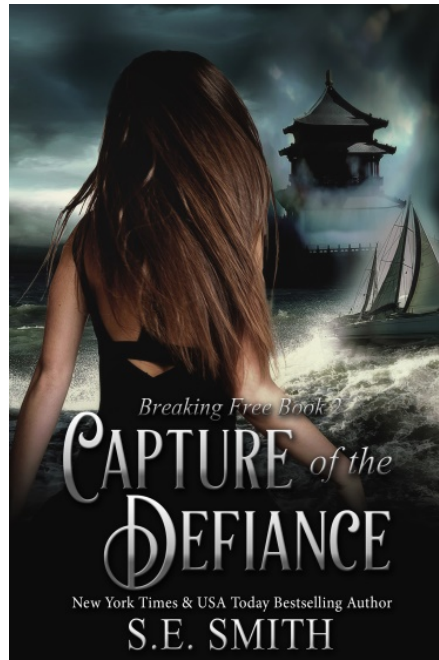


Capture of the *Defiance*
Breaking Free series



By S.E. Smith

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my husband Steve for believing in me and being proud enough of me to give me the courage to follow my dream. I would also like to give a special thank you to my sister and best friend, Linda, who not only encouraged me to write, but who also read the manuscript. Also to my other friends who believe in me: Julie, Jackie, Christel, Sally, Jolanda, Lisa and Jake (who loved Voyage), Laurelle, and Narelle. The girls that keep me going!

—S.E. Smith

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Summary: A young woman's trip to join her grandfather on his sailboat turns into a deadly race when he and the *Defiance* are taken, forcing her to seek help from old friends to discover what happened to him before time runs out.

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Synopsis

New York Times and USA TODAY Bestselling Author S.E. Smith returns with an emotionally charged action adventure thriller filled with suspense.

Makayla Summerlin is excited to join her grandfather Henry in Hong Kong during a college break. She plans to help him sail the next leg of his journey around the world on the *Defiance*, but events take a frightening turn when her grandfather is kidnapped and the *Defiance* disappears! Unsure of what to do, Makayla reaches out to an old friend for help.

Brian Jacobs' work at the Consulate General in Hong Kong is just a stepping-stone for his political career. His life for the foreseeable future is carefully optimized for success, but everything is turned upside down when he receives a frantic call for help from a friend. Their meeting quickly turns to one of survival when Makayla is almost kidnapped in front of him. Seeing Makayla again awakens old feelings inside Brian and he knows he will do everything he can to help her, no matter the cost.

When the situation turns deadly, both Brian and Makayla find unexpected help from another old friend and a Hong Kong detective. Together, the four race to find Henry and protect Makayla. Their efforts to unravel the mystery of why a wealthy crime lord would target Henry and Makayla and to find the *Defiance* will take them further than they ever expected to go, but will they be able to discover the truth before time runs out for Henry?

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Chapter 1



Hong Kong

The figure of the man pushed through the crowds gathered along the Graham Street Market, uncaring of the curses he was drawing. Sweat beaded on his brow despite the cool breeze and temperate weather. His gaze swept the collage of faces. Almost immediately, his eyes locked with the intense, dark gaze of a man searching the crowd – for him.

Gabriel Harrington swallowed and backed away. He stumbled when he ran into an older woman who turned and began admonishing him. Pushing past her, he ignored her when she continued to yell after him. His frantic flight that had started earlier that morning was now one that meant life or death.

Turning, he cut between two of the merchants' booths, pushing the colorful material hanging down on display out of his vision. He was already passed the irritated merchant before the man could say anything. He turned along the sidewalk toward the busy intersection in the hope of getting across it and losing himself in the crowds of pedestrians.

The skin on the back of his neck tingled and he could feel the sweat sliding down between his shoulder blades under his shirt. He slipped his hand into his pocket for the small box containing the precious item he was carrying.

He glanced over his shoulder again and breathed a sigh of relief. He didn't see the man who had been following him. Reaching into his pocket, he pulled out his cell phone and quickly dialed the number he had memorized.

"Do you have it?" The voice on the other end asked in a terse tone.

"Yes, but I'm being followed," Gabriel muttered, glancing both ways before entering the intersection.

"Where are you?" The voice on the other end demanded in a brisk tone. "I'll send backup."

"I'm leaving the market near Shelter Cove. I'll... Shit!" Gabriel hissed, pausing about three-quarters of the way across the intersection.

"What is it?"

"There are two of them," Gabriel said hoarsely. "I'll try to get you the package."

"I have a team in route," the man said.

"It's too late," Gabriel replied in resignation, turning and seeing the other man he thought he'd lost. "I'll hide the package and notify you of the location as soon as I can."

"Negative," the man hissed, but Gabriel was already turning to cross the intersection at a diagonal angle.

He had only taken a few steps when he saw a third man appear on the corner in the direction he had been about to go. Twisting, he bumped into an older man carrying several canvas shopping bags. He muttered an automatic apology under his breath, even as his hand slipped the package in his pocket into one of the bags. His gaze swept over the old man's face, trying to memorize it before he backed away.

He darted across the intersection. He was almost to the curb when a van, trying to make the red light, turned the corner. Gabriel registered the impending impact just seconds before his body hit the windshield. He rolled several feet before coming to a stop. In the distance, he could barely make out the old man turning to see what happened before everything went black.

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Makayla looked around the custom's area. There was a sea of people from all over the world. Her lips curved upward when she saw a harried mother trying to corral a wayward toddler behind her. The smile turned to a sympathetic grimace when the little boy started crying when the mother picked him up. Several people standing behind her gave the woman an annoyed glance.

Makayla started to turn away until she noticed that the woman had dropped her passport on the

ground when she bent to pick up the little boy. With a murmur, she motioned for the two people behind her to go ahead. With a tired sigh, she waited until they had passed her before she stooped to retrieve the fallen documents.

“You dropped this,” she murmured, glancing at the woman’s name on the open passport. “Would you like some help, Hsu?”

“Oh, yes, please,” the woman stuttered, startled, before she breathed out a tired sigh. “It has been a long trip.”

“Where are you traveling from?” Makayla asked politely, adjusting the diaper bag and pushing the stroller forward along with her carry-on.

“Seattle,” the woman replied. “Thank you so much for your help.”

“You’re welcome,” Makayla replied with a sympathetic grin. “My name is Makayla, by the way.”

“That is a beautiful name,” the woman responded, stepping up to the line with a relieved groan and adjusting the little boy who had fallen asleep on her shoulder. “I think I can put him in the stroller now.”

“Oh, yes,” Makayla said, quickly moving the diaper bag so that Hsu could carefully place the sleeping boy in the stroller.

“Where are you from Makayla?” Hsu asked politely, straightening and placing a hand on her lower back before she took the diaper bag Makayla was holding. “He is getting heavy.”

"I'm from Florida," Makayla said, adjusting her backpack on her right shoulder. "He looks it. How old is he?"

"He will be three next month," Hsu replied before she turned to the Customs agent. "Thank you again for your help, Makayla. I hope you have a pleasant visit in Hong Kong."

"You, too, and good luck!" Makayla replied, watching as Hsu push the stroller up to the window.

A moment later, it was Makayla's turn. She walked up and presented her passport. The agent behind the window briefly glanced up at her and then down at her passport.

"What is the purpose of your visit?" The agent asked in a cool, disinterested voice.

"Vacation," Makayla replied with a polite smile.

"Are you traveling alone?" The man asked, suddenly more focused on her when he looked up from her photo to her face.

"No, I'm joining my grandfather who is already here," she replied, keeping the smile on her face even though the man's sudden assessing gaze was making her uncomfortable.

"How long will you be staying?" The agent asked with a smile.

"A week," Makayla answered.

She quietly answered several more questions before she breathed a sigh of relief when he stamped her passport and handed it back to her. She quickly passed through the gate and into the main section of the airport. She was relieved to get out of the crush of

people. Fortunately, she was able to bypass the wait for baggage claim. Twenty minutes later, she was in a taxi heading for the marina where her grandfather was docked at the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club at Shelter Bay.

Sinking back into the seat, she stared at the tall buildings and crowded streets. She didn't even want to think about how the taxi driver was able to navigate through the streets without hitting either a pedestrian or another car. All the sights, sounds and colorful assortment of people were overwhelming for her exhausted brain.

"Is this your first visit to Hong Kong?" The driver asked, glancing up in the mirror before returning his gaze to the road in front of him.

"Yes," Makayla answered, staring out the window.

"You have friends here? I can tell you the best places to go for young people," he said, laying his hand on the horn when a car cut in front of him. "There are lots of young people here."

Makayla shook her head. She knew he would think she was strange if she told him she preferred to be in places where there weren't that many people, or buildings. That was one reason she had gone into the field of study that she had in college. As a marine biologist, she could escape from the mad rush of urban life and spend most of her time either in a lab or on a research ship.

“No, thank you,” Makayla finally replied when she realized that the driver was waiting for her response. “I’m meeting up with someone.”

“Okay,” the driver replied.

He finally took the hint that she wasn’t a very talkative passenger and refocused his attention on the traffic instead of her. She knew she was attractive and was used to drawing men’s attention. It wasn’t that she was a beauty. She wasn’t delusional enough about her looks to think that. It wasn’t until she overheard a couple of guys talking about her in one of her classes that she finally realized what it was about her that drew attention.

It wasn’t her looks, but her attitude and appearance of aloofness that was like a red flag to guys. They liked the challenge of trying to get her to open up for them. She had never been very talkative and really didn’t care to be around a lot of people. It had taken a while to finally figure out it was a self-defense mechanism – a wall between her and the world. Deep down, she knew it was probably because of the way she was raised. Oh, she didn’t blame her mom. Her mom had had enough baggage for years without Makayla adding to the load. She had just learned at an early age that life could suck and she didn’t want to fall into the same dark hole that her mom had.

Her gaze softened when she thought of her mother. She was doing so much better since she had married Arnie Hanover three years ago. She liked Arnie. He had been there for her mom, supporting

her, encouraging her, and calmly waiting until her mom was ready to take control of her life. It was something that Makayla had secretly wished for, but doubted would ever happen.

Pushing the memories back into the box that she kept them in, she refocused on the landscape. It took her a minute to realize they were traveling outside of the city. It would take almost an hour to get to the yacht club. Henry, her grandfather, had offered to pick her up, but Makayla had told him it didn't make sense for both of them to spend the money to and from the airport. It would give her time to unwind as well.

Makayla leaned her head back and closed her eyes. At twenty-two, she was fortunate enough to be in a better position than most girls her age. Her father had died before she was born, but he had left a trust fund that she had inherited when she turned twenty-one. The fund had grown over the last twenty plus years and while she wasn't wealthy by most standards, she had a nice nest egg that had allowed her to focus on her education without having to worry about how she would pay for it. Between the trust fund and the summer internships that she had worked, she had never had to touch the principle to live on. It also helped that she didn't need much. When living in a small dorm room or on a research ship, there wasn't a lot of room for material things.

Makayla opened her eyes when she felt the taxi slow down and turn. She blinked her eyes to clear the

gritty tiredness from them. She sat forward when she realized that they were turning into the yacht club.

She quickly fumbled for the information her grandfather had sent her and her passport to show identification to the security guard at the gate. She pressed the button on the window when the guard leaned down to talk to the cab driver.

“I’m here to see Henry Summerlin,” she stated, holding out the documents showing Henry’s membership card and her ID. “He should have notified you that I was coming.”

“Good afternoon, Ms. Summerlin. Welcome to the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club,” the security guard greeted in a polite professional tone. He glanced at the documents before returning them to her. “Mr. Summerlin is located in E40. Please go down to the turning circle. It will be located on the third turn. Have a nice day.”

“Thank you,” Makayla murmured, impressed with the efficiency of the guard.

Her gaze swept over the man’s immaculate uniform of dark bluish-gray pressed slacks and white short, sleeved shirt with the emblems of the yacht club on the shoulders. The man’s close cut, short, black hair and dark brown eyes were as warm as his greeting. A relieved smile curved Makayla’s lips that the journey had been less stressful than she feared.

Within minutes, the red and white taxi drew to a stop at the beginning of a long dock. She could see the numbers depicting the dock slips in several different languages. She quickly leaned forward and paid the

driver before grabbing her carry-on and backpack. She drew in a deep breath of relief at having finally arrived after the long journey, pushed open the door and stiffly slid out of the taxi.

Chapter 2



Makayla rolled onto her toes and stretched the soreness out of her muscles as the taxi pulled away. She glanced around and lifted her face to the fading sunlight. It felt good to be out of the cramped confines of the airplane and taxi, and to be out in the wide open spaces again.

She shielded her eyes and gazed around her. In the distance, she could see the rise of low mountains and the tall high rises of the city overlooking the emerald blue waters of the bay. Excitement filled her as she stared out at the variety of sailboats, powerboats, and multi-million dollar yachts either berthed or anchored in the surrounding waters. She couldn't help but shake her head at the thought of how out of place Henry's small sailboat must look like among the larger vessels.

Adjusting her backpack strap on her shoulder, Makayla bent and pulled up the handle of her carry-on and headed down the long dock. She gazed across the long line of boats to the coastline, enjoying the gentle, cool breeze against her face. The temperature was a nice seventy degrees Fahrenheit, but she knew it was expected to drop after sunset.

Her steps slowed as she came closer to the slip where she could see the *Defiance* moored. A slight movement and tuft of gray hair peeking out near the back of the sailboat told her that Henry was there and working on probably one of an endless list of repairs. A rueful smile curved Makayla's lips. She had once heard that the acronym for the word boat was 'bring on another thousand'. She imagined that was true, especially if you owned a sailboat and were sailing it around the world.

"You know, old man, I heard tell that the two happiest days in a man's life are the day he buys a boat and the day he sells it," Makayla called out in greeting.

Henry turned in a quick circle, surprisingly fast for a man in his late sixties and grinned up at her. He wiped his hand across his cheek, leaving a dark patch of grease along the silver whiskers that coated his jaw. The smile on her lips grew when he realized what he had done. He muttered a soft curse and pulled the rag out of the back of his pocket and scrubbed at his chin while staring up at her.

"Well, seeing that I'm not in the mind to do either one at the moment, I guess you'll have to wait to find out," he replied with a huge grin. "You made it."

Makayla nodded and looked over the deck of the sailboat. "Yeah, I made it. It's good to see you, Henry," she said, pushing the handle of her carry-on down and handing it to him when he reached up for it.

“You, too, girl,” Henry murmured, setting her bag down and reaching up to help her onto the sailboat. “I’m glad you’re here,” he added, pulling her into a tight bear-hug the moment she was on board.

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Makayla finished stowing her clothes in the cabinet that Henry had emptied for her. It didn’t take long. She glanced up through the companionway and saw that the sun was about to set. Quickly pulling out some lunch meat, cheeses, and condiments, she prepared two turkey and cheese sandwiches on whole wheat with a side of potato chips. She grabbed two bottles of water out of the small refrigerator and stacking the plates on top of each other, carefully climbed the steps.

“Perfect timing,” Henry said with a grin. “I just finished cleaning up. Let me go wash my hands. Mm, that looks delicious. I haven’t eaten since this morning. I wanted to have the blasted engine maintenance done before you got here, but had to wait on a part.”

“No problem,” Makayla replied, placing the plates and bottle waters down on a teak table that Henry had cleared and uncovered. “Take your time, I’m going to enjoy this beautiful sunset.”

Henry chuckled and looked over at the mountains. “It is a beauty, isn’t it? I’ll be right back. I might take a quick shower as well,” he muttered with a wrinkle of his nose. “I stink.”

"I wasn't going to say anything about that, old man, but since you brought it up, you smell like a diesel engine," Makayla laughed, relaxing against the seat and laying her arm along the back of it.

She affectionately watched Henry head down the steps muttering about ungrateful passengers. She chuckled and tilted her head back to look up at the sky when he disappeared from sight. Breathing in a deep breath, she held it for a few seconds before releasing it. She gazed upward, staring at the faint dots of light beginning to appear. Against the darker hue, she could just make out the first few stars that were beginning to shine through the twilight hue.

Her mind drifted in a kaleidoscope of thoughts and images. She turned and tiredly rested her chin on her arm. The last six years of her life had been a blur of activity. It was hard to believe so much had happened in such a short space of time. Most of it had been good, but some of it had been sad as well, she thought.

"Why the sad face? You aren't having second thought, are you?" Henry asked, emerging from the galley.

Makayla turned and smiled. It was a good thing Henry was practically bald on top, otherwise his hair would be sticking up everywhere from the way he was rubbing it dry. As it was, it looked like he could use a haircut for the sides. She'd have to see if he had any electric clippers on board.

"I'm sorry about Breaker," she murmured, twisting back around. "He was a good dog."

Henry grunted and hung the towel over the side of the opening to dry. Turning, he reached down and grabbed the two beers he had taken out of the refrigerator. Makayla watched him in silence. He twisted the tops off and held one out for her.

“I think we can celebrate your arrival and Breaker’s long life with a beer instead of water,” he said, picking up one of the plates and sitting down. “He was a damn good dog. It’s hard to find one like that again, so I didn’t bother.”

“Kind of like Grandma?” Makayla asked with a raised eyebrow.

Henry’s hand paused as he raised the bottle of beer to his lips and he shook his head. He took a long swig of it before he set it down on the table. Makayla could see the amused twitch to his lips and in his eyes.

“Anyone ever tell you that you are a lot like your Grandpa?” Henry asked, picking up his sandwich and taking a bite.

“Only everyone that knows you,” she retorted, picking up her own sandwich and taking a bite. “So, tell me about your trip so far? How was the trip from Australia?”

They spent the next three hours, eating, drinking, and talking. Makayla slowly felt her body relax from a combination of exhaustion and relaxation of being back on the water. She raised her hand to smother a yawn. She should have stuck to the bottle water, she thought, lowering her second empty bottle of beer.

“So, are you seeing anyone?” Henry suddenly asked.

Makayla blinked and dropped her hand to her lap. Her lips pressed together and rolled her eyes, a habit that she thought she had given up when she was sixteen. Leave it to Henry to bring up her love life on the first night.

“That is none of your business,” she replied, lifting the bottle of beer and finishing it. “You know, most Grandfathers’ wouldn’t give their grandkids a beer, don’t you?”

Henry shrugged and grinned. “You’re over twenty-one and won’t be driving. Plus, I hoped between the jet lag, exhaustion, and the slight buzz that you might let me know if you’ve found someone,” he said.

“Well, you’ve got the three things right, but I’m not talking,” Makayla retorted, pushing up off the seat and lifting a hand to her head. “I’m done for the day.”

“You get some sleep. You can have the front bunk; I’ll take the one in the galley. Don’t worry about this stuff, I’ll clean up,” Henry instructed, rising to his feet.

“Thanks, I’ll be more coherent tomorrow,” she replied, holding onto the side of the companionway to keep from stumbling.

“Makayla...,” Henry called quietly.

Makayla glanced over her shoulder, her foot on the first step leading down into the galley. She could see the love and concern in his eyes. A part of her

wanted to look away, while another part wanted to reassure him that everything was fine. In the end, it was the need to reassure him that won.

"I'm okay, Henry. You don't have to worry about me. I'm not broken. I've just been a little busy with school. I haven't exactly been dead to the world, either," she murmured. "I'll see you in the morning."

"Have a good night, sweetheart," Henry said after searching her face to make sure she was telling him the truth. He seemed satisfied with what he saw there. "I'll see you in the morning."

Makayla nodded and made her way down the steps. She passed through the galley, grabbing her small toiletry bag from off the shelf and made her way to the head. It didn't take her long to brush her teeth, hair, and wash her face. She didn't bother with a shower. She was too exhausted and would probably fall asleep in it. Instead, she changed into a pair of pajama pants and an oversize T-shirt.

She barely made it to the bed before she collapsed. Rolling, she pulled the covers over her and wrapped her arms around the pillow. For a fleeting second, the image of a face from her past flashed through her mind before it was gone. Makayla didn't even bother to try to hold onto it. The memory was gone before she knew it, lost in the fog of her exhaustion. She was too tired to think about anything at the moment, but sleep.

Chapter 3



Two days later, Makayla sat back and gazed out over the water. She could already feel the itch to leave. She refocused on where she was polishing the safety railing. Henry had done some modifications to the *Defiance* over the last few years to make it more of an ocean going vessel. She was still amazed that he had made it over half way around the world already. This would be her fifth trip with him and the longest since he started.

“What do you think?” Henry asked, standing near the mast.

Makayla glanced over her shoulder and raised an eyebrow. “I try not to,” she joked, watching an expression of exasperation cross his face at her snarky response. She laughed and turned to face him. “I was just thinking how impressed I am that you have made it this far. It is an incredible feat. You know, Mom still thinks that you’ve totally lost your mind.”

Henry bent and sat down next to her. She could see the thoughtful expression on his face while he gazed out across the harbor. His fingers played with the wire he was holding, rolling it back and forth between them.

"I've been smart about it," he commented, turning back to face her. "I watch the weather and stay in the major shipping lanes. I've made some of the longer trips with other boats. I've been planning this trip my whole life and I have to admit – I don't have a single regret. I've seen places and met people that would have otherwise been impossible."

"You've also had a few close calls," Makayla reminded him. "The Philippines...."

Henry waved his hand. "I know, but that's life. There are never any guarantees. One thing your Grandmother made sure I never forgot was there are never any guarantees in life. Her death was a huge blow to not just your mom, but to me, Makayla. When Mary Rose was dying, she made me promise that I wouldn't let fear stop me from living my dreams. She reminded me every day to grasp life with both hands and live it, because as she pointed out, you never knew when your last day might be. I raised your mom and uncle as best I could. I wasn't perfect, but I can say I did my best. Having you back in my life made me realize just how fortunate I am."

Makayla sat in silence for a brief moment before she shook her head. "I think that's the longest thing I've ever heard you say," she reflected with a grin before it faded and she grew serious. "You did good, Henry. Mom doesn't blame you for what happened in her life. And me – well, I'll be the first to admit you changed mine," she said in a quiet tone, glancing away to look at the water again.

“You already had a good head on your shoulders, girl. You just needed to know what you had inside you,” Henry replied in a gruff tone. With a grunt, he stood up. “I’d better get the wiring completed if we are going to leave the day after tomorrow. We’ll be following a couple of cargo ships down to Guam, then over to Honolulu.”

Makayla nodded. “I saw the charts. It’s good to know we won’t be alone. The Pacific Ocean is a mighty big place to get lost in,” she said, picking up the polish and pouring more onto the rag she was using.

“There’s a market about a mile or so from here. I’ve got a couple of bikes and thought we could stock up on some supplies later,” Henry commented. “I went there the day before you arrived. They have a nice selection of items.”

“That sounds like fun,” Makayla said. “I could use some exercise.”

Henry nodded. “Looks like a good day to go, tomorrow it’s supposed to rain,” he reflected. “I’d better get the new wire run for the lights if we want to be able to see where we are going.”

Makayla turned back to her task at hand. In the background, she heard Henry turn on some music. All around them the sounds of other boat owners could be heard talking. She glanced up when she saw a helicopter flying over the marina. Shielding her eyes, she saw it land on a yacht anchored offshore.

"That must be nice," she muttered under her breath before a familiar song caught her attention and she became lost in it while she worked.

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Makayla brushed her hair out and twisted it up into a messy bun. Several strands of dark brown hair fell and she impatiently tucked them up into the mass of twisted hair. Her gaze flashed to the clock on the microwave.

"Henry, if we are going to go, we need to do it before it gets much later," Makayla said, grabbing a pile of canvas shopping bags from off the table. She frowned when she heard Henry's muffled reply. "What?"

"I've got at least another hour or two," Henry said, glancing up at the sky. "The front is expected to come through starting tonight instead of tomorrow."

Makayla could see the frustration and regret on his face. She could also see the dirt and grease. Shaking her head, she glanced up at the sky before looking at him again.

"I can go," she said. "It isn't far. I saw it the other day when the taxi brought me here. I'll go get what we need and be back before the weather turns bad. If you need help, we can wait and go tomorrow."

Henry gave her an appreciative smile and shook his head. "If you can go today, it would be better. I'm not that wild about shopping if you remember. At

least if you go, I know we'll have something worth eating," he said.

Makayla nodded her head in agreement. They had been living on turkey and cheese sandwiches for the past two days. She had quickly discovered that was all Henry had his refrigerator. At least he had also purchased some bread.

"If you're sure you've got this, I'll handle the food," Makayla promised, stepping up onto the back of the sailboat before jumping down onto the dock.

"Coffee!" Henry called out behind her. "Don't forget the coffee."

"I won't," Makayla responded, placing the canvas bags in one of the baskets attached to the bike Henry had placed on the dock. "Anything else?"

"Just whatever you want," Henry said, already focusing back on the wiring. "Don't talk to strangers."

Makayla didn't even reply to Henry's last comment. Instead, she adjusted the small purse she had draped across her chest and slid the straps of her empty backpack on. Grabbing the handlebars of the bike, she turned it and pushed it up the dock. Once at the end, she slid her leg over and kicked off.

She enjoyed the exercise of riding the bike. She followed the road around to the front entrance. Raising her hand in greeting to the security guard, she rode down the short drive before turning right onto the bicycle path.

..*

“What did you discover?” The man standing in the elegant office overlooking the bay asked.

Sun Yung-wing poured himself a cup of tea from the small, antique silver teapot. The steam rose in the delicate white china tea cup. He lifted the fragrant brew to his nose and sniffed it in appreciation. The tall, slender black hair man that had entered the room politely waited until his employer turned before he answered.

“Mr. Harrington is still in a coma,” the man stated.

Yung turned to look at the new man in charge of his security. The last one was now at the bottom of the ocean. He carefully studied Ren Lu.

“He is still alive?” Yung asked with mild surprise.

“Yes, Mr. Sun. Until we can locate the information that was stolen, I thought it best not to kill him. There is no guarantee that he will survive. If he does, I have personnel in position to extract the information before eliminating Mr. Harrington,” Ren Lu explained in a quiet tone.

“And what are you doing about locating the information that was stolen from me?” Yung asked in a deceptively pleasant voice before he took a sip of his tea.

Ren Lu stared back at his employer with a cool confidence. “I have accessed the security cameras situated around the marketplace. I was able to narrow in on an encounter Mr. Harrington had with another individual shortly before he was struck by the van. The video was inconclusive, but I believe Mr. Harrington may have given the information to the

man. There is a section of the video where it looks like he pulled something out of his pocket. It is unclear if the American was a contact of his or not.”

Yung walked silently over to his desk and placed the teacup down on it before he pulled out the chair behind the desk and sat down. Sitting back, he once again studied the man in front of him. The recent discovery of Harrington’s double cross stung. He prided himself on his ability to recognize someone who was being deceptive.

“Have you located this individual?” Yung asked.

“Yes, sir. He is an American. He has a vessel berthed at the Royal Hong Kong Yacht club,” Ren Lu replied.

“Bring him to me,” Yung ordered. “I have business offshore. I want no mistakes this time. I want the information that was stolen returned to me and anyone involved eliminated.”

“Yes, sir,” Ren Lu replied with a slight bow.

“Mr. Lu,” Yung said, stopping Ren Lu when he started to turn.

“Yes, sir?” Ren Lu responded.

“Remember what happens to those that fail,” Yung stated in a cold voice.

“Yes, Mr. Sun,” Ren Lu replied, bowing his head once again.

Yung watched his new security chief exit his office. He sat in silence for several long minutes before he reached for his cell phone. Pushing his chair back, he rose and walked over to the floor-to-ceiling,

tinted glass windows and stared across the bay. In the distance, he could see the marina in question.

“Prepare my yacht and send for the helicopter to pick me up,” he ordered his assistant on the other end.

With a press of the button, he disconnected the call. This was one situation where he would need to be personally involved. There was too much at risk. If his clients were to discover that their identities and locations had been compromised because of him, the United States and British governments would be the least of his concerns.