glanced her way then turned his attention back to the road. “You wanted to get here fast, didn’t you?” He didn’t wait for an answer before continuing, “There weren’t any economy seats until later in the day, and it’s a hell of a lot cheaper than grabbing a private jet like he tends to do. Besides, it was this or wait, and I had the feeling that wouldn’t have worked for you.” Truth be told, he’d already checked into a private jet when he’d had trouble finding a quick flight for the two of them. In his mind, there’d been no question on their immediate response, even if Rylee hadn’t asked for help. He’d done some quick research before they’d departed. Whether Rylee knew it or not, she was in a damn pickle. The FBI wanted her for questioning in the death of the government agent and one scum of society’s offspring. Disappearing screamed she had something to hide.

He couldn’t figure out why she hadn’t asked for help though. Did she plan to just hide out until it all blew over? She had to know that wouldn’t happen, especially as she knew how the bureau worked. Even if she wasn’t involved, she knew both of the victims too well in the minds of the investigators. They’d assume she knew something.

Devon kicked himself over and over again for not checking on what she'd been doing lately. When he'd received the papers, he'd been so taken aback, that his need to keep track of her had died out.

"You're right," Kate said. "Thank you."

They slowed as a family of deer hopped across the road ahead. The large buck stopped and looked their way, almost menacingly, until the others were safe on the other side, sliding into the woods.

"So," Kate dragged the word out, "tell me why you're here."

Too many reasons to count. Mostly, he had a nagging suspicion Rylee wasn't hiding from the FBI but from who killed Brent and Dave. It appeared to be a professional kill. He assumed a hit. Had she witnessed it? If so, she should've asked for help. Then again, he didn't really believe she'd ask him for anything. "What do you mean?"

"You know what I mean, Devon Michael Hamilton."

Out of the corner of his eye, he caught her crossing her arms over her chest. He knew she'd tossed in his middle name to rile him. He'd seen her do it with her husband often enough. The woman had a stubborn streak that rivaled any he'd seen from his sister.

"I understand you don't do anything unless it's behind a computer. And, as far as I know, you've never met her. So, my question is why now?"

Hell, she'd find out soon enough. He was damn surprised she didn't already know. Once he'd found out the two women were close, he'd expected a confrontation from Kate long ago. But it'd never happened.

He may as well unburden his soul while she couldn't inflict damage on him without running the risk of him crashing the car and maybe killing her in the process. "Right before you and I met, I'd taken a trip to Vegas for a tech conference."

"Rylee went to Vegas about that time also."

He waited for her to process those two statements together.

"Wait. Are you saying you do know her?"

Devon glanced at her and hesitated before speaking, "Apparently, I do."

"Apparently? What kind of bullshit is that?"

“Something happened while I was there, and I lost most of my memory of the weekend. All I know is that I’d been prepared to drop a boatload of money on new equipment, and then I woke up in the hospital not knowing what had happened the prior twenty-four hours.”

She relaxed her arms. “Is that when you met her? During the time you lost your memory? Has your memory returned then?”

“Yes and no. Jesse arrived shortly thereafter. The doctor said I’d either been hit on the head or had fallen and hit it hard enough to knock me out. By the time we’d returned to the hotel, maid service had cleaned the room. Jesse found out about a broken lamp the maid had disposed of. The question was still whether I’d been hit on the head or knocked it off the desk when I fell.”

“I’m surprised Jesse didn’t take the lamp pieces and have them dusted for prints.”

Devon chuckled in remembrance of his brother’s high-handedness at the hotel. “He’d wanted to do just that, but I finally convinced him that we’d have hundreds of people to speak with since we knew maid service wasn’t always that efficient. Hell, there was no telling the last time the lamp had been wiped down.” He’d fought digging the pieces out of the garbage, but he’d known it would set up a ton of wild goose chases and probably no answers.

“Nothing had been stolen from my room, so I couldn’t imagine someone just coming in and hitting me over the head.” He flashed her a smile that he’d learned women appreciated. “I’m real likable.”

She playfully swatted at him and laughed. “The most likable of the bunch. Now, get on with it.”

He sobered again. “We checked with security to see if someone had left my room. Some idiot on their tech team had placed the security tapes in a view only status, and no one had known they hadn’t been recording until we asked to see them.”

“Humph. I hope they fired that moron.”

“They didn’t have to.” He shook his head. “Jesse dressed the kid down so much, he resigned. Probably to get away from your husband.”

A proud smile split her face. “That sounds like the Jesse I met.”

“We’re glad you were able to squash that part of our brother who had become almost unbearable. However, sometimes, when that Jesse reemerges, it’s a sight to behold.”

The car's navigation directed them to turn onto a dirt road. He and Kate turned to each other and raised their eyebrows in unison. Rylee definitely wanted to be out of the way.

"It's a vacation cabin she's rented. Now, quit changing the subject. What else happened?"

"All right, pushy." He chuckled at his sister-in-law. She was about to hate him, but he loved that she was a part of their family. He liked Jesse's first wife, *God rest her soul*, but Kate brought out the best in his brother. He wanted something like that and hoped the woman they sought might be the one to be his better half.

"Enough of that. What about Rylee? How does she fit into this?"

"Christ, woman, I'm trying to tell you."

Kate waved her hand in a circle motion to encourage him to get on with his story.

"At the hotel, the maid whispered to me about condoms in the garbage. I've had one-night stands before—"

Kate's snort of disgust reached his ears.

He inwardly chuckled at her prudish censure but kept on telling his tale as if she hadn't interrupted. "But this freaked me out for some reason. So, I rushed me and Jesse out of town and didn't want to look back."

He slowed as the car dipped into a washed-out hole in the road. "Jesse pushed me to look into it, but I kept putting it off because I didn't want to know if I'd done something unforgivable. I might've hired a hooker or something, and I didn't think I could handle that if I had."

"Devon, you wouldn't have hired a hooker. Enough women fall at your feet for you to even need to do so."

"Yeah, well, after a while, I couldn't stand the suspense. I mean, did she hit me on the head? If so, why? No money was missing. Had I hurt her in some way? So, I started sneaking into some of the businesses on the strip's security footage that was still available. It wasn't easy considering it'd taken almost a month to get up the nerve and most places don't keep their security tapes very long—no matter the law." He took a deep breath, held it for a moment and released it in a long, loud sigh. "It took a while, but I found footage of me walking with a woman down the sidewalk. I did facial recognition and got a hit."

“Rylee.”

He nodded and tightened his lips. “Yes, Rylee.” He’d been laughing and holding the hand of a dark auburn-haired beauty. They’d only had eyes for each other and had bumped into enough people to unwittingly prove their distraction from the world around them.

Devon couldn’t find enough footage to piece together their entire evening. Not even to show that she’d been in the hotel with him. He knew that she’d been there though.

Once he’d learned her name, he’d checked the registry—with some difficulty—and there she’d been. Rylee Hawkins had checked out of the hotel before the maid had discovered him and he’d been taken to the hospital.

He’d called her a cold-hearted bitch for possibly leaving him like that. Yet, he couldn’t hang onto that anger because maybe he’d deserved her need to run from him. Maybe she hadn’t hit him. What had happened that night had consumed him. He’d had to find out so he’d reached out to her.

Kate’s mood flashed to anger. “What the hell did you do to her, Devon? She never would’ve hit you if you hadn’t done something.”

“I tried to find her... to apologize....” For what exactly he hadn’t known, but he’d known it was necessary. It was always necessary for a man to apologize. “I couldn’t contact her though as she’d left on an undercover assignment.”

“I remember the night she left my house for it. Actually,” she said and brightened, “you came later that evening. You two didn’t miss each other by much. Did you know about her then?”

He shook his head. “No. I was still acting like a pussy about finding out. It was while we searched for that maniac after you that I couldn’t stand it any longer and began to seek out the truth.”

She huffed out a breath. “I knew something had gone wrong on her trip. She wouldn’t talk about it. I kind of figured it involved a man. Hang on, if she knew who you were, she would’ve surely said something to me.”

He’d thought the same thing when he’d found out who she was. “Maybe. Maybe not. You’d just met us when Arthur sent her undercover. Maybe she found out I was Jesse and AJ’s brother and didn’t feel comfortable telling you.” He shrugged. “Anyhow, she’s back.”

“Did you know that before I said something to the team?”

“I’ve kept tabs.” Seeing Rylee and how happy they’d been on tape, he couldn’t just let her go without knowing what had changed that. Hell, he’d wanted to know how they’d met. The chemistry between them could’ve melted the surveillance tapes he’d watched. And he’d watched them over and over again until each movement had been ingrained upon his memory.

“Have you tried to contact her since she’s returned?”

“Yes.”

The Australian male voice that Kate had programmed into the navigation system announced the final turn. His pulse rate increased in anticipation. He’d see her in only a few more minutes. What would her reaction be? Hell, he didn’t even know how he’d react. He still hadn’t decided how to play things with her. No approach seemed to be foolproof, considering he didn’t know everything.

“And I take it she didn’t respond. What if things didn’t go well between you two? Maybe this isn’t such a good idea to have you along.”

“You’re wrong, Kate. She did respond.” He slowed to a stop on the one-lane dirt road and looked at Kate to gauge her reaction before continuing to their destination. “You see, we got married that night in Vegas.”

She gasped as her eyes widened, and her hand flew to her mouth. “What did she say? Wait! I thought you didn’t remember what happened.”

“I don’t.” He turned back to the front of the car and eased his foot back on the accelerator. “The hotel later mailed me something that had slid under the bed and hadn’t been found until a refurbishment.” He released a sigh. “Our marriage certificate. I double-checked and it’s legit.”

Kate swore. “Why didn’t you tell anyone? Why aren’t you two together?”

“And tell everyone what? Oh, hey, I apparently got smashed, got married, and don’t remember it. And, by the way, she hit me on the head and wants nothing to do with me so I must’ve been one hell of an asshole.”

Kate cringed. “You’ve got a point. Jesse would want to fix it, and the rest of the group would kick your ass.” She shifted in the seat. “Hang on. I thought you didn’t drink.”

He swallowed hard. “I haven’t since that night.”

“But, why stop drinking?”

His reasoning sounded stupid, even to his own ears, but it worked for him. “Because, in the videos I found of us, I had a drink in my hand quite a few times, which means if I did something stupid, I figure alcohol must’ve pushed me to do it.”

“But, you could’ve truly fallen in your room, and Rylee had nothing to do with it.”

Kate had a point that he’d tossed around several times, but someone had been in his bed, and he’d put down everything he owned that it was Rylee. “It’s possible.”

“So, what are you going to do? You still haven’t told me what she said, and something tells me she’s not going to be happy you’re with me.”

The small, log cabin came into view. The getaway embodied the rustic look nestled in the woods like a traditional hunting or fishing cabin. The sun glinted off something in the front window. His senses went on instant alert, raising the adrenaline level in his system.

“Shit,” Kate breathed out.

“Did you call to let her know we were coming?”

“No cell service and the landline isn’t turned on.”

He tightened his jaw. Something was definitely wrong. He slowed the car to a crawl and stopped short of the cabin. Unfortunately they were within firing range if she decided to welcome them that way. “Grab the binoculars from my bag in the back and see if that’s what I think it is.”

Kate unbuckled her seat belt and angled herself in the back to shuffle through a black duffle bag. She turned and looked through the field glasses to the cabin. “It’s Rylee, and she’s got a rifle pointed straight at us.”

“Son of a bitch!” He snatched the binoculars from her and looked in the same direction as Kate had. “I hope to Christ she doesn’t shoot us.”

Kate snorted. “Sounds like she might shoot you, but I doubt she’d shoot me even though I brought you along.” She reached for the door handle. “I’m going to step out of the vehicle so she can see me.”

Devon reached over to stop her. “Are you fucking crazy?”

“It’s Rylee. Don’t worry. Just stay right here until I tell you to move the car.”

Although he didn't want to, he agreed that once Rylee knew who she was, they'd be safe. He sat helpless while his sister-in-law stepped from the vehicle into a potential line of fire. He prayed Rylee didn't shoot first and ask questions later.

Kate reached the front of the cabin and her friend stepped into view with a medium-sized black dog at her side. The women embraced, then Kate turned and waved him forward.

He pulled the vehicle closer and stopped. Once he'd turned off the engine, he sat for a moment and drank in the sight of her. The live version was much better than the tapes he'd watched so many times. He'd seen how she stood about six inches shorter than his six-one with a body that told him she kept fit—lean and strong.

The image of her standing there in form-fitting jeans, a cream sweater and hiking boots, with her hair flowing freely around her shoulders, stirred intense lust inside him. It made him nervous as hell, and he couldn't say why. Hell, he prayed he hadn't done anything terrible to make her run from him. He wouldn't be able to stand himself if he had.

He'd put it off long enough. Taking a deep breath, he took the first step to confronting his lacking memory... and the woman he'd forgotten. He exited the car and faced her.

Rylee's eyes widened when she recognized him. "Devon?"

Was that shock or fear in her voice? Maybe a bit of both. He'd have to figure it out as he went along.

The dog bared her teeth and growled. *Shit. He hoped she hadn't taught the dog to attack. He might be fucked.*

Attempting to keep things light, he raised his eyebrows and spoke, "Did you think I'd sign those annulment papers without even speaking with you?"

HIS CHANCE is available now!