



Run the Risk (Love Undercover (Foster) series Book 1)

By Lori Foster

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When Detective Logan Riske goes undercover to find Pepper Yates, a potential link to his best friend's unsolved murder, he vows to gain her cooperation by any means necessary. But the elusive beauty is more suspicious—and in far more danger—than he expected. And the last thing Logan needs is to start caring for her....

Pepper has spent years dodging the corrupt club owner who will stop at nothing to keep her silenced. She can trust no one, not even the handsome new "construction worker" who's moved in next door. The heat between them is undeniable. But will surrendering to passion bring her the safety she so desires—or will her feelings for Logan draw them both into a killer's crosshairs?

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Editorial Review

Review

"A red-hot page-turner!"

--#1 New York Times bestselling author Kresley Cole on When You Dare

"Foster has an amazing ability to capture a man's emotions and lust."

-Publishers Weekly on A Perfect Storm

"Steamy, edgy, and taut."

-Library Journal on When You Dare

"The fast-paced thriller keeps these well-developed characters moving...Foster's series will continue to garner fans with this exciting installment."

-Publishers Weekly on Trace of Fever

About the Author

Lori Foster is a New York Times and USA TODAY bestselling author with books from a variety of publishers, including Berkley/Jove, Kensington, St. Martin's, Harlequin and Silhouette. Lori has been a recipient of the prestigious RT Book Reviews Career Achievement Award for Series Romantic Fantasy, and for Contemporary Romance. She's had top-selling books for Amazon, Waldenbooks and the BGI Group. For more about Lori, visit her Web site at www.lorifoster.com.

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Pepper Yates felt the intense scrutiny stroking over her as she made her way to her apartment building. She'd been feeling it for over two weeks now, ever since her new neighbor had moved in, but she'd never get used to it.

Dangerous anticipation crawled up her spine.

She didn't acknowledge the man leaning over his balcony, muscular arms folded along the railing, shirtless, smiling—tracking her every move.

She didn't, in any way, encourage him. He was out of her league in a big way. His attention made her tense, more so with every incident.

Uncertainty gave her a faltering step, causing her cheap canvas slip-on sneakers to make an obnoxious shuffling sound. Her long skirt kicked around her shins. Her chest constricted.

Keeping her head down, her paper bags of groceries held securely in her arms, she pretended not to notice him.

She should win an Oscar for her performance, because seriously, who wouldn't notice him? If she had to guess, she'd say women came to him easily. He had that type of raw, cocky presence. The kind of presence that left her on edge.

It probably ate him up that she ignored him. That was the only explanation for his continued attention. But what else could she do?

The hot August sun beat down on her head. She would dearly love a cool swim right about now. But not with him around.

Actually...not ever.

It seemed her carefree days of swimming were well behind her. It made her sad to think of all that had been lost, all that she'd had to forfeit, in the name of survival.

But thanks to her brother, she had survived, she reminded herself. And that's what mattered most.

It was also the number one reason she couldn't be drawn in by the new neighbor's lure.

He should have a big *D* for *danger* on his oft-naked chest.

As she hastened her steps in, Pepper dropped her head so far that her chin nearly touched her chest.

Of course he called out to her. He always called out to her. It made no sense, but her rebuffs hadn't dissuaded him at all.

The man had a rock-solid ego.

"Evening, Ms. Meeks."

When she'd taken the alias, it hadn't been a big deal, because she wasn't a big deal. Few ever spoke to her. None ever called out to her.

But he did.

She drew a fortifying breath, peeked up at him and gave a subdued nod. "Evening."

He disappeared off the balcony and she just *knew* he was coming inside to corral her in the narrow hallway.

Why wouldn't he leave her alone?

The apartment building was...unpleasant. Peeling paint from the walls, mold in the corners, carpet with stains she didn't want to investigate too closely.

She knew why she was there.

Why was he?

Dreading every foot that brought her closer to him, she went up the squeaking steps to her second-floor

apartment, and...there he was.

Knowing he waited for her, she stalled.

He lounged back against his door, which was right next to hers, arms crossed over his bare chest, his brown hair disheveled, five o'clock shadow on his jaw. He wore only wrinkled khaki shorts that hung low on his lean hips—and he took her breath away.

Seeing him again had the same impact it'd had the first time she'd laid eyes on him. He was so sinfully appealing that it staggered her senses.

What did he want?

Not the usual, not with how he looked, and how...she looked. So then, why did he so relentlessly pursue her?

The long walk to the grocery and back again—something she usually enjoyed—left her hot, damp with perspiration and in no mood for playing games.

At least, not these games.

She had to avoid his gaze or—humiliating thought—he just might see everything she felt, everything she thought.

About him. About the incredible body that he insisted on displaying.

And how she'd like to rub *her* body all over his...

"Hey."

Before she could figure out a way to dodge him, he pushed away from the wall, his smile welcoming, his dark eyes warm. She swallowed her sigh. "Hello."

"Here, let me help you with that."

Like she couldn't handle a few bags of groceries? *Why* was he bothering her like this? Flustered, talking too fast, Pepper said, "That's okay, really. I've got—"

He scooped the bags away from her and gestured for her to precede him to her apartment.

"—it." Left empty-armed and unnerved, she kept her shoulders slumped and did her best to bank her reaction to him. "really, Mr. Stark, I don't—"

"We're neighbors, so call me Logan."

She didn't want to call him anything and tried to convey that with a show of umbrage. "Really, *Mr. Stark*, I don't need any help."

His grin widened. Teasing. Flirting. "You are so prickly."

How could he make that sound like a compliment?

"I am not—"

He snatched her keys from her, too, and short of grabbing for them, which would only make her look foolish, she had no choice but to follow him.

"—prickly," she muttered—probably in a really prickly way. While he unlocked her door, she stared at his broad back. He was tanned, his sleek skin almost as damp as her own.

Her fingers twitched with the need to touch him, to coast her palms over his heated skin and taut muscles.

He turned toward her, and she got the up close and personal view of his chest. It shocked her, but she noticed his small brown nipples, how soft chest hair half hid them...

"If not prickly, then what?"

She glanced up, saw he'd been watching her as she studied him, and wanted to sink into the floor. Her face went hot, her body hotter—but probably not for the reasons he assumed.

"I'm *private*" Although, the way she'd just looked at him, sort of eye-raping him—*oh, God*—it was no wonder he didn't understand that.

Every single time he got within her view, she visually molested him. His fault in part, because he always had so much skin on display; she wasn't used to anyone like him, anyone who looked as good as he did.

A touch to her chin brought up her face and nearly stopped her heart. "Saying hi to a neighbor somehow intrudes on your privacy?"

No, no, no. He couldn't *touch* her. She couldn't *let* him touch her. Time to escape.

Ducking around him, Pepper swung the door open, stepped in fast ahead of him, then turned to block his way. "I barely know you."

"I'm trying to remedy that, right?" He looked into her apartment with curiosity and surprise. One brow lifted at the mess she knew he saw.

So she wasn't ubertidy. So she was actually a slob. Maybe that would repel him.

"I keep to myself." She awkwardly snatched back her groceries and straightened her spine. "Others should do the same."

"Yeah, maybe I could." Giving up his scrutiny of her cluttered living space, he leaned in her door frame—all six-feet-plus of him. His broad shoulders kept her from closing the door.

Patient, silent, he waited for her to meet his gaze.

Girding herself, Pepper looked up—and felt caressed by his suggestive, intimate attention. She cleared her throat and prompted him with, "You could...what?"

"Maybe stop chasing your skirt." His voice dropped. "If you weren't so damn cute."

Shock took her back a step.

Cute? He must be deranged, because no way was he desperate. Why would he say such an absurd thing? His expression softened. "You don't think you're cute?"

The laugh strangled in her throat, and her automatic "No" sounded like a croak.

Cute? Hardly. She kept her dull blond hair pulled back in a low, unflattering ponytail at the nape of her neck, showcasing a face devoid of even the most subtle makeup. She wore clothes any respectable grandmother would disdain, with shoes so ugly they made her sad when she stepped into them.

She slumped when she walked, mumbled when she talked. Or at least, she remembered to mumble when a certain neighbor didn't push her past the breaking point.

"Well, I think you are," he said, still watching her, his tone almost...pitying.

How dare he feel sorry for her?

Pride rose to the forefront, returning her backbone.

"Is that a joke, Mr. Stark?"

Shifting his stance, he leaned in and—while she held her breath—said with distinct insistence, "Call me Logan."

Oh, good Lord. He was close enough that she felt his warm, moist breath and could see the thick, dark lashes on his eyes.

Bedroom eyes.

Her temperature spiked. "Oh, umm." Those sexy lips lifted into a satisfied grin. "And I'll call you.?"

When Pepper only stared at him, a little dazed, his grin twitched. And man, oh, man, she wanted to kiss that mouth of his.

Kiss it and...other things.

Catching herself, Pepper shook her head and tried to ease the door shut. "Goodbye, Mr. Stark."

His big hand flattened on the door near her shoulder. "Come on, throw me a bone here." Without much effort, he held the door open. "How will it hurt if I have your name?"

What to do, what to do?

He was so pushy that her continued refusal looked absurd.

Grudgingly, she said, "Sue."

Now more amused, he admitted, "I know."

"Beg pardon?"

"You manage the building, so I already saw your name on my rental agreement." He tweaked her chin again. "But I wanted to hear you say it anyway."

Her huff of affront did nothing to get him out of her doorway.

"So."...

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Maria Kraus:

Playing with family in a park, coming to see the ocean world or hanging out with friends is thing that usually you have done when you have spare time, then why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition associated with. Even you love Run the Risk (Love Undercover (Foster) series Book 1), you are able to enjoy both. It is fine combination right, you still want to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh can happen its mind hangout people. What? Still don't obtain it, oh come on its named reading friends.

Marni Elliott:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray you actually, why because this Run the Risk (Love Undercover (Foster) series Book 1) reserve written by well-known writer we are excited for well how to make book which can be understand by anyone who all read the book. Written inside good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and producing skill only for eliminate your own hunger then you still skepticism Run the Risk (Love Undercover (Foster) series Book 1) as good book not simply by the cover but also with the content. This is one reserve that can break don't determine book by its handle, so do you still needing another sixth sense to pick this!? Oh come on your reading sixth sense already said so why you have to listening to a different sixth sense.

Jose Shepard:

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