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## Tamed (Corcoran Team: Bulletproof Bachelors)

By HelenKay Dimon



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**SHE WAS OFF-LIMITS UNTIL HER LIFE WAS ON THE LINE...**

Agent Shane Baker has denied his attraction to his best friend's younger sister for years. But when computer guru Makena Kingston's latest online investigation stirs up a series of break-ins, Shane isn't about to let the vulnerable beauty fend for herself. Makena refuses to be seen as anything but the alpha male's equal...even as she finds comfort in his protective arms. But soon they uncover the threat to Makena is closer than either of them expected. With Shane's bodyguard instincts on overdrive, he knows keeping his professional distance will be nearly impossible. Because even the most highly trained operative has his breaking point.



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## **Editorial Review**

### About the Author

Award-winning author HelenKay Dimon spent twelve years in the most unromantic career ever - divorce lawyer. After dedicating all of that effort to helping people terminate relationships, she is thrilled to deal in happy endings and write romance novels for a living. Her books have been featured in *Cosmopolitan* Magazine and E! Online. HelenKay loves hearing from readers, so stop by her website at [www.helenkaydimon.com](http://www.helenkaydimon.com) and say hello.

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Makena Kingston had spent most of her life waiting for Shane Baker to wake up and notice her. Tonight she waited for him to pull into the guest parking space so they could have dinner.

She'd called him on a whim. A simple "Come over and we'll eat." It seemed innocent enough. He had a few days off from the Corcoran Team, the undercover squad where he worked with his best friend, her big brother, Holt.

She'd asked this morning, and the hours since had ticked by in painful slowness. Now she glanced out the window over her kitchen sink, looking for Shane. Glanced—as in looked for the five hundredth time.

From this position she could see the steps down to a small lawn area and a much bigger gravel-covered spot. The brightly colored cottages sat in a row, close together, allowing for some privacy but not much. The close quarters and general lack of updating helped her afford the place.

Maybe fifteen feet separated her deck from the one next door. Sometimes she could hear her neighbors, a young married couple, argue. They did that a lot, and about everything. Makena often thought marital longevity might not be on their side.

The night fell over Lannaker Estates, the fancy name for the development of cozy single-level homes perched on a small hill overlooking the Chester River. This part of Maryland, the Eastern Shore, possessed the bucolic feel of a university town, which it was. Small and quaint, close to the Chesapeake Bay and about an hour and a half from Washington, DC. Nothing much happened in Chestertown, and she liked it that way.

For the five hundred and first time, she glanced out back on her Shane watch. This time she saw a dark SUV parked parallel to the neighbor couple's back porch. She couldn't make out the exact color thanks to the fading early fall sunlight. Probably just someone coming to referee the fighting couple's newest argument.

She could make out two people...wearing all black. That struck her as a little much for this time of year. They'd moved out of shorts weather, but the cool breezes hadn't started yet.

Yeah, all black and...she balanced her palms on the counter and leaned in closer. She blinked a few times as she tried to figure out what she was seeing. It was as if the two people—men, she thought from their wide-shouldered builds—stalked the house. They separated. One stopped at a utility box attached to the house and did something. She couldn't quite tell what. The other went to the back door and dropped down on one knee.

Then they raced. Stormed the back of the neighbor's house. She switched from the window at the sink to the

one on the side of her house. With her back to the wall, she peeked around the window frame and watched a bulky figure run through the back of the house next door.

Her heartbeat thundered in her ears, and her chest ached from the force of her heavy breathing. When a bang rang out in the quiet night, she gasped. She fought to drag air into her lungs, but her body stopped working. As if the messages from her brain just kept misfiring.

She stood, frozen, as her gaze searched from window to window, looking for any sign of movement. Thoughts jumbled in her muddled brain and she tried to think. It was as if someone had thrown a blanket over her, slowing down every movement and blocking every thought. She needed to do something. She should...the phone.

She patted her back pockets but couldn't feel her cell. She didn't have a landline, so she depended on the cell. Fear clogged her throat and a frantic desperation made her movements jerky. She glanced around and forced her brain to reboot. The family room. That was where she'd left it, so if she could get there she could call out.

A weird sensation washed over her. Her head whipped around and she saw him. A looming figure standing in the window directly across from her. He had the edge of the curtains in his fist. Even with the mask she could feel his furious glare.

Then he was gone.

She took off at a dash. Crossed the threshold and stopped at the fireplace. She threw the stack of magazines on the floor and ran around the coffee table. Laptop. Remote control. No cell.

She heard knocking in her head. A deafening series of thuds. It took her a few seconds to figure out the noise came from outside the cottage, not inside her mind. The back door crashed in. Wood splintered and the glass of the small window at the top of the door cracked.

Footsteps echoed around her. She could barely make out any sound over the clipped panting escaping her throat. She turned around and slammed her knee into the table but kept moving. Standing still meant death. Holt and Shane had drummed that into her head. Fight back. Scream.

She started to do just that.

"Help!" Her voice cut off when the attacker slammed into her.

She felt the force as if she'd run at high speed into a steel wall. Her teeth rattled and her head snapped back. The breath left her body. No matter how she fought for balance, her feet slid across the floor.

Arms wrapped around her waist in a crushing band. The room spun as she fell back. She waited for the punishing thump against the floor, but it never came. Her butt bounced against the couch cushion just as the attacker's body came toward her.

Tension choked the room. She went from thinking and feeling to autopilot. Before the attacker could use his weight to press her down, she scrambled. Pivoted to the left and kept going. She reached out to stop her fall, but it was too late. She kept going until she landed with a jolt on her hands and knees.

Something crunched under her leg. She grabbed it as she tried to run. She got maybe a foot before a hand

latched on to her calf. A tight hand squeezed her muscle until she cried out in pain.

The aches mixed with the fear as her heartbeat kicked up even higher. She felt the burning in her palm and looked down. She didn't know when she'd found her cell, but she held it.

She kicked out against the grip on her leg. Looked around for something to throw. Tried to keep her mind engaged as terror took off inside her.

The attacker regained his balance and climbed to his feet, never letting go of her leg. She hopped as she tried to make the call. Her eyes focused long enough for her to see the terrifying message: no signal.

She was on her own.

Dizziness hit her out of nowhere. He yanked on her leg and sent her sprawling backward. This time she missed the couch. The free fall ended with a hard smack against the hardwood floor. Her elbow made contact first and her hand went numb. The useless cell dropped and bounced.

She tried to turn over and he fell on top of her. His legs straddled her sides and his hand tightened on her throat. Seemingly using almost none of his strength, he flipped her over onto her back. Dead black eyes stared down at her.

"Move and you die." He slipped a knife out and flashed it in front of her eyes. "Do not test me."

"I don't have anything." She tried to shake her head, but he kept her locked against the floor. "I work at the university. I don't—"

He tightened his hand. "Shut up."

Survival instinct kicked in. She grabbed for the hand, trying to pry his fingers away as he choked off her breath. Desperate to gain traction, she shifted her hips. Her feet slipped across the floor.

Fear clamped down on her. The adrenaline pumping through her gave her a burst of energy. She slapped against him, against the floor. Her gaze whipped around the room as she looked for something to make into a weapon. Anything.

"It's over." The ominous threat sounded even worse in the attacker's flat tone.

"No." She said the word as much to herself as to him.

She had to stay conscious and clear even as panic bombarded her. It became harder and harder to breathe. He outweighed her. His strength far surpassed hers. Which meant she had to depend on her smarts.

But she was running out of options and air. As her vision darkened around the edges, she remembered the fireplace and the poker. While she wrestled with the hand crushing her windpipe, she shimmied. Moved on her back as he shifted and increased his grip.

With one last surge of energy, she threw her arm out to the side. The move nearly wrenched it out of the socket, but when she didn't touch anything she did it again. This time she knocked over the small vase holding the fireplace tools. The poker hit the back of her hand and rolled. The handle slipped away from her

fingers, but she lunged and caught it. Cool metal filled her palm.

She tightened her grip and prepared to swing.

Shane Baker arrived in Chestertown an hour before Makena's suggested dinnertime. He broke a few traffic laws getting to her, speeding being one of them. But instead of going in right away, he parked at the opposite end of her cottage complex and walked along the river, trying to clear his head.

Makena was off-limits. He'd done the marriage thing once and failed miserably. The idea of trying something light and no strings with Makena might work if she weren't his best friend's baby sister and a woman he knew would expect more than a few nights of meaningless sex. She deserved more. Deserved better than him.

He worked long hours and traveled all the time. He loved his job with the Corcoran Team, the off-the-books undercover group that took on high-risk rescue jobs for companies and governments. He lived with danger. Thrived on it.

Dragging Makena into that life, no matter how hard it was to forget her face even as he traveled thousands of miles away, would be a mistake. Dinner wasn't even a good idea, but he couldn't say no. Holt was out of town, enjoying some time off with Lindsey, his new girlfriend. Shane rationalized his presence at Makena's back door as he walked toward it. He needed to watch over her. No kissing. No fun. Just two old friends talking.

Now if he could only get his brain and body on the same page.

He rounded the far corner of the complex. Heard the crunch of wood just as he saw Makena's back door implode. Before his mind could process, he took off. He ran along the edge of the hill and sprinted to the porch. Up and inside just as he heard her scream, then voices.

His heart hammered in his chest as he silently hoped he wasn't too late. He shot through the doorway. A series of grunts and thuds greeted him as he glanced around the small space. His eyes finally focused. It took him until then to realize the lights had blinked out. But he had no time to worry about that now. He had to get to her.

With his gun out, he approached in rapid speed. He was about to call out when something flashed through the air. She had something in her hand and swung it in an arc. It connected with the attacker's shoulder.

The guy let out a roar. His big body shuddered, but he didn't fall. Shane took care of that part. He switched his grip on the gun and whacked the guy in the side of the head with all his strength. The attacker dropped in a crumpled heap.

Then Shane focused on Makena. Her eyes wide and glassy. A ripped shirt and her long black hair half-pulled out of her ponytail. He'd never been happier to see her.

He took a step forward and she scooted back on her butt as if fear still held her in its grasp. "Makena, are you okay?"

Some of the haze cleared. She blinked and her shoulders fell. "Shane?"

"Come here, baby." He stepped over the unmoving body to get to her.

In one lift he had her up and in his arms. His hands shook with relief, but that was nothing compared to the trembling moving through her. Much harder and she'd break apart. His palm smoothed over her hair as he scanned the room. He had no idea what was going on, but the guy on the floor wasn't exactly dressed for a social visit.

Once he had them out of the immediate grabbing area if the guy should wake up, Shane pulled back from her. As gently as possible, he lifted her head to look into her eyes. "Did he hurt you?"

"There were two of them." Her voice sounded small and shaky, totally unlike her usual spunky go-get-'em attitude.

The news sent a shot of adrenaline coursing through him. He slipped her behind him and faced the open area. The squeal of tires echoed in the distance. Shane left her only long enough to run to the back door. He caught sight of the back of a dark SUV. No license plate.

When he spun around again, Makena stood right behind him. She rubbed her hands over her arms. "I didn't want to stay in there with him."

Shane's gaze shot past her to the body on the floor. The guy hadn't moved, but he would, and Shane wanted him tied up and ready for questioning. He took out his cell to call in reinforcements.

She shook her head. "Mine wouldn't work for some reason."

Shane got a signal and sent the emergency code to Cameron Roth, one of his teammates, before turning back to her. "Stay here."

With the order given, Shane headed for the guy. Checked for breathing and was relieved the guy was still alive, because it was tough to question a dead man.

"Zip ties?" He knew she had them, but he asked anyway. No sister of Holt Kingston, leader of the Corcoran traveling team, would have a house without zip ties. The bigger question was why the attacker had stormed in here. He had nailed the door with a determined kick, and Shane wanted to know why. "Did he say anything to you?"

"Barely." She buzzed into the kitchen and came back with the restraints.

"I'm going to need to hear every word." Shane went to work on binding the unconscious man. "I'm guessing he was here to rob you, but with your connection to the Corcoran Team, we can't be too careful."

"He's not here for me. They...he...broke into the house next door." She paced the floor a few feet away from him. "I saw him, he saw me and then he came over here."

The idea of her being a witness brought him some comfort. Wrong place, wrong time. It sucked, but it meant she wasn't the target. That would help him sleep again...someday.

"Here." He handed her his cell. "Call the police. They'll need to check on the neighbors."

"I hate to think about what they'll find over there."

"You're not alone on that." Shane did a quick pocket check of the unconscious guy. He was about to stand up when he touched a piece of paper. Slipped it out of the guy's pocket and read the message. The words on it hit Shane like a kick to the gut.

She froze while pacing back and forth a few feet away.

"What is it?"

"Your name and address."

She frowned. "What?"

There was only one explanation, and it chilled him straight to the bone. "The men were here for you."

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Chris Bynum:**

Hey guys, do you would like to finds a new book to read? May be the book with the title Tamed (Corcoran Team: Bulletproof Bachelors) suitable to you? Typically the book was written by well known writer in this era. Often the book untitled Tamed (Corcoran Team: Bulletproof Bachelors)is one of several books in which everyone read now. This particular book was inspired many people in the world. When you read this book you will enter the new way of measuring that you ever know before. The author explained their strategy in the simple way, and so all of people can easily to know the core of this book. This book will give you a lots of information about this world now. To help you to see the represented of the world within this book.

#### **Phillip Chadwick:**

Why? Because this Tamed (Corcoran Team: Bulletproof Bachelors) is an unordinary book that the inside of the e-book waiting for you to snap the idea but latter it will jolt you with the secret it inside. Reading this book next to it was fantastic author who also write the book in such incredible way makes the content inside easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning entirely. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This phenomenal book will give you a lot of gains than the other book have got such as help improving your proficiency and your critical thinking method. So , still want to delay having that book? If I had been you I will go to the guide store hurriedly.

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**Barbara Morton:**

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