

Chapter Two

When I awoke again a second time, I don't know how long I was out, but I found myself under the bed again. It felt like I was having déjà vu. Just like before, she was laying on her back next to me. I tapped her shoulder for her to wake up, but she didn't. I waited for a few minutes before pushing her out of my way, and she didn't even wake up. After I got out, I pushed her back under the bed. I have to say, whatever she had must have been strong because she was out. Anyway, I got up, and my leg wasn't hurting me, nor did I feel light-headed. I felt great. I walked towards the window looking outside to see if anyone was out there. I observed for about five minutes. The minute I opened the door, this awful smell of two dead men hit me and almost made me gag. I don't know how long the bodies had been there, but they looked like they were ready to explode covered with a swarm of flies and maggots. The men appeared to be shot in the head, lying feet from each other not too far away from the door. I walked towards the big house and climbed on the roof to figure out where I came from. I thought I could easily figure out where I came from, but I couldn't. About twenty minutes later, as I was lying on my stomach, I saw the young woman open the door looking like a mad woman, stumbling over as she missed her step, looking around. Then I saw her walk over to the big house under me. I don't know what she was looking for or maybe she thought I left. A few minutes later, I heard her screaming. I hurried down thinking she was being attacked. I carefully went inside with a knife in my hand, looking around. I found her in one of the rooms on her knees with her head down seemingly crying. I walked up to her, kneeled next to her, touched her back, and asked, "Are you all right?" I guess I scared the crap out of her, and the next thing I knew, she jumped up screaming as she moved backward real fast away from me. I quickly held my hand in the air and said, "It's okay, it's okay, it's me. I'm not going to hurt you." I stood up, looking at her, and she looked terrified. I don't think she realized it was me as she looked at me in shock for a couple of minutes before she got up, ran to me, and just hugged me in tears.

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While she held on to me, she was saying things to me, but I had no clue what she was talking about. I rested my hand on her back and said, "I'm going to get you out of here, okay?" She then pulled away and started talking to me. I was looking at her strangely, saying to myself, *does she know that I don't speak her language?* As she kept on talking, I shook my head, smiling, and said, "I don't understand what you're saying." She took my hand and walked outside with me. I was wondering where she was taking me. She stopped feet away from the dead bodies, she pointed at me, then herself, and then at the bodies on the floor. I kind of got a hint of what she was trying to tell me. I looked at her smiling because I could tell she was a little frustrated trying to express herself. She shook her head and said something before she walked back to the little house. I stood there for a few seconds watching her leave before I went back up to the roof. I don't know how long I stayed on the rooftop hoping one of our convoys would drive by, but it never happened. It was really hot out there, and I decided to go back inside to see if I could try to talk to her so we could get out of there. When I walked in, I found her sitting on the couch watching TV. I closed the door behind me, walked towards her, and I sat next to her with my body leaning forward, looking at her. I shared a smile looked into her eyes and asked, "How long have you been living here?" I tried my best to sign while I was talking to her. I noticed she was staring at me as if she was lost. I shared another smile and said, "This is going to be fun." I thought I'd give it another shot, and I started signing again to each word I said and made a sleeping sign, counts and as I said "here" I pointed at the floor. Finally, she got the hint and she showed me both her hands. I nodded with a smile and said, "Okay you lived here ten years." I noticed she was blushing, and she said something in her language, looking as though she was waiting for a response from me. My eyebrows went up as I looked at her confused, and I noticed she touched her stomach and said something again. "You have a stomachache?" I asked, touching my stomach and continuing to look at her. She started talking to me again as she pretended to eat. I looked at her awkwardly and said to myself, *Oh boy, what is she saying to me? Is she asking me for food?*

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She stopped as I was staring at her, and I said, "You want to eat." She got up, waving at me to follow. I got up and followed her to a small area that looked like a kitchen. She lifted the cover of the pot, and I saw cooked spaghetti. Then it finally clicked, and I said, "Oh, food. You were asking me if I was hungry." I nodded and said, "Yes, I'm hungry. Thank you!" She then put some spaghetti on a plate for me and handed it to me. I was grateful that she shared her food with me and said, "Thank you." I was really hungry, and I didn't care how the food tasted. I walked back to the living room and sat on the couch waiting for her. She came back with a plate as well and handed me a soda bottle. "Thank you very much." I nodded and then said, "You were asking me if I was hungry." I touched my stomach, smiling, and she said, "Hungry."

"Yeah, hungry," I replied sharing a smile with her. I pointed at the food on my plate and said, "Food."

"Food," she repeated pointing at her plate as well, and we shared a smile again. After I was done eating, she took the plate from me to put away. Before she walked away, I nodded and said, "The spaghetti was good. Thank you!" When she came back, she sat down next to me. It felt a little awkward not saying anything. I turned my attention to her, forgetting that she didn't speak any English, and said, "I'm Ryan Walker, what's your name?" I noticed her eyes wandering for a quick second before turning her attention back to me, looking confused. "I forgot you don't speak English." I said then pointed at myself and said slowly, "My name is Ryan Walker." Then I pointed at her and said, "What's your name?" She pointed at herself and said, "Ryan." I faked a smile and said, "Never mind."

I got up and went back outside up to the rooftop again looking through a small pair of binoculars I had. I thought of walking down the street to see if any of my guys were driving around, but I didn't want to take a chance. I stayed on the rooftop hoping that they would drive by. They had to be looking for me, I hoped. I spent hours on the rooftop watching and waiting. I realized that they weren't going to

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drive by after I watched for hours. So, I went back down searching in the bigger house for any weapons. I needed at least something I could make a weapon with to defend myself. There was a phone line but no phone. I went back on the rooftop again around six thirtyish to see if I could see any of my guys driving by. As I was looking through the binoculars, something told me to shift to the east side of the house. When I did, I saw a group of guys coming far off, and most of them had weapons in hand. I hurried down and rushed inside. I don't know if the guys saw me getting off the rooftop, but when I ran inside she was watching television. She could tell something was wrong, and she immediately turned the television off and unplugged it. I helped her flip the couch after I closed the door but left it unlocked. Then I heard gunshots, and I had her go under the bed before I found my knife and went under, lying on my stomach with the knife in my hand. Then I heard some people in the back talking loudly as if they were arguing among themselves. Minutes later, I heard someone push the door open and run inside. I think he ran to the other room before someone else ran inside after him and opened fire. Whoever was shooting stopped for a second and said something in Creole. I could hear footsteps as if more people came inside and were yelling. I could feel the young woman's heart pounding, and she was shaking in fear next to me. Suddenly, I heard a man screaming, which sounded as if they were dragging him outside. It was a good thing that the room was kind of dark. After they all walked out, I heard the man screaming as if he was begging for his life. Then I heard a single shot, and I didn't hear him anymore.

I wasn't a Christian, but I was praying that they wouldn't come back inside and search under the bed we were beneath. I thought they were going to leave the premises after killing the guy, but they didn't. We had to stay under the bed because they hung around all night. *These people don't have a life, family, or home to go to.* I asked myself.

I looked at my watch, it was around midnight. It got kind of quiet, and I supposed they had left. I was about to come out from under the bed to stretch, and the minute I stuck my hand out to crawl out, two

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men walked back inside and started talking. In less than a minute they walked back out, and then came back in again. I heard something fall right in front of the bed. It was dark, so, I don't know if they picked it up or not, but they continued talking before walking out again. It was so hot under the bed and uncomfortable. I had to stay up watching and hoping these guys wouldn't find us under the bed. It was one hell of a long night.

Ryan: The Chase

A little after five fifteen in the morning, my body gave in as the sleep crept up on me. I fell into a deep sleep, and I dreamed a hand grabbed me from under the bed and was trying to pull me out from under there. I jumped up, hitting my head, and I woke up. I looked at my watch and saw it was seven in the morning. Before I crawled out from under the bed, I listened for sound for a minute then slowly crawled out and found almost everything was missing. I stayed low and while I was going to wake the girl up to come out, I heard voices, and I quickly crawled behind the door. One guy walked in, and then another followed after him. "*Shoot!*" I said within me, praying that she wouldn't wake up, but it was too late. I believe when she didn't see me next to her, she began to crawl out. The guys saw her coming out; they stood there waiting for her. The guy who was standing closer to the door had a gun and aimed it at her. The other guy had a machete in his hand.

When she came out from under the bed and saw the guys, she was shocked. The guy who was closer to her grabbed her by the hair, yelling at her. I had to react quickly, so I pushed the door closed and tackled the man with the gun. As we struggled on the floor, I held the hand with the gun and punched him a couple of times. The guy squeezed the trigger and started shooting. I tried to take the gun away from him, and he struck me in the face. I angrily struck him back with my elbow across the face, and then I started punching him repeatedly as I held the hand with the gun. I don't know what happened, but I heard the other guy scream and ran out. I kept on punching the man under me until he was

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unconscious. I took the gun, stood up, and I shot him twice before turning my attention to the girl and asking, "Are you all right?" She looked like she was still in shock, shaken up a little. I knew we had seconds to get out of there, and I immediately took her hand and said, "Come on, let's go! We don't have much time."

I drew the gun as I slowly opened the door and quickly looked to see if there was anyone else out there. I held her hand as she walked behind me with my gun drawn, and we ran to the gate. I carefully looked before bringing my full body out the gate, and on my left, I saw about fifty or more guys coming with sticks, machetes, and rocks down the street. I started running with her in the opposite direction as fast as we could. We took a right down to another street, running as they chased us. I saw a corridor, and we ran through it. I guess she panicked; she let go of my hand and ran to the first house banging on the door for help, but no one opened their door. "Crap!" I said after I checked the gun and only saw three bullets left. "Come, they are not going to open the door. Let's go!" I yelled, but she kept on knocking in fear. I went over to her, took her hand, and started running.

This dog came out of nowhere, started chasing us and launched for her foot, and bit her. I was going to shoot the dog, but I only had three bullets left. I suddenly stopped; I angrily kicked the dog hard and caught him in his rib cage. The dog fell screaming and then ran away crying. We came out to another street. We kept running, and I saw another corridor and ran through it. She started to slow down, so I ran to the corner and we hid next to a house with a metal sheet roof, letting her catch her breath. I quickly looked at her foot where the dog bit her and saw it was just a scratch. I stood up and noticed she was breathing heavily, but we had to keep going before the group could catch up with us.

It was a good thing that I looked to see if anyone was coming, and I saw two guys coming from afar. I turned and saw this older guy at the door looking at us. So, I rushed him inside with the girl behind me and shut the door. After we got in, I saw a woman and child standing there looking scared. I put my

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finger over my mouth and said, "Shhh..." as I stood by the door. I heard the two men talking outside close to the door, and I silently mouthed, "*Damn it!*"

I looked and noticed the woman signing us to come, and then I saw her pull the bed away from the wall. "*What is it with these people hiding under the bed?*" I said to myself, looking at her with curiosity. She continued signing for us to come and someone knocked on the door. There was no other place to hide in the room because it was so small with a bunch of stuff in the corner. I took the girl's hand and quickly went behind the bed. I was much taller than the bed, so she put a suitcase beside it to block my feet from view and threw a blanket over us. I was lying on the floor on my back with the girl lying on top of me. I held the gun ready to shoot just in case.

I heard the old man talking with the men. As she lay on top of me, I don't know what got into me, but as her boobs were pressing against my body with her head resting on my chest, I slid my hand down to her buttocks and immediately got an erection. Her head immediately popped up and looking into my eyes puzzled. I stared back at her with my brows narrowed and whispered, "I'm sorry about that."

After the guys left, the older man quickly walked back into the house. The woman then pulled the sheet off, and we both got up. I glanced at the girl and noticed she was looking at me awkwardly, and I smiled before turning my attention to the older guy and said, "Thank you." The girl said something to them, and he let us out through the back door. We went around the house; I looked to see if the guys were still around but saw no one. However, the guys were standing further down looking for us at another house. I took her hand and started running to get out to the street, hoping any of my men would drive by. As we ran past them, I heard one of them yell and say something before they started chasing after us again. They shot at us as soon as we got out to the street, and I shot back once. Both men ran to the side next to a home for cover. Minutes later, the two men began chasing after us again.

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Suddenly, a rock flew past me, and then another hit the girl on the side of her left arm. I quickly turned my head around as we were running, and I shot the last two bullets. I saw one of the men go down. I don't know if he was dead or not, but we kept on running.

We turned left onto another street, running, and quickly looked back and didn't see them behind us. The girl couldn't keep up anymore, and she was slowing me down. I couldn't leave her because I knew they were coming for us. I stopped, so she could catch her breath for a few seconds, but we had to keep moving, and I said, "We have to go." From where I stood, I could see the main street and noticed a car drive by. That was our only chance; hopefully, someone would stop to help us. I took her hand and started running towards the main street and saw another car drive by. Once we got to the main street, it looked like a ghost town. There was no person or cars in the street aside from the ones I had already seen driving by. The last car I saw that was heading east was already too far away. I took the girl's hand and started running east, and she suddenly stopped. She looked like she was running out of breath. I became angry, bending over in exhaustion with my hands rested on my knees, and said, "*Damn it!*" I stood up straight in anger, not knowing what I was going to do.

The girl was standing a few feet away from me by the sidewalk, and I began to walk toward her. She could barely stand still in her efforts to catch her breath. I didn't know how I was going to get her to continue. As I continued walking toward her, I noticed she was pointing in the other direction, and when I turned, I saw the group coming far off. I ran to her and said, "We have to go, they are coming for us." She looked as if she was going to pass out, looking at me, shaking her head, and saying something in Creole that I couldn't even understand. I looked back, they were getting closer before turning my attention to her, and she waved her hand at me for me to go. I shook my head and said, "No, no, come on, girl, let's go, they're coming." I took her hand, but she pulled it from me as she shook her head, almost out of breath, and said something to me again in Creole. I wasn't going to leave her behind

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because I wouldn't have been able to live with myself if something had happened to her. Out of frustration, I yelled at her and said, "Come on! They will kill you!" She shook her head in exhaustion, waving her hand in the air once again for me to go. As the group kept on coming at us, I grew in fear and said, "Fuck! Let's go, I'm not leaving you!" I grabbed her hand, and we started running for our lives. Seconds later, she collapsed from my hand and went down to the ground. I was about to run when I saw them coming with all kinds of weapons in their hands and said, "Shit, shit, shit!" I only had seconds to decide to die with her or run for my life. Looking at her on the ground helplessly, I couldn't leave, and I quickly went down to her and said, "Please, get up. I don't want us to die. Get up." I attempted to pick her up, but I knew I couldn't run with her as fast. I immediately sat her up as the group approached us, yelling viciously. I shielded her with my body so they wouldn't hurt her and said, "Lord, please forgive me for my sins." I held on to her tightly ready to die.