By: Helen Francis

Shay always put her friends before herself, never thinking twice. Tyler, Cort, Will, Sofia, and Austin were all she ever protected. What she didn't know was that the entire worldâ s military was after them, and that she may have trusted the wrong people. Shay learns about her past, present, future, and all about herself. She learns about trusting, and how to fight for her freedom.



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I can hear the laughter in the other room as I lay looking up at the empty ceiling. It was early in the morning, the sun not quite up yet. As I got up and put my cloths on, the laughing stopped, and the other room became extremely quiet. Opening the door to my room, I felt a cold chill go through me. Breathing in, I stepped out and into the hallway, my bare feet freezing on the cold cement floor and into another room.

Tyler sat on the faded green sofa. Her short black hair tied back into a bun and her normal smile gone and replaced with a frown. She looked cold considering her shorts and tank top. As I entered the room, her head pops up; her wide brown eyes glossed over with fear. Down on a small warm rug sat Sofia. She was sitting up; her big green eyes fixed onto the TV. screen. Strangely, her stuffed bear lay off to the side, and for the first time she didn't care if it was dirty. Now,Sofia is young. Younger than all of us living in this dump. At only six years old she knows just about everything. When I say everything I mean EVERYTHING.

I went around to Sofia and sat down behind her eyeing the TV screen. As I watched the TV, Sofia climbed into my lap and buried her head into my shoulder. On the bright lit screen, it showed a list of people and their pictures. The one that stood out the most was of a girl with long black hair with bright red highlights. Her pitch black eyes burning fire in yours if you stare right at them to long. Under the picture was a name. One name. One word.

"Shay?" Tyler asked very slowly. "Why is your picture on that TV?"

I calmly sat Sofia back on the rug and got up. Then, I shot upandran to the end of a long hallway. All the way at the end, I opened the door and yelled, "Meeting in ten!" Running in the the next two rooms still yelling it over and over. The six of us sat around in a circle on the ground in front of the TV. Tyler sat on my left, Sofia in my lap, Cort sitting next to Tyler and Will, and then Austin. Who is standing off to the side.

Will sat still looking bored with his blue eyes wondering from place to place. His glassing slipping off his nose, and he pushed them up with his chubby figures. Will is, how do I put this, a nerd. A complete nerd with the glasses and everything. The only thing that's different is that he's a fighting nerd. He can punch a full grown man as hard as a football player. So, he's like a super nerd. Cort was sprawled out on his back. His arm covering his eyes and his blond hair a mess in curls. He wore baggy jeans, and we could see his purple shirt move up and down as he breathed in steadily. When he started to snore, Austin walked over to him and punched him in the arm.

"W-What? What's going on?" Cort asked looking around fast and confused.

"Pay attention," Austin said, "this is important." Austin was a year older than Tyler, Cort, Will, and me at the age of sixteen. Hisbrown hair spiked after just waking up, and he was wearing a pair of old sweat pants and a worn out shirt. Cort sighed and looked at me. I could feel everyone starring at me, and I panicked.

I can't tell them. I just can't tell them, I thought fast as I was about to come up with a lie.

"Shay," Tyler said breaking the silence, "you have to tell them."

"Stay out of my head, Tyler," I snapped hating her for reading my mind.

"Tell us what?: Austin asked. "What's going on?" Austin's face solid and showed no readable emotion.

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[Ok, I should probably explain. We are special. We're not normal. We have these abilities that changed our lives forever. So, when we all first met, we made a deal. A deal to never draw attention to ourselves. A deal to never be on TV, or in the paper or we would have to split up and move apart. We can't risk exposing ourselves.]

"I saw Shay on TV," Sofia said playing with her bear, not realizing that she's talking. As she kept playing, she continued, "She looked just like Shay, and had the same name." She sounded so innocent and sweet.

All of us were quiet. No one making a sound. Out of no were, Will shot up and started yelling. "What the Hell were you Fucking thinking?! Oh wait, you weren't thinking! You were on TV!" He sounded angry and annoyed. "Not just TV," he continued to shout, "but national TV! A crime show! You're all over the world! The whole Fucking world knows about you! Do you ever think at all! GOD, You're so stupid! Now, we're all going to have to separate!" Will stopped, took a deep breath, and within a second he was in front of me. His rough hand slid across my face with a boom.

My head jerked to the side, and I was flown side ways from the force. I lay on my side cupping my cheek as Will stands there breathing hard. I look over to see Tyler and Cort starring with disbelieve.

"Shit, Will." The voice came from Cort who was by my side. His tender hand on my now red swallen cheek. "You really didn't need to slap her that hard."

"What? So you're saying that he should have slapped me in the first place? Thanks Cort," I force out, trying to hide how much that hurt.

"We need to talk about this without fighting!" Tyler yelled right as Austin was about to punch Will in the gut. Tyler was in the middle of them, and then walked over to me helping me up. "I have an idea, but no one's coming if there's going to be this much fighting." She looked at Will when she said this.

Will threw up his hands. "Fine. From this day on I am no long a part of this Hell of a group. You guess all suck anyway." He was just leaving the room when he turned back and faced me and said, "Go die in a hole, Shay."

Chapter 2: A War You Want Is A war You Get: Chapter 2:

The room filled with tension as Will stormed out muttering curse words. "Well," Austin said letting out a ragged breath," That was interesting.

"We need a plan. We can't just sit here like sitting ducks just waiting to get caught. Will's leaving for good, and we can't let anyone find us. Especially you two," Tyler said pointing at me and Austin, andwent to get an ice pack for my face. When she returned, Cort and Austin were arguing about something. She ignored them as she gave me the ice. "You're going to have a bruise, but other than that, it should be just fine.

I thanked her and went to sit back down next to Sofia. In the back of my head, I could still hear Cort, Austin, and now Tyler yelling at each other, but my focus was no where near them. I should be the one to leave. Not Will. He wasn't the one breaking the number one rule around here, I was. They don't need to separate just because I made a mistake. I don't even know where they got that picture. Then my mind wondered to the worst possible thought. What if they all blame me for what's going on! Panic surged through me at the thought of everyone leaving me. I would never show it, but I was really freaking out.

"We don't blame you, Shay, and were not going anywhere," Tyler said turning her back from the guys. The guys stopped talking and the room became quiet.

"Yeah," Cort chimed in, "we're all a family now No one's going anywhere." He said sitting down next to Tyler.

"Except Will," Sofia said. We all looked at her surprise that she had followed all of that while playing with her bear. "Will is leaving, but it's for the best." She was so young, yet she knew more than most of us in that room.

Yes, it's for the best," Cort said slowly, and them more confident, "It's one against four, five if you count Sofia. He doesn't stand a chance." Austin didn't day anything, but he can and sat down close to me. Putting his arm around me, he pulled me towards him. My face buried between his neck and shoulder.

"We will never leave you Shay. No matter what happens." He sounded so sure that I nodded into him. "Will is just an ass hole," he continued. "We should just forget about him. Okay? He means nothing to us now."

I froze at what he was saying. Forget about him? Is that even possible?! I pulled away from him and stood up. "It's not the same," I said as Austin stood up too. "Nothing is going to go back to the way things were. All of this shit, has never happened." My voice getting louder. "All the ten years we've known each other is now over. Will was family, and now he's just going to turn his back on us. Just like that in a flick of a figure." I paused and looked at Tyler. She nodded and stood up. "I have to talk to Will."

I moved towards the door. "What about he did to your face?" Cort asked sounding sour.

"What about it?" I asked challenging him. "He probably didn't mean anything to it." I tried explaining to him.

"Yeah whatever, just let me come with you just incase he tries anything stupid," Cort said.

"I'm coming too," Tyler chimed in. I looked at Austin ready for him to say he was going to come too. All he had was nod his head for me to understand what he was thinking, and I can't even read minds. Tyler stood up

and went over to Sofia. She took her hand, and took hod of Sofia's hand saying, "Come on Sofia, time for bed." To us she whispered, "Wait till I get back before you guys do anything." With that Tyler and Sofia made their way out of the room.

As they exited, Sofia asked, "Why am I going to bed? It's day time!" Tyler's answer faded the farther they went. Cort, Austin, and I were all standing there awkwardly. Before I could try and think of something to say, Cort said, "Well, I'm going to go start to pack considering we're going to be leaving soon." He backed out of the room, but before he left completely, he popped his head back through the door and asked, "So, where are we going?" He looked at Austin for the answer.

"I don't know yet, Cort. Let me talk with Shay about it, and I'll get back to you later," Austin replied, and then it was just me and him standing arm length apart. "I was thinking of the Western Forest. It's a good place for food and water." I looked at him confused. "What?"

"You- You still want me as your second in command after all of that shit? Why not Cort or Tyler? They sound like the better choice."

"Nah, I think you're just fine. You know how to keep everyone under control when I'm gone. Besides, remember the last time I left Cort in charge?" Cort had destroyed half of the theater. He left bricks and blown out walls everywhere leaving nothing undamaged. Now, we're living in the horrible part of the theater because of him.

"Yes, I remember," I said as a smile started to form on my face.

"You also know how to keep your emotions under control." He took a step closer to me. My heart skipping a beat as he stood nota foot away. I looked into his dark green eyes, so full of hatred, yet they can be so kind.

"Not always," I tried to sound cool, but I could even hear the squeak in my voice. I took a step back from Austin. "So the Western Forest. That sounds good. Plenty of food sources and water," I said trying to change the subject.

"Yup," Austin said crossing his arms over his chest. "The only problem is getting there..."

"No," I replied quickly, "The problem will be getting Will to come with us."

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