

**Luca's arms cradled the baby's form in an effort to keep from reaching out to Elyse.**

He'd dreamed of bringing Elyse to his home country one day, but this wasn't quite the way he'd pictured it. Because in his fantasies, they'd had a huge Italian wedding with all of his family in attendance. And all of hers.

Only, life had had different ideas.

*"Scusami. Una foto?"*

He jerked back to reality, realizing someone was trying to take a picture and they were in the way. Staring at each other like star-crossed lovers.

*"Mi dispiace."*

They moved out of the line of fire and headed toward the cathedral. He could try to say he'd been looking at something in the distance and not at her, but it would have been a lie. And he couldn't bring himself to force out the words.

The baby chose that moment to wake up, blinking eyes coming up to meet his. Her head swung around obviously looking for something else.

Elyse took the baby's hand and peered in at her.  
*"I'm here, sweetheart."*

His chest contracted. He was a stranger to his own daughter.

Dear Reader,

Have you ever kept a little secret from someone? I have. Things like hiding Christmas presents or a surprise party come to mind. But some secrets are much bigger than those fun, everyday ones. They are painful and raw, and you feel the need to heal in private. That's what Elyse Tenner is trying to do in the aftermath of a traumatic breakup and the birth of her daughter. She just can't bring herself to trust in the power of love. But love has a way of nudging its way in...

Thank you for joining Elyse and Luca as they navigate the waters of heartbreak, secrets and forgiveness while in the beautiful city of Florence, Italy. Elyse has a hard time letting people in, but with Luca beside her, she is sorely tempted to let down all her defenses and give love one more chance.

I hope you enjoy reading this special couple's journey as much as I loved writing it!

Love,

*Tina Beckett*

# THE SURGEON'S SURPRISE BABY



TINA BECKETT

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The Surgeon's Surprise Baby

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To my husband: thank you for my chickens!

**Praise for  
Tina Beckett**

“This is a truly passionate and moving story that brings two beautiful people together.... Ms. Beckett has brought out the love and emotion that will surely have you smiling and sighing.”

—*Goodreads on Rafael's One Night Bombshell*

## PROLOGUE

“WELL, I’M NO longer your boss.”

Luca Venezia stared at her as if she’d lost her mind. No longer his boss? Was that all she had to say to him? The obvious relief in her voice told him that she’d been anxious to wield that particular ax. Only she’d just done it in a room full of his colleagues, who had suffered a similar fate. He’d stayed behind after the others had all filed out dejectedly.

She was perched on her desk, looking just as gorgeous as she had a year ago, when he’d first stepped into her neurology department. It had taken him a while, but he’d finally convinced her to look past her reservations about engaging in a workplace relationship and see what they could be like together.

And it had been good. So very good.

He took a step closer. “Is that all you have to say to me, Elyse?”

Her head tilted as if she truly couldn’t un-

derstand what the problem was. Was this an American thing that he hadn't yet grasped? Just when he thought he was understanding this culture, the woman in front of him threw something into the mix that had him reeling.

Italy was suddenly beckoning him home. But he wasn't leaving without a fight.

She slid from her desk and stood in front of him. "Don't you see? This could be a good thing."

No. He didn't see it. No matter how he looked at it.

She drove him insane. With want. With need. And now was no different.

"Do you want me gone, is that it?"

She took his hands in hers, before her hands slid up his forearms. "Are we talking about from the hospital? Or from my life?"

It was one and the same to Luca. It felt like they'd been trapped in a game of tug-of-war ever since their first date. The harder he pulled her toward him, the more she seemed to resist letting him get close to her, and he didn't understand why. They were in a relationship, only nothing was easy. Except the sex.

And that had been mind-blowing. Maybe part of that was the uncertainty of it all. Maybe it had lent an air of desperation to their love-making.



Her green eyes stared into his, and the crazy thing was, he could swear he saw a hint of lust in there, even though she'd just fired him. Had she gotten off on delivering that death blow to all those people?

No. That wasn't the Elyse he'd known these past few months.

“What is it you want from me, Elyse?”

“Don't you know?”

He didn't. Not at all, but he was tired of playing guessing games with her. He cupped her face, trying to make sense of it all, but the swirling in his head gave him no time to think. No time to ask any questions. Instead, the refuge they'd sought after each fight opened its door and whispered in his ear, promising it would all be okay.

He no longer believed it. But his blood was stirring in his veins, sending waves of heat through him. Even as her lips tilted up, telling him what she wanted, he was already there, the kiss scorching hot, just as it always was. His tongue met hers, his hands going under her ass and sitting her back on her desk. The sound of her shoes hitting the floor one at a time and her hands going to his waist and tugging him forward between her legs answered his earlier question about what she wanted.

*Hell.* There was no question as to that. *Gra-*

*zie a Dio* he'd locked the door behind him, thinking that what he'd had to say to her he wanted said in private. Right now, though, the last thing he wanted to do was talk.

And he was so hot. So ready. Just as he always was for her.

The desk was wide, the middle bare of anything.

Made for sex.

He grabbed hold of her wrists and tugged her hands away so that he could take a step back to unzip.

The sight of Elyse licking her lips was his undoing.

He came back to her, reaching under her skirt to yank her boy shorts down, tossing them away. Then he eased her down until her back was flat against her desk, her breasts jutting upward, the outline of her nipples plainly visible beneath the thin white blouse.

“Do you want me?” His hands palmed the smooth skin of her hips and tugged her to the very edge of the desk.

She bit her lip, her legs twining around his until he was pressed tight against her, his hard flesh finding a wet heat that destroyed any hopes of prolonging this. He drove home, her sharp cry ending on a moan, her hips moving as if to seat him even deeper.

“*Dio*, Elyse...” His eyes closed, trying to grasp at any shred of control and finding nothing there.

His thumb moved from her hip to her center, hoping to help things along, but the second he touched her, she exploded around him, her gasped “Yes,” sending him over the edge. Bracing his hands on the desk, he plunged home again and again, his body spasming so hard his vision went white for a brief instant. Still he thrust, unwilling for the moment to end.

Because that’s exactly what it would do. What it needed to do.

His movements slowed, reality slowly filtering back in.

*Hell*. As good as this was, it had solved nothing.

Nothing.

The job had been the thing that had held him there, made him keep trying, even as she burned hot and then cold.

But now she’d killed the job. And in doing that, the relationship. What they said about goodbye sex was evidently true.

He didn’t try to kiss her, just moved away, zipping himself back in, even as she sat up on the desk.

“What’s wrong?”

Was she really asking him that? Everything was wrong. But he was about to make it right.

“Did you put my name on that list of people to be fired?”

She frowned, coming off the desk, retrieving her undergarment, turning away from him as she slid them over her legs. She didn't answer as, with her back still turned, she pushed her feet into her shoes, black high-heeled pumps that he had always found so sexy.

By the time she finally turned around, his last shred of patience had disappeared and he no longer needed a response. “You know what? It doesn't matter. You've been pushing me away ever since I got here, so I'm finally giving you your wish. I'm leaving. Going back to Italy. You actually did me a favor in firing me, so thank you.”

He put a hand on the doorknob, half thinking she would call his name and tell him it was all a big mistake. Tell him that she didn't want him to go. He tensed, knowing that even if she did he was no longer willing to go on as they had been. Maybe he'd revisit that decision in a week...in a month. But right now, he needed time to think things through.

Except there was no sound from behind him as he opened the door. As he stepped through it. As he closed it.

Maybe that was all the thinking he needed to do.

So he started walking. And kept on walking until he was away from the hospital and on his way out of her life.