

# LINE OF SCRIMMAGE by Desiree Holt

## EXCERPT

Erin stared at her friend as if she hadn't heard right.

"You want me to babysit some guy? Is that what you're asking me? Did I hear right?"

Ivy shook her head. "No. Not babysit. Use your skills to help someone who is incapacitated and needs assistance for the moment."

Erin scrubbed her face, wiping away fatigue as if that had made her hear wrong. After all, she had hardly arrived back in her apartment before Ivy showed up. Her suitcases weren't even unpacked yet. Two weeks on a luxury yacht playing personal trainer to a dozen rich women was a lot more stressful than it sounded. Her brain was probably asleep.

"I'm not sure that's what I'm hearing, so maybe you'd better tell me again."

Ivy took a sip of the tea Erin had fixed. "I'm just glad you're back. I was afraid I'd be out of luck. Honey, this is a win/win situation for everyone."

"Yeah?" Erin quirked an eyebrow. "How do you figure that?"

"You need a job and I need someone with your skills in training people's bodies. See? Win/win."

Erin took a swallow of her tea. She could certainly use a job. The two weeks at sea had paid well, but her reserve funds were low and not much stood between her and shit-out-of-luck. Who knew her job situation would be suddenly turned on its ear? Or that no place in the entire Greater Austin area was hiring a trainer either for a spa or a fitness center? Not even a plain old gym. How was that even possible? Her luck just sucked.

Her rent was due, she was nearly out of money, and she was facing the task of having to relocate. Everything just sucked. The offer to spend two weeks at sea with a bunch of women who wanted to exercise and tone every day had been a lifeline. It also got her out of Austin where it seemed every living person was talking about the opening of football season, the Mustangs, and the gridiron god, Jake Russell.

Sometimes, in the deepest dark of night, when she lay in bed, wondering how her life had taken such a sharp turn for the worse, images of that night together floated through her brain, tantalizing and torturing her. She'd been right to stop it before it got started. She just knew it. The pain she carried from the past was a constant reminder of that. But oh, lordy, how her traitorous body yearned for him. If he were here now, she knew she'd be tempted to throw caution to the winds. Then she'd just

regret the hell out of it afterward. For a moment, she was tempted to ask about him, but she clamped down on her mouth. That way was trouble.

“Come on,” Ivy coaxed. “We can help each other. You need a job and I have a situation.”

Uh-oh.