



## Hot Zone

*Catherine Mann*

Download now

Read Online →

# Hot Zone

*Catherine Mann*

## Hot Zone Catherine Mann

"Catherine Mann delivers an emotional and action-packed story that leaves you wanting more." -- Sherrilyn Kenyon, #1 New York Times Bestselling Author

HE'LL TAKE ANY MISSION, THE RISKIER THE BETTER...

The haunted eyes of pararescueman Hugh Franco should have been her first clue that deep pain roiled beneath the surface. But if Amelia couldn't see the damage, how could she be expected to know he'd break her heart?

SHE'LL PROVE TO BE HIS BIGGEST RISK YET...

Amelia Bailey's not the kind of girl who usually needs rescuing...but there are anything but usual circumstances.

"A powerful, passionate read not to be missed!" -- Lori Foster, New York Times Bestselling Author of When You Dare

USA Today bestselling author Catherine Mann delivers another hero from the Air Force's celebrated Pararescue Jumpers-"The PJs"- an ultra-elite force who put themselves at extreme risk in the most dangerous emergencies so that others may live. A sizzling thrill-ride of action and attraction, Hot Zone will leave your pulse pounding.

## Hot Zone Details

Date : Published December 1st 2011 by Sourcebooks Casablanca

ISBN : 9781402244988

Author : Catherine Mann

Format : Paperback 316 pages

Genre : Romance, Romantic Suspense, War, Military Fiction, Suspense, Contemporary, Contemporary  
Romance, Military Romance

 [Download Hot Zone ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Hot Zone ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Hot Zone Catherine Mann**

---

## From Reader Review Hot Zone for online ebook

### MsRomanticReads says

Another fantastic read in the Elite Force series. If you love a hot hero in camouflage, honorable to the core, heart-thumping, nail-biting suspense and a kick-butt heroine then you'll want to read this series. It's seriously addictive.

---

### Saly says

#### Rating 3.5

This book is the second in the Elite Force series about pararescuemen and this time we have Master Sergeant Hugh Franco overcoming his demons.

Hugh loves his job and taking risks because it is all he has got left or has the emotional aptitude for. Five years ago due to no-one's fault he lost his wife and little girl and since then he's perfected having casual relationships and giving it all to his job. His current job, working earthquake rescue in the Bahamas.

County prosecutor Amelia Bailey is buried alive literally in an earthquake, under the rubble of what was her hotel, though she is scared she is determined to hang on and get help for her newly adopted nephew Joshua. She has no idea how long she has been buried or what happened to her brother and sister-in-law who she came to help. Her prayers are answered when Hugh finds her and assures her that help is coming, but she tells him that no matter what happens, to save her nephew.

For Hugh knowing that a kid's life hangs in the balance is a nightmare, he hasn't been near a child since the death of his child and this tragedy makes him wonder about the last moments of his family, but despite not wanting to be there or believing that her nephew is not fine, he talks to Amelia to keep her sane and their conversation becomes kind of personal.

Amelia vents about her divorce and cheating ex and Hugh finds himself recounting how he first met his wife when they were kids, they talk in jest about getting it on once they are rescued, which they are and instead of letting them go, Hugh finds himself making sure they are safe.

On the other hand we have a secondary storyline with Amelia's brother Aiden, a surgeon and his wife, a nurse. We learn that both Amelia and Aiden had a father who left scars due to his perversions, more on Aiden than Amelia, which make Aiden scared to be a parent but what he doesn't know is that his wife Lisabeth is pregnant and scared.

Things go wrong when Hugh visits Amelia and ends up having sex with her in a closet and to his shock she walks out on him even before he can pull up his pants. A scream makes him run to the rescue and find, Amelia, Joshua and himself in the middle of a child smuggling ring.

The book goes on non-stop without a break, from the rescue, to the brief hospital stay, to finding themselves stranded in the middle of nowhere in a country still dealing with aftershocks, looter and an unknown organization after them and no communication tools. Hugh has to deal with being near a baby and Amelia and Amelia finds herself dealing with things she never thought she would for Joshua.

I enjoyed the book quite a bit, Hugh was a great hero, wounded, smart, resourceful and surprisingly more in touch with his emotions than Amelia.

I also enjoyed reading about their three-time divorced leader Major Liam and hope we get to read about him in the future.

Catherine Mann sure knows how to write a military romance novel.

*ARC received through Netgalley.*

---

### **Nadine says**

This one was too unrealistic for me. Yes, I know it's a work of fiction, but what makes a contemporary story really good is finding some plausibility to it. Instead this story was one adrenaline rush after another. The book starts us off with rescuing the heroine and her nephew after a natural disaster struck their location. The heroine, Amelia, quickly bonds with Hugh, her rescuer during the hours long rescue mission. Okay, sounds good so far. After her rescue, Hugh feels drawn to her and continues to check up on her in the makeshift hospital. Soon after however, Amelia and her toddler nephew are abducted. Hugh witnesses this just in time to jump on the back of the moving van and work his way in. From there the action keeps going from overtaking the abductors, stumbling upon a black market baby ring, fleeing for their lives and surviving snake bites and after shocks, all with a toddler in tow.

It actually might not have been too bad of a story IF we could have stuck to the main characters. But the constant viewpoints of side characters threw off and interrupted the storyline. I don't see the point in showing us a sex scene between Amelia's brother and his wife back in the main part of the earthquake zone working through their marital issues while Amelia and their son are in the jungle fighting to stay alive. Nor was there any point in showing us Hugh's team leader lusting after a search and rescue worker. Neither of those things helped move the story along.

Overall, there were too many research faux pas and too much unnecessary filler.

---

### **Nikki says**

4.5 stars.

Catherine Mann is definitely at the top of her craft in writing military romantic suspense. This was perfectly executed, extremely well-written, exciting and had a hot *and* likable H/h with well-rounded secondary characters.

The only thing I disliked about the book, and perhaps a slight that most RS have, is the fact that we don't get to see the couple in real-life after they've escaped the danger plot. I mean we may get an epilogue of sorts, but I have a real driving interest of seeing the H/h relationship after the initial HEA and whilst most romances don't allow for this - some definitely do and I find myself enjoying those ones most of all (Sweet Dreams is testament to this).

Either way this has made me want to FINALLY get back to Cover Me which I had DNF'd out of boredom - the plot was hard for me to get into and I think I had a touch of the old B&S Syndrome. I have other books

dedicated to my holiday reading but once they're done, I may make CM a priority. :)

---

## Tracy says

### Earth-Shaking Action and Romance

Waking up buried under several tons of rubble is not Amelia Bailey's idea of a good time, but she survived the earthquake that leveled the hotel she was staying in, so she can hardly complain. Being able to feel, if not see, her new nephew has also survived is even better. So long as she doesn't think about what's left to endure, or panic about not being found, she'll be okay. Relatively speaking.

Amelia had come to the Bahamas with her brother and sister-in-law to act as their lawyer and help facilitate the international adoption of baby Joshua. Now she's trapped, with no idea if her brother and sister-in-law are still alive, and worried that help won't reach her and the baby before they both succumb to the dust, debris, and weight of the world resting precariously above them.

As an Air Force Pararescuman, Master Sergeant Hugh Franco is used to being on the front lines of rescues and natural disasters. Since the death of his wife and daughter five years ago, he's the first to volunteer for the most dangerous, potentially fatal missions. He doesn't do it solely out of a desire to rescue victims, or just to keep other members of his team safe, in particular those with families. He does it because he doesn't care if he survives. He's just marking time until he gets to see his family again. That's all. Anyone he rescues in the meantime is just gravy.

That's why Hugh is crawling through some of the worst debris he's ever seen after one of the rescue dogs signals a live soul in the rubble. When he finds the trapped individual, sees the wary hope in the eyes of the woman he's found, he quickly sets about stabilizing her until his team can free her. Then she tells him about the baby, stuck just beyond where her body lies under a twist of concrete and steel. A baby he knows could not possibly still be alive.

Getting Amelia free is his only concern, but it's not the only problem. When they are finally pulled from the rubble, they emerge into a world of devastation and chaos. Aftershocks threaten the rescue missions, searchers work frantically to save lives, and armed guards struggle to defend against desperate looters. It's as if Armageddon has been unleashed. Then one lone, tiny wail of furious life echoes across the filthy crowd of men and women and Hugh's soul practically shreds, even as it shifts a little inside him.

Joshua is alive, just as Amelia had tried to tell him. And no matter what, for whatever reason this woman and child still live, Hugh can't help but feel compelled to make sure they continue to do so. But natural disasters of this magnitude do more than highlight the best in humanity...they also bring out the worst. The opportunists, the users, and the vilest criminals take advantage when the whole world is looking away.

His self-appointed task isn't over. Not by a long shot. Amelia and Josh may have survived the earthquake, but it will take every ounce of his strength and training to keep them alive when faced with with a human monster working an evil agenda. One who has no compunction about making them all collateral damage.

~\*~

It would be impossible to read this story and not be reminded of the earthquake in Haiti, or to think of the number of scenarios that play out during a natural disaster that would so closely resemble the beginning of this book. To imagine with sorrow the number of incidents that don't end nearly as well as it does for Amelia and Joshua. It's a sobering thought, and a powerful way to kick off a book.

This is my first read of Catherine Mann, and if this story is any indication of what's come before, shame on me for the oversight. Action-packed and intense, this military-themed romantic suspense was also uniquely believable and touched on an array of human emotions and human conditions that were realistic, even in such a tragically surreal situation. Despite the larger-than-life heroes, or maybe because of them, getting a gritty view of a horrific rescue mission in less than ideal circumstances was surprisingly moving.

The lead characters, Hugh and Amelia, were fantastic in their roles. Not only did they have excellent chemistry together, each had a backstory and toted around enough baggage to lend their characters depth and dimension. I had no trouble at all understanding exactly where Hugh's frame of mind was at the beginning of the book, and I felt deeply for Amelia's past and the emotional journey she was on during the story.

I liked them, both of them, very much, and because I liked them both so much, it was easy to get swept up in their wild, bumpy ride of survival, endurance, and perseverance.

I'm still sort of up in the air about the ancillary plotlines and shifting character POVs, though. I didn't dislike them, really. I valued seeing the rescue command from Liam's perspective, and getting more information on Amelia's brother's history, as well as seeing how things fell into place with his wife. Those elements did make me feel I'd missed some previous story development and setup, though, and I'm not sure either thread was as fleshed out as needed to give them a true presence and significance in the book as a whole. And Liam's thread felt like it was left awkwardly dangling with no resolution whatsoever.

I also wasn't totally sold on the kidnapping/baby ring. I thought the motivations of the Bad Guy was fascinating, and I felt it was an interesting twist in an already horrible situation, but I wasn't convinced by the execution or the actions of the characters involved. If it had been more thoroughly developed and liberally sprinkled throughout the book, maybe, but as it was, it more divided the book in a way that I didn't find completely satisfying, and the resolution of that thread was a bit abrupt.

Amelia's and Hugh's character and relationship evolution were the high points of the book for me, and frankly, those points were very high. I felt their passion; I felt *for* their pain. And I just flat-out enjoyed reading about them both. For romantic suspense with a hefty side of action-adventure, this book was a huge success for me, and provided many hours of luscious reading entertainment. I have every intention of continuing this series and reading more of Catherine Mann's books.

***Disclosure:** An ARC of this book was provided to me by Sourcebooks Casablanca publisher Sourcebooks via NetGalley. This rating, review, and all included thoughts and comments are my own.*

~\*~\*~\*~

Reviewed for One Good Book Deserves Another.

---

## **Jacqueline says**

This book started off with a bang with the heroine trapped under a building after an earthquake and the hero rescuing her. It was fast moving and never let up the pace. There were several couples involved but the transitions were smooth and all the characters had parts in the current book to play so it worked really well. Loved the heroine and the hero both. She was a strong woman but not in a ball breaker way. She just had inner strength. He was a tortured type hero but he was calm, competent and kind.

My only real caveat is that the author had him use a Vulcan neck pinch. That just threw me out of the story. I know this is fiction but the VNP is beyond fiction. Like, I don't know, totally made up? I had to pretend I

hadn't read those words. Other than that, totally worthwhile read.

---

### **Danielle Gypsy Soul says**

Hot Zone is the 2nd book in Catherine Mann's Elite Force's Series and I liked it even more than the first book.

This book centers around Hugh Franco an Air Force PJ who hasn't gotten over the death of his wife and daughter and Amelia, a lawyer who is in the Bahamas helping her brother and his wife adopt a baby when an earthquake hits.

Amelia is buried under the collapsed building for two days when she is finally rescued by Hugh. I loved the rescue scenes and how the two characters interacted but this was just the beginning of their adventure together. Hugh doesn't like to be around kids because they remind him too much of all that he lost but Amelia hasn't been able to locate her brother and his wife and so she is all that baby Joshua has right now. Hugh wants to make sure they are both safe but he is having to deal with a lot of emotional issues from his past.

Amelia also has issues, she had a bad first marriage and still has a few issues with her father from when she was young. But no matter the past issues they have they are fiercely attracted to each other and respect the strength that the other has shown during this disaster. Amelia and Joshua end up in trouble and Hugh is thrown together with them (I won't spoil it by telling you more) but it gives the characters a chance to grow together and really connect.

There are also a couple of side stories during the book that are both very interesting. Amelia's brother and his wife who are dealing with not knowing if Amelia and Joshua are alive and Aiden's issues from his and Amelia's father's past while they work as doctors helping the injured. There is also the beginning of a romance between Hugh's commander Liam and the rescue dog handler Rachel that I believe will end up being a book in the future.

I don't usually like too many side stories but they worked well in this book and didn't take too much from the main characters.

Overall, I really enjoyed this book. It had plenty of action, romance, and adventure. Great characters with intense backgrounds and a riveting plot. It hooked me from page one and left me wanting to read more.

---

### **Sonia Cristina says**

[Depois de Amelia e Joshua serem raptados estive sempre muito enervada, a pensar nas dificuldades. Dava-me calma saber

---

### **Jess says**

Review posted: Happily Ever After - Reads

I love it when a book draws you right into the story from page 1. HOT ZONE starts strong with the action and doesn't let up. We open during the aftermath of an earthquake in the Bahamas; Amelia and her young nephew are trapped under the rubble of what was once their hotel. She can't see her adopted nephew, Joshua, but she can touch him and knows that he's alive, barely hanging on. She has no idea how long they've been trapped, believing it to be only hours since the earthquake instead of the 2 full days that has really passed. Her body is slowly giving out and she's losing hope, until Hugh makes his way to her.

Hugh Franco has been running from his past for years. He lost his wife and young daughter in a plane crash and has never been able to heal and start living his life again. He takes on one high risk mission after another, chasing the adrenaline high, and though he doesn't say, he thinks it - he's waiting for his time to come so he can be reunited with his wife and daughter in the afterlife. His current mission finds him tunneling through a collapsed building, trying to find survivors after this devastating earthquake. He makes contact with Amelia and stays with her until the clean-up crews can get enough debris off them, so Amelia and Joshua can get out safely. I really enjoy when a hero and heroine meet like this. They can't see one another, all Hugh has to offer Amelia is touch, something as simple as holding her hand to help get her through this nightmare, but they talk to pass the time and keep all the bad "what ifs" away.

**"You clean up nice."**

**He eye-stroked her in a way that made his answering attraction clear without crossing the line. "You're not quite what I expected either, now that we're in the daylight." She slid her hand away, closing her fist to hold onto the feel of him.**

**"What did you expect?"**

**Someone with traditional good-guy looks – blond. All-American like her ex. Would she have reacted differently earlier if she'd known her gentle, steady rescuer had a bad-boy body and forbidden-sex eyes?**

Once the trio is brought out of the collapsed building, Amelia is instantly worried about her brother and sister-in-law who are here with her. They all came to the Bahamas so her brother, Aiden and his wife Lisabeth, could adopt Joshua. Its craziness all around the devastated area, looters and crimes are happening in full force and information is lacking all the way around. She stays attached to Joshua's side as he's put in a make shift children's area for medical attention.

Hugh can't get Amelia out of his head, and visits her a couple times while they rest and recover. They have that spark and come together to release all the worry and fear and adrenaline and reaffirm that they're alive and made it through. It's not the most romantic of scenes, having sex in a storage closet, but it was hot and fast and full of emotion for them both. But, my one little annoyance with the moment, Amelia leaves Joshua in the children's area by himself – and yes, the kids were being watched by nurses, but still. They had just survived a disaster, overcoming pretty bad odds, they were buried under a hotel for goodness sake, so leaving him alone to be with Hugh was a bad move, especially when we all can see the writing on the wall. Amelia makes it back to Joshua in time to see someone carrying him out of the area and into a waiting van. They grab Amelia too when she tries to get to Joshua and Hugh is able to follow the kidnappers as they head out of the area.

The story for Amelia and Hugh went from surviving a natural disaster to being kidnapped by people running an illegal adoption ring. The action really was non-stop, but it didn't feel like every page was filled with it. There are sweet moments throughout the whole story between Hugh and Amelia, especially for Hugh, who's

battling trying to not get close to anyone ever again; the fear of loving and losing more people is just too much for him. But hearing him slowly open up to Amelia about his daughter and sharing little memories he has of her, helps him open himself back up to love again. There are also really nice scenes with Amelia and Joshua. She bonds with her nephew and I was counting down to the scene when she's reunited with her brother and sister-in-law, but also dreading it because she'd have to hand Joshua over to them.

Aiden and Lisabeth have a really great supporting storyline, so much so that I wish the book would have been just a little bit longer to get their POV towards the end after all the events had taken place. Aiden is fighting with demons from his past as well, and with the help of his wife, he too learns to open up and just let go of all the worries and pain he'd been holding in.

This is a great must read from Catherine Mann. I was sucked in from the start, put immediately right next to Amelia as she was buried alive wondering if help would get to her and Joshua in time, and I loved seeing her and Hugh together. They struggled to survive when many obstacles were put in their way, and through helping each other, they were able to put parts of their past behind them for good, and have something to live for again.

---

## **Annie (Under the Covers Book Blog) says**

### **Posted on Under the Covers**

HOT ZONE, the second book in the Elite Force series by Catherine Mann draws you from page one and doesn't let go until the very end.

Attorney Amelia Bailey and her nephew, Joshua who is just an infant are trapped under the rubble of an earthquake in the Bahamas. Despite the fact that a building is lying over her, Amelia maintains a clear head. Pinned down with no way to escape, Amelia waits it out, touching her nephew's pulse every now and then to make sure he is still alive. Hours...days pass and they are still trapped until Master Sergeant Hugo Franco comes to their aid.

In these moments of extreme fear and desperation, Amelia and Hugo find comfort in one another. Not a woman to be easily frightened, Amelia takes what reassurance Hugo gives her. He tells her that his men are working on getting them out. That he'll do everything in his power to take care of Joshua, whether he gets out of this mess dead or alive. Soon, Amelia finds herself trusting this man who has crawled through the rubble to reach them. But can this trust lead to love?

Hugo has a past that has haunted him. The ghost of his dead wife and child follows him on his assignments day by day, weighing on his heart like a rock. The presence of Amelia and seeing Joshua bring forth these painful memories. But before Hugo can really understand what this means, Amelia and Hugo are thrust into a dangerous world of kidnappings and human smuggling.

With undeniable sexual attraction, fast-paced action and equally quick-witted banter, HOT ZONE is another hit for Catherine Mann. I really admired Amelia's personality. She was strong, fearless and loveable all at the same time. She was the perfect woman for Hugo who is loyal and honourable to the bone.

Though technically this is the second in the series, you can still read this without having read the first, COVER ME. There is some slight crossover between the two books, but nothing overly vital that will make you regret starting with this one.

Mann has a lot of things going for her in this series. With UNDER FIRE coming out in May 2012, Liam McCabe and Rachel Flores will get their own adventure. We get a taste of them in this book and it makes me want the next one so much more.

---

## **Karla says**

### **5 Captivating Stars! I'm HOT for you Hugh, please come rescue me!!**

These men do it **ALL!** From the first page to the last I was totally captivated by this story!

The story starts out in the Bahamas, where the island has been decimated by an earthquake. Master Sergeant Hugh Franco is crawling through the rubble, because one of the S & R dogs, Zorro, has hit on something. Even though the search cameras come up with nothing, Hugh places his trust in the dog, who's barking his head off. Lucky for Amelia and little Joshua, this Pararescueman goes with his gut, because after 2 days under a collapsed building, they are about to see what this hero is all about!! The details just consumed me, to the point where I felt as if it was me pinned under the concrete; I held my breath and got claustrophobic! The story just took off from there, and it just **did not STOP!**

Amelia and Hugh are quick to become sexually involved, and it's initially based on the need for comfort, a way to deal with all they've been through and also I think a little hero worship. I was fine with it, because when you are in a life and death situation and are able to walk away in one piece, you're going to grab hold of what you can, something that makes you feel, and boy do these two feel!! As they become more involved, through way of gripping circumstances, the love between them grows.

The author manages to entwine two other couples into the story; one is an established relationship, involving Amelia's brother, sister-in-law and parents to Joshua, Aiden and Lisabeth. It was incredibly moving and sweet. The other is the set-up for the couple that will grace the pages of the next book, Major Liam McCabe, team commander, and Rachel Flores, who is there with a canine S & R unit. Liam is quite the character and so funny, he's already stolen my heart. The only thing missing for me, was that we only got one brief moment with Wade Rocha, our hero from Cover Me. Then again, his stories been told already. It's more a personal issue, because I like catching up with the characters from the previous books. Maybe we'll see more of him in the next book, Under Fire.

This is one of the best military/suspense/ romances I've ever read. These guys are in the moment, they are on the job doing what they've been trained to do, and that's what makes this series so exciting. The author takes real life situations, adds the romance aspect, some humor, and fantastic dialogue and gives the reader a story that's a real page-turner. My guess is she based her research for this book on the devastating Haitian earthquake of 2010. The setting and descriptions are so realistic, right down to the overwhelming smells of death, which is a constant reminder of all who perished. If you are a fan of this genre of book, or are looking for some excitement in your reads and haven't read this author, I highly recommend that you do.

**Pararescuemen saving lives...I'm awestruck at their overall skills and what lengths they go to, to do their job.**

---

## Jae says

What can I say, the HOT cover totally does justice to the AMAZING story (or is it the other way around?) Anyway my point here is, the Hero, heroine, secondary characters, plots, settings and the shagging actions were very fulfilling and I had an enjoyable time finishing this off.

Hugh and Amelia's first encounter with each other was when he was rescuing her from under some earthquake rubble. She was trapped for three days and nearly gave up hope on any rescue when Hugh heard the weak banging she made.

*If I'm hallucinating, please don't tell me.*

*Ma'am, you're not imagining anything. I'm here to help you.*

And things were never dull after that I-cannot-imagine-if-that-ever-happened-to-me moments.

This is the sequel to but it doesn't really matter if you haven't read it (like me) since Wade the hero in book #1 was hardly ever mentioned here and didn't really make an impact to the story. But still, I'll head to book #1 next just to check out whether Wade was as HOT as his book cover.

---

## Crystal ♥ RBtWBC says

Hot Zone is another exciting edition to a fantastical series centered on a team of sexy and daring Pararescuemen!

Hugh Franco lives life on the edge as a PJ (Pararescue Jumper), running from his past and saving lives to make up for the ones that he lost so long ago. When an earthquake sends Hugh and his team to the Bahamas, he is the first one crawling through the rubble. Trapped underneath feet of debris Hugh finds Amelia Bailey and is instantly drawn to her bravery and cool head, earning his respect and starting a fire in his blood even before he can tell what she looks like. Once free from the fallen building Hugh can't seem to let Amelia and her young nephew go but before they can explore their attraction further they are swept up into an abhorrent scheme of kidnapping and human smuggling. Can Hugh extract Amelia and her nephew from the evil clutches they find themselves in before the kidnappers realize that they're on to them? And if he can, will their new attraction survive past the devastation they've found on the ravaged island?

Catherine Mann weaves heated romance with nail biting suspense in the second installment in her captivating and intense Elite Force series. If you've read Cover Me then you will remember the daring Hugh Franco from the PJ team in Alaska, but if you haven't then that is okay because the author has set Hot Zone up perfectly to read as a standalone.

Hugh is a tortured soul, living through the loss of his wife and child he is easily relatable to any reader and his story tugs on your heartstrings. Having nothing left to lose he feels that it is his job to take on the most dangerous assignments and spare his team mates. Brave, honorable, self-sacrificing, sexy as all get-out with a soft spot for children...Hugh Franco is a dream boat. ;)

His story was well written and paired with the feisty Amelia they gave each other balance in all the right places. Together they sizzled and the story intrigued.

I didn't find Hot Zone wasn't as fast-paced and riveting as the first novel, Cover Me, but it definitely made my must-read list of 2011 and the series in general is on my must-read series list so I am eagerly anticipating the next novel, Under Fire (May 2012) which features Liam McCabe, Rachel Flores and Disco, who we see a bit of here in Hot Zone.

---

## Auntee says

I loved it--and I'm lovin' this series! Plenty of suspense/action, with just enough romance. And my favorite--lots of details (especially about the setting and the characters) and enough back story to make me *care*.

This story takes place in the Bahamas, where the heroine, divorced, pretty blue-eyed blonde lawyer Amelia, has traveled to help her brother Aiden (a doctor) and his Bahamian wife Lisabeth (a nurse) adopt a baby boy. Amelia gets trapped underneath the rubble of their hotel (with baby Joshua) when a massive earthquake hits.

*The hotel, before the quake...*

The hero, dark-haired, green eyed Master Sgt. Hugh Franco (who we first met in Cover Me) is an Air Force pararescueman who has come to the island with his team to help in the search and rescue. He heroically crawls into the rubble to save Amelia and her 13 month old nephew, and their relationship starts there.

*Hugh...*

In **Hot Zone**, both the hero and heroine have issues about their pasts. County prosecutor Amelia is a recent divorcee (because of a cheating husband) and longs for a family of her own one day. Hugh, who has been living life on the edge (taking on the most dangerous assignments) and never having a relationship that lasts more than one night, meets his match in Amelia. (view spoiler) When he meets Amelia, something about her spirit touches him, and he finds it hard to walk away. Things get physical, and Hugh is stunned when *Amelia* (running from her feelings) chooses to walk away. But then they get caught up in an illegal adoption/human trafficking ring when someone (the story's villain, known as 'the Guardian') kidnaps Amelia and baby Joshua. It takes all Hugh's bravery and training and a lot of fierce determination on Amelia's part to escape the kidnappers, reunite Joshua with his adoptive parents, and bring down the illegal adoption ring.

Catherine Mann not only gives us Hugh/Amelia as the main romance, but also gives us a secondary romance with her doctor brother (who is harboring a secret that's eating him alive and is the reason why he doesn't want a biological child) and his wife. Plenty of details here and a nice connection between husband and wife when Lisabeth reveals her own secret to Aiden...and then he finally opens up to her. Some good stuff here.

We also get plenty of background on Major Liam McCabe and the set up on what will probably be his story next (Protector) when he meets (and tries to romance) a somewhat reluctant Rachel Flores (a search-and-rescue dog handler). I really liked Liam--he's charming, funny, and it seems like a hopeless romantic. I'm looking forward to his story.

As I read all the detail CM provided about the earthquake (the destruction, the looters, the lawlessness, the relief workers, the rescues) it reminded me a little of what was seen on the news from Haiti. Catherine Mann brings everything to life in vivid detail and manages to educate the reader about what the rescue workers have to endure too. You can tell she did her homework on this, and I appreciate how authentic and believable everything sounded.

*The destruction...*

The romance? Just a few scenes between Hugh and Amelia (three, I think) but they were plenty steamy, but not erotic. It's kind of hard to get romantic when you're in the middle of an earthquake and its aftershocks, but these two did find a way--most memorably in a claw foot tub...

*The tub...*

So this series is off to a great start! I liked 'Brick' from .Cover Me, adored Hugh Franco (such a sad backstory and such a caring, sensitive hero) and I already love what I know about Liam McCabe. Amelia was a feisty, brave heroine and I was rooting for things to work out for her and Hugh. I loved the sweet little epilogue we get at the end (for a moment, my heart skipped a beat thinking there wouldn't be one!) I think Catherine Mann is onto something with this series about heroic pararescuemen, and I'm glad to see them get their due. 5 stars

\*Although part of a series, this book can be read as a stand alone\*

*ARC provided by Netgalley*

---

## **Wendy says**

**Hero** – Pararescueman Master Sergeant Hugh Franco is an alpha male to the core, is swoon worthy, gorgeous, sweet, gentle, caring, tortured and absolutely to die for! Hugh has won my little heart.

**Heroine** – Amelia is headstrong, caring, sweet, smart, and I would love to have her as a BFF.

**Plot and Writing** – Smooth and fast paced that had me on the edge of my seat.

**Steam factor** – Hot and guaranteed to steam up those reading glasses. ;)

**Overall** – One of the best romantic suspense I've read, which left me a happy camper!

---