

Who Will You Run To?

by David Carner

After Chuck leaves Sarah in Prague, Sarah decides change in her life is necessary.

Rated: T · Genre: Adventure, Angst, Humor, Hurt/Comfort, Romance · Chapters: 27

Chapter 1: Who Will You Run To?

Fic takes place present day

I don't own Chuck

She cleaned her gun meticulously, hoping that would keep her thoughts off of the man in the other room.

Here is your ticket and your new passport. Your name is Hector Caldaron.

Sarah, wait.

We have plenty of time to talk on the train. Right now we have to act fast. Trust me, Chuck. It's all going to work out fine.

If she lived to be two hundred, she would never forget that moment. She thought it was the first moment of the rest of her life. The first moment of what would be happiness. She kissed him and knew that it was not going to be. Oh, part of her hoped, the girl in her hoped, the stupid one, she hoped. But the agent...the agent in her knew. She continued to polish the metal, holding it up, and seeing her reflection in it.

That's not the kiss that I was expecting.

Sarah, there is an entire facility here dedicated and designed to turning me into Intersect 2.0. I mean, think about it. Think about that. Me, a real spy, you know, living a life of adventure, and doing things that really matter.

The frown on her face deepened, thinking about that moment, where she put herself in front of him. Her, the girl...Sarah Walker, not Agent Sarah Walker...but the girl. No, not the girl, the woman that loved him. The woman who would do anything for him, and that's why she was in the mess she was in right now.

She laid the gun down, placing her palms flat on the table, and thought about how he had reached her. The woman, not the agent. The woman he made giggle, made her twist her lips to the side when he said something to irritate Casey. The one who told him he could have anything, when he should want anything....and perhaps that was it. Perhaps in that moment he realized he could do better. Her memory continued to assault her.

It's not that simple. You don't know who you're working for. It's complicated. Nothing is real. This... This is simple. This is a real life.

She swore she could still hear those bells clanging, but she wondered was it the heart of the woman breaking.

We have to go, Chuck. This is it. Are you coming?

Her dad used to listen to a song called *Midnight in Montgomery* and there was a line in the song that she never used to understand. She did now.

I can hear that wistle moanin', I'm so lonesome I could cry

The whistle in that moment...she had never felt so alone in her life. Not when her father was captured. Not when she gave the baby to her mother. Not when she realized in Cabo that her and Bryce could never have anything together.

She shook her head as she began to clean her gun again. He had left her at a train station. She took Bryce's ashes and spread them as he had asked. When she got back to the states, she found her father, and he offered her a part in his newest con. She told him no thanks. She knew what he was, and he wasn't going to change, but she didn't need another man letting her down then. She knew what she needed, and even though she shouldn't, that's how she found herself parked three blocks away, and walking the streets at dusk, watching every which way around her.

She knocked on the door, and part of her hoped no one would be home. When the door opened, she thought she might cry. She entered, told her mom everything was okay with the baby, and let herself be hugged as only a mother can hug a daughter.

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"So, after two years of telling him that you couldn't because of the job," Emma began.

"Mom!" Sarah protested. "It's nothing like that. I was trying to save him."

"And he didn't want to be saved," Emma pointed out. "If only I had some experience with that." Sarah didn't know what to say about that. She had never thought about it that way. "There's always some person in our life we'll do anything for, regardless of how mad we are at them, and do you know why?" Sarah looked down at her hands. Her elbows were on her knees and she was hunched forward. She knew the answer, but she couldn't say it or look her mom in the eye at that moment. "Because we love them. So you have two choices at this moment."

"I never want to see him again," Sarah told her, looking up.

"Then you have to leave, and I don't mean just California, I mean the CIA," Emma told her. "If this goes well, what's gonna happen?"

"He's going to want to be my partner," Sarah said.

"And if it doesn't?"

Sarah snorted. "He's gonna come to me to help him."

"Why?" Emma asked. Sarah couldn't answer. Emma picked up a remote and fiddled with it for a few minutes. A song began to play she didn't recognize. Emma held up her finger. "Now," she said.

You don't know what it's like to live on your own

You've always had me there beside you

You think it's easy finding someone out there

Who's gonna care as much as I do?

*What's gonna happen baby when you find out
That there's no one there to cry to?
You can tell the whole world how you're gonna make it
You can follow your heart but what ya do when someone breaks it?
Who will you run to when it all falls down?
Who's gonna pick your world up off from the ground?
Who's gonna take away the tears you cry?
Who's gonna love you baby as good as I?
You found a new world and you want to taste it
But that world can turn cold and you better face it
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She heard a noise in the other room pulling her out of her thoughts. She paused cleaning her gun, waiting to see if he was free. She leaned back and saw the chair and it's occupant had fallen over. He was struggling to get loose from the restraints. She leaned back and began to clean her gun some more. She'd give him more time...maybe she'd be in a better mood later. She doubted it, but maybe.

Chapter 2: Who Will You Run To Ch 2

I don't own Chuck

"So I need to leave," Sarah said to her mom a few minutes later.

"I didn't say that," Emma told her. "I said you have two choices."

"What's the other choice?"

There was silence as the older woman studied the younger one. "For all his faults, I loved him...still do, you know that right?"

"Are you seriously talking about dad right now?" Sarah asked, stunned.

"Sarah, damn it," Emma said, frustrated. "You are taking a mountain of frustration out on a man who made one mistake."

"No, he rejected me," Sarah insisted.

"Did he?" Emma asked. Sarah shook her head and stood up. "If you don't leave, then you need to accept something." Sarah paused and looked at her mom. "You know and I know you love that man, and if he comes to you, you will take him back."

"The way you took dad back, over and over and over," Sarah said, beginning to understand her mom and dad's relationship for the first time in her life.

"Your dad is actually protecting me by not coming around me, which is what you think you are about to do," Emma pointed out. "That's what he does you know. Protects me. That's why he wouldn't let me know where the two of you were. To protect me if he was ever caught."

"I shouldn't have gone with him," Sarah said softly. "I left you, mom."

"You were a teenager that thought your dad was amazing, and he is. Hell, I know about getting swept up in him. He's so charismatic, and God, he loves us both but..."

"He's no good for you," Sarah said, understanding.

"Come with me," she said, and led Sarah downstairs to the basement. Emma went over to a corner where different empty boxes were located. "What do you see?" Sarah studied them, and shook her head.

"He's sending you things," she said, with a sad smile. "What was in these?"

"Baby supplies," Emma said softly. Sarah's head whipped around. "You see, the reason you have to leave isn't for him. I know you Sarah, there's a lot of your dad in you, that's why you went with him. That's why you are scared to let anyone really in. That's why you never walked away from the CIA when you could have. He will do anything for me, no matter how much it hurts him. You have to protect you."

"But you don't think I should?" "I think you were hurt that in the first time you truly opened your heart to him, he didn't understand what he was doing," Emma told her.

"Mom, he rejected me," Sarah insisted.

"Or, like your father, did you not say exactly what you mean?" Emma asked. Sarah lowered her head slightly and averted her eyes from her mother. "Did you do what you and your father do so well? Did you not say what you felt because you're scared of it? Did you not say what you meant so it couldn't be used against you?"

"Mom, if he doesn't understand me, no one ever will," Sarah told her. "But you also don't understand."

"Then explain it to me," Emma nearly pleaded.

"Mom, they are going to turn him into a one man army. The perfect spy, which means he's going to do things that will destroy who he is. You know what me being with dad did to me. I thought I was worthless, and when I was given the choice, I thought I had no choice and joined the CIA. I was trying to save him from that life."

"You were trying to save him for yourself," Emma corrected.

"Damn it," Sarah said, looking away, tears building in her eyes. "Is that so horrible? Me wanting to save him from going through what I did? From him changing? He's so good, and you know how they changed me."

“Did they?” Emma asked, stepping up to her daughter and pulling her into a hug. Sarah wanted to push away. She wanted to run away, but for the first time, in a long time, she held on to her mother tight, and let out the tears and frustration that had built up in her for years.

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She walked into the room, and saw him lying there, on his side. He mumbled, having heard her footsteps. She shook her head. God, she was so tired of this, she didn’t want to do this, but if she didn’t he would die. He was going to hate her, and that was probably best. He was supposed to be the best, and he wasn’t...at least not in the way that they graded.

What they didn’t know was, he was the best. He was so much better than any alphabet agency. Her heart was breaking looking at him like that, but she had no choice. This was going to be the absolute hardest thing she ever did in her life, and he was going to hate her for it. And she was gladly going to take that hate, because it would keep him alive.

She walked over, and managed to get him and the chair that he was tied to upright. He yelled into the gag that was under the hood he wore. She could feel the fear radiating off of him. She moved his chair to the corner of the room, so he couldn’t as easily tip himself.

“Free yourself,” she said softly.

Instead of doing so, she heard him call out her name. It was muffled from the gag and the hood. The surprise, shock, and hurt was clear, if the word wasn’t. She shook her head and walked away, out of the room as he called after her.

She had to leave the room. He didn’t get to see her cry. He didn’t get to see the decision she made rip her apart, like his words did in Prague. She was going to save his life...if it killed her.

She was pretty sure it would.

Chapter 3: Who Will You Run To Ch 3

I don't own Chuck

"Mom, I'm not the person I was," Sarah began.

"Who is, Sarah, who is?" Emma asked. "But your heart, you soul, your goodness, it's still in there."

"He didn't want me," Sarah insisted.

"From what you told me, he didn't say that, he just put doing something for himself over you," Emma said.

"And that's what dad did to you," Sarah pointed out. "But didn't you do the same thing to him?" Emma asked, frustrated. Sarah threw her hands up. "Fine, but I'm serious, if you are dead set on not being with him, then you need to leave, cut off all connections to him. That place you have, is it still hidden? Does anyone know about it?"

"No one knows," Sarah told her.

"Go there, get away." "Okay," Sarah said, nodding. "Does this mean I'll never see you again?"

"I don't think so," Emma said shaking her head. "I believe you'll listen to your heart at some point."

"I don't want done to me what dad did to you," Sarah insisted.

"Chuck isn't like your father," Emma reminded her. Sarah looked away. "Come'ere." Emma pulled her into a hug. "Listen to your heart baby girl."

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She went back to DC and shut down her apartment. There wasn't much there, and what was there she donated to charity. She drove to Langley and began the process of retiring. She couldn't help but feel the irony of how she was no longer an agent, and now Chuck was going to be. She thought there would be push back, she thought at some

point in the process that General Beckman would show up to stop her. She was certain someone would do something, but if anything, the entire process went more quickly than she ever imagined.

She walked out of Langley, and stopped in her tracks as she saw the man in front of her. "Casey," she said.

"General Beckman wonders if you'd talk to her for a moment. She'd consider it a personal favor," Casey told her. Sarah pulled her chin back, surprised and stunned. "Walker...Sarah, I would consider it a personal favor."

"Okay," she agreed. She got into the vehicle with Casey and they took off. Sometime later, they found themselves on a private air strip.

"We're gonna have to take a flight to get to her," Casey told Sarah. "Casey, I know I'm a civilian but-"

"There's no burn, hit, or termination order on you, Walker," Casey told her, his hand on the door handle. "This...blast," he grumbled. "Walker, please."

Sarah sat there for a moment trying to think of any reason other than the one that popped into her head as to why Casey was asking...nicely. "How bad?"

"He's completely shit the bed," Casey grouched.

"Of course he has," she sighed. She opened the door and got out of the car. Casey got out, confusion on his face. "Lead the way," she told him.

"Walker...thank you."

"Don't thank me yet, Casey, I haven't done anything." Casey nodded, but the look on his face said he knew she would help. Hell, she knew she would help. It was Chuck. This is what her mother meant. No matter how much he hurt her, she would be there for him. Maybe not as the lover that she wanted to be. Maybe not as his friend, but she would always be there for him. That's who Sarah Walker was when she loved someone. Her training had tried to take that away from her, and that's when it hit her what her mother meant when she had asked Sarah, "Has it?" She still was, who she was. She was Sarah

Walker, and when she loved someone, she would do anything for them...no matter how much it hurt.

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Sarah watched the footage of Chuck and shook her head. "This is...something," Sarah said. "But I'm not sure what you want me to do."

Beckman said nothing and showed Sarah a picture of her and Chuck on the train station platform in Prague. The time stamp date was highlighted. Beckman pressed a button that showed a video of Chuck flashing and defending himself. The date was the morning of the incident at the train station. She then showed a video from two days later. There was no delicate way to put it, Chuck was getting his ass handed to him.

"Again, I don't know what I can do," Sarah said softly.

"Miss Walker," Beckman began. "Our organizations have been compromised. They know about Chuck. They know the Intersect doesn't work. He is in danger. I would like to contract you out as a freelance NSA operative. Your mission, to protect and train Agent Bartowski."

"I don't think-" Sarah began.

"Before you answer what I think you're going to answer, there's someone that needs to be here, to know that I did all I could." Sarah stared at Beckman. She wouldn't. Beckman nodded at Casey. Casey looked uncomfortable as he opened the door. As the woman from the other room walked through, Sarah wanted to call Beckman names.

"I know this is unfair," Ellie began. "But it's my brother, Sarah. So I do this for him." Ellie paused and Sarah had no idea what was going on. "Help me Sarah Walker, you're my only hope."

Shit.

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Sarah sighed, tired of the past and the memories. She looked at the clock and saw it had been an hour since he had awoken. She'd give him another hour and then...then they'd

talk. Actually she'd talk and he'd listen. She should leave him alone until then. She glanced over at her water bottle and dropped her head. She know knew exactly what her mom meant. She would do anything for him. She sighed, and grabbed the water bottle.

She walked into the room with a water bottle with a straw. "Do you want a sip of water?" She heard him say something against the gag. She didn't know what it was, but she had a good idea. "I'm sorry, I can't let you go to the bathroom. If you need to use the bathroom, then free yourself."

He was silent for a moment, and then she heard him yell one word against the gag in his mouth. "Why?" she asked. "To protect you, Chuck." He shook his head, and she turned, and left the room. She heard him yell her name through the gag, and she kept walking. It was killing her, but she had to. She was going to do whatever it took to protect him, no matter how much it hurt her. She wasn't going to let him die, because that...that would be worse than her own death.

Chapter 4: Who Will You Run To Ch 4

I don't own Chuck

"This isn't fair," Sarah said before she could help herself. She sat there and began to laugh. He had broken her. Completely broken her. That was something he would say and then she would agree with him and tell him that he was right, it wasn't fair, but they had a job to do. She had a job to do, and she knew it. She was going to protect Chuck Bartowski. It wasn't a job anyone had given her. Well, that wasn't true. She had given it to her. Sarah Walker, the woman. She had given the job of protector to Agent Walker. She thought she had buried the woman with her training at the Farm. She was wrong. The woman had been mostly gone, but lately, she showed herself more and more.

The woman who wanted more than a physical relationship with the pretty spy she was with that turned out to be a traitor...and then wasn't. The woman, who loved her father, even thought the agent in her knew what he did was wrong. The woman who told the agent that she had done some of those wrong things as well, and her time as an agent hadn't cleared her slate.

Those in the CIA accused Agent Walker many times of being cold, calculating, and of a single focus. They were right. She was. But she was also complicated, complex, and at the same time very simple. The simple part was, when she loved you, she'd fight like hell for you. Now, that fight, it might be complex or complicated. She was so tired. She was so tired of living two very different lives, because try as she might, she couldn't live one or the other. But now that she didn't work as an agent, she could...except...just when she thought she was out...they pulled her back in.

"Good God, he's got me quoting movies," Sarah muttered.

"I don't know what he did," Ellie began.

"He didn't do anything, Ellie, we were never together," Sarah told her. Sarah looked over at Beckman who's face was a mask. "So you told her."

“Dr. Bartowski can be...persuasive,” Beckman admitted.

Sarah barked a laugh and turned to Ellie. “Sorry, Chuck once told me that the Spanish Inquisition had nothing on you.” Ellie smiled. “I want to hear from you, what’s wrong.”

“He’s not himself, Sarah,” Ellie began. “He’s...lost. He’s lost his friend, the person that believed in him.”

“I’m out of that life, Ellie, for me, I’m out of it,” Sarah said with a shrug. “You don’t understand what it’s done to me.”

“I do,” Ellie said. “General Beckman showed me your entire file.” Sarah turned to Beckman who cleared her throat and looked slightly embarrassed. “I may have threatened them with legal action,” Ellie said trying to look embarrassed, but failing miserably.

“Good,” Sarah said. “They did him wrong.”

“I know,” Ellie told her. “After I saw your file, I realized exactly how supportive you were. I saw exactly how much it must have killed you. To be around someone like that, when I have to believe most men you were around thought they were either King Shit, and were really a nasty bad guy, or pompous men who thought they were James Bond.” Sarah couldn’t help but snort a laugh. Casey looked away. “Or, were like John here, and have constipated emotions and feelings. It must have thrown you for the biggest loop ever.”

“It did,” Sarah admitted softly.

“He’s my brother, and I love him,” Ellie said, tears in her eyes. Sarah looked away, and wiped at her eye. “He’s going to die, Sarah.”

Sarah turned back to Ellie. “They know he has this thing in his head. They know he can’t defend himself, and that fool....that fool...” Ellie took a deep breath. “He’s out there looking for you, with no care about his own safety. He thinks maybe they took you to get to him. Something about Spider-guy, Paul Parker, and Mary Jo?”

“Wait, I’m Mary Jane in this scenario?” Sarah asked. The worry left Ellie’s face and she smiled. “What?”

“Not only you know the name, but you know why you being called Mary Jane is insulting, and at the same time it’s not because in her own right, Mary Jane is a complete bad ass,” Ellie said. “What did that idiot do?”

“I don’t know-” Sarah began.

“What did my fool brother do?” Ellie asked, her voice softer but the intensity had everyone else in the room looking nervous. Sarah held Ellie’s gaze for all of thirty seconds.

“He picked the job over me,” Sarah told her softly. “And I know, I did the same in the past, but it’s different.” “It is,” Ellie agreed. “Okay, thank you for your honesty. I’ll find another way to protect him.” Sarah pulled back her chin, stunned. “Sarah, I can’t ask you to do what needs to be done.” There was a look on Ellie’s face of understanding. “Sarah, you’re my friend, and I can’t ask you to do that.”

“Do you really think he will die if I don’t do this?” Sarah asked. Ellie looked away. “Ellie,” Sarah said simply, but the tone said everything that need to be said. Ellie turned back to Sarah, crossed her arms uncomfortably in front of her and nodded.

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Sarah picked up her phone and dialed a number. “I have him,” she told the female voice that answered the phone. “He’s been awake for an hour and hasn’t escaped. He hasn’t flashed, and in his attempt to escape, he fell over in his chair.” She listened for a second and couldn’t help but laugh. “Yes, he kind of did look like a turtle on his back.” She listened for a second. “You’re welcome,” Sarah said, and clicked off the phone. She laid it on the table, reached for her gun to clean it again, and pushed it away, shaking her head. She rubbed her neck with her hand, trying to rub out the tension. One month since Prague, and she found herself with the man she had told her mother she never wanted to see again. With the man her mother had told her to run from. Her mother was

right. She would do whatever it took to help him. She just wished her mind and body would quit reminding her of how much she missed him.

Chapter 5: Who Will You Run To Ch 5

I don't own Chuck

Ellie hung up the phone, and sat in the chair across from General Beckman's desk. Beckman opened the drawer of her desk, pulled out a bottle, and pour two fingers each into two glasses. She sat one glass in front of Ellie and watched her down it in one shot. "Second thoughts?" Beckman asked.

"No, but this could be bad," Ellie admitted.

"You should have seen the last two years," Beckman grouched.

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A few days earlier

Ellie walked into her office, gently tilting her neck, and sighed with relief as her neck cracked, letting the tension loose. She stopped in her doorway as she saw someone sitting in the chair across from her desk. The woman rose.

"Ellie Bartowski, I'm General Diane Beckman, and I desperately need your help," Beckman told her. Ellie stepped into her office and shut the door.

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"My idiot brother has a computer in his brain...*after* my idiot father had it taken out," Ellie muttered, her hand on her head, pushing on her skull, trying to relieve the tension she felt because of her idiot family.

"It get worse," Beckman said. Ellie gave her a look that said that wasn't possible. "I promise you, it does."

"How? How in the hell does it get worse? You somehow got my brother to convince me he was in love with a woman, which he was not, because he had to fake a relationship," Ellie began. "And did I mention my idiot brother put a god damn computer in his head!?!"

Beckman sat there, her lips twitching. It was like a dam broke and she began to laugh uncontrollably. Tears began to flow from her eyes as she bent over, laughing. Ellie sat there, looking stunned. "What did I say?" she asked softly.

"You think," Beckman began as another fit of laughter hit her. "You think that we are that good?" She had to catch her breath from laughing. "You think that we could train Bartowski...*CHUCK*?!!? You think we could make him control his emotions and make you believe he had fallen in love?"

"Well if you didn't," Ellie began. She paused as it hit her. "Ohhhhhh," she said. "No wonder he's a mess. He's in love with Sarah, and she's not in love with him." Beckman stared at Ellie and burst out laughing all over again.

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Beckman took a sip of water and chuckled. "I apologize. We are under attack, we as in the intelligence communities. They want what is in your brother's head and I worry to the lengths they might go to get it. I worry the torture he might have to endure, I worry the tests they might submit him to, to retrieve what is in his brain."

Ellie sat there, frowning. "Why are you telling me this?"

"Because there is no one I can trust that can help me," Beckman said simply. "And it gets worse. Your brother met up with Agent Walker in Prague, they were going to run. It would have been easier if they had."

"Why's that?" Ellie asked. Beckman gave her a flat look. "Listen, I have no idea why you think what you think."

"Agent Walker is one of the best agents I have ever seen in my life, and she is so in love with your brother it's ridiculous," Beckman replied, shaking her head. "It's damn embarrassing."

"It is," Ellie agreed, grinning.

"You're as bad as he is," Beckman muttered. "But, that is why I'm here. I need someone that thinks like him and understands him. Agent Walker is in peril because of him."

"I'm sorry, what?" Ellie asked. "You just said that she was in love with him."

"She is, and he with her, and if someone wanted your brother, the easiest way to get to him...take her," Beckman explained.

"Yeah, but can't she fight them off?" Ellie asked.

"Normally, I would bet on Agent Walker, but your brother...his actions have left her off of her game," Beckman admitted. "I feel now the only way for your brother to be safe is to be with her, until we can neutralize this threat. However, at the moment, Agent Walker wants nothing to do with him."

"What happened?" Ellie asked. Beckman looked away. "Hey, you came to me. What. Happened?"

"We knew that Agent Walker was coming to Prague to take Agent Bartowski on the run," Beckman began. She paused and considered the look Ellie had given her. "What we miscalculated was...Chuck," she said, watching Ellie's look change. "Would reject...Sarah." Ellie smiled. "We never thought that someone that in love would turn down a chance to run away with the woman he was in love with." Ellie scoffed.

"Jesus, you people are morons," Ellie grumbled. Beckman's eyes went wide. "Oh, come off it. I thought you were supposed to be smart? For *YEARS* life has kicked my brother in the teeth, and yes, some of it is his wallowing, but think about it. This woman, this...fucking amazing woman, cares for him, loves him, for who he is..." Ellie trailed off, shaking her head.

"But that's what we were thinking," Beckman protested.

"Have you noticed my brother doesn't think a lot of himself?" Ellie asked. "Have you noticed that he works in a damn BUY MORE!?! Have you noticed that he respects Sarah Walker, and craves her respect? Have you noticed that when it comes to his well-being he will give it up for others, for their safety?"

"Shit," Beckman muttered.

“So, you’re realizing you put him in an impossible situation, where the only choice he had...the only choice to prove to the woman he loved that he was *worthy* of her love...and might I add, that’s his dumb ass brain thoughts, not mine, and definitely not Sarah’s, is to become like her.”

“That’s impossible,” Beckman replied. “Why the only way that could happen...is....” “If someone put a damn supercomputer into his head,” Ellie said.

“So what do we do?” Beckman asked.

“We tell her he’s in danger,” Ellie said. “These two are like magnets. They will find each other, and woe be unto those between them. When everything goes wrong, they are who the other turns to. We tell her, he’s in danger-”

“He is,” Beckman insisted.

“I believe you,” Ellie replied. “But how do we show her?” Beckman frowned, and pulled out a laptop out of her bag. “What’s this?”

“A live feed of your brother at her apartment,” Beckman said, turning it on, and showing it to Ellie.

“Damn it, Chuck,” Ellie swore softly.

Chapter 6: Who Will You Run To Ch 6

I don't own Chuck

"I'll do it," Sarah said softly.

Ellie was silent for a second. "Thank you, Sarah."

"He doesn't deserve to die," Sarah told Ellie. She turned to Beckman. "I'm not giving you your soldier, I'm teaching him how to defend himself." Beckman nodded. "So basically, I'm back in, is what you're saying, just with the NSA now."

"You are...if you want to be," Beckman said. "I promise you, we aren't the CIA."

"We have much better dental," Casey said. Everyone turned and stared at him. "Christ, I must miss the moron if I'm making his jokes."

"Okay, so how bad is it?" Sarah asked. Beckman never looked at her, she simply punched a button and a new video began to play. Sarah leaned forward her elbows on her knees, her hands steepled, her index fingers over her nose, her thumbs under her chin.

"This isn't doctored, I promise," Ellie said. "I edited it because...well..."

"I just long and sad," Casey said. Everyone turned to him again. "What? It IS!"

"It is," Beckman agreed. Sarah saw the time highlighted on the video of Chuck sitting in front of Sarah's door, holding gardenias. There was a cut in the video, and she could hear him saying softly, "I'm sorry, please forgive me," as if she was in the room, hiding from him. She looked at the time stamp and saw it was seven hours later. Sarah bent her head down, her index fingers sliding up her forehead, her thumbs never moving. She heard a groan, and realized it was her own.

"He can't flash at all, can he?" Sarah asked.

"Nope," Ellie said in a clipped voice. "He keeps insisting he just has to 'straighten things out,' and he can." Sarah looked up at her. "I've watched a LOT of footage of him talking

to General Beckman and others.”

Sarah studied Ellie for a minute. “What happened?” Ellie started to answer and Sarah simply tilted her head and lifted an eyebrow.

“I deserve that for what I did earlier,” the brunette said with a smile. “I tailed him, Sarah. I’ve been tailing him, me with no training and I’ve been tailing him.”

“Oh, God,” Sarah groaned.

“He has gone to your door every day and waited for you.” Sarah groaned at that. “I was able to convince Big Mike to have one of his guys get this footage off of the camera.” Sarah gawked at her. “I didn’t want to sit in the stairwell the whole time.” Ellie shrugged. “I told Big Mike that it would be awful if there were suddenly a lot of sexual harassment lawsuits against some of his staff.”

Sarah chuckled. “What did Chuck say while sitting at my door?”

“He talked to your door about how Casey shunned him and all sorts of other stuff I didn’t understand,” Ellie told her.

Sarah looked over at Casey. “She came to me with this tape and....oh, hell, you know what happened.”

“She scared you,” Sarah said.

“I’ve seen starving, rabid bears less scary,” Casey admitted. “No offense,” he said quickly to Ellie.

“So what do you want me to do?” Sarah asked.

“Exactly what you were going to do, go off the grid,” Casey told her. Sarah started to protest and then realized there was no point, he was right. “But take the moron with you.” “Careful, Casey,” Sarah warned. “Rabid, starving mother bear over there.” “Oh, he is a moron,” Ellie agreed. “I need you to train him to take care of himself, and see if you can help him use that damn thing in his head, for protection.” Sarah held Ellie’s gaze. “I’m not saying try to fix things between you.”

"Your not, not, saying that," Sarah pointed out. "Ellie, this is on me, he stayed. I wasn't enough for him." Casey snorted. "What?"

"Nothing," Casey said quickly. Ellie glared at Casey. "Walker, you've got it wrong. He told that door why he did it. He did it because he wanted to be your equal. He did it because he looks up to you and respects you and....." Casey clamped his mouth shut.

"And what?" Sarah asked.

"Nothing," Casey said, shaking his head.

"John," Ellie said in a warning tone.

"He loves you, alright?! He's up in his damn ladyfeelings....no offense to any of the three of you," Casey quickly added.

"Funny damn way of showing it," Sarah said before she could stop herself. She felt Ellie's eyes on her and refused to look at her. "So, he had no idea you were following him. He isn't paying attention to anything, can't flash, and is having trouble with his emotions. That about sum it up?"

"Yes," Ellie said. Sarah nodded. "If this is too much..." "It is, but at the same time, he obviously wouldn't be in this spot if it wasn't for me," Sarah told them. "I will train him. I will work with him to control his emotions and hopefully that will get him to flash. I can't promise miracles."

"Sarah, I need you to protect him if he can't protect himself. I don't want to send him to a bunker." Beckman seemed to wither a bit with the look Ellie gave her. "If he can't flash, you have to teach him some basic defense."

"Okay," Sarah said nodding. Beckman pushed a paper toward her. Sarah looked over it and then back to Beckman, shocked.

"Not enough money?" Beckman asked.

"No, that's more than I made at the CIA," Sarah mumbled.

"Told you we have better benefits," Casey said grinning. Sarah gave him a look. "What?"

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The two NSA agents looked through Chuck's window, and saw him sleeping. "If the Intersect is working we might get our ass kicked," Sarah told Casey.

"We'll nab him with no problem," Casey assured her.

Ten minutes later it was done. A drive, a flight, and another drive, left him still out from the drug they had given him. She put him in the room, gently put the gag in his mouth, put the hood over his head, and gently tied him to the chair. She shook him and he started to wake up. She walked out of the room. She needed to clean her gun. She had to do something, because she was in her hideout, her sanctuary, and he was here, and she had sworn after Prague he would never be here. Now, he was here, until he learned how to defend himself or the threat was neutralized. She felt the frown grow as she began to clean her gun.

Chapter 7: Who Will You Run To Ch 7

I don't own Chuck

She didn't make any extra noise, but she wasn't trying to be quiet as she brought the card table into the room. She sat it up, and walked out, with him yelling into the gag. She could hear him, but she did her best to drown it out. The lyrics played through her head.

Who will you run to when it all falls down?Who's gonna pick your world up off from the ground?Who's gonna take away the tears you cry?Who's gonna love you baby as good as I?

She set up the laptop, and started it up. She got the connection set and saw Ellie on the screen. "Chuck," Ellie said. Chuck stopped squirming and yelling. Sarah grabbed his chair and drug it over in front of the computer, and pulled the mask off of his head. Chuck's eyes went wide. Sarah removed the ropes that restrained him, but let the gag in his mouth because she didn't want to hear him right now.

She walked out of the room, letting Ellie talk to Chuck. She walked out of the house, grabbed the ax that was leaning on the side of the house, and headed over to the lumber that was piled up beside the house. She knew she was going to need fire wood. They were far north, in a remote area of America. That had been done on purposed. She swung the ax, perfectly splitting the wood in front of her. She decided that today she would chop wood, but one of Chuck's chores while he was here was to make sure they had enough wood. He was going to pull his weight. She would protect him, but he was going to do his part. She was having trouble seeing as she split the wood. She was sure it was the sawdust in her eyes making her tear up.

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She was nearly finished when she heard the door open to the house. She had positioned herself where she could see all directions but that one. She knew that having her back to the door was the safest play...at least physically. She heard him clear his throat, and

she couldn't help but just bury the ax in the wood as she turned.

He looked ashamed...she hated how much that upset her. "For the record, what happened with the tying up, that was all to see if you could flash, and free yourself...it had nothing to do with..." she trailed off, her mask firmly in place.

"Right-right," Chuck said quickly. He rubbed his hands on his pants.

Good, she thought. He's nervous. He should be. He should be terrified. "Ellie explained the danger I was in, and the danger I have put you in." She tilted her head. "It's obvious to anyone who has seen the surveillance footage of me over the last two years how I feel about you."

She couldn't help but scoff at that. "Sarah-" he began.

"Nuh-uh," she said quickly. "If you 'felt' that way," she used finger-quotes. "You had an opportunity to show it."

"It's not that simple," Chuck protested.

"THE HELL IT WASN'T!" Sarah yelled. Chuck stepped back. They could hear her words echoing through the valley. "I apologize," she said.

"You shouldn't be here, this isn't fair to you," Chuck began.

"I'm being compensated to be here, quite well," Sarah replied. She saw the look of hurt on his face. "Come on, Chuck, it doesn't matter how mad I am, or hurt I am, I'm not going to let someone do to you what they would have to do to get the Intersect out of your brain."

"I'm sorry," Chuck told her.

Sarah shrugged. "What's done is done. I have had worse jobs. What we have to do first is train you. Then we have to get your emotions under control so that you can use that thing in your head. And you better believe I'm invested in this, buddy." Chuck yanked his head up, hopeful. "Because you're right. IF they have tied me to you..." Chuck's shoulders slumped. "So, first thing, don't ask where we are."

"Ellie told me not to," Chuck replied.

"Good," Sarah told him. "Every day, you need to make sure that wood box there is full. If we get stuck in snow for a few weeks...." Chuck looked worried. "Exactly, keep it full." She walked over to where the lumber was piled. "If it falls below this line, let me know so I can get some more delivered."

"Okay," Chuck said, nodding. "Keep wood filled so we don't freeze to death."

"Can you handle it?" Sarah asked, looking him right in his eyes. "I can handle it," he replied. She nodded, turned and walked back toward the house. She had to. There was something in those eyes that called to her, and she couldn't do this...not and keep him safe. She couldn't lose him, she had already lost him once, and as bad as it was they couldn't be, if he wasn't in this world...she couldn't think about that.

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"Chuck," Ellie said, as he was removing the gag. "Chuck, are you listening to me?"

"Sarah's leaving, Ellie, I need to talk to her," Chuck insisted.

"She's not leaving," Ellie told him. "Beckman and I had her do this."

"Why?" Chuck asked, sitting. Ellie glared at him and he gulped. "How do you know about Beckman?" The glare intensified. "Ellie, do you know about Prague?" He was wrong, NOW the glare intensified.

"What the hell were you thinking, Chuck?" Ellie asked.

"Which screw up were you talking about?" Chuck asked. Ellie sighed. "Me getting the Intersect...wait, do you know about the Intersect?" Ellie slightly tilted her head, and he saw her eyebrow twitch. "Right, you know about the Intersect." He cleared his throat. "Or do you mean the colossal mistake I made with Sarah?"

"Colossal?" Ellie asked.

"Ellie....I love her," Chuck told her. Ellie smiled. "What?"

"Well, at least you admitted it, and that, baby brother, that we can work with."

Chapter 8: Who Will You Run To Ch 8

I don't own Chuck

"What does that mean?" Chuck asked, and then he blinked, realizing something. "Wait, this is my computer."

"Yeah," Ellie told him. "We needed something safe to communicate on."

"Ellie, I am no longer a CIA Agent, no one cares about me."

"CHARLES IRVING BARTOWSKI!" She hissed.

"EEP!"

"That woman loves you, not a word," she added quickly. Chuck mimed zipping his lips.

"That woman is now a target because of all the leaks within the intelligence communities. That woman could be attacked because of you, and what is in your head."

"Shit," Chuck muttered. "Wait, who's telling you this, Beckman? She could be lying."

"Why, Chuck, why would she lie?"

"To get me to work properly so that she'll have something to fight her enemies with," Chuck told Ellie.

"Chuck, she wanted you to run with Sarah, because she saw what she was doing was wrong," Ellie said softly. Chuck managed not to groan...just. "Chuck, I know why you stayed." He looked down at the floor. "So, you have two problems, and both of them require the same thing to fix."

"And what's that, Ellie?"

"Put in the work you need to," she told him. "Start at the beginning and rebuild everything."

"She's mad, Ellie, she wants nothing to do with me," Chuck protested. Ellie nodded, agreeing with him.

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Chuck walked around the yard, looking over the property. He had no idea where he was, and realized Sarah had his phone so he couldn't use the location to find out where he was. Given what Ellie had told him, that was probably smart.

"We have a land line," he heard Sarah, say, making him spin, startled. "For now, we don't use cell phones, we can use the computer to contact Ellie and General Beckman sporadically." "Okay," Chuck replied. "Where did you come from?"

"The house," Sarah said, pointing back to it. "You didn't hear me?" Chuck shook his head. "So we'll need to work on that. I wasn't trying to sneak up on you. I'll teach you to work on that."

"Hell, you might as well teach me to use the force while I'm at it," Chuck muttered. "As much good as it will do me. I'm sorry you're in this mess, Sarah." "Chuck, don't," Sarah began.

"No, let me say this, and I won't say anything about...that train station." Chuck watched her and she nodded. "You have been put in a terrible spot by my actions. Actions that I have no excuse for. Actions I can explain, but I'm not saying anything else about because you don't want to hear it." She shook her head at him. "I know that I've done a lot of damage to this." He gestured between them. "Us," he said. "But I am going to listen, because if I don't it might get you killed, and I couldn't live with myself if I did that."

"Good," Sarah said quickly, trying to push down her feelings. They were one part wanting to hug him, one part wanting to shake him until she screamed. She wasn't sure which she wanted to do more, and that worried her. "So, you say teach you to use the force...what I'm going to teach you kinda is."

"I'm sorry...what?"

"If I remember right, the force is feeling every living thing, right?" Chuck nodded, stunned. "So that's what I need you to do, become attuned to things around you. It's more about feeling...hearing small sounds when people move. That sort of thing."

Chuck was silent for a moment. "I have so many things I want to say," he said softly.

A week ago, Sarah would have turned and walked away from him, giving him a chance to say nothing. Today...today wasn't a week ago. "You get one, so make it good."

Chuck stood there for a moment, thinking. "Okay, does this make me your padawan learner?" She shook her head, disappointment on her face.

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Chuck watched Ellie's face and his heart sunk. He had thought she would give him words of encouragement, but that clearly wasn't happening. "Chuck, I've seen multiple videos of you two and do you know what I saw?" Chuck shook his head no. "Communication."

Chuck scoffed. "Come on, Ellie, we are the worst communicators in history."

"Worst talkers, yes. Communicators?" Ellie gave him a look. "Even when she told you no on the camera, it was clear what she was saying." Chuck looked away.

"Okay, say you're right, then why is this so bad? Chuck asked her.

"The kiss at the train station," Ellie told him.

"Exactly how much surveillance was I on?" Chuck muttered. Ellie gave him a look and he cleared his throat. "What about it?"

"That's not the kiss I was expecting," Ellie quoted. "Chuck, you communicated to her that you were choosing you over the two of you. I don't know if you can fix that."

"Shit," he muttered. "This isn't what I wanted."

"What isn't what you wanted?" Ellie asked. "Sarah being mad at you for choosing something over her?"

"Ellie, no!" Chuck protested. "I was only trying to better myself, so I could..." he trailed off.

"Be worthy of her or some bullshit like that?" Ellie asked. Chuck nodded. "Well, you were worthy...then."

"Now?" Chuck asked.

Ellie shrugged. "Chuck, what do you know about her past and her relationships with other people?" Chuck looked away. "Exactly. Have you ever thought the past is hard for her to talk about because the past was hard for her?" Chuck looked guilty. "I know, you can talk about your issues, but not everyone is like you. All you can do is start back from the beginning, on everything and try to keep yourself safe, and by doing so, keeping her safe."

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"So, tonight, we only have one bed," Sarah said. "The other one is being delivered tomorrow."

"Right, so like Barstow," Chuck replied. He saw the look on her face. "How's the couch?" Sarah just stood there a second and walked back inside. "I think I'm going to find out."

Chapter 9: Who Will You Run To Ch 9

I don't own Chuck

He didn't sleep much that night. Ellie didn't understand. If he could get the Intersect working, then he could be the man Sarah deserved. He just had to find something to do right, and that would start the Intersect working, he knew it would. Once he did that, he could fix him and Sarah. He finally drifted off, a new plan in place.

Chuck opened his eyes, his neck hurting. He tried to straighten, but his foot caught the edge of the couch, making him wince. "Good, you're up," he heard her say. He sat up the best he could, feeling stiff from sleeping on the couch. "Your bed has been delivered."

"Delivered?" Chuck asked.

"Yeah, we're gonna test you," Sarah told him. "You couldn't escape from that chair, but let's see what you can do when it comes to building something."

"What, did you get my bed from Ikea?" Chuck asked grinning. Sarah took a sip of coffee.

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"I had to ask," Chuck muttered two hours later. "I don't get it. I've built stands for the Buy More. I've built desks, I've put together entertainment centers, but this...this is ridiculous." He looked at the bed, that looked put together correctly, but also noticed a pile of pieces left over. "Maybe they were extras?" He pushed them under the bed, and went out to get the mattress and box springs off of the porch.

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"Do you have everything delivered?" Chuck asked a few hours later, as they were both eating a salad.

"I have someone in town I trust," Sarah answered. "Since this was originally a safe house for me, most everything I need is here. But for fresh things, or furniture for

someone I wasn't planing on, I have it delivered."

Chuck took a bite, and didn't say anything. She didn't say it with malice, just matter-of-factly. He was trying to think what to say next when he heard a car horn.

"Stay here," she said. She went to the door and looked out, her hand at her waist, gripping her gun. She relaxed, adjusted her shirt, covering her gun, and went outside. She came back a few minutes later. "This is for this afternoon."

"Are those yoga mats?" Chuck asked. Sarah didn't say anything, she just looked at him. "I don't understand, am I going to meditate to clear my mind to flash." She just stood there, shook her head and walked into the living room. "What did I say?"

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Chuck had joined her in the living room, but she sent him back to his room to change clothes, specifically into a pair of loose shorts and a tee shirt. He came back out, and they began with simple poses. "Our goal here is to start preparing your body for what it needs to do, to stretch out," she explained. "Also, if you're concentrating on this, and it clears your mind, great. The goal here is to get limber.

"This isn't bad," Chuck said, sitting cross-legged. He could do this. This he could do. This was his shot. All he had to do was start flashing and he could fix everything.

"It's literally called the Easy pose," Sarah told him. "Let's try Butterfly." She pressed the soles of her feet together in front of her, lowering her legs, until her knees and legs were on the ground.

"No problem," Chuck said, lowering his knees, feeling the pulling in his legs, the muscles protesting. He fought to keep the wince off of his face.

"If it's tight, you don't want to go all the way," Sarah said. "Gently bounce your legs, that will gently stretch the muscles."

"I got it," he insisted. He could do this. He saw Sarah shaking her head. "What?"

"Nothing," she said, continuing to shake her head. "Nothing." She brought her legs back in front of her, shifted, and laid down on the mat. Chuck copied her. She lifted up gently,

lying her arms on the mat, her elbows making a “L”. “Okay, this is called Sphinx.” She pushed herself up, and bent her head back. Her hand was straight on the ground. “This is Cobra.”

Chuck was following along. “Holy crap,” he muttered, feeling things in his back pull.

Sarah lowered her head to look straight ahead and came down about half way with her body, her arm bent. “And this is Upward Dog.” She pushed herself up with Chuck following. She was on her knees and hands looking forward. “This is called Cow. Feel the stretch in your neck?”

“YEP!” Chuck replied.

She arched her back, pulling her stomach up, and put her head down. “And this is the Cat.” “The blood rush to your head is amazing,” Chuck said, feeling a bit dizzy.

She pushed back and sat on her heels, her face to the mat, her arms on the mat facing forward. “And this is baby.”

Chuck was having trouble getting back on his heels. “How long will it take for me to be able to do what you’re doing?”

“No idea,” Sarah admitted, standing. “Now we’re going to try Warrior pose.”

“Ooo, I can do that one,” he said, bounding up. Sarah didn’t reply, she just stepped forward with her right foot, sinking forward until her right knee was the shape of a ninety degree angle, her left leg stretched out. She spread her arms, right arm pointing over her right knee, her left arm point back over her left leg. She heard Chuck stumble and nearly fall over.

“Widen your stance,” Sarah told him, looking over at him. Chuck moved his feet further apart front to back from each other, deepening his stance. “No, not like that, further apart left to right, you don’t want to go too deep.”

Chuck did as she said, and then after he found his balance, he sunk lower into the pose.

“See, I can do it!”

“I see,” Sarah said, watching him, her lips a thin line.

"This actually feels great!"

"Uh-huh," Sarah said, looking forward, a hint of a smile playing on her lips.

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Chuck lay in his bed, and fell asleep quickly that night. About an hour after falling asleep, his hamstring cramped and he screamed as his leg shot backwards, nearly kicking himself in the ass. He moved quickly and the bed collapsed, leaving the mattress on the floor. The door flew open, and he felt two strong hands massaging the cramp out.

"There's a reason I said not to go too deep in that stretch," Sarah told him, rubbing shaking her head.

"I'm sorry," Chuck told her, beginning to breathe normal as she worked out the cramp. "I should have listened to you."

"Yeah," she said, helping him up. "Go to my bed."

"Thank you," he said. He limped toward her room as he saw her head to the couch. "Sarah--"

"Don't, Chuck," Sarah told him. "Just get some rest, we'll deal with things tomorrow."

He went into her room, and laid down on the bed. "Will we?" he asked the quiet room softly.

Chapter 10: Who Will You Run To Ch 10

I don't own Chuck

She heard him leave the cabin early the next morning. She could tell by his footfalls, his leg was still sore from the cramp. She felt bad. She knew what was going to happen, but he had told her he was going to listen to her, and he hadn't. He had to learn. This wasn't punishment for him. She was trying to help him. Didn't he know all this pain was causing her pain? Didn't he know that she WISHED she felt nothing for him.

She had tried to convince herself before seeing him again that she didn't love him, that she had loved the idea of him. God, was she wrong. She did love him.

He had chosen this life over her, and if that was the choice he was going to make, she was going to help him fulfill it, regardless of how she felt. She tried to stop the memories, but they refused, and attacked her any way.

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"Darlin', I'm telling you, if we do this, we can be set," Jack told her.

"Dad, what if...what if we just lived in a small house, and didn't travel, and you just worked a normal job? What if I got a job as soon as I turned sixteen. And-and, I could get a paper route now, or something," the twelve year old begged. "I just don't want to see you have to run...again."

"Darlin', we pull this off, we can have everything we want. The big house, we can travel where ever, when ever, don't you want that?"

"I just want you, dad," Sarah told him.

"But Darlin', my whole life, I've wanted all these things, don't you think I deserve them?"

"Yeah," Sarah said dejectedly. "Okay, what do I need to do?"

"That's my Angel."

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She sat quietly, sure that he hadn't heard her. Not that she had been quiet on her approach, but that he was wrapped up in his head. He was struggling, but she didn't understand why. He had made his decision in Prague. He chose the CIA. She shook her head, watching him sitting by the creek behind the house. Why was it always water with him? He had chosen the CIA over her. Like Bryce. Like Steve. She had thought he was different. He had chosen something over her. Like her dad.

She never had a choice, and when she finally did, she took the chance and ran with him. She could have lost her job, became a criminal, and she did it...and he thanked her. She had chosen him over the mission at Ellie's wedding. She had chosen him in Prague...and he didn't choose her.

She watched him reach out and rub his hamstring, and she wondered if he needed her to massage it. She winced at herself. That wasn't happening. It wasn't. Her body damn near betrayed her last night, and she nearly had gotten in the bed with him. God, she understood her mom so much right now. She understood the hell Emma must have been in every damn day she watched the man she love continue to pick a life over her. As a child, Sarah hadn't understood. Sarah hadn't thought Emma weak, or anything like that, but now...now she wondered if Emma wasn't some God damn super hero with the ability to stay away from Jack.

Sarah wondered if this might actually kill her. She was going to be isolated with Chuck for months, hell, maybe years. It was going to be hell, yet part of her...part of her wouldn't have it any other way. That was the woman in her. The woman in her that believed he was still amazing...still the smartest man...the sexiest man...the best man she had ever met. The agent...the trained, cynical agent...she reminded the girl that again, someone had chosen something over the girl. Sarah found her self hugging her knees, setting there, feet on the ground, just watching him. She allowed herself to accept she wished she was hugging him and he was hugging her.

}o{

For his whole life, there was one question he wondered. It started when his mom left. He was sent to therapy, and he learned there that the only way therapy would end was for him to say what they wanted him to say, so he did.

It continued when his father eventually stopped coming home...that question entered his mind again. Senior prom, when Becky broke up with him the week before, when she got a better offer from a football player.

Things seemed to change at Stanford. He met a great friend, and then a great girl. But had he? Had he met them and the CIA ended it, or was it more of the same. The same thread that had run his entire life. He just wasn't enough for people.

He wasn't enough for his mother to stay, he wasn't enough for his father to stay, he wasn't enough for Becky. Bryce admitted on the tape he wasn't enough to be a CIA agent. When he lost his scholarship, he wasn't enough for Jill. And then he met Sarah Walker.

God, she was so amazing, and the love he felt for her...he wished to God he was enough. He wished more than he ever had in his life that he was enough, but how could he be. She was so amazing...so....out of this world that he knew he wasn't enough for her. Ellie didn't understand. She was Ellie. She was one part sister, one part mom, all doctor. She was Ellie, and he...he was Chuck. A good guy. That's all he was.

He wanted to believe that old axiom wasn't true, but he'd seen it happen too many times in his life. He wasn't good enough for Sarah. With the Intersect...he was. He could be the man she DESERVED. Without it, he was plain old Chuck Bartowski. He was so out of his element here. He had to listen. He had to accept the Intersect wasn't returning. He had to listen to her, to keep her safe. She deserved happiness. She deserved to be free from the burden of him. Ellie was right, he had to start at the beginning. He stretched out his leg and winced. Maybe he'd start after he iced down his leg.

Chapter 11: Who Will You Run To Ch 11

I don't own Chuck

She received the text that her contact was near. Sarah took another look at Chuck, stood, and headed back to the house, to meet Susan. As she saw the SUV pull up, she couldn't help but smile. Susan had done it, she had left the CIA. She had a family. She found someone that chose her.

The vehicle pulled up beside her, and the window rolled down. "Hey, Sarah," Susan said, a tired look on her face.

"You okay?" Sarah asked, concerned. A babble came from the back seat, and Sarah quickly looked back there, seeing the little boy, chewing on some toy. It was covered in slobber.

"Someone is teething," Susan told Sarah.

"Oh, I shouldn't have asked-"

"Don't you dare," Susan said quickly. "You're the only adult I get to talk to besides my husband, and he's as exhausted as I am."

"Do you want to come in?" Sarah asked. Susan gave her a look. "Right, we said no contact between you and my client."

"Sarah...I know I don't know what happened, but it's on your face that something went wrong, and if I can see it, that means you're slipping," Susan said gently. "Does he even know what he's done wrong?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," Sarah replied.

Susan snorted, Sarah gave her a look, and Susan burst into laughter. "There was a day my friend, that your glare, would have scared the bejezzus out of me, but the thing is, today...it's not that day." Sarah looked confused. "I thought we couldn't get any more tired than some of the stuff we did for the company, some of the hours we kept. Then I

had a kid. I've reached a whole new level of tired, exhaustion, and panic that I didn't even know existed. Here's the thing, if you didn't care about that guy, I wouldn't see how upset you were. You're mad because you care."

"Oh, I know I care," Sarah replied. She winced, but Susan was already chuckling.

"Again, maybe he doesn't understand," Susan told her. She started the car, went to put it in drive and paused. "Then again, maybe you don't understand why he did what he did. See ya, love. Text me if you need anything." With that, Susan took off, leaving Sarah there, holding the bag Susan had brought her.

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Sarah plopped down beside Chuck. "Irony, isn't it?" He turned to look at her. "This time, there literally isn't anywhere you can go, because they might find you." She handed him the bag. He took it and looked inside. "There are different creams and gels in there to use on your muscles. I don't know which one you wanted so I had her get one of everything."

"Thanks," Chuck replied. "I need to pay you back for this somehow."

"I expensed it," she replied quickly. She winced at herself. "But," she added softly, making him turn back to her. "I would gladly pay for it not to see you in pain."

"I wish you didn't hate me," he said softly.

"I don't hate you, Chuck," she replied. She shook her head and turned, looking him right in the eye. "God, I almost wish I did. That would be easier than this."

"Sarah, I know I messed up," he began.

"Yeah, you did," she replied. "I'm sorry, I'm just hurt."

"Okay, I messed up, but let's be honest, there were times you said we couldn't be. There were a lot of times that I-

"Stop," she said in a voice that was cold as ice. "Chuck, what you don't seem to realize is, I chose you, every damn time. When I said we couldn't be together, do you know why? It's because they would have reassigned me. I chose you in that moment. If I had

chosen for me, fuck yes, we would have been together.”

“But,” Chuck began. “But.”

“Every. Damn. Time. I made a decision it was about you. It was about you. Every. Damn. Time.” Tears were flowing out of her eyes. “The one time I wanted you to chose me, you chose what’s best for you.”

“No I didn’t!” Chuck insisted.

“You chose to be the Intersect over me!” She replied, her voice rising.

“I chose to learn the Intersect so you wouldn’t leave me!” Chuck replied.

“What the hell does that mean?” Sarah asked. “That makes no sense! Do you remember when Bryce came back at Thanksgiving? Do you know he asked me to leave?” Chuck nodded. “I chose you. When they tried to take you away on the helicopter, I was prepared to shoot someone for you.” Chuck swallowed. “When it came time to bring you in to a bunker, I chose you!”

“I know, I know!” Chuck replied, trying to leap to his feet, but failed miserably because of how sore he was. He finally got up, and turned and there was Sarah, not backing down an inch. “I get it, you chose me, but did you?” She pulled back her chin. “Did you really decide to stay with me, or not go with Bryce? Or, what about the wedding? You never said-”

“I was going on vacation with you!” She snapped.

“And then what?” Chuck asked her. “Sarah, my whole damn life, I’ve never been enough. Not for my mother. Not for my father. Bryce thought I wasn’t good enough for the CIA. When I wasn’t in Stanford I wasn’t enough for Jill.”

“I’m not them,” she said softly and dangerously. “I have guarded you Chuck Bartowski. YOU. Not the damn Intersect, but you!” She paused. Chuck swore steam was about to pour out of her ears. “You didn’t trust me.”

“I didn’t,” Chuck admitted. “But....Sarah...you never told me.”

"I didn't," Sarah agreed. "I trusted that you would understand, and I guess...I guess I was wrong to trust you." She glanced down at the bag in his hand. "You might want to use the roll on one, it will be easier to reach the back of your leg." With that she turned and headed toward the house.

"Sarah!" he called out after her. She lifted a hand to stop him and kept walking. "Fuck!" he swore.

Chapter 12: Who Will You Run To Ch 12

I don't own Chuck

She stormed into the garage, pulled on her gloves and began to assault the punching dummy in front of her.

"Does he even know what he's done wrong?"

"Then again, maybe you don't understand why he did what he did."

She noticed that while her punches and kicks were exactly on target, the ferocity with which they had previously landed had lessened. She kept going, wanting to burn off the rage, the anger, but after a few minutes, she found herself with her head against the punching bag. Sweat was pouring off of her, but Susan had been right. She had been so wrapped up in her feelings, her hurt, that she hadn't thought about Chuck and why he did what he did.

God damn it, why did she have to love him so much? She knew she was alone, and she let the tears flow. She thought about that movie he once had her watch, *The Princess Bride*. While Chuck kept quoting line after line from it, there was one that stuck with her, *To the pain*. That truly was what this was between the two of them. *To the pain*. She let out the bottled up emotion.

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After letting herself cry, she had slipped in garage door that was in the back of the house, and had gotten to her room. She showered, and changed, prepping herself to go in there and talk to him like a damn adult. That had never been her strong suit, but she had to. This couldn't continue. She walked to the door when the smell hit her. She opened the door and followed the smell to the kitchen. Chuck was busy cooking, but glanced over his shoulder as she stopped short, watching him. He looked back at the food, but quickly spun, his eyes wide, as if realizing she was there.

"Listen, please don't think this isn't me listening, because it's not," Chuck began quickly. "I noticed you had a list on the fridge of food, and it looked like you were thinking burgers and fries, so I thought I could make them because I need to pull my weight, but if you don't want me to--"

"Chuck," she said gently. "It's okay, thank you." Chuck blew out a sigh of relief. "There's no grill so I was going to put it off for a few days but it seems you figure out how to do it on the stove."

"Yeah, something I picked up when mom and dad were gone," Chuck told her. He turned back to the burger, studied it and when he saw whatever he was looking for, flipped it expertly. "Sarah, I'm sorry."

"I am too," Sarah told him.

"Ellie said we are great communicators, but horrible talkers," Chuck began. He was going to say more, but the sound of Sarah's laughter, something he hadn't heard in a long time, made him turn back to her. She made no attempt to keep it from him, and he smiled, seeing her laugh. "It is the most obvious thing she could say," he added. Sarah's laughter just intensified.

}o{"I'll start the dishes," Chuck said, starting to rise. Her hand caught his wrist. "Or, you can."

"Sit, we need to talk," she told him. They had eaten in silence, but it wasn't the normal silence between them as late. It seemed to be...less heavy. "You said something earlier about people leaving you."

"It's not important," Chuck began.

"Chuck, don't do that," Sarah told him. "I know, I exploded earlier, I had all my pent up anger, and hurt, and resentment, and I am sorry. In the end, it was a shit idea I came up with, but it was the only idea I could come up with to save you."

"I know," Chuck said. "I know that. And-and, you were right. I've had people leave me, for most of my life. Hell, only Ellie and Morgan haven't." Sarah nodded for him to continue. "Please don't take this the wrong way, but you once said I needed to trust you,

not believe you. I understand now what that meant. But you have to understand...Sarah...you are freaking awesome, and even if I had all the confidence in the world, I would still wonder if I was good enough for you."

She shook her head. "I don't know why you do this to yourself," she said softly. "Probably for the same reason I don't voice what I expect...or want, because I'm afraid someone will not choose me."

He laid his hand out on the table, palm up, hesitantly. She looked at it, and then looked at him. She put her hand in his. "You hurt me, Chuck."

"I know," Chuck replied. "And as bad as that is, now I've put you in danger...again."

"I can handle being in danger," she told him.

"See, that's why I question how I'd be enough," Chuck pointed out. She scoffed laughter at that. "So, I have a question, and if it's no, I'll understand."

"Chuck, we have a lot to rebuild," Sarah began.

"I know, and that's why I have to take this first step," Chuck told her. He sat there quietly as she stared at him. She didn't know what to say. That was a damn lie. She knew. She knew exactly what to say. The girl in her was screaming for him to say it. The agent tried to hush her.

Sarah nodded for him to go on.

"Would you," he began, and paused. She felt nerves in her stomach. "Come with me to my bedroom." Jesus, what in the hell was he going to....no...he wouldn't. "And instruct me on how to rebuild my bed?"

"What?" Sarah asked.

"I can't use the Intersect because my emotions are in the way, and I'm never going to calm my emotions if I don't fix this." He paused a second. "And I don't know if I can ever get it back to where we were." She didn't say anything. She didn't know if she agreed with that statement. Right now, she didn't trust herself to say anything. "But, maybe what I can do, is show you that I trust you, and if you tell me how to rebuild the bed, me

not seeing the directions, maybe I can begin to fix this.”

“Part of it is my fault as well,” Sarah reminded him.

“Well, you said you don’t tell your expectations, doing it this way, you absolutely can spell them out,” he told her.

“Okay,” she said with a grin.

“Back to basics,” Chuck said.

“Back to basics,” Sarah parroted. For the first time since Prague, the hurt in her had lessened.

Chapter 13: Who Will You Run To Ch 13

I don't own Chuck

"This screw goes there," Sarah said, handing him a screw, and then pointing at the frame. Chuck looked at it, and then where she was pointing.

"Where?" he asked.

She moved in close and pointed it out to him. He turned to say something and their noses were a few inches apart. She smiled at him, and moved back to her seat. "Is that one of the screws that you didn't use before?"

"Naeiou," he replied as he began to tighten it. "Okay, fine, absolutely it was." He grinned as he heard her giggle. "I mean, it is kinda hidden."

"It is," she said softly. She sat there a second. "A lot of things are hidden that if we don't address will cause what we're building to fall apart." Chuck sat back on his feet, blinked, and let out a low whistle.

"My goodness, Sarah Walker, I was not expecting that level of deepness when putting together this bed."

"Maybe you aren't the only articulate schnook," Sarah replied.

"According to Ellie, neither of us are," Chuck pointed out. He started to screw on a piece over what he was working on.

"Wait, wait, wait," she said, jumping to his side, her hand on his, stopping him. "That bracket goes right here."

"Are you sure?" Chuck asked. He looked over at her, and she was giving him an amused look. "I mean, of course you are, it's just....you know what, I didn't put that bracket on, and my ass ended up on the floor." He began to try to put on the bracket. "I don't think I have enough hands," he muttered.

"Here," she said, holding the piece, the two having to be close as he tried to tighten it. She chuckled as she shook her head. "Chuck, we've been closer than this."

"Like in that trunk?" he asked, trying to lighten the mood.

"Yeah," she replied, grinning at him. "We have a history of getting a bit emotional and yelly, don't we?"

"Whaaaaa," Chuck said, turning to her, his mouth open, as in shock, but his whole disposition reflecting the humor he was feeling. She gave him a shy smile and gently hip bumped him. "Ma'am, I am trying to put this bracket on correctly."

"It's a damn wonder you didn't kill yourself," she muttered, shaking her head.

"You talking about the bed or the past two years?" She didn't replied. "Sorry."

"No, no. Nothing to be sorry for, I was just thinking how it's probably both." He finished with the bracket, and she moved back to his seat.

He started to work on the next part, when he realized something. "I couldn't help to notice during our conversations that you kept using the word choose, or choice."

"Conversations?" Sarah asked, chuckling.

"Tomato, to-ma-toe," Chuck replied. "I take it from what you said and inferred that you weren't chosen a lot in life."

"My dad choice the life he did over me, Chuck," Sarah said softly. "Damn it, I love him so much, but he has hurt me at every turn and I couldn't do that again. But, I've come to realize that maybe I didn't think about what you have been through. Maybe...maybe I got caught up in me."

"And I was absolutely caught up in me," Chuck replied.

"Don't do that," Sarah said softly. He turned to look at her, and saw the vulnerability on her face. "Don't excuse what I did. We both fucked this up six way from Sunday." Chuck nodded, not knowing what to say. "You know, I know how screwed up I am from what my dad did, and he was around. I can't imagine what you went through."

"I mean, when mom left, I thought, okay, we still have me, Ellie, and Dad," Chuck began. "But Dad....Dad wasn't there. Like physically he was there...some, but mentally...he was gone, Sarah. He was looking for her, and all I wanted was my dad to realize, we were here, his damn kids were right there. Dad provided money, and everything we needed, but...he would disappear for days on end. Ellie would have to sometimes forge notes for me at school."

"God, Chuck," Sarah said, shaking her head.

"When I got to Stanford, it was going to be different," he continued, not able to look her in the eye. "I was going to have friends, I found a girlfriend...and...well...you know how that worked out."

"You do know they're idiots for what they did to you, right?" Sarah asked.

"You do know I never thought I was choosing the Intersect over you, right?" Chuck countered. Sarah twisted her lips to the side.

"You know, and I am not saying this is your fault, at all," she began. "You have this knack...this...I don't know, intuition of knowing what I need to hear even when I don't, and in that moment...when you kissed me...." She trailed off and shook her head.

"Every old fear, every old worry came rushing up?" Chuck asked. Sarah nodded. "God," he said, running his hand through his hair. "I get that." There was silence for a few seconds. "Okay, where does that screw go?"

"Really? No wonder this thing fell apart. I thought you were the "King of the Buy More," Nerd." She was grinning at him.

"I am," Chuck replied. "But I am a mere peasant when it come to IKEA it appears," Chuck replied. Sarah snorted, handed him a screw, and pointed to where it went. "I'm surprised the bed didn't fall sooner." Sarah outright laughed at that. "So yes, I chose to be at the Buy More to hide." He looked over at her. "Is that what you did?" She tilted her head, confused. "Did you choose to go to the CIA to get away from it all, or was it, because of call of country like Casey?"

“I never chose to go to the CIA, Chuck.”

Chapter 14: Who Will You Run To Ch 14

I don't own Chuck

"I never chose to join the CIA, Chuck." His mind tried to wrap around that statement.

"So you're saying your family made you go, to join up?" Sarah snorted at that. "What? Did I say something wrong?"

"No, you said nothing wrong, but yeah, my dad made me join, just not in the way you're talking about."

Chuck sat there a second, confused. "I'm sorry, I'm not understanding. I'm not asking you to tell me, but I don't understand." Sarah gave him a sad smile, nodded, and handed him another screw and similar bracket as they began to work on the bottom corner of the bed. She got in close, knowing she would have to hold the bracket.

"Do you remember the way Heather was always saying things about my dad?" Sarah asked. Chuck nodded, continuing to do his task, worried if he looked at her, she'd lose her nerve. This seemed big...huge. "Dad was arrested by the CIA." Chuck stopped screwing. Why in the hell was someone in the CIA arrest someone in the US. Furthermore....how?

"They can't legally do that," Chuck blurted out. "Sorry-sorry. Not trying to question your telling of the story, but....Sarah...that's fucked up."

"And, maybe they didn't arrest him, but they were there. The Director of the CIA was for sure." She paused and he heard her take a breath. "Graham found me at sixteen and told me I had a choice. To either join him, or go to jail like my father."

"That sonofabitch," Chuck blurted out. "He had no right. That can't be legal."

"Sixteen year old me didn't know that," Sarah said.

"Oh, and I'm betting that's what he was banking on," Chuck added. He turned to her and saw the hurt on her face and that's when it hit him like a ton of bricks. "I literally

chose to join the CIA and you didn't," he said softly. She nodded.

"I mean, I *did*, but did I have a choice?" Sarah asked. She took the bracket and placed it over the corner the way she did the other. "Come on, we still have two more to do."

"Right," Chuck said, getting back to work, and thinking.

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Sarah was sitting on the couch some time later, drinking a cup of hot tea. Things had been quiet between her and Chuck since she told him about her recruitment to the CIA. She blew out a rough breath. Her refusal to share these things with him, they were part of the problem, and she knew it. He was the first person since Susan she had shared it with. No one on the CATS knew. Bryce hadn't known. And it was because of shame. Shame of the prior life she had lived, shame of being used as she became older and had realized what had happened, and shame she had stayed in the CIA after realizing the truth.

She just refused to share any more. Her past was her past, and frankly, thinking about it, just made her hurt more. She knew she should talk to people that she cared about...Chuck and Ellie...and Morgan and Devon. But she just couldn't.

"Hey," she heard him say gently from the doorway to the living room. "I was thinking of pasta for dinner, how does that sound?"

"You don't have to cook every meal, Chuck," she told him.

"I know, but, I think maybe you're a little in your head after sharing all that information." Sarah begrudgingly nodded, her lips pressed together. He nodded, started to turn, stopped and turned back to her. "So, would I be wrong to think that at the train station, when I picked going back, it may have run through your mind that I picked the very group you were forced into?" She looked down for a second, back up at him, through her lashes, and gave a quick nod. He opened his mouth to say something when she quickly cut in.

"But, you didn't know. You didn't know what I expected, what I thought. You just had a way of knowing what I needed, and...God, Chuck...when you did the exact opposite thing

that I thought I needed....”

“Wait, you said thought, does that mean you now think it was a bad idea?”

Sarah was silent for a second. “Late at night, I might think about how you not having your friends, because of a decision I made...how that might make you resent me if I went with you.” She blew out a rough breath. “I just know what this life did to me. I just know what I didn’t want it to do to you.”

“So you chose to protect me from harm,” Chuck said softly.

“I did.” There was silence in the room for a moment. “I always did.” He looked up at her. “Chuck, do you remember the whole Lon Kirk mess?” Chuck looked away, grimacing. “I’ll take that as a yes.” She watched his shoulders shake, him chuckling. “I approached that mission the way I did to make sure I wasn’t compromised.”

He couldn’t help but grin. “How’d that work out?”

“In the end I trusted my guy, and knew I was compromised. But do you understand why I did what I did?” Chuck shook his head no. She nodded and took a deep breath. “Because, Chuck, everything I have done is to protect you. If I couldn’t do my job, if they thought we were in a relationship of any kind, I would be gone, Chuck. GONE. And I couldn’t be, because...” She chuckled.

“What?” he asked, curious.

“My mom, she played this song when I told her what happened.” Chuck went pale.

“What’s wrong?”

“You told your mom about me...about my stupidest moment?” Sarah began to laugh.

“It’s not funny.”

“It’s goddamn hilarious is what it is,” Sarah told him. Chuck shook his head. “Anyway, there was this song she played, and it really made me understand how I felt.”

“What are they lyrics?” Chuck asked. She gave him a shy smile and began to sing.

You don't know what it's like to live on your own

You've always had me there beside you

You think it's easy finding someone out there

Who's gonna care as much as I do?

She grinned at the look on his face. "No one is gonna care about you the way I do, Chuck, I have to protect you."

"No you don't," Chuck told her.

"Yeah, I do," Sarah replied.

Chapter 15: Who Will You Run To Ch 15

I don't own Chuck

There was silence for a moment, and then Chuck asked the question he was pretty sure he knew the answer to.

"So, you left the CIA?" Chuck asked. "You chose to leave the CIA." Sarah nodded. "And now, you work for the NSA?" Sarah nodded again. "Because you wanted to protect the Intersect."

An amused smile covered her face. She knew what he was doing. "No, Chuck," she said softly.

"Because Beckman asked you to?"

"No, Chuck."

"Because Ellie asked you to?"

"No, Chuck."

"Then why, Sarah?"

She looked down and then back up at him. "Because I choose you."

"I see," Chuck replied. "What fulfills the requirements of this job? Not what they say fulfills them, but what do you say fulfills the requirements?"

"You can protect yourself, and I'm not talking about the Intersect, I'm talking about you have the skills and tools to protect yourself."

He was silent for a second, processing that. "And once that's done, what happens?"

She grinned at him. "I don't know," she admitted.

"So, you will be here in danger, because of me." She started to protest and he held up his hand. She gave him a look but didn't say anything. "So, I need to listen to you, and learn what you're here to teach me, so that if, once I learn everything you teach me, you

decide to stay, then at least it would be of your own free will, and you wouldn't be distracted by me and my safety."

"I think you still aren't getting it," she said, standing and walking toward him, not able to help herself from grinning. "IF I chose to stay after your training is sufficient, in my opinion."

"The only opinion that matters," Chuck said quickly. She twisted her lips at that, amused.

"I will most definitely be concerned about your safety because that is MY choice."

"Then my choice," Chuck began.

"*Your* choice?" Sarah asked.

"My choice," Chuck said, leaning down, their noses inches apart. "Is that I will not feel sufficiently trained until I can protect you, should *you* make the choice to stay and not fly off to some sunny coast."

"What if it's my choice to fly off to some sunny coast and take you with me?" she asked softly. She watched as his smile grew.

"I like that choice," Chuck admitted. "However, we have a ton of work to do both physically...not like that!" He was beginning to blush and she shook her head. "With my physical development?" he offered. She nodded. "AND, I think more importantly, some actual talking."

"Isn't that what we're doing?"

"We're kinda talking around things," Chuck pointed out. "It's kinda what we do."

"It is," Sarah replied. "So, what do we do first?"

"We come to a decision," Chuck told her. He could see the nerves radiating off of her. "Meat sauce, or just red sauce?" She blinked, confused. "With the pasta." She tried to look irritated but she couldn't stop the grin. "Sarah, let's be honest, it's gonna take a bit to get me in shape." She began to chuckle and then break into full on laughter. "I don't know that it was that funny."

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For the next week, Sarah began working with him, cardio for endurance, yoga for flexibility, and his chopping wood was his weight training...plus, she was sure it would be cold soon enough and they were going to need a fire...maybe a lot of fire.

She had caught him doing yoga yesterday, by himself, and blinked a little at how flexible he was becoming. She knew that was good, because if the Intersect ever worked again, and he was to do some of those moves she saw him do long ago, when she thought they were going to die in that white room with Bryce, he wouldn't be as sore as he was after the adrenalin of the Intersect wore off. Plus his flexibility would just help in general. She grinned at that thought and pushed those thoughts aside.

Neither had mentioned the physical aspect of their relationship they could now....partake in. They hadn't partaken, which she had opinions about both ways. Chuck had given her a few high fives after he had completed a new physical fitness milestone. They had hugged a few times, and of course they had sat very close to each other while watching TV some nights.

While he hadn't said anything about them, he hadn't shied away from her. She noticed he carefully listened to what she told him, and not only accepted her points as she taught him things, but welcomed it. She was teaching him fighting stances, walking through it slowly. She knew at some point she was going to have to spar with him, and she didn't think he would be upset if she beat him, but she did worry he might become disappointed if he didn't progress as fast as he thought he should.

She watched him walk into the room and shook her head. "What's up with the beard?"

"Up in some part of the northern US," he began, and paused as if looking for confirmation. She shrugged her shoulders and grinned. He chuckled and continued. "I'm being practical. Less supplies needed, better chance of confusing someone looking for baby-face smooth, Chuck Bartowski, and to help keep my face warm."

"We can handle the cost of razors and shaving cream," she teased.

"Fine," he said, grinning. "It's to keep you from attacking my face with yours while we do all of this."

"Excuse me?" Sarah asked.

"Sarah, we need to be focused, and I don't know if you've noticed but in certain...shall we say...heightened situations...we have a habit of making out."

She was silent for a second, an amused look on her face, thinking about what he said as she slowly stirred her tea bag in the hot water. "Okay, you have a point, but you need to know something...*Chuck*." He gulped as she emphasized the "K" in his name and stood.

"And whatever is that?"

"That if I *choose* to attack your face with my face as you so delicately put it."

"Not sure it was that delicate," Chuck muttered.

"There's nothing you can do about it."

Chuck swallowed. "Uh, I could say no." She just held his gaze, a slight grin on her face. "I could."

"No, you wouldn't," she said, walking past him, into the kitchen. "I could!" he said loudly. He heard her snort from the kitchen. "Not that I would," he said softly to himself. "I heard you," she said in a sing-song voice.

"How?" he asked, shaking his head at her. He had no doubt he had messed up in Prague...but maybe...just maybe...it wasn't the end of them.

Chapter 16: Who Will You Run To Ch 16

I don't own Chuck

"Now, I need you not to freak out like you usually do," Sarah began.

"Well, this is an unusual circumstance, so I might not be able to control my freaking out," Chuck replied, grinning. She let out a breath. "Listen, you started it."

"Yes, because I was trying to get your attention," Sarah began.

"And you have it," he cut in. She pressed her lips together and gave him a look. He mimed zipping his lips shut. "This is probably the most important thing I can teach you." His eyes lit up. She couldn't help herself and chuckle. "You must be aware of your surroundings."

"As if maybe I was wearing a helmet and couldn't see?" he asked gleefully. She put her hands on her hips, and stared at him. "Sorry." He did not look one bit sorry.

"You must use all your senses to give yourself the upperhand so that you can try and anticipate what is about to happen," Sarah continued.

"So I can dodge an attack or parry it?" he asked, his voice nearly going up an octave in excitement.

"Focus, Chuck," "I'ma focusing, I'ma focusing," he replied, excited.

"Chuck, you need to become attune to everything around. You need to learn to listen to your body as it realizes things are off."

"Say it," he nearly pleaded.

"Chuck." There was warning in that tone, and he nodded that he realized he had gone too far. "Listen, I know you're excited, but I need you to listen to me. Our body is constantly processing things, we just have to learn to listen to them, to understand them, to know when something doesn't feel right. The big things....your body tells you."

"Like when your hair goes up on your neck when someone is watching you?" Chuck asked. Sarah nodded. "Sarah...am I gonna learn how to use my spy sense."

"Oh my God," she said exasperated, throwing her head back, dramatically. "What happened to you listening to me?"

"I have never listened more," Chuck argued. "I'm just excited to learn how to use-" He stopped mid-sentence because of both the look and her pointing at him. "I excited to try and learn to use my senses," he finished.

Sarah twisted her lips, and he saw her trying to stop the smiled. "Chuck," she said softly.

"Yeah?"

"Do or do not do, there is no try," she said, unable to help herself, shaking her head in amusement. "YES!"

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"You literally have a blindfold on me, just like in *Star Wars*."

"I thought it was a pilot helmet with the visor being opaque," Sarah replied. Chuck was silent. "Sorry, was that dumb?"

"Listen, I thought we talked about this," Chuck said, his voice a little raspy.

"About the movie?"

"No, about us being serious and you not attacking my face," Chuck told her.

"I'm not about to attack your face," Sarah replied.

"Yeah, but lines like that from you, make me want to attack your face," Chuck told her.

"And I can't Sarah." She watched the smile on his face and saw the nerves on his. He was trying to be funny, to joke with her.

"I told you that if I want to attack your face I would, and maybe right now, I'm showing you that if I decide you have no chance," Sarah replied, making sure he could hear the teasing in her voice.

“By making me want to attack your face?”

“Like I said, no chance,” she teased. “Okay, time to get serious.”

“Okay, serious,” Chuck replied nodding. He was sitting in the chair she had set up. What he hadn’t seen as she led him to the chair was the bucket of water above his head, and the rope that held the piece of wood in place that kept it from tipping over.

“Okay, now, no matter what you hear, unless I tell you to get up or move, you do not get out of that chair, do you understand?”

“I understand,” Chuck replied.

“When you hear a sound, that’s not natural to whatever is out here, I want you to point in the direction you heard it, and call out what you think you’ve heard,” Sarah continued.

“Ready,” Chuck replied.

Sarah had set up small speakers across the yard. She had a tablet in her hands, that she could select an individual speak and play the sound at whatever decibel level she decided. She set a countdown for one of the speakers to play a sound after five minutes.

She watched him, knowing what he would try to do, the same mistake all rookies made. When your sight is taken away, fear grips you, and you try to hear things, anything that will help you. She didn’t expect Chuck to make it five minutes without hearing a phantom sound.

About two minutes in, his finger shot out, pointing across the yard. Sarah had heard nothing. “What did you hear?”

“A cough?” Chuck asked.

“No you didn’t,” Sarah replied.

“No, I didn’t,” Chuck said. “I kept thinking I should.”

“I know,” Sarah told him. “Chuck, just listen. Don’t fall asleep, but relax, and listen.”

Three minutes later, Sarah barely heard the sound of a can of soda being opened. She saw Chuck's finger point almost directly at the speaker. "Did someone open a drink?" he asked.

"Well done," Sarah told him, grinning. She began to have sound go off randomly, at different sound levels, and Chuck was hearing everything, now came the grand finale. It was going to upset him, and he was going to think she was pranking him, but it was a test at the Farm.

"Okay, keep listening," she told him. She got up, moving silently. She took her knife, swung it, and cut the rope, the knife driving into the tree. She watched him. He was told not to move, but she watched him frown, and then began to shift. The water should have poured directly on his head, instead, Chuck had heard, or felt, or sensed what was about to happen and had moved. The water hit his right shoulder as he had twisted, feeling it coming.

"ARRGGGHH!" He yelled, standing and ripping off the mask, looking at her, his eyes wide. He looked one part furious and one part ready to laugh.

"It was not a rib, I promise you, Chuck," she said quickly. "You sensed it, didn't you?" He paused, and realized that she was right. "Yeah, something was...off," he admitted. "Like, I felt...I felt something was headed for my head, and I would have gotten up if you hadn't told me to stay put."

"It's the sense we were born with," she explained. "Think about early man, and how he had to be aware. With so much in our world today, those senses are dead."

"Okay," Chuck said, nodding, and giving her a look.

"What?"

"I'm just saying there were other ways to do it," Chuck told her. She couldn't help but grin. "Think I'll work on my sneaking skills."

"Careful, Bartowski," she said, watching the grin on his face. "If you get caught, there could be hell to pay."

“Worth it,” he said softly. With that, he turned and headed toward the house.

“Huh,” she said, shaking her head. She watched him go inside. “Maybe it is.”

Chapter 17: Who Will You Run To Ch 17

I don't own Chuck

"So," she said, them standing outside. "I was thinking of getting one of those motion-capture suits for you so that any shot that hit you would register electronically." She was holding some type of gun in her hand. Chuck's lesson today was about sensing, but this time, with his eyes wide open, and being hunted.

"Go on," he encouraged her.

"But then I got to thinking of the two problems with that," Sarah continued, smirking. "One, there would be nothing protecting you if I shot you in the face."

"You wouldn't shoot me in the face, right?" Chuck asked. Sarah tilted her head. "Like, right after I got here, I could completely understand, but now?"

"I mean, I wouldn't enjoy it, but I'd do what I have to do to teach you, Chuck." Her voice was dripping with honey and she batted her eyes at him.

"You'd still enjoy it, wouldn't you?"

"Not answering that," she said, chuckling. "Number two...that suit would probably cost a lot of money. So, what I did was get this gun, with nerf-like bullets, but it will leave a mark on your clothes or skin, that will wash off, when I hit you with a shot."

"Don't you mean if?" Chuck asked. Sarah gave him a look, and he cleared his throat. "Right, when. Okay, how many bullets?"

"Twenty," she told him.

"So this exercise will take, what, half the day?" Her lip twitched. "Two hours?" She looked away, twisting her lips. "An hour?" She looked back at him, he could see the mirth in her eyes. "Surely longer than thirty minutes." She tilted her head, grinning.

}o{

Three minutes and twenty-six seconds later

"That was good," she told him, him gasping and out of breath.

"You shot me eighteen times!"

"Hey, you managed to avoid two of them, and three of them are superficial wounds at best." Chuck pointed towards his head, where there was a small chalk mark right between his eyes. "Oh, right, I need to order some goggles for next time." With that she turned and walked off.

"I said I was sorry about Prague!" he called after her. She lost it and burst out laughing.

}o{

He came out of the shower a little while later, drying his hair. "Any bruises?" she asked.

"No," Chuck admitted. "I think that set-up will work just fine."

"You do know none of that was in retaliation for Prague, right?" she asked.

"I do, but I do think you did enjoy it just a bit," Chuck said, looking her straight in the eye and grinning. She gave him a smile, and turned back to her computer, typing up an email. "Okay, what's wrong?"

"Nothing," she said, shaking her head.

He sat down at the table beside her. "You know, before I went all stupid," he began.

"Now, are we talking the day you were born, you dating Jill in the first place?"

"Ouch," he said.

"You running into countless building, and leaving cars when I tell you not to, you uploading the Intersect *AGAIN*, or that little thing at the train station?" Sarah finished, grinning at him. He reached over and took her hand, and she squeezed it.

"When I lost your trust," he said softly.

"I don't know that you ever lost it," Sarah told him. "Temporarily hid it from view? Maybe. But lost it?" She shook her head. "No."

“So, before I was stupid,” he gave her a look and she mimed zipping her lips. “We were friends and you could talk to me about stuff.”

“We are still friends, and I’m not sure I ever talked to you about much of anything,” she countered.

“Sarah,” Chuck said, mock exasperation in his voice.

“Fine, the person who delivers us stuff wants me to have dinner with them tonight,” Sarah said.

“Oh,” Chuck replied. He sat back, taking his hand off of hers. “Well, you should go.”

“I can’t go, Chuck,” Sarah told him. “I mean, you’d be here alone.”

“I’ll be fine,” he said, waving his hand and scoffing. “Tell him you’ll come.”

Sarah narrowed her eyes at him, as he stood, and headed back toward his bedroom. “You do know it’s a she, and she’s married, has a kid, and I knew her a long time ago, right?”

Chuck stopped walking. He couldn’t turn around, because she’d see it on his face. “I didn’t,” he said softly. “But it doesn’t matter who it is, you shouldn’t have your life ruined because of me.” He walked into the bedroom. Sarah sighed, got ready to get up, when he walked back out. “Sorry, had to put my towel up, I do believe it’s my turn to cook, which works out fine, it’s for one tonight.”

She got up and followed him into the kitchen. “I can’t leave you alone here, Chuck, what if someone found you? I can’t lose you.”

“Sarah, you have to trust me,” Chuck began.

“Wait, you misunderstand, I do trust you, Chuck. I can’t lose you. Me, Sarah Walker. I can’t lose you.”

Chuck turned to her, and the two locked eyes. “Sarah, what are you saying?”

“I think you know what I’m saying,” Sarah told him.

"I think our past proves we should perhaps be a little more forthcoming with our words," Chuck replied. Sarah stood there, looking uncomfortable. "Sarah, I'm not asking you to say anything to me you're not ready for, but I have to also tell you, I can't read your mind. And you can't read mine, and that's one of the reasons we're in this mess we're in."

"Dinner's for two tonight," she told him. Chuck nodded, and turned to the fridge. "I love you," she blurted out. He spun back to her, shock on his face. "Chuck, I fell for you a long, long time ago. After you fixed my phone and before you started defusing bombs with computer viruses." She paused. "Do you understand what I'm saying?" All Chuck could do was nod.

Chapter 18: Who Will You Run To Ch 18

I don't own Chuck

I love you.

He had lost the ability to speak, his mind was whirling. Sarah Walker loved him. She. Loved. Him. He was gobsmacked.

"Chuck? Are you okay?"

He had to get it together, he couldn't do what he did in Prague.

"Yes," Chuck replied hoarsely. He cleared his throat. "Yes." He looked into her eyes and saw how vulnerable she was. "I don't know what to say."

"I see," she replied.

"Wait-wait, that came out wrong, what I mean is, given the situation we are in, given what happened...then." She nodded. "I...need to protect you, Sarah, and I don't know what to do. I don't want to hurt you."

"Just tell me what you are thinking." He gave her a look. "I know, I know, but just do it."

"GOD I LOVE YOU!" he said, pulling her into a hug. She found herself crying, holding on to him like he was oxygen, and she needed him to breathe. "I know I haven't done the best of hiding it." She snorted, but held him tight, her arms clinging around his neck. "But I love you, and I'm so sorry for everything I've done to hurt you."

"I'm not sorry for shooting you between the eyes with that nerf bullet," she said, still not letting go. She felt him shake from chuckling. "When I say I can't lose you, I don't mean as an assignment, Chuck."

"I understand," he said.

She finally let go, and pushed herself away, to look him in the eye. "Do you? And, I don't ask that to be mean or anything. Because I barely understand it. I have never felt this way about anyone in my whole damn life and it scares me a little."

“Sarah,” he began, but that’s as far as he got, because she cupped his jaw with her hand, and dove in to him. She felt herself get lost in him, and him in her. This wasn’t Barstow, this wasn’t a bomb, this wasn’t a train station in the fog. This was here, now, and forever.

Eventually she pulled away. “Sorry,” she said, pulling her bottom lip between her teeth. “I’ve been wanting to do that since-”

She got no further, as he cupped her cheeks in his hands and dove in for his own kiss. Eventually he pulled back. “If we keep doing this, we’ll never have any conversations,” she told him.

“Trust me?” he asked. She nodded. “There’s something I want to do.” She grinned at him. “In your bedroom.”

“Don’t trust your bed?” she asked, smirking.

“It’s too important to risk it,” he told her, taking her hand, as she led him in.

}o{

Ten minutes later

“You know, when you asked me to come to bed with you, this wasn’t what I thought,” Sarah said, pushing up on an elbow and grinning at him. “But, I must say, I didn’t know how much I missed cuddling.”

“We’ve never really cuddled like that before,” Chuck told her.

“Oh, I know,” Sarah replied. “But my body is now going to require it.”

“I live but to serve.”

“Okay, watch it,” she told him, bopping him on the nose. “Not that I’m complaining, but why?”

“Because...because as much as I want to kiss, hug, and...”

“Make love?” she offered. He blushed and nodded, making her smirk.

"There were nights, when all I wanted to do was hold you...be held by you...you were right there, yet..." he trailed off.

"Well, I'm here now," Sarah told him.

"But, is that smart?" Chuck asked. She sat up at that. "And not because I don't want to be with you, but you're already having to protect me and-"

"Chuck Bartowski, you told me you loved me," Sarah said, cutting him off. He was taken aback by the softness, yet fierceness of her voice. "I will fight anyone who tries and take you from me."

"Never let anyone tell you, that you don't know how to make someone feel special," he told her. The way his eyes shined, she knew he was being 100% honest. "But we have a problem."

Sarah snorted. "Chuck, it's us, there's always a problem." Chuck nodded. "What is it?"

"You need to see your friend," Chuck told her. "I don't know why, but I can hear it in your voice, see it in your body language."

She was silent a moment. "Were you really going to encourage me to go see my friend if it was a guy?" Chuck nodded. "Why?"

"For the reasons I just said, Sarah," Chuck told her. "I just want you to be happy."

"Okay, she can't see you, for her safety," Sarah informed him.

"What if I absolutely promise to stay in my room?" he offered. She shook her head. "Or-or, wear a mask?"

"Great," she muttered. "She's gonna think you're into some freaky sex stuff, you wearing a mask."

"Who says I'm not?" Chuck countered. Sarah's eyes went wide, making him burst out into laughter. "Sarah....nevermind?"

"What?"

"I was going to ask you how you knew her, but that could put her in danger," Chuck replied. He was silent for a moment. "Taco salads for two tonight and then we work out how to see your friend soon?"

"We can try," Sarah replied. "Need some help chopping? I'm really good with a knife."

"Yeah you are," Chuck replied, smiling at her. He leaned over, and kissed her lightly on the lips. "Hey, I love you." She smiled at him, and threw her arms around his shoulders. "Uh-oh."

"No, uh-oh," she told him. "But please understand how we are in this together, okay?" Chuck nodded. Sarah hopped up and headed to the door. "You coming?"

"Yeah," he said, slowly getting up, thinking about how to get Sarah to see her friend.

"I mean if you like the bed that much you can sleep here tonight," she said, heading out the door. Chuck nearly choked, and he swore there was a little extra sway in her hips.

"Funny, Sarah," he called out after her. After a second of no answer, he called out again. "Sarah?" He walked to the door and saw her head in the fridge, looking for something. "I said that was funny, Sarah."

She stood up, an amused look on her face, winked, and went back to what she was doing. Chuck's mouth went dry.

Chapter 19: Who Will You Run To Ch 19

I don't own Chuck

Chuck Bartowski had been through a lot in his life. Mom leaving. Dad basically leaving. Kicked out of college. Downloaded the Intersect. But none of that....NONE of it, compared to how floored he was right now. Sarah Walker had told him she loved him. He was trying to get this right. He *had* to get this right...for her...hell, for him.

He now knew her past...will, some of it. He couldn't be the one to hurt her. He had to make sure he did this right, and he wasn't sure what the next course of action would be.

"Did I chop the tomatoes wrong?" Sarah asked, sitting in the chair across from him, eating her taco salad, an amused grin on her face.

"No-no, they're great," Chuck told her.

"You know what I like about a taco salad, when it's done right?" Sarah continued. Chuck shook his head, stunned that she was talking about taco salads right now.

"You have this contrast," she continued. "The coolness and crispness of the lettuce, and then the warm beef and taco shells." Chuck nodded. "When I was a kid, I used to make myself taco salads sometimes. We didn't have taco shells." Chuck sat there, silent. She chuckled. "We used Doritos, they were really good in a pinch."

"I bet," Chuck replied. What was going on?

"Chuck, are you okay?"

"Why would you ask that?" Chuck asked.

"Oh, I don't know," Sarah said, taking a sip of her drink. "You have gone deathly quiet, and in the past, you have mentioned that you didn't think you were good enough for me. You knew I liked you, and cared about you...but loved you? And given how you feel people who you believed loved you treated you..." She reached across the table and took both her hands in his. "I just think maybe you need a moment or two to process."

"What about you?" Chuck asked.

"See, I know what you're doing here," she told him.

"You do?"

"I do," she replied, sitting back in her chair, grinning. "One, you are being Chuck, which means making sure others are okay. Two, you are deflecting a little to not deal with pain of the past. Chuck, it's okay to feel however you are, all I ask, going forward, is that we are honest with each other."

He was silent for a few seconds. "You're not going to see your friend, are you?"

"Nicely played," Sarah told him.

"Well you said we should be honest," Chuck pointed out.

"Why is it so important for you that I go to see her?"

"Because you have lost so much of your former life," Chuck began. "Hell, Sarah, I don't think I'm being egotistical here when I say you've had more fun with me on this mission the past two years than you have in your entire life."

"It's not egotistical," she replied. "I have had fun, but not...consistently. That team I was with that Carina was on...we had our moments." She was silent for a moment. "But I couldn't trust them the way I do you." She sat there and a smile began to grow on her face. "I need to show you something."

"Okay," he said, and followed her as she got up.

}o{

Chuck found himself out in the garage. "Now, I want you to know I didn't show this to you earlier because I didn't need you panicking and really worrying about your safety." Chuck looked concerned. "Listen, I had this installed before we met, okay?" Chuck nodded. She blew out a breath.

"What? I promise I won't freak out about what you're going to show me," Chuck promised.

"Oh, you will freak out," Sarah told him, grinning. She led him over to the far corner of the garage. There was a small TV sitting there, and a small tarp over something. She gave him a look, shook her head, and picked it up.

"OH MY GOD!" Chuck yelled, his eyes wide. He turned to her. "Does it work?" She tilted her head to the side. "My bad," he said. He looked back at it, and his eyes went wide again. "OF COURSE!"

"We're gonna do this?"

"Oh, Sarah Mae Walker," Chuck began.

"It's not Mae," she said, but was ignored. She shook her head, amused.

"I'm not gonna lie, if you forced me, I'd of had you down for a *Double Dragon* or *Ninja Gaiden* type of girl, but of course, it's *Contra*," Chuck said, a look of pride on his face. "I mean...you do play it, right?"

"I do," Sarah told him. "But, there's something you need to know, this one, it has a secret."

"I know the code, Sarah," Chuck told her. "Every nerd is given the code at birth." She continued to look amused. "Up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, B, A, Start."

"That will get you thirty extra men," Sarah replied. "Now, when I first made this, I worried that someone would have to be with me, and I'd have to protect them as well."

"Okay," Chuck said, not sure where this was going.

"So, you see there is only one controller here." She paused and turned to him. "Don't worry, the NES inside has two controllers."

"Oh my God," he said, biting into his knuckle of his fist.

"You do know the two-player code, right?" She asked. Chuck scoffed. She handed him the controller.

"Up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, B, A, *SELECT*, Start," Chuck said, looking at her the whole time as he punched in the code into the controller. There was a noise and

Chuck turned his head, to see the work bench that had been up against the wall swing out, and a set of stairs appear.

“Not bad,” she said, patting his cheek as she walked past him, and down the stairs.

“That wasn’t necessary,” he muttered.

She poked her head back up from the stairs. “You liked it.”

“I did,” he admitted, and quickly followed her down.

Chapter 20: Who Will You Run To Ch 20

I don't own Chuck

Three weeks later

Chuck opened the door and grinned. "Susan!" he said enthusiastically. "I'm Chuck, I've heard so much about you! Lovely to meet you! Please won't you come in!"

Three weeks ago (the end of last chapter)

He went down the steps and his mouth dropped. The area seemed to be as big as the house. There were two bedrooms, a kitchen area, and a main room.

"Holy shit," Chuck muttered.

"By the way, that's twice I was right," Sarah told him. He slowly turned to her, trying to figure out what she was talking about. "The first is you were going to freak out about this."

"Okay, that's fair," Chuck replied.

"The second is, I told you that beard wouldn't stop me if I decided to kiss you," she continued. "Let's be honest, the CIA really couldn't stop me, they only slowed me down."

"Damn," Chuck said in a reverent voice as she stood there proudly. "You are something else." He looked over the area. "I think I've figure out how your friend can come over."

"And how's that?" Sarah asked.

"Easy, you put me down here," Chuck told her, spreading his arms. "Plenty of room."

"The problem with that is, she's former CIA, Chuck. She's going to want to know where you are, and she knows I wouldn't let you be anywhere that isn't safe."

"Oh," Chuck replied. "When did you meet her?"

"We were roommates at the farm," Sarah told him. "She left the CIA after her boyfriend, who was also in the CIA died right after graduation."

“So, she was a full agent, and then retired?” Chuck asked. Sarah nodded. “So, you kept in touch with her?”

“No,” Sarah said, shaking her head. “When she left, she was really upset, and to be honest, I was shocked when she told me that she was married and had a kid.” Chuck was silent, processing that. “The weird thing is, she married a former CIA agent. Given how she left...” Sarah shrugged.

“Huh,” Chuck replied. “So, you reached out to her when you got here?” Sarah nodded. “I see.” Sarah narrowed her eyes at him. “Well, I need to go finish my lunch and put away the rest of the food and do the dishes.” He had turned and was walking to the stairs. A groan came from overhead as he saw the opening covered. Chuck turned around, and saw Sarah standing there, hands on hips. “You literally just shut the door so I couldn’t leave, didn’t you?”

“I thought I said we should be honest with each other going forward?”

“Sarah, I’m not sure what you’re talking about,” Chuck began. She tilted her head. “Listen, it’s just a thought that came to me, and you have enough going on without dealing with my crazy thoughts.”

“Chuck,” she said simply.

“Will you answer one question for me?” Sarah stared at him, and then nodded. “Are we near the US Naval Surface Warfare Center in Bayview, Idaho?”

“How?” she muttered. “Did you flash?”

Chuck shook his head. “No,” he replied. “Morgan.”

“Morgan?”

“See, the little guy....will...Sarah....he wants to believe.” Sarah looked confused. “Sarah, Morgan really believes in aliens, and I mean, *REALLY*.”

“Morgan,” she said with a tinge of disappointment in her voice.

“Hey, we’re dealing with a freaking computer in my head, and you question the beard’s belief in extraterrestrials?”

“Okay,” Sarah said, amused.

“In fact,” Chuck continued.

“Okay, good to know my boyfriend’s a believer,” She muttered. Chuck stopped dead in his spiral/rant. “Chuck?”

“Did you...did you just....”

Sarah smiled, knowing what had him so confuzzled.

“Sarah...did you just call me your boyfriend?”

“Mmmhmm,” she hummed. He pointed to himself and she nodded.

“Well, that really changes things,” Chuck said, scratching the back of his head.

“Wait, you were about to say something before I derailed you.”

“Oh, that,” Chuck said waving his hand. “I mean, who’s to say this whole Intersect technology isn’t alien.” Sarah’s eyes widened at that possibility. “This throws a monkey wrench into everything.”

“What does?” Sarah asked, grinning at him.

“Well, as your boyfriend, I can’t tell you what I was going to tell you, because that might upset you,” Chuck told her, a teasing grin on his face.

“Oh, and that’s more important than upsetting your friend?” Sarah countered.

“You’re really not playing fair,” Chuck pointed out.

“I’m not even playing yet, I’ll let you know when I start.”

“DAYUM!” Chuck said.

“Chuck, I need to know what it is you’re thinking,” Sarah said, walking towards him. He swore there was a certain swing in her stride.

“You’re really pretty.”

“Thank you,” she said, smiling at him. “But I was talking about what it is you’re keeping from me.”

"I used to be the computer hacker Piranha," he said.

She pulled her chin back. "Really?" she asked. Chuck nodded. "Why would you tell me that?"

"I'm your boyfriend, I can't not tell you things."

"And yet you continue to keep something from me." He opened his mouth, but she laid a finger, quickly, but gently on it. His eyes went wide. "We both know I know three hundred and eighty-six ways to find out what it is that you won't tell me. But I'm your girlfriend, so I won't do that to you."

"I mean, you might need to stay in practice," Chuck said, her finger still on his lips.

She chuckled. "Maybe on something not important, like where we'd go out to dinner."

"We can't go out to dinner," Chuck pointed out.

"I mean after this is over." She saw so much on his face in that moment. "Chuck, I told you I love you. I wanted to run away with you. We both made mistakes, but I really feel this is worth fighting for."

He gently kissed the finger on her lips and she moved it. She kissed him soundly.

"Please, Chuck. Tell me."

}o{

Three weeks later

"Susan, so glad you could make it," Sarah said, coming into the living room, and giving Susan a hug.

"I wouldn't have missed this for anything," Susan said. Sarah walked over to Chuck, and put her arm around his back, as he put his over her shoulder. "I should have done this when you invited me in a few weeks ago, but it seemed like you two weren't one the same page."

"We weren't," Sarah told her. "But we aren't now, aren't we Chuck," she said, looking up at him.

“Absolutely,” Chuck replied, smiling at Susan.

Chapter 21: Who Will You Run To Ch 21

I don't own Chuck

Three weeks ago

"Okay, what exactly do you want to know?" Chuck replied.

"Just like that?"

"Just like that," Chuck told her. She grinned at him. "Sarah, I'm easy." She burst out laughing. "Not sure that was necessary," he muttered.

"Okay, let's start at the beginning, about Morgan and how you knew where you were."

"Fine, Morgan is all about that *ET* life, and I don't mean Entertainment Tonight." Sarah snorted at that. "He knows *ALLLLL* about Lake Pend Oreille."

"Does he know or does he think he knows?"

"How about both?" Chuck offered. Sarah chuckled and nodded. "He does know it's one of the deepest lakes around and submarine testing happens here. He also *thinks* he knows about USOs."

"You mean UFOs, right?"

"Oh, no, ma'am," Chuck said, making her laugh again. Unidentified Submersible Objects."

"Really, these things exist?"

"California has all kind of sightings," Chuck explained. "Here, in Sandpoint, Idaho, if I had to guess." Sarah's mouth dropped. "Come on, Sarah, it's the biggest town that's near the base, about thirty minutes away, if I'm remembering correctly."

"Okay, so, how do you know we are here though?" "Morgan has made me watch a *LOT* of videos and he's pointed things out to me," Chuck explained. "He would pull up videos side by side and show me geographic landmarks. I've come to know them by heart."

"Wow," Sarah said softly.

"Also, kinda your fault as well," Chuck told her. She looked confused. "All my training about listening to what's going on...the constant helicopters."

"Wait, you heard those? I mean they're not quiet or anything, but how did you know?"

"Sarah, this place is in the middle of nowhere, so, how else would things get in and out. Plus, it makes sense some military base had to be nearby to get me here, you wouldn't trust a normal airline."

"You don't need the Intersect to be a spy," she said softly.

"Lot of good that has done me," Chuck told her. She gave him a look, and he shrugged.

"Okay, so, you know where you are because of Morgan and my training."

"It's okay to be proud of that last part." She grinned at him. "The next part...maybe it's too many comic books, too many spy movies, but....don't you find it a bit odd that your friend, who left the CIA over being upset that her boyfriend was killed, now lives, near this base, with a former CIA husband and kid?"

"It is a little convenient," Sarah replied. "She was very disillusioned by the CIA after what happened." Chuck gave her a look, and motioned her to continue with that thought. "She might not have left, but went to work off book at a black site, like this one." Chuck nodded. "Okay, tell me everything you think is going on."

Now

"I'm so glad you could be here," Chuck said as they were eating dinner. "And I don't know how to thank you enough. This has been hard on Sarah. I just hope no one figures this out and your husband and child are put in danger."

"Oh, my husband is former CIA, he can take care of himself," Susan said, looking down at her plate and cutting the steak. Chuck and Sarah exchanged a glance.

Three weeks ago

"Okay, what are you thinking?" Sarah asked.

"I think we have the worst possible luck," Chuck told her. "IF they figured out I am the Intersect, and they know I have disappeared, then they looked into who left the CIA, NSA, and other government agencies around the same time. To figure out if anyone is guarding me, or any agent who isn't being assigned something right now."

"Okay, that's simple enough to do," Sarah said, nodding. "So then what?"

"Then you have to actually find me," Chuck pointed out. "Identify me."

"Okay, flaw in your idea," Sarah pointed out. "I asked Susan to come in a little while back, and she reminded me that was a bad idea."

Chuck tilted his head. "And what did that do, psychologically?"

Sarah stared at him and then shut her eyes, and pinched the bridge of her nose. "It helped me establish trust in her," she said. She opened her eyes and looked at Chuck. "Damn it."

Now

"So, your husband...wait, don't tell me, it's probably best if I don't know his name," Chuck began. "How did you two meet, or can you tell me." Susan winced, but her face showed humor. "Sorry, that's need to know."

"Oh, we know about need to know, don't we Sarah," Chuck said, grinning at Sarah.

"Do we ever," Sarah replied, taking a drink.

Three weeks ago

"She told me she couldn't come in, it would jeopardize her husband and son," Sarah told him.

"I need to ask you something," Chuck said tentatively.

"Ask me anything," Sarah told him, making his eyes widen. "I'm not saying I'll answer it, but you can ask me anything."

"Where were....we," he said gesturing between them. "When you made that offer?"

"You were sitting by the creek and I had just been sitting there, watching you." Chuck was silent for a moment. "Guess we need to talk about that at some point."

"I mean normal people would, but us?" She couldn't help but laugh at that. "So, I would say your mask was down and she might have known we were...having issues?"

"Are you asking if we were having issues, or trying to frame it nicely?" Sarah asked. Chuck mimed zipping his lips, making her chuckle. "Yes, she knew that."

"And she started asking to have dinner with you, after we had straightened things out....we have straightened them out, right?" Sarah nodded. "So, she has your trust, you're not thinking anything about her asking to have dinner with you, and we're finally on the same page."

"Same page? More like same book, probably same chapter, but same page?"

"I think you like it when you are on a different page than I am," Chuck told her. She winked at him.

}o{

Now

"So, may I ask what finally happened that you two fixed whatever was wrong?" Susan asked.

"We finally got on the same page," Chuck told her. He turned to Sarah. "Right?"

"I mean, I'm not happy about us being on the same page, but he's right," Sarah replied, taking a drink.

Chapter 22: Who Will You Run To Ch 22

I don't own Chuck

Three weeks ago

"If you're right, we need to run," Sarah said, after thinking about everything.

"That seems to be your go to option," Chuck teased. She swatted him on the arm good-naturedly.

"Fine, what is your idea then, Nerd?"

"You know I don't take it as an insult."

"You know damn good and well I didn't mean it as one."

"You really want a nerd as your boyfriend?"

"I mean, I didn't have much say in it," Sarah said with a shrug. "You love who you love."

"Funny you say that," Chuck said softly. "I was thinking about someone who I really respected and what he said."

"Tell me," she said.

"Love isn't a state of perfect caring. It is an active noun like struggle. To love someone is to strive to accept that person exactly the way he or she is, right here and now." Chuck quoted.

"That's beautiful," Sarah said. "And it's true." She looked down and then back up at him.

"I have a hard time believing anyone would active strive to accept me, I'm a mess."

"We're all a mess, Sarah," Chuck said softly.

"Who said that? The love quote, not what you just said."

Chuck smiled at her. "Mister Rogers," he told her.

"Of course he did," Sarah replied. "Okay, you have an idea, what is it?"

"We need to stop running and hiding. This may be the place where we can do it. The place where we can take a stand and end this."

Today

"I don't understand," Susan said, looking from one to the other.

"Well, I always kind of liked keeping him off-balance, because it amused me, and we weren't really off a lot, just a little bit," Sarah began.

"But now," Chuck said taking her hand and squeezing it. "We realize with everything we're facing in this world, we have to be on the same page."

"Are you two about to do something?" Susan asked, surprised.

"No," Chuck said, shaking his head. "We're just talking about how hard it is to be together. You know, you're married." He saw it in her eye for a brief second.

"Yeah, I do," she said, nodding. "I do."

Three weeks ago.

"Okay, what do we do?" Sarah asked him.

"What they're trying to do, verify," Chuck told her. She walked over to the table she had been near earlier, flipped a switch and Chuck heard the gears churning behind him. He turned and saw the opening.

"You can do this and not get caught?" Sarah asked.

"The same way you can pick a lock and no one would know that you're there," Chuck told her. She pulled her chin back, impressed. "Sorry."

"No, I like confident Chuck." Sarah said, walking up to him, taking his hand and leading him upstairs.

"Uh, about confident Chuck," he said as they got to the top of the stairs. "I need you to know it's not your fault I'm not exactly acting confident when it comes to us. It's just...there's been..." "A lot that has gone sideways?" Sarah offered. Chuck nodded. "Do you love me?"

"God, yes," Chuck told her, making her giggle.

"Do you believe that I love you?"

"I do," he answered. "But you need to know, through no fault of your own, sometimes I wonder if that is enough, and I think we've been down that road of my issues with that at least forty-seven times."

"Don't do that," she told him, confusing him. "Don't act like I'm not to blame for some of this. Chuck, you have to know everything we go through, we go through together."

"So, if we were to figure this out, then what with us, job and being on the run that is?"

"I have no idea," Sarah said, shrugging. "I know I'm a special NSA consultant, and you are not of the CIA, but you do have the Intersect."

"I do...not that it's doing a lot of good right now," Chuck added.

"We've never needed the Intersect, Chuck. It's always been you." Chuck smiled at her.

"There he is," she said softly. "Now, go do you, Nerd boy." She leaned in and gave him a peck on the lips.

"Yes, ma'am," he told her.

}o{

Now

"How long do you think you'll be here?" Susan asked.

"Oh, probably for a while," Chuck said, sighing. "I mean, I miss my friends, but I have Sarah."

"You do," she said, squeezing his hand.

}o{

Three weeks ago.

"Okay, Susan Jane Dubois. Cannot find a marriage certificate or a birth certificate where she is named the mother, anywhere."

Sarah blew out a breath. Chuck had spent that night and the next day, scrubbing the Internet trying to find anything. “Now, what?” she asked.

“Now, it’s time to verify,” Chuck told her. “And you’re not going to like it.” The look she gave him, made him gulp.

}o{

The next day found her sitting in one of the vehicles, she had stashed around the property. Sarah was sure Susan had never seen it. She was low in her car seat, a brunette wig on, sunglasses, and the hood of her hoodie over her head. Luckily it was a cool day. She saw Susan leave the pharmacy with Chuck’s prescription that Ellie had called in. Chuck was right, Sarah didn’t like this one bit. He was currently behind her, on the floorboard, a blanket over him.

“Do you see her?” he whispered.

She chuckled. “Yeah, get ready.” Susan pulled off, and Sarah followed. After a few minutes of driving, Susan pulled into a driveway. It matched the records Chuck had found online with where she currently lived. “You were right about the address.”

“We needed to verify though,” Chuck told her. “Okay, let’s get out of here.”

“Wait, someone is pulling up,” Sarah told him. She fished out her cellphone and snapped a picture of the man, and then snapped a second picture when the man pulled a baby out of the car, that looked like the child Susan had the last time she had dropped off something to Sarah. Sarah put the car in drive, hurrying home.

“Something wrong?” Chuck asked.

“Yeah, my friend is more than likely a Fulcrum agent,” Sarah told him, putting her foot on the gas to get home before Susan got there.

Chapter 23: Who Will You Run To Ch 23

I don't own Chuck

"You okay?" Chuck asked as Sarah came back inside after getting Chuck's eczema prescription from Susan.

"I'm fine," Sarah assured him. "I have been in many situations with people that I've had to lie to before, I promise she got nothing from me." Chuck gave her a sad smile. "Sarah, I meant are you okay?" He paused, and then pointed to his heart with all four fingers and his thumb. "In here."

She didn't say anything for a second. She opened her mouth a few times to say something, but couldn't get the words out. Chuck held his arms out, and a second later, he wrapped them around her, as she stumbled into him, her face pressed against his chest. "I trusted her," she said softly.

"I know, and you don't deserve that," Chuck told her. "I promise, Sarah, I'm going to do everything in my power to never break your trust again."

"I know," she said softly, holding him tight. She didn't say anything else, but her shoulders softly shook and he felt his shirt slowly grow wet.

}o{

It was several hours later that the door opened to the house, and he stepped outside. Chuck had gone to bed and he thought Sarah had. He lay there in bed, tossing and turning, when he heard the door to the outside softly open. She was sitting on the porch, in the dark, in the swing, wearing his dress shirt. He didn't pack a dress shirt, so how she had one.... He had brought a blanket with him, knowing that she might just need one. He gently laid it over her bare legs, and sat down beside her, and swung with her, not saying a word.

After a minute, she lifted up the blanket near him, scooted as close as she could get, and tossed it over him. She laid her head on his chest, and the two swung, neither saying a

word.

}o{

Several hours later, she awoke, in her bed. She didn't remember getting there, but she was quite sure she knew how she did. She got up, went to the bathroom, and instead of returning to her room, peeked inside Chuck's room. It was early morning, and she watched him for a minute before making a decision. She crawled in bed beside him. She watched him for a moment, and then snuggled up against him. She was asleep in seconds.

}o{

Now

"So, was there a moment you figured it out?" Susan asked. Chuck and Sarah looked at her. "You know, that you were it for each other."

"I'm not really sure," Sarah said.

"Oh, Sarah," Chuck said, chuckling. She looked over at him, curious. "It was the day you brought us my eczema cream," Chuck told Susan. "It was like it just...hit us, you know. We had each other. We could trust each other." He looked over at Sarah. "There's a song," he continued, talking to Susan, but never taking his eyes off of Sarah. "And for the first time, I really realized what the lyrics meant."

He sang softly.

Who will you run to when it all falls down?Who's gonna pick your world up off from the ground?Who's gonna take away the tears you cry?Who's gonna love you baby as good as I?

"It was her," Chuck said to Susan. "We both realized that we were that person for each other."

"We did," Sarah agreed.

}o{

Then

He woke, feeling her holding him tightly. He squeezed her shoulders, lowered his lips to the top of her head, and gently kissed her. As he lay back, she pushed herself up and looked him right in the eyes. She leaned in and kissed him gently. "Thank you," she said softly, as she pulled away. "God, it hurts, Chuck. I thought she was different."

"I'm so sorry, Sarah," he replied, rubbing his hand down her back, trying to comfort her. "Are you hungry? Can I make you breakfast?" She shook her head. "Coffee?" She chuckled. "What?"

"You trying to seduce me there, Buddy?" she asked.

"No, just letting you know I'm here." She nodded and leaned back, letting him get up. He started to get out of the bed when her hand shot out and grabbed his arm. "I love you. I'm sorry for what we went through." She looked up at him, locking eyes with her.

"I love you," he replied. "And I'm sorry as well. To be fair, some of it was just the suckage of the CIA, and some of it was us." Sarah nodded. "But, Sarah," he said gently. She locked eyes with him, and he couldn't help but grin. "We're together now, so....worth it."

"Worth it," she parroted.

}o{

She emerged from her room some time later, showered, hair in a ponytail, a look of determination on her face. Chuck handed her a cup of coffee. She took it from him, took a sip, and nearly moaned. "Thank you," she said softly. He wrapped an arm around her back and kissed her softly on top of the head.

"You're welcome," he murmured.

"So, what's the plan?" Chuck's eyes widened from her question. "You have a plan, I know you, Chuck."

"Okay, I ran the picture of the man through facial recognition," Chuck told her. "Both he, Peter Wilcox, and Susan work for a private security firm, and the picture of the child

resembles the child of these two.” Chuck pulled up the site and showed her. “Meet Nancy and Peter Wilcox,” he told her. He pushed a button and pulled up a birth certificate for Rebecca Wilcox, Nancy and Peter’s daughter.

“Think Nancy knows Peter is using their child in this thing?” Sarah asked.

Chuck grimaced. “Either answer is not good,” Chuck admitted.

“What now?” Sarah asked. Chuck turned to her, looking worried. “Just say it, whatever it is.”

“I think it’s time to bring in some help on this one,” Chuck told her.

Sarah sighed. “Casey?”

“Casey,” Chuck replied.

Chapter 24: Who Will You Run To Ch 24

I don't own Chuck

Now

"So you two are serious?" Susan asked.

"I am," Sarah said, with a shrug. "He's it for me."

"She's it for me," Chuck added.

Then

"Okay, so, I push this button, we call Beckman, tell her where we are in this, and literally, where we are, and Casey comes to help," Chuck said, staring at the keyboard.

"Wait," Sarah said. Chuck turned to her. "You asked me something the other day about what about us after this is over."

"I did, and it's fair that you don't know," Chuck replied.

Sarah shook her head. "No, Chuck. I do know, about me, that is. I want to be with you. Wherever that is, however that is."

"And I want to be with you," Chuck told her. She slid an arm around his neck and kissed him. He began to slide his arms around her waist as they both heard someone clearing their throat. They jumped apart and saw Beckman on the screen in front of them.

"You hit the button?" Sarah asked.

"Apparently," Chuck replied.

"About damn time," Beckman muttered.

}o{

"I don't like it," Beckman said after Chuck and Sarah told her the entire plan. "It's not your plan I'm questioning, but putting you two out as bait."

“We could draw out the big wigs of this organization,” Chuck pointed out.

“You could, or they could send lackeys,” Beckman countered.

“Ma’am, they have to know this is their best chance,” Sarah argued. “We may not get those behind the curtain, the leadership, but if we can get some of those from our agencies...”

“Agreed,” Beckman said. “You will leave the field work to Agent Casey?”

“Yes ma’am, he’s in charge in the field,” Sarah replied. Beckman nodded and reached to cut the feed. “General,” Sarah said quickly. She reached over and took Chuck’s hand. “We’re together, exclusively, and when this is over-”

“When this is over, I hope to have both of you in the NSA,” Beckman said. “You three are my best team, and what you two do....I don’t want to know about.”

“Why would you think we would tell you what we do?” Chuck asked. Sarah slowly turned to Chuck, and it dawned on him what he had said. “NOTLIKETHAT!” he blurted out. Beckman shook her head and cut the feed.

“I mean I’d like to keep our personal life private, but it would be *really* nice if you didn’t tell Beckman,” Sarah teased. Chuck turned to her, chuckling. “So, what are you thinking?”

“Two days until Casey gets here because of him taking precautions?” Sarah nodded. “Okay, I think it’s time I look at perimeter footage.” Sarah stared at him. “Sarah, it’s you, I know you have footage, you just don’t look at it unless you need to.”

“I just don’t want you to think it’s for keeping you trapped here,” Sarah began. He took her hand and squeezed it. “I know,” she said with a sigh. “Sorry about just crawling in bed with you.”

“Never apologize for crawling in bed with me,” he told her. She lifted an eyebrow as she gave him a mischievous look. “Will you just show me where I can watch the footage?”

}o{

Now

"That's dangerous in this work," Susan blurted out. She looked like she wished she hadn't said it.

"I know," Chuck said gently. "Sarah told me everything, but you found love, and a kid, right?"

"Right," Susan replied, not realizing how her expression didn't convey that she believed what she said.

}o{

Then

"You okay?" Sarah asked as he came into the living room a few hours later.

"Yeah, those are nice cameras and I was quickly able to verify the license plates," Chuck told her. "I'm sorry, Sarah."

Sarah shrugged, and patted her lap. "Here, lay your head here, and take a nap, I know you did a lot of digging and you deserve a break."

He laid down, his head in her lap. He turned his head to see what she was watching. "I didn't know you were a fan of old movies."

"Oh, I just found this on," Sarah said. "Since we can't log into anything on any account so they can't track us."

"Point," Chuck told her. "You ever think about this?" Sarah looked down at him. "You know, after a long day of spying, just sitting here with someone on the couch, relaxing, no pressure, just...being?"

"Many a night in that green hotel room," Sarah admitted.

"Oh, shit," he muttered. "Your apartment...you moved out."

"I did," Sarah said.

"Uh, you know, now that Ellie and Awesome are married, I kinda need to find my own place," Chuck told her. She looked down at him. "You have any interest in having a roomie? I'm sure we could find a comfy two-bedroom apartment."

"I thought we talked about this?" Sarah said softly. Chuck looked confused. "When we were locked up? Two-bedroom?" Chuck grinned at her. "Yes, Chuck, I think I could use a roomie. Although, Morgan might be a little upset."

"I think he'd be fine since it's you," he told her. He closed his eyes, relishing in her touch, her hand slowly making it's way through his hair, the feelings on his scalp making him want to moan.

He felt her bent down, and he just knew she was inches from him lips. "You sure you're okay with me crawling into bed with you?"

"No, I am not," Chuck said, never opening his eyes, a grin growing on his face. "You should never crawl, Sarah. You should march right in there and hop into bed like you own it."

"If you insist," she said softly. Chuck's eyes flew open, and he saw her's sparkling.

"Uh, are we sure Casey is as far away as we think?" Sarah sat there for a second, confused. Then she realized what he was asking, and burst out laughing.

After a minute she stopped, and smiled down at him. "I need to get up and lock the door, just in case." Chuck's eyes went wide.

Chapter 25: Who Will You Run To Ch 25

I don't own Chuck

They were sitting on the porch waiting as Casey pulled up in front of the cabin. "Anyone follow you?" Sarah asked as he got out of the car.

"Come on, Walker. It's me," Casey told her. He stopped. He looked at her, then to Chuck, then back to Sarah. "Christ," he muttered. "Is there coffee in the kitchen?"

Chuck pulled out a thermos and pitched it to him. "We had it ready for you." Casey grunted. "Figured you'd want to see everything and get to work."

"At least your damn head is finally working right," Casey muttered.

"Still haven't flashed," Chuck told Casey.

Casey gave him a look and shook his head. "Who said a damn thing the Intersect, numb-nuts?" Casey muttered, walking away.

"Are they?" Sarah asked softly. Chuck gave her a confused look. "Your nuts?" Chuck's eyes went wide and she winked at him. She stood up and followed Casey.

"This is gonna be so much fun," Chuck muttered.

}o{

Chuck quickly recovered, grabbed the file folder, and joined the two. He began to lead Casey around the property, showing him things. He led them toward the back, pointing out the nearly invisible cameras that were posted around the backside of the property, near the back road.

Casey watched Chuck, impressed. Casey glanced at Sarah, who grinned and shrugged. "That's where I'm thinking they come for us," Chuck said, pointing to the spot where Susan and Peter had been photographed by the surveillance cameras. "That road leads to a service road to the base."

"And its security is run by a private security firm?" Casey asked. Chuck nodded. Casey snorted. "You have to give it to them, these Fulcrum assholes know how to play dirty and make it look clean."

"How would you do it, if it were you, Casey?" Chuck asked. Casey turned to him. "I mean, you have the most experience where it comes to military maneuvers."

"I would do exactly what you laid out," Casey replied. He pointed to a clearing off the side of the road. "I set up base camp there. Being who they are, they could close this road, no questions asked." He pulled the pack he had off of his back, and rummaged around in it for a moment. He pulled out a small cylinder and walked to the clearing.

"What's he doing?" Chuck asked.

"Looking for the best vantage point," Sarah told him. Chuck watched Casey take the small object, extend it and look through it. He slowly turned until Chuck saw him grin. Chuck followed Casey's line of sight and saw a cliff. "That's good," Sarah said nodding.

"If I take position there, I can take out one or two," Casey told him.

"How many do you think there will be?" Chuck asked.

"Eight to twelve," Casey replied. "The question is who do I take out."

"The leader," Chuck answered. Casey gave him a surprised look. "It creates the most chaos."

"Kid, when I say take out..." Casey trailed off.

"They're coming to take me and probably kill Sarah," Chuck answered. "This isn't us breaking in somewhere, and guys doing there jobs. These are men coming to kill her, and make my life a living hell."

"Kid," Casey began again.

"I don't like it, Casey," Chuck admitted. "But what choice do we have."

"Solid copy," Casey replied. "I can probably get three or four guys here that I know. They're retired, but I know they're solid and we don't have to worry about them turning

on us, unlike the wedding.”

“Sounds good,” Chuck said, nodding. “Would it help if I could kill their communications?” Casey grinned.

}o{

Now

Susan looked uncomfortable. “You okay, Susan?” Chuck asked.

“The baby was having some teething problems,” Susan answered. “I’m just concerned.”

“Well, feel free to make a call,” Chuck told her, lying his napkin on the table and sitting back.

Susan gave him a grateful smile, pulled out her phone and tried to send a text. “There doesn’t seem to be any service,” she muttered.

“Weird things always happening here,” Chuck told her. “Could be those USOs in the lake.”

Susan looked at Chuck like he had grown a second and a third head. “I’m sorry, what?”

“You know, those USOs,” Sarah told her. Susan gave Sarah a look. “What?”

“You told him where you hid him?” Susan asked, surprised.

“I don’t know why you’re surprised,” Chuck said calmly. “You asked to meet me, it’s not like you’ve been following protocol.” Susan slowly turned her attention to Chuck. “I wasn’t supposed to mention that was I?”

“No, baby, you weren’t,” Sarah said, lying her hand on his.

“Baby?” Chuck asked, grinning, staring into Sarah’s eyes.

The sound of a gun being cocked brought both of their attention back to Susan. “So, I guess you figured it all out.”

“Yeah,” Chuck replied. “We did.”

}o{

Then

"How much time do you need?" Chuck asked Casey.

"Week, ten days," Casey answered. "You sure about this, Bartowski?"

"No," Chuck replied. Casey stared at him. "This may absolutely fall apart, but what good am I doing anyone constantly being on the run? What good are we constantly playing defense?"

Casey looked around. "Hell of a place to make a last stand."

"No, it's not a last stand," Chuck told him. "If that's what you think it is, then we do something else."

"No, Bartowski," Casey said shaking his head. "You're right. This is no way to live...not for you. For me, heh, it would be fine, but for you..." Casey shook his head again.

"Thanks, Casey," Chuck clapping the older man on the shoulder. "Now, I just hope we don't lose anyone."

Now

"So how's this going to go?" Chuck asked.

"You just made me a lot of money," Susan told Chuck. "The search was over for you."

"Oh, got tired of looking?" Chuck asked.

"No, no one in Fulcrum thinks you have the Intersect," Susan said with a shrug. "The only person that does is the lead agent on this mission."

"Huh," Chuck replied. That's when they all heard the gun go off.

Chapter 26: Who Will You Run To Ch 26

I don't own Chuck

Then

Casey had left, and told them when he came back he would have a camper. He had told them he didn't need to be around their fresh hell.

"He knows, doesn't he?" Chuck asked, the two sitting on the porch, looking at the night sky.

"Beckman knows," Sarah said with a shrug. Chuck gave her a look that made her giggle. "I mean she knows that we're together."

"I didn't tell her the rest," Chuck muttered. Sarah squeezed his hand.

Now

"What in the hell was that?" Susan asked. Another crack ricocheted through the house.

"Sounds like two gun shots," Chuck told her, as he stood. Susan aimed the gun at him.

"No, you're not shooting me," he said, as he began to walk down the length of the table, away from Sarah, Susan's gun trailing him.

"Now," Sarah barked. Chuck dropped to the ground, as Sarah grabbed a plate, and sent it flying discus-like into Susan's hand, making her drop the gun. Susan pulled back her hand, stunned, as Sarah put a hand on the table, pulled herself up, and with the other hand, punched Susan right against the jaw, knocking her unconscious. Sarah stood, looked down at Susan, and then back to Chuck. "Got her."

"Yeah, but who's gonna get us?" A man asked, entering the room, followed by three others. He jabbed forward, with something in his hand. Sarah convulsed and dropped to the ground.

"SARAH!" Chuck yelled.

"She's alive," the man said, advancing on Chuck, with the other three following.

"You can't shock him," one of the other three said. Chuck barely heard the words. He was staring at Sarah. It sounded like he was underwater.

Then

The two of them sat there, holding hands, looking at the sky. He couldn't help himself and began to softly sing.

*You don't know what it's like to live on your own
You've always had me there beside you
You think it's easy finding someone out there
Who's gonna care as much as I do?*

*What's gonna happen baby when you find out
That there's no one there to cry to?
You can tell the whole world how you're gonna make it
You can follow your heart but what ya do when someone breaks it?*

When he finished, he turned to her. She rubbed her right hand against his cheek, and quickly pushed herself up, to where she was straddling him. She cupped his face and began to kiss him. His hands rounded her back and went up to her shoulders, holding her. She let go of his face, and reached down to grab his shirt, slowly pulling it up.

"Ma'am, this is a bit of PDA," he told her, grinning as she peppered him with kisses.

She pulled his shirt off, and reached down to grab hers. "You can always tell me to stop," she teased.

"No, I'm just gonna have to figure out how to keep you warm on this cool night," Chuck replied.

She peeled off her shirt, and faux gasped as he unsnapped her bra. "Well, I guess you are."

"I have ideas," he said, as he kissed her neck.

Now

There were no motions from him. Time seemed to slow down. He saw each of them moving toward him, but at the same time, he saw Sarah, and everything they had been through. The first date. The second first date. The beach. Barstow. Making love in her bed for the first time. Making love on the front porch.

He saw her teaching him how to fight.

He had a bo in his hand, and spun it. "Try to hit me, Chuck," she teased.

"I don't want to hurt you," Chuck told her.

"Chuck, you can't hurt me," she told him, grinning. She took her own bo, and began the attack, he parried everything perfectly, never flashing. He had parried everything perfectly, except at the very end, when as she went by, her bo, thwacked him on the backside, like a pat. "See."

"Do it again," he said, and she did, except at the end, she didn't hit his backside with a bo. He thwapped hers with his bare hand.

"Chuck Bartowski!" she said mock affronted. "How dare you."

"Want me to rub it and make it feel better?" he offered.

"Cheeky," she told him, and moved to attack again.

He felt that old rush begin in his head, but it was smoother this time. While he had his new normal flash, this time it was Sarah, showing him how to fight his way out of this predicament. He reached down to the table, seeming to go normal speed, but everyone around him still moving slower.

He grabbed a plate, and flung it at the man with the shock stick, knocking him to the floor. As he released the plate, he pivoted to his right, striking the man closest to him in the jaw. He blocked a right from his opponent, moved into him, and spun the two of them. He heard two shots, looked down and saw two darts in the back of his opponent, the opponent unconscious. He shoved him into the two men standing, sending them sprawling.

He slid to the right, grabbing the chair he had been sitting in earlier, and stood, bringing it with him. The man closest to him, brought up his hands defensively, but Chuck cracked him over the head with the wooden chair watching it break, one of the chair legs remaining in his hand. He threw that chair leg at the other opponent, knocking the dart gun from his hand.

Chuck crossed the room toward the man that had been holding the dart gun, and took him out before he could recover. He spun and face the man that had the shock stick. The opponent jabbed at Chuck, as Chuck moved to his left, grabbed the overextended wrist, twisted the man's arm, and drove the shock stick into his opponent's gut. The man hit the ground, the shock stick in Chuck's hand. He looked over at an unconscious Sarah, hit the button on the stick and watched the electricity on the end of it hum. He looked down at the man who had shocked Sarah, pulled back his arm, and prepare to jab the stick into the man's gut.

Chapter 27: Who Will You Run To Ch 27

I don't own Chuck

"Chuck, don't," he heard her weak voice say. He turned and saw her there, her eyes open, trying to catch her breath. "It's over. It's not worth it." He began to turn to the man who shocked her and she grabbed his near hand. "Chuck, please." Chuck looked at the man who had shocked her and then back to Sarah. Chuck bent down and helped Sarah to his feet. "They hurt you," he said softly.

"They did, but you saved me," she told him, cupping his cheek.

"Walker, Bartowski," they heard Casey's gruff voice call out. "You two okay?"

"Yes," Sarah said taking Chuck's hand and squeezing it. She gave him a look to see if he was. "Yes, we're okay," Chuck called out.

}o{

A few days later found them back in Burbank, under the Orange Orange, talking on the monitor with General Beckman. "Team, it appears that the threat has been neutralized." She glanced at a file. "Unless Daniel Shaw figures out how to get up from the grave minus a head," she added.

"I've learned since Larkin," Casey said proudly. He felt Sarah and Chuck looking at him. "What?"

"He is so serious about his work," Chuck muttered.

"Very," Sarah agreed. "General, my contract is not yet fulfilled."

Beckman gave Sarah a look. "The threat has been eliminated," she reminded Sarah.

"This threat," Sarah retorted. "But there will be others. He is not trained to take down a team if they are sent for him."

"I am right here," Chuck said, holding up his hand. Sarah and Beckman glared at him, and Casey stood there looking amused. He cleared his throat and continued. "I did flash,

General, that is true, but what I flashed on wasn't what was in the Intersect, but what Sarah taught me. I don't know if it's evolving or what, but it doesn't matter. I am choosing Sarah."

The look on Casey's face went from being amused to respect. "In the past few months I have learned something." He reached over and took her hand. "We were compromised, we do have feelings...hell, I love her, and that made us better, we fought for each other. When we didn't....well....that didn't work so well."

"No, no it didn't," Beckman agreed. "So what are you saying."

"I'm saying that if you want this team back, then Sarah and I are a package deal, if she agrees, and if she doesn't, well...I'm doing whatever it is she wants. And-and, I want it very clear, I'm choosing her. Whatever she decides, is what we do, because she understands this world better than I, she understands what to do when this world falls down."

"Ann and Nancy are so underrated," Casey muttered. Sarah and Chuck turned toward him, stunned. "What? I told you I wasn't hatched."

"So that's the way it is?" Beckman asked. Both Chuck and Sarah nodded. She looked at Casey. "Colonel."

Both Chuck and Sarah tensed, wondering what was about to happen. They turned toward Casey who was holding two packets. "Told ya we had better benefits," he said with a shrug.

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"I'd like to point out that we do have a two bedroom apartment," Chuck said to Sarah as she moved her last box into their apartment. Ellie and Devon had moved to a bigger apartment in the complex while Chuck was gone. Beckman had the apartment held onto in case Chuck was to return.

"Fine," Sarah told him, grinning at him. "But I'm sleeping in this room."

"Well, it's my room," Chuck told her.

"I won't be crawling into bed...unless of course that's what you want," Sarah told him. Chuck felt his mouth go dry, and lost the ability to talk, sing, move, or function. Sarah grinned, beginning to put away her clothes. "You know, I normally just leave everything in my suitcase." Chuck sat down on the bed, and just listened. "My whole life has been running, Chuck. With my dad, the CIA, and now...now I feel like I have a home."

He walked up behind her, and gently slid his arms around her stomach, holding her. Her hands slid over his as she let her head fall back against his shoulder. "You do," Chuck told her.

"I know," she said softly, turning in his arms, sliding hers around his shoulders. "So, do you think we talk the way others do? You know, have conversations?"

"No," Chuck said, shaking his head. "I mean, I think both of us have pasts that bother us and we try to avoid them, and maybe that's normal. I don't know if anyone tells their significant other about all of their past."

"So I am your significant other?" Sarah asked, grinning.

"Girl, you are more significant than me," he replied, returning the grin.

"No," Sarah said, shaking her head. "You aren't going to do that. You are not going to put yourself down, do you understand?"

"I do," Chuck said, nodding. "Sorry."

"Nothing to apologize for, we're just not going to do that," Sarah told him. "That's how we got in this mess, both of us thought the other was a better...whatever. We both put ourselves down and hoisted the other up." Chuck grinned at her. "What?"

"Well, you just made the point I was about to, before I was stupid," Chuck told her, making her smack him lightly on the shoulder. "Maybe we don't talk about the past, but we do talk about the present and the future. We talk about us and how we go forward, together, so, it doesn't matter how we look compared to others."

"You are an articulate scnook," Sarah said, giving him a kiss on the cheek. He smiled at her, but the look on his face worried her. "What?"

“Are you concerned that when I flashed it was about how you fought?” Chuck asked.

Sarah was fighting a smile, but was losing. “No, because it seems the Intersect flashes on the best techniques,” she replied, bouncing a shoulder as she grabbed some items that needed to go into the bathroom.

Chuck watched her, a bit stunned, but grinning as she sauntered toward the bathroom. He hurried after her. “Oh really?”

“I mean you, should know, right?” she asked. She shrieked and ran as he tried to tickle her. He chased her into the living room, where she spun, dropped her items, and pinned him against the door. “You’re like that dog that chases the car. Now that you caught it, what are you gonna do with it?”

“Whatever she wants me to,” he answered softly.

“Good answer,” she told him, leaning up to kiss him.

Who will you run to when it all falls down?

Who's gonna pick your world up off from the ground? Who's gonna take away the tears you cry?

Who's gonna love you baby as good as I?