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Police chief Juliette Tremblant recognized the shape of the man strolling down the street—in as calm and leisurely fashion as if it were the middle of the day rather than midnight. She slowed her car, convinced her eyes were playing tricks on her. It had been a long time since Tyler O'Neill had been seen in this town.

As she pulled to a stop at the curb, he turned toward her, and her heart about stopped.

"What the hell are you doing here, Tyler?"

"Well, if it isn't Juliette Tremblant." He made his way over to her, then leaned down so he could look her in the eye. He was close enough to touch.

Juliette was not, repeat, *not* going to touch Tyler O'Neill. Not with her fingers. Not with a ten-foot pole. There would be no touching. Which was too bad, since it was the only way she was ever going to convince herself the man standing in front of her—as rumpled and heart-stoppingly handsome now as he'd been at sixteen—was real.

And not a figment of all her furious revenge dreams.

"What are you doing back in Bonne Terre?" she asked.

"The manor is sitting empty," Tyler said and shrugged, as though his arriving out of the blue after ten years was casual. "Seems like someone should be watching over the family home."

"You?" She laughed at the very notion of him being here for any unselfish reason. "Please."

He stared at her for a second, then smiled. Her heart fluttered against her chest—a small mechanical bird powered by that smile.

“You’re right.” But that cryptic comment was all he offered.

Juliette bit her lip against the other questions.

*Why did you go?*

*Why didn’t you write? Call?*

*What did I do?*

But what would be the point? Ten years of silence were all the answer she really needed.

She had sworn off feeling anything for this man long ago. Yet one look at him and all the old hurt and rage resurfaced as though they’d been waiting for the chance. That made her mad.

She put the car in gear, determined not to waste another minute thinking about Tyler O’Neill. “Have a good night, Tyler,” she said, liking all the cool “go screw yourself” she managed to fit into those words.

*It seems Juliette has an old score to settle with Tyler.*

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*to see how he makes it up to her.*

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***“Don’t you feel, Mitch? You act as if nothing touches you. Nothing bothers you. You’re always in control.”***

He freed his fingers from hers, reversed his grip and held her palm to the side of his neck.

“Don’t mistake control for a lack of feeling, Chantal. I feel everything,” he said. “I’m as worried as you are about the welfare of the hostages, maybe more, because I’ve seen what can happen when situations like this go wrong.” He pressed her hand more firmly to his skin. “I’m concentrating on my duty so I can shut everything else out, but I can’t turn it off entirely.”

She shuddered. “That’s what I mean. I can’t turn it off, either.”

“And if things weren’t already complicated enough, for the last ten minutes, I’ve felt your body under mine and your hair tickling my cheek. A minute ago I felt the curve of your breast under your jacket and right now I can feel the trembling in your fingers. I’ve been doing my damndest to ignore all of that, too.”

Leave it to Mitch not to beat around the bush.

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Dear Reader,

*Army of Two* was a labor of love for me right from the start. I've had a crush on Major Mitch Redinger since he popped up in the first book of my original EAGLE SQUADRON series. He was so noble, so dedicated to his men and his missions—and so handsome in his uniform!—he deserved a story of his own. Many of you readers agreed.

The only problem was, I had given him a wedding ring. Luckily, I hadn't given him a wife to go with it. Believe me, I combed back through the books to make sure she was no longer in the picture. Those stories had been my first experience with a miniseries, and I hadn't realized when I started how many details had to be kept straight. I can only hope that no one was too confused by one character's changing eye color. Maybe he'd decided to wear colored contacts and had forgotten to tell me.

Anyway, I knew Mitch wouldn't give his love easily a second time. Thus I needed to find a character like Chantal, who had loved him first. To my delight, her crush on the major turned out to be even bigger than mine.

Happy reading,

Ingrid

# INGRID WEAVER

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*Army of Two*

ROMANTIC  
SUSPENSE



If you purchased this book without a cover you should be aware that this book is stolen property. It was reported as "unsold and destroyed" to the publisher, and neither the author nor the publisher has received any payment for this "stripped book."



SILHOUETTE BOOKS

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ARMY OF TWO

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## INGRID WEAVER

propped an old manual typewriter on her children's playroom table to write her first novel. Twenty-six books later there's a computer in place of the typewriter and a RITA® Award on the corner of her grown-up-sized desk, but the joy she found in creating her first story hasn't changed. "I write because life is full of possibilities," Ingrid says, "and the best ones are those that we make." Ingrid lives on a farm in southern Ontario, where she gardens in the summer and knits in the winter. You can visit Ingrid's Web site at [www.ingridweaver.com](http://www.ingridweaver.com).

## *Chapter 1*

The Aerie perched on an outcropping of rock that thrust straight out from the hillside. Its entire front wall was made of glass, providing a bird's-eye vantage point that wasn't for the faint of heart. From the second-floor gallery, Chantal Leduc could see across the lake to the line of distant mountains that held the northern end of the Appalachian Trail. Above it all stretched a wild and endless expanse of sky that never failed to lift her spirits.

The view was only one of the reasons she loved this place. She loved the homey smell of wood smoke that lingered in the log walls, and the solid, here-to-stay sound her footsteps made on the plank floors. There were misty mornings when the lake was a mirror and the air was so pure it tasted sweet. On clear nights, the stars were as thick as the pebbles on the shore. Every winding trail strewn with orange pine needles and each majestic spruce that



swept its branches up the hillside had a regal, timeless beauty. Here was the peace she'd struggled to achieve. Here was sanctuary.

None of that would change simply because *he* was coming. He would only stay a week. She could manage that.

"Miss Leduc?"

Chantal curled her hands around the gallery railing and peered into the lobby. The boy who looked up at her was all pre-adolescent arms and legs, as eager to please as a puppy. His father was the cook, his mother the resort's accountant and assistant manager. The pair had been part of the package when Chantal had taken over the business, although they felt more like family than employees. She remembered how Henry had been a mere toddler the first summer she'd come to work here. Some of the furniture in the dining room still bore the scratches of his toy trucks. "Yes, Henry?"

"I think that's them," he said, pointing out the window.

She scanned the sky, and her hands tightened on the railing. He'd picked out what she hadn't yet seen. There was a speck to the southeast above the horizon that glinted in the rays of the lowering sun. Though it was too far to distinguish any details, it had to be the helicopter they were expecting. No one strayed this far into Maine's North Woods by accident. "Let your dad know we'll be serving dinner in an hour," she said.

He waved and disappeared beneath the gallery. Chantal could hear the rhythmic thump of the aircraft now, vibrating through the walls and windows. She remained where she was and watched the speck grow larger while she went through a mental checklist. Linens. Towels. Food and liquor. Wood for the fireplaces. Gas for the outboards.