

On The Run (Men of Honor book 1)

Rhonda Lott

CHAPTER ONE

ALEX

A blast of awareness wash over Alexandria Harding like a warm summer rain shower. It flowed over her, bringing goosebumps along her bare arms. Her thrift store silk gown proved little protection against the invading unease.

Cautiously twisting around, she scanned the ballroom. Hyper-vigilant and constantly alert she assessed the milling crowd of women in brightly colored gowns and men in dark evening attire. The ebb and flow of conversations and the occasional titter of laughter was normal for such an affair. The Fall Charity Ball hosted the who's who of Atlanta society. Something was off though. Alex considered herself to be a finely tuned machine when it came to spotting danger.

Her gaze moved once more around the room, her heart went still in her chest. Jerking forward slightly as if pulled by some unseen force her feet gravitated towards him.

A strikingly handsome man stood head and shoulders above other men. His sharp features were stern yet alluring, more interesting than model pretty. Dove gray eyes took careful inventory of her. Alex's whole being was absolutely ensnared, chained to his presence as if he had slapped her in irons. She did what she did best when at a loss. Alex cued the band, took a settling deep breath and allowed the music in her heart to cascade over the crowd. Her voice took flight and her soul soared.

Every eye swung to her, as she flowed suggestively with the tempo of the music, gliding like a mist across the stage. Alex let the words of her song fill the sudden silence of the venue. Her voice moved across each person, touching them with fingers of rhythm that gripped and held them entranced. The pumping adrenaline rush she loved ramped up her performance. Sky diving didn't have shit on this. Rapt attention, adoration, pure pleasure on the faces of the audience filled her body to overload. She held the final note of her first song. Pushing back her riotous curls, she smiled into the crowd as the roar of applause fill the air.

Alex finished her first song aware of Mr. Handsome eating her up with his unnerving steely gaze. What was it about this guy? Men usually gravitated to her, but this felt different. She wasn't the most beautiful woman in the world. Men were usually attracted to the fact that she was a performer not that she was some sex pot. Alex didn't give a damn about it. She had too much stress in her life already. She didn't need another male in it what so ever. Forget him, just sing, she told herself. Alex began an up tempo number and strutted for all she was worth across the stage. She would give them a show to remember, for all she knew, this might just be her last.

As always, by the end of the show Alex was floating on her own personal happy cloud. Alex loved singing. It was like putting on your favorite pair of jeans, they just fit perfectly. Singing fit Alex perfectly. The dream of becoming an R&B superstar lived and breathed in her heart, until two years ago when her life swerved drastically off course. Now life was all about staying under the radar and living to see another day.

She made her way off the stage with one last peek at the intriguing stranger. The ardent intensity of his gaze on her made Alex steps falter a bit. Oh well, Mr. Handsome, wish I could have met you before, she sighed under her breath, before she was a woman on the run from a monster.

DAVID

David McAdams knew he was fucked. Yes sir, fucked five ways till Sunday. His brother was talking to him, but he didn't know what the man was saying. The constant party banter drifted all around, yet sounded hushed as if he was submerged underwater. The sharp, sweet taste of champagne awoke his taste buds and the aroma of many designer scents hung in the air yet, his body could not readily acknowledge any of that.

The Charity Ball was not his idea in the first place. Rarely did he ever attend events such as this. His brother Kane was his whipping boy when it came to public appearances. Now, however, the night had become a lot more interesting. She stepped from behind a screened off section of the stage. In profile she was the picture of womanly beauty. Who was she and why did he feel an overwhelming urge to push the overdressed, overindulged people out of his way to get closer to her?

David's complete attention was held transfixed on the brown skinned woman stepping onto the stage. Her backless gown showcased flawless shoulders, dipping to a trim waist, lower still to that ass, a spectacular ass. He found himself holding his breath, excitement coursed through him and he hadn't even seen her face. That hair caught his eye right off the bat. Extraordinarily black and naturally curly, her hair brushed the top of her shoulders. It moved with a life of its own.

David longed to see her face. She turned, scanning the room, reminding him of a lioness surveying the savannah for hidden dangers. Her gaze landed on him and his breath left his lungs on a short hiss of awareness. Her eyes were the color of warm honey. David absorbed their warmth as it poured over him. He found he could, with ease, eternally bask in their sweet glow. He could not bring himself to look away.

Never in his thirty years had a woman impacted him so profoundly. David had a great deal of respect for women. He dated sparingly, when the need arose. There was no time for relationships in his life. McAdam's Securities and his brother came first. As he watched the singer step to the mic, he felt a shift in his soul. Her voice, sultry and strong, shifted something inside him. Her body flowed like water over rock. Emotions dripped from her voice and he felt the pain her words conveyed. David knew he was lost. A slow smile stole across his face. Yes, he was most definitely fucked.

ALEX

Alex darted out the back of the Peachtree Hotel and made a beeline to her car. It was past midnight and a persistent cool breeze found its way under the collar of her old jacket. The night air was thick and smelled of rain in the distance. Alex kept her eyes moving, searching the dark parking lot. The street wasn't busy. Alex didn't mind that so much. At least she could see if someone approached her from the street. She was a few steps from her old Toyota when she heard the sound of heavy footsteps pounding on the concrete behind her. Alex fumbled in her pocket. She whipped out a canister of mace. Whirling around with her finger on the nozzle, she was a second too late.

A huge body slammed on top of her, jerking her arms behind her back and slapping a meaty hand over her mouth.

"Got ya now bitch." He spat in her face.

The smell of whisky and stale tobacco made her stomach heave. His fat sausage fingers over her mouth stifled her desperate screams. Alex tried to kick and twist away from him, but there was no getting loose from his cruel grip. Hot tears of fear and pain rolled down Alex's face. Horrible pain radiated from her arm sockets as he pulled violently on her arms. Even with the pain, Alex fought with everything she had in her. To stop fighting was to die and dying was not happening tonight. She had someone to get home to. Protecting him meant she must live through this. The monster wouldn't give up and neither would she. There was more than her life at stake. This attack was not random, hell it was expected.

"A fighter, huh. Gonna knock that shit right outta ya." The beast grunted, his foul breath hot against her face. Getting a one handed grip on her hair, he began dragging her towards the darkest part of the car park.

The sound of the city was drowned out by the thundering of Alex's racing heartbeat. Suddenly, as the attack started it was over. Her assailant was jerked from her and she fell to the ground on her hands and knees.

Alex stared dumbfounded as two men fought in front of her. Mr. Handsome from the gala was pounding her would be kidnapper repeatedly in the face. Grunts and the thud of skin violently meeting skin sounded magnified and sickening to her ears.

Her savior moved gracefully and quickly. With shock settling in and jumbled thoughts, Alex tried to make sense of what was happening. The gray eyed stranger rained powerful blows onto her attacker. Spellbound, she was frozen to the grimy concrete. The harsh breath, beefy hand fucker tried to connect with his punches, but he seemed stuck as if in quicksand. His meat hook arms swung with no effect, missing his target more times than not. The thug's performance would have been funny if he wasn't trying to kill his opponent. Alex was absolutely certain she would not have stood a chance with that goon.

Mr. Handsome moved effortlessly like a professional boxer, side stepping each blow sent his way. When a punch did land it didn't seem to affect her hero. He came in close, his fist a blur of movement. One punch, two, on the third connection, the giant fell face first onto the pavement. Down but not out, the bad guy stumbled like a tranquilized rhino to his feet and took off into the night.

DAVID

David's blood was pumping fast and furious through his veins, the night air burning his lungs. Being a CEO played havoc on his cardio. He was an active guy, but tussling with that brute put a new perspective on how much of his time was consumed with work and not working on himself. Boy, would his brother have a good laugh at him right now. Thank God for his military training. Good old Uncle Sam taught him to take out his opposition with speed and accuracy. It was good to know that after years behind a desk, he hadn't totally lost his skills.

Fury pulsed inside him and he wanted to give chase, but one quick look at the beautiful woman, he knew he couldn't. David jogged over to her.

"Are you alright?" He asked.

She was trembling, her slight shoulders scrapped and bruised from the abrasive asphalt. She looked up at him with wide honey gold eyes, shaking her head as if trying to assure herself that the attack hadn't happened.

"Tell me darlin are you hurt?" He asked.

"I believe I'm fine, banged up a little is all." She answered in a quaking voice, making to pull herself from the ground.

David grasped her elbow and helped her to stand. His anger slipping away as concern took over. He watched as she tried to compose herself, brushing dirty hands down an equally dirty gown. A gown that was ripped along one side with oily black stains from the grimy parking lot all over it.

"Let me take you to my truck then we can call the cops." David suggested.

The woman quickly pulled away from him.

"No, no cops." She cried, her body tensed noticeably.

David frowned down at her. He hadn't been expecting that response. Having been attacked and drug about a parking lot, she didn't want to report it to the cops. His song bird had secrets. Prime example, why he didn't get involved. He had enough baggage of his own to deal with. Who knew what this woman had going on. Yet he felt a stirring of compassion for her. She appeared so lost, so fragile.

David placed both his hands on her shoulders and felt a flash of energy spark between them. They stood with their eyes riveted to one another. The cool air brought a fine mist of rain and David felt the beautiful woman shiver even more under his hands.

Looking into those unique eyes, David couldn't help being intrigued. His mind was telling him to help her to her car and get the hell away from there. His body on the other hand wanted her, wanted to protect her. Hell, that's what his company did on a daily basis. McAdams Securities protected the rich and famous and their possessions. But, he was no Body Guard. His employees handled all the guarding assignments. It had been a long time since he got his hands dirty with the operations side of the business.

“No cops then, but you are in no condition to drive. Let me get you home.” David shifted closer to her.

Her shock must have worn off. She twisted away from his hands. Back peddling frantically, patting her pockets. Her gaze skidded around the ground.

“If you looking for that canister of yours, it’s under the BMW three cars over.” David stated, leaning back against a car folding his arms across his chest.

“You’re one of them aren’t you?” She accused. “You’re one of his fucking men.”

David didn’t know what to think of that. “I am not a part of whatever you got going on lady. I was trying to help you out, that’s all.”

Her face in the moonlight was a portrait of despair. Big golden eyes glistening with tears that refused to fall. Her spunk was admirable, damaged and banged up, but obviously not broken.

Pushing off the car, David took one step forward. She took two back, her hand raised in front of her.

“You stay back. Tell him he won’t get me and he’ll never get my baby.” With that, she was gone, bolting out of the lot on wobbly broken heels.

David shook his head. *What the fuck*, he thought.

Fine misty rain blew across his face. That mist quickly turned into a light shower, soaking through his clothes and cooling the fire in his body. Blood and vanilla cream scented the night. David closed his eyes, listening to honking horns and a siren in the distance. As he stood there, David found, he felt the urge to follow her, to discover her secrets.

“Baby?” David whispered into that pestering rain.

From the Author

Thank you for taking the time to read this sample chapter of *On the Run* (Men of Honor book 1). I hope that you enjoyed a taste of Alex and David tale. I sure did enjoy writing their story. As always, if you liked this book or any of my other books please leave a review. It would be a great help for a small fish in such a big pond. Thanks once again and happy reading friend.

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