

Super Sneak Peek Excerpt from TATE...

“Tate?”

Not the voice he’d expected, really. Because knowing Glo, she would have wanted to run in after him, help heal his wounds.

But big brother Reuben wasn’t the coddling type.

“Tate—”

Tate grabbed a towel and turned, holding up his hand. “Save it, bro. I don’t need your pity.”

“None here. Trust me—I’ve been there enough to know what’s going on in your gut. I nearly got Gilly killed, twice.”

“Yeah, but she’s here, marrying you tomorrow, so you must have done something right.” He ran the towel over his face.

Reuben walked over to the cupboard and grabbed a glass. “The only thing I did right was give myself permission to have a second chance.”

Tate gave a sad shake of his head. “Yeah, well, I tried that. And managed to get a girl killed.”

Reuben frowned as he handed Tate the glass.

“Vegas. Back when I was working security for a mob boss. Another slick idea of mine. I turned in my boss to the FBI, but not until they killed the woman I was dating to warn me off.”

Reuben leaned back against the counter, his arms folded. “How did I get so far out of your life that I never knew these things?”

Tate filled his glass with water. “It’s no big deal. I was a mess. I didn’t stick around long after my medical separation from the military. Dad sorta told me that if I wanted to be a hero, I needed to act like it.”

Reuben frowned. “Dad said that?”

“I might have come in late from the Bulldog, a little too much beer on my breath.”

Reuben gave him a nod. “It’s tough when the one we worship falls hard.”

“I didn’t worship Dad,” Tate said.

“I wasn’t talking about Dad.” Reuben raised an eyebrow. “The number one idol of the human race is ourselves. Or at least that’s what Gilly’s dad is always preaching from the pulpit. And he’s right.” He smirked. “It’s hard not to feel like you make your own tailwind when people are in the stands screaming your name, Twenty-Two.”

Tate opened his mouth. “I don’t—”

“Want to impress yourself? Prove to yourself that you’re not the scared kid who fell off a horse?”

“Yeah, well, *I* didn’t leave home to jump out of airplanes into infernos because of my pride.” Tate didn’t mean for that to come out quite so darkly.

But he didn’t expect Reuben to nod. “I admit, I was running from my own demons, my own broken places. Problem was that no amount of my own awesomeness could heal me. No matter how many fires I put out, I still came home to an angry Reuben.”

Tate finished off his water, set the glass on the counter. “So, how did you get from there to...well...” He glanced out the window to the family campfire. To Gilly.

And of course, looked at Glo, who had drawn up her knees, clasping her arms around them. She glanced at the house, as if feeling his gaze on her.

"I had to stop trying."

Tate looked at him. "What?"

"I know. It sounds crazy, but I had to stop trying so hard to prove that...well, that I was somebody worth loving, I guess. And just let Gilly—and God, too—love me."

Tate reached for one of the cupcakes on a plate on the counter.

"Touch that and you'll pull back a nub."

Tate glanced at his brother. Held up his hands. "Fine. Listen, I don't need to prove to anybody that...whatever. It's no big deal."

"It's the *only* deal, Tate. When you show up with nothing and discover that you're loved because of who you are—that's when you realize what it means to be a son of God. That's when you discover that you've inherited more than you could possibly imagine. It's pretty breathtaking." He grinned. "Sort of like free-falling, knowing that your chute is going to catch you."

He frowned at Reuben, but the door opened, and Gilly came in. "I'm checking on my cupcakes."

"All good here, honey," Reuben said and pulled her against him. But he looked back at Tate. "Just remember, bro. You're not the good news. Jesus is." He clamped him on the shoulder and guided Gilly back outside.

A son of God. Tate didn't know why those words settled inside him, rough-edged and itchy.

He'd never really seen himself as the son of anyone—sure, Orrin Marshall, but he was so very different from his father.

Different from his brothers.

He watched them out the window. All of them loved the ranch, knew how to throw a rope, were easy in the saddle, and sure, Ford had gone on to become a SEAL, but at the end of the day, he was a cowboy to his core.

Tate had hated the ranch.

No, he hated not measuring up.

As he watched, Ford got up and, after a glance at Scarlett, headed to the house.

Nice. Tag team brotherly counsel.

He was leaning against the counter, his arms folded when Ford entered...