



## TIFFANY

When Tiffany Patterson and Jamal George Washington left the compound, they hoped to return shortly—to accolades. They were brave, weathering the lawless land in order to bring back much-needed supplies, weren't they? Tiffany wanted things from the house—kitchen ware, hygiene items, clothing—things she'd had to leave behind when the Martins first brought

her family to their homestead. Also, she wanted to please Andrea—and what better way than to bring her clothing, jewelry, makeup and other baubles from their past life? Trinkets weren't as important nowadays as food and shelter, so what teenager wouldn't see the love involved in acquiring them simply for sheer pleasure?

Andrea, she thought, would understand how risky the journey was. She'd appreciate that Jamal was willing to take those risks just to please them. There was a little more to it than that, but Andrea needn't know it. She hoped that, when they returned with many wonderful supplies from their home, it would silence the resentment Andrea felt towards Jamal.



Jamal Washington knew shortly after meeting Tiffany Patterson that she was in the market for a new husband. He'd lost his wife to illness made worse by malnutrition, after the pulse. He was lonely, and found Tiffany's interest much to his liking. His daughter Evangeline still ached from the loss of her mother. She needed a woman to care for her.

Still, when Tiffany asked him about making the trip back to the Patterson's plat, he hadn't been so stupid to think they'd have an easy time of it. He was no gunman—but he packed a single pistol that he'd owned for decades. It had been his father's. They left early in the morning, and he hoped to be back before sunset.

They reached the plat, but never made it to the house. A gang of marauders dressed in war paint, whooping and hollering like savage Indians on the warpath, converged around them on the road. Though Tiffany and Jamal were on horseback, they hadn't moved fast enough—gang members grabbed the reins of the horses and quickly brought the pair to a stop.

Tiffany thought her heart would burst from fear. Jamal made the mistake of yanking out his pistol. It was a mistake for two reasons: the first being he was clumsy and slow about doing

it. The second was that, as soon as gang members saw the weapon, two of them pulled him off the horse, while another raised a club and struck him forcibly in the head. He fell to the ground and lay there motionless while a red splotch appeared around his head. For a split second he glanced at Tiffany; then, his open eyes stared, unseeing.

Tiffany sobbed.

The gang's leader approached, shouting not to hurt "the woman". Tiffany barely noticed. She stared at Jamal's body in shock, feeling as though her blood had turned to stone. She knew without a shadow of a doubt, she had caused Jamal's death. He'd tried to talk her out of the trip. She'd promised to share his cabin with him and Evangeline upon their return, which is what made him risk it. His dying was all her fault!

The gang leader came up to Tiffany, eyeing her with undisguised curiosity. He looked down at Jamal. "Was that your husband?"

She shook her head.

"Good." He turned to one of the gang. "At least you didn't make this lady a widow." The group tittered, but Tiffany felt bile rise in her throat.

"Someone else already did that," she said, trying hard to suppress tears. The gang leader raised his arms up to her. "C'mon, let's get you down from there." He didn't sound dangerous or crazy—that was something. Tiffany allowed herself to be helped down. Like Andrea, Tiffany had dark hair and was petite—a mere five feet two inches. The man easily swung her from Rhema's saddle. He looked down at her appreciatively.

"I'm Walt," he said.



Thanks to the fact that Walt for some reason instantly took a liking to Tiffany, she was protected from harm. In a few days, she was one of the gang. Walt questioned her exhaustively about how she'd survived since the pulse. She instinctively knew she had to protect her children by keeping the compound a secret—and did so.

It wasn't difficult to make up stories of how she and Jamal had survived—she drew on accounts she'd heard from the Philpots, from Cecily, and even Roper. Tiffany knew she'd done a lot of wrong things in life, such as having an affair. Even the way she'd left the compound—it seemed so foolish, now. She'd left her children—her baby! But she swallowed her sorrow and put up a brave front, never giving a hint of having family that had survived. The lying came easy. She would never lead Walt and his gang to the compound. The way they'd killed Jamal—and worse, what they did to people who were peacefully trying to get by in their homes—it was more than enough to keep her lips sealed about the compound.

At one home, after the gang had brutally killed its occupants, and then gone through the provisions they'd found there, Walt spotted a green knit hat in the closet.

For some reason, he took it and placed it gently on her head.

"Brings out the green in your eyes," he said. Shortly after that, they attacked a fortified cabin—and Tiffany had been shot, even as they were making a retreat.

Afterward, Walt left her in an abandoned home with strict orders to stay put until he returned. He and the gang went back to the cabin where she'd taken a bullet, determined to loot the place and "take care" of its occupants. They were sure the cabin held great resources—why else would it be so well protected? Plus, a gang member's cousin had been killed there during the first attack.

Walt seemed to genuinely care about Tiffany, leaving her with food and water—enough for a few days. But she didn't return the sentiment. She was frightened of his ruthlessness, and repulsed by his nonchalant attitude towards violence. (Yet, he was angry at the people who'd shot her. Go figure.)

She'd been alone for two days now, and was nearly out of water. She was also weak from blood loss. But suddenly it occurred to her that she had a choice: she could leave! Not a single gang member had returned, including Walt. Maybe they were all dead!

All she had to do was work her way back to the compound.

That's all she had to do.



**Author's Note:** This chapter will not be published in *DEFIANCE*, ever. It is a bonus chapter that *only* subscribers to my list can access. Thanks for reading the series, and I hope you enjoyed this answer, though it is brief, to what happened to these characters. Although we don't see Tiffany's full story—we still don't know if she ever makes it back to the compound—I hope it nevertheless answered some questions.

I'm not planning on adding to the Pulse Effex Series at this time; but if I do, rest assured. Tiffany's journey and subsequent fate will be revealed!

Did you post a review of *DEFIANCE*, yet? If not, please do so!

[Here's the Amazon link](#), but other places to post reviews or recommendations are Facebook, Instagram, and Goodreads. If you enjoyed the series, I'd really appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to tell your friends.

Thank you!

*Linore*



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