



## Fatal Jeopardy (The Fatal Series Book 7)

By Marie Force

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With lines between personal and professional blurring in this emotionally charged, deeply personal case, Sam is relying on Nick more than ever for support. But when suspicious images from the night in question appear on social media, Sam begins to wonder if her niece is telling her everything she knows about what really happened. And when Nick questions her tactics—and her ethics—as she races against the clock, Sam will need to decide how far she's willing to go to prove Brooke is a victim, not a murderer.

*Book 7 of the Fatal series from New York Times bestselling author Marie Force*

95,000 words

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### Editorial Review

#### About the Author

\*\*\*Start reading Marie's New York Times Bestselling Gansett Island Series today with Maid for Love, free on Amazon. \*\*\*

**Marie Force** is the *New York Times* bestselling author of more than 50 contemporary romances, including the Gansett Island Series, which has sold more than 2.3 million books, and the Fatal Series from Harlequin Books, which has sold more than 1.2 million books. In addition, she is the author of the Green Mountain Series as well as the erotic romance Quantum Series, written under the slightly modified name of M.S. Force. All together, her books have sold more than 5 million copies worldwide!

Her goals in life are simple--to finish raising two happy, healthy, productive young adults, to keep writing books for as long as she possibly can and to never be on a flight that makes the news.

Join Marie's mailing list on her website at [marieforce.com](http://marieforce.com) for news about new books and upcoming appearances in your area. Follow her on Facebook at [Facebook.com/MarieForceAuthor](https://www.facebook.com/MarieForceAuthor), on Twitter @marieforce and on Instagram at [instagram.com/marieforceauthor/](https://www.instagram.com/marieforceauthor/). Contact Marie at [marie@marieforce.com](mailto:marie@marieforce.com).

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The game whizzed by so quickly Sam could barely keep up. Next to her, Scotty bounced with excitement as they watched Nick fly around on the ice with skill and stamina that astounded her. Although she shouldn't be surprised he was so good. Not only had he played hockey for years when he was younger but he regularly demonstrated his stamina in other important ways.

Chuckling at her own joke, Sam tried to keep her eyes on his white helmet and green jersey with number 22 on the back. With the campaign over and the election won, he had time now to rejoin the men's league he'd played in before his life took an unexpected turn almost a year ago.

That's when his best friend and boss, Senator John O'Connor, had been murdered. From that awful tragedy had come two interesting things—their relationship and his ascendancy into the Senate, where he now held the seat from Virginia in his own right after a resounding win in the election.

"He's so good," Scotty said, dazzled by Nick's skill on the ice. "I'll never be that good."

Sam hooked her arm around the twelve-year-old she and Nick were adopting out of state custody in Virginia and brought him close enough to drop a kiss on the top of his head. "Sure you will. Keep working hard and do what Nick tells you, and you'll be up to speed in no time."

"I don't know," Scotty said hesitantly, his eyes fixed on Nick. "All the other kids are way better than me."

That's because they'd been skating and playing hockey for as long as they could walk, while Scotty had been well cared for but without the frills and extras most kids took for granted. "I have faith in you, and in Nick. If you guys keep practicing as much as you have been lately, you'll catch up."

Nick had spared no expense in outfitting Scotty with top-of-the-line hockey skates and all the required

protective equipment. Sam had joked that the hockey bag was bigger than the kid, but Nick had assured her it was no bigger than anyone else's. Hockey, she was learning, took a tremendous amount of time, equipment and money—not to mention the warmest coat she owned whenever she ventured into the ice rink.

"I hope you're right," Scotty said.

"I'm always right."

That drew an expected snort of laughter from the boy. "And totally full of yourself."

Sam tightened her arm around him into a headlock that made him laugh even harder.

They froze when Nick was checked—hard—into the boards and went down in a boneless pile on the ice.

Sam gasped and would've left the stands to get closer to him, but Scotty held her back.

"Don't. He wouldn't want you to make a thing of it in front of the guys."

When had he gotten so wise about such things? With her eyes riveted to the ice, she waited breathlessly for any sign of movement from her husband. All she could think about was her dad and the egregious gunshot injury he'd suffered nearly three years ago, which had left him a quadriplegic.

The coach and several other players huddled around Nick, making it impossible for Sam to see what was happening. One of the other wives sent her a sympathetic glance that set her nerves even further on edge. "Come on, come on," she whispered. "Get up."

Scotty's hand curled around her arm, and Sam wasn't sure if he was giving comfort or taking it.

After what seemed like an hour had passed, the other players and coaches moved back and one of them helped Nick to his feet. Everyone in the stands applauded as he made his way—slowly—to the bench. It was killing her not to know what he'd hurt or whether it was serious, but at least she could breathe again watching him glide over the ice with coaches on either side of him.

He was moving, and that's what mattered.

Sam blew out a deep breath. "Well, that was fun. When can we do this again?"

"Don't be such a worrywart, Sam. Guys get banged up playing hockey. We don't want to be treated like babies."

"Is that right?"

"Nick will probably be mad that he got checked out of the game, so I wouldn't say anything about it if I were you."

"Now I'm taking marriage advice from a twelve-yearold?"

"Soon-to-be thirteen-year-old," he replied with the engaging grin she and Nick had loved from the start.

"Ahhh, so I've heard. I suppose I have to get a cake or something, huh?"

He rolled his eyes at her. "Mrs. L got me an ice cream cake every year," he said of his former guardian at the state home. "That's my favorite."

"I can't compete with Mrs. L. I'm sure to mess this up in some important way. You know that, right?"

"You don't have to compete with anyone. You and Nick have given me everything. I don't need an ice cream cake."

The kid was too damned much. Sam put both arms around him. Her usual rules of public displays of affection absolutely did not apply to the son she loved beyond reason. "You've given us so much more than we could ever give you."

"Doubtful," he said in the dry tone she'd come to anticipate.

Sam kept an arm around him until the game came to an end and she could go check on Nick—without making a fuss, of course. She wouldn't want to be accused of hovering or any other unsavory "girl" thing.

They waited for him outside the locker room with several of the other spouses and family members. He was one of the last to come out, his hair damp with sweat, his face red from exertion and pinched with pain. It was all she could do not to run to him, but she heeded Scotty's advice and hung back until he joined them.

"Awesome game," Scotty said, beaming up at Nick. "You're so good! You've never skated like that when we practice."

His smile more of a grimace, Nick mussed Scotty's hair. "Because that's about you, not me." He glanced at Sam, who could tell with one look he was in pain and trying hard to hide it from them. "Who's up for pizza?"

"Me!" Scotty said. "But can I get a hot chocolate first?"

"Sure, you can." Sam handed him a five-dollar bill and watched him run toward the concession stand. A couple of months ago he never would've asked them for anything. They'd been working on that, trying to get him to act like other kids who were constantly asking their parents for money and other things. Scotty would never be like other kids, but Sam took the request for hot chocolate as a good sign that he was beginning to get the message that what was theirs was also his.

She glanced up at Nick. "What'd you hurt?"

"Smacked the rib I broke last winter and got the wind knocked out of me."

Sam winced. "The same rib that took forever to heal?"

"That'd be the one."

"We should hit the ER on the way home."

"No need. It's just a bruise."

Sam gave him her best cop stare. "What would you say if it were me telling you it was 'just a bruise'?"

To his credit, he had the good sense to squirm under her glare. "I, um..."

"We'll drop Scotty at Dad and Celia's on the way to the ER."

"After the pizza. I'm starving."

Scotty rejoined them, carrying a steaming cup of hot chocolate with a huge dollop of whipped cream on top. "Looks like someone is having dessert before dinner," Sam said.

Scotty handed over the change without being prompted. "Don't worry. I'll still eat a ton of pizza." With his free hand, he reached for Nick's hockey bag and started toward the door, the bag rolling behind him. Over his shoulder, he said, "I'll get this, but only cuz you're injured."

"Thanks, buddy." Leaning in close to Sam, Nick said,

"I make him take care of and carry his own equipment. Never too soon to learn that lesson."

As they made their way through the crowded rink, Sam noticed people watching them with a mix of curiosity and envy. The curiosity stemmed from the highprofile lives they led. The envy came from the women, who took extra-long looks at Nick. He was even hotter than usual with his cheeks red from the cold and the workout and his hair mussed from the helmet.

Feeling possessive of what was hers, Sam curled her hand around his arm, and then smiled with satisfaction when he raised his arm, put it around her and brought her in tight against his uninjured side. She knew a rare moment of complete contentment with her husband's arm around her, their son walking in front of them and a full week off to spend together before they confronted the looming reality of her dad's surgery.

*Let them all look*, she thought as a group of women stopped talking to watch him go by, one of them actually having the nerve to lick her lips. *He's all mine*. The funny thing was, if you could call it funny, he didn't even notice the women checking him out. His gaze was fixed firmly on Scotty, watching over the boy as always.

Snuggled up to him, Sam could tell he was favoring his left side, which meant he was probably more injured than he was letting on. She withdrew her phone from her jacket pocket, looked for their friend Harry's phone number in her contacts and put through the call before Nick noticed.

"Hi there," Sam said when Harry answered. "Am I getting you at a bad time?"

"Not at all. What's up?"

"Your buddy Nick took a hard hit to the left side during a hockey game just now, in the same neighborhood as the earlier rib fracture. I was wondering if you might be able to meet us at the ER in about ninety minutes or so."

"Why the delay?"

"I'm told I have to feed him first."

Nick scowled playfully down at her, but she could see the pain reflected in his hazel eyes.

"Tell him to be careful," Harry said. "I doubt he wants to go through another collapsed lung."

"No chance of that," Nick said, speaking toward the phone so Harry could hear him.

"See you in an hour and a half," Harry said.

"Thanks, Harry."

"No problem. You two are enough on your own to keep me in business."

"Hardy har-har." Harry was still laughing when she closed the phone and stashed it in her pocket. "Always a comedian, that one."

When they reached Nick's black BMW, he held the passenger door for her.

"No way, buster. You're not driving. Get in."

"I'll remember this the next time you have blood streaming down your face and tell me you're fine and don't need a doctor." This was said as he moved gingerly into the car.

Scotty snorted behind his hand and got into the backseat after stashing Nick's hockey bag and stick in the trunk.

"I heard that," Sam said to Scotty when she got into the driver's seat. She loved driving Nick's car. It was like a vacation from her basic, boring department car. When she punched the accelerator in his car, things happened.

They went for pizza at the same place Nick had taken her when they first got together during the O'Connor investigation. As soon as they were seated, he reached for her hand under the table and winked at her, reminding her of the night they'd held hands under the cover of the tablecloth when their relationship was still the best-kept secret in Washington.

Back then, being seen holding hands with him in public would've put her career in jeopardy. Now she could touch him and kiss him and sleep with him and live with him and be with him any time she wanted. How far they'd come in eleven months. He glanced at her, and she knew he was also thinking of the first time they'd come here together and how much had changed since then.

He gave her hand a squeeze that had her leaning her head on his shoulder, proud to make a public declaration of her love for him—as long as there were no cops in sight. Her PDA rules when it came to her colleagues were still quite stringent.

After Scotty and Nick polished off a large and a small pizza while Sam stuck to salad, they dropped Scotty at her dad's house, three doors down from their place on Ninth Street.

"We're apt to be a while at the ER," Sam said, "so we'll see you in the morning. Okay?"

"That's fine," Scotty said. "Abby and Ethan are sleeping over too. We'll have fun."

"Enjoy the cousin time, buddy," Nick said.

"Hope your ribs are okay, Nick. Will you guys text me and let me know what Harry says?"

"We sure will," Nick said. "It's nothing like the last time, so nothing to worry about."

"Okay."

Sam watched Scotty scamper up the ramp and into Skip and Celia's house, where he was a daily visitor. Scotty and her dad had become fast friends and could talk for hours about everything and nothing. Sam loved watching the two of them together, and she adored Scotty even more for making Skip an important part of his new life.

"The boy is becoming very comfortable in his new world," Nick said as Sam pulled away from the curb and headed for the George Washington University Hospital on 23rd Street, where she was a frequent flyer.

"I was just thinking the same thing as I watched him go busting into Skip's place like he owns the joint."

"I love that."

"So do I," Sam said. "What's the latest from Andy on the adoption? I'll be happy when it's signed, sealed and delivered."

"I will too. I expect to talk to him early this week about a few things, and that's number one on my list."

"He's been a huge help to Gonzo on the custody situation with Alex. I can't believe that's going to court on Thanksgiving week, of all times. I sure hope it goes his way. I don't even want to think about the alternative."

"I'm sure it'll be fine," Nick said. "The fact that he's had custody all this time has to count for something."

"I hope so." Baby Alex had come into Detective Tommy "Gonzo" Gonzales's life last winter when a woman from Gonzo's past let him know he'd fathered a child. Now the child's mother was back in the picture, her drug problem rehabbed and her scumbag boyfriend out of the picture. Sam would never let on to Gonzo that she was worried about the baby's mom getting custody after all the effort she'd put into changing her life.

At the hospital's Emergency entrance, Nick insisted he was capable of walking in with her and didn't need to be dropped off.

"I'm going to remember all of this the next time I'm the one who's injured. You're a terrible patient."

"Like you have any room to talk about being a terrible patient," he said with a scoff. "I'm totally fine. You're totally overreacting, and this is me humoring you. You might want to try it sometime. It's really good for marital tranquility."

"If you weren't already injured I might be tempted to punch you for using the H word. No one *humors* me."

"If that's what you want to believe, my love, have at it."



## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Dennis Boone:**

Book is to be different for every grade. Book for children until eventually adult are different content. As we know that book is very important normally. The book Fatal Jeopardy (The Fatal Series Book 7) had been making you to know about other information and of course you can take more information. It is extremely advantages for you. The e-book Fatal Jeopardy (The Fatal Series Book 7) is not only giving you considerably more new information but also for being your friend when you experience bored. You can spend your own personal spend time to read your guide. Try to make relationship with the book Fatal Jeopardy (The Fatal Series Book 7). You never truly feel lose out for everything in the event you read some books.

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#### **William Marsh:**

This Fatal Jeopardy (The Fatal Series Book 7) is great book for you because the content that is full of information for you who all always deal with world and possess to make decision every minute. This particular book reveal it information accurately using great arrange word or we can say no rambling sentences included. So if you are read this hurriedly you can have whole info in it. Doesn't mean it only provides straight forward sentences but hard core information with beautiful delivering sentences. Having Fatal Jeopardy (The Fatal Series Book 7) in your hand like finding the world in your arm, details in it is not ridiculous one particular. We can say that no e-book that offer you world within ten or fifteen minute right but this publication already do that. So , this can be good reading book. Hello Mr. and Mrs. hectic do you still doubt that?

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