

Four or Dead by GOA

Chapter 48

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Emma...Present..

I barely slept after I told the guys what we needed to do tomorrow, but this was the only way to get this done. We needed to put on a show and break up. Not only that but I needed to be so broken down that Zane would give up whatever he was doing to come to my rescue. Which meant the guys had to bring back the side of them they had left behind when they claimed me as their girl

They would have to break me down to nothing so Zane will swoop in and save me. They didn't want to do it but it needed to look real. For now, though I needed to find Devaro and see how I could be sure that I would be ready in such a short time. [?]

When I came out of the shower I found a set of workout clothes outside the bathroom door. There was a note telling me to put it on and come downstairs pronto. I scowled but did as I was asked and quickly left my room. I could hear voices right away and I glanced down over the glass railing to find my four coaches sitting around Devaro as he gave them instructions. |

I smiled at the sight of them and practically skipped downstairs. They turned to look at me when they heard me approach and they smiled at me

"Hey, Miss Emma!" Tony said standing and offering me his seat

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"Hey, guys! What are doing here?" I ask taking a seat and glancing at them and then at Devaro. [?]

"We are short on time Emma, so they guys are here to give you a crash course on things you need to know," Devaro says crossing his arms across his large muscular chest. *

I mimicked his actions and we had a silent stare-off

"T have a gym here where you can go and they will spend the day teaching you self-defense and weapon training. It will be more limited than I planned but something is better than nothing. Eat breakfast quick and get to it. I have other business to deal with." With that, he stood and left me with the guys

I smiled at them and felt a shot of determination rush through me. I was going to do this and when the time came I would show Zane Dalton exactly who he brought into his house. A wolf in sheep's clothing

"Let's do this," I say standing and popping my hands on my hips

* * a

An hour into my self-defense training and I am sweating bullets. My muscles are already starting to ache and we were only just getting started

"Part your legs and keep your feet grounded. If you don't have a firm core then one small move will have you stumbling," Tony instructed

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me

He was a patient teacher and I appreciated it because I was worse than a beginner I'm sure

"Good. Now block! Block! Dip! Block!" he called out as one of the other guys uses the flat boxing mitts to attack me

He is taking his job very seriously and I'm so close to just kicking him instead

"Don't let your anger control your actions. Be smart and look for your opponent's weak spots. Does he favor one arm more than another? Does he step forward with his left foot before each throw? Knowing your opponent gives you an advantage." Tony explained

"What if I don't have time to observe him well enough?" I ask

"Then you attack first and keep attacking until he is too weak or hurt to fight back. These men will want to kill you or capture you. If they succeed on the latter then you fight like hell to get away. Don't ever let them take you. You scream you thrash, you fight. You got it? I nod

His firm tone makes me nervous I'm not going to lie. The realization that if I'm found out I could be killed begins to hit me hard. I wanted to be brave, to prove I could do this but can I really? My father beat me and hurt me for years and I never fought back. What if the moment comes and I'm too scared to fight? \^).

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"Emma. I am giving you all the tools you need to be sure you are never a victim again. All you have to do is believe in yourself. Don't let doubt fog your mind. When the time comes, breath and remind yourself that you are a survivor. You have fought and come back from being close to death more than once. There is a reason for you to be here. So don't stop fighting. Fight to live. You understand me?" Tony's words hit me harder than I expected and I couldn't help the tears few tears that fell from the corners of my eyes. .")

He steps up to me and rests his hands on my shoulder. "You can do this Miss Emma. Devaro wouldn't send you in if you couldn't."

I laughed. "I didn't exactly give him room to say no to me."

He smiles. "Exactly why he knows you can handle it. Now, back to first position."

I crouched and held my arms up and my elbows tight and made sure I

was ready to counter Tony's unexpected attack. .)

The rest of my training felt like a cakewalk compared to the hand-to- hand combat. My muscles ached by the end of the day and I dropped onto my temporary bed completely exhausted

I was confident in my shooting skills after having to load, unload, and shoot over and over for four hours. I even learned a neat trick where I grab the front of a gun and unload it before the person can shoot me. I

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am confident there is no way I would be able to pull that off but it was cool to learn. \^)

My phone chimed and I groaned and rolled over like a sack of potatoes to grab it from my nightstand. It's a video call from Logan, and I quickly answer it

"Wooh baby you look rough." That is the first thing he says

"Wow, thanks." I deadpan and he chuckles

"Training was rough then?" He asks

I notice he is walking around and I can hear the other guys in the background arguing about something.

"Yeah, but I think I'm ready. What are you guys up to?" I ask as he enters the kitchen and he turns the camera to show the others

"Trying to figure out this enchilada recipe you always make. It's pretty obvious that we suck at cooking." I see the mess on the counters and laugh

I had not been a great cook when I first moved in but I got the hang of it well enough to have a few go-to recipes that the guys liked. These boys were for sure going to go back to eating take-out all the time. The thought of that reminded me that I was leaving them and I didn't know for how long. It gave me an idea and I jumped up much to my body's objections

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"Asher drop the spoon. Drop it right now. I'm on my way." I say and they all look wide-eyed at me. |

"You're coming home?" Logan asks

"T am not going to let you guys kill yourselves trying to make enchiladas, and...it will be the last time I can cook for you for a while." My heart tightened and I tried hard to not let them see how much leaving them hurt me. .")

They were already against this and if they saw that I was having doubts they would bring out all the stops to try and get me to stay. I needed to present a strong front and get through this as fast as possible so I can come home.

"I'm going to talk to Devaro, and I'll be home soon." I send them an air kiss before hanging up and rushing out of the guest room

I head toward Deavaor's office and find his face hidden behind some paperwork and he lifts his eyes to me when I walk in. \^

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"What is it?" He asks, his voice all business.

"T want to go home and stay with the guys tonight," I tell him

"Fine. I'll ask Tony to bring the car around." He says taking his phone out and putting it to his ear. "Tony I want you to drive Emma back to Asher's place. Good." [?]

Chapter 48 "That was a lot easier than I was expecting," I mumble

"You're not a prisoner here. You completed your training, so there is no

reason for you to remain here." He says not bothering to look at me a second time. \^

It didn't matter how he was basically dismissing me. I was going home and I couldn't wait to see my guys. Everything I had been angry about could wait until this was all over. I needed one more night with them

My guys and me. \^

seo

It takes me less than twenty minutes to pack my stuff and meet Tony outside the apartment door. He greets me with a smile and takes my bag before leading the way to the elevator

"Couldn't last another night with the boss?" He asks with amusement and a mischievous smirk

I give him the stink eye. "I can handle him, I just prefer to be in nicer company. His moods shift quicker than the weather. I already have one moody Ramano man to deal with, I cant deal with another."

He lets out a full laugh. "I can't disagree with you there." I smile and comfortable silence falls between us for a few short seconds

"Thanks, Tony," I say turning to him. "I appreciate all your help."

He turns his head and bows it. "Your welcome Miss Emma." "Just Emma. We're friends now after all." I tease

"Whatever you say, Miss Emma." I bump his shoulder in objection but

there is no heat in it

I didn't realize then that what he taught me that day really would save my life. I was about to face a monster like none I had come up against. I would fight harder than I ever have and no amount of preparation

would have readied me for what those weeks with Zane held for me. °