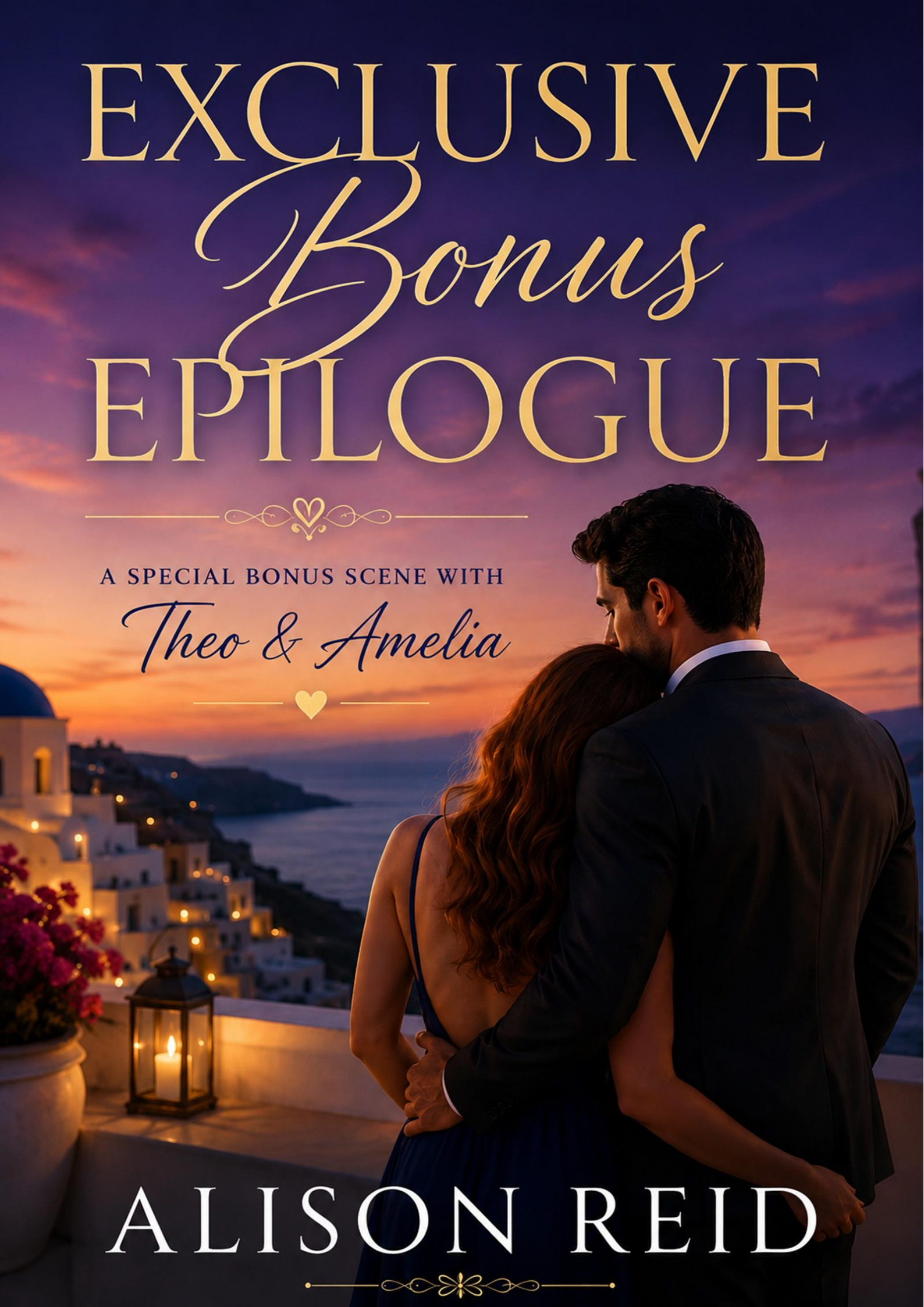
EXCLUSIVE *Bonus* EPILOGUE

A SPECIAL BONUS SCENE WITH

Theo & Amelia



ALISON REID

Exclusive Bonus Epilogue

The Greek Tycoon Claims His Virgin Bride

by Alison Reid

Sixteen Years Later…

The ballroom glittered beneath crystal chandeliers, filled with the soft murmur of conversation and the occasional burst of laughter.

Theo sat at the centre of a table filled with the people who mattered most. The people who were his. A concept that still surprised him sometimes. Not ownership. Belonging.

Across from him, Leon was attempting—and failing—to stop Sophia from stealing the bread rolls from his plate.

"That one was mine."

Sophia looked entirely unapologetic.

"It was unattended."

"It was on my plate."

"Exactly."

Leon stared at his younger sister. Theo hid a smile behind his glass. Beside Leon, Elias shook his head.

"You realise you're arguing with someone who enjoys irritating you."

"I'm aware of that."

"And yet you keep engaging."

"Because she's impossible."

Sophia grinned. Victorious. Theo's daughter possessed Amelia's smile and Theo's determination. A dangerous combination. At twelve years old, she had

already mastered the art of getting exactly what she wanted while somehow convincing everyone else it had been their idea.

The first time Theo had realised he was completely incapable of denying her anything, she had been four years old. Amelia still reminded him of it regularly.

Across the table, William laughed. Daniel beside him. Comfortable. Happy. The sight still pleased Theo. Not because William had once offered to marry Amelia. But because he had loved her enough to let her go. And because without William, Theo might never have found his way back to her.

Nickolas sat beside Calista, one arm resting along the back of her chair. Sixteen years later and they were exactly the same. Theo suspected they always would be. Calista caught him looking and smiled knowingly.

Theo immediately looked away. She laughed. Some things never changed.

At the other end of the table, Amelia was speaking to one of the organisers. Elegant. Graceful. Beautiful. Theo's attention lingered. As it always did.

Elias noticed.

"Dad."

Theo glanced at his eldest son.

"Yes?"

"You've been staring at Mum for approximately six minutes."

Sophia immediately joined in.

"That's actually an improvement."

Leon nodded solemnly.

"Last week it was ten."

Theo looked at all three of them.

"You realise I pay for your education."

The children exchanged identical expressions. Unimpressed. Amelia returned to the table then, unaware she had just been the subject of discussion. Theo rose automatically. Pulled out her chair. Waited until she was seated. A habit formed years ago. One he had never abandoned.

Amelia smiled up at him. That smile. The same one. The one that had undone him from the beginning. His chest tightened. Even now. Sixteen years. And still.

The master of ceremonies returned to the stage. The room gradually quietened.

"Tonight, we honour an extraordinary woman."

Theo felt Amelia shift beside him. Immediately uncomfortable. Of course. Recognition had never interested her. The work did. Always the work. The children did. The families did. The difference she could make did. Everything else was secondary.

"...for fifteen years of advocacy on behalf of displaced and vulnerable children..."

The applause began.

Amelia sighed softly beneath her breath. Theo reached for her hand beneath the table. She squeezed it once.

"...a woman whose foundation has transformed thousands of lives..."

Theo's gaze remained on her. Because he knew exactly why this mattered. Not the award. The children. The cause.

When Amelia had first spoken about creating the foundation, Elias had been a baby. She had sat beside him on the terrace overlooking the sea, explaining what she wanted to build. A place where children who felt abandoned could find stability. Safety. Belonging. Things she had never had enough of herself.

Theo had funded it immediately. Not because she needed him to. Because he believed in her. And because he had learned long ago that when Amelia cared about something, she changed it.

The applause grew louder.

"And this year's Humanitarian Excellence Award goes to Amelia Andrakis."

The entire table stood. Instantly. Theo first. Then everyone else. William. Daniel. Nickolas. Calista. And their children. Sophia's whistle was loud enough to make several nearby tables laugh. Amelia covered her face briefly. Mortified.

Theo smiled. Completely unrepentant. She deserved every second of it. As she walked toward the stage, his gaze followed her. And suddenly he wasn't looking only at her. He was looking at everything surrounding her. Everything that existed because he had taken one risk. One leap.

Elias. Nearly sixteen. Intelligent. Disciplined. The future already stretching before him. Yet still the boy who checked on his mother whenever she looked tired.

Leon. Kind-hearted. Thoughtful. The child most likely to notice when someone was hurting. The child most likely to do something about it.

Sophia. Fearless. Bright. Impossible. The daughter who had wrapped him around her finger before she could form complete sentences.

William. Happy. Loved. Living openly.

Daniel beside him. Exactly where he belonged.

Nickolas and Calista. Proof that some love stories survived everything.

And Amelia. At the centre of it all. His wife. The woman he had nearly lost. The woman who had given him a family. A home. A life he had never imagined wanting. Much less needing. Because the truth was brutally simple. If he hadn't gone after her—

The company would still exist. The wealth would still exist. The influence. The power. The success. All of it. And none of it would have mattered. Because he would have missed this.

Every laugh. Every argument over stolen bread rolls. Every late-night conversation. Every family holiday. Every school performance. Every bedtime story. Every ordinary moment that had somehow become the most valuable thing he owned.

Amelia reached the podium. The applause faded. She looked out across the room. Then her gaze found him. As it always did.

For a moment neither of them looked away. And Theo smiled. Because even now, after everything, she still looked at him as though he was the best thing that had ever happened to her. The truth was—

She was the best thing that had ever happened to him.

Amelia's smile softened. Then she looked down at the award in her hands.

"When I was a little girl," she began quietly, "I used to think being chosen was something that happened to other people."

The room fell silent.

Theo felt his chest tighten. Because he knew that story. He knew every part of it. Amelia looked up again.

"But life has a funny way of surprising you."

A ripple of gentle laughter moved through the audience.

"And what I've learned is that sometimes the most important thing we can do is make sure a child knows they matter. That they are wanted. That they belong."

Emotion caught briefly in her voice. Not enough to stop her. Never enough to stop her.

"Because every child deserves that."

Applause rose again. Theo joined it. Unable not to. His eyes never leaving her. And Theo felt it. The same certainty he had felt sixteen years ago. The same certainty he felt every morning when he woke beside her. She was the best decision he had ever made.

And as Amelia continued her speech, Theo sat back in his chair and watched the life he almost lost. And for perhaps the thousandth time in sixteen years, he thought the same thing.

Thank God I took the leap.

— The End —

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