

Read Untouchable (Unstoppable 1) by Danielle Hill

Chapter 44

Epilogue

Riley

“Riley Mason.”

A chorus of hollers went up. Blushing, I ducked my head, moving quickly across the stage to accept my diploma. Lip muscles straining to control the smile that wanted to break out, I tipped my head to the seats in the auditorium, knowing my mom and Liss would be there, grinning widely. My gaze snaked past them, muscles loosening as a small smile formed. My eyes carried on, until they rested on the face I'd been looking for. He stood a head taller than everyone else around him. His hands were jammed in his pockets, hair tousled on top, just the way I liked it, especially when I knew it was my fingers that had been raking through it. He still took my breath away.

Those dark eyes met mine and I stumbled, righting myself just before it became obvious. He'd caught it. His lips twitched, humor glinting in his soulful eyes. Beyond that, there was pride, shining brightly, aimed directly at me. My heart melted. And his lips moved, forming silent words. I love you.

Biting my lip, I nodded, glancing away quickly before the moisture that welled in my eyes spilled over. I couldn't cry in front of everyone, not even happy tears. Stepping off the stage, I couldn't resist a peek back. His eyes were still on me. Overflowing with love, and I couldn't stop myself from blowing him a kiss.

The smirk I'd once thought I hated tugged at his lips, hitting me right in the middle of my chest, and he winked. Cocky son of a...

But I loved it. I loved him.

In the past three years, we'd argued, we'd fought. We'd said things we didn't mean and made stupid mistakes. We were learning. Learning that we wouldn't always agree. We'd do stupid stuff to piss each other off. Hell, there were times we wouldn't even like each other, and the distance had been hard, for both us.

But I'd never stopped loving him, not for one minute. And that meant we fought through the rest. Love first, and everything else will follow. I'd heard that somewhere once. And it was true.

Two sets of slim arms enfolded me in their embrace and squeezed me to death, squealing and jabbering in my ear. Smiling wide, I returned their enthusiasm, gripping tight until we broke apart. Liss and my mom stepped back.

And there he was.

Rising on the balls of his feet, looking down at me. I practically skipped to him, planting my face into the hard plains of his chest as my emotions burst free. His strong arms came around me, crushing me to him and lifting until my feet left the ground. My head rose, lips finding his, and I squeezed my eyes tight as our mouth fused. It was chaste, we had an audience, after all, but I felt it all the way to my dangling toes. His low growl suggested he did, too. I grinned, breaking away, and met his gaze.

"I'm damn proud of you, baby," he said roughly, staring into my eyes.

"Thank you," I said, voice oddly shy.

"Okay, okay, put her down, lover boy. We got shit to do, places to be and all that jazz. She's my best friend... gimme."

Reno's lips curved in a reluctant grin, his head shaking and eyes rolling in his head. Lowering me to the floor, he dropped a gentle kiss on the tip of my nose and tapped my butt. "Get out of here. See you for dinner?"

I nodded with a snuffle, eyes glazing over. Wow, emotion overload.

My mom, Liss, and I had the rest of the day.

Tonight, was mine and Reno's. He had plans, the kind I wasn't privy to just yet. But as long as they included getting naked at some point, I didn't really care. I took two paces away, changed my mind, and rushed back to him, fitting my lips to his for one last kiss. I took him by surprise, but he caught on quick enough, hands gripping my hips and mouth latching onto mine.

Flames. I broke off before we got carried away, but the glazed look in his hooded eyes told me I might have waited too long. Flashing him a grin, I waved and took off.

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Freshly primped, primed and made up in a brand-new dress, I walked toward where Reno waited by the entrance to the hotel bar. It felt like we'd been waiting a lifetime for this day. The moment our lives could officially start. I was going home to stay, and we were going to build a life together. Reno had made good on his promise to Brett. Using Brett's life insurance, he'd invested in the garage, upgrading and expanding to include services for custom detailing, window tinting, amongst other things. It was doing exceptionally well, and I was prouder of him than he could ever be of me, I was sure of

it. He'd been lost for a while there, but he'd fought his way back. Despite the fears that plagued him. Despite the losses he'd suffered.

His eyes darkened when he spotted me, and I felt the heat from his gaze all over. A shiver worked its way down my spine and my breath caught. I let him take my hand and he hauled me against his body. His hands found the small of my back and he slid them down to cup my butt, squeezing possessively.

"You look fucking gorgeous," he growled, eyes dipping to my mouth. For all his manhandling, his lips were tender when they met mine. And like always, I melted into him.

When I would have suggested we forgo dinner and head to the room, he moved me back, extending his arms until his elbows locked, holding me away from him. Hunger burned like an inferno in his eyes as he warred with the same temptation I had. Finally, he gave his head a sharp shake and slid one hand down my arm, grasping my hand in his. And then we were off. Trailing behind, my eyes strayed longingly to the elevator we sped past. But he didn't stop his march until we were safely through the hotel lobby and had cleared the revolving glass doors.

He slowed his pace about twenty yards down the sidewalk and swivelled his head to look down at me with a knowing smirk. He knew what he'd done. I scowled up at him, lips twisting in displeasure. His smirk bloomed into a full blown laugh and I couldn't hold on to the expression.

"So," I said, "Where are we going? Better be some place real good if you're passing up on hotel room sex."

His head fell back with his laughter as we strolled, hand in hand, turning into the park. He shrugged, miming zipping his lips together. I smacked his arm with the heel of my palm, eyes narrowed on him teasingly. Leaning into his side, I rested my head on his bicep, eyes fluttering closed. The streets of downtown were alive, vibrant with noise and color. Contentment filled me, a soft sigh filtering between my curved lips, the smile seemingly glued to my face.

Glancing up, the ferris wheel towered above us, an all seeing eye standing proud above the city.

Reno followed my gaze and gave my hand a squeeze. "Come on."

With no line, we paid and boarded, ascending into the sky within minutes. I moved to the edge of the glass, looking out over the perfect skyline. Dusk was on the verge of giving up the day to the night. The burning oranges and yellows of the departing sun melded with the deepest of blues, broken by thin slivers of shadowed clouds and the

looming mountain scape in the distance. It was beautiful. I felt Reno move in behind me, arms circling my waist, chest

fitting against my back. I let my head fall back to rest on his shoulder, his chin found the top of my head, nuzzling, and I wrapped my arms over his.

"I love you," he murmured.

My arms tightened, and I craned my head to peer up at him, my heart swelling in my chest. "I love you, too."

He dropped his head, planting a kiss on my temple before straightening and shifting his eyes back to the view. I followed suit. Our car stilled at the very top, and I heard Reno exhale, the sound extended and sharp, like he was doing it through pursed lips. His weight shifted and cool air hit my back as he drew away.

"This wasn't the plan... I had a reservation at a fancy restaurant, but..." he said, and he sounded nervous.

My brows drew together. I turned, expecting to look up at him, except he wasn't standing behind me. He was down on one knee, arm extended, a sparkling diamond ring held up between his thumb and finger.

My trembling hands flew to my mouth, breath escaping me in an awed gasp. "Ren...?"

Soul deep eyes captured mine, penetrating right through me. "I wasn't sure if I should even do this yet, Ri," he started, and he seemed so unsure of himself, a quiet sob broke from me, my heart thumping. "You're still young. This is the first day of the rest of your life, and I'm hijacking it."

His beautiful eyes flashed with intensity, boring into me, and his voice turned husky. "But I'm a selfish asshole when it comes to you and I won't apologize for that. I want your future, Riley. I'll support and stand by you, whatever you do, but I want to be there with you, be a part of it. I want you to be my wife, have my children," his voice broke, and I couldn't hold back. My head nodded vigorously.

Relief washed over him, a smile breaking over the face I loved so much. "I love you so fucking much. Marry me, Riley? Please?"

I fell on him, almost toppling us both, but sure arms fastened around my shaking body and lifted us both up. Head buried in his chest, legs threatening to give way, all I could do was nod.

He eased back, tipping my chin. "Be nice to hear you say it, Ri," he said, tone light.

"Yes. Of course, yes," I said through my tears. Reaching up to trace my hands over his jaw, nails scratching the scruff, I nodded again. "You are my future, Maddox Renner. Everything else... is just stuff, but this... us," I held his gaze. "Is the single most important thing in the world to me."

He took my small hand in his big one, and slid the solitaire over my finger before pulling my hand to his mouth and brushing his lips over my knuckles.

Two years later

Reno

"We're gonna be late, Ri!" I shouted up the stairs, tapping my fingers impatiently against the wooden rail. Scrubbing a hand through my hair, I checked my watch, and muttered, "Christ, woman."

What the hell is she doing?

Pacing down the hallway, keys swinging around my finger, still muttering about my wife's inability to be on time for any fucking thing, I double checked the locks on the doors and windows, eyes quickly surveying the space around me.

We'd bought a three bed house six months ago. It was on the same street as Leon's mom and step-dad. Not too big, not too small. Little patch of grass out front and a decent sized yard out back. We had bigger visions, but it was home, and everywhere I looked, I saw Riley. Framed pictures of us adorned the walls and surfaces. Honestly, I could live in a cardboard box, if it was with her, I'd be good.

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Our relationship was like the ocean, calm and serene one minute, turbulent as fuck the next. It worked for us. Safe to say, we made up a lot, and I'd ride that damn storm any day. I was still goddamn crazy for her, and she still drove me crazy. But I'd tried life without her once, and it was like being half alive. I'd take her temper and irrationality, because she loved fiercely, with every fucking part of her. And being on the receiving end of that, was exhilarating. Humbling. Addictive. We'd never doubted our love for each other, not when I spent the night on the couch or she stormed out the house in a blaze of fury, putting the lives of every pedestrian in her path at risk. I loved the calm, I loved the chaos.

I fucking loved her.

My gaze landed on the candid black and white picture, framed by the word love, that had pride of place in the centre of the wall in the hallway. She'd never looked more beautiful. Walking down the aisle toward me on Le's arm. I'd had to dig my heels into the ground to hold myself back. My heart had slammed into my ribs hard enough to crack them.

That was a month ago. It was the second time I'd slipped a ring on her finger. There was no feeling in the world that compared to seeing them there. She was mine. She always fucking had been.

Right now though, she was a royal pain in my goddam ass who was going to make us miss our honeymoon.

"Riley!" I growled, tossing the keys back in the bowl on the table by the door. I started up the stairs, taking them three at a time to see what the hell the damn hold up was this time.

Pushing open the door to our bedroom, I stuck my head round. Finding no sign of her in there, I backed up, and strode down the hallway to the closed bathroom door. "Ri?" I called.

"Yeah." Her voice was muffled by the wood, but it sounded off.

My brows drew down. "You okay?" I asked, hand closing around the knob and twisting.

My eyes found her immediately, sat on the bathroom floor, knees pulled to her chest, and her arms wrapped around them. Red-rimmed eyes met mine and my protective instincts flared, every muscle tensing into action. "What is it?"

Her head swung wearily, forehead lowering briefly to touch her bent knees, before she raised it enough to make eye contact, and tipped her head over her shoulder toward the basin.

Brow creased, my gaze shifted. And immediately landed on the thin white stick laying face up by the faucet. It wasn't one of those ones that said the word, but I knew enough to determine what two pink lines meant. My gaze stayed on the stick for a while longer, my brain storing the information, placing it in a box marked come back to.

Sighing heavily, I dropped down, shifting until we were sitting side by side with our backs against the tub. Stretching my legs out in front of me, I took one of Riley's pale hands in mine, turning it over and running the pad of my thumb over her smooth skin. Looking at the side of her head, I said quietly, "Too soon?"

We hadn't planned this. It wasn't a subject we'd discussed in any detail, Riley always shut it down. We'd touched on it early on, more at my insistence than Ri's, and decided it was a conversation for the future. I knew why she was reluctant. I also knew why she was crying on our bathroom floor. And it had more to do with the past than the future.

Her head shook as she tucked her chin into her knees and closed her eyes.

I swallowed, chest burning. I couldn't even focus on what that stick meant for us right now. I had to figure out how to comfort her, but I knew how I felt and what I wanted. I wanted this baby.

All being said, I'd easily agreed to go along with whatever Riley wanted, to put it off indefinitely and wait until she was ready, but that stick changed things. I had no fucking idea what I'd do if she didn't feel the same. "Talk to me, Ri."

She just shook her head, internalizing her struggle.

Swallowing hard, I pushed the words out through layers of resistance. "You don't want it?"

Her head shot up instantly, face crumbling and watery eyes wide. "Of course I do," she said, and relief rushed through me. My fingers squeezed hers. "But... I'm scared."

Her small voice twisted at my insides. Reaching across, I wrapped my hands around her biceps and lifted, settling her over me, legs braced either side of mine. Using both hands, I swiped the matted hair from her damp face, curling it over her ears before framing her face with my hands. "Everything is going to be fine, baby. I promise."

Her head shifted in my hands, but I held firm, keeping her eyes on me.

With a despondent shrug, hands lifting up helplessly before landing on my chest, she said, "I don't know if I deserve it, not after..."

"You did nothing wrong last time, baby," I said, fierce determination in my words. "And you damn well deserve it, Ri, do you wanna know why? The fact that you feel this way, that you're worried you don't, proves how much you do. What happened before won't happen again, there's no reason to think that it will. I know you're scared, but whatever happens, Riley, I'll be here. Right here with you," I vowed emphatically, holding her watery gaze and refusing to let go. "Whatever comes our way, good or bad, we face it together, and we get through it together, you hear me?"

She pressed her lips together, sniffing as she nodded, those green eyes shining like emeralds through long spiky lashes. Her lips lifted the tiniest bit on one side, eyes wide. "I can't believe it. I've been taking birth control, never missed, I don't know how..."

"Doesn't matter," I said, reassuring her.

Eyes locked on mine, she inhaled a long breath, chest lifting with the motion. "Do you... are you... happy?" Her voice was tentative.

My face broke into a grin before I slammed my lips down on hers, hands angling her head for better access. The emotions I'd put to one side smashed into me at full force. Happy? Didn't even fucking come close. Easing back, lips still hovering over hers, I shifted to look at her. "Yeah... I'm really fucking happy, Ri," I breathed, wonder in my words.

Her lids fell, but her face broke into a wide smile.

My hand found her stomach between us, palm splaying across the still flat surface. Awe swept through me, right along with joy. Pure unadulterated fucking joy. My chest was struggling to contain it all. My baby was in there.

Our baby.

I might have been waiting for this for six years.

Voice gruff,

thick with emotion, I repeated, "I'm really fucking happy, Ri."

Her hand covered mine and she shook her head lightly. She was beaming.

"Me too," she breathed.

Fuck, I loved her.

THE END