



## The Hunk Next Door

*Debra Webb , Regan Black*

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## **The Hunk Next Door** Debra Webb , Regan Black

In the season of hope, someone's out for blood. Police Chief Abigail Jensen is determined to protect her town -- and avoid falling too hard for Riley, the new guy next door. But deciding who to trust can be deadly, especially when he has deep secrets....

Agent Riley O'Brien's mission is clear when he joins the CIA's covert Specialist task force: protect a small-town cop from a terrorist, no matter what. Trading his identity for the undercover guise of a handyman is part of the plan...getting close to Abigail on a personal -- and passionate -- level isn't.

## **The Hunk Next Door Details**

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Author : Debra Webb , Regan Black

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## From Reader Review The Hunk Next Door for online ebook

### Susan says

Very good book with action and suspense from the very beginning. Abby is a police chief who spearheaded the capture of a drug shipment that was being used to finance a cell of terrorists. After making a public statement that she wouldn't put up with that kind of trouble in her town it comes to the attention of people high up that she's stirred up a hornet's nest. One of those people is the head of the CIA's Specialists group, who assigns Riley to go undercover to protect Abby and the town.

Riley is the first of the operatives to be assigned to a new type of mission. These are long term assignments with no known end date. He goes into this assignment knowing that he will be in Belclare for a very long time. He has a hard time getting close to Abby at the beginning because of all the work she's doing. Once he moves into the house next door it gets a bit easier. He doesn't expect the attraction that he feels for her.

Abby is fighting for the safety of her town. She has to worry about the threats she has been receiving from an unknown source, and also about what may happen during the town's Christmas festival. There are members of the town who are fighting against the safety measures she's trying to implement and others who blame her for all the trouble. One of the construction people who is working on the festival preparations seems to be constantly underfoot and she isn't sure whether she can trust him. She's also attracted to him, and she worries that it is distracting her from what she should be doing.

The suspense is constant from the very beginning. We know who the bad guy is from the start, as some of the story is told from his viewpoint. Even if it hadn't been revealed I would have suspected him, as I just found him kind of creepy and smarmy. The intensity of the attacks on the town and on Abby's peace of mind keeps escalating. I loved seeing how Riley worked to be there when Abby needed him. As the days went on Riley had to figure out how to protect Abby without giving away who he really was. In spite of the secrets, Riley and Abby made a great team. There are two confrontations at the end that are quite intense, and though I knew they would turn out the right way the suspense of how it was going to happen kept me riveted to the pages.

I loved Abby's strength of will when it came to doing her job. She wasn't going to just roll over and let the bad guys win. She has a good brain and the ability to figure things out. She starts out suspicious of Riley, but quickly comes to trust him, even though she doesn't understand why she does. She wavers a bit toward the end, but the trust does win out. I also loved Riley. He had grown up as an orphan but made a place for himself in the Specialist family. When he takes this mission, he finds that he likes the small town life and the sense of family that is there. He's surprised by the intensity of his growing feelings for Abby and feels badly about not being able to tell her the truth. I really liked seeing Abby realize that it was okay to lean on Riley for help and support, that she didn't have to do it all by herself. And I loved seeing Riley get a chance at the love and family he'd never had before.

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### Maureen Hubley says

Hope the next book in the series is as good.

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## Carmen says

*"You're a terrible flirt."*

*"So I've been told." He winked, opening the passenger door of his truck for her.*

*"No, I mean you're really bad at it."*

*"You want me to up my game?"*

Yes. No. *Uncertain, she pulled the door shut. When he slid into the driver's seat she said, "I don't want any games. I want you to be yourself."*

*"Easy enough." He stared at her for a moment that went on and on and she realized she was holding her breath.*

*"What you see is what you get, Abby."*

Of course, that is a huge lie.

Abby Jensen is Chief of Police in the small town of Belclare, Maryland. After busting up a huge drug shipment, she makes a public statement that quickly goes viral on YouTube declaring war on criminals in Belclare.

Unfortunately for her, there is a sleeper cell of terrorists there.

Fortunately for her, the government is putting together a sleeper cell of their own – a group of specialists who will be embedded, long-term and secretly, in various places around the country. Concerned that both Abby and her town will be facing some serious blowback from the video, Agent Riley O'Brien is assigned to move in next door to the Chief and become part of the town, posing as a handyman who is helping Belclare prepare for its huge Christmas village event.

Paranoid beyond belief, Abby initially mistrusts the new neighbor who befriends her, but after spending some time together things start to heat up between them...

...

I liked this book. I'm partial to easygoing, laid-back men who are slow to anger and Riley O'Brien fits this bill perfectly. I love how patient he is:

*She had no idea how good he was at the waiting game.*

I like how careful he is with Abby. I like how when Abby tells her something "bad" or "wrong" about herself, he brushes it off like it ain't no thang. This is exactly the type of man who makes me melt.

*"So come inside with me." His wide palms cruised up and down her back, his fingers sliding under the clasp of her bra. "I have cookies."*

He is offering some nookie and some cookie! LOL Completely approve of this.

...

I also liked Abby Jensen. She is tough as nails: a competent, take-charge, no-nonsense police chief. It takes a while to realize that she is vulnerable, too. A lot of people in the town blame her for the onslaught of terror and vandalism, and this really hurts her. Also, she feels like she has no real friends in the town. I really enjoyed this juxtaposition of hard and soft with her.

...

Then we have this trope of a man sent to guard and protect a woman who is unaware of his secret mission. A

very enjoyable trope, in my opinion, and the reader can always look forward to that shocking and dramatic moment when she learns the truth about what he *really* does. Good stuff, predictable but fun. It's always fun when someone has a secret identity!

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The intrigue is not A+, but it's not too shabby, either. There is an amazing scene about halfway through the novel in which Abby does some pretty awesome police work, and I enjoyed it.

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The sex was good, but it was not up to my very specific and high standards.

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Tl;dr – After reading a lot of trash coming out of Harlequin (I mean, trash even by romance novel standards), I was pleasantly surprised by this thoroughly entertaining little read. It wasn't perfect, but it was good. 4 out of 5 romance stars. Is it silly? Yes, of course, it's a romance novel. But if you can accept that, and move on...

P.S. The title is super-lame. Good thing I don't judge books by the title.

P.P.S. AND it takes place during Christmastime. So it was helping me get into the spirit.

THREE REAL STARS, FOUR ROMANCE STARS

Harlequin Intrigue November 2014

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## Harlequin Books says

Miniseries: The Specialists

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## Grammy 1 says

The talented Regan Black has been a favorite author of mine for many years. Writing alone, her paranormal and UF series have stood the test of time, and I still cannot wait to see more them. Now the team of Debra Webb and Regan Black's writings is creating a different genre, but no less exciting. This Dynamic Duo has successfully launched two exciting new series for Harlequin Intrigue, and I cannot say enough about them.

This breakout first in the Specialist Series called The Hunk Next Store had me sitting at the edge of my seat. We were introduced to what this series will be all about, as well as to the characters for this story. The straightforward writing needs no explanations. You are brought to a beautiful, untouched town nestled in Maryland, where the townsfolk learn that there is no longer any safety from crime and terrorism.

Our heroine, Abigail Jensen, is Belclare's Police Chief. Our hunk is Special Agent Riley Jensen, sent undercover to this town by Homeland Security. We also meet a wonderful array of townsfolk and the bad guy, Deke Maynard. The twists and turns in the story keep the reader interested and on edge as we follow the trail of clues with Abbey and Riley to thwart the enemy, all during the Christmas Holiday season for which this town is known.

The dimension of the characters and the storyline are appealing, the spark between the two is sizzling, and

the total package is 5 Star! Heart of a Hero will be out February 1st and I cannot wait to continue with this series.

Review by Gloria Lakritz

Sr Reviewer and Review Chair for the Paranormal Romance Guild

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### **Sam Spencer says**

The two prominent reasons people lie were aptly represented here.

- 1) To protect those we care about.
- 2) To further our own agendas.

In both cases it is a risk, the dishonesty might be found out and we stand to lose that which we value so much. Sometimes that risk proves worthwhile, and people surprise you by being more understanding than you give them credit for.

This book is a perfect mesh of all of the above.

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### **John W. says**

If readers like mystery, illegal drugs, kidnapping, suspense, arson, betrayal, secret government agencies, romance, intrigue, small town politics, terrorists, and organized crime, they will find all of the elements for Regan Black and Debra Webb's new book. "The Hunk Next Door – The Specialist" is truly a book readers should not just judge by the title of cover.

The quick pace of this mystery thriller introduces readers to the key protagonists, Police Chief Abigail Jensen and Special agent Riley O'Brien. Chief Jensen's a strong independent leader determined to keep her community safe She is not afraid to speak her mind and after giving a speech discussing her recent bust of drug shipment, Jensen ends up in the cross hairs of a terrorist cell. When Specialist Director Thomas Casey learns of the trouble in Belclare and Chief Abigail Jensen's life is in danger, he sends specialist agent Reily O'Brien on a long term undercover assignment with orders to protect her and find out who is threatening her.

Regan and Webb give readers the backstory of the agency and agent O'Brien and continue to expand O'Brien's character. They provide readers with Chief Jensen's back story and life in Belclare, Maryland. Readers meet all the support characters and their role in the fast moving romantic suspense story. The authors keep building on the plot and involve readers in the investigations of the many mysteries Chief Jensen is trying to solve.

Readers immediately learn the identity of the antagonist Deke Maynard and his plans to ruin Jensen and cause trouble in the community. They participate in the investigation and see how Jensen and O'Brien uncover clues and proof of what the terrorist group is planning.

The plot has several subplots and readers see changes of direction and even though they know who the bad guy is they never know what Jensen is going to do to stop him. In the midst of all the action, thrills, and suspense we see romance blossoming in Belclare, Maryland. Regan and Webb keep their readers on the edge of their seats and as deliver a great unpredictable ending to their story. The only way to see how all the elements in play in "The Hunk Next Door – The Specialist" is to read the story. I recommend the great read and give a 5 star ranking.

## **Toni says**

In *The Hunk Next Door*, Debra Webb and Regan Black launch their new Specialists series. Each Specialist agrees to take on a lifetime assignment to protect a city or individual from long-term threat. Not surprisingly they manage to fall in love with the town, the people, and the person they are primarily protecting.

Riley O'Brian takes his new assignment very seriously. Based just outside Baltimore, Maryland, he is sent to protect the local Police Chief Abigail Jensen from an unknown terrorist cell. Abby initially looks at all newcomers with suspicion. Bad things are happening in her town and she is responsible for protecting everyone. Soon she begins to rely on his observations and steadying presence. Together they make an amazing team and manage to defeat the immediate threat. While I would have liked a little more insight into the bad guy's motivations, the suspense is great and comes to a well-reasoned conclusion. I can't wait to see how the series shapes up from here.

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## **Jo Ann Reinhold says**

Regan Black and Debra Webb blend their talents to create a new series for their readers. *The Hunk Next Door* is the first in this series and I hope to see much more.

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## **Claudia says**

Really enjoyed this one!

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## **Paula Legate says**

This was a really good book, with action, suspense, and romance.

Abby is police chief for her small town. She is good at her job, and worked hard to get where she is. She made a stand that she would not tolerate drug shipments in her town. When she did, she made herself, and her town a target for some really ugly people. Being police chief she is also lonely. She does not date. she never wants to jeopardize her job. On the other hand she would like someone to notice she is a lady, and not just see the badge that she wears.

The FBI sent Riley in undercover to protect Abby. Not sure how they pulled it off, but the house next door was up for rent, so Riley moved in. Riley was expecting this to be just another job. He didn't expect to be attracted to Abby. At the same time Abby was cautious at first of Riley. Being in law enforcement trust does not come easy. She did like the way he noticed her as a lady, and not a cop.

The story has accidents, bombs, and team work. The suspense was good. We knew early on, who was behind the attacks, but still wondered how it would all play out in the end. I love a good police story, and this one did not disappoint.

## Paula says

Abby is the police chief in the small town of Belclare, Maryland. After making a major drug bust, she becomes the target of a sleeper terrorist cell operating in her small town. Riley is an undercover agent sent to Belclare to protect the pretty police chief unbeknownst to her. He's working undercover as a carpenter helping the town decorate and set up for their annual Christmas Village. He rents the house next door to Abby and as the two get to know one another Abby suspects there is much more to the handsome handyman than meets the eye.

This was an enjoyable story. Riley and Abby made a great pair who worked well together and they had terrific chemistry. Abby was a very strong heroine who didn't back down from the threats coming her way but faced them head-on. She wasn't going to let anything happen to her town or its citizens. Riley was a fantastic hero, trying to keep to the sidelines as not to give away his true purpose there, but still always there right when Abby needed him. Well-paced story that had some very intense moments of suspense. Very entertaining.

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## Debbie Heaton says

In Webb and Regan's romantic suspense novel, CIA covert Specialist Riley O'Brien is on a mission to protect police Chief Abigail Jensen from a terrorist. Assuming the identity of a handyman and occupying the house next to hers, Riley easily slips into his new role and finds himself not just fighting terrorists, but passion as well.

A fast-paced thrilling first installment to the spinoff series The Specialists: Heroes Next Door.

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## Harlequin Books says

"A charismatic hero and playful dialogue make this story a fast read" (RT Book Reviews).

Miniseries: The Specialists

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## Larena says

Contemporary, Romantic Suspense

Belclare, Maryland

While the town is celebrating the season of hope it seems someone isn't enjoying the season and is out for blood. Abigail Jensen is the police chief and she is determined to keep her town safe from harm. She is also

trying to avoid falling too hard for the new guy next door, Riley. Abigail has to decide who she can trust because trusting the wrong person, especially someone with deep secrets, can be deadly.

Riley O'Brien is an agent with the CIA's covert Specialist task force and he is on a mission. He needs to protect a small-town cop from a terrorist. No matter what. He has traded his identity for an undercover guise. Riley is a handyman which is all part of the plan. What isn't part of the plan is getting too close to Abigail on both a personal and passionate level.

This is a great romantic suspense story that starts out fast and doesn't stop until the very end. The characters are complex and interesting and make for a story that is hard to put down. As the clues and story unfold it makes for a story that pulls readers in and they try to figure out just what everyone's angle is and who can be trusted. The reader never knows what will happen next and how everything will turn out. This is the start of a spin off series that will have readers that haven't read the original series wanting to read that and also want to read the other books in this series. This is a different romantic suspense series that makes for a read that is hard to forget even when the reader is done with the book.

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