

TACTICAL RESPONSE TEAM  BOOK ONE

FIGHTER

CINDY BONDS



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*But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to
what lies ahead.
Philippians 3:13b (ESV)*

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PROLOGUE



“So, what’d they do to get asylum?”

Lieutenant Evan Mitchell frowned at Sergeant Rogers. “Not our concern. We just follow orders, Sergeant.”

“Yes, sir.”

Glancing at the trio walking ahead of him, he wondered the same thing.

The couple had a woman with them. She had to be older and, from the way she held her head, appeared unfazed by the danger. A younger woman would be terrified to see men with guns raid their compound and escort them out of town.

But she seemed unaffected. Covered in a burka, only her eyes showed in the dim light. They looked determined.

Whoever they were, the U.S. government deemed them worthy of a SEAL team escort to American soil. They had executed the entry without a hitch. If they could just get to the extraction point without trouble ...

As they approached the helipad, Evan turned. That overwhelming feeling that had saved him and his team in the past told him they needed cover. Now.

A glint on the hillside three clicks away caught his attention. “Down! Everyone down!”

The tremendous wave threw him backward. His body slammed into a Humvee, knocking the wind from his lungs. Burning remnants of an assault vehicle sat in front of him, and the smell of sulfur was thick in the air.

“Lieutenant!”

Evan gulped air. “Protect the bird! Get them out of here!”

Small arms fire erupted. He righted himself and rushed to the defensive. Straining to see through blurred vision, he fired on the insurgents. The sound of another shell whistled through the air.

“Down!”

His team took cover just as the blast shook the ground. The roar of rotor blades drowned out the shouts and gunfire. Evan dove behind a vehicle and sprayed suppressive fire while the helicopter lifted and banked away.

“Sir? Where’s the evac?”

“They’ll be here! Stay at your position!”

The small arms fire ceased as the helicopter disappeared into the darkness. Evan steadied himself from his position behind a vehicle and sucked in a deep breath, still shaky from the blast’s impact.

“Sir?” Someone grabbed his arm.

Spots appeared. A wave of dizziness sent Evan to his knees.

The echoing sound of Rogers’s voice rolled through his head as his world collapsed and went dark.



Two Years Later

The murmur of low voices hummed throughout the large building. The smell of diesel and oil filled his senses as he paced. What was taking so long? They'd been in this dreadful place a week—biding his time and making plans.

The men who filled the room were all hired hands. If he were home instead of the United States, he would get rid of every one of them and employ a new team. Scanning their faces, his jaw clenched.

Which one would betray him? There was always one.

“We’re ready, sir.”

He glared at the militant man in front of him. “You and your men will do everything I say, complete this job without fail. Do you understand me? It’s not just your payment for the job on the line.” He gritted his teeth as the man nodded.

He’d spent years searching, buying confidences and lives, anything to get him the information needed. Now that they were so close, he couldn’t fail. That’s why he was here. He could only trust himself to complete the mission.

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He would get what he wanted. Revenge and reconciliation would be his. No one would stop him.