

The greatest thing about surveillance is when something actually happens. And that isn't often, but today, the man I'm following is busy. He talks to a woman ahead, but I'm too far away to hear them, but it's not his normal meet up. The regular lady isn't there, and I can't help but wonder where she went. While they sit and talk, I stop by a fruit stand, picking up an apple before he begins moving again. Paying for my food, I continue following him.

If this man is the big bad agent everyone told me he is, he has to know I'm following him. Hell, if he's the big bad agent, he's probably known that I've been following him for weeks. Or maybe his reputation is just a myth. I've followed him from the Smithsonian and now we're up in Dupont Circle. *What are you up to?*

Street vendors begin to fade away as we get closer to the circle. Carts are replaced by buildings, mostly embassies. Embassies full of people who will gamble with him.

Cars on the street begin to disappear into the tunnel below, leaving the one green patch in the city. Today it's probably brown, a muddy river as everyone dodges the rain. They keep saying it's going to snow this afternoon, and the moment it does, I'm abandoning this mission for a Starbucks hot chocolate. Freezing cold rain? I'll tolerate that, but snow is a no-go.

We've stopped at an intersection, and I'm trying to keep my distance. Even if he knows I'm following him, it's better to stay back. With a wide frame like his, he could strike me with no warning and from a distance.

Most days, I'd be out here with my gear, but I couldn't make it to the office before I found him. Sometimes I feel like he knows I'm following him, the way he hovers every morning around the Hoover building - he has to know.

For weeks now, I've been tracking him, trying to establish a hard case against him to bring him in. A former FBI agent, someone who abandoned his country to make big bucks gambling with international figures. The only problem is, no one at the agency seems to know why he left. He left before I came around, which is why they sent me - hoping he won't know recognize me as agent. So far, I think I'm safe, most of the time, I feel like he has to know.

As the group of people we're in begins to move, he turns right down P Street, and I wonder where he's going. A woman accidentally hits him, and he turns around to apologize to her. I freeze; if he looks up, he'll be looking right at me. I slide a little further to my right, trying to hide behind the man in front of me, but this guy isn't any taller than I am. At 5'7", it surprises me just how tall I am compared to some men. This time is no exception, and I find myself trying to shrink without being obvious that I'm trying to hide.

He turns again, this time to the left, at 17th street, and I wonder what's going on. We've never been up here before, and I'm curious to see where he's taking me. Tracking him is easy; he stands so tall above the rest. The fact sheet in his file says he's 6'4". While I've seen plenty of men that tall, none of them have had his build. He's not fat; he just has broad shoulders that make him seem so much more menacing than other men.

A car honks at me, and I realize I haven't paid attention. I jump back to avoid it and ignore the middle finger the driver gives me. When I make it to the other side of the street, my stomach drops. My man is gone.

I make it to the end of the sidewalk, a new intersection. There are less people here, further away from Dupont Circle. Looking both ways, I don't see anyone who stands above everyone else. *Hmm, where is he?*

Out of ideas, I begin walking to the left, hoping he's trying to hide in some store. Maybe, if I just act like I have no idea where he is, he'll feel confident enough to pop out. Wouldn't that be convenient? All this following is in vain. Even if I wanted to, I couldn't bring him in today. There's not enough evidence quite yet (at least that I know about - the Director swears I'll find everything I need) and the man could throw me like a rag doll. Taking him down will require an army, and when I'm ready, I'll get that army. Good things come to those who wait. Isn't that how the adage goes? If that's the case, I'm willing to wait as long as I need to.

As I wait, I watch a little snowman in the storefront dance around, and the store next to it has Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer in it.

There's the sound of people everywhere, running by, trying to finish last minute Christmas shopping. A child is throwing a fit on the other side of the street, kicking his feet and yelling at the sky. Moments like this, I'm more than okay with my fate of being single. A little girl runs up to the boy, maybe his sister, and gives him a quick kick in the side. I shudder. The kick looked painful. In my many foster homes, I dealt with my fair share of sibling fights. Usually won them too, even though I was almost always replaced immediately after and the chances of adoption became slimmer and slimmer.

Some people are destined for a life of solitude. Good thing I don't mind being alone. At least, that's what I tell myself.

For a moment, I stop and listen, hoping that I'll hear him. I've followed him in enough quiet places to pick up his footsteps. His feet are always heavy because of his size, but he doesn't always drag them and he's not slow. If he's here, I'll know.

After a moment, I feel it. Or him, or his footsteps. I can't believe that actually worked. I spin around to see him walking away, coming out of a store. He's looking over his shoulder, right at me. The recognition hits in, and I know he's about to make a run for it. Without taking my eyes off of him, I reach into my coat pocket and pull out my gun.

"FBI, freeze!" I yell, throwing the gun up at eye level. "Put your hands where I can see them."

Everyone around us has stopped, watching us. People have dropped their belongings, slowly raising their hands. The only one who isn't listening is him. "I said put your hands where I can see them," I call out. He's not moving, but I can't see his hands. My gut says he's armed, but until he whips his gun out and shoots me, I don't know for certain.

Today wasn't the day I was planning to bring him in, but sometimes life makes plans for you. I take a step toward him.

That's my fatal mistake.

He must know footsteps too, because he jumps into the street, right in front of a car. I shoot at him, but he's too fast, and I hit the car. I shoot again and seconds later, he throws his

arm over his leg, gritting his teeth in pain. The passenger car door opens and someone leans out to pull him up as I walk over. When I'm almost to the front of the car, the driver jumps it and I jump back. My man is getting up with the help of the man from the passenger seat. I take another step, and the driver jumps again, effectively blocking me off from the man on the ground.

The two men finally stand up and get into the car, the passenger back in his seat, and the man with the bullet in his leg in the backseat. The car begins to hum and jumps, knocking me over as it catches speed. I pull my leg out before the tires run me over. Trying to keep my leg on my body distracts me long enough for them to cause enough panic in the one-way street to escape. I try to shoot out a tire, but the panic makes it hard to get a clean shot. Before I have a chance, the crowd has completely covered the street.

"Do you need help, ma'am?" A young boy comes up to me and offers his hands.

"No, thank you," I say, pushing myself up, "but thanks." Smiling, the little boy looks down at his shoes before running off. Without much else to do, I pull my phone out and call my partner, Kevin.

"Moore," he says. It always irritates me when he says that. He has my number in his phone. He knows it's me. "Did you run into a hitch?"

"Oh yes. I lost the target. I need you to start paying attention to the local hospitals and see if anyone with his description comes in with a bullet wound in the right leg."

"What did you do?"

"He was moving and the guy in the car tried to run over me. I had a lot of things to worry about," I say.

"Okay, I've got the hospital feeds ready to go. What are you planning to do?"

I open my mouth to respond, but stop when I hear the wailing of police sirens. Just what I need. I know I'll have jurisdiction over them by being a federal agent, but it's always a good practice to not piss them off. "The police are already coming. Guess I'll have to deal with them

first." I hope they're quick, though. Realizing I'm still in the middle of the street, I move to the side of the road and wait for the cops to show up.

"That's not good," Kevin says.

"No shit," I say. Blowing my cover has put me in a bad mood quickly, and I'm ready to be home and away from people. The cops are getting closer and closer, but people are starting to leave the scene. Either they're afraid of me or the cops, but I'm guessing a bit of both. With my gun back in place, I reach into my jacket to pull out my badge before the cops come. I'd rather not have them try and shoot me while I reach for it.

"Well, you better deal with that," Kevin says. "Call us when you're done." The line goes dead and the cop car pulls up to the side of the road. One cop climbs out of the car and walks up to me, specifically because I'm watching him intently, almost calling him to come over to me.

"Officer Morgan with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The shooting that happened here a few minutes ago was a part of a classified investigation," I say, introducing myself.

"And it happened in the middle of the street?" He's looking at me like I'm absolutely ridiculous, and I guess I can see that. A twenty-two year-old FBI agent? They don't even let people into the agency until they're twenty-three. It takes special strings to get in early, but a lot of times, no one believes me. I know there's no way he can tell I'm legally too young to be an agent, but he's probably thinking to himself that I'm cutting it close.

"Sometimes these cases play out in public, despite our attempts to stop it."

He's still giving me a "that's bullshit" look. "What kind of case is this?"

"We're investigating a suspect, and unfortunately I can't give you any more information than that. The suspect got away after receiving a bullet to the knee. I can show you his name and picture, but that's really it."

"We'd appreciate that."

"If you find him, contact me immediately." I reach into my jacket, carefully as he watches, and pull out my card. After handing it to him, I pull Anders' picture up on my phone

and show it to him. "This is Connor Anders. Like I said, if you find him, please call me immediately."

"Can you email me that picture?" the officer asks. He gives me his email address and I forward the picture to him. "Is there anything else we should know?" he asks.

"That' it," I say.

"Well, if that's the case and the FBI is taking over, I think that's it," he says, just the words I want to hear.

"The FBI thanks you for your cooperation. If you need anything else, feel free to call me." I offer my hand and he takes it. After, I take off and turn around the corner. On the other side, the wind picks up and I pull my head down to keep my face from going numb.

The officer turns to talk to another witness, and I take the time to call Kevin. He doesn't answer, so I tell him to let me know when he or Jess, our handler, finds out where Anders is.

While Anders is nursing a wound, I'll take the time to snoop on his place. *Time to find out what his big secret is.*

Read the full novel [here](#).