



Unbreakable

Stephanie Tyler

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This is section 8

A cabal of operatives with dangerous pasts teams up to work black ops missions. Their weapon: deception. Can they help one of their own before he goes too far?

When Gunner agreed to help Section 8, he didn't realize he'd be pulled back into the shadowy world he thought he'd escaped forever. The son of double agents, he was initiated at a young age into the cold world of espionage when his father forced him to work for international smuggler Drew Landon. And when Gunner's past with Landon threatens the other mercenaries, and, most important, Avery, he makes an impossible choice...and disappears.

Avery's not willing to give up on Gunner. The attraction between them has been there from the start, and she rallies Section 8 to help him. She knows there's only one way to keep Gunner safe: fake his death and take him off the grid. But when she finally locates him, Gunner is a changed man, harder, more desperate, and on the edge of self-destruction. And only Avery can find a way to free him from Landon—and from the demons of his past—before it's too late.

Unbreakable Details

Date : Published November 5th 2013 by Signet

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Author : Stephanie Tyler

Format : Paperback 400 pages

Genre : Romance, Romantic Suspense, War, Military Fiction, Contemporary, Contemporary Romance

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From Reader Review Unbreakable for online ebook

Jen (That's What I'm Talking About) says

My Rating: 3.5 stars: Liked it - recommend (B)

Originally posted at That's What I'm Talking About
review copy provided by NetGalley

After killing off the bad guy (Rip) and making it back to New Orleans in the first Section 8 novel, Avery insists that everyone leave town to relax and think about what the future holds for the Section 8 team. Finally left alone with Gunner, Avery gets up the courage to tell him how she feels, and that's when everything falls apart. James, aka Gunner, knew the moment he stepped onto Rip's Island that his identity would be discovered. Gunner doesn't want to return to the life he escaped: doing the bidding of crime lord Drew Landon, but he refuses to endanger his new Section 8 family, so he cuts ties and takes off. Now it's up to Avery and the others to find Gunner and make him whole again.

Welcome to the high-octane, crazy ride that is Section 8. This group of loosely connected individuals found their way together after each was impacted by an evil man (Rip). They are a second generation group, and at the start of Unbreakable, they are contemplating the merits of staying together to make the world safer by running covert black ops missions off the grid. The story is told from multiple points-of-view, which can be a little confusing at times. I recommend reading the precursor story before picking up Unbreakable for a better understanding of the group and what's going on.

Typical of Ms. Tyler's military-suspense romances, our hero is a tough-guy, bad-boy. A man of few words, he's rough around the edges and better at action than heart-to-heart talks. As the story unfolds, we learn that Gunner has lived a pretty miserable and unfortunate life. Briefly escaping once before, he was taken in by a warm couple and fell in love with their daughter. But after she was killed, he realized that a "normal life" was not for him. Gunner really works for me. He's unapologetic when it comes to the choices he makes, which gives him a raw honesty. He is equally passionate when it comes to loving Avery. Although he puts distance between the pair to protect her, he loves her with a powerful intensity that makes me blush. I enjoy seeing Avery through Gunner's eyes.

Avery is young, but not completely innocent. Her childhood, while better than Gunner's by far, wasn't all sunshine and roses. But she isn't jaded like Gunner, which gives her the edge needed to save him from his boss, as well as himself. Her perpetual optimism kept me from ever getting too down while reading the story.

The bulk of the storyline revolves around Gunner's former boss, Drew Landon. Although he is a big-time man of crime, he treats Gunner like a son. He also sends Gunner on missions to take down human traffickers. Yet he is responsible for some horrendous actions as well, such as killing Gunner's first love and harming Gunner's ex-wives. There is also a horrible torture scene. Stopping Landon permanently so that Gunner can finally be free takes over as the focus once the gang retrieves Gunner. The storyline has a significant twist, which is fairly predictable, but I wasn't quite sure of the truth for a while. Although the twist is a good one, I felt the timing of when certain pieces of the puzzle were initially presented came a little too late in the story, making it feel like an afterthought.

While I enjoyed the story and its twists, I will admit that I had a tough time trying to piece together the timeline of events and how much time was passing while Gunner was gone from the group and even after his return. If you are not a stickler for such things, it probably won't bother you the way it did me, but I found

myself rereading passages trying to piece together a timeline, which confused and frustrated me.

In the end, regardless of my frustrations over the timeline and flow of the story, Unbreakable is a solid action/suspense story. I like the characters and enjoyed seeing them come together as more than a team. Ms. Tyler pens a good balance between the tense situations and low-key downtime - action and romance. And with the way this one ended, I'm curious as to what is next for the Section 8 team.

Michel Reinhard (Smut Book Junkie Reviews) says

ARC provided by the Publisher, via Netgalley, in exchange for an honest review.

Stephanie Tyler is the master of romantic suspense. She writes an edgy, thrilling, escalating suspense, and erotic romance. The characters are well-developed and believable. Their life story draws the reader in and keeps the reader cheering for their victory against the threatening perils.

Unbreakable is book two in The Section 8 series. It should not be read as a stand alone. Surrender, book one in the series, builds the world, explains the history, and the formation of the group in Section 8. It gives the reader a better understanding of the characters and their drive.

Unbreakable features Gunner and Avery. Gunner is an interesting character. He has a tendency to take the easy way out and hasn't handled situations well. He has to come to terms with his actions and put his money where his mouth is. Avery has resolved to help him out. She is a strong willed, take names heroine. She pulls out all stops to get her man. She is the glue that keeps the group together. She has to show Gunner that they both are strong enough to handle any situation that is thrown their way.

As the danger against the group escalates, the intensity gets stronger. The book takes the reader on a twisty path that leaves the reader wondering what more can be thrown at Section 8. As this series builds, the plot thickens, the danger increases, and the members can find their happily ever after. Gunner and Avery have worked very hard for theirs.

I highly recommend this series and this book. Unbreakable will leave you clutching your seats in suspense.

Taylor says

Such a good book. I loved it. I was sucked in the whole time.

Book Reading Gals says

Title: Unbreakable

Series: Section 8 bk 2

Author: Stephanie Tyler

Genre: Romantic Suspense

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Thoughts: Stephanie Tyler has a knack for writing amazing romantic suspense with characters who shouldn't make sense and yet they make complete sense. When I read the first book I wasn't sure how she was going to pull off this crazy cast of characters but she did, then I thought no way can she make it happen again, but she did.

Unbreakable picks up right after the first book, and we watch as Gunner does something I never saw coming. His reasons make perfect sense to him, but he can't stay away from Avery and it puts her right in the crossfires of those who would destroy him. When Avery and Jem finally track him down months later he's no longer the man they knew.

Jem however knows something Avery doesn't and Gunner does. And he uses it to break Gunner. To bring him back to them. Because Jem is a crazy person (I can't wait to get his back story and his love story) he knows they have limited time before Gunner's enemies come looking for him. What none of them count on was Gunner's enemies taking Avery.

When they rescue Avery they pick up another member of this motley crew of mercenaries, a doctor with enemies and demons of her own. Her addition brings a different dynamic to the group and helps Avery and Gunner deal with the repercussions of what happened to her. She also gets to Jem and I can't wait to see what happens next with them, especially after the end of this book and where it leaves her.

Overall this is another great book by an author who continually delivers excellent characters, and stories that keep you glued to the book until the wee hours of the night. If you haven't yet picked up this series I highly recommend it.

Grade A

Review by: Heather

<http://www.thebookreadinggals.com>

Pam says

A thrilling addition to this intriguing series, I love Ms. Tyler's suspense stories as she takes us into danger and tension with wonderful characters that live life to the fullest. I enjoy seeing individuals from the first book featured prominently here as well as introducing us to new characters.

Life changed drastically for those that are now part of Section 8, the story takes place immediately after the Surrender ends with Avery, Dare's sister hanging with Gunner at the tattoo shop and everyone relaxing after the latest mission. Four members of the group are about to take vacations, Dare and Grace together and brothers, Jem and Key going off to their own destination. Avery decides to stay in New Orleans with Gunner; unfortunately he is making other plans.

Since the mission was completed, Gunner has been pulling away from the group; he has even stopped doing tattoos, something that he loves. Avery wants to talk to him but before she gets a chance he is gone, leaving papers showing that the building has been sold and she has a month to leave. She is devastated, as he did not take anything and left no explanation, she is especially hurt as she thought they had something special.

Gunner has a secret life, one he never told the others about; he thought he was done with his old life, but it came roaring back when he was recognized during the last mission. He knew he had to go back, it was only the determination of Avery and Jem that they hope to bring him back, yet the danger is intense and it puts all those involved in Section 8 at peril, including a new member with her own secrets.

This book starts immediately after Surrender, grabs hold of you and does not let go until the thrilling conclusion. I really enjoy these types of books, black ops with alpha heroes and the kick ass women that work side by side with them. Unbreakable is no exception, there is action from beginning to end as we learn about Gunner's past and what he has been up to more recently. I did find it hard to keep track of the timeline, it seemed to jump ahead and all of the sudden it was several months later but not sure what happened in between and I found it hard to believe that Dare and Grace stayed away for so long and never questioned what was going on with the group, but once they were back together, the team was strong.

I liked Gunner from the first book; he has a heart of gold but feels his past is too horrendous for others to live with, so he takes himself away. You can feel his emotions disappear when he goes to the island and becomes the man he used to be. It takes the love of Avery and his friends to bring him back, and it was so emotional watching them plead with him. I love Avery, she is one that was not taking no for an answer and her strength really comes out when she has to endure her own threats.

I enjoy that all of the others from the first book are featured, some more than others and I really love Jem, and look forward to his story one day. And Drea, what an intriguing person she is and the twist on her character at the end is intriguing. This is the second in the series and there is a lot of back story in the first book but you can read this story easily as a standalone.

Copy from publisher for an honest review

Jess says

Review posted: Happily Ever After - Reads

Blog rating: B-

Unbreakable ended up being a tale of two halves, the first half of the book I felt a little lost with the story (yes, I read book 1) but the second half really picked up the pace, storylines cleared themselves up and I was hard pressed to put the book down.

The story picks up right where book 1, Surrender, left off. Gunner has outed himself to a man he was trying to avoid and by doing so, he put Avery and his other friends in danger. This is actually where the story lost me a little. I felt like when Gunner up and goes back to work for this shady character, Drew Landon, there was some information missing. Namely, who Drew was, his business and what Gunner, known as James to Landon, was exactly doing for him. I wasn't sure if it was information I just forgot from the first book or if I missed something in this one, but it becomes clear later on when Gunner explains to Avery regarding his connection to Landon, how he came to start working for him and what he's done in the past. So I guess if you find yourself a little confused like I was, just keep reading, details come out as the story progresses.

That aside, the first half of the book dragged a bit for me. Gunner and Avery met and started their relationship in the first book, so we jump into Unbreakable with them already having some strong feelings for each other. Avery is planning to restart the Section 8 team that her father was a part of years ago and wants her friends to split up for a few months, think about her offer of putting this ops team together before committing. Gunner takes this opportunity to go completely off the grid as he goes back to work for Landon to keep Avery safe. Gunner lost his first love when she was murdered because of his work and association with Landon, though it's unclear early on if it was Landon that committed the murder or someone else, and Gunner's stipulation to Landon is he'll come back to work for him as long as Avery's safe. Avery doesn't stand for this and with the help of their friend Jem, they track Gunner for months before finally finding, capturing and taking him to a safe house to figure out what's going on. The build up to this is what dragged the story down for me, but it's at this point that things really start to pick up and when Avery is captured mid-book by Landon, the book becomes pretty hard to put down.

There are two relationships building in Unbreakable, the main relationship between Gunner and Avery and a supporting relationship that I'm assuming will continue as the main storyline in book 3 between Jem and Drea, a doctor who finds herself as a new member of this group. I really enjoyed Avery and Gunner. Gunner's had some bad things happen to him in the past, namely having the woman he once loved killed because of who he was associated with. He's fights a little against his feelings for Avery, but the fight doesn't last long, mainly because Avery won't let him and that's what made their relationship work – Avery is so strong, she's fierce and even being tortured by the same man Gunner had been working for, she suffers but doesn't let it impact the main focus which is to bring this man down. I liked the dynamic between Gunner and Avery, they're sexy and a great team.

The supporting relationship that starts building really took me a bit by surprise in a good way with how quickly I latched on to this couple, Jem and Drea. Drea is brought into the mix after Avery is hurt and needs medical attention. Jem finds Drea at a local clinic and "convinces" her to come to their motel to help her. Drea has her own set of problems, being a part of a motorcycle club, not by choice, because of a man who helped her out of a bad situation when she was younger. She's so desperate to get away from the club, she wants to go with Jem and this group of possible Section 8 members without knowing much about them. Jem already had me in his corner. He's funny, sarcastic, smart, I could keep going, but he's a character who comes alive on page and steals scenes. Their story sets up well for the next book as Drea is dealt a big blow at the end of Unbreakable and it will absolutely impact not only her but Jem and more than likely Section 8 as the series progresses.

With a slowish and slightly confusing start (at least for me), Unbreakable picked up the pace, the action and the romance as the story progressed and turned out to be a very captivating read. My overall rating averages

those two feelings I had but make no mistake, the ending is great and now I'm hooked even more into this romantic suspense series from Stephanie Tyler. With an ending that leads into a fantastic setup, I'm now anxiously awaiting the next book.

Mary says

<http://allaboutromance.com/book-revie...>

Stephanie Tyler's second installment of her Section 8 series was an interesting read, but I believe that my enjoyment did suffer from not having read the first book in the series. Readers who enjoy Ms. Tyler's books and have read *Surrender*, the first book in this series, might have a higher opinion of this story and fewer unanswered questions.

The heroine of this story is the daughter of a man who ran a mercenary camp called Section 8. After a showdown in which Avery's father is killed, she attempts to revive Section 8 with the people who helped take down Richard Powell (the evil villain from the first book). After putting the idea in front of her brother Dare, his wife Grace, brothers Jem and Key and loner Gunner, the survivors decide to take a few weeks in New Orleans to think it over. Avery has a thing for Gunner and tries everything to get his attention during their sabbatical. She knows he is attracted to her, but he will not act on it and instead keeps pushing her toward a relationship with Key. Avery is understandably frustrated.

Gunner is the son of the infamous and now dead Richard Powell and feels guilty that his father is responsible for the death of Avery and Dare's father. He also has big secrets he is keeping from everyone in Section 8. When he was still a child, his father gave him to international smuggler Drew Landon. After years of mercenary work for Landon, Gunner leaves and changes his name. He is now a tattoo artist in New Orleans. Gunner worries his presence puts them all at risk and when he receives a message from his former employer, that worry becomes a reality. Gunner thought that nothing could make him enter into his previous employment again, but when his friends are threatened, he disappears without a trace. When someone begins to target the Section 8 members as well as Gunner's ex-wives, Avery and her cohorts know that Gunner is in danger and set out to find him. After six months of searching, they finally do and Gunner is a changed man. It will take love to bring him back.

Avery along with every other member of Section 8 carries some serious baggage from her childhood, but she is determined to turn that baggage into a positive by using Section 8 to do good in the world. She is the tenuous glue that is holding Section 8 together, but at the beginning of the book it is not clear if Section 8 will survive. She is stubborn and strong, but whether or not she has the skills to lead is in doubt. The one thing she does know is that she believes in Gunner. When Gunner leaves without a word, the events that follow do more to solidify the Section 8 team than any contemplation could have accomplished. The team mobilizes for Gunner and when they find him, his problem becomes their problem.

Stephanie Tyler does romantic suspense well and does a good job of crafting alpha males and strong heroines. The book is fast paced and filled with action. The bad guy is certainly not a caricature and Tyler does a good job of making him human without excusing his flaws. She also does a commendable job of misdirection so the reader is kept on tenterhooks throughout most of the book. I liked both the hero and the heroine, but Jem as a secondary character steals the show and this does detract from the relationship between Avery and Gunner somewhat. I was more interested in his story than I was in the main characters. This was enough to bring the grade down for me. Also, Tyler's use of flashbacks to fill in the reader was a little

disjointed and it took me a while to get into this book. I was able to discern enough about what brought the Section 8 members together to enjoy the book, but I still had unanswered questions on the last page. Still, this book is a solid read and worth the time for romantic suspense fans.

Barb Lie says

Unbreakable by Stephanie Tyler is her 2nd book in her Section 8 series. I discovered Tyler when I had read and reviewed the 1st book of the series, Surrender. I loved the book, and noted that I would be adding it to my must buy list. When Unbreakable was sent to be for an honest review, I was looking forward to see if Tyler can keep this storyline going, and I am thrilled to say.....she does. Unbreakable, which is romance suspense, was a fantastic story, with many of the characters from the first book playing major parts in this story.

Our heroine in Unbreakable is Avery, who is Dare's sister (our hero in the first book), and the person who will help run Section 8. Gunner is the hero in this storyline, and there is no question that both Avery and Gunner love each other very much, but in this case, nothing is easy.

Unbreakable starts a short time after Surrender left off, with Avery trying to put the pieces of Section 8 back together. Many of the others were sent to take a vacation break, with Avery, Gunner and Jem hanging back. Gunner leaves to go back to work for an old boss, Drew Landon, as he feels he is not good enough for Avery, not to mention putting her life in danger. But Avery is determined to get Gunner back, and with the help of Jem, she succeeds to kidnap him and bring him home. What Avery doesn't realize is that Landon will go to extreme lengths to bring Gunner back to him, including hurting Avery very badly. At this point, we meet up with a new character, a female doctor named Drea. I loved this new addition to the group, as she fit in so well. The team is called back together, while Avery recovers, to plan some way to stop a powerful villain like Drew Landon.

What follows is an exciting and suspenseful adventure that was a thrilling ride all the way to the electrifying climax. A few surprises and twists will create a very exciting, and volatile situation at the end. Though the storyline come to a satisfying conclusion, there is something that is left open ended, and we know who book three will be about. Darn...I cannot wait for the next book. Tyler does such a great job with her fabulous characters, such as Avery, Gunner, Dare, Grace, Jem, Key and now Drea. I guarantee you will love them as much as I did.

If you like adventure, danger, suspense, hot mercenaries, strong women, steamy sex, and a nasty villain, then this series is perfect for you. Even though this is the 2nd book of a series, it can be read as a standalone. But because of these wonderful characters, I wholly recommend you start with the 1st book to meet them all, and understand more of the storyline and background. Stephanie Tyler is one of the best authors writing romance/suspense. If you have not read this series, go buy Surrender now, and then read Unbreakable.

Barb
The Reading Cafe

Zara Brumana says

I received this book as a Goodreads/ARC giveaway in return for an honest review.

Maybe it's because I'm not primarily a romance novel reader and perhaps because I didn't read the preceding books but this novel in particular was hard for me to follow. I didn't have much of a backstory on the characters so I struggled to find any vested interest in any of them. The scenes of sexual contact were not romantic or erotic and instead came off as if the people involved in them were having very angry sex which occurred because the genre required it and not because it made any sense for them to be engaging in such.

Overall, I don't know if this book would have been better if I'd read the novel before it but going on what I read, I don't think I would have read this one if I had read that one, if you can follow.

Saly says

Rating 3.5 stars

E_bookpushers says

Review originally posted here:

Publisher: Signet

Publish Date: Out now

How I got this book: ARC from the publisher via Netgalley

A cabal of operatives with dangerous pasts team up to work black ops missions. Their weapon: deception. Can they help one of their own before he goes too far???

When Gunner agreed to help out Section 8, he didn't realize he'd be pulled back in to the shadowy world he'd thought he'd escaped forever. The son of double agents, Gunner was initiated at a young age into the cold world of espionage when his father forced him to work for international smuggler Drew Landon. And when Gunner's past with Landon threatens the other mercenaries, and most importantly, Avery, he makes an impossible choice...and disappears.

Avery's not willing to give up on Gunner. The attraction between them has been there from the start and she rallies Section 8 to help him. She knows there's only one way to keep Gunner safe: fake his death and take him off the grid. But when she finally locates him, Gunner is a changed man, harder, more desperate, and on the edge of self-destruction. And only Avery can find a way to free him from Landon—and from the demons of his past—before it's too late.

This blurb came from the author's website.

I was really looking forward to Unbreakable, the second of Tyler's Section 8 series after reviewing Surrender earlier this year. Unfortunately, this one really didn't work for me. I had issues with timeline and characterization inconsistencies. This review will contain spoilers from the first book and from this installment so if you wish to avoid them you should stop reading now.

Unbreakable takes place shortly after the dramatic events of Surrender have ended. Peace, vengeance, and love were achieved and the next generation of Section 8 was in its infancy. Avery decided to give her potential teammates a month away to decide if they wanted to return to a life of danger and intrigue. In the meantime she wanted to try to work on getting Gunner to act on their obvious attraction except he didn't cooperate with her plan. Gunner vanished, left paperwork detailing the sale of his tattoo shop and associated property to some stranger along with a 30-day vacate notice.

Instead of Avery telling the others who joined together in the first book, she kept her mouth shut. Then right before the 30 days was up, she received a flower delivery including an unpleasant surprise. She decided to call and inform one person. During the same 30 days, Grace and Dare, hero/heroine of the first book had a discussion about how something wasn't quite right, that they needed to contact Avery and find out what was going on yet nothing about the call was ever referenced again. This was one of the inconsistencies that really bothered me, especially given the tight attention to detail that I found in the first book.

As the story continued, time started jumping forward by multiple months. This was clearly signified in the text so that part wasn't an issue. What bothered me about the time jumps went back to the first 30 days when everyone was supposed to reconvene. The deadline was referenced often in the early pages of the book but nothing was ever said about missing the deadline or what the other potential team members were doing during that time. Those omissions really bothered me since they violated how the group operated and was formed during Surrender which in turn altered some of the previously established characterization.

The core group formed because treachery and death brought them together. They succeeded in the first book through trust and open communication. Watching the leader of the reborn Section 8 deliberately keep information about one of their teammates from all the others seemed to be a violation of that trust. I was willing to give her the 30 days as grace but after that deadline, things continued to happen and I never had the impression that information was shared I felt strongly that Avery's entire character had changed. I also felt that the acceptance of the others about this lack of information meant they had changed. There was one minor blow-up but given the depths of betrayal they dealt with before I thought there should have been a stronger reaction. Especially given what happened to Avery before the rest of the team was informed.

Unfortunately I was unable to enjoy Unbreakable because of the timeline and character inconsistencies. I kept thinking that scenes were missing which would have filled in the pieces and left me understanding their behavior instead of being extremely puzzled and unable to believe these were the same characters. I did receive an advanced reader copy and I understand those can contain errors so it is possible the final version was smoothed out.

I give Unbreakable a D-

Sophia says

I picked this one up for a variety of reasons- wanted to try the author, loved the cover, in the mood for this type of story and the blurb got my attention. I knew going in that this was the second book in a series, but hey, the stars were in alignment and all that for me to read this one so I did. This was a 'fasten your safety belts, keep your hands inside the vehicle and know the safety instructions' sort of book and not just because of the action sequences. I had some issues with it, but not enough to dampen my enjoyment of the book.

So it would definitely fall into the strong sequel category I'm assuming. Not having read the first book, I'm going out on a limb on that one, but it's a strong limb. I'm guessing I would have gotten a lot more out of the experience if I had read *Surrender* first, but I wasn't lost and I had no trouble getting into it and going with the story at least for that reason. From what I understand, the whole series is a spin-off of yet another series. Yeah, I am way off my usual game here by not only starting with the spin-off, but grabbing the second book on top of that.

The story opened with one of those teaser-style Prologues where you're going what in the world? Gunner is being tortured by Jem for information and Avery's in on it. Okay...

But then it flashes back to earlier when Avery, Gunner, Dare, Grace, Jem and Key- the surviving contacts and family members of the old Section 8 Covert Ops group have come to a crossroads. Avery wants them to all pull together and form a new Section 8 and continue the legacy started by the others, but she knows everyone is still wound tight after what they had all just gone through so she asks them to go away on vacation and take the time to decide what they really want. She assumes when the others go that she'll have some private time for just her and Gunner and not just for the passion. She hasn't missed that he's gone cold and withdrawn from the whole group even her. But then it happens, he rejects her kiss and the next morning he's gone with a note that she has to get out because he sold the tattoo shop.

Gunner has a dark past that he got a reprieve from for over ten years, but one heroic act brings him back into the sights of a cold operator who wants Gunner- the best merc he ever had- back and working for him. The man has no compunction about killing every barrier there is to owning Gunner entirely and that includes everyone Gunner cares about. To protect everyone and because he thinks he doesn't deserve to be with Avery and the others anyway, he walks away cutting all ties. Hardest choice he made it seems, but after enough kills and missions he won't remember or feel a thing.

After Gunner left, Avery kept hoping that he would walk back through that door, but he doesn't so she determines to go find him. She starts with looking up one of his ex-wives. This starts a chain reaction of events including a bomb included with a note and flowers from Gunner. With the help of a crazy as a fox, Jem, she steps up her game while keeping the other members of the team in the dark to protect them. They track through Gunner's life and find even more than they could have ever imagined. It was starting to look like getting Gunner back would be the easy part. Getting Gunner back as the Gunner they loved and knew while keeping a boatload of people off him would be nigh impossible.

The plot on this one wasn't a clean line straight to the finish. Not that it's a bad thing. It just means that it's one of those books where you had to really pay attention not only to who is narrating, but when it's all going on. Now, I'm going to say at this point that I read an ARC copy so maybe some of what caused trouble for me got cleaned up in the finished copy like the switches in narrators and the flashback and forward stuff. The flashbacks were woven throughout the book.

The pacing was a bit uneven. In the beginning, it moved right along then just beyond the middle it started grinding out slowly before picking up again for the end. I think some of the middle could have been clipped because it seemed to just cover the same ground with their worries and fears on spin cycle.

It's told third person POV from mostly Avery and Gunner for much of the book, but then bad guy and other members of the gang have page time. I don't mind a book told with multiple narrators, but I do mind a book that is cruising along with its storyline and its main characters only to get slowed down, cut down or sidetracked by a new storyline that could have waited for its own book and is obviously part of the set up for the next book. A little intro to new characters that will stay on and a little set up for the next book, fine. But a chunk like this one just bogged down the pace and stole time from the main couple who needed that time to

develop their characters and romance better.

Which brings me to the characters.

Avery wasn't convincing for me in many ways though I still liked her as a person. I don't mind it when an author puts women into the toughest of man worlds like trained spec ops operatives, but the author does need to convince me that the woman really can be it and do it. In this instance, Avery has the lead role in this group of ex-special forces, ex-CIA types with years of experience and the mental/physical scars to show for it even though she's a latecomer to the fraternity. I felt like the author was telling me that she was one lethal bad mama with nerves of steel capable of running an operation like Section 8, surviving torture and coldly taking her own revenge, but as I read, that wasn't the Avery I saw. She's in her own head a lot for one. The only action scenes she is in is when she's the damsel in distress. Now to be fair, I admired her greatly for the emotional toughness she did display when she didn't let Gunner get away with his sacrificial martyr act. She wanted him, she believed in him and she went after him. This is part of what I meant about a little more page time giving Avery some scenes where she bests a bad guy with her skills or plans out a successful mission that would have convinced me more.

This type of thing overlapped into the relationship with Gunner. They just don't get enough page time together. There are literally like three or four scenes and only two of them even slightly romantic- passionate yes, relationship building, no. Now maybe that's the tone of this series where the romance takes a back seat to the suspense, but that's not the impression I got. This isn't a case of instalove because I know they began their connection to each other in the previous book. Its a case of lack of development time and then boom! Togetherness. Based on what I got to know in their characters I can totally see them together, but again (yes, harping on this) it only needed more page time to make it happen.

Gunner is probably the best part of the book for me. His character, his past, his thoughts and his actions all jived. He's this lethal, tortured, worthy of love guy who just can't catch a break. He's the son of not one, but two black ops people with one parent staying just on the correct side of right and the other completely off the charts wrong. He is honed in the fires of hell it seemed and it was amazing that it left him capable of the good stuff. He struggles hard to hold onto the small amount of light left in his soul and its his sliver of hope for a future free of the demons and a chance at a life with the woman he loves that holds him together. But if he can't have that, he will sell the rest of his soul to keep her safe and the rest of those he loves. Gah! He was just the perfect flawed hero.

Okay, I know I tore into this book and it frustrated me, but the big picture is that I also got into it too. I like these sorts of plots and characters and the author gave that to me. I would recommend this one for those who enjoy more of a thriller feel to their romantic suspense with the romance on the spicy side.

My thanks to Penguin group and Net Galley for the opportunity to read and review this book.

Sharon says

I love this book so very much. I started reading it after supper one night and didn't want to stop. I thought I loved Gunner in book 1. My love for him knows no bounds after book 2.

The version I read is a very early version and some things will change. But the suspense continued to keep me on the edge of my seat, and I can't wait to reread this when it's closer to its final form.

Gail Mitchell says

Amazing series!!!

Talk Supe says

Talk Supe review

The plot was fantastic, you have human traffickers, goons, mercenaries, villainous twins, spy games, it's exciting, suspenseful with a good amount of blood and gore thrown in to add to the grit! The story revolved on Gunner's redemption, he had some pretty rough and dark moments, being the tortured hero that he is, but at the same time, I also like that the story didn't dwell on that. STyler kept the pace quick and suspenseful and focused on Section 8 agents nabbing the bad guy. And just like in Surrender, the conflict resolution was thrilling, the scenes are like a Mark Wahlberg action movie so you can only imagine the level of adrenalin present here. Also, based on the new thread opened, it seems like Section 8 will be saving a damsel in distress in the next book and the bad guy is the leader of a motorcycle club. I can tell book 3 will even be more epic than the first two, can't wait!
